THE BOOK WAS DRENCHED

ONLY THE OTHER DAY

A VOLUME OF ESSAYS

BY

E. V. LUCAS

'I've seen worse than that in the Sunday papers, *my* love.' *Mr. Mould in "Martin Chuzzlewit'*

METHUEN & CO. LTD. *LONDON*
36 Essex Street W.C.

First published in 1936

PRINTED IN CRTAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

'THE EMPTY CHAIR'

(WITH A NOTE ON THE FRONTISPIECE)

YOU like stories of book-collectors, don't you? Nice stories, generous stories. Very well, then.

Every one who is interested in Dickens—and that means the whole English-speaking world and a good deal over—knows that when the novelist died, in 1870, there appeared in the *Graphic* an engraving after Luke Fildes entitled 'The Empty Chair'—the Gad's Hill working room with no occupant—probably one of the most famous pictures ever published. But what every one does not know, is that the artist also made a water-colour drawing, and that that drawing went to America.

It was upon this fact that A., one of the book-collectors of Philadelphia, which is not only the Quaker City but a nest of bibliophiles, based the story (with B., another Philadelphian connoisseur, in it) that he told me the other day, and that I now pass on.

'Once every year,' A. said, 'I go over to B.'s to spend the night and see what new things he has been acquiring, and in particular to look at his

copy of *Pickwick*, which, after my own and perhaps one other, is the best in existence. We have a real bookish talk over our dinner, and again after dinner, and again the next morning, when little problems that occurred in the watches of the night must be cleared up. Well,' he continued, 'the last time I was there I was worried to see on the wall of the library, all among fine original things, the print of "The Empty Chair".

' "What a pity," I said, "that you didn't buy the water-colour when it came into the American market! You could have got it for two thousand dollars."

' "Yes," he said, " I have never ceased to regret it. But I thought I couldn't afford it. Lost chances! Lost chances!—the collector's constant lament. Anyway, where is it now? Have you got it?"

' "No," I said, "I don't go in for pictures. I never knew what became of it, but it's right place is here."

' "Don't I know it!" said B.'; and in course of time A. said good-bye and went off to his office.

*Directly I got there,' he resumed, 'I was rung up by an old friend who was the trustee of still another Philadelphian collector and was winding up his estate. Let us call him Tom.

' "I have got everything spread out here," Tom said, "with the price that I think fair against each article, so that there can be no bargaining. Do you want anything?"

' "I want that portrait of Dr. Johnson/' I said. "How much is it?" '

Tom told him and he secured it.

' "I'm afraid there's nothing else in your line," Tom said. "It's a pity you dislike the sadness of 'The Empty Chair'."

' "What's that got to do with it?" I asked.

' "Nothing, except that it's here," said Tom.

' "You mean the wood-cut?" I said.

'"Not at all," Tom replied; "the other, the water-colour."

' "Good heavens!" I exclaimed. "So that's where it's been! How much is it?"

' "Two thousand dollars," Tom said.

' "It's mine!" cried I. "Send it round to my office at once" '; and then, he told me, he rang up B.

' "B," I said, "have you got two thousand dollars?"

' "I could scrape them up," B. replied.

' "Very well," said I, "bring them to my office and I'll give you something in exchange for them—something you have wanted for years." '

That is the end of A.'s story.

For two reasons I have made the picture of 'The Empty Chair' the frontispiece to this bo'ok. One is as an accompaniment to the present essay, published during the centenary year of Dickens's death; the other is, that if you look at the

articles on the desk, you will see among them, at the back, the top of a foliated box. This box was given to Dickens in 1830, when he was eighteen and just before his genius began to be apparent, and it bears a gold tablet with 'C. D. 1830' on it. According to a brief description of it, in the handwriting of the late Georgina Hogarth, Dickens's sister-in-law and close companion, the box never left his side, was always in use as a receptacle for his quill pens, travelled with him to America, and, as we see, was on his desk on the fatal ninth of June, 1870.

Who gave it to him, she does not say ; but as 1830 was the year of Dickens's attachment to Maria Beadnell, it is not improbable that it was a gift from her.

Through the generosity of Sir Seymour Hicks, this box, with Miss Hogarth's verification, now belongs to me.

BURY ST. EDMUNDS

IT was not until, the other day, in the smoking-room of the 'Angel Hotel' at Bury St. Edmunds, I found myself surrounded by Dickens pictures, that I remembered that this old Suffolk town figures also in the *Pickwick Papers.* I say also, because I had just come from the 'Great White Horse', at Ipswich, where, very properly, every inch of wall-space downstairs is given to Dickens, and upstairs you are shown the room with its two four-post beds in which Mr. Pickwick, after hazily returning from the quest of his watch, wrongfully and embarrassingly found himself. It will be remembered how, from the ambush of one of the curtained beds, he watched the middle-aged lady in the yellow curl-papers doing her back hair. It will be remembered how she turned out to be the intended of Mr. Peter Magnus, a fellow guest at the 'Great White Horse'; it will be remembered that it was at Ipswich that Mr. Pickwick appeared before Mr. Nupkins, the Mayor, and that Mr. Weller, senior, indicted widows. It will be remembered also that Sam Weller first met Mary, the pretty

housemaid, in Mr. Nupkins's kitchen. Ipswich, then, is closely connected with the *Pickwick Papers*, and, if you like, you may sleep in the famous room, which, to my eye, looked comfortable enough, and dream of the immortal pilgrims.

Although I have heard more than one person claim that Bury St. Edmunds and Eatanswill are one, it is distinctly stated in *Pickwick* that twenty miles separated them, and it is generally believed that the true place for which Slumkey was returned was Sudbury. But we know from Chapter XVI that Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller knew Bury, for they stayed at the 'Angel'. Whereas, however, at the 'Great White Horse/ the bedroom that you are shown is called Mr. Pickwick's, at the 'Angel', at Bury (down three steps), it is stated to be that in which Dickens himself slept.

Mention of Eatanswill reminds me of a statement in connexion with Dickens—very humiliating to myself—that my conscience tells me I must make; and it is this: that not for many years did I ever think of Eatanswill as anything but the name of an imaginary place, with no double meaning. It was not until comparatively recently that I realized that the scene of the very corrupt election in which the Hon. Samuel Slumkey defeated Horatio Fizkin, Esq., was made up of the words 'eat', 'and' and 'swill'. Incredible, but true, and only to be palliated by the confession

of a friend of mine, that, until I told him, he had seen no special significance in 'Dotheboys'.

One does not, however, go to Bury for Dickens, even though Job Trotter went there, and Mr. Pickwick was caught there by the lady-abbess of Westgate House (a solitary adventure which I have always thought Sam would not have allowed); you go there for the ruins, opposite the 'Angel', of the great Abbey over which, in its heyday, Abbot Samson presided. Amid all the vestiges of the Dissolution these remains are perhaps the most pathetic and eloquent, and not less so when you study the reconstruction which hangs in the noble entrance gate. I am not blaming Thomas Cromwell and Henry VIII for everything, for there were damaging Town-versus-Church riots before their day; but it is they who, the chief culprits, changed Bury St. Edmunds from an ecclesiastical and civil power to a memory. Nowhere can one get such an idea of the vastness of these old establishments as when one walks among the flower beds, the playground, the tennis courts and bowling greens which now intrude upon the crumbling grey foundations of what, not so long ago, were the monastery's pride.

I am glad I went to Bury, not only to get this idea of the place, but to see also the beautiful St. Mary's Church, with its rich colouring, and to be sent again to Carlyle's *Past and Present*^ where Abbot Samson, who ruled the Abbey from

1182 to 1211, is the chief figure, as reconstructed from the Latin chronicle of that earlier Boswell, Samson's disciple, Jocelyn of Brakeford. Samson's Tower is still one of the buildings that stand amid all the modernization—the recent tombs, the Bristol Estate Office, the Abbey Ruins School, and so forth—and Carlyle's portrait of that strong, vigorous man is one of the best things in all his many writings—often too shrill and too angry, but always worth studying. And we may remember here that Carlyle was a contemporary and friend of Dickens.

'One monk, of a taciturn nature,' wrote the Sage of Chelsea, 'distinguishes himself amon,g these babbling ones . . . The reader is desired to mark this monk. A personable man of seven-and-forty; stout-made, stands erect as a pillar; with bushy eyebrows, the eyes of him beaming into you in a really strange way; the face massive grave, with "a very eminent nose"; his head almost bald, its auburn remnants of hair, and the copious ruddy beard, getting slightly streaked with grey. This is Brother Samson; a man worth looking at.'

In such terms does Carlyle, the fine, vivid limner that he is, introduce the Abbot, and then for'many pages we have the record of his deeds; his controversies with authority, even with Royalty itself, whom, in the person of Richard I, he challenges and confutes and in the process so

endears himself, hitherto an enemy, to the King, that that doughty fighter craves from him a present of the famous Abbey dogs; down to the moment when the Abbot is present at the disinterment of St. Edmund the Martyr and finds the body untouched by time.

Abbot Samson's own tomb, discovered in 1903, may now be seen, but the remains of St. Edmund the Martyr, where are they? The villagers of Hoxne, also in Suffolk, claim that, in 870, Edmund, the last King of East Anglia, was killed there by the Danes, shot to death by their arrows while he was bound to a tree. But there is much doubt. Later the body was conveyed to Bury (hence the name) to a house above which, in the eleventh century, the Abbey Church was to rise, with the shrine as its chief glory—the shrine which took so many pilgrims, regal and otherwise, to this town, and upon which, in 1215, the Barons swore to obtain from John the ratification of Magna Charta. But, as I say, I find the authorities at variance over this monarch-saint and the vicissitudes of his corpse. It is even claimed that one of his arms is in the crypt of the Cathedral at Westminster. So may it be.

Meanwhile one goes to Bury for the fame of Samson and his Abbey, all in the past. How does Carlyle put it?—'Monks, Abbot, Hero-Worship, Government, obedience, Coeur-de-Lion, and St. Edmund's Shrine, vanish like Mirza's

Vision; and there is nothing left but a mutilated black Ruin amid green botanic expanses and oxen, sheep, and dilettanti pasturing in their places.'

THE PARASITES

HAVING said something about a good book, let me refer to the worst book I have ever read: worst not in a moral sense, although it is based on a theft, but stupidest, least worth doing. By a strange hand, and entitled *Pickwick Abroad*, it carries on at immense length the adventures of Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, Mr. Winkle (who has left his family behind), and Mr. Samuel Weller, on a foreign tour, chiefly in Paris. This would have been an impertinence even if it had been done after Dickens's death, but the date is 1839, when he was still in his vigour and when he himself might possibly have been contemplating some such sequel. What he thought of his rival, I have not been able to discover, there is no reference in the correspondence; but I should think that the publication was distinctly actionable. So far, however, from any injunction being sought or obtained, the work, which was first issued serially, was extended on two separate occasions, the final complete edition, containing more than 350,000 words, being dated 1864, when Dickens still had six years to live.

To one who holds imitation in abhorrence—unless done for the fun of the moment, by a Calverley, or a Knox, or a Beerbohm, or other witty parodist—the attitude of the author of this work, as expressed in the preface, is one which indicates that his offence must be dealt with rather by the psychologist than the moralist. For, breaking no technical law, he seems to have had no notion that in employing the sincerest form of flattery to a financial end he was doing anything incompatible with the behaviour of a gentleman. How he could have defended himself, had any one suggested that he was not playing the game, I cannot imagine, unless, like the Christ's Hospital boy in Leigh Hunt's reminiscences, who had put his master's desk to a use to which it was not intended, he would reply that 'he did not know it was forbidden'. It never occurred to him that he was picking a pocket, or that he was reaping in another man's fields. In order to illustrate such an unbelievable state of affairs, let us suppose that during John Galsworthy's life some bright young adventurer had brought out *The Forsytes in Paris,* or in the forthcoming publishing season we should see announced, by another than Mr. Wodehouse, *'Jeeves on the Continent.* But we cannot suppose: various forces, not wholly the Law of Libel and its applications, would forbid. Yet in the eighteen-thirties the attempt on the part of parasites to derive profitfrom Boz's creations had become an industry.

'Many other works in a similar strain/ says the preface to *Pickwick Abroad*, 'were issued at about the same time, but in spite of the announcement that they were to be completed in 20 numbers they died of pure inanition one after the other. A partial feeling of satisfaction and pride/ he continues, 'cannot therefore be blamed in the author of *Pickwick Abroad* when he contemplates the successful termination of his labours in the Twenty Parts to which no other imitator of the "immortal Boz" has yet attained/ To read this to-day, when literary property is better protected, is to be amazed ; but I personally am amazed, also, not by the liberty given to the parasites but by the parasites themselves, so willing and eager to batten on Boz and then considering themselves exonerated, or even justified, by calling him 'immortal'.

The book itself—this *Pickwick Abroad*—keeps as closely to the novel as is possible, but is never really within sight. As for real humour, there is not a glint. On every page Mr. Weller utters his comparisons, but they never score. 'A preshus queer set they appears to be,' is his remark on arriving at Calais, 'if von may judge by fust appearances, as the vite man said to hisself ven he got among the selvidges vich made a fire to eat him'; and very near the end, returned to England again, he says: 'There's sich a thing as bein' a little too tender at times, as the lady said

ven her husband volloped her for not lovin' him enough.'

There is the same pathetic effort to keep the other characters also true to type, Mr. Tupman being continually in love, Mr. Winkle and Mr. Snodgrass being constantly gullible, and Mr. Pickwick inquisitive, benevolent and diplomatic. In place of Jingle, there are several voluble impostors who would not have taken in an ordinary child, but who do very well out of the members of the Club.

The pattern of the original is in other ways closely followed, such as the interpolation of songs and stories, while among the illustrations, in the manner of Phiz, are scattered wood-cuts of the principal buildings in Paris, so that the reader may be instructed too. But nothing can save *Pickwick Abroad.* I cannot find out when the well-known saying that sequels are always a mistake was first uttered; but it may well have been called forth by this egregious work.

And who was the author of it? George William MacArthur Reynolds was born in 1814, and thus was two years younger than his victim. He was intended for the Army, but took instead to travel, settled in France, acquired a sound knowledge of its language and customs, translated Hugo, and wrote an excellent book on contemporary French writers. Having exchanged Paris for London, he established, in 1847, *Reynolds'$*

Miscellany, to which he contributed a series of melodramatic popular novels, in the manner of Harrison Ainsworth, but far inferior, of which his *Mysteries of London,* in direct imitation of Eugene Sue's *Mysteries of Paris,* was the most successful. Taking to politics, he became a Chartist, and was found to be a capable inflammatory speaker; and it was during this phase that he founded the London weekly paper that still bears his name.

We have seen that among certain writers of that day—a century ago—there was no recognition of a man's right to his own imagination. That is curious; but perhaps even more curious is the benevolent attitude of critics to such procedure. Critics can still be incapable men in a hurry, and they seem to have been so then. The *Sun* said that it rose from the first number, with the only regret that Charles Dickens himself had not written it. The *Age* warned Boz to look to his laurels. *Bell's Life* found the fun and quaintness of the great original admirably depicted. The *Weekly Chronicle* discerned an undiminished Spirit. The *Merthyr Guardian* was rewarded by much food for hearty laughter and much genuine fun and frolic. The *Glasgow Courier* considered that *Pickwick Abroad would* become as popular as Box's famous *Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club.* The *Sunday Times* alone seems to have disapproved. 'Mr. Reynolds,' it said, 'proceeds in his striking imitation of Boz. Would it were not so.'

THE *GUIDE* SUPREME

THERE lie before me, a loan from Mr. Forbes Sieveking, the two volumes of the *Paris Guide,* written by 'les Principaux Ecrivains de la France', which were issued in 1867 by Lacroix in connexion with the French International Exhibition of that year; and truly it is a noble, lavish and distinguished work, owing its homogeneity and distinction to Jean Jacques Auguste Bohn,, a Parisian journalist who was the son of one of Napoleon's most trusted soldiers. And what a team he brought together! The challenging Introduction is by Victor Hugo (a special friend of Bohne); the chapter on Old Paris is by Louis Blanc; the Institut chapter is by Ernest Renan; that on the Academic, by Sainte-Beuve; on the College de France, by Michelet; on the Musee du Louvre, by Theophile Gautier; on the Churches of Paris, by Viollet-le-Duc; on the Comedie-Fran,aise, by Emile Augier; on the Conservatoire de Musique, by Ambroise Thomas; on the Pantheon, by Edgar Quinet; on the Palais des Tuileries, by Arsene Houssaye; on Art in France, by Henri Taine; on the Ecole des Beaux-

Arts, by Dumas *pere;* and on Parisian First Nights, by Dumas *fils.* Think of the difficulties an English editor of to-day would have in assembling such a team for a book on London! And by less illustrious commentators there are articles, all careful and adequate, on the Academic des Sciences, the Jardin des Plantes, the Natural History Museum, the Observatory, the Sorbonne, the Printing-Works of Paris, the Bibliotheque, the Hotel de Ville, the factory of Sevres. What a book!—while at the end of the first volume the reader found plans of the theatres and the prices of seats.

Every contribution is interesting, every contributor is characteristic, and none are overweighted by the magnitude of the task. I wish I could quote long passages, particularly from the two Dumas', who are at their glorious best. At first sight it struck me as odd that to the great Alexandre should have been allotted the chapter on the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, but the reason quickly becomes plain. There is in that building the facade of the old Chateau at Anet, where Diane de Poitiers was installed; there is the hemicycle painted by Delaroche; and there is the Last Judgment at the Sixtine Chapel as copied by Sigalon; and Alexandre the great had things which he wanted to say about all. But, for fun, the best reading is Dumas *fils* on the Parisian first-nighters, by which he means the three-hundred

people who are never absent from a new play and whose verdict is right. Were a new edition of this extraordinary work planned, in which every article were revised, that by Dumas *fils* could be left almost as it is.

Should such an edition be planned, I fear that Victor Hugo would fare almost worst, because with characteristic daring he starts off with a prophecy. In the twentieth century, he predicted, France will be an amazing nation. It will be great, and nothing will prevent it from being free. It will be illustrious, rich, thoughtful, peaceable, and friendly to the rest of the world. It will have the sweet gravity of old age. . . . It will think of ancient martial glory only with bewilderment, finding difficulty in distinguishing between the general's purple and the butcher's red. A war between Italy and Germany, between England and Russia, between Prussia and France, will appear to the French nation of the twentieth century as impossible as, to-day, in 1867, a battle between Picardy and Burgundy.

'In the twentieth century (I continue to translate Hugo) circulation will take the place of isolation. Every one will be allowed to pass anywhere. The rivers that are now frontiers will be highways. To destroy a bridge will be as unthinkable as to decapitate a man. Gunpowder will be confined to blasting; saltpetre, instead of being used to pierce the human body, will be

used only to pierce mountains. . . . France in the twentieth century will be more than a nation, it will be a civilization; it will be better than a civilization, it will be a family. . . . Although the French will have Paris for their capital, but the country will no longer call itself France; it will call itself Europe. But only in the twentieth century will it call itself Europe; in the centuries after that this nation, even more transfigured, will be called Humanity.'

Thus the prophet Hugo, the brave old man! And why do I say brave? Because when he wrote this Introduction, throbbing with patriotic fervour and idealism, he was still an exile in the Channel Islands.

Volume I deals with 'La Ville' and its history; Volume II, covering 'La Vie', is also by the best writers and artists, and again we find Hugo, on this occasion on the Marais, the Place Royale (now the Place des Vosges) and the neighbourhood of his boyhood. As usual, he does not forget himself, 'It is time,' he says at the end, 'to stop. We are afraid we may, while following the subject, remember too much and mingle history with autobiography. There was under the arcades of the Place des Vosges a humble school where one learned to read and write. One's first impressions began there. It was there that one knew one's first joy and wore one's first mourning. It was there that one learned what life meant. Some-

times, leaving the old Hotel Guemen,e early in the morning, with a Virgil or Homer under his arm, he has first crossed the Place Royale on the way to the Pension Jauffert, in the Rue Culture-Sainte-Catherine, from there to the College Charlemagne in the Rue Saint-Antoine, not returning till the evening to the kindly family roof. . . . For himself,' he adds (this was written in 1866 when Hugo, exiled in Guernsey, was sixty-four), 'for himself he has with difficulty mastered his emotion in thinking, so far away, of that dear home in the Place des Vosges, where, a small boy, he lived among the great; where, only a child, he was treated as an equal by these already of the elect.' Again I say the brave Hugo, and how I wish I had time to translate more—in fact, to translate most of this fascinating book.

Volume I has 900 pages; this one has 1,100, together with maps, and more pictures by the best artists and engravers, among them Daubigny and Rops and Morin and Valloton and Lalanne and Monnier and Rosa Bonheur and the witty 'Cham', one of whose drawings, in 1866, shows two Americans, a Federal and a Confederate, on the top of a bus exchanging pistol shots; while there is a chapter on Americans in Paris by Andre Leo—the Americans whom he describes as 'the hardy and sublime inventors of the doctrine of "Go ahead".' The English in Paris are described, too, very shrewdly, by John Lemoine,

who blames them for not rightly mixing or losing their melancholy. 'An Englishman,' he says, 'is always first and foremost an Englishman; he carries England in him, on him, with him; he has no need of any other country. He is always at home; the atmosphere about him is of Great Britain and he owns the air.' The Englishman abroad, the author continues, 'carries not only England with him, but also his Church; all over the world he has the company of his Bible; whereas the Frenchman, a born Catholic, is a bad traveller, needing both the bell and the priest to help him to God'. That, however, was in 1866; it is doubtful if a new John Lemoine would write thus to-day. After some scornful words about English women in Paris, who wear straw hats in January and furs in summer, the critic offers the warning, 'But don't deceive yourselves,' adding that there is material in them for the best French treatment. 'Quelle belle construction! Quelles fermes assises!' Wait and see: 'the Englishwoman naturalized in Paris is perfection'.

We meet England again in Jules Janin's praise of Lord Spencer, in the article on Paris Bibliophiles. The proof of what a book-hunter can do is offered by Lord Spencer. 'He spent only a year in Rome, where he visited neither St. Peter's, the Colosseum, nor the Vatican. He occupied himself only with dealers, and, having at last found the *Martial* edited by Sweynheym and

Paumarty in 1743, he returned instantly to London without giving the Eternal City another thought. In the course of time his library became the most famous in London,' 'Don't laugh,' adds Janin: 'the love of books is a charming eccentricity: it is respectable, it is innocent, it proves that you have an honest soul, a contented mind. To love books is to renounce games, good eating, useless luxury, horse-racing, political ambition, the pains of love. In his library the bibliophile is King.'—So much for England; but we meet again with books in Theodore de Banville's article on the Latin Quarter.

For the most part the Paris set forth lovingly in this wonderful book is the Paris that still exists. There have not been so many changes, for the French are a conservative people, and underneath a little Parisian froth, such as foreigners see and contribute to, France goes on. Georges Sand on 'La Reverie de Paris', Jules Claretie on 'Les Places Publiques', Paul de Kock on 'Les Boulevards', Emil Deschamps on 'Versailles', Edmond About on 'Les Ruines', Charles Yriarte on 'Les Types Parisiens'—they are even now, nearly seventy years after, not so much out of date, while when Alphonse Karr, who knew all about gardens, asks for a covered flower-market for Paris, he is voicing a need still unfulfilled; and when at Pere La Chaise, Jules Noriac quotes the poet's line, 'Forgetfulness is a flower which grows

on tombs', we still sadly agree. But there is one chapter dealing only with what has disappeared that fills me with the sense of loss and grief for the vanished, and that is Andre Luchet's on 'Les Grandes Cuisines et les Grandes Caves'. Listen to the names of the best restaurants in the year of the great Paris Exposition of 1867: Cafe Riche, Maison Doree, Cafe Durand, Cafe Anglais, Pascal-Phillippe, Cafe Voisin, Les Provengaux, Magny, Le Cafe Foy, Brebant-Lachette, Roussel-Vefour, Tavernier-Bonvallet, Roussel-Bonnefoy, Maire, Peters, Le Moulin-Rouge, Guibert-Vefour, Philippe de Bercy, and Janodet. Where are they now, in 1936? I fancy that Peters is still there, but any other? I doubt it. Certainly the Cafe Anglais has gone, the Cafe Anglais, which I remember for its quietude, its distinction, its paternal attention, its thoughtful discriminating wine-waiter, its perfect food. I was there not long before it closed; but M. Luchet knew it in its heyday, when the proprietor was M. Delhomme, and M. Duglere was his chef and his collaborator, 'a man of illustrious taste, and at the same time an artist and a sympathetic connoisseur; such a man as only the Cafe Anglais can appreciate'. Before entering the restaurant, says M. Luchet, you might expect to be about to visit a bank. The simple hangings, the mahogany tables without a cloth, to be covered only by plates and dishes, suggested the 'eating house';

and one anticipated the odour of 'pickles'. But you were quickly and happily disillusioned. As for the cellar, it was a 'coquetterie', filling the underground spaces of the neighbourhood with excellent wine, particularly the wine of Bourgogne, which M. Delhomme liked so much that he was almost ready to deny the true quality to any other vintage. Alas, that was in 1866. What is the Cafe Anglais to-day? An office. What is the Cafe Riche? A cinema. What is Durand's? Cook's.

Before leaving this subject I should like to quote from a very interesting letter which my praises of the *Guide* brought forth :

'Can it be possible that the owner of these, delightful volumes found them on a Paris quay, where once on an autumn afternoon, when all the world was fair, and the cotton-wood trees that border the quay were russet and gold, and the very air was as rosy as the river Seine which reflected the colours of the setting sun, two volumes of the *Paris Guide* looked up at me from an old bookstall, and seemed to smile, as books sometimes will when they meet a friend? I bought them, paid 30 francs for them, and didn't haggle over the price.

'Within a week they were on shipboard with me, bound for America. I lent them to a journalist, a rabidly republican Dublin-Irishman, who, with the incongruity of his race, longed for Lon-

don as for a promised land. He had spent his youth in Paris, and now, chained to near prosperity and a New York "desk", supervised sports and "comics" and with tongue in cheek solemnly ordered five-point heads for stories of crime and scandal. The *Paris Guide* delighted him and intensified his longing to be poor and jobless again—and free! He died after a three-days' illness—for even Death moves swiftly in hectic, high-stepping New York—and the *Paris Guide* returned to me, and with me to Paris.

'One day, about two and a half years ago, when lowering clouds over the river Seine brought threat of snow, and the cotton-wood trees were stark and bare, their long slim fingers pointing almost accusingly toward Heaven, a woman, tremulous and faint with hunger, carried the *Paris Guides* again to the quay, and noticed for the first time how heavy they were. She sold the two volumes for three francs; she had held them out until the very last. The book vendor was reluctant to take them. "Too old," he said; "Paris has changed. Who wants a guide of 1867?" Even the bold signature of Victor Hugo and the pages of autographs did not impress him.

'Some one had said that Paris is Paris because so many have spent their happiest days here. I sometimes think that Paris is Paris, with its indefinable charm and its mellowed bouquet, because so many have struggled and suffered—

and hoped—here. It is in the bruising, like the bruising of a flower, that a gallant spirit yields its *parfum.*

'These two volumes which you describe compress within their mottled covers the story of Paris by men best qualified to tell it. The record of the wanderings of these well-thumbed books would make a very human document,'

The letter was signed 'The woman who sold the *Guides'*

CUPID'S DEPUTY

I ONCE put forward as a supreme example of a man who had no sense of humour, the author of a book of etiquette. But after looking at other kindred works, I am inclined to think that to be without any sense of humour is essential to the authors of them all. Could they laugh, they would be writing something else. 'Ah,' but you say, 'is it not possible that they were merely suppressing their true nature in order to make a little money?' I doubt it. Having read these books, I am convinced that they are genuine products of an inability to laugh. Somewhere, if they were not genuine, the smile would be evident; but they never relax.

Take, for instance, the book that lies before me, *The Lover's Letter-Writer.* It has no date, but internal evidence suggests that it was prepared for the lovers—if such staid and grammatical people can be so called—of the middle of the last century. So little, however, does human nature alter, and so little fun have those who take the pen to propose, to accept or to refuse, that this volume is still on sale, and no doubt there are

other volumes like it. The world changes only on the top, and not much there.

Most of our romantic epistolary needs are here catered for, even if the language is that rather of Dr. Johnson than of Eros. Thus, there are letters, always with favourable and unfavourable replies, from a Gentleman to a Lady whom he has Seen but Once; from a Gentleman to a Lady Disclosing a Passion he has Long Felt *but* hitherto Concealed; and every one knows that at this moment Gentlemen in these positions are nursing their emotions and wondering how they ought to express them. Well, here are models, and, to add verisimilitude, every one in this book writes from a definite address: a note of realism that I personally find very persuasive. Thus the Gentleman who has seen the Lady but Once writes from Mordan Grove, and the second Gentleman from Wimbledon.

Other invaluable letters are from a Gentleman (29, Percival Street) to the Father of a young Lady to whom he proposes to pay his addresses (for addresses are, although you might not think it, still paid); from a Gentleman (42, St. Margaret's Square) to the Mother of a young Lady whose hand he Solicits (for hands, although you might not think it, are still solicited); from a Gentleman (Brandon Circus) to a Lady by whom he has been Previously Rejected; from a Widower (10, Playford Square) to a Widow, with Proposals of

Marriage; and from a Gentleman advanced in years (Whitmore Park) to a Young Lady. And here I may say that the Young Lady (5, Beaumont Terrace) took eight days to make up her mind, whereas the one (44, Wyndham Street) who said no took only three.

There are also, in addition to the necessary replies, letters from Ladies themselves, such as from a Lady (Worthing) to a Gentleman, enclosing her Portrait; from a Young Lady in the Country (Avon) to her lover in London; from a Lady (West Bank) to a Gentleman who had proposed a hasty marriage; from a Lady (Clifton) to a Negligent Correspondent, and from a Lady (Baxter Terrace) accusing her Lover of Inconstancy. The ground, you see, is pretty well covered.

Where Baxter Terrace is, we are left to guess, but a Gentleman who has suffered a Reverse of Fortune boldly dates from Stockport. Need I add that this unforeseen visitation had resulted from no imprudence or fault of his ? 'My confidence,' he writes, in perfect if stilted English, 'has been abused, and my trust betrayed, in a quarter where I had least right to look for treachery; dishonesty has too long and successfully worn a specious mask, and the ground upon which my hopes were built has been sapped by insidious and designing hands,' Alas for Stockport! Unfortunately, as there is no reply to this, we must reluctantly assume that the Lady whom he addressed was not

sympathetic. And now let me quote the letter with which the Lady at Worthing accompanies the gift of her Portrait to the Gentleman at 6, Montagu Street, London, and his ,delighted reply; for I feel sure that such offerings are still being made. This is the Lady's letter, and I would have wagered any money that she would employ the phrase 'unworthy self:—

In answer to your repeated requests that I would send you my portrait, I have at length been induced to enclose the semblance of my unworthy self. If, as you have often assured me, the possession of so insignificant a token will afford you happiness, I trust that in moments of bitterness and trial one glance of the counterfeit will suffice to assure you that the original sympathizes with you; and when you are prospering you may detect in these lineaments an expression of kindred pleasure and gratification suggestive of the regard felt for you by

Yours ever truly,

——.

And this is the acknowledgement, such as any Gentleman would make:

Believe me that this dear resemblance of yourself shall no more leave my possession than shall your memory be effaced from my heart. I shall regard it as my talisman, deriving from its smiles approbation and encouragement in the struggles of life, and drawing from that sweet, feeling expression which the limner has so faithfully reproduced, sympathy with suffering, and consolation in sorrow.

May the happy day be not far distant which will give to me the original of this fair image, is the prayer of

Your devoted and affectionate Admirer,

So complete is the manual that there are specimen letters from a Tradesman (writing from High Street), from a Professional Man (Abbot's Walk), and from a Military Officer ordered on Foreign Service (the Curragh); but all have this in common, and in accordance with the title, that they hope for a Partner for Life. The Tradesman is convinced that such is the prosperity of his business in the High Street, extending and increasing season by season, that it affords a reasonable prospect of his being able, in the course of a few years, to retire upon an independence; the Young Professional Man is certain that his upward stormy path will be rendered less steep and galling to the tread when there is a fair hand to pluck forth the briars and strew flowers on the pathway; while the Military Officer ordered on Foreign Service, after announcing that he will be abroad only for two years, adds, 'with secret delight I shall watch every sunset, recording, as it will, another period of Expatriation passed, another day journeying nearer to you'. 'Dare I,' he continues, 'ask you to keep me in your memory during that long dreary interval?' Thus Military Officers at the Curragh write in this book. Do they, in real life, use such formal phrases, or may not such terms as 'Old Fruit' wander into their correspondence? It is not for me to say.

FORTY-ONE YEARS OFF

WE are all only too familiar with manuals of behaviour of a century and more ago which humorous sociologists reprint for our entertainment. 'Rummy pedantic old things, those great-grandmothers and great-grandfathers of ours!' we say as we read. 'Fancy putting up with instructions like those!' But a code of conduct as commended to the girls of a school not a hundred miles from London as recently as 1895, which has just been shown to me, proves that for the purpose of demoding an almost mushroom period and of endowing it with an antiquated air, events can be as powerful as the passage of time. For in the matter of time, 1895 is nothing. Just forty-one years ago. But in those forty-one years the telephone has spread, motor-cars have come in, the movies have come in, the talkies have come in, universal suffrage has come in, the Great War has been fought and very largely forgotten, road-houses have come in, jazz has come in, [4]O.K.' has come in, bathing-pools have come in, crime fiction has come in, a women's cricket team has toured Australia, and smoking is

universal. That is why some of these rules, gentle and sensible in 1895, look to-day so venerable and out of date that they might have been drawn up a century before.

It was apparently worth while pointing out, in 1895, that in the corridors and on the stairs a girl should be 'quiet'; that in the library she should choose the book that will 'instruct rather than amuse'; that in the bedroom she would be 'silent while dressing'; that she should there 'let devotion precede other duties', and in bed 'commune with her own heart and be still'. For behaviour in the library there is one rule that I like very much. 'Criticisms,' it runs, 'however valuable, not to be written in the books. Freehand sketches to be avoided,' 'However valuable' is excellent. 'It is a mark of refinement,' the section ends, 'to be able to read a book without injuring it.'

In 1895 the following sententiae on daily life were worth setting forth:

MEALS

Never allow yourself to be hurried.
Do not drink with your mouth full.
Make no allusion whatever to health.

WALKS

No Lady ever speaks in a loud voice or laughs loudly when out of doors.

GARDEN

Do not loiter about aimlessly; be energetic even in recreation.

SUNDAYS

Conversation may be cheerful and -pleasant[1]*, but not frivolous.*

PERSONAL

Talk of things rather than of persons.

It is better to intend to be courteous than merely not to intend to be rude.

Other times, other manners; and it is possible that a satisfactory wife may still be obtained by a young man, although she was at a school where she sang or whistled on the stairs; chose Dornford Yates rather than Thomas a Kempis; brushed her hair before praying; chattered while dressing and in bed; ate too quickly; drank with her mouth full; talked about her indigestion; shouted and laughed loudly out of doors; loafed by the rose-beds; often forgot it was Sunday; discussed people rather than things and rarely preferred justness to malice.

No one is perfect, and, as I say, a young man of the moment may find his wife adequate, even though she breaks all the 1895 rules. But when it comes to writing letters, it seems to me that the advice drawn up by this seaside school (now a hundred years old) so long ago, yet still handed out to every girl at letter-writing time, could not be improved.

All that we say in writing must be true, useful and kind.

TRUE.—*Stating facts without adding or withholding; describing feelings without exaggeration.*

USEFUL.—*Looking well to our motives: we should be clear why we state a fact, and why and how we describe our feelings. Our letters must influence.*

KIND.—*Placing ourselves in the position of our correspondent, in order that we please and benefit; avoiding carelessness of thought, using the best words, expressing them in the best writing.*

When we sit down to write letters we should have at hand dictionary, blotting-paper, and the last letters from home.

The home letter should be written first.

We should give all the "pleasure we can by our letters.

See that the address and signature are legible.

Since personality is taken for granted, I fail to see anything missing there. But I fancy that many of the letters now written are not so long as they should be, or used to be, and that the superior advantages of the telephone are often in the writers' minds.

ROCAMADOUR AND PERPIGNAN

IN the minds of us all there are place-names that shine like a star. Every one has such fancies, such Meccas-in-the-air, which probably should remain in the air; and would do so, were we not so fearful of loss. America is full of them, old Indian names, as a rule, such as Narragansett Bay. And you find them all over the world. Valparaiso, for example: how I have desired to go to Valparaiso, and not only since I saw Whistler's blue nocturnes painted there, but long before. Valparaiso, however, remains for me in the air. Like Narragansett Bay, it is out of reach, a matter only of beautiful sound.

Three such names in my own experience have been Caerleon in England, and Carcassonne and Rocamadour in France; and I wish I had seen none of them, for the glamour has gone. The last of the three—Rocamadour, whose syllables have been haunting me for years—I saw during a recent summer, and as it chanced to be a day of pilgrimage, I must now find another lovely word and keep it sacredly out of reach. For I was not in luck. I should have known about the festival day

and kept away; since Rocamadour overwhelmed by pilgrims is like Mont St. Michel overwhelmed by trippers. These shrines are, in fact, too much alike; almost exactly alike, except that Rocamadour is inland and Mont St. Michel rises from the sea. They are equally steep; they are equally high; there are the same persistent shopkeepers on their steps; the same dealers in picture-postcards, in relics and in food.

But they are different in the circumstance that whereas Mont St. Michel, appearing with amazing unreality in the bay, is seen many miles away, Rocamadour is hidden. As indeed you come from St. Cere, the usual road route, Rocamadour is bewilderingly hidden; bursting on you round a bend: first an unsuspected valley, and then a lofty perpendicular cliff to which hotels and residences and churches cling, with a castle incredibly perched on the distant top.

Castles on the distant top are, indeed, a peculiarity of this craggy romantic district, so rich in reminders of the mighty over-lords and humble servitors of those feudal times. St. *C6r6* itself has two such structures, in addition to the Renaissance Chateau de Montal, now filled again with its own furniture, which you pass on the way to Rocamadour and may visit. But all the way along the valley between Cahors and St. Cere there are castles and fortified farmhouses, to recall the days of insecurity.

According both to my *Book of Saints,* 1921, compiled by the Benedictine Monks of St. Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate, and to the inscription at Rocamadour itself, there is considerable indecision as to St. Amadour and his performances. All are agreed that here is a rock and an exhausting one; all are agreed that Amadour was a saint, and it is common knowledge that one of his seven chapels, which the pious visit, where I found a thousand candles burning, has performed countless miracles, to which the many tablets outside testify; but as to St. Amadour himself, the stories differ. In the *Book of Saints* he is called St. Amater, with the date August 2Oth: 'supposed to have been the first Christian to lead the hermit's life in Gaul'. But where he led it, is not sufficiently explained, nor is there a word about his famous abode. We next read that 'his body, in the year 1126, was found to be incorrupt and flexible as when first laid in the tomb'; but near his own crypt a tomb is shown where, in 1166, was discovered 'parfaitement conserve', the body of Zach,e, Tami de St. Amadour'.

Should hermits have friends? That is one question. And another is, Is there not some confusion here? At any rate, the Benedictine Monks do not refer to the similarity, and possibly more, between the exhumations, forty years apart, of hermit and friend, supernaturally intact. As for the supernatural intactness, this is a peculiarity on

which the Church of Rome seems to set great store, as we know also from the accounts of the body of St. Edmund when it was moved from its loculus by Abbot Samson, a hundred years after the king and martyr's death. You find at Rome that the body of St. Cecilia had also retained its pristine freshness; but such marvels are of the past. The body of St. Amadour's friend, for example, is not visible, but on the other side of a grating it has been reproduced, with a flowing beard, and through this grating the elect fling coins. I saw quantities there, mostly of the denomination that has a small hole in the middle, but francs too: quite a comfortable sum.

There must, however, have been a St. Amadour, who was sufficiently far-sighted to make his hermitage in this wonderful cliff and give his name to it, and who established its activities; but when I was there, during his fete, which lasts for a fortnight, I found myself curiously alien among so many splendid bishops and archbishops and their ecclesiastical followers. Peeping into the largest of the chapels, I watched them in their stalls, plumply settled, while a preacher on high told us, in rich nasal modulation, of the glories of religion. But for the support of a bearded beggar at the foot of the staircase to the chapels, who smoked a pipe and kept his hat on and proffered candles, I should not have dared to inflict my

presence on such sanctity. He comforted me as a confederate.

It is odd how mature one has to be before learning the truth of the maxim that growth is more desirable than fruition; that, as the Arabs say, it is better to travel hopefully than to arrive; that the journey is more than the end. But Rocamadour I had to see, and to find it a teeming mart overrun by humanity: and Carcassonne I had to see, and to find medievalism restored by Viollet-le-Duc, with a hotel in its midst supplied with English and American papers and a cinema photographer taking shots of raddled performers on the ramparts; and Caerleon I had to see, with all its half-dug holes, and notices set up by excavators. Is it not possible that the wise man sits at home with the sweet syllables ringing in his head and does nothing? Yet perhaps I am glad I am not wise.

As for Rocamadour—is not the word lovely?—you must not go there on a day of pilgrimage. Keep it as a beautiful secret. In the depths of winter, perhaps, when the hotel touts are silent, and the shops are shut, and no priests and devotees throng the steps, there may be romance and mystery, and you and the jackdaws can share the heights alone. But better cherish it as the unattainable. Rocamadour! Rocamadour!

I might perhaps add Perpignan as another of those French towns with a delectable promise that

is never quite fulfilled. Not, however, that this and Rocamadour are at all similar, for Perpignan, although under the dominance of the Pyrenees, and with a gigantic citadel on its own summit, is not a precipitous religious centre but a commercial border town, near enough to the Mediterranean to eat many and various fish, and near enough to Spain for the girls to be dark and sparkling and for the police to be particular about strangers.

I cannot remember a community more self-sufficing, for Perpignan seems to have everything. Although unconscious, as I walked the streets, of any particular suggestion of learning, this little town has no fewer than nineteen schools, each of which is enumerated on the local map. I copy them as they occur: College de Garfons, College de Filles, Ecole Nationale de Garfons, Ecole Nationale de Filles, Ecole Superieure de Garcons, Groupe Scolaire, Ecole J. J. Rousseau, Ecole Madame de Sevigne, Ecole Florian, Ecole Racine, Ecole Paul Bert, Ecole Lavoisier, Ecole La Fontaine, Ecole Michelet, Ecole Voltaire, Ecole Jeanne Hachette, Ecole Lakanal, Ecole Lamartine, Ecole Pasteur. There are also an observatory, a cathedral with an openwork belfry, six other churches, a Protestant Temple, seven barracks, an arsenal, two theatres, one of them municipal, and two cinemas. Not bad for a population of 50,000!

France, as we all know, is careful to use her

streets as reminders of her illustrious sons. Everywhere, all over the fair land, north, south, east and west, there are Rues Gambetta, Rues Victor Hugo, Rues Emile Zola, and Rues Marechal Joffre, while, not so long ago, in Paris, the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne was renamed in a night the Avenue Foch. Perpignan is no exception. Perpignan celebrates them all, but differs from most of the other myriad French towns in having not only a Rue Jean Jaures, after one who was more honoured after his assassination than before it, but a bust of that firebrand, too.

Rues Arago are also well distributed over the country, but at Perpignan you find both a Rue and a Place named after the astronomer; and there is reason, for he was born at the village of Estagal, close by. His statue, in the centre of his Place, is a noble tribute to a great man. He stands there, on the summit, surrounded by mathematical instruments, while about the base are three reliefs, showing him, in one, at his early experiments, gracefully reclining on his side; and again when fame came to him, still reclining, with learned professors looking on; and lastly, undefeatedly studious, in his armchair. He died in 1853, aged sixty-seven.

Although Dominique Francois Jean Arago was a native only of Estagal, Hyacinthe Rigaud, the painter, Perpignan's other star, was born actually in the town, in 1659, and he, too, has his

Place and his Rue and his statue, while in the Musee you may, if the custodian is agreeable, see pictures from his easel, as well as drawings by Gavarni, who came also from the Pyrenees. But you know what French provincial museums are—more honoured in the breach than the observance, with the most capricious times of opening. Some day there should be an inquiry into France's multitudinous Musees, which would include a census of attendance and perhaps some humanizing reconstruction. It is badly needed. I personally rarely fail to find the Musee, see the concierge, and do my best to enter; but I have been repulsed as often as I have succeeded, and when I have won the pass I have found myself the only living being in a dead world where heating was never heard of. I have even been in the Musee at Agen, where there are pictures reputed to be by Goya. France is as keen to establish a museum as to name and re-name her streets after famous men; but having established the museum—never very cordial and worse when there are Roman remains—she considers her duty done.

'East, west, home's best,' Perhaps. None the less, if I had not gone to Perpignan, thus fulfilling a desire long entertained, I should not have seen a very remarkable and memorable thing. And I shall always remember Perpignan for it. When leaving, at about half-past two, for Foix, as I passed a crowd of men on their way to a foot-

ball match, there was suddenly a fracas, and one of them clenched his fists and hit another full in the face. This was the first time, in France, after many, many years, that I had ever seen threats turned into a blow.

JACK THE PERUSER

ONCE again I have to express surprise and satisfaction at the below-the-surface ameliorative activities that are always proceeding in this country. The prominent advertised good works we know all about—the Hospitals, the Red Cross, the Soup-kitchens, the National Theatre, the Lifeboats; but how many people have ever had their attention drawn to the Ocean Library Service of the British Sailors' Society? Not I, until the other day, when a copy of its periodical, called *Chart and Compass,* came my way; but now my mind is full of it.

Ever since I was eleven or twelve and made the acquaintance of a Sussex vicar who told me that after having read *Rare Bits,* a weekly paper new at that time and now defunct, he sent it to a certain lightship—ever since then I have had thoughts of the needs of lightship-keepers, out there, remote and uneasy, but I do not remember doing, as I should, anything to render their lives less lonely. And now I find that there is, and has been for a long while, an organization for that very purpose. Wireless, of course, must have

made a great difference; but these men want to read too, and the Ocean Library Service provides them with books, provides also with books the keepers of lighthouses and the crews of merchant vessels, and, incredible as it may sound, has been doing something of the kind ever since 1818.

Not, however, till 1924 was the supply regularized, and certainly when I was in a tramp steamer in the Mediterranean in 1889 there was no such amenity, for all the books on board were supplied by me, the library consisting of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall,* in one gigantic, double-column volume bought at Palermo, and a variety of novels in the Tauchnitz series, described by the Captain as 'Tonches'. 'Is there another of them Tonches you can spare?' he used to ask. But to-day—to-day there would be a box of thirty books at his disposal; for each Ocean Library consists of twenty-eight volumes, in addition to a Bible and an Encyclopedia, classified thus: Theology I, biography I, science I, essays I, travel I, history I, poetry I, education and technical I, standard fiction 5, current fiction 15; and here is a specimen Ocean Library, packed in a case that serves also as bookshelves: Holy Bible, Encyclopedia, *English Critical Essays, A Ray of Light,* Ainsworth's *Old Saint Paul's,* Allan's *The Masked Stranger,* Beach's *Winds of Chance,* Belloc's *French Resolution,* Bennett's *The Card,* Conrad's *Youth,* Coppleston's *The Treasure of Golden Gap,* Dumas's

Chicot the Jester, Farnol's *The Definite Object*, Gibbs's *Master of Life*, Gordon's *Factory on the Cliff*, Gregory's *Making of the Earth*, Haggard's *Queen of Shebas Ring*, Ian Hay's *The Middle Watch*, Jepson's *The Death Gong*, Raymond's *Morris in the Dance*, Sabatini's *Bellarion*, Salmon's *All About Photography*, Service's *Rhymes of a Rolling Stone*, Short's *William Blake*, Mrs. Alec Tweedie's *An Adventurous Journey*, Edgar Wallace's *Law of the Four Just Men*, H. G. Wells's *War in the Air*, Weyman's *Wild Geese*, Wister's *The Virginian*, and P. G. Wodehouse's *A Gentleman of Leisure*.

With each library goes a request for criticism, and this, favourable or unfavourable, is rarely withheld. Jack's the boy for work, Jack's the boy for play, Jack's the lad when girls are sad to kiss their tears away; true, but Jack is also the lad, when he has done with a book, to say what he thinks of it. Here are some typical comments, the favourable specimens first: 'Well worth reading'; 'Gripping'; 'Well worth loss of sleep'; 'Jolly good'; 'Quite decent' (this encomium must be getting rare); 'Delightfully uncanny' (I suspect this reader of having gone aboard under false pretences); 'Topping'; and 'Not too bad'. And here is Jack in a destructive mood: 'Hopeless'; 'Nothing to boast about'; 'Unadulterated rubbish'; 'Trash'; 'Rotten'; [4]'No good' (not, I hope, of *The Card*, for it was Arnold Bennett's favourite depreciatory phrase, lifting his

head and closing his eyes to say it, 'No good', with complete finality); 'Too drawn out—interest lost' (here we find the intelligentsia again); 'Leaves one in mid-air' and, without any diluting qualification, 'Dry'. Lastly there is this comment against a certain work: 'The Captain's and Fourth Mate's opinions differ,' a statement which is almost a nautical novel in itself. For Mr. Masefield, I think.

Popular authors, then, must not suppose, because their works go to readers who might be expected to welcome any form of print, that they are not as likely to come under the microscope as when perused under pleasanter conditions. 'Any book in a storm' is by no means Jack's motto, and particularly, the report before me remarks, when the story is a story of the sea. In another list, for example, I find Mr. Jacobs's *Many Cargoes,* and wonder what his fate was. In this other list, by the way, there are signs of no little imagination on the part of the librarian, for it includes a work on postage stamps, the *Essays of Elia,* Chaucer complete, and *The Diary of a Nobody.* How I should like to be secreted in, say, the lee scuppers, when the Footer family was being minutely discussed!

The books are changed among the ships at regular intervals, new ones being from time to time added; and if any one reading these words has a fiver to spare, I suggest (although this is not

a begging appeal) that it be sent to the British Sailors' Society at 32A, West India Dock Road, E.I4 (just where such headquarters ought to be), because a fiver provides a box of thirty books and starts it on its career, while for a hundred pounds an Ocean Library is endowed for ever.

In addition to the curt comments of which I have spoken, there is also, for the secretary, a constant stream of letters from readers, whether on lightships, tramp steamers, or in lighthouses, recording opinions, and asking for information, as well as expressing gratitude. One writer, for example, indicates the catholicity of crews when he says that the greatest favourites among the authors in the last box are Jeffery Farnol, Edgar Wallace, 'Sapper', Oliver Goldsmith and Thomas Moore. Another writer expresses a wish for a copy of a book, unknown to me, entitled *The Human Hair Trade of Europe*; while a third, a captain, says how grateful he is that an 'Encyclopedia' is on board, as a timely and fortunate reference to its pages, to decide whether or not England is in Europe, probably averted a mutiny.

TWO FAMOUS SONGS

AT a public gathering the other evening, where the full text of the National Anthem was sung, I found myself lagging far behind. So tuneless am I that I made, as usual, no effort to join in the actual singing, but it was galling not to know, in the second and third stanzas, what came next. Thinking about this defection, I realized that I was equally unaware of the full text of 'Home, Sweet Home', and inquiry here and there proves that I am by no means solitary in this ignorance. Every one knows (except, of course, the unhappy French, who, we hear so often, can say only 'chez') the words 'be it ever so humble, there's no place like home'; but who can finish it? And who knows its story?

Having been industrious, I can supply all the information. The song was written by an American named John Howard Payne, and introduced as a lyric in an operetta called *Clari,* produced at Covent Garden on May 8th, 1823, and its music was composed by Henry, afterwards Sir Henry, Bishop. The music is known to all; here, I fear, are the words:

'Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home!
A charm from the skies seems to hallow us there,
Which, seek thro' the world, is ne'er met with elsewhere.
Home! Home! Sweet, sweet home!
There's no place like home!
There's no place like home!

An exile from home, splendour dazzles in vain.
Oh! give me my lowly thatch'd cottage again;
The birds singing gaily that came at my call,
Give me them with the peace of mind dearer than all.
Home! Home! Sweet, sweet home!
There's no place like home!
There's no place like home!

'All the information', I said; but I was being a little free. According to musical critics, Sir Henry Bishop was capable of 'conveyance', and there are similar earlier airs; while one literary critic at any rate—Sir E. Rimbault Dibdin—has found some lines by his relative Charles Dibdin, the song writer, not unlike Payne's confection, but far more vigorous. Under the title 'Home's Home', Charles Dibdin published, in 1794, a ditty with the following refrain:

The good that we wish for mayn't match what we've got,
[Their minds are their kingdom, who're pleased with their lot;
And to whatever place discontented folk roam,
At last they'll be forced to say this of their home:
Our friends are as true, and our wives are as comely,
And, damn it! home's home, be it ever so homely.

Apart altogether from Payne's famous song, which hardly bears print, I have long had an inter-

est in the writer, as a friend and correspondent of Charles Lamb. It was in the summer of 1822 that they met, when Lamb was staying in Paris at the invitation of James Kenney, the dramatist, and Payne, then aged thirty, was there too, and was instrumental in bringing together Lamb and Talma, the tragedian. 'You are a rogue, you are a great rogue,' said Talma, after Lamb had made one of his best or worst puns. Payne, who was Lamb's only direct link with America, a country that never bulked largely in his thoughts, at that time was working very hard at play-writing, and Lamb was giving him introductions to London managers, and, as always, doing his best to help. More than one of Lamb's letters recall with gusto memories of the Paris adventure. 'Do you remember', he writes to Payne, 'a Blue-Silk Girl (English) at the Luxembourg, that did not much seem to attend to the Pictures, who fell in love with you, and whom I fell in love with—an inquisitive, prying, curious Beauty—where is she?'

Payne, who seems to have been an ill-starred man, did not carry enough guns for dramatic success, and therefore, like so many of his gifted countrymen, was pleased to accept a consulship, even though far from the native land he professed to love so well. Howells in Venice and Hawthorne in Liverpool come instantly to mind. For John Howard Payne the place of Consular exile was Tunis, where he lived for several years, dying

in 1852, and where, on a visit to that city, I went to find his grave.

Personally I should dislike either to live or die in Tunis, which is draughty and noisy and uncomfortable. Furthermore, it is inhabited chiefly by Arabs, Jews, Italians, and by the kind of Frenchman who is willing to be expatriated. In summer it must be too hot; in winter it can be very cold, according to the snow on the mountains and the direction of the wind. But it has in the old Arab town some beautiful doors and the best green paint and best whitewash I have ever seen; and to loiter in the souks, or Arab shops, is to have the *Arabian Nights* brought to life; while there is an old palace in the outskirts, called El Bardo, where the Roman past is revived, and where you may imagine the Bey as he still sits in state and administers justice. The large throne-room is shown by an aged Arab with the profoundest admiration for a ruler who has a bad carpet thirty yards square and around the room no fewer than twelve florid clocks. There are also, on the walls, votive portraits of the principal rulers of the world in the middle of the last century, mostly indifferent oils, although Queen Victoria is engraved and Louis Philippe worked in coloured wools.

John Howard Payne's grave—or rather memorial—is in the churchyard of St. George's, in the old town, where many consuls lie. He was

buried there in 1852, but some thirty years later his remains were carried to America for reinterment at Washington, his native town: taken 'home', let us say. 'Then be content, poor heart,' is inscribed on the stone.

As to our National Anthem, the historian cannot be so precise; for there is more than one claimant both to music and words. In its present form it was first printed in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for October, 1745, when George II was King. One school of musical critics give the composition, very appropriately, to an Elizabethan composer named John Bull; another to Henry Carey, who sang it in 1740 as his own; and a third to James Oswald, a Scotchman. Who shall decide when Mus. Docs, disagree?

With the words under my eyes I am bound to express the opinion that still another effort should be made to improve them, or that certain new versions which I seem to remember reading a few years ago (was there not one by Arthur Christopher Benson?) should be examined again. Some revision is essential if we are to sing 'God Save the King' in full. Look at the second verse:

O Lord our God, arise,
Scatter his Enemies,
And make them fall.
Confound their Politics,
Frustrate their knavish tricks,
On Thee our hopes we fix,
O save us all.

'On Thee our hopes we fix.' What a line! And in the third verse we have 'cause' and 'voice' as rhymes. The music is beyond alteration, but now that we have a new King, to be crowned in 1937, I should like to think that modern poets are not too decrepit.

LONDON TO BISKRA

THE flight from London (as, for convenience, Croydon is called) to Tunis (as Carthage is called) by way of Paris (as Le Bourget is called) is punctuated by descents of half an hour apiece, the first being at Le Bourget, the second at Lyon, and the last at Ajaccio, while a whole night must be spent at Marseilles. This southern city, by the way, is distant even farther from its airport, at Marignan, than London from Croydon and Paris from Le Bourget, the journey there and back being made on a winding, rocky road in a bus driven with fury by a cheerful Marseillais whose faith in the gods of chance is profounder than mine. And hooting, hooting all the way.

The first descent, at le Bourget, is welcome, for there is a well-appointed restaurant waiting; but the Lyon buffet is less ready for the visitant from the sky, although it is there for no other purpose than to expect him and nourish him. At Marignan there are no refreshments at all, so that, in spite of the hazards on the way, one is not sorry that the bus to Marseilles is urged forward at such

a pace. For Marseilles eats well, although why there is a prejudice in that city against bouillabaisse as an evening dish, I cannot explain; but there is. Isnard, for example, which, still flourishing, was a famous house in the time of Edmond Dantes and is mentioned in *Monte* Cristo, serves bouillabaisse only at lunch; and at the Brasserie de Verdun, where the connoisseurs now go, if you want this steaming aquarium for dinner, you must order it in advance.

No form of aviation inspires in me any feeling of confidence or any anticipation of longevity, but when at Marignan, in the chill dawn next morning, I saw the flying boat that was to negotiate the Mediterranean, ascended a ladder to reach its roof, and then, entering a manhole, descended another ladder to gain the interior, all hope fled. There is, when one is in reach of an honest aeroplane door, a faint illusion of security; there is none when one is battened down like this and when the start is made through waves of spray. We had six passengers and two operatives, and if these operatives, both of them, had not been deep in the Marseilles morning papers, I do not think I could have borne it. But, peering over the shoulder of the one nearest me and watching his concentration in a serial entitled *Souvenirs de Jo aux cheveux blancs*, I was restored. No man as near death as I was feeling, could, I reasoned, be absorbed by such trifles; so that soon I, too,

was reading a detective story and my fears were gone. White-haired Jo had saved me.

Looking up from my novel, some hour and a half later, I found that we were descending on the harbour of Ajaccio; but, deeming half an hour there insufficient for any exhaustive study of Napoleon's childhood, I made at once for the buffet, where the pilot and his observer immediately sat down to a casserole of ragout, while the rest of us were offered only eggs, cold meat, and coffee without milk. I shall now always think of Ajaccio as a hillside of sunbaked villas, somebody's birthplace, and the spot where one cannot get milk.

The half-hour being accomplished and the operatives replete, we were again boxed up in this frightening machine for the last lap, to Tunis, and this time, inured to the risks, or fatalistically accepting them, I made an effort to see what I could through the little porthole; and marvelled at the rocky consistency and snow-clad heights of Sardinia, rejoicing to think that I had not to dwell there. And so to my detective again, and to Afric's sunny shore, which we reached surprisingly and gratifyingly soon, because the clocks in Tunisia (but not in Algeria or Morocco) conform to mid-European time and are an hour in advance of ours.

And there, just beyond the landing-place for aeroplanes, were the ruins of the once mighty Carthage; and there on the hill was the cathedral

of St. Louis, King of France, who died here in 1270 while leading a crusade against the city in which I had booked rooms.

Having already spoken of Tunis, we come now to the Garden of Allah, at Biskra.

I remember that when, once, in Port Said, a street dealer addressed me heartily as Sir Harry Lauder, I was perplexed as to a reply. To accept the honour, or sternly to repudiate it, would be equally unfair to Bonnie Scotland's famous singer, so I merely passed on and said I wasn't wanting anything of that kind to-day. Not, however, that that made any difference to the pedlar, who walked or ran by my side till I embarked for the ship, entreating me, either as Sir Thomas Lipton or Mr. Lloyd George, or both, to patronize him. When, however, in Biskra, a small brown boy in a fez walked or ran beside me, calling me Mr. Hichens, I thought it time to protest. 'Me no Mr. Hichens,' I assured him in perfect Arabic. It did not depress him. He continued by my side, merely remarking, as he lit the desert with his teeth, that I was going the wrong way for the Garden of Allah.

The few shops that Biskra possesses contain picture-postcards of the Garden of Allah, while behind lock and key in the hotels there are copies of the famous novel of that name, and most of whatever population of Biskra there may be, which includes tailors on the sidewalk at their sewing-

machines, hasten to suggest to the stranger that the Garden of Allah should be at once visited in their company. Why they also call you Mr. Hichens is a mystery, for on the face of it he is the one person who, by this time, would like to avoid the Garden and not be there.

As my hotel was only a few yards distant, and as the normal gardens of Biskra consist of a single bougainvillea and much dust, I found myself one day in the celebrated reserve, which is practically the last thing before you come to the illimitable sand. North of it are the hills; south there is nothing but the dunes and the waste: occasional flocks of goats with their goatherd, donkeys each with one or more sedate and silent rider, and now and then a group of camels gravely and disdainfully picking their way beneath their burdens. And so on for miles and miles and miles. All this you see or imagine from the ramparts of the Garden, which, however, is no garden, as we understand the term, the flowers being few, but a collection of trees. I believe that every tree that could grow in that climate is to be found here. But I saw no turf, no flowers.

My ticket lies before me, a slip of pink paper: 'Jardin Landon, Biskra. No. 04453, 3 francs, entree pour une personnel But it cost me more than that, for certain youths had to be bought off, and a blind beggar, directed at me by his attendant like a torpedo, had to be subsidized (but Heaven

knows how long he was allowed to retain the coin), and the keeper of the Garden house, who is not supposed to show it, required his fee too.

The house! What a travesty of a home! You have read, in *Great Expectations,* of Miss Havisham and the state of frozen inaction in which that bridal room was kept; you have read, in Tennyson's *Princess,* of the sudden arrestation of life under the magic spell; well, the house in the Garden of Allah is like that. There is the furniture, there are the photographs, there are the rugs, there is the piano—but they have not been used since 1912. They are dusted every day, against the return of the owner, the windows are opened, the spicy air blows in; but the owner is absent. She walked out one day in the summer of 1912 and is still in Europe. The papers that she was reading are still on the table; but she is not there to finish them.

When this house was built, I cannot say: probably in the eighteen-sixties; but the interesting thing to bear in mind, as one passes from room to room amid Second Empire fittings, is that they were assembled in the days before Biskra was united to the rest of the world by a railway. That is to say, everything here was brought from the North on the backs of those self-contained superior creatures, the camels, gravely and disdainfully picking their way down through the bleak red hills from Constantine.

Returning to London, a fortnight later, I began not by Air France, but by the A.L.S.A., Ala Littoria Societk Anonima, from Tunis to Naples. On this journey the stay of half-hour is at Palermo, and a very dreary half-hour it is, for there is no buffet, and the landing-stage is at a part of the town where there are no shops. I did, however, succeed in finding a fruiterer who supplied bananas at a lira each, but on the way back I had to run the gauntlet of a number of small Sicilians urging that their need was greater than mine. Begging from the famished: this was mendicancy over-reaching itself; and I clung to my own with a tenacity that surprised me.

There was, however, a day or so later, at Naples, a boy who surprised me even more. I was walking on the Via Partenope, by the Bay, trying to forget the northern wind and be sunned upon, but again running a gauntlet, this time of persistent men who offered their services as guides, persistent men who had the cheapest and best cars for visiting Pompeii, and even more persistent men with boxes of coral and tortoiseshell trinkets. Having at last won through to the less infested Via Caracciolo, where the Gardens are, I was beginning to think myself free, when I observed, advancing pitilessly, a ragged Neapolitan urchin, with every sign upon him of wanting something and intending to get that something out of me. Judge then of my amaze-

ment and relief when all he said was 'Good-bye'.

Just that—'Good-bye'! Not only as if he had one English phrase and was bent on using it, but (as might have been the case) that Naples had had enough of me, and he had been deputed to tell me so.

But I have reached, in this record of flight, Naples too soon. It was two hours after leaving Palermo that we alighted there, having for the last part of the flight a snow-capped Vesuvius smouldering in the distance, more lovely almost than Fujiyama, which, but for the volcanic smoke, it might have been. Palermo had been empty, but at Naples a vast crowd assembles every day to see the passengers emerge, much more like Jonah than any god, from the machine. It would require, I reflected, as I climbed the perpendicular iron ladder, a very great personality to retain any dignity under such conditions. But, *terra firma*\

HERCULANEUM

OF the many lessons frequently being brought to our consciousness, but seldom wholly learned, none in my experience recurs more often than that which says that we must accept nothing on the evidence of others but see things with our own eyes. In spite of advancing age and the accumulation of warnings, we still catch ourselves talking with assured authority about places we have not visited, plays we have not seen, books we have not read and people we have not met; and for years I have been assisting to spread the legend that whereas Pompeii was destroyed by the ashes from Vesuvius, Herculaneum was submerged by boiling lava which when cold turned to solid rock, and hence the difficulty of excavating there as compared with the ease with which the treasures of Pompeii have been disclosed.

A little thought would have made it clear that if, within the walls of Herculaneum's houses and shops and villas and public buildings, the lava had become as hard as that, Herculaneum would still lie undisturbed. But now that I have used

my own eyes there is no problem at all. I now know that the material which in A.D. 79 overwhelmed the little crowded seaside town and its environs was not lava, nor rock, but a mixture of earth and ashes which, borne and diluted by mountain torrents, descended in a muddy avalanche and not only filled up every interstice that was fillable but deposited debris above the roofs to the height of many yards.

Had it the igneous solidity of tradition, it could be dealt with only by means so violent that a new destruction would result. But as it is, being, although very closely packed, soft, very like the *pise*, or rammed earth, of which French cottage walls and floors are made, a pickaxe and shovel are all that is necessary. I know this, because I have watched the workmen and have crumbled the stuff in my fingers. No doubt flaming cataracts of lava rushed down the sides of Vesuvius on that terrible day, but their course was diverted from Herculaneum, just as it was, again, in the latest of the great eruptions, in 1631.

The history of Herculaneum may be briefly told. Beginning as a fishing village on the shore of the Bay of Naples, it was so naturally attractive in its site, between two streams, and in its climate and vineyards, as to be coveted by the pleasure-loving Romans, who, a century or so before Christ, captured it from the Samnites, as the Southern Italians were called. Herculaneum

thereafter remained Roman, growing in prosperity and size and repute as a holiday resort and becoming an excellent example of a successful watering-place, with a fine theatre peculiarly rich in adornment, two or three temples, a fishing population, public baths, and, both within and without its walls, wealthy residents with not a little civic pride. In fact, save for higher artistic standards, Herculaneum was a Bournemouth or Eastbourne of Italy.

As for Vesuvius, although now, all these years later, the mountain is never without its smoke and steam, he was then, and had been for many years, so quiet as to be thought extinct. True, it was a volcano, and not only was it perilously near to Herculaneum, but the town lay all exposed on the side where the monster's feet met the sea; but no one gave it a serious thought and the menace was over.

And here let me state that if the sea no longer washes up to Herculaneum's walls, and if the streets no longer give directly on to the shore, it is because the intervening banks are part of the eruption that eventually occurred. The millions of tons of liquid mud that slid down the mountain and covered the town, passed on also to slide into the Bay and make soil of that. So that while the streets still descend to their shore-exits, where the fishermen used to join their boats, the water is distant, with a high intervening barrier of earth'

Very well, then: the people of Herculaneum—the regular plebeian inhabitants, the summer visitors from Rome and other cities, the wine-growers and farmers on the slopes, the patricians in their villas—concentrating on the present, alike were secure in mind, and thinking fearfully of no future. For was not the sun hot and Vesuvius extinct?

And all went well until 63 A.D., when suddenly there was an earthquake. A destructive one, it is true, but only an earthquake, a natural phenomenon in that land, soon to be put right and nothing necessarily to do with volcanoes. This one tumbled the masonry and statuary of Herculaneum so badly that very extensive re-building was necessary; but in those days of subservience and cheap labour this was soon accomplished, and the populace settled down to enjoyment again. But only until August, 79.

The earthquake may have been a separate and independent convulsion and it may not; but what is certain is that the ultimate extinction of Herculaneum in August, 79 A.D., was the work of Vesuvius, who, suddenly, awoke into terrible and unexampled activity. It is conjectured that many people may have escaped, the first excreta to fall being only stones and sparks and embers, with no concentration of attack; but when the storms and waterspouts and other meteorological accompaniments set in, and the mountain-sides became

a Niagara, there was no hope. The city was submerged beneath a landslide sixty-five feet in height.

The classic account of the great eruption of 79 A.D. is in two letters written to Tacitus by the Younger Pliny, so called to distinguish him from his uncle the Admiral, one of the victims; but I imagine that Lytton's romance *The Last Days of Pompeii* is the more popular authority. At this time the Admiral was at Misenum, another port in the Bay of Naples, in command of the fleet, but spending much time on shore with his sister-in-law and nephew, at their Misenum villa. The nephew was then a youth of seventeen (or nineteen), and in reading his account of the tragedy it must be borne in mind that he did not commit it to writing until more than twenty years had passed. In the main, however, I should call it acceptable; it certainly reads like a faithful and minute record. On the 24th of August, about one in the afternoon, he writes (in Jebb's translation), his mother called his uncle's attention 'to a cloud of extraordinary size and appearance. He had taken a turn in the sunshine, and then a cold bath—had lunched leisurely, and was reading. He calls for his shoes, and goes up to the place from which the marvel could be best observed. A cloud was rising (from what mountain, was doubtful in a distant view; it was afterwards ascertained to be Vesuvius); a pine-tree will perhaps

give you the best notion of its character and form. It rose into the air with what may be called a trunk of enormous length, and then parted into several branches: I fancy, because it had been sent up by a momentary breeze, and then, forsaken by the falling wind, or possibly borne down by its own weight, was dissolving laterally: one minute it was white, the next it was dirty and stained, as if it had carried up earth or ashes. Thorough lover of knowledge as he was, he thought that it was important, and ought to be examined at closer quarters. He ordered a cutter to be got ready, and gave me leave to accompany him, if I liked. I answered that I would rather study; in fact, as it happened, he had himself given me something to write.

'As he was leaving the house, he received a note from Rectina, the wife of Caesius Bassus, terrified by the imminent danger—his villa was just below us, and there was no way of escape but by sea; she begged him to deliver her from such great danger. He changed his plan, and turned the impulse of a student to the duty of a hero. He had large galleys launched, and went on board one of them himself, with the purpose of helping not only Rectina, but many others too, as the pleasant shore was thickly inhabited. He hastened to the point from which others were flying, and steered a straight course for the place of peril, himself so free from fear that, as he

observed with his own eyes each movement, each phase of the terrible portent, he caused it to be noted down in detail. By this time ashes were falling on the ship—hotter and thicker the nearer it came; then pieces of pumice too, with stones blackened and scorched and seamed with fire: then suddenly they were in shallow water, while in front the shore was choked with the discharges from the mountain.'

The account goes on to describe the futile efforts of the galleys to be of any practical use, and how the Admiral landed at Stabiae to call on, and, if possible, comfort, his friend Pomponianus. As night drew on and there was no abatement of the shower of pumice stones, and the house of Pomponianus filling and shaking, they decided it would be better to cover their heads with cushions and go out. 'They resolved to go down to the shore, and to see from close at hand whether the sea now gave them any chance:—no; it was still, as before, wild, and against them. There, lying down on an old sail, the admiral called repeatedly for cold water, and drank it. Presently flames, and the smell of sulphur announcing their approach, turned the others to flight: him they only roused. Leaning on a couple of slaves, he rose to his feet, but immediately fell—an unusually dense vapour, as I understand, having stopped his respiration and closed the windpipe, an organ in him naturally weak as well as narrow, and frequently

inflamed. When day returned his body was found, undefiled and unhurt, with all the clothes upon it; its look suggested sleep rather than death,'

That is from the first of the two letters. I now quote from the second. 'You say that the letter describing my uncle's death which I wrote to you at your request has made you anxious for an account of my experiences, as well as fears, when I was left at Misenum—for that was the point at which I broke off.

> Though my soul shudders at the memory,
> I will begin.

'After my uncle's departure, I spent the rest of the day in study—the purpose for which I had stayed at home. Then came the bath—dinner—a short and broken sleep. For several days before, an earthquake had been felt, but had caused the less alarm because it is so frequent in Campania. That night, however, it became so violent as to suggest that all things were being not shaken merely but turned upside down. My mother rushed into my room; I was getting up, intending on my part to rouse her, if she was asleep. We sat down in front of the house in the court which parted it by a short interval from the sea. I hardly know whether to call it intrepidity or inexperience—I was in my eighteenth year—but I called for a volume of Livy, and began

reading as if nothing were happening—indeed, I continued the extracts which I had begun to make. Enter a friend of my uncle's, who had just come to him from Spain: when he sees that my mother and I are sitting there, and that I am actually reading, he comments sharply on her patience and my apathy: I pore over my book as intently as ever. It was now about 5 a.m.—the daylight still uncertain and weak. Shocks having now been given to the walls about us, the danger of their falling became serious and certain, as the court, though open to the sky, was narrow. Then it was that we decided to leave the town. A mob crazy with terror follows us, preferring their neighbours' counsel to their own, —a point in which panic resembles prudence,— and driving us forward by the pressure of the throng at our heels. Once outside the houses, we halt. Many strange and fearful sights meet us there. The carriages which we had ordered out, though on perfectly level ground, were swaying to and fro, and would not remain stationary even when stones were put against the wheels. Then we saw the sea sucked back, and, as it were, repulsed from the quaking land. Unquestionably the shore-line had advanced, and now held many sea-creatures prisoners on the dry sands. On the other side of us, a black and appalling cloud, rent by forked and quivering flashes of gusty fire, yawned asunder from time to time

and disclosed long shapes of flame, like sheet-lightning, but on a vaster scale,'

Pliny and his mother then finally left, to join in the universal exodus. 'You could hear the shrieks of the women, the wailing of children, the shouts of men. Parent, child, husband, wife were being sought, and recognized by the voice. One was making lamentation for himself, another for his friends. Some were so afraid to die that they prayed for death. Many lifted their hands to the gods: a larger number conceived that there were now no gods anywhere—that this was the world's final and everlasting night,'

A map would (as so often) greatly help this narrative.

If such was the frenzied state of affairs at Misenum, several miles from the volcano, think of what Pompeii and Herculaneum, so near, suffered; but in the case of Pompeii, extermination must have been almost instantaneous. The human beings in the Museum there tell us that.

According to Dio Cassius, 'some thought that the giants were rising up (for then also many phantoms of them kept looming through the smoke, and moreover a sound as of trumpets was continually heard), but others thought that the whole universe was consuming into Chaos, or into fire'. Dio adds that the ashes reached Rome and overshadowed the sun; also Africa, Syria and Egypt.

The history of the official excavation of Herculaneum—or Ercolano, as the Italians call it—covers a number of episodes, and has been most sketchily narrated. So far as I can ascertain, the first really organized effort was in 1738, and the latest, begun in 1927, is now drawing to a close—not because the work is complete but because the living are more important than the dead. In other words, the operations must cease until the houses now in occupation on the land at Resina, above the buried city, can be acquired and compensation made to their tenants. And as the area is extensive, and Italy, never too rich, has now other uses for her money, and Italians in possession are probably as tenacious of their rights as any one else, if not more so, it must be long before the great task is done.

As it is at the moment, the two principal streets running uphill from the seaside end abruptly at a perpendicular wall of brown earth, like a cliff, on the top of which are many dwellings. The streets below, for all their signs of civilization, their baths and gymnasia, their exquisite architectural detail, their wine shops and oil shops, their delicate frescoes and intricate mosaic floors, date from the second and first centuries B.C.; the houses above are of yesterday, and this time, even without personal ocular proof, I think it safe to assert that there is not a single object in any one of them which, in the distant future, would be worth

any archaeologist's efforts to bring to light. A strange experience, to reside in the twentieth century amid trumpery furniture and cheap crockery, telephones and radio-sets, and to know that in the dark earth far below are annihilated homes where, although civilization as we think of it did not exist, everything is beautiful.

When the time comes for these homes to be revealed, at first, no doubt, the excavators of the new territory will find very much what there is in the exposed area to-day: houses and shops, as inhabited by ordinary folks. But as they ascend to the outskirts to what were once, before they were overwhelmed, the sunny slopes, described by estate-agents to-day as 'Desirable Sites', it is expected that they will uncover the summer residences of the rich, and then the real discoveries will begin again: bronzes and statues comparable to those which are now the glory of the Naples Museum, and possibly more papyri.

It was not until 1927, under the patronage of the Duce, that the first scientific or rightly ordered excavating work at Herculaneum began. All previous efforts may be described as tentative and in the earliest instances as purely predatory. They were initiated as long ago as 1709 by Prince Elboeuf, who, having fixed upon Portici, beneath which part of Herculaneum lies buried, as the place for a villa, was told by the peasants that excellent blocks of white marble often came to

light, and, digging, his workmen discovered, in addition to building material, the series of superb statues of women or muses of which two are in the Dresden Museum and one in Naples. That was in 1709. Soon after Charles III, Bourbon prince and King of Spain, made himself, in 1734, King also of the Two Sicilies, he decided that he too would have a villa at Portici and directed his chief of the works, Colonel Rocco de Alcubierre, to continue where Elboeuf had left off. In 1738, therefore, tunnels, vertical and horizontal, were made, when it was ascertained that the building so rich in treasure was the theatre. From this time until 1779 desultory work was carried on, almost entirely in the theatre, varied by the constant necessity to underpin the houses above, which were being rendered insecure. Nothing was laid bare, the unique works of art which now make the Naples Museum one of the most remarkable treasure-houses in the world, all being brought to the surface through shafts.

After 1779 there was a lull until 1828, Pompeii coming in for attention in the interval; but from 1828 until 1875 there was sporadic activity. Nothing, however, that came to light in the nineteenth century, or that has been found since 1927, equals in artistic importance the early yields from the theatre and from the Casa dei Papiri or Villa Suburbana, outside the town, both of which were fully exploited under Charles III. This

villa, which, after exploration, was again filled in, is on the north-west and was discovered while the stables of the royal palace at Portici were being constructed; and from it came, in addition to eight hundred papyri, which have not yet all been unrolled and deciphered, whatever Herculaneum works of art the Naples Museum possessed that did not belong either to the theatre or basilica. The loveliest wall paintings were in this Casa, the best pavement, the bronze heads of Seneca (so like Ruskin) and other philosophers, the Mercury seated, the Hermes in repose, the Theseus with inlaid eyes, the glorious bust of Dionysius, the marble statues of Aeschines, Homer and an Orator, the dancing maidens and the praying maiden, the sleeping fauns, the dancing faun, the drunken satyr, and the wrestlers, of whom we have a reproduction in the Embankment Gardens in London.

It is because of the Casa dei Papyri trouvailles that such high hopes are entertained of the other villas belonging to wealthy Roman scholars and connoisseurs which also are situated in the, as yet, unplumbed districts.

Not only has the Casa gone, but the Basilica also was again filled in—the Basilica (so called) which provided the Naples Museum with the wall paintings of Theseus and the slain minotaur, of Chiron with Achilles, and the Childhood of Telephus, and such statues as the two Balbuses,

father and son, on horseback, Marcus Nonius Balbus, having, as an inscription records, built or restored the Basilica, the gates and the wall, at his own expense. Whether Christianity had reached Herculaneum with sufficient force to establish a stronghold of such magnificence as the Basilica, we have no proof. What is, however, known, is that among the old gods worshipped there was Hercules, who gave the town its name.

'Few people,' a guide at Herculaneum complained to me the other day, 'come to Ercolano. They all go to Pompeii,' Pompeii has the *reclame,* and I think deserves it, for considered as a whole, as a piece of evidence of the past, it is more interesting, while its Museum makes it more interesting still. The decision having been reached to leave *in situ* everything discovered in Herculaneum, it has no separate museum: as indeed has been the rule at Pompeii in the past few years, everything found in the recently explored buildings being left where it was. Pompeii is also more open; not so open as Timgad, in Algeria, which, being on a hillside, affords to the eye a complete and sudden prospect and is, in fact, the perfect example of a ruined city; but Pompeii is open enough, with streets running into the country. Were only one of these Vesuvian relics to remain, Pompeii would, I take it, be selected.

But Herculaneum has claims to be considered first, and we must remember that of the works of

sculpture in the Naples Museum, those from Herculaneum are far finer than those from Pompeii. Whether the picks and spades of the future are destined to uncover anything as splendid as some of these famous figures, only time can tell; but at Herculaneum certain vestiges of the past have been preserved by the overwhelming mud which the smouldering ashes of Pompeii at once incinerated. There is, for example, in one of the houses of Herculaneum, a wooden bed which, had it been at Pompeii, would instantly have perished. Yet here it is, damaged, it is true, but sufficiently intact for any designer to make an exact replica. The wood of beams and staves has equally resisted the ages, and now, enclosed by glass, will probably for many years to come testify to the excellence of the old carpentry. Marble and bronze naturally suffer less, if indeed at all, for the bronze, at any rate, acquires with the centuries a richer patina, and you will see in the new-old rooms at Herculaneum beautiful work in both mediums. I call to mind in particular the two marble tripod tables in the villa by the sea, and the two marble hunting groups, one with such realistic treatment of the hounds' claws, while there are several tall bronze candlesticks standing just where they stood when the turbid overwhelming flood was loosed. But, as I have said, marble and bronze are expected to endure. More remarkable are the little stores of food, such

as lentils, bread and biscuits which were to have been eaten that day.

As has been indicated, the present period of activity is nearly at an end, unless it is decided to proceed towards the shore and remove the artificial cliffs between the Casa dei Cervi and the Bay, which the eruption threw up. From the balcony of this house, recently uncovered and partially restored, where the two marble tables are, its owner, before the dread day of August, 79 B.C., had an uninterrupted view of the sea, immediately below him. In conversation with Professor Amedeo Maiuri, of the Naples Museum, who has been placed at the head of the excavations not only here but at Pompeii and elsewhere in Italy, I gathered that this may be the next objective; and in this connexion let me say that the Professor's great book, *Herculaneum*, published in 1932 in Italian and French and illustrated lavishly and partly in colour, is the one authoritative record of what, in the latest phase, has been accomplished. There you will find described in full what I have only lightly mentioned. But it is more important to make a personal visit to the cities of the dead.

Of Pompeii I have said nothing, but much has been done there too, and all the time is being done, including the further opening up of the Via dell' Abbondanza towards the Porta Urbulana, where some of the richer houses stood: such as that of Paquius Proculus with its election propa-

ganda; and that of Trebius Valens, next door to the Collegium Juventutis Pompeianae, or, shall I say, the Racquet Club of the city; and the sumptuous villa of L. Loreius Tiburtinus, nearest the gate, with its mural scenes of the Trojan War and its gardens; and next it the house of Epidius Hymenaeus, who very prudently reminded himself of his duties as a respectable citizen by moral warnings, one of which adjured him not to look covetously on the wife of another and one urging him to return straight home at night. These (together with the Laundry of Stephanus) are all in the Via dell' Abbondanza, and in all are preserved whatever the excavators found there, even to dead bodies. New also to travellers who have not been to Pompeii since the new methods set in are the house of Menander with its silver treasure; the Villa of the Mysteries, outside the Porta Ercolanesa, at the end of the Via dei Sepoleri, with its Dionysian paintings; the very impressive Sepulchre of the Istadi, with its fallen columns replaced, and one of the reconstructed towers of the fortifications.

The great calamity was in 79 A.D. To-day, in 1936, there are around the base of the volcano new populations, who appear to be as sure in their minds as those ancient inhabitants were, that Vesuvius has nothing up his sleeve. Time alone can show. When I saw him in January of last year he had, as I have said earlier in this book,

a hood of snow, and against the blue sky and in the evening glow was indescribably unreal and beautiful. But smoke was pouring upwards all the time and, although it took exquisitely fantastic shapes and hues, suggesting nothing more than caprice, I was conscious of foreboding. Volcanoes are volcanoes, even when railways are run up their sides; and what has happened, will happen.

OUR MR. SHARP

IT was not long after a conversation the other day on Jacks-of-all-Trades that, reading the life of that sturdy pastor the Rev. Robert Stephen Hawker, Vicar of Morwenstow in Cornwall, written by his friend and fellow-cleric, the Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould, Squarson of Lew Trenchard in the next county, I came upon an advertisement of a universal provider so embracive that, although it is by no means new, I quote it. If any one, always excepting Mr. Shaw and Mr. Wells and Mr. Aldous Huxley, knows more than Mr. Giles, I should like to meet him. Here is his modest programme:

ROGER GILES, Surgin, Parish dark and Skulemaster, Groser, and Hundertaker, Respectably informs ladys and gentlemen that he drors teef without wateing a minit, applies laches every hour, blisters on the lowest tarrns, and vizicks for a penny a peace. He sells Godfather's Kordales, kuts korns, bunyons, dokters hosses, clips donkies wance a munth, and undertakes to luke arter every bodies nayls by the ear. Joes-harps, penny wissels, brass kanelsticks, fryinpans, and other moozikal hinstrumints hat grately reydooced figers. Young ladys and genelmen lames their grammur and langeudge, in the purtiest manner, also grate care taken off their morrels and spellin, Also zarm-

zinging, tayching the base vial, and all other zorts of vancy-work, squadrils, pokers, weazils, and all country dances tort at home and abroad at perfekshun. Perfumery and znuff in all its branches. As times is cruel bad, I begs to tell ey that i his just beginned to sell all sorts of stashonary ware, cox, hens, vouls, pigs, and all other kinds of poultry. Blakin-brishes, herrins, coles, skrubbin-brishes, traykel, godly bukes and bibles, mise-traps, brick-dist, whisker-seed, morrel pokkerankerchers, and all zorts of swatemaits, including taters, sassages, and other gardin stuff, bakky, zigars, lamp oyle, tay-kittles, and other intixzikaytin likkers; a dale of fruit, hats, zongs, hare and bunyon zalve and all hardware. I as laid in a large azzortment of trype, dogs' mate, lolipops, ginger-beer, matches, and other pikkles, such as hepsom salts, hoysters, Winzer sope, anzetrar.

P.S.—I tayches gografy, rithmetic, cowstiks, jimnastiks, and other chynees tricks.

—A man to know, Mr. Giles, who, though a Cornishman, now and then reminds one of Artemus Ward. I like his concern for children's spellin and morrels.

We can all remember instructive capable creatures of whom, as small children, we stood in awe, but they were never as gifted as this. Mr. Sharp, for instance, a power in my own boyhood, as any man must be who keeps a junk shop, fell dismally short of Mr. Giles. So far as I can recollect, he taught nothing. On the other hand, he was a great giver. He gave me my first ice-skates, strange things with curly runners on which in his incredible youth he had, according to his own account, performed startling deeds on the Lincolnshire fens; and he gave me my first roller-

skates, so lacking in bearings that I was forbidden entrance to the local rink. Also it was he who first mounted me on stilts, and found an owner for a Maltese terrier which had incurred displeasure in the house, and provided a very old pistol for conjuring tricks; but he was ignorant alike of grammar and perfumery, country dances and acoustics.

Mr. Sharp resembled Mr. Giles in his curative capacity, although he made no charge for his services. He knew, for example, all about warts. He could, given time, charm them away; but if you had no time, he suggested remedies. One sure way, for example, was to steal a piece of meat and bury it. We know that Hartley Coleridge once stole a leg of mutton from Wordsworth's larder; but that was sheer impishness, and had nothing to do with warts. Or, at any rate, so we have always supposed. Mr. Sharp could deal with lumbago too. A violin string bound round the patient's middle was good. If you could not afford catgut, a strip of red silk ribbon would serve. And rheumatism—Mr. Sharp had numbers of certain remedies for rheumatism, one of which was to cross your socks.

Mr. Sharp called himself an old-iron merchant, and there were in his shop always rusty bicycle wheels. In appearance he was rather like Abraham Lincoln, very tall and spare, with a grisly beard. What his first name was I never knew.

'Mr. Sharp' was his only style—'Please sir, or please ma'am, Mr. Sharp is here'—and I never knew for what purpose he arrived every now and then so mysteriously. But there he was, cap in hand, standing at an immense height in the kitchen; and directly his business with the authorities was over, he was mine. First of all he would produce from his pocket the treasure of the day—I remember it was once a model gun-metal cannon which needed real gunpowder and not the chopped matchheads which had hitherto served for the twopenny brass substitutes from the neighbouring toyshop—and afterwards he would suggest a walk, and off we would go, Mr. Sharp towering above me. Well, he is no more, but his tribe persists. Every family has its Mr. Sharp; I shall never forget ours.

To return to children's spellin and morrels, it is, as I have probably too often remarked, odd how one thing leads to another. No sooner had I read the comprehensive announcement of Roger Giles in Hawker's *Life*, than a kind friend, also Cornish, sent me, out of the Duchy's clear sky, the advertisement of a schoolmaster named W. Cullis, who, proposing to open a school in Oswestry, told prospective parents all about his intentions and qualifications. For the most part, he followed familiar lines: recommending the Bible as the Best of Books—'all human teaching is useless without it'—and stating that maps had been specially en-

graved for him by a London artist; but then came a departure indeed. After saying that he proposed to teach Arithmetic, Book-keeping, Algebra, English Grammar, and History, comprising English, Roman, Grecian, Hindustanee and Chinese (not 'chynees tricks'), he added:

> . . . Further, as the various periodicals issue from the London and Provincial Press (particularly our own locality), portions will be culled, such as murders, executions, military and naval engagements, shipwrecks, &c. &c., and commented upon in a pleasing way—so that every child may know something of what is passing in the world, and furnish his head with its actual doings, not merely take home his copy book, or book of figures, and receive the praise of his parents; which in W.C.'s opinion is a very little part of an useful education: but perhaps he may be wrong.

—That, surely, is unusual, or it was, for ninepence a week, unusual in Mr. Cullis's day, some seventy years ago. But perhaps all teachers of the young now instruct them from the daily Press. There are, at any rate, murders enough. As the reporter said at the naughty Gate Theatre the other night, after more revolver shots led him to new triumphs of publicity, 'Gee! ain't God good to newspapers!'

But to return to Roger Giles, who taught 'zarm zinging' and the 'base vial', I learn that another parish clerk, also known to the Rev. R. S. Hawker, was a similar instructor. One night, as he was returning in his usual intoxicated condition, his wife, a laundress, hastily donned a newly-washed

surplice and, affecting to be a ghost, warned him against his evil habits. But Cornish church-officials cannot be dealt with so easily as that. 'Aride, Satan!' he called out. 'Doan't 'e know I be clerk of the parish, base-vial player and taicher of the zingers!'

The name of Giles, I am further told, is a common one in Cornwall, and there is, in the *Poetical Epitome* of 1792, actually an epitaph on still another parish clerk who was so called, and a very pretty one too. 'Here lies,' it runs:

> ' Here lies, within the tomb so calm,
> Old Giles—pray sound his knell—
> Who thought no song was like a psalm,
> No music like a bell,'

THE OTHER DOCTORS

TOO many years ago, when I had serious thoughts of becoming a doctor, I considered also the claims of the veterinary surgeon, and found myself with strong leanings that way; but in the end the pen turned out to be stronger than the knife. But, although I observe with composure the black-coated doctor on his rounds, there is something really attractive to me in the freer-and-easier life of the veterinary surgeon and his associations with dumb creatures. They, at any rate, when they are ill, are ill. They, at any rate, do not waste his time. And if bills are mislaid, it is not they that mislay them.

Where the veterinary surgeon stands in the hierarchy of healing, I cannot say; but I know that if I heard a Harley Street consultant speak belittlingly of a 'horse-doctor', I should have something to remark. But I am sure he would not. All the same, I cannot forget the story of Madame Meissonier, wife of the French artist, sending for her medical attendant to come instantly (it may even have been in the middle of the night) to minister to her pet cat. The doctor came, pre-

scribed, and left; but when, some time later, he was asked for his account, he replied that he was rendering none but would be glad if M. Meissonier would repaint his garden gate.

To give up one's life to treating sick animals, and particularly to be willing to cope with an angry cat, is really a fine action. The fact that I myself meditated doing so means nothing, because I abandoned the idea. But these practitioners all over the country are doing it, and I honour them. And what is wrong with a 'horse-doctor', a 'dog-leech'? They are essential, and can be heroes. I have known in my time several veterinary surgeons, all of them hale and hearty, if a trifle brusque and without an inferiority complex; and none of them was so hale and hearty and so brusque and so proud of himself as the one who, after mending the broken leg of a thoroughbred which had been given up by its owner, had just witnessed the point-to-point race where it had come in first. That was a triumph, if you like. Menders of men can also be cock-a-hoop after a cure that looks miraculous; but there was no mistaken diagnosis about this particular steed. I know that his leg was broken, because I used to see him slung up.

Although, a correspondent remarks, the term veterinary surgeon is comparatively new, there were shoesmiths, or farriers, practically as long as there were horses, and it is only one slip from

shoeing a horse to healing it. Many English names such as Ferrier, Farrier, Farrar and Farrer, probably derive from the smithy.

The phrase 'horse-doctor' brings to mind an election address which was issued just over a hundred years ago—in 1834, to be exact—by one Darby, to the werry worthy inhabitants of the parish of St. Giles in the Fields, calling on them to vote for him as horse-coroner. The document, which is to be found in a scrap-book in the British Museum, is a magnificent example of defiant illiteracy; so much so indeed that some of the words, phonetically spelt, beat one at the first reading: 'Ann Bill', for example, for hand-bill. But in time all comes to light, and the writer's boast that he can 'rite to be understew'd' is justified. Here it is:

Ladiss and Gintilman,—Sum false feller as as no shame in him, as sent fourth a Ann Bill with my naim, anouncein as I hav declin'd the hoffis of Oss Corriner—so far from thinkin' of sitch a thing I feels moor sertin than ever o' vinnin, becos of the oncommon number of promerses vich I have met with from every boddy. I vish their four to ackwainte my frens that I shall still continny a kandedait, and I hear by korshon them not to beleave a single word in that bill, as I never rote it, and as it's wot my perposer, Mr. Day, calls 'A weak inwenching of the Hennermee. . . .'

It's werry troo, as is inserted, that I am habel to woork, but Fde raither not, if I cood get henny thing that's heasier.—Every boddy noes that hard work isn't heasee, and I don't like it no moor nor other peepel. . . .

Ass to Muster Harris, hees awl werry well among his kabs—

and he noes awl about live osses, but vot does he no about ded uns?

Hi've seed moor ded osses than he's seen live uns. I used to go and see Bill SmifF kill 'em for amoosement—and I vonce made a kart to carry 'em in—so I ort to no summut about 'em an no mistake !!!

Ass to whot sum peepel say about feelin—I thinks myself as human as any other kandedate, and so the osses shall fine me if I shold be apinted. It as bin inserted by sum, that I carn't reed and rite—I contribbits that to there Higgerance—becos they must be roags or fules that says it—Roags if they noes I can —Fules if they noes nothin about it.

I have suffer'd my Printer to korreck what I have rote afour —and therfour peepel have thought as he rote it.—I sharn't let him doo no sitch thing in footer—I can speck to be understew'd and vy sholdn't I rite to be understew'd? . . .

Let us hope that he was helected. No one, whatever signs of military genius he may display, can, if his orthography is as bad as that, get into the Army; but such niceties are foolish when it comes to the choice of an oss corriner. Oss corriners can spell as they like; and I hope the voters plumped for Darby.

There is no doubt in my mind that the veterinary surgeon has been unfairly treated by novelists. We meet medical men by the thousand, but I cannot recall a single veterinary surgeon outside the pages of Anstey's *Lyre and Lancet* and of the Two Ladies who wrote the *Irish R.M.* stories. And yet their lives are full of incident and they are men of unusual sagacity. Anybody, it may safely be stated, who can minister to the needs

of a suffering four-footed creature, has peculiar qualities. Courage he certainly must have, for whereas most of us are scared, or at any rate disconcerted, in the presence of an angry dog, he must handle it. Sympathy he must also have, or the dog, a very astute judge, would repulse or even rend him. And he must be, even more than a doctor, superior to bad weather; while it is very unlikely that he can ever cuddle into the corner of a chauffeur-driven car. Veterinary surgeons drive themselves. And they are intrepid motorists too. I met one the other day who, in his car, had just crossed a ploughed field to see a sick cow. No one else that I know would set his tyres at such a surface.

Dogs, however, are commonplace patients, such as we all, except perhaps postmen, have occasionally to dose; but where are we when fowls refuse food and canaries droop and parrots lie on their backs? 'Send for the vet' is at once the cry. And he comes. If there is any kind of case that he would refuse, I should like to know what his limit is. Parrots, of course, are frequently treated, and not too easily either. A parrot that I know, which recently contracted gastritis, recovered only after absorbing glycerine and brandy, ministered by the veterinary surgeon, and then enjoying a prolonged state of coma on the sanded floor. In due course it arose, blinked, waddled, said 'Cheerio' and was well. On the

other hand, I know of a veterinary surgeon who had to admit his utter defeat as he fled round the surgery pursued by a macaw. To give a drench to a cow was nothing to him: but for a vengeful macaw he had no technique. Nor (since we are referring to this type of medical man's infrequent failures) could one of his forerunners find anything to say when, after telling Byron, the playwright, that he should give his horse a ball, Byron replied, 'But whom shall I invite?'

THREE AMERICAN HUMORISTS

CHARLES FARRAR BROWNE, known as Artemus Ward, although he was the first American humorist really to make multitudes laugh and to gain a reputation on both sides of the Atlantic, had his predecessors. Three of them, at any rate, were Seba Smith, who wrote the *Letters of Major Jack Downing;* Benjamin Penhallow Shillaber, who wrote the *Life and Sayings of Mrs. Partington* and George Henry Derby, who wrote under the name of 'John Phoenix' and was the real father of American printed foolery. But Artemus Ward was the first to win universal fame and to be welcomed also in England, where in 1866 he lectured and contributed to *Punch.* Since then, the seed being theirs, many have grown the flower; but honour to pioneers.

Artemus Ward began his career on the Cleveland *Plaindealer* in 1858, whereas his close rival, Josh Billings, although many years older—he was born in 1818 and lived on to the eighteen-eighties—was not really known until the early sixties, while Mark Twain, who was born in 1835, [a]

year after Artemus Ward, did not, with his celebrated frog, jump to fame until 1867 and then jumped under Artemus Ward's auspices. We must, therefore, in dealing with the great line of laughter-makers, put Artemus Ward first.

To the inquiry, Why should American humour, hitherto more or less a private matter for home or saloon consumption, suddenly, in the late fifties and early sixties, become a public need, I have a suggestion to offer. May it not have been because of the influence of that great and unconquerable joker, Abraham Lincoln? America was, before his rise to eminence, as fond of humour as ever, but is it too fanciful to say that it was waiting for Old Abe to popularize and nationalize it? Old Abe liked to hear good stories, and to tell good stories, and to invent apologues to drive home his political points, and, as we are all imitative creatures, every one else wanted to be funny too. There had never before been a jester in such a high place, and the fashion was set. Moreover, we are not only imitative: we like to gratify the eminent; and I have no doubt that every humorous writer in those days hoped that his efforts might catch Lincoln's eye. Lincoln, in the darkest hours of the war of North and South, was in the habit of reading Artemus Ward's articles to his Cabinet, and for a while the rumour spread that it was actually he who disguised his identity under the name of Josh Billings.

According to one of the numerous biographies, Carl Sandburg's, Lincoln carried about with him a copy of Joe Miller which contained more than a thousand stories, most of them still in circulation, and it was his habit, when on his legal journeys, to retail it to his companions. Many of the anecdotes were quite in his own manner, such as, for example, that of the traveller who said that he, alone, had made fifty wild Arabs run: 'I ran, and they ran after me,' But, although Joe may have helped and stimulated, Lincoln was capable of joking unaided; and my argument is that this man, on his way to be President of the United States, and later actually President, who kept a jest-book in his pocket and loved to create laughter and to share in it, was the cause of the sudden outburst of American humorous writing of which Artemus Ward and Josh Billings were the most articulate and most acceptable representatives.

Artemus Ward was the more original of the two, and it was he also, because nonsense can be largely a trick, who had more derivatives. But sagacity cannot be imitated: you have to have it. What, however, no one could reproduce was Artemus's radiance, which also is of the individual, In Mark Twain even at his most absurd there is a touch of sternness, sometimes almost of ferocity; but Artemus Ward was all fun and sweet reasonableness and profoundest common sense, with an

occasional barb that by its unexpectedness did the more damage. He gave himself additional reality by the assumption of the role of a travelling showman, with his wax figures and moral 'snaiks', with his wife Betsy Jane, and with the twins. These were very skilful dramatic touches, beyond the capacity of the ordinary journalist or funny man. And he brought into literature a cheerful disrespect that it had not known before. Mark Twain's *Innocents Abroad,* in 1869, may be said to have registered the birth of irreverence; *Artemus Ward, His Book,* in 1862, was the first to treat with irresistible familiarity such august figures as the President of the United States and the Heir Apparent to the English throne.

As an example of Artemus Ward's most ingratiating nonsense, that very rare article, I think the last sentences of his interview with the President may stand:

'How kin I ever repay you, Mr. Ward, for your kindness?' sed Old Abe, advancin and shakin me warmly by the hand. 'How kin I ever repay, you, sir?'

'By givin the whole country a good, sound administration. By poerin ile upon the troubled waturs, North and South. By pursooin a patriotic, firm and just course, and then, if any State wants to secede, let 'em sesesh!'

'How 'bout my Cabinit, Mister Ward?' sed Abe.

'Fill it up with Showmen, sir! Showmen is devoid of politics. They ain't got any principles! They know how to cater for the public. They know what the public wants, North and South. Showmen, sir, is honest men. Ef you doubt their literary

ability, look at their posters and see small bills! Ef you want a Cabinit as is a Cabinit, fill it up with showmen, but don't call on me. The moral wax figger perfeshun musn't be permitted to go down while there's a drop of blood in these vains! A. Linkin, I wish you well! Ef Powers or Walcutt wus to pick out a model for a beautiful man I scarcely think they'd sculp you; but ef you do the fair thing by your country, you'll make as putty a angel as any of us! A. Linkin, use judishusly and firmly the talents which Nature has put into you, and all will be well! A. Linkin, adoo!'

He shook me cordyully by the hand—we exchanged picters, so we could gaze upon each other's liniments when far away from one another—he at the helium of the ship of State, and I at the helium of the show bizniss—admittance only 15 cents.

There is little fun, I can assure you, in writing an article on Artemus Ward, for the simple reason that I want to quote from every page and there is no room. No other humorist takes you so often by surprise and has such convulsing hair-pin bends, so to speak. 'Dear Betsy, I write you this from Boston, the Modern Atkins, as it is denomynnated, altho' I skurcely know what those air'—what can be said of a man with such a mind as that?

In real life there was no Betsy Jane. Charles Farrar Browne died a bachelor and died at the age of only thirty-three: a too early death, but we must suppose that Heaven, at that moment, was short of laughter.

As I have said, Josh Billings was not so irresponsibly funny as Artemus Ward: he had neither

his genius for absurdity nor his gay inventiveness; but he was more deeply rooted. Artemus Ward was a richly endowed chuckling commentator on odd times and odd people; Josh Billings was a serious moralist, almost a preacher, with a gift for epigrammatic expression which probably has never been surpassed, but which, because of the grotesque orthographical form in which it was offered, may never have been rightly appreciated. Spelt properly, these sayings of Josh Billings can hold their own for good sense, wit, and forcible phrasing with any of those of the French masters *ofthepexsee*\ while when it comes to humour, the others are nowhere.

La Rochefoucauld and Vauvenargues may have known everything about poor human nature; but they expressed their knowledge frostily and were shy of exhibiting feeling. Josh Billings loved laughter, and was aware of its power, and he must have had the kindest of hearts. I transpose a few of his sayings into ordinary English just to illustrate, and, I hope, prove, this point.

Honesty is the best policy. But don't take my word for it; try it.

Marrying for love may be a little risky, but it is so honest that God cannot help but smile at it.

I depose that most men would rather say a clever thing than do a good one.

Truth is the only thing I know that can not be improved upon.

Wise men don't expect to do away with the vicissitudes of life; they only expect to blunt the edge of them.

I would rather be the receiver of stolen goods than the keeper of men's secrets.

Sknder is played on a horn of brass, but truth steals forth like the dying song of a lute.

About as good a way as any to be happy is to pity those who are below us and forget that there is anybody above us.

Epitaph. Here lies John Ferguson Esq. who died worth half a million—less the Kingdom of Heaven.

Avarice eats up all the good things in a man and then feeds on his vices.

If you have a good wife, keep perfectly still and thank God every living minute for it.

Fools do more harm in the world than rascals.

Such homespun wisdom, always very popular in America, could not, however, alone have made the name of Josh Billings a household word. The moralist had to spell it badly and mix it with nonsense; and this he did with great skill and the utmost economy of style. Now and then there is no doubt that the bad spelling helped some of the aphorisms. These that follow seem to be improved by it.

Giv the Devil his due, but be very kerful thare aint mutch due him.

Marrying a woman for her munny is vera mutch like setting a rat trap & baiting it with yure own finger.

Gra hares are honorabil, but I kno ov a grate menny gra heds that the Devil will keep under a glass kase tu sho the curous in theze matters.

A vartuous and ekonomical and knowing and butiful woman is—is all that can be sed on the subjec.

Man was created a little lower than the angel & has bin gittin a little lower ever sinse.

I have finally kum tu the konklusion that a good reliable sett ov bowels is worth more to a man than enny quantity ov brains.

God save the phools and don't let them run out, for if it want for them, wise men couldn't get a livin.

It is dredful eazy tew be a phool. A man ken be one and not kno it.

It is highly important, when a man makes up his minde tew becum a raskall, that he shud examine hisself clusly & see if he aint better konstructed for a phool.

As a general thing, when a woman wares the briches she has a good rite tew them.

Woman will sumtimes confess her sins but i never knu one tu confess her faults.

Evra sorrow has its turn of joy. The fun of skraching almost pays for having the ich.

Thare is one time when awl men are comparatiffly pure & that is when tha are in luv.

Chastity is like an isikel; if it onse melts thats the last ov it.

Adam invented 'Luv at first sight', one of the gratest laber saving masheens the world ever saw.

I hav herd a grate deal ced about broken hartes and thare may

be a fu ov them, but mi experiense is that nex tew the gizzard the harte is the tuffest peace ov meat in the whole critter.

Bad spelling also seems to help this charming autobiographical passage:

Yestereay, i reseaved a dunnin letter, from mi fashionable tailor, for a coat, that has bin worn out, more than 2 years. I replied tew the limited cuss, briefly, as follwers: 'Dear sur—Enklozed, pleze find 20 dollars—if yu can. Yures, sum, Josh Billings.'

And it helps also these answers to correspondents: a device of which, like many of his competitors, Josh was very fond:

'Lines tu a sleeping infant', bi Alice, received.—Tha are tender, dredful tender, almost tu tender tu keep thru this hot spel; yu hav talons ov the highest order, but yu must kross yure t's, or you kant suckeed in portri; good bi Alice!

'Sportsman.'—Yure inquiry iz not edzackly in mi line, but i haste tu repli, as follers, to wit: The rite length tu cut oph a dog's tale haz never yet bin fully diskovered, but iz undoubtedly somewhare bak ov his ears, provided yu git the dog's consent. N.B. It aint absolutely necessara the dog's consent should be in riteing.

'Willyu Kiss me, Dearest', Bi Mary Ann.—Acksepted. We take all them kind ov chanses. The portri ain't fust rate, but we expect the kissin kan't be beat, till then, fair Maid ajew!

In American literature Josh Billings occupies a place midway between Benjamin Franklin, with Poor Richard's Sayings, in the eighteenth century, and the late Kim Hubbard, with the 'Abe Mar-

tin' sardonic paragraph, in the twentieth. And his most recent popular derivative was Will Rogers, who died tragically in 1935.

Rogers was essentially of America, the product of a young frank society, natural vision and open spaces, bringing to life an experience gathered among toiling Bohemians all the world over, and a wit and shrewdness peculiarly his own. If, as I have said, he was like any other humorist, it was Josh Billings.

Will Rogers might never have been known in England had he not been lured to the films, for his newspaper comments on events of the day did not reach this country; his two or three books of comic and caustic comments had no sale here; and, when once he appeared in person at the London Pavilion, twirling his lariat and amid its serpentine convolutions uttering the wisest of cracks, comparatively few people heard him. One of those cracks, I remember, dealt with the Test matches and the English cricketers' addiction to meals. Whenever, said Will, he went to Lord's, there was always, a minute or two after he arrived, an interval: a lunch interval or a tea interval, and the result was a draw. 'Now,' he said, 'if you want your matches to end with a decision, you must cut out the eating. ".Gentlemen," you must say, "no food till you're through." ' In print this may not sound too hot, as Will would say; but, coming from those mischievous lips, in slow tones,

with long pauses—and in the midst of the writhing rope—it was funny enough.

In real life Will Rogers was just the same; and in real life he was also always chewing gum. One had read that Americans continually did this, but Will Rogers was the first I met who was true to alleged type. As he chewed he summarized public life with deadly, smiling precision. Although I could not exactly see him in power at the White House, I was not surprised to read, later, that he was being seriously considered as a candidate.

According to a cablegram, Will Rogers once wrote his own epitaph. 'When I die,' he said, 'my epitaph is going to read: "He joked about every prominent man in his time, but he never met a man he didn't like." I'm proud of that,' Will added. 'I can hardly wait to die so that it can be carved. And when you come round to my grave, you'll probably find me sitting there reading it.' I like that phrase: 'I can hardly wait to die.' Many a man has thought with something like pleasurable anticipation of the surprise his testaments might cause—the surprise either of joy or disappointment—and has expressed a wish, often malicious, to be there to see. But this is the first time I have read of a man eager to die in order to read the good about him.

AN ANGLO-AMERICAN HUMORIST

EVER since I read of the death of Oliver Herford in New York, in 1935, I have been thinking about him with contrition, for when I was in America the year before, we failed, through inadvertence, to meet; and even while he was dying, a letter from me to him was crossing the Atlantic. We had until then corresponded with some regularity, but when he was in England last, I saw him as often as his disregard of dates, his inexact memory, and his confusion as to London topography permitted. For a certain vagueness, accompanied by childlike pleasure in inconsequent discovery, and no sense whatever of time, were part of his charm—allied always to his wit, which, expressed by pen, pencil, and by the spoken word, often unpremeditated, sparkled and bubbled.

Oliver, who was seventy when he died, was an American only by residence and naturalization, for his father was Brooke Herford, the Unitarian Minister who, after emigrating for service in Chicago and Boston, settled down in 1892 at Hampstead, a suburb of London, England, where

he died in 1903, while Oliver's uncle was William Henry Herford, the Unitarian Minister and educationalist of Manchester, who did not work in America at all. I remember hearing from William Hall Walker, who was an American pioneer of amateur photography, how, in the early days of motoring, he had lured Brooke Herford for a trip in a white steam-car, and how, after a brief spell on a country road, it had gently but firmly run backwards into a ditch, where, while the inventor was tensely and excitedly trying to set things right, the Man of God was keeping his seat and (like John Lamb in a famous essay) finding the quietude and inanition good. Exactly so would Oliver have behaved. Unusual events, not being in his line, did not disconcert him. He sat still and observed and reflected, and all his reflections were individual and odd.

After leaving school at Antioch College, Ohio, Oliver, who had very delightful powers of drawing, studied art in Germany, in London, and in Paris, and it was in the eighteen-eighties that he became an American artist, journalist, playwright, and one of New York Bohemia's darlings. But he always guarded an English background; and he was always independent, free to see and criticize, like a visitor. I have never met an author with so little of this world about him. I do not mean that, in the religious sense, Oliver was of the next world, although, for all his tendency to

irreverent improvisation, he was a Puritan at heart; but that he thought in terms of a society not governed by our own rules and regulations: he inhabited a realm of nonsense where the nonsense was often the best sense.

Strangely enough, he found time to write a number of books, often in verse, illustrated by himself, several of which I possess with inscriptions from him. They are all fanciful and witty —probably too fanciful and too witty to appeal to more than the few. The titles themselves are indicative: *The Bashful Earthquake, Cupid's Fair Weather Book, Cupid's Encyclopedia, This Giddy Globe, Sea Legs, The Herford Æsop* and *The Rubaiyat of a Persian Kitten.* Probably the most famous is the last, where the whole feline religion is expressed. You remember—

The Mouse makes merry mid the Larder Shelves,
The Bird for Dinner in the Garden delves.
I often wonder what the creatures eat
One half so toothsome as they are Themselves.

And—

'Tho Two and Two make four by rule of line,
Or they make Twenty-two by Logic fine,
Of all the figures one may fathom, I
Shall ne'er be floored by anything but Nine.

And this piece of typical impertinence—

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep.
The Lion is my cousin ; I don't know
Who Jamshyd is—nor shall it break my sleep.

The idea of the kitten, indeed, fascinated Oliver, for he wrote also an imitation of Stevenson called *The Kitten's Garden of Verses*, wherein we find this—

> The World is so full of a number of Mice,
> I am sure that we all should be happy and nice.

In his *Book of Animals* he expresses regret that the Shark has such a hard time.

> Think of the Horrid Sailor men
> He has to swallow now and then.

Whereas,

> If only we could make the List,
> Of those on whom He *should* subsist,
> No Home, I'll venture to remark,
> Would be complete without a Shark.

And it is in this work that the porcupine endears himself to author and illustrator, because

> Though full of quills, he does not write.

One of Oliver's best-known poems is that in *The Bashful Earthquake*, where, after describing the sudden cataclysmic explosive finish of our own globe, he imagines that, at the same instant, on another 'planet far'—

> A child may watch us and exclaim,
> 'See the pretty shooting-star'!

A sardonic humorist, you observe.

As for Oliver's prose, there are many examples,

but some of the definitions in *The Deb.'s Dictionary* may serve as typical examples. Such as, 'Ambidextrous: not telling your right hand who is holding your left'; 'Corset: the secret of Uncle Bertie's waist-line';'Diagnosis: inside information through which a doctor discovers how much you have got'; 'Jade: a semi-precious stone and a semi-precious woman'; 'Lottery: an excursion ticket to Perhapsburg'; 'Quotation: the birth-certificate of a wisecrack that knows its own father'; 'Rouge: the fourflush of health.'

An old friend gives me more sidelights on what he calls 'the most lovable person I ever met'. Oliver, it seems, was credited with at least one book that he never wrote or that never was written. The title was announced by the Boston publishers, but that was all. Oliver himself wrote of it, explaining that he was 'much too busy in Boston to attend to such a trivial matter'. But, he added, 'the name is the best part, and this I made up all by myself, very quickly, one day in the publisher's office, when he was telling me there was no time to lose'. He was right: it was *Pen and Inklings.*

Of another book, in verse, he promised that he would send my correspondent one, with 'the dearest regards of the writer'. But should it not arrive, he added, 'will you have the dearest regards, which are much more real than poetry'?

The Herford legend is voluminous, and will—

like the Sydney Smith legend here—continue to grow, and already I have seen attributed to Oliver Max Beerbohm's remark, after enjoying his hostess's honey, 'I must keep a bee.' But Oliver was fertile enough to need no such help. It was he who, during the War, repudiating an offer, wrote that he would not assist any project of the paper's proprietor, 'unless he should contemplate self-destruction'. It was he who said that if a woman's mind is cleaner than a man's, it is because she 'changes it oftener'. It was he who, when a fellow-clubman complained that he had been offered fifty dollars to resign, advised him to 'hold out' for a hundred. It was he who described his wife, Peggy, who died so soon after him, as having a 'whim of iron'. It was he who said that, even in the best-regulated families, actresses would happen. It was he, I believe, who said that an egoist was one who wanted to talk about himself at the same time that you wanted to talk about yourself.

Oliver said in my own presence many good things, but the one which I like best I just missed. It bears upon the two visits which an editor in New York told me Oliver had that very morning paid him: the first when he deposited the drawing he had promised, and, again, ten minutes later, when he had returned to reclaim the elastic band which had been around it. Having selected it from others and stowed it away, Oliver remarked,

'I may disregard many duties and often break engagements, but I do know my own elastic bands,'

As illustrations of the curious aloofness which he could practise, and of that streak of intolerance which one did not at first expect from him, but which increased, I can remember the ferocity of his attack on a fellow-humorist for certain moral laxities, and his willingness to meet an old friend only if so-and-so, another fellow-humorist, were absent. Gradually, indeed, his anti-sociability increased; but I was not there to see. To me Oliver remained the little impish creature, with his eyeglass and his white hair and his sober clothing, who moved unmeaningly about, mysteriously subsisted, made the most excellent jokes, loved the past, and found a peculiar delight in discerning folly in the present and shooting it as it flew.

'A BOY'S ASPIRATIONS'

THERE are certain phrases, strikingly determined in mood, which I have often found myself recollecting from a distant past, and murmuring with dark purpose, but which I could not, as we say, place. While in perfect sympathy with what they say, I could not, or did not, remember when they first entered my head.

I'll get my feet wet whenever I wish

—that is one.

I'll see a pantomime six times a week

is a second. And others are:

I'll have no visitors ever let in

I'll cut my fingers without being hurt

I'll never stand up to show that I've grown

I'll have no governess, giving her hints

—all, you see, defiant and bearing upon a future of complete unrestraint, when the speaker should be sixty years old. Such are among the promises

I used, almost mechanically, to hold out to myself; but their source I could not determine.

But now I know, for chance has just steered into my hands a copy of the book itself—one of those fat little books which were the joy of our early lives. Published by Strachan, it is bound in green with gold lettering, thick, and almost four inches square, in fact, 32—just the attractive pocketable size—and, called *Child-World,* it is a mixture of verse, grave and gay, by 'Two Friends' —the authors also of *Poems Written for a Child,* a uniform volume. Of these friends the book divulged no more than that they called themselves 'A' and 'B', and that 'B' was the author of my own particular delight, 'A Boy's Aspirations'— for it is, of course, a boy, dating from 1870, who had made up his mind that it was worth while waiting until 1930, when he would be sixty and immune.

I'll spoil my best clothes and not care a pin,

he vows, but, alas, at sixty how often best clothes have to be conserved with care!

I'll have no comforters tied round my throat.

Won't he?

The arrival of this dumpy book, which has come from the Continent, whither, in the eighteen-eighties, it had strayed, is another reminder of the freakishness of memory, for when, in the nineties.

I was compiling *A Book of Verses for Children,* and again, a few years later, when I was compiling a sequel to that book and searching near and far for material, I never gave 'A Boy's Aspirations' a thought. There they were, all the desirable, appropriate lines, in my head, somewhere, but during those protracted occupations they never came to the surface.

Pll get my feet wet whenever I wish

—what a magnificent resolve, what a glorious declaration of independence, and how often I uttered it, but never at the right time, never associating it with the whole poem. And this is only another proof that Mnemonica, or whatever the Goddess of Memory should be called, is a capricious lady, refusing ever to deliver all the goods on the same occasion.

The other day—to give another example—when writing, in *The Old Contemporaries,* about my family, I completely forgot an uncle very near to me. This estimable relative had a companion-housekeeper, who, in addition to many significant characteristics, had one remarkable gift, and this was her ability to compress his whole name, John Edward Lucas (which, in the manner of Quakers, she used in full), into what was practically one fluid syllable. I cannot spell it; it defies transcription; but her tongue could contrive it. Well, you would call this the kind of

thing that, at the right moment, Mnemonica would enjoy diving for and bringing to the top. But no, she allowed me, at the critical period, to forget it altogether, just as she allowed me to forget *Child-World* altogether.

At the end of *Child-World* the publisher gives particulars and specimen illustrations of other volumes in this fascinating series—all forgotten now but all very real in the early seventies. *Poems Written for a Child* is one, with a picture, signed W., of a boy and girl arm-in-arm with a fox; *The Magic Mirror,* by William Gilbert, illustrated by W. S. Gilbert, and the same author's *James Duke, Drummer,* illustrated by William Small, are two more; and I find also *Wordsworth's Poems for the Young,* with illustrations by John Pettie, John MacWhirter, and J. E. Millais; *Dealings With the Fairies,* illustrated by Arthur Hughes; and *Lilliput Levee,* illustrated by J. E. Millais, G. J. Pinwell, and others, I know that *Lilliput Levee* was written by William Brighty Rands and that he, who died in 1882, seems to have written his verses and done his other literary work during the leisure allowed by his duties as a Parliamentary reporter, and I know that he was an authority on Chaucer; but his *Lilliput Levee* has been superseded since, and no longer would he be called, as James Payn called him, 'The Laureate of the Nursery'.

Even in 1870 I, personally, should not have

applied the phrase to him, unless, of course, I referred to the living. I think Ann and Jane Taylor much nearer inspiration than he; and we have had, of course, many poets since who have better claims to be the Nursery's Laureate than Rands—the author of 'The Jumblies' and 'The Owl and the Pussy Cat', for instance. I think 'A' and 'B' were in the running at first, although their tendency was to be too long, and, of course, Lewis Carroll had just done his best work. But since 1870, children, at any rate as a literary audience with a sense of fun, may be said to have been discovered, and their latest, and, in some ways, best, poet is Mr. Milne. Between Mr. Milne and William Brighty Rands there is half a century of poetry for children, in which the new manner had time to develop and perfect itself, with Mr. Belloc most memorably aiding.

So much had I printed, when Miss Mary Hunt Millais wrote: 'I have a beautiful little copy of *Poems Written for a Child* given to me by Lewis Carroll (Mr. Dodgson), who thought a great deal of the book. "A" was Miss M. B. Smedley and "B" was Mrs. E. A. Hart. *Lilliput Levee*, by Mr. W. B. Rands, was very popular amongst children about 1870. I sat to my father, Sir John E. Millais, for the little girl in his illustrations—going to sail a boat with my brother George, and saying my prayers as "Polly". Lewis Carroll used to recite some of the *Poems*

Written for a Child, and I especially remember parts of "A Pat of Butter".'

Another correspondent added that most of the poems appeared in *Aunt Judy,* Lewis Carroll having been asked by its editor, Mrs. Ewing, to help in finding material.

So now we know that that aspiring resolute rebel who, at the age of sixty, would not only have such a healthy contempt of risks but would still be young, was Mrs. E. A. Hart—

> Fll hear Mamma say, 'My boy, good as gold,'
> When I'm a grown-up man sixty years old.

A *GUIDE'S* LAPSE

STAINED glass is all very well; but I had a great shock when, the other day, in York, I discovered that in the guide-book with which I had provided myself as an aid to its glories, there was not a single reference to Mr. Richard Turpin. His name was not in the index (nor, under B, was 'Bess, Black'); there was in the museum section nothing about his massive fetters being preserved there; while St. George's Church, in whose graveyard he was buried, is not even mentioned.

An odd way to compile a guide-book to York, especially for a reader whose first association with that place was the unforgettable spectacle (unforgettable although—or perhaps because—it was nearly sixty years ago) of Claude Ginnett, in his father's circus just north of the Level at Brighton, enacting the part of the famous highwayman on his historic ride. Claude was a little swarthy man, who, as Dick Turpin, wore a mask, a three-cornered hat and a brocaded coat, and bestrode a mare of the deepest nigritude; and when he came to a toll-gate, long before the gatekeeper, in a

white nightgown and white tasselled nightcap and carrying a lantern, could open it, he had jumped it and was again on his wild career up the Great North Road. At the end, when, York at last in sight, the faithful Black Bess lay down on the Knavesmire to die, and Richard's bold voice broke as he bade her farewell, it was almost too affecting.

It was odd then on reaching York to find that this profiteer was without honour in his own country's guide-book; and yet there is some reason for that, because inquiry suggests that the glamour that surrounds the name of Dick Turpin is not wholly justified. In fact, it seems to be possible that, although he was tried and executed in York, he came to the city by ordinary stages, and the feat that bears his name and has given it immortality was accomplished by a predecessor of the High Toby named John Nevison (1639—85), known as 'Nicks' or 'Swift Nick'. Normally merely a road-robber, with headquarters at the Talbot Inn at Newark, and his principal victims wayfaring merchants, 'Nicks', when extending his activities as far afield as Gad's Hill in Kent, had the misfortune to kill a Justice of the Peace, whereupon he immediately made for York at top speed to establish an alibi. According to the records, he covered the distance in fifteen hours, just as Dick Turpin is said to have done. Nevison's horse was, however, a bay, while he himself differed

from the hero of my childhood, who, I am afraid, was merely a common scoundrel, in being 'a person of quick understanding, tall in stature, every way proportionable, exceeding valiant, having also the air and carriage of a gentleman'. But we find a resemblance to Dick again in the circumstance that Nevison also had a painful and disastrous interview with the York hangman, the date of his demise being either March I5th or May 4th, 1685.

John Nevison would seem to have been of the school of Claude Duval, who had met his end in a similar way fifteen years before, at Tyburn. Nevison was from Pontefract, and Turpin from Hempstead in Essex, but Duval was a Norman, having been born at Domfront in 1643, and not reaching England until the Restoration, when he came over in the suite of the Duke of Richmond. Not even the excitements of the court of the Merry Monarch were, however, sufficient for him, and he took to the road and soon became at once its terror, and, in a way, its pride, his gallantries to his fairer victims, and the minuets danced with them, passing into history. He fled to France when England became too hot for him, and had he remained there, might have seen old age; but there being an irresistible fascination in his lawless calling, back he came and was arrested, and, although 'many great ladies are said to have interceded for his life', he danced a

final dance, on air this time, on January 2ist, 1670.

No great equestrian performance is given to Claude Duval; and if Richard Turpin, who lived some years later—from 1706 to 1739—has, with Black Bess, the credit of the ride to York, it is due chiefly to Harrison Ainsworth, whose novel, *Rookwood*, gives it to him. That was written in 1834. Three years later Dick received another fillip: from Sam Weller's song, in *Pickwick*, which so displeased the mottle-faced gentleman in a blue shawl.

> And the Bishop says, 'Sure as eggs is eggs,
> This here's the bold Tur-pin.'

—for which words, sounding to me very like a compliment, Dick shot him through the gullet, and then 'put a couple of balls in the coachman's nob and perwailed on him to stop'. It was the statement that the coachman had to be perwailed on to stop that so infuriated the mottle-faced man, who, a coachman too, considered it a reflection on the cloth. 'I say that that coachman did *not* run away; but that he died game—game as pheasants.'

We all have different tastes; but is it not the duty of those who compile guide-books to respect other people's? Hence, even if the Turpin legend had to be questioned and even destroyed, I think that a word as to the city's most notorious

malefactor should be included. But to be quite fair, I would add that York is so rich in treasures, and guide-books have to be so small, that it is possible that Dick was once in but had to be crowded out at the last moment; and if it was the stained glass in the Minster that displaced him, I withdraw all charges.

The Five Sisters! No highwayman, however romantic—and Dick seems to have been nothing but a selfish blackguard—should stand between the visitor to York and those visions of sweet gravity and beauty: beauty of colour and beauty of form. I had just been reading the late A. E. Housman's account of the effect on himself of true poetry; and, coming suddenly on the Five Sisters, I experienced feelings very similar.

Indeed, the morning was almost too emotional, for this chanced to be the hour of noon, when, every day, a leaf of the Golden Book of the West Yorkshire Regiment—the Roll of Honour of those who fell in the War—is ceremonially turned over by a messenger from the barracks. It was just as I was leaving that he came in, this young soldier, through the door of the South Transept, removed his cap, advanced to the regimental chapel, faced the desk whereon the great illuminated volume is kept, replaced his cap, clicked his heels, took a step forward, saluted, turned the page, saluted again, took a step backward, clicked

his heels, removed his cap, marched again to the portal, replaced his cap, and was gone—the last stroke of twelve booming forth even as he vanished.

GEORGES TWAIN

THE Bayeux tapestry—which in the original may be seen at Caen in France and in facsimile in London—breaks off with the victory of the Normans, when there were twenty-three years of the Conqueror's life still to run; and thereafter the centre of gravity, so far as the Duke of Normandy, as distinguished from King of England, was concerned, shifted to Caen, which, on his frequent crossings from realm to realm, William made his French headquarters and considered his home town. His Queen and Duchess, Matilda, although the tapestry so identifies her with Bayeux, was also attached to Caen, where in 1062, as her contribution to the expiatory deed demanded by the Vatican for committing the offence of marrying her first cousin, she had begun the great nunnery of the Trinity; William, for his part, having to give to Caen the monastery of St. Stephen. Popes, you observe, will be Popes. Later he was to build the abbey at Battle; but his heart was in the Caen foundation, where he designed one day to lie.

But you can see to-day only the last resting-

place of Matilda, in the middle of her abbey choir, for William's grave was twice violated, once by the Huguenots in 1562 and again, by the Revolutionists, in 1793, and not a vestige remains: merely, in the pavement before the high altar, a record of the position it once occupied. It might be thought that the Conqueror would have wished to be buried in Westminster Abbey, as his predecessor and cousin, Edward the Confessor, had been; not only because he was King of England, but because he had won to that supreme honour by might; but it must be remembered that he was before everything, a Frenchman, and Frenchmen like their own soil best.

But it was less of Norman Kings and Queens that I was thinking as I moved about the noisy city of Caen, than of that pitiable husk of a man who a hundred years ago was a familiar figure in its streets, a shadow of his former insolence and splendour: George Bryan Brummell, condemned by his extravagance and want of conscience to a degraded exile in a foreign land. A king, too, in his time; not, like the Conqueror, a legislator for a nation, but for his fellow-dandies. 'Let whoso will make the laws of a country,' he might have said, 'so long as I can devise its neckties,' And it was an English vice-king, too, who for a while allowed him to share his pre-eminence and prestige; for, until the break came, George the Prince Regent and George the Beau might be called two

other Kings of Brentford, their Brentford being St. James's Street; their sceptres, clouded canes; their orbs, snuff-boxes; and their crowns, tilted hats. In the Beau's great days at 4, Chesterfield Street, while dressing, he was frequently visited by the Regent; and it is on record that once, when Brummell was unable to extend his approval to the cut of one of the Regent's new coats, the Regent 'blubbered'.

George Brummell's rise to power is, perhaps, the most remarkable thing about him, for, although he had wit, he had, beside his exterior, little but effrontery; and I can find no record of his ever doing anything for any one but himself. 'Love yourself, and the world will love you,' say the French; but I doubt if Brummell won much of that divine quality. Of comparatively humble extraction, he made the fullest use of associations formed at Eton, and his patrimony and an amusing sense of words helped him still further. Some of his carefully planned speeches, always made in the presence of the right listener, are perfect of their kind—their kind being advertisement, or, as we say now, publicity: as when, after his return from a tour of the Westmorland country, on a noble visitor asking what scenery had most pleased him, he rang the bell for his man: Tray tell his Lordship which Lake we liked best.' Again, when asked by a beggar for a halfpenny, he replied that he knew nothing of any coin

of that name, but 'Here is a shilling for you'; and on being given by a shopkeeper three or four pennies as change, he sent for a porter and bade him 'carry this luggage to my hotel', handing him half a crown for his trouble.

But Beau Brummell lives, and will live, by the colossal impudence of his comment on his former and now alienated associate, the Regent, when, overtaking him with a friend in the Row, he nodded in the direction of the First Gentleman in Europe, asking, 'Who's your fat friend?' That needed doing. Whoever told the tale, these sayings were spread about and served their purpose.

It was over a snuff-box that the break had come. The Prince wished to give the Beau one of these articles as a personal souvenir, and it was to have the Royal features on the lid, surrounded by diamonds. While the goldsmiths were busy with it, the Beau arrived at Claremont, where the Prince was giving a party, but was met by his host with the request that he would return to London, as a fellow-guest, Mrs. Fitzherbert, did not wish his company. Brummell re-entered his chaise without a word, but, sending at once for the snuff-box, was told that the Prince had countermanded it; and from that moment there was enmity.

Strangely enough, it was also a snuff-box that brought about the only semblance of reconciliation that ever occurred, for when, in 1821, the

Prince, now King of England, passed through Calais, where Brummell had taken refuge from his creditors, and was told by one of his suite that his ancient crony was there, and was even reminded of the gift that had failed, he sent him, in another and inferior snuff-box, a hundred guineas.

From Calais Brummell moved on, in 1830, to Caen, first as British Consul, with some kind of status, and, after, with none, as a kind of professional *convive* guest of every one who stayed at the Hotel d'Angleterre. In the manner of the collegians who used to be generous to the Father of the Marshalsea, in *Little Dorrit*, it was the habit of English visitors, seeing the wreck of this flamboyant figure, to offer him food and drink. Even in France, however, although safe from the fellow-countrymen whom he had defrauded, Brummell ran into debt, and for a while was in the Caen prison. Later he declined into a condition first of repulsive self-neglect, and then of insanity, and he died in the Bon Sauveur in 1840, aged sixty-two, and was buried in the Protestant cemetery, where you will have great difficulty in finding his grave. Thus came one golden lad to dust, seventeen years after the other, who had been buried in state at Windsor.

A BEST SELLER

SINCE most fashions recur, we may at any time expect the arrival of another short-story writer in verse to reach a public comparable in size to those which hung upon the lips of Mrs. Mary Sewell, in the middle of the last century, and, towards the end, of George R. Sims, author of the 'Dagonet' ballads. Latterly our poets have been more disposed to the lyric than the narrative form, with the exception of Mr. Masefield's three or four experiments; but these, I fancy, do not number readers in such profusion. Mrs. Sewell's *Homely Ballads,* 1858, a book which lies before me at this moment, was in its seventh thousand within a year; *Mother's Last Words,* published in 1860, sold over 1,000,000 copies, and *Our Father's Care,* in 1861, over 700,000. And the curious part of this amazing success is that the author was sixty before she took to verse at all; or at any rate to the kind of writing by which she is known, where the utmost directness of manner conveys the old, old doctrine that if you do wrong you will be punished. Dagonet, although his message was similar, was more

sophisticated: he wrote more or less as the lady did, I imagine, because there was money in it; but Mrs. Sewell had no complications: she taught in numbers because the numbers came, and she was a severe moralist because her beliefs lay there.

Her public was deliberately chosen. *Homely Ballads for the Working Man's Fireside* is the full title of her first book, her belief being 'that there exists amongst them generally an instinctive love and appreciation of simple descriptive poetry; and that, both morally and intellectually, it is of more importance to them to have the imagination cultivated and refined by the higher sentiment of poetry, than it can be to those who have the advantage of a liberal education; to the one, it is a luxury—to the other, an almost needful relaxation from the severe and irksome drudgery of their daily lot'. As for Mrs. Sewell's manner, it is incredibly simple. This is how 'The Miller's Wife', a matter of a hundred stanzas, begins:

Young Annie Smith was dairymaid
At Brookland on the hill;
The pretty farm that lies above
Old Jacob Slater's mill.

The story follows familiar lines.

She was a bonny little lass
As e'er you'd look upon;
No wonder, then, she stole the heart
Of Slater's miller, John.

There are, however, surprises. John did not turn out badly. For instance,

> His mates would often sneer and laugh,
> And tempt him to a pot;
> But he would let them laugh away,
> He scorned to be a sot.

Moreover,

> Tobacco he would never buy.

The miller's first child died at some length; but then came others, who prospered:

> She did not stuff their little mouths
> With cakes and lumps of meat.
> She said that porridge was the thing
> That children ought to eat.

Then came another blow: John broke his leg. But just when things were at the worst and he was talking about the poorhouse, he was given a job as time-keeper. His wife, however, had never faltered. ' 'Twas you,' said John,

> ' 'Twas you that kept my spirits up.
> 'Twas you kept bed and board';
> But Annie kissed his cheek and said,
> 'Dear John, it was the Lord.'

Among Mrs. Sewell's other titles are 'The Thieves' Ladder', 'The Guilty Conscience; or, Hell Begun', 'Mrs. Godliman' (the panegyric of a cheerful Lady Bountiful, and 'The Young

English Gentleman', a boy of twelve who knew how to behave:

He ne'er was seen to teaze a cat,
Nor set a dog to fight,
Nor beat down insects with his hat—
That was not his delight.

But he would sometimes share his meal
With poorer boys than he;
He had a noble heart to feel
And do a charity.

Then there are 'The Young Nurse Girl', 'The Bad Manager', and 'The Funeral Bell', the panegyric of Adam Hope, a village benefactor:

O, what will become of the destitute poor?
He was eyes to the blind, he was feet to the lame;
To the fatherless orphan he opened his door
And the widow's heart sung at the sound of his name.

And finally, 'The Drunkard's Wife':

Her father never thought of her,
Poor helpless innocent!
But often down that dismal stair
Her trembling feet were sent.

On, through the foul and filthy haunts
Of misery and sin,
Into the drunkards' palaces,
To get her father gin.

Such was the muse of Mary Sewell, a Victorian poet whose success must not a little have perplexed

Tennyson, who ought perhaps, when he wrote 'Enoch Arden', to have put it into rhyme instead of blank verse. But Mrs. Sewell and 'Dagonet' seem to have been the last of the narrative poets. Their only companion in popularity, the late Wilhelmina Stitch, won her fame purely as a didactic or ecstatic lyricist, disguising her brief flights in verse, her 'Fragrant Minutes', as prose.

Another link between Tennyson and the moralist balladmonger is that each wrote a poem with sixty years of retrospect in it. The flying 'train', Mrs. Sewell wrote, in 1858,

> was then a hidden thing,
> The gas-lit city but a fairy dream;
> And gold-fields—common now as flowers in spring—
> And boiling water moving ships by steam. . . .

Coming to more intimate affairs, we have these lines:

> A cup of tea was then for ladies' drink,
> For working people it was far too dear;
> How little did those thrifty housewives think
> 'Twould soon be common as their home-brewed beer!

Reading these words to-day, when the word 'Teas' is found wherever the eye turns, we may feel some of the thrifty housewives' surprise too, not that there should be tea at all, but that there ever was an England without it. Yet Mrs. Sewell was right. At the end of the eighteenth century, the period she was recalling, the average con-

sumption of tea in England was only two pounds a year per person, and not until 1840 was any serious effort made to popularize it. But not even yet do we really appreciate this beverage, and I wonder if, before next Easter arrives to remind us that the country is better than the town —for that I think is the opening of the touring season, whether on foot or in car—something could be done to see that a sufficient supply of it is at our service. At the present time tea is provided only by every other cottage in England. Could not the others be forced to come in too? Is it right that any one living beside road or lane or by-pass should not have a sign bearing the magic four letters?

Mrs. Sewell, who was born in 1797, lived to be eighty-seven, as a good Quaker should. Her contributions to literature did not end with her own books, for she had a daughter, Anne, who also conferred happiness by her pen, producing one of the most enthralling and, in the end, pathetic, stories for children that can be found, *Black Beauty.*

TREES

I WOULD not go so far as to say, with some challenging assertive people, that trees are more beautiful than flowers, and, indeed, when trees are flowers too, I find little pleasure in them. The avenue of white horse-chestnuts in bloom at Bushey has never attracted me, although I grant them splendour, whereas pink horse-chestnuts and pink mays alike I find positively repellent. But the almond in early spring is a delight; and how rich are London gardens in this unexpected touch of colour! The magnolia, the laburnum, the cherry, the crab apple—all these trees that are flowers, or flowers that are trees—have their special grace, and, blossoming early, help towards that inward glow which insists that there will be another summer after all. My favourite flowering tree in England is, however, that curious subtle symphony in green, the Tulip tree, which one sees so seldom and which does not fling out its blossoms every year; while in France I always look forward to a certain Judas tree which blooms at the opening of every spring racing season at Longchamps.

But these are all gentle creatures. For sheer triumphant, almost insolent, beauty there is nothing like the Flame of the Forest, which, burning among the woods, and topping all its sober neighbours, one sees in Jamaica and Ceylon.

In a charming 'Child's Song' by the late E. Nesbit (Mrs. Hubert Bland) I find this stanza:

> The chestnut's proud, and the lilac's pretty,
> The poplar's gentle and tall,
> But the plane tree's kind to the poor dull city—
> But I love him best of all.

And my own most constant arboreal companion is the plane tree in the Temple which I see from my window, a magnificent growth which displays no undue haste to be green in the spring, in summer is like a tent, and in the autumn covers the ground with enough articles of clothing for all the statues in the world. Birds used to build in it, until some irritable advocates or wanton clerks shot at them with air-guns and either killed them or drove them away.

I wonder how many readers of these words can remember the merriment that was caused one day in the eighteen-nineties when an indignant lady wrote to *The Times* to ask if nothing could be done to prevent the defacement of London's plane trees by the mischievous people who tear off their bark?

For some odd reason, there is a superstition that the plane tree flourishes only in our capital,

but nowhere have I seen finer examples than in France. I remember two in a meadow in the Marne during the War, in which there was almost always an oriole fluting against the distant bombardment. Not long ago a conference in France on the best tree to plant beside roads came to the conclusion that the plane was not to be excelled. In the neighbourhood of Montpelier one passes through miles of them.

There used to be a saying that to plant an avenue was the most altruistic of deeds, for it can be appreciated only by our descendants, sons possibly, grandsons certainly. And of most of the most famous avenues this is true. But there are certain trees which yield quicker results and which the selfish may safely adopt, such as the birch; but the grower must bestow more care and thought on them than the contractors do who plant the miserable saplings beside many of our by-passes and then forget their existence. The man who plants a sapling, and ties it to a supporting post, and then omits to renew the cord—there is for him, I hope, in the future life, a particular penance.

One of the most interesting avenues that I know is the double avenue on Bucklebury Common in Berkshire, consisting of two rows of oaks of differing sizes. The largest row was planted in 1715 to commemorate the Battle of Blenheim; the smaller row in 1815 to commemorate Water-

100. One can thus, walking here, not only be reminded of historic victories but also have direct instruction in the growth of trees.

But the idea of the avenue is too stimulating; and I should like to spend the rest of my life in exploring every one. The first that I can remember was in Buxted Park: venerable lime trees, with deer straying among their trunks; the last that I saw, to cause by its exotic magnificence an emotion comparable to that early Buxted thrill, was in the Botanical Gardens at Rio, where a double row of the loftiest and noblest palms I ever imagined—the *Oreodoxa regia*—climbs the hill.

In an interesting history of that imaginative institution, the Royal Society of Arts, I have been reading how, in its very early days, it took arboriculture under its motherly wing, urging the planting of trees, and how, in 1758, it awarded the Duke of Beaufort a gold medal, and, in 1761, the Duke of Bedford a silver medal (a curious distinction), for sowing their land with acorns. These dates are peculiarly interesting to me because they suggest that it may have been the publicity given to the awards that stimulated the young Charles Goring, of Wiston Place in Sussex, to climb to the top of the massive down known as Chanctonbury, above his homes and, in 1760, plant there that grove of beech trees which, known as Chanctonbury Ring, is prob-

ably more familiar than any clump in this land, and which may be said to have half Sussex under its tutelage. Most planters of such landmarks die before they are mature; but Charles Goring was more fortunate. As a boy, he said:

> ... an almost hopeless wish
> Would creep within my breast.
> Oh! could I live to see thy top
> In all its beauty dressed!

But he did live, and in 1828, then an old man in the eighties, he was able to thank God that the clump had grown and that in the spring he could see its new clothed beeches gilded by the sun.

Sussex not only has this Ring, to be seen from so many parts (and indeed its visibility is employed by house-agents as an additional lure), but she possesses also, in the north-west district, a famous mound with a single tree upon it, an elm, known as Nell Ball, which in the neighbourhood has a fame no less than Chanctonbury and from its summit provides an astonishing panorama north, south, east and west. Lovers of trees should know that between Nell Ball and the South Downs, Goodwood way, stretches one of the least frequented of our old English forests, very like the New Forest in formation, with sudden lawns and wild deer, but from which the noble word 'forest' has now dropped away, leaving only 'common'. Ebernoe Common may be its name,

but it is forest too, and I can give no better advice to those who like primitive country than, next April, say, when the tender green puts forth, to take a lunch basket there, or, in July, to watch the 'Horns' cricket match.

Whether the Royal Society of Arts is still concerned with plantations, I cannot say, but there are the 'Men of the Trees', a group of amateur enthusiasts, to carry on the work, and there is the organized Forestry Commission always active. In fact, so active that during the season of 1934 they planted 53,928,000 specimens, made up of Scots and Corsican pines, 15,184,000; European and Japanese larches, 7,765,000; Douglas fir, 1,230,000; Norway and Sitka spruces, 24,018,000; oak 1,785,000; ash 411,000; beech, 1,794,000; others, 1,741,000. These are terrific figures. Let us rest our bewildered minds by remembering the five Grace Darling oaks that will commemorate the heroic deed of herself and her father on September 7th, 1828. The first was planted the other day in Battersea Park; the other four are to be planted in the course of the next years in British ports abroad; and I have just heard of the 'Squires of Mons', that association of the sons of Australian soldiers who fought in the Great War: young men binding themselves together to 'uphold and perpetuate the splendid traditions of our forefathers and their glorious dead at Mons in 1914 by evidencing Chivalry,

Courage and Service'. On August 28th, 1935, the Squires of Mons planted an oak at Mons in New South Wales.

Here let me quote four lines from the urbane and courtly pen of James Russell Lowell, the Ambassador to St. James's from a country where the profession of tree-surgeon is honoured. 'Who does his duty', he began, and I hope I am quoting with accuracy,

> Who does his duty is a question
> Too complex to be solved by me;
> But he, I venture the suggestion,
> Does part of his that plants a tree.

To this I would add another question, too complex to be solved by me—whether he who plants a tree or he who spares a tree is the more to be commended. The destruction of trees in the recent craze for new houses has been widespread and often unnecessary and wanton. Next to the loss of friends, the loss of trees is a matter for grief—the destruction, all in a moment, of what has been particularly and beautifully growing for all those years. And for no other purpose than to create a new suburb. As one of *Mr. Punch's* poets expressed it:

> Less than a little year ago
> This spot was rural as could be;
> You saw no dwelling-place, because
> There was no dwelling-place to see.

The happy meadows spread around,
The oaks and ashes flourished there,
And weary townsfolk walked that way
To get 'a breath of country air'.

But now two rows of villas stand
Exactly on that sheltered site;
And water now has every house,
And every house electric light.

The placid cattle browse no more,
The birds that used to sing have flown;
But every house a garage has,
And every house a telephone.

'Well, well,' I said as, looking round,
I realized the altered scene;
'The people must be extra nice
To justify such loss of green.

Yes, extra nice,' as once again
I sensed the new urbanities,
'The people must be extra nice
To compensate for all those trees.'

On the other hand, but for the extension of towns and the invasion and curtailment of the country, how would many persons ever be able to live in that country at all, urbanized though it be? Again there is a question too difficult for me.

As I write these words, the meadows around the house are covered with fallen leaves so that when the November sun shines on them it is as though the grass were turned to gold. This is a

fleeting but very pleasing effect, coupled always with the increasing beauty of the trees as their boughs and twigs become bare and make once more that delicate pattern against the sky which I have not seen since April. The time of full leaf has a radiance of its own—at the end of June, say—but to my eyes the tender green following the bursting of the buds, and especially on the silver birch and the beech, is best; and then the pure nakedness of winter. The burning tints of the Fall, though they have their resplendence, have their sadness too. I do not find winter sad.

HAPPY ENGLAND

THE suggestion has been made that there was an irreconcilable incompatibility between the life of George Morland and his works; he so deplorably dissipated and degraded, and they so bloomy and idyllic. But I do not see why. I see no reason why a sot should not, in his non-sottish hours, think only of the pleasant homely things, of the gentlest horses and the woolliest sheep, and paint them accordingly. George Morland was, it is true, an incorrigible sot, but also, when at his easel, he was an incorrigible optimist; and there you are. But his, surely, is a very curious case; and it is more curious when we realize that no other English painter was more imitated, more engraved, or more forged. George Morland had nothing to offer but kindly, well-dressed rustics, pretty country girls, and, as I have said, the gentlest horses and the woolliest sheep; but as he painted them exquisitely, with every kind of loving touch, he was in more than steady demand.

I was hearing not long ago that, before the War, Birket Foster's prices had fallen to a few guineas.

And then the War made rich a certain kind of man who thought with tears in his eyes of England, and wanted about him representations of the England of his delight, warm and sunny and reposeful, rich with crops and healthy village children swinging on gates; and Birket Foster's prices went up again, and have, I believe, stayed up. George Morland, or rather those who profited by him, enjoyed something of the same experience. The time when he painted was a time, before the worst menace of Napoleon, when we were wealthy, and proud of England and what was characteristic of her; and Morland's plump cattle and well-fed steeds and prosperous, comely swains gave us agreeable thoughts, and we liked to have them on the walls—an original, if possible, but if not, a hand-coloured stipple or mezzotint engraving of such passages. We liked Morland's transcripts of England just as the Dutch a hundred and fifty years before had liked the Dutch painters' transcripts of Dutch life. They gave a comforting sensation that all was well.

And so it was, except, as it happened, with the artist, who was usually drunk.

George Morland, the son of a painter and the grandson of two painters, was born in London on 26 June, 1763, and was an infant prodigy. At the age of three he began to draw, at the age of ten he was exhibiting in the Royal Academy, and

by the time he was seventeen his picture 'The Angler's Repast' had been engraved by William Ward and was in great demand. George's father, Henry Morland, who was known chiefly by his two portraits, now at the Tate, of the girl ironing and the girl washing, did all he could to encourage his son, made him copy from the Dutch and learn from every picture that he could. But even while the boy was under his father's roof, his wild caprices had begun; and directly he could escape, he did, and thereafter, although the need of money for his follies made him do a certain amount of work for the dealers who had captured him, he spent as little time as possible at the easel and as much as possible in the society of prize-fighters, grooms, tapsters and topers—very often at the 'Flask', at Highgate, which still exists almost as it was. And so to the miserable end, in 1804, when, in his own words, he died at forty, 'a drunken dog'. 'Here lies a drunken dog,' was the epitaph he designed for himself.

Sober artists are easy to find, but artists and the bottle have often, too, been friends—a theme on which I do not propose to enlarge. The alliance is not difficult of explanation when we remember that artists are genial fellows who work while it is day, and when the light goes can have difficulty in getting through the time. But of all the artists who could drink too much, none can compare with George Morland.

I must not be thought to be ignorant of Morland the moralist, for in addition to glimpses of bucolic blessedness he could reap also in Hogarth's fields, and, for the engraver, produce such contrasts as 'The Fruits of Early Industry and Economy' and 'The Effects of Extravagance and Idleness'; 'The Miseries of Idleness' and 'The Comforts of Industry'; and I am saying nothing of his competition with Wheatley in his 'Visit to the Child at Home' and 'Visit to the Boarding School', in his 'Children Birdsnesting', 'Children Playing at Soldiers', and his 'Dancing Dogs'. I know his whole range, and, knowing it, I am aware both that George was at his best and most characteristic when he was portraying country life, and that, try as he might, he could never depict wickedness. Even his attempts at villains are prepossessing. His very smugglers are Arcadians.

Good Morlands still command good prices, and you have but to go to the National Gallery to see why; for at the top of the stairs, on the left, his 'Stable Interior', No. 1030, hangs, and if you want a more comfortable work of art I am at a loss what to commend—unless, of course, it is another George Morland. All his gifts are here, with additional size added; for it is a big picture, painted in 1786, when he was twenty-three; here are his softness, his tenderness, his luminosity, his simplicity, and his very remarkable skill. To

which should be added the fact that his colour remains fresh and pure, for he was one of those artists who mixed from powder his own paint; and yet he was almost always drunk.

Morland's case is indeed a bad one for the preacher, because he did so much, and set so much machinery in motion, on the side of the angels. He may not himself have been innocent; his imitators certainly were not; but without Morland to show the way, the world would not suddenly have been enriched by pictures painted, and pictures engraved, of rural and lowly felicity. The records of Morland's sordid, self-indulgent life, which, as I have said, finished when he was forty, tell us that in addition to being usually drunk, he was always in debt, always hiding from his creditors, and, except for a very brief period, was without any sense of responsibility. But he left behind him a mass of admirable work, and, so far as his work is concerned, an admirable tradition. Very difficult for the Rev. This and Canon That!

George Morland may have called himself 'a drunken dog', but what adorable pictures the 'drunken dog' made! They may not be great, they may not be epoch-making, but they cannot be viewed without pleasure. Even the spurious ones have their own appeal; and that is why I advise those readers who possess genuine George Morlands to seek expert opinion.

SOMETHING IN COMMON

THE nineteen eminent persons who, in the remarks that follow, will be found gathered together, probably for the first time and last, have been thus assembled because they have one point of resemblance. What that point is, is for the reader to guess.

So strangely assorted a company could not be made orderly, but an appearance of tidiness can be obtained by taking them alphabetically. Joseph Bramah, then, who invented the lock which bears his name, was born in 1748 and died in 1814. In addition to the famous lock, he devised an hydraulic press, and he was among the first to realize that steam vessels could be propelled by screws. He also perfected a machine, now not too much in use, for mending quill pens, and, far more popular, a beer engine. His claim that his lock was unpickable held good until thirty-seven years after his death, when, at the Great Exhibition of 1851, an American named Hobbs came along, and, performing the impossible, picked up also the £200 reward offered by the patentees.

Robert Burns was not recognized as a poet until he was twenty-six, when he produced 'The Twa Herds', based on a theological dispute at Kilmarnock. The satire, circulating in manuscript copies, had a great local vogue. His next effort, also published by hand, so to speak, was that scathing masterpiece 'Holy Willie's Prayer', which he soon after provided with some kind of antidote in 'The Cottar's Saturday Night', in memory of the simple piety of his father. It was not until 1786, when he was twenty-seven, that Burns was printed, and the resulting volume, known as the Kilmarnock Edition, is now worth its weight in gold.

The author of *Hudibras*, Samuel Butler, who was born in 1612, blossomed far later than the national poet of Scotland, for he spent the first half of his adult life as a private secretary, or clerk of the works, to various country gentlemen, chiefly Puritans, one of whom, Sir Samuel Luke of Cople Hoo, near Bedford, is said to have supplied the groundwork of our most famous mock-heroics. Now and then Butler painted a miniature, having acquired from the great Samuel Cooper the elements of this art. He was even permitted by Cromwell to make a portrait from life—warts, we must suppose, and all. It was not until 1663 that there crept into the world the rhyming satire called *Hudibras*, which instantly succeeded, not alone because it afforded opportunities for that

always popular game, fitting-the-cap. Charles the Second, ordinarily no bookworm, could hardly be separated from his copy, taking it even to church.

James Cook, known as Captain Cook, whose lean circumnavigating figure is familiar to Londoners from the statue in the Mall, near the Admiralty, was born at Merton in Yorkshire in 1728, and at an early age became a sailor, serving first on vessels in the Baltic trade. The first ship he commanded was, in 1759, the *Mercury*', in which he went to Canada to sound the St. Lawrence and thus assist the British fleet; but it was in the *Endeavour,* in 1769—71, that he began his career as an explorer and gave to New South Wales (now chiefly famous as the home of Donald George Bradman) its name, and named also Botany Bay (although I think it was more probably Sir Joseph Banks, who was with the expedition, that did that) and Endeavour Straits. Cook's last ship was the *Resolution,* in which he was exploring the Pacific when he was killed by the natives in Hawaii in 1779.

Samuel Crompton, the inventor of the spinning mule, a machine used in the manufacture of muslin, who was born near Bolton in 1753, need not detain us long, although the universal possession of muslin blinds is, I often think, one of the most curious things about this country; but William Dampier, another circumnavigator, who, how-

ever, unlike Cook, combined piracy with his enterprise, deserves attention. He went early to sea, and by the time he was twenty had seen fighting against the Dutch. After a period in Jamaica on a sugar plantation, he took to buccaneering, his special prey being the ships of Spain in the Pacific. His adventures were related by himself in a series of letters and diaries, showing how he oscillated between wealth and poverty; and he did not return to England until 1691, when his sole means of subsistence was a curiously tattooed Meangis islander whom he proposed to exhibit for gain, and would have done so had not death snatched his prey. Thereafter for many years Dampier engaged in various expeditions, one of which would have made him wealthy had he not died before the distribution of the prize-money. As a man he seems to have had little character, but as an hydrographer he did valuable work.

From piracy at sea it is simple to pass to its land equivalent, highway robbery, a perilous calling well upheld by William Davis of Sodbury in Gloucestershire, who worked on symmetrical lines, robbing by night the customers to whom he had sold grain by day. After a successful career, both as an honest dealer and a rogue, so cleverly concealing his double life as to raise no suspicions either in his wife or among his neighbours, he retired; but suddenly needing money,

and returning to his old mode of life to get it, he was caught, and sentenced to be hanged at the entrance to Salisbury Court, *off* Fleet Street, on the spot where on this last escapade he had been so unfortunate as to kill one of the pursuing host, a butcher. As, however, Davis died before the day of execution, his body was instead hung in chains on Bagshot Heath.

From one who took life we now turn to one who would preserve it—to William Harvey, of Folkestone (where you may see his seated effigy facing the Channel), the discoverer of the circulation of the blood. What all the physicians of the world had thought the blood did, before Harvey told them, I cannot conceive; but such was their incuriousness that Harvey has the statue. Next to him I must place John Ireland, of Wem, in Shropshire, the popularizer of Hogarth, and next to Ireland, Richard Jefferies, the naturalist and author of that remarkable piece of spiritual self-revelation, *The Story of My Hearty* and also of the forecast of post-civilization called *After London,* which every one now plunged into perplexity and peril by the modern developments of the capital should rejoice to read.

Master Hugh Latimer, the reformer and martyr, may seem strangely placed here; but so the alphabet directs. His birthplace was Thurcaston, in Leicestershire, in 1485: his death-place 'the ditch over against Balliol College', Oxford,

seventy years later, in the reign of the sanguinary Queen. With him was Nicholas Ridley, Bishop of London, to whom, as every schoolboy knows, Latimer said, 'Be of good comfort. Master Ridley, we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out.' It is no fault of mine, I assure you, that the next name on our list is that of Tom Paine, of Thetford, Norfolk, the Freethinker, whose ambition was to blow that candle out.

Next to him, we come to travel again, with Mungo Park, a Selkirkshire man, who, after some training as a surgeon and botanist, became a famous African explorer, and lived to prove his theory that the Niger, on whose banks he died in 1806, 'could flow nowhere but into the sea'. Passing over George Parr, the Nottinghamshire cricketer and hitter to leg, and Thomas Parr (1483-1635), the oldest man, whose longevity is said largely to be due to his inordinate powers of sleep, we come to Sir Joseph Paxton, who gave us the Crystal Palace and was knighted for it; to Thomas Telford, the engineer and maker of roads; and, finally, to George Smith, who founded that magnificent work of reference, the *Dictionary of National Biography,* but for which I should not have been able to collect all this information.

There, those are the nineteen, all told, a list which could no doubt be indefinitely extended. "And what is the one point that these so diversified

men of eminence have in common? Those who know need not be told; those who do not know could never guess. They are all farmers' sons.

OUR FRIEND THE ROBIN

WHATEVER may be the private life of the robin—and I have heard gruesome stories of how the young ones put the old to death—it is acknowledged that he is the bird of our winter affections. We have agreed to forget the past and, with pleasure, to think only of his current activities—his companionableness, his cheerfulness, his fearlessness, the gay expanse of his red waistcoat, his merry eye, and, most of all, his sweet, if slender, rivulet of melody. In the spring he is less prominent, while he and his wife are seeking sites in which to build, often an old hat or tin, so odd as to attract the attention of the local reporter and ensure the resultant paragraph, 'Robin's Strange Nesting-place'. In the summer his voice is lost in the universal choir. In the autumn he is with us, although not too noticeably. It is in the winter that he comes into his own—draws nearer and nearer to the gardener, perches on spades and wheelbarrows, puffs out his chest, straddles his infinitesimal legs and trills his pretty song. In short, he has become the friend of man and the comforter of man; and

if his notes could be translated into English, they would assure us that the leaves will come back and the annual miracle of the renaissance will be fulfilled.

I should not dare to parallel his song in words, but a real ornithologist thus does so: 'The usual cries are a sharp "tik", sometimes rapidly repeated; a long-drawn plaintive intense note, "ptzee", uttered especially when the young are in danger; also a "tsip" or "tsip-ip", frequently heard during the winter territorial disputes, and also serving the hen as a begging note for food,' Thus the real ornithologist; but to my unlearned ear the song is more musical than that.

So far as I can gather, whereas the cock bird is normally so much the finer, in the case of Mr. and Mrs. Robin there is something very like equality. Both fly the red flag. The children are more mottled, more yellow, but they too, in time, will be ruddy. It is they, before they develop into suspicion, who are so bold as to sit on our fingers. I never knew one with such address as Thomson's, in 'The Seasons', who knocks at the window, and, being let in, snuggles by the fire; but I have known them very intimate, and have coaxed them that way with little pellets made of butter and brown sugar.

What a beneficent thing, I have often thought—and never so feelingly as when watching a kingfisher—it would be if there were more under-

standing between birds and men. What pleasure, for instance, a kingfisher could distribute, what simple exciting delight he could impart, if it were widely known that at a certain time every day he would be on view at a certain spot and dart up and down for, say, only five minutes! There are countless persons in England upon whose eyes has never fallen the ecstasy of this marvellous bird's swift and jewelled flight; there are none who have seen as many kingfishers as they would like. It ought to be so easy to arrange; and it would be so good for all of us. But it is, I suppose, impossible. The indomitable ingenuity of man can arrange for photographs of a cricketer batting in England to be sold in Australia a few minutes after the close of his innings; the indomitable ingenuity of man can get the intricate plangent cadences of Debussy into every farm labourer's cottage in England and the Continent at the same moment; it can fly the Atlantic and tunnel the Mersey and split the atom. But to persuade a beautiful blue bird to keep punctual hours is beyond its attainment.

To make at all sure of the phenomenon I desire, one would have to do as Mr. Kearton did, and conceal oneself in an artificial cow; or become a country postman. I say a postman, because the only person I ever met who knew of a sure place and time for such a joy, was a postman at Midhurst in Sussex, who told me of a bridge on his

beat, across the Rother, upon which if you stood, at a certain early hour, kingfishers would be seen threading the arch like bolts from the blue, bringing the blue with them. But that was a long time ago, before the new noise and the latest inventions had come into the world.

What we shall never know is whether, when the populous world started, man and birds were on friendly terms, or whether there was always the gulf between them, since made wider by man's tendency to kill. That gulf is now very wide: but there are few among even the most destructive gunners whose heart would not be softened, should, say, a bullfinch descend suddenly from a tree and perch on his hand. Every fratricidal impulse in his system would immediately vanish, and, flushed with a new humane glow, he would go singing on his way. A similar action on the part of, say, the common sparrow might turn the thoughts even of the catapult-bearing schoolboy away from slaughter. But these miracles do not occur, and such intimacy as between human beings and birds is ever attained, is reached either after caging or through food, the prime movers being ourselves. The sparrows that, in the parks, surround odd grain-bearing gentlemen; the pigeons that, in Trafalgar Square and St. Paul's Churchyard and the Piazza of San Marco, cluster about tourists; equally are emboldened by greed. On the other hand, I must

admit that the little owl, taken by a keeper from a nest, which used once to sit on my shoulder, had no such motive, or, if he had, and was disappointed, did not let that disappointment deter him. That was many years ago, but I can still recall the thrill of pride which ran through me to be so honoured.

Thomson, who took all Nature for his province, of course devotes lines to the robin; but probably no bird has appeared in verse more often. William Blake stated furiously that:

> A robin redbreast in a cage
> Sets all Heaven in a rage;

but it is doubtful if he ever saw one thus confined, or more than one. We don't cage robins. And the robin was formally addressed by William Wordsworth, whose gaze was always alert, as he tramped the fells and dales for such fauna. As rhymes 'doors' and Poors' are not too close; while some of us would hesitate to clip the final 'g' of 'sobbing'. But I am, perhaps, hypercritical. Here, anyway, is the poem:

> Art thou the bird whom man loves best—
> The pious bird with the scarlet breast,
> Our little English robin?
> The bird that comes about our doors
> When autumn winds are sobbing?
> Art thou the Peter of Norway boors?
> Their Thomas in Finland
> And Russia far inland:
> The bird who by some name or other
> All men who know thee call thee brother?

Wordsworth, you observe, also glosses over the bird's bad character, and even goes so far as to call him 'pious'. Whittier also lent his kindly metrical gifts to whitewashing this engaging little villain, versifying the Welsh legend of the redness of its breast coming from the burns inflicted in hell when it flew there with water to allay the thirst of the damned.

> He brings cool dew in his little bill,
> And lets it fall on the souls of sin;
> You can see the mark on his red breast still
> Of fires that scorch as he drops it in.

As for the robin's habit of building in curious spots, there is a well-authenticated story that, in the unusually mild weather in the autumn of 1818, a redbreast at Chatham Dockyard, when a 100 gun Trafalgar was being constructed in memory of Nelson, made a nest somewhere on the vessel, and, by a remarkable chance, the first of five eggs was laid there on the anniversary of the great admiral's victory—18 October, 1805. Such is the tale, soberly narrated by William Hone, with the date as I repeat it; but this is (nominally) a free country, and I, at any rate, crave permission to remark that Nelson won the battle and lost his life three days later, on 21 October, 1805. But 'symmetry, gents—symmetry'.

There is good reason why the robin of the Trafalgar was not (as so often) pursued by a cuckoo and compelled into the relation of foster-

parent; and this is that the cuckoo had already flown. 'In August go he must.' But, very oddly, considering the disparity in the sizes of the birds, and the form and position of these little nests, and the difficulty of inserting the alien egg, the bulky trespasser is frequently and dutifully fed and brought up by a robin. What is the secret of the cuckoo's power over other birds, no one knows; how he can get such servility, such service, into them, and particularly, perhaps, into the disdainful, independent robin. But there it is, and the robin, otherwise so masterful and conceited and resolute, is too often his victim. Can it be that the cuckoo is sent as a scourge and is continuously and threateningly reminding his deputy of his presence?

The most famous Robin of all is, of course, Robin Hood, whom I was brought up to believe was really the Earl of Huntingdon: a jovial, carefree bandit, who lived in Sherwood Forest; who stole from the rich in order to give to the poor; who could shoot an arrow accurately for over a mile; who wore Lincoln green and was surrounded by a loyal and enterprising band, which included Maid Marian, Little John (a giant), and Friar Tuck. That is what we used to be told, and liked to be told. To steal from the rich and give the spoils to the poor, was an ideal to be admired—in fact, not theft at all, but justice—while what could be more romantic than

a merry outlaw and dead shot, who could, if he liked, return at any moment to the status of a peer?

But the scientific historians have discredited the whole Robin Hood saga. Listen to this: 'In its origin the name was probably a variant of "Hodeken", the title of a sprite or elf in Teutonic folklore. The prefix Robin, a diminutive of Robert, implied an affectionate familiarity, as in Robin Goodfellow, or in Robin of Redesdale, the assumed name of Sir William Conyers, leader of the Yorkshire rebels in 1469. The word Hood may have been applied to the elf because such creatures, according to popular belief, wore hoods, or it may be a corruption of 'V th' wood", because they were assumed to live in forests. A "Robin du Bois" is said to figure in the folklore of French peasants. The wide dissemination of the elf's fame is proved by the appearance of "Robin Hood" in the names of places and plants in all parts of England.[1] And so forth, the whole purpose of the late Sir Sidney Lee's argument being to invalidate the generally accepted romance and prove it an invention. Elf, indeed! Personally, I shall continue to believe in the genuine activities of Robin Hood and his friends, and to admire their short and amusing way with sheriffs.

To return once again to the bird, I find that he is found under different names all over the world, but I was astonished, when in America,

to see how big he is: three times at least larger than our own redbreast. Or was I surprised? You meet him as far away as Japan, where he is called komadori. In Finland and Russia, says Wordsworth, he is Thomas; in Norway, Peter Ronsmad; in Denmark, Tomi Linden; in Italy, pettirosso; in Spain, pechicolorado; in Holland, roodborstje; in Cornwall (and in the works of Bewick), ruddock. To Linnaeus, he was Motacilla rubecula; to Buffon, le Rouge-gorge. Mr. Lloyd George calls him brongoch and Mr. Milne, Christopher.

THE GUILTY KNIGHTS

IN conversation the other day with an enlightened cleric who, as a Friend of Canterbury Cathedral, had seen Mr. Eliot's drama of the death of Becket, I gathered that he cherished the belief that none of the four assassins of the Archbishop came to disaster. I, on the contrary, had always thought that their lives after the crime were miserable and brief—as, in a well constructed and well controlled world, murderers' lives, after a crime, should be—and, in order to see which of us was right, the rector or the scribbler, this article has been prepared.

The four knights were Hugh de Morville, William de Tracy, Reginald Fitzurse, and Richard le Breton. Accompanying them was a clerk named Hugh, of Horsea, whose part it was to demand the presence of Becket, so that he might be accessible enough to be killed, and at the end of the tragedy to scatter Becket's brains on the pavement. The spot is shown to-day, blood-stained. Of these four knights, Fitzurse struck the first blow, merely removing Becket's cap. The first deadly blow was delivered by de Tracy,

at Becket's head, and was wounding, although it was partly broken by the intercepted arm of Grim, Becket's attendant. Twice more Becket was struck on the head, the second blow cleaving the skull. De Morville meanwhile was making the assassination more simple by keeping the growing crowd at bay. It was then that Hugh of Horsea completed the task and called on his associates to be gone. 'This man will rise up no more,' he cried.

To what extent Mr. Eliot has read the thoughts of the knights, I cannot say, but it seems to be certain that there was no such set scene of sophistical justification as in his play, *Murder in the Cathedral;* for immediately after the assassination they leapt on their horses and rode to Saltwood Castle, at Hythe, where they knew they would be sheltered, and whence they had proceeded, to rid their King of the pestilent priest. That was on the evening of 29 December, 1170.

It is known that the authorities of Saltwood Castle did not deem it prudent that they should be there long, for a day later they left it for sanctuary at Mailing, near Lewes, whither I, too, journeyed on this matter of investigation. It seems that they would have been safe at Mailing had not the table on which they placed their accoutrements, grown heavy in their escape, risen up and flung them to the floor.

The evidence is contained in *De Vitis Sex*

Episcoporum Coelariorum by Giraldus Cambrensis, who says:

> And when they had sat down at the fire after dinner, the principal table, where the archbishops are wont to sit, so suddenly began to shake that it threw all their equipment, that is sumpter-saddles and supplies placed there, to the ground with a great din.

But according to another version, that of John de Grandison, Bishop of Exeter's *Vita S. Thomae*, it was only the knights' arms that were placed on the table:

> . . . When they entered the hall, and were dining, having placed their arms upon a great table, the table springing up, threw them far from it, denying its office to the sacrilegious. In the same place that table is still shown kept in memory of the miracle.

In either case, the furniture was rebellious; and who shall gainsay when tables rise up and repudiate? Certainly not the Dean of Mailing, and so the four knights had to ride on.

The actual church, however, which was there in 1170, afterwards surrendered to Henry VIII, was destroyed by Mary, and was supplanted by another early in the seventeenth century; and therefore I was on different ground, while the Deanery is now a beautiful private residence with herbaceous borders. But, not to be wholly uninstructed in doom, I found on the church wall a tablet to eight unfortunate persons who were killed in 1836, in the local poorhouse, by the fall

of the roof in a snowstorm, the memorial having been placed there by subscription 'to record an awful instance of the uncertainty of human life'.

I was not, however, otherwise completely frustrated, for a week later in the House of Anne of Cleves, now preserved at Lewes by the Sussex Archaeological Society, I found the very table—or at any rate a table with an inscription saying that it is the very table. It looked to me a firm enough piece of carpentry; but, having encompassed the death of no prelate, I could not put it to the test.

Abjured by Mailing, the knights, who had been instantly excommunicated by the Pope, rode to Scotland, but, under threats of hanging, returned to England, to Knaresborough Castle, which Hugh de Morville owned and put at their disposal. But here, too, they were shunned by all, even by hungry dogs, which refused their scraps. They came at last again to Henry II—at one time their employer and, as they had believed, their instigator, but who now not only had become one of the dead Archbishop's most humble and devoted adherents, but was as hostile to his old associates as the Mailing table itself. The King, however, who for an ecclesiastical murder had no power of death, commended them to the mercy of the Pope, and the Pope sentenced all but de Morville to the Holy Land as exiles, there to fast and mortify themselves. This

penance they began, but in three years' time, it is said, all three were dead.

I don't want to make my friend, the enlightened cleric, feel too small; but I am bound to state that when three young or youngish men, all at the height of their vigour, become, within three years of an assassination of a Man of God, intensely unpopular and fade out, they cannot be called exactly fortunate. And it has to be remembered, too, that that Man of God quickly became venerated as a Saint, to whose shrine pilgrims from all over the world were drawn, and are drawn, and about whom plays have been written and are acted every year in his Cathedral.

As to the four knights themselves, the striker of the first blow, Reginald Fitzurse, who was a baron, and had always been a swashbuckler, and was once in Becket's service, began, it was said, by glorying in his deed; but, according to de Tracy, came, with the others, to be overwhelmed by a sense of guilt. He seems to have died in a religious house near Jerusalem and to have been buried at Jerusalem before the door of the Templars' church. A descendant, not his own but of a brother, was none other than the author of *The Ingoldsby Legends.*

William de Tracy, who, on the evidence of at any rate one observer, struck the final blow, cleaving the Archbishop's skull, had also been one of Becket's men, and was indeed the only one of

the four to be addressed by the Archbishop by his Christian name. He seems at first to have urged Becket to escape, but since his advice was not taken, he became a real assailant. In such a melee, of course, no chronicler could be very clear, and the more active of the knights are much confused; but what we do for certain know is that later de Tracy shared the doom of his companions. Leaving for the East after them, he got no farther than Cosenza in Sicily, where, within the three fatal years, a disease that destroyed his flesh attacked him, and he died in agony 'praying incessantly to St. Thomas'. A descendant, I know not how direct, is Mr. Cyril Maude, the actor.

Hugh de Morville, so far as I can discover, survived until 1204, but this longevity was due probably to the circumstance that he struck no blow at Becket. He seems, however, to have shared ostracism with his friends, although I learn that 'his blood has flowed, and continues to flow, in most illustrious channels', including ornaments of the Royal House of Windsor.

Of the subsequent careers of Richard le Breton and the clerk, Hugh of Horsea, I know nothing, but I naturally assume that they perished shamefully from swift and painful causes. Where do we stand if such malefactors thrive and prosper? Thankful I am to "have been prompted by the Church to an investigation that has such satisfying and comforting results.

LINCOLNSHIRE AND TENNYSON

I LITTLE thought, when, quoting recently the quatrain about the kiss of the sun for pardon, that I should so soon come across it again. The previous time I had seen it it was carved on a garden seat in a shop window in New Bond Street. And then, only the other day, while exploring the delectable county of Lincolnshire —the 'fat shire', as Tennyson called it—I found it on a board nailed to a sycamore tree in the one place where probably it should not be, the open-air extension of an hotel lounge. The sun, it is true, was shining, whether we needed pardon or not, and there were birds singing, possibly for mirth; but with tables with glasses on them, striped deck-chairs, and after-luncheon guests enjoying forty or more winks, were we so near to God's heart? Nay, but I had no sign. And doubly nay when I add that this house in its less spectacular days, before it had been taken up by the A.A., and indeed before the internal combustion engine was invented to bring so many strangers here, was a retreat of Tennyson himself, a Lincolnshire man to the core. Indeed,

the second name of the hotel is 'Tennyson's House'.

Skegness—for it is of Skegness I am speaking—is truly a very unusual place. 'So bracing' it may be: I was not there long enough to tell; but for the retiring garden-lover I would hesitate to commend it. On this fine and windy Sunday it was populous and noisy, and, in spite of the North Sea or German Ocean washing its shores, it was also immensely urban and aggressively unrestful. Thousands of motor-cars moved about like a weaver's shuttle, or, at rest, glistened in their parks. A switch-back railway on the water's edge carried screaming couples up and down. The brightly coloured clothes of beach girls dazzled the eye. The fruit shops, toy shops, newspaper shops, sweet shops, tobacco shops were all open; while stall-holders had also established themselves. The Solarium was crowded; and possibly the Home for Lost Children, for Skegness apparently think of everything. Bracing or not, we sought with relief the empty roads of the fens, and, by devious routes, wound our way between golden buttercups and brown cattle through the English Holland, or, as I always think of it, De Wint Land.

But Tennyson we could not forget; and, indeed, he is very present in any Lincolnshire ramblings, one of the first sign-boards we had noticed in the morning pointing to the village of which his

father was rector, and where he was born, and where as a splendid youth he could pitch a crow-bar farther than any of the rustics, so that a friend said of him that it was greedy and unfair to be an Adonis and a Hercules as well. We saw also sign-boards pointing to Mablethorpe, where the poet, seeking the sea, found a less crowded shore than Skegness: so lonely indeed that he once wrote from it to his publisher saying there was nothing there but himself and two starfish. And on the way to Lincoln, where the great statue of him is, we passed through Spilsby, which was where, as he tells us, he learned the dialect in which he wrote his purely Lincolnshire poems—the two 'Northern Farmers' and the dialogue and hay-makers' song in the 'Promise of May', and, latest of all, that excellent piece of comedy, 'The Churchwarden and the Curate', with all its racy epithets. Do you remember it? The church-warden, now an old man, meets again Master Harry, the son of the parson, whom as a boy he had befriended, and who has now become a cleric himself. In fact, it is because the churchwarden had been good to the boy that he was made church-warden at all, and got 'the plaate fuller o' Soon-days nor ony chuch-warden afoor'. Earlier in life he had been 'a Baptis an' agean the toithe an' the reate', but he changed over to the Establish-ment after some of his co-religionists had used his pond for their rites, and, in his opinion, in so

doing had poisoned his cow. Another case of the exquisite rancour (to borrow a phrase from Gibbon) of theological hatred.

Well, this narrative, together with the two 'Northern Farmer' monologues, is sheer Lincolnshire, with all the cynical shrewdness of its people. 'If iver tha means to git 'igher,' is the final advice of the churchwarden to the curate, 'tha mun tackle the sins o' the Wo'ld an' not the faults o' the Squire'; and 'niver not speak plaain out, if tha wants to git forrards a bit, but creeap along the hedge-bottoms and thou'll be a Bishop yit'.

It is a sign of the wide range of Tennyson's mind—wider than the present generation knows, but before long he will regain his kingdom—that he could write not only this poem, but the lines which accompany the statue in the cathedral close:

> Flower in the crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of the crannies,
> I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
> Little flower—but *if* I could understand
> What you are, root and all, and all in all,
> I should know what God and man is.

Having read these lines, we thought it would be good for our souls to enter the cathedral and rest there awhile, to be refreshed and blessed by the cool stone, and see again the statue of my dear De Wint, a water-colour of a hay-making scene by whom hangs by my bed; but not a door was open.

It was only between four and five on a Sunday afternoon, and several groups of people seemed to be sharing our not too unreasonable wish; but we were doomed to disappointment. The doors were firmly shut.

One of our party had once, he told us, spent a good deal of time and trouble in writing, at the request of a Lincolnshire friend, an appeal for funds for the restoration of this very edifice; 'but if I had known,' he said, 'that it is shut between services in such a crabbed unimaginative way, I would have held my hand. Cathedrals that are locked on Sundays may fall down, for all I care,' In fact, he went almost farther, and after marvelling at the unintelligence of the Establishment in times when it ought to employ every means to increase its popularity, he swore roundly, with Tennyson, no doubt, in his mind, that he would 'cheange over to they Baptises'.

Our hopes were the more dashed because in the morning the church of St. Botolph in that Saint's own town—Botolph's town, or, for short, Boston—had been so very hospitable. It was the first time I had seen that glorious tower, miscalled 'Stump', since the citizens of Boston, Mass., came to the rescue and made it strong again, and rehung the bells, and gave the nave a new ceiling and the chancel a coating of many colours. Very hospitable we found it, although it was on a Sunday; with a custodian in the shape of a helpful

Bostonian vergeress, who has all the dates by heart, and who hands you a mirror so that rather than crick the neck, you may see, in reflection, the lovely stone-work on the ceiling of the tower. I commend this example to the grudging authorities at Lincoln, with their ready outlocking keys.

But who could long remain cross in such a smiling paradise as Lincolnshire on that day of high summer? All our good spirits came back as, on the return journey, we used up the multiplication table in counting the village churches, which surely swarm here more thickly, and are closer together, than anywhere else in this island of ours that we call little but are continually finding to be inexhaustibly great. Do they take in each other's theology, these? Have they each a parson, or are two or three parishes served by one? Even so, they would have each a churchwarden, with 'unsheakable' views on this life and the life to coom.[1]

[1] Since this article appeared I have become the possessor of *Lincolnshire Church Notes*, made by the sixth Lord Monson and prefaced for the Lincoln Record Society by the present Lord Monson, which is a mine of local information.

THE INCOMPARABLE GAME

HAVING, the other day, once again spent an afternoon in watching a village cricket match, I am again perplexed by the passion for that game which is displayed by those who cannot shine at it. They cannot bat, they cannot bowl, they leave their place in the field, they miss catches, they fumble returns; and yet, every Saturday, there they are, often in perfect flannels, ready to fail once more. What is this lure, this attraction, that cricket exercises, and why is it that so few village elevens can ever muster more than two or three players who know anything? No wonder it is so hard for first-class teams to be brought together. As, the other day, I saw this lack of any kind of skilled resistance to the bowler, I meditated afresh on the difficulties of those observant pilgrims from green to green whose duty it is to build up the county's nursery; and as one defeated batsman after another, with a nought to his name and no sense of humiliation, sank into his deck-chair, I deplored anew the absence of national pride. Why on earth, I wondered, don't they watch better men

and learn something? Why do they think they can hit before they have tried to defend? Why do they want to make four off the first ball? But so it is, and so it will be until September, when football again comes in, and if they make mistakes they will hear about it.

But the passion for cricket is in our blood. Small boys have it, youths have it, grown men have it, old men have it; and no amount of disappointment, no ducks, can change it. Even that scholarly cleric, the Rev. John Mitford, rector of Benhall, in Suffolk, collector, connoisseur and dilettante—he whom Lamb called 'a pleasant layman spoiled'—had it. In a man of letters so cultured you would not expect to see the spell of this unlettered game thus active; but it was there. Even as late in Mitford's life as 1827, when he was forty-six, we find Bernard Barton writing to Lamb a letter, now first published in a book, with these words in it:

'Mitford is gone crazy about cricket—he has, I am told, organized a cricket club in his Parish, and enters into its advancement and success with all the interest of an amateur. The Benhall Club (Benhall is Mitford's Parish) sent a challenge the other day to the Saxmundham Club—and the approaching contest was a matter of as much discussion in the vicinity as the Battle of Waterloo was some few years bygone among politicians. The Benhallites were beaten, and Mitford, so far

as I hear, has [kept] house ever since. I fancy he has had a knock or two with the balls, for his letter talks of a disjointed thumb, a contusion on the hip, and a sightless eye; in another letter he describes himself as bandaged from head to foot, and as full of sores as Lazarus.

'In despite of all this he is a perfect enthusiast on the subject of bat and ball, wickets and bye slows. What is the Laurel, he asks, compared to the Willow? For that Tree alone makes good cricket bats; or the Myrtle to the Ashen?—of which the wicket, it seems, is fashioned. He apostrophizeth, anon, certain Cricket Players, just as he was wont to speak of Homer, Virgil, Dante, or Tasso. Poor M—I am sorry for his case: 'tis lucky we have a Lunatic Asylum erecting in the neighbourhood: but he may receive his quietus from bat or ball, and die ere his wits are wholly gone—and have this epitaph on his headstone

> Mitford! mighty once at cricket,
> Head erect, and heart elate,
> Now, alas! he heeds no wicket
> Save John Bunyan's wicket gate.'

You could not have a better account of Mitford's fine frenzy than that, and Lamb, although he liked Charles Cowden Clarke and also Vincent Novello, who both knew John Nyren, never refers to cricket and did not reply to it. But Barton does not mention—what I happen to know—

the reason for this new excitement; and that is, that the rector of Benhall had taken into his employ, but more as a pensioner than a toiler, no other than William Fennex, once an all-England player, and was fascinated by his memories and enthusiasm. Indeed, had it not been for these memories and enthusiasm the world would not have had Mitford's articles in the *Gentleman's Magazine,* which he edited, on Nyren's book, nor would Mitford's friend, the Rev. James Pycroft, have written that other classic of the game, *The Cricket Field,* for upon Mitford's MS. notes of Fennex's talk was it based. All honour then to the 'pleasant layman spoiled'.

For a concise account of Fennex we have to go to Lillywhite's *Scores and Biographies,* where Arthur Haygarth says that among underhand bowlers he possessed the highest delivery ever seen, his hand, when propelling the ball, being nearly on a level with his shoulder. I wish I could have seen this. The few underhand bowlers that 1 can recall kept their hands low, while Walter Humphreys hid his behind a loose cuff. Fennex, in addition to being especially good at single-wicket, and a very useful ally to any side, was a pioneer in forward play. As we know from the old man's own account to Mitford, it was when Fennex was adopting this new but sensible method both of prevention and cure, that Fennex's father, with the ordinary senile suspicion

and dislike of innovation, cried out 'Hey! hey! boy! what is this? Do you call that play?[1] Fennex also has his place in the history of cricket as the model for Fuller Pitch.

A blacksmith by trade, Fennex was 5 ft. 10 in. in height, muscular and abstemious, and even to the end he could walk prodigious distances. In conversation he was 'facetious and comical'. Leaving farriery, he kept a ground at Uxbridge, played for Middlesex, and had for a while the 'Portman Arms', Marylebone, where he used to smuggle tea. He was fortunate in his old age to be admitted as a titular gardener at Benhall and to have the custodianship of the ground at Eye. We have the Rector's evidence that it was Fennex's bowling, when he was between fifty and sixty, which removed the pride of Mitford and his young friends who thought they could bat. Elsewhere Mitford says that Fennex was still effective at sixty-five.

The Reverend John (who, I am told, was not overburdened by a sense of fidelity to the Thirty-Nine Articles,) was an enviable man in many ways. He had learning and leisure; his Suffolk garden was beautiful; his London rooms were comfortable; he wrote what he liked; but I covet nothing of his so much as the companionship, whenever he wanted it, of Fennex, who was always ready to recall the past, and who in particular delighted in extolling the genius of Beldham.

'He hit quick as lightning all round him,' said Fennex. 'He appeared to have no hit in particular. You could never place a man against him; where the ball was pitched, there it was hit away,' That was Silver Billy. And the evening before he scored 92 against Brown, the fast bowler, and turned what was expected to be a deplorable failure into a victory, it was he who, while taking a social glass at the 'Green Man', where he was addressed so provocatively by his illustrious and terrifying adversary, had the right answer ready. With 'as much sincerity as good humour', Brown told Beldham that he should soon send his stumps aflying. 'Hold there,' said Beldham—it is an old story, but I like to tell it again—'Hold there,' said Beldham, fingering his bat, 'you will be good enough to allow me this bit of wood, won't you?'

With a view to slimming, *Wisden* now omits from its preliminary list all cricketers who died before 1851, and Fennex, therefore, is not there; but you will find him in earlier issues as dying in 1838, aged about seventy-five, although Mitford says he lived to be eighty. There are, I find, some discrepancies in *Wisden s* revised list. John Nyren has, under the new rule, disappeared altogether, but Cowden Clarke retains an honoured place as Nyren's editor. I doubt if this is fair, for without Nyren there would have been no Cowden Clarke. Among other writers on the game whom I notice are Ashley-Cooper, Hay-

garth, Frederick Gale, Andrew Lang, John Mitford, James Pycroft, Stewart Caine, and three Pardons; but Denison, who wrote the excellent *Sketches of the Players,* is not there, and A. J. Gaston, who made some remarkable compilations, is not there.

Apropos the Vicar of Benhall, I have been looking at a number of the *Cricketer* which contains a reference to another enthusiast for the game who also was a Mitford—the late Francis William Mitford, aged eighty, of Wealden in Sussex, who dying, in 1935, after witnessing a peculiarly exciting match near his home, was found to have left a peculiarly interesting will.

After the usual disposition of his property, to descendants, relations, friends, servants and public characters, he adds: 'As one who has delighted all my life in cricket, at first as a player in my own small way, and later as a spectator, I wish to express my regret that the art of throwing the ball in from the field has so few adepts, both in the first-class game and in the club and village game. Even on county grounds it is habitual to see the wicket-keeper leaving the stumps, behind or beside which he should be rooted, and running several yards this way and that to receive the ball from slovenly fieldsmen; while in the smaller matches there is even less respect for precision. I cannot say when the art of swift and accurate throwing was allowed to decline; but I fear that

it is no longer a matter for practice, and that when the young player has had his hour at the nets, either batting or bowling, he considers that he has done all that is needful. Even catching is not practised as it used to be and ought to be.

'It is in the hope that something may be done to bring back into English cricket such throwing as we see among the Australians, that I am directing my executors to set aside the sum of £500 to be divided into prizes to be awarded to the swiftest and most accurate returners of the ball to the wicket, from all parts of the ground, far and near, and in order that as many youths as possible may be affected by this incitement, I wish an announcement to be inserted in *The Times* at the beginning of the season following my death asking the headmasters of public schools and grammar schools who are willing to institute competitions to let my executors know.

'If I may offer any hints to the judges, I suggest that points should be given for direction, for speed and for trajectory, which should be low, the ball to reach the wicket-keeper's hands just above the bails either as a full pitch or long hop. A pound note might be the prize. It is not much, but no boy would despise it, and in the effort to win it a new spirit of keenness should arise which, in course of time, would reach the county grounds too.'

A very ingenious scheme, which should bear

fruit. I wish that a little of the money had been set aside for throwing-contests on the first-class field, but the testator knew what he was about when he chose the school for his arena. All the same, there may, here and there, be a generous patron of the game who, fired by Mr. Mitford's example, will offer a fiver to be thrown for after an early end to a big match. The contests should be well worth watching and very stimulating.

A CRICKET POET

I WAS wondering the other day as I watched a village game, if there is any cricketer, however normally impious, who has not, at one time or another, invoked, to quicken his eye or invigorate his arm, heavenly aid. I was not thinking then of Don Bradman or of such luminaries; but I will do so now, and, including them with cricketers of every degree down to schoolboys, express again the wonder whether they have not, at one time or another, invoked heavenly aid. I know that I did.

That such outside influences can be called upon we are aware also from printed words on the game nearly two centuries ago—earlier than we usually think of cricket as a moving spectacle at all; but as long ago as the seventeen-forties, James Dance, under his alias of James Love, an Oxford undergraduate who later played for Richmond, was writing his mock-heroic poem 'Cricket' in celebration of the first match given in *Lillywhite's Scores and Biographies,* the match between Kent and Richard Newland's eleven, a match in which two at least of the contestants besought the interference of the gods: one for strength to hit and one, having hit, for the fields-

man to fail to hold. Bryan, for instance, before he hit that five, desired the Propitious Powers to assist his blow and to grant that the flying orb might shock the Foe; which it (or, in other words, the batter'd Pellet) did. But peruse the whole passage:

> Bryan, collected for the deadly stroke,
> First cast to Heav'n a supplicating Look;
> Then pray'd: 'Propitious Powers! Assist my Blow
> And grant the flying orb may shock the Foe!'
> This said; he wav'd his Bat with forceful swing
> And drove the batter'd Pellet o'er the Ring.
> Then, rapid, five times cross'd the shining Plain
> E'er the departed Ball returned again.

As I said—a five.

But here let me give in full Lillywhite's first recorded match, merely stating that it was by no means the first important one to be played. Two or three London newspapers had been giving notice of other matches, both at the Royal Artillery Ground, which still may be visited in Moorgate Street, and at Lamb's Conduit Fields, for several years. This is Lillywhite's entry:

In 1746, Lord John F. Sackville,issued a challenge on the part of the county of Kent, to play 'All England'. This match came off at the Artillery Grounds, in Bunhill Fields, Finsbury Square, London, and is recorded in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for the year. It assembled the first players from all parts, and proved a well-contested match. It may as well be premised, that the curved bat, the wide stumps (two in number), and the old system of bowling then prevailed; and that the fielding must have been *good,* or the batting *bad,* or the ground very heavy, to produce such a score under such circumstances.

KENT *v.* ALL ENGLAND

Played in the Artillery Ground, London, 1746.

ENGLAND

1st Innings		*2nd Innings*	
Harris, b. Hadswell	0	b. Mills	4
Dingate, b. Hadswell	3	b. Hadswell	11
Newland, b. Mills	0	b. Hadswell	3
Cuddy, b. Hadswell	0	c. Danes	2
Green, b. Mills	0	b. Mills	5
Waymark, b. Mills	7	b. Hadswell	9
Bryan, st. Kips	12	c. Kips	7
Newland, not out	18	c. Lord J. F. Sackville	15
Harris, b. Hadswell	0	b. Hadswell	1
Smith, c. Bartrum.	0	b. Mills	8
Newland, b. Mills	0	not out	5
Byes	0	Byes	0
	40		70

KENT

1st Innings		*2nd Innings*	
Lord J. F. Sackville, c. Waymark	5	b. Harris	3
Long Robin, b. Newland	7	b. Newland	9
Mills, b. Harris	0	c. Newland	6
Hadswell, b. Harris	0	not out	5
Cutbush, c. Green	3	not out	7
Bartrum, b. Newland.	2	b. Newland	0
Danes, b. Newland	6	c. Smith	0
Sawyer, c. Waymark	0	b. Newland	5
Kips, b. Harris	12	b. Harris	10
Mills, not out	7	b. Newland	2
Romeny, b. Harris	11	c. Harris	8
Byes	0	Byes	3
	53		58

Kent winning by one wicket.

Lillywhite adds that Long Robin was, as indeed we suspected, a feigned name. In a record kept in a certain Kentish pavilion, it is said tersely that he was at once one of the best cricketers and worst men in England.

We will return later to the supplicatory fieldsman, but meanwhile I should say that James Dance, the poet, was one of the sons of George Dance, the architect, first of that name. It was not, as has been stated, in the forlorn hope of bettering his fortunes that James changed his patronymic to Love, but as a compliment to his wife, whose surname was Lamour. Meanwhile his brother George, the second architect, and his uncle Nathaniel, the painter, were prospering. The Dances, indeed, seem to have been an interesting company, starting with the George Dance who designed the present Mansion House, and proceeding with his sons, whom I have mentioned, and his grandson the dramatist, also a George Dance, who died in 1863, just within living memory, and, in addition to burlesques with Planche, wrote, among certain farces which had a long life, such as *Delicate Ground* and *Naval Engagements,* a play that I should much like to glance at, called *Izaak Walton.* In these days, when men of letters and women of letters appear on the stage in the unfamiliar role of central characters, and even poor Rossetti's frailty has been exploited on the boards, I should like to see

what could be done dramatically with the Compleat Angler.

George Dance the first was born in 1700. His Mansion House has solidity, and I am sure that the Lord Mayor is glad to see again its sombre and massive yet welcoming facade when he returns home from any jaunt; but personally I should prefer a Mansion House which might have been built there instead. For the story goes that a design for this important building, by no less an architect than Andrea Palladio, which, two centuries late, was put at the disposal of the authorities, would have been seriously considered had not Lord Burlington, the chairman, dismissed it as the work not only of a Papist, but of one who had not been elected a Freeman of the City. Dance, however, did reasonably well, and he designed also St. Luke's, in Old Street, where he was buried.

George Dance the second, who was born in 1741, has a special interest in being one of the original forty members of that much-criticized but steadily surviving institution, the Royal Academy. To this he added the further unique distinction of outliving the others, so that when he died, in 1825, and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral, he was, of the forty, the last. Although, for a while, the R.A.'s Professor of Architecture, Dance never lectured, and, indeed, he behaved more like an artist than an architect,

contributing to the august walls a large number of portraits in chalk, which, as engraved by Daniell and published, serve historians well. His principal work, Newgate Prison, has been replaced by the Central Criminal Court.

But this Dance was not the only member of his family to be an original member of the Forty, for his brother Nathaniel was one of them as well. Other honours also came Nathaniel's way, for, failing to win the affections of Angelica Kauffmann, he married the daughter of a baronet, and himself, in due course, was created a baronet too. He also assumed the name of Holland, and entered Parliament, continuing to paint now and then; but neither he, nor his architect father, nor his architect brother, ever wrote a mock-heroic poem on cricket, or added to our knowledge of the union of proficiency and piety.

As for the poet, first James Dance and afterwards, as actor and playwright, James Love, I find that his second instance of proficiency allied to piety occurred when Newland, hitting high (as they practically always did in those days before the bat was straight), was careful to employ against the fieldsman, who happened to be Lord John Sackville, what influence he had Above. Thus, as the glancing ball (which has now become the ascending Pellet) mounted upwards in the air, he, too, had recourse to intercession.

The Batsman sees it, and with mournful Eyes
Fix'd on th' ascending Pellet as it flies,
Thus, suppliant, claims the Favour of the Skies.
'O Mighty Jove! And all ye Pow'rs above!
Let my regarded Pray'r your pity move;
Grant me but this: whatever Youth shall dare
Snatch at the Prize descending thro' the Air,
Lay him extended on the grassy Plain,
And make his bold ambitious effort vain!'

Meanwhile, I take it. Lord John's supplication was directed wholly to making the catch; and in the result, I must add, his prayer was successful, although half of Newland's was gratified, for in making the catch Sackville fell.

The match eventually was won by Kent, the critical moment coming when Waymark—

Waymark was ready; Waymark, all must own,
As sure a swain to catch as e'er was known—

dropped the ball.

The assumption is that Waymark had not sufficiently placated the gods. That modern fieldsmen also are not incapable of piety, I have a further proof in the reminiscence sent me by an old Eton master. The batsman in was C. I. (or Buns) Thornton, no less, and the fieldsman was standing 'very deep long-on almost in the left-hand corner under the trees as you look from the Slough Road. Before long there was a terrific skier and several appeared to be run while the ball was in the air'. But the catch was made. When the fieldsman

was asked, afterwards, what he did while he was waiting, he replied, 'I prayed to the Lord'.

Another correspondent tells me that it is not only cricketers who resort to Divine intervention. Exactly the same anxious appeal, he says, was made in Matthew Concanen's mock-heroic poem, *A Match at Football*, in 1721.

Whether such prayers are quite playing the incomparable game, the casuist (and the Committee of the M.C.C.) must decide; yet since both teams have recourse to entreaty (and, in my opinion, always have had and always will), there is not much to be said, in the Chair or out of it.

THE EARTHQUAKE

A FRIEND of mine who returned the other day from California, after exchanging the usual greetings, and telling me how he was, and had been, and asking how I was, but not waiting for the answer, subsided into my best chair with the remark, 'God is very good.'

'Of course,' I said, 'but in what immediate connexion?'

'In providing,' he said, 'those who have an urgent story to unfold, with opportunities of unfolding it.'

'I'm waiting,' I said.

'When I was at Los Angeles,' he began, 'I was taken for a short cruise in a motor-boat off San Pedro, all among the vessels of the United States Navy, which included two aircraft-carriers like floating skyscrapers. Very impressive and frightening. Now and then we slowed down to trawl for a big local fish called a barracuda, which, however, on that occasion did not see in our flashing bait enough to tempt him; but trawling, even for fish that do not bite, is always fun.

'South of San Pedro is the popular watering-place. Long Beach, which the captain of the motor-boat pointed out to me as being the centre of one of the last bad earthquakes; and indeed from the general appearance of the place, with walls visibly out of plumb, I might have guessed it.

' "We often have little quakes," he said. "I often see the walls of my house shimmying a bit, and I was at a show only last week when there was such a tremble that every one quit. The theatre was empty in twenty seconds."

'And now,' my friend went on, 'following on this experience, comes the real story; for on the train from Los Angeles to Chicago, a three-day journey largely through rocks and sand, there was an elderly lady travelling alone who by chance took her meals at the same time that I did. Also I always sat within earshot, which in America, it has to be admitted, is not difficult. She was a tiny little thing with white hair and features much made up, and she chose a seat at one of the tables for four, with as much persistence as I sought a place at a table for two.

'It was at the first of our joint meals that, the train giving a rather bigger jolt than usual, one of the negro waiters lost his balance and his tray slipped to the carpet with a crash; whereupon the little old lady pressed her hand to her heart and sprang to her feet.

' "For the moment," she said on recovering

herself, "I thought it was another earthquake." You notice the key-word?

' "Earthquake," I suggested.

'Of course not,' he replied: ' "another;" and the obliging neighbour, god-sent, was there to repeat it and emphasize it.

' "Another?" asked the obliging neighbour.

' "Yes," she said. "I was in the one at Long Beach," and forthwith began the tale of her experiences. The first thing she had noticed was the chandelier rocking. Then to her fascinated gaze a wall slowly opened and a little cascade of plaster fell into the room; then foundations began to give way and Bedlam was let loose. Many people were killed; it was terrible. She herself was not hurt, only frightened, but not so frightened as to prevent her from doing all she could for others. But she would never forget it. The mere sight of a chandelier to-day brought it all back. "YouVe no idea how funny it makes you feel to see a chandelier begin to swing like a coat on a cabin-hook in a rough sea"; and so forth.

'That was, if I remember rightly, at lunch. At dinner the little old lady again took the fourth place at a table for four, where the rest of the company was strange to her. Having written down the items of her frugal meal, she had composed herself for the inevitable delay—for in America there is never anything to eat while you are waiting for something to eat; in America every-

thing comes at once—when one of the party chanced to mention Long Beach.

' "Pardon me, but did you say you had been to Long Beach?" the little old lady asked.

' "No, I haven't been there," said the other. "I was merely referring to it as the home of one of my aunts," She said ants.

' "I hope your ant wasn't in the last earthquake," the little old lady remarked. "Being through it myself I know what it was like," and having thus captured enough attention, she was launched. And she was word-perfect. We had it all over again, even to the coat on the cabin-hook.

'The next day she was not so fortunate. At lunch, two of the same people being at her table, her style was cramped; at dinner, her neighbours, wholly occupied with their own conversation, were not to be interrupted. Seismic disturbance and disaster were therefore at a discount, and we ate in silence, she brooding and I looking out of the window at the sunset and now and then seeing one of the jackass rabbits of whose speed Mark Twain said, in an early book, "long after they are out of sight you can hear them whizz". What her luck was in her own section of the train, or at other times in the observation car, I cannot say. Possibly she had had excellent sport; but in the dining-car the day was blank.

'On the next, however, Heaven assisting as

usual, she recovered her form. It was at lunch, her table had three strangers at it, a father, mother and daughter, and directly their orders had been deposited in the attendant's kind brown hands, I saw, as clearly as though her forehead was of glass, her thoughts working. I saw that she realized that the story would to-day go better than ever, because her neighbours had so little left to say to each other. But how to begin?

'It was then that I was prompted to conspire. Gradually and, I hope, imperceptibly, advancing my glass of iced water nearer and nearer to the edge of the table, I tipped it off. It fell to the floor with a noise sufficiently loud to assert itself above the rattle of the wheels.

'The little lady made a sudden gesture of alarm.

' "Forgive me," I said, "for being so clumsy and startling you."

' "Granted," she replied. "But ever since I was in the bad earthquake at Long Beach my nerves have been jumpy."

' "Why, were you in that?" asked the daughter, an eager girl. *"Do* tell us about it."

'And the little old lady did.

' "You've no idea," she finished, "how funny it makes you feel to see a chandelier begin to swing, like a coat on a cabin-hook in a rough sea." '

MY MURDER STORY

EVERY one who employs the pen must now and then have wished to share the spoils of the writers of detective stories. Whatever his ordinary task, whether novelist of normal life, philosopher (look at *Father Brown*\ biographer, historian, sociologist (consider those Coles), poet, essayist—before him is always the fascination of inventing a chain of circumstances in which, at the beginning, a living fellow-creature is by some lethal process converted into a body, and not until the end is the perpetrator of the crime discovered. That is what the public want to read about, and that therefore is what we want to write about.

Sometimes the body remains where it fell, mutely refusing to divulge the identity of the murderer; sometimes there is a problem as to the cause of death; and sometimes there is a complete disappearance, which in time prompts those suspicions of foul play that lead to inquiries, to detection and to the gallows or the chair. But always there must be an outraged public, and swift investigations either by the officer within

the Force, such as Inspector French, or without it but working with it, such as Colonel Gore. Always with tobacco and often with intuitive wives.

No matter what the preliminaries, murder must be committed, and when the time is ripe and the secret is revealed, justice must be done, and the finished book will be returned to the library and exchanged for a new one almost exactly like the last. But different enough. Instead of being called, say, *The Murder at the Sixth Tee,* it will be called *The Murder at the Seventh Tee.*

Anyway, that is the kind of book which authors all want to write, for whereas what we normally produce may sell eight hundred copies, crime stories sell eight thousand.

If I have caused you to suppose that because the titles of this kind of work can be not too dissimilar, their plots are alike, I have misled you. There is, among detective novelists, a constant expenditure of grey matter in the attempt at originality, so that one continually marvels at the many ways in which living human beings can become bodies. One of the best is for the victim to be pushed into a kiln of quicklime; and indeed it would be perfect but for the circumstance that some one always sees it, and, very likely, thinking it rather odd, looks at his watch. But what I mean to say is, that new forms of murder are constantly being devised by the blameless men and

women who flood the market with these books, the ranks of whom all authors, and I among them, are so eager to augment.

It was in the course of considering the question for myself and compiling a mystery which should run to the necessary three hundred-and-fifty pages and make some real money, that I have hit on a plot which I am certain is not hackneyed and which I am going to work out with the closest care. It will include, of course, a man who must be got out of the way. I cannot say yet why I dislike him so much, or why he impedes me so much, but he must be got out of the way. Choosing, therefore, my time—on the eve of his departure for Peru, say, on a botanical mission to be carried out alone—I contrive to kill him. How I do this does not at the moment matter, but of course, against finger-prints, I first put on my gloves. At some place where there is no one to see and look at his watch, I kill him, and, having dug the right kind of hole, bury him and his luggage in it.

So much for the first part. I then, having often recapitulated the sequence of events and found no incriminating flaws, await the time when the disappearance will begin to be noted. At first, of course, as he is on his way to Peru, he will not be missed. Then, arriving there, as he is on his botanical expedition in the darker parts of the Peru hinterland, he will not be missed. But

later will come the time when he should again be among us, and when, in the usual way, his non-arrival should cause suspicions to be aroused, rumours to be rife and fingers to be pointed.

It is then that I ought to play my cards with the utmost circumspection and be always on guard; it is then that inevitably the little over-looked piece of evidence would, in real life and in the books, crop up and give me away.

That is what would happen in the books. But the difference between my story and all the others —my own startling novelty—is that my victim is never missed. The fact that he does not write, that he is not encountered by any one in Peru, and that he never returns, excites no comment whatever. He is, in short, never missed; and if a body is not missed, where are you? Murder is in vain. I even walk over the spot where he and his clothes and his luggage are decomposing. I hold picnic-parties there. Laughingly I refer to his mysterious absence; but no one minds. It is, you see, not even the unravelled mystery; it is no mystery at all. Could anything be more original?

That is the new kind of murder story. I thought it out purely as a literary exercise, but I now wonder if the case is unique.

TWO ARTISTS' STORIES

TRUE stories are of course the best—even though the tellers continually interrupt themselves to insist on verisimilitude. Invention, for one thing, is easy; truth, for another thing, is rare, or is rarely passed on. But so often has truth been tampered with that nowadays nine out of every ten narrators insist that they are not exaggerating. During the telling of the two stories that follow, both told to me by artists, each of the tellers now and then stopped to say, 'I assure you this is gospel'. But, while bearing carefully in mind W. P. Ker's injunction never to refer to 'Coincidences', I am disregarding that recommendation. And I have become old enough not to let truth surprise me.

'We went'—this is the first artist talking, an artist known for his transcriptions of marine humour—'we went for a long week-end to a cottage near Cuckmere Haven where a painting friend was then living. You probably know it—very lonely and desolate at night, with nothing to think about in the small hours but the old smugglers and their war with the revenue officers, and

by day with nothing to do but stretch and laze and listen to the gulls. But a perfect retreat, and probably the nearest of its kind to London. Well, before we went to bed on the Saturday we were talking about words, this unusual word and that, and some one asked what "halcyon" meant. One man said it was what the Greeks called a nightingale; another said nonsense, it was what they called a swallow; our host said it was what they called a kingfisher but was now used chiefly as an adjective for calm. According to our host, who seemed to know things, the Greeks thought the kingfisher, the *alkuon*, bred in the winter in a nest floating on the waves, charming them into quietness for that purpose.

'Anyhow, we went to bed with the argument about the word in our heads, and the next morning'—(interval here for reference to truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth)—'the next morning my host and I went down to the shore of the Haven and there found that in the night, among other flotsam and jetsam, a lifebuoy had been washed up. And what do you think was the word on it? "Halcyon." '

It was then that the other artist told his story—this artist being known for his sensitive landscapes—usually English, although he has been for inspiration as far away as Venice—and for his portraits.

'Many years ago,' he said, 'when I was a new-

comer to London and in need of lodgings, I went from house to house trying to find suitable rooms. The landladies were all alike—hopeful, eager, each with something marvellous to let—and I looked at everything that sounded possible, and refused, and tried again. At first I gave the reasons for declining, but when I found that everything I lacked could be at once supplied, I gave that up and merely said, "No, thank you," and passed on.

'But at last I came to the perfect abode. A top storey, self-contained, with the kind of view I wanted, east and west, good furniture, comfortable bed, not too dear.

'I was just going to accept when I noticed hanging over this bed a memorial card with a big black border'—(interval for reference to the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth)—'and for some reason or other I read it. And what do you think the name was? It was my own. The same Christian name and the same surname. And it recorded that he had died at what was then my age.'

'So what did you do?' we asked.

'As this story is true,' he said, 'I shuddered and left,'

THE LOST

IT has been said that one of the most difficult things to remember is what a new shop was, before it was the shop it now is. This may be so; but in my own case the *puzzle* is, when did I last see the unknown person whom I once used to see regularly but now see no more.

There was something about this person that singled him out—or singled her out—from the rest of the punctual moving crowd; and who is he? I used to ask myself, as I continue to ask myself of those who still are in the daily throng. Who is he? Is he married or single? What kind of a home has he left? Where is he going? That topper suggests that he may be a civil servant. Those striped trousers and black jacket and black soft hat proclaim him bound for the Temple, where lay uniforms are sported. Some office must be in view, or he would not be here always on time, since only those who are artistic observe no hours.

And she? Who is she? Where has she come from? Where does she work? Is she engaged yet? Is she in love with her boss? If we met

and talked, would she be amusing or just ordinary? And would he? They both look clever, but you never know. And what do they do on Sunday, when routine is broken?

All these things we want to know: ships, as we are, that pass in the day. We: for it is not impossible that they see me too, and are curious.

Sometimes it is not because they are fresh and candid that they attract, but because they are old and ugly. Like me, perhaps. Yet, every morning, there they are, and, every evening, there they will be again, mysteriously finding their homes, inevitably inserting the right key in the lock. Millions of houses very much alike; millions of locks, millions of keys; no mistakes. For we are such creatures of habit that our feet learn it too, and all these people mechanically find the right place. Every one knows that, even to the sober, it is possible, in the late afternoon, to find oneself upstairs, in the right room, without any memory of ascending the right steps, finding the the right key and turning it. Acacia Row is very like Clematis Terrace, but as we happen to live in Acacia Row it does not matter where our thoughts are, it is in Acacia Row that we find ourselves.

Desperate efforts can be made to break down the tyrannies of custom, but they always fail. Humiliating as it may be to record, the struggle against habit can be habit too. It was quite

recently that I heard another testimony to this, when a man whom I will call Alpha entered the railway-carriage bearing *The Daily Wire*—shall we say?—instead of *The Dawn*, which he had been seen reading yesterday. 'Hullo,' said some one. 'Alpha seems to buy a different paper every morning.' 'Yes,' said another man, 'he makes a habit of it,' Now what could be worse hearing for Alpha, who prides himself on unconventionality and impulsive wayward excursions ?

But there is no real caprice. Every path has been trodden; habit gets us all the time. One way of proving how firmly it is embedded in us, is to have a mirror moved from one side of a dressing-room to another. For weeks, if not months, you will go to the wrong side.

To return to my original theme, it is with suddenness that we realize that he has not been there lately; that she has disappeared. Such experiences come to all of us, and, without special information, all of us are equally uncertain as to when the evanishment occurred. At a certain moment we realize that these punctual glimpses have ceased. Where is that man? we ask. Where is that girl? How long is it since I saw him last? Can he be dead? But why dead? Why should he not have moved to a suburb in another direction? Why should he not have changed his occupation or received promotion and with it the right to be half an hour later?

Why should he be dead? And the girl, why should she not have married and now be house-bound, or more nearly so? No need to think of death yet. Plenty of time for that. No, she is married.

I am personally—and have been for a long while—much interested by a man I used to pass every morning in the Green Park reading a book and smoking a cigarette. A man with no employment, but certainly not an idler. It is some time now since he has been there. He may merely be away. He may be ill. He too may even be dead, but I hope not. I always used to wonder what book he was reading and to hope that I might get to know him and find out. Now this may never be. On the other hand, he may be there again to-morrow.

When you know for a fact that an old acquaintance or passer-by is dead, your feelings are different. The element of finality comes in. 'Well,' you say, 'so he's left us. We shall never see him any more,' In short, you know. But in these other cases, where there is only disappearance, we never know, and, hoping for a return, we continue to scan the features in the street. Nor is it only the features for which we look. It is physical peculiarities too, for we find that we have subconsciously acquired knowledge as to how all these people in whom we are interested move and walk. These idiosyncrasies that the Almighty

has arranged are really very remarkable; for just as among all the myriad faces in the world, there are no two really alike, so are there no two identical sets of limbs. I have found myself recognizing ways of walking that I had not seen for many years; and I am sure I am not unique.

NOTE

I have to thank the Proprietors of the *Sunday Times*, *Punch*, *Harper's Magazine*, the *Strand Magazine* and *The Cricketer* for permission to use the foregoing essays, some of which have been extended and all revised. For facility to reproduce Fildes' water-colour drawing of 'The Empty Chair,' I am grateful to its present owner.

Printed in Great Britain by Butler & Tanner Ltd , Frome and London