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HANNEN SWAFFET'S WHO'S WHO

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Simpson



HANNEN SWAFFER
As Joseph Simpson sees him

*HANNEN SWAFFER'S
WHO'S WHO*

By

*WITH A FRONTISPIECE, AND A FOREWORD BY
EDGAR WALLACE*

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THE PLAGUE OF SWAFFERISM

BY EDGAR WALLACE

THERE is only one man in the world who understands Hannen Swaffer—and that is I.

Swaffer himself does not understand much about him. He accepts himself as one of the gifts of God, just as he accepts sunlight and spring flowers, and other lesser creations of the Almighty. The world revolves about him once in every twenty-four hours ; for his special benefit the year is divided into four quarter-days. These are facts that are hardly worth analysing ; *why* he should be so gifted, *why* any revue is not complete without a reference to him and no musical comedian, whether he is appearing in London or Manchester, can resist a jape at his expense or an appreciation of his acknowledged qualities, he does not trouble to discover.

Swaffer and I have been the greatest blessing to writers of revues and to musical artists: we have eliminated and replaced the town of Wigan as a substitute for wit. I often wonder that the proprietors of the great music halls in London do not bill, as an attraction, the fact that a reference will be made to Hannen Swaffer, but really this is unnecessary, for there invariably is a reference to Hannen Swaffer. There is, in fact, too much Hannen Swaffer on the Stage.

I find him in the provinces. There is one dramatic critic who describes himself as " The Swaffer of the North." There is another who has printed on his cards the devastating announcement that he is " The Hannen Swaffer of the West." The plague of Swaffers has even reached Glasgow.

For some reason, which I have never been able to understand, actors hate him. I have never known a working actor to suffer at the hands of Swaffer, though some of my friends

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who occupy a more exalted position in the profession have suffered at his hands, Stupidly, I think—for who is Swaffer ?

" I don't mind his criticism," says one, " it is his damnable personalities——"

Nobody seems to realise that personalities are his invention and that personalities boiled down to a formula mean intimate gossip about an actor's life, his salary, and his peculiarities. Everybody likes personalities if they are pleasantly and flatteringly written. None of us like them if they jar our vanities.

I have many personal grudges against Swaffer. He was the first man who discovered that I sat in the box on a first night and laughed at my own jokes, and, once this revelation was made every writer in England made the same discovery.

Why shouldn't I laugh at my own jokes ? Somebody has got to laugh. Besides, they do not seem like my own jokes when they are delivered by the character on the Stage.

He discovered there was too much Edgar Wallace when I produced a failure at the Savoy, and my answer to that was to come out in the next week and have a success at the Lyceum.

He was not annoyed. He was probably relieved, because under his rough and unprepossessing exterior beats a kindly heart, and, somewhere in his sinister inside, burns the oriflamme of a poet.

Swaffer can never completely annoy me, because I recognise the qualities that make his articles so valuable, for I am a journalist. That is my basic profession, and the smell of Fleet Street is to me as the roses of Araby.

You can get no good hot news without hurting somebody. Did you ever consider the heartaches which are caused by perfectly proper comments on a murder trial, or upon a convicted murderer ? Do you think of the feelings of the suicide's widow, or the sister of some woman who has got herself mixed up in a beastly divorce case ?

News is trouble. Ninety per cent of all newspaper articles and news items are uncomplimentary to somebody. Nobody wants to read good news in a newspaper. A journal thrives on world miseries. Take up any daily and analyse the headlines. Almost every one will be read with anguish by some innocent person.

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Swaffer invented the daily gossip column, just as he invented and fostered many methods of journalism which are to-day the features of the popular press.

The underlying spirit which he applied was that contained in the best epigram he has ever made : " Worms have more to do with the beauty of ruins than architects."

He found theatrical journalism mainly laudatory. The gossip-writer's column, the theatrical writer's column and the theatrical paragraphias column was a waste-paper basket into which press agents had poured their inventions.

He was not satisfied with the polite announcement, which was handed to him, that Miss Jinx was leaving the cas. of " What a Flop ! " because her doctor had ordered her a complete rest. He probed down into the circumstances and got the whole Story of the unholy row which Miss Jinx had had with the management because some other lady in the cast had got more songs to sing than she. It was very annoying for Miss Jinx to read the truth, and very interesting to everybody else.

Indeed, it is impossible to find a paragraph of his which arouses the bitterest hatred of this loathsome fellow without reading in the next paragraph and discovering an unpleasant fact about somebody else with which we heartily agree.

A newspaper man's job is to get news—and news means facts. We were taught this in a very hard school in the days when Swaffer, Charlie Hands, Philip Gibbs, Harold Ashton, myself and other bright lads were reporters in Fleet Street. We spread in various directions—Philip Gibbs to his well-deserved knighthood and fame, Harold Ashton to his death, Charles Hands to a retirement in the Isle of Wight, Swaffer and I holding grimly on and digging ourselves to Fleet Street, never, I hope, to be exploded from our little Strongholds.

I hear about Swaffer in odd corners of the world, Stare at his articles in languages which I cannot understand in far-away continental cities, and am called up on the telephone by vengeful friends to demand whether I have seen his perfectly disgraceful reference to them in that morning's *Sunday Express*.

Usually, Swaffer is right; sometimes, he is ravingly, madly wrong. His audacity in telling me that I was a bad producer because one of the actors in my play forgot his lines and a

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light went on when it should have been off, remains with me as an instance of his unparalleled nerve.

With the conclusions he forms in this book, I can neither agree nor disagree, as he didn't take the trouble to send them to me. I shall like all the unpleasant things he says about people I dislike, and hate his reference to my friends. I hope he has written nothing about me because we are, just now, on speaking terms.

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HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

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GENE TUNNEY

CHAMPION OF THE WORLD WHO HATES IT

TUNNEY is the shyest world's champion who ever came to London.

Jack Dempsey, modest though he was on our side, was "The Champ"; as such, he went to the Carpentier-Beckett fight and took his bow. Tunney went scarcely anywhere. There was the inevitable Harry Preston dinner and a call on the Prince of Wales, but that was nearly all.

"I want to lose myself in the crowd," he told me. "I do not want to see my photograph in the papers. I will not see any interviewers. I have retired. I have nothing to say."

His modesty is in striking contrast to the glare of publicity in which Jack Johnson, when he was champion, would drive through London's Streets in a blatant motor-car.

Jem Corbett appeared on the music-hall Stage. Fitzsimmons went everywhere. Tommy Burns was usually seen around. I do not remember Jeffreys in England.

Now, Tunney has retired with £500,000. He sought secrecy even for his marriage.

Where are his surviving predecessors in the long line of world champions? Tommy Burns, when last I heard of him, was running a hostelry in Newcastle. Jack Johnson, his money nearly gone, was making a film, in Mexico, a picture in which he defended a white woman from a brutal white man! Jim Jeffreys was farming somewhere in California, and acting now and then for the screen.

Jem Corbett, when I last met him, was making "pictures" in Hollywood, complaining that his arm ached with the strain of knocking people down, actors for the films—if he were tired, what about the other poor fellows?—and Jack Dempsey, who now owns an hotel in Los Angeles, and dabbles in real estate, was being rehearsed by David Belasco

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for a play called "The Big Show," in which he was to aft with his wife. It failed dismally.

Corbett, charming and kindly man that he is, was recalling, without envy, the fact that, whereas Dempsey could make £100,000 over a fight, he had to pommel John L. Sullivan in the blazing sun for what seemed like years for a mere £2,000.

"Even then, I felt I was King of Broadway," he said.

I have met all these boxers somewhere or another, either on the other side of the Atlantic or on this, some of them on both. All were men remarkable in some way or another, for, as I told Gene Tunney, a man who becomes champion of the world has to have some great quality other than those of a fighter.

"I suppose he grows other qualities," said Hugh Walpole, who was in the party. Walpole, knowing the champion's often-printed liking for literature, had sent him a Christmas present of all his works.

"I have read one or two of them," said Gene. "But I prefer to take one author at a time and read him all through, I remember *Fortitude.* I did read that."

The young Marquis of Clydesdale, who was the fourth person present, had read "Fortitude," too. I had read the first half. So we were all Walpole "fans."

This man Tunney is neither the highbrow of the sporting cartoonist, nor the fake Student of the cynic. He is just a big, natural man, with charming manners and a film-Star face. Although he has educated himself, his poise is perfect. He "belongs," and he knows it.

He went into the ring to make money. Having made it, he got out. So that was that. Now, on his marriage, he is going into the "Social Register," the American Debrett. That is a romance, isn't it?

There was no highbrow stuff about his rooms. Alexander Woollcott's "Going to Pieces," a book of dramatic criticism, was perhaps the most highbrow book in the room. There were eight or nine American novels of the Thomas Beer type, but, as his two travelling friends explained, "Most of those are ours—just presents sent to the boat." Americans do that. People send you boat-books. You do not read them. You leave them around.

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Tunney's talk was chiefly of mutual friends on both sides of the sea. It is amazing how small that Atlantic Ocean has become during the last few years. Anglo-Americans are a great family. One name brought up another. After all, nearly everyone has been "on the pictures" by now. That makes the world seem small.

Ireland, of course, is one of the champion's great subjects. His father left Ireland when he was a year old, and his mother when she was a young girl. Irish-Americans begin to dream of the Emerald Isle when they are small. They go to see the place at some time or another, if they can.

Tunney's views on the Ould Country are interesting. He was struck by the strange contrast of the modern concrete roads and the old-fashioned mud-cabins close beside them. The cabins reminded him of homes he has seen in Arizona and New Mexico, except that around them there was the

"I had read (BB ^flsh literature," he said. "I was prepared." "Ireland seems to live on tradition and for tradition. It seems strange to look back so much. People should look forward."

He spoke to me of his first sight of Ireland—of Kingstown, where thousands of people waited in the rain all over the scenery, some with umbrellas, but most of them just getting wet; of Dublin, with people standing wet through from 5.30 until 11, just to see him; of scores of policemen who, though there to manage the vast crowds, forgot their duty in their anxiety to shake hands.

The American Minister's wife, he said, "nearly passed out" in the mob; John McCormack had to lift her through the mass.

I liked that picture—the other most famous of Irish-Americans acting as escort at his fellow-hero's homecoming.

It was fortunate for Tunney that the public did not know what London hotel he was staying at. As it was, the telephone went all day and messages and telegrams arrived. There was always a kindly answer, but invariably it had to be "No."

Gene Tunney, although champion of the world, is nothing of the sort. He is now a gentleman in private life. He

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wants to be forgotten for the hard punches he gave. He wants to be remembered for the handshakes he receives.

Still, London will remember him for the speech he made at the Harry Preston dinner. He spoke for half an hour, without notes, about how he hated fighting and loved boxing, how he loathed the man-killer, the brute in the ring.

The fashionable folk there, and the authors, had rather patronised Tunney until he stood up. Then he made a better speech than any of them could have uttered. They felt suddenly small. The days of the cabbage-eared champion were over.

SEAN O'CASEY

THE GENIUS THEY COULD NOT LIONISE

TO look at, Sean O'Casey is merely a sore-eyed working man. His clothes do not fit him.

"I do not know whether I dislike you more than I like you" were the words with which he once started a conversation with me, over the telephone. Sean is very frank.

He is irritable, and he is lazy. He boasts of it.

"Work is meant for——slaves," he shouts, sometimes.

Yet he was a bricklayer's labourer, who could not read or write until he reached his 'teens. He learned by struggling through Shakespeare, late at night, hour by hour. He lived in a Dublin slum, amongst the very poorest of slaves. He hated it. Then he started to put it into plays.

Of all the writers I know, he has the most incisive style. He writes down exactly what he sees. No, he doesn't write—he takes photographs. He is the supreme realist of our time. He has gone into the lowest haunts, like Gorki, and remembered scraps of conversation, studied people through those half-blind eyes of his, eyes weakened by late study, and with no lashes on the lids, and then made of it all an indictment that is terrible to see.

"The Shadow of a Gunman" was the first. It made his name. Yet, when it came to London, its humour was so great that people laughed when they shouldn't have done, for the very humour was acid grimness.

When they accepted "The Shadow of a Gunman" for the Abbey Theatre, Sean left off working.

Why should he work when there were a few pounds coming in?

"When I was down to my last ten-pound note," he told me, "I used to take off my coat and sit down and say, 'Now

I've got to do some——work.' Several times, when I did this, they called round and said, 'We're reviving "The Gunman" for a week.' That was good enough for me. I would put on my coat and go round to the pub."

When " Juno and the Paycock " was produced in London, and Sean, the navvy, came here to make his bow, they tried to lionise him. He shocked them. He went to a reception at Lady Blank's, wearing his ordinary suit, the only one he had. The butler wouldn't let him in. Lady Londonderry was more polite. She received him at a swell party, with Stanley Baldwin there, although Sean was in his old grey suit.

Sean has been on the dole, he has had his play nearly broken up by Republicans, and once his leading actor was nearly kidnapped, just to stop the show! He has earned sixpence a day when a grown man, and, as a playwright, he has earned £200 a week. He has received the Hawthornden Prize from Lord Oxford, still in his grey suit, and he had his last play turned down by the Abbey Theatre, in which he made his name! Still, what does he care ?

Besides, when " The Plough and the Stars," the story of the revolution, was being done at the Fortune, mine was the only criticism that appeared next day. There was a real revolution on, outside, and so there were no newspapers !

LIONEL POWELL

MAN WHO CARRIES THE MUSIC

THE world's greatest impresario remains calm, in spite of all the prima donnas.

Eager interruptions come from Lionel Powell when you talk to him ; otherwise, he is normal, a shortish red-faced man, with greying hair.

He has been to America forty times and twice round the world, always with prima donnas or great pianists. He has branches now in twelve of the world's capitals, and he has managed more Stars than any other man alive. He travels all the time, and even when in England he uses a Daimler car fitted with a bed inside, so that he can sleep on his way to Manchester or Leeds.

He has run 15,000 concerts in his life! For twenty-five years he was Melba's manager, and yet she is Still a friend of his.

He has met the Kaiser, King Leopold, the Emperor Francis Joseph, the Tsar, Alfonso, Viftoria, Edward, Alexandra, who all asked him to arrange command performances. He knows all the crowned heads except the present Royal Family of England. They do not like music.

Pachmann is his favourite, the dear old man whom music keeps alive, and who, even when he went to Marlborough House to have tea with Queen Alexandra, insisted on washing his tea-cup I He always washes his tea-cup, even in palaces.

" I love it," said Queen Alexandra, when Lionel whispered a few words of excuse—words the deaf Queen could scarcely hear.

Once, when, having left Calgary for a concert in Edmonton, he went to his usual game of chess with Kubelik, Lionel discovered that the chess-board—in fact, all the luggage—had been left behind, including Kubelik's famous violin.

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Although they sent it on by special train, which cost £200, it did not arrive in time. The hall was packed with people, some of whom had driven nearly fifty miles to attend. Where was a violin ?

" I bought one in a pawnshop for fifteen shillings," said Lionel. " It was the only one in the small town. ' If you don't like it,' I said to the audience, ' you must have your money back.' "

They Stayed. Kubelik gave an electrical performance—and the violin was sold for £50 to someone in the hall.

" A few years afterwards," commented Powell, " I bought the Emperor Strad for Kubelik, and it is now worth £10,000."

One day in Chicago, when Powell was taking Pachmann into his hotel, they met Paderewski on the Stairs. Pachmann had played to an empty hall—Paderewski had been sold out.

" Ah, you take the money," said Pachmann, " but I play the piano."

Powell has taken artistes by sledge and motor car, by special train and boat and aeroplane. He has been snowed up in the Rockies for two days. He has been in washouts on the Andes, where avalanches had swept away the railroad in front of him.

Yet his most terrible memory, almost, is Caruso's first attempt to sing in English. He tried to teach him the words at a piano. Caruso's accent was dreadful. Still, they tried it—at Liverpool.

" He mixed up all his words, even those which he could remember," said Lionel, " and I stood at the back howling with laughter. Yet the audience applauded ! "

" King Edward is dead," Melba called him up at nine o'clock one Saturday morning. " We must cancel to-morrow's concert."

" What shall we do ? " said Clara Butt, when, at Vancouver, they found that they could not engage a hall.

Lionel hired a theatre at midnight, after the play was done. Special ferry boats took the audience back to Victoria. Early morning trams were arranged. Night became day, and they played to record money.

" How shall we get there ? " said Melba once in New York, when 10,000 dollars worth of seats had been sold for the New

L I O N E L P O W E L L

York Hippodrome and snowdrifts were lying all over the city.

They didn't get there. Neither did the audience. There was no concert.

During the last six months Lionel has paid to artistes no less than £70,000. What he has paid to Paderewski in his lifetime not even Poland knows.

"Paddy," as he calls him, is the greatest idol of them all. He never eats in public, because of the mobbing, and when they have been on tour Lionel would always buy four first-class tickets, to reserve a carriage, push him inside, pull down the blinds, and shout, "For God's sake, Start the train!"

One night in Russia, when Kubelik was playing in St. Petersburg, the violinist was in one of his most all-compelling moods. When they swept over him women used to cry, and the hall seemed like one vast breathlessness. A pistol shot rang out. A Student had shot himself.

"We all told Kubelik that it was through his bad playing," said Lionel. "The truth is that the music had snapped something in the Student's brain."

Whenever I see Lionel Powell's eager-looking eyes, I think of the shrieking prima donnas he has seen, of pianists who refused to play, of the tears and the tantrums. . . .

ERNST TOLLER

THE REBEL IN A NIGHT CLUB

A BLACK-HAIRED German came to London three years ago. As he wanted to see the night clubs, Ashley Dukes asked me to take him round.

I took him to dinner at the Embassy. He was nearly as bored as I was; it was so very respectable, although Nelson Keys was among the dancers. Then we sat in the Cosmo for an hour, enduring the vulgar noise. Then they wouldn't let us in the Fifty-Fifty, which was a good thing.

So we went into the Kit-Cat, where Lord Beaverbrook sat in a corner talking to Joe Coyne and Freddie Lonsdale, and Sophie Tucker flopped down next to me.

"This looks too rich," said the young German.

So Leslie Hore-Belisha and I took him to the Corner House in Coventry Street, where we sat talking politics until four in the morning.

The young rebel had behaved so nicely all this time that I had almost forgotten his past. When we came out, and I bought a *Sunday Express*, however, he asked for a *Sunday Worker*. That gave him away.

You see, he was Ernst Toller, the leader of the Spartacist revolution, which rose up in a day in Germany and then was smashed in a sea of blood.

They put him in gaol for five years, and, in gaol, he wrote plays, protests against massed cruelty and war. "Masses and Men" was one of them, a new conception, a terrible exposure of Society, a vital thing. They called it Expressionism.

This young dark-haired German, this gaol-bird, this violent orator, had come to England, and all he wanted to see was night clubs !

It was Strange to think that it is because of late-night noise that we seem to be chiefly famous in the new culture of Germany.

ERNST TOLLER

I like Toller and I believe in his kind, although I may not see eye to eye with them in politics. He rushed from Paris to fight for his native Germany, crossing the frontier four minutes before they closed it for four terrible years,

"For thirteen months I murdered in the field," he said. "I believed it my duty. I murdered, murdered——! One day I found a heap of corpses and I saw in them a protest against the humanity that had murdered them. I became a penitent, yet laden with crime, a murderer whose hands could never again be clean."

Toller recited some of this to me, while, in the Cosmo Club, they danced to negro jazz.

"I shall never be clean again," he repeated. "My revolt was a protest against hate and murder. I am Still a rebel. Prison did not break me. Even in my five years in gaol I dreamed of the peace that, one day, shall come into the hearts of men."

Germany put him into a fortress because, in January, 1918, he organised a Strike of munition workers, preached in favour of peace without annexation, and argued that Germany was not guiltless in the War. In the fortress he learned to write.

The revolution of November freed him, but he was soon back in gaol. No party, no class was big enough to hold his burning soul for long; only a narrow cell could find room for it.

He talked to me for hours—and the next day Sir William Joynton-Hicks sent him back to Germany again. Yet out of the poetry and the vision of men like Toller will the last great humanity be born.

I am glad he did not think much of our night clubs. I hate the damned things. So does Jix.

VIOLET MELNOTTE

THE WOMAN WHO SOLD OUT

ALTHOUGH Violet Melnotte has sold the Duke of York's Theatre, her painted photograph is still in the foyer. After all, she built it. It is her monument. Besides, "Madame" will not soon be forgotten.

When she erected the theatre, thirty years ago, St. Martin's Lane was a sort of slum. They called her "Mad Melnotte." Then Wyndham followed her—and Stoll.

For thirty years she clung to the theatre for her family's sake. Her husband became an invalid. She went on alone, through evil days and good. The pit screamed at the pillars that blot out the sight. She did not hear. The gallery complained that they could not see. She just kept on.

I laughed because it was the only theatre with real fires in the auditorium. "Madame" did not even make the joke that it was in case she had another frost.

She played the business game of the theatre as they really play it. "I always kept my theatre nice," she told me, when she sold out. She believed it, too. She loved to sit in the royal retiring-room, which looked like a Brixton parlour in the 'nineties. She would hate the new Byam Shaw superlithographs and the polished floor that now await the King—in case.

Violet Melnotte is such a keen woman of business that she admits it was she who started the high-rent system.

"It was not really my fault. A syndicate wanted to take my theatre for Gina Palerme in 'A Girl for a Boy.' I said I wouldn't deal with a syndicate. They kept on raising the offer until, to stop them, I said, 'You've got to pay £300 a week.' They paid it! Other managers, hearing, started raising their rents, until the Palace went up to £800 a

VIOLET MELNOTTE

week. None of them knew before how much people would pay!"

It was the sight of a pile of banknotes laid on the table that made her let the theatre for "The Merchant of Venice," composed as an opera by Lady Beecham's son.

"It was a terrible failure. Sometimes they took only £20 in a night, and a famous singer and Merlin Morgan, the conductor, were so angry, after sitting in the box which we gave them when they asked for two seats, that they cut my manager dead the next morning."

It was Miss Melnotte who suggested Noel Coward as a playwright to Basil Dean.

"Noel had been in 'London Calling' in my theatre," she explained, "and I liked him very much. I thought he would make a playwright. In fact, I still do. So Dean, whom I regard as a fine producer, although too expensive for me, Staged 'Easy Virtue' and 'Home Chat' on my Stage.

"Then they were going to do 'Sirocco' here, but somehow changed their minds and went to Daly's. I went to see it on the first night, and then, when I heard the boos, I went home and sent a letter to Mr. Dean.

"Thank you very much, indeed," I wrote. "Yours delightedly, Violet Melnotte."

Dean tells me that, by mistake, she wrote "Yours delightfully."

Her most mysterious author was the man who wrote "Life Goes On."

"A manager I knew kept on worrying me to produce that play," said Miss Melnotte, "and at last I consented. I used to get wires from all over the country congratulating me upon my courage. Then on the first night the author pretended to wire from Arundel.

"Officially, to this day, I do not know who the author was; privately, I do know. He was formerly a manager at this very theatre. It was he who suggested my Staging it. It ran five nights.

"Yes, the theatre business is a gamble. The longest run here was 'Daddy Longlegs.' Henry Miller sent his son Gilbert over here to Stage it. - On the first night there was a lot of noise in the pit, and Gilbert Miller, used to America,

HANNEN SWAPPER'S WHO'S WHO

thought they were giving it the bird. Actually they were liking it.

" ' Will you gamble ? ' said Gilbert.

" ' Yes/ I said, ' I will.' "

" Daddy Longlegs " ran for sixteen months.

Then, when "The Man From Toronto" failed at the Royalty, she saw it, took it to the Duke of York's, and ran it there for fourteen months !

" I have had Bernhardt acting here, and both BouwmeeSter, the Dutchman, and Moscovitch in ' The Merchant of Venice,' and Sybil Thorndike in ' The Trojan Women,' and ' Medea.' Mrs. Pat Campbell went away to cry in Barrie's flat after the terrible failure of ' Madame Sand,' and Gertrude Elliot, I find in my programme book, was here in ' The Lonely Lady,' although it is a play I have completely forgotten."

" The most terrible night I remember here," she went on, " was when Marie Tempest came back from Australia with ' Good Gracious, Annabelle.' I could have sold the Stalls three times over.

" A Stage reception was arranged. Then at the end they Started booing the play. Famous people, almost by the dozen, came up to me and said, ' Oh, do go behind and apologise. We cannot face Miss Tempest.' Only about six went on the Stage. It was dreadful."

Well, now " Madame " has sold out.

" I am so tired of climbing up these Stairs and counting the takings, and worrying what is coming on next. It has been a trying time. . . . "

SIR BARRY JACKSON

MAKES US DANCE ROUND THE MAYPOLE DAIRY

AT times I have heaped jam-spoons of praise upon Barry Jackson's head. At other times his productions have almost sickened me. He has done so much. Then he had fallen so far below his best achievements. I think he was knighted as a punishment.

Sir Barry's father was a grocer in Birmingham's famous Bull Ring. Out of his shop the Maypole Dairy Company was born. So it is that Sir Barry, his son, enjoys the income on £1,000,000. He would like to brighten England. He wants us all to dance round the Maypole Dairy Company.

You wouldn't believe it, but the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, which is the most efficient playhouse in England, was really born in an Edgbaston dining-room, where young Jackson, who knew the Stories of Shakespeare's plays before he could read—one of his childhood's games was to recite "Double, double, toil and trouble," marching round an old armchair!—drew around him young amateurs who, first of all, produced plays in a respectable dining-room, and then, for six years, played in small halls round Birmingham almost every Saturday night.

Barry Jackson himself acted. So did Bache Matthews, now his assistant director, but then a Corporation clerk; John Drinkwater, then surveyor to an insurance company; Scott Sunderland; and Cicely Byrne, who is Sir Barry's niece.

They didn't aft for charity. Jackson believed in making people pay. He wrote some of the plays himself, but most of them have long since been burned, and he learned to design scenery and dresses. He mastered foreign languages, too, so that he could translate plays from the Continent. Because the first two plays they acted publicly were "Eager

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Heart" and "The Interlude of Youth," and because they called themselves the Pilgrim Players, Birmingham began to believe they were missionaries of the Roman Catholic Church, engaged in religious propaganda I

Sacred music was used, you see, and incense and tapers and vestments, and they even went so far as to print on the programme, "Christians, Awake," which the audience had to sing!

The Birmingham Repertory Theatre was built, a monument of the small-theatre movement. Yet although, when Drinkwater became general manager, he knew nothing whatever of management, and Matthews, when he took on the business side, knew, he boasts, even less, it became a model for the world.

"Back to Methuselah" was acted there first; so was "The Farmer's Wife." Those, of course, were successes. Yet when Georg Kaiser's "Gas" was done, there were usually more people on the Stage than there were in the audience.

Jackson's achievements are vast. He gave us "The Immortal Hour," which ran on for month after month at the Regent, ending with a presentation to Sir Barry by a Royal princess. I saw it over twenty times. He put on "The Insect Play" and, when he brought "Yellow Sands" to the Haymarket, his system of casting from the provinces was so perfect, that, although the play ran over a year, the entire company of twelve did not cost so much as Fay Compton had been earning in the two failures which preceded it.

Yet when Jackson modernises Shakespeare, it seems to me like lunacy. And, every now and then, he puts on plays so trivial that, while they are part of his plan of acting drama of every kind, I think, instead, of the great things his intelligence and wealth could do if he took the big plunge.

The great tiling about Jackson is he learned it all himself. He joined no company. He took lessons from no manager. Neither did he go to a correspondence school.

OLGA PETROVA

REALLY " MURIEL HARDING " IN DISGUISE

THE Greville Collins management, who wanted to produce her play "Hurricane," were very much afraid of Olga Petrova one day. She was staying at Claridges's, where everybody called her " Madame." She was so imperious, they said.

I went up with Collins' manager, who was afraid of going alone. Petrova came out, looking like a leopardess.

" You used to be Muriel Harding," I said. " You are English."

She looked at me. I could not imagine anyone being afraid.

Ever since, Petrova has been a great friend of mine. She is the most intellectual of all the women who ever went upon the screen. She speaks four or five languages and she is the wife of a fashionable American surgeon, who is very quiet when she is there. Her home on Long Island is a dream, wakened up.

Who would believe that, when she was plain Muriel Harding, she used to walk about the London Streets, Starving?

" I would have done anything for a meal," she says.

She had tried her hand at journalism and acting, and then she went on the Canterbury Stage, wearing a dress she had dyed herself, sitting up all night with a dolly-tub.

They screamed at her and threw pennies, and they pulled the curtain down. Yet she was trying, on the London halls, the work that afterwards made her rich.

One day, Leon Zeitlin, her agent, bought her cough lozenges, because she was so poor. One of her lungs was spotted. She weighed less than ninety pounds, and was a bag of bones.

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"Your English name won't do," said Zeitlin. "What shall we call you?"

So, in his London office, she wrote some names on his blotting-pad, something like that of Pavlova, who was then a boom. At last she got to "Olga Petrova."

"That looks fine," he said.

So Olga Petrova she became, and, as such, she went to New York. A few years afterwards she came back and, with her Russian name, topped the bill at the Tivoli, which had turned her down as Muriel Harding.

In those days she used to have boa-constrictors in her Adelphi rooms. Then came hard years upon the films, and wealth, and a rich husband, who calls her "Madame," as does everybody else. Afterwards, she wrote plays, "Hurricane" and "The White Peacock," Starring in them in American tours, and lefturing women at matinees, idolised.

Now, but for the Censor, she would be acting her own plays in England. She writes verse, she expresses life in short Stories and she looks, always, like the heroine in "Three Weeks." Her new flat in Paris is between a monastery and a maternity home. Her villa at Cap Ferrat is next to Somerset Maugham's. She calls me "Master," and, English though she is in origin, she always talks with the foreign accent she had to learn, so that the Olga Petrova would seem real.

She is one of those awkward women who like truth.

I rank her play "Hurricane" beside "Anna Christie," because of its power and courage.

Still, I dread the time, which Petrova declares will come, when women, entering their own, will be masters of the world.

MATHESON LANG

THE ACTOR WITH HIS FATHER'S VOICE

IT was one of those "old nights." Matheson Lang, having made a small fortune in the provinces and on the films, had come back. His Scottish caution had decided to take some sort of a plunge, a year's sharing tenancy of the Duke of York's, with three plays, all carefully tried out on the road.

It is pitiful to have to say it, but even a modest venture such as this aroused our eagerness. I wrote excitedly. The British theatre had come to that!

"What a voice!" wrote one reader to me. "When I heard it on the wireless, reading from 'The Wandering Jew,' I could hear, once again, the voice of his father, the Rev. Gavin Lang, preaching in the old kirk." I received scores of letters like that. We all got worked up.

• After all, Lang has great gifts—a presence, but no past. He is a quiet, modest man of experience. We could remember of him no slighting word, only a record, since he first "walked on" as a convict in "Proof," earning, in 1897, a guinea a week in Louis Calvert's company, of long, hard work. He was trained in the old school. He is diffident; he is kindly and popular with all his players; he has acted nearly every male part in all the leading Shakespeare plays.

Although his clever wife, Hutin Britton, helps him to stage his plays, she has the good sense not to impose herself as a member of his company. There is nothing of the Lady Martin-Harvey about her. She knows how hard it is to find a play for one Star, without worrying about two.

There was never any vanity about Lang, except that, when a youth, he insisted on leaving his father's manse and going on the Stage. They wanted to make a minister of him. Lang's cousin, who fell in with his father's wishes, is now

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Archbishop of Canterbury. The father was Moderator of the Church of Scotland ; the son is Primate of the Church of England. That is what I call being Scots.

Matheson Lang left home with £5 in his pocket, his father's blessing, and the remark: " You can come home if you fail, but there is no more money."

That original £5 was all Lang ever had, except what he earned. He "walked on." He went through the hard Benson grind, and he slaved and worked and saved. Indeed, Lang has always backed himself—out of his own savings.

" I played in dramas, farcical comedies, and all sorts of plays on tour," he says. " I often went without my dinner and supper. I had promised my father that I would earn my own living on the Stage and never appeal to him for money or help, and somehow I managed to worry through."

Sometimes his cousin, the Archbishop, has been to see him act, sitting in the dress circle, but he does not go behind. I am glad he did not see Isobel Elsom's costume in " Such Men are Dangerous." I hope he did not see the last act of " Mr. Wu." I hope, too, he did not see the fallen women, put into " The Christian " before it began to pay.

Matheson Lang, who was London's youngest Hamlet, has played Charles Surface in an all-Star cast in New York. He has acted in almost every part of the British Empire, and he has done hard work upon the films. His Scots grit has won through.

Still, Lang should not have Stayed on tour so long. He had become slow and heavy *on* that night of happy return. They cheer you too much in the provinces; they never criticise.

He played in " Such Men are Dangerous," the part that Charles Laughton had played a year before, in " Paul I. " None of these after-managers can Stand up against Laughton.

Dennis Eadie tried, as a French detective, a few months before. It was his last attempt at Stardom. He died a few weeks after, a disappointed man. . . .

" Lang," I shall say to him, when next we meet, " be brave I Yours are the shoulders on which the mantle of tradition should fall. You have a great public. Now find a great play."

R. H. GILLESPIE

THE MAN WHO ACCOUNTS FOR TASTE

“ I AM a public caterer.”

There are no delusions about Harry Gillespie.

“ I am like Joe Lyons. I've got to give them what they want.”

He sits on more boards than any other man who was ever associated with British amusement. Over 300 theatres, music-halls, and cinemas look to him for guidance.

He has great limitations of outlook. He merely sees what is in front of his nose. Yet if it is in front of his nose he sees it.

I do not remember anyone speaking ill of him.

When they sent for him, he cut down De Courville's extravagances at the London Hippodrome, using his accountant's pen like a carving knife. He joined one vast group after another, and justified himself.

I would ascribe it to his modesty that he always looks nervous if I venture to find fault. It is only for a moment, though. The accountant's brain begins *to* work again and I am made to see that business is business, after all.

“ I am a public caterer.”

There is none of your damned art about that, is there ?

Harry Gillespie has discovered that the accountant is becoming more and more the important man in business England. We are becoming more and more a nation of agents, yes, and more and more a nation of shareholders. People want to know “ the figures.” When it comes to a fight, only the accountant's brain knows them.

Harry Gillespie can quote even more figures than Butt. Butt was only an accountant in the sense that he started in the business department of Harrod's. Gillespie, until recently,

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had been an accountant all his life, and, with his brother and cousin, he Still runs an accountant's business.

His two sons are to be accountants after him.

"I want them to learn accountancy," he told me, "and then they can choose what profession they like."

In the accountant's office you learn all the secrets. You know where the money really is. No one can argue with you. Others deal with theories. You deal with facts.

Harry Gillespie now runs, among many other things, the Newcastle Empire, where once he merely counted the box office takings. He Still counts them.

"I've got to feed my provincial houses," he says. "I've got to Study Sheffield and Birmingham and Leeds. The curtain has to go up every night all over the country. You only think in the West End."

When I go along to argue art, he tells me how they saved £2 a week in Nottingham by knocking down a dressing-room wall. Or he tells me how much they took in chocolates at Southampton, or he recites the takings at Liverpool. He remembers everything that I want to forget.

Now that Gillespie runs a farm at Horsley, even the cows have to produce milk in *i regular Stream. The box office takings of each hen are calculated, and if a sow should have one piglet less than she did last time, Harry calls a board meeting.

You have heard all this talk about Daylight Saving in the theatre. Harry Gillespie applies it even to his cows. He sends men on tour with milk cans in the neighbourhood of his farm. The milk inspector got hold of one of them, one day, and discovered that ~~the~~ milk was point point point something deficient in cream. Gillespie worked it out and then proved that, because of Daylight Saving, which gave the milk an hour less for production, that it wasn't the cow's fault, but the clock's.

When a man can argue like that—well, he ought to run theatres.

When I think of Sophie Tucker, I think of peroxide hair and a raucous voice. He thinks "£230 at Leeds on a bad Tuesday."

I think of Jack Buchanan .is a good-natured fellow who

R. H. GILLESPIE

learned his job by hard work. Gallery girls think of him as someone they would like to hug—"Flaming Youth," and all that sort of thing.

"We dropped £847 the first week he was away," says Gillespie—"and nearly £3,300 in three weeks."

It is the cash appeal that Gillespie likes.

Yet, ART rather worries Harry Gillespie. You see he is an accountant at heart. And there is no accounting for taste.

Gillespie's new interest is a Goliath. They call it the United Producing Corporation. It is a musical comedy trust. All the musical comedy managers are in, except one or two. They are to import, and then sell to each other, all the American musical comedies.

They have rows of figures, they have cash registers by the dozen, they have ledgers and day-books and everything. But they have not got a producer. They offered one terms that might have meant £6,000 in a bad year, and £10,000 when trade was good. He had a contract already—at much less than half that. So there may be something in business, after all.

CHARLES LAUGHTON

THE BEERBOHM TREE OF TO-MORROW

CHARLES LAUGHTON'S romance outshines them all. In spite of his squatness and bulk, he is the most brilliant character actor I have seen on the London Stage since Tree died. And he is not yet twenty-nine !

There is a sardonic grin behind that large brain of his. His mastery of his fat, flabby hands seems to fill a Stage. His acting is all inside him.

He is the white hope of the English world of acting. He goes from triumph to triumph.

Yet it is less than three years ago that he left the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art; two years before that, that he was an hotel servant.

He uses the words " hotel servant" himself, although he is purposely making it sound as bad as he can. What he means, of course, is that, when his family wanted him to learn just how to run his father's hotel, he Started just like a Swiss or Italian docs—at the bottom. Escoffier did, and the lords of the Carlton and the Ritz.

So it happened that, not five years ago, he was a waiter at Claridge's, attending to the wants of the fashionable people who are now his friends, or would be, rather, if he cared to mix with them. Laughton is not a Society actor. He has too much brains. He reads. He Studies. He thinks.

I find it refreshing to note that the much-despised critics discovered Laughton when, at Barnes, he was working for Philip Ridgeway. Then he came West, but at a salary ridiculously small. In cutting after cutting of mine, I find, for instance, that I said of " The Happy Husband," " As for Charles Laughton, as a jealous American with a sparkling wife, he gave the best performance of the evening," **and** that

of Pirandello's "Naked," a month later, I remarked, "The cleverest acting in the play was Charles Laughton's." Time after time, when he was earning only £3 a week, we all singled him out. Critics always are two or three years in front of managers.

Every time when Laughton has acted, when I have been there to see, he has been the cleverest person on the Stage. Yet he learned his American accent for "The Happy Husband" by studying gramophone records of speeches made by President Wilson and President Taft! His mimicry of Arnold Bennett in "Mr. Prohack" was an afterthought.

Young Laughton's acting in "A Man With Red Hair" was a devilish delight. He played the part of a Sadist as though he were a fiend let loose from Hell. In "Liliom," which, as produced in London, was an insult to the intelligence, and, with its sulphurous smoke, which filled the Stalls, an incredible offence to our nostrils, he was—well, all that Ivor Novello was not. No one would call Laughton a pretty boy. In fact, his problem is that we may get tired of his shape. You never know. Most actors who rise to the very top, and stay there, are thin men. There is less to look at.

His family ran an hotel in Scarborough, and the keen business men of Yorkshire who patronised his father's hotel did their best to dissuade him from the Stage.

"Ay, lad, why doan't tha goa into business?" they would say.

Young Laughton, however, had tried the hotel business in London. He tried to master it in the daytime; at night he would find his way *to* some pit or gallery in a theatre where the so-called Stars were acting. Then he took the plunge—at the R.A.D.A. he spent three terms, Studying under Komisarjevsky, Claude Rains, Norman Page, and Mile. Gachet, and then, at the end of his Student life, he took part in the Academy's annual public performance, acting in "School," with Bancroft as a judge.

"I was very nervous," said Mr. Laughton. "Seeing it, Sir Squire, who was in a box, gave me a nod. An hour afterwards he awarded me the gold medal, his own gift!"

Then Komisarjevsky took young Laughton to Barnes, where he was producing Russian plays—"The Government

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Inspector," " The Cherry Orchard," and " The Three Sisters." Then, in " Liliom," he was so praised that five other parts were offered him.

All his success came in eighteen months. Other young actors have had to struggle. He found nothing but success.

I do not like talking to Laughton because I always feel that he is mocking. I like to do my own mocking for myself. I think he has found out the secrets of the world while still a very young man. If you have attended people in a fashionable hotel, you know. . . .

You have heard people talk. You have heard them eat their soup. You have watched their clothes and seen the uncreased pants. You know all about the buttery fingers that asparagus makes—and last year's grouse. You know what happened in room 871 on that terrible Friday night . . .

Fancy knowing all that and then putting it into your acting !

DORIS KEANE

THE WOMAN WHO SEEKS PEACE

THEY identify Doris Keane only with "Romance." They do not know the sincerity of her mind, nor her high intelligence.

After all, "Romance" was acted in London during the War for over 1,000 times ! It dragged on for weeks, a failure, and then was a sudden success. Doris began to hate the play. She had acted it when half asleep. She has played it when seriously ill.

Except that Epstein made it, I am sure she would destroy the head he did of her in the part. Except that Charles Buchel lavished great care upon them, she would destroy the many sketches he made of her as the Cavallina. Besides, it would annoy her Italian maid, Octavia, who has been with her through all the years, cooking her spaghetti and keeping her "Romance" accent right.

For twelve years Doris has had a windmill in her garden near Tring. Often, for years at a time, when she has been in the States, she has not seen it, but the windmill has waited for her return. There is a path leading down to it from the cottage, a pathway painted blue, and there are blue flowers on each side of the pathway. There is blue glass, too, all over the cottage.

Sticking out from the cottage is a sort of shop window, in which are displayed hundreds of china dogs. She is a restless soul, always seeking peace and never finding it.

Her twin soul, more than anybody, is Edward Sheldon, who wrote "Romance," and who lies on a bed paralysed in New York, helpless and blind.

When Doris wants comfort badly and she calls on him, this wonderful man, though always in pain, talks in a soft voice that has calmed the souls of many troubled people who

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have called in search of a philosophy that comes from another world. He cannot see them ; but they go away, their worries won by his smile.

Ned Sheldon is rich, successful, working Still on plays, and yet he cannot move even a toe, or sec a thing ! He dictated " Lulu Belle " to a secretary whom he has never seen. He has three new plays, nearly done. He works on, a lesson to us all.

Doris' new craze is papier mache. She finds that easier to buy than a new " Romance," and, when Ellen Terry died, she said, " The last of the great ones has gone. There is no theatre now. . . . No, you never know. . . . The drama never dies. It only changes its face. It was a miracle play once, then a circus. Soon, perhaps, I shall have to do ' Romance ' as a talking film."

No, she won't. She has sold the rights. Greta Garbo will do it instead. To me, Doris Keane is " Romance "—and Romance is Doris Keane.

SIR CHARLES HIGHAM

THE M.P. WHO EMPLOYED A "BARKER"

YOU do not know Higham when you meet "Sir Charles." The knighted publicity expert has assumed the incandescent mantle of an English Babbitt, made himself believe that all advertised pills are worth a guinea a pill, and lived every word of his super-Bottomley speeches. Although a London-born youth, he joined the American Army, not because they sank the Lusitania, but because they sank the Maine. He wanted to fight the Spaniards, but got only as far as Florida—years before the advertising boom.

Then, Standing in Chicago one day, he threw up a coin to decide whether he should come to London or go to Los Angeles. It was a toss up between advertising and the films, type or pictures.

The Charlie I know is a very modest man, so self-conscious that, although he has raised himself from nothing to being the highest-paid publicity man in the British Empire, he often asks his wife, "What have I done that really matters?" She hastens to reassure him, but in vain. Except when he is making speeches, I never heard him say a boastful word.

He is the only man in London with a board room which is never used. For he has no board to sit there. He never asks for business, but, when it comes to him, he always asks a lot of money.

He is the only Parliamentary candidate who ever employed a "barker." Knowing that would-be M.P.'s cannot speak to voters on their way to the poll, he hired a man to Stand outside the polling-Station and shout, "Lloyd George tells you to vote for Higham!" Meanwhile, Charlie Stood beside him, raising his hat, to indicate that he was the good-looking young fellow whom Lloyd George liked so much.

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" Oh, that's Higg-ham," said the old ladies, who voted for him immediately.

During his four years in Parliament he made four speeches which, altogether, lasted for fourteen minutes. Once, wishing to please Ralph Blumenfeld, editor of the *Daily Express*, he moved the adjournment of the House on the question of cheaper fares, only to find, to his disgust, that forty-two Labour M.P.'s were the only ones who stood up to support him against his own Government. To his joy, his own motion was defeated.

" I congratulate you on your concise speech," said Sir Eric Geddes, against whom the motion was directed.

" It had to be short," replied Charlie. " They didn't tell me any more."

" You are the best life of any men of fifty whom I know, Higham," said Sir Thomas Horder, the other week.

Yet his only exercise is building bonfires. He keeps the home fires burning every Saturday, when he collects all the rubbish in the garden and goes on striking matches until not even the wind can put it out. You could not put Charlie out.

VISCOUNT BRENTFORD

PEER WHO WILL ALWAYS BE " JIX "

YES, but he has character. Four years ago, when I sent him, through a reporter, the facts about the night club scandal, and its pollution of the police, he immediately touched a bell and said, " Send for the Commissioner."

" He's away, Sir William," was the reply.

" Send for the Assistant Commissioner."

He came Straight over from Scotland Yard.

" Close all the night clubs immediately," said the Home Secretary.

" But——"

" Do as I tell you."

" You won't be able to do it like that," said the reporter,

" The influence is too Strong."

" We will try," said Sir William.

He failed. Night clubs had lots of money. Raids were known about beforehand. Someone always blabbed.

That was four years ago. Then, in spite of everybody, Lord Byng was called in and I saw Sergeant Goddard and Mrs. Meyrick sent to gaol. So did her titled daughters. Policemen resigned; others were dismissed. The new broom swept clean, and Jix was sent to the House of Lords. Where Jix had failed, Byng succeeded.

Yet Jix resisted the plot to save Victor, the night-club waiter, from deportation, even though he sent him a kind letter afterwards. Lady Dash went down on her knees almost, to Jix. The Home Secretary would not listen.

On several occasions, I have sent him fads about the police scandal, told him, for instance, how the chauffeur of a car, in which I was riding, was arrested outside Buckingham Palace for drunkenness, when all that had happened was that

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a taxicab dashed into our car, which was driven by a man who had not had a drink for several hours; written, too, how, in my company, once, there were three men, all of whom had had similar trouble with the police in the last few days; and called his attention to the unjust conviction of a woman for manslaughter because the evidence went wrong.

On every occasion, Sir William listened, although it would seem that his Home Office Staff was not so systematic as he tried to be. Indeed, on one occasion, my letter got mixed up with some correspondence congratulating him upon the result of the Prayer Book debate, with the result that, in his reply to me, I was called "The Reverend Canon Hannen Swaffer," yes, both *on* the Home Office envelope and inside the letter also I

I was for long mistaken about Sir William Joynson-Hicks. I regarded him Still as the small solicitor he was when he Started. That was before, when plain "William Hicks," he married an heiress called Joynson, and adopted her name with the hyphen. I thought him a joke. So did large numbers of the electorate. So did some of his fellow Ministers. They were the same ones who sneered at Baldwin.

Then he beat the bishops, who, before, were laughing at him up their sleeves. He saved Protestantism in England. He had the courage to come out as a safeguarded although he is not a Protectionist, and he was so Strong in the late Cabinet that Baldwin, fearing the result, dodged whether, in his absence, he or Winston should be acting Premier.

It was twenty years ago that Jix sprang into the limelight. He beat Winston in North-West Manchester in a fight over Protection. It was a spectacular by-election. Jix won. It made his name in a night. Always fight a by-election, if you can. You get much more publicity.

Churchill and Joynson-Hicks have since been fighting for Baldwin's place permanently. Winston is the artful one. Joynson-Hicks has been side-tracked into the House of Lords. So now it will be Neville Chamberlain instead.

Although he does not employ a Press agent, you Still see his name on the front page every other week. Indiscretion, in his case, is the better part of valour. Stupid as he is over

V I S C O U N T B R E N T F O R D

Russia, he is right three times out of six. That is a high average in politics.

He is religious, and yet so indiscreet that, even when he went to the Kit-Cat, to get funds to fight Socialism, he got mixed up in an auction sale of champagne after the legal hour ! A Home Secretary who is a teetotaller helping to sell drink after closing time to beat the wicked Reds is a joke which only Joynson-Hicks' lack of humour could live down.

How surprised he always looks ! How Startled are those eyes of his ! Perhaps he sees things not normal to our sight—Bolsheviks or something.

waiting for half an hour, and then turned up, only to ask the orchestra, "Where can I get my beard trimmed?" He insisted on its being trimmed, too, even though the audience had to go on waiting.

He has sometimes ordered his orchestra to meet for a rehearsal, too, and then forgotten to turn up, although you know what orchestral rehearsals cost, nowadays. Nothing has ever worried Sir Thomas—no, not even James White.

At a Wagner festival in Torquay, he arrived in yachting clothes, white trousers and all, and finished the last beat of "The Ride of the Valkyries" by throwing the baton at the drummer.

I remember once asking Sir Thomas what he thought of a Handel Festival. He burst into irony.

"Why, because Handel wrote some tunes," he said, "should all the old women in the suburbs who think they can sing Stand up on a platform and scream all at once? Handel would turn in his grave if he knew."

Yet, not many months ago I saw Sir Thomas himself conducting "The Messiah" while all the "old women" sang it at the Crystal Palace—and enjoying it. The first time he conducted "The Messiah," Lionel Powell told me, he finished the first half seven minutes in front of time, and the second half twelve minutes sooner than was usual! Beecham can even speed up Handel!

I do not wonder that Sir Thomas turns and attacks us. He sees the English theatre in the same condition as English music, and he laughs and he sneers; and, as he has paid out of his own pocket, he has earned the right to say what he likes. I hope he will go on doing it—so long as I can be there to hear.

W. MACQUEEN-POPE

THE MANAGER WHO DOES IT HIMSELF

OFTEN when you go into a West End theatre, you see a most resplendent individual in "faultless evening dress," as they call it, either in the box office or the vestibule. It is his own evening dress, but not his own importance. He does not own the theatre. He is simply the Manager. His splendid dress suit is probably the only good suit he has. You never see him in the daytime—perhaps for that reason. He may look as if the theatre belongs to him. Really he belongs to the theatre.

Walter Macqueen-Pope, now at the Duke of York's, breaks every rule made for theatre managers. He is not immaculate, and he is in the theatre all day long. He will never be rich, because he really likes the theatre. He never wears a tall hat. He doesn't even play golf. He just Sticks in the theatre.

Although comparatively young in years, he is looked upon as a veteran manager, and was appealed to, the other day, to settle a dispute over some theatrical matter which happened in 1869, years before he was born.

"You and I belong to the Old Brigade," said another manager.

That is because he has been in the West End for over twenty years, and knows everybody. He has done it all—and Still believes in the Stage.

Although he meant to be a sailor, circumstances forced him into more troublous waters. He spent years with Sir George Dance, in the days when plain Mr. Dance used to run twenty-two companies, all at once, and with a Staff of two. Those were the times when fortunes were made in the show business. Life was one long fight. They did everything,

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

from theatre bars to Drury Lane melodramas on twelve-foot Stages.

Once, Pope was sent to Salisbury to buy Stonehenge! That was one of the few times he was scared. He wondered how he would get the monoliths on tour. But it was all right. Stonehenge wasn't for sale.

Then he joined Sir Alfred Butt, ran four theatres for him at once, booked tours, and did publicity. He looked after Gaby Deslys's last London season and used to persuade her to go on the Stage in the middle of air raids. She always went on. She wanted him to remain with her, but he preferred London. He refused a leading part in a big London success to remain a manager. During the War, he used to understudy most of the male parts in the productions he managed, just for something *to do*. He has never solved the great theatrical problem of getting others to do the work—he is the mug who does it.

Medically unfit for the Army, he was a special constable in the War, when he used to push the drunks on the other side of the road, for the other police division to cart them to the Station. He spent once hours on a reservoir, tracking what he thought was a German, but found it was merely a hedgehog in a tin. While attached to the Intelligence Staff, he Still ran three theatres.

He has always looked after Elsie Janis and Mother, in London. He could always manage Mother and used to take charge of them, directly they arrived, and keep the peace. He has handled nearly every Star of the day and remained friends with them all. He has never had a row with any of them. Then, after managing the last of all Old Drury's pantomimes—that was Covent Garden—he left Butt, turned the Royal Opera House into a boxing booth and Staged a heavyweight contest for the championship of Great Britain between Joe Beckett and Boy MacCormick. They were sworn enemies and wanted to Start the fight in the *Sporting Life* offices when they signed the articles. As Pope told them they wouldn't get the purse if they did, they put it off and fought twelve terrific rounds at Covent Garden instead. Then, going to the Alexandra Palace, and re-opening it after the War, he found his worst job yet. It was dreadful. He rebuilt the theatre,

W. MACQUEEN-POPE

which is larger than Drury Lane, and he ran a Boy Scout Rally and fed 73,000 Scouts and Cubs as well, to say nothing of the 100,000 of the public.

They used to have a dog show one day, and Galli-Curci the next, for Pope performed the seeming miracle of luring the flat-voiced soprano to the Palace.

He used to throw the drunks out of the dance hall, and sometimes get thrown out himself. One day, when he ran an enormous temperance demonstration, all the bars had to be closed.

An infuriated mother sought out Pope, and demanded a drink.

"Madame," he replied, "this is Temperance Day."

"Bust that!" she replied, "Temperance is all right for kids. I want a Guinness."

She got it.

He used to battle with committees all night, and still get away with it. He ran concerts, oratorios, boxing, dances, skating, fireworks, circuses, and Masonic banquets. Indeed, in the annals of the Alexandra Palace, he has become a legendary hero.

But it got him down, and he came back to town to reorganise the Palladium's publicity. He got on with Lorna and Toots Pounds, when no other pressman succeeded.

He ran Billy Merson as an actor-manager and all England knew when they found a needle in Billy's body. He got on the front page, every time.

Then he went to the Duke of York's, to Violet Melnotte, who had tried manager after manager. They had all gone. Pope stayed. He was the only manager she couldn't sack. She sold the theatre instead.

He is still there. He has converted the Royal Room into a club, where all the leading lights of Fleet Street are to be found. It is unique in London. It is known as the Junior Garrick Club. It is the only manager's room in London to contain my portrait.

Pope reads all the plays which come along. He dreams of finding a winner. Perhaps he will have to write it himself. One of his sketches ran for over three years.

He is always getting into the papers because he is the only

HANNEN SWAPPER'S WHO'S WHO

manager who is always in the theatre and because when he thinks something, he says it. Indeed, unknown to Fleet Street, he inspires half of the theatre news of London. If he ever retires, some of our " theatre correspondents " won't know what to write.

ALFRED WOLMARK

HE PAINTED ME TO BE SLASHED

WOLMARK'S story is that of scores of Jewish artists—Mark Gertler, for instance—who, within recent years, have sprung into fame. You see their pictures on the walls. You do not guess the Striving that went before.

His people were aliens and, as a very small boy, he slaved away in the East End, teaching himself, and spending his few coppers on cardboard and paint.

At the Street corner Stood a Jewish beggar, impressive in profile—Moses, to look at—but a mendicant.

"I asked him one day if he would sit for me," Wolmark has told me, "when, to my surprise, he turned on me and spat. 'How dare you ask me to profane our holy religion,' he said."

The ancient Hebrew was content to beg but, like the older Jews of thirty years ago, he interpreted, literally, the commandment, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth."

This exact, verbal interpretation of the commandment kept the Jews back as artists for centuries. They could not become sculptors or painters; so they found expression in music and the drama, which broke no law.

You would not believe it, but that was true of London until a few years ago. Solomon J. Solomon, who died only recently, was almost the first Jewish artist who reached fame in this country. Now, you find them in every walk of life, often reminding the world that all Jews are not money-makers by being in the advanced ranks, where there is no profit.

When the boy Wolmark won a scholarship at the Royal

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Academy he was so excited that he would wake up at five o'clock in the morning and run all the way from Whitechapel to Piccadilly left he was late. He would get there, perhaps, at about half-past six and wait outside until nine o'clock, when the doors opened.

Yet Sargent, who was one of the visiting masters, always ignored him, walked past his easel, neither casting blame nor murmuring praise.

When he reached the age of forty, Wolmark, who for years had drawn rabbis and painted conventional Jewish scenes, became an Apostle of colour, which he saw everywhere, even in the shades. Critics laughed at his splashes of vividness, but he went on and even destroyed his old works by covering them with new modernist paint. When they Staged " Three Weeks," his highly-coloured cushions, designed specially, got the only praise. Yet, in New York, he shocked me once by insisting on accompanying me to an art reception wearing white spats with his evening dress, although the snow was on the ground I

" I am an artist," he said. " I dress to please myself."

Wolmark always designs a special frame for each of his paintings. That is why he wants to know what wall-paper the picture will hang on before his work is completed.

• His dream is to make London bright splurges of paint, millionaires' offices and all, and, when he sees people Staring at Rembrandt, worshippingly, in a gallery, he says, " The poor fools don't know it, but Rembrandt was attacked when he painted those pictures because the colours were too bright. Now that the colour's all gone, the world admires the dirt that covers it. And they laugh at me ! "

Wolmark's most recent grief was when, in Paris, a few months ago, someone slashed a portrait he had painted of me. " I would slash half the portraits I see in the Academy," I told an interviewer.

" You shouldn't have joked," said Wolmark. " My pictures are my children." He must have a strange family.

DEAN INGE

GLOOMY MAN IN A GLOOMY HOUSE

WHEN some years ago I wrote to certain puzzling celebrities asking them how they pronounced their names, Somerset Maugham said: "My name rhymes with Waugham, as in waugham day." Dean Inge replied: "My name rhymes with thing." I should have said "king."

He looks like a black beetle, an executioner taking a busman's holiday in the Chamber of Horrors, or a waiter who, asked out to a party, finds to his disgust he has to wear evening dress.

When St. Paul's was doing one of its famous falling-down acts, I called in to hear a minor canon on his way to service say to a verger, as he looked up at the roof:

"Not fallen down yet, I see."

"No, sir," replied the verger; who, turning to me, added, "I hope when it does fall, it damn well falls on me. It'll never fall down. The truth is, these architects are always growling because they're jealous of Wren."

I do not know what St. Paul would have thought of Dean Inge. He would have written him a special epistle, I know, all to himself, and then been surprised when he got a long answer. Dean Inge would have been the only one to answer back.

It was once said of him that he was an ideal Dean of St. Paul's because he was a Buddhist who hated the working classes. Really, although Dean Inge seems to remember all the things that dead men once said, he shouldn't nag so much.

Christianity consists of turning the other cheek, not cheeking the other turn.

Dean Inge discovered Lord Birkenhead's secret—that there was more money in journalism than his own job.

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

It was W. G. Fish, present editor of the *Daily Mail*, who made him by calling him " The Gloomy Dean." Fish, when he was news editor, once put it like that on his morning schedule of news. It got in the paper—and Stuck.

He lives in a gloomy house and when I called, some years ago, to ask whether they were going to give Captain Scott a memorial service—St. Paul's had not thought of it then—I was much impressed by his gloomy housekeeper.

A few weeks back, when riding in an omnibus in Fleet Street, I saw on the other side a most unhappy-looking man, who did everything except moan.

" Who on earth is that ? " said a friend, when he got out near the Law Courts.

" That," I said, " is the official head of London's parish church. It is Dean Inge."

" Good God ! " said my friend.

I am surprised Dean Inge nags everybody so, because in St. Paul's Cathedral, which he runs, they sang the other month these words :

" Set thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him, and let Satan Stand at his right hand. When sentence is given against him, let him be condemned. Let his days be few, and let another take his office. Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. Let his children be vagabonds and beg their bread. Let them seek it also out of desolate places——."

Yes, they sang these words! I have no doubt Dean Inge was there and heard them.

I wonder no one brawled. You wouldn't believe it, but it happened in St. Paul's Cathedral in the year of grace, 1928.

Why, I wouldn't say things like that about an American manager—or a comedian !

BASIL DEAN

THE PRODUCER WHO JUMPS ABOUT

DEAN'S adventures as a producer would fill columns. I remember, for instance, how, a few nights after Butt had invited Basil to join him in joint management of Drury Lane, I saw Sir Alfred at the gala performance of the Playbox, seated in a box, Staring at " Gruach " and " The Phoenix," and wondering, I am sure, if that sort of thing were going to Drury Lane.

A few weeks passed, and I saw them at work on " A Midsummer Night's Dream " on Old Drury Stage.

"Thank God, Shakespeare's come back," they said.

Then, on the first night, we saw Titania's bower that looked like a Stone cavern and a Puck played by a man, and we wondered how long that would last.

Butt and Dean parted blaming each other, Butt saying that Dean turned down " Rose Marie," which he saw in New York, for Drury Lane, and Dean replying that, one day, he would print all the cables, and adding, " I was building up a policy."

Dean's ventures with Alec Rea, a Liverpool shipowner, included the framing, in St. Martin's, of a full record of their productions, with the number of performances underneath. They were frank, even about failures.

I thought " Will Shakespeare," which Dean produced, a work of genius in many ways ; but nearly all the critics slated it. Urged on by my praise, Reandean spent thousands more on trying *to* make it go. It merely went.

Dean's revival of " The Little Minister," a failure at the Queen's, included two-dimensional trees in a scene of three dimensions. The beauty of his " Hassan," from which the Grossmith management barred me because I **had** slated " **The**

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

Beauty Prize," a musical comedy, excited Butt, and led to Drury Lane.

Basil Dean and George Harris, the Stage artist, dreamed their dreams together when young men in Liverpool repertory. The time came when they Staged plays in London, with lots of money at their back. Dean framed the Stage designs; Harris always preferred to tear up his past.

Basil's marriage to Lady Warwick's daughter, who had acted in his company as Nancy Parsons, was a romance; his production of "The Constant Nymph," which he adapted with the author, was a triumph; his belief in Noel Coward, proved by "Home Chat" and "Siritoco," was a tragedy.

He Staged at the St. Martin's an electric-light plant which made thunder and lightning, rolling clouds, and real Storms, and then found you can have Storms in a theatre without electric light. He was the first manager, after James White, who prophesied the end of the theatre. That was when he was going on the films. Then he came back to the Stage, after one picture, and changed his mind. Then he dreamed of becoming a Talkie King, asked all the authors and dramatists and half the actors to lunch, made a long speech about his schemes—and then did not float the company.

I am not surprised. Dean wanted them to keep their novels and plays for British talkie companies.

"We must protect authors from changes in dialogue," he said. "We must see that British actors play British parts. We must see that the author remains in charge of the picture to protect his idea and keep his own personality.

"I remember nothing more dramatic than the situation created by the talkies. There is no need for panic. We merely wish to give sense of direction to the turmoil. I am not share-pushing."

Although it was an impressive occasion, the thirty or forty authors in the room were not impressed. They had, between them, probably 600 novels and plays they would have liked to see made into talkies, but Dean only spoke of making one picture . . .

Yes, Dean jumps from one scheme to another. At one time, if he had been given the proper backing, he might have saved the English theatre. He loves it. He has a genius for

BASIL DEAN

casting. He has discovered a score of young actors and actresses, including Meggie Albanesi, who wore away her hectic life and whose bust in the St. Martin's is this only memorial to a young actress in a London theatre.

Dean really knows his job. But he has missed his chance. No one can save the English theatre now.

One day he took from a cupboard in his Study two beautifully bound volumes.

"Very few people have seen these," he said.

On the first page, in his own writing, I read, "The first and last writing of 'The Old Wives' Tale.'" It was the original manuscript, beautifully written and altered in scarcely a single word. To my surprise, the first page began with the initial letter printed in big block type, for which the opening sentences had left a space!

"Do you mean to say that you Started that book by writing it in the belief that it would be worth keeping like that?" I said.

"Yes," replied Bennett.

"What sublime arrogance!" I said. "Are you going to leave the manuscript to the British Museum?"

"No, I should call *that* arrogance," he answered. >

Still, "The Old Wives' Tale," after Dickens, is, perhaps, England's finest record of ordinary people's lives. It is a work of genius. I cannot imagine its author writing, as he does, such drivelling journalism—"How To Get Thin," and that sort of thing—at /100 a time. Still, the rich must live, I suppose.

With the exception of his literary articles and the one called, "My Religion," I have never yet succeeded in reading one of Arnold Bennett's articles all through.

I hope this Statement will Stop him from saying, as he has been known to do, that I am a great journalist. Indeed, they tell me it is one of his jokes to say this at a luncheon table and then listen to the sneers. It is the best of all ways to Start a row, I suppose. Your guests eat less . . .

Bennett is a Liberal, an Agnostic, I believe, a man who writes frankly for money and yet a man whose best work will live for a long time. I found "Lord Raingo" unreadable; "Pretty Lady" perfect journalism; and "Riceyman Steps" so harrowingly affecting that I could not finish it.

"What do they say of you in the Potteries, Bennett?" I asked, once.

"When I go down there they say, 'You can do anything you like in London,'" was his only reply.

Yet I remember that town councils have protested against

ARNOLD BENNETT

THE AUTHOR WHO LOOKS LIKE A COCKATOO

ENNOCH ARNOLD BENNETT always reminds me of a cockatoo. His front hair stands up so obstinately. Then a curious squeak comes out of a mouth that looks over-full of teeth.

You would not believe he belonged to the Five Towns or that he came from the lower middle class, except that Wells did, and so did Shaw. He came to London as a clerk at 25 s. a week. Now, with the exception of Maurice Baring, he is almost the only notable author you see "out" anywhere. He moves in the smart world condescendingly. Baring regards it as something of a game.

Bennett is certainly the only author I ever knew whose wife has exposed his married life and printed it in a daily newspaper !

"It is hard to get on with a genius," she said.

"Why do I only get sixpence a word for it ?" she asked me. "My husband gets three shillings a word."

"If you were not Mrs. Arnold Bennett," I replied, "you would not get anything."

This blunt truth rather shocked her.;

I admire Arnold Bennett profoundly, although he is the only author I remember in whose presence I feel a bit embarrassed. It must be his Stammer. . . . His literary criticisms in the *Evening Standard* are by far the most useful writings of their kind printed in this generation. When he says a book is good, it is.

Although some of his plays have been dreadful, even those his friends have excused. "London Life," they said, should not have been produced at Drury Lane. They forgot that, in the programme, there was a Statement by Bennett saying it had been specially written for that theatre.

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

Bennett's pictures of the Five Towns. They should be proud of him—proud that Puritan England could turn out such a craftsman.

And he once lived by solving missing-word puzzles 1 On the day that he and other youths he worked with had found the right word and would have won thousands—the House of Lords stopped it 1

GEORGE ROBESY

A COMEDIAN EVEN IN PRIVATE LIFE

“**T**HE Prime Minister of Mirth," now one of the best-known men in the British Empire, was once George Wade, an assistant to Professor Kennedy, the "mesmerist," and before that a comic at smoking concerts. Although he might have become an engineer, a visit to the old Royal Aquarium changed Robey's whole life. He saw Kennedy "mesmerising" people, and became a "subject," his job being, when Kennedy asked for men to assist him by being "hypnotised," to walk on, go "under control," and sing a comic song.

"Mind you, no needle-sticking, drinking oil, or eating pepper," insisted Robey, "or I will give the show away."

The other "subjects" had to endure all that.

"I have you under my power," Kennedy would say to him every night when he walked up. "You will do what I tell you. You are now a comic singer." That vacant look we now know so well would come over Robey's face, it would be followed by that ludicrous grin that has long been part of the scenery of England's urban areas, and then he would sing, "A Little Peach in an Orchard Grew."

Thus did audiences first behold "George Robey, comedian," later to be the £600-a-week artiste who, hired by Oswald Stoll to save the Alhambra with "The Bing Boys on Broadway," made such a reputation that the Hippodrome and the Alhambra, soon rival revue houses, used to bid for his services against each other.

He went from one to the other several times, and one day Alfred Butt, seeing him leave Stall's offices, said: "I don't care what they've offered you, but I will give you £100 a week more 1"

It is almost true that an old lady, seeing a special constable with " G.R." on his hat, thought it stood for George Robey ; it is quite true that, when his name was used as a password by troops in France, a soldier was nearly shot one night for replying " George Formby," by mistake, when challenged.

Robey is a master of self-advertisement. Who but he, when playing in a pantomime in Manchester, would have taken the trouble to ride from his diggings, and back again, before and after every performance on an elephant? In a few days Oxford Road was crowded half an hour before Robey was due. By that time the elephant followed Robey about like a child, and one evening, when he called in at an hotel on his way home, the elephant followed him up the Steps with such success that it got jammed in the doorway, and could not move either way, until a chopper was fetched.

Although Robey to-day is worth perhaps £70,000, he has had hard times, even in success. Years ago, when he was earning £200 a week on the halls, he developed a mania for postage Stamps, especially when they were expensive, and rare china. Then his copper shares went wrong, and Robey found himself heavily in debt. He kept £50 a week to support himself and his family, and every penny of the rest went to his creditors until it all was paid.

Always before Robey goes away on tour, he and his son, who is a barrister, his daughter, who rather shocks her father by being a modern sort of artist, Lord Dewar and I have lunch together, and we do the same always when he returns.

Each time, Robey comes back with a new Stock of good Stories, some printable.

I envy Robey his delight in life. I like him because he is Straight. He tells you what he thinks, and, though I seldom agree with him, I am very fond of him, all the same. We have quarrelled—once about his humour, in such a way that there was a libel action between Sir Oswald Stoll and Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, although neither Robey nor I were active parties.

Still, Robey's humour has been such that, when the first Variety command performance was planned, they put his name on the bill with fears and tremblings. Royalty was not used to music-halls.

George's jokes were discussed in whispers for weeks before. " Will the Queen like it ? " people asked, for even Marie Lloyd had been left out.

Frankly, although the programme was not a success—most of the turns were afraid even of themselves—Robey, when he made his first face as the Mayor of Muckemdvke and then looked shocked, made the Queen rock with merriment. Even when he talked about a bath, and the draught that came up the hole when you took the Stopper out, she could not control her laughter.

Once in a pantomime, Robey, arranging something special, as usual, for his benefit, thought he would burlesque Leoni Clark's Cats, Dogs, Rats, and Mice, which were also in the company. When he advertised for some cats at a shilling each, half the population of the city was outside the theatre in a few hours, with cats for sale. To the half a dozen chosen, Robey, with his usual industry and patience, taught silly little tricks just sufficient enough to make his appearance with them ridiculous.

On the great night the curtain went up, disclosing the cats in small cages at the back of the Stage, and Robey in trainer's uniform. He released the cats, and was just about to address the audience with mock seriousness, when a man in the gallery went, " Ph-ph-th-th-t! " loudly. In a second the cats disappeared from the Stage in their fright.

Robey, although disgusted at the interruption of his turn, found, to his surprise, that the audience rocked with laughter. " To this day," he says, " they think I planned it."

Robey's attitude on the Stage is one of shocked surprise. He says something with a double meaning, and when the audience laughs he looks very grieved. His heavy, black eyebrows go up. He raises one hand in horror.

He used to say, " Desist," like an archdeacon reproving a choir; but now it has become " Shur-r-rup ! " Once I heard his " Shur-r-rup! " Stop an air-raid panic in the Alhambra. It would Stop anything.

Yes, but Robey's last revue, " In Other Words," was a terrible froSt. He relied too much on himself. He must not do things like that in London. They hurt. . . •

JOHN McGORMACK

THE TENOR WHOM LONDON REJECTED

“**T**HE Irish Caruso " has every reason to dislike England. When, years ago, he was a youth in London, Edgar Cohen gave him a letter to his friend, George Edwardes. Although we all flatter Edwardes' judgment in comparison with that of his successors, the truth is that " The Guv'nor " offered the young tenor £2 a week in his chorus!

McCormack had a hard time of it in Bloomsbury. When he went to see " The Vicar of Wakefield," in which he had lost the part of Squire Thornhill because of his Irish accent, he had no money with which to buy a programme! Yet, before America discovered him, he became one of the worst actors ever known, even on the Covent Garden Stage, where he sang leading parts, two years after George Edwardes thought him just fit for a chorus job.

He used to Stand with his back to the audience and look just a funny, fat man. Then America took his Irish smile to her heart, and during the War McCormack made speeches against England in the United States, and became an American as a protest against his British citizenship.

I do not know what I should have done, had I been an Irishman; but, anyway, although I did not mind McCormack becoming an American, I did resent his coming back here, so soon after the War, and trying to get things both ways.

My article on McCormack Stopped his first concert in 1920—he had already cancelled his Australian tour because the audience sang " God Save the King "—but before his return, four years later, we had all relented. Ever since, McCormack has been a London idol, paid as much as £650 for a few songs at the Mayfair Hotel, and becoming, with the exception of Chaliapin, Paderewski, and Kreisler, the only artiste who can

JOHN MCCORMACK

fill the Albert Hall. In America he has drawn over £2,000 in a night.

Tom Burke, another Irish tenor, went over, a few years ago, to steal some of John's glory. Unfortunately, they billed him for the New York Hippodrome, McCormack's Sunday afternoon Stronghold, and said, beforehand, he was the better of the two. Burke failed, where McCormack had succeeded. Indeed, he went into a revue for the Shuberts, and then into "The Mikado."

I last met McCormack at Ascot, with his wife and two children.

"The only horse I backed to-day was Mr. Jinks," he said. "After all, Mr. Jinks saved the Free State I"

Irishmen are like that. They cannot think outside Irish politics. Usually, though, they merely talk about Ireland, and never go home to save their country, as they could.

McCormack, however, has rented with his great wealth Moore Abbey, which belongs to Lord Drogheda. He has stocked it with Old Masters—he owns a Romney, two Rembrandts, a Corot, and a Whistler "Nocturne"—and bought his wife, Lily, to whom he owes much of his success, a priceless store of black opals.

John's smile would captivate anybody, although, when I saw him on the racecourse on Derby Day, and again at Ascot, no one seemed to recognise him.

"I am not the world's greatest tenor," he says. "There is no greatest tenor. The greatest tenor is dead. The next one has not yet arrived."

Still, when he sings "The Minstrel Boy," you would think so, although his wonderful head note is not quite what it used to be—in the days, I mean, when, while Lewis Waller's mother was dying, he used to go along to sing to her "Mother Machree," her favourite song.

I wonder how many potential McCormacks are hard up, unrecognised, in London to-day. I know two I

CHARLES CHAPLIN

THE CLOWN WHO CRIES INSIDE

WHEN Violet McInotte sold the Duke of York's, I was shown a white satin programme, with a gold fringe. It was a souvenir of King Edward's visit to see, in 1905, "Clarice" and "The Painful Predicament of Sherlock Holmes." Right at the bottom it said :

Gwendolyn Cobb ... Miss IRENE VANBRUGH
Sherlock Holmes ... MR. WILLIAM GILLETTE
Billy. MASTER CHARLES CHAPLIN

We have all forgotten that, haven't we? It was Charlie's only appearance before royalty.

As a youth, Charlie Chaplin was so hard up that, borrowing an evening paper once, he entered a newsboys' competition for Step dancing at the Canterbury, and would have won the ten-shilling prize easily but for the fact that, his artistic soul running away with him, he was much too good. They found him out, and threw him off the Stage.

Syd Chaplin, his brother, was quite smart and natty. Charlie's old clothes so shamed Syd that, wishing to smarten him up, so that he could get him ten shillings a week more in "Mumming Birds," he took him into a shop to buy him a pair of boots.

"How are your socks, Charlie?" he asked nervously.

"One's all right," replied Charlie.

When they came to try on the boots, however, Charlie took off the wrong boot. He was wearing half a sock! Syd walked out in disgust.

Yet, do you know his recent divorce case cost Charlie £500,000 altogether, and that "The Circus" will bring him in £100,000 more than that?

CHARLES CHAPLIN

Charlie is the most fascinating being in the world, an ocean of tricks and impishness, at the bottom of which are limpid depths of sentiment. He left England unknown, an ill-paid music-hall artiste. Because of the chance that his inimitable miming belonged to a time when films could multiply it a million times, he came home rich, so famous that thousands waited outside the Ritz Hotel all day.

He was in his bath once at the Ritz while I talked to him through the door. A card was brought upstairs.

I shouted out the name—"Mrs. Smith-Wilkinson."

"Who's that?" said Charlie.

"The best-dressed woman in the world," I explained.

"Well, I'm the best undressed man in the world," he answered. "Show her up!"

The rich and mighty tried to entertain Charlie during that trip to London. He chose the company of H. G. Wells, Thomas Burke, the novelist, Edward Knoblock, and a few people like myself, shunning all the rest. He took lonely trips around, exploring his old London, finding out his lodgings in the Kennington Road.

Once, at night, he walked along the Embankment.

"I used to walk along there with my father," he told me, "so small that I wondered what was on the other side. Now that I can look over the wall I know it is only water. When you know, you don't want to look any more."

On Westminster Bridge he stared at the windows of the great frowning hospital.

"All night, when I was a boy, I used to stand here," he said, "and watch a light in a window. When it went out I thought my father, who was lying there, would die. Now I come back, and other people are still dying there. . . . On the bridge there used to be a man, who stood all day selling tomatoes. He is still there, I see, still selling tomatoes. But now he doesn't stand up. He sits down."

When, as a boy, I walked along Westminster Bridge Road, I used to see in Sharp's, the photographer's, a lot of unknown, humble faces, in the middle of which was a large photograph of Dan Leno. Charlie said how, when he used to walk along every day, he, too, would stand and stare, worshipping, just as I did.

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

"I went over to that shop this morning," he told me, "and asked if I could buy some photographs they took of me fifteen years ago. 'No, we have thrown all our old negatives away,' they said. 'Have you got Dan Leno?' I asked. 'Yes,' they answered. 'He was a famous comedian.' 'I am rather a well-known comedian,' I said. * What is your name?' they asked. 'Chaplin, I replied. 'Come in and be taken now,' they said, excitedly. 'I am tired of being photographed now,' I replied. And I ran out, to escape being mobbed."

Charlie loves talking of his poor boyhood—how he Starved and was kicked around.

"I was in Paris yesterday," he said, a few days after, "and I went out with Carpentier. I thought he used to be a miner. He seems a very high and mighty sort of man. He would take me around the swell places, to meet rich friends. I wanted to see the haunts where I was hard up, when I acted in Paris. Some people seem to get fashionable when they get on."

Charlie dramatises his life all the time. He and Tom Geraghty were in Edward Knoblock's flat, in the Albany, during a thunderstorm.

"Don't get near the window," said Tom, "or you might be Struck by lightning. My God I What a heading it would make—'Charlie Chaplin killed by lightning,"

Charlie went over and Stood by the window. just then there was a tremendous clap of thunder. Charlie fell on the floor with his eyes shut.

"My God, fetch the police!" shouted Geraghty. "Charlie Chaplin's killed!"

And he shouted "Police" and "Doctor," on the telephone.

"Don't be a fool, Tom," said Charlie, opening his eyes. "I'm only playing."

When I was visiting Douglas Fairbanks in his wonderful home near Hollywood, he told me that, as a boy, he wanted to be so rich that he could have a bed-room with one window overlooked by hills, and with another overlooking the sea.

"Now I have got it," he said. "Alas, Charlie Chaplin will come here to Stay, and when I come home at night there he is in my bed I"

CHARLES CHAPLIN

In Hollywood, no one ever knows where Chaplin is. He goes away for weeks. He reads Shaw and Wells, and hates capitalism, out of which he has made several fortunes. He likes to wander about at night, watching poor people, and during his last night in London he left me in the Rite while he went outside and Stuffed Treasury notes in the pockets of down-and-outs, huddled up against the rails outside the Park.

If you ask him to lunch he invents new tricks with the rolls, and does something funny with the serviette, and at five next morning you are Still there laughing at him.

When I took charge of the *People*, a Conservative newspaper, I wrote and told Charlie, "I am going to tell the truth," I said.

"Unfortunately the truth is not always Conservative," replied Charlie.

So I soon found out.

D. W. GRIFFITH

THE MAN WHO MADE THE MOVIES

I STOOD once on a hill north of Hollywood, looking down over a vast plain, in which there were trenches Still dug. It was there that D. W. Griffith, the greatest film director of them all, had made "The Birth of a Nation," years before. That was his battleground.

He had many battles himself before the film was made. Companies went broke. New capital was always wanted. Griffith went on.

"David Wark," as I always call him, is a man of high ideals, who believes that films could abolish war. I laugh at him, but he always goes on saying it.

On one Shakespeare's birthday night, I took him down to the Old Vic.

"I will bring Griffith down to-night," I telephoned them.

They thought I mean Hubert Griffith—and thanked me I That was the only one they had heard of.

Anyway, in the interval, I pushed him on the Stage and, when he said who he was, the audience laughed. He soon captured them, though.

"I am only a hairy-chested American," he said—he always says that—"but when I was a boy, down in the South, my father used to read to me the words of Shakespeare."

His speech gripped the audience, and Griffith Stayed on, watching the crowded mass eating in Shakespeare until I reminded him he had an appointment.

"That can wait," he said.

When we got back to the Savoy we found that Lord Beaverbrook, Major David Davies and two other millionaires—Jimmy Rothschild was one, if I remember—had been waiting in a motor-car for the best part of an hour.

"Where have you been?" they said.

D. W. GRIFFITH

" I've been out with Swaff," said Griffith.

You wouldn't have believed that Griffith had come here that time to raise money for a film, and that these were the people he had hoped to interest. He had forgotten them !

I have attacked him in public for making, in the picture, " Broken Blossoms," an Englishman the villain and a Chinaman the hero, knowing it would cause great trouble in the East. Yet we are Still friends. I have attacked him in public for his anti-English point of view in " America." Yet we are Still friends. We often argue about the films, sometimes fiercely. Yet we are Still friends.

He sometimes tells people that I am the only really honest man he has ever met, which is his exaggerated, sub-title way of showing that, in the film trade, they seldom speak the truth.

When the " big picture " was unknown, he invented it. They have Stolen his thunder. He has lost his money. They have put him in chains. They dislike him, for he makes them feel small. I do not remember of him one small thing. I love to hear them sneer at him. Then I know he is right.

JACOB EPSTEIN

THE JEW WHO SCULPTURED CHRIST

HE is the greatest sculptor in the world. Yet, a few weeks before his last exhibition at the Leicester Galleries, a friend came over from Ohio to sell some of his busts at half-price, so that Epstein could pay the founders who were making the new busts for his exhibition. Otherwise, there would not have been one.

His wife once told me that when he went out at night she gave him ten shillings.

"If I gave Jacob more," she said, "he would only give it away."

Epstein does not work for money, and he does not care a damn!

When, years ago, they first began to jeer at his genius, because they had not the brains to understand it, I rushed to his defence, and, although I seldom see him, I shall defend him until the end, although he will not thank me.

Eighteen years ago his nude Statues in the Strand made people jeer. Now the sun and the rain have had a go at them, and the omnibuses drive by without looking.

"The capital of the British Empire was so used to Statues in frock-coats and trousers," said Epstein, "that these Struck them as brutal truth."

There were placards and screams. Yet when I met Epstein that night, in the middle of the row, he was the only cool man in the room.

Not long afterwards his symbolical figure, done for the Oscar Wilde tomb in Paris, caused twenty times the row there was over the Strand. People had fights in the cemetery about that figure, and finally the authorities put an enormous bronze fig-leaf over it. This roused not so much an outcry as laughter,

JACOB EPSTEIN

until—well, one night, as Epstein sat in the Cafe Royal, a Student arrived wearing the bronze fig-leaf round his neck. He had prized it off. It was the toas. of the Cafe Royal for weeks.

Then there was the Venus that they mocked at. People went to the Leicester Galleries to mock. It was so new, you see. The public had not begun to learn that art had passed the Stage when, if a man wants a picture of a cow, he wants all the markings on the cow's back.

When the poets first began to write, and they wrote about the sun, they had to Start: "The sun is round and warm and bright," because people did not all know what the sun was like in those days. Although a poet would be shot if he wrote that nowadays, an artist has to do it, or they grin.

Then came Epstein's "Christ." Father Bernard Vaughan preached against it and made it a new Sin of Society. Epstein had sculptured a Jewish Christ. Orthodox Theology yelped. They had forgotten Renan ; but Epstein is alive.

As for his women's busts, he Strips the women he sculptures of all the silly prettiness you can buy with a powder-puff, shows the character behind the eyes, and the tragedy or the passion behind the lips.

A man Stood once in front of Lillian Shelley's bust.

"You haven't shown the best side of her, Epstein," he said.

"Do you know her better than I did?" replied Epstein.

Not many months afterwards the man who had objected to the bust was kicked to death by a miner, and the miner was acquitted because the man was attempting to betray his daughter.

Since then, there has been Rima—and "Day" and "Night." While Epstein lives, there will always be a row.

SIR OSWALD STOLL

THE LAST OF THE TOP HAT MANAGERS

IT is untrue that Oswald Stoll, whose name, originally Gray, rhymes with doll and not dole, sleeps in a top-hat. The other time he took it off was when he went to America. Otherwise, what they say about him is true,

The only time I did not notice his tall hat was at a royal garden party. You see, we were all wearing them.

He is the long distance variety champion. Every Monday he sits the Coliseum programme all through, even the turns he has seen a hundred times before, and then goes to the 6.10 house at the Alhambra and does the same. During the week he sits all through every one of his London shows, even keeping awake while the films are on at the Stoll Picture Theatre. He Started training early.

Even when only fourteen he helped his mother with the Parthenon, in Liverpool, a beer-and-sawdust hall so cheap that the most expensive seats were the shilling ones in a box actually on the Stage—a box in which people were locked in so that they could not get out and tickle the dancers' legs. Stoll's stepfather, whose name he took, ran a waxworks in Liverpool; Oswald, one day, may find himself in Madame Tussaud's.

Stoll takes life as seriously as his top-hat. He has published a book on philosophy, and he writes on economics—a subject on which he can be so dull that no one but himself can understand it.

"Although my detractors call me a master of theatre finance," Harry Gillespie told me once, "I thought I was until Stoll kept me talking about it in the Street the other day. He made even the most simple things sound obscure. I could not understand a word."

Yet Sroswald can hire artistes cheaper than anyone in the business. They squirm, but they agree. You would not believe that he was a song writer once. He wrote two numbers, " Mary and John " and " The Parrot and the Cage," for Vesta Tilley; and another of his songs—one about the Mediterranean, I seem to recall—was on the first Coliseum programme, in the days when they lost tons of money, and reconStructded. Sroswald, although a supreme realist, has patented illusions 1 And he has sat in a box at the Coliseum—ignoring the Roman spelling, Colosseum, he took out the O S and put in the I instead—and listened without blinking while Malcolm Scott said, one Monday : " I mustn't say ' Damn ' on this Stage. Damn ! Damn ! Damn ! Damn I Damn ! There ! "

Although Sroswald is said to dislike publicity, I very often see his name in the *Referee*. He owns it.

Yet not even the *Referee* can save variety for Oswald Stoll. It is dying under his eyes. The all-conquering talkies are killing it every day. Not even his great discoveries, Gladdy Sewell and the Houston Sisters, can save it.

The agents have found nothing for years. They have merely gone abroad for American turns, of which the public have grown sicker and sicker. The public asks for bread and Stoll gives them Heather Thatcher.

Sroswald's weakness is a lack of initiative in the discovery of new blood. He is not the only one. His Strength is his firmness of character, his unflinching honesty, his sticking to something when he has started it, his loyalty to his staff, and his popularity with the artists whom he employs.

They all like him—once they have signed the contract. Anyway, they always go back. They have to.

JACK BUCHANAN

AN ACTOR WHO MADE NEW YORK DRESS

WHEN Jack Buchanan, as a youth, in Glasgow, played George Graves's part in "Veronique," with amateurs, he little dreamed that after people had tried to snub him off the stage for some years he would become the idol of New York, almost in a night, and then a rich man while still in his early thirties.

When he started in Glasgow he did four shows a day at Pickard's Panopticon in his native city, going on at two, at four, at seven, and at nine. A few years later, when he was the Star in "Battling Butler," he was told, "Mr. Pickard wants to see you."

"I am told you once showed for me, Mr. Buchanan," said Pickard. "I don't remember you. How much money did I give you?"

"None," replied Jack. "You gave me ten shillings for my make-up."

For that Jack did twenty-four shows in a week!

Soon after they gave him a date at the Edinburgh Empire, trying him for the Moss tour.

"I strongly advise you not to continue on the Stage," said the manager. "I cannot recommend you for the tour."

Buchanan called on Tom B. Davis at the Apollo.

"I was lucky, I suppose," said Jack. "I caught him, I imagine, in an off moment."

"Do something," said Davis.

"I stood up and recited a long speech from 'Veronique,'" says Jack. "It must have been awful. Fancy trying to be funny like that! Much to my surprise, Mr. Davis said, 'I'll find you a part soon.'"

Three months later, when he was back in Glasgow, thinking he was forgotten and that his Stage career was finished, a

JACK BUCHANAN

contract: arrived for " The Grass Widow." He went on tour in " A l l Scotch," but, fortunately, they did not take up his option.

It was at Cardiff that, by chance, in the New Theatre, right at the end of a tour, he met young Ivor Novello, who lived there and who had just sold his first musical score," Theodore & Co."

" Come up and see Grossmith with me," said Ivor.

They went up, the one with his score, the other with his knees knocking. Jack got a part in " To-night's the Night " on tour.

Then came the Chariot days . • . and the famous American tour. Archie Selwyn, who was taking over the Chariot show with Buchanan, Gertie Lawrence, and Beatrice Lillie, asked me to go up and see it at Golder's Green.

" It's awful," he said. " If it isn't altered before New York, it'll be an awful flop."

I went up, agreed, and said so—in print.

There was a row with Chariot, but he changed his show.

New York went mad over it, especially over Jack Buchanan's double-breasted dinner jacket. Fat old men went into tailors' shops to get copies, hoping to look like him. " Jack Buchanan collars " and " Jack Buchanan ties " were the rage.

On tour, however, the show flopped, and, at Los Angeles, after a six weeks' limp, it came to an end.

" I let them off the rest of it," says Jack. " I felt sorry for them."

Now, well, Jack Buchanan is his own master, the highest-earning musical comedy Star in England, and yet a diffident young man with black rings under his eyes, and a very delicate appearance. He is the sweetest-natured of beings, a mixture of casualness and hard work. In private life, he reminds me of gingerbeer—rather dull, but very sweet. On the Stage, he goes off " pop " every time.

He is now building a theatre of his own and yet he has never let a friend down. People who belong to his earlier days Still remain—climbing with him.

AL WOODS

" HULLO, SWEETHEART," IS HIS GREETING

ALBERT HERMAN WOODS is by far the most popular of all the half-educated American managers who come to London in search of plays. They say of him that, when he saw " Othello " he told his manager to cable the author for " some more of his stuff." Although it isn't true, it explains his rough-and-ready horse-sense.

He is really Albert Herman, who, once a poor Jewish boy in the Bowery, made a fortune out of " Nellie, the Cloak-Room Model," and crude dramas like that.

Now, in spite of his lack of culture, he is a kindly man with a wall eye and a face like a battered sheep dog.

" Hullo, sweetheart," he says, immediately he sees you. Then, always, he hands you a cigar, waiting in his waistcoat.

He has said it to Somerset Maugham, Lord Lathom, Lord Lonsdale, whose eyeglass he once put in his own eye, because it was the first real one he had seen, and half the celebrities of England. We all love him, and no actor ever goes to Al, as everybody calls him, with a sob Story in vain, although he has a big negro figure, waiting in the semi-darkness, to frighten them.

Once, when he said, " Hullo, sweetheart " to me, he walked away suddenly from the table. I guessed his guilty secret. He had no cigar to give me! I saw him borrow one from another table, and come back.

" Hullo, sweetheart," he said again. And he handed me the cigar. His reputation was saved.

When I told him Sybil Thorndike was the greatest actress in England, he said, " Bring her to see me to-morrow."

I took Sybil to the Piccadilly Hotel, while Lewis Casson walked about in the Street outside.

" Look here, Sybil,' he said. " Swaff tells me you're the greatest actress in England. I haven't seen you, and I don't want to. Now you come over. I'll give you a thousand dollars a week. I've a play here. There's a gink who's got a wife, and he falls for you, and in the second act you live with him. Then there's a bed-room scene."

That was all he remembered. It was by a great French author, whose name he did not know. He did not care. Names are nothing to him. The bed-room scene counts.

Al, when he is in London, will see any author with a play. He will go even to Kew or the Regent to see one acted, and any actor or actress who likes can call and ask him for a job.

He has made more money out of bed-room scenes than any man in the world. In fact, he buys Strong beds specially made, so they will do for the next play. He likes them with hard springs, so that real passion can be Staged. It was the bed scene in " Othello " that attracted him. He thought he had invented it, until then. That made him admire Shakespeare.

When you meet him and the Shuberts and Archie Selwyn and the rest, all kidding, it is better than any American comedy.

" Who's the sweetie you've bought that ring for ? " said Lee Shubert to Al, in Paris, once.

" It isn't for a sweetie," replied Al. " It's for my wife."

" But her fingers are covered with rings now," kidded Lee. " She's got no room for a new ring."

Even that did not disconcert Al.

" I'm going to buy her a new finger," he said.

You can say anything to Al. He always wins.

CONSTANCE COLLIER

AN ACTRESS WHO KEEPS UP HER DIGNITY

CONNIE, at the age of forty-nine, has more grace and dignity than any actress on the English Stage. She belongs to the tradition, because she was born in it.

Her mother was a fit-up actress, who used to leave Connie, a few-weeks-old baby, on the dressing-table, wrapped in a blanket, among the grease paints, while she acted. A few years afterwards, when they went on tour, Connie used to be hidden under a rug in the railway carriage, just to save her fare. Then they would wander round to get cheap lodgings, and, when they found them, the child Connie used to have sewn on her back a label bearing her name and address, for fear she got lost, playing in the Streets.

"You say I am charming," she said to me once. "I had to learn it as a child. I used to wheedle every new landlady, so that I could go into the kitchen, and not be left alone in the evenings."

The time came when she played Cleopatra—and looked a queen of women.

When Tree went to Berlin, and there were riots in the theatre because the Crown Prince's faction opposed the English players, the Kaiser sent for Tree and Constance and stood between them in his Royal box, braving the anger.

She went with Tree to Hollywood to make pictures, and there had to comfort poor Tree, insulted by raucous producers, who called him "The Old Man" sneeringly.

"Am I an old man?" he used to say to Constance pathetically.

Tree was a failure on the films. They insulted him, to break his contract.

CONSTANCE COLLIER

" Don't give in, Herbert," Constance would plead. " Get their money and then we will go home."

Tree got the money—the first real money he had made for years—and put some of it into " Chu Chin Chow."

Constance afterwards went back to Hollywood to teach Mary Pickford and her husband to speak English on the talkies. What a job—elocution mistress to the talking film ! Then she wrote a book—eloquent, but, oh, how flattering ! Still, she likes people, and she feels that way.

Only those who know her well know how Constance has often acted in spite of great physical pain. She was dying of diabetes in Switzerland once. Clara Butt went to sing at her death-bed. Then she heard of insulin, dragged herself to the Strasburg train, and came back cured.

Then her comedy work in " Our Betters " was the finest piece of sardonic acting of our time, although, often, she was in agony while she acted.

She worships the theatre. She is the soul of kindness. She taught Ivor Novello all he knows. And she wrote two plays with him. One was not as bad as the other.

On her mantelpiece in her drawing-room is a mirror, on which, if she loves you, you can scratch your name with a diamond. There are old play-bills in the hall, drawings of Connie by Sargent and the rest, and the framed sash that Condor painted for her dress once, when she was too poor to buy a new one., There are memories, too, of Julian L'EStrange, the fine actor whom she married and whom she mourns.

They were in New York when the War broke out.

" I must leave for England," said Julian to the Shuberts.

" You have a contract with us, Mr. L'EStrange," they said.

" I have also a contract with my King," said Julian.

He came to England. At the end, Connie nursed him with a loyalty that Still brings tears to my eyes when I tell of her devotion.

Connie soit qui mal y pense.

SIR ALFRED FRIPP

FROM WAR HERO TO FROTHBLOWER

“**T**HE Baron,” as Guy's Hospital calls him, is now that Strange paradox—a great surgeon who became the chief Frothblower.

I used to revere him. Now, when I see his noble forehead at first nights, which he loves, I think of quotations from the "Frothblowers' Handbook," such vulgar slogans as "Gollop your beer with zest."

Charity covers a multitude of sins.

Fripp is famous for two kinds of theatres, those where they operate to save your life, and those where they co-operate to bore you to death. In the first, you are "cut up" by Alfred Fripp—in the second by Hannen Swaffer.

When I have heard Fripp say, casually, in the evening, "I have had five big operations to-day," my mind has pictured five unfortunate beings, some suffering unspeakable agony, upon whom Fripp, with that assurance which makes surgery almost genius, has performed, in a white apron and cap, a miracle with a knife.

Often he has performed 1,000 major operations a year—six a day, three days a week, one, perhaps, on a private patient, and five at Guy's Hospital, lasting an hour each, and real "set" performances, with twenty or thirty Students looking on!

"You *know* men when they walk into this room, Stripped," Fripp said to me once, in his consulting room in Portland Place. "There is no sham, no mask, when the surgeon looks into their faces."

I almost forget the Frothblowers and their beer-golloping when I remember that it was Fripp who made the R.A.M.C. into an efficient service—when, early in the Boer War, he took out from Guy's Hospital a base hospital of 520 beds.

SIR ALFRED FRIPP

You would not believe it, but he took the first physician who ever went abroad with a fighting force, the first dental surgeon, too, and the first X-ray specialist, the famous Hall-Edwards, of Birmingham, whose arms were afterwards eaten away by Rontgen rays.

He dared, too, to take more than nine nurses to attend on 520 patients. Nine was then the complement. He took fifty, including his young wife, putting her in charge of "Comforts," unheard of then.

"Why are you taking all those silly nurses?" they said. "If I were you, I'd lose them going up country. They'll only trip over each other's skirts."

Really they saved thousands of lives, although in Kroonstadt, where men were dying of typhoid like flies, the only glass of milk in the town was one they kept so that Lord Roberts could taste it when he went to the hospital.

"That's good," said Bobs. He did not know.

The subsequent scandal nearly wrecked Balfour's government. Fripp, returning, drew up on the liner a scheme of reform.

"I want to talk to you about the R.A.M.C.," he said to Balfour.

"I won't hear any more scandal," said Balfour. . . . "Go and see Brodrick."

Two years were wasted. Then, when King Edward intervened, the R.A.M.C. was reconstructed, in the form which, drawn up by Fripp, saved hundreds of thousands of lives in the Great War. Alfred Fripp, then one of the greatest abdominal surgeons in the world, had, through his hands, all the casualties in the first two North Sea battles, and half of the Battle of Jutland's many wounded.

I first met him, close to, over something he was doing for George Thorne, the unfortunate Savoyard clown, upon whom he operated once, and over whose funeral he took the most elaborate care, arranging every detail personally, attending the funeral with the widow, after then taking hours of time to see that poor Thorne's affairs were in as good order as they could be. And Thorne had only been a poor patient, come across, casually, once, in a Guy's ward, in which Fripp happened to hear him humming a Gilbert and Sullivan song.

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

Yes, Fripp has had many patients ; but the most whimsical, probably, was poor Tree, upon whose leg he operated after Tree fell and suffered an injury which led to his death.

Fripp was going away one Friday, for the week-end, when Tree said, " Well, I will go home on Tuesday. You said I could."

" No," said Fripp. " I said I would talk to you, on Tuesday, about when you can go home."

" But I am making a speech on Tuesday night," persisted Tree. " They are giving a dinner to three friends of mine who were in the Honours List, and I have prepared a speech full of delightful impromptus. I want to be carried in on a Stretcher in a dressing-gown, looking just like a Roman Emperor in his toga. And from the Stretcher I will deliver my speech."

" No, you won't," Fripp insisted.

On the following Tuesday night Tree, Still in bed, had finished a well-enjoyed meal, when he said to his nurse, " Open the window." She did so, and turned round—to find him dead.

Had Tree gone to the dinner and made that speech, Fripp told me—it was timed for just about the same quarter of an hour—the excitement would probably have brought about his death, in just the same way that his pleasure at eating a good meal did, after his weeks in bed.

But what a death ! just the dramatic actor-manager thing that Tree himself would have loved !

If I had been Tree I should have made the speech.

But then, not being Tree, I couldn't have thought of the Roman Emperor make-up.

Yes, Fripp can tell many Stories. And he can " paper " any theatre. If you see scores of women in a show, looking like nurses, Fripp has probably sent them. Indeed, he is so used to papering theatres, to please managers, that he has cards printed on which the only vacant space is that on which he writes the theatre's name. I like the idea of a surgeon who colle&s dead-heads.

ANITA LOOS

A BRUNETTE WHOM GENTLEMEN PREFER

WHO would believe that, facing you—merely a short, black-haired little thing with big horn-rimmed glasses—was the only female humorist in the world? Old "Pop" Loos, as all Hollywood calls him, must wonder about it, sometimes, when his girlish looking daughter goes West and calls on him.

He was a theatre manager at San Diego long before the magic days when the films Started another Gold Rush to California—long before he got a job writing titles for the Canned Drama.

How many remember, now, that it was as a child of fourteen that the Anita Loos, who was destined to make two continents believe "gentlemen prefer blondes," wrote her first film Story? She called it "The New York Hat," D. W. Griffith directed it, and Mary Pickford, then next to nobody, played the lead.

All three were destined to make what ranks as history nowadays. Three very different people, those three—David, Mary and Anita! I know all of them, and like them all.

Well, that was only sixteen or seventeen years ago, for, rich woman as she now is, Anita is not much more than thirty.

In 1916 Douglas Fairbanks, a failure on the Stage, was thinking of going into his father-in-law's business as a cotton broker—giving up his dreams and taking up the old man's job—when they signed him up for the films with the Triangle Company, got John Emerson, for years Frohman's manager, as director, and bought a Story from Anita, then about twenty years of age. She called it "His Picture in the Papers," and it was Douglas' first real chance.

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

Anita had learnt the picture game by then. **By the time** she was twenty-one she was earning £200 a week !

Not very long after she married John. And not so very long after that Mary married Douglas.

John looks very quiet, but has a will as Strong as Steel. Anita looks very lively, but is helpless without John. She knows " piftures " through and through, but she has often given in to the ignorance of some director who did not know a tenth of what she did—been barked down through some megaphone, till John has come across to the Coast to see justice done.

Pictures, plays, books—that has been their life for years together. John is the big noise in Equity and in the Dramatists' League, too, for he was called in by the playwrights of America to band them into a gang that could save them from the managers. John talked to scores of them in a room for days. Then, suddenly, the managers excitedly called each other up on the telephone.

" We're saved ! " they said. " Emerson's lost his voice."

It had broken down with Strain.

For months he scribbled on a writing-pad every word he wanted to say.

Meanwhile, Anita had written in a train, to pass the four days' journey to the Coast, a magazine article, one declaring that " Gentlemen Prefer Blondes." The editor asked for more. Then it came out in a book. Anita made a fortune. They yelled for more. She grumbled, but sold it them—at a dollar a word, for the magazine rights alone.

But John's voice had Still gone. He looked at Anita's black hair, and wrote on his pad : " I prefer brunettes."

They made a play of it, John and Anita, and, chockful of blondes as the American Stage is, they had to put a golden wig on dark-haired June Walker so that she could play the part. It made Anita another fortune in America ; it failed in London, it was so vulgar, so trashy.

Still, I thought even the book unreadable in its incredible banality. One page was enough to betray the shallowness of the minds that would call it entertaining.

I much prefer the real romance that came out of **the** Emerson's lives—the romance of **a** fine, clever **man** of **the**

ANITA LOOS

theatre, respected by all the members of his craft, and the little brunette who helped him get back his voice again.

She is so tender and devoted a wife that I forgive her all that over-paid nonsense. I forgive her, too, her share in "The Whole Town's Talking," that dull "farce" that they adapted from the German, but which failed in London, even when it was passed off as an original work.

DAVID LLOYD GEORGE

THE HAS-BEEN WITH THE MONEY-BAGS

I BECOME a reporter again whenever I hear Lloyd George's name.

I was in Birmingham on the night that L.G., after trying to make a pro-Boer speech, escaped from the Birmingham Town Hall in policeman's uniform while in angry crowd smashed the windows and threatened death while a shortish figure passed through them in constable's clothes, much too big for him, unrecognised among the other bobbies. Little did they dream they were denouncing a man who, in the years to come, would be acclaimed as the saviour of his country.

Although Lloyd George was one of the most talked-of men in the country in those days—he made Stunt speeches up and down England, saying the war was wrong, which we all know, nowadays—his wife now often recalls how, prominent though her husband was, they were so poor that they scarcely had the money to buy the next meal. No one would patronise his solicitor's office; he was banned.

Then L. G. made £1,000 by selling the option to buy the *Daily News*. He made much more—about £250,000, I believe—when he sold the *Daily Chronicle*. Now he is so rich that, quite recently, he tore up a contract of £20,000 a year, paid him by Hearst for writing an article every fortnight. Fancy, £800 an article!

Yet L. G.'s self-made fortune, which became his late in life—after he had slaved for his country for next to nothing—was made in spite of the judgment of all his moneyed friends.

Asquith took their advice, and died living on the charity of his political opponents.

L. G. bought control of the *Daily Chronicle* when wiser

DAVID LLOYD GEORGE

people were selling out, by borrowing from the banks. Then, in spite of them all, made more money in five minutes than he had made in his life. He also saved the old Liberal paper for his Party.

I go back to my reporting days, too, when I recall the Limehouse speeches I delighted to hear—they were the most fascinating orations I ever heard—and the Marconi Inquiry ; the day, for instance, when Lloyd George declared that, never mind what they thought, he had not made any money.

" As Chancellor of the Exchequer, I control millions belonging to the nation," I heard him say, " and yet I am a poor man. I own one cottage in North Wales. Cannot a man own one cottage ? "

He produced his bank book, and held it almost threateningly in the air. It seemed a narrow squeak once again. L. G.'s days looked over.

We all liked L. G. You see, before he became Prime Minister reporters were not allowed in Downing Street. Asquith would see J. A. Spender, having his usually misguided notion that the *Westminster* was read, and Garvin had his friends, but that was nearly all.

When Lloyd George became Prime Minister, you *had to go*. L. G. banged his own drum, like Cochran, and, like Sequah, he had cures for every ill.

L. G. was the first Prime Minister who ever understood publicity. He always tried to make his War speeches on Saturday afternoons, so that he could get them in the papers on Saturday afternoon, Sunday, *and* Monday morning—three times with the same speech. Not even Northcliffe ever thought like that.

" The Cup Ties are on to-day," the reporters would say. " You won't get much space."

" Well, we'll have the speech half an hour earlier," Lloyd George would reply. " Will it get in then ? "

Yes, it did!

Lloyd George's great trick was to escape responsibility. That is the real secret of success. Get the glory yourself. Let somebody else get the kicks.

Yet L. G.'s sense of humour, which is ebullient, saves him often. It makes you like him, never mind anything.

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

One Saturday afternoon there was a new kind of circus Staged at the London Opera House. One of L. G.'s Press agents arranged that, when he rose to speak to a great Coalition meeting, the organ would play patriotic airs. Unfortunately the cues got mixed, and they played the wrong tunes at the wrong time!

Sober-sided Conservative Statesmen sat there, wondering what it was all about.

After all, it would be unfortunate—wouldn't it?—if, when L. G. began to speak, the organ played " We won't go home till morning," or " Get your hair cut."

Reporters always liked Lloyd George. He wasn't a being above them. He knew all their names, and the papers they worked for, and always remembered the important ones. And you couldn't be angry with him. He smiled so nicely. If he remembered you, you took it as a compliment, forgetting that he wanted something all the time.

Not long ago, when I saw him at supper with Lord Beaverbrook and Lord Rothermere, both at once, I reflected that he must want something very important, very badly, that night.

It was Lloyd George who Started throwing about titles. If you weren't fighting in the War, you had to have one. It was his new form of punishment for slacking. All the Joneses got one, and all the Evanses, and scarcely one Lloyd escaped. People ran back to Wales in case they got knighted. Even Swansea was better than that.

L. G. loves singing hymns. In fact he was England's first community singer. Once he Started to compile a hymn book with Sir Richard Terry and Sir Henry Hadow. They all three used to sing hymns on Sunday night at Criccieth. Then, years afterwards, Lord Beaverbrook, finding it out, asked him round to sing hymns, L. G. going because he thought something new had cropped up in politics. Most of the others present were actresses or " Society ladies," which is the same thing nowadays. They could not join in.

" You and I are the only two who know the words," said Beaverbrook.

When I remember that it was Lloyd George who won the War, I always remember that Bottomley's poster, " To Hell

DAVID LLOYD GEORGE

With Serbia I " was all along the Strand on the same day that Lloyd George was opposing Asquith's desire to join in the War, and that, on the same day, too, Northcliffe was saying " Not one British soldier shall leave England. We will see to that."

It shows how we all change, doesn't it ?

Now, after it all, Lloyd George is merely a has-been Statesman. He has the moneybags of Liberalism to spend, a constructive policy and scores of young Liberals, most of whom failed to be returned at the last election.

When they talked about roads, the country shouted back, " What about a land fit for heroes ? We've heard it all before."

He used up all his powder towards the end of the war. Now, people don't believe. "Yah," they say, "who won the war ? " They have learned, at last, that no one wins wars, really, for even the victors have to pay.

LORD LATHOM

PEER WHO WRITES PLAYS ON A SICK-BED

NED LATHOM makes such a passion of the theatre that he has even embarrassed himself financially in paying for other people's shows. Yet, clever playwright though he is—and he has written plays since he was nineteen—he will not spend a penny in backing himself. He will go to Glasgow to see a pantomime. His idea of heaven is going to the theatre every night.

Before I knew him I was astounded, in the early days of my psychical inquiries, to hear a titled woman at a seance at Dennis Bradley's, ask a "spirit guide" if he would go to Hot Springs, Virginia, and try to cure Ned Lathom, who was supposed to be dying of consumption.

Do you know what Lord Lathom was doing at that very hour? He was lying in bed, though dying, he thought, writing "Wet Paint," the play which shocked the Sunday night critics—one said it should be called "Mud"—and horrified the Lord Chamberlain, this although Lord Lathom's grandfather was Lord Chamberlain to Queen Victoria.

I hope the "spirit guide" did not help to write the play.

Lord Lathom has sold Blyth, his Lancashire home, merely with a smile. A few months ago, he said, "Sell all my books," and gave up his home off Park Lane. Nothing of that sort worries him. "A to Z" cost him over £11,000.

He goes on writing plays, five of which have now been staged in London. All of them show merit. Yet, while blah-blah London has patted Noel Coward's hand, it refuses to take Ned Lathom seriously, probably because he is a peer.

Yet he still goes on writing and hoping, again on a sick-bed, this time forgetting death itself. He is one of the pluckiest men I know.

LORD LATHOM

Ned would give away anything—except himself. He likes to arrange a dinner party, and then take all his guests in motor buses to a circus. When he sees Nervo and Knox he nearly falls out of the box with joy.

I shall always remember of him that, when I have had lunch with him at home, he has about twenty different kinds of bread on the table.

TOM WEBSTER

CARTOONIST WHO SLEPT ON THE EMBANKMENT

TOM WEBSTER, in his private life, is the greatest humorist I know. He would have made a great comedian. He sees more funny things in life than any man I have ever met except Charlie Chaplin. His drawings are a mere indication of his outlook on life. He returns from a golf match or a race meeting with Stories of a score of comic things that he has seen. I regard him as England's most wafted potential journalist. A daily column of his talk on the oddities of life would be much more popular than his cartoons.

Yet, when he wrote a revue at the Criterion Theatre, it was booed ; his famous character " George " ran for less than a week when put into the farce " Who's Who."

After the Prince of Wales, Tom excites more attention than any man I have ever seen at a sporting gathering, or at a first-night. Yet—such is fate—the firm that now prints his cartoons boastfully once turned him down.

" There's my old flat," said Tom Webster, when driving along the Embankment, past the Savoy, in Lord Northcliffe's car.

" Did you use to live at the Savoy?" said Northcliffe, surprised.

" No, I mean that seat," Tom explained. " I slept there for three nights in the rain, waiting for a pension that was nine months late,"

No one would employ Webster in those days. He had come out of the Army, wounded and rheumatic. Newspapers were small. There was no room for artists. He was so mad on newspapers that, when he woke up on the Embankment one morning, wet through and with only 11/2d, he spent a penny of it in buying a *Daily Express*.

TOM WEBSTER

The *Star* refused him work, and then, a few weeks later, when J. M. Dick of the *Evening News* had put in his first drawings, and he was famous, they rushed for him.

"You are too late now," said Tom. "They all want me now. I'm signed up."

Webster offered himself to J. S. Elias, of Odham's, for £5 a week, with a five years' contract. He knocked at every door. No one would have him.

Now he draws his cartoons in a beautiful flat in Grosvenor Place, and often, when he is drawing, he can see the Royal Family walking in the gardens of Buckingham Palace, which he overlooks.

He has been brutal to Joe Beckett and Inman. He made Tishy famous, and Still has her tail, sent him from Boulogne, where that famous mare was run over by a train.

On the morning after Carpentier knocked out Beckett, and thousands of people booed the British champion at Olympia, Webster's cartoon was so fierce about Beckett that Descamps woke up Carpentier and said: "Beckett, he kill Tom."

Carpentier turned over in bed.

"No," he replied, blinking. "I think Tom could beat him, too."

Lots of Stupid people think that Tom Webster draws his cartoons and that some other clever person writes the words. Yet, at Monte Carlo, once, some girl turned to Tom, when the Paris *Daily Mail* arrived, and, looking at the cartoon, said: "Very funny, Tom! That other man's not so bad either—the one who draws the pictures."

Inman used to be very angry with Tom Webster about the way Webster drew his nose. People thought Inman would punch him, one day. As a matter of fact, he used to call up, semi-pathetically, with tears in his eyes, to say how much he liked it. Then one day, outside the London Pavilion, Webster looked at Inman and said: "Melbourne, you must be careful. You are growing nothing like my drawing."

Jim Driscoll, Bombardier Wells, Frank Goddard, and Joe Beckett were all discussing Webster's drawings of them once in the National Sporting Club. Beckett did not like it; he looked almost like hitting somebody. Tom Webster stood there quite nervously, he tells me, until Driscoll said:

HANNEN SWAPPER'S WHO'S WHO

" I wish Tom Webster had been drawing when I was in the ring. I'd have given him a thousand a year for the advertisement."

Joe Beckett then walked towards Tom.

" I thought I was going to get one with the left, and then another one with the right," Tom told me. By this time, however, the idea had reached Beckett's brain.

" Thank you for the advertisement," he said to Webster.

" When I was introduced to the Prince of Wales at the Theatrical Garden Party," said Webster, " he seemed to know I was going to draw him. 'How long will it take you?' said the Prince. 'I have done it already, sir, I replied. I had drawn it while walking up to him."

Some time later this same drawing, signed by the Prince, was auctioned at a Hippodrome charity performance. Moss's Empires bought it for £250, and gave it back to Tom Webster. Indeed, it is the only drawing by Webster on the walls of his flat, except one which he drew of Barry Lupino, in 1911, when the two of them were in Birmingham. Tom was then unknown. Barry had kept it—and then given it back.

Tom Webster has holed out at Combe Hill in one, and he is claimed, as a native son, by Sheffield, Birmingham and Manchester. The truth is he was born in Bilston, and when he went back to open a flower show, having left as an unknown boy, he was so famous that the whole town went to meet him. They even made a local policeman sit on a horse, for the first time in the history of the town, to keep the crowds away.

" That policeman on that horse," said Tom, " was the funniest thing I ever saw."

It was funnier than when Tom nearly drowned himself on the Lido, trying to prove to E. V. Lucas that he couldn't float—funnier, even, than his look of relief at St. Moritz when, after boasting he would steer a bobsleigh down the Cresta Run, the secretary called him up, apologetically, and said " Fresh snow has made it impossible ! "

You may have seen, a few months ago, in the *Daily Mail*, a comic drawing by Webster making fun of " The Ring " at Covent Garden. About five years ago Tom, being asked to illustrate general happenings, went to Covent Garden and

TOM WEBSTER

roared with laughter at "The Ring"—Wagner's kind, not Dick Burge's.

Much to his surprise, his drawing was not used. Tom Marlowe, the editor, had not thought it funny enough!

Long after, the new editor, Walter Fish, suggested that he should go to Covent Garden.

"You have got an old drawing of mine," said Webster. "Use it up."

It was used—just as it was drawn, years before. And Webster got more correspondence about it than any of his drawings for years past.

GRAGIE FIELDS

THE STAR THEY CANNOT SPOIL

"GRACIE FIELDS is an English girl whom the WeSt End had never heard of until laSt Monday," I wrote in August, 1923. "Yet gifts which amount to genius show her as a Beatrice Lillie, Florence Mills, Ethel Levey and Nellie Wallace all rolled into one."

Gracie, who was then a touring revue actress, knew so little about London then that she did not even read my notice.

"Has Hannen Swaffer ever written anything about me?" she asked her sister a few months ago.

Then they turned up the notice in which I had proclaimed her. When I wrote it, it meant so little that, when asked what he thought about it, Archie Pitt, Grade's husband, replied: "We often get things like that. We had a column last week in a paper in Hull."

Gracie and Archie acted in "Mr. Tower of London," their touring revue, for 4,000 performances without missing one. It ran for nine and a half years, and took £400,000. All the Pitt family were in it and all the Fields family. They wrote it; they did it all themselves.

"Everybody seems to have discovered Gracie except me," Archie Pitt told me. "The truth is that, years ago, I went to a firm of Manchester agents, who had her under contract for twelve years, and bought the contrail for £25. That's what I thought of her. Then she became my wife."

That was three days before Gracie Fields appeared as Gerald du Maurier's new Star. We were sitting over the Prince of Wales's Theatre, and the Pitts and the Fieldses were discussing how the family's share of the takings was only £70 the first week, how they had often slept in terrible lodgings,

GRACIE FIELDS

moved their own scenery during Strikes, were inoculated against smallpox, and braved floods.

" Now, I'm supposed to be a posh actress," said Gracie. The solemnity of the St. James's Theatre, which takes itself seriously, amused her. " It's funny being posh."

Yet, a few Christmases ago, Archie, thinking that Gracie ought to Stay in an hotel over Christmas, booked her a room, only to find the sitting-room floor was bare, and there was nothing but a table and a lamp. Gracie's bed was an iron one on a carpetless floor, and the dressing-table an orange-box with a candle in a gingerbeer bottle.

" It seemed like Christmas Day in the workhouse," said Archie. " Still, we were happier then than now. Although we have more money, it is a responsibility."

Gracie Fields, like James White, came from Rochdale, where she used to sing outside an actors' boarding-house, hoping some actor would hear her and give her a job. When she did, they fired her. So she became a factory hand.

" When Sir Gerald saw me at the Alhambra and engaged me," said Gracie, " I suppose he thought from my songs that I knew all the passion Stuff". The only lover I have had is that." And she looked at her shortish husband. " I feel I ought to go and see some sheik films to get passionate."

To this day Gracie retains her Lancashire accent, and she looks at everything from the business point of view.

Once she had sung a few nights before at the Gallery First Nighters' dinner.

" What good will that do me ! " she asked me.

" Oh, it's nice for you to appear, sometimes, at places," I said.

" Why ? " she asked.

She wanted to know.

Recently she was offered £10,000 to make a talkie that would take five weeks, this while her income from gramophone records was £300 a week, and this, too, while, in a touring revue, she was crowding the Victoria Palace and taking the place of a music-hall programme which had paid 20 per cent, for years !

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

Yet, when she went into the Savoy to supper, with R. H. Gillespie, she Staggered the waiters by asking for port and lemonade. They had never heard of it. It is drunk in Lancashire, I believe. Gracie carries Lancashire about with her everywhere she goes.

"Goom," she says.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON

PRELATE WHO WAS TOLD THE FRANK TRUTH

HE could argue with anybody, could the Bishop—except the Anglo-Catholics, who call him "Arthur Foley," his Christian names.

Although, when he was Bishop of Stepney, he debated with Freethinkers from a tub, the Anglo-Catholics knew how to pull his leg. He ignored their first Congress until the last day, when, suddenly realising its power, he went down in khaki and condescended to address an Albert Hall that contained Anglican "Sifters" in nun's attire, and bearded priests who were dressed like monks. I wonder if you know that Dr. Frere, of Truro, is the first monk who has been an Anglican Bishop since the Reformation.

The second Congress he annoyed by stopping them from singing a hymn to the Virgin Mary, but, by the time the week was out, they dragged him into their procession and knelt before him.

Now, he defends a Prayer Book allowing Reservation !

Poor Bishop ! He does not know where he is. He forgets that Smithfield is in his diocese, and that St. Paul's, his parish church, is called after a man of whom they said, "He knows his own mind." The Bishop has to mind his own No's.

Yet, I like him—his fine, handsome face, his tolerant sympathy, his friendliness.

I went to tell him once what I thought about the London Stage. He sat with a committee of twenty or more earnest men or women in the vestry of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, all worried about the Stories of the naughtiness of the London theatre and wanting to hear more. Mrs. Bramwell Booth was there, and Mrs. Creighton, widow of the Bishop's predecessor.

HANNEN SWAPPER'S WHO'S WHO

" Your committee will be sneered at as Puritans, my lord," I said. " You must not mind. You are right, and you have behind you the goodwill of every person who does not like public indecency."

The Bishop Stared. He is not used to the support of a cynical man of the world. It was like Satan reproving gin.

I told him of the commercialism of the Stage to-day, the profit-rental system, and the money found by Stupid backers, and I told how decadent plays reflected a phase of perversion now so common in London that he would be astounded if he knew the world as I did. I gave him names and I gave him facts, and I urged that, as bishop of the most important city of the Empire, in which English drama had its centre, he had every right to go to the Lord Chamberlain and demand reform.

" What do you think of ' Fallen Angels ' ? " asked the Bishop.

I am afraid I told him. A man of the world told the frank truth to a man of God.

What I said sunk into his mind. It must have worried him, for, not long after, when he went to a nursing-home to see Henderson Bland, the actor who played Christ in the film, " From Manger to Cross," he dragged up his chair to the bed in which Bland was lying and said: " Swaffer has told me some Startling things about the Stage."

" Whatever Swaffer told you would be true," said Bland. " He does not lie."

Then Bland told the Bishop some more.

I think that, if hung in the Royal Academy, the picture of the Bishop of London discussing, in a nursing-home Startled by his visit, the improprieties of the Stage with an actor who had played Christ, would make the art sensation of the year.

DR. ROBERT BRIDGES

POET LAUREATE WHO WON'T WRITE

IN an hour of irrational crisis, Alfred Lord Tennyson wrote "The Charge of the Light Brigade." Alfred Austin, during the Jameson Raid, wrote about "There's a Cry for the Gold-reefed City." Rudyard Kipling, thinking it a Bore War, insulted Verse with "Pay, Pay, Pay! "

There is nothing like that about Dr. Bridges. His only likeness to Alfred Austin, his predecessor, is that he scorns honours. Austin, in reply to an autograph hunter, who called him Sir Alfred, wrote, "I am plain Mister. It is a distinction to which I attach considerable importance."

A few years ago, I met Dr. Bridges in a garret in a slum off Theobald's Road. He was then nearly eighty, a white-bearded giant, who, although Poet Laureate of England, had gone to the Poetry Bookshop, run by Harold Monro, to read poetry to servant girls and shop assistants, drawn from the neighbourhood. When he recited Homer and the "Ode to a Grecian Urn," the eyes of servant girls forgot, for a moment, the drabness of the streets outside and the step-cleaning, while they heard spoken music.

.A That is the sort of thing Dr. Bridges does. He does not write nonsense rhymes whenever a Royal baby is christened, nor does he flapdoodleise in jingle when someone wins a battle, which, years, afterwards, it is discovered, was really lost, after all.

Organised Death does not exalt him. He has been too near Life, for, in his earlier days, when he was house physician at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, the Great Northern, and the Children's in Great Ormond Street, he examined hundreds of patients a day.

HANNEN SWAPPER'S WHO'S WHO

" I believe I saw 53,000 patients in one year," said the poet, grown doctor again for an instant. " Surely it was a record."

Dr. Bridges lives at Boar's Hill, near Oxford. He is never interviewed, and he never says anything for print. He walks about in the rain, is the friend of everybody who loves the sound of well-spoken English, and, at the age of 84, he writes verse in archaic forms which few can understand, and which the Royal Family, although it is written by their Poet Laureate, never read.

Horatio Bottomley once demanded he should write something or retire. Since then, Bottomley has written " The Ballad of Maidstone Gaol." He just done some retiring himself.

I will quote a very simple specimen of a Bridges poem written when he was eighty. The first mark of punctuation comes in the eighth line, and there is no formal division.

" Thus threw he to the wilderness and silent sky
" his outrageous despair the self-pity of mankind
" and the disburdenment of his great heaviness
" left his heart suddenly so shaken and unsteadied
" he seemed like one who fording a rapid river
" and poising on his head a huge stone that its weight
" may plant his footing firmly and stiffen his body upright
" against the rushing water, hath midway let it fall
" and with his burden hath lost his balance, and staggering
" into the bubbling eddy is borne helpless away."

In his beautiful house near Oxford, filled with books, the venerable doctor experiments in new verse-forms, and tries to keep the English language clean. Pure English is his passion.

If he ever went to the theatre and heard the American words they say, he would hand in his resignation.

Robert Bridges is a great man.

SOPHIE TUCKER

RED-HOT MAMA WITH THE BIG HEART

WHO would believe, meeting Sophie Tucker, who prides herself on being fat, which she isn't, and seeing her feted by the famous and the rich, that she started life as a girl in a restaurant, waiting on actors, in her father's cook shop, in Hartford, Connecticut? She sang snatches of their songs to them while she handed them knives.

"You're fine, Sophie," they said. "You ought to go on the Stage." She believed them.

She ran away from home, mad to go on the Stage. She became, in real life, a better Story than Fanny Hurst ever wrote.

Her father was a Jew who escaped from Russia to avoid military service. His real name was Kalisch, but, so afraid was he of being caught, that, when an Italian named Abuza died in his arms in the train, he used his passport and took his name.

To the end he talked, at home, in the Yiddish in which Sophie has performed at the Rivoli, Whitechapel, in the intervals of entertaining princes in Mayfair.

"I ran away to New York," she told me once, "and thought the actors I had waited on would find me work. Alas! they were all on tour. So I got a job singing songs in a joint in Chinatown, no salary, but only the money they threw at me when I sung."

Poor Sophie, in her innocence, did not know that the women who took money from their socks for her to mind, so that their men hangers-on should not get it, were Street-walkers.

"It was a tough joint,' she said, "but I was so young I could not understand,'

The pianist there was a pale young man of 18 or 19, a pianist who got 15 dollars a week, which was the star's salary.

"And a share of the dimes they threw at us," said Sophie.

His name became Irving Berlin. He was sometimes a hungry boy in those days. Sophie and he became friends, and she sang his songs. He wrote them in the morning; she sang them the same night.

The time came when, on the night of Sophie's farewell at the Kit Cat, two years ago, Irving sat at my table with his new bride, the runaway daughter of Clarence Mackay, one of the Smart Set of New York, a big Stone in the Diamond Horseshoe, a proud millionaire, bitterly angry that his daughter had married a Jew.

"Irving, sing them some of the songs we used to sing in Chinatown," said Sophie, who by this time had earned as much as £ 1,700 a week, her share of the takings of Reisenweber's Cafe—before Prohibition days. She made all the Stars in London sing that night. The most applauded, though, was pale-faced Irving Berlin, who, with his little thin voice, stood up and piped a little song. Sophie cried.

Sophie's baby boy, left in her parent's care at Hartford, is now Albert Tucker, aged 23, a vaudeville performer.

"He is going to be a Star one day," Sophie told me. "I am going to put him across in London soon. I have got a husky voice; he has a small one. I cannot dance; he can. He is fine! He is my boy."

Sophie is "Hallo, darling!" to half the West End, nowadays. She has the biggest heart of any woman I know. She loves giving away money, but she hates paying it. She can make anybody sing—the Prince of Wales or Joe Sacks.

She is as strong as a horse, and she often sings forty-eight songs a day, all about how fat she is, and how she treats 'em rough. She couldn't treat anybody rough, could Sophie. I adore her.

FEDOR CHALIAPIN

RUSSIA'S AMBASSADOR OF SONG

EVERY now and then, Fedor Chaliapin returns to London, sometimes to earn £1,250 in a night, and always with his English improved to an extraordinary degree.

He has great charm. He looks Strangely like Tree, and is not only the greatest bass in the world, but the greatest actor.

I have met him wandering about the Streets of London in the middle of the night, Studying the "atmosphere."

Sometimes, he talks of his boyhood, how, the son of a drunken peasant, he Started life as a shoemaker and was thrashed as a boy because he bought a violin for two or three shillings and played it when he should have been working.

It seems incredible, when you meet him, that he has been a railway porter, a bookbinder, and a joiner. He sang in a choir as a boy; he learned acting from the old "face-makers" of Russia; he danced in a divertissement one night, and acted lead the next.

Yet he is a peasant who became a prince, for no king ever moves, nowadays, accompanied by the homage paid to Kreisler, Chaliapin, and Paderewski.

All three have the minds of artists and yet the bearing of great men. Chaliapin has taken Caruso's place as the most popular singer in the world, and, because he sings "The Song of the Volga Boatmen," unheard of a few years ago, it is now the most famous tragic melody ever sung and one of the most haunting.

Gorki and Chaliapin were friends when they were boys. Revolutions have come since then, and they have quarrelled. But they Stand together in the world of art and letters as Russia's great ambassadors.

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

When I first knew him, Chaliapin could scarcely speak a word of English. Now, every time he comes back to London, he speaks it so much better that to-day, although his articulation is slow, you can understand every word he says.

Europe is full of most annoying Russian emigres of all kinds. People who say they were once princes now do our millinery. Pallid youths who call themselves counts are gigolos in cabarets all over the continent. Some of them are fakes and most of them are dreadful.

Chaliapin, himself an emigre now, for he has quarrelled with the Russian Government with which he was once friendly, towers above them all, a great singer, a great artist.

He has his little fits of temper now and then, quarrelling with the conductor at Covent Garden. Still, artists are allowed to behave like that. Besides, it is good for publicity.

Now and then, the silliest Stories about him appear in print. He told me recently that he had seen in a paper a picture of the wonderful castle that the Bolsheviks had built for him.

" Really," he said, " that castle only exists in my dreams. Before the war, I wanted to build a great palace, dedicated to Art, one to which I could invite the artists of the world. Drawings were made for me by an architect, and I suppose the Bolsheviks Stole them from my home and painted them up to make them look like photographs of an actual castle. It was very kind of the Bolsheviks to give me that castle, because it has not been built yet. It exists only in my mind."

LADY WYNDHAM

THE RICHEST WOMAN IN THE THEATRE

ALWAYS on a first-night at the Criterion or the New Theatre you see a woman in a right-hand box with a bouquet on the ledge in front of her.

Usually she has chosen the play, for both theatres are let on sharing terms. Usually, too, she has guessed right.

It is Lady Wyndham, the astute woman who is the richest theatre-manager of her generation. For years she was Mary Moore, a very talented comedienne, and the widow of James Albery, the dramatist, who used to get three guineas a night for "The Two Roses," in which Irving made his name.

The time came when his widow, in partnership with Charles Wyndham, often paid Henry Arthur Jones or Haddon Chambers ten per cent, on £1,600 a week!

Sometimes, on Sundays, Lady Wyndham gives a *the dansant* in her house in Regent's Park. Other titled folk of the theatre go, and they dance to a gramophone with an oil painting of Charles Wyndham as David Garrick looking down at them.

When James Albery fell ill, Mary Moore, twenty-three, and twenty years his junior, had to support the family, and so Wyndham gave her £4 a week to understudy a part on tour, although thirty shillings, perhaps, was the price in those days. Even that did not content her. After all, she had been sending £2 home to keep her two younger boys, and with the other £2 she kept herself and the eldest boy on tour. It was not enough. She took a night train from Liverpool, bearded Wyndham in London—and got a part I

Not long after, Wyndham gave her a three-years' contract, and the lead in "Wild Oats" at the Criterion—£5 a week the first year, £6 the second, and £7 the third. Those were the salaries leading ladies got in those days.

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

When, in 1896, Mary Moore and Charles Wyndham became partners, there started their long Story of the Criterion triumphs of Henry Arthur Jones, Haddon Chambers, and Hubert Henry Davies, the Story indeed of modern English comedy—"The Liars," "The Tyranny of Tears," and "The Mollusc."

Wyndham and Miss Moore invested their money in South Africa, but then came the Jameson Raid, and such a slump that Wyndham was heavily involved.

Still, Joseph Pyke came along and said: "I have a wonderful site for a theatre. If you find the money for the land, I will find the money for the building."

What was a rookery of poor houses belonging to Lord Salisbury became Wyndham's Theatre, and "Because we had a little bit of land left over at the back," Lady Wyndham says, "we bought some more, and put up the New Theatre behind."

Indeed, Miss Moore's business sense was such that she once told me that, knowing the two theatres would be back to back, she planned that the same Stage hands should do the scene-shifting in both theatres at once.

Although she admits that she turned down "Tons of Money"—"No one can tell farce," she says—her astuteness is such that she seldom knows failure. She backed Sybil Thorndike when no one else would, and when George Edwardes refused to take over the New Theatre just before it was finished—"It would take three years before the cabmen knew where it was," he said—she and Wyndham opened it themselves, and made the theatre famous in a week.

"The Importance of Being Earnest" was written for Wyndham, who gave Oscar Wilde £300 for the option, and then let Alexander have it, Wilde promising him another play instead.

"Months passed," Lady Wyndham told me, "but Wilde forgot to return the £300, and he forgot to write the play."

One day at Brighton, Charles Wyndham, Mary Moore, and Oscar Wilde sat at lunch. "The Importance of Being Earnest" was making the town talk.

"What about my play, Oscar?" said Wyndham.

"My dear Charles," replied Wilde, with his slow drawl,

LADY WYNDHAM

"I am at home to managers between four and six on Thursdays."

Years before Wyndham died, the whole burden of running their three theatres fell on his wife's shoulders, for Wyndham had lost his memory.

"Who owns that theatre?" he once asked a policeman outside the Criterion.

"You do, Sir Charles," he was told.

Wyndham went in and sat in the stalls.

"Lady Wyndham has called for you, Sir Charles," soon said an attendant, for his wife, who used to track him down in his wanderings, had found where he was.

"Lady Wyndham?" replied Sir Charles. "She's dead." The first one was.

Wyndham would forget where he lived, and go home in the wrong overcoat. They had to follow him everywhere.

Lady Wyndham, with an office at the New Theatre, still runs the business. The three sons she reared so bravely are all alive—Irrving, a successful Stockbroker, Bronson, his mother's assistant, and Wyndham an accountant, and, alas, as Lady Wyndham says, "a rebel I"

Bronson is a red-hot Conservative, but naughty Wyndham stood as Labour candidate for Hammersmith.

"I am glad he did so well," said his Tory mother, proudly. "*But I am glad he did not get in*"

CICELY COURTNEIDGE

THEY THREW PENNIES WHEN SHE WAS POOR

CICELY COURTNEIDGE is the best case I know of a dud who made good. Although now a great personality in revue, it is not more than ten years ago that Cicely was so bad an artist that she nearly always used to "get the bird."

Well, now, Cicely has made good. In one of her recent hours of triumph, she told me her Story in excited jerks.

"I never got the bird in the theatre but—on the music-halls! I never had pennies actually thrown at me, but the remarks flung at me? I've been on when I've been unable to hear myself speak.

"Sometimes the audience has not taken the slightest notice of me. Had the bird in the papers!

"People used to say I was my father's daughter. Only reason for me being in his theatre! Only in a job because I was his daughter! Often heard this! It hurt terribly. Always had to work terribly hard, even though I was his daughter. Anything to be cut, I was the first to lose a song or a scene or anything."

Dear Cicely! She laughs about it now.

"On the music-halls people used to shout to me, 'Speak up, and all that sort of thing,' went on Cicely. "I was terrified.

"First real eye-opener was 'The Light Blues,' Then I knew how bad I was. Felt sure 'The Light Blues,' even if it were a failure, would run six months. Then I married my husband. 'The Light Blues' ran three weeks!

"Then I couldn't get a job for two years. Went round to all managers. Never done it before. Started to go to agents.

"I went to all the managers. Went myself. In my own

CICELY COURTNEIDGE

name. Not my father's. Saw Chariot, Stoll, Laurillard, everybody. Never got a job. Never got a hearing.

" Didn't work for two years. Nobody would look at me. My husband was in the Army. We had very little money. Nothing to do. Determined to try and make good."

This is all Cicely's own jerked-out Story.

" I went on the music-halls again. Then I got dates for six years ahead. This was in last year of the war. Had to make good. Made good on the halls. Victoria Palace, my first big chance !

" Then I got dates with Moss. Went round the halls. Then I opened at the Little Theatre. I followed Beatrice Lillie, and all the papers said I was an imitation of her. It wasn't really true. That hurt. I never tried to imitate anybody. I always tried to be myself.

" First time the papers were really nice to me was in ' By the Way.' Then I went to America. They were wonderful to me. The papers were flattering about me in ' Lido Lady.' Then I felt I had won."

With all their success, though, the Hulberts are so modest that, when I spent a week with them on the Lido, I do not remember their mentioning their show once.

Cicely is just a dear.

GWEN FFRANGCON-DAVIES

GIRL WHO HATED SHOWING HER LEGS

GWEN'S father, once a Welsh clergyman, was one of the best-known singers in oratorio in late-Victorian days—a man who once, when he was singing "Elijah," went on the Stage and found himself facing several dummies, made up just like himself, which humorous friends had put there to annoy him. Elijah walked off in disgust.

No, Elijah's daughter, although she always reminds one of a wounded bird, has not got raven hair. She is a blonde-brunette with liquid eyes, who nearly became a Co-optimist! If she had done so, we should never have heard her wonderful thin soprano voice in "The Immortal Hour," nor seen her as Titania in Dean's ill-fated try at Shakespeare at Drury Lane.

Archie de Bear, when in Birmingham with the Co-ops, wanted a girl to join the troupe.

"There is a very clever girl in the Repertory Theatre," they told him. He went along, saw her in comedy, and offered her a job.

"I couldn't show my legs in pierrot clothes," said Gwen. "I don't like the shape of my legs."

Yet a few years later she played, in "Back to Methuselah," the part of Eve, the nudest woman in history, even including Lady Godiva!;. As an actress, Gwen has elfin moments that are like glimpses of shade in the woods.

When Joe Sacks wanted a leading lady for a new musical play, he complained there were no girls in England who could sing.

"Why don't you try Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies?" I said.

"Who is she?" he asked.

GWEN FRANGCON-DAVIES

" She is acting to-night at Drury Lane," I replied. " She is in ' A Midsummer Night's Dream.' "

" I have never heard of her," replied Sacks.
That knocked the Bottom out of it.

VIOLET LORAINÉ

THE ACTRESS WHO DARED TO COME BACK

I USED to read every now and then that Violet Lorainé was thinking of returning to the Stage. Then she did, in comedy. I am sorry. It lasted only a few weeks—even when she put a song in. Times change. . . .

Vi is the biggest-hearted woman who ever appeared on our revue Stage.

My wedding present to her consisted of a volume containing all the photographs of the crowds waiting to cheer her outside St. Margaret's, Westminster. Among the pictures were the backs of three actresses who had been in the Divorce Court—Lilian Braithwaite and Ethel Levey were two of them—and underneath I wrote, "The Stage turns its back on marriage."

"Long after all the flowers are dead," I wrote in the first page, "and when all the other wedding presents are smashed, or lost, or pawned, you can show these pictures proudly to your children to prove to them how popular you used to be."

The first time I met Vi I had got my eyes very red while motoring, and, although I was nothing in her life, at that moment, I shall never forget the nursefulness with which she bathed them—and for a long time. It seemed so *womanly* for a dressing-room. It is a trivial memory, but it expresses just what Violet is.

She sang "If you Were the Only Girl in the World" with George Robey in "The Bing Boys" all through the air raids, and whenever, at some benefit, she returns and sings it, she puts all those young upstart actresses back in their place, and then is very proud, but rather sorry that I say so. Heavens, how it annoys the upstarts! I must show you their letters.

There is no one quite like Vi. All that "great artiste" Stuff is nonsense.

SYBIL THORNDIKE

A NOBLE WOMAN WHO DOES HER JOB

TEN years before, in " St. Joan," she scored the greatest personal success ever achieved by any English actress in my lifetime, Sybil was earning thirty shillings a week at the Old Vic, where they played Shakespeare all through the War. Even on the night when the Huns were bombing Waterloo Station, just over the road, Sybil and company only shouted Shakespeare louder to the Germans overhead.

She made over £20,000 over " St. Joan," which Shaw wrote for her, and which she performed as such a sacred duty, risking her all on it, that she went to Mass that morning to sanctify herself for a great task. Even after the first night, we all thought it would run only six weeks.

Because Sybil could not find another " St. Joan," she has since declined as a Star. Even genius must find a medium. I thought that, in " Advertising April," she was obliterating **June.**

She hates me to say it, but Sybil is the most noble-minded woman I know in any sphere of art. She loves her job. Other Stars have champagne suppers on first nights. After an important premiere of Sybil's, I have gone home with her and Lewis Casson, her husband, and had cocoa and marmalade!

The theatre snobs hate her. The toadies are jealous of the things she does. But all Stage hands worship her, and she is the only actress in England with any intellectual following.

She learned her job by hard work. In America, with Ben Greet, she acted in twelve Shakespearian plays a week, ailing and travelling all the time, to miners, to cattlemen, in barns and sheds.

She has played 112 parts in Shakespeare's plays—in " Hamlet," for instance, the Player Queen, the King's nephew,

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

Osric, Ophelia, Rosencrants and messengers. In " Macbeth " she has played both the King's sons, all the witches, Lady Macbeth, Lady MacDuff, the " bloody " child, half the walks-on, and all the cries of women off.

At Santa Barbara, in California, she acted " Everyman " to the monks of a little Spanish mission, men of God who had never seen a play before, and who sat there bare-footed, astounding everyone, when Death came on, by shouting loudly with glee.

When Cochran found her at the Old Vic, he gave her a job in a revue at £7 a week. Then he got her to understudy Madge Titheradge, Still at £7 a week!

You wouldn't believe it, but it was Charles Gulliver, a mere music-hall manager, who gave Sybil her real chance. He read her notices after she had produced " The Trojan Women," for a Pacifist conference, at Oxford, and Casson had hawked the production around London.

Gulliver financed her in a season at the Holborn Empire, a music-hall, which, for matinees, Sybil crowded for eleven weeks.

Not even then was she made. I hawked her about among the managers to find her a partner. I offered her to Butt, and James White ; I forget the others. Very soon after that the Princess Royal, seeing her aft Euripides, said, " Tell Miss Thorndike she is the most wonderful woman I have ever seen."

Yet when she married Lewis Casson, whom she first met in the Dublin Zoo, looking at the lions—" I picked him up," says Sybil, meaning Lewis, not the lion—he was married in the clothes he wore in the second aft of " Widowers' Houses," and went away for his honeymoon dressed in the clothes for the first aft of " David Ballard."

Nowadays, Sybil Thorndike is herself a tragedy. She lives in an age where there are no plays for her. She is the only tragedy queen, but she has no throne and Greta Garbo has Stolen all her subjects. The universities pay her honour. Royalty has acknowledged her greatness. Yet, where is the public ? And where are the plays ?

When you saw her in " Mariners," you saw the only inheritor of the tradition of great tragic acting. You saw a

distinguished player who was not too proud to Strip herself of every shred of good looks and decent manners, one who jabbered incoherently in a paroxysm of grief, rent her soul in tatters, and exposed the uttermost depths of feeling until they seemed repulsive.

Only Sybil Thorndike had the courage to-day to Stage a play like "Mariners." She must have known that it could not run. There was nothing pretty-pretty about it. No one wore the latest fashion. There were no cocktails. Only one woman smoked a cigarette.

Sybil Thorndike is so far in front of her compeers that she is out-of-date. So would Charlotte Bronte seem nowadays, and George Eliot, and Mrs. Humphry Ward. They render lip-service with a lipstick nowadays. Great women fought for women's equality, and now the women they fought for all want to go on the movies.

Yes, Sybil Thorndike's own life is itself a tragedy. She slaved. Like Edith Evans, she worked on for many years for very little money, and, now that her powers are at their height—well, who wants tragedy, and who is there to write it, even if the public wished to go ?

One night, when she was producing "Cymbeline," in Cardiff, it was the first time the play had been acted in England for years. Sybil was appearing in a part in which Ellen Terry once shone. Yet the chief paper of the Welsh city did not trouble to send.

When the manager called up and spoke to the editor, he sent along a reporter, who merely looked at the playbill, and then composed from its contents a short paragraph of which nearly half consisted of the words, "Several scenes are laid in the Principality, and Mr. Lewis Casson, the producer, is a Welshman."

Now forty years ago, in Irving's great days, heavens ! the shout there would have been !

Mind you, the reporter was right, after all, for when it came to London, and I saw "Cymbeline," I made the manager Stop me from going in to see the second half, for I feared to think what I should have to write!

Recently, Sybil drivelled away nearly all of the profit she made out of "St. Joan," losing it all before she went to

HANNEN SWAPPER'S WHO'S WHO

Africa. Yet her Lady Macbeth at the Princes was one of the greatest Shakespearian performances of recent years. Her death scene as Queen Katherine in " Henry VIII " has a tender beauty that will long be treasured in the memory of all who love beauty, while, so successful was that play that, while it cost £6,000 to Stage, she put it on at the Empire, a music-hall, at cheap prices, and then did what none of the business men of the theatres have ever done—paid off the cost of the production in two and a half weeks!

That is the greatest commercial feat ever performed by any actor or actress in the history of the theatre. Yet Sybil only did it because she loved Shakespeare!

Those who have seen Sybil Thorndike play Hecuba and Medea in Greek tragedy have seen the noblest flights of acting belonging to our time. At her best there is no living actress who can equal her. Then, she is superb.

Have you ever seen one of those large lilies in an indoor lake at Kew? Its enormous leaves, of a pale greenness, and its large white bloom seem to fill the sight. Put it in a small room and it would look a blousy, swollen thing.

Sybil is like that. Her art must be displayed in spaciousness. Put it in a small frame, and the picture fails.

Cannot a modern playwright find in the chaos which we call Civilisation one great theme which will provide chances for fine actors and actresses, teach us something and please the public at the same time? Is not every human life to-day a great Story?

We are on the eve of a new epoch. Everything around us is changing. The old order passes under our eyes. The mighty have fallen from their seats. A new democracy has been born. Yet no one writes of it. No one utters a clarion call to nobler thoughts. There is no great acting to be done. Our younger playwrights write of the cocktail parties to which they belong. Our older ones have grown swollen with success.

Is not Somerset Maugham rich enough to cease, for a month or two, writing commercial dramas with some vivid sex scene dragged in to fill the box office? He has a fine brain, and he came from an early manhood where he saw suffering and toil. He was not born in a night club, like some of them.

SYBIL THORNDIKE

Has Barrie nothing more worth saying ? Galsworthy does not write women's parts. Cannot one great woman character be made the symbol of all this change ?

After all, Sybil Thorndike is first and foremost an artiste. She has thought, all the time, only of her job. She does not possess a selfish thought. She has high intelligence. She has culture, and she has more enthusiasm than any actor or actress now upon the Stage. She will make herself hideous or old or hunchbacked, if the occasion arises.

The tuft-hunters of the Stage hate all that for which she Stands.

I am much concerned about the best people on the Stage, and I am much concerned about the few good dramatists we have left. They are being battered about in an age for which only slick minds are needed, apparently.

Mary and Ann Casson are to be actresses, but, sometimes, I agree with the elder Casson boy.

" Are you going on the Stage ? " I said to him some years ago.

" No," he replied, " I prefer a man's job. I'm going to sea." He went.

SENATOR MARCONI

THE IMMORTAL WHO DOES NOT KNOW IT

OLIVER LODGE discovered wireless; Marconi mechanicalised it and made it save ships and educate children. Now, after Mussolini, although his reticence would never let you know, he is the best-known Italian in the world.

Yet, so simple is his reserve that, when asked for his occupation when he joined the Hambone Club, he just wrote the word "mechanic."

When they first discussed wireless, Marconi told me, Lodge did not think much of its future. He thought that, in fifty years perhaps, you would be able to send a message by wireless a distance of half a mile,

"I was writing about you the other day," I said to Marconi at lunch, on his return from Africa. "I wrote an article called 'Immortals I Know, and you were one of the six or seven. I was not sure of all of them, but the name Marconi will certainly last, if only in Marconigram."

"I am not so sure about immortality," replied Marconi. "When I was away I read in the papers that, when Madame Tussaud's was burned, my waxen effigy was melted in the flames. Fame, after all, is rather like that."

When you talk to Marconi, he usually discusses, not the future of wireless, but some such triviality as the latest revue.

"Why is a man of your intellectual power interested, apparently," I asked, "merely in such trivial things?"

"You don't understand," he replied. "If I were to talk about the engineering things which interest me, only three or four men in the world could understand the technical words I should have to use. If I mention a revue, people know what I mean."

Marconi sees more through his one glass eye than he says with his two lips.

MARY PIGKFORD

BABY FACE WITH A BRAIN THAT COUNTS

" **T H E** WORLD'S SWEETHEART " knows all her admirers by a number. If ever you write to her, your letter is put into a file, and there you are—registered—so that you can be supplied with the latent news of the latent picture.

I went through Mary Pickford's offices in Hollywood once. She was "on the lot," as they call it, working, but all her publicity staff were busy sorting out the mail, sacks and sacks of it, and keeping a record of every name and every address.

Yet Mary smiled with her baby eyes and shook her baby curls when I saw her and told me all about how she loved children—she hasn't got any, of course—and the orphanage down town. Douglas' gag is how he loves Nature.

" Here am a great husky fellow," he told me, " and yet I fall for a wayside flower."

" Don't try that Stuff on me, Douglas," I replied. .

I was not fair to Mary. It is true that, when leaving the Los Angeles children's hospital, to which she had gone in her make-up one day Straight from the lot, a child whom Mary had been nursing would not go to sleep if she left. Hour after hour she nursed the child, who woke up every time she moved. Mary, make-up and all, had to Stay all night, Still nursing the baby.

The first time Mary came to England, it was with Douglas on their wedding trip. They were mobbed everywhere. At the Theatrical Garden Party they barely escaped with their clothes. The next time I saw another Mary—the clever woman of business, a baby face masking a business brain.

James White asked me to take her to Daly's, as he wanted to " do a deal."

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

" Come and meet a millionaire who can make you laugh," was my bait for Mary.

She went with Douglas and myself to Daly's, and the three of us and White sat in George Edwardes' old board-room—Robert Evett, the manager, perched himself on the fireplace—while he tried to interest her in the Tivoli site.

" I have a piece of idle land in the Strand, Miss Pickford," he said. " If I build a cinema there, and you and Douglas and Charlie Chaplin and Griffiths come on the board, I will make your fortunes."

He scribbled figures on his blotting-pad. Mary began to criticise.

" Why do you want to pay 7 per cent, for your money ? " she asked. " I have never paid more than 5 1/2."

" What do you know about finance, Miss Pickford ? " said White, surprised.

" Mary is the brains of the picture business," said Douglas. " She owns the Pennsylvania Railway! "

It was a joke, but it explained things.

" How much did you make last year, Miss Pickford ? " asked White.

" Four hundred thousand," replied the film Star.

" Dollars ? " he said.

" No, pounds," was her reply.

" Good heavens," he said. " You, a little girl with baby eyes ! It's a good job for me you didn't come into the cotton business."

Poor Jimmy ! If Mary had, there might not have followed his ruin, his suicide, and the long trail of disaster that soon engulfed Alec Ormerod and Tommy Dawe.

Now it is nearly time for Mary to retire. What will she do ? For years she has thought of nothing but films—eaten them at meals, dreamed of them when asleep. She knows nothing else. Of all the world's actresses, she has been the slave of her job. She has never left it. Soon it will leave her.

The World's Sweetheart will have to be merely Doug's.

LADY ASTOR

ONLY PILGRIM MOTHER WHO CAME BACK

ALTHOUGH, even when I was drinking, I was always a Prohibitionist, Lady Astor, the only Pilgrim Mother who ever came back, has almost made a "Wet" of me. I do not like Americans who meddle, nor people who hate war and yet sit for dockyard towns, nor people who hate gambling and yet go to race meetings.

One day, in the House of Lords, I heard the King read his speech when the Baldwin Government, which knew its end had come, was just about to fall from power.

Right at the end the King said:

"Preparations have also been made . . . for the ascertainment of costs and profits in connexion with the distribution of milk."

When I walked out from the Upper House I found myself caught in a small jam in the Outer Lobby, one in which Baldwin was saying to Lady Astor, "You see, I put in a reference to milk, just to please you."

"Yes," she replied, "that was because you knew it did not mean anything. If the Government had been going to last, you would have put beer in instead."

She is like that.

Once, when I was in the Central Lobby bar, Nancy Astor came in and said to an elderly M.P.: "Drinking again, I see."

"Yes," he replied, "ginger ale."

Then she bought herself a bar of chocolate.

Nancy has courage. She goes up the alleys in Plymouth and tackles them, uses language they understand, browbeats, terrifies. Still, Susan Lawrence can easily put her in her place. So could Maggie Bondfield.

SIR HALL GAINE

THE ONLY MANXMAN EVER HEARD OF

HE was little Tommy Caine once, a humble boy in the Isle of Man. The time came when, but for him, Manxland might have remained unknown. One day, Queen Alexandra called at Greba Castle with King Edward. "As the King and I were sailing down the Channel on the Royal yacht," she explained, "I said to the King, 'Let's go and see Hall Caine's island!' So here we are."

D. D. Home, the famous medium, once told Hall Caine, when he was Rossetti's secretary, that he could be a medium himself if he tried. To-day he is a psychic without knowing it. Once, he told me, he wakened up in the night, with his hand pressing his brow, remembering a vivid dream.

"I went to sleep again, and once again woke up, having dreamed the same dream," he said. "A third time that night, I dreamed the same thing. At last I got out of bed and wrote the Story I had dreamed."

It was "The Woman of Knockaloe," afterwards called "Barbed Wire," a story attacking war.

"Why don't you become a Roman Catholic?" said Cardinal Merry del Val to Hall Caine once.

"I am afraid you could not have two Popes," replied Sir Hall.

In a Jesuit monastery in Jerusalem, years later, the old Abbot, who had spent forty years Studying the Story of Christ upon the spot, asked Sir Hall to tea. It was the first tea they had ever had, and almost the first gueSt. For two hours, with bemazed monks sitting around, the two sat arguing Christ from **the** Catholic and Protestant points of view.

On the day he was seventy years old, Hall Caine told me how, when, as a youth of fifteen, he was looking over some

SIR HALL CAINE

land for his master, an architect and surveyor, a tall, slim man, wearing a top-hat and Stock, came and spoke to him. It was the great Gladstone, the land's owner. Two years afterwards Gladstone asked young Caine to become his Steward. Instead, he came to London, lived with the pre-Raphaelites, sat as their model and met all the great writers.

Hall Caine is belittled by people who do not know him. I, who have spent hours arguing with him in the bed-room in which he works, know that it was his lofty aspiration and deadly earnestness that raised the popular novel to its highest height and swayed millions for good.

Yet, although the Governor of the Isle of Man can leave a public concert at Douglas unnoticed by 10,000 people waiting to cheer Hall Caine, and people passing Greeba Castle have even stolen the notice, which he had painted, asking them not to invade his garden, the General Post Office, apparently, has not heard of him.

He showed me, not long ago, a large brown envelope, containing a tribute sent him from the people of Scandinavia, and addressed to "Sir Hall Caine, the greatest man in England."

The postman had written in the corner, "Not known," and someone else had added, "Try Sir Charles Nail-Cain, Wargrave, Berks."

SIR THOMAS LIPTON

MILLIONAIRE WHO KEEPS A TIP

ALTHOUGH Sir Thomas Lipton Started life by sleeping under the counter of a grocer's shop in Glasgow and lived to refuse a peerage, he remains A. the most kindly of friends. He has usually talked to me, not of his triumphs in business, but of such memories as the fact that, when he first landed in New York, he went Steerage and obtained free lodgings for himself by bargaining with the proprietor that, if he persuaded a dozen immigrants to board there, he could do so for nothing.

He has gone on to boast that, when next he arrived in New York, he was king of the city. The police boat met him with all the reporters on board, and every siren in the harbour screeched a welcome. He had then gone with the " Shamrock," and was the most popular Britisher in America.

He has told me, too, of how, because, when he is on board a liner, he always wears a yachting cap, an old lady once mistook him for the deck Steward, asked him to get her a chair, and then gave him a shilling. He produced the shilling to show me, more proud of it than he was of Lipton's tea.

Lord Dewar calls him " Tea Tom " and he calls Lord Dewar " Whisky Tom." When I have lunched with the two of them, they have delighted to relate Stories about Scotch meanness with great joy. I believe they make them up.

The name of Lipton's house at Finchley rhymes with sausage, and they say that when you are going to call, he gets out your photograph and puts it on his Study table. I must send him mine, to see.

I hope he never wins the America Cup, for then we should have the next race over here. A yacht race is the most boring thing in the world, only the yacht knows which has won.

JOHN GALSWORTHY

AUTHOR WHO SNEERED AT A KNIGHTHOOD

“ **W**HAT Youth wants ' should make a good feature," I once said to an editor. " I will go out and find what these young men are thinking. I will Start with Noel Coward."

I asked Noel to lunch, but, although I tried to get something out of him, he did not seem to have any ideas at all.

" I am Studying Stage technique," was all he said.

Since then, I have seen " Sirocco."

So, seeing John Galsworthy across the restaurant, I left Noel and joined a man whom I regard as one of the greatest living Englishmen, a man who is a projection of all the finest English qualities, a man with a brain and a heart and a soul and a courage.

" The Forsyte Saga," which was published in one volume for 7s. 6d. in the author's own lifetime, was one of the noblest literary achievements in the history of our race.

Still I did not like his play, " The Show," in which he criticised the Press.

" The next time you want to attack sensational journalism," I said, " I do wish you would ask me for some fads. It is much worse than you wrote. You are too kind-hearted to know anything about it."

Galsworthy looked at me, wonderingly, while I told him a few truths. Little did he know that, in my pocket, all the time, was the plot of his next play, " Escape," which they were rehearsing at the Ambassadors across the road, keeping the plot a dead secret from all the world.

I am afraid, the next morning, when I printed the secret plot in full on the front page of a morning newspaper, Galsworthy, for a minute, must have agreed with me.

" There was a deuce of a row in the theatre to-day," said

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Leon M. Lion, who was rehearsing "Escape," next morning. "We stopped the rehearsals and cross-examined everybody, even a charwoman, to try and find who had blown the gaff."

He need not have worried. No confidence was betrayed. Merely by an accident, I had called into the office of another manager, who had said, "By the way, Swaff, here's Galsworthy's play, if you would like to read it."

It had been lent to him—and forgotten!

One day, during the War, Sir William Sutherland, who was Lloyd George's drum-banger, boasted that he had got one really respectable name in the Honours List.

"Galsworthy is a knight," he said. "That'll make the list look fine."

The next day, Galsworthy's name was in the Honours List. A few hours later, Galsworthy said he wouldn't have the knighthood at any price.

WINSTON CHURCHILL

I SHALL NOT TRUST HIM WITH MY NEXT WAR

I WAS brought up where they did not think much of politicians—at Carmelite House, where Northcliffe taught so-called Statesmen that their speeches were usually worth only a few lines. He treated them rough.

One afternoon, when I called at Northcliffe's house during the War, I was greeted by a new maid.

"Are you Mr. Hannen Swaffer, or Mr. Winston Churchill?" she demanded.

"Why?" I asked, astounded.

"Because his lordship said that Mr. Swaffer was to be shown Straight up to his bed-room," she replied, "but Mr. Churchill was to wait."

When I asked Northcliffe the reason for this extraordinary proceeding, he replied, "That's the way to treat 'em."

So far as I have seen, it is. Swollen-headed politicians get even more flattery than flapper actresses.

Churchill is a dreadful speaker to listen to, if you have any ear. They call it a "lisp." It is worse than that; it sounds like a turkey trying to say "cuckoo" without hatching the other bird's eggs.

On the night Winston's engagement was announced, I sent Collinson Owen down to see Lady Blanche Hosier, his future mother-in-law—to get the photographs. He came back with the family album and, until the day of the wedding, Lady Blanche joined the *Daily Mirror* Staff and supplied us exclusively with all the news.

One night she came in to see Ernest Buley, the night editor, to plead that she should be allowed to insert the announcement of the wedding date in the *Morning Post*. "I know you are

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to have all the news," she said, " but do please let it go in that one other paper."

Buley consented—but, even then, she came back in despair.

" They wanted to charge me for the announcement," said Lady Blanche.

She had gone in the advertisement department!

Winston does not know that Story.

I do not think I shall trust him with my next war. Still, I think a man who does not care if he is a Liberal or a Coalitionist or a Conservative, so long as he is in the Government, should make a name for himself in a world that does not know the difference. No, that is not true. Now that Snowden has been to the Hague, pre-war " Statesmanship " is exposed for ever.

MAURICE MAETERLINCK

MODEST BELGIAN WHO DID NOT "MAKE GOOD"

THE great Belgian poet is more nearly a seer than any living man except Tagore. His sublimified simplicity can find a soul even in a bee.

I met him with Otto Kahn some nine years ago, when he was the idol of New York and he sat in the centre of the Diamond Horseshoe in the Metropolitan Opera House, which was ablaze with vulgarity, while they first did "The Blue Bird" as an opera.

Maeterlinck looked bored through the dreary music for four hours. Then, a Strange contrast to the swank, he came out with his second wife, a small, unobtrusive creature in what looked like imitation fur.

New York went mad about Maeterlinck that week. That night's party at the Hotel Vanderbilt was the sensation of the season.

Otto Kahn introduced the two of us amid the Opera crush.

"Why do they make such a fuss of me?" said Maeterlinck. "I am only a simple peasant."

A few days after, Sam Goldwyn saw him off to Hollywood to make pictures.

"Don't worry, Mr. Maeterlinck," he said. "I know you'll make good."

For weeks, in Hollywood, they waited for Maeterlinck's first scenario with bated breath. Then, one Studio manager screamed, "Gee! His leading man is a bee!"

"Show him the twelve best films of the year," telegraphed Goldwyn from New York.

For a week, Maeterlinck endured two films a day. Then he tried again. It was one long bed-room scene!

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" We wanted love, not adultery! " they screamed.

" After seeing your films," replied Maeterlinck, " I am convinced that, in America, there is no difference."

Then, like Columbus, who also was a wise man, he came back to Europe!

LORD BIRKENHEAD

A JOURNALIST WHO WRITES A LOT

I FIRST met F.E., as he will always be, on Friday, October 3rd, 1924, when Grant Morden, who owned *The People*, of which I was editor, wanted to pay him £100 a week for a year, to write articles I did not value. As one-tenth of the profits, if any, were to be mine, I disliked paying Lord Birkenhead £10 a week out of my own pocket, for something I did not want.

However, when they proved I should not lose by it, I met the great man, who asked me for his first subject.

"Write about the fall of the Socialist Government," I said.

"What on earth do you mean?" he asked.

"The Government falls next Wednesday night," I replied.

"Nonsense," was his astounded answer.

"I tell you the Government falls next Wednesday night," I replied. "At about a quarter past eleven, there will be no Government."

"Why do you say such Stupid things to me?" said Birkenhead.

"Ben Spoor, who is the Government Whip, has just told us," was my insistence.

"But I have just left L.G.," protested Birkenhead. "He did not tell me."

"Lloyd George does not know," I replied. "Jim Thomas is going to make a speech that will make the House throw Ramsay out, whether it wants to or not."

Even then, Birkenhead would not believe me, and he would not write about it. So I did—although no one believed it.

Next Wednesday night, I went down to the House of Commons to see the Government fall. No one believed my Story—not even the policeman at the door.

For three hours I was disbelieved. Then Jim Thomas

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made his speech, and at 11.15 the Socialist Government was no more.

For all time, then, I gave up belief in the infallibility of great Statesmen. Not that I ever believed in them ; reporters never do.

Still, I like Lord Birkenhead. He is so wonderfully indiscreet. His views on his colleagues would illuminate the moon. He once told a Scottish literary society that he had read the works of Scott, all through, nine times! They cheered!

What he thinks of Baldwin, passes human misunderstanding. What he does not think of Joynson-Hicks, could go in the New Prayer Book. Yet even the village Smithy Stands.

I first dared to enter his proximity at a luncheon of the S.J. Club, when Solly Joel and James White and some bookmakers entertained Colonel Robert Loraine, then freshly wounded from the War.

" In the old days, heroes used to be enshrined on clouds of glory," orated F.E. " In these days, they are wrapped in mists of——"

" Censorship," I interjected, remembering F.E.'s early activities during that same War. That silly joke of mine ruined his speech.

Then, at an O.P. dinner once, when he was Lord Chancellor, he suggested from the chair that the House of Lords debates could be enlivened with music.

MacDonald Rendle, in reply, suggested the song, " The Galloping Major."

Galloper Smith then said he would not go to the O.P.s Club again. He did—after Rendle died.

Oh, yes, and now Birkenhead is a journalist. He gets £200 an article ! And he is a company director.

Statesmanship has dropped him overboard.

LORD RIDDELL

THE AMBASSADOR OF THE PRESS

GEORGE RIDDELL, once a solicitor, now a millionaire peer, has the keenest wit of any newspaper proprietor I know. "I know why you call it the *News of the World*" I said to him once. "It's because it consists entirely of the news of the flesh and the devil."

"I'm not all *News of the World*" he replied. "I also own *Country Life*, and one of the things that worries me is : which will last longer ? I mean, that although the paper we print *Country Life* on costs very much more than the paper we use for the *News of the World*, nobody knows which will perish first.

"They are both filed away every week in the British Museum, for future historians to see, but no one knows which one will rot before the other. I often think that if the paper on which *Country Life* is printed survives longest, posterity will say, 'What wonderful houses they lived in/ while, if *Country Life* perishes and the *News of the World* remains, they may say, 'Why, in those days it wasn't safe to walk down the Strand/ "

Lord Riddell is the best ambassador the Press ever had. In Paris he was the soul of tad, and in Washington he charmed everybody. He has no Side, and, if he writes for his own papers—well, I don't suppose he pays himself, and, anyway, they all do it, now.

His friendship with Lloyd George, which lasted a long time, was a puzzle to many. I solved the problem once, when proposing his health at the Royal Automobile Club.

"The P. M. has to keep on the right side of Lord Riddell," I said, "so that, when the first edition of the *News of the World*

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comes out on Thursday night, he knows he'll take him down an early copy."

Most millionaires work in elaborate rooms with a score of secretaries. Riddell's office in Bouverie Street is almost the smallest I know, a mere cubby-hole, with portraits of Statesmen in it, and that is all. There he writes what he thinks of our great literary folk—and criticises last Sunday's *News of the World*.

"I've have often seen you running down Bouverie Street with your bright little paragraphs," he said, friendly, as usual, to a girl reporter at Sir William Sutherland's wedding.

The girl looked at him.

"I'm on the Press, you know," explained Riddell.

"What paper are you on?" asked the girl.

"*News of the World*," replied Lord Riddell.

"Oh, that dreadful paper that is all about divorces," said the girl. "We won't have it in our house."

She did not ask who he was. A little later, at the wedding breakfast, she blushed when she saw him sitting next to Lloyd George, laughing as he told the Prime Minister the Story.

SINCLAIR LEWIS

SEIZING THE MAIN CHANCE IN MAIN STREET

AN American of forty-five, whom they always call "Red" because of his hair and because of his politics. Although his "Babbitt" is a perfect expression of his hatred of the things that have made his country small—mail-order minds, cash register consciences, Standardised Staminas—he does not know his luck. He began life as a journalist, and then refused to write for the *Saturday Evening Poll*. The Irvin Cobbs and the Will Irvins sneered—but he won through,

Coming to England, he grew as Red as his hair, and went canvassing for Bertrand Russell with Sybil Thorndike in Chelsea, where they all three lived.

When they called at Chelsea Hospital, the pensioner at the gate demanded their business.

"It's about the General Election," said Sinclair.

"We don't worry about things like that here," said the pensioner, shutting the gate. I suppose there are no grumbles, nowadays, about the pensions for the Crimean War. Then Sinclair began to understand England. Once when he did not was when, after he and I had been dining with Foster Fraser at the Constitutional Club, he shocked the members by saying, "Swaff and I are Socialists." Although I was a Conservative editor at the time, he did not notice that I was kicking his foot. We went on to a fancy-dress party in the Bloomsbury flat of a leading Communist. London is a Strange place.

> Sinclair's first wife went to Reno for her divorce. Fancy giving him Babbitised freedom I* I defy anyone to talk long to Sinclair Lewis. He speaks in jerks, and, frankly, I do not

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believe he knows what he says. He writes it much more clearly—at a dollar a word.

When Sinclair remarried, I sent him Roy Calvert's book, "Capital Punishment," as a present.

In it, I wrote : " Marriage is a capital punishment, except that both people lose their heads."

Sinclair will never lose his. He knows how to stick it on again.

AL JOLSON

STAR WHO WAS AFRAID OF LONDON

THE Story of most of us would make a film. How many of us, though, could play the leading part himself, and, in doing so, revolutionise the screen? That is what Al Jolson did.

Jewish audiences sit and cry over "The Jazz Singer" because, in some way or another, it is the Story of half of them. They have nearly all broken the Law, nowadays. So many have quarrelled with their families, in consequence, and then made it up again. Jewry is broadening, becoming liberalised. The older generation cannot understand.

Asa Yoelson was born in a Russian ghetto, the son of a cantor, whose family, five in a line, had been singers in the synagogue. So it was the old man's dream that his boy, in turn, would follow him and sing the holy songs on the day of high festival and chant the lamentations in the times of mourning.

Then, when the family sought liberty overseas and got to Washington, the old man found, to his disgust, that his son was learning ragtime songs, sinful, corrupting melodies.

"One day I shall go on the Stage," said young Asa.

There fell upon his head a father's threats, mixed with the haunting fears of a loving parent who did not fathom the mysteries of a new land. Still, there was no keeping Al Jolson, as he was known by then, away from the foodights. He ran away from school and joined a circus. All over the States he toured, learning his job, dreaming always of Stardom and the Stars, sleeping under them sometimes, though. Then, as the years passed, he found himself back near his father's home, singing in a cafe.

One night old Yoelson Stamped in indignantly and ordered his son to leave the Stage. In the film, "The Jazz Singer," the

son is called home to sing Kol Nidre in the synagogue because his father is dying. Although that part is not true, all the rest is his real life story.

"The Jazz Singer" was the first talkie play. It made history. It made fortunes. When they saw it all the film millionaires wondered. Was the silent screen doomed? With Jolson in the screen version, it beat the taxings of "The Jazz Singer" as a play, with George Jessel acting in the Jolson part. Talkie stocks soared to unheard-of heights. Screen stars learned to talk. Then it was shown in London—and Jolson came here with his bride.

My reunion with him was a wonderful coincidence. I saw him standing in the foyer of the Savoy Hotel in exactly the same place where, three years before, when he had come here after his failure in a silent picture made by D. W. Griffith, he told me he was afraid to face a London audience. Life looked black then.

"All my life I have dreamed of appearing in London," he said, "and now I am afraid. I dare not go on, even under some other name, and wearing a disguise."

This second time I saw him, however, he had been on the stage the night before, and done what I always told him he would do—scored a great success. London had no longer any terrors. His young bride smiled, in memory.

I wonder why it is that Jews are so suited for crooning melodies. It is something born of their years of persecution? Do they feel more than we do? Will it disappear when they are used to complete freedom?

I remembered, when I saw "The Jazz Singer" how the old man Darewski used to be cross with his son Herman when he began to write for the music-halls. He, too, had been a cantor.

The time came when all four Darewski boys were in the theatre business.

Still, Jolson is more than a syncopated singer. He blacks up his face and goes on, and sings all about his mammy and a small child with dirty hands and a dirty face. He can keep it up by the hour, holding vast audiences almost mesmerised.

He has earned often as much as £3,000 in a week, and yet

AL JOLSON

he remains very quiet about it all, the best fellow in the Studio, the friend of the Stage hands, just a big boy around.

"Do you know, even now, my hand is shaking while I am talking to you?" he said to me, not long ago. "I feel as if my heart was right over the other side of the hall, I am so nervous. When I stood on the Piccadilly Stage I was thinking of you half the time. You once wrote a paragraph about my nervousness in London, and then you prophesied how, one night, I would take courage and go on. Your reprinted writings followed me everywhere I went. I have seen your Statements in print a hundred times. Now, well, I have done it . . . but I am nervous Still."

The Story of this poor Jewish boy is the Story of myriads of his co-religionists. They have gone from the ghettos of Europe and found a new world. By sheer hard work they have made good, thousands of them. Some of them marry Christians. Many eat bacon. They break away more and more from old habits. They understand the outside world more and more, and it, too, finds every year, more space for them.

Yet, once a year, on Yom Kippur, nearly every Jew is called right back. Moses Still speaks from the desert, and they all hear. They sentimentalise about it, but they are in thrall.

Two or three generations will pass and then, for all we know, their inter-marrying may have changed civilisation. They are the halfways.

I know hundreds of them. ,

PAUL ROBESON

THE NEGRO WHO CONQUERED LONDON

PAUL ROBESON came to England an unknown actor, touring with Mrs. Pat Campbell in "Voodoo," which never reached London. He came back, a year or two afterwards, in "The Emperor Jones," because Charles Gilpin who created the part, would not Cross the sea. Eugene O'Neill's play was overrated, but Robeson scored a great personal success as the jungle-haunted savage whom the self-appointed black emperor proves to be V; hen Stripped of his splendour and glory in the forest, and left alone with his fears.

Sometimes, at night, Robeson was rowed to a yacht in the middle of the Thames, and there he would croon negro melodies to a few friends, the rhythm beating the waters.

Robeson first discovered that he had a voice when, in the house of white friends in New York, he was first asked to Stand up and entertain.

"I can't do anything," he replied.

Then, almost forced to his feet, he began to sing a spiritual he had learned at his father's knee.

"Much to my surprise," Robeson told me, "the company began to cry."

His father had been a slave in North Carolina, and when afterwards, a Methodist preacher holding revivalist meetings, he used to sing the songs of the slave days, the boy Paul learned them and carried them about, sunk deep in his heart. Out of "hem now he is making a great international reputation.

"Nobody taught me to aft," he said, "except that Eugene O'Neill encouraged me, and Isadora Duncan's brother, Augustin. Nobody taught me to sing, except that, after I had been singing for some time, I learned a few tricks to save my voice. I cannot understand it. I suppose it is born

PAUL ROBESON

in me, deep down somewhere in my nature. I must be a natural singer."

Paul Robeson is one of those black people who have recently come to England, primarily to earn a living, of course, but, in spite of this, as unsent missionaries of the idea that the children of slaves imported by brutal men into the United States have a right to work out for themselves a new economic freedom.

He is a man of culture. At his University of Rutgers he became a member of an honourable fraternity, one of those Strange mysterious things with Greek letters for a name. And so great an athlete was he that he was the only black member of the All-America football team. He was singled out as the finest player in the team, and was chosen again the following year, the only negro in America's greatest team.

In spite of "Nigger Heaven" and the new literature which deals with the position of the black man in America, Robeson finds difficulties in the country of his birth. Over here colour does not matter so much. We are used to Indian maharajahs, and Egyptian law Students' and black youths who come here from the West Coast to learn medicine.

They brought him here to sing in "Show Boat," and he was its success. His one song, "O! an River," was the triumph of the evening, and, such was his artistry, that even when he stood at the back of the Stage, whittling a piece of wood, it gave a tone to the picture. People watched him fascinated, even when he stood still. Now he can fill Drury Lane all alone with his spirituals, and, although he is only thirty, earn £700 a week or more, when he likes.

Recently, Robeson has shouldered blame. He signed a contract to appear in a cheap revue, and then found himself in England, unable to go home. Equity threatened him with suspension unless he went back.

"I must work out my career as an artist," he told me. "I will pay whatever damages Equity thinks I should. My own black people blame me for letting them down. They do not understand. I am an artist. I cannot sing blues. It was all a mistake."

He sat in my Study, the other week, explaining it all, a Greek god in physique, a gentleman in speech, a scholar in

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culture, charming in his restraint. I felt, somehow, though, that unseen chains were still upon his wrists. He seemed to hold them as though they were used to submission. Perhaps it was only the parts he has to play

He mixes with white culture here. Yet, like thousands more of his kind, he carries everywhere with him the colour that many folk consider shame. It is something that can never be washed away. It splits races. It makes people say awful things. It is a perpetual reminder to us white people of the wrongs we have committed.

Somewhere, deep in their hearts, some of these black people hope for things that frighten us. They have rights as well as we.

What is there waiting in the future? One day they will want Africa again!

LORD DAVIDSON OF LAMBETH

THE HANDS THAT HELD THE CHURCH TOGETHER

I RAISED my hat, in the Central Lobby of the House of Commons a few months ago, to an old man who came in, wandering around as though he once knew where he was, but had nearly forgotten.

"Who is that?" said a Labour M.P., now a Cabinet Minister, when the elderly figure bowed back.

"That is Lord Davidson of Lambeth," I replied.

"Good Heavens I " he said. "I thought it was George Robey."

It was those eyebrows. They are longer than Robey's, and much more grey. They are eyebrows that you would notice anywhere. They grow out of a rock, like seaweed.

It is extraordinary that Randall Davidson had to reach the age of nearly eighty before he found that universal respect which he had earned for so long, but which millions of people had never felt for him.

When you are a young Scots clergyman, when you marry your archbishop's daughter, when you become the favourite preacher of Queen Victoria and Chaplain of the Chapel Royal, Windsor, and when, shortly afterwards, you become Primate of All England, you are asking for criticism. People **remember** all those Scotsman in a hurry !

I can understand, because I used to consider Dr. Davidson an artful statesman. Yes, I thought the Statesmanship was artfulness. Then, as the years passed, I began to realise, and, soon after, so did the entire country, that only great honesty of character could have triumphed over the difficulties in which the Primate found himself at the end of the last century. They were difficulties which were to grow with his years.

A few months back, the Primate pointed to his white hairs.

"When the snow melts," he said, "there will be much mud."

He thought that, when he died, the war would begin. He saw Disestablishment a vital issue before the country, the High Anglicans and the Low Churchmen at daggers drawn, and he could not see Standing between them anyone with his own Strength of mind and his own wealth of experience.

It has not come quite as he thought. The Prayer Book, to revise which he spent many years, has been thrown out. The resultant clash has been postponed. Besides, Disestablishment is now a thing that most Churchmen would face without any qualms at all.

So, an octogenarian, he has retired, to grace Still the House of Lords with a layman's title, and leaving as his successor a man worthy to follow in the line, a Primate with Labour sympathies, a nobleness of speech, a Mont Blanc peak, a bedside manner, and a perfect voice.

The old Archbishop wept when the House of Commons threw out his beloved Prayer Book. It was a scene pregnant with tragedy. They led him away. Half a lifetime had been wasted.

During the years that Randall Davidson had kept the Church together he had forgotten one thing—that England is, at heart, a Protestant country, one in which Nonconformists and Jews and Roman Catholics all have an equal right to decide on matters which concern the Church in relation to the State. He saw only the Church. He forgot the nation.

Joynson-Hicks beat him. A speech by Rosslyn Mitchell was the final blow.

Yes, even the Primate who had crowned King George and married the Duke of York, who had been for years the spiritual guide to monarchs and sat on Augustine's throne, had to learn that the Church cannot have both privilege and freedom.

"Everyone should see this play," he said to me, when the curtain fell on "The Enemy." "It will help people to understand the new problems of peace."

Alas, "The Enemy" ran for only four weeks!

No one takes much notice of parsons in England. -

LESLIE HENSON

THE DROLL WITH THE BATEMAN FACE

WHEN you are given an H. M. Bateman face and a Heath Robinson brain, you can't help it, I suppose. You survive everything. The audience rocks with laughter whenever you appear. In private life, everyone says : " Isn't he funny ? " Royal princes go sometimes to your parties.

Even when there is a war on, they argue violently as to whether you ought to be in the Army or on the Stage, discussing whether you are more use driving a motor lorry than paying big Income Tax, and then, even when you join up, they make you sing to soldiers in France instead of soldiers at home.

It must be Leslie's face. It cannot be the life he leads.

When I called him up the other day he groaned that he had to make records in the morning, rehearse a new play in the afternoon, and then aft in another at night. The next morning he was in the bath, and then, a minute later, he had hopped off to a conference about a play.

Life cannot be as funny as all that.

Leslie, after a wedding at St. George's, Hanover Square, has been in the Divorce Court, and married again. He has made a fortune out of " Tons of Money," the play, after lots of others turned it down, and owned a half share in Tons of Money, the horse, which lost thousands by being left in the Lincoln.

Jimmy White told every man, woman, and child in the country, " to put their shirts on it." Leslie went to Lincoln to " lead it in." What a game I

He has spent weeks in a theatre where the other leading comedian, equally well-known, wasn't speaking to him off the Stage. He has had newspaper arguments with an actress

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who left a play of his suddenly, and then made it up charmingly. He has tried in vain to make actors and actresses send each other first-night "tele-wishes," for charity, instead of all those silly first-night telegrams they waste. He is the life and soul of every theatrical party. They are dreadful if he doesn't go. Yet he must have a devil of a time.

Perhaps his dear old mother understands. I met her one night at supper after one of Leslie's triumphs, white-haired and sweet, a simple, dear, old thing, so obviously proud of her clever son.

When I once saw in the *Meat Trades Journal* a big advertisement, "Henson's Lily-White Tripe," I reflected that after all the basis of the harlequinade is not only a red-hot poker, but sausages. Perhaps all comedy is really tripe.

Leslie, I hope, will run that Smithfield business one day. I have seen him funny in everything except an apron. He is the greatest droll in the English theatre, funnier than Grock, the Swiss clown, more personally inventive than any other comedian, the best comic for any other comic to work with, for he often hands him the business ungrudgingly, a good fellow, excitable, jumpy, all over the place, and yet a man who sticks to his job.

He is the only man who has made the Winter Garden pay. He drives the winter out. No, he does not forget his old friends, like so many of the actors who think themselves in Society. He was a pierrot with Louis Rihll's concert party at Bath when he started, four years before the War, and, when fortune came to him, he financed a London show for his old friend. It was not successful, but it proved Leslie's good nature.

When he was getting £4 a week from George Dance on tour, he asked for £4 10s. They wouldn't give it to him. In "Funny Face," Butt paid him £500!

I first remember Leslie in "To-night's the Night," in which, after he had played a small part in New York, he stepped into a leading role when it came back to the Gaiety. It was his eyes that did it. They look like a cod's, sticking out. When Leslie purses his mouth, his whole face becomes a fish. Even without his legs, his grimaces would be a pantomime. He can hold the Stage all alone longer than any

LESLIE HENSON

comedian except George Robey, and, at rehearsal, when he is producing for someone else, he invents gags for other people with the same ease that they suddenly burst upon his brain when he is driving along the Street.

I had a row with Leslie once, over some trivial thing—one of those rows, I mean, where two people agree not to speak. Then one day news came that Alfred Lester was dead. Poor Alfred had seen a bull-fight in Seville, while my brother waited outside for him, refusing to go in, and cursing everything in Spain. Overcome by the cruelty to the horses, Alfred, after hiding his face in his hands, had rushed out, crying: "We must leave this damned city." They went to Madrid by night in a crowded train, in their haste to leave the scene of slaughter. Poor Alfred caught cold and died.

I saw Leslie in *Ciro's* just after the news cast theatreland into gloom.

"We don't want to quarrel on a dreadful day like this," said Leslie.

That was the end of it.

During the middle of the general Strike, Leslie came up to tell me that he had just seen a lorry passing the Winter Garden Theatre bearing a label "Food Only." Its only cargo, he said, was an enormous Stack of barrels of beer.

Only the real comedians see things like that, although, of course, they are always there.

Leslie is a diplomat at times.

"Is it true, after the first night of 'Funny Face,' Alfred Butt did not ask you to his party?" I asked.

"I asked him to mine," hedged Leslie.

I was not asked to either.

THE BISHOP OF BIRMINGHAM

THE BRAVE MAN THEY CALL A HERETIC

EDWARD BARNES was a poor boy who sang in a small church in Birmingham. He went back to the Midland City as Bishop, following, in turn, the urbane Russell Wakefield, a Broad Churchman, and Charles Gore, the Anglo-Catholic saint, ascetic, and founder of the see, which he endowed with his savings when Bishop of Worcester.

Barnes was sent to quell the Anglo-Catholics, who hated him as a Churchman, whatever their opinion may have been of him as a man. Barnes reduced the Anglo-Catholics to an impotence of fury, and he was a rock on which Protestantism could lean, when it rested for support between its attacks on the new Prayer Book and its Romish tendencies.

Yet—and there is often a Strangely human reason for most decisions that affect grave issues—it was the death of his father-in-law, I believe, that made Dr. Barnes leave the shelter of the Abbey cloisters for the rough-and-tumble of the fight outside. Westminster Abbey was his natural home. It had a pulpit where there was freedom of expression. It embodied the tradition which an ordered mind like that of Edward Barnes respects, and it had a quiet peacefulness, in which his Studies could go on undisturbed.

There was no room for the mother-in-law in the small space of his cloistered home. So Barnes went to Birmingham instead; then, a few weeks later, the old lady died. The sacrifice had been made in vain. The Church, though, has benefited, whatever Barnes may have lost.

"Barnes is no theologian," say his critics, when his calmness of mien is disturbed for a time by the need for some frank utterance. That he may not be. I once described the difference between a fool and a theologian as being that "A

THE BISHOP OF BIRMINGHAM

fool knows nothing about anything and a theologian everything about nothing."

I am among the critics of Barnes in the sense that, with my personal experience of psychic powers, I have listened, almost with ill-suppressed annoyance, in the Abbey, when I have heard him dismiss the claims of spiritual healing. For the same reason, I have heard, with cynicism, his exposure of so-called miracles, and listened, disturbedly, while his acid words have eaten away, speck by speck, seemingly the rock on which Holy Writ Stands. I adore, though, his courage of speech. Although I have only met him for a few minutes, once or twice, there is no man in England for whom I have a higher regard.

Many of the other critics of Barnes amuse me. I have sat immediately under him, in the Abbey, watching the faces of old men and older women, white with anger, while they have heard his words. I have walked out from the Abbey, hearing such phrases as, "How dare he say things like that?"

Thousands of Churchmen hate him with an intense bitterness. They have interrupted one of his sermons in St. Paul's. They have written threatening letters to an editor who used to print his sermons weekly. They have even made me the victim of their insulting correspondence, when I have written of him with respect.

"The new Socialist Government will bring about neither the millennium nor a revolution," he said, on the Sunday before Ramsay Macdonald became England's first Socialist Prime Minister. . . "In the hours of crisis, England has often looked to the plain, simple people. They are the Stock from whom Cromwell came."

"There is no historical justification for the idea of a Palm Sunday," I heard him say once in the Abbey. "There may have been a Palm Wednesday, or even a Palm Thursday, but Palm Sunday could never have been." And he went on to describe the passing of Christ through Jerusalem seated on an ass, while the crowds shouted "Hosanna!" as little more than a poetic Story.

"There were Roman ordinances in force in Jerusalem to prevent the assembling of crowds, similar to those by-laws in existence in London which prevent meetings in Trafalgar

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

Square while Parliament is sitting. The sight of a Jew riding past on a donkey would excite neither derision nor an outburst of cheers.

"The Roman soldiery would not have been called upon to deal with the disturbance, had there been an outbreak. There were stalwart men in charge of the slaughter of the larger animals for sacrifice in the Temple who could have kept any crowd in order."

Although these words come from my memory—I did not write them down—I remember that the Bible Stories used to trickle away like that, while I heard.

Then, one day, the Story of Exodus disappeared. Barnes would have none of the parting of the Red Sea, the water rolling back, nor a one-day crossing. He pointed out how the Israelites had obviously been escaping from Egypt for many years, a few at a time; how the Bible ignored the many who went West, and became lost in the tribes around them.

Yes, Barnes is a Modernist. Although I have watched, sometimes, while the congregation was reciting the Creed, I do not remember seeing his lips move all through. I do not complain, because, although I call myself a Christian, I cannot recite the Creed.

Frankness like that of Barnes is much needed in these days. If your creed will not stand it, it should disappear. If, when you have heard it, you still believe it all, it has stood a needed test.

Besides, these Abbey preachers frequently annoy people. Mrs. Lionel Harris, who is a member of the Westminster City Council, told me recently that when she and her fellow-councillors went to the Abbey at some official service, Canon Donaldson almost insulted them by reminding them of the slums in Westminster. Still, I have heard Barnes talk about these self-same slums from the self-same pulpit. Unless the Church speaks out, its tongue will rot.

It was L.G. who gave him his Westminster canonry.

"Go and hear a man called Barnes who preaches in the Temple Church," he said, I believe to Sir John Davies, when a canonry fell vacant.

"He attacked you bitterly," reported the emissary.

"That's the man for them," said L.G.

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So Barnes' troubles began.

Barnes was idolised at the Abbey. The choirboys liked him, and all the vergers and the Staff. His great height towered over all the other canons, except Storr, little Donaldson looking almost funny beside them. I have seen them march, in glad procession, on festal days, wearing the old robes, recently found, robes that date back centuries in their rustiness. There is often pomp.

Sometimes, among the silly Statues, I hear some truth. Then you ought to see the faces of the old men and the faces of the older women I

JACKIE COOGAN

THE POOR-LITTLE-VERY-RICH BOY

ONE of the jokes of life is keeping Jackie Coogan poor. When at the age of thirteen, you have made £800,000, and you mustn't know, it is a devil of a job.

I hand it to Mrs. Coogan. For nine years she has had the care of Jackie, during the time when he was the most famous child in all the world. Yet she handles him just like an ordinary mother, and he does everything she tells him.

" Say ' Pardon me, " says Mrs. Coogan.

" Pardon me," says the four-million-dollar kid.

They were quite unknown people—the Coogans—nine years ago. Jack Coogan was a trouper, a legmania dancer, always on tour. He was with Annette Kellerman in a revue in Los Angeles when the Big Break came. There was an argument with Annette and a woman dancer, one of the usual " billing matter " kind. The dancer refused to go on. Jackie was doing an imitation of David Warfield in those days, merely when people called at high-ball time.

" Let Jackie go on to-night," they said. He did.

Charlie Chaplin, by a wonderful chance, was in front that night.

" That's the boy I want for ' The Kid, ' " he said.

Nine other boys had been up on the lot for over a week, being tried. Jackie went along the next day. That was the end of it. He was the ideal child actor.

Chaplin was passing through the troubles of his first divorce case. He was moody, irritable, sulky, worried to death. Little Jackie was the only one who could handle him. When Charlie would sit all alone, Staring at the ground, cross as a bear, Jackie would snuggle up on his lap. Then Charlie gave in—

JACKIE COOGAN

and smiled. For hours they would dig corals. "That boy saved my reason," Charlie has often said.

You wouldn't believe it, but, although I saw Jackie when he had just come from Savile Row, ordering some dress clothes, Jackie is like that to-day.

They have brought him up like a poor boy, except that he lives in luxury. They give him twenty-five cents for a film idea worth thousands of dollars; then they take his money from him by "fining" him. His vaudeville act earns £600 a week, out of which Jackie gets £3 for himself. Then they fine him, dollar by dollar, on some foolish pretext until it has all gone. Once, when he had saved £20, they persuaded him to put in into a fake company, so that he "lost" it all. Mrs. Coogan put it in the bank.

Jackie, the perfect actor, can cry to order.

"I have seen film Stars on the lot trying to cry for hours," said Mrs. Coogan. "I have seen the director kneeling down in front of them for two days, telling them all the mournful Stories he can think of, and saying: 'Cry, for Heaven's sake, cry, just one drop!' Jackie just turns his back, and when he looks at you again, the tears are falling naturally one at a time."

Yet this wonderful-child plays with trains, just like a boy of eight. Their rails cover a whole ball-room floor. He has the simplicity of a child of ten. No one knows him in the Street nowadays, for they have cut his hair.

You go to tea with the Coogans in a swell apartment. Every luxury is theirs. Coogan senior talks of the four Rolls-Royce cars he has had. "I have two now," he says. He speaks of the ranch he owns and the swell gun his wife bought him last Christmas—and you know that every penny came out of that small child's brain.

"Sometimes I wake up and wonder if it isn't all a dream," says the father. "I dread for a minute, lest I have to go on the road again."

They have invested the money, of course, and it is Jackie's. But he doesn't know what money means. So they give him a dollar at a time, and, if someone presents him with a five-shilling piece, because he hasn't seen one before, he wants to go outside and buy another train.

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

" Do you think I could buy one for fifty pounds ? " he says. He does not know what £50 is, or, when he receives 125,000 francs a week in Paris, how much it is in "real money."

I hope he will never have to find out.

EDGAR WALLACE

THE DICTAPHONE THAT CHURNS OUT NOVELS

IT has been called "The Street of Adventure," but, believe me, it is anything but that. Journalism is a disease which you cannot cure.

Edgar Wallace, Philip Gibbs, and I were all three young men on the *Daily Mail* together, a quarter of a century ago. Here we Still are. Gibbs has been knighted, become a high-fee lecturer, turned Catholic, made a name as a novelist, and done real Christian service for world tolerance. Yet there he is, back every time they call.

"You cannot leave Fleet Street," he said to me the other day, when he looked in with an article, probably the worst-paid thing he had done that year.

As for Edgar Wallace, he turns out more Stories than any other man in England, in addition to more plays than any other man in England. No, he has no ghost. That is mere bunk. He is too vain. Yet, though you see him at every important race meeting, if you call up and say, "Edgar, will you write me a thousand words on cock-fighting?" there it is, in the office, punctual to time, and charged for, believe me, at no higher rate than if Edgar Wallace were an ordinary sort of hack.

As for me, I go to Fleet Street seven days a week. Goodness knows why! Perhaps I like to see other fellows work. I have gone to Fleet Street seven days a week for over twenty-five years. You cannot cure us.

There are scores of other men who, by using their natural qualities of business, courage, or invention, could have left Fleet Street, and made a fortune. They Still Stick on, doing work that doesn't matter, just because the wheels go round, and they bring more reels of paper in. Other men have become millionaires by taking advantage of all this. No

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

journalist in the country is well paid. Often, he earns twenty times his salary.

Many men I know bring in more money to their firm than any famous actor or actress who ever lived. Yet the public seldom know their names and they always die poor.

Do you know that Edgar Wallace, who was one of the best journalists who ever came into Fleet Street never earned in the Street of Ink, more than sixteen guineas a week?

Well, Wallace broke away, or, rather, it broke him off. When we were motoring through London the other week' I said, "Weren't you fired from the *Evening News* over the soap libel?"

"No," he said, and he pointed to a newspaper bill about the Royal Oak court-martial. "Every time I see that man Collard's name, I give him a cheer. When he was in that 'On-the-knee' business at Portsmouth, I made a Statement that he had been in trouble before. So they sacked me. Anybody who libels a hard-working naval officer deserves it. I was terribly sorry when this Royal Oak business turned up. Besides, I believe Collard is a fan of mine. By the way, you and I were about the only people ever fired from Carmelite House. Everybody else resigned. I am not sure that you *were* fired."

"I was fired once," I replied. "I resigned twice, except that the last time was a dead heat, perhaps."

Although Edgar Wallace began life by selling newspapers in the Streets, he had a much worse time when he was a sort of editor. Some of us do. When Captain Morrison financed the *Evening Times*, and then got sick of it and went to Africa, the Staff tried to carry it on themselves—Charles Watney as editor, Cowley as manager, Bernard Falk as news editor, and Wallace as sporting editor, leader writer, and special correspondent. He was paid £3 or £4 a week, the rest being in shares, which turned out worthless.

"I Started work every morning at four a.m.," says Wallace, when reminiscent, "never finishing before six at night. Then I Started to write Stories till bed-time. Otherwise, I should have Starved. Yet my books were bringing me in nothing. Indeed, I sold the rights of all the books at £80 apiece. So I never received a penny in royalties for any of the

EDGAR WALLACE

books published by Ward Lock, out of which they made a fortune."

Five years ago, Wallace told me he was making £4000 a year. Then the boom came. "Make it an Edgar Wallace Year,' I read in the trade papers. They did. The book-stalls were flooded with anything Wallace had ever written.

"I do not think I have ever received more than £100 for the book copyright of any Story Ward Lock published. Last year, about 2,000,000 books written by me were sold on the bookstalls. Yet I received not one penny royalty on them. So, when people talk about my enormous income, they are talking through their hats." <

Soon after the *Evening Times* failed, Wallace used to walk up and down Fleet Street. Nobody wanted him. Nobody cared. Yet I consider his pen-picture of the two Whittaker Wrights, the one in Society and the one in the dock—this was written for the *Evening News*—a masterpiece of journalism. His description of the Crippen trial was the best that was printed. Into his Story of the Sidney Street sensation he put more thrill than you have ever seen in one of his plays. When the "Titanic" sank, Wallace's account brought tears to hundreds of thousands of eyes. Yet nobody wanted him.

"I never thought I should get work again," he said. Well, about that time, De Courville was producing revues at the London Hippodrome. Edgar Wallace used to sit beside him and write sketches and suggest things. It was in that theatre he first Studied the technique of the Stage. Then he wrote a play himself. "My Lady" he called it, putting it on at the Playhouse.

"This is a cast-iron success," he said. "It contains all the elements."

It ran a week. Still, since then he has had three plays running in London at the same time, and he told me the other month, quite casually, that he was writing a drama for Paul Robeson and a Marie Tempest comedy.

Yes, the fruition of all Wallace's training has now come—his life in the Army, where he was a private in the R. A. M. C., his appearances at smoking concerts in the barrack-room, his writing a song for Arthur Roberts in his youth, his journalism in South Africa, the world scoops he got for the

HANNEN SWAPPER'S WHO'S WHO

Daily Mail over the peace news, when Kitchener put a wire fence round Africa and Wallace broke through it, and his long work in Fleet Street, the finest training ground in the world.

Now you know why he doesn't care a damn about actors and their moods—why, although the Duke of Gloucester usually goes to his supper-party after a Wallace first night, he is back in Fleet Street the next day, talking to reporters in the Press Club, more at home among the News than among the Nobs.

"He's been dead since 1880," Wallace said to me of a very well-known manager, "dead from the neck up."

"He's a provincial actor and he doesn't know it," he discovered about a middle-aged man with superior airs.

"Oh, my Heaven, have you heard him speak?" he once demanded, when a famous actor's name came up.

When these Stories get about, half the actors get angry, because each one thinks Wallace means him. Besides, I believe he does.

"Tie him up in a chair and I'll come and talk to him," he said about an actor-manager who wanted a play of his.

"I'll put the play on myself," he said, when another manager argued. So he did. Now, tired of managers making all the money, he is his own manager.

"I have made more money out of racing this year than I have made out of plays," said Edgar the other month. "I made £2500 at the three Newmarket meetings. My brief association with Robert Loraine cost me £6000."

You wouldn't believe it but, when Edgar wrote "The Four just Men," Northcliffe solemnly warned him: "Let the cobbler Stick to his last." The last was journalism. Northcliffe always liked you to feel you depended on him.

The quickest work Wallace ever did was to write 35,000 words, reviewing the War, in twenty-four hours. As no newspaper would send him to France, he used to write about it at home, for the *Birmingham Post*. He wrote 15 00,000 words for that one paper. His "Sanders of the River" Stories are literature.

Yet he is a gambler at heart. Once, when he was on the *Standard*, and broke to the wide, he borrowed a sovereign

EDGAR WALLACE

from the manager to go to Ascot, and came back with £1700. He has never seen a horse win in his own colours. They always seem to wear his wife's jacket when they come in first.

I expect Edgar will die poor. I have warned him. Yet he Still goes on making more money.

When I call to see him in Portland Place, I always see him working in a sort of glass case, smoking cigarettes through a long holder, with a dictaphone in front of him and secretaries waiting to type it down. He has another dictaphone in an office in the Haymarket in case, when passing there, he wants to write something that cannot wait.

He never thinks of his plots. They just pour into his head. He never works them out. They seem to come, he says, from outside himself.

He is blunt and honest, self-reliant and cool. He loves the Press box at Newmarket more than any other place in the world. Burglars call on him when they come out of gaol. He has a manservant on duty all night, left he wakes up at four, as he sometimes does, and wants to Start work.

He works half his life, and yet you seldom see him doing anything. He boasts he has the fastest typist in the world. Whenever I see this typist, however, he is at Newmarket with Edgar, being sent back to the rails to find out what they're backing. The man, Wallace means, I suppose, has the finest typist's job in the world.

There is only one Edgar Wallace. Thank Heaven there are not two ! The present one, when he saw " Too Much Edgar Wallace " in a headline of mine, merely went to his dictaphone and Started three more plays I

EVELYN LAYE

THE ACTRESS WHOSE NICK-NAME IS "BOO"

SIR GERALD DU MAURIER will not believe it, but Evelyn Laye's pet name is "Boo." They say I "Boo" to her, even at home. You can say anything to Evelyn I

Her father was an actor, who knew what a dreadful life it was. He had been a Stage-manager, too—yes, even with Ernest Rolls in "Topsy Turvy" at the Empire. Both fathers were in that show—Gilbert Laye and Robert Hale, the fathers of the two children who, a few years later, were to become man and wife.

"Don't go on the Stage, Evelyn," her father said. "Do anything else I"

It was in the days of "The Merry Widow," when she was a little girl in short frocks. Every girl wanted to be a Lily Elsie in those days. The time came, of course, when she was to play "The Merry Widow" at Daly's, just as Lily Elsie had done—and with Joe Coyne, too, sitting in the Stalls I That night we saw a willow dance. We heard a skylark sing. We saw charm, and grace, and sweetness, all in one. Now, she must grow personality.

Evelyn earned sixpence once, when she was a child, for toddling across the Stage every night for a week, at the bidding of W. S. Penley. Really, she ran away from home and did crowd work for the films at ten shillings a day. A small part in "Mr. Wu," a short tour in "Oh, Caesar!" a pantomime job at Portsmouth—she rose by gradual Steps. When she got to musical comedy it was easy. No one can touch her.

Her father became her manager and he managed her so well, that when he died, a year or so ago, she was earning, I suppose, £200 a week. Her weekly salary now is £250, and

EVELYN LAYE

she refused £600 a week to go to America to aft for Florenz Ziegfeld. Selwyn is now paying her more than that.

Evelyn Laye says it was the gallery that made her name. They loved her sweetness and her charm, and they told her so. " Evelyn! Evelyn! " it soon became.

She is the only English musical comedy actress who can dance and sing and aft, and who looks sweet on the top of it. Some can do three of the four. Some of them can only do one. Most of them cannot do any !

Yes, Evelyn began in " Mr. Wu " at twenty-five shillings a week on tour. She has acted twice-nightly at the Elephant and Castle; she has lived in a combined room; she has " waited outside " for a job. Success came merely because she worked.

Katie, her dresser, knows about it all. For ten years, now, she has watched Evelyn going on and up.

"Miss Laye is a good, sweet, pure girl." That is her hardened comment. She chatters it while she gets the next dress ready or tidies up. " She has taught herself. She is not like those girls who want to go into Society.

" When Miss Laye was such a success as Madame Pompadour, Lady Louis Mountbatten asked her to dinner. Perhaps she wanted her to recite something. She didn't go. She went home.

" She often goes out at the front of the theatre to escape the girls waiting outside. Miss Laye is not like Miss You Know, who gives them presents to get applause. Nor does she have them in her dressing-room, like that girl at the Blank Theatre. Miss Laye has earned her success."

I would call it Stupid loyalty, did I not share Katie's views on most things—such as managers who do not know their jobs and theatres which want rebuilding.

" I am Still learning to sing," Evelyn said to me recently. " Perhaps one day . . . Mother used to have a nice voice, you know, and she taught me first. She was Tiger Lily in ' Peter Pan.' Father was on the management side of the same show. Pauline Chase used to give me thimbles in her dressing-room, so I always wanted to play Peter myself until last year, when I saw that Forbes-Robertson girl. Then I knew I was too old."

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

Gladys Cooper did not think she was too old.

It was the matter of Winnie Melville that best proved Evelyn's quality of character. Clayton and Waller, saying that Winnie Melville could not draw any money into "Princess Charming," replaced her by Evelyn Laye, and, because I had taken Winnie's side, I was not, at first, invited to see Evelyn's debut. I went, and gave her her best notice. I had known what Clayton and Waller did not know—that Winnie and Evelyn had been calling each other on the telephone half the day, smoothing out the difficulty, afraid of offending each other. Neither suffered in popularity.

The reason is, you know, that Evelyn is just the same as she used to be. When she takes on a job, she learns it, and while most silly young actresses always want to rush along to the Savoy Grill, Evelyn will sometimes call up her "Uncle Tom"—Tom Reynolds is Mrs. Robert Hale's brother—and say, "Uncle, I've found a new fried-fish shop."

"Do you eat it on paper with the vinegar?" said Uncle Tom, once.

"Of course I do," she replied. "Otherwise, it wouldn't be real!"

She has also taken him along to eat sausages and onions at a coffee Stall.

When she met Edgar Wallace, nearly a year ago, they started to talk about Camden Town.

"I know Camden Town," said Edgar. "I used to take out the milk for Higgs's."

"Fancy that!" said Evelyn. "I used to go to buy the milk there."

Now, on her dressing-table, is a photograph of Edgar, signed for "a fellow ragamuffin." Katie's only comment is a wonder why Edgar earns more than Shakespeare. I do not think she reads either of them.

One of Evelyn's tragedies was Cleopatra. Although she looked beautiful as the proud Egyptian, no one could survive the flat-footed dialogue, altered to suit Jimmy White. It was all about "the moogs," and "selling 'em some shares." Another failure was "Merely Molly," in which, as a Cockney girl, she had to make love to Godfrey Tearle, as a duke. 'Madame Pompadour' was one of her triumphs.

EVELYN LAYE

Journalism is Evelyn's only vice. She writes to tell women how to get thin. Unfortunately, she then Starts to get thin herself. I have asked her family to tell her. " You tell her yourself! " was the reply. She should not play to the calorie. I should like to see more of Evelyn.

Recently, I came across Evelyn Laye and Bertram Wallis at lunch.

" When I was a very young girl," she said, " I had an idol on the Stage. He was handsome; he had nice, curly hair, beautiful eyes, and perfect manners. I used to keep all the pidture postcards of him. Perhaps I felt very much in love. Well, there he is, sitting beside me now."

Bertram was thirty-four then, and acting in " The King of Cadonia." Evelyn was only eight!

The time came when, in " Blue Eyes," Bertram was paid to make love to her, and she was paid to repel him ! When it comes true, you see, it isn't real, after all.

ALFRED NOYES

POET WHO KILLED OUR VICTORY BALLS

FANCY a poet who believes in sense and sound and rhythm having a name like Noyes. Yes, and fancy his living it down. Indeed, he has sold 300,000 copies of his books of verse. He lives Opposite-the-Ducks in Regent's Park, overlooking eighteen swans that sometimes swim in the lake, all in a row. And he has a few-months-old baby, the image of himself.

When, not long ago, I was asked to address a literary dinner, and I looked along the top table and saw a crowd of novelists with so-called "names," I reflected with some cynicism that I had never read one word by any one of them. They earn large sums of money. Papers print their names, sometimes, in double-size type. Yet they never say anything.

Then up Stood Alfred Noyes, not an author but a poet. For half an hour he eulogised the sound of words and declaimed verses, quoting, first other poets, and then himself. Noyes has done that over half the English-speaking world. He is an orator. He has the gift of ringing words. He is an apostle of the majesty of sound, an anti-eccentric, a man who, when he reads a so-called modern poem Starting with the line, "I have a Zoo inside my hollow rib," thunders forth a protest, quotes from the Elizabethans, and goes back to the tradition of great English poetry.

He despises long hair and Bohemian manners. He looks like a successful business man. He has defended Tennyson. He has attacked Bunyan and his very old theology. He can utter a panegyric to the adventurous Drake, sing the praises of a quiet meadow in Connefticut, and yet, in another mood, lash with a cold fury the crying scandal of the Victory Ball.

" Shadows of dead men Stand by the wall."

ALFRED NOYES

Hotel proprietors, night club grabbers, dago waiters, the gang that try to cheer up fatuity by giving it balloons, tried, some years ago, to continue selling high-priced drink on Armistice night. The death of more than 1,000,000 Britishers was to be celebrated annually by asinine noise and the blowing of tin horns. It was like holding a beanfeast in a cemetery and charging to go in.

Not even the death of Billie Carleton by cocaine poisoning the morning after the Victory Ball Stopped this blasphemous junketing. It went on, even after Captain Boyd-Carpenter, the Bishop's son, Stood up in a Piccadilly restaurant when the noise was at its height, and asked the company to join in singing " Oh God, our help in ages past." Shamefacedly, they did. Then they jazzed again.

They tried it another year. Titled names were used to bolster up the sacrilege ; as usual, the sacred name of Charity was invoked.

Then I took a hand and called in the help of Alfred Noyes.' I printed his poem, " The Victory Ball." That was the last or it. Conquest can-cans, Armistice champagne, death dances, war wozzles, all Stopped suddenly. I give the credit to Alfred Noyes, the clean-living, clear-minded, sane Englishman who, though in appearance and manner the antithesis of all that Poetry is supposed to look, is the most English of all the living poets in the sanity of his outlook and the moderation of his words.

I never knew a poet who could recite so well as he does.

No wonder he upset the Censor during the War. He wrote some " Songs of the Trawlers," how they fought the submarines.

One line originally ran " She'd a gun at her bow, that was Bethlehem's best," intended as a tribute to the great American Steel works. The Censor suggested that this should be altered to " She'd a gun at her bow, that was Vickers' best," when it was nothing of the kind.

Eventually, Noyes insisted that he should make his own alterations. So he made it, " She'd a gun at her bow, which was Newcastle's best." Then they thought it meant the Newcastle centre-forward.

JOSEPH COYNE

THE TROUPER WHO MADE GOOD

JOE COYNE, the most popular American actor who ever came to London, is a loose-jointed, sad-faced, man who kicks out each foot as he walks. He has long arms, a worried expression, and he looks as though he wore short sleeves. He is all things to all men and all women, with all an Irishman's charm and with none of his jealousies. He walks miles every morning through the London parks, all alone, just to keep thin.

Once, when he returned to the Carlton, where he lived for years, wearing a cap and a sweater, he was going up in the lift in which, by arrangement, the liftman always called him " My lord," if anybody was there, just to puzzle the Americans.

He came in looking more or less like a tramp, to the surprise of two very respectable Americans going up to their floor.

" Oh, your lordship," said the liftman, " her ladyship asked me to tell you that she was round at Ciro's having a cocktail with the Prince of Wales. Will you join her ? "

The Americans pricked up their ears. When Joe got out at his floor, and the others went on up, the American turned to his wife and said, " Say, honey, if that guy's a lord, there's a chance for me."

You wouldn't believe it, when you see the gallery applaud him, that he was a poor Irish boy once, born in New York City, working for a firm of sculptors, who paid him to keep the clay moist for the artists.

When the sculptors went home on Saturday afternoon, Joe's job was to keep pouring water on their modelling clay until Monday morning. All the time, however, he was mad

JOSEPH COYNE

on the theatre; he used to rush off instead of watching the clay. One day, in his hurry, he smashed an enormous Statue of a general, and was so afraid that, not waiting to collect his salary of four dollars, or even his hat, he left the Studio door and ran like the devil.

On the way, he saw in a newspaper an advertisement wanting 100 boys who could dance. They were to apply at the Stage door of Niblo's Garden Theatre. As he passed, he saw thousands of children waiting. He joined the crowd and was one of the twelve boys let in. The Kiralfy Brothers watched while he did a Step and then he was one of the six boys picked to do a ballet dance.

The ballet was called "Excelsior, or The Triumph of Light Over Darkness," a great big spectacular show—the first Steamboat up the Hudson River, the first electric lights, and all that sort of thing.

It ran for a whole year and then the boy, Joe, went on tour with it to San Francisco.

Then he started with a partner of his own, Frank Evans. "Evans and Coyne" toured variety theatres, anywhere where they could get a job. They played with Keith's first dime museum in Boston for four weeks, and then the Sells Brothers circus. They had to do a turn in the concert which always followed the circus. Joe and his boy friend had to black their faces with cork and do speciality dances. While the circus was on Joe used to play the drums for all the circus acts. Then, about one or two turns before the concert, Jim Robinson used to take his drums and Joe used to black up ready for his turn. They played several circuses like that in Texas, California, all over the country—just a couple of kids.

Then Joe became grand—an actor! When twenty, he joined a Stock company at Boston, one attached to "Dr. Lathrop's Grand Circus." He played all sorts of parts in dramas, comedies, everything. Then he joined what they called "Stock Stars." A man or a woman Star would send the company a play, post the parts along about a week ahead; the Stock company would learn the parts and rehearse, and on the Sunday the Star would come along, a rehearsal with him would take place and the show would be acted on the

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

Monday. They went from theatre to theatre, always the same company, but a new Star every week, always acting, always rehearsing.

It was then Joe met Romance. I must not tell you that Story yet.

It was in "The Limited Mail" that Charles Frohman saw him in New York, acting at a cheap theatre, one of those they called "Ten-twenty-thirty," which meant the cents they charged for seats. That changed his career. In 1901, Frohman brought him over to England with Edna May, in "The Girl From Up There," and London saw a new kind of leading man. After a year he went back to America, and then, in 1906, came back again with Edna May in "Nelly Neil."

George Edwardes, who was at the first night of "Nelly Neil," engaged him to play with Marie Tempest in "The Merry Widow." He went Straight to his dressing-room after the show and engaged him to play Prince Danilo, the part that changed his life. Marie Tempest., however, thought her voice was going, changed her mind, and resigned her part, and decided to tackle Straight comedy. They scoured all Europe for a leading lady, and finally chose Lily Elsie, then almost unknown. We all remember. . . .

Crowds used to wait for Joe at the Stage door; sometimes he had to fight his way through them. They would shout to him from the gallery. He was London's idol.

One night, in the scene where he had to pretend to kiss Lily Elsie, and then draw away, the gallery yelled, " Kiss her, Joe ! Kiss her. Don't be a fool! Kiss her ! " He did—and spoiled the scene. The play was over. They had made it up before the proper time.

All through "The Merry Widow," he was under contract to Charles Frohman, who had only lent him to George Edwardes. He played in "The Merry Widow" for a year, and then Frohman took him out, and made him go to America in "The Mollusc."

In New York, Joe was indiscreet. He praised London too much. He came back.

Then, twenty years afterwards, I saw him playing "The Mollusc" again—this time, not with Alexandra Carlisle,

JOSEPH COYNE

who is married and a politician, but with Constance Collier. For nearly twenty years, every time Constance saw him she said, " Let's do 'The Mollusc, "

When they did it, all London Stayed away. Still, Joe smiled. He is the Trouper who Made Good.

G. R. W. NEVINSON

THE BRITISH CUBIST WHO WON THROUGH

AFTER Orpen and Lavery—whom? May I suggest it may be Nevinson? He is only 40. Nevinson is the British Cubist who won through, the rebel who showed them he was right.

It was the War that made Nevinson's fame. When, after seeing fighting in the earlier days of the scramble, he was discharged in 1915, he gave his first show at the Leicester Galleries, one that showed war in Cubist form and rather shocked people.

When called up for re-examination, Nevinson, an old Uppingham boy, thought he would rather be an officer that time. When he wrote to Sir John Cowans to use his influence for a commission, he got a message to go down to the War Office. Nevinson saw a secretary.

"I am perfectly willing to join up again," said Nevinson, "but I do not want to be just a private."

"You should apply for an artist's commission," said the secretary.

"Til join the Artists," was the reply. "I don't care what regiment it is."

So, from office to office, and from man to man, Nevinson was sent. He saw general after general, and then finally got to Charles Masterman, of all men in the world.

"I want an Artists' commission," said Nevinson, used to the phrase by this time.

"I have seen your show," replied Masterman, "and can get you a job, but in any case we could not pay you for it."

Masterman, you see, was in the propaganda section, and he thought Nevinson wanted to go to France to paint!

Nevinson said nothing. He just gripped his jaw—and

C. R. W. NEVINSON

hoped. To his astonishment, he found himself with a **job, and** the order, " Do some flying and lithographs."

The flying is forgotten; the lithographs went **round the world.** Then Nevinson, Still by the merest luck, was sent to the Front, with a chateau and a car and only painting to do. Then the Canadians applied for him. The brush was mightier than the sword.

When peace came he went to America, sold all the work he had, and then returned to New York two years later, to find James Montgomery Flagg leading a Chauvinist movement in favour of American artists.

" What right have aliens like Nevinson to come here and have all the success ? " he asked.

Nevinson then took part in one of those wordy battles that helped to make his name.

He came back from America, the second time, **treated as** though he were a leper.

Although he has been through those phases in England too, the truth is that, while he was the first of the English Cubists, he is a Cubist Still, when he wants to be, and although he was jeered at for joining the Italian Futurists for a time, he Still is a Futurist, when the mood takes him. He is six or seven artists in one.

I regard his pictures as a good speculation. They are of all kinds—tempera, pastel, oils and water colour, while he does etchings by the dozen. His last London show, his seventh, was a real success. He has broken into the Ring. People do not call him a Cubist nowadays, and they seldom notice the Futurism in his work. Our eyes have changed. We can gaze into more light without blinking.

Nevinson has driven me home in his Strange yellow motor caravan very late at night, and I have seen him, very early in the morning, Still wearing his red shirt and collar. Now, the motor caravan has become a saloon car with a bed in it.

Nevinson's father, the humanitarian journalist, has fought **for** manylostcauses. His son has fought for himself.

EDWARD LAURILLARD

MAN WHO OPENED LONDON'S FIRST CINEMA

LET me take you a little behind the scenes of the theatre—the world, I mean, in which some of us live most of our lives, in the company of players, authors, composers and managers.

Almost every night we gather, when the curtain is down and the play is over, and, very frankly, among ourselves, we discuss the real truth of what happened without fear or favour.

Usually, after a first night, I join a gathering like that. Lee Ephraim is often there, and Al Woods, if he is in London. Freddie Lonsdale and Monckton Hoffe sometimes join us. Theatre owners walk up and talk. Actor-managers come up to hear the news.

My friend "Lauri" is often one of us.

When I look at him, a blond sort of man, with a serious face, I marvel that his quiet exterior conceals the personality which actually opened the first picture-house ever built in London. He could have been a millionaire, had he only known.

It had been a greengrocer's shop in Shepherd's Bush, and it was a hall so small that it seated only 180 people. Even that was in front of its time, for no money, except a few pounds, was taken for eight weeks! Then a miracle happened. People began to stand in long queues trying to get admission.

Lauri's first stroke of luck in this business was a complaint, made by the people upstairs about the piano; an action was brought against him, and the magistrate held his show to be a "nuisance." This brought down the newspaper men in search of a story, and, in consequence of what they wrote, such publicity followed that picture-houses began to grow

EDWARD LAURILLARD

up like mushrooms. Lauri built no fewer than twenty-five, all around the suburbs.

Three years after the Shepherd's Bush venture, Laurillard began his famous partnership with George Grossmith. In 1914, they took "To-night's the Night" to America with a cast which included James Blakeley, Davy Burnaby, Maurice Farkoa, Lauri de Frece, George Grossmith himself, Leslie Henson, Fay Compton, Adrah Fair, who afterwards became Mrs. Laurillard, Iris Hoey, Madeleine Seymour, Elsie Sinclair, who afterwards married George Gould, the millionaire, and Emmy Wehlen. Such a mammoth enterprise would now be impossible. The salary list would kill it.

Before long, the firm of Grossmith and Laurillard were in control of eight London theatres, all at once, and had over twenty companies on tour! On its ninth birthday I attended a banquet, with poor Dickey Jowett in the chair. There were, at the long dinner-tables, it seemed, half the theatrical Stars in London, all employees of the firm.

Lauri had grown up since the picture-palace days. He was then one of the two heads of one of the greatest producing firms in the world. Yet Lauri himself had not changed. I still remember the shout of laughter that went up when Leslie Henson, in an impromptu revue, gave an imitation of his quietness of manner.

"G. L." as they called it, had started with "Potash and Perlmutter." Soon, Grossmith and Laurillard had invented "The Bing Boys" and "The Bing Girls," and given us, too, a score of plays.

It was Edward Laurillard who discovered Leslie Henson, then an almost unknown provincial actor. Most Stars of to-day have at some time been under contract to him when they earned only small salaries. Yet "G. L." split. They quarrelled—and Laurillard retired.

Within a year he was back again, alone. He produced "Love's Awakening," which proved too good for the public. On the first night, Lauri was offered £10,000 for a 10% share. I knew it was too good and said so in the paper the next morning. It was one of those many occasions when I became unpopular. Yes, I have had rows with Lauri, too.

Then he gave us "The Cousin from Nowhere," by the

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same composer, Edward Kunneke ; and then, growing tired of aiming high, went from the sublime to the ridiculous. He produced " The Smith Family " at the Empire Theatre, and asked all the Smiths in London. Two of them refused to go ; most of the others forgot.

His next show was " The Little Revue," which ran for a year at the theatre from which it took its name. Jack Hulbert and Cicely Courtneidge were the Stars. That was Lauri's last venture in London for three or four years. He went to America, and then came back with his mind full of the plan we saw completed at the Piccadilly Theatre.

Indeed, although Lauri will not like me for saying so, he was responsible for the first show I ever saw. It was " The Gay Parisienne," which I paid sixpence to see, at the Corn Exchange, Ashford. I blame him for my career. I saw a musical comedy—I became a critic. It is all Lauri's fault.

When I slated " The Butter and Egg Man,' Lauri said he would not have me in his new theatre. Actually, I wrote an appreciation of him in the brochure which they gave away on the first night!

Now he is building another theatre. I have already chosen the door from which he must throw me out.

ARNOLD DE BIERE

THE MAGICIAN WHO CAN'T DISILLUSION ME

DE BIERE is now my Magician-in-Waiting. It is his job to teach me tricks. So far, all I can do is to make a match-box Stand on end, on my hand, when I ask it. Even now I am afraid people guess how it is done.

The other day De Biere spent a lot of time showing me how to look in a crystal and see a card that someone had taken from a pack. I merely dropped the crystal.

Magicians interest me deeply. There are 10,000 of them in England, from royalties down to navvies. If you sit in Will GoldSton's office near Leicester Square you will meet scores in a week. They arrive from all over the world. Professionals come in to discuss each other's tricks. Amateurs call to buy a new illusion for a shilling. " Boring a hole through a man " cost £1,000.

Two M.P.'s are amateur conjurers, several mayors, doctors, and parsons by the score. They try it on the baby first. Then they give a show at home to their friends. It is the first sign of Christmas, because it Starts in January.

King Edward was an amateur conjurer, who even taught De Biere a trick. When, years ago, De Biere first showed at the Alhambra, Charles Bertram took the Prince of Wales, as he was then, round to the dressing-room. He sat on a trunk and showed De Biere—what he did not know then—how to slide a card from the top of the pack to the second or third or fourth position at will. Although King Edward could do it, it took De Biere three months to master.

The late Tsar's father could tear a pack of cards in two. It is a trick, although Sandow could tear two packs at once, properly. King Alfonso boasts that he learned tricks from magicians when he was a boy.

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At St. James's Palace, a few weeks ago, De Biere, summoned to amuse the Prince of Wales and his guests, found King Alfonso and Winston Churchill among the party.

"You can say anything to a king if you are a magician," De Biere told me. "He will do anything you ask him, as though he were a boy in a fair. He will be blindfolded. He obeys your slightest wish. Then, suddenly, you remember that he reigns over millions of people. Apparently he has forgotten, though. Magic has captured him."

On this occasion De Biere changed the watches in the pockets of Alfonso and the Prince of Wales, until a sheepish look entered their faces. Yet they enjoyed it more than anybody. Indeed, De Biere was called back three times, even when he had put his coat on to go. It went on for two hours.

De Biere is the most presentable of present-day illusionists. He is a small, dapper man, who knows how to tie a tie. His smile does not annoy. He does that bird-cage trick with a dummy bird. Carl Hertz caused trouble with a real canary.

Deception seems to have been born with him. He scarcely went to school because, when he did join a class, they soon threw him out for playing jokes upon the teacher. He has performed in every country in the world almost, except India. Give him a pack of cards and let him borrow an egg, and that is all.

Nate Leipsig, the cleverest card manipulator now alive—Professor Alexander Hermann was the greatest of all—is not much good in a theatre.

The great Lafayette wanted a show—lions preferred.

Houdini was a blusterer, full of bounce, greater than anybody else—in his own mind. He would swank his superiority over all the rest. That cost him his life. He let a Student punch him once after the show, just to show his Strength. He forgot he was not thirty any longer. He died a fortnight later from a burst appendix. His so-called "exposures" of spiritualism were all bounce and exaggerated bunkum. Usually the "mediums" he "exposed" were his own confederates. He was what is called a "great showman," which means a man who brags and prints his name big.

ARNOLD DE BIERE

Lafayette was burned in a theatre fire in Edinburgh, unable to open the pass door. "Open sesame" did not work.

Chung Ling Soo, the victim of an accident, was shot by one of his own assistants during a trick.

The world of illusion is often made real with tragedy.

Then there is Malini, the little fat man, the quickest magician alive at a party, but no use for the Stage.

They all have their qualities. They criticise each other. They all know each other's tricks. They are always improving, always making variations.

All the cleverest ones are Jews. The Jew has that subtlety which realises a situation. A trick has so often to be changed while it is actually happening. The Jew is suave; the Jew can sense you. De Biere is a Jew.

I have met scores of them in the Magicians' Club, where they perform to each other. Oh, some of it is so boring—that is, when the worst of the amateurs get going. Some of it dazzles even the greatest experts in the room.

Some of it you can buy for half-a-crown. Some of it, such as the way in which De Biere can conceal a card, is possible only after twenty years of practice—hours every day.

LORD DEWAR

THE COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER OF ALL TIME

ONE of London's mysteries is how Lord Dewar does his speeches. He is one of the world's greatest monologists. A Dewar speech is a long recitative, an endless String of anecdotes and epigrams. It is just like turning on a gramophone.

"How on earth does he do it?" people ask. No one knows. Oh, yes! I do. . . .

For Lord Dewar, in his ordinary life, is a very courteous, charming man, slightly lame, usually alone, unpretentious, anything but a self-made millionaire.

You wouldn't believe it, but he was once the world's greatest commercial traveller.

He and his brother John began to sell whisky in Scotland, as their father had done in a small way before them, and, since there did not seem room for the two brothers in Perth, Thomas came to London, and, opening a small office in Cockspur Street, set out to make Dewar's Whisky famous. A few years ago the combined firms of Buchanan-Dewar, Ltd.—two great rivals now one concern—had over 23,000,000 gallons of Scotch whisky in Stock and an issued capital of £6,649,580. The total reserves were nearly £3,000,000 and the year's profits were £887,220.

Yet when Dewar came to London Irish whisky was the fashion. He changed England's taste.

Dewar put it his own way to me once, with that little snarling cynicism he affects to hide his kindness. It sounds something like a Yankee drawl.

"On the first Sunday I was in London I went to a Presbyterian church," he said, "and there was a rich man in the congregation who said to me, 'If I can give you any advice, I will.'

LORD DEWAR

" 'I'm told you export whisky to India,⁵ I replied. ' I've got some to sell,

" 'How do you know?' he answered. ' I never mix up religion and business.'

" What did I do? I changed my church."

Dewar never missed a chance in those days of Struggle. When a thousand licensed victuallers came from America on a holiday he gave them all a banquet, where his gifts as an orator and his friendliness created a great impression. His great rival, young Buchanan, asked them all to a larger banquet at the Crystal Palace, where Dewar was one of the guests. Much to his delight, the principal American speaker, in responding to the toast of the evening, said, " Well, Mr. Chairman, we have enjoyed ourselves very much in England. But the things we shall remember most are Victoria Vat and Dewar's Extra Special."

Both these whiskies were Dewar's!

" Dewar's done it again," said the host. " We've spent £5000 for nothing."

Still, he got his own back some other way—and he is Lord Woolavington now.

Dewar seldom talks about business. His Stories are all about sport, his prize pigeons, his fowls—he once took the championship, twelve trophies, and sixteen first prizes at an international poultry show—his horses and his greyhounds.

During the War Lord Dewar gave young pigeons to the nation, and they were quartered either on ships belonging to the Fleet, or Somewhere in France. Those attached to the Army were given motor omnibuses from the London Streets for their lofts, and, when released with messages from England, each one would find its own motor-bus in France, even if the line had moved forty or fifty miles, and no man could have traced it.

A pigeon released from headquarters on land would find its own boat somewhere in the North Sea, although it had moved hundreds of miles; while, if it returned to the Fleet at the Scapa Flow, it would single out its own tiny craft, though hundreds of ships of all types were massed together.

It was in 1915 that Dewar won the Waterloo Cup, with Winning Number. He has been luckier with his grey-

HANNEN SWAPPER'S .HO'S WHO

hounds than at racing, for twice in his life a Derby has slipped out of Dewar's hands. In 1900 Forfarshire was the favourite for the Derby a month before the race.

Dewar's friends went down by the score, waiting to cheer; but Forfarshire was run into at Tattenham Corner and injured, and King Edward's Diamond Jubilee won.

"Why, where's Forfarshire?" someone yelled.

"In the North of Scotland," somebody replied.

Then, years after, Abbot's Trace nearly won the Derby.

"It led for a great part of the way," said Lord Dewar, "and then turned a somersault. Steve Donoghue, who was riding it, turned two or three somersaults, and I knew that, once again, the Derby had escaped me. Then came the news that Donoghue had broken his neck.

"I went round to the weighing-room. When a horse is going forty miles an hour, and the jockey is thrown, you never know what'll happen. But there was Donoghue already dressed in the colours of the owner for whom he was riding in the next race, and whistling a tune. And he won the next race."

Abbot's Trace was sent to the Stud by Lord Dewar himself, against all expert advice. You all know the result. Abbot's Trace horses now carry all before them.

He once Startled England by driving to his election, which he lost, in a coach-and-four, and when he was Sheriff of the City of London someone Stole his chain of office, and the whole of London wondered who was the thief. Little did they guess that some friend had annexed it for fun and that, all the time, it was reposing in a room in the Hotel Cecil, where Dewar lived—a room tenanted by his friend, who screamed with laughter at the contents bills of the newspapers, and thought, "Ah, what a good advertisement for Dewar."

Yes, Dewar is a bachelor and so is Lipton. And they have spent their lives, both of them, trying to find wives, each one for the other. During one of his African trips Dewar discovered a place where you could buy six wives for three pounds of Lipton's tea.

So he wired home to Lipton, "Send three pounds of tea and I will send you six wives."

"No," replied Lipton. "Lipton's tea is the best."

ARCHIE DE BEAR

MANAGER WITH TOO MUCH SENSE OF HUMOUR

"LET'S look at your dossier," I remarked to Archie de Bear. We walked into the library of a newspaper office.
"Give me the De Bear cuttings," I said. "I want to examine Mr. de Bear's past."

It is cruel to show a theatre manager all the cuttings about himself—the plays he has promised to produce that never come to anything, his flamboyant announcements before a production, and his admission at the end that it was a frost, his replies to other managers who have said trade was good or bad. You know how silly reporters go along to interview managers about nothing—and believe them.

Well, it takes more than that to upset Archie de Bear. He is temperamental and nervy, but he has a greater sense of humour than any of his kind. It makes him readjust.

"We took more at 'Blue Skies' last week," he told me once, "than we took all through the run of 'C. O. D.' " He had already forgotten that my criticism of "C. O. D." made us quarrel. He only remembered making it up because, knowing of our differences, a well-known actress who wanted to sue me for libel, had sent along to him a detective to ask: "Will you go into the box and say that Hannen Swaffer enters a theatre with a prejudiced mind?" De Bear replied: "Yes, I will go into the box and say Hannen Swaffer goes into a theatre with a mind prejudiced in favour of speaking the truth."

When "C. O. D." was at its worst, De Bear, hearing the box office takings one night, merely remarked: "I bet you are at least four visiting-cards up on last night."

"Have you got the 'House Empty' boards out?" he asked on another evening.

When looking at the large signs on which were printed the critics' eulogistic comments on "Vaudeville Vanities," how artistic it was, how wonderful, and how marvellous all the artistes were, he merely said, forgetting his own losses, "To think that, after all that, no one went."

When his revue "R. S. V. P." was going to Southsea, and the management suggested that the local people would not know what the title meant, he replied: "Call it 'Reaches Southsea via Portsmouth.'"

When knowing that the last words of "Cleopatra," addressed to Evelyn Laye, consisted of "Hail, Cleopatra, hail!" Archie, hearing suddenly of Evelyn's engagement to Sonnie Hale, suggested they should be altered to "Hail, Cleopatra, Mrs. Hale."

He does at least one of these a day. It makes up for a lot. I am his Boswell.

When, just after the failure of "Sirocco," he heard that J. M. Gatti, his landlord, was about to be knighted, he said: "If it were his brother, Rocco, now, the King would have to say 'Arise, Sir Rocco!' It couldn't be done."

Fortunately the Gattis laughed.

Although his revue "The Punch Bowl" ran for fifteen months, he, as author and manager and producer, made only £3, less than the weekly salary of his poorest chorus girl. The money for his share in the Co-Optimists, whose name he invented and whose slights he worried over, was lent by a relative, who, investing £250 herself, made £8000 out of the dividends. All Archie got was growling, whereas his popularity with the Press was what kept the Co-Ops going.

When he had been discharged from the Army because of shell shock, he joined the Navy and was sent to Italy, and even then, when sent home, a crock, he was torpedoed in the hospital ship, "Rewa," and was exposed to privation in a lifeboat for hours. To this day his nerves are so affected you cannot get him into a motor-car, and he will not step into a train. He is always planning marvellous trips for himself—to Morocco, Iceland, or Australia—and then, at the last minute, he never goes.

If he ever does get anywhere, you cannot get him back.

ARCHIE DE BEAR

He buys a ticket, goes to the Station, looks at the train, and then goes back to bed.

He loves writing letters to other managers—marvellous letters, that win every trick. He will show them to you gleefully. Then, the next day, he is sorry he has sent them. I am like that, too.

When he had to go bankrupt, a few months ago, it was for only £5,000, a mere trifle compared with what other managers have owed before their creditors cheered them, and they started all over again. Archie, being an honest man, took it seriously.

Even when Archie saw the roomful awaiting his public examination, however, his humour overcame his trepidation.

"It looks like a full house," said Edgar O'Brien.

De Bear's retort was like a flash.

"I'm afraid it's all paper," he replied.

For a day or two, after finally retiring from management, he was tempted back. The Duncans, who had only three managers at the time, wanted a fourth.

"Could Noble Sissle fill the house?" asked Vivian, during Rosetta's illness.

"The only noble Cecil I know is Lord Cecil," he answered, "and he couldn't draw a bob."

Two days later, he retired again.

His father, Bernard de Bear, was the head of Pitman's School, and the first man in the world who wrote shorthand at 200 words a minute. Archie, reluctantly chosen by his father, who did not want to push him, became secretary to Sir Wilfred Laurier, because he could write shorthand equally well in French and English. Then, in turn, he became private secretary to Lord Riddell, whose letters he sometimes had to read aloud while the owner of the *News of the World* was steaming in the bath; Arnold Bennett, whose novels he typed; and Sir Basil Zaharoff, the mystery financier, about whom he knows a lot, but about whom he never says a word.

Archie's troubles with the Censor have been comic. The Lord Chamberlain once stopped him from showing Stanley Baldwin smoking a pipe! Once he would not let him mention Lady Ellesmere's name in a sketch, although thirty other real names were in the same revue.

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Sometimes Archie's humour comes true. In the middle of " The Punch Bowl " was his brilliant one-act play based on the life of a Punch-and-Judy man. It contained the complaint made by Punch, " Toby's got too much to do."

During the run, Archie fell ill and went to Eastbourne, only to hear that, while he was away, a member of the company had called a rehearsal to cut the part of Toby, although all the poor dog had to do was to Stand at the side, during the ballet, with his paws in the air. The complaint was that Toby's cleverness was detracting the attention of the audience !

The playlet was written, in dream form, as a satire on the vanity of actors. This time, Archie's dream came true. Most of his other dreams have been nightmares.

FREDERICK LONSDALE

THE LAZIEST MAN IN LONDON

"**B**ROOK HOUSE," I have heard Freddie tell his chauffeur, when he has dropped me outside a theatre.

"I was at the Duke of Blank's last night," he has told me, with a feeble sort of smile.

Why does so-called "Society" flatter writers so?

I might make an exception, though, in Freddie's case if I had ground rents to live on, and a castle that wasn't in Spain, for when he and I lunch together, privately, shutting the door, as we sometimes do, we talk the most wonderful scandal, and we roar with laughter at all our friends behind their backs. He loves it. So do I.

In spite of his success, Freddie is the laziest man in London—after me. When he had undertaken to write a musical comedy with Irving Berlin for Drury Lane, he merely wrote a letter of apology to Sir Alfred Butt. When he contracted to write "Foreigners" for Tallulah Bankhead, he couldn't finish the third act. Again, Butt had a grievance.

I was once present when Freddie arranged with Archie Selwyn and George McLellan to complete a play for His Majesty's. It came to nothing.

Still, as Freddie says, it saves the managers money.

"If I cannot finish a play properly," he argues, "it is better not to finish it at all. Never mind what they say at the time, it is cheap in the end."

"I am going to make a sensational speech," he once told me before the Gallery First-nighters' Dinner, mentioning what we call in newspapers, "a certain phase of modern life," and the danger of it all. Then when the night of the party came, he fuked it.

One of the officials of the club who had got a hint as to

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what their guest thought of saying, had quite a shock, ten days before the dinner, when he was asked by the management of Frascati's for a lift of the guests.

"Why do you want them?" he demanded. "We have dined here for twenty-four years. You know us."

"The police have asked for them," was the reply, "because they have to protect prominent people."

Freddie, apparently, needed no protection, in official eyes, whatever it was he had intended to say. He spoke instead of his Struggles, before he achieved fame, how he ran away from home at the age of nine to join a circus, how he had been a soldier and a sailor, and how it was when a landlady threatened him and his two fellow-lodgers with ejection that they had to think of something. So he thought of writing a play.

In spite of his warning to the backer, the play was produced at Ealing, where, on the first night, Clement Scott, just because he was sheltering from a snowstorm under the portico, went inside and looked.

"Although it's a bad play," said Scott, when he saw it, "you will write a good one if you keep on."

So Freddie wrote musical comedies, one after the other, although he was often hard up. Then, chiefly because of the War, "The Lady of the Rose" was a great success. "The Street Singer," "Katja the Dancer," and "Madame Pompadour," all brought him more than he deserved.

Then his serious work began. In "Spring Cleaning," he lacerated degeneracy and brought an unmentionable character upon the Stage. "Aren't We All?" was written, he said, to "save" his daughter. "The High Road" was supposed to be a plea for actresses who marry titles. No, he is not a Crusader. He gets moods like that—or perhaps it makes paragraphs.

The truth is he knows that the public like to see plays about titled rakes and snobs and naughty baronets and liars, especially if they have a handle to their name.

His chief joy is when he can write a scene in which a duke says to a baronet: "You rotter!" That brings down the house.

Now and then Freddie says he is going to retire. Then he

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qualifies this by saying that, in future, he will only write **one** play a year. Then he says he cannot finish his last one. Sometimes, he is going to write movie plays. Then he is going to write talkies. Then he indicts the commercial manager. All the time he makes, I suppose, £20,000 a year.

He professes to despise rich men and the way they grab money, and yet he mixes with them. He is terribly shy at first nights, and he is really anxious to know what people say behind his back. He enjoys taking my part when I am not there, and sometimes he is going to retire and live in Jersey, and sometimes he is going to retire and live in the South of France.

Yet I would not call him a retiring sort of man. He has a red face, he often looks surprised, and he wears his tall hat at the back of his head.

If ever I want to know what some knighted actor has just said to some knighted manager and what the knighted manager said when the knighted author told him, I go and have lunch with Frederick Lonsdale.

Freddie's favourite Story concerns me. He has told it a score of times, although I do not think it funny.

When I saw him going into the first performance of " The Green Hat," I thought he had helped Michael Arlen to do the play and so said : " I wish you success." After the first aft, I said: " I'm sorry I thought it was you, Freddie. It must have been Lord Lonsdale."

THE EARL OF LONSDALE

MAN WHO LIVES BEHIND THE TIMES

WHEN Lord Lonsdale dies, we shall have seen the end of the Corinthians. The world is changing. I notice it whenever I see the enormous yellow Lonsdale motor-car, whenever, on a racecourse, I see Lord Lonsdale's broad, Striped trousers, his frock coat, his side whiskers, and his long cigar.

At Epsom, I have often watched him walking across the course all alone, after every race, to see the weigh-in, and then going back to the small Stand opposite the Royal box to Stare at each Start through his race glasses, as though nothing else in the world mattered.

He moves about a racecourse all day long. Whenever anything is happening, he is there. You feel that, without him, there couldn't be a race.

Once, at Epsom, he took a horse from a policeman, and rode down the course to see if the crowd had cut up the turf. His name is used to silence an angry boxing crowd.

Before his yellow phaetons convey his guests to the Doncaster racecourse on St. Leger day, he inspects all the horses and all the harness himself, just as though it were a Lord Mayor's Show. His footmen and his postilions wear buff-coloured silk hats.

He has been photographed with pearly kings, and with ringmasters and clowns at circuses. He seems to run the Horse Show all by himself. In his own native North, he is a sort of king, for there he is Hereditary Admiral of the Coasts of Cumberland and Westmorland, and Lord Warden of the West Marches.

Yet—you wouldn't believe it—although his sporting ancestry dates back to the Plantagenets, he used to be a circus acrobat. When a baby, he wasn't allowed to go in a peram-

THE EARL OF LONSDALE

bulator, for when he was not carried in his nurse's arms, he rode in a pannier on a pony's back. When five, he learned to ride; when nine, he had a little thoroughbred of his own; he hunted with the Cottesmore when most boys were still their mother's own boys.

When he was seventeen he joined a circus in Switzerland, and toured the Continent with it for over a year, performing acrobatic feats, with and without horses.

Yet even his love of animals has been considered out of date. Because he championed the circus, the Performing Animals Defence League struck his name from its list of patrons. The world moves on. . . .

I have seen his seven-inch cigar at Ascot and Doncaster and Newmarket and Lingfield. I have seen it at the National Sporting Club, at Olympia, and the Albert Hall—no, not when there is music, but when two overpaid pugilists have received an enormous sum of money for being hit once or twice on the nose.

I remember now that he was a great friend of the Kaiser before the War, and I recall that on the day of his golden wedding the King and Queen asked if they might go to dine with him. There was a cabaret and a present for everyone.

I recall, too, how he denounced greyhound racing one St. Leger eve. How dare anything rival the sacred Turf! That is the dominating motive of his life.

I think nearly all the things he loves most boring. To me it is funny that pheasants should be fed by hand so that people can shoot them at a cost higher than their price in a shop, funnier still that grey Scotch foxes should be imported into England so that men in scarlet coats can chase them. The streets are more dangerous, nowadays, than a ride to hounds. To my mind, it doesn't matter twopence which horse wins the Champagne Stakes. We use tanks for warfare now, not cavalry horses, anyway, so the old excuse of breeding blood-stock for warfare is out of date.

Most prize-fights are very boring things. Nothing is so dreary as a horse show, while, as for circuses, Charlie Chaplin has made the world's clowns seem very, very dull. In these days, too, we wonder whether the lions and the dogs

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enjoy performing as much as little boys used to love climbing chimneys. >

Yet all these things delight Lord Lonsdale. He Stands, like John Bull, typical of many things that used to be. Anyway, while he is about, they will all be cleaner and the more sporting, because he is there to keep his eye on them.

SIR HARRY LAUDER

THE MAN WHO LIVES THE MEAN STORIES

YOU have all heard those Stories of Harry Lauder's meanness—how, at the end of a pantomime engagement, he has given the Stage-hands a picture-postcard of himself instead of the usual tip ; how he haggles about everything.

I put it Straight to Harry one day.

" Tell me about your meanness," I said.

" When you've Started working in a coalmine," he replied, " and then you've got a job singing songs on tour at £2 a week, and you've walked round from door to door every Sunday night trying to find cheap lodgings so that you can send a shilling extra home to your wife and bairn, ye get mean—and ye Stay like that. Then they talk about you.

" Anywhere in the world, when someone tells a Story of a mean man, the other fellow says, ' Have you heard that Story about Harry Lauder ? ' It's the greatest advertisement in the world—and the cheapest."

That is the Lauder I know, frank, Straight out, and yet with a grave humour underneath it all. There was never a music-hall performer in England who could earn so much money.

When, during the War, I guided Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien through his attack upon the vulgarities of the Stage, Lauder boasted to me that, at Glasgow, the previous week, he had made £1,316 singing clean songs.

His is a triumph of character. He is made of granite. He is on the level. You cannot swerve him

Whenever a man like him comes across the Border, something is going to happen. In my own profession I got so afraid of them years ago that, knowing they were all after my job, being willing to do it for about half the money, I

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organised a league to put poisoned porridge down at Euston. It was the only way to Stop the cheap competition.

Whenever a Scotsman arrived at Euston, I thought he would see the porridge, grab it, put it in his mouth and die. Alas, nothing happened for several weeks, until a dog was poisoned 1

I Stopped it immediately then, for you cannot be cruel to dogs. Besides, I did not know that Scotsmen all came via St. Pancras, in those days, because it was sixpence cheaper.

Lauder loves that Story.

" I didn't come even by St. Pancras," he said. " I walked."

He is a Strange mixture of grey moods. Once, when there was a Press reception organised to welcome him back from one of his world tours, he made a speech full of funny Stories, at the end of which the religious Scot came out with a jerk. He was telling about a prisoner he had met in Sing-Sing, a man who, after murdering his wife, had " got right with God." Suddenly he looked at me and shouted, " As Hannen knows, you must get right with God."

Nobody knew what he meant. Why he singled me out, I cannot tell. He went off into a homily on religion. Meanwhile the reporters were all drinking whiskies and sodas, at the expense, by the way, not of Harry Lauder, but of William Morris, his manager.

It was Morris who made Lauder rich.

I remember Harry first when he was an £8-a-week turn at the old Tivoli, in the days when they gave them long contracts and bound them down. I saw him rise, I suppose, to £100 a week, and £300 in pantomime.

Then William Morris saw Lauder's great possibilities. He became his partner, without a contract, and with just the word of the two of them. He showed Harry how to make money. He took him on a tour of the United States, arranged kilted pipers to meet him at the different towns, made him move among the governors of States and the dons of universities.

Lauder became the greatest one-man show in the whole world. His income was multiplied by ten.

Everywhere he went Lauder was on the front page. Once, when Morris made him Step off at some small Station to lay

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a wreath on the grave of some local poetess, Lauder burst into a fervid oration about how, as a boy, he had cried when he read the words written by that splendid American woman. Then, when he got into the train again, he turned to Morris and asked, "What did she write?"

Morris has made the fortune of many artistes. He is a man who never breaks his word. American vaudeville worships him. He is always there, when charity calls. He runs a convalescent home for the Stricken vaudeville folk. He has run Paul Whiteman and Sophie Tucker and Nora Bayes, and made them all rich. But Lauder is his greatest triumph of all.

My business as a journalist has brought me into close touch with many famous men, and scores of famous women. Sometimes, to get an article, I have taken a reporter down and sat beside one of them, guiding Celebrity through an interview, or a difficult explanation. I have done this when some great Statesman has been there—or some scientist, author, or millionaire. Lauder, to interview, is the best of all the lot. He is one long String of anecdotes. He goes Straight to the point. He never falters for a word.

"Now a touch of sentiment, Harry," I have said. In a second, he has recited a description of that magical Scotland from which he comes. With words that never falter, he has painted the picture of some Highland glen, or some beauty spot by the lake.

"Now a little tragedy, Harry," I have said. There it has been, Straight away, in never-hesitant words, a little bit of verse, a smile, a joke.

It sounds like oratory. It reads like literature. You need not change a word. Yet he was only a miner, working underground!

When, a few weeks back, he Stayed at Glamis Castle, with the Duke and Duchess of York as fellow-guests, not a word of it appeared. There is restraint in his method, you see, when it suits him. Yet, in other moods, he is a great showman in kilts.

"Pagliacci" came true, one night in the theatre, while I watched.

Lauder had saved his money, pound by pound, for years,

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so that his son, after him, could lead a life of ease and comfort. There were only the three of them—Lauder and his wife and the boy. There had been the three of them in the Struggling days, and, when wealth came, there were the same three—the wife, on tour with the father, and the boy at a university, with a motor-car, proudly bought him by his dad.

Then came the War. Lauder, making his first appearance in revue in London, was in " Three Cheers." His only son was at the front fighting.

In the middle of the show Lauder, dressed in khaki kilts, had to sing :

" When we all gather round the old fireside,
And the fond mother kisses her son,
All the lassies will be loving all the laddies—
The laddies who fought and won."

England was passing through black days, just then, and often there were only a few dry eyes in the house as Lauder, who can sing a song of that kind better than anybody else on earth, Stood on the Stage, resonant and Stern.

Then one night came the news of young Lauder's death, " Three Cheers " came to an end for some days, because Lauder had to rush to Scotland to comfort his wife. Then one night he returned. His friend, William Blackwood, his confidant for years, implored him to cut out the song. The Strain on Lauder might be too great he thought.

" I'll go through with it or die," said Lauder, setting his teeth.

I was behind the scenes that night, and I shall remember, to my dying day, the pathos and the tragedy with which the theatre was filled. Lauder's condition was pathetic. He was a broken man. The light of his life had gone out. All that he had Striven for for years had gone for ever. Yet his brave heart faced it all.

I sat in the Stalls when, in his khaki kilt, Lauder came on, set his teeth, and sang. He did not miss one word. When he came to the lines:

" When we all gather round the old fireside,
And the fond mother kisses her son,"

SIR HARRY LAUDER

a great sob went up from the Stalls. They were all Staring up at a short man in khaki, who, with the tears Streaming down his face, was carrying on.

When the curtain fell on that song, although the audience did not know, Lauder fainted in Blackwood's arms and was carried into his dressing-room.

"It's all right, William," said Lauder, opening his eyes. "How long have I got?"

He went on the Stage and finished the show. It was a triumph of manliness.

They often write about these "Pagliacci" scenes. Here was one in real life. Yet, apart from the tears on Lauder's face, and the grim determination of that granite Stare, you could never have told that he was acting with a broken heart.

Yet they say many things about Lauder. He has worked for what he has got. He has done his job cleanly and well. He has taken a few tunes from the heritage of his race, mixed them together, re-written them, joined up a few scraps of poetry, and made it his own. It belongs to the very soil, as do the poems of Burns. He is typical of a very great people, and, while men like him continue to make much more money than the muck-heap rakers, there will be hope for a clean theatre and a chance for decent actors and actresses.

STANLEY BALDWIN

PIPE-SMOKER KILLED BY " SAFETY FIRST "

STANLEY BALDWIN is a proof of how an ordinary man can rise to anything by luck, and then Stop there by honesty of character. I have heard whole-hog Conservatives sneer at Arthur Balfour when he was Premier, and I have heard their supporters gibe at both Asquith and Lloyd George when they lived at 10, Downing Street. Stanley Baldwin is the only Prime Minister of whom I have heard even members of his own Cabinet speak in words of contempt.

" I think he is the worst Prime Minister old England ever knew," said one of his Secretaries of State to me, one day at lunch.

" Worse than Addington ? " asked a friend.

" Yes, even worse than Addington," was the reply. " You see, when we get Winston on one side of him and me on the other, we shall pull every leg he's got."

Strangely enough, it did not happen.

The country does not trust sharp swords or admire glittering prizes.

" I would like to retire and live among my pigs," said Baldwin once. He is a simple soul. When he gave, anonymously, to the State the £100,000 he had made out of the War, he thought others would follow suit I

I once tried to render him a great service, and failed dismally. When appointed editor of the *People*, I found myself, for the first time in my life, a Conservative editor.

" Go and find out what Conservatism is," I said to a colleague. " I want to know. And tell them I want an interview with Stanley Baldwin. I want him to talk Straight out."

When Herbert Blain was appointed Conservative organiser,

STANLEY BALDWIN

he consulted me, because, Strangely enough, I had met him at a Co-Optimist party with Archie de Bear, with whose father Blain used to teach shorthand.

"Tell Baldwin to get rid of his hangers-on," I advised him. "And tell him I want an interview with him."

When the interview happened, months afterwards, it spilled the beans. Baldwin told how he could not understand why, as a Worcestershire farmer, he sold for a farthing a cabbage for which threepence was obtained in Birmingham, only a few miles away. He talked of the problems before him, problems which, obviously, he did not understand. You may remember the names he mentioned, and the people who, according to the reporter, he would not have in his house.

Had Baldwin stuck to that interview he would have been the Strongest man in England. As it was, the Conservative Office disowned it all. So far as I can tell, Baldwin has not himself done so yet.

Baldwin has been unlucky in his talks with the Press.

If he had disowned a certain interview at Southampton, in which he promised to pay America our War debt, it might have saved Britain over £300,000,000 a year. Yet, even to-day, with a policy, he could lead the country.

He sees all the problems, but cannot solve one. In fact, he is the only Prime Minister of our time who has not a single friend among the newspapers of the land.

Lord Rothermere calls him a Socialist. So does his own son Oliver, who is a Socialist himself.

He wants to nationalise coal, but only says so in private. He once wanted Reginald McKenna, a Free Trader, as his Chancellor of the Exchequer, and not long afterwards he pledged his party to Protection.

He is a typical Englishman, slow-thinking, obstinate, a pipe smoker, a super-ordinary man.

The country likes him. He does not put on airs. The country respects him. He really does try. The country admires him. He is so obviously a very honest man.

Yet, when the great clash came, all he could think of was "Safety First." Poor England! Poor Nelson! Poor Drake! Poor Segrave! And Segrave was asked to Stand

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as one of his Conservative candidates! Besides, Baldwin has sandy eyebrows.

Who would believe that it was he who, with a speech at the Carlton Club in October, 1922, burst the Coalition? Who could believe, too, that during his years of office his quiet simplicity has Stopped all the plots against him?

Fancy an ordinary man like that having in his Cabinet Lord Curzon, Lord Birkenhead, and Winston Churchill, each one of whom always had twenty times his ambition and twenty times his brains!

His tenants adore him. His old work-people at Baldwins, Limited, have not one word of criticism. His servants pay him in devotion. And, when she is dead, he "discovers" Mary Webb!

He has no guile. He lacks subtlety. He is good-natured. He is an Englishman. He will not save his party. You see, he lacks ideas and he lacks initiative. He is an honest man.

LADDIE CLIFF

THE CO-OPTIMIST WHO LEFT EARLY

THEY can say what they like about the London manager who cannot read or write. Laddie Cliff did not even go to school! He went one day—when he was eight. On the first morning he caught whooping cough I So he never went again.

Just as though he were an American—Clifford Albyn Perry really belongs to Devonshire—he owes everything to his mother. She taught him to read; she taught him to write; she taught him everything. In "Who's Who in the Theatre" it says "Educated privately." You know what that means, as a rule—Borstal and Brixton. In Laddie's case it means "at his mother's knee."

He first went on the Stage when he was only five and a half years old, and although he was born in the South of England, he chose for his epoch-making debut the Town Hall, Lerwick, which is in the Shetland Islands, far away in the North of Scotland. He went on as a baby coon and sang Bessie Wentworth's song, "Looking for a Coon Like Me," and then "The Dandy Aristocrat." History records no panic, no protest. For six months Laddie toured all the Shetland Islands, and whatever Orkneys there were with a public hall.

He joined Harry Reynolds' minstrel troupe when he was only six and a half! "The Boy Perry," as they called him, then wanted to be a serious rival to Gene Stratton. Before he had been in the show a week, he said: "Mr. Reynolds, can't I be a corner man?"

A tambourine half as big as himself was given him, and for months he sat proudly next to the principal tambourine comedian, the youngest minstrel in the world!

"No, I never went to school," Laddie has told me. "I

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used to be hauled up before School Boards all over the country and asked a thousand questions to see if I could pass the test Standard for my age. Somehow I always managed to scrape through. I went round the world before I was sixteen. That is how I learned, I suppose. That is the best way to learn geography. Besides, circuses and minstrel troupes and vaudeville acts teach you quite a lot you do not learn at school."

Perhaps that is what has given Laddie Cliff his worldly wisdom. He is a man of calm judgment. He wears earnest spectacles and he always looks very wise. He has tact.

Other people have claimed the credit—or the blame, whichever it is—of founding the "Co-Optimists." Actually Laddie was the first chairman of the company—his photograph with Archie de Bear and Clifford Whitley outside the Royalty records the real Start; and all the time he was with the troupe he Stopped the quarrelling, putting the best side on everything, and pouring oil everywhere.

It was natural that a troupe which Started with only £900 capital and then became such a rage that, at times, Davy Burnaby and Melville Gideon earned £350 a week each—Melville drew publishers' royalties on top of that—should be difficult to control.

The "Co-OptimiSts" became a national institution. They were the pets of Royalty. They moved from theatre to theatre and crowded them all, although they had no scenery to pay for, few authors' fees to find, no "overhead." They took over £500,000 for seats. A £100 share became worth **£5,000.**

Human nature could not Stand it. Almost from the Start there were rows about songs, the relative importance of the different members of the troupe, the large share of the takings received by the original Co-Ops, as compared with the salaries paid to those who joined afterwards—yes, a score of things.

For a long time Laddie was the shepherd of the flock, the bell-wether, the leader. He kept his head. He *was* the head. When he left, the Co-Ops lost theirs.

Flattery added to the trouble. They did not understand that most of them could be replaced, although, if some one ever was replaced, they often chose the wrong recruit.

LADDIE CLIFF

The lesson of Pelisser's "Follies" was loft on them. They thought they could go on for ever.

Laddie is a Christian Scientist, and he married Phyllis Monkman, his second wife. In his earlier days he travelled all over America, year after year, usually in vaudeville, but he was also in New York's first *café chantant* show, in which Will Rogers and Olga Petrova were among the Stars. It was when he followed Lauri de Frece in "To-night's the Night" in Chicago that England called him home again.

When he appeared as the leading comedian in "Tip Toes" at the Winter Garden, it was his first return to that house since 1900, or thereabouts—it was then the famous "Old Mo"—when, as "Little Cliff," he was one of six extra turns paid five shillings on Saturday nights by J. L. Graydon!

"I had to sing a couple of songs and then do a 'wallop,'" he told me. "I wore a yellow suit; that's all I remember now. The next Saturday I was at the old Standard, which is now the Victoria Palace. There I got only half a crown! On one of those Saturday nights, if I was good, I might get a few weeks of regular work at £2, £2 10s., or £3." Now, of course, Laddie can earn, sometimes, £300 a week, salary and share and partnership.

I regard him as one of the minor hopes of the English musical comedy Stage. Although he has great limitations on the Stage, he is wise enough to know it. He can work splendidly with other people. He makes himself part of a team. He speaks kindly of the others. He helps.

One of his disasters was "Cliff Perry, Ltd.," which produced "Fantasia." I shall never forget the booing on the first night. Eric Blore, facing the angry gallery, grimaced back at them. Another trial was the first night of "Shake Your Feet," at the Hippodrome. It was dreadful. Milton Hayes got the bird, but went on until it flew away. Yet Laddie got to work next morning and the show made money.

They do not teach his sort of wisdom in the schools. You have to learn it by work, by "keeping on." You have to learn to profit by the mistakes you make.

NOEL COWARD

THE IDOL OF THE BRIGHT YOUNG THINGS

HE is "Noel Coward Incorporated" in America—yes, a limited company, with himself, Gladys Calthrop, and Jack Wilson as the directors. I am glad he is a one-man business here. You could not call him "Noel Coward Limited," could you? Noel Coward is a product, a symbol of this age. Flapperised youth adores him. Pallid boys cheer all he does. He represents their ideal of revolt.

Men of forty regard him as a boy, for he is only twenty-nine. Youths of twenty regard him as a blase old man. We grow young very soon, in these days.

Sometimes he regards me as his chief enemy. The truth is, I am an enemy of all the shallowness for which he stands and the trivialities that he glorifies. Yet, now and then, when I have exposed the nothingness of most of his work, he has smiled at me limply, and said: "I see you have been very elfin."

His two first plays, "I'll Leave it To You," and "The Young Idea," excited the baby boys so much that they hung coloured mufflers all round the boxes on the first night of the latter and nearly cried with joy.

Noel should have known better. He had been a boy-actor with Italia Conti on tour, and, when he was in Liverpool with her, he cried at her knee because he was spending Christmas away from home. Sometimes he is still as young as that.

He first got the bird in "London Calling," which Lord Lathom backed and for which Noel wrote sketches and songs, and in which he acted and sang. Then came the play that made his name, "The Vortex," which, backed by Michael Arlen, who found £150, was produced at Hampstead, and then

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came to the Royalty with Noel in the leading part. No, it was not the great success you think !

Few of Coward's plays have made much money. It ran only a few months in London, was bought for the provinces for £1,100, the record price for a comedy, and then ran only for a fortnight on tour. The same thing happened in America. I wrote in *Variety* a long article attacking its decadence before it reached New York. A pro-English millionaire had the thing re-printed and broadcast by the thousand. In spite of all the noise, " The Vortex " ran in New York only a few months ; then it spent two weeks in Boston and two weeks in Chicago, and that was the end.

You've heard a lot of noise about Noel Coward. I read once that he had seven plays running in New York at the same time. He has never had more than two. I read once that he was one of the highest-paid dramatists in the world. That is not true, either.

The sparkle on the surface has sometimes been the frost.

" The Vortex " did not contain one clever line. " Fallen Angels " was a leer. " Sirocco " was a fiasco. " Easy Virtue " ran because of Jane Cowl. " Home Chat " was a great failure; it lasted only five weeks. The last week took only £480.

" Hay Fever," much to my surprise, was cheered at the Ambassadors, with the result that a young man, apparently a Stranger to first nights, turned to me, and said : " Pardon me, sir, but is this a good play ? " It was Marie Tempest who made it.

Whenever I have met Noel Coward in argument, I have won. When he wrote " The Marquise," I objected to a line in which a man said: " My aunt had lots of lovers in a convent." The line was cut out.

When he sold for £75 a song for " White Birds," there were two lines in it to which I objected. Those two lines were removed.

When, outside Daly's, they put a long list of eulogies of " Sirocco " on one side on a panel, the panel on the other side was empty except for one line from me, slating it, with, on top, just the announcement—" Mr. Swaffer." " Sirocco," of course, lost a great deal of money.

HANNEN STAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

" You are the only man who could help us to abolish the Censorship," said Noel to me once.

" My dear Noel," I replied, " it would be easier to abolish you! A journalist like myself works with a thousand times more censorship than you ever know about. Yet he says twenty times as much without offending anybody. If you cannot work inside the censorship, you do not know your job."

" Hay Fever," when done in America, Started with a sort of command performance. They Staged it one Sunday night and invited all the Stars and half the half-wit " notabilities." Laura Hope Crews, who played the lead, dried up, and it lasted only a few nights after that. " This Was a Man," banned in London, went to New York and ran a week. It was one of the nastiest of all.

Noel usually depends on old ideas for his plots. " Hay Fever" was a Story Constance Collier told about Hartley Manners¹. " The Queen Was in the Bar Parlour," as I always called it, acknowledged its relationship to " Rupert of Hentzau," but, instead of writing, as Anthony Hope would have done, some love speech for a George Alexander to spout, Noel contented himself with fatuous remarks like, " She's got sweetbreads instead of brains," and " I always feel so well after parties."

These lines were greeted with loud laughter from Coward's youthful admirers. Even a palace scene was full of references to cigarettes and drinks.

Indeed, a Noel Coward play is a cocktail with a cherry picked off the floor.

Now, they talk of Noel Coward's " wit." When " Home Chat" was Staged, the Marquess of Winchester walked out after the second aft.

" It is an insult to the public," he said.

The dialogue of " Home Chat" was phrases like this:

" Life's funny."

" In what way ? "

" In lots of ways."

A ad like this:

" You're a fine fellow."

" In what way ? "

NOEL COWARD

" You're so tremendously glad,'

And also this:

" She'll be glad to see you."

" Why? "

" I don't know ! "

In " The Rat Trap," Noel paid me the great tribute of mentioning me.

" Where is it ? " asked somebody.

"Hanging next to Hannen Swaffer's photograph in the kitchen," was the reply. It was not " kitchen" in the original. The Censor saw to that!

" If you talk any more epigrams, I shall scream," said a character in the first aft.

Nobody talked any epigrams, unless " Will you have a Stinker ? " is the modern idea of brilliance.

" Good-night, little bride-so-soon-to-be," was the last line but one.

The blushing bride replied, with the last line of all. It consisted of the word, " Swine," which brought down the curtain.

Noel, you see, hears a remark at some cocktail party and goes away and writes a play about it. His great laugh in " Sirocco " was a remark made by Gladys Folliott, when they wouldn't let her dog into the Actors' Association.

I have more than once heard in his plays some inanity, which I heard someone say in small talk weeks before. He has thought it worth a play !

Yet the trouble about it is that Noel Coward is really a very clever man. He has a sense of the theatre. He has a great facility for writing words. Yet he has no real originality. He has nothing new to say. In his world, they dare not think.

In " The Queen Was in the Parlour," he had a queen who, called back to a Balkan State to rule, deserted the night clubs of her life and faced a revolution. Here was a great idea. He could not handle it.

In " Home Chat" he had a bright notion of a woman who, accused when she was innocent, went deliberately away and broke through convention only to find, on her return, that no one believed her confession of guilt.

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

Yet it lasted, all told, for one hour and twenty-six minutes, and footled away with silly words.

When "Sirocco" failed dismally, Noel went to Cochran and said: "Charlie, tear up the contract." They had a revue in the making, and Noel was decent enough to want to let the manager off, if Cochran was afraid to go on. Cochran, however, is an obstinate man, and he was right. He Staged, within a few weeks, "This Year of Grace," which Noel invented, wrote and composed, all by himself. He repeated the feat with "Bitter Sweet," but it was the production and Cochran's management that put over an old plot and not much music. I found it Strangely dull and marred by such a rawness as a song sung by four "ladies of the town" and such a Stupid ineffectiveness as four effeminate youths singing bunkishness. Coward seems unable to leave out this sort of thing. If he wants a big public, instead of the so-called "fashionables" attracted by Cochran, he must escape from the bleaters.

"Home Chat," which was an old play, he wrote in three weeks.

"I think 'Sirocco' will be better," said Ivor Novello to me on the first night. "Noel took three months over that!"

Nay, it was worse, the only original idea being, when an English clergyman made a speech in a bar, that he made it in Italian, which nobody could understand, and off the Stage, so that nobody could hear. That was banality gone mad.

Yet here is Noel, not yet thirty, really intelligent, really charming, successful in quick spurts. He did not have to learn his job. This is the trouble.

And, all the time around him, young men say: "Oh, Noel, how wonderful you are!" That is the other trouble.

I am sorry he regards me as an enemy, because I like the man.

When he was going to aft in "The Second Man," Basil Dean did not send me a ticket. When we asked the management why it was, we were told "Mr. Coward has a long and trying part, and he says he could not ad to-night if Mr. Swaffer were in the theatre. He can have the whole front row of Stalls for the second night."

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I had worried him down to that!

Noel had forgotten that, a few months before, when he acted in "The Constant Nymph," my eulogy of his performance was one of the most flattering things ever written about him. He came to tell me so !

In these days, every young man is a Coward to his valet.

JAMES RAMSAY MACDONALD

THE SOCIALIST IN A COURT SUIT

JAMES RAMSAY MACDONALD used to address envelopes in Chancery Lane for a living. So did George Graves.

The time came when he was the greatest Foreign Minister this country has known for nearly a century. Yet his parents were working folk, and at the age of twelve he was earning his living upon a farm. What a romance I •

It was a woman, of course, who raised him out of the rut. He came to London and tried to write articles for a living. One night he nearly gave up. Indeed, he went to a pillar-box to post letters to tell his friends he had gone back to Scotland. Something Stopped him. Not long afterwards he met the daughter of Professor Gladstone. He Stood for Parliament. She made him know people. They married. It was an ideal match. Their home in Lincoln's Inn Fields was a haven to which came refugees and reformers from all over the world. His wife's death clouded his life, and drove him back to his native melancholy.

I remember seeing Ramsay cheered in the Albert Hall by thousands of Socialists when he returned from India, where he had annoyed all officialdom and came out in favour of Home Rule. Then came the War, and his work for peace. They booed him out of meetings, and threw Stones. Australian soldiers Stormed the platform, threatening physical hurt.

Within a few years he was the first Socialist to become Prime Minister of England—this not long after the elefctors of Leicester nearly chased him from the town. He had a railway cleaner running the Colonies and a gas-worker leading the House I No, there was no revolution ! Our wonderful Constitution bore even that.

Posterity will write an apocrypha about those days. It

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will tell how Stephen Walsh, when Secretary for War, turned to the generals and colonels around him in conference at the War Office, and said: "Captain,"—they were all captains to him—"who takes precedence, the Secretary for War, or the Secretary for the Colonies?"

"You do, sir," said a puzzled general.

"Then, call up Jim Thomas," was the War Minister's reply, "and tell him to Step over for a minute."

There are scores of Stories like that.

I attended semi-State functions at that time with working men in attendance on the King. His Majesty, with an amazing tactfulness, fitted himself into the new regime. Ramsay's week-end visit to Windsor Castle, with his daughter, Ishbel, was an illumination of the democratic possibilities of our monarchical system. Yet, behind, on the back benches, were Ramsay's wild men, yelling for "Socialism in our time!"

Yes, Ramsay was the first Prime Minister of England who had ever been round the world. He had been round it twice. Although his Premiership was bitterly blamed, his work for world peace in the Foreign Office was so great that, when his Government fell, Lord Curzon was not allowed to go back. They were afraid Curzon would undo all that Ramsay had done. Even the doorkeepers of the Foreign Office respected him! All the officials realised that the despised Socialist knew what he was talking about.

His fall was as sudden as his rise.

First they accused him of taking a motor-car from a biscuit manufacturer. Then they blamed his Government for Stopping the prosecution of a wounded ex-soldier accused of sedition.

He insisted on being turned out of Downing Street on that issue, hoping the country would send him back. But then came the bombshell of the Zinovieff letter. An obscure man in a room in Moscow sent a letter to a few silly Communists in London—poor, loud-mouthed working men, talking of a plot to blow up dockyards or something. The *Daily Mail* printed it. Every old lady of ninety got out of bed and was pushed in a bath-chair to vote. The Empire was in danger! The Red Flag of Communism would soon be flying on St. Paul's! It was the end of all things!

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Ramsay blundered over his explanation. His Government was swept from power. Now he is back, with the future of the world in his hands. Disarmament is at last a thing within reach of practical discussion.

The way to Paradise is a Stony path with sharp flints always in front of you. You must not go along it on your knees, but with your head held high, even if someone throws the Stones.

IVOR NOVELLO

THE ACTOR WHOM EVERY SERVANT ADMIRES

I SAT with D. W. Griffith in the Savoy Grill late at night. It was two or three years after the War, when people who were complaining about Dora were all trying to make us sit up late to eat bored bacon.

Griffith, as usual, was talking about himself, much to my disgust, because I had not mentioned myself for two whole minutes. While we talked, a dark young man came in with two young folk, whose sex I did not notice, and sat at a table opposite.

"That's a good type," said Griffith, after a time.

"Strangely enough, he is a film actor," I replied.

"Who is it?"

"His name is Novello."

"Don't tell him now, but let him know I would like to see him."

Griffith did not want to be bored by any actors just then. He was still talking about himself.

When Novello walked out I followed him.

"Mr. Novello," I said—I scarcely knew him in those days—"D. W. Griffith wants to see you. I think he is going to give you a job."

"Thank God!" replied the dark young man. "This is the chance I have prayed for, for years. I recognised Mr Griffith when I entered the room, and started acting for him. I ate my food like a film hero is supposed to do on the screen, and I overdid everything carefully. When can I see him?"

"Give him a ring in the morning," I said. "He is staying here."

I thought the young man was going to cry, he was so excited.

Well, weeks passed, and nothing happened. Months went by. There was no sign.

Then suddenly Novello got a cable from New York. Shortly after, he went to play for Griffith the male lead in "The White Rose." I saw it, but all I remember is that it rained terribly and people cried a lot.

Griffith had an option on Novello, but it was never exercised. I thought it a terrible criticism, because, while Griffith always boasted he could even make monkeys aft, Ivor possessed all the outward attributes of a screen hero—luscious eyes, oliveness, glistening black hair, Romeo, Romeo. . . .

The trouble about Ivor Novello is that he can do most things a little. And, never mind what spiteful people say, he is really a very charming young man.

He is good to his mother, he is kind to all his friends, he likes to enjoy other people's success, he gives away much of the money he earns, and he is sweet-natured and thoughtful to a degree.

I do wish he could aft. I do wish he could write plays. I do wish he could compose music.

You see, he does all these things, so it would be much better if he did them well. He ought to have been talked to frankly, years ago. Instead, sycophants have done their worst.

There is an Ivor Novello Club, members of which write vitriolic notes to every critic who dares to slight their dark, young god. They have a magazine, and they all hold each other's hands when they see him on the screen. They even do it when, in some cinema, they see him try to play a White Hussar. They even do it when, in a theatre, they see him try to aft as an Apache. It is incredible, but it is true. It is they who do not laugh when he tries to love upon the Stage.

You see, Ivor is as good looking, almost, as Henry Ainley was when he was a young man. Still, Ainley grew up into a fine actor. Besides, he had a splendid voice.

Ivor has not progressed. Even in the War, you know, the tune he wrote to "Keep the Home Fires Burning" was considered work of national importance. Shortly afterwards, when Nikisch, the greatest conductor of recent years,

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was sent to Sweden by the Germans for propaganda reasons, we actually sent Ivor Novello! Only Eddie Marsh could have had a sense of humour like that. I see it solemnly recorded in my 1918 cuttings, " Mr. Novello has been for a three-months' tour in Sweden doing propaganda work." Betty Chester went with him. She sang.

This was about the time when J. T. Grein thought of winning the War by Staging " Salome " in Holland.

Ivor has thousands of fans. He also has enemies.

" Why do you boost that little Jew?" someone wrote to me once.

I laughed, and sent on the letter to Ivor, whose real name is Davies. He replied, of course, that he was Welsh and that, although it seemed funny, his grandfather was quite a well-known Revivalist preacher.

Ivor has had his set-backs. He once signed a contract to aft in a series of plays for Frank Curzon. " The Firebrand " was the first—and the last. He merely looked lovely in tights.

I suspected something would happen, a week before. I asked Ivor and Constance Collier and a few friends to a "farewell lunch." They came, thinking I was going to America by the next boat.

" No," I remarked, when we sat down. " I shan't be speaking to any of you next week."

" What do you mean ? " said Ivor.

" Your new play," I explained.

A wise critic foresees these things.

Still, it was much worse after " Liliom," when poor Ivor, who failed terribly in a comic adaptation of Molnar's play, meandered about the Stage, while in one scene Komisarjevsky belched real smoke at the audience.

" The great mistake was made of doing it in what is called the Russian manner," I wrote. " That is, its dreariness was made more dreary, its lack of inspiration was made more monotonous, its ugliness of theme was made cruder than before. After the play, a woman who had been sitting in the pit rushed up to me in the Street and shouted : ' If you give Ivor a good critique for this, I shall murder you !'

" Standers-by applauded her.

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" ' My life is quite safe, I replied."

Indeed, Madge Titheradge, who had been sitting in a Stage box, was carried away in a fainting fit during the third aft. Soon afterwards Ivor Novello rushed excitedly about the Stage, while a few people shouted, " Speech 1" and Komisarjevsky, Fay Compton, and Ivor all clapped each other.

When, quite fairly, I described the banality of it all, Ivor wrote me and said that my remarks were more like the savage attack of a fiend than dramatic criticism.

" I don't mind what you say of my productions or acting," he wrote, " as I firmly believe that candid friends are kindest, as long as they Stick to criticism. A few small things went wrong on the first night, lights being left on, etc. etc. Don't you know, you, who have been in the theatre world for years, the agony of mind we poor actors go through at the slightest mishap on the first night, when our nerves are tuned up to such a pitch that white seems definitely black ? Surely you don't pour away all your milk of human kindness on entering a theatre on a first night ? "

However, although Ivor hated my criticism, he profited by it, as actors often do. At the second performance there was no smoke used on the Stage at all. So I was right about that. On the second evening, too, a Stupid heaven scene was cut out altogether. So perhaps I was right about that scene also. At the next performance, however, the heaven scene was put back again, although the lighting was Still altered. So perhaps I was wrong and not right about that.

When I printed his reply, Ivor wrote thanking me. He is as charming and forgiving as that! In fact, he is as sweet as he looks.

"I dislike my appearance intensely," he says. "I hate my type. I want to do wonderful things for the Stage, not to be called beautiful. In ten years I shall play Hamlet, in three Romeo."

I don't suppose he will, but papers believe it. As it is, he writes very ordinary plays and acts in them himself.

I am glad " The Truth Game " was not the great failure I thought it would be. I am glad Du Maurier was wrong when he wouldn't produce it, because Ivor put his own

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money in the show. Anyway, it was a million times as good as that pitiful sketch, "The Gate Crasher," in which he appeared at the Palladium, and it was ten times as good as "Sirocco," which Noel Coward wrote for him, and which nearly caused a riot at Daly's.

During the last aft of "Sirocco," the gallery roared with laughter every time Ivor came on wearing light-blue pyjamas. When he carried a spaniel puppy and went out to buy some milk, the laughter grew even more cynical.

When the curtain fell the play was booed, Ivor Novello was booed, Noel Coward, the author, was booed, and there were derisive noises made at Basil Dean, the producer. For nearly ten minutes wild scenes went on.

Whenever Frances Doble was pushed forward by the author, however, there was wild excitement from upstairs.

"Bravo, Bunny I" they shouted. "You're wonderful! Bunny! Bunny! Bunny!" Then, although they had asked for a speech from Miss Doble, they would not listen to it, but shouted "Rubbish!"

Finally, Dean shouted for silence, and then Miss Doble said it was the happiest night of her life! This was greeted with laughter, because of the pitiful tragedy of the rest of it.

That was a Novello first night that I shall never forget. Ivor, you see, is such a nice young man. It makes me feel sorry.

JOHN MASEFIELD

POET WHO ONCE SWABBED OUT A BAR

NOYES went to Oxford, of course. John Masefield, long before that sort of age, had worked before the mast. You wouldn't believe it, for he has a shrinking manner and the quietest look I have ever seen. He is the champion of the under dog.

When, at rehearsal, one day, I said to him: "Is it true you used to sell beer in a New York saloon?" he replied: "I didn't reach that high level. I used to swab the floors."

When he was fourteen his father sent him to sea "to get the nonsense knocked out of him." Masefield looks as though it must have all been knocked out very thoroughly.

In the 'nineties, he was searching America for work, now and then joining tramp Steamers, sometimes trying to live by singing at Street corners. His most important job in America was handy man in a New York saloon, where he worked sixteen hours a day, cleaning beer taps, washing the glasses, polishing the brass, and squirting soda water into the faces of drunken tramps, and all for ten shillings a week! Then he would go up to his garret and read his "Morte d'Arthur," the only book he possessed, until he fell asleep.

Yet the time was to come, not long ago, when I saw him in a Canterbury hotel. He came across to speak to me, looking very nervous, I thought, hazarding my name, apparently afraid lest he was mistaken. We were speaking under the very shadow of the great cathedral in which I had just seen his modern miracle play, specially written for performance on the Steps in front of the high altar. It was the first play ever performed in an English cathedral since the Middle Ages. What a contrast to squirting soda water in the faces or drunken tramps. I call that triumph, being asked to write something to the glory of Almighty God in the shrine

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of Augustine, the cradle of English civilization. Yet, even in that play, Masefield made a mistake in the sex of a sheep.

Literature holds Masefield in great esteem. You hear of him nothing but kindness. Young writers go to him with their woes. He lives near Oxford with a theatre in his grounds where they played, once, "The Trial of Jesus," which the Censor banned from the London Stage, and in which Masefield got hold of the wrong Herod. His first editions reach a high price more quickly than those of any other living man.

Yet I remember one Sunday night in the Royalty Theatre, where, very modestly, in a sort of Soho slum, they acted, for the first time, "The Tragedy of Nan." No manager had rushed to Stage it. It was done just in that modest Sunday-night way, the way in which Bernard Shaw had to begin. No one took much notice. Yet, that night, we looked on Genius.

When nearly all to-day's Stage nonsense has been long forgotten, that Story of Nan will remain. Lillah McCarthy, who played Nan, of course, must have been dreaming of the past that night, because the actress and the poet first met in an orchard when they were both thirteen.

"He Stood apart from the rest of us under an apple-tree crowded with shiny red apples," explained Miss McCarthy. "When we asked him to play with us, he backed against the tree. When I asked him to climb the tree and give me an apple, he was rooted Stiff with shyness and could not move. So I climbed the tree myself and got him an apple, which he took but did not eat."

If Adam had been as nervous as Masefield, it might have all been another Story.

Noyes writes of the sea in that declaiming sort of way, as though the sea were our servant. He has crossed it in liners. Masefield writes as though, very bitterly, he understands. He has eaten salt pork in some Stinking cabin.

Yet poets are Strange contradictions. Behind Masefield's shrinking manner and great understanding, is a cynic. When he named a Story of adventure, "Odtaa," they asked him what it meant.

"One damn thing after another," he replied.

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Cochran used it for the name of a Pavilion revue!

Who would ever think that Masefield tries to keep the well of English undefiled? He uses such coarse language himself in "The Everlasting Mercy." Who would believe, remembering his phrase, "One damn thing after another," that he has sat by the hour at Oxford Studying the speech of budding elocutionists?

Still, who would think that a man who used to clean out a bar would live to dramatize "The Story of Jesus" and, at the request of the Archbishop of Canterbury himself, write a miracle play about the birth of Christ?

BILLY MERSON

THE CLOWN WHO LOVES EVENING DRESS

“**C**OME and see the clown," I have said sometimes. And I have taken a friend into Billy Merson's dressing-room.

Even when, as an a&or-manager, he was appearing in his own show, "My Son John," he acted as a clown one night in the Olympia circus. When at a James White party he broke off a talk with me to do a crocodile walk on his hands, just as years before he did when, in order to join a circus, he ran away from his home in Nottingham.

"Ping-Pong, the Clown, Engaged at Enormous Expense," he read one day on the bills.

"You won't want me then, guv'nor," he said ; "I mean, now that you've got Ping-Pong."

"That's you," replied the circus proprietor.

It was—at £1 a week. When Billy couldn't get £z ios. he left and went on the halls. He became Snakella and Trevella, with a partner no one knew.

The song, "Setting the Village on Fire," made him. He jumped from £8 in 1908 to £50. In "Rose Marie" he got £450.

Then he loft money over "My Son John."

"Riquette" or "Yvonne" was James White's problem at Daly's, once. Merson, going into "Riquette," had a song called "I Like the Polka Best." White cut it out. Merson bought the show. White ran "Yvonne" at Daly's ; Merson, calling his purchase "My Son John," Staged his at the Shaftesbury. How they watched the rival takings every night! White loft most!

There are two artists in Merson's small frame : Mr. William Thompson, who wants to wear a dress suit and be a gentle-

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

man; and Billy Merson, red-nosed comic. The latter is the real one. The former is a fake.

See Billy with his family I His brother Steve is always there; his son and his daughter are mostly in close attendance. His wife, as short as the rest of them, is often around. At Nottingham, Billy's mother Studies every Press cutting about her bon—they are all sent to her.

If Billy goes to law, all the family go to the Temple with him to attend the consultation in chambers. If Billy is ill, all the family take him to Harley Street. At Thames Ditton, where they live, they all swim together, or play games. It's all a family show.

If you call on Billy in his dressing-room, a drink awaits you the moment you arrive.

Yet Billy takes himself with a dogged seriousness. He writes his own songs. He plots his own gags. He does not understand failure. In fact, he does not know it is there. He goes on. . . . Laugh, clown, laugh! . . . A fall or two more cannot hurt much. Besides, there is always the cheering at the end.

Even when, in the Edgar Wallace failure, "The Lad," he ran only a month, Billy rushed on the halls on the following Monday with a new show. When, on the first night, it flopped he smiled.

"It will be all right in a day or two," he said. It wasn't. It was a burlesque of the talkies. Alas, the talkies have won!

They even beat him in a lawsuit he brought against an Al Jolson film. It cost Billy thousands.

I am afraid the talkies will go on winning. . . .

GILBERT FRANKAU

THE JOURNALIST WHO MADE MONEY !

IT was Charles Higham, who, in 1917, first brought Gilbert Frankau to me. His first novel, "The Woman of the Horizon," was just coming out, and Gilbert, who had then only sold cigars, written Byronesque rhymes about the War, and been to Eton, wanted publicity, I laugh to think of it now, because Gilbert makes my own methods look like those of a child.

"Til tell you what I'll do," I said. "Write me a column review of it yourself, and I'll print it."

After all, I was an editor, and it was getting copy free. Gilbert did it.

Since then, Frankau has been painted in hunting costume, and he has married the charming Aimee de Burgh, who shuts him up in a room every morning, and won't let him come out until he has written his 2,000 words. Another actress tells me she does the same thing to her husband, Valentine Williams. I wish someone would do it to me.

Gilbert is one of the die-hards about the War. "What shall I do about the P.E.N. Club?" he asked me once in Ciro's Grill-room. "Galsworthy wants to invite Hauptmann, next month, as the club's guest, and I have threatened to resign."

As the P.E.N. Club was formed by Galsworthy to make the world's authors love each other, I was astounded.

"My dear Gilbert," I said, "it is up to you. After all, you fought in the War with great distinction, and if you still feel bitter about it, be bitter. We must leave these things, each to an individual conscience. I am a Pacifist, but you must please yourself."

Gilbert left the P.E.N. Club. Galsworthy was very hurt, but Gilbert does things his own way.

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When he and I debated at a Jew's Club in the East End on " Are the Jews detrimental to Art ? " Gilbert gave me a terrible hiding. But I got my own back at the O.P. Club three years later, when he came back from America and talked a lot of drivel about the American theatre.

He could beat me on the Jew question because he is a Jew, but I am old-fashioned enough to consider the theatre a Christian institution.

After that, Gilbert became a journalist. He Started *Britannia* with William Harrison's money, hired all sorts of people at extravagant prices to write old-fashioned Stuff, had his office fitted up as a sort of captain's cabin with lights that went on and off to warn his Staff when he was thinking, had his name in flaming lights in Piccadilly Circus, and then, after a few weeks, gave it up and was paid in compensation more money for a few weeks' work than I could earn in a couple of years.

His first leading article, one called " Zero," rather gave it all away. It described how he, the captain of the ship, was just going to launch a new enterprise, and how the Staff was waiting outside for this, the last page of copy.

" Am I right ? " it said.

No, he was wrong. *Britannia* may rule the waves, but she cannot waive the rules.

Then Gilbert went to France to write a book, and I read in a paper that he had engaged a lot of Russian servants.

I like Gilbert. He is so direct. I like his confidence. But I did not like his book.

RUDYARD KIPLING

SEVERAL POETS IN ONE MAN

TWICE in my life I have been summoned to my office to write Rudyard Kipling's obituary.

Always, however, when I write an obituary the person gets well immediately. In fact, I once wrote to Henry Arthur Jones and asked him to let me know whenever he was feeling unwell, as my obituary would cure when all the doctors had failed.

Well, when Kipling does die, they will say a lot of things because Kipling is all things to all men. The Radical bits of us remember the incredible vulgarity of much of his work, **the** banality of the lines which opened the Boer War:

" Pass the hat for your credit's sake
And pay, pay, pay ! "

and deplore the childishness of the jingle :

" We've had a jolly good lesson
And it serves us jolly well right."

I remember, too, Standing at Bonar Law's funeral **in the** Abbey near the ambassadors from all the nations when they sang "Recessional," which Kipling intended as an anthem. When we came to the line, " And lesser breeds without the Law," I saw how un-ChriStian it was, how typical of India, not of England, of the Viceregal Lodge in Curzon's day, perhaps, but certainly not of a contrite heart in the house of God. y

Yet who so well as Kipling has heartened Britain **in her** blackest hours? Who has so chastened us in our times of **slackness?** He has chanted our exultation **and put our resolution into** words.

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

It was Strange that, a week before his recent illness, I came across him walking through the Central Lobby of the House of Commons, unnoticed. The Poet of Empire Stalked through the Lobby unknown! His beetle brows Stuck out in vain. His earnest Stride made no echo.

Yet every exile in the furthest British outpost knows his rhymes. Every smoking concert has heard "Gunga Din" recited, and "Follow Me 'Ome" sung by some would-be baritone.

Now and then I think of him as a man who missed his great chance of immortality. I see him surrounded, in India, by a score of races, contrasts of great wealth and abject poverty, famine, colour, gloom, despair, and tyranny. I see processions of elephants passing him and diamonds sparkling in the night and palaces of white marble. Then all I can remember are the dirty little love affairs written about in "Plain Tales from the Hills." When I remember "Kim" I am heartened again.

There are several Kiplings—the Anglo-Indian, narrow, superior; the human Kipling, who can sit at a roadside in summer and talk to road-menders; the well-rehearsed orator, whose tribute to surgery, spoken at the Middlesex Hospital on Prize-giving Day, was a masterpiece of words, and whose warning in the Ulster crisis, "A province and a people of Great Britain are to be sold to their and our enemies," was one of those mistakes that cost us Ireland.

He lives a life almost apart. They say he writes the speeches of his cousin, Stanley Baldwin; Still, lots of people are accused of doing that. He will not have his poems recited on the Wireless. He is a man who knows his own mind.

He should have been Poet Laureate when Alfred Austin died, of course, because, more than any other man, he can put Imperialism into ringing words.

But he had offended Queen Victoria. "Here's to the Widow of Windsor," he wrote in a ballad. The Court never forgot. Nowadays, the remark would pass unnoticed.

He is the greatest writer of short Stories whom England has produced for many years, yet when he goes in for journal-

RUDYARD KIPLING

ism you wonder what it is all about. Words! Their array frightens me.

It is typical of the man that he is Still " Mr. Kipling," typical of his Nonconformist descent, typical of his Yorkshire blood.

GENERAL HIGGINS

CHIEF OF STAFF WHO BROKE A DEAD MAN'S WILL

GENERAL BOOTH'S bloodless face was as white as his long whiskers, as white as the pillow on which he lay. He was marble. He was dead. Yet even in death he was dominant.

"We had better move him over," I said.

"Anything you like," said his secretary.

"Why not get four soldiers in to Stand at the four corners of the bed?" I asked. "It'll look more impressive."

"Yes, if you like," said the secretary.

I had taken a man up to photograph the dead General. We moved the bed. We posed the sentinels, who stood with bowed heads. The picture went all over the world.

Salvationists looked at it and wept. They saw the Blood-and-Fire jersey, and remembered their mission. Yes, even in death, old Booth was a tyrant. I nearly trembled when we moved the bed.

Two days later they marched him through London, through the Streets in which he had preached salvation, through the slums he had tried *to* save.

I shall never forget the tyranny of his look. He was a modern Moses, fresh from a new Sinai—a Moses who had written his own commandments on his own piece of Stone.

They called us once to headquarters in Queen Victoria Street. "The General has something to say." The reporters stood round respectfully, with their notebooks. George Herring, the ex-bookmaker, had left the Salvation Army a vast sum for a housing scheme. Old Man Booth thundered forth its details. Only I ventured to criticize. I had once sat in a Fabian nursery, you see. The General turned on me like thunder and lightning. I don't suppose he had been questioned for years.

GENERAL HIGGINS

Well, they built the houses and put slum dwellers in, and the slum dwellers, not used to new houses, chopped up the window-frames, and put coals in the bath, of course, and wouldn't pay the rent.

Poor General! I remembered that when I saw him lying dead, so dead that, for the first time, he could not answer back.

"What will become of it all now?" I thought—"all these millions of soul-saving soldiers, not one of whom can smoke a cigarette or drink a glass of beer or go to a theatre. Will the knee-drill go on, now that their Moses has reached Pisgah?"

Well, William Booth was gathered to his fathers, and his son, Bramwell Booth, succeeded him. But no one could succeed William Booth. The old man passed on the succession, but no one could succeed.

They found the name "Bramwell Booth" in the dead man's envelope sixteen years ago. But Bramwell Booth had none of his father's greatness, only his name. There were buildings and assurance companies and workshops and factories to run, branches in every land, and Salvationists speaking a hundred tongues.

William Booth was a great man of business and a man of spiritual perception. You cannot have two of those in a century. Bramwell Booth clung to power, as his father had done; but his followers talked behind his back. For sixteen years he hung on. He had written another name, and put it in an envelope. Who was it to be? There were Mrs. Booth, his daughter Catherine, and his sister Eva.

So Eva came back from America, with her own Press manager, who gave out the dope. Sixty-three commissioners came from all the countries of the earth.

For six months the General had been ill. He was seventy-two. He could not carry on, they said.

I thought of the Skeleton Army in Folkestone, the crowd of roughs that used to follow the Salvation Army about, throw Stones, persecute, gibe, jeer. I thought of Eastbourne, where in the old days Salvationists were thrown into the sea.

Their movement had grown to power. Money was now at Stake. The Booths moved about in high-powered cars,

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

and the evening papers were provided with a beautiful nine-days wonder.

Meanwhile, on a sick-bed at Southwold, the old man Still clung to power. They appointed five Commissioners to visit him. He could scarcely hear what they said, they reported, even with his deaf-box to his ears.

My mind went back to the old General, the founder, yelling out at a meeting: "Are you saved?" as he pointed his finger, and "Are you saved?" as he pointed again. At last he screamed it at a man in the front row, a man who yawned and said: "I am a reporter."

Then I thought of Bramwell, the son, saying to Irving Taylor, the reporter, "Are you saved?" by sheer force of habit.

"It is not customary to interview the Press," replied Taylor.

You cannot laugh. They have saved thousands and built up wrecked lives again. But now the power is there and the money.

Even on his sick-bed, in his Stricken age, Bramwell Booth hit back. He applied for an injunction. Hearing that, one of the sixty-three Commissioners dropped dead. The hymns were sung and the prayers went up.

Then, in his turn, Bramwell Booth died, beaten, superseded. So it is the job of Edward Higgins to carry on, rebuild, restore the confidence. Heavens, the prayers it will need 1

G. B. SHAW

THE GREATEST MAN IN THE WORLD

YEARS ago, when, having no banking account, I thought I would Study political economy, I joined the Fabian nursery and listened to all the old men who in those days were mankind's worst rebels. Now, their views are Acts of Parliament, passed by Conservatives.

Shaw is now a lean and slippered Pantaloon who could play Clown, and does, any night, or Harlequin, for all that, so lissom is his leggishness.

Shaw, I remember, lectured to me on "Rent," with a blackboard and a piece of chalk. He drew a map of an island and showed how the price of land went up. I think Winston Churchill ought to go to a lecture like that.

Well, that is how Fabians changed the world—or, rather, Shaw did. Now, whenever they sack a Shah in Persia, or a Lenin rises in Russia, or Spain thinks of building a road, Shaw did it years ago. He taught the young people of the world to think for themselves.

Because the old men had visions, they made the young men dream dreams. >

Shaw told the truth about the War when few other people dared, and he told the truth about Henry Irving's backers in the week that Irving died, with the result, I remember, that at the Guildhall School of Music, when Shaw was lecturing, a silly little man Stood up and said:

"How dare you talk here when you insult our great **dead?**"

Shaw's work will not live—that is, with the exception of the first and last acts of "Back to Methuselah" and "St. Joan," the greatest play of our time, which Shaw wrote, however, without understanding the psychic side of Joan's

life, the part which made her something more than a farm girl.

A few years ago I invited Shaw to a direct-voice seance. He sent back one of those insulting postcards of which he is so fond.

"I gave up table turning in my childhood," he wrote.

"Now that you are returning to your second childhood," I replied—for I also can write postcards—"I thought you would like to have another go."

I am sometimes sorry I wrote it now, for I have a profound admiration for Shaw, one bordering on affection. Yet he asked for it.

Although he has written some of the worst plays in the world—"Press Cuttings," for instance, and "Adolphus Does His Bit"—I regard Shaw as the greatest living man, when he is not the greatest living bore.

He is by far the finest platform debater I have ever heard. His mind is an encyclopaedia and underneath his whiskers is the kindest of men. His actors adore him. Young dramatists have much to thank him for. Even at the opera he wears a bone Stud that Sticks out at the back.

"How much are you going to pay me?" he once said, when, as a young reporter, I went to get an interview for the *Daily Mail*.

"Nothing," I replied.

"But Mr. Hearst pays me £300 for an article," replied Shaw. "Why should Alfred Harmsworth have one for nothing?"

As I turned away disappointed Shaw called me back.

"Will you get the £300 if I don't?" he asked. "What I want to know is, why should Alfred Harmsworth get it?"

Then, relenting, as always, he said:

"Let's see. There are twelve hundred words in one of your columns, aren't there?"

"Yes," I replied.

"If you call back in an hour my secretary will give it to you."

When I called back there were exactly twelve hundred words, nicely typed and signed "G. B. Shaw."

Yet, great man as I regard Shaw, I must say that his plays

G. B. SHAW

usually bore me when they are revived. When I saw "Major Barbara" redone, a quarter of a century after its first performance, my mind played round that word, "revive," which means bringing back to life something which is nearly dead, like a drowning man. They lay him on the beach and wag his arms about.

Revivals of plays usually bore me. They never stand it. Except when they deal with history, which is seldom more wrong than it used to be, both Ibsen and Shaw soon date. Being combative journalists, they indicted the evils of their time, and that was the end of it. "A Doll's House" is as dead as the dodo.

The trouble with Shaw is that he wears whiskers. I discovered, years ago, that the only men who never changed their opinions were those who never shaved their chins. But for the razor, men would never have had to stare at themselves in the glass every morning.

While it makes the foolish ones very vain, it makes the clever ones very humble. It even makes some use the razor to cut their throats. It makes the wise ones see through themselves. The whiskered ones escape. •

I seriously suggest to Mr. Shaw that he buys a safety razor—he is too old now to be trusted with the old-fashioned kind—and that every morning, for a quarter of an hour, he first covers his face up with lather and then uncovers his soul with a nice scrape-blade. He would not dare to repeat himself if he shaved his chin.

The mirror exposes everything. The looking-glass is the one thing which the theatre cannot show. It dare not hold the mirror up to its own footlights. So, always, when you see a Stage mirror, you see some whitewash on it. That is why the Stage is such a cloudy reflection of life.

It was pretty sickening to hear Shaw saying, in "Major Barbara," "Every true Englishman detests the English."

That is utterly untrue. The only people who hate themselves are the Irish, which is proved by the fact that no rich Irishman who has made money abroad ever goes home again. The two exceptions are John McCormack, who goes for a visit, and Boss Croker, who soon died. If Shaw so hates the English, why does he live here? Ireland is quite

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

a safe place for him now, except that it wants to censor his books.

The English do not hate each other. In fact, it is their love for themselves that annoys every other race. Besides, if the Irish were as clever as they think, we should all be talking Erse.

"Major Barbara," which is crammed full with misstatements, is made Stupid with childish jokes like, "I had rather go and live in some cheap place like Bedford Square or even Hampstead."

The loud laughter which followed this remark gave you an idea of the mentality of the audience. Highbrow audiences always laugh at the Stage mention of Hampstead. No one knows why they do. Shaw knows, apparently. So, copying fashion, he put the line in.

I deny that Andrew Undershaft could possibly exist.

I deny that munition manufacturers purposely make war, just as I deny that Lord Dawson of Penn purposely creates disease. Both disease and war are preventible things which create a market for something which, naturally, is supplied.

I deny that in England—I am Sticking to the facts I know, and not following Shaw's example by making assertions—any munition manufacturer has any control over the Press. I have edited newspapers in my time and I have never once seen one indication of it. Why, munition makers go on their knees to you to ask you to use their wives' pictures.

If they ran governments, surely someone would have blown the gaff. If Lloyd George would not do it, well, John Morley would have done so. If Asquith had been afraid, would not John Burns have said so once ?

I get tired of these wild sayings by wild men. Bernard Shaw seldom acquaints himself with the facts. I think he gets them from newspapers and does not know what the newspapers leave out. A journalist's memory is made up of unrecorded things. I notice, whenever people who write books about famous crimes come into a newspaper office, that they merely look up the files and never interview the reporters who went out on the Story, and learn about the things they couldn't print at the time.

G. B. SHAW

There are pages of Shaw which are great literature. Some of the end of " Back to Methuselah " reaches sublime heights. The Inquisitor's speech in " Saint Joan " is the last word in logic, defending the cruellest idea in history. In writing the epilogue to " Saint Joan," Shaw rendered To-day's martyrs a great service.

But much that he writes is both bunk and banality. He ridicules the Salvation Army by choosing as his two converts two humbugs. He funks the fad. You should indict the Salvation Army, if you object to it, by indicting its genuine conversions.

Shaw imagines that religion never moves. It moves, of course, much faster than Mr. Shaw. The Church of England is moving so quickly that one-third of it wants to go all the way back to Henry VIII. Going back is real progress.

Even the Church of England, which Shaw pilloried in " Major Barbara," is much more advanced than he is. He merely thinks he knew it all when he was a little boy.

If I had time, I would take almost every line of " Major Barbara " and throw it in Shaw's face, torn into scraps of pre-war paper. It is as old-fashioned as its long speeches.

Major Barbara and Cusins and Lady Britomart, and half the characters, are all impossible people. They all talk, at times, like Shaw, and Shaw talks too much.

I had known all that for a long time when Sir Barry Jackson tried to start a sort of English Bayreuth at Malvern, where he lived.

" We will have a Shaw Festival every summer," he said.

So Shaw wrote " The Apple Cart " at the age of seventy-three, and there was a sort of circus in which I was invited to bang the drum or be a dromedary, or something. Shaw was the elephant. He trumpeted like mad.

Five years before, Malvern had been the only town in England that had booed Ramsay Macdonald when, as first Socialist Prime Minister, he drove through its Streets.

Then, as Shaw's incessant showmanship had deluded even Malvern, the most Tory part of Baldwin's own constituency, the town turned him into a patron saint. Local saints are good business. While they were taking the waters, I suppose, visitors had to take ahaw—two purgatives in one.

HANNEN SWAPPER'S WHO'S WHO

Oh, the row there was, when I told the truth about the play and its ineffective dullness !

" Poor Swaffer! " said Shaw, trying to dismiss my truthfulness as " tosh." One of the lamblike critics called me a " yammerer." I had found a joint in the armour and got my rapier through. I need not have worried. "The Apple Cart" upset itself.

Shaw was behind the times. Shaw was an old man. Shaw could not look forward any more.

The Socialist Government, which he helped to bring into being, had much more vision and much more common-sense. It was in office, trying to bring about disarmament. Shaw was only yapping.

RALPH BLUMENFELD

THE MAN WHO DID NOT CHANGE HIS NAME

RALPH D. BLUMENFELD is the only American journalist who ever came to England, settled down among us, remained, and not only made good* but left a mark on the English journalism of his time. Yes, and he did not change his name. He is a first-class reporter and a man with an unerring eye for "news." He is an editor whose judgment I would unhesitatingly accept. I know, because I have sought it. He has no prejudice to blind him, no antagonisms to distort his views. He does not "interfere." He likes people and they like him.

When the Great Strike came, R.D.B., as he is known to his Staff, surprised even those who had worked with him longest by turning printer. All the compositors had gone on Strike—against their will—and most of the papers just gave in and did nothing. Not so the *Daily Express*. The Editor himself went upstairs, took off his coat and set up the type.

There were only two in the composing room—the master machinist, who worked the linotype, and R.D.B., who set up the headings, made up the columns, and pulled the proofs.

That is what I call being a practical journalist. Anyone can write the leader. I, now a dramatic critic, know that anyone can write the nonsense they write about the theatre.

R.D.B., in the emergency of a Strike, merely went back to his boyhood. He was born in Winconsin, in 1864. His father owned a small newspaper, and young Ralph learned his alphabet, at the age of six, actually at the printer's case.

These young men want to come down from Oxford and write gossip. They think knowing Tallulah Bankhead by sight is all there is to learn. Some of the older ones have been right through the mill.

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

Even when he was eight years old, Ralph Blumenfeld wanted to become the editor of the New York *Herald*. In those days that newspaper stood for great things in the United States. James Gordon Bennett was then the most enterprising journalist in America. He did things. Young Blumenfeld's imagination was kindled.

Anyway, when he was seventeen, R.D.B. began to carry out his plans by starting as a reporter in Kansas City. He had his ups and downs, changes of fortune, jobs in one newspaper office after another, but within five years of starting out in journalism he was a reporter on the New York *Herald*.

More than that, they took notice of him. When he was only twenty-three he was sent to London to report Queen Victoria's Jubilee. He took full advantage of his opportunity! In those days the important people of England were more open to access by American journalists than by those in England, for English journalism was very respectable, like a butler, and would take any kick. He interviewed Gladstone. He bearded Tennyson's whiskers, and he sent home interviews with many of the pompous and the great.

The New York *Herald* was rabidly in favour of Home Rule in those days, and Gladstone, seeing an advantage, took up young Blumenfeld, and made a friend of him.

R.D.B.'s work seems to have made a great impression in New York, because, when he returned, he was made managing editor.- I have never known what a managing editor is. I always think it is a man who just manages to edit. Still, he did it, and anyone who knew James Gordon Bennett can guess what his job was like.

Bennett was probably the nastiest man who ever owned a newspaper. Brilliant in his youth, he developed arrogance, megalomania, powers of tyranny, and was nearly as unpopular in Paris, where he lived the later years of his life, as he was in New York, which he left under a cloud.

Towards the end he used to choose his Staff by asking young men to call on him at his villa in the Champs Elysees. The young man would go into a drawing-room and see some Pekinese dogs. He did not know, but what the dogs did decided his fortune. Bennett, in the meantime, was hiding behind a curtain.

RALPH BLUMENFELD

If the dog spoke to you, you were engaged. If it ignored you, that was the end of it. ,

Indeed, it is recorded of Bennett, in all sincerity, that once, when on his yacht, he saw the captain knocking a sailor about, he walked up to him and said, " You're the editor of the New York *Herald*."

" What do you mean ? " said the captain.

" Go to New York and sit in the editorial chair," replied " The Commodore," as they called him, " and, if anybody interferes, hit him on the jaw like you did that sailor."

Young R.D.B. had something like this happen to him. Having returned to London, he was in charge of the ill-fated London edition of the *Herald*. One day Bennett arrived and sacked the lot. That was the end of the *Herald* in London.

Still, R.D.B. was not sacked entirely. He was treated like the captain of the yacht and sent back to America as business manager of the New York office. The reason was that he knew nothing about business.

Among his other jobs was to put up the famous *Herald* building. The reason he was given that job was he knew nothing about building.

Still, he saw that the famous owls were put outside, the owls that had their eyes lit up at night.

" Why do you have owls outside ?" somebody once asked Bennett.

" Because owls are awake all night," he was told.

" Yes, but they sleep all the daytime," said the man.

R.D.B. was an owl for some time, and then he returned to London, and, in 1900, joined Alfred Harmsworth, becoming the news editor of the *Daily Mail*. Two years later, came one of the inevitable arguments with Harmsworth, and R.D.B. joined C. A. Pearson on the *Daily Express*. Ten years later he succeeded Pearson as chairman, and, when the finances of the *Daily Express* were in low water, kept the paper going by force of his own personality.

One day he heard that young Max Aitken, a Canadian new to London, had money to invest. He tackled him, and got him to save the *Daily Express* from disaster. For some years the paper lost money, and then came the times of fortune—and the Beaverbrook peerage.

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Recently, under R.D.B.'s magnetic editorship, the *Daily Express* has made such great Strides that it is rivalling the *Daily Mail* itself.

Without R.D.B. all this would have been impossible. He is wonderfully popular. He is loyal to his Staff, who adore him. He never loses his temper, and he could not lose his head.

He has always scorned personal preferment. Membership of the Carlton Club and the presidency of the Institute of Journalists are the only two honours he has ever accepted. He is a working journalist—and proud of it.

LORD BEAVERBROOK

THE JOURNALIST WHO LEARNED IT LATE

ONCE, after I had been dining with Lord Beaverbrook and I heard him ask his wife for a shilling, to give to the hat and cloak man, I said, " You remind me of Lord Northcliffe. He always used to walk about without money."

" What else is there about me that reminds you of Lord Northcliffe ? " he asked.

" Ah ! " I replied. " That would take me a long time . . . "

In some ways, Beaverbrook is much like the Northcliffe I remember; in others, he is his contradiction. Northcliffe was by far the greater journalist. Beaverbrook knows at least a million times more about politics, and, except journalism, which Northcliffe had studied all his life, a thousand times as much of about nearly everything. He is much better read. He has much more knowledge of the world. For one thing, he does not go to bed at nine-thirty every night.

I first met Lord Beaverbrook when, during the war, he was Minister of Information.

Northcliffe, in those days, was pretending to run propaganda in enemy countries. It was all very artful and very secret. All I know of it was, that whenever I saw him at Crewe House, which he made his headquarters, he seemed to be running the *Times* and finding fault with the *Daily Mail*. At this time, with a hotel near the Strand as his centre of activity, Beaverbrook was controlling a vast machine which was seeking to tell the world how marvellous we were, and how terrible were the Germans.

We were then sending to the Chinese stories of German atrocities which the Chinese thought stupidly humane, and inflicting on Russia millions of copies of tracts which the

HANNEN SWAFFER'S WHO'S WHO

Russian peasants could not read, Beaverbrook associated himself with business men like Hugo Cunliffe-Owen, authors like Arnold Bennett—H. G. Wells quickly retired from the Northcliffe end of the business—political experts and all types of people, some of whom knew the business, some of whom had nothing else to do, some of whom wanted titles, and some of whom wanted a salary. It was a thankless job he undertook.

Anyway, Beaverbrook's practical mind made him close down all this vast enterprise within a few hours of the declaration of peace. Other Ministries went on.

The way I first met Beaverbrook was rather extraordinary.

When the American troops landed in England, Sergeant Edmund Goulding, an Englishman who left the film trade in New York to join the American Army, came to me with a terrible Story. Colonel Samuel Jones, who was in charge of the rest camp at Winchester, had listened to Goulding's Story as to how the American troops were being neglected in England, how the American Y.M.C.A. had broken down, and how, because of the general disconsolateness, they were all leaving England for France hating England like billyho!

"After being cheered off by vast crowds in New York," he said, "and being told that they had come to win the war, they were packed like sardines on troopships for a week, all seasick on an ocean most of them had never seen before, and then, on being disembarked at Liverpool, they were all disillusioned by discovering that none met them or gave them a cigarette, and that, because England had experienced nearly four years of war, nobody cared a damn!" . . .

The American film trade had given them millions of feet of movies, but they were never shown. They just idled round the camps, hating everything.

One of Goulding's schemes, to carry out which Colonel Jones gave him leave, was the arranging of concerts in London for the Americans who were only drifting around, ignored by everybody.

I saw everybody I could think of who could put this right, and everywhere I dragged Goulding around with me, in uniform, carrying a thesis which Goulding had written describing, like a psycho-analySt, the secret yearnings of the

LORD BEAVERBROOK

American troops. He was used to going round American cinemas analysing films like that.

Our most disappointing interview was with General Biddle, who was in command of all the American troops in England.

When I had told him my Story, with Goulding sitting well at the back, he asked, " Who told you all this ? "

" Sergeant Goulding,' I said.

" Sergeant Goulding does not run the American Army," he replied.

Goulding sat shivering at the back, thinking that he was going to be put in irons.

Eventually, however, thanks to Beaverbrook, part of his scheme was carried through. When I took it to Beaverbrook he turned down the idea at first, saying that nothing had been arranged for the Australians or the Canadians, and that there was no reason why the Americans should be singled out for courtesy. After all, he had other things to worry him. I kept on at Beaverbrook, however, until he gave in. He appointed James White to arrange concerts on Sunday nights and boxing shows at the National Sporting Club.

James White, in dealing with the theatre managers, was almost brutal at the first meeting. Two or three of them started to quarrel as to which theatre was to be the scene in which the performances were to be set.

" Stop this arguing," said White, " or I'll have you in the Army in five minutes."

The concerts were organised. What good they did, I don't know. Beaverbrook, anyway, did at least respond to my pleading, whereas, before him, Northcliffe had turned a deaf ear.

I wonder how many people know that, in the days of the Great Retreat in 1918, the American Red Cross came to me—I still fail to understand why I was consulted over all America's little troubles—and said that their hospitals in France had been cut off by the enemy, that they had no hospitals in England, and that the American and British wounded were being mixed up together, with the result, no doubt, that they, the American Red Cross, were losing kudos.

I forget what happened in the end, except that, as a detail, I remember going to Freddy Guest, then Lloyd George's

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right hand man, and suggesting that Buckingham **Palace** should be turned into an American hospital. I considered that, if doughboys could write home to Mum and Sis with Buckingham Palace on the notepaper, it would be good hands-across-the-sea Stuff.

The chief reason this scheme was turned down, was that Buckingham Palace was such an old-fashioned building that there were not enough bathrooms for the purpose. . . .

Since those days, I have joined Beaverbrook's Staff, and I have been much impressed by the intelligence and charm of a man whom, before I knew him, frankly I did not like.

I do not remember asking him a favour which he has not granted me. Even when I wrote a book on Spiritualism, he was good enough to write a preface vouching for my honesty of purpose, and thereby heading off certain newspaper criticism that I had invited.

During my three years as one of his dramatic critics, I have made enemies and experienced organised opposition. I have never known him fail to support me. Anyway, he likes a fight. Northcliffe seldom supported his Staff. He was like Lloyd George. It was always the other fellow's fault.

Beaverbrook has many enemies. He is misunderstood, in consequence, because he seldom troubles to reply to anything they say. Years ago, I heard the Strangest Stories about him. They were so persistent that I began to believe them. Stories about financiers soon spread, and, when a man has made a million by his own efforts before he is thirty, when he has come to England from Nowhere overseas and burst into political prominence in a few months, and become a Minister of the Crown, the close friend of a Premier, and a newspaper magnate, all in a few years—well, the jealous ones will say things.

I can only speak of the man I know—a kindly and helpful friend.

When, before I joined him, I was present at one of his conferences, waiting until he could see me about some private matter, I heard him discuss, for nearly an hour with his managers, the details of some trifling difficulty with one of the mechanical unions. It seemed very Stupid to me, and very wearisome.

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Northcliffe would have said " Yes " or " No " in a minute—and then, perhaps, been wrong. Beaverbrook listened to every word from everyone, except that, with the irritating way he has of asking questions, he would cross-examine and keep on asking more.

" Your patience is astonishing," I said, when the others had gone. " I could not put up with a dreary argument over a petty thing like that."

" I want to know all about it," he replied. " I am learning journalism now."

Then he plunged into my troubles, and with a most helpful and considerate kindness.

Beaverbrook's habit of asking questions worries people more than he knows. When I joined him with Albert de Courville, one supper time, de Courville was telling him all about gambling, roulette and chemin-de-fer, I suppose, being a science unknown to Beaverbrook's Presbyterian youth in Canada. Beaverbrook's continual questions so worried me that I soon said " Good night I " He was kind enough, nevertheless, to go on to some cabaret with de Courville, to see some actress for whom de Courville wanted something done. I expect he asked questions about her all the way. And I am sure he did whatever de Courville wanted.

One of Beaverbrook's editors met me once when he had just had two hours of cross-examination.

" It sounded as if the old man was trying to trap me," he said " I had to be careful because I know he will start asking the same questions again, next time I see him, and I shall forget to give the same answers."

I am usually safe in interviews like this, because I am so talkative that I do not listen to questions.

Some of Beaverbrook's Staff call him " The Chief "—this annoys me because Northcliffe will always be " The Chief " to me—but often they say " The Beaver " or " The Little Man."

He gives you this impression of a little man when he is Standing up, especially as his head is big for his body. You see an impish smile, which is almost a grin, sometimes. You never know whether he is laughing at you, inside. Yet I am **sure** he is a shy man, which, perhaps, accounts for the fact that he is not known to all the members of his Staff.

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During the days of the Great Strike, in 1926, Beaverbrook found time to mix freely with his editorial men, who were getting out Strike editions all by themselves and with a much greater enthusiasm than that found in any rival firm. He took, obviously, a great delight in the loyal work his Staff were doing. He spent many hours in the office, taking a childish delight in it all.

We had a Strange insight, in those days, into the ramifications of Beaverbrook's friendships. Lord Birkenhead came down to see the Strike editions printed; Lady Louis Mountbatten tried to run our telephone exchange. All sorts of odd semi-Society people arrived, with their motor-cars, to take the paper out.

Yes, Beaverbrook's friendships are Strange ones. Michael Arlen, Joe Coyne, Frederick Lonsdale and Arnold Bennett are, or have been, his intimates. Otto Kahn is the American, I suppose, nearer to him than any other; it was the English constituency which Otto Kahn was nursing, Ashton-under-Lyne, for which Beaverbrook sat when Kahn went to New York and became an American.

Although I have seen him at supper with Lloyd George and Churchill, Beaverbrook rather likes the company of actors and actresses. It is a change, I suppose. Great men like to unbend. Indeed, I have heard several of the younger players, who call me "Mr. Swaffer," refer to him as "Max." I have reprimanded them, but he does not seem to mind. Let the children play. . . .

He lives at Stornaway House, a large dreary-looking building just outside the Green Park, and close by St. James's Palace. He has a country house at Leatherhead, and I have heard of "The Vineyard," but I do not know where it is. It may be Naboth's, for all I know.

He seems to like homes, though. Once, although he had at least two, he lived in the Hyde Park Hotel. Then he used a sort of office flat above the *Daily Express* offices, including a very large room, decorated something like a jazz cabaret, with a piano and a lot of books that had come in for review. He likes review copies.

England, to-day, is passing' through a very troublous Stage. The country is hard up. Millions of people are disillusioned.

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We are moving on to broader ideas of liberty. The Socialist vote grows, every time the nation goes to the poll. We have the most Stupid Conservative party of modern times. Although newspaper influence is almost dead in England, there is now a chance to re-establish it.

If Beaverbrook would aft on his instincts and not listen too much, he could carry behind him, at this moment, a much greater public than he knows. Although he calls himself a Conservative, that is only a tag. I know, from what I have seen of him, that he is a Radical at heart, just as Northcliffe was.

People who come from the Dominions to England take a long time to understand our country. Few of them succeed in understanding it at all. They will keep in their heads the idea that you can learn more about the British Empire on some prairie than you can in Whitehall. Beaverbrook is under no delusion like that.

The ball is, I think, at Beaverbrook's feet.

I should welcome his re-entry into politics, if only for the fun.

Perhaps, he is a little tired of it, though, for he has recently bought racehorses at fabulous prices and given them names which no one can remember and I can never spell. He Started off racing with such bad luck that, not long ago, he called up his trainer and said that, if his horse didn't win the next day, he could "shoot the damn thing?" . . . It won!

Lord Castlerosse, who recently returned with him from Egypt, asked him why he employed Ashmead Bartlett to writ' on bridge in the *Evening Standard*.

"What do you mean?" asked Beaverbrook.

"Why, you are the best player I know," was the reply. "When we were away, and you got a bad hand, you threw it in the Nile."

Yet he has so much humour that, on the eve of the Great Strike, he made one of his editors play the tune of "The Red Flag," and another sing it. That is the English way of beating revolution—laugh at it! . . .

He likes singing, just like Lloyd George. At home, on Sunday nights, he makes the house party sing hymns. At the community singing concerts which his morning paper organised, he always sang the loudest himself.

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Low's cartoon of him, published in the *New Statesman*, shows a small man sitting in a big arm-chair answering the telephone, with a grin on his face. It is a triumph of satire. The secret of the truth, Low saw—an elfin smile in the eyes of a man who, no doubt, when he drew it, was shouting orders on the telephone, knowing he would be obeyed. Most men would have been angry, had they been caricatured like Low caricatured Beaverbrook in the *Star*. Beaverbrook gave him a job, and at a record salary.

I Started this article by quoting an instance of Beaverbrook's similarity to Northcliffe. I will finish with one of the dissimilar traits.

On November 8th, 1918, I was in charge of the *Weekly Dispatch*, one Saturday night, when Northcliffe called me up and asked me to read the late-night communique.

"The war won't be over for a long time yet," he said, when he heard it.

For politeness' sake, I agreed. It was time for Northcliffe to go to bed.

Soon afterwards, Beaverbrook called me up. He was in the country somewhere, I suppose, and, as he had not a Sunday paper in those days and there would be nobody of importance in the *Daily Express* office on Saturday night, he thought he would ask me the latest news.

When I read him the communique, he said, "It will be over about Tuesday."

It was!

