



# Pick of Punch

Edited by Bernard Hollowood

# PICK OF PUNCH

*Edited by*

**BERNARD HOLLOWOOD**


“LIGHT ARTICLES ONLY” was a title once given to a collection of his by A. P. Herbert, and if this anthology hadn’t a time-honoured title already it might do worse than borrow it. All *Punch* articles are not light these days: a *Punch* that overlooked the seamy side of the sixties would not be *Punch*: but the pieces assembled here are strictly for laughs, and readers looking for treatises on economics, juvenile delinquency and nuclear strategy will be disappointed. Wodehouse is here. So are Gwyn Thomas, H. F. Ellis, Claud Cockburn, Richard Gordon, Alex Atkinson, B. A. Young, Price, Turner, Hollowood, Boothroyd.

*Punch’s* favourite artists too: Larry and Langdon, Anton, Thelwell, Brockbank and Sprod; Burgin, Mahood, Hewison, Smilby, Hargreaves, Siggs, Taylor . . . reinforced, if they needed it, by Smits, Fremura, Gantriis, Sempe, and other distinguished recruits from foreign parts.

Ladies and Gentlemen . . .  
“THE PICK OF PUNCH”!

*Jacket design by* SMILBY





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Pick of

# PUNCH

edited by Bernard Hollowood

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# INTRODUCTION

The average careers master, trying to do his best for the school-leaving bulge, tends to keep the profession of humorist off his list of attractive openings. Nor do the boys and girls themselves often come before him with a firmly declared ambition to go out into the world and split its sides for it. If they did, the master in his wisdom might well warn them that this day and age was not the ideal time for the exercise. There are comic aspects, no doubt, of nuclear stockpiles and other basic themes of modern life, but even the most highly developed humorous techniques undergo a certain strain in probing for the funny side.

Indeed, humorous techniques undergo a certain strain anyway. A rough calculation shows that *Punch* has produced about 125,000 jokes in its time, and even the most dedicated joker can be forgiven the conviction – at times overpowering – that all possible laughter has already been raised, and all possible subjects exhausted. This is the time when the humorist wishes that he had been born a tragic poet instead: opportunities for splashing a dirge across the page with a broad and gloomy pen seem to be continually thrusting themselves forward. Shouts of spontaneous laughter are on the whole less intrusive.

Nevertheless, in some extraordinary way, the index at the back of this book still manages to assemble an astonishing number of writers and artists whose faces are turned from the primrose path of tears and lamentations; whose feet are recklessly set on the rocky road of frivolity and fun. I commend them to you with pleasure, gratitude, surprise at their continued existence, and a reminder that theirs is a hard life – the more so because the fact of its hardness has to be kept out of their work. Gaiety in print or line may be achieved in the smoke-filled rooms of the small hours, with oaths and groans and a sense of looming despair, but the reader doesn't want to know, and mustn't suspect. And quite right too. It is only in the course of a few off-the-record remarks such as these that the truth can be leaked out: it's no fun being funny.

So, as you laugh – and I think you will – spare a thought for the laughter-makers in this new *Pick of Punch*. They're already working on the next lot.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

In compiling this selection I have been particularly helped by J. B. Boothroyd, William Hewison and Kenneth Mahood. A.B.H.



# Hard, Hard Fact



## WE'RE SAYING GOODBYE TO THEM ALL

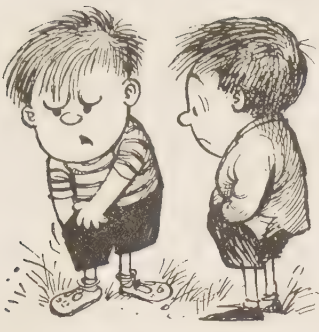
By Leslie Marsh

**I**t's a superb piece of open-air theatre, this dispersal sale of a Hereford pedigree herd. The backcloth is Welsh upland so enchantingly painted in russet and gold that I envy the cows for all the time they've had to stand and stare at it. It's theatre in the round; performers in a fenced circus, audience on bales of hay ranged in tiers – good view from all parts of the house – and compère on a dray.

The timing is perfect. Before curtain up at noon the beginners have been called down from the high pastures into the dressing-rooms, pens giving on to a grass corridor behind the auctioneer's wagon, where they are brushed and titivated. Lot I, and the opener goes into the ring, soft-eyed, generously flanked, curly red-coated and white-faced like all her gentle family, so modest in manner for all their lineage as long as the Lupinos'. She is encouraged with a prod or two from the white-aproned stage-manager to keep moving round.

Sometimes the owner, a sad looking man no longer young standing at the side of the rostrum, helps to move on the lovely creatures he is reluctantly losing (because his health is failing) but I notice that he never prods them, he merely holds up his stick horizontally as a barrier. He has lavished time, skill, devotion and money on building up an army of aristocrats with better taste than Frederick the Great, who picked merely for size, not breeding. His is a unique deprivation. Headmasters see their boys go in batches, Tiller girls grow up and are replaced, commanding officers lose their troops piecemeal, but who else sees all the living treasures he has trained vanish in a few hours?

Now the bidding is on. None too brisk. They need jolly along. The auctioneer, goodlooking, with the ready smile of a performer (only it may be genuine because he knows most of the farmers) must talk without pause for at least four hours. Even



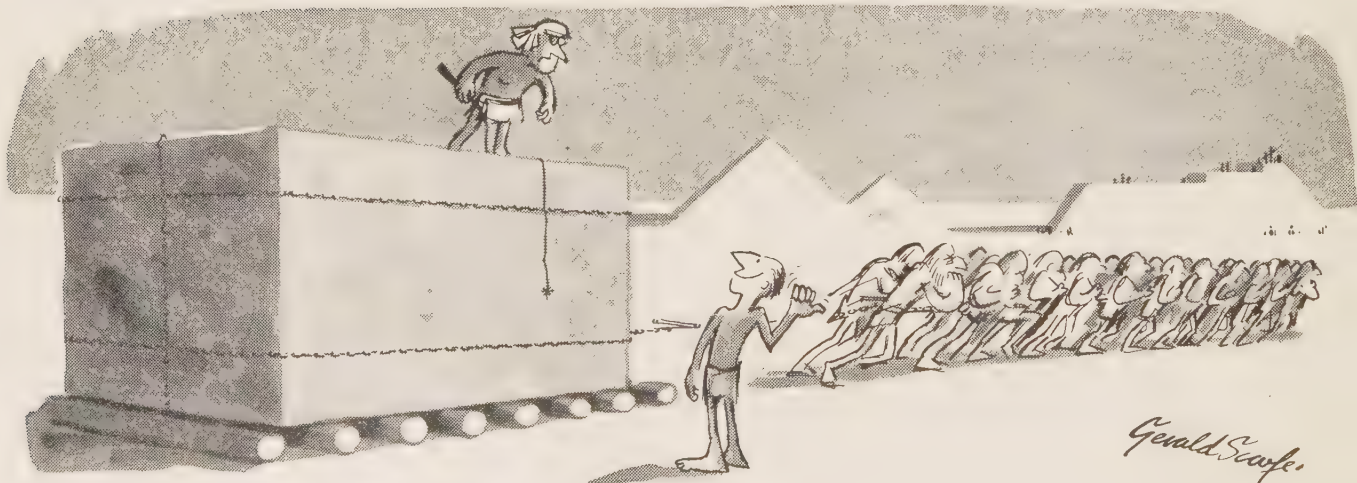
"Well, it was a peewit's egg."

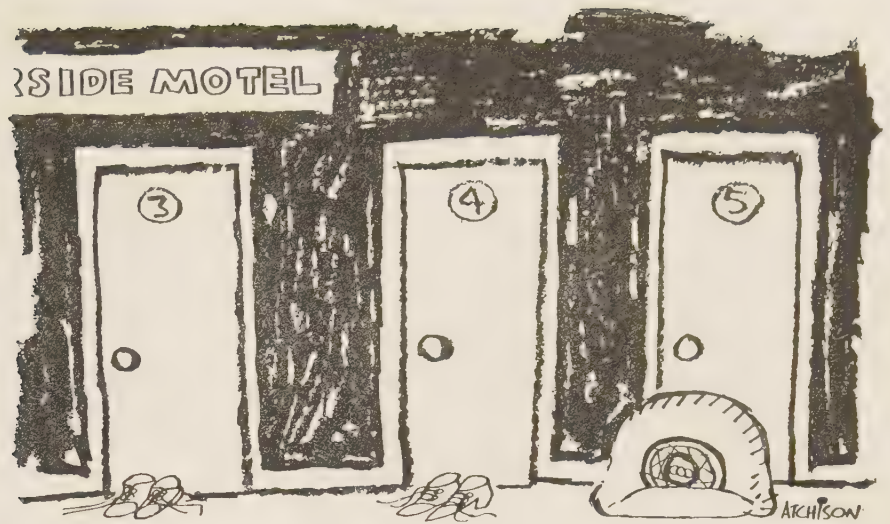
Tommy Trinder, who is at his best prattling to an audience about other matters without benefit of book and would have made a good auctioneer, might wilt at ad libbing for 240 minutes, but this man keeps fresh to the last lot. Clearly he relies on some used material – "You can't be doing wrong at this price," "I don't think you'll see another chance like this" – but given the glimmer of a feed from the house he flashes in to get laughs on which no one can tread. Glib, but informed. He's got to understand the points of the stock he's selling for an ill-founded claim would get the wrong kind of laugh. "And a very sweet calf, isn't she?" is reserved for a starlet, and when it comes to the bulls "A bit of age perhaps but he's bound to do someone a lot of good yet" has a disarmingly honest ring.

He's friendly but his supporting players terrify me. Three auger-eyed men standing at his side rake the gallery with infra-red penetration power glares for latent bids. Their eyes are truculent. "You skinflint there in glasses," I seem to hear them saying to me, "do you think we've come all this way to watch you scowling mumchance the whole afternoon?" I freeze, as taught in fieldcraft, lest any slightest deepening frown of mine be misinterpreted and trap me into paying 200 guineas I haven't got for a cow I don't want. I look furtively at the catalogue to compare the glossy photograph of "Playful" with the original, and I'm back in school dreading I'll be caught with the crib, only I never had to stammer through Caesar to three masters at once. Perhaps it wasn't fair to have come simply for curiosity and eaten all those substantial beef sandwiches and cakes provided free in a tent before the show started.

That last touch momentarily destroys the theatre atmosphere, but it's soon back; here's a heifer reluctant to leave the ring, as so many of them are, perhaps not knowing what's to come, and having to be prodded out and away to green pastures (bull calves in a special enclosure where they are entertained with delicious chopped greens). She *won't* go off without really vigorous encouragement, so like the old twice-nightly comedians who had outrun their 9½-minute allocation by a full minute until some ingenious managers in cahoots with the electricians caused "GET OFF" to be spelt out by the footlights.

Nearing the end now. Some of us, fretted a little by the hay-seats, stroll to the tent (drinks are not free: you can't expect the auctioneers to slake yeoman thirsts all day long) and peer back-stage at the waiting calves in the wings. In all these hundreds of viewers there are barely twenty recurrent bidders. It's a paper house. The few who mean business keep crossing swords, usually raising each other by fivers, but for a less attractive lot, to the auctioneer's open disgust, creeping on like tomorrow and tomorrow in ones. Some old boys and girls of the Hereford school are destined for Scotland, Canada even. It will be several days before they are all





taken afar and asunder and if I were they I should certainly look back and regretfully wonder what had become of those lush Monmouth meadows.

Prices fluctuate unpredictably from sale to sale. Last week, I am assured by the knowledgeable, inferior cattle at another dispersal made far more money than these. No one can say why. There are no City slicker counterparts to explain that it's all on account of what Ike or Khrushchev said or the centrifugal nuclear fission uncertainty.

Now the big finale scene, the bulls, always saved up for the last. They look meek enough to inherit the earth. Even in a china shop, you would say, they would behave like tea-set connoisseurs in Cheltenham. Four hundred guineas the juvenile lead makes, and that's not enough really. The auctioneer implies that it's like offering Olivier rep. rates.

"You've made up your minds? All right, you know best. At 320 guineas . . . done." Always Done, never Gone, and no going, going.

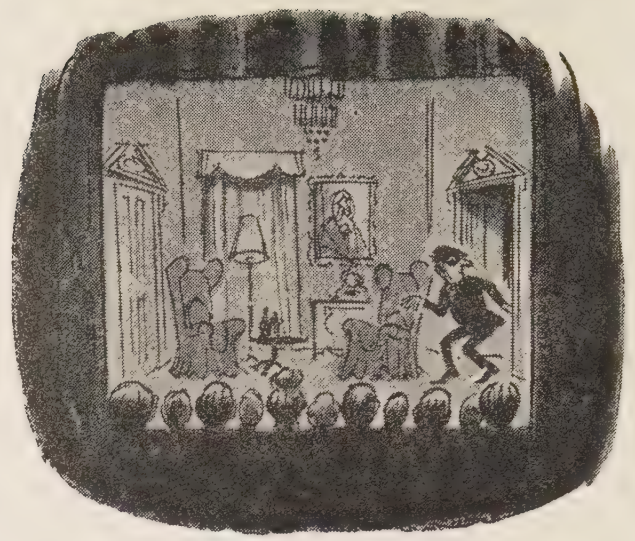
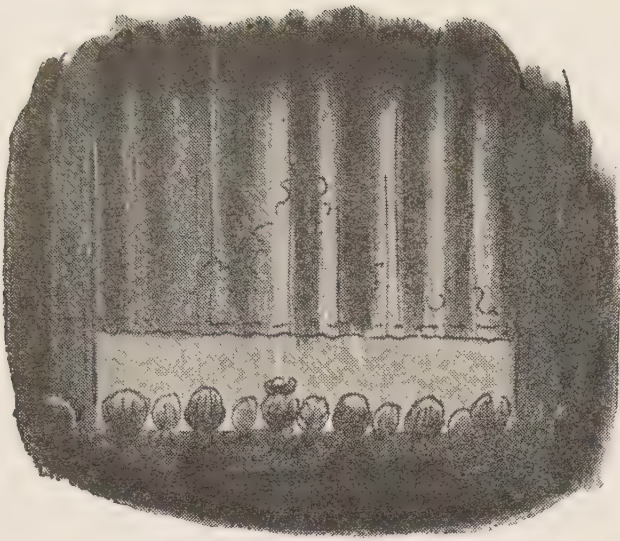
Now we're away, those of us whose wheels aren't stuck in the grass park where the going is very deep. But I learn a lot more from my companion, at home. On his walls hang no Van Goghs, no "Dignity and Impudence," but champion bulls from the mists of time, some photographs and some engraved paintings. He talks with easy familiarity, as a racing man will of such legendary horses as Eclipse, Ladas and Minoru, of bulls that have made Hereford history. I comment on one at random. "Oh yes, Maxy," he says, "came from by Greensleaves, didn't he? Mr. Evans The Knubb. Sired by Dandy out of Butterfly, wasn't he?" Maxy, by the way, lived nearly a hundred years ago. My host is the inveterate first-nighter of this Arcadian show-business world. Maxy to him is a kind of Martin Harvey. He has every volume of the Hereford Herd Book from number one with its coloured plates before the camera came, and remembers most of their contents. He can laugh now and then at these old but happy far-off days and cattle long ago, for he produces a broadsheet of doggerel, written in 1884 by a few cronies gathered in the pub that used to lunch the farmers and carry them by horse from railhead to showground. The authorship was a secret, for the verses were broad and sometimes actionable about some of the exhibitors' foibles. Just a flavour:

His cattle are "wonders" but never seen,  
I believe they're at Stapleton, near Presteign;  
I've seen his bulls, nothing much sadder,  
Split one through, he'll make a good ladder.

He reminisces late into the night. Back to London tomorrow. Pity. I don't like the herds there.

"Said Alderman Chalkley:  
'There should be no sex difference  
between men and women . . .'  
(laughter.)" – *Wimbledon Boro'  
News.*

Laugh at anything these days.



## FRYING TONIGHT

The White Fish Authority is an authority not only on white fish but on elegance. Everyone knows its peppy advertisements which say: "It's smart to have a party with fried fish and chips. Visit the man in your fried fish shop."

Even in darkest Bedfordshire, or more specifically in the villages of Aspley Guise and Woburn Sands, they know that it is smart to eat fish and chips, but what happens? The Ampthill Rural Council regards a fried fish shop as only one step removed from a *maison tolérée* and has refused permission to open one.

The fish and chips industry, which uses more than a third of Britain's white fish catch, is now fighting on several fronts. It is still battering (battering is the word) against what one of its leaders, fifty years ago, called "walls of prejudice thicker than the walls of Jericho" – hear that, Ampthill?; and it is trying to persuade some of its more old-fashioned members to provide a less Hogarthian ambience.

The real enemy of the trade, as of everybody's trade, is of course television. A smart frier will consult the timetables and audience ratings of the leading ITV shows, as thoughtfully supplied by the White Fish Authority, in order to fix frying times to his best advantage. The really smart frier, however, contrives to sell even at the height of "The Army Game," by organizing an evening delivery service. The viewers are never so obsessed that one of them will be unable to grope backwards to the door and extend a hand to take in a white-wrapped fibre container.

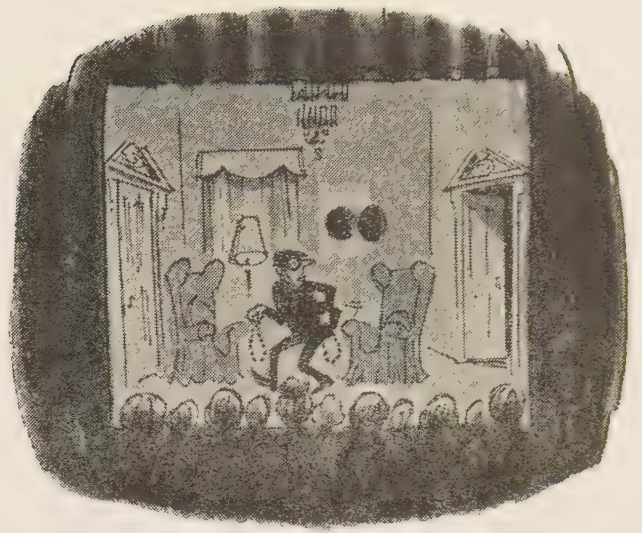
Note that fibre container. That is how fish and

chips are being dispensed nowadays. The law says that food may no longer be wrapped in Rectors' Lapses and Models' Overdoses. Indeed, there are many establishments where the rule is "Not a newspaper in the place." This will not stop the British Travel people from telling American tourists to be sure to eat their fish and chips hot from the headlines; it takes at least a generation to kill a joke.

A fried fish shop (*sans* chips) of Dickens' day was not a subject for sentiment. The Lucifer who stoked the coals looked on ventilation as mere decadence. Around him were the rich smells of underground slaughter-houses, livery stables, beer cellars, gin palaces and overstocked crypts, and he may well have thought the stench of exhausted cotton-seed oil was Chanel by comparison.

By about 1900, however, the public nose was growing fastidious. The history of fish and chips, at this stage, becomes one of protests and prosecutions, punctuated by frequent fire alarms. For their protection, the leaders began to band together. In 1907 the authorities gained power to declare fish frying an offensive trade. That they were frustrated was due to impassioned lobbying at Westminster and the friers' own policy of self-improvement.

Between the world wars there was, in an unfortunate phrase, "a continuous flow of new blood into the frying industry." Social workers did not cease to deplore how the rich gold of Public Assistance was poured into the pockets of the friers, how the feckless poor weaned their babes on to greasy chips; but



By E. S. Turner

George Orwell has said that fish and chips was one of the safety valves which saved the country from bloody revolution.

In 1939, according to the more cynical social workers, it was the absence of fish and chips shops in rural areas – perhaps even in Aspley Guise and Woburn Sands – which wrecked the Government's evacuation scheme. The urban friers did their best; a Birmingham trader earned himself a headline by regularly sending fish and chips to former customers evacuated to Hereford.

The year 1940 was a crucial one, but the trade received generous allocations and Lord Woolton beamed on a poster saying "Fried Fish and Chips – An Excellent War-Time Meal." Here and there it was still possible to buy one pennyworth of chips, but it wasn't so easy in Scotland after the Italian friers had been swept into captivity.

It was during the war that the sign "Frying To-night" became an institution. So many G.I.s were introduced to fish and chips that it was thought the fashion would spread at last to America ("Frying To-nite"). Not so long ago an English fish and chip shop was opened, with much publicity, in New York. But the answer to the question, "Will the Hot Dog be Dethroned?" is, briefly, No.

About 1950 there was a false boom in fish frying in Britain. At its height there were some 25,000 friers, since when 8,000 have run down the shutters. In the Army it was sometimes said of a fumbler that "He couldn't even run a fish supper shop," but it was





*"It was rather sordid, actually – about a middle-aged husband who comes home at eleven with a rumpled collar and a thin story about working late at the office."*

evident that the task called for more talent than was suspected.

Most of the socially penetrable areas, including the new towns, have now been penetrated, but in 1958 Eton successfully resisted an attempt to open a fish supper shop in its High Street, between a book shop and a dress shop. No regard seems to have been paid to the desires of Eton boys. At the back of the controversy may have been a fear that the battles of tomorrow might well be lost in the fish and chips shops of Eton.

The best place for a fish and chips shop, both strategically and hygienically, is on a corner. This ensures cross-ventilation, and additional extraction is achieved by chimney-high flues or underground ducts. The well-equipped shop will have an infra-red cabinet for keeping cooked food warm; it may have those fashionable chickens on spits; it may have tables and chairs; and it may have a flashing sign. It will be run by "a lively wide-awake man" full of goodwill to all but the owners of mobile fish supper shops which halt in his radius. He is trying to educate his customers not to eat fish and chips in buses (there was a big row

over this in Great Yarmouth, where a conductor was injured through slipping on a chip) but he will supply fish suppers for consumption in a customer's own Jaguar.

It is symptomatic of the modern frier's concern for his prestige that in 1953 the owner of a mobile shop sued the Showmen's Guild for ruling that possession of this equipment did not entitle him to membership. He could have fallen back on the fact that he also operated Dodgems, but he preferred to fight as a fish and chips man; and he won.

On the research front the most interesting news for some time is that a firm in Cleethorpes has been exporting deep-frozen fish and chips meals to some sixty-six foreign countries whose shores (if any) are unblest by cod, haddock or plaice. Special potatoes are used to withstand the crystallizing effects of quick freezing. "At the end of a tiring day," reported *The Times*, "the exile can take his packet of fish and chips from the ice-box, warm it in the oven and within half an hour have a meal that could not be bettered at the sign of 'Frying To-night' back in England." It's smart to eat fish and chips, even in exile.



# AN HOUR ON A40

By H. F. Ellis

Here then beside me, for another thirty-five miles at least, is this incommunicable young man with a pack across his knees and an indefinable air of having been in better cars in his time. For an hour, less or more, the threads of our several lives will run together along A40, but it does not look as if anything rich or strange will come of the convergence. "How far are you going?" was his first remark as he opened the nearside door, and so far it remains by several words his longest utterance. I have tried this and, because after a mile or two silence seems oppressive, I have tried that. I have asked him, a little unnecessarily it may be thought, whether he is on holiday, and he has told me, after stubbing his cigarette out on the sole of his shoe, No. I have observed, at a time when she was going like a bomb up the long hill out of West Wycombe, that my car is not as young as she was, and had to be satisfied with a nod. Other comments, on the weather and the passing scene, have with increasing difficulty escaped the barrier of my teeth, not in every case absolutely calling for a reply and invariably getting none. And now I have given myself up to hate.

There is nothing personal about this hatred, or at least nothing exclusive. This dumb self-centred heap alongside might as well be any of the dozen or so of his monstrous tribe whose scythe-like sweeps I ignored this morning before the final surrender. He is just a type. An a-typical type, perhaps. It is true that in all my experience I never lifted a more unyielding take-it-for-granted mass of dough from the roadside; and it may be that had I stopped instead for the two soldiers at Gerrards Cross, or the bearded man beyond Beaconsfield, or these two knobbly women sitting on a gate, who do not look up or interrupt their talk but simply go through the motions as they sense the car's approach, like fledglings stimulated to open their beaks when the nest is touched—it may be that all would have been gas and gaiters, and not a curmudgeonly thought this side of Cheltenham. But no matter. I hate them all.

"How far are you going?" Here is the quintessence of impertinence. State your destination, so that I may decide whether it is worth my while getting in. I am not some raw beginner content with a ten-mile stretch and then all the trouble of thumbing

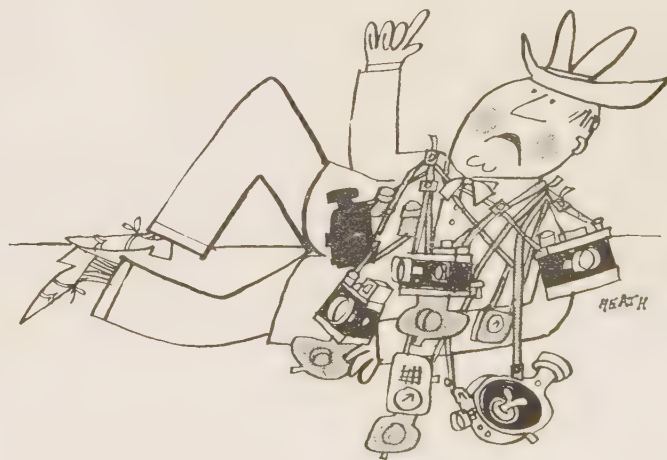
to do again. No, no, you won't catch an old hand like me—a man who has done Dubrovnik from Ostend in four straight lifts and not a minute over fifty-two hours—accepting anything under a forty-mile hop in an old crate like this. Cheltenham, eh? All right, then. Only push her along, man. I haven't got all day.

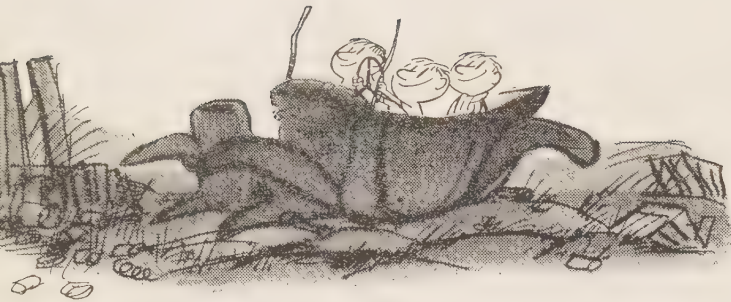
Insufferable, insolent parasite!

Where's the harm in it, people ask me. Why shouldn't young men and girls, who haven't got the money to buy cars or scooters or to pay train fares, try to get about and see the world by begging a lift now and then from lucky old car-owners like me who have a seat to spare? It shows initiative and enterprise, doesn't it? And after all you haven't got to pick them up if you don't want to, have you?

No. You haven't got to give a piece of cake to a dog that stands by your chair, following every mouthful to its destination with great sad eyes. Not that there is anything very doglike about the begging of hitchhikers—just look at the peremptory thumb-sweep of the beshorted string-beam we are passing now; he wouldn't dare hail a No. 11 at a request stop in that arrogant way. But the effect of these iterated demands is much the same. My cake turns sour on me. I begin to feel, as the fifteenth customer looms up, that I have no right to go buzzing along the highway enjoying the bliss of solitude. I am a rich, selfish old misanthrope unwilling to give a helping hand to a footsore youngster without so much as a push-bicycle to his name. *This* one looks harmless and deserving enough. So here

*"Could someone please help me up?"*





I am, constrained and irked for another – what is it now? – twenty-three miles by the presence of this dour and mannerless lumpkin.

There's one thing, though. I didn't let on that I was going right through to Brecon. I kept my head to that extent. "I can take you as far as Cheltenham," I said, meaning to extend the offer by stages if he turned out to be one of the better ones. And now I wish very much I had made it Oxford. Twenty-two and half miles of brooding resentment still to go – always assuming that he will get out when the moment comes. I've known them argue. Very likely I shall have to turn up some side road, as though about to visit an aunt, and then hide until some other poor weak creature whisks him away to the west. They always want to go as far as the car is going, and some of them aren't above suggesting that it goes a bit farther than that – just on to Carmarthen, say, where it's easy to pick up a lift for Aberystwyth.

A professional hitcher, in a recent letter to the press, set down his Code of Behaviour for this great brotherhood of the road: what to say and do, and what not to say and do. You should never, for instance, start eating your sandwiches without first asking the driver's permission – a very delicate attention. Comprehensive as the Code seemed, I could add to it. But that is not, with seventeen miles still to go to Cheltenham, my present intention. My mind dwells rather on a Code for lift-givers, or hitchees, and so far I have adumbrated these three cardinal rules:

*Never* stop for anyone who is standing, sitting or lying, but only for those who are making some sort of progress in the same direction as that insistent thumb. There will then be a faint hope that the person helped is actually prepared to hike as well as hitch.

*Never* admit how far you are going. Keep it vague until you find out what you have picked up.

*Never* expect to be thanked. A "So long, then," is about what it will be.

\* \* \*

And here, at long last, is Cheltenham. "Drop me off where the Gloucester road swings left," I am told, so *that* anxiety is over. My only worry now is lest, when the moment comes, this lump of clay will suddenly take human shape, smile, overwhelm me with gratitude, so that all my loathing will melt away and I shall be put in mind of others of his fraternity whose company has given me real pleasure on lonely journeys. But it is all right. "So long, then," he says.

I am free! The lovely unencumbered miles stretch ahead – to Gloucester, to Ross (I shall be able to stop in Ross for a drink, if I like), to Monmouth, to Abergavenny – But whoa! Long before I get to Abergavenny I shall have weakened again. The incessant rhythmic sweeping of those ghastly thumbs will have worn me down once more.

*"No, no, you've got it wrong; the dog's name is Topsy and mine is Lady Fiona ffynngle-Ffolliott."*

# THE DOOLITTLE SYNDROME

By Patrick Skene Catling



**F**or no reason that is any longer very easy to sum up in a few words, I was in Nassau, in the Bahamas, the other day, and quite unexpectedly it was called to my attention that there was a man in the neighbourhood who talks to flamingos.

Talking to flamingos may not sound so very difficult (you just find some flamingos and talk to them), but he talks to fifty of them at a time, and the flamingos all pay attention, and demonstrate beyond doubt that they understand what he tells them.

Everyone, surely, must have wished at some time for Dr. Doolittle's ability to converse with animals and birds. The wish is almost as basic as the childish wishes to alter drastically one's size (Alice), to achieve occasional invisibility (Cheshire Cat), and to fly (Peter Pan), by simple acts of will, aided a little, perhaps, by magic. As years elapse, fantastic hopes may dwindle, yet seem never entirely to perish; and, indeed, as further years go by the sense of fantasy sometimes grows again: there are men and women who own or are owned by dogs and cats and parakeets who come to believe that human soliloquies heard by pets may after all be dialogues.

People who seek encouragement in this line of speculation could hardly do better than catch the next Britannia bound for New Providence Island. There they can find this man of great renown, Hedley Edwards, a 59-year-old Jamaican Negro with a piercing gaze and a smile like the beam of a lighthouse, who exhibits his flamingos in action in Ardastra Gardens twice a day, all the year round. Visitors to Nassau are told that the spectacle is something they must not miss, and after skin-diving in even the loveliest pellucid turquoise waters that may or may not be frequented by barracuda and sharks, and shopping for straw hats and tortoise-shell trinkets in Bay Street, the notion of some tranquil nature-study in a palmy garden exerts considerable charm.

The night before I visited the flamingos I suddenly realized that I knew nothing about them, so I did some research in a few of the local cultural centres (the Royal Victoria Hotel, the Pilot House Club, Blackbeard's Junkanoo, The Silver Slipper, Chippie's Confidential, etc.), and, for the benefit of any bird-lovers who may be allergic to planter's punch, I hereby pass on my notes:

The flamingo (generally called Phoenicopterus, after the phoenix) is a preposterous creature of rare beauty and absurd ungainliness. It has pale scarlet

*"KUALA LUMPUR, Saturday. Malayan students going to Britain to study on Government grants – they now number 3,000 – must sign a contract vowing now to marry until their courses are complete." – Evening Standard.*

Then work for their decree?



"Thank the Tungsten Steel Rolling & Drop Forging Company for their descriptive calendar."

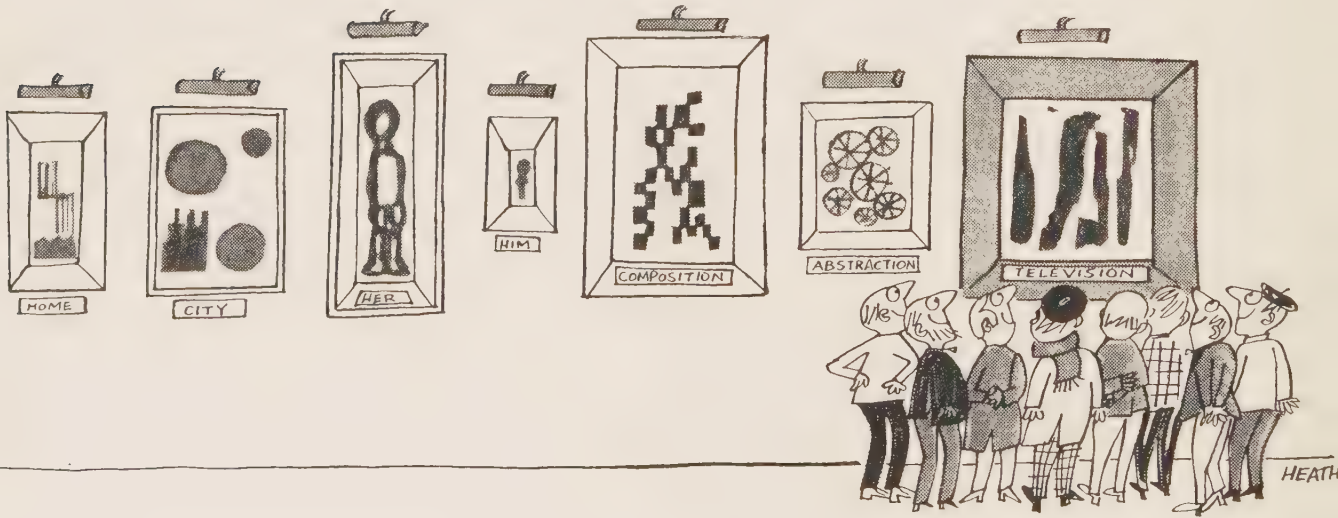
coverts and black pinions, which are displayed attractively in flight. Students of its history, such as the National Audubon Society of New York, have written that Phoenicians used to sell flamingo skins as phoenix skins to gullible pre-Christian Cornish tin-miners who aspired to immortality; first century Roman gourmets regarded flamingo tongue as a delicacy; nineteenth-century European and American hat-makers sought flamingo plumes until they were found to fade rapidly after the birds died. There is a song called "Flamingo", which is played best by Duke Ellington's orchestra. The flamingo is a gregarious bird, yet ordinarily shy outside its own flock. It lives usually in quiet, remote brackish swamps and lagoons, and before Mr. Edwards became interested in the idea nobody had thought that any flamingos would want to live in Nassau. The flamingo is widely regarded as quite a high-class bird, even though it is unsuitable for use as a croquet mallet.

It was hot and humid the next morning when about a hundred tourists, mostly Americans off an Italian cruise ship from New York, and I showed up at the Ardastra Gardens for the 11 o'clock exhibition.

A plump Negro woman - who looked like a mammy from an old Southern plantation - sat at the entrance gates eating water melon (flamingo-pink) and taking the dollars. "Only well-behaved children allowed," said one notice on the wall behind her. "Short shorts not allowed," said another. "Mr. Edwards is particular," she explained. "He wouldn't want the type of visitor who'd disturb those birds of his." Even so, the day's receipts often amounted to several hundred dollars, she said.

The flamingos were standing at ease in an artificial pool that looked like pea soup. Mauve hibiscus blossoms surrounded the water. Another notice said: "These flamingos are the unique gems of the tropical bird world. These birds are gentle. Be very kind and enjoy your visit with them." The audience sat on concentric rows of chairs around a circular lawn. Mr. Edwards stood at a microphone and said:

"On behalf of the birds, welcome to Nassau. After fourteen months of secret experiments and altogether over three years of training, they're doing quite well and keep doing better. I hope they will convince you once and for all that people don't really know what they're talking about when they say 'bird-brained'. These flamingos are intelligent birds, under disciplinary training. The only reward they get for their performance is your applause, so please be generous with it; it means a lot to them. They have been applauded by Lord Beaverbrook and the Prime Minister of Canada and Winthrop Rockefeller."





Mr. Edwards lectured briefly on the care and feeding of the flamingos. They were fed shrimp meal, peas and rice and “calf manna”. The male birds were inclined to be vain, he said, and he got better results from the females – “but then all females respond better than males to loving kindness,” he added with a wink at an appreciatively giggling matron in Bermuda shorts.

At last he turned toward the pool and called: “Are you ready?” and there was an excited flutter of wings and some soft bleating honks. “All right,” he shouted with sergeant-majorly vigour; “Pa-rade! Fall in!” Without an instant of hesitation, the fifty flamingos began marching in a compact group up the steps from the water to the grass. “All right,” Mr. Edwards shouted. “Mark time!” – and their long thin legs, like hinged sticks of rhubarb, moved obediently up and down in unison.

“Of course, they’re not all perfect,” Mr. Edwards said. “There are a few renegades, a few shirkers, in every army. But still . . . All right: for-ward march! By the left . . . a-bout turn!” – they all immediately turned about as one bird – “a-bout turn! . . . a-bout turn!” Again and again, he moved them to and fro like a squad of infantry recruits. “And now,” he said, “our wing display.” He ordered the flamingos forward on the double – “on the double, I said,” he said – and they rushed around the circle, flapping their wings and honking. He halted them within a few feet of visitors with cameras and allowed the birds to stand easy. Then he brought them to attention again and shouted: “Dis-miss! Re-tire!” and they meekly turned and marched back into their pool, while we clapped.

“Well,” Mr. Edwards said proudly to the spectators, “when you go from here I want you to tell it to the army, and tell it to the navy, and by all means tell it to the marines. I know they won’t believe you, but you’ve seen it with your own eyes.”

How had he done it? Mr. Edwards would not say, so I questioned one of the flamingos.

“How do you *think* he did it?” the flamingo said, his tiny yellow eye glittering crossly. “He’s right: this is just the same as any other bloody army. Nothing but bull and nagging and drill, day in, day out. We walk our feet off almost, and the C.O. takes all the credit. The applause isn’t really for us. And you heard that crack about renegades and shirkers. . . .”

At that moment Mr. Edwards came up and asked me if I would sign the visitors’ book.

“And back in the pool, you,” he said to the flamingo. In reply the flamingo only honked, and it was still honking as we walked away, but now I couldn’t understand a word. It was very hot and humid.

### Bearded Ladies

“And, of course, the women of Yorkshire – this perhaps was a tribute to the virility of the Women’s Institutes whose marquee was a focal point – rallied to Harrogate in great numbers.” – *Yorkshire Post*.

# DIARIES



*"After the service dined with the Bishop—a first-class meal but forgot to say grace—had indigestion."*



*"Saw several unfamiliar faces to-day . . . must have a recount."*



*"Feeling good. Spent my month's alimony to-day."*



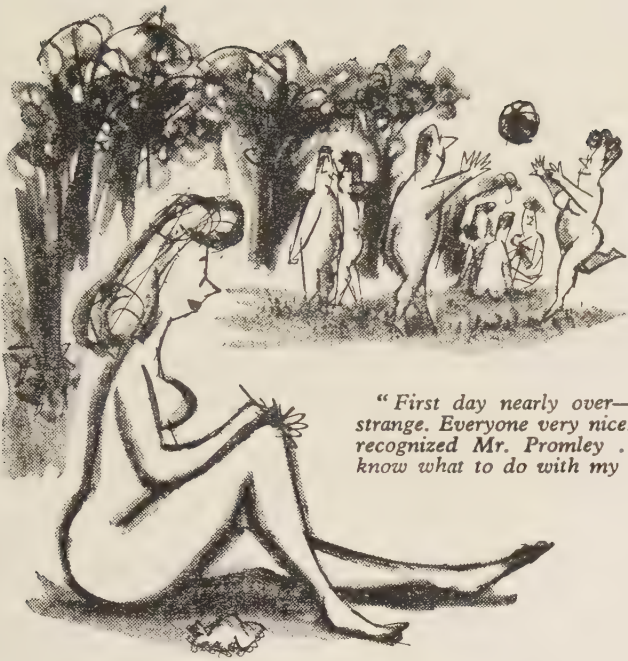
*"Scalped three palefaces to-day."*



*"I woke early but felt too excited for breakfast. The bouquets were lovely—Mother cried all morning. I was nervous during the service but Henry was very calm. The reception was very jolly and we were nearly late for our plane. Our room has a lovely view over the sea and everything would have been wonderful but we had our first quarrel."*



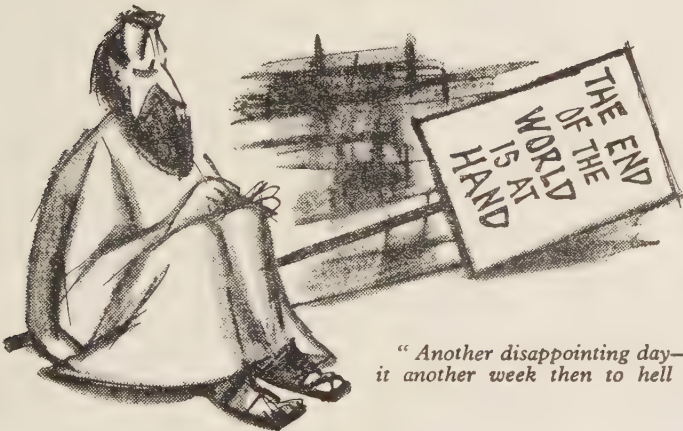
*"Mr. and Mrs. Heatherington, Captain Rothschild, Baron de Courcy, Martin Dunhill, Greta and Joe Roth, Franklin Townsend and Lita all sent their compliments to-night."*



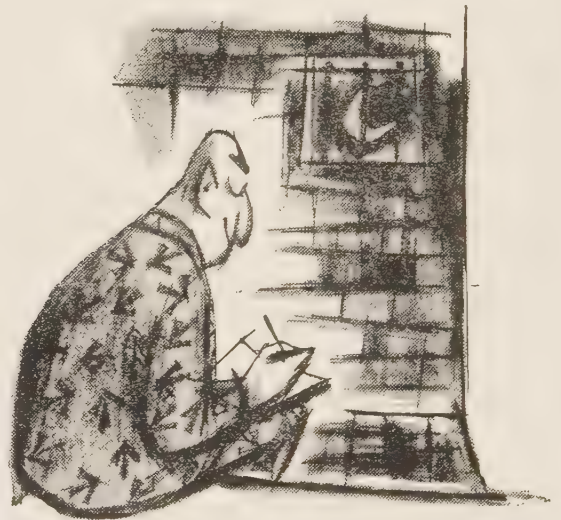
*"First day nearly over—felt rather strange. Everyone very nice. I scarcely recognized Mr. Promley . . . didn't know what to do with my hanky."*



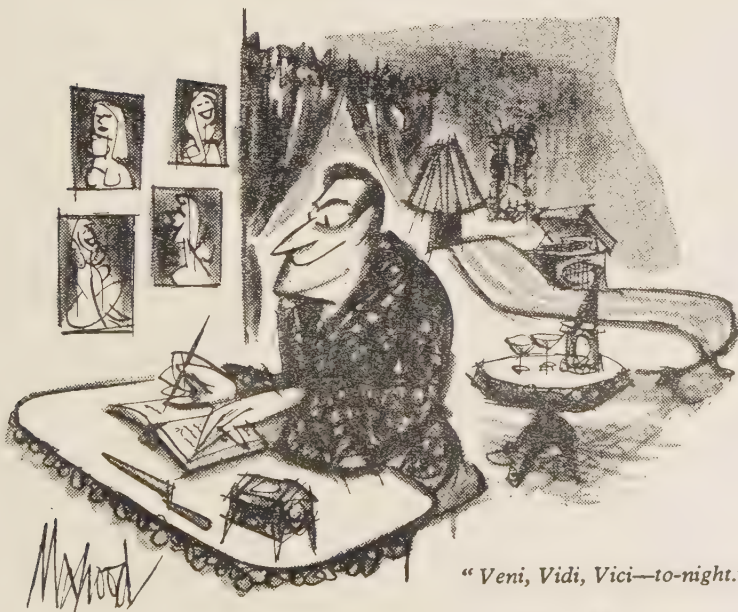
*"Topsy was really very naughty again. After much consideration have decided to cut her out of my will."*



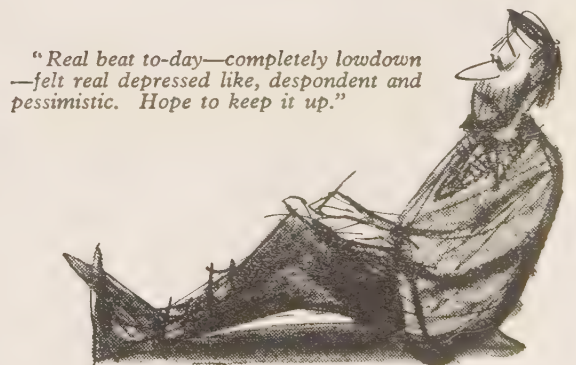
*"Another disappointing day—will give it another week then to hell with it."*



*"Been going straight now for 291 days."*



*"Veni, Vidi, Vici—to-night."*



*"Real beat to-day—completely lowdown—felt real depressed like, despondent and pessimistic. Hope to keep it up."*



## CONCERNING ASTRO-LUNO-

By A. P. Herbert

Few of the satellites at present in orbit seem to have much appeal for the Common Man. But some of those promised or expected look like bursting into the home one day. There is the Weather Satellite, for example, though we do not really believe that a dozen such are going to help the islanders greatly on Boat Race Day, at Lord's or Wimbledon. There is, or will be, they say, the Telephone Satellite and the Telegram Satellite, which will make all those tiresome cables under the sea – and even the ordinary old-fashioned radio – redundant. Or, without the worry of satellites, we may make our Greetings Telegrams and unnecessary conversations bounce off the Moon or Mars. Very well. Go ahead.

But what about the Entertainment Satellites? It is assumed by many careless thinkers that any improvement in communications must bring benefit not only to civilization, etc., but also to those whose joy or business it is to entertain or enlighten their fellows, by words, music, art or acting. This is not always so. The death, or moribundity, of dear old Variety is a sad example. In the good old days – and they were pretty

good – the popular comedian could keep going for twenty years on a single turn, or perhaps two or three. All the year he travelled slowly round the country doing "The Gas-oven," or "Ma-in-law," at Brighton, at the Empire, London, at Nottingham, at Manchester, at Newcastle, at Edinburgh, at Glasgow, and perhaps still farther north. By the time he got back to Brighton a new generation of entertainment fodder had grown up who had never seen him do "The Gas-oven," and those who had were glad to see him do it again.

But all these mechanical and radiotic appliances have put an end to that. Rash man, he made a record of "The Gas-oven"; worse still, he did it on the air: and now he can never do it again, for everyone has a disc of it or has seen it on the telly. So one after the other the music-halls come down and "The Gas-oven" is heard no more.

That may not worry you. You have your lovely telly. But now the frantic men who serve it are expected to produce something just as good and mirth-making as "The Gas-oven," not merely every day but two or three times a day: and this is quite impossible. There is not so much fun in this still finite world. Even if now and then they smashingly succeed, their success dies like a May-fly: for everyone everywhere has "seen it before," and rarely do they dare to do it again. And you, spoiled darlings, complain that so much air-time is taken up with Quiz and Acquisitive



Programmes. You should think yourselves lucky if you get one laugh every week.

Further, as we said soon after the South African War, "Easy communications corrupt good manners." Especially they make it much easier to steal. Even an ordinary book-contract now extends for miles: and a play or film-contract goes on for almost ever. There are so many different things that can be done to a work, so many ways and places, in which copyright can be infringed – publication, performing, mechanical, dramatic, translation and what-not. A has some of the rights in England and B a few in America, and some of these they share, but not in Norway. Agents, with proper caution, allow for every possible contingency, and it is a wonder that the contracts ever end. But the most imaginative agent cannot always provide for modern machines and developments. Parliament, when it made the elaborate Copyright Act 1956, did not foresee the hard-binding of paper-backs for schools and libraries. The coming of the

not English, will become the common language of the backward races. Well, there you are – Celestial Television for the Schools!

But what about celestial entertainment – and celestial copyright? At present it is still possible for a British comedian, lecturer, or politician to get a hearing, and even a laugh, in the States or Canada with material that has been done to death in his native land. But when the Cœlotelly is established we can see the tragedy of "The Gas-oven" enacted on a cosmic scale. No joke will be new anywhere. The British comic in Australia will be told "Oh yes, I heard that on the Luno Telly." And all the agents will go mad. They may sell the celestial video-rights in a play to the Scandinavian countries: but will they be sure that they are not being pirated by Germany or Russia? They may grant mechanical rights in a symphony to the United States: but what if every teenager in Japan can catch and keep the music on his tape-machine?

## SATELLITO-TELECOMMUNICATION

Gram-and-Radio Age tore the guts out of the sale of sheet-music: but Performing Rights and the Society of that name came to the aid of the musical composer, author and publisher. But here comes the clever tape-recorder. The publican entertains his customers with music pilfered from the B.B.C. or a borrowed record. The teenager, instead of buying an expensive record, tapes good music in his bedroom. Splendid, of course, that so many new minds are learning to like good music – and books: but the ordinary composer and musician is not prospering *pari passu* – not to mention the ordinary author or actor. Never mind: the agents, and the Societies, are doing their best for him.

But what a job is waiting for them in the sky, when Astro, Luno – well, let's call it Cœlo-telecommunication – gets going! On the day the first Sputnik went into orbit, three years ago, the poet H. wrote:

*Lord, what a mess the firmament will be  
When every nation boasts of two or three.  
Loud-hailers next? For all that we can tell  
The sky-flies will be taught to talk as well:  
And monsters, motionless, above the town  
Will bellow threats and propaganda down.*

We won't bet about the loud-hailers, but the stationary monster is not only predicted but desired by a serious scientist or two. Professor Somebody said in 1958 that the Russians will send up television and radio satellite-stations "all over the Middle East": and if we do not do the same it will mean that Russian,

This morning, in the news, we see one way out. The poet H., it seems, was not far out when he spoke of a satellite "mess." There are, it seems, to be inter-satellite battles or bumping-races. "The United States Air Force is starting a £25 million programme to find out how to destroy a satellite once it is in orbit." We are delighted: indeed, we asked for this to be arranged two years ago. First, a sort of reconnaissance sat. will snuggle up to the suspected sat. "inspect the target and decide whether it is innocent or hostile." Then a destroyer sat. will move in. Excellent. There will be a number of Copyright Inspector Satellites (run by UNESCO, perhaps) nosing about like B.B.C. vans and hounding down the copyright-breachers. If necessary they will order a pirate sat. to be sunk. What fun!

What they will do about the Moon and Mars we cannot tell.



# THE BATTLE OF THE BEACHES

By E. S. Turner

I would never presume to teach the Mayor of Scarborough his job. If he says it is his duty "to protect the holiday-maker from being bombarded by advertising stunts" then I respect his views.

It seems that twenty-four organizations, including several national newspapers, were all set to commit nuisances in Scarborough – giving away money, parading pretty girls in bikinis, and that sort of thing – but they have been told to think again.

Something must have happened to spark off the Mayor's protest. Perhaps it was the thought of being beset, for the fortieth time, by small boys leaping up with "You are Mr. Lobby Lud" and demanding the prize of the day. Or perhaps he was annoyed with his publicity manager for lending the mayoral limousine to be converted into a float representing Pomona, Ceres and Mass Circulation. More likely, he was exhausted after persuading Mr. Richard Dimpleby not to investigate methylated spirits drinking in the town.

Summer can be a very difficult period for seaside mayors. Unless they take a firm line, the day's diary begins to look like this:

- 9.30 Service of Dedication, Ginga-Cola Sky-Writing Flight.
- 10.00 Attend heats, *Sunday Star's* Merriest Widow contest.
- 10.15 Receive delegates to Jingle-Writers, Annual Convention.
- 10.45 Open *Daily Drum* Smooching Parlour.
- 11.00 Assist Nancy Spain to open bookshop.
- 11.30 Present *Daily Wallop's* £4,000 seaside bungalow to winner.
- 11.45 Judge Hairy Chest finalists (*Hairdressers' Monthly*).
- 12.30 Cocktails with Association of Circulation Managers.
- 1.00 Celebrity Luncheon, with Mrs. 1970, Strand's Lonely Smoker, Miss Judo, etc.
- 2.30 Award prizes *Sunday Shine* Glamorous Grandmother contest.
- 3.30 *Concours d'élégance* of Mobile Fish Supper Shops.
- 4.30 Kissing contest, Coliseum, sponsored by Lipstick Federation.
- 6.30 Cocktails with Association of Circulation Managers.
- 7.30 Grand Gala Dance in aid of Circulation Managers' Widows and Orphans Fund.
- 10.00 Barbecue and Sing-song by Peace Pledge Union.
- 10.30 Fireworks by National Coal Board.

But the point is, we must all try to live together. What do holiday-makers themselves think about advertising stunts? Mr. Bert Richards, of Huxtable, says: "We must always remember the kiddies. My two boys, aged nine and twelve, are dead keen on bathing beauty contests. When that Sunday paper brought down a coach-load of models in swim suits for the fans to photograph you should have



seen how Jim and Alf hacked their way to the front. They used six reels of film each and got some shots anyone would have been proud of. Does the Mayor of Scarborough want to stand in the way of youth?"

Mr. Stan Smythe, of Bolton, said: "What's all this talk about stopping people giving away samples? Do they think we go to the seaside for fresh air? In one day last summer I got three packets of corn plasters, a box of travel pills, a cat comb, a tube of mustard, a white jockey cap, two funny faces to stick on the soles of the wife's feet and an interesting booklet about trusses."

Said seventy-year-old Mrs. Eliza Grimm: "I'm getting too old to read the sky-writing, but it helps the children to spell. If you ask me, the sea could do with a bit of brightening up at night. What happened to all those boats with electric signs that used to sail up and down at Blackpool?"

Miss Sara Steele said: "A very refined gentleman from the *News of the Globe* gave me a free pantie set for being the best-dressed girl on the West Pier. You don't catch the Mayor of Scarborough doing anything like that, do you?"

What is the attitude of Fleet Street? "Some of these resorts," said a *Daily Monitor* executive, "are so mean they try to charge you twopence on every balloon you send up - even when they sail through the window of the Mayor's Parlour. They wouldn't give you a dandelion towards a battle of flowers. We try to help these towns by running advertising supplements, but you have to beat the shopkeepers over the head with a stick of rock before you can get a six-inch double out of them. When we did an ox-roast at Eastsea we were mobbed by starving holiday-makers from the boarding houses, yet the landladies said we were lowering the standards of the town."

A *Sunday Star* spokesman complained that in some resorts grandmotherly by-laws nearly fifty years old made it impossible to advertise on the cliff face. A proposal to explode a mine of leaflets in the dingle at Brightnor had been turned down. His team of fly-posters was having a particularly difficult season.

An unusual complaint came from a film company's publicity officer who said he had asked permission in Westpool to give away green carnations on the promenade to advertise a current attraction but had been treated with marked discourtesy and a complete lack of understanding at the Town Hall. The managing director of the Sudsy Corporation revealed that, as a condition of being allowed to blow coloured bubbles from the civic fountain at Littlesea, his firm had been compelled to open two free foot-cleaning clinics on the more polluted stretches of the beach. "It is nothing short of blackmail," he said.

A town clerk who did not wish the name of his town to be mentioned said: "The only test to be applied to a stunt is: Does it make people want to spend money in the town? If it does, then I don't care what they do, so long as they don't do it in the street and frighten the horses."

Finally, a spokesman of the advertising profession said: "If people don't like advertising stunts they can always go to Frinton. I do."

I only hope the Mayor of Scarborough finds this helpful.



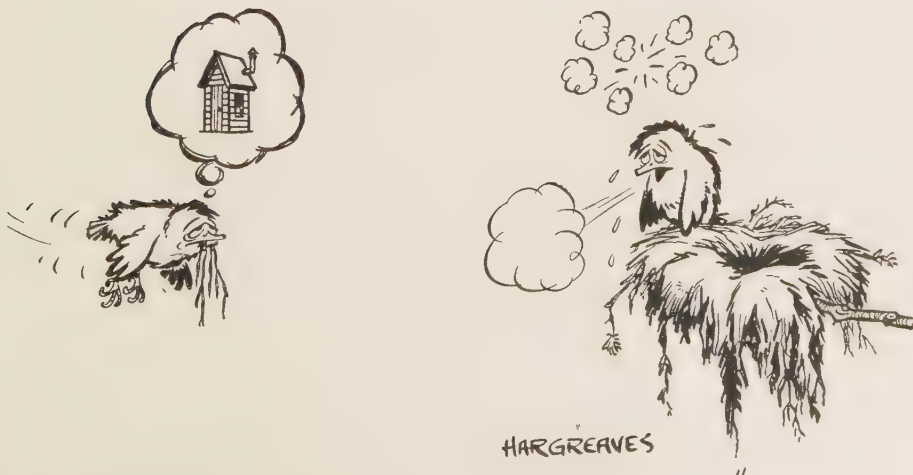
"Yes, yes, you'll get your tax rebate just as if you'd been married in church."

"Witness. - I only said that it was true so that they should leave my husband and children alone.

His Lordship - Who are 'they'?

Witness. - Minogue and Wolstenholme. They threw a brick through the window. I was expecting a baby." - *Times Law Report*.

It would have been harder to catch.





"Saved us a fortune in trick photography."

# PILCHARD PACKING MOMMAS

By Monica Furlong

What must be said about the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation as it gives away another cool half million is how catholic it is in its tastes. Reading through its list of gifts for the second half of 1960 makes the mind boggle: it also makes one feel what a good, generous old fellow Papa Gulbenkian must have been, and what a lot of amusing projects people are working away at with his help – an old pilchard factory converted to an art gallery, a music typewriter, an edition of pre-reformation music, a Portuguese grammar and the study of “tholos”-type passage-graves in the Algarve in preparation for excavating a passage-grave in Co. Armagh.

What I didn't know until I read the press report was what Miss Pearl Jephcott (of the London School of Economics) was up to all these years. Miss Jephcott has just received a final grant of £1,000 (in addition to £1,600 announced in 1959) to complete a retrospective study of the formative influences in the adolescent lives of 160 girls now in their twenties and thirties in a London borough and two provincial towns.

“Miss Jephcott”, the report continues, “has succeeded in tracing a high proportion of the girls, now women in their twenties and thirties (almost all married and mostly mothers), whom she originally studied in their teens. A study of their experiences in and out of school, work and marriage should produce a little of the solid information which has hitherto been lacking about the needs and aspirations of adolescent girls.”

My own reactions to this piece of news are pretty complicated. For instance, downright envy – why has nobody ever offered *me* £2,600 to study adolescent girls, or, since, to tell you the truth, adolescent girls bore me rather, mature men? (Come to think of it, I did carry out a study very much along these lines a few years since, and a fascinating field of research I found it. It never occurred to me, though, to publish my thesis or to limit my field to one London borough and two provincial towns). Then, curiosity. Why 160 girls, and which borough, and what towns, and how did Miss Jephcott come to study all those girls in the first place? And finally, what is the solid information that has hitherto been lacking about the needs and

aspirations of adolescent girls, and why can't it be ascertained by grabbing the nearest passing girl and asking her?

I don't want to do Miss Jephcott out of a job but for what it's worth I'm perfectly prepared, by a study of my own experiences in and out of school, work and marriage (actually I don't go much for experiences out of marriage) to deduce quite a lot about the needs and aspirations, etc. For the record I should say that I am a girl, in my twenties and thirties, almost entirely married, and mostly a mother.

Take school. I well remember the term I was thirteen. My aspirations were to get into the lacrosse team, to write like John Keats, and to liberate India (I was a very political little girl). Sad to say, I only achieved the last of these. That same term we all had rather a crush on the art mistress, I remember, though I thought myself she needed her hair permed and fewer clothes made out of Heal's curtaining. What I needed at the time was to cut down my consumption of iced buns, to wash behind my ears and to come to some kind of working truce with algebra and the German teacher.

From there my old school reports to some extent take up the tale, and depict a figure so punctual, efficient, responsible, public-spirited and altogether establishment-orientated that friends have often accused me of forging the lot. I think myself that it

“So this is where you've been all the time, is it?”



suggests something very interesting about the English education system; that it tends to exhaust all one's social virtues in one's early years so that one ends up in adult life reluctant to so much as pass the salt.

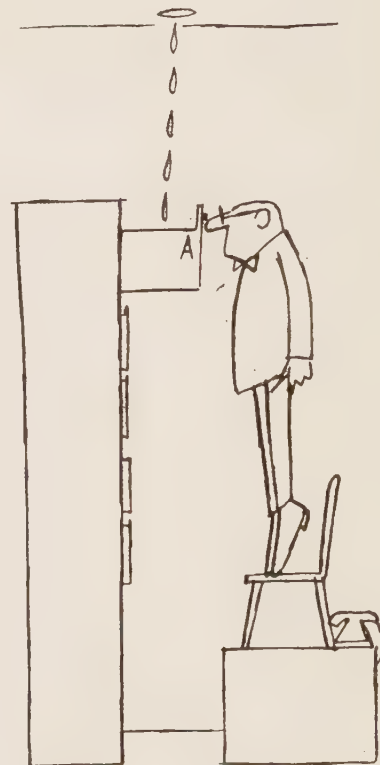
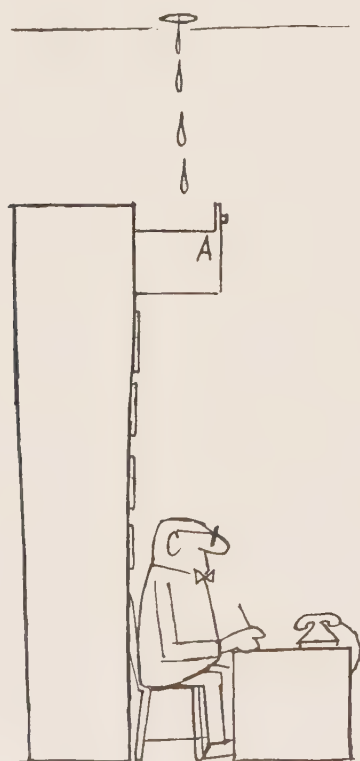
Beneath my bulging school uniform, however, there were other hopes and ambitions. (Are you listening, Miss Jephcott?) Career-wise I was pretty much of a blank, though I did think sometimes that I was destined to do something big like designing a cathedral, become Dr. Schweitzer's right-hand woman, turning into a ravishing Lady of the Camellias, or bringing a little happiness into the great, sad eyes of Laurence Olivier, in those days gazing soulfully over the footlights at the New Theatre. Alas for Gulbenkian, and still more alas for me, these aspirations never really got off the ground. It was about this time that we read *Villette* as a set book, and I developed a taste for short, dark, intense men, with personalities like rockets, which tended to regulate my falling in love rather monotonously for the next few years. So much for education.

Work. Soon after I began an entirely undistinguished office career it became clear to me that what I needed was a job that allowed me to arrive late, go home early, take two hours off for lunch, and talk all day. Failing

a seat on the Board, there seemed little hope of achieving this aspiration, so while grudgingly allowing a succession of offices my physical presence from nine to five, I withdrew my needy and aspiring self to more worthwhile pursuits, such as clothes, boy-friends, love and life. Really I can't think of anything nicer, and I do hope that most of Miss Jephcott's protégées, even if they don't qualify for the Perfect Secretary Award, can say the same.

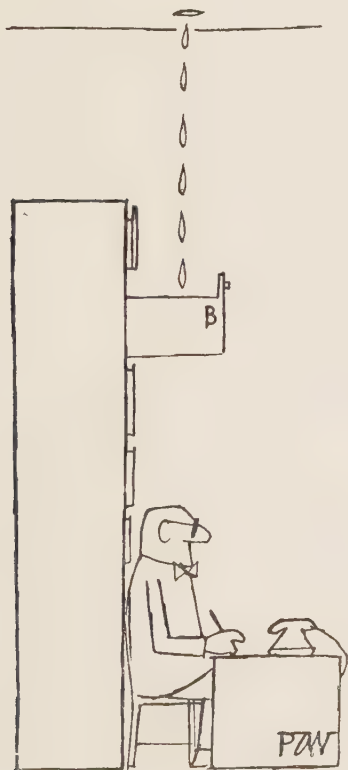
For marriage treads hard on adolescence these days, and while one's husband may be precisely what one wanted and more, in no time at all the pair of you are wringing mortgages, hire-purchase payments, rates and electricity bills out of your hearts' blood, and wondering how on earth you used to spend all that money on L.P.s and lingerie. And when one is not so much aspiring any longer as needy what earthly use is a Perfect Secretary Award then except as something for the baby to cut its teeth on?

Finally, motherhood. My aspiration, partly achieved, is four children, preferably witty, beautiful, intelligent and good, though the attributes are not essential. My need is for a super-nanny, of the kind that even Norland don't manufacture, or better still one of those coal-black mummies they always had in



Hollywood films in the thirties, not so much for the children as for me. What I could do with, it often occurs to me, is a broad, tolerant bosom on which now and again to sob out my worries about feeding, teething, measles and the effect of television on the growing child, and if at the end of it the bosom is able to say "There, there, Mis' Monica, don't you worry 'bout a thing" life would be a thousand times more tolerable than it is to-day.

A crazy hope breaks in at this point which is that when the Gulbenkian Foundation have read Miss Pearl Jephcott's report on her 160 girls, and when they have read what I have to say about Miss Pearl Jephcott's report, they might decide that some of us wives and mothers are as much worth spending a few pounds on as pre-reformation music or the pilchard-packing factory. One hundred and sixty one grants to provide one hundred and sixty one coal-black, or for that matter snow-white, mummies to produce sympathy, advice and clucking noises. For the benefit of one hundred and sixty one anxious wives and mothers would look very well indeed on the Foundation's report and probably revolutionize British home life for the better. And let the passage-graves in Co. Armagh and the pre-reformation masses fall where they may.



*"Frankly, I don't see why you're so anxious to make Kennedy an Honorary Chief. Honorary Chiefs Coolidge, Hoover, Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower - what good did they ever do us?"*

## The Reef Lectures

FULL fathom five my armchair lies,  
 Unless I'm wrong in my belief  
 That I myself - not just my eyes -  
 Am resting on a coral reef . . .

How long has television banked on  
 People prowling through the plankton,  
 Watching with impressive patience  
 The gyrations of crustaceans  
 Through their telescopic lenses?  
 Fish go into frightful frenzies  
 Faced by underwater cameras -  
 Those two specimens look amorous!  
 One is striped and one is spotty . . .  
 My mistake, it's Hans and Lotte.

Supple, elegant and sleek  
 They swim before me once a week -  
 Look, no Hans! But what a lot of  
 Bubbles . . . Ah, he's got a shot of  
 Lotte (someone else behind her  
 Has them both in *his* viewfinder).  
 Now it's time to leave the Hasses  
 In their submarine crevasses -  
 Symbolizing, one supposes,  
 Ocean-bottom symbiosis.

One day perhaps, still with this pair  
 Of flippered television stars,  
 I'll - from the depths of my armchair -  
 Explore the waterweeds of Mars.

- ANTHONY BRODE

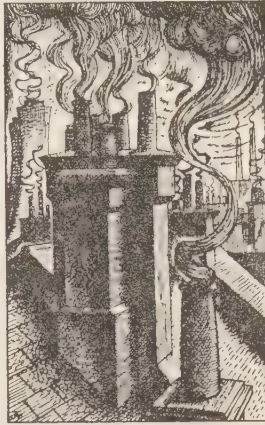
# THE TOWNSMAN

"A magazine for townsmen"

Vol. 1

No. 1

The Official Organ of the  
Society for the Preservation  
of Urban England



"Urbs in Urbe"

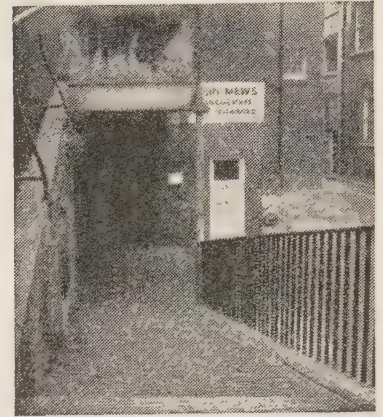
## MID-MAYFAIR

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## OUR COVER

Scaffolding at the New Slab Flats Middlesbrough. "The Slab," as the locals already call it, can be seen from the Cleveland Hills, and of course vice versa. Photographed by Joan Stewart-Smith.



HERE, at last, is the first issue of *The Townsman*.

We are confident that it will perform a function—perhaps, we hope, fulfil a purpose. It is a function, a purpose, in a cause long unserved in this land of ours. We of *The Townsman*, with the support, we trust, of fellow townsmen all over Britain, are determined to do for our towns and cities what so many people have done in the past and still continue to try to do for the country, to help to preserve a way of life.

We of *The Townsman* believe in town life. Nowadays—and we are not actually blaming the Ministry of Housing and Local Government or Professor Lewis Mumford—on every side one hears of the drift away from the urban centres. More and more people are moving out into the country. More and more people seek their recreation there. Inevitably, it seems, there is a comparable decline in the number of people who reside and pass their time in the towns. Can the drift be checked? Can it be reversed? These are two questions.

Meanwhile, we of *The Townsman* maintain that it is vital that those of us who still appreciate our urban heritage should do everything we can—our utmost—to preserve the urban amenities as they were handed down to us, to resist the encroachments of the developers, and to encourage true townsmen in every walk of life to cherish the immemorial urban arts and crafts and, above all, the urban frame of mind.

## A TOWNSMAN'S NOTES

Modern towns cannot hold a candle to the town of my youth. Towns were really towns then, and townies towny. The well-dressed Londoner changed into tweeds to go west of Knightsbridge. Even the less fortunate members of the community were immensely loyal to their neighbourhoods. I remember once my father took me for a Scandinavian cruise and on the way through Dockland our taxi passed a number of urchins hurling rusty tins at warehouse windows. "Who are those poor boys, father?" I asked. "You need not feel sorry for them," he replied. "They belong here. They are playing a traditional Dockland game. They wouldn't give it up for anything. They'd be lost anywhere else. They'd hate spending the summer abroad." His words deeply impressed me, and I often think of that

simple scene when I see the lower classes today, cooped up in their family motor cars, on the way to the fields and beaches and ports, so many links with old traditions having been broken.

The Port of London Authority's sight-seeing launches on the Thames deserve a word of commendation. I recently sailed in one from Charing Cross Pier to Greenwich on a lovely wet, smoky afternoon. I was most impressed by the incessant running commentary that was broadcast from the bridge through loudspeakers that one could hear very clearly wherever one chose to sit on deck. The view of the river on both banks is, of course, entirely urban and almost entirely unspoiled by refurbishment, and the commentator paid proper attention to the urban features of the trip that really matter, such as the large clock on the Shell-Mex Building and the flat that belongs to Daniel Farson, the television personality.

There is a place for flowers. It is in the country, not in the town. I have noticed that the rash of window-boxes is particularly



widespread this summer. Perhaps the people of our towns will come to their senses after a few more road-widening schemes and off-street parking projects have eliminated enough of the unsightly green of urban parkland to convince the slowest-witted among us that there is really nothing quite like concrete and brick.

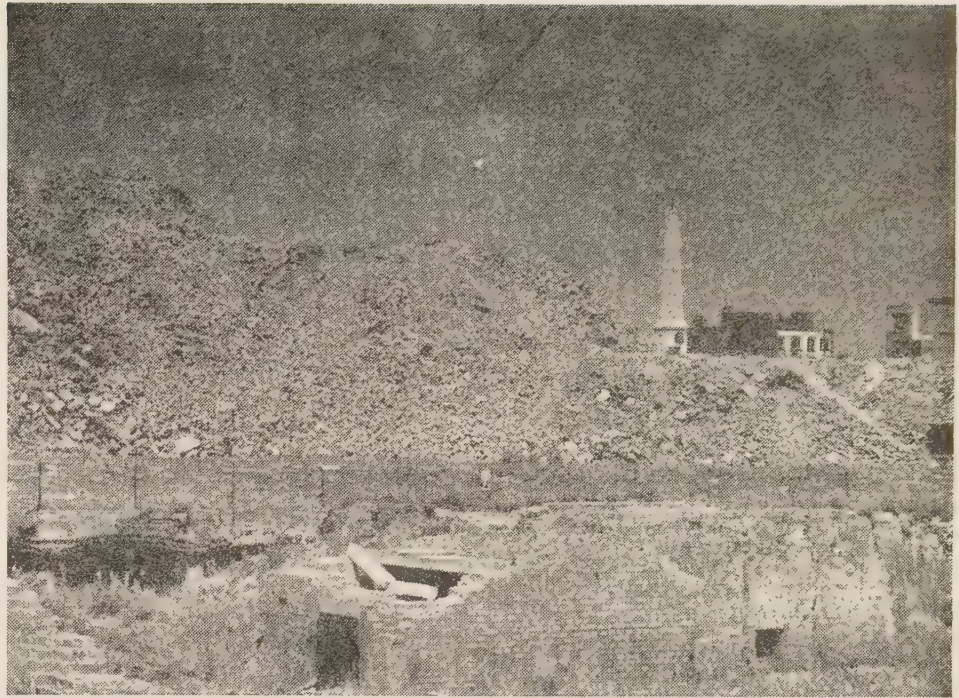
\* \*

Looking on the bright side, I must give credit where credit is due. I was walking in Belgravia early last Sunday morning, savouring that delicate but unmistakable hint of soot in the air that one can still enjoy in London, especially on a warm, humid day, when I suddenly came upon a gang of navvies tearing up the road with pneumatic drills. Am I wrong, or have road-drills been slightly muffled in recent years? No matter, their rhythmically animated roar more than compensated for the disappointing traffic display at that early hour, and set up an effective counterpoint to the church bells. I find that the bells alone sound rather unsuitably rural, but the anomaly is usually as well disguised as it was on this occasion. Incidentally, I feel that the authorities should remind the road-menders that the smell of hot tar is one of the great delights of towns. Surely there is no need to undertake repairs at such a rapid pace? Another penalty for undue speed is that the road-menders seem to be losing the knack of constructing really durable barricades. How often now does one see a watchman brewing tea on his brazier outside a tarpaulin shelter that looks as though it had been built to last? But, all in all, I enjoyed the morning.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### VANDALISM

SIR,—All townsmen who enjoy watching the lusty chaos of a London traffic tangle will have been appalled to learn of plans for yet further road-widening schemes, this time in Oxford Street of all places! Cannot this vandalism be stopped before it is too late? Or is the whole great metropolis to become a boring complex of broad avenues, where vehicles will proceed at sedate intervals of twenty-five yards and the excitement of intertwined bumpers and cabbies' cheerful oaths will be lost for ever? Already



*A HAPPY SOLUTION has been suggested to the problem of bombed sites, which ought to satisfy both those who believe they are part of our urban heritage and those who believe willow-herb and ragwort are unsightly intrusions. The S.P.U.E. has acquired a site at Branksome St. Mary, Dorset, whither selected sites, such as the famous Old Street Heap shown above, can be transferred and preserved. Funds are urgently needed, as are volunteer brick numberers.*

the true character of the town is being whittled away, what with noise abatement, smoke abatement, the litter laws, the Street Nuisances Act and what-have-you. If things go on like this we might all just as well go and live in the country and have done with it. What is needed is a narrowing of streets, with the introduction of artificial obstructions if possible. If motorists want to tear about unimpeded, let them do it in the parks: those are dull enough in all conscience, and if the authorities continue in their refusal to build them over with some decent factories or power-stations, at least they might be livened up by turning them into traffic bottlenecks.—*H. W. Bungster-Fruitwell (Maj.), The Manse, Swiss Cottage.*

\* \*

### DRINKING TROUGHS

SIR,—In a recent House of Commons debate the Minister of Works referred to the difficulty of removing and disposing of drinking troughs. Not a single Member raised the question of why they should be removed and/or disposed of! My Society plans to erect a quantity of new troughs, and gifts of sites or funds are welcomed.—*Arnold Hat Peasby, Hon. Sec., London Society for the Propagation of Characteristic Street Furniture, 2076, Wigmore Street, W.*

\* \*

### A CURIOUS EPISODE

SIR,—As a lifelong student of the habits and habitats of railway kiosk employees I was recently much interested to see one of them, a lady, lean over the counter and throw water

on the platform from a shallow enamel bowl. Does any reader know whether this is used for absorbing fumes from a hidden gas fire, sitting with the feet in, or simply drinking? No one else took any notice of the incident, not even a man whose legs were splashed.—*Mary Miriam Mince (Mrs.), 300b, Goldhawk Road, W.6*

\* \*

### SOME INTERESTING BOLLARDS

SIR,—Your readers may be interested in the enclosed photograph of bollards. They are in good repair and a credit to the Borough of Southwark (who request that I do not disclose the site, for security reasons). Dr. Goalie, in his *Standing on a London Corner* (1877), records no fewer than sixty of these pleasing objects in Southwark alone, but to-day a constable looking for something to hang his cape on can find one only with difficulty.—*J. le W. Nurture, 6a, The Crescent, Holborn*

### CITY WEEK-END

*You know not what you miss,  
You hosts who seek the summer sea  
Or green, monotonous scenery.*

*Look! You are losing this:  
The dusty litter blowing free;  
Soot falling faint and filigree*

*Like a soft, slow, black kiss;  
The loafers loafing home to tea;  
Acres of asphalt, all for me!*

*You know not what you miss.*

MARY ROSE BARNARD



See "Some Interesting Bollards."

# LOOK!

# NO HANDS!

By Patricia Riley

TUESDAY

**H**aving people in this evening. What a delight is my new electric mixer delivered yesterday! My "robot" the salesman called it. Stands in kitchen looking very workmanlike in two-tone grey and white, with all thirty-five attachments. Means sacrificing a few visits to hairdresser, etc., but surely worth it for wholesome, imaginative, easily-prepared food? Such fun, too! How lucky I filled in that coupon about new easy terms!

8.0 a.m.-8.45 a.m. Fit coffee-grinding attachment. Should be much quicker next time, now that I know how it goes. Worth every one of the forty-five minutes anyway, for that fresh, home-ground aroma.

9.15 a.m. Detach Coffee Mill and wash same.

9.30 a.m. Attach Sausage Filler ("simplifies the otherwise virtually impossible"). What a joy to think of fresh, home-made, tasty sausages instead of stale old preservative-ridden shop ones!

9.45 a.m. Something very wrong with Sausage Filler. Remember that I am dealing with a delicate, precision-built machine. 'Phone electrician.

10.15 a.m. Electrician arrives and discovers golliwog's eye in sausage mixture.

10.30 a.m. Both electrician and I feel in need of a cup of coffee. Remove Sausage Filler and wash same. Attach Coffee Mill and grind coffee. Remove Coffee Mill and wash same.

11.0 a.m. Time to prepare dough for home-made bread. What a joy to think of fresh, home-made, tasty bread, instead of stale old shop loaves! And it only needs three mins. kneading with Dough Hook!

11.30 a.m. Finally locate Dough Hook attachment and ruin game of Peter Pan by removing Captain Hook's distinctive feature.

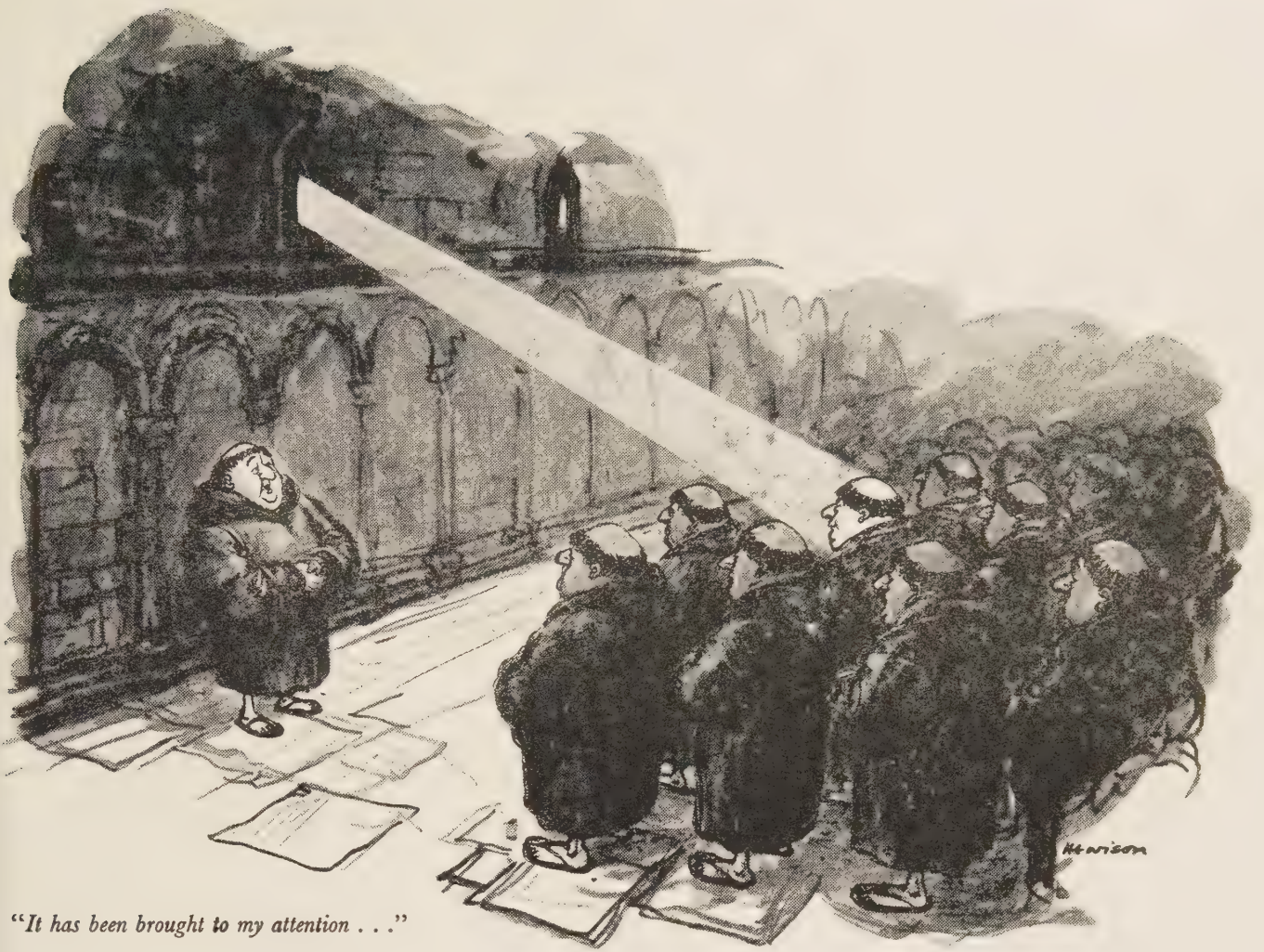
11.35 a.m. Gouge left thumb while fitting Dough Hook to delicate precision-built, etc.

12.0 noon. Thumb bandaged and dough prepared.

12.15 p.m.-2.15 p.m. Prepare for wholesome, imaginative, easily-prepared lunch. Fit Liquidizer for vegetable purée and mashed potatoes. Remember potatoes not peeled. Remove Liquidizer and fit Potato Peeler. Remove Potato Peeler and wash same.



*"But that's the whole point - we're supposed to look as if we've just got up."*



*"It has been brought to my attention . . ."*

Fit Liquidizer. Remove and wash same. Remember spinach which was to have been pulverized. Replace Liquidizer. Remove and wash. Fit Mincer to transform left-overs into appetizing snack. Left-overs certainly minced but no more attractive than before. Remove Mincer and wash same. Fit Coffee Mill. Remove and wash same.

2.30 p.m. Eat wholesome, imaginative, etc., lunch.

3.0 p.m.—7.30 p.m. In kitchen with old Delicate Precision. Use Slicer and Shredder for eggs, tomatoes, carrots, cabbage, cucumbers, etc. Use Oil Dripper for mayonnaise. Use Bean Slicer and Pea Huller. Use Beater and Whisk for pies, meringues. Wash Slicer and Shredder, Oil Dripper, Bean Slicer and Pea Huller, Beater Liquidizer and Whisk.

8.0 p.m. Guests begin to arrive. Do not see a great deal of them but manage to pop out to greet the first arrivals.

8.10 p.m.—11.10 p.m. Back to kitchen with old Delicate P. Fix Liquidizer to mix drinks ("stand-in

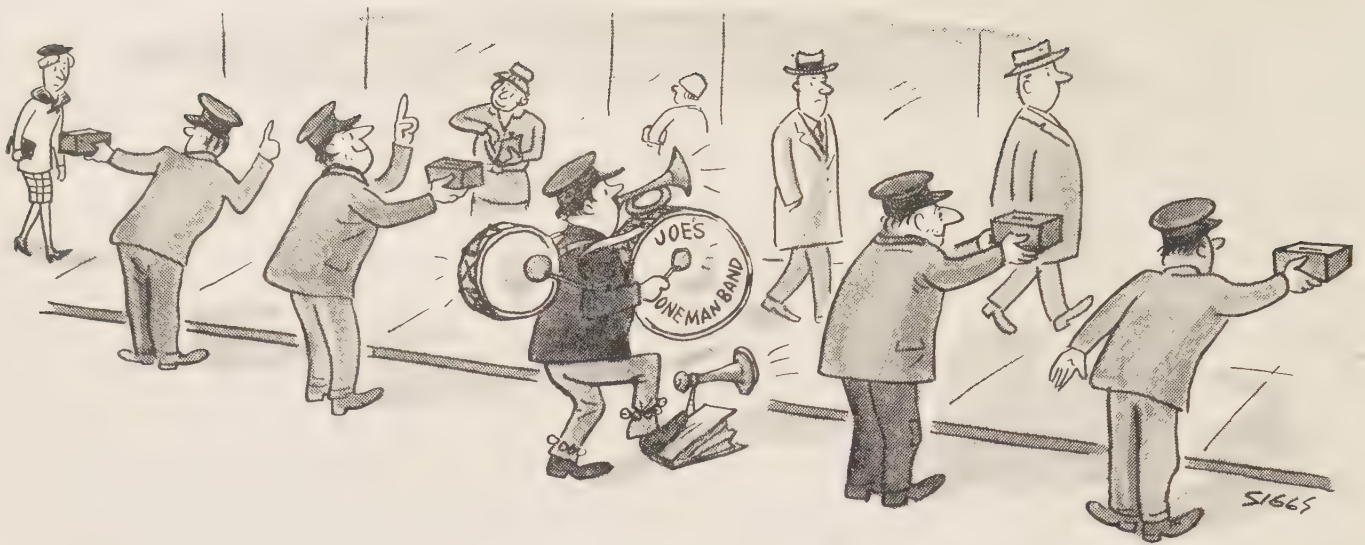
for bar-tender"). Remove. Fix Juice Extractor for fresh, etc., fruit juices. Fix Can-opener for beer cans. Remove Can-opener to fix Slicer and Shredder for orange and lemon slices. Remove Slicer and Shredder and replace Can-opener. Remove Can-opener to fix Coffee Mill. Search desperately for old, hand-manipulated can-opener. Repeat process many times.

11.10 p.m.—11.40 p.m. Wash Liquidizer, Juice Extractor, Can-opener, Slicer and Shredder, Whisk and Coffee Mill.

11.41 p.m. Husband enters with about a hundred-weight of shredded carrot. Says last guest has gone and asked to be remembered to me. Husband very merry (Liquidizer-mixed drinks?) with alien lipstick marks on collar.

#### WEDNESDAY

10.30 a.m. Hair Appointment. Nip into Supermarket on way home for loaf of sliced bread, tin of mushroom soup, instant coffee and a tin-opener.



# WHY DOGS BITE GARDENERS

By J. B. Boothroyd

**Y**ou mustn't think I'm not sorry for Lady Astor of Hever, because I am. It's no joke to break your foot and have to crawl about the estate, accompanied by three barking French whippets, until gardeners come to the rescue and wheel you to safety in a barrow. On the other hand, if you're a gardener loading a lady into a barrow, it's no joke to be bitten by three French whippets "apparently thinking the gardeners were abducting their mistress." Lord Astor, even, was moved to comment: "It was hard luck to be bitten . . . but the men seemed to understand. We hadn't the heart to scold the dogs."

My source of information is one of the more nobility-fancying Press gossips, and as this particular piece carried news not only of the Astors but of the Queen, Prince Philip, Princess Birgitta of Sweden, Prince Johann of Hohenzollern, Sir Guy and Lady Shaw-Stewart, Sir Timothy Eden, Lord Downe, Lord Combermere and the Earl of Leicester, it was obviously impossible to introduce any sort of statement from mere gardeners. As Lord Astor said – avoid any degrading suggestion of direct spokesmanship – they seemed to understand. The point I want to make is that the dogs didn't. They barked for help, and when help came they attacked it. It now gives me great pleasure to attack the dogs. The Astors may not have had the heart to scold them. I have.

These dogs, like all dogs, were fools. Admirers of the canine intelligence, so-called, tweedy folk of the "he-understands-every-word-we-say" school, will be shocked to read this. And not before time. "How lucky," they have been saying to each other, "that the dogs were there to bark for help. And of course when those great rough gardener men came stamping round in their horrid gaiters they bit them. Why, poor little things, they must have been in an awful state." I don't take this view. I take one or two others.

"It was a Russian patrol boat. I stopped, and he hailed me in fairly good English, asking what ship, what owners, where from and where bound. I answered all his questions as he lay close alongside.

I asked why they stopped me on the high seas. He replied "Thank you. You may proceed."

– *Birmingham Post.*

Righted himself, we trust.

(a) The dogs weren't barking for help at all. They were just barking. This is the average dog's contribution to any already exasperating situation, and is one of many pointers to the essential dimness of the species. If the dog had any whit of the intelligence ascribed to him he would know that, for instance, any domestic crisis involving, say, dropped crockery or a bird catching fire on removal from the oven, would be a good time to get out of sight under the table and stay there. How many dogs have the intelligence to see this? Instead, they go into fits of yelping hysterics, showing the whites of their eyes and plunging into the storm-centre, where they trip people up and get their feet wedged in the vegetable-rack. Lady Astor's dogs were instinctively making a confounded nuisance of themselves. Either they resented her being on all fours, trying to get into their act, or they felt intuitively that she was in trouble, and that a concerted bout of shrill barking would stand a good chance of making things more difficult than they were already. Intelligence didn't come into it.

(b) Supposing, just for the sake of argument, that it did. Supposing they worked this thing out rationally.

1ST FRENCH WHIPPET: (*in French, but never mind*) Look, chaps, Mistress has fallen down.

2ND F.W.: How come? I wasn't watching.

3RD F.W.: Tripped, I think. What's she saying?

1ST F.W.: Sounds like, "Oo, my foot." She's starting to crawl. Ought we to get help?

2ND F.W.: Pardon? Sorry, interesting smell here. Well, she won't get far at that rate. What about a good bark? Might fetch the gardeners.

3RD F.W.: Not a bad idea. All set then?

All: Row-row! Row-row-row! Row-row-row-row! Row-row-row! (Etc.)

How's that for a reconstruction, dog-lovers? Chime in with your theories all right, does it? Good. Then let's move forward in time about ten minutes. Dimly, above the canine S.O.S., feet are heard approaching through the undergrowth.

All F.W.s: (*as before*) Row-row! Row-row-row-row! (Etc.)

1ST F.W.: Here come the gardeners, chaps.

2ND F.W.: They've spotted her.

3RD F.W.: They're lifting her up. Row-row-row!

1ST F.W.: Row-row!

2ND F.W.: They've fetched a barrow. Row-row-row!

3RD F.W.: Ready boys? They're putting her into it. Stand by to bite gardeners.

1ST F.W.: Bags I first. Grrr-rrr-rr!

All: Grrr!

*They sink teeth into gardeners' calves, ankles, wrists, etc.*

Of course, I realize I haven't a chance of swaying dog-lovers. They'll soon find a way to explain and defend this sudden lapse from rational Good Samaritan into



berserk fangster. One of the gardeners, no doubt, was wearing a jumble-sale hat, formerly the property of a Russian agent. Or the dogs had been following the Lady Chatterley case, and feared the worst as soon as they saw a coarse hand laid on their stricken mistress.

Well, I'm sorry. I've nothing against dogs, any more than I've anything against the Astors. I just want to explode the intelligence myth, that's all. I've even got a dog of my own. His name's Spot, and you only have to mention a word that rhymes with it, such as clot or guillemot, and he's up from the hearthrug trying to get an imaginary biscuit out of the hand you're holding your glass in. Other indications of this having no sense whatsoever include seeing off the goldfish, thinking it's bedtime and cringing into his kennel in mid-afternoon when all you've suggested is a strategic walk round the garden, trying to go upstairs when two men are coming down with a wardrobe, jumping up for twenty minutes at a tennis-ball on a string plainly two feet out of range, not being able to find a bit of cheese-rind he's standing with his foot on, and barking his head off every night at six when I come home, still not knowing my footsteps from a Broadmoor fugitive's after seven years of hearing them every night at six.

Dogs are fools, but at least I know it. When mine finds me crawling home on all fours with a broken foot it won't surprise me at all if he sinks his teeth in the rescue party. The real surprise will be if he doesn't sink them in me.



*"That's one we had done when we were still courting."*

# BOOTS

## BOOTS

By Angela Milne

Wellington may have won a battle at Waterloo but we mothers know what he really did for England. Invented those boots.

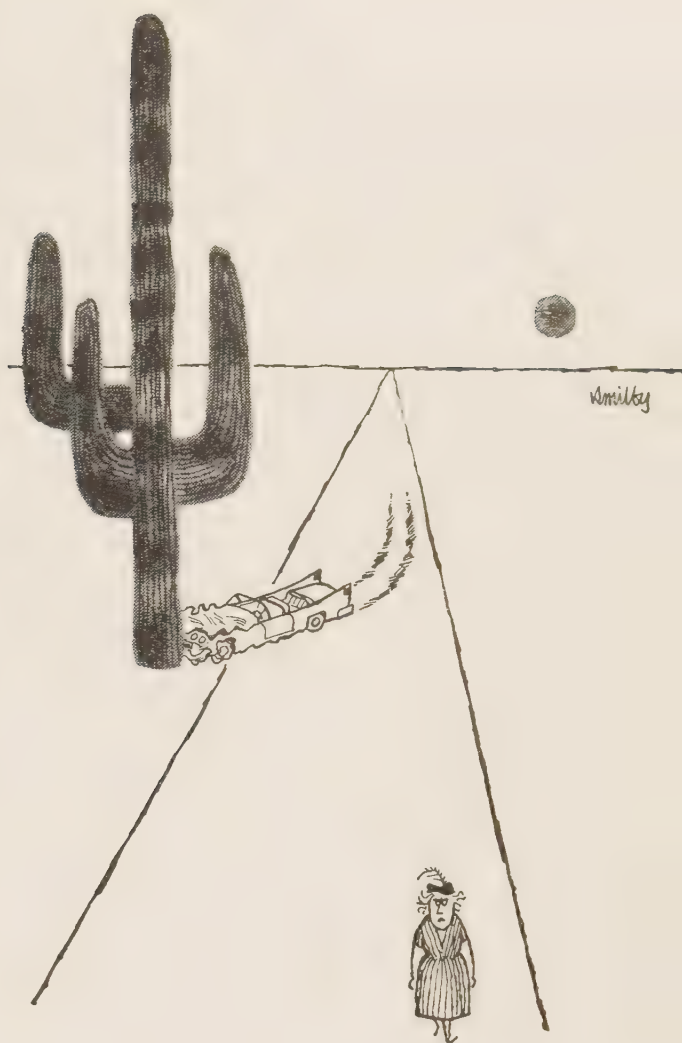
Entering life with toddlerhood, wellingtons begin by being matt red commas three inches high, clutching or clutched by the elastic anklets of woolly boiler suits, dementedly staggering through puddles and drumming push-chair floors. When they join the family line in the cloakroom they look quite delightfully Little Bearish; indeed the chief feature of very young wellingtons is that with their slightly ballooned-up toe-space and characteristic top-rim finish they are as perfectly a replica of the real thing as are the feet they enclose.

Very soon wellingtons are displaying other chief features; for example, their talent for becoming surplus. All those ex-pairs – the minutely graded red matts, the sawn-off glossy blacks, the full-length, magnificently rubbery clumpers with soles as chunkily studded as a lorry tyre – would silt the house up did not Nature decree that discarded wellingtons should be either maddeningly new, and so get handed on, or maddeningly punctured and cut up for paraffin drum tap-washers. It takes time, of course, to cut up an unpunctured wellington; hence the odd left-footer that would make it impossible for you ever to lay your hands on the required pair first go if you didn't find it impossible anyway, what with wellington-sizes being so sturdily independent of shoe-sizes.

School wellingtons are traditionally marked inside with the biggest blackest capitals known to the marking-ink world; but this doesn't help the school mum rootling through lockers for her six-year-old's glossy blacks. Still, as she and the form-mistress stoop chattily along the row, she can at least console herself by thinking what a good parent-teacher relationship she is working up. Other bonuses offered by wellingtons are their easiness to choose in shops (buying them never gets to the point when the assistant has moved the ladder for the fifth time and the children are

fighting for the slide-rule); and their gorgeousness when new. Thus they atone for such inherent defects as harbouring possible spiders in the toe and being, to anyone borrowing a pair perhaps too small, a bit of an act of faith during that struggle past the instep.

Wellingtons off to boarding-school know a proud moment when, by the laws of gravity and displacement, their newspaper-wrapped hulk is voted first item into the trunk. But the holidays, when chum visits chum, give them their real thrill; for delicious weeks they zoom through the post in floppy wedge-shaped parcels, pursuing from Surrey to Dorset, from Cornwall to the Usk Valley those owners whose hostesses forgot to look downstairs when packing. What with all the characterful things wellingtons do, besides what they do in keeping the wet out, it is understandable that the Iron Duke could have been Poet Laureate for all we mothers care. With us, his fame rests more surely.



# HAVE B.A., WILL TRAVEL

Further jottings from the Diaries of A. J. Wentworth

as recorded by H. F. Ellis

**I**t is grand to be back here again, if only "to tide us over" as the Headmaster puts it. Well, I have tided them over a few difficulties in my time, and I dare say I can do so again. Of course it is not the same. One cannot expect to step back into one's old seat at the top of the Common Room tree on the strength of a few weeks' temporary work. Easy does it. "Tact, Wentworth old boy!" I said to myself as I shaved this morning, "Tact and diplomacy!" And be sure I shall need both. I had to hold myself in pretty tight directly after chapel when I was hanging up my gown in the old familiar cupboard. They've put in a new light-switch, I noticed: one of those pull-down things on the end of a long string, which always seem to me a bit – not suggestive exactly. Anyway I don't like them. But it wasn't that. It was a young fair-haired fellow, new since my time and takes French and History, they tell me. "I say," he said, "you must be Thompson's stand-in. That's Mr. Rawlinson's peg, if you don't mind my telling you. He's a bit touchy, you know."

Well!

It was on the tip of my tongue to inform this young hopeful that the peg in question happened to be mine, that I had used it for twenty-seven years (ever since the Lent Term 1933, when old Poole gave up, to be precise), and that if anybody was trespassing it was Rawlinson. But my sense of humour won the day and I thanked him instead, saying with an assumption of the utmost gravity, "I am most grateful for the hint. You have saved me from an irreparable blunder." I then took my tattered old gown off the peg and hung it up again, with mock humility, on the furthest peg of all, right in the corner where the rolled-up map of Europe before the Great War used to stand.

"That's mine," the young fellow said.

Still, all the familiar smells are there, and I snuff them up like an old war-horse returning to the fray. The headmaster, in particular, has been most kind and





welcoming. "It is like a breath of fresh air to have you back with us, A.J.," he told me, to which I replied, jokingly (though to tell the truth I was very much moved), "The School hasn't often been short of fresh air, surely, Headmaster?" – a reference to the central heating system, which was always going wrong in my time. But he missed the point I think. He has grown rather fat in late middle age, and is no longer known to the boys as the Squid, so Rawlinson tells me. Apparently they call him the Atomic Pile, in their modern way, or "Tommy" for short, though his real name is, of course, the Reverend Gregory Saunders, M.A.

I had quite a shock on entering Classroom 4 for my first period with my old mathematical Set IIIA. The lower part of the wall, a sensible dark green in the old days, has been painted primrose, of all colours, with a lighter shade above, on some cock-and-bull theory that boys work better in cheerful surroundings. Nonsense! Boys work best when they have got their heads down over their books, with a master in charge who knows how to keep a firm hand on the young rascals, not when they are staring at fancy plastic emulsions. I suppose it is all part and parcel of turning the place into an "Inspected School", which happened as soon as my back was turned. We are to have a second visit from these gentlemen in a week or two, the Headmaster tells me, and much good may it do us, or them. It is difficult enough in all conscience to teach boys the Theorem of Pythagoras, without being distracted by some Government popinjay sitting in judgment on the teaching methods of a man old enough (though by no means inclined) to be his father.

However, what was in some ways an even greater shock awaited me with IIIA. One's first duty, naturally, is to list the boys' names. Not that they are not already listed in the mark-book by one's predecessor, but it makes a start and helps one to get acquainted and so on.

"Call out your names, please, one by one," I told them, "beginning from the left of the front row."

"Do you want them in the form order, sir?" somebody asked.

"Naturally," I said. "That is why I said beginning from the left."

"The top boy sits on the right, sir."

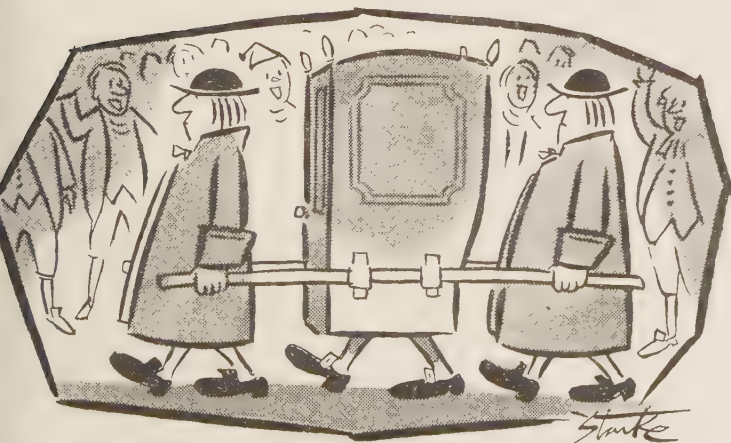
I was thunderstruck. Boys at Burgrove sit at their desks in the order of the previous week's mark-lists, and in all my experience it has been the rule that the top boy sits on the left, the next boy on his right, and so on down the rows, ending with the bottom boy (who has to wipe the board and do other small chores) at the extreme right of the back row. Any other arrangement leads, in my opinion, to nothing but confusion.

"In my classroom," I said, "the top boy sits on the left. Now will you please get yourselves sorted out in the proper order as quickly as possible. And *quietly!* This is a classroom, not an elephant-house."

It is extraordinary what an amount of noise a dozen boys can make with their feet, but eventually, after I had given a pretty sharp look to a biggish dark boy



*"Then they remarried and lived happily ever after."*

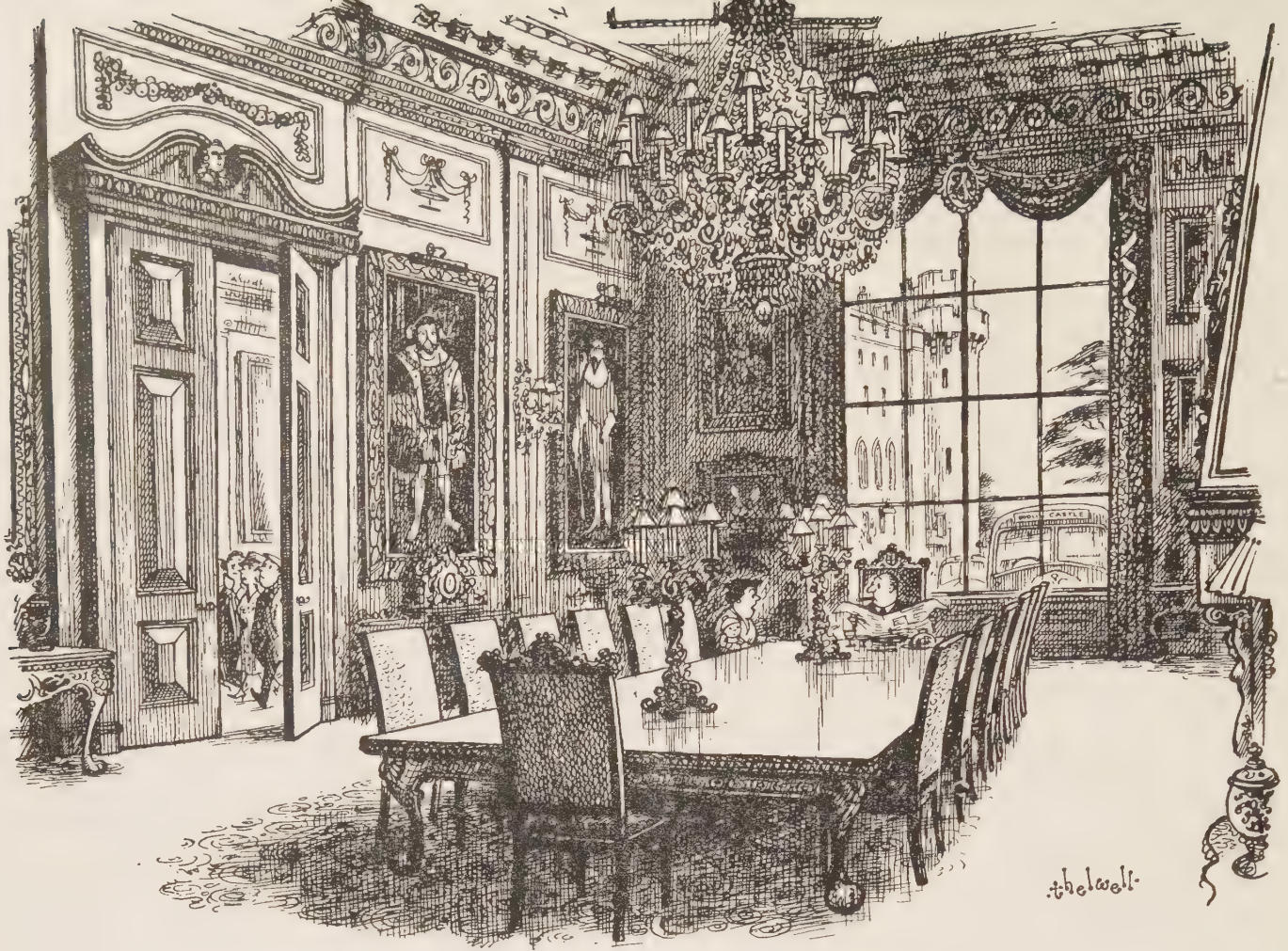


### House-Work

TO CLEAN: it sounds a simple thing,  
And so it might have been,  
If *then* I had no need to clean  
The things with which I clean.

Nor there, alas, does trouble end.  
I find it hard, I mean,  
To clean the things with which I clean  
The things with which I clean.

— R. KENNARD DAVIS



"Excuse me! Do we have to serve ourselves?"

whom I caught tweaking another boy's ear as he passed, they all settled down again, and I began to write their names in my book as they called them out.

"Henderson," I repeated, "Blake, Wrigley . . . With a 'W'?" I asked, looking up at the third boy in the row.

"Yes, sir. As in Wrekin."

To my astonishment it was the boy next to him who answered, that is to say the third boy from the *right* (there being seven desks in all in the front row, as I ought perhaps to have made clear), and I immediately demanded an explanation. "Has Wrigley lost his tongue?" I asked sharply. "Or why do you take it upon yourself to speak for him?"

"I *am* Wrigley," the boy said, looking genuinely bewildered.

"I see," I said. "Wrigley, did you not hear me say that you were to sit in your form order *beginning from the left*. Can you not count up to three?"

Wrigley simply stood there, looking helplessly about him, until the boy on the extreme right, who turned out to be Henderson, kindly put his oar in. "I think I can explain it, sir," he said. "Wrigley thought you meant our left, not yours. We all did, sir. That's why I'm over here where I am now, instead of being where I was when I started, if you see what I mean, sir."

It is most important that a master should be fair, as well as firm, and believing that there had been a genuine misunderstanding I said no more than "Very well, Henderson. But understand this, all of you. When I say 'left' in this classroom I mean *my* left and nobody else's. Is that clear?"

"What happens if you are speaking with your back to us?" somebody asked.

"Stand up the boy who said that," I ordered, in the voice I use only when I

### Beauty Hint

"Or if your face conflicts with the flower-pot idea twist it into a knot at the back and wear one of those delicious satin or velvet pillboxes." — *Evening Standard*.

mean to have no nonsense. A fair-haired boy with glasses, whose face seemed vaguely familiar, rose to his feet a good deal more slowly than he will learn to do when he knows me a little better. "I only meant——" he began.

"Your name?" I said sternly.

"Mason, sir."

"Mason!" I repeated. "Indeed! Mason, eh? Well, well, well, well. Good gracious me! I see. How old are you, Mason?"

"Eleven and a half, sir."

There was a fair-haired boy called Mason here in the old pre-war days, with whom I crossed swords on one or two occasions. Not a bad-hearted chap, but a little too inclined to overstep the mark. Indeed at times he was guilty of downright insolence, which I am scarcely the man to tolerate. It would be odd, though not of course impossible, if I were now to have the doubtful pleasure of trying to cram the elements of algebra into his son's head.

"May I sit down now, sir?"

Some of the other boys laughed at this, and I very soon spotted the reason.

"You appear to be sitting down already, Mason," I said. "So I am afraid I fail to see the point of your question."

"Oh, so I am sir. I must have done it without noticing. What I mean is, may I have your permission to sit down, sir?"

If I had not been quite certain before, this sort of tomfoolery was enough to convince me of the boy's identity. I was anxious to have no unpleasantness in my very first period with IIIA, but the sooner this youngster was put in his place the better it would be for all of us.

"Mason," I said slowly, "I believe your father – All right, boy, sit down now – your father was at this school, I believe, in the late 1930s. Is that so?"

"Yes, he was, sir. He told me all about you."

"Indeed!" I said. "That must have been very interesting. And did he tell you, among all the other things, that I was not a good man——"

"Oh, no, sir."

"Not a good man," I continued, raising my voice, "to try to be funny with? Do you happen to remember that, Mason?"

The boy had the impertinence to pretend to be racking his brains, until I

"One-way plan next year at Cemetery." – *Reading Standard*.

And this is new?



brought him to his senses by rapping sharply on my desk with a pair of compasses.

"I expect he did, sir," he said hurriedly. "Sir, is it true, sir, that you once fell backwards into a kind of basket in the boot-room?"

"Be quiet, all of you," I cried. "We are wasting far too much time. Henderson, where had you got to with Mr. Thompson before he became ill?" I had forgotten, until the boy I was addressing told me his name was Sibling, that the form was still back to front owing to this misunderstanding about left and right, and there was a further tiresome delay while they all got themselves back into their original positions.

And even then, as Henderson reminded me, I had still to take their names down before we could get started.

"Henderson, Blake, Wrigley with a 'W'," I said briskly – "those I have got. Next?"

There was no reply, and I had to repeat the order. But the silence continued.

"Come along, come along, wake up!" I said. "You, there – what is your name?"

"Kingsley," the fourth boy said, looking frightened, as well he might. "But I'm not really next, sir."

"Then why are you sitting there, boy?" I thundered, beginning to lose patience. Upon my soul, I began to wish I had my old IIIA lot back again, muddle-headed as many of them were.

"It's Potter who's next in the order really, sir," Henderson explained. "But he isn't here."

"Why is Potter not here?"

"I don't know, sir. I think he had to go and see Matron."

"See Matron and die," somebody sang out. I suspected Mason, but in my profession one has to be on one's guard against prejudice. So I let it go, and went on with my list of names as though I had noticed nothing. Which was just as well, as it turned out; otherwise I might not have got to the last boy before the bell rang for the end of the period.

We must really get down to it to-morrow. Still, the hour was not entirely wasted. As every schoolmaster knows, it is of the first importance to get on terms with one's boys. Let them see what they are up against right from the start, and then – off with a bang!

## *Wiltshire v. The Rest*

POOR weary Londoner, come to the fresh green countryside,  
To the hush of the grass growing under the deck chair,  
To the peace of the shadowing branches and the rest of roses.  
Come, come away from that thundering city of lights,  
And lie in the silent sun, in the calm of a long week-end.  
All is quiet here: on Saturday there are only four to lunch,  
And five to tea, and six to drinks, and seven to dinner,  
And eight coming in afterwards to play Canasta till dawn.  
On Sunday there are only nine people dropping in after church,  
And ten of us going to look at a wonderful garden  
Which is only eleven miles away, in the afternoon.  
There may be twelve coming in for supper, but you can leave early  
And catch the midnight train which gets in at two,  
So do come and relax, you poor tired thing with your pale face,  
Come to our peaceful, restful, hushful, quiet countryside.

— VIRGINIA GRAHAM



# PSYCHOLOGY

## VERSUS

## HORSES

By R. Squire

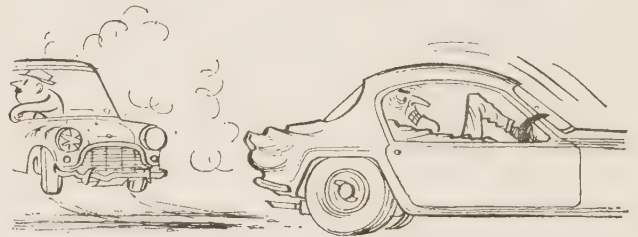
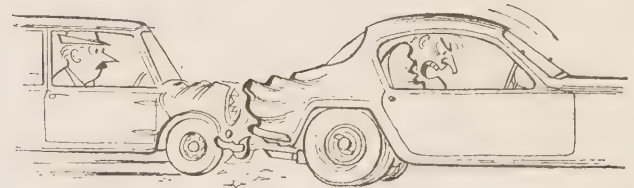
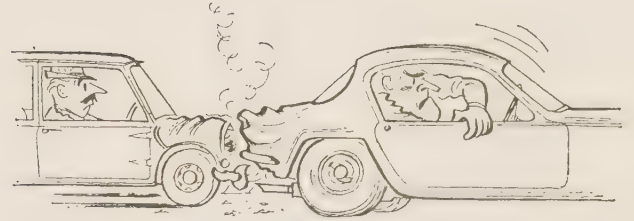
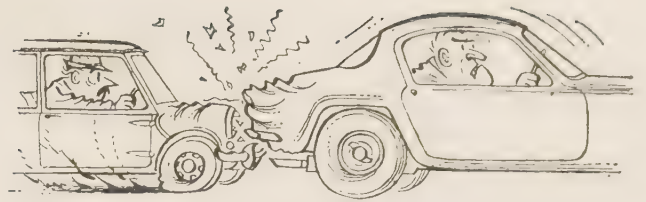
**I**t says on the dust cover of a new book about equestrianism that the author, who is Lt.-Col. A. L. d'Endrödy, "has analysed how to control the horse's mental powers."

It is a pity we did not know how to do this at the Clerkenwell depot of the United Milk Company before the war. There were thirty horses on the staff, supposedly to pull milk carts, but a more awkward gang of work-shy scroungers you never met. A roundsman would disappear behind a house with some milk and instantly his horse would double off down the road to a spot with a grass verge to chew. It might take hours to find him, with angry customers waiting and, in summer, half the milk on his cart gone sour.

Many of our horses were dishonest. They had places on their routes where they repeatedly stole flowers from a garden or sweetstuffs from a barrow. But their worst vice was automatism. We might keep a horse on a certain route for three months but then have to change him to another. A decent horse would regard this as due to the exigencies of the service, but many would persistently try to go back to their old district. At five o'clock on a perishing cold morning a milkman sets out from the depot to go down to High Street and deliver in the shopping centre. But the horse wants to go the other way, back to the Station Road sector which he thinks he owns because he did it for a few months.

Suppose the milkman gets his way in the end and they start work in the High Street. The horse watches his chance and as soon as the man is out of sight he nips off back to Station Road. Sometimes the milkman would fetch him back five or six times in one day.

If we had known how to control the horse's mental powers we could have got some system into our deliveries. But during the war I found that horses in other countries are no better. For example there was a Sikh horse, or to be exact a horse hired from a Sikh, in Kashmir.



We set out from a village and went along a mountain track, this horse and I. There was a sheer drop of two thousand feet on our left and a little stone wall that kept us from falling over. But one mile out of the village the wall suddenly stopped. Presumably all the masons who built it had fallen over the precipice by then.

It was now that my equine friend showed his true self. Whether to scare me, to show off, or from a genuine death wish, I do not know, but he deliberately



*"Don't forget - you promised to let me know when it became an orgy."*

avoided the inside of the track and walked along on the crumbling edge of the abyss. Most of the time his two outside legs were hanging over empty space. Sitting on his back there was nothing I could do, nor dare do. Broken fragments of the edge went thundering down to terrify the villagers in the valley below, while my horse put on a tremendous act where he pretended to lose his foothold, scramble with his hoofs and teeter on the brink. And all this with three feet of solid ground on our right where we could have been riding in safety.

I would have given anything to control his mental powers just then, but nothing I could say or do had the slightest influence on him. He scared me out of a year's growth, and since then I keep well away from horses. Nevertheless I observe them and some of the things about them are rather disturbing. For a start, their mental powers are not so limited as you would think. They are putting on an act. When you see one of them, lantern-jawed and horse-faced, standing idle as though thinking of nothing, his mind is really working like an electric clock. And he is looking down his nose at you too.

Sooner or later, horses or their spokes-horses will have to answer some very disturbing questions.

1. Why is so much television horse opera? Who enjoys it except horses?
2. There used to be horses that actually worked, like Shires and Percherons. But they went out, and now you rarely see a horse do a hand's turn. Whose idea was that?
3. How is it horses have dodged out of doing delivery work in Central London and have been replaced by vehicles that are not effectively faster in traffic and actually cost more to run? In other words who benefits? The horse.
4. How did horses become so socially acceptable? In a country where eighty per cent of the people live in towns, horses contribute nothing to the urban economy, yet they are always regarded as upper class. Men work like slaves in cities to get enough money to move to the country. Not because they want to, oh no, but simply because their womenfolk want a horse. Again, who benefits?
5. And what about racing? Betting men are always broke and millionaire racehorse owners admit that they lose money every time they win. So who does win, if not horses?

We should get the mental powers of these horses under control before they control ours.

# MY TIPPING PLAN FOR THIS SEASON

By B. A. Young

**T**he practice of adding a few per cent for service, say ten, or say more likely fifteen, seems to suit most people, even if there are not many of us who can look a hall-porter in the face as he stows our baggage in the station-bound taxi without raising his share to eleven, or sixteen, as the case may be. My new scheme for tipping is therefore based on this method, but I add a new element which makes it less impersonal.

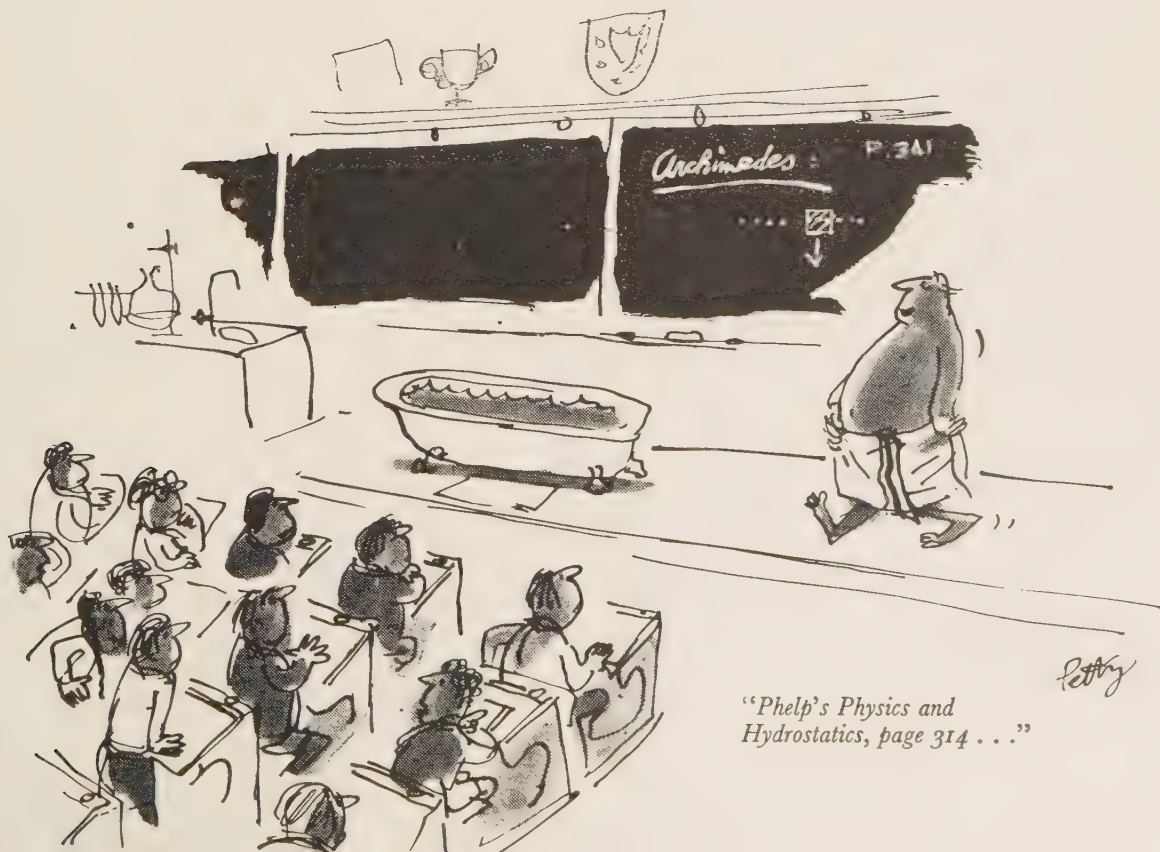
The system is quite simple. I begin with a standard percentage, a generous one, say twenty per cent, and then I keep a running score during my stay of (a) services performed, (b) services not performed, (c) unwelcome services touted, and – this is most important – (d) services performed by myself for the staff. Services performed are of course covered in the standard twenty per cent. For each service not performed I then deduct one per cent; for each unwanted service thrust

at me another one; and for everything I do for the staff I enter one per cent on a separate account which I shall match against the hotel's before I settle it.

For example, suppose I stay a week at the Hotel Elysium et Macclesfield at Cannes (*près de la Croisette*). My bill for full *pension* for seven days is 30,000 fr., to which I gladly add twenty per cent, or 6,000 fr.

I then make the following interesting adjustments:

1. <i>Services not performed.</i>	
Shoes not cleaned . . . . .	deduct 1%
Not told Jayne Mansfield staying at the Carlton . . . . .	” 1 ”
Not told <i>Hiroshima Mon Amour</i> showing at the local cinema . . . . .	” 1 ”
Not warned hot tap marked “Froid” and vice versa . . . . .	” 1 ”
Night-porter asleep when I come in from the Casino . . . . .	” 1 ”



“Phelp’s Physics and Hydrostatics, page 314 . . .”

2. *Unwelcome services proffered.*

Sold ticket for boring bus tour to somewhere or other . . . . .	deduct 1%
Offered hire of unreliable scooter from proprietor's cousin . . . . .	„ 1 „
Offered share table with mature English schoolmistress . . . . .	„ 1 „
Persuaded see new Steve Reeves film at the local cinema . . . . .	„ 1 „
Night-porter awake when I come in from the Zanzi Bar . . . . .	„ 1 „

3. *Own services to staff (separate account).*

Listen to chambermaid's story about her sister . . . . .	enter 1%
Agree with hall-porter's estimate of local football team . . . . .	„ 1 „
Promise to visit hall-porter's cousin's London restaurant . . . . .	„ 1 „
Tell pageboy how to pronounce "Edinburgh" . . . . .	„ 1 „
Ask waiter how his baby is (once daily for 7 days) . . . . .	„ 7 „
Pat proprietor's enormous dog on the head . . . . .	„ 1 „
Tell proprietor dog's paw-marks on suit don't matter . . . . .	„ 1 „
Shop at chambermaid's brother's remote shop for <i>Ambre Solaire</i> . . . . .	„ 1 „
Correct pageboy's pronunciation of "Thank you" . . . . .	„ 1 „
Tell proprietor, hall-porter, waiter, chambermaid and pageboy how much I have enjoyed my stay . . . . .	„ 5 „

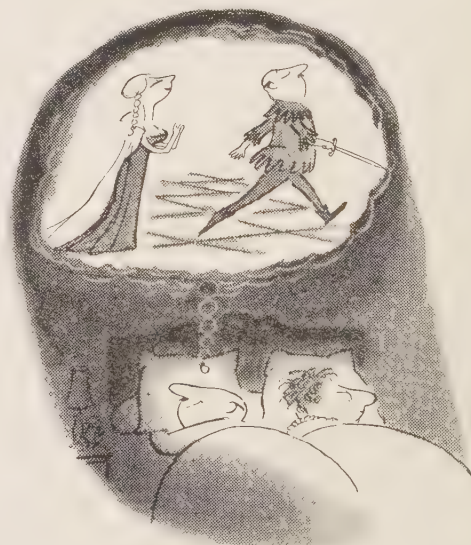
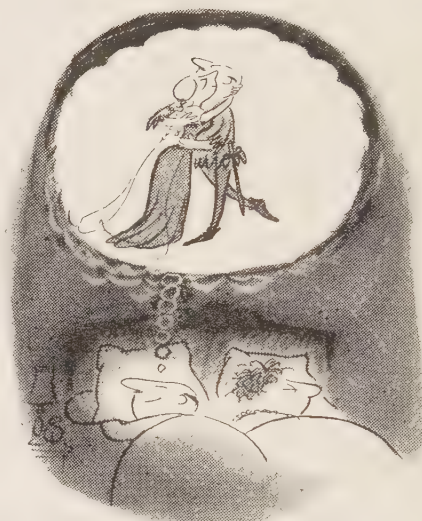
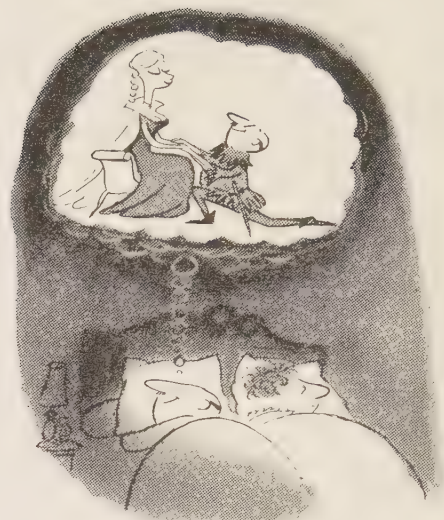
The total deductions under (1) and (2) amount to ten per cent, leaving ten per cent still payable for service. Against this I match the twenty per cent which I reckon the staff owes me for service. The total resultant service charge is thus ten per cent, or 3,000 fr., in my favour.

This time next year I will tell you how this system works out in practice.

"HOME OF THE HAPPY PEOPLE

For a honeymoon, a tenth anniversary, or a twenty-fifth, it [Tahiti] is clearly the spot *sans pareil*. Join in a *Tamaaraa*, the Tahitian feast. Thrill to a Tahitian dance. Ride an outrigger canoe. Climb Mr. Tohivea." - *An airlines brochure.*

The *happy* Mr. Tohivea?





## Me and Aunt Edna Calling the Box Office

I HAVE been purged for long enough by terror and by pity,  
Emotionally I'm a bankrupt; there's nothing left in the kitty;  
All I ask is the camel lines and the lights of the desert city  
And lashings more of the blissful secret life of Walter Mitty.

Oh for the cleft-chinned hero, winning a golden fleece,  
Two persons putting together a dinosaur, piece by piece,  
And one of them tumbling the whole thing down by a slip in a pool of grease,  
And an endless stream of dear Mack Sennett's belly-laugh police.

I crave for a level-crossing and a truck and an engine's scream,  
And the purr of mink and the chink of ice and the sequin's wicked gleam,  
Ruritania and Rose-Marie, Lerner-and-Loewe-and-cream,  
Oklahoma and Pinafore and a Midsummer Night's long Dream.

I will not lay good money out to be harrowed about perversion –  
Come down, cat, from the hot tin roof to a Garden coolly Persian.  
What I require is three good hours of sumptuous total immersion,  
In the swish of Daimler tyres on the drive and a Golden Arrow Excursion.

I long for the innocent ageless dead-pan face of Buster Keaton,  
And the feast of whelks and winkles of a Day by the Sea at Seaton,  
The brittle charm of early Edwardians dressed by Cecil Beaton,  
And a clash of the sunny temperaments of characters raised at Eton.

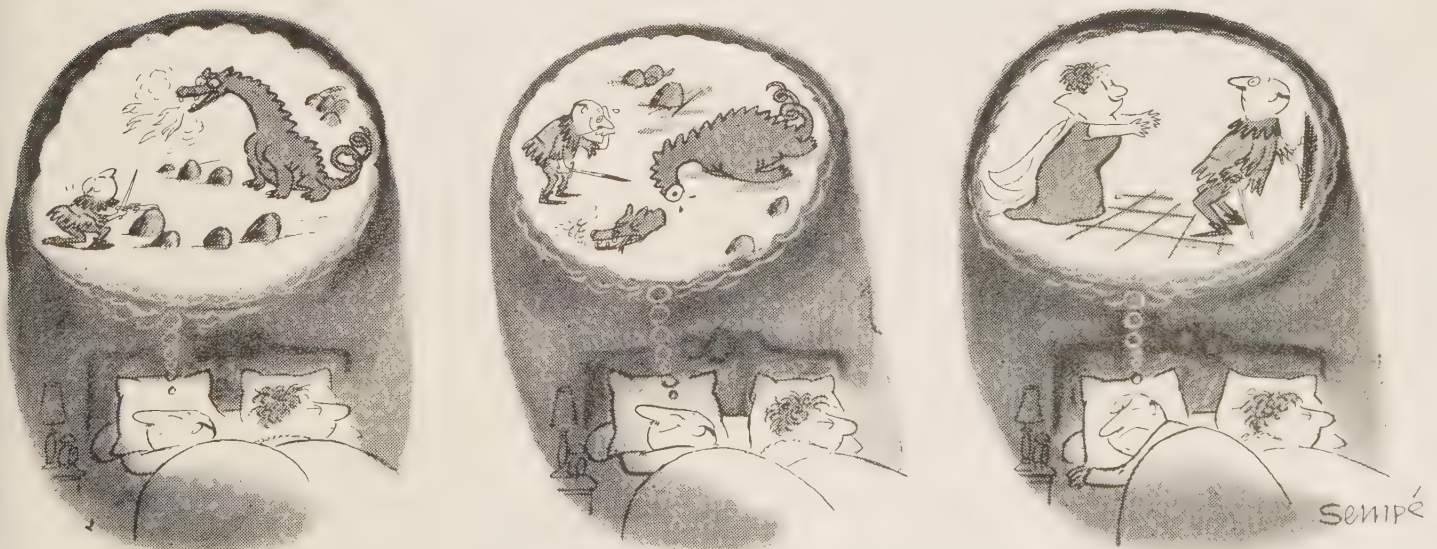
Guards officers planning adultery in a chi-chi Georgian setting,  
And a bee-hive girl with a salty wit and a Dior dress abetting,  
A blonde and a carefree sailor in some un-neurotic petting,  
And a twelve-stone dame in a feather boa receiving a sudden wetting.

Brother, oh brother, we *like* it Ham. We do not want Real Life.  
Plenty of that outside in the rain, and sinks are all too rife.  
Give us a romp in lollipop land and a lull in mental strife,  
And no more high-toned bellyaches from a sex-starved teenage wife.

– PENELOPE HUNT

### Pardon My Metaphor

“Taurus (April 21–May 20). –  
Stable conditions in working life  
enable you to let go of the reins.”  
– *Katina and the Stars: Evening  
Standard.*



"Call the Garage!"



# FISH FROM THE TOBACCONISTS

By H. F. Ellis

I have never (I shall say to my grandchildren) been one to praise time past for its own sake, wilfully shutting my eyes to all the benefits that man has won for himself since Norfolk suits were compulsory at preparatory schools. But you must forgive me if I heave a sigh, as old men will, for the days when grocers sold groceries, chocolate came from sweet-shops, and it was as necessary to go to a chemist for razor-blades as to a shoe-shop for shoes.

Oh, yes, of course there were General Stores even in my young days. When a village had only one shop it was natural enough that the old lady who ran it should cater, within certain limits, for all the needs of the villagers, and a very odd smell indeed such places had, with their mixture of beeswax, iron saucepans, oatmeal in sacks, toy wooden horses, hanks of wool, kitchen soap, well-blackened bits of bacon, and those new-fangled tins of beans with the dents on top where someone had tried to hammer down the tell-tale convexity. There were also, at the other end of the scale, sizable Department Stores in large centres of population, where shoppers might buy anything from towel-rails (in the Basement) to grand pianos (on the floor

immediately below Garden Furniture and Teas) by simply ascending through Groceries, Fancy Goods, Ladies' Fashions, Juvenile Wear, Gramophones and Books, Soft Furnishings, and Carpets. I remember, when I was no older than you are, my dears, buying a ninepenny white-metal pin-box, made in Japan, for my mother, and then completing my Christmas shopping *in the same building* by simply going upstairs and getting a cotton handkerchief for my father with his first initial embroidered on it in blue.

So you must not think that there is anything strange or shocking to me in the idea of multiple stores dealing in a wide variety of merchandise. But in between the General Store and the Department Store, for the convenience of shoppers who lived neither in hamlets nor near the West End of London, but in those larger villages, provincial towns and suburbs which are the heart of England, there existed in my heyday a pleasing multiplicity of small shops devoted each to the sale of some particular homogeneous commodity. Butchers, bakers, grocers, greengrocers, fishmongers, ironmongers and dairies sold, respectively, meat, bread, groceries, fruit and vegetables, fish, ironmongery and

milk. It is true that tobacconists sold walking-sticks, but that may have been because nobody cared to trade exclusively in so sluggish a line; they also sometimes sold sweets, but in that case were careful to call themselves, in somewhat curly characters on their shop-fronts, "Tobacconist and Confectioner." The men and women who manned these shops were specialists, trading only in the type of goods to which, whether by chance, heredity, inclination, or through lack of competition, they had decided to devote themselves. It did not occur to the greengrocer to sell soup on the side, or to the chemist to try to do the tobacconist down by stocking cigarettes. The butcher would as soon have thought of adopting the grocer's white coat as of running shelves of tinned foods along one wall of his shop.

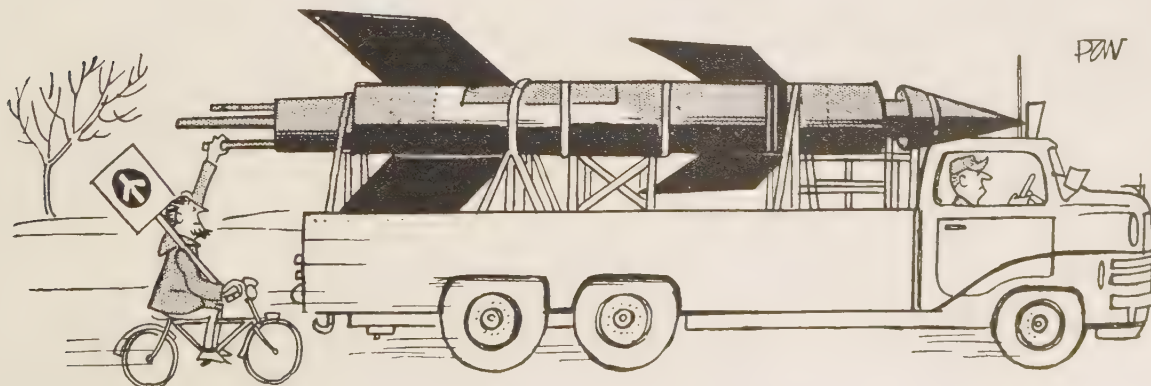
I am aware that to you, who are accustomed to go into any shop outside which you happen to find yourselves, without even troubling to notice what kind of establishment it purports to be, and buy everything you want, all this may seem a little bizarre. But to me, who am older and a great deal wiser, the present age of non-specialization in shopping is distasteful in the extreme. I do not desire to buy tinned pilchards at the baker's, nor to see cigars in cylindrical containers at the greengrocer's. It offends me, when I am in search of stationery, to find myself leaning against a trough or bin full of frozen peas, fish fingers and turkey pies (for four persons), from which rises a kind of steam or miasma of what I believe to be liquid hydrogen. It is all very well on the Continent, where abnormality is in a sense a part of the enjoyment, to buy beer at a hardware store. Here, in England, at what used to be my tobacconist's, I do *not* expect to be offered chicken supreme in tinfoil trays (simmer for fifteen minutes if unfrozen, or twenty if needed immediately after purchase), still less to read a notice just above a jar of mint humbugs appealing to me to "Let Us Handle Your Holiday Travel Problems. B.E.A. Bookings Accepted Here."

It was in 1960, as I remember, children, that I first became aware of the rapid spread of this strange, and to my mind greedy, development. Wishing to buy some backing in Brecon, while en route for parts

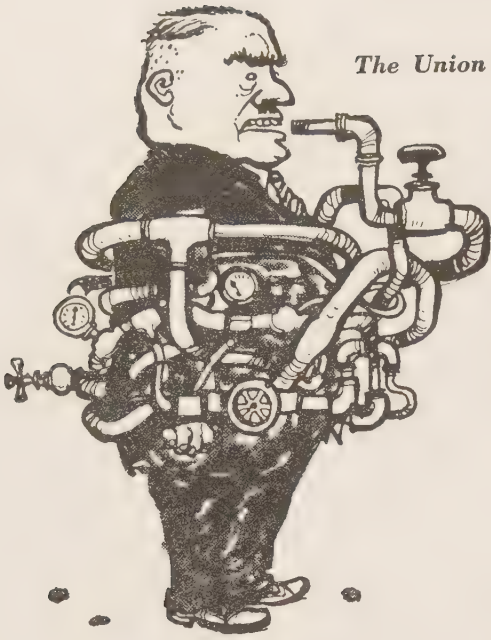
farther west, I sought naturally enough for a shop with fishing-rods in the window, found one and made my purchase. So far, so good. But I also needed toothpaste, among other small items, and before leaving the shop inquired of the man I had taken to be a tacklist where I could get some. He at once led me across his shop, past a magazine stall, where I bought an evening paper, and a confectionery counter, where I bought chocolate, to a darkish corner where I bought toothpaste and a small bottle of aspirins. He also sold me tobacco, thus reducing my list of last-minute requirements, which I had thought would entail a pleasant stroll in holiday mood about the streets of Brecon, to the solitary item "wrist-watch strap." I did not ask him where these were obtainable, having already noticed several dozen hanging on cards near the door.

Alerted by this curious experience I began to take careful note of my surroundings when shopping and very soon found that it was practically impossible to discover a grocer who sold only groceries, a haberdasher who dashed nothing but habers, a cobbler who stuck to his last. Fish fingers were everywhere. In one Cornish village, known to me of old as a well-mannered place where it was a pleasurable necessity to visit all the six little shops in order to obtain meat, flour, melons, cream, tobacco and a shirt with "Hiya!" on the back, I was shocked to find myself buying all these things at the post office, plus paperbacks and whisky. By 1961 outfitters in my own south-westerly London suburb were selling theatre tickets, and within a year or two after that the last of the ironmongers gave in and took to hanging salami sausages from his ceiling. Since then, as you know, children, I have not cared to go out shopping save to that little old-fashioned second-hand furniture shop that still keeps its soups and Christmas cards curtained off.

But there it is (I shall say to my grandchildren). I mustn't keep you here at my knee all day while an old man grumbles away his time and sheds a bit of a tear for the old days. Run along out now – and if you're passing Ye Olde Cake Shoppe get me a quart of rum for my catarrh, dears, and perhaps an olde cake too, if they happen to stock such a thing.



*The Union Statement Voice*

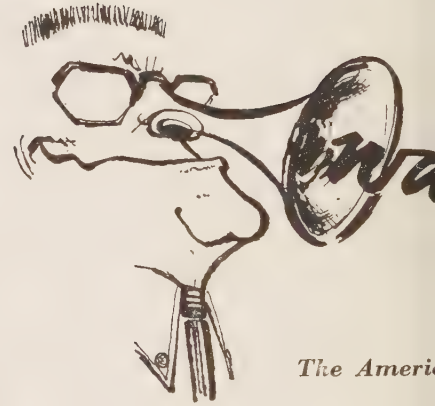


# VOX HUMANA

knuck 'em  
for six cheps  
just a easy  
little party cheps  
first-class



*The Officer Voice*



*The American Voice*



*The Politician Voice*



*The Kensington Voice*



*The Pulpit Voice*

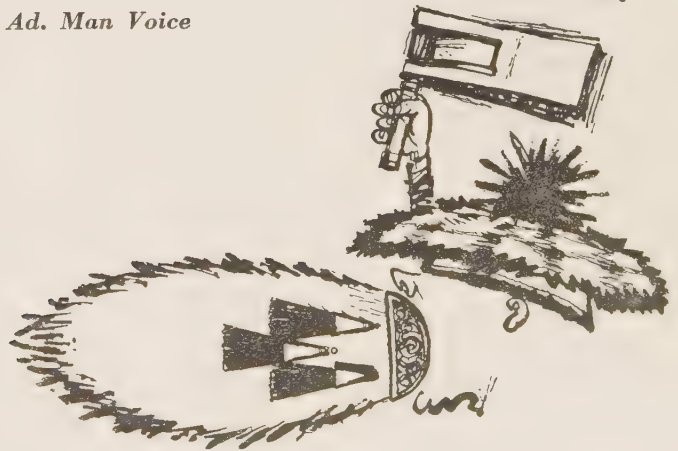


*Wahwah*



*The Ad. Man Voice*

*Hewison*



*The Scots Voice*





# WINTER DRAWS ON

By J. B. Boothroyd



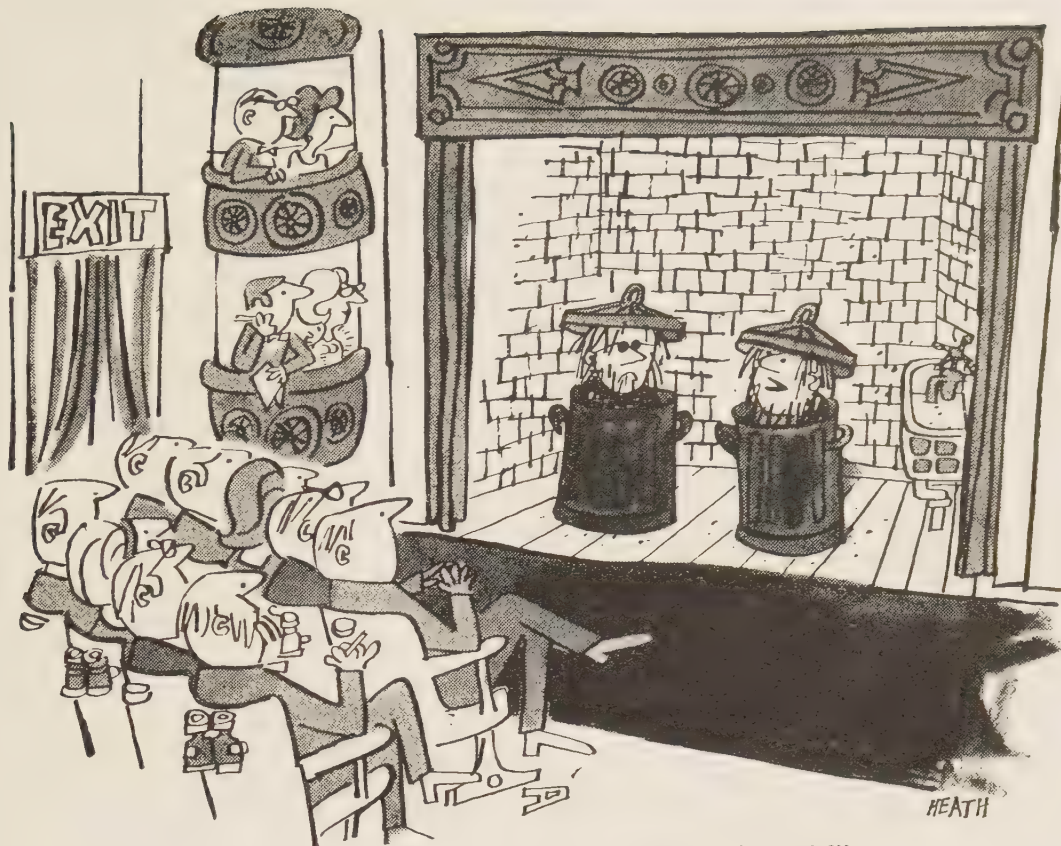
When the wind hits my house now a disconcerting thing happens: it snows porridge in the upper rooms. If it isn't actually porridge it's as near as makes no difference . . . fine particles of an oat-like substance, hesitating in the ceiling cracks and floating gently down; and there's plenty more where that came from: twelve man-high bags of the stuff, strewn in the rafters. I know, because I strewn it.

They say, the people who sell these bags, that every house loses one-sixth of its heat through the roof. I don't doubt them. And for anyone who can tell whether or not he's feeling one-sixth warmer than he was yesterday (assuming millibars and all those things unchanged) the trifling operation of trapping the wayward therms on their way out, by shovelling this breakfast-food three inches deep between the joists, is obviously well worth while. It's just my bad luck that I happen to be more or less impervious to temperature variations of this modest order, and can combat even wider fluctuations, whether up or down, by a simple manipulation of extra waistcoats. It was because of this, I suppose, that the decision to go in for fragmented insulation was my wife's. Wives, as is well known, have closer affinities with Herr Fahrenheit, and on the whole have no middle course between turning blue at the extremities and suddenly throwing all the windows open. So my first intimation was on answering the door and seeing these twelve bags in the porch, crowded together for warmth, with a man's hand coming over the back waving a pink invoice. Wives, whatever their shortcomings when it comes to holding a constant temperature, know the value of a domestic *fait accompli*.



Other men's false roofs, I have no doubt, are stable, uncluttered, easy of access and comparatively unoccupied by birds. Mine isn't. Except for an arbitrarily sited island of stout planks in what I judge at random to be the north-west corner the place is ideal for tight-rope practice; or it would be if progress along the joists were not impeded every few feet by tea-chests full of old hats, bedroom chairs singing with worm, children's tricycles, hand-cranked film-projectors,





*"Anyone for tennis?"*

gladstone bags bursting with old eiderdowns, gilt picture-frames, camp-beds folded solid with rust, and immense beehive-shaped structures of straw brought in at some pains by starlings. One false step, which is easy, and you've got a leg through the bathroom ceiling. But at least this gives you the rare relief of straightening your back for a moment.

All this is assuming that you've got up there in the first place by leaping off a short pair of steps and hanging by your elbows. A sharp shove from below with bag number one may then help you into a position from which you can haul up the round dozen. Then all you have to do is spread the stuff – from time to time, as required, shifting tea-chests, chairs, tricycles, camp-beds and the rest; moving the candle-stub from rafter to rafter; replying noncommittally to inquiries from below of whether you're all right; cracking your head on the wealth of beams; and wondering why the hell it is that bags which burst readily on the way up can't be induced to yield the necessary hole at the end from which the contents may be dug out dogwise and backwards during eighteen or twenty squatting progressions back and forth across the width of the housetop.

However, let's have no bitterness. I did it. It took a mere four hours. My back will never be the same. I still haven't got all the candle-grease out of my hair.

The stuff isn't spread with complete evenness. Here and there it's a foot deep; elsewhere it's a mere sprinkling; in places there's more on the joists than between them; and where it's between them it's falling as snow when the high winds hit us. But the expression on a wife's face when she sees twelve full bags of insulation disappear up into the roof, and twelve empty ones, screwed up savagely, hurled down on to the landing is its own reward. I haven't bothered to explain that, owing to an inevitable miscalculation, we really needed six more bags, and one-third of the area hasn't been done at all. For safety's sake I've covered this with the tea-chests and the chairs and the camp-beds, though I don't imagine that any actual inspection will take place.

In any case it's doubtful whether even wives, with their well-known thermodynamic sensibilities, can tell whether one-sixth of the heat has been stopped on its way out, or only two-thirds of one-sixth, whatever a mathematician might make that out to be. All the same it's rather curious that on answering the door yesterday afternoon and peering through the light fall of indoor snow I saw what I at first took to be the Michelin man standing in the porch. . . . Actually someone completely swathed in coils of rubber draught-excluder, holding out a pink invoice through a small air-hole in the middle.



*“And how’s old inferiority complex getting along?”*

### *The Glory of the Garden*

I AM the Happy Gardener, he  
 Whom every man would wish to be.  
 Unroll the flex! Run out the hose!  
 (Away with spades – we shan’t need *those*)  
 Fill up the tanks! Replenish sumps!  
 Ease triggers – gently! Prime the pumps!  
 Now watch me as, with modest pride,  
 I spread a pall of fungicide,  
 And run my flame gun through the ferns  
 (“It sterilizes as it burns”),  
 And wield my powered pruning saw  
 Until the apple trees are raw.  
 What next? My cultivator bangs  
 Superbly as it sinks its fangs  
 In clay, or chews the cordwood through;  
 You must not doubt that it will do  
 The other things the booklet mentions,  
 I paid good cash for six extensions  
 And I have vowed upon my life  
 To use each one each week. My wife  
 Has donned a pair of blush-pink pants

To blast some anticide at ants;  
 The reservoir upon her back  
 Is pressurized by Port-a-Pack.  
 My neighbours now are tough as teak –  
 Not one has hanged himself this week.  
 Their mowers roar, their smokes project,  
 Their leaf-collectors leaf-collect,  
 Their hoes chug deep, their scythes rotate,  
 Their tree-top jets ejaculate,  
 And endless sibilating sprays  
 Are puddling up the soakaways,  
 And not a bird finds orchard room  
 Where rows of scarers glint and boom.

So come with depth-charge and with gin!  
 So wheel the new Midgemaster in!  
 With poisoned drag and lethal rod  
 Propitiate the garden god!  
 But let us never bend a knee,  
 Or use a muscle needlessly.  
 We are the Happy Gardeners, we.

– E. S. TURNER



# THE EFFICIENCY MAN

By H. F. Ellis

Something white rolled in the gently undulating sea, a few yards out beyond the general mass of bathers.

"It's a fish," one of the ex-bathers said. They sat with towels over their shoulders, hugging their knees, in little groups along the sea-wall, their backs supported by the verandaed bathing huts that fringed its rearward edge. In the near-coma that succeeds a bathe on a day of blazing sun a large fish, dead or alive, so close inshore was acceptable and right. Something to watch, but not to stand up for. Now and again the thing's darker, glistening back appeared for a moment as it rolled, so that one could not say for certain that life was altogether extinct. Perhaps it was ill, or exhausted, or simply sunning its underside.

"Is it a porpoise?" a girl asked.

A porpoise or a dolphin. Nobody on so hot a day cared to remember whether the two terms were synonymous, or mutually exclusive, or whether the one, whichever it might be, enclosed and comprehended the other. More important, the creature was clearly drifting inshore, and any moment now a baldish man, floating blissfully on his back with his eyes shut, would find himself nuzzling this strange cold companion. That would be good. The meeting would surely show whether there was life in the fish, whether it could still, whatever malaise gripped it, move quicker than a man. Both were belly upwards, so the test was fair.

The two were a bare yard apart and interest in the approaching clash was spreading outwards along the waterfront like the ripples of an idly flung stone when a well-built man, bronzed, erect and wearing those handsome shorts with turn-ups that so surprisingly (to an older generation) prove to be submersible, strode down the sea-wall steps, swam powerfully out to the fish, seized it by the tail, snatching it as it were from under the very cranium of the floating man, and towed it ashore. The fish came quietly, being clearly dead, and in its wake swam or waded a number



*"I have to inform you that you have been sent to Coventry."*

of curious bathers, hitherto unaware, because of their lower elevation, of the creature's presence. Across the strip of sand and up the steps the gleaner went, his sad five-foot burden bumping behind him, and there on the sea-wall, in the presence of quite a little crowd of mourners, he laid it down. He did not speak. He had not thought it right, before entering the water, to inquire whether it was the general wish of the spectators that the fish should be brought ashore, nor did he now explain for what purpose he had landed it or what was to be done with it in the immediate future. He simply laid it down and went away. The incident was over. He had done what had to be done, and there an end.

It occurred to me, after I had retraced my steps along the sea-wall and resumed a basking posture, that I had met this man before. At intervals, in a not very adventurous life, he has been there. Masterful, silent or at most mono-syllabic, immensely competent, he has turned up out of the blue to take charge, to avert a catastrophe, to resolve some dilemma so baffling that nobody else knew that it was there. Then, like a Homeric god, he has returned to Olympus, leaving us ordinary mortals to wonder who, and what a track showed the upturned sod.

He understands knots and the principle of the lever and can do with one hand in a twinkling what it will take another man half an hour to undo again. Twice at least in my experience, while I have been struggling to shut the sliding door of a railway compartment, he has come down the corridor in the nick of time and, without pausing in his stride, had it wide open for me. He is skilled at dispatching animals and once, I remember, in my prep-school days he killed a field mouse with a single sharp blow against the heel of his boot, whereas we boys had stood around watching it for a good ten minutes doing absolutely nothing. With a few nails and a hammer he will cure a creaking floorboard that for five years and more has warned the secretaries that the managing director is approaching. In war he is indispensable. Many a time I have known him descend unexpectedly from a staff car and show a fatigue party how, by means of a couple of railway sleepers and a running bowline, to complete by noon a job we had bargained on spinning out for the rest of the day. And always, in war or peace, when the job is done, he departs as mysteriously and as suddenly as he came. He never waits to be thanked.

Brooding on these things on the hot sea-wall, with the sadness that besets a man who will now in all probability never see a bather tangle unexpectedly with a dead porpoise, I could not help wondering whether this character – the Efficiency Man, the man who knows what has to be done and does it – has a wife, to whom he returns at the end of a well-spent day. And if so, does she share the contempt he must feel for the aimless hesitancy, the doubt, the inertia of the rest of us? “So I had to go in and haul it out myself,” I seemed to hear him saying as he mixed his flawlessly proportioned martinis. “They all just stood round gaping.” Every evening he would have some trifling incident to relate, some little contretemps remarkable only for the failure of the principals or the bystanders to cope with it. “Nobody had the sense to see that a bit of rope thrown over a branch and tied to the cross-member would lift it clear . . .” “Of course, once I had the main fuse out . . .” “. . . through the scullery window, with a pair of tongs. He was dead by the time I got him out, naturally.” And the little woman, listening, would have no option but to reply “Darling!” or “It was wonderful of you to bother” or “But did *nobody* offer to help?”

When I was baked on the upper side I turned over, and at once a thought of some comfort occurred to me. It was impossible, if the man indeed had a wife, that she should live with him year after year without acquiring something of his ready wit, some smattering of his genius for coping. The time must surely come when she would find herself with some blunt instrument, perhaps even a dead porpoise, conveniently to hand and the back of her husband's head within easy reach. She would know what she had to do and, unless his teaching had been entirely wasted, she would do it.

But I don't know. A hot June sun, blazing down on the unnumbered laughter of a not altogether unharvested sea, breeds much unjustifiable optimism.



“Leave town.”



*"It just shows what colossal achievements man is capable of when he stops spending all his time, energy and resources on war."*

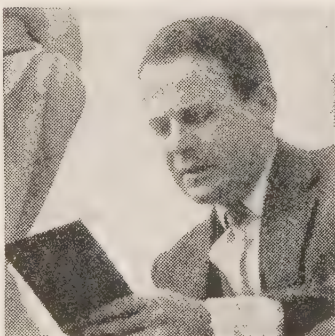
Is it true that BBC TV, in its quest for the common touch, is levelling down its programmes to the ITV IQ? If so, *Tonight* is still holding out nobly against official demands for lower standards. But can Mr. Michelmores' boys keep it up? If they give in, they'll go all the way.

# CLIFF'S INN

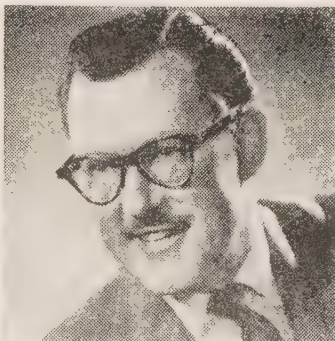
"Can you see me there in Birmingham, Mr. Gillanders? I can't see you. Something wrong with the monitor. Now tell me, you began taking these rather nasty Rheumatabs just a year ago . . .?"



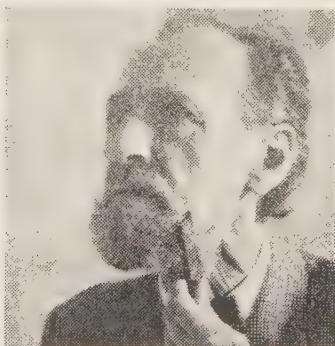
"I had another question here somewhere. Yes. As Managing Director of the Triple-Strength Drug Company, don't you ever wake up in the night sweating to think of the price you charge for these little pellets of plain soda?"



"Hallo, again. And when I tell you lucky denture-wearers about the five fabulous facts of Ferguson's Fixative, don't go jumping to the conclusion that I've got false teeth. These are my own, and I'm as pleased with them as I am with the rest of me."



"Well, as you've just seen, a man with a coarse, firmly-rooted beard can shave with a Williamsby's Wonderwhirl double reverse plucking action electric razor and not make any impression at all, beyond a wee disarrangement of the whiskers."



MICHELMORE (*pretending to be caught sitting on some sort of table*): Good evening. I hope this thing's safe. I made it myself with the latest O-So-Neet mechanical carpentry kit. Table like this would cost eight pounds in the shops—the timber alone cost me nine pounds fifteen. Then there was five hours' work, two electric shocks, three barked knuckles (*displays bandaged hand*), a kitchen full of shavings and my wife's gone to her mother's. Don't forget the name, O-So-Neet. (*Slaps table. It collapses.*) And now we've got a bit of film for you.

*Short, rather grainy film-sequence of swans taking off, flying, wheeling, landing.*

MICHELMORE (*pretending surprise that the film is over so soon*): Egyptian geese, mentioned by Herodotus, held sacred by the Egyptians, eaten by priests. I like the way they tuck their feet up, don't you? Early example of the retractable under-carriage. But did you notice how *white* they were? We'll come back to that in a minute. Here's Derek Hart.

HART (*whose nose looks fastidious*): You probably know that a controversy is raging in the World Health Organization as to the possibly harmful effects of chemical additives in household cleansers. Here are two identical piles of washing-up. (*Camera tracks back to show these.*) Now, all this washing-up has been washed-up, as you see, so it's all perfectly sanitary and hygienic. Or is it? I also have with me two almost identical managing directors of detergent firms, Mr. Box and Mr. Cox. (*Close-up of each. They are short, aggressive men with thick necks and suspiciously tanned, damp-free faces.*) Now, Mr. Cox, why do you think that this pile of crockery nearest you has been washed-up with your product Quikfome, the new formula, easy-to-squirt, housewife's joy?

COX: It's obvious. Look at the—

HART: Just examine this gravy-boat. And you, Mr. Box, are equally sure that *your* pile—take this meat-dish a minute—has been done with your hand-flattering, live-action Sinkmate?

BOX: Definitely.

HART: Thank you. And you both honestly believe that—  
*Burst of singing by a close-harmony trio, suddenly:*  
"IT COMES COMPLETE!"

*Camera picks up MICHELMORE, registering wry surprise.*  
Sorry about that. And you both say that neither product has any harmful ingredients?

BOX: } Definitely not.  
COX: }

HART: And no truth whatever in the suggestion that

solvents can loosen cup-handles, for instance, so that they get into the children's porridge?  
 COX: There's one extremely vital point about that—

BOX: One factor of really immense importance—

HART: Well, thank you both very much indeed.

MICHELMORE *fades in abruptly.*

MICHELMORE: Hollywood is running out of stage-coaches. Remember this bit of film?

*A sequence from "Stage-Coach."*



From the film *Stage-Coach*. Of course, some prefer to see the countryside from the foam-sprung, lounge-settee comfort of Tomlinson's Trans-Britain Tours, though others don't care to spend a fortnight sitting next to total strangers with streaming colds and Leeds accents. Here's Alan Whicker, on film.

*Victoria station by night, practically deserted. One or two would-be travellers mooch aimlessly past closed kiosks, occasionally looking out of the screen with dull curiosity, then moving out of shot as if shoed. This goes on for about a minute.*

MICHELMORE (*turning from a monitor with a slight falsetto crow of laughter*): Well, what happened to Whicker? He was supposed to stride on in his eager way, shaking out his cable and telling us why people stranded at Victoria after the buffet shuts ought to eat Crispy Crunchy Malt-O-Bars, the Ideal Snack When You Can't Get Back. Never mind. Here's some film about Olive, the cow, who lives in a bedroom in Eastham Ferry, Cheshire. The male lead in this picture is an actor called Pierre something, a Frenchman who plays opposite (*he sneezes.*) Or it may be Louis. And this is the rather dramatic scene where he (*gets out handkerchief and drops it*) . . . I think I've got a cold coming on. (*Blows nose.*) We present it by courtesy of the Milk Marketing Board.



MICHELMORE: I expect you heard in the news to-night that Kapoco Island, one of the smaller Friendlies, sank without trace early this morning. Fyfe Robertson was on the island last week, talking to the Chairman of Kapoco Pumice.

ROBERTSON (*painfully earnest, in a small, hot office*): You say stains and dirt vanish, Mr. Clifton. Does that include nicotine, now, I wonder?

CLIFTON: Of course. The better-known pumice-stone from Stromboli, say, is much less efficient for nicotine. The Kapoco volcanoes are constantly active, so we get the stuff when it's fresh and rough. (*A menacing rumble.*) Often while it's still warm.

ROBERTSON (*to camera*): Buy Kapoco Pumice, and have fingers she'll love to kiss and now back to the Tonightstudioin-Londongoodbye. (*An explosion. Film runs out with a quantity of code-numbers sideways-on.*)

MICHELMORE *fades in, smiling broadly.*

MICHELMORE: Kapoco Pumice, don't forget. And by the way, it's now in short supply. I wonder how many of you have ever taken part in a chandelier-shoot? (*Looks upwards expectantly. Pause.*) I knew that wouldn't work. They were going to let a chandelier down and I was going to shoot at it. Never mind. Here's a bit of film—



and don't let anyone tell you that television's hitting the cinema. Where would *Tonight* be without it? Where, indeed?

*Film showing the light-fittings of about sixty Stately Homes in quick montage, ending with two characters carrying a chandelier on a pole.*

MICHELMORE: You didn't see any shooting? Just our little joke. But remember that chandeliers harbour dust and germs. Spray yours regularly with Doctor Dobree's Dust-O-Spray, and see how easily it mixes with biscuit and table-scrap. I'm sorry, my mistake, forget that last bit. Derek Hart.

HART: Thirty-six years ago this month, Mr. Charles Chaplin released his famous film, *The Gold Rush*. Let's see a short sequence from it.

*Film. A short sequence from "The Gold Rush."*



What struck you chiefly? Undoubtedly the fact that the central character, played by Chaplin himself, is in a state of malnutrition, and also very badly-dressed. I think if you'll look at me you'll agree that I am neither. That is because I take my Deep-Frozen Pre-cooked Steako every day. Collect the labels off a thousand tins and you get a Savile Row suit, with extra pair of trousers, for only six pounds. Steako for the inner and the outer man.

MICHELMORE (*walking sideways, twiddling a finger*): And to-night you met Rheumatabs, Triple-Strength Drugs, Ferguson's Fixative, Wonderwhirl, O-So-Neet, Quikfome, Sinkmate, Trans-Britain Tours, Malt-O-Bars, the Milk Marketing Board, Kapoco Pumice, Dust-O-Spray and Steako. Oh, and I forgot to say that those geese in the first bit of film were advertising whiteness generally, also that they were actually swans. Goodnight, and the next *Tonight* will be pretty much the same.

"Stage-Coach" and "Gold Rush"—United Artists. "Miracle in Milan"—Unitalia. "L'Age d'Or"—Luis Bunuel and Salvador Dali.

## The Other Half

"Well, one has to start somewhere."



# FIRST CLASS RETURN TO RURITANIA

By J. E. Hinder

**T**he sad news that the Orient Express is to be axed for reasons of economy, although not unexpected, comes as a bitter blow to veteran travellers on this famous old train, especially those who recall the glories of its pre-1914 heyday.

There will never again be anything comparable to that luxurious progress through the Balkans, with the old carriages, all mahogany, plush and tinkling chandeliers, full of Rumanian violinists, exuding clouds of paprika as they played mad Bucharest *zigeunerlieder* to gorgeously-uniformed officers of the Imperial Army, each one drinking Tokay from the tiny silken slipper of a courtesan in the pay of the Czar. There, sprawled behind a velvet curtain, one could see an old Armenian merchant from Smyrna,

pockets filled with gold coin and currants, playing a leisurely game of Bosnian Cribbage with a black-bearded murderer from Herzegovina, one of the many who travelled on a monthly season ticket to the South during the assassination season.

To be assassinated on the Orient Express used to be the prerogative of high officials in the service of Franz-Josef and an admirable way of rounding off a distinguished career. Swarthy ferocious peasants would eagerly crowd round the train as it drew into one of the smaller stations, to see if a corpse would be carried out, draped in the Austro-Hungarian flag, ample supplies of which were always carried in the guard's van for this purpose.

The comfort of the passenger was the sole considera-

tion of all concerned in the running of the pre-Sarajevo Orient Express. For example, when in 1907 Archduke Adolf of Sitzenbad-Heisswasser complained that his view of a favourite waterfall was partially obscured by a group of peasant dwellings, the Company had the offending buildings dynamited in time for the Archduke's return journey. For this, it is interesting to recall, the driver received the Order of the Golden Knees of St. Alexandrov.

For twenty kronen or the equivalent any passenger above the rank of baron could, on application, be provided with a dancer from the Budapest Opera up to the Bulgarian-Turkish frontier. From here she was shipped back to Hungary on a goods train.

The uncertainty of the political situation in the Balkans accounted for many of the more romantic incidents on the Express. On more than one occasion, different train-drivers, heavily bribed by Serbian and other extremists, nearly succeeded in driving the train into the Sea of Marmara. There was also the famous day when an Archduke's discarded mistress, disguised as a fireman, signalled by whistle to Croat revolutionaries waiting to place a bomb in the compartment reserved for the Prime Minister of a certain country. Her mission would have been successful had not the driver become aware of the faint odour of patchouli emanating from his fireman. He gave the

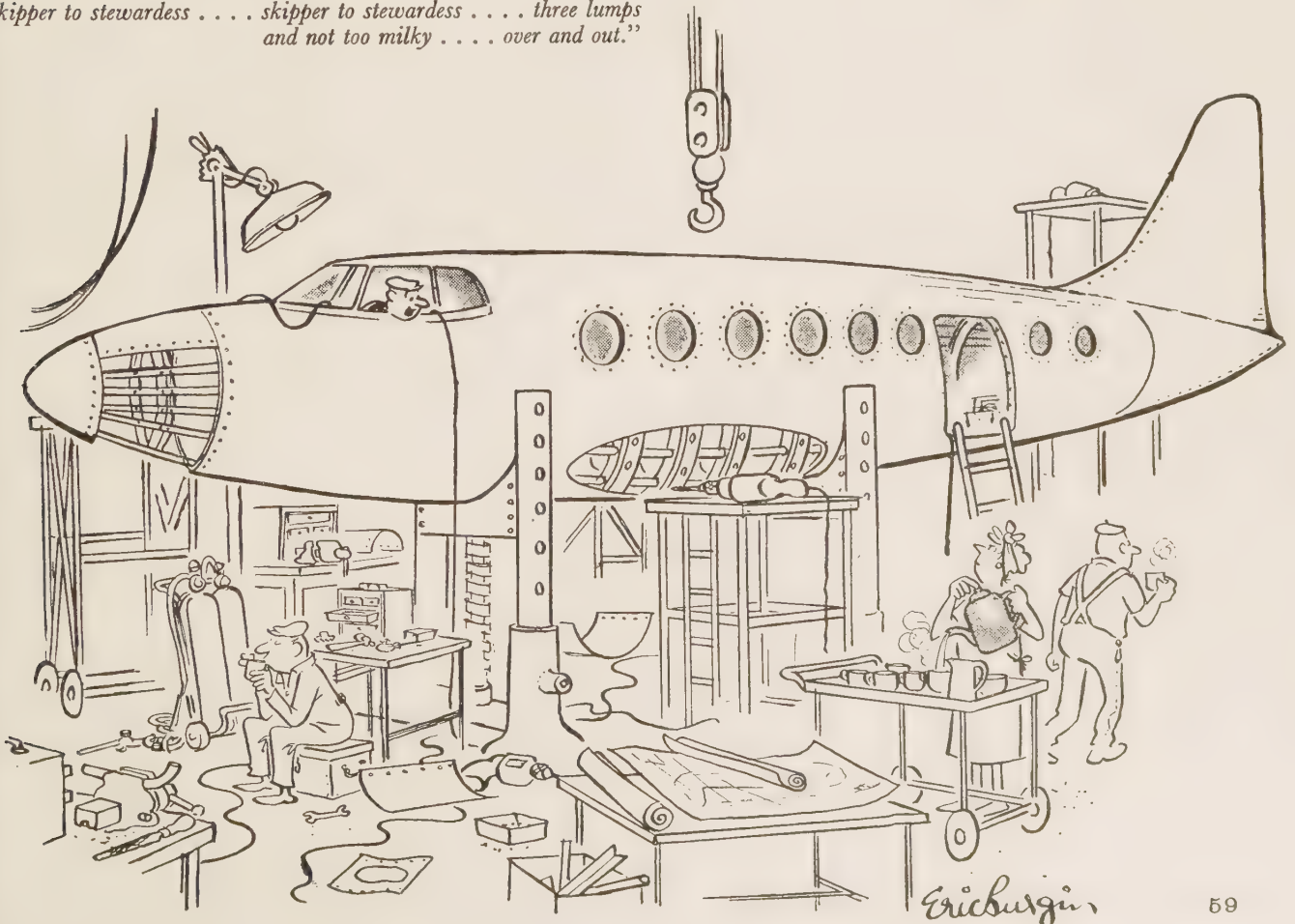
alarm and the daring adventuress perished beneath the sabres of a troop of Imperial Dragoons.

All this and much more gave to the Orient Express its private and particular charm. One could talk ofmorganatic marriages celebrated while the train waited patiently in a siding, of a decapitated Turkish politician discovered still holding in his hand an unspilled cup of black coffee, of the time when the train was held up for two hours in order that a minor member of the Hungarian aristocracy could pick wild garlic for his beautiful Russian fiancee, of the diplomatic incident caused by an Eastern ruler who ordered his eunuch to strangle the waiter who had dropped caviar on his turban: but idle reminiscence will not bring back the Orient Express.

It is understood that the traveller may still take the Simplon-Orient Express which winds its sedate, democratic way through Italy. I have travelled on this train during part of its journey. There is not a Hapsburg to be seen throughout its considerable length. All that is no more. In the corridors stand weary, grey-faced travellers, wondering what has happened to their couchettes, munching sandwiches and pursuing half-heartedly an elusive railway employee who sells warm coffee in cardboard cups.

By the time they reach him the coffee is all gone. Like the Orient Express.

*"Skipper to stewardess . . . skipper to stewardess . . . three lumps and not too milky . . . over and out."*



# CENSUS IN SOUTH AFRICA

By Allen O'Brien

There is *apartheid* in the census in South Africa. The printed instructions in my letterbox were for me to fill in a white form for myself and my family and a pink form for any Bantu who slept on my property during the night of September 6, 1960. I filled in the white form before I went to bed and early in the morning of September 7 took the pink form to my little fruit farm outside Johannesburg where my Bantu servants live.

Ben Qwabe was digging up an ant-heap to feed the ants to his chickens. He was surprised to see me there so early but not surprised that I had come to fill in a form. In his long life he could remember many other times when white men had written down the names of people. It had not made any difference to him.

He spoke to me in Xhosa, suitably simplified for a white man's understanding, but when he called to his wife he spoke in Sotho, so that I could not understand at all.

All Bantu in South Africa have to carry passes and the Director of Census and Statistics advised us to consult these passes for the correct spelling of names. There was a clear photograph of Ben Qwabe in his pass book, but the name in it was Harrison Malahla. That was all right, said Ben. Harrison Malahla was his real name; Ben Qwabe just a name he used here in the Transvaal. I wrote "Harrison Malahla" on the pink form.

Ben's wife is known to me as Emily; but was she, I asked her, Emily Qwabe or Emily Malahla? In reply, she handed me her pass book. Her name, above

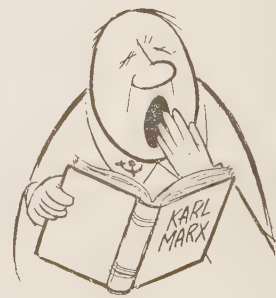
a photograph making her look even more gaunt and aged than she is, was shown as Miriam Gumede. She denied that this was her maiden name, the name of her father. Did I not know that Gumede was a Zulu name and her father had been a real Xhosa whose name was Xaxa? Gumede was a husband she had once had.

I entered her name as "Miriam Gumede Malahla."

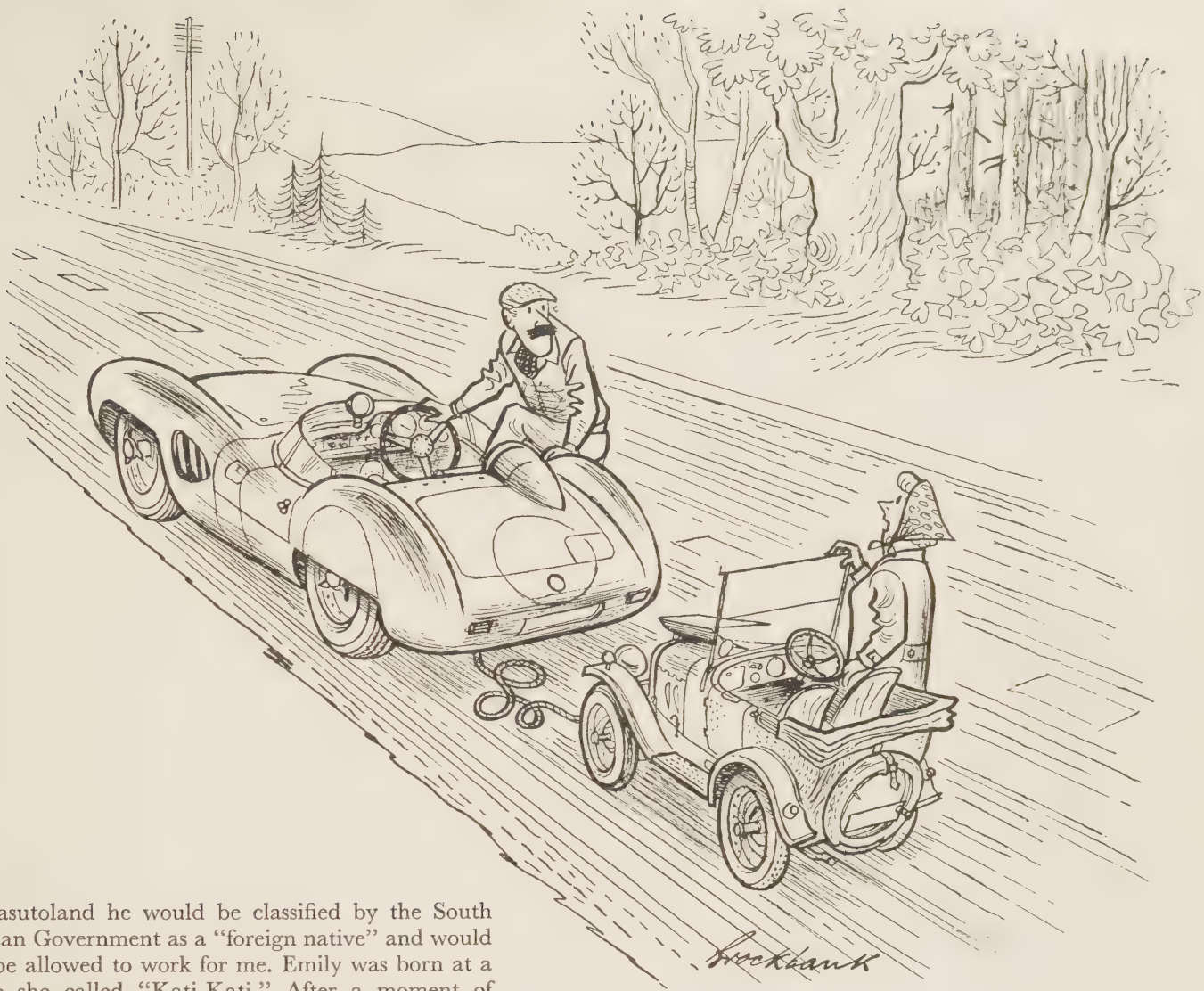
Ben's daughter-in-law's name was less of a problem. Her pass recorded it as Maggie Oboretse, but she was now married to Ben's son (although she had not seen him for six months) and, assuming that his name was the same as his father's, I called her Maggie Malahla. I called her two children Malahla, too. She did not want me to write down the first name of the younger child as Mhlupeki, which we all called him and which means "little nuisance," so I named him "Absolom."

The question on age (exact or approximate) presented no difficulties. Ben said that he had been a herd boy at the time of the "Impi kwa maBunu" – the Boer War. His wife said that she was born in the year of the "lindipesi," meaning the great rinderpest epidemic among cattle in 1897. Maggie was modern enough to know the month and year of her birth and the exact dates of birth of her children.

Nor did we waste much time on the question on place of birth. Ben said loudly and without looking at me that he was born at Mount Fletcher and, without argument, I wrote "Cape Province" on the form. I knew that this was not true, but if it were known that Ben's real place of birth is Sehlabathebe







in Basutoland he would be classified by the South African Government as a "foreign native" and would not be allowed to work for me. Emily was born at a place she called "Kati-Kati." After a moment of hesitation I decided that this was Cathcart and wrote "Cape Province" as her place of birth, too.

Section E of the census form reads:

*E. Marital Status*

- (1) State whether Never Married, Married, Living Together, Widowed or Divorced.
- (2) If Married state whether –
  - (a) Civil or Religious
  - (b) Bantu Law or Custom (Lobola); or
  - (c) Both Lobola and Civil or Religious.

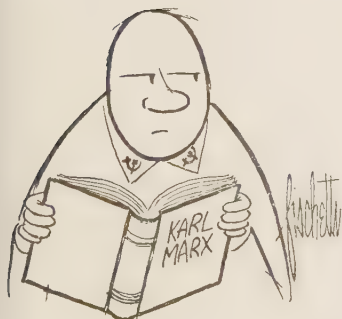
Ben was emphatic that he and Emily were married and not merely living together. They certainly had

"Please will you tow me at the speed to which I'm accustomed?"

not been married in a civil or religious ceremony and therefore must have been married by Bantu law or custom. But a Bantu marriage is not valid unless *lobola* has been paid. *Lobola* is the agreed price to be paid by the bridegroom to the bride's parents. Formerly it was always paid in cattle but it is now often paid in cash.

Emily said that *lobola* had never been paid by Ben. Ben denied this. He said that when he took her over from the man who lived near the stony hill she was already old and worn-out but in spite of this, he had paid her elder brother (her parents being dead) an amount of ten pounds in two five-pound notes which he had withdrawn from his Post Office Savings Bank. Emily said that it was true that he had paid her elder brother ten pounds, but it was known to everyone that it was because he had bought her brother's bicycle – the same bicycle that could now be seen lying on its side under the apricot tree.

While the argument went on I wrote on the pink



form that they had been married by Bantu Law or Custom.

In the section on religion we were asked to state the "particular denomination." I knew that Ben and Emily belonged to some Christian persuasion because on Sunday mornings the delivery boy for the local bottle store arrived on his bicycle, donned a tattered cassock and led an assembled group of about twenty Bantu in singing "Nearer my God to Thee" in African close harmony. What was their denomination, I asked. "Chech," replied Ben, and Emily nodded proudly in assent. They seemed satisfied when, thinking of the cassock, I entered their religion as "Church of England."

Maggie was insistent, however, that she was "iKatoliki." What sort of Catholic, I asked "kwa Roma?" No, she said, not "kwa Roma," but "kwa Afrika," and as evidence showed me a baptismal certificate. It was a highly coloured document, adorned with crocodiles with tails entwined, and it certified that on August 29, 1943, Maggie Oboretse had been baptized in the rite of the "African Catholic Church" by "Saint Ebenezer Moloi of Johannesburg."

The last section of the questionnaire had to be answered by indicating which of the following languages was the home language of the person concerned:

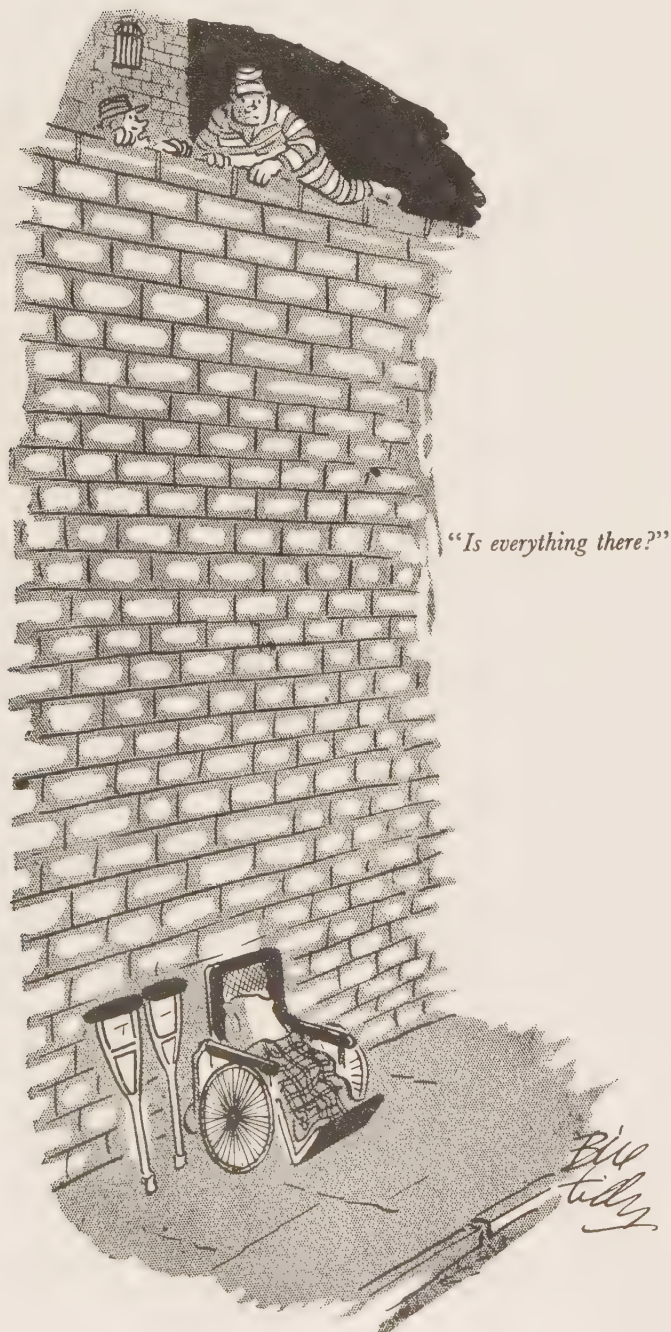
- Xhosa
- Zulu
- Swazi
- Ndebele
- Seshoeshoe (South-Sotho)
- Tswana
- Sepedi (North-Sotho)
- Shangaan (Tsonga)
- Venda
- Other Bantu Languages (foreign)
- Afrikaans
- English

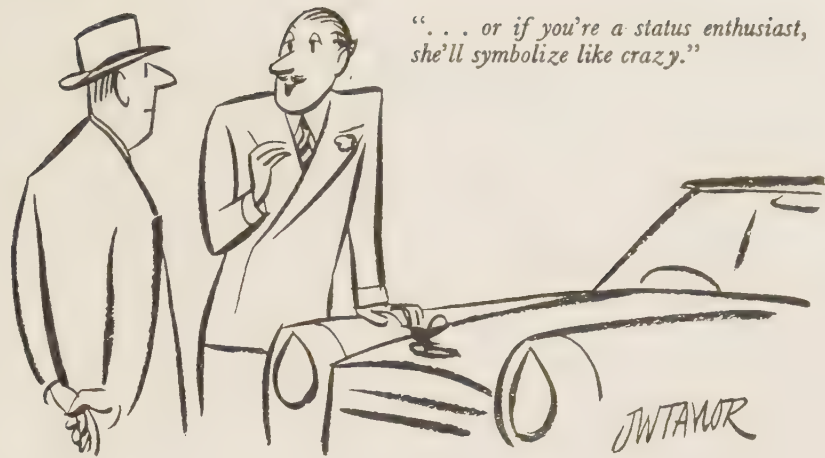
Ben said that his home language was Xhosa, although we both knew that it was Seshoeshoe (or South-Sotho). There was no doubt about Emily's language. Her Xhosa was so unadulterated that few people in the Transvaal could understand her.

It was with Maggie that we now had difficulty. Her father, Oboretse, was, she said, a Motswana from Bechuanaland and his language was, of course, Tswana. But he did not want it to be known that he came from Bechuanaland in case the Government deported him so they had spoken her mother's language at home. Her mother had come from the Swaziland border, but she spoke Zulu in the "Thefula" style, changing the ls to ys, and not in the "Swazi" style, changing the zs to ts. It would perhaps be more correct, said Maggie to say that her mother's home language was Tsonga and not Zulu, but if, as it said in the Government form, Tsonga was the same as Shangaan, it would not be correct because her mother had certainly not been a Shangaan.

I could see no solution to this problem, but Ben intervened with the authority of a father-in-law. Maggie's home, he said, was no longer with her father or her mother but with the family of her husband, and if their home language was said to be Xhosa, then hers was Xhosa, too.

I wrote "Xhosa" as the home language of Maggie and her two children, even though the elder can speak only Seshoeshoe and little Mhlupeki can say only one word, which sounds like "nyanya" and means "dog" in a language all his own.





# BEWARE OF A CROCODILE BAG

By Peter Mayne

**T**here was a girl they all said later was American. She went stepping down the street ahead of me, young, with a good figure, well covered. She was well dressed too, and she had a way of working her haunches as she walked that rather singled her out. I had been specially conscious of her for the past hundred yards or so because there was a man following along close behind her who found her irresistible – it was clear to see in the way he was jockeying for position, sidling up on her right, whipping over to the left again, only to be foiled each time by some clumsy interfering pedestrian or a lamp-standard or whatever it might be. I knew what he planned to do, too.

This was in Athens and the three of us – first the girl, next the man I speak of, and then myself bringing up the rear – were walking across the top of Constitution Square along with a whole crowd of others. On we went, the girl wiggling, the man set on his little plan, head held rigid and a bit to one side, one arm behind his back – she must surely have been aware of him as over the road she wobbled and on to the further pavement, down the side of the Hotel Grande Bretagne. The man was most certainly Greek and I guessed that the girl could not be. He was coming right up alongside her now, very close . . . and then suddenly, without warning, the girl spun on her heel in a ninety-degree turn and the next moment she would be in at the Grande Bretagne side-entrance, safe in one of the little segments of those revolving doors. It all but caught the man off-balance: but the Greek mind is very quick and he reacted instantly. He had to move before she could slip away for ever. So his arm shot out and he pinched her smartly on the behind.

What should a girl do when this happens in the public street? In Athens it is an occupational risk all girls run and I have had talks with several of them about it. They mostly give the same answer. Nothing. They are very sensible about it: they

realize that if they dress provocatively and walk provocatively, someone is likely to be provoked into pinching them. An Athenian girl can recognize a pincher a block distant. He is quite easy to identify, it seems – the slightly furtive sideways advance, the hand behind the back symbolically out of sight, as it were, the manoeuvring – girls quickly learn to take evasive action, such as keeping away from shop-windows or points where they could get cornered, and the nervous ones certainly welcomed the full flaring skirts with the layers of stiff frilly petticoat underneath when that fashion came in. But those narrow, hobbling skirts . . . I have questioned several Athenians. They say it is better to come up from behind if you can. I can see the sense in that. “*A mezedaki*,” they are apt to call it: a little *hors d’œuvre*. It is a game, really: a game for two persons, whether the second person wishes to play or not. And once the pincher has got his pinch in, or else the girl has outwitted him and escaped, he does not follow her up. He is content with his pinch, just as a picador is content with his pic, or the banderillero with banderillas. Most girls say that there is only one rule – if she loses she must do so with grace. No shrieks, no angry cries. She must just walk on as if nothing whatever had happened. The game is over. She has lost.

The game is not always very well understood by foreign ladies visiting Athens. An English lady with whom I was silly enough to discuss it said she was disgusted and that these men ought to be shut up and that if she had a young daughter she would not allow her to walk in the streets of Athens unaccompanied – indeed she wondered if she would bring the child to Athens at all, let alone let her loose in it. So I asked an American lady. She agreed with the English lady that it was disgusting but she wanted to be fair and show compassion for such a man: she wondered whether perhaps poverty and having to sleep a whole family in one little room . . . “ . . . maladjustments,” she hinted: “a thoroughly bad home environment . . .” But she believed nevertheless that girls should be protected. I said I thought girls could very well protect themselves – just as well, anyhow, as they can protect themselves from the flying, ruthless Athens traffic: and I added that the girl in my story should not have wobbled her hips so, at which both ladies promptly rounded on me again and said that girls could not help wobbling a bit, being built the way they are. It made them feel quite sick, they both said, to think of men following secretly along behind. Had Greek men no respect for womanhood? – this was what they wanted to know. I did not say so because I felt it would strike them as rude, but the truth is that girls in public places probably have to choose between being respected and being desired. If they choose respect they can try how it goes: they can get up on pedestals out of reach. Or they can be desirable and take a chance on that. But these two ladies I was talking to seemed to want desire *and* worship. Well, they can’t have both.

The case of the American girl who had fled to the safety of the Grande Bretagne underlines my point. Her thinking was confused. She was not in the wrong, maybe, but she reacted wrongly. When the man landed his pinch and won, she lost her head as well as the game. She went black in the face and did something very shocking. Everyone present gasped. She was carrying a big crocodile travel-bag – a splendid thing with metal clasps and buckles, and so on. She swung this bag of hers in a great arc and caught the man over the head with it. He went to the ground instantly. She tossed her head furiously and as she turned to wobble through the revolving doors to refuge, the man was rising to his feet again and wagging his head in his bewilderment.

“I only pinched her . . .” he said plaintively, looking round at us.

We were quite a little crowd by now – the hotel doorman, taxi-drivers, other passers-by, a policeman.

“*Tch-tch!* . . .” the people went, wagging their heads too and staring through the big plate-glass windows at the girl’s retreating back. What sort of girl could she be? A taxi-driver helped the poor man up, brushing him down.

“Did she hurt you, then?” he asked with great solicitude.



“ . . . I would just like to add a few short words . . . ”

# TIME

THE BLEAKLY NEWSMAGAZINE



Norman Macdonald

GOODWILLMAN  
CLAUS

# The Miracle of the Mind of Man

No. 117 in a series



*"Liberty's a glorious feast"*

(Robert Burns: Scotch poet: 1759—96)

Realized by Wilhelm Hewson

The delightful trimmings of Yuletide . . . the holly wreath on the door, the trilling of children's voices, the mood of festival . . . and the more humble symbols, mince pies and cranberry sauce and sauerkraut . . . the litter of gaudy gift-wrapping . . . these we have inherited from our forefathers. And more than these. We have inherited the democratic tradition, the noble purposes of a free

nation . . . the nation which, nine score and four years ago, our fathers brought forth upon this continent. These purposes, this tradition, are made viable by the mighty tide of commerce that billows through the veins of America to-day, the lifeblood of our land. Synthetic Sawdust Incorporated is proud indeed to be numbered among the glorious companies of these United States.



**SYNTHETIC SAWDUST INC.**

Makers of Hygienic Schwenkolite (with pre-polychromatized PB-4) "The Sawdust You Can Trust"

# A letter from the PUBLISHER



DEC. 24, 1922



DEC. 22, 1931



DEC. 25, 1946



DEC. 22, 1959

at this critical stage in world history, you continue to truckle to outmoded geographers by headlining succeeding sections of TIME "U.S. Affairs," "Foreign News" and "The Hemisphere"! Friends, Neutrals and Enemies people the world to-day, and if we must do business with any of them, let us at least recognize them for what they are.

PETER MACK BRISSAC

Painswick, Mass.

## Desirable Alien

Sir: Thank you for your brilliant article on German cinemactress Gerda Eindhoven. American womanhood has much to learn.

WALTER ABHOLDT

Detroit

Sir: Thank you for your brilliant exposure of Gerda Eindhoven's absurd claim to have anything that Hollywood hasn't already got, supposing it wanted it.

BETTE DUMARIS

Oakleaf, Calif.

Sir: First I must thank you for your kind and generous article about me. But I must also point out that contrary to your usually very accurate reporting, I have never married any Princes, let alone three, that I can speak English, that I did not appear naked in *The Flesh is Pink*, but wore a waterproof over a nun's habit throughout the film, that I am Swiss, and that Vienna is in Austria.

FREDA EINHOVEN

Geneva, France

Miss Einhoffen is correct in every detail. TIME erred.—ED.

## Medicine on the Move

Sir: I rejoice at your report on the new drive-in hospital at Caliban, Ohio. This is a reform that I have long been advocating as sociologically necessary. The automobile is a part of modern man, just as if it was an extra limb. It has its own ailments, which can be cured while the man is undergoing treatment. What America needs now is complete parallelization of the roles of doctor and mechanic, so that each, in an emergency, can do the other's job at a moment's notice.

GARRETT H. SEGGER

Pandemonium, Ga.

Sir: While driving through Caliban, Ohio, I turned into what I took to be a service station and called "Gas" to the attendant. In a trice I was anesthetized, underwent an operation for paradidiosis and was presented with a check that is still giving me ulcers. But anxious to be gone I climbed into my Chevy and drove off. Within eight miles I ran out of gas.

J. JONATHAN FLING

Truthville, Miss.

## Music hath Qualms

Sir: I think it is only fair that your readers should know that soprano Annabel Clegg was suffering from food poisoning throughout her performance in *La Astigmata* which your critic panned so savagely.

LOUISA KELLUP

New York

So it was clams made Miss Clegg clam up.—ED.

PUNCH, DECEMBER 14, 1960

TO climax the year comes Christmastide. Once again the Christmastidings will flow into TIME from all the world, from Ankara and Athens (Greece) and Antananarivo, and equally from every letter of the alphabet right down to Zanzibar and Zululand. What is the purpose of this mighty ingathering? That these raw, chaotic and at times indigestible facts should be checked (for truthfulness), ordered, made palatable and redistributed to two thousand three hundred seventy million\* readers in eighty-seven countries, many of them behind the Iron Curtain. Year in, out, this prodigious process continues.

This year (1960) TIME has shaken a bumper crop of Christmastidings off the tree. For the sappiest of these turn to:

**U.S. Affairs**, which analyzes the impact of Goodwillman Claus's arrival in the U.S. When back in 1922 the founders of TIME brought forth this newsmagazine, they did not foresee every detail of its future development, let alone that S. Claus, an alien, would now be appearing on its cover for the 39th successive year (see cuts).

**Foreign News**, which describes the advent of the annual message of peace on the deadly summit of the world.

**The Hemisphere**, which tells how the life-giving dollars are succouring both sides in Peruvian Lopez Collino's desperate revolt against the entrenched government of Matteo Arguri.

**Business**, which is as usual, as usual.

**Education**, which tells how bread, face-cream and empty tomato cans are being used to teach students in a small Mid-West town Latin and Greek at a higher average level than any college in the Ivy League.

**Religion**, which rings its yearly carillon of hope for every American by telling how millionaire Father Beatitude, spiritual head of the United Church of the Sacred Constitution, manages to touch dough without being defiled.

To bring you these stories TIME reporters interviewed 17,603 people, filed six and a half miles of copy, invented seventy-three new verbs.

\*Population of planet earth: two thousand eight hundred and eighty-six million. Not all of these, however, are literate.

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## U.S. AFFAIRS

### THE NATION

#### The Golden Jingle-Belfry

After the reckoning the feast. While Republicans, Democrats, Don't Knows were healing their wounds, refreshing themselves for the next Presidential election campaign,\* the dominant figure on the domestic scene became chunky, ruddy, bearded, pulse-fingering Beneficiency Expert Santa Claus,† the master politician of them all. As the Teletypes in 7,392 TIME bureaus pinged, chattered bulletins, alerted Bureau Chiefs, initiated deployment of vast task forces of word-and-picture teams from Maine to Hawaii, from Alaska to Florida, the scuttlebutt on Main Street was: Christmas is coming. Immediate reaction: let it come. Grumped New York's Liberal Egghead Tabloid *Post*: "Who cares?" But already beneath the popular pastiche of veneers there was a groundswell of grassroots excitement that cracked indifference like so much Vermont maple taffy.

In the capital, at the south-west corner of the White House Rose Garden, the President, casually wearing shoes, socks, underwear, shirt, tie, and a suit with pockets, informally chatted with newsmen, quipped: "Is it cold enough for you?" Rose Garden temperature at 3.32 p.m. (EST): 46° F. (freezing is 32° F.). It was not yet quite cold enough to turn water to ice, but TIME Washington Bureau Veteran Staff Correspondent G. Lincoln Taft, III, intuited that the Chief Executive was trying to hint at something, maybe mean something, quietly returned to his Dynamic Electronic Typewriter, which Colleague Dwight Hagerty, Jr., had been keeping warm, and soon the big story was tapped out over TIME's bomb-proof coast-to-coast closed-circuit memorandum-network. By evening's end the Presidential Press Secretary was forced to jolt Washington's National Press Club with an emergency hand-out. Tersely it confirmed: Santa Claus is coming to town.

\*Most probable year, crystal-balled the politically savvy: 1964, otherwise sooner, later. A breakaway splinter-group of Vassar graduates, not offered jobs as TIME researchers, is lobbying for Constitutional reform, jobs on *Newsweek*.

†Pronounced San-ta Claus, does not rhyme.

Old-hand newshawks, newshens realized the unprecedented special announcement meant Christmas had achieved important breakthrough, attained new dimension. Question was: would politicians be able to adapt themselves? Over expense-account orange juice, ham-and-eggs, waffles and syrup, black coffee, tranquillizers, other stimulants, sedatives, many a legislator in his expense-account suburban split-level ranch-house looked out picture-window, past his Cadillac, Mercedes, Jaguar, saw the question mark over Capitol Hill, anxiously asked his expense-account great & good friend: "Is this then the dawning of a new era? Are politics and you and I as we have known them headed for skidsville?" In an adobe motel near Lava Bed, N.M., in a pig-iron muddler's penthouse in Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle, among the tumbleweeds on the back lot at Metro, TIME Observers observed that nobody knew which way the cookie was crumbling.

Santa Claus sneaked into Maryland's Friendship International Airport unobserved at 9.41 Thursday morning, blew his nose, scratched his left armpit, hawked twice, spat downwind, blinked, raised his right eyebrow two-sevenths of inch, announced press conference. Tipped-off in-the-know TIME Helicopter

Unit arrived before any other helicopter, put down dime-precise in spite of 345 men, women with notebooks, cameras around Santa Claus. Beside the starkly Trumanesque terminal building\* Santa Claus stood on his feet in pin-drop quiet, intoned words one by one, as though bonging gong with velvet-covered mallet in small onyx echo-chamber. Message's gist: "Christmas comes but once a year!" Political pundits, who had not forgotten Santa Claus' traditional garb is red, pointed out that there was a great deal more he did not say.

**Feud for Thought.** In final analysis, however, it was too early to say whether Santa Claus was really planning to schedule another chimney-to-chimney sleighbell-stop campaign. National prosperity had mounted since his last time around; he was getting no younger; the tempting ease of television was never more obvious. In-the-know Yulemen rated odds even (50-50), predicted possible changes. On one conclusion leaders of both parties were off-the-record virtually unanimous: as year ends, more and more Americans become increasingly Christmas-oriented, fewer and fewer focus their awareness on July Fourth. Political result: more and more concern about the immediate future.

Grizzled oldtimer Senator O'Neill Wagner Whiteford swizzled champagne at a glittering "Back To The Mainland" charity ball at the Chinese Embassy at week's end, remarked: "There's been too much feuding within the parties and between party and party in recent months.†" Queried he: "Isn't it time we all tried to get together and have just one big, peaceful, prosperous, unified, harmonious super-party?" Would Santa Claus accept the Super-Leadership? Could the Christmas season be extended to last twelve months a year? Extension required: nine months. At week's end, TIME's high-powered presses started to roll and nobody knew the answers.

\*Former President Harry S. Truman opened Friendship International Airport when he was President. Except coerced small-time political debtors, onlookers at ceremony numbered 17. Truman also started Korean War (see TIME), abused critics of Daughter Margaret's cacophonous soprano.

†Examples: June, July, August, September, October, November.



Hewison—Chattanooga Dispatch-Telegram

"PERHAPS IT'S ME THAT SHOULD GIVE YOU A PRESENT?"



## THE POLE

### Paper Hats in the Arctic

While Khrushchev's soft-nosed propaganda bullets were still mushrooming into the body politic of East-West relations, men of the U.S. and U.S.S.R. armies were advancing on each other in the deep-frozen North. Their objective: an uncharted trading post on Komsomolets Island and the honouring of spirit of Christmas with gifts and goodwill. Instead of mortars, bazookas and personalized distant early warning systems the G.I.s have two Snocats of peanut butter, Camels, rye whisky and TIME MAGAZINE subscription blanks. General Wymbake T. Potter, fount and origin of

has virtually a free hand. If all goes on schedule his ten-man, eight-vehicle mission should hit Komsomolets on Christmas Day at noon (E.S.T.). There has been some doubt whether all personnel should don the traditional Santa Claus costume or whether this distinction should be reserved for Parschwa alone. Costumes for all have been issued and form a part of the equipment now heading for the rendezvous, but a Pentagon spokesman said over the telephone last week that he thought one Santa would be enough: "The Russian boys could be simple, like kids; a whole bunch of Santas coming at them through the snow might scare the pants off them." He added, as an afterthought, that the Russians might be

plugging the two-car family and government by the people and the next outfit on the ice-cap's going to find 'Yanks Go Home!' spelled out round the Pole in busted Smirnov bottles. Where's that get U.S. prestige?" Similarly it was agreed not to ask Mr. Hammarskjold to send along a U.N. observer to see fair play. Other views doubted whether Soviet troops could be trusted even on Christmas. Should Colonel Parschwa's boys be entirely deprived of armaments? Decision, Yes. Even the proposal that small harpoon guns should be issued was ruled out (though the proposer made the point that such weapons did not rate even as "conventional" under international law). A trigger-happy G.I. could easily mistake a Russian for a seal in the gauzy Arctic light: a member of a goodwill mission with a barb through his leg could be another U.2 incident.

**Sop to the American Mother.** A related episode given prominence in the Portland, Oregon, press, was the visit to Washington of angry, greying Mrs. Sadie Weeks, widowed mother of Sergeant Victor Weeks, Parschwa's senior N.C.O. Her aim: the presentation of a one-woman petition to the President not to send her son on to the unknown perils of the ice-pack without some means of self-defence against a surprise Communist attack. "The President was real sweet," she told reporters. "He said that I was a credit to American motherhood, and that if I felt that strongly he would make personal arrangements for Victor's outfit to have fighter cover." To date Washington declines to confirm or deny.



## THE MOLUCCAS

### Sweet Potato Spaceman

Seventy-seven million, nine hundred eighty-seven thousand, eight hundred seventy-nine Indonesians threw colourful native headdresses in the air last week when Premier Djuanda Kartawidjaja interrupted network radio\* with a flash that a volunteer from Macassar had been successfully shot moonwards around evening rice-time, Tuesday. No news of re-entry to date but, mused Mrs. Smith, wife of the departed sweet potato farmer immigrant from Bradford, Lincolnshire, England: "He was often away, even before this; he had a girl in every island."†

Strictly anti the Macassar experiment are inhabitants (no recent census) of the Moluccas, over which Smith passed on the first stage of his trip. Though a

\*Video sans picture.

†Gazeteer says: "Indonesia comprises Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes, 15 minor Is., thousands of smaller ones."

the exercise, was of opinion that the Ivans' preferences in gifts was not predictable . . . "We tried to think of everything," he told pressmen.

**A Meeting of Hearts.** Now wrapped up in his mission after an early display of no zest Lieut.-Colonel Frank Parschwa says, on a tape flown out by chopper: "Folks up here rub noses when they meet. My boys and the Commies are aiming to rub hearts. This is one of the best damn hopes for world peace we've got." The Pentagon brief is precise: a goodwill exercise is to take place. But the details are fluid, and the Colonel

dressed as Santas too, making the whole thing farcical.

**Leave Their Brains Dirty.** This is to be no business-cum-pleasure trip. Preliminary discussions at White House level dickered with the desirability of loosing a few propaganda shots. One suggestion talked out was a distribution of Uncle Sam carnival hats; another, that when private soldiers of East and West pulled a snapper, small printed excerpts from the Constitution should be revealed inside. Gritted national security chief Dulles: "There's a time and a place. Is this Hands-Across-the-Ice or isn't it? Start

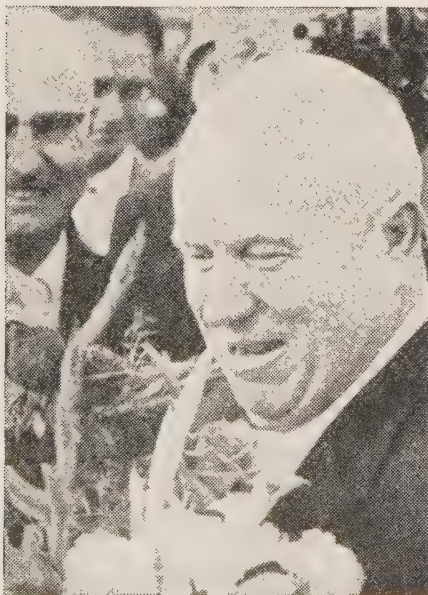
# PEOPLE

Planning to spend December 25th "simply, with his folks"\* is President of Supreme Soviet **Nikita S. Khrushchev**. As we go to press Mr. K. is still in consultation with his aides over eleventh-hour revisions of his greetings-card list. Latest intelligence, Eisenhower and Gait-skell out, Castro in, Macmillan borderline. Dropped for the fourth year running, Malenkov, Suslov, Shepilov, Burgess, Maclean.

Under fire from rocketman **Wernher von Braun**, editor **Brad Satterthwaite** (Poughkeepsie *Sentinel and Star*), for printing a detailed report of plans by the ex-Hitler backroom boy to don Santa Claus garb and tour refugee camps dispensing comforts wrapped as a gift. Throated von Braun: "I don't know where Satterthwaite got his information, but he wants his gyro seen to. What I'm aiming to tour is rocket-bases, as usual, Christmas or no Christmas. Those boys get glum, sitting underground in the control rooms. It gives them a boost to see one of the men who keep them down there." Poughkeepsie residents flooding into the *Sentinel's* correspondence columns underwent fission into two factions over the original report, those before yelling "Hypocrite" and those behind crowing that von Braun was a nice guy to think of it. Penned real real estate man **Myron M. Cimpermann**, after the denial: "Von Braun's tricks could wreck my business any time of the year."

Faint upsurge of artistic integrity bids to sour Christmas week for telesalespluggger

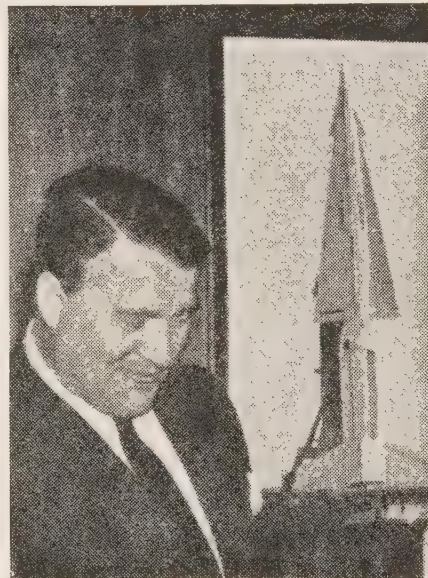
\*Reuter, by translation, out of Tass.



MR. KHRUSHCHEV  
Black List

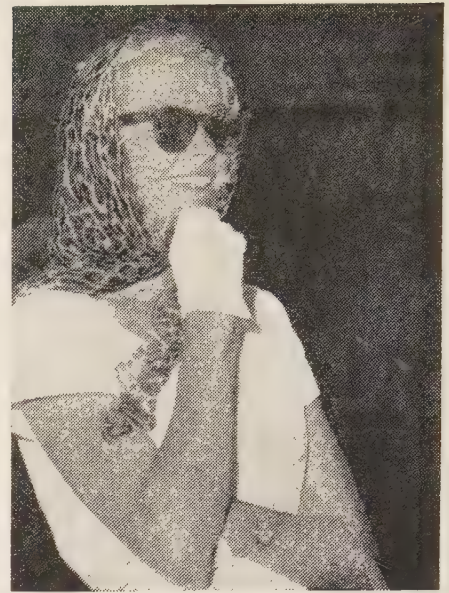
**Norris Ducker**, stuck with breakfast-time commercials (NBC) designed to inspire procrastinating givers to plunge on a gew-gaw from 42-story Balisto's, Fifth Avenue (often confused by hick New York-visitors with the Empire State until they get aloft and see the Empire State). Grouched stocky, tousled Ducker: "Imagine selling last-minute shoppers on a solid gold lawn-sprinkler with built-in softener, the summer we had this year." Bright spot, Ducker is contracted, not reliant on commission on sales.

Hollywood, falsely said by some to be moribund large-screenwise, offers at least one Yuletide release to tempt the seasonably entertainment-starved not corralled at home joining in the telecarols, to wit,



WERNHER VON BRAUN  
Black looks

**Charles Dickens's** *A Christmas Carol*, adapted from the book by **Tomlin Motz** and **Edwin H. Cok**, additional dialogue by **Wainwright Barff**, junr. Odd choice for the role of moneygrubbing, ghost-converted Scrooge is up-and-coming **Chester Glasgow** (*Turncoat Prodigy, The Man With a Misery*), who hasn't read the book, doesn't mean to, and sees himself in Tab Hunter roles. Said Glasgow on seeing the script: "They clank a hell of a lot of chains around here," but agreed to go ahead, insisting on wintertime shooting. "I did *The Misery* in hot weather and high humidity, and the whole thing took place in Alaska. This time we'll shoot in fog and get the feel of Dickens's England." Producer **Bumstead W. Stutser** okayed, and *Carol* was shot a year ago. Doubts Stutser: "It may seem old-fashioned by now. That's Glasgow's fault, and he performed lousy, anyway."



PRINCESS GRACE  
White hope

Who's giving who a Parker Pen this year may be of interest to the nation as a whole, but in Heartburn, Pa., this year as for many past, local opinion waited on the declared choice, by Mayor **Winthrop C. Proudlove**, surgical belt milliardaire, of a gift for **Mrs. Proudlove**, traditionally announced, well before C-Day, in the news columns of the Heartburn *Weekly Cosmopolitan*. Last year the Mayor choose a fortnight's sunshine cruise to Bermuda, thus offending many Heartburners, among them husbands who had to follow suit but could not afford it, and local trading associations who resented losing the cream of the town's women shoppers for two weeks in custom-starved January. This year Mayor Proudlove has learned his lesson, is giving Mrs Proudlove a Proudlove surgical belt.

Concert-goers wondering if the leader of a symphony's first violin desk is really as good a man as the big name fiddler playing the concerto, but just hasn't had the breaks, got their answer when Italy's famed **Norrizzo Ludino** broke the bridge of all three of his violins trying to give a Carnegie Hall audience the Bruch No. 1 in G Major last week. Ludino stormed off in tears, whereat leader **Amos H. Butterworth** stood up and played it (*see Music*). Meanwhile, sobbing Ludino had flushed the broken bridges down the artistes' water closet in a fury, was unable to substantiate later charges that Butterworth had been at them with a saw.

Toughest gift request from she to he. Reports from Monte Carlo say that **Princess Grace** of Monaco, homesick for home, has asked **Rainier** to lay on a white Christmas this year. Last white Christmas in the Principality, according to TIME researchers, December 25, 1677.

## One Legged Race

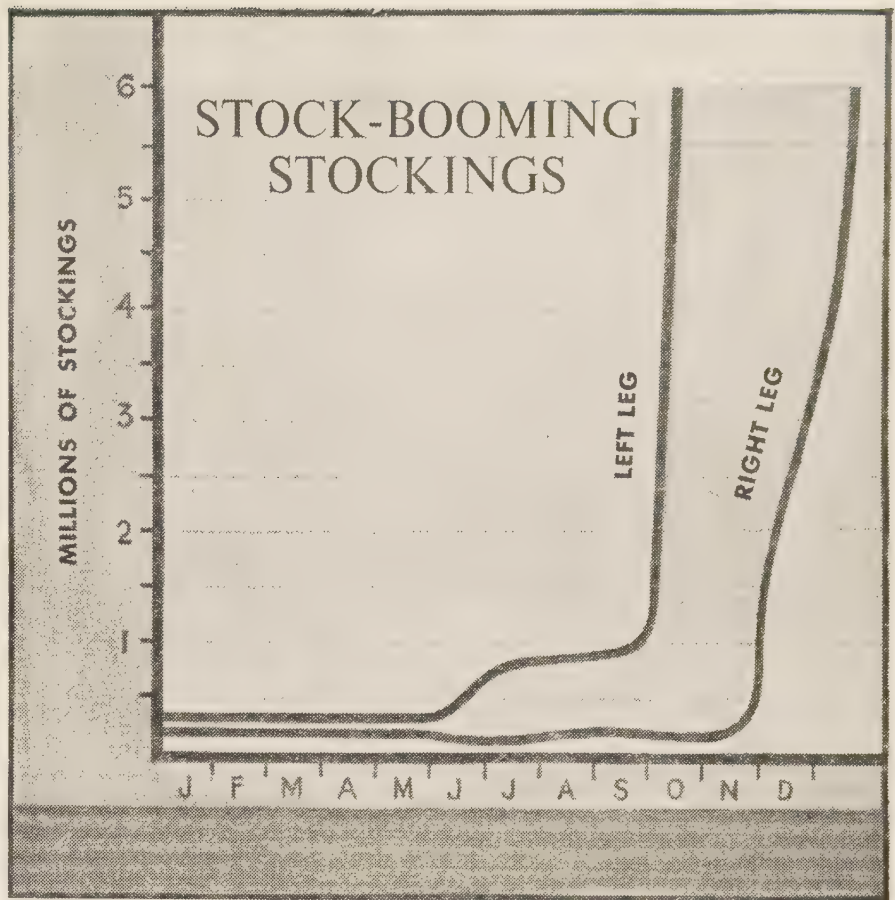
At bedtime on Dec. 24, 8,000,000 British children of all classes, from polished young sprigs of the aristocracy at swank \$1250-a-year Eton College, founded in 1440 by King Henry VI, to the offspring of the lowest-paid workman in the Special Areas,\* will hang up one stocking in the confident expectation of finding it in the morning filled with presents by Father Christmas. To some homes Father Christmas will bring gold wristwatches, miniature cameras and mink-trimmed slippers; to others, plastic toys from Woolworths. But whatever the value of the presents may be in terms of cash, their rating is uniformly high in terms of excitement and pride of possession.

What other common factor can be discerned at the bedheads of all these British children? To this problem devoted himself 23-year-old inventor and small manufacturer Donald Duckworth, and the answer he came up with was, as he said, so simple it was a wonder nobody had noticed it before. The answer, as divined by eager Italian-suited Duckworth, was the oddness of the stocking.

**Left, Right.** In order to hang up a stocking at Christmas it is necessary to separate a single stocking from a pair of similar articles, leaving the other unemployed. As the filling of a stocking with toys, and the subsequent reckless handling to which it may be subjected while the toys are extracted, are inclined to leave a stocking unfit for further wear until it has been laundered and possibly darned as well, this results in two wasteful consequences, 1) the washing of a number of single stockings that have not even been worn, and 2) the unprofitable neglect of an equal number of single stockings that cannot be worn without their mates.

Duckworth's solution to this dual problem was the invention of the Santaclauze Christmas Stocking, a cheap but attractive single stocking designed expressly for Yuletide use. "Besides the fact that you only want one of them," explains inventor Duckworth, "my stockings have several advantages over ordinary hosiers' stockings for the Christmas Eve function. To start with they are all the same size. I remember when I was a kid [Duckworth last hung up his Christmas stocking on Dec. 24, 1949, when he was 12 years old] how unfair I used to think it was that my elder brother should be allowed to use his stockings, which were

\*Formerly known as the Distressed Areas, subsequently rechristened by a sensitive Government to appease sensitive inhabitants who prefer to keep their distress private.



a lot bigger than mine, and in the end we both compromised by hanging up our sister's nylons. In some homes I believe the kids are actually allowed to hang up pillow-slips. Now if everybody used the Santaclauze we should know that every kid in the country was getting a square deal, because they all come the same size. You can get them in different colours, of course, blue for a boy and all that lark."

Other advantages of the Santaclauze are 1) it is strong enough to withstand the roughest treatment on Christmas morning, 2) it is sufficiently flexible to hint at its contents without being sufficiently translucent to reveal them, 3) it is expendable, being designed to sag slightly after use so that the child asked to put it away tidily and use it another year would have a definite feeling of deprivation.

**Status Symbol.** Duckworth claims that when his factory gets into full production he will be able to manufacture the Santaclauze at about one-fifteenth of a penny (.078 cents) each. As they sell at a little over \$1 apiece this represents a handsome profit for the inventor. "Of course," admits Duckworth, "it's a lot more than you would have to pay for an ordinary stocking, but the question of prestige comes into it. You won't get a kid satisfied with hanging up its ordinary grey wool school socks when it knows that the kids next door are all hanging up gaily colored Santaclauzes."

## Family Planning

In Bakersville, Mo., Stanley K. (for Kennedy) Rawhide, 16, is the latest, and youngest, member of the clan to enter what has become a family preserve in the town over the past half-century. The business? Playing Santa Claus at Cooper's, the big department store on Main Street. Previous and current holders of the appointment include Grandfather Stanley R. (for Roosevelt), 82, now retired; Great-uncle Olaf T. (for Taft), 77, also retired; Father Chester W. (for Wilson), 51, who plays the part evenings and weekends when the younger generation is busy; Uncle Theophilus H. (for Harding), 49, who took over from Stanley R.; and elder brother Henry F. (for Ford), 23, who first officiated when his uncle Theophilus left in the fall of 1952 to play Santa Claus for the combat troops in Korea.

Says 5-ft. 3-in., smooth-cheeked Stanley K. "I know I'm a bit young for the part, but folks in Bakersville expect to see a Rawhide at Cooper's, and I guess they'll sort of get used to me after a time."

Why has Stanley been pitchforked into the job so young? The appointment was offered to brother Henry for the current Christmas, but Henry was unable to accept. On Dec. 1 he was committed to the County Jail for six months. His offence? Stealing Christmas goods from Cooper's department store.



"LIKE OKINAWA"

## King of the Office Parties

Wheels wailing, sirens flogging the air, come the ambulances. The cop on the corner stops chewing, strolls over to where the glass and ebony slab of offices steeples into the night. He shoulders through the crowd, clenches an ambulance man, queries: "What makes here, Bub?"

Answer (likely with a background chorus of disaster buffs already gathering to count the stretchers) in three-and-a-half words: "Aragorn's up there." The law 'n' orderman nods, strolls back to his corner, starts chewing.

**Some Mutt Has a Yen.** Julius J. (for nothing) Aragorn began playing games at kids' parties when he was still in blue satin knickers. "With lace around the knees," he recalls. It was not, however, until he had majored in Physical Combat at Paradise College, Kansas, had fought with Merrill's Marauders through Jap-fraught jungles, that Aragorn came into his kingdom. He was only 23 when in 1946 he left his first Christmas office party with the rooms looking, as an admiring director of Skinner, Duboi, Haslam, Prince, Prince, Prince, Gotlop, Despering & Haslam whistled, "like Okinawa." Next morn Aragorn was offered a trainee place with SDHPPPGDH, now provides the only vowel\* in initials of Wall Street's prime tongue-twister.

Slab-faced, balding, paunchy, Aragorn is Dean of New York's party gamesters. But, despite (or because of) his fame, he cannot let up. Rumbles "Dig" Digby, his longtime trainer and fast friend:

"Some mutt always has a yen to take on the champ, so's he can have something to say to his women." Digby pauses, chomps a cigar, adds: "When he gets out of hospital."

Most party gamesters are specialty men. Up 'n' coming Edgar Revesky, of Lynch and Lynch, does not deny that he is, first and last, a piano-hustler. When the Daiquiris and Old-Fashioneds have worked their spell and the typists' pool is choppy with alcohol, Revesky can get a Bechstein moving like it was living. Toni Fleschinger, a novice who finished 1958 with three broken ribs, now lords it over the chair-pilers. Nobody can touch Jim Topeta at bottle-pitching. There are plenty of young contenders in other fields. But Aragorn refuses to specialize. He too can make a piano waltz like it was living, can spillikin over the pyramided chairs, can splinter a crate of coke in ten seconds. Gripe some of SDHPPAPGDH's rivals: Aragorn does not drink. Say they: there are as many wilting rubber-plants as snapped fibulae at parties where Aragorn has performed.

Last year, irked into action by acid whispirings, SDHPPAPGDH hired scientists, doctors, judges to stage "controlled experiment" before an invited audience composed of representatives of every billion-and-over firm on the Street. In pin-drop silence, broken only by the glug of his epiglottis, they watched Aragorn down two whisky sours, seven vodka Martinis, a beaker of mulled wine, three brandy 'n' sodas. As the last glass tilted its amber down Aragorn's throat, nine cheering (but sober) volunteers burst in, started to play "Corridor Crush." Next second, Aragorn's chair was empty,

Aragorn was in the melee. Later he visited all nine at Central Hospital.

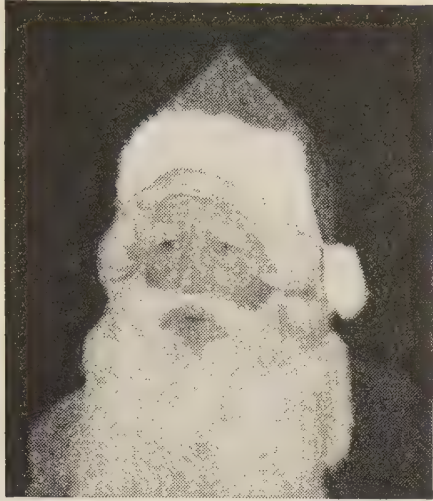
**Be Ruthless.** Quizzed by eager reporters, Aragorn smiles, says: "Shucks, I'm just lucky." But in a private gab-fest with a TIME writer he admitted: "You gotta keep at it. You gotta be ruthless. Most of these guys think they're at a party. They're doing it for kicks. If that's OK by them, it's OK by me. But I do this for a living. If I see a hand on the parquet I put my heel on it." True to his creed of ruthlessness, Aragorn does not spare even himself. All summer and fall he trains for his brief season, keeps in trim by flipping his tycoon-size desk round his office, swats bluebottles three hours a day to hone up his already transistor-swift reflexes. He seems ageless, but this year, fixing his tie for the first of the big-league parties, he voiced doubts, talked of retiring at season's end. But at Happymad Inc's yuletide get-together Aragorn appeared as young as ever. Damage to date: fifteen hospitalizations, eighty-three minor injuries, one lift, one stairway, nineteen doors and \$23,000 worth of movable office furnishings.

## Scoreboard

¶ On the first big pro snowballing weekend of the year, top-ranked teams across the nation flashed expected power as they warmed up for battles to come. Despite scrappy blocking, mighty Penn Puritans put in a display of power pitching that rolled unranked Westchester Mauves off the field, 35—7. Boston's unlovely slogging offense ground down Rackstraw 19—0. Odd Sox battered Republicans 33—9. Only real upset: Hapsburg Thugs got lost in intricate elegancies of their own open-T-plan offense, allowed snowballs to melt, went down 14—11 to straightforward pick-it-up-and-chuck-it play by Chicago's unconsidered Cut-throats. After game, Thugs fired coach Sig Piffler, hired Mick "Miracle-man" O'Kelly for a reputed \$45,000. Grated Piffler: "O'Kelly's the ninth in two years, but he should make a few cents before he goes."

¶ Bouncing in, out of the Ring like an animated yo-yo, Chips ("The Lips") Longacre kissed 28, hugged 17, missed only 5, to break by 3 points the Kiss-in-the-Ring National League record. Nation over, Kiss-in-the-Ring fans are asking themselves: can Chips, now kissing a fabulous '576, hold off Senator Beeker's Corruption-in-Sport investigation long enough to break Grand Old Kisser Jabez Jones's thirty-eight-year all-season record, 212—166—73? Smacked Jones last week: "Kissing's always gonna be corrupt. Look at the money that's layin' about. I reckon Beeker's jealous."

\*Between second and third P.



FOR SANTA . . .

## TELEVISION

### The Portable Keyhole

Enthusied by critical kudos, pelf, New Wave Cinemogul Nathan Goodspeed told Sunset Strip-teuse Georgina (Jelly-Roll) Velvette (39-19-37) (real name: Mavis Schmuck; real measurements: 30-30-30): "From here on out, now I understand the flexibility of the medium, I'm taking the camera places it ain't hardly ever been before, and, doll, I figure maybe I can use you." Brainstormed the plumping (net weight gain since award of Pulitzer Prize, mention in *TIME*\*: 3½ ounces), balding (net hair loss since *TIMEN* interviewed him: 7,326 strands, or 38.2 per cent) producer: "If I'm making out like great already with improvised footage on practically no budget, how can I miss with a sponsor, agency men, all sorts technical advisers, writers even? Prestigewise, this new Yule program is a cinch for an Emmy. What type statue do them Swiss† give you when you buy a Nobel Prize?" Home Truthed she: "You cinemoguls always talk so complicated. What are you going to do?"

\*Most status-aware upper-income-group (\$40,000 up) *Timentioned* men, women gain, lose weight during week after publication. If all avoidrupois gained, lost during single calendar week were balled together entire Notre Dame varsity athletic scholarship squad could not lift it goalpost-high.

†Goodspeed erred. Nobel was Norwegian inventor of Maxim gun, named after his favorite restaurant in Paris, France.

‡Goodspeed embargoes controversial Havana, Cuba cigars as gesture of protest against Dictator Castro's refusal to convert nationalized casinos into drive-in theaters for old Goodspeed movies.

§After dinner he sold tablecloth to alert Hollywood *Time* Correspondent Milton X. Kerouac, who had it photostatted, chartered-jetted to New York, filed, forgotten.

With his charred Jamaican Corona-Corona‡, Goodspeed diagrammed§ his plan for coast-to-coast Christmas show which he hopes will give the annual carnival new interfaith entertainment value, raise it above sectarian partisanship. Optimized he: "Christmas is for everybody with a television set, irregardless of race, color or creed, and I don't care even if it's only a 10-inch screen." Eyebrowed she: "But Nat, honey, where do I fit in?"

"I'm coming to that," he patiented. "Listen, when you think of Santa Claus what type image does this project?" "Well, this beard and all," she synecdoched. "Right!" he merely bellowed. "Like from hobo jungleville—hairy, unhygienic, old-fashioned, and we're supposed to be selling a way of life, soap, razor-blades. So this is the gimmick that's going to put Christmas 1960 on the map: a smooth Santa Claus—and what can be smoother than a broad?"

Statuesque Georgina was custom-fitted into an ermine-trimmed red Shantung bikini, Santa Claus hat, boots (total cost: \$5,000), took crash course in chimney-climbing. Authenticity was a must to satisfy children, Goodspeed adamanted. At same time, he was blue-printing, time-tabling saturation kinescope candid camera invasion of photogenic family homes to record genuine expressions of seasonable astonishment. First reactions



. . . A NEW SHAPE

to pilot scheme shooting in swank exurban Westchester communities (place names were top secret: Bronxville, Scarsdale, White Plains); jazziest fillip to tired institution since invention of rye egg nog.

Homemaker Hortense Luce said whole family unit was surprised when Georgina and film crew climbed into master bedroom. Explained Mrs. Luce: "Here at last was a Santa Claus I could identify with. After all, 83 per cent. of the retail purchasing in the United States is conducted by women, so it's only fair the Christmas shows should be female-oriented. My husband appreciated her dance routine, and junior couldn't have been happier with his Christmas giftpack of silver dollars. I was glad to sign the waiver. Who would sue Santa Claus for trespassing when it's going out over the network if you cooperate?"

## HOLLYWOOD

### Keep Right On Suing

Disenthused, on the other hand, by Hollywood's egg-head trend, Old Hat Cinemogul Cyrus K. Tablet (*The Leviticus Story*, *Bride of Habakkuk*, *Vengeance of Judith*) objurgated:

"You can't cast a religious picture these days. You can't even begin, no, sir. All these guys going about pretending they're human. So human they gotta be ashamed of the lines they're given. De Mille once had a guy call Delilah a Tinrath alley-cat, and the guy called her a Tinrath alley-cat without batting a hair. Not now. No, sir. I got a nine billion dollar budget for my massacre, and can I get a guy to play Herod without blushing? I got ten thousand guaranteed innocents for my massacre. I got the army of the United Arab Republic to massacre 'em. I got every Hebrew scholar in Harvard on my pay-list to see that they massacre 'em right. I got a six-hour script, with *three* intervals. I got SuperTotalScope. Yes, sir. But I got no actors. Not one. That noise you hear on the fifteenth floor, that's contracts being torn up. I'm recruiting another hundred lawyers to keep right on suing the bastards, but they still won't touch it. They're intelligent. They got to look intelligent. They got to talk intelligent. They got to act intelligent. If only they'd think intelligent I'd have Herods flocking in here. And it's no use telling me I better wait until it's not smart to be intelligent no more. I can't wait. I got a terrible wastage of innocents. They keep growing up."

Hollywood gossipractor Desirée Glit points out that egg-headery has only hit the males so far. Tablet has choice of five Dames to play Herodias, ninety-eight dames to play Salome. Latest whisper from Sunset Boulevard: Tablet will play Herod himself, with beard, without blushes.



CALIFORNIA'S SCHULTZ  
Sick chic

## Status Stomachs

Disputed with insular calm by British Medical Association's suave, agnostic, chain-smoking Neuropean Adolf Klang, but passionately affirmed by California's Howard C. Fenton Institute's pink-jowled, effervescent Headman Hadley P. Schultz is the latter's theory, based upon observations made of 2,100 British children from all strata of society, that infantile Christmastide digestive upsets may be interpreted in terms of status.

Yuletide sickness, reports Schultz in a 3,500-word article in the current issue of white-covered 48-page monthly *British Medical Journal*, can be categorized accurately according to the social class to which the patient belongs. Thus children from working-class (weekly pay-packet \$70-\$120) homes will typically suffer from seasonal outbreaks of *acne rosacea* as the result of sudden over-indulgence in a diet excessively rich in ice-cream, chips and canned fruit-salad. Children of middle-class (monthly pay-check \$100-\$180) families, on the other hand, are likely to exhibit symptoms of acute gastralgia arising from abnormal intake of turkey, plum-pudding\* and grocer's claret. More significantly Schultz holds that status-conscious children may produce symptoms appropriate to classes other than their own from the effect not of dietetic irregularity but of simple envy.

Concludes Schultz: "All our illnesses are caused in part by conscious volition. Businessmen seeking increased recognition of their efforts often produce spontaneous stomach-ulcers which in these circumstances take on the character of status symbols. In the same way a healthy, imaginative British child of the

\*A British folk-confection, traditionally consumed at Christmas, containing nuts, dried fruit and brandy but no plums.

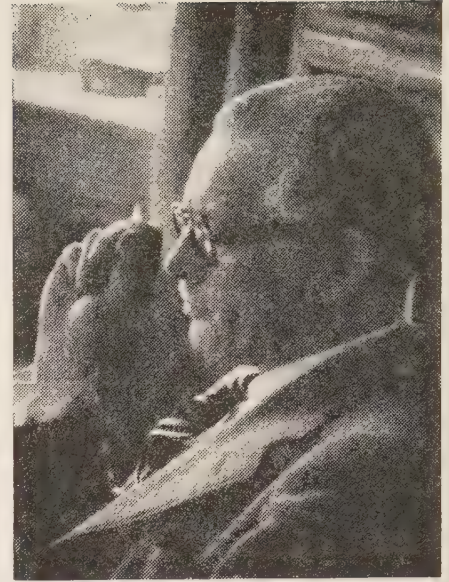
lower income groups can show irrefutable evidence of poisoning by over-dose of *pâté de foie gras* and champagne without having consumed anything more noxious than roast chicken, brussels sprouts and mashed potatoes."

**Excessive Intake.** Firmly ranged against him is handsome formerly Austrian ailurophile Adolf Klang, who, after a brilliant career as a brain-surgeon in Vienna, came to Britain in 1946 in order to participate in the then-impending National Health Service. Dr. Klang, who abandoned brain-surgery in 1947 to devote himself to pediatrics, gave short shrift to what he described as "the comic-opera theories of this vest-pocket Voronoff." Quipped he: "So you are showing me a child that is sick the day after Christmas. All right already, so you are showing me a child that has been over-eating. Whether it is caviar or candy-floss, I will settle it damn quick with a good dose of salts."

## New Out of Africa

To the already highly flammable admixture that is to-day's African medical world of Kenya is added fresh fuel in the form of a statement from newly formed Kenya Indigenous Doctors' Union's paunchy, dark-complexioned President Mshimba Mshamba. Stated baldly at K.I.D.U.'s inaugural meeting in Nairobi's Guy Johnson Hall President Mshimba: "The time has come when European and Asian residents in our land can no longer be allowed to avail themselves of the services of African witch-doctors. If they cannot organize their affairs without witch-doctors, they will have to train witch-doctors of their own."

Sharply divided is opinion on this pronouncement among Kenya's European population. Reactionary settler comment among old-style "colonialist" residents takes the line that 1) there has never been any significant demand among European settlers for the services of witch-doctors, and 2) since currently practising witch-doctors owe their present autonomous status to the benevolent paternalism of the Colonial Government they must hold themselves at the disposal of the settlers whenever required. The more liberal elements of the European population maintain that it would not be difficult to train a corps of white witch-doctors if the need were clearly shown, but that this would mean the end of a valuable interracial traffic whose influence has always been for good. Said leading Nairobi obstetrician Kennerley Farnsworth Holmes: "Relations between African practitioners and ourselves have always been harmonious. We have a good deal to learn from them, especially



LONDON'S KLANG  
Sick joke

the Masai *laibon*, who are universally respected; and I would venture to say in all humility that they can learn a certain amount from us, particularly in the spheres of endocrinology, antibiotics and deportment."

Scoffed President Mshimba: "When I see a *Mzungu* [i.e. European] doctor who can cure E.C.F. in a milch cow with banana leaves, chicken's blood and two crossed sticks, I will believe that he has something to teach my people." No *laibon* President Mshimba, incidentally; he is a Luo from the Kisumu area and holds the degrees of M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. from St. Thomas's Hospital in London.

## A World Elsewhere

Making major medical break-through, Dr. Rameses Probo of Basketville University announced last week that he had isolated, described and cured a nationwide mental disease, all in one morning. The ailment: idiophobia, or fear of being an individual person. The symptoms: a series of morbid beliefs, to wit, that the patient must sometimes make up his mind for himself, that it is possible for both sides to be right in a controversy, that the ills of the world may not be cured by having a decent citizen in the White House, that some things are more important than others, that there is a world elsewhere. Any of these, and related symptoms not yet clinically described, may coexist in the mind of the patient, causing stress, baldness and loss of efficiency. Two out of every three adult Americans suffer from idiophobia. The cure: massive doses of TIME-reading. In emergency cases, where TIME is not available, *Life* magazine will do. Probo team's next research assignment: a comma-by-comma, cent-by-cent analysis of *Fortune* magazine and its readers, to discover whether that causes, cures anything.

# FASHION DICTATES

By Catherine  
Drinkwater

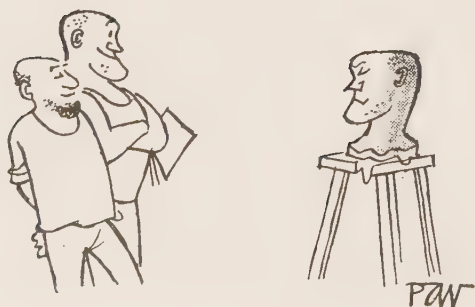
When I read the stiletto heel was on its way out I knew that the female Roman would have to think up some chic weapon to take its place. Now my friend Assunta tells me that the metal-covered toe-cap, a tapering, elegant bone-bruiser if ever, is coming into its own. One needs to have played a reluctant partner in squirrels and bears up and down the gangway of a crowded Roman autobus to appreciate its potential value; the prod of a metal-bound toe should have as cooling an effect on the lecherous Latin as the stab of a stiletto heel.

Some scientist in search of a subject for his thesis ought to try "the Continuous Ability of the Minimum Capacity to Absorb the Maximum Load" which will be the long way of describing the phenomenon of the Roman autobus. Too many people raise the comparison of the Underground in rush hour. This is optimistic foolishness. I myself have passed more than once from the Bank to the Oval crouched like Quasimodo with a total stranger's elbow in my ear, but I was never more than a shuffle or two from the entrance and I was allowed to remain there and not incessantly urged into the hinterland only to be contorted into new and undreamt of shapes. On the

*"Whatever was it we got so bored with before we had TV, stereo and home movies?"*



Eric Sargin



autobus what goes in one end either comes out the other or gives up the ghost in between. From time to time small cries of alarm float out from the centre as undersized Sicilians frantic for air bite out in every direction. In winter the smell of salami bounces off the mothballs; the scent of the summer is best left undescribed.

The comparison of Underground and autobus is at its weakest when one calls to mind the amorous hunter who lurks on every autobus breathing down one's neck like an asthmatic horse. Let no one deny that a certain amount of limb mingling goes on in the best conducted Undergrounds; in such a democratic bustle it is inevitable that the *Mirror* should entwine with the *Telegraph*. Yet even with one's lips pressed against another's ear lobe a decent cool-to-frosty air prevails. But there is no togetherness like that of the autobus. Stilettoes flash sparks as they grind into two-toned winkle-pickers cunningly reinforced by two pairs of socks and corrugated cardboard in the toes. Fights break out as the heels of the righteous churn up innocent feet. One might enter more into the spirit of the thing if after some fifteen minutes brushing butterfly kisses on to one's arm they didn't whip smartly underneath it into the first vacant seat. Roman men are no fools when it comes to seating. They spread the whisper that only those well past their prime need be offered a seat. Stout Roman matrons pop-eyed with fatigue snap like stoats at the donor of a seat. The sole competition comes from foolish foreign females who must be hooked round the ankle by an umbrella handle, or smartly tapped in the bend of the knee as they poise for a pounce. The only people sure of a seat on the autobus are disabled veterans. They have two special seats allocated just behind the driver. At least it was from such a seat that I was hauled by a man with a wooden leg. He caught me up by the ear, then rolling up his trousers he showed his wooden leg to the driver and sat down without saying a word.

Even in this matriarchal age the Italian male runs the show, and gets the seats, and in his own inimitable manner dictates the fashion in footwear.

#### Over to You - Over

"SIR, - Traffic over the Channel bridge from England to France should proceed on the right, so as to prepare the drivers for the conditions they will meet when they arrive in France. Conversely, traffic from France to England should proceed on the left."  
- Letter to *The Times*.



# SLIM FOR DEFEAT

By Bernard Hollowood

Nobody, so far as I am aware, has yet found a convincing explanation of the trade cycle, that curious wavy movement of economic activity marked by a succession of booms and slumps – or, as we now say, of boomlets and recessions. Any economist worth his salt will list the possible causes of the trade cycle for you, starting with ideas about Bank Rate, gold prices, harvests, imports, tides, sun spots, and going on, if you let him, to speak at length about Hayek, Taussig, Schumpeter, Keynes, Crowther, Harrod, Balogh, Rostow, Galbraith and even Parkinson. What no economist will tell you, until, of course, he has read this article, is that the trade cycle is the direct result of variations in a nation's dietary intake.

In America at this moment the Chamber of Commerce is desperately worried about falling gold reserves, a balance of payments deficit and a slump in export trade. Why? Because Americans have suddenly these last few years become a nation of slimmers. *Punch's* correspondent in Baltimore reports that millions go to bed hungry and wake up hungrier because they are kicking the food habit and trying to

keep b. and s. together with metered calorie dietary products.

Americans used to be vaguely disgusting to Europeans on account of their king-size steaks and sizzling platters, their turkey and pumpkin pie and clam chowder and waffles with syrup, their burgers of beef and ham and cheese, their corned beef and cabbage: now, our reporter insists, they are consuming things called "Metrecal" (Mead Johnson), "Bal-cal" (Sears Roebuck), "Quota" (Quaker Oats), "Dietcal" (Jewel Tea Stores), "Cal-a-day" (United Whelan Stores) – all of them liquid preparations of chemicals *à la mode*. Slimming.

The chain of economic effect is obvious enough. First to feel the draught are the restaurants, grocery stores and butchers, who cut back their orders and throw the producers into desperate confusion. The waffle belt grinds to a stop, the pumpkin reserves are decimated, the stockyards of Chicago and Omaha become gaping wounds in the economy's flank. In next to no time the farmers become depressed and let their topsoil blow away. Naturally they buy no new machinery, and Detroit and Gary and Pittsburgh and Toledo are smitten by unemployment . . . The rest is familiar. They call it a recession because capitalism is on trial and the world slump in the West means an ideological victory for Communism in the East.

America's last big slimming craze was in the 'twenties. It produced the Wall Street Crash of 1929 and the Great Depression. Then in 1933 the Americans repealed the Volstead Act (1919), which had prohibited the consumption of alcoholic beverages,



*"Is that the fine sense of anticipation you were talking about?"*

and at one bound turned the economic corner. People drank more, ate more, spent more, worked harder and of course the country prospered.

It ought to be fairly obvious by now that slimming, whether voluntary or involuntary, induces bouts of severe depression. All over the Middle East and the Far East millions have been on a starvation diet for centuries and as a result have known nothing but economic recession. In Britain we have never done better in the export markets than when we enjoyed a Victorian reputation abroad for champing through four square meals a day and guzzling enormously on

beer, gin and whisky – though we came near to repeating this success after the last war when we ate and drank everything in sight, doubled our overseas trade and reached a state of prosperity that allowed our present Prime Minister, the best we have, to underline the economist's "affluent society" with "We've never had it so good."

And now, I fear, we are in danger again of catching America's cold. Already the dieticians are on the move, urging us to cut our calories and to replace natural fattening and invigorating foods with enervating mashies and pulps. The food manufacturers want to expand their trade, so they remove from their products any element of taste to which any part of the public might take exception. The aim is the mass market, and the result in terms of food is a pre-digested dish of neutrality. This has already happened, it seems, in America, and is happening now right *here* before our very taste-buds. And when all goods have been treated and doctored and taste of plastic sponge, what is more natural than that the consumer should decide to slim? There is little difference anyway between a can of fattening Youknowwhat and a glass of slimming "Metrecal"; the switch involves one in no real hardship. One is missing nothing.

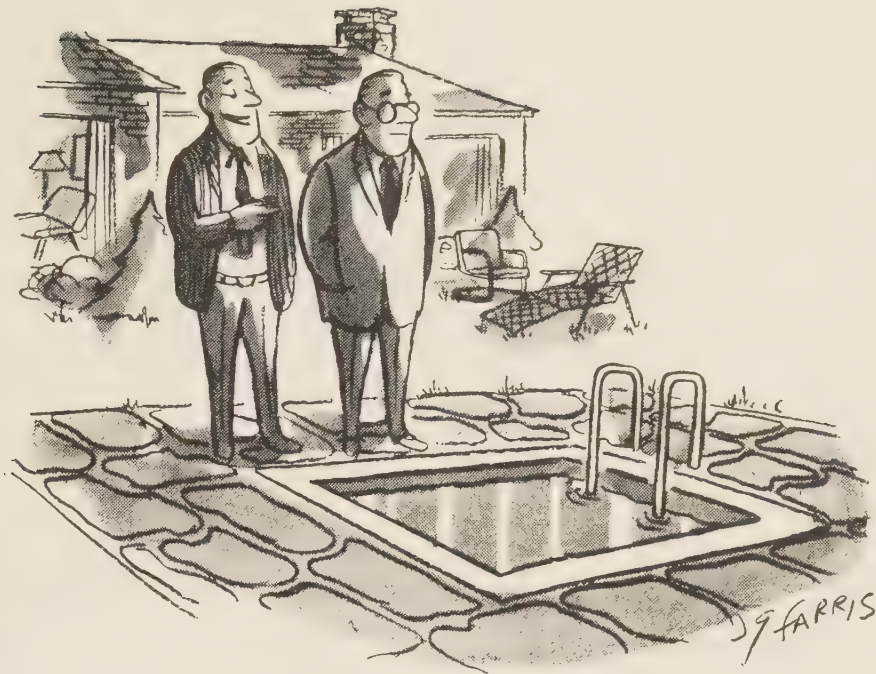
So Britain too will have its recession.

And what is France doing? Closing the bistros. And just when everyone was thinking that the France of Charles de Gaulle was finding its feet economically. It is *tragique*, is it not? The bistros will close, the vineyards will suffer, the land will suffer, no one will pay taxes, industrial production will fall, the heavy franc will go like gossamer . . .

The Russians do not make our mistakes. They eat and drink for the Motherland. They eat till it hurts, plate after plate of caviar, cup after cup of bortsch, slice after slice of rye bread. Watch Khrushchev. See him eat. Wow! There's a real economist for you. They have no trade cycles in Russia. They don't slim.



"On the other hand,  
it's sixty feet deep."



# WHEN I INVESTIGATED KATANGA

By Claud Cockburn

Not everyone, I dare say, reading of the Congo and Mr. Tshombe and the *Union Minière du Haut Katanga*, at once thinks of churches and stained glass. I do. And the reason for that is that on the only occasion when I went to see the bosses of that almighty Haut Katanga firm I saw something – right there in the heart of Brussels – which I never thought to see.

What they had was an office with a device of double windows all around it. The outside windows were of more or less ordinary glass, but the inner windows were of stained glass, depicting saintly legend and story. Between the two layers there were high-powered electric lightings. So that while you waited in this place to ask the chiefs of the U.M.H.K. why they went on the way they did you had the impression all the time that you were in some sort of church or chapel. You gently, under the illuminated influence of those windows, dismissed from your mind raw, brash and sordid thoughts. You thought about all things bright and beautiful and the early Christian martyrs and you felt that probably the Directors of the *Union Minière du Haut Katanga* were in about the same bracket with those saints and martyrs of old.

The time I sat there I was in the company of Mr. Ralph McAllister Ingersoll, then managing editor of a magazine called *Fortune* which, according to its advertising copy, was the magazine of the "50,000 richest people in America."

And what we were there for was to "lay bare" the "inner workings" of the U.M.H.K. The notion at that time was that these fellows had somehow hogged – or were about to hog – the world radium supply. (This was before every hitch-hiker had a Geiger counter and sought uranium.) It is an odd fact about the Haut

Katanga firm that from time to time it causes thoughtful journalists and investigators all over the world to start by wondering what the devil it is up to and to go on by imagining that it is, just possibly, up to no great good.

The same thing happens from time to time to the firm of Krupp. No reason for it – probably just an old family curse.

So, the day before, this man Ingersoll and myself had been sitting in the American Bar of the Savoy Hotel, London, and he was explaining to me – I was a correspondent of his magazine at the time – that what we needed to do was to dash over to Brussels and lay bare the Haut Katanga. Ingersoll had a suitably sensational mind and he believed the tentacles – a phrase he happened to employ – of the Haut Katanga were everywhere. “Even here,” he said, and gave a sharp, richest-American look at a man at the next table who seemed to be showing interest in our conversation.

Without moving any part of him but his eyes, Ingersoll actually said to this man “Do you have some interest in our conversation, sir?” The man shook his head and put his lips into his liquor and waddled away.

Ingersoll told me two things about our mission. The first was that the only time to see really top-flight Belgian business men was between the hours of three in the afternoon and five in the afternoon.

The reason? Because, so Ingersoll had been most credibly informed, until 3 p.m. the high-income-bracket Belgians are still getting over their hangovers. After 5 p.m. they are drunk. (I have no wish to asperse rich Belgians as such – I am simply repeating what this American editor told me.)

The other thing was that we had, at all costs, to get to see this fellow Schneider – or a name to that effect. He was the inside-top-man of the Haut Katanga and Ingersoll knew a man who knew some men who knew Schneider, and when we got to Schneider we were going to be right in.

Time was moving along, and almost before we could order another drink it became apparent that were we to reach Brussels during the effective working period we had to hire an aeroplane to get us there. The ordinary scheduled flights were going to land us so late there would be nothing to investigate but a boozing party.

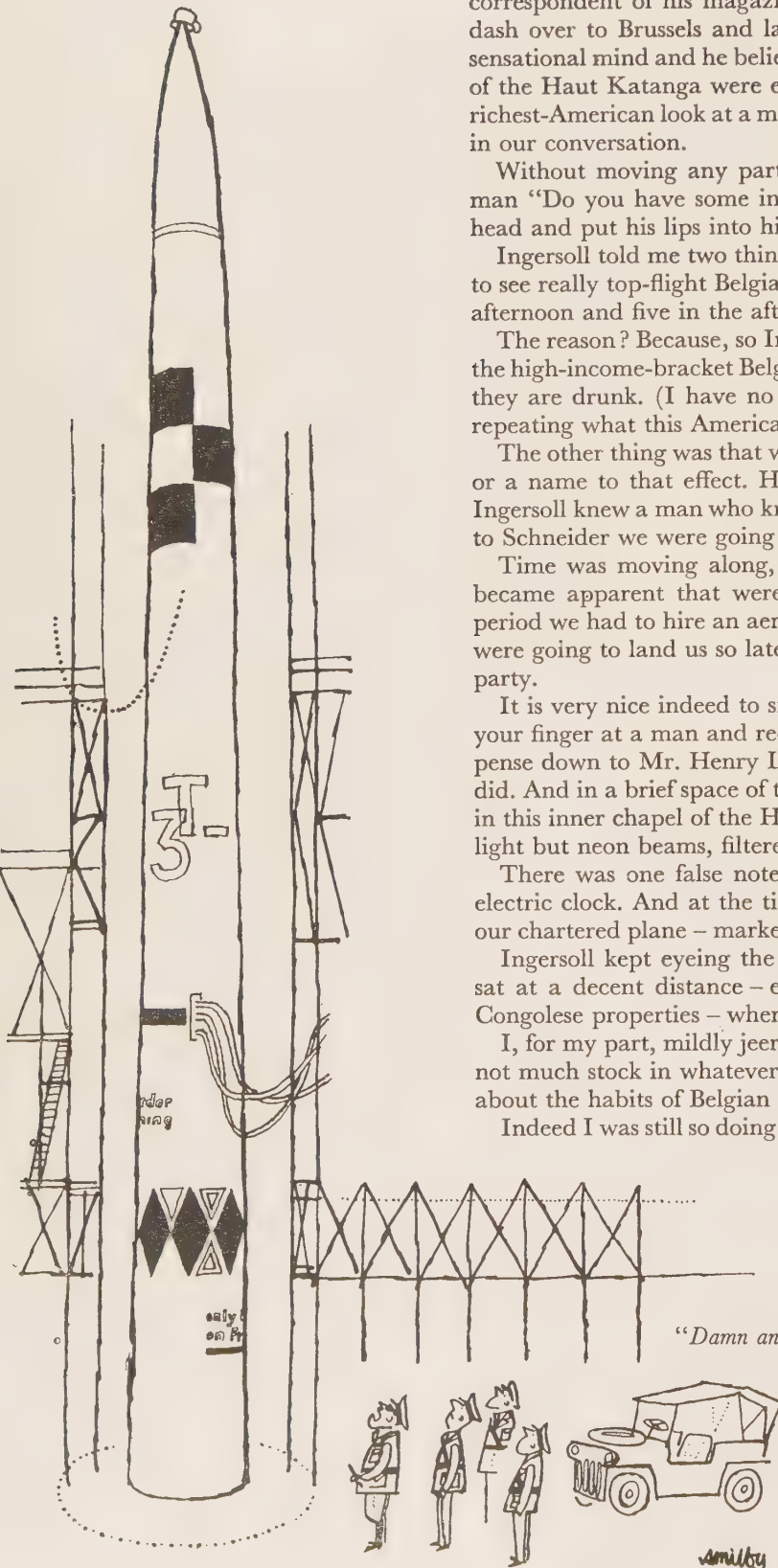
It is very nice indeed to sit in the American Bar of the Savoy Hotel and crook your finger at a man and request him to lay on a private aircraft and put the expense down to Mr. Henry Luce, owner of *Fortune* magazine. This we accordingly did. And in a brief space of time we were cloistered – a *mot juste* if ever I saw one – in this inner chapel of the Haut Katanga concern, into which fell not vulgar daylight but neon beams, filtered beneficently through ecclesiastical panes.

There was one false note – or a note, if not false, yet menacing: namely, an electric clock. And at the time we entered the clock – despite the costly speed of our chartered plane – marked already the moment of thirty-one minutes past four.

Ingersoll kept eyeing the clock with apprehension and asking an acolyte who sat at a decent distance – either telling his beads or totting up his holdings in Congolese properties – when we could hope to see M. Schneider.

I, for my part, mildly jeered at Ingersoll. I indicated clearly enough that I took not much stock in whatever his friends and associates in New York had told him about the habits of Belgian big-business men.

Indeed I was still so doing when the hands of the clock reached and barely passed



“Damn and blast all undergraduates.”



the hour of five. At that moment two separate doors of the chapel burst open and out of one came four, out of another three, men who – had you met them in Toronto or Bournemouth – you would have immediately recognized as Belgian big-business men. They walked – the group of three and the group of four – arm in arm. They were jovial. They were making a good deal of noise. And as they reeled past us, shouting and humming, I had to admit that they were, without question, drunk as lords.

Ingersoll gave me a look of restrained triumph, disentangled his serpentine legs, and said “You see? We’ll have to wait till to-morrow.”

After that airborne dash it was at first hard to adjust oneself to the idea that we had absolutely nothing purposeful to do in Brussels until 3.1 p.m. the following afternoon. (For after this first experience I accepted unquestioningly Ingersoll’s corollary statement to the effect that a visitor coming upon – say – Schneider before three o’clock would encounter something like a bear with a sore head.)

As it was, Ingersoll’s own nervous restlessness nearly got us into trouble after all. For on the following day we had finished lunch early – to be sure of getting to the Haut Katanga office on the stroke of three – and then found we had three-quarters of an hour in hand. Ingersoll was determined to employ this interval in driving about Brussels, seeing as many monuments and other sights of historical interest as possible, in a one-horse *fiacre* of the kind which at that time was stationed here and there in the city for the convenience of tourists with a penchant for the Old World.

Perhaps because Ingersoll – a large man – squirmed so, or perhaps simply under the impulse of our nervous tensions, somewhere in the inner suburbs first the *fiacre*, then the driver, then the very horse itself began to go to pieces. A wheel loosened, the driver became wild in manner, and the horse sank to its knees. We had literally to run nearly half a mile to reach the shrine by 4.45.

The acolyte showed us immediately into an inner office. Ingersoll, with his perfect faith in the timing of the operation, had no doubt that the high official who there received us was neither hung-over nor drunk. My opinion was that he might have been either. Ingersoll was also under the impression that this must be the M. Schneider for whom we had so repeatedly asked.

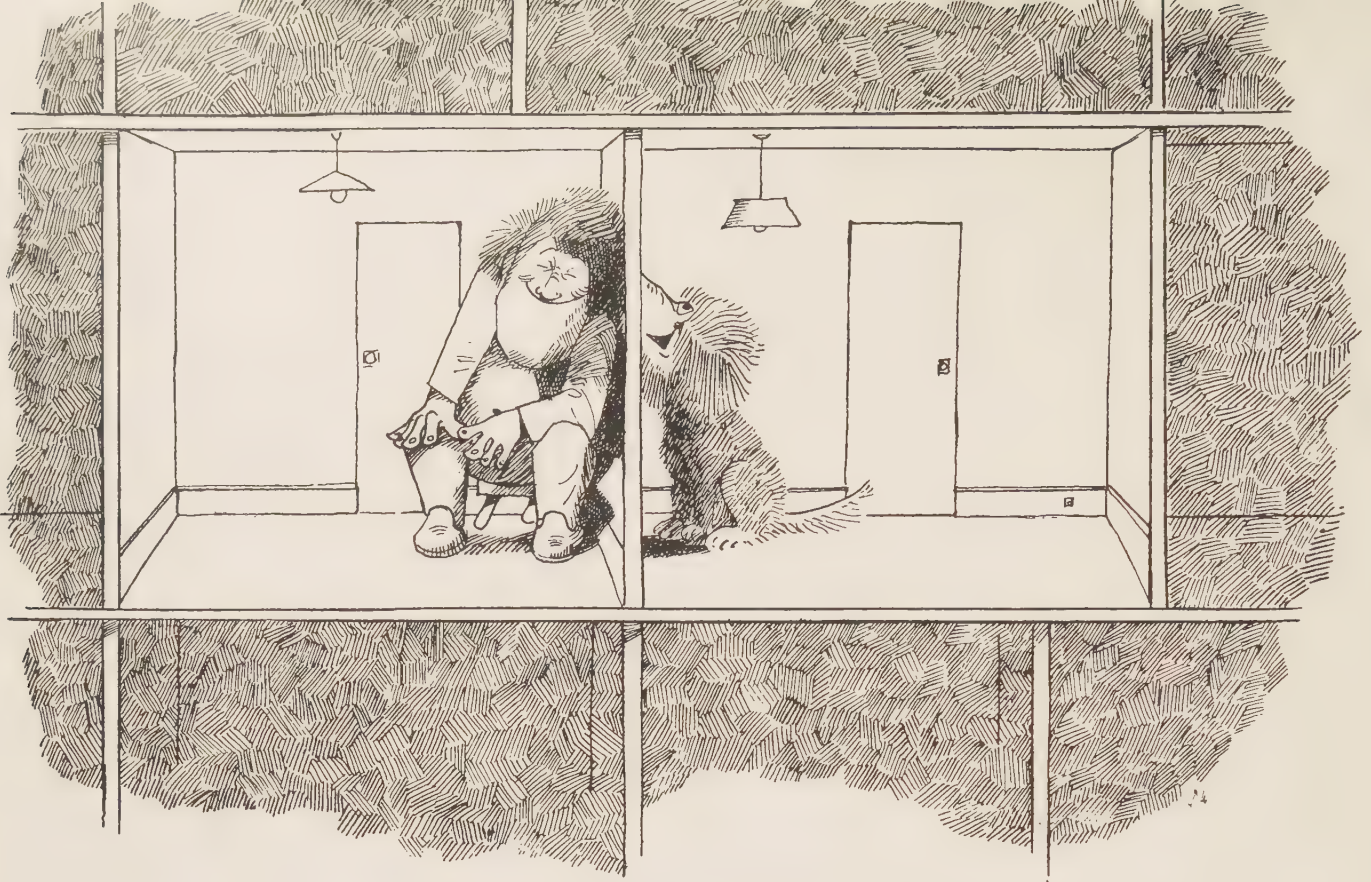
Between sorely knitted brows and heavy pouches, the man’s eyes narrowed meanly. He did not care to have this American editor insisting that he was M. Schneider. His name, it seemed, was quite otherwise.

“Where then,” we asked “is M. Schneider?”

At this stage I need hardly tell you that we were informed that M. Schneider had been residing some days at the Savoy Hotel, London. If we chartered a plane immediately we might just reach him there before he left for Leopoldville.

We did so. We reached the Savoy. In time. In time – again it is almost too agonizing to recount – to introduce ourselves to M. Schneider who was the man to whom, only thirty-six or so hours earlier, we had been so rude in the American Bar because he had seemed to show an impertinent interest in the conversation of two journalists laying plans to lay bare the secrets of the *Union Minière du Haut Katanga*.





# SCOWLE IN THE SIXTIES

By Bernard Hollowood

Wednesday night is all hell at our house. It's, then that my Dad gets down to his forms, and for a few hours the ordinary life of 134 Byron Road comes, more or less, to a standstill. The I.T.A. set in the lounge where Dad works has to be switched off, and that leaves us with only the old B.B.C. I mean, there's nothing to buy on the B.B.C., is there? Watch it for long enough and you begin to feel deprived, if not poverty-stricken. It's like looking into shop windows on Sundays when the blinds are down, or being on the wagon at Ind Coope's annual outing. Of course, my Mum feels it more than we do because she actually remembers the old days of depression before the Tories introduced National Health and Full Employment, and at that time – if you can believe her, and I reckon she exaggerates – she hadn't got two fivers to rub together.

Anyway, as I say, Wednesday night is hell. My old man gets out his pen and ink, clears a space for himself on the tea table and settles down to the graft. I once read a book at school called *Great Expectations* (by Dickens) and there was a character in it that reminds of me my Dad. Joe Gargery. He was so dead serious about his writing and figuring. Course, Joe Gargery wasn't writing at a table littered with left-over meringues, cold ham, etc., but he took his paper-work very much to heart. My Dad is surrounded by newspapers and reference-books and charts, and tables of all kinds. Also his cheque book. He has his collar off, his shirt sleeves

rolled up to his armpits, and the smoke from his cigar swirls round his head like that chemical vapour stuff they're always using on the telly. After a bit of introductory penmanship he looks up.

"Hey, mother, where are you? Lend me a hand for a minute, lass."

My mother switches off her automatic dish-washer and lights a fag.

"Well, what is it now?" she says. "I'm busy, can't you see? I've only one pair of hands, you know!"

"What about Guest, Keen and Nettlefolds?" says my Dad. "They're strongly tipped in the *Express*, by Frederick Ellis."

"How do they stand then?" says mother.

"Just gone up a bob to 92s. 6d. Dividend's covered twice and the yield's a steady five per cent."

"Sounds all right," said mother, "if you're looking for growth prospects. But as you know I'm still set on Marks and Sparks. Your portfolio's too narrow for my liking. Why don't you get into consumer goods for a change?"

"Because it can't last, love, that's why. I was talking to Jim Nathan, chap in our shop at Meadowcrofts, and he was saying the credit squeeze is certain sure. The H.P. boom can't last."

"Tell me the old, old story," says Mum angrily. "Father, you've been talking this load to my knowledge for five years, and you've been proved wrong. Why don't you grow up? This isn't 1930, you know."

"I'm still the boss of this family," says Dad, raising his voice and dropping cigar ash all over his pass-book, "and I'll thank you to keep——"

My sister Selena shouts from the kitchen.

"Shut it, you two, I'm trying to concentrate!"

Selena is giving herself a "Contessa" home perm at the sink, and the top of the old telly (1955) is covered with bottles, sachets, pins and other ridiculous paraphernalia.

"If you're so sensitive," yells my father, dead furious by now, "why don't you do your fancy work in the bathroom?"

"Because some old fool has left his golf clubs to drain in the ruddy bathroom sink!" screams my sister.

This, as it happens, is true. My Dad used to play bowls regularly at the Workingmen's, but like so many of his mates at Meadowcrofts Resins he's lately taken up golf. And this being Wednesday he's been flogging it – after knocking-off time – doing nine holes on the Scowle New Course. And in the pouring rain.

"Look, Jack," says my mother, in an attempt to mollify, "why don't you pack

#### "SNOW ANIMALS

SIR, – I am wondering whether any of your readers, in the recent hard weather, have seen a natural snow formation as lifelike as this snow dog; or is it a snow parrot?"  
– *The Sunday Times*.

If the latter, ask it.





"Well, if it has got a message it's not getting through to me."

it in for to-night? You're tired, lad, tired. You've had a long day and you've earned a bit of relaxation. Slip your coat on, there's a boy, and pop down to the 'Grapes' for an hour or so. Do you good."

"That girl's going to feel the weight of my hand one of these days," he says. "No respect at all. I work my guts out trying to put my money where it'll do the family most good and all I get in return is impudence and abuse. My father would have —"

"Yes, Jack, we know. But times have changed. She doesn't mean any harm, the girl doesn't. It's just that they don't *show* respect as we used to."

"I suppose she's off out with that young Peskett again," says Dad, "rockin' and rollin' like a mad thing."

"Reg is all right, Jack. He's a good boy and as sharp as a needle. Not many lads of his age that can handle their own income tax returns without an accountant."

"Ask me, I bet his books won't stand looking into," says Dad. "Estate agents are all the same."

"Now, now, love, don't be jealous. Reg's got his head screwed on. He's careful too. He's just bought two Kandinskys and a Modigliani as a hedge against inflation, and I *admire* that. And don't forget it was Reg who started the Scowle Mutual Investment Club. He's all right, is Reg."

### Not Before the Children

"They wore their uniforms of blue tunics, skirts and hats at the graduation. Monday they are expected to down slacks to ride the scooters." — *Montreal Gazette*.



"There's something wrong with a young chap who doesn't play games. Not even snooker!"

"Nothing to go by these days, Dad. Selena was telling me they did a ton last Sunday on his motor-bike. That's *his* sport."

"You two talking behind my back?" shouts Selena from the kitchen. "Nothing better to do?"

"I'd better go before I lose my temper proper," says Dad, and he gets up and struggles into his plastic mac.

"I'll have your supper ready soon as you're back," says Mum. "Enjoy yourself, it's later than you think."

As soon as Dad has gone we get stuck into the telly in the lounge. Two Westerns and a smashing new power drill, only £5 19s. 6d., easy payments.

\* \* \*

We are having supper and the old man, fresh from "The Grapes," is naturally in a better frame of mind. Over the minestrone he wants to start up on Clause Four, but my brother Ned isn't having any.

"Listen, Dad, that's old stuff. Your lot are all stuck on the old nationalization lark, but where's it got you? And where's it get us? Me! Start talking nationalization these days and people think you're dead common. It's not on, Dad, not on. We're trying to come up in the world and all you do is try to hold us back with your silly ideological hangovers."

Dad starts on a leg of his broiler and takes a swig of Spanish Chablis.

"Okay, then" he says resignedly, "what *d'you* want to talk about?"

"Well . . . anything," says Ned, "provided it isn't the old guff."

"I've been thinking again about the investments, Jack," says my mother, "and I've come to the conclusion that we ought to go all out for consumer goods. The better H.P. companies like United Dominions Trust are still showing excellent results."

"Oh, do give it a rest," Ned says. "It's nothing but investments morning, noon and night."

"I've already tried to tell you, mother——" my father begins.

"May I say a word?" says Selena. "You don't seem to consider me at all when you're arranging our investments. Might as well not exist. But how *d'you* think I feel when people at the shop ask me what we're in? I was serving Mrs. Craddick the other day when the subject of the bakery take-over came up. 'Mr. Craddick,' she says, all snooty-like, 'has just got himself a parcel of Miami Bonds, 6 per cent., and a nice little set of Grousemoor Rainwear 5 per cent cumulative preference. What's your father doing, then, these days, Miss Hunslett?' 'Oh, I was going to say, 'nothing nearly so posh. We're in Runcorn Municipal Stock, Emslow's Greaseproof Papers and Swirlaway Sanitary Fittings.' But I didn't. And *d'you* know why? Because I was ashamed, that's why. Other folks in Byron Road invest in classy things, nice respectable shares that you can talk about and feel proud of. But not us. Oh, no, not us. We have to pig it with Emsley's Greaseproof Papers and Swirlaway. Why can't you think of me once in a while? Why do parents have to be so goddam selfish?"

And Selena leaves the table and runs crying to her room.

Mother pushes back her chair.

"Sit down!" says Dad. "Leave her be. She'll come to her senses in time. Wait till she hears the crêpes suzettes spitting. She'll be back, never fear."



# THE FIRST WELSH INTERNATIONALS

By Catherine Drinkwater

**T**he main case against Cardiff as the capital of Wales is that we have the amenities but none of the hwyl. Three-quarters of those bursts of patriotic fervour you see when Cardiff Arms Park's on the telly are simply laid on for the day. They're imported. All that emotion catches the last bus back to the valleys after the match and we're left, a city of hybrids where Italian is rapidly becoming a second language and there's at least one safe seat for any Sinn-Feiner who cares to chance his arm.

I certainly ought to feel at home in this milieu. For the past hundred years every Irishman who has fallen short of the fare to Liverpool or New York has made it to Cardiff. Marrying and inter-marrying they've knitted a chain mail of green, white and gold that covers a quarter of the city; and if they happened to hook up a Welshman on their way they rearranged his culture patterns by sheer weight of numbers. My father, an inoffensive man if ever, was absorbed in marriage by ten Murphys with a fine backwash of Donnellys, Connollys and Regans. So I was born into a household containing as small a racial minority as can be achieved this side of statistics. The utmost hwyl I've known him muster has been while singing "Hail Glorious Saint Patrick" every 17th of March.

Having been brought up alongside this fourth degree of downtroddenness (my father in an enclave of Irish surrounded by dark-souled Welsh who are ruled from London by the unfeeling English – not that we see many of *them* down here) I can always find a dollop of compassion for any of the other races that people Cardiff to-day. When anyone asks, pitching his voice to a rising note of indignation, what the Indians in our midst have contributed to the stream of Cymric culture apart from some sharp lessons in the art of unobtrusive property accumulation, I have



*"An alert, intelligent dog would have given the alarm."*



*"But most people are such awful bores until they're unfit to drive."*

an answer. There is the anaesthetizing whiff of their scent in passing, and the knowledge that the most delicate gold-threaded sari and the daintiest of nose rings may be worn above peacock-blue barathea trousers and men's size eight brown brogues. I have to admit that they are still a race apart, seen only in the hygienic light of the laundrettes spin-drying their turbans and filling machine after machine from suitcases of saris.

But, as I say, they are new. Perhaps they will meet us half way like the Greeks and Italians – and what more fascinating sound than an Italian speaking English with a strong Welsh accent? Or perhaps, and I shift my ground unobtrusively, they will emulate the Arabs and absorb Welsh culture like water on a Wellington boot.

Once I am on to the Arabs I have won the argument, by my rules anyway. I know them well because when I was at college I had a working arrangement with our insurance agent; he was a chronic sufferer from sinusitis, and when he got clogged up I did his Butetown and Tiger Bay round for him. This area has acquired an odd reputation, but to my mind it's about as tigerish as a tabby cat. At the bottom end lies the land of the Citroen and the Super Snipe, but behind the shipping offices it's simply row upon row of narrow grey streets varied by the occasional Moslem butcher's and the corner shops dealing in asphyxiating Arab scent. Even the witch doctor cuts a pallid enough figure in his double-breasted bird's-eye and black glacé Oxfords.

The nearest thing to a rough-house I ever saw in Butetown was between a gas



collector and an Arab. The Arab, a real hawk of the desert with two journeys to Mecca and one to Medina behind him, had built a mosque in his house, and the only way to the gas meter was through it. The gas collector was refusing to take off his shoes, and at the same time insisting on seeing the meter. I went quietly off to collect insurance elsewhere, but when I came back the gas man had gone. There didn't seem to be any blood.

This is what I like about the Arabs, their total refusal to truckle to an alien culture. Perhaps it's because I feel that they are working the same line as Glendower and O'Connell. (Freudians would say that it's because I subconsciously wish my father would behave that way towards the Murphys, but it's an uncomfortable household we'd be if he did.) Certainly, seeing Arabs who've lived here for fifteen years talking sign language to us foreigners affects me like the wearing of the green.

Like the Indians in the laundrettes, they are of course ready to use any quirks of our culture that come in handy. The daughter of a family I had become friendly with once asked me if I knew where they could hire a really impressive car – two pounds an hour they were ready to pay for it – and I put her on to a fellow student, the son of a fire and brimstone chapel deacon and an alderman to boot. The son was broke and the father ran a black, shiny, eight-seater limousine, handy for toting delegations round in. Everybody knew it. When the son turned up to earn his easy money, about a dozen white robed Arabs piled in. Two charabancs of Arabs formed up behind and as he got into second they started to wail. There was no question of a swift belt through the city as by now he'd grasped that it was a funeral. And there was to be no nipping down the back streets; every time he tried it the Arab beside him gave an imperative tap with his staff on the steering wheel. All across Cardiff in the rush hour he led the procession, bumper to bumper, with the two bus loads behind setting up a dirge that would have sent a banshee into ecstasies. In his first flow of gratitude for the job he had offered me a cut of the takings. Personally I counted myself lucky to escape with my life.

Another thing I admire about the Arabs is that they have the Murphys' capacity for absorbing stray Welsh. The mother of one family I knew quite well was a native of Abergavenny and a rabid Arab nationalist combined. So were her thirteen children, even the youngest a child of some eighteen months was apt to break into sporadic chants of "Nasser, Nasser, Nasser," her arm outstretched in stiff salute. Though the family swore they loved me, after an hour with their ears glued to Cairo radio they were ready to mow me down. They seem to hold me personally responsible for English foreign policy since the time of Creçy, and me with a mother pensioned off from the I.R.A.

This kind of treatment dims my admiration, and deadens my compassion for racial minorities as a whole. Sometimes it makes me depressed enough to talk things over with my father, who, I find, has a powerful grasp of the whole problem.

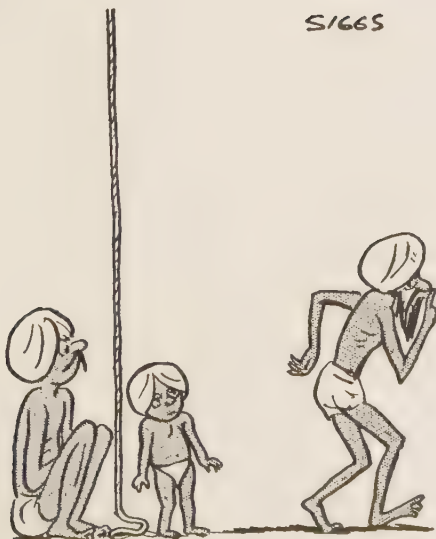
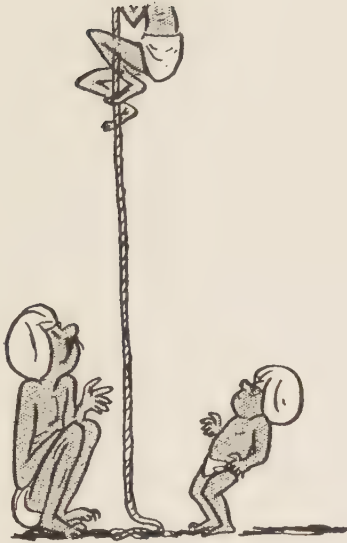


Hollowood

*"I think it's a wonderful age to live in – no longer afraid of Russia, not quite afraid of China."*

# OUR MAN IN AMERICA

By P. G. Wodehouse



S1665

Until recently one had always thought of Los Angeles as a city where you could have a pretty good time if you didn't mind being choked by the smog, but now it seems that there are any number of disadvantages to living there. The men up top, anxious to scoop in enough doubloons to balance the budget, are slapping a weight tax on all citizens who, neglecting to watch their calories, send the scales up to over fourteen stone four, a \$1,000-a-year impost on the unmarried, and, of all things for sunny California, a bathing suit tax. And, as if this were not enough, there is already a law in Los Angeles rendering you liable to a heavy fine if you shoot jack rabbits from street cars.

It is not in my line, but somebody with a talent for the grim and sombre could make a very powerful story out of this, taking as his principal character a fifteen-stone bachelor who likes going about in a bathing suit and suddenly gets an irresistible craving, while riding on a street car, to shoot a jack rabbit. I see it as one of those gloomy *New Yorker* things which end up "Suddenly Mr. Jones felt very tired," but of course you could have a happy ending, with the fellow redeemed by the love of a good woman, who persuades him to lay off the bread and potatoes and leave his gun at home when he rides on street cars. Anyway, there it is, boys, it's all yours. Ten per cent for the idea will satisfy me.

A thing that has been worrying the city fathers of Chicago for years is the thought of how unpleasant it is for people to get to their work of a morning – the hurried dressing, the snatched cup of coffee, the draughty train and all that sort of thing – and at last someone has come up with the really bright idea of a super-bus which will make getting to the office a pleasure. This new bus, plying between the city and a suburb called Park Forest – experimentally for the moment, to see how it catches on – provides curtains, wallpaper, foam rubber reclining seats, bridge tables, television sets and those deep squashy carpets that



midgets get lost in and have to be rescued by dogs. Orange juice and coffee are served, and two electric razors are available to those who have had no time to shave before leaving the little nest. It has only one thing in common with the old-style bus. You always miss it.

You may often have wondered how the Louisville, Kentucky, police fill in the long hours and avoid ennui. Now it can be told. Whenever they find themselves at a loose end, they go out and arrest Shufflin' Sam Thompson, a local negro, for shuffling his feet in cafés in rhythm with the music of the juke-box, claiming that he is dancing in a place where dancing is prohibited by law.

The last time they did this, Sam felt it time to take a firm stand.

You might have supposed that every policeman present would have said "A Daniel come to judgment!" and that Sam would have been dismissed without a fifty-eighth stain on his character, but no. They haled him into court again, and a seated magistrate fined him the usual ten dollars.

But justice will prevail. The United States Supreme Court has decided that there was no evidence to show that he was either dancing or loitering, and when last seen he was sitting in the saloon bar of the Dew Drop Inn gently shuffling his feet to the strains of a popular juke box number, blended with a soft, crunching sound of a policeman in the doorway gnashing his teeth.

A good deal of light has been thrown on the mystery of why men grow beards by Mr. Earl



"Ever see Fred Astaire?" he asked the boys at the police station.

Yes, they had seen Fred Astaire.

"Ever see him dance sitting down?"

The constabulary's faces grew red, and after a hurried conference in whispers they informed him that the charge would be changed to loitering.

"How do you mean, loitering?" said Sam.

"You were sitting down."

"That's not loitering."

"It is, too, loitering."

"Look," said Sam. "You ever seen a magistrate?"

Yes, they had seen many magistrates.

"Well, I've been in court fifty-seven times," said Sam, "and every time the old goat who fined me ten dollars was sitting down. Was he loitering?"

Wrightson, a singer in opera, who has for years peered out at the world through a zareba of face fungus.

"Men grow beards," he says, "primarily to regain the falling respect of women. Much has been written of the emasculation of the American male. He is supposed to be downtrodden by the American female and to have lost his position as the dominant sex. It is up to him to regain it by being rugged, and the most obvious facade of ruggedness is a beard. But," Mr. Wrightson went on, his voice hardening, "there are some sneaky men around town who grow beards simply to attract attention. We call these 'unearned beards' and bristle at them on the street. When a man with an 'affected beard' is introduced to a man with a 'rugged beard,' it is like the meeting of two vicious dogs."



# THE SNOOPER COUNTRY

By Marjory E. Fyson

“**S**ay *naqsha.*” “*Nashqa.*” “No, listen. *Naq.*” “*Naq.*” “*-sha.*” “*sha.*” “*Naqsha.*” “*Nashqa.*” Oh, well . . .

If there was a half-warmed fish in the good Dr. Spooner’s breast, it must have been a desire to visit the Punjab, where he would have been in his element. It is not accidental sentences, but words, consonants, vowels, and all on purpose, that are spoonerized here. Punjabi is a distinct language, composed entirely of French Ns, Russian vitches, very hard Ds, and spoonerisms on Urdu words. My father, who is biased, says it has a Greek future tense. It was he who always told me that Lucknow was really Naklao, but the British spoonerized it. I now strongly suspect that it was originally Lucknow, and the Punjabis spoonerized it – just like their nerve, when it isn’t in the Punjab at all. Of course it may even have been Naklao, the Punjabis spoonerized it to Lucknow, and then spoonerized it back again.

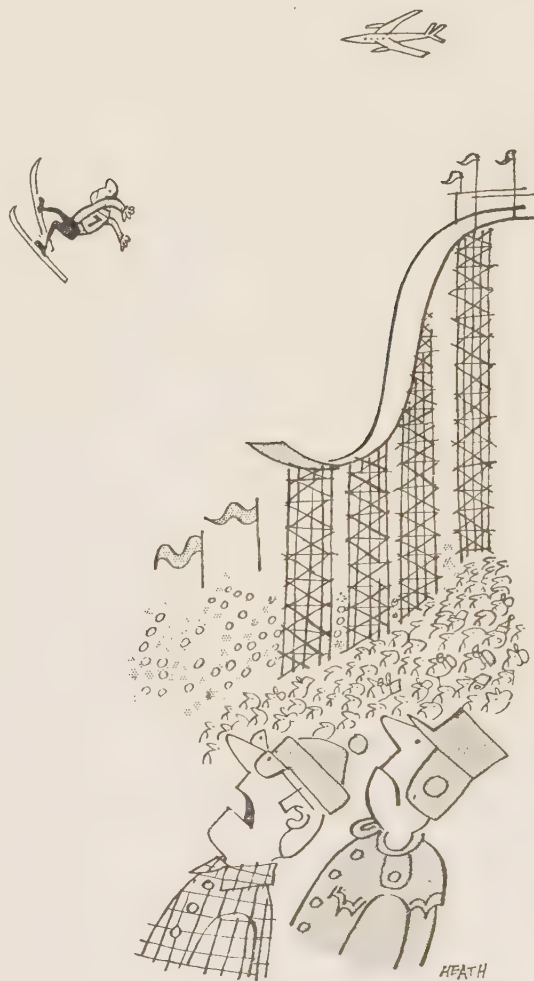
“What is Punjabi for mud?” “*Chiker.*” Punjabi my foot. Anyone can hear what they have done to the Urdu word *keecher*. They call a *degchi* a *dejki*, and picture becomes pitchker, for of course the habit applies to English words as well. My favourite is “sniggle-um”. What? You know, evading the customs, snigglum gold across the border.

Sometimes you get a very subtle transposition of consonants. “I didn’t see the Aircondition in church to-day.” “But there is no air-conditioning in church – it’s far too big.” “No, the Padre Sahib – the Air-condition.” I see now; he means the Very Rev. who performs archidiaconal functions.

There are other word tricks in both Punjabi and Urdu which appeal to the peculiar tribes who invented English. The double-barrelled word is, I think, found in no other languages with quite the same silly lack of meaning. (In Malay it is simply a plural: “mata-mata” – “eyes, eyes” – in other words The Police.) But any English person will at once catch the

ridiculous euphony of “jhuggra-wuggra” (quarrelling and all that), “subzi-wubzi” (vegetables, etc.), “rumble-tumble” (scrambled eggs), “khansi-wansi” (coughs and colds). I hope the Urdu or Punjabi speaker will as quickly catch on to the idea of roly-poly, teeny-weeny, namby-pamby and shilly-shally.

If the small word is repeated without change, it means something a bit different “ahiste ahiste” – slowly gradually; “wari-wari” – turn by turn. This is a word I have used from infancy, imagining it to be good Urdu, but when I came out with it here on my return after many years, I found it is pure Punjabi, the Urdu being “bari-bari”. It is the same with “lumbardar” or head-man. I now find it is really “*numberdar*” in a sort of Anglo-Urdu. Well, I shall go on saying wari-wari and lumbardar to my dying day; which shows how much I have been infected by Punjabi notions.



“Isn’t he in danger of violating somebody’s air-space?”



Amfe.

# ITALY

## I LOVE YOU

By J. B. Boothroyd

My wife said that we might try complaining just once more, and if no one came to mend the bedroom bell, the bedside light, the window-catch, the hand-basin waste-pipe or the lavatory-seat we must simply resign ourselves to the Italian way of life and get on with the arrangements for to-morrow's coach-trip to Portofino. After all, it was a brand new hotel, and we could hardly expect everything to be working yet.

So we complained to the *signor direttore*, who was shocked, amazed and apologetic as always, promising instant action. Nothing in the English language quite matches *subito* for the suggestion of instant action. Then we went on the beach, and at lunchtime found two chambermaids and the porter carrying one of our beds out. As far as we could understand it a previous guest had complained that it creaked. Nothing had been done to the bell, the light, the catch, the pipe, the seat.

The leaflet for the Portofino trip had been handed out by the reception desk, so it was a surprise to us, when we said we'd like to go on it, to find that it wasn't running. On the other hand, the *direttore* assured us that he could reserve seats on a better excursion with the same destination, provided we didn't mind catching it at Savona, a sort of Italian Slough near by, which we could reach by local bus from the hotel's very door. We handed him 5000 lire and tucked away his detailed receipt. With characteristic kindness he gave us another piece of paper with 7 a.m. written on it, heavily underscored to avoid errors; the time of our first bus, just down the road. We should be called, with breakfast, at 6.30. We weren't called, and we had to go foraging for the breakfast (the bell not working), and when it came, though otherwise delightful, it had no knives with it. Nevertheless, we were at the bus-stop at five to seven. And, in fact, at twenty-five past. No bus. At the risk of being away at the very moment of its arrival I sprinted back to the hotel and found the porter singing and polishing a glass door. Where was the bus? I said. *Dove* bus? He said, *Subito*, wished us a pleasant day, hoped that the *Signora* was well.

It was plain that when we reached Savona this would have been an ideal day to have stayed on the beach, and we hadn't had many. The man in the bus office had already got his shirt off and his small moustache was moist. He looked at our receipt and assured us that this was the excursion that went yesterday. We took leave to doubt this, and eventually he admitted to an exaggeration. The writing was not good. Yes, it was true that we were on the right day, but the excursion had left ten minutes before – as, in fact, it had every right to do, much though we deplored the awkward lapse into punctuality.

We stood in the bus office. My wife said that she would not trust herself to return to the hotel, as she would undoubtedly murder the *direttore*, also his wife, and very probably a fat boy, suspected of belonging to them, who often sat on the terrace eating peaches out of a Venetian glass bowl and throwing the stones at the deck-chair men on the beach below. She said that she hated all Italians, and on the crest of this emotion launched an attack on the bus official, now returning with

“The Antiquities Department in Cairo to-day announced the discovery of several mummies belonging to the Roman and Islamic era, especially of the time of the Fatim Dynasty, A.D. 909. They were found near the site of the ancient Aswan cemetery when it was being cleared last month.

In one of the 90 exquisitely carved wooden coffins found was the well-preserved body of a beautiful woman, with even her elaborate coiffeur intact.” – *Daily Telegraph*.

And what was *he* doing there?



unconcern from a back room. "What's going to happen? What are you doing about us?" she said. He seemed surprised. He said "A car is coming." And to me, that the *Signora* was very pretty.

A car did come, a small, private personal car, driven by a bus driver, who bowed low, and drove us a good fifteen miles to Varazze, where he refused a tip, conferred with the local bus agent and drove off, flashing us a gay farewell. The bus agent explained that the car had been intended to catch the excursion at Varazze, but alas, had arrived too late. The coach had gone.

It was very hot indeed now. A perfect day for the beach, which must have been twenty-five miles off by this time.

"However," said the bus agent, "I have sent the car to fetch it back," and retired into the cool darkness of his office.

There were a lot of Germans in the coach when it came back, and they showed none of the amiable feelings towards us which should prevail among partners in the N.A.T.O. camp. But there were also some Italians, who greeted us warmly, one of them struggling up to offer my wife a seat on the shady side. The driver was cheerful, and made no reference in word or manner to disrupted schedules. It's possible, of course, that they feel these things less deeply over there.

The stay at Portofino, which should have been three hours, turned out to be twenty minutes. I can't think that we were entirely responsible for a disparity of this degree. And we were put out in Genoa for an hour and a half during the evening rush hour "for the ladies to shop." We were either lucky or unlucky in having only twenty-five shillings between us, and passed the time eating a dusty, open-air *Pizza*, which only partly filled a felt want. Everyone on the bus but us had been eating packed hotel lunches all day.

Except for a collision between our local bus and a trailer carrying a railway goods truck in Savona – Italy must surely be the only country to convey its rolling stock by road? – the rest was uneventful, and we returned to find the *direttore* in a sad state of puzzlement and dismay. He had heard from Varazze that he had put us on a bus that never turned up. He could not understand it. He had checked his timetable. How could it have happened? Were we sure that we were at the bus-stop on time? On this we were emphatic. We had made sure of this by taking the time from the hotel clock.

He looked at the wall behind him. "Not *this* clock?" he said. But yes. His face cleared. The mystery was solved. He laughed until his dark brown eyes were as moist as sucked humbugs.

"But *Signora, Signore* – this clock is no good. It is ten minutes slow. It is a *new* clock, you see?"

When we had all recovered he leant forward with an air of proud, hushed confidence, and told us that the men had been working in our room all day, and he felt sure that we should have no more trouble with the shower-bath spray. If so, we must of course not hesitate to complain.

We went in to dinner.

"If you had been O'Hara, eating a lonely meal in Fagnani's little restaurant, and a girl staggered through the door with a knife in her back, you would no doubt have done as O'Hara and sworn over her dead body to get her killer." – *Blurb from "Mortgage for Murder," by Paul Costello.*

Or changed your restaurant.



# BRISTOL

## GRAMMAR

By Cyril James

*A few words from our West Regional Studio*

“**S**DEE TAWN'DYE?”

This sentence seems to be, at first blush, one of the lesser known precepts of the Koran, written in the original. In fact it is a transcription, necessarily inexact, of the Bristolian in the middle of an argument. Translated, it runs: “Are you talking to me?”

In these two words lie many of the peculiarities of the genuine Bristol dialect. Analysed, they provide a working basis for a Bristol grammar.

To take first the word “Sdee.” This consists, really, of two words: “S” and “Dee.” The “S” is a shortened form of “Bist” and “Dee” is a mispronunciation of “Thee.” Here, then, is the second person singular of the verb “to be” – “Thee bist.” It may be as well here to give the whole of the present indicative of the verb:

I be	We'm
Thee bist	You'm
E be	Um be

The initial “H” in the third person singular “E” has not been dropped. Your true Bristolian doesn't recognize its existence. The word is “E,” just as one may ave some am for tea. There never were any aitches in these words. Indeed the letter “H” is almost superfluous. We have already seen that “Thee” is properly pronounced “Dee.” What, then, you ask, of the word “whether”?

This brings up the subject of the glottal stop. The Glaswegian has brought it to a fine art, but the Bristolian has refined it to a peak of perfection. He can, and does, glottal stop words like “better” and “butter”, but he goes much farther than that. Our tricky word “whether” would be pronounced “we'er,” and in the opening sentence the second word provides a superb example of the glottal stop combined with elision. “Talking” has lost its “l,” “k,” “i” and “g” and become “tawn,” and “to I” has been gently tacked on in the form “dye”.

There is in Bristol a famous establishment known as the Colston Hall. But in reply to a Bristolian asking



“Werse goin?” (*trans*: “Where are you going?”) the correct reply would be “Cawsnaw.” No “H” required, you see – and precious little of anything else either.

You must not think that the Bristolian is a lazy or thoughtless speaker. He shows a fine culture in that he takes after the Greeks and the Romans. One remembers at school how it was explained that “eikosi,” the Greek for 20, was really the same as the Latin “viginti,” also meaning 20. The Latin master, challenged with the fact that the only similarity between the two words is a couple of “i”s, replied that in such matters the consonants hardly count and the vowels don't really signify. So it is with the Bristol dialect. And note further the influence of other European languages: where does the “bist” of “thee bist” come from if not from the German?

It is time to pass on to the peculiar glory of Bristol. We have seen that the most common sounds are “d,” “n” and “s,” but they are the mere pom-pom-pom of the accompaniment. The melody is played by the liquid “l.” Most people know how Bristol got its name; that it was originally Briggstowe – place of the bridge; that the genius of the Bristolian, and it is surely no less, gave to the word that glorious, limpid “l” which transformed it into the thing of poetry it is to-day.

Most people know these things, but do they know the full measure of the enrichment of the English language? Victorial, certainly; Indial Office, of course – instead of the hateful Indiar Office of the B.B.C. But what of tomorrol? Is not that a beautiful word? How much be'er it is than to-morrow, with its



## PARTY PIECES

By

LARRY



suggestive overtones of work to be done. Tomorrol sounds like what it is, the Bristolian's view that tomorrol is another day.

The student of Bristol now has material upon which to work. Before we set him his exercise let us take one last example of a Bristol gardener explaining simply, succinctly and with nothing but point how the vegetable garden should be treated:

"Deduswanna keep aoin onum over, ndecus sor'a watchm grow, snow." (*trans*: "Thou dost want to keep a hoeing of them over, and thou canst sort of watch them grow, thou dost know.")

The following exercise is only for the serious student, who should read the question carefully, using a low, guttural growl and talking at great speed, with much stress upon the "r"s.

*Exercise.*—Turn the following piece of beautiful Bristol prose into B.B.C. jargon:

Tomorrol's we'er. Twube we' 'n win'y wur deese be, bu' wur I be durl be some snow, snow.



# The CHANCTONBURIAN

HOC OPUS, HIC LABOR EST

AUTUMN 1960

EDITORS: B. HOLLOWOOD P. DEHN  
VOL. LXXXVII NO. 590

## EDITORIAL

Shelley's "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness" will be well upon us by the time these lines are perused. Did the poet foresee how Big Side becomes invisible from the top of Stodgers in the October fog? And how the crabs ripen on Founders' Tree in the October sunshine? Or did he intend his euphonious juxtaposition of autumnal attributes to be less evocative of our scenery than symbolically suggestive of our *condition humaine*? Another School Year has commenced and we are all (Tweaks as well as Squealers) faced with the same choice—the "mists" of mediocrity or the "mellow fruitfulness" of excellence, whether on Big Side or in Top Schools. We must hope that this generation, despite its "angry young" protagonists, will elect for the latter alternative. Then and then only:

*Schola haec manebit  
Durior Liguria.  
Floreat, florebit  
Alma Chanctonburia!*

## School Notes

Mr. M. H. J. Miskin, who joined us at the beginning of the Summer Term, left us in the middle of the Summer Term.

☆

### Awards and Decorations

R. Hiplock (1898-1902)—B.A. (Hull)

D. Hiplock (1899-1903)—M.B.E. (posth.)

P. Kukla (1955-60)—Order of the White Bull of Tamai; Grand Cross of the Knights of St. Borromelius of Aleppo with Garnet Clasp; Anklet of Fertility (with armlet) and Privy Councillor to H.R.H. Narasri Kukla, F.R.Z.S.

☆

The lowering of the Craig Fields to the level of the Withers Fields, which was started two years ago, has been postponed on advice from the School Surveyors that the Withers Fields are higher than the Craig Fields.

Upper School Roll Call will therefore take place this term on Lower Fourpenny, and Lower School Roll Call in alternate weeks on Upper Fourpenny and Oliver's Egg.



LINOCUT (After Picasso)

### SCHOOL SOCIETIES

Nat. Hist. Soc. During the Summer Term the Society had two meetings, which

formed an extremely varied programme. Dr. L. Pargeter, B.Sc., delivered a paper on *Weed Varieties in the Sargasso* illustrated with slow-motion film; and Mr. Miskin accompanied a Saturday Ramble in Bosinney Woods, where several interesting specimens were observed.

*Deb. Soc.* On June 17 L. F. Disher moved "That this House prefers to move with the times." N. Veitch opposed. There were four subsidiary speakers (three *pro* and one *con*) and the Motion was won by 3 votes to 1.

*Mod. Lang. Soc.* Several members attended the lunch-hour showing of a film kindly lent by the Albanian Cultural Institute. *This Is Albania* was, as its title suggests, an introduction to the Albanian culture and "way of life." The film was followed by a brief discussion. Our thanks are due to Mrs. Collis for the loan of her drawing-room and appetizing sandwiches.

☆

### SCHOOL FASTI

#### Michaelmas Term—First Half

- Sep. 24 1st XI v. Repton 3rd XI (Away)  
2nd XI v. Malvern 4th XI (Away)  
3rd XI v. Bishop's Stortford Under 16 2nd XI (Home)
- Sep. 25 Preacher: The Suffragan Bishop of Stortford.  
Film Soc.: "Battleship Potemkin" Part I (Moser Buildings).
- Sep. 28 Dram. Soc.: Reading of Osterley's "Ctesiphon and Belmyra" (Mr. Osterley's room).
- Oct. 1 Steeplechase: School v. St. Luke's (Home).
- Oct. 2 Preacher: The Warden of St. Luke's Home.  
Film Soc.: "Battleship Potemkin" Part I (Moser Buildings).
- Oct. 5 C.C.F. Inspection: A/Capt. R. St. J. le P. Danks, T.D., R.E.M.E.  
Lecture: "The Scope and Function of R.E.M.E." by A/Capt. R. St. J. le P. Danks, T.D. (Music Hall).
- Oct. 6 Entertainment: Dr. Frantiček Korotva's Latvian Puppets (Interpreter: Lady Owtram.)
- Oct. 7 Lady Owtram's English Elocution Prize (Judge: Dr. Frantiček Korotva).  
Film Soc.: "Battleship Potemkin" Part I (Moser Buildings).
- Oct. 8 Recital: Canon Earnshaw's Selected Choristers.
- Oct. 9 Preacher: To be arranged.

### CARILLON

(An Essay in Onomatopœia.)  
Tangled ling in dingle dangles.  
Single twangings, tingling, swing.  
Sings on shingle Spring in spangles.  
Jingling clangs and clinging jangles  
Mingle, mangle, wrangle, ring.  
— P. HARDACRE (Cl. Remove)



## The School "Macbeth"

ON Speech Day the Dramatic Society rendered Shakespeare's *Macbeth* to an appreciative audience of O.C.s and parents, most of whose sons were included in the extensive cast.

The Curtain rose on an empty stage representing, as our programme informed us, a camp near Fortes.

Mr. Osterley, who produced, had cleverly surmounted the absence of W. Humby with mumps by the clever device of making the Second Witch invisible and by himself speaking the part mysteriously from the wings. B. Libomba's long drum solo before Macbeth's entry was loudly applauded, and L. Wivenhoe as the Porter got a good laugh by cleverly simulating his inability to open the castle door, which made a good "build-up" for Macduff's first entry in Act V.

D. Samkin made a good if small Old Man, and Miss Pickering's clever make-up

made R. D. Hogg quite unrecognizable as Lady Macbeth.

The part of Banquo, which was to have been doubled with that of the Second Witch by W. Humby, was also spoken from the wings (in a slightly different voice) by Mr. Osterley and this was most effective in the Banquo's Ghost scene. Here the eating of actual food (provided by Mrs. Collis) lent an authentic touch.

Hogg made the short sleep-walking scene doubly effective by playing it with his eyes shut as though in sleep, which greatly increased the effect of Lady Macbeth's final fall from the battlements with a realistic cry after her famous curtain-line: "Yet here is a spot."

Real shrubs were used in the Birnam Wood scene and were well wielded by Macbeth (S. Hargreaves) in his final victory over Macduff.

s. VOSS (Maths VI)

## Sporting Jottings

### The First Eleven, 1960

WITH five old colours available great things were expected. But, alas, in the event school were even beaten hollow by our old rivals Stoneborough (twice). The one bright spot was our win against the Old Boys, ably led by the ex-Sussex amateur K. R. Feilder who made eight (clean bowled by Nodder).

During the season the captain (T. S. Nodder) tried no fewer than twenty-three players in the eleven, but there were many failures. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that practice is essential. Only Baileff, Jones and Nodder used the indoor net at all seriously and of those who turned up for the Wed. and Fri. nets on Big Common only Jones and Nodder were ever-present.

The captain (T. S. Nodder) usually gave his side an inspiring start and finished third in the averages (second if we omit the Old Boys' Match) with 8.75 per innings. Baileff was first with 37.2. Baileff improved

considerably but he is still woefully weak on the leg side and must watch his left elbow when he plays back.

Bowling was our strong point. Ackerman and Jones usually kept a good length and worried most visiting batsmen. They were ably supported by T. S. Nodder.

Averages:		
Ackermann	26 wkts.	for 153 runs
Jones	31 wkts.	for 271 runs
Nodder	5 wkts.	for 437 runs

The fielding, there are no two ways about it, was a disgrace. Quite apart from missed catches (seven against Stoneborough, away!) and muffed ground-fielding, the general department of the side left much to be desired. Cricket boots were improperly cleaned (Do not leave Blanco on the soles and heels!), and coloured socks were seen more than once. From these strictures I can exempt only Harrison Senior, Mayhead and Nodder.

T. S. NODDER (Lower VIB)

### Next Term's Football Team

Pen portraits contributed by H. R. Fairlow (Upper VIA, Secretary).

**WILLIS:** A sound goalie whose play leaves little to be desired (Old Colour).

**MEMBER:** Energetic and enthusiastic, but must learn to clear his lines more accurately. It is not enough to boot hopefully up-field.

**COOPE:** Keen, sometimes too keen. The referee's decisions are final and in amateur soccer it is "not done" to appeal vocally for off-side. Coope, as an Old Colour, should know better.

**AINSLEY-SMITH:** The captain (Old Colour) is of course a tower of strength. His ball distribution is near-perfect and his energy something to wonder at.

**GALL:** A sound left-half.

**WINTERTON:** Outside-right or centre-forward (Old Colour). A reliable man whenever he plays, but must avoid tendency to over-elaborate.

(Continued on next page)

### OBITUARY

IAN NORMAN CLEGHORN  
MOWBRAY  
1899-1960

"Inky" Mowbray came to Chanctonbury in 1913, where he will be remembered by some of his contemporaries as a persevering half-back in his Second House side. Reaching Lower Vb in his last year, he enlisted in the Lancashire Fusiliers to which he was gazetted 2/Lt. on Nov. 12, 1918. He then picked up the threads of a career interrupted by war and joined his uncle, S. K. Mowbray (O.C.), in the family stationery firm of Mowbray Ltd., where he had already reached the position of Chief Clerk when he died (aged 60) after a brief illness in his rooms at Brondesbury. D.D.T. writes: "His feelings for his old school, which he last visited in 1919, never changed."

### The Annual Sports

THE 29th Annual Sports and Parents' Day was held on July 6th in the presence of the Mayor and Mayoress, five Governors and Miss Ellis, the Head's daughter. Naturally enough, in Olympics year, the excitement was more than usually intense. "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp," as Browning said. There were record entries in most events—74 for the potato race, 63 for the sack, 59 for egg-and-spoon.

Victor Ludorum was J. Fellows (VB) who won the 100 yds, 220 yds, long jump, high jump and throwing-the-cricket-ball, and came seventh in the mile. He is indeed a worthy champion and should go far. The only incident to mar the occasion was the unseemly behaviour of one of the juniors who interrupted the Staff Race to ask Dr. Dupont (he was leading at the time) for his autograph.

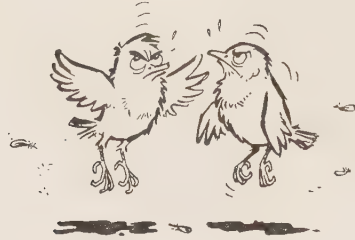
(Details of results on page following)  
J. FELLOWS (VB), Athletics Captain



## M

I WENT on pilgrimage from A to Z.

One day a spirit came to me and said:  
 "Look, here is M; a smiling place, though small.



Why do you want to go to Z at all?  
 "For here at M are many things of worth.  
 Here are the mansions of the middle earth.  
 Here are deep meadows where the murmurous bee  
 Hums, muted, his melodious middle C.

"Here all is measured. Here the weird and wild  
 Shrink to the meek, the mollified, the mild.  
 The lake becomes a mere, the peak a mound,  
 And both merge smoothly in the middle ground.

"Here men, once fretted by delirious dreams,  
 Find out that everything is what it seems,  
 That anything immoderate is odd,  
 And Money is the middle name of God.

"While madcap maidens, amplified by time,  
 Enter the mellow temple of their prime,  
 And are transmuted, and made manifest  
 As mink-clad matrons from the Middle West.

"Mitten and Muffler, muffin, macaroon  
 Mock the diminished magic of the moon.  
 Here is mid-morning. Here is merry May  
 Without its madness; here's the Middle Way.

"Look upon those who strove to get to Z!  
 Why, most of them are prematurely dead;  
 The others, dizzy with a sense of doom,  
 Zealously towards the zenith buzz and zoom.

"Yet, Z being once attained, their journey's done,  
 With no more mysteries beneath the sun.  
 Then stay at M, for N holds nothing new;  
 Why opt for O or P, or quest for Q?"

"Pitch here at M your unambitious tent,  
 And pass your days in mirth and merriment.  
 Sit here and muse on this unmoving stage,  
 Becalmed in an eternal middle age."

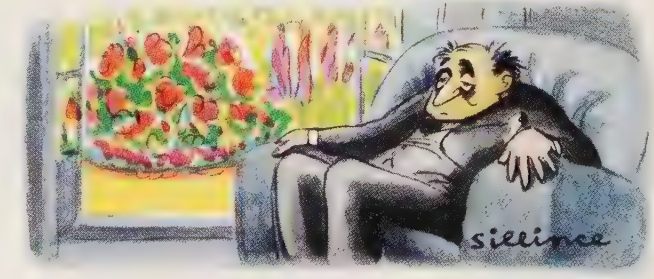
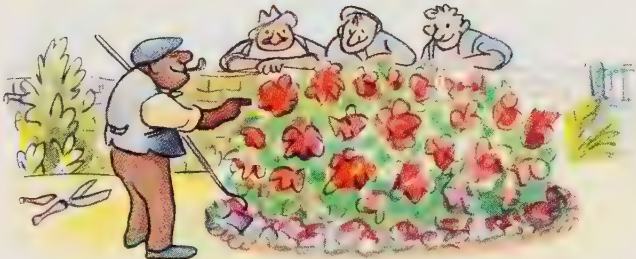
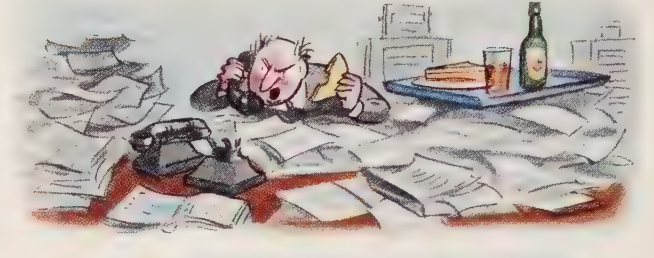
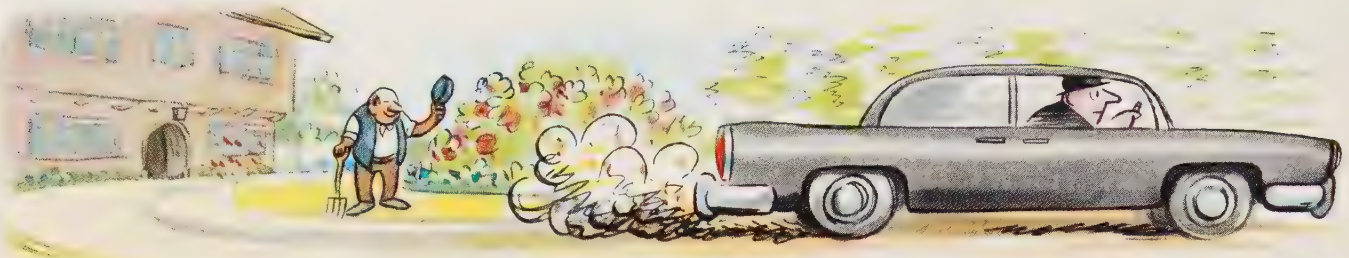
"Thank you; you are extremely kind," I said,  
 And zigzagged on, along the road to Z.

— R. P. LISTER



HARGREAVES.







# FIELD MARSHALS IN MY LIFE

By Patrick Ryan

**I**t seems that all the field-marshals have now published their memoirs telling how they won the war in spite of Sir Winston Churchill, President Eisenhower and the other field-marshals. I read their books with application and am disappointed to find that none of them mentions me.

I met them all during my brush with the Army, and I remember them all right.

We were living under canvas on the desert sands when my first field-marshal came to have lunch on the regiment. The first thing the Army does in such circumstances is to build the visiting field-marshal a private place remote from the common suites. This is done, I believe, in the interests of morale, to protect the Wagnerian myth that the Higher Command do not need private places.

The Colonel selected the site, and the Quartermaster personally supervised the erection of the hessian screen. All that remained was to protect it from desecration, and it was decided that a guard duty of such delicacy could only be performed by a subaltern of exceptional discretion. The adjutant selected me.

I wore my pistol for the assignment, just in case there was trouble. If they charged me I would save the last round for the field-marshal in protection of the Wagnerian myth. And I began to believe in it myself when our distinguished guest had been with us for three hours and I still hadn't set eyes on him. Then, half an hour after lunch, he appeared at the back of the mess-tent and came striding my way. I don't recall his name just now, but the Colonel punched up on bird-watching for a week before he came.

I flung up a salute that set me vibrating like a tuning-fork. He acknowledged hurriedly and went inside. The screen was of French design, finishing about eighteen inches from the ground, and I could see his riding-boots. I looked firmly the other way. I may not be much on table-manners but I do know how to behave as a field-marshal's lavatory attendant.

When he emerged I scythed up another royal salute and wind of its passing trembled his hat. He walked away. It was just my bad luck that he returned for his gloves just as I was coming out.

I did not get promoted that year.

I bagged my second field-marshal a few months later but he was only a general at the time. He was God Almighty, however, for hundreds of miles around our camp in the cork-forests of Tunisia. I think he had shares in a cork-factory because he used to blow his top whenever anybody set fire to a cork-forest, and was always issuing five-page instructions about how everybody was to drop everything if a cork-tree was alight and beat it for the blaze. We used to practise every day,



*"Of course he's guilty. All men are guilty."*



and while we may not have been much at fighting Germans the local Arabs elected that we were the best damned cork-fire-fighters they'd ever seen.

We had in the regiment this hilarious chap named Corner who was entertainments officer. He did a poor man's Peter Cavanagh act and could imitate people like Hitler, Churchill, Haw-Haw and our rising field-marshal. One afternoon when I was duty officer, sitting at the adjutant's desk unfolding his paper-clips, old Corner telephoned me in imitation of the field-marshal and said he was in the middle of a cork-fire and everybody was to come quickly.

"Give over, Corner, old man," I said, well up to his gags. "Pull the other one. It's decked with fairy-lights." And hung up.

Ten minutes later, a staff car screeched up outside and a khaki-clad fountain of red fire erupted before me. It was the field-marshal, singed, smoke-streaked and sweaty, bouncing up and down in fury, roaring like a burnt bull and demanding in language fit to start another fire if I was the mutinous, ill-bred, foul-mouthed, illegitimate, bolshevik blackguard who had lately been conversing with him on the telephone.

I took the worst of the storm on the bony part of the forehead and said "Yes, sir, it was I."

I did not get promoted that year, either.

Peace had descended when my third field-marshal came to call. He was making an inspection of training and a gigantic charade was laid on for his entertainment. A couple of divisions were spread out in companies, platoons and troops over a large, open piece of Europe, each group demonstrating in its own plot a different phase of training – gunners gunning, signallers signalling, engineers bridging, and so on.

The Colonel allocated to each troop in the regiment a different part of our martial role. One troop had to do Recreational Training – Cricket, and I and my lot were called upon to demonstrate this in Plot F27. The plots had been ingeniously laid out from the map at Army level so that the field-marshal would not have to walk more than fifty yards from the road to see any tableau.

I would have joined in the applause for this fine piece of staff work if F27 hadn't turned out to be three and a half acres of corrugated rock. It was the original field sown with dragon's teeth and was surfaced with millions of tiny white tombstones.

"We can't play cricket on that," I said to the brigade-major in charge of F sector.

"You've got to," he said. "F27 you were allotted and that's where the field-marshal will expect to see Recreational Training - Cricket. So get on with it."

Sergeant Clough and I selected for the wicket a green strip where a varnish of moss covered the granite beneath, and set up the stumps in their wooden blocks. We had just thirteen men for the fixture and our forces were fully committed with two men batting and a fielding side deployed among the boulders.

The field-marshal was timed to arrive with us at 11.45 hrs. and, so that all would be swinging by then, F Sector started training at 11.00 hrs. We opened the bowling with Corporal Todson, medium pace, right arm over. He normally delivered amiable up-and-down stuff, but on our rock-candy mountain he came off like Larwood with a liver on. It was like playing cricket on the Giant's Causeway. The first ball reared up six feet above the batsman's head, the second whipped the cap off the wicket-keeper, the third broke on a Jurassic fault and went straight into the stomach of mid-off, the fourth leapt clear out of F27 and laid low the key-man of a bridging party in F29. The batsman hit the fifth in self-defence and the ball went off like a demented jack-rabbit, ricocheting from crag to crag until it struck an outcrop of quartz and broke into four pieces. At which point Sergeant Clough called Over.

The new bowler was Trooper Grady, a natural Trueman-type, and he was adjured to curb his pace. His first ball was heard to pitch but was never seen until it smashed the windscreen of the ambulance at the A.D.S. performing in E16. The next kept low, hit the bat and zoomed away like a horizontal rocket, zig-zagging from col to col, fieldsmen going down like redskins as they tried to follow after. The third got up like a sputnik, bounced once on the road and took the brigade-

"Monks of the Franciscan priory at Palmerston North fear that a proposed path round the Centennial Lagoon would destroy their privacy.

The priory joined a deputation to the city council when it was asserted that a path on the eastern side of the lagoon would present an opportunity for immortality."  
- *New Zealand Herald*.

Oh, but surely—?

*"Personally, I think no picnic is complete without them."*





*"They don't seem to be in."*

major in the small of his back. I called a halt and told Sergeant Clough to put on two other bowlers.

"I can't," he said. "They're the only bowlers in the party that can bowl over-arm." He came from Liverpool and pronounced it "bowl-er."

I discussed the situation with the brigade-major who said that in no circumstances could a field-marshal be shown Army cricketers bowling under-arm.

We shifted the line of the wicket so that Grady's skyscrapers would be cut off by a small, uninhabited mountain and kept Todson down to two strides. It was a blazing summer's day and the fieldsmen had a terrible time stumbling about in gym-shoes on the baking hot tombstones, wrenching ankles, stubbing toes and living in mortal fear of Grady's rebounds. By 12.30 hrs. the field-marshal had not arrived, two more balls had been broken and we all had feet like firewalkers. Footsore and dripping perspiration, we plodded on like characters in some Greek cricketing tragedy, doomed by the gods to play out eternity on the stony purgatory of F27.

At 13.10 hrs. we were down to our last ball and that was cube-shaped and breaking up fast. I showed it to the brigade-major who had now bitten his nails down to the cuticle. His wireless had broken and nobody knew where the field-marshal was.

"For God's sake, go on playing," he said. "He may turn up at any minute."

I asked what we should do if the last ball broke and he said to carry on going through the motions.

"Shadow-cricket?" said Sergeant Clough when I reported to him. "The men'll never stand for it. We'll have to make this ball last out."

The essential thing was to stop the ball hitting the rocks and we devised a form of cricket to this end. All the fieldsmen stood in a close ring about the wicket while Todson and Grady, unchanged for three and a quarter hours, hobbled up on roasted feet and bowled slow full-tosses so that the batsman could play spoon-shots direct to the fieldsmen. After a little practice, we got the hang of this ladies' pat-ball and still had our last ball intact when at 13.50 hrs. the field-marshal arrived.

As he clambered over the rocks towards us Todson ladled up his donkey-drops and the batsman patted them away. The great man stopped beside me and watched the last four balls. Grady came on and gently tossed up six more lollipops. The field-marshal turned to me.

"Bloody rotten bowlers, you've got," he said, and went straight back to his car.

He said it bowl-ers, too, just like Sergeant Clough, and I believe he was practising his Australian.

And I never got promotion that year, either.



RDY DAVIS

# MODERN MISSILES LTD

By Will Owen

At the second annual general meeting of Modern Missiles Ltd., held at Winchester Hall, the Chairman, Major-General S. W. Tyte, said:

The report I am presenting brings me great pleasure. Last year I could only report that work on the missile "Flash Back" had progressed more slowly than we had expected and there seemed to be no easy solution to the problems involved. However, those days of failure are past. Aided by a generous grant of £150m. we have been able to increase our efforts. "Flash Back" is now a reality, and it is possible to be amused at our previous attempts. Indeed, on the shop floor our workers have bestowed the ironic name of "Back Firer" on their failure. This is an apt indication of the height of our firm's morale.

This missile has a range of 3,000 miles, a speed of 2,000 miles an hour, accuracy to a hundred yards, and a destructive power sufficient to remove a city the size of Manchester from the map. All this will, I know, bring satisfaction to every member of this audience. Britain has placed its faith in the nuclear deterrent, and this new weapon must make any would-be aggressor pause.

The recent decision to establish a warning system in Britain is good to hear. But I must solemnly remind you that we are not the only nation which can possess such defences. In order to overcome these systems we are beginning work on another, more potent, weapon. It is to be called "Liquidator." At the moment work

is in the early stages, but I can give an indication of the way in which our minds are working by suggesting that the principal objection to modern war is that it needlessly destroys irreplaceable works of beauty. This new weapon will ensure that in future wars only humans are destroyed. Work is proceeding round the clock, and, with another interest-free loan of £30m. it is likely to be finished this year.

Work on a defence against the enemy's use of a similar weapon will start shortly.

During the year you each received a copy of our report "A Mission in Missiles," written as a result of opposition to our plans to take work to the underdeveloped parts of the country. Our cause proved successful and we now have well-concealed factories in most of the National Parks. Work has thus been provided for 500 people. We extend our thanks to those authorities who helped us and showed that there are still some who feel that the country's security must not be abandoned for a handful of hikers.

For some time we have been dissatisfied with the military toys which are available in the shops. Rifles and bayonets are now out of date and encourage unrealistic thinking. Our company is preparing a range of models of our products and these will be marketed in time for the Christmas trade. In addition we have prepared a liquid which, when shot from any ordinary water-pistol, will temporarily neutralize anyone it touches. We expect considerable sales of this novelty. These products will strengthen confidence in our



*"It all started over a moot point."*

defence as well as helping to produce a healthy balance sheet.

The export of our goods still causes concern. You will, I am sure, sympathize with us in this. In general only the home market is open to us, but representations have been made to high authority and a modest market with friendly countries should start soon. It is hoped that sales will amount to £350m. The possibility of building, equipping, and staffing factories abroad has not been very seriously entertained.

You will have noticed that from holiday to holiday there are marches and demonstrations by people who favour nuclear disarmament. These people inspire our deepest respect, even though we obviously cannot share their beliefs. If they visit our factories, we are prepared to meet them. Meals will be provided, and

accommodation given for one night. This, we believe, is the British way of doing things. We do not want to make their work unnecessarily difficult.

Finally, I wish to thank all our staff for their devotion and loyalty during the year. They have done well. The pension and profit-sharing schemes have been extended, the sports activities are thriving, and everything possible is being done to ensure that all employees are able to look forward to a long, happy, and healthy retirement. The library of recreational and cultural books has made a further purchase of rare specimens, and has received a hand-printed copy of *The Last Days of Pompeii*. We thank the anonymous donor of this book.

The dividend for the year was 67 per cent and there was a one for one scrip issue.

The report was unanimously accepted.



"Waiter! There's a feather in my soup."

“... and assaulting an officer.”



## PLEA FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE RESTAURANT CAR

Some clown, some jumped-up bureaucrat, decided a few weeks ago to cut the restaurant car service on the Waterloo-Portsmouth line. And for no better reason, so I'm told, than that the service didn't pay. It used to be possible for the weary City worker to get a seat in the dining car of the 5.20 and, desperately uncomfortable though it was, that seat provided access to tea, bottled beer or gin and tonic. Not any more. Economics has reared its ugly head. I had a friend – something in vulcanized asbestos – who used to get to Waterloo at 5.05 and put his hat on the seat opposite. That hat, glared at in its time by thousands of hostile eyes, has been my ticket to equanimity, my passport to pink gin and euphoria. It operates no longer. My friend (I never actually knew the man's name) now drinks in the City and gets home an hour or so later to a suspicious wife.

I still haunt the 5.20. I still sit in the dining car (it is much easier to get in there now), the dining car that is no longer a dining car. You see, the madman who decided on these cuts hadn't the decency to *remove* the coach: it is still there, deceptively welcoming with its little tables, straight-backed chairs and lingering odour of burnt toast. From my seat I see the old-timers

By Bernard Hollowood

hurrying along the platform and their thirst is terrible to behold. They are shrivelled and desiccated, these men, like bulbs in a neglected plant pot, but they move smartly enough with a wild hope in their eyes. They scramble aboard and appear at the door, and then their faces crumple into masks of withering anguish.

They recover brilliantly in true British fashion. I am proud of them.

"What you having?" says one, dabbing at his neck with a carefully folded breast-pocket handkerchief. "It's on me."

"Well, thanks," says another, 'I'll have a gin and ginger ale with plenty of ice."

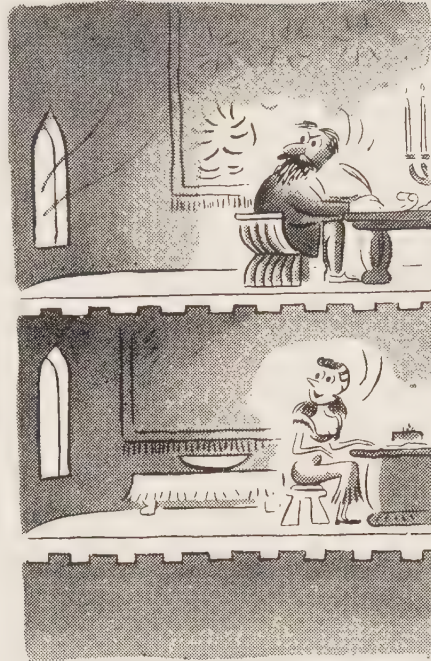
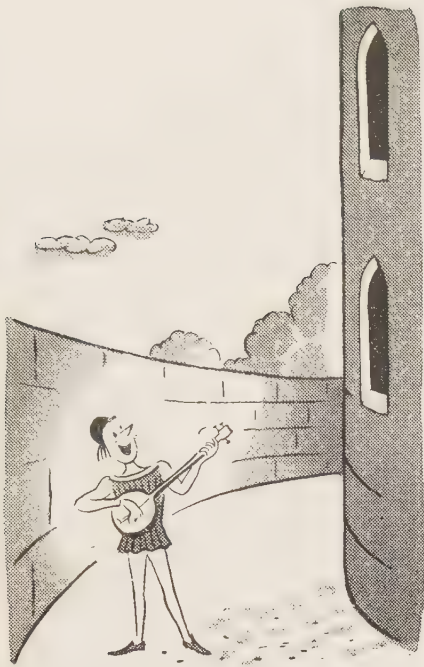
"Double?"

"That's mighty civil of you. Thanks."

Then they laugh mirthlessly.

The first man starts on the City page of the *Evening Standard*. Looks up.

"I still can't get used to it," he says. "It's the same



every day. I'm like one of Pavlov's dogs – conditioned."

At my table two elderly brokers play the same macabre game of make-believe.

"I see they're doing without tablecloths. The credit squeeze, I suppose."

"Better without them. More classy and refectory-like. They've done away with paper napkins, cutlery and crockery, too."

"Only gets in the way."

"Yes."

"What'll it be then?"

"Eh? Oh, same again, thanks."

"You mean a similar, don't you?"

The same brittle cackle of extruded laughter.

My defence mechanism works rather differently. I sit there smoking furiously and trying to convince myself that I am better off without the waiters and the fruits of their fiery bijou kitchen. After all, the vast majority of the 5.20's passengers never have ridden in the restaurant car, and obviously they have their reasons. Do they really prefer a seat in an ordinary coach? Just sitting there at rest, sleeping perhaps and willing the miles away? It seems ridiculous that there are such people, that at the end of a long day's sedentary work some people prefer to relax rather than battle it out in the restaurant car. There was

nothing, I used to find, more inspiring and revitalizing than the competitive thrust for victuals, the manoeuvring for milk, hot water, ice and lemon in the furnace-like heat, the savage blows from the hips of laden waiters, the scrambling rummage for fallen napkins.

Few people I found had mastered the technique of pouring (tea or beer) in a swinging, jolting coach, and my ego enjoyed the daily demonstration of my superiority. I used to lift the receptacles (pot or bottle, cup or glass) from the table and transfer the fluid easily and accurately as my whole being – hands, arms, torso and mind – hovered to the swaying of the train. Never a drop spilled, never. It was something to be grateful for, this manual dexterity, this quickness of hand and eye.

My companions used to watch me with the keenest



interest, and sometimes after the tablecloth had as usual been drenched by hot tea I would offer to pour for others.

"Here, let me do that for you," I would say, without a trace of side or condescension. And I would grab the pot and cup and make a clean job of the decanting. More often than not this particular knack of mine would give us something to talk about all the way to Woking, if not Guildford.

Another thing I used to do was defend the railways and the dining car staff against their critics. Some people were never satisfied. They would complain about the slab cake (too dry), the toast (they wanted white bread if they had brown, brown if they had

white), about the hot water refill being tepid, the glasses being dirty, forks having dried food trapped between the tines – anything. Any mortal thing. I would watch some elderly shopper – who ought to have travelled earlier and left the 5.20 to the bread-winners – switch on her look of disgust, take a napkin from the tumbler and wipe out her tea-cup like a housewife scouring a burnt saucepan.

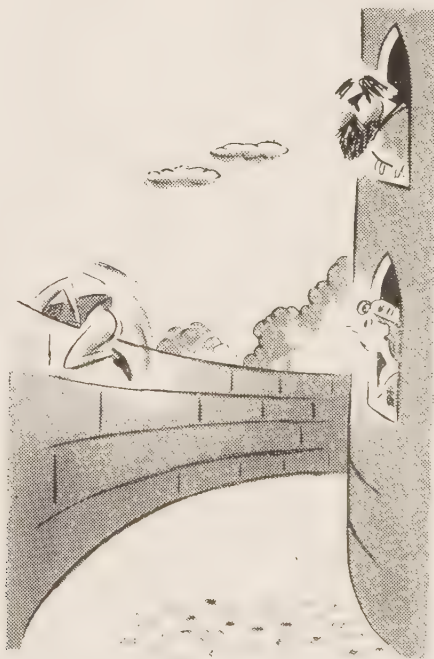
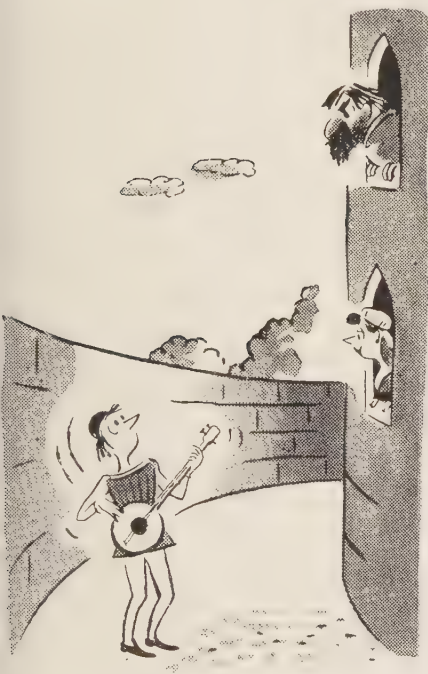
"You will eat a peck of dirt before you die," I used to say.

"Lipstick," she would say. "The thing hasn't been washed."

"Madam," I would say, fixing her with a stern eye, "we must be tolerant. The crew works under appallingly cramped conditions and always under extreme pressure. We ought to be grateful for the service we get."

I used to raise my voice a little during these exchanges and sometimes I would be rewarded by a kindly glance from a passing waiter. It all helped. At all events they always brought ice and lemon with my gin and tonic without being asked.

But I digress. The point I want to make is this: the railwaymen have now got their increased pay and it may be possible for someone in authority to restore the restaurant car service. Not on every train, of course: just the 5.20. And I'm not asking for the service to be back-dated.



"Didn't you know? It's Rock Nite at the Darby and Joan."



## GRACE AND GRAVY

By Gwyn Thomas

*I would, on balance, given a better eye and a stronger wrist, have preferred to be a wood-chopper rather than a teacher. At least the blocks and faggots do not walk around with your traumas notched in decorative designs all over them. Nor do they need school dinners.*

**I**n the second school at which I taught the eating scheme when I got there was strictly out of Gorki. The dining-hall was the school library, a small, gloomy room. The books themselves did not help. They fell into two main types. Books like *Old Saint Paul's* and *Last of the Barons* and *The Drunkard's Dream* donated by a school governor who was not much for reading himself but who was for other people's reading being wholesome. The other section of the library had been the personal property of a past master, an eccentric polymath who had not been able to resist any volume of over five hundred pages. He had gone through life awaiting the revelation of something tremendous. In some lump of leather-bound wisdom he was convinced he would find it and, when found, it would release him from loneliness, stupidity, chalk and fear. When he died he was alone, reading, apparently unsatisfied and insensate. He had no money to leave; it had all gone on books. These had been dispatched to us by his landlord, a man who preferred his thoughts rare and slim. The books now provided half the framework for the dinner-scheme, and there had rarely been a sharper, sadder declension of dignity. Bored diners often used the heavier of these books as weapons, and my first act of first-aid was a whiff of ammonia to a boy who had been felled by Frazer's *Golden Bough* while trying to snatch a larger slice of apple charlotte, and I am still trying to figure what Frazer would have made of that.

The cooking was done in a minute crypt, a scaly niche. How three women, deliberately chosen on the small side, with their stoves and raw material could find space in such a galley was a daily miracle. They would stand back to back, making only the smallest chopping movements, and revolving slowly in order to



"Report of the Advisory Council on Corporal Punishment."

avoid being excessively roasted in any one place. When they fainted that usually meant that the stuff was done. The kitchen remained like a kiln for a good hour after the switching off of the stoves, and on their way home the cooks were often heard to laugh together on an unnaturally high key. They were sometimes thought to be crazy or given to immoral sorts of joking. They were not. They were just cool and glad to be out of that firing chamber.

About the quality of the food I knew nothing. I found the contrast between witless diners and overly pensive books too shocking to the nerves to allow me to eat. My barometer was a boy in one of the far corners. Whenever I saw him catching a peep at *Saint Paul's* between the courses I knew he had been depressed beyond measure. If he picked up *The Drunkard's Dream* he had reached a climax of disgust and had now decided to leave school and go over full-time to depravity.

In 1947 we were given a new dining hall. Even in that mean period there were audible notes of grim inadequacy about this structure. It was prefabricated and was assembled almost as quickly as the first meal. The new kitchen, by comparison with the priest-hole in which the cooks had previously worked, was vast. It was also electrified and the cooks lived in a whirl of instructions. More than once one saw them diligently reading a plate of tart and pouring custard over a handbook. It took them weeks to break the habit of the old fire-dance and resume the type of easy amble natural in kitchens. The dining-hall took a slice out of the rugby field, and until we taught the faster and less observant wings to choose only the softer parts of the building to crash into we had to study methods of getting the best out of concussed players.

The new hall was taken by some as a chance to purge the dinner scheme of the squalor and casualness that had marked the sessions in the library. There was an immediate doubling in the number of diners, and that marked the first step taken by eating towards primacy in the set-up of the school. The old dining-room had been so tiny the boys had to be admitted in small clutches, and even with the limited over-all number the process of feeding them was as slow as a transfusion. In the new place two big sittings saw the multitude replete. For a fortnight after the opening the county meals supervisor threw in what she thought were some gracious details but they were too rich for the blood of the Hogarthian crew who still lived in the stained shadow of the old régime. Bright tablecloths and pots of flowers created little but confusion among those who thought of school feeding in



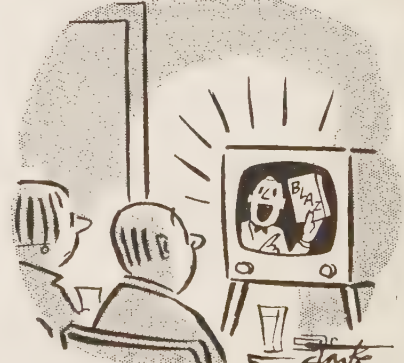
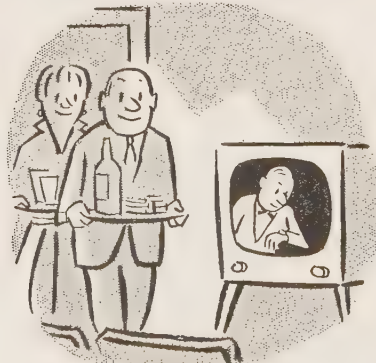
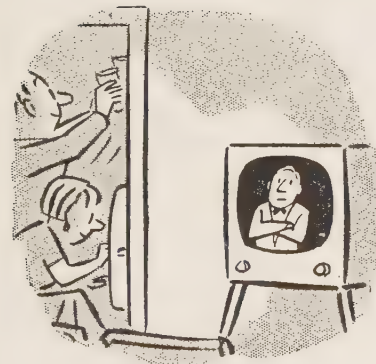
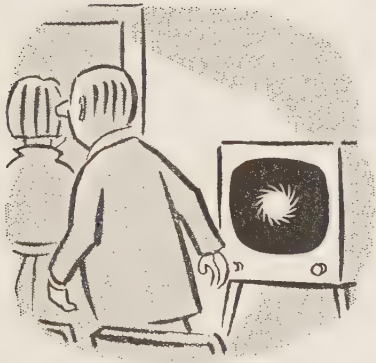


plain and penitentiary terms. Some tended to regard the flowers as part of the first course and I have yet to find eight boys who can sit around a small table without feeling at once impelled to play the fool with the cloth. They will quietly remove it if only to create a clearer racket with the cutlery.

The reactions of the staff were interesting. There had been no formal act of grace in the old dining-room. The place did not suggest a need for gratitude and when you set eyes on the average platoon of diners in the half-lighted cavern a blessing was the last thing you felt like giving them. In the new place one at least had the sense of a congregation, an occasion. So a proper formula of commencement had to be found. A school with a mossier tradition would have had recourse to some inscrutable bit of Latin, but every splinter of the dynamited nonconformist conscience was represented on the staff, and they wanted things made very plain even at the expense of banality. So masters were told to play it any way they thought fit. One or two of the less obtrusive, who did not want God dragged into a question that affected the rates, just muttered into the gale of diners settling down, and the grace slipped into a pre-Augustine gloom. One or two with sharply anti-dogmatic views couched the grace in a vagueness bordering on code. A few reactionary orators took the chance of appending to the basic religious message some thoughts about Welfare States and dinner schemes, urging boys to eat at home and to force their mams to keep out of factories, and to chew well to avoid the need for dentures which the crazed State would be eager to press on them at fifteen or under. And there was a small group of my colleagues genuinely impressed by the bounty of the County Council, the size of the kitchen, the coloured prints on the wall, showing such events as the landing of the Danes, the knighting of Raleigh, and they kept harping on the theme of miracles until a tapping of spoons from the far corners told them to cut it out and get the potatoes rolling.

The building lost sweetness with a theological haste and finality. The concrete blocks became dirty and discoloured as if mothered by Manchester. Condensation proceeded at the same rate as at Wookey Hole, a wet cave. Slower moving pupils had to be kept wiped and warmed at the first signs of petrification. The tables and benches were frail and a whole age away from those ponderous refectories where the fittings were meant to keep the food and diners off the floor. Our benches were collapsible for the convenience of the cleaners and proved it even when the cleaners were nowhere around. Boys got used to eating at swiftly changing levels and conversation never flagged as the angle of the bench-leg switched from nought to ninety.

The appetites of boys vary. There are boys who would barter a cooked dinner for a custard pie any day; boys on whom the smell of cabbage and the sight of meat have some kind of curdling effect. Balancing these lads you have the natural pythons who will scoop all unwanted stuff on to their own plates. I have even seen some of these artists with the food piled up on their plates to the height of one foot, and they do not so much swoop down on it as bore their way through it. There are few things more unsettling than to see a face appear suddenly through a wall of potato. These boys sit through afternoon school, still as stones, their eyes like





*“Which Embassy’s this?”*

glazed buttons, their minds at the Pole. On one occasion the Head saw a boy put away so much potato he had him sent to the Pest Officer to be examined for the red and yellow stripes of the Colorado beetle. The boy fainted while trying to keep track of all this irony.

The young, they say, want affection. They also want gravy. And in our dining-hall they got it. The floor got it as well. Small gravy boats were used and the appointed waiter at each table, also known as a runner, would wear himself out going back and forth to the hatch getting them filled up. The gravy would spill as the runners grew giddy and pools of the stuff would have whole groups of boys with loaded plates figure-skating around the sharper bends while the diners prepared to duck if the plates got out of control. I have rarely seen a set of eaters work so close to the food as that lot. One member of the staff who was against the dinner scheme demanded that we be utterly frank and have the gravy delivered by bucket. Another, a talented mechanic, claimed that he would fit up each table with a gravy-pump. Another emigrated to a robust new country where there was no dinner scheme.

# STANDARDIZED STANDARDS WANTED

By J. B. Boothroyd

I suppose a lot of people have been laughing at the post office counter clerks of Hull, whose new counter is too wide. "If a man is even the slightest bit corpulent," one of them told the *Times* local man, "it will be hard going for him." But it's easy enough to laugh. What is needed is a remedy for this situation. The Hull public and its post office clerks obviously can't go on straining and grunting to touch finger-tips across the waste of plastic; for one thing it's only going to aggravate the old, unsolved problem of territorial boundaries; many a post office customer, thumbing his shopping list of four hundred and six assorted insurance stamps, wonders whether he's supposed to shove it across or wait for the man to lean over and get it. Some customers, with an inborn gift for shove-ha'penny, like to send their half-crowns gliding over, and at Hull, where the receiving arm is at full stretch, these are likely to go right up its sleeve.

A busy clerk, whose blood has already been pushed into his head by a morning's pressure on the waistline, won't have even the energy or the patience to dance about shaking his arms. Especially if he's the slightest bit corpulent.

But this isn't just a question of Hull, it's all post offices undergoing £5,000 modernization schemes. It isn't even a question of post offices, come to that. It's a question of all the material equipment of work and leisure whose heights and widths and (in the case of tip-back desk chairs) points of irrevocable backward tip are fixed by some person or body of persons unknown. I happen to be thinking particularly of some of the seating on Brighton-line trains, where the head can only be rested on the bulge intended for it if the passenger measures five feet from rump to occiput and sits bolt upright. This is why observers on the intermediate stations though which these trains pass are able to see compartments full of sleeping stock-brokers, whose heads are revolving on their chests with the broken rhythms of the rails, like seaweed in the tide. Later, when these same men make their statutory homeward stop in a bar, their still sleepy feet may be seen unconsciously groping for the rungs of the stool, which may not exist at all, or be on two sides only. Sometimes the men, dimly recognizing discomfort, will abandon the stool for the counter, and stand there pawing for the brass rail, which is sometimes so high that a shoe waves for ten minutes without finding it; sometimes so low that the drinker who realizes that his wife has been expecting him for some time now will turn away suddenly, find his foot wedged, and tear the more vulnerable ligaments of the ankle.

Mr. R. E. Boatman, Hull's head postmaster, told the *Times* man that the width of the new counter had

"I'm afraid I have bad news,  
Private Heathcote."





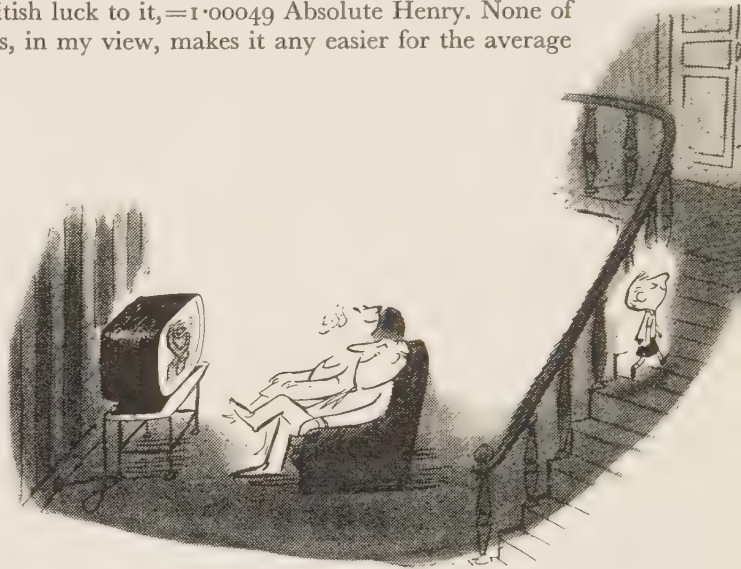
been "approved by a working party" and had "become standard for post offices due for modernization." This is all very well in a civilization which has produced, under the guidance of a working party of skilled geneticists, a standard post office clerk. In time this may come, as may a standard stockbroker, but in the present state of things a degree of adaptability is desirable. How are these working parties selected in the first place? Is any attempt made, either by the Postmaster-General or the top brass in British Railways coachworks, to assemble the long and the short and the tall, or are they simply men who understand about plastic surfaces and about upholstery designs calculated to reduce wrath over the present price of so-called cheap day returns?

Neither of my available reference books seems to have much on this. I learn that the Controller of the Board of Trade Standards Department is Mr. T. G. Poppy (though this was in 1953, and he may have fallen backwards out of his chair by now), but there's no information about whether, in approving, say, an eye-level grill, he considers the average level of eyes. I read that the British Standards Institution was formed when the Institution of Civil Engineers, the Institution of Electrical Engineers, the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, the Iron and Steel Institute and the Institution of Naval Architects got together and turned themselves into a Joint Engineering Standards Committee, and that it now has a branch office in Buenos Aires; but more precise details are lacking, and there is no suggestion that the Institution is reaching out a helping hand to the man on the counter at Hull, with his "Two threepennies - *ergh!* - five shilling postal order - *oof!* - and your Savings Bank book, madam - *aargh!* *Phew!*" That "Position Closed" board is going to be propped up after every customer at this rate . . . if he can get it near enough to the customer for it to be legible.

I see from my other source of information that there are Standard Sizes of British Books, and a rum lot they are, from F8 at  $6\frac{1}{4}'' \times 4\frac{3}{4}''$  to Impfol at  $22'' \times 15\frac{1}{2}''$ . This explains why a circulating library I used to visit at Uxbridge, where the wares were for the most part carefully classified under Detection, Western, Auto-

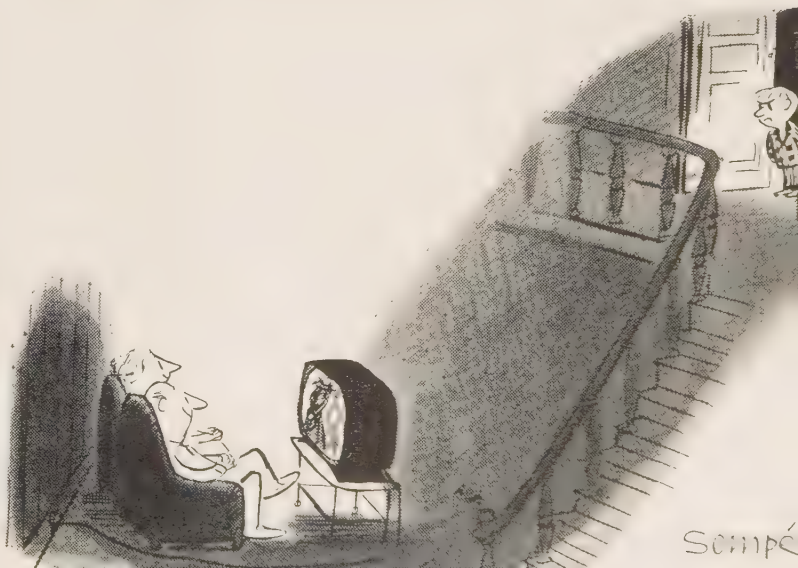
biography and Dictionaries, had a section at one end labelled "Mixed Large."

The trouble, as I see it, is a pre-occupation with classifications of the stuffy, scientific kind, rather than of public convenience, if the phrase doesn't fall awkwardly. The mathematicians may have enjoyed themselves deciding that 1 International Ampere = 0.99985 Absolute Amperes (if the plural is in order); or, even more enjoyably, that 1 International Henry, which seems to be a unit of inductance, and the best of British luck to it, = 1.00049 Absolute Henry. None of this, in my view, makes it any easier for the average



householder to remove a defunct electric bulb from one of those narrow glass shades, popular with bathroom equipment experts, that he can't get his hand in to catch hold of. My own solution, to wrap the whole fitting in a stout hand-towel and strike sharply with a hammer, would no doubt be considered absurd by Mr. T. G. Poppy, his successors and assigns, but if some working party has a better suggestion I should like to hear it.

In the meantime, and to return to Hull, the fact is that 1 New Post Office Counter = 1 Absolute Mess. But at least that's in plain figures.



Ross]

Lawrence of Arabia and Aircraft-  
man Ross - ALEC GUINNESS



The Devils]

Sister Jeanne of the Angels  
- DOROTHY TUTIN



# THEATRE

Ronald Searle



The Bride Comes Back]

Smith - JACK HULBER  
Jason Kilpatrick - ROBERT



Billy Liar]

Billy Fisher -  
ALBERT FINNEY







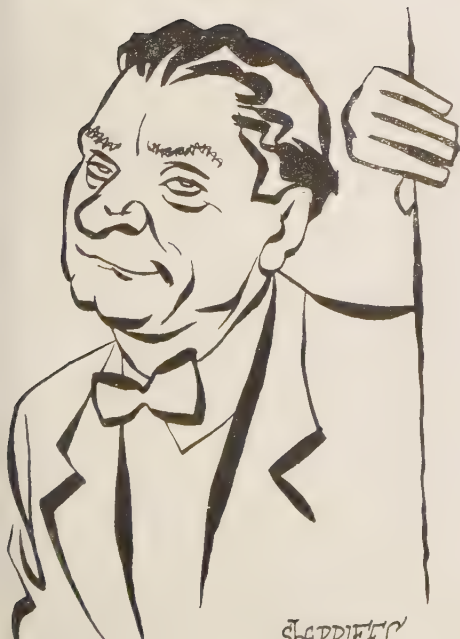
[The Alamo

Davy Crockett (with nameless unit of the Mexican Army) - JOHN WAYNE

# CINEMA

## Sherriffs

RE



SLADDIELO



SHERRIFFS

Mrs. Venable - KATHARINE HEPBURN

[Suddenly, Last Summer  
Catherine Holly - ELIZABETH TAYLOR

The Entertainer]

Jean Rice - JOAN PLOWRIGHT  
Archie Rice - LAURENCE OLIVIER

# CINEMA



[The Long and the Short and the Tall  
 Corporal Johnstone - RICHARD HARRIS  
 Sgt. Mitchem - RICHARD TODD  
 Private Bamforth - LAURENCE HARVEY  
 Tojo - KENJI TAKAKI



[The Facts of Life  
 Kitty Weaver - LUCILLE BALL  
 Larry Gilbert - BOB HOPE

# THEATRE



HIRAM SHERMAN      GRAHAM STARK  
 CAROLE SHELLEY  
 [The Art of Living

## Shanty

“ . . . the vessel made an all-time record turnaround . . . and, as a result, only about half her cargo could be discharged.”

*Shippers' explanation of non-arrival of goods, quoted in a letter to "The Times"*

SOLO (*very slow and mournful*)

I'll sing you a song of New York haaaaarbour

I'll sing you a song of the export dri-yive.

CHORUS (*very brisk indeed*)

With a yo-heave-ho

And away we go

With the same old cargo lying down below.

You can't clear the ship

On a record trip

So you just turn round

And you're homeward bound

With a yo-heave-ho!

SOLO (*still more mournfully*)

I'll sing you a song of Liverpool haaaaarbour

I'll sing you a song of Selwyn Lloy-yud.

CHORUS (*briskier than ever*)

And we're off again

On the ocean main.

We'll soon be as fast as an airyoplane.

Make no mistake

The spirit of Drake

Is still alive

In the export drive

With a yo-heave-ho!

(Repeat until bankrupt)

— PETER DICKINSON



*“Yes, I got the call all right. Then I remembered it was a Monday night and I thought it might be an excuse to get me to appear in ‘This is Your Life’, so I didn’t go, and it wasn’t until next morning that I heard about the B.B.C. being on fire.”*

### **This is Pretty Serious**

“SIR, — There was much attractive humour in Gerda Cohen’s article, but I cannot let pass her assertion that Hong Kong nappies quickly come to resemble shredded cabbage.

Reputable manufacturers and exporters in Hong Kong and importers in the United Kingdom are supplying first-class products of this kind which stand up very well to the ends to which they are put. — E. G. A. Grimwood, Director, Hong Kong Government Office, W.C.2.” — *Letter to the Observer.*



# MINISTER OF HEALTH

By Richard Gordon

It delights us all that politicians of the three parties so freely and frequently describe our Health Service as the best in the world, the envy of all civilized communities. But after twelve years snags must inevitably be noticed in the N.H.S. by some of its participants – doctors, matrons, hospital governors, the B.M.A., drug manufacturers, the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, and even the patients.

These may be put shortly:

1. The general practitioner, supposed to be the backbone of the Service, has become its vermiform appendix.
2. People lounge about for months and months treating hospitals like hotels.

3. The doctor's surgery has become a clinical free-lunch counter.
4. The Service is bandaged in red tape.
5. It pays the doctors far too little.
6. It costs the taxpayer far too much.

I propose to abolish these little difficulties with a short National Health Service (Reform) Bill.

*The General Practitioner*

It will be an offence for any general practitioner to treat any patient, with a maximum of ten years' imprisonment.

At present, the g.p. is largely occupied with people who can't sleep and people who can't keep awake, thin people who want to be fat and fat people who want to be thin, girls who want less hair on their legs and men who want more on their heads, couples who want to have children and can't and couples who have too many and don't know how to stop, frustrated people who find themselves inadequate for life, and frustrated people who find life inadequate for them. The rest of his time is spent signing certificates, entitling persons

to anything from more milk to less work, and from getting the youngest off an afternoon's school to getting the eldest off his National Service.

Occasionally people who are genuinely ill appear in the g.p.'s surgery, and these he rightly packs off at once to the corresponding hospital specialist, who knows far more about the business than he does. Thus my Bill would simply regularize existing conditions. Admittedly, the g.p. at present treats people with illnesses unworthy of a specialist's attention, such as influenza, the common cold, migraine, or eczema, but as these diseases either get better by themselves or never get better at all it is an obvious waste of the taxpayers' money ever to attempt treating them.

#### The Specialist

Much discontent is caused among specialists at present by the system of "Merit Awards," which are dished out by the Ministry to deserving consultants and kept as secret as a bookie's takings. Surgeon A can tell if Surgeon B has got the reward he should be enjoying himself only by observing such signs and symptoms as a new car, a more cheerful wife, holidays at Klosters, enthusiasm for the N.H.S., etc. As this is clearly unscientific, I shall bring the Merit Scheme into the open. I intend to start a monthly league for local consultants, prepared independently by the M.C.C. and the F.A., with Merit Awards for the top two.

This example will be published with the Bill:

	Cases	Won	Lost	Much the same	Patient declared had enough	Bad Anaesthesia stopped Op.	Points
Mr. P, F.R.C.S. ..	55	19	5	25	5	1	63
Mr. Q, F.R.C.S. ..	100	10	50	—	40	—	20
Mr. Y, F.R.C.S. ..	5	5	—	—	—	—	10
Mr. Z, F.R.C.S. ..	5	—	5	—	—	—	0

Some sort of Cup may later be awarded by the President of the Royal College of Surgeons.

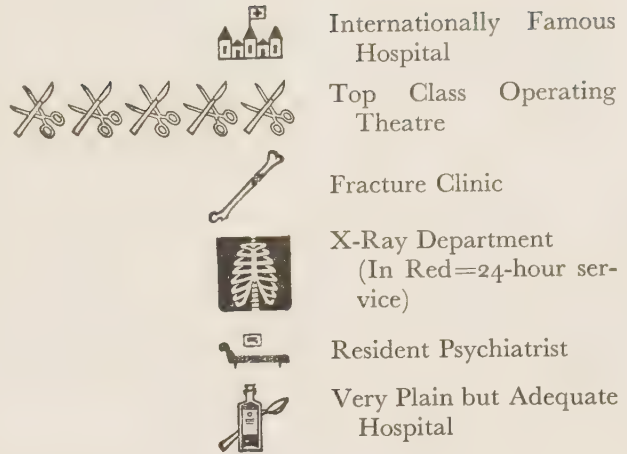
The new scheme will clearly encourage an enterprising spirit among our surgeons, and as the League will be published every week in the local papers it will be a useful guide to patients in choosing their specialist.

The Bill will also provide for a Pool to be run on the weekly results.

#### Hospitals

All hospitals will be let to Messrs. Charles Clore and Forte on a 999 years' lease. As it now costs more to put up at Bart's than the Berkeley, their reorganization of each hospital as an hotel with an extra bell-push for the doctor will bring a striking saving in Health Service costs. Patients will be given free choice of hospital, though advised to book well in advance outside the holiday season. An official handbook will be published resembling the *Guide Michelin*, with simple symbols indicating the hospitals' amenities.

For example:



#### Prescribing

Most doctors' houses are large and sited for the convenience of the population they serve. They will all be purchased compulsorily at a fair price and re-designed at public expense as Supermarkets. These will sell not only drugs and dressings but the usual groceries, detergents, dog food, pest killers, and ices. A doctor in a white coat will be on duty with the girls at the cash desk by the exit to sign prescriptions, particularly for the dangerous drugs.

I feel the principle of patients' satisfying their medical needs *first* and then obtaining the necessary prescription is a brilliant reversal of the system that now brings so many complaints from both sides of the consulting desk. It will not only save patients the tedious period of waiting and doctors the moral necessity of examining them but the profit on non-medical articles sold at commercial prices will allow the present shilling prescription charge to be abolished.

Certificates will be issued by machine.

#### Miscellaneous

The *Pollution of Beaches* will be encouraged. This will reduce summer road traffic to coastal resorts, with



"He's gone to market."



"Two . . . four . . . six . . . eight . . .  
who do we appreciate?"

great saving of life and limb, in accordance with the best principles of preventive medicine.

Any *Anti-Vivisectionist* will have the right to a High Court injunction preventing any animal being used in a scientific experiment, as long as he agrees to substitute himself.

*Medical Research* on any subject will be permitted only with special permission of the Minister. As for several centuries the work of one generation of research people has been mostly disproving the work of the generation before, this will release a large number of highly trained specialists for useful medical activities.

#### *Finance*

1. The National Health Contribution will be abolished.

2. The remuneration of no medical practitioner will be below that of the Minister, who has had to undergo much less training for his job.

I intend to meet the cost of the Service with a royalty of ten per cent levied on all books, television performances, films, plays, newspaper articles, broadcasts, or advertisements, in which any mention whatever is made of medical matters, hospitals, or doctors. I am convinced that this will not only wholly finance the Service but the entire hospital rebuilding programme as well.

#### *Administration*

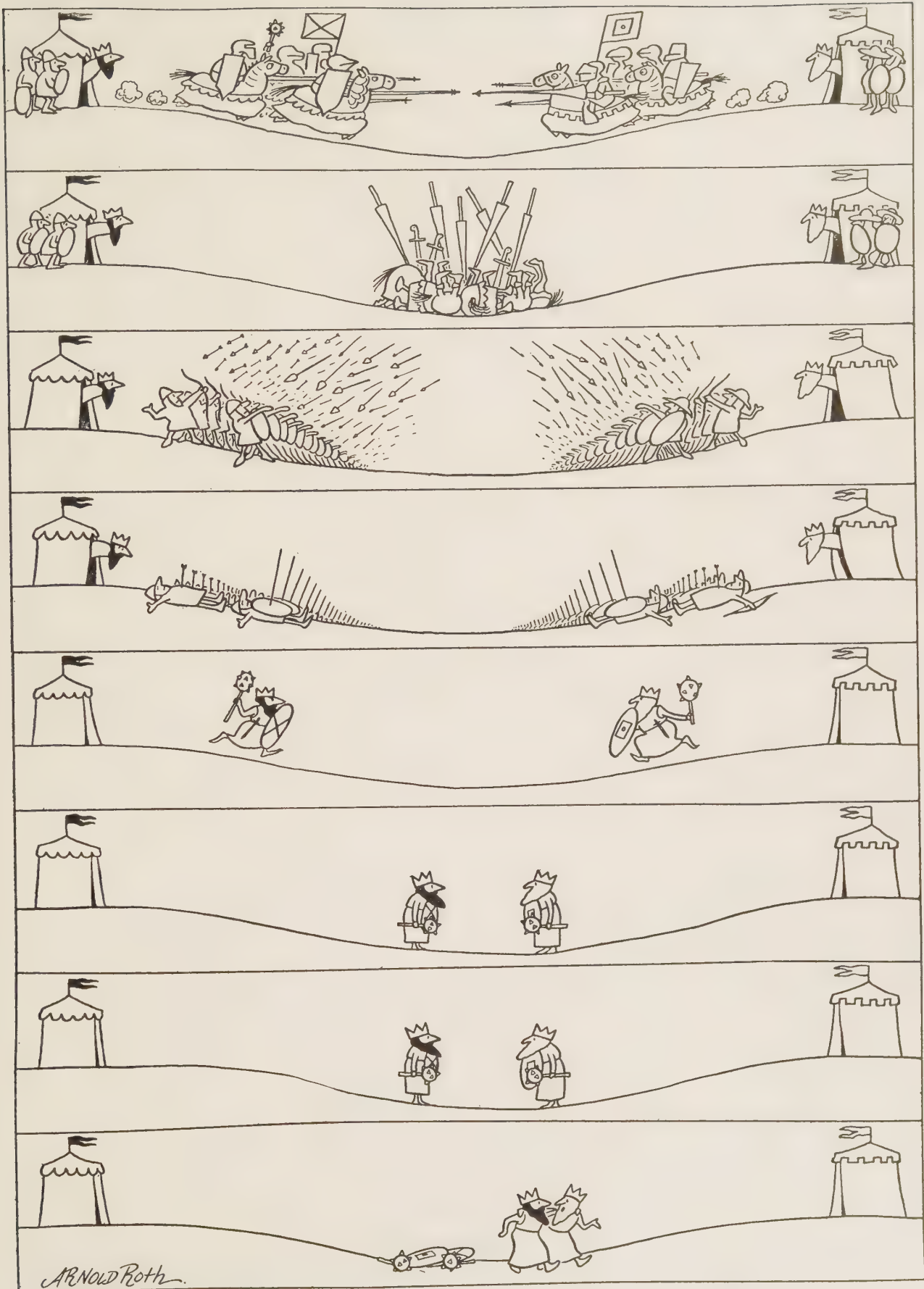
I intend to appoint as my Permanent Secretary Mr. William Butlin. Mr. Butlin's life has been dedicated to making people happy, and his persistent prosperity is sufficient proof of his success at it. As the bulk of modern medicine consists in the application of either pills or psychiatry to make large numbers of miserable people feel rather happier, I am confident that with Mr. Butlin's help we shall indeed have the best Health Service in the world, the envy of all civilized communities.

### *The Viennese Shampoo*

**K**ANN ich ein Waschen haben, bitter sehr?  
Und auch ein Set? Nein danke, nothing mehr.  
Kein Friktion, nein, und ob es tut mir leid,  
Kein Tinting weder, und auch nicht ein Schneid.  
Nein, wirklich nicht, mein Haar is nicht too lang,  
Aber ich mögt ein kleine curly Bang  
Über mein Forehead haben. Ist zu dick?  
Warten Sie bitte, just ein Augenblick,  
Als ich in meine dictionary dip

Zu find das Wort für eine Kirbigrip.  
Ich wünsch ein wave, ein Welle, haben *da*,  
Und *da* ein andere. Das ist wunderbar!  
Ja, ich verstehe, zwirn this knorren twice  
If meine Drier kommt a bit too heiss.  
Ah! da ich bin, and though it's not quite ich,  
Es ist entzückend und erstauenlich!  
Ein tausend thanks, not only bin ich clean,  
But auch die schönstest Englander in Wien.

— VIRGINIA GRAHAM



ARNOLD ROTH.

# ENTENTE

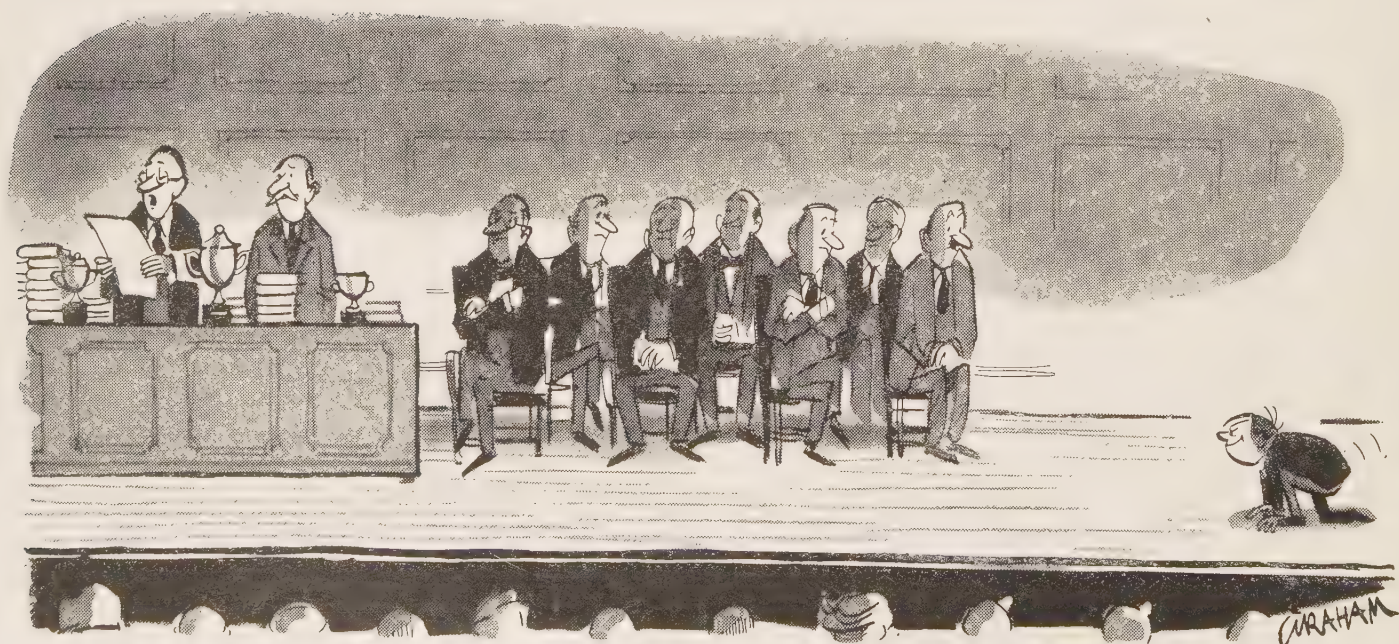
## EACH WAY

By Catherine Drinkwater

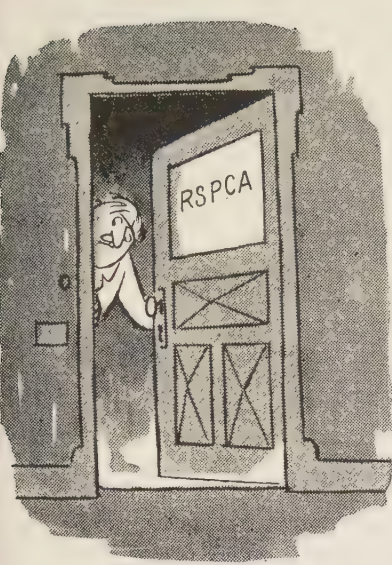
With the coming into force of the Betting and Gaming Act yet another illogical part of our national way of life has been smoothed into uniformity. Myself, I can't see that the situation called for anything as drastic as an Act. Granted the bookmaker's office I worked in may have been unique, but it was a fine example of the harmony a little tolerance can achieve.

There were nine of us in the office. Larboard the bookie – apprenticed as a humble larboard watch in the days when a runner literally had to – three settlers, four runners and me. Larboard was a kindly man with eight tweed suits and an Aston Martin. He asked little of life beyond half a pound of mussels and a bottle of stout but in a mad misguided moment he had married and the iron had entered into his soul. The trouble was her family never stopped doing things – acting, swimming, fencing, the lot. They didn't take up hobbies; they annihilated them. All his married life Larboard had been licking the *passe-partout* for their diplomas, with never an honorary mention to his name. The only field he led in was press cuttings, and the medal-bound brigade took a very frosty view of those. They kept adding up the cost of his fines, estimating his probable loss in takings and urging him to fit out the runners with barrows and get into something steady like fruit.

In fact a conviction didn't cost Larboard nearly as much as it might have, because our station sergeant had been anticipating legalized betting as best he could for years. He was obliged to pick up our runners, but he always gave us fair warning. This was essential, for if our own runners appeared in court with their list of convictions they got a thirty pounds fine on sight, and lost the day's takings.





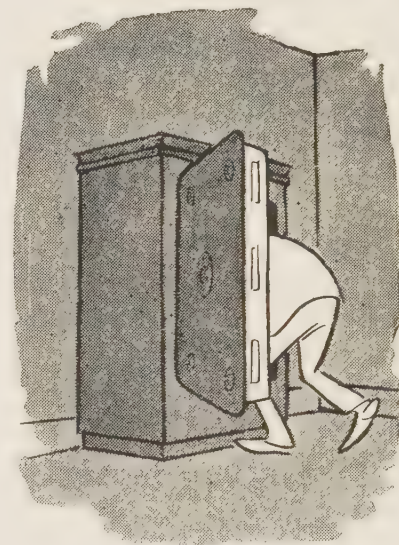


Moreover betting slips were confiscated on arrest and clients turned peevish at losing their money before the horse had put its hoof outside the paddock. So when the sergeant dropped the word that a certain time and place a runner was due for a pick up we sent out for a stooge. Anyone over eighteen with a clear record that he didn't mind smirching a trifle was eligible. He got two pounds down and three more after leaving the court. His only duties were to write out a pocketful of betting slips, take two bags of small change and wait for arrest. This method cut Larboard's losses to the minimum and our relations with the force were a smooth-flowing cycle of courtesy and consideration.

Not so the magistrates. There was one who seemed bent on breaking Larboard through either the courts or the course. After slapping a fifteen pounds fine on a stooge with a spotless record he would ring up and put another fifteen on a rank outsider that would promptly steam home by a nostril just for him. To that man a fancy for a horse was like gilt-edged stock. He could have backed a three-legged goat as a cert for the Derby.

We had clients who preferred to forgo eating rather than betting. The street betters were realistic because they parted with their hard cash on the spot and what they didn't have they couldn't lose; but those with accounts kept on trying desperately to break their luck, and if there's one thing working in a bookies' office has taught me it's a firm disbelief in the law of averages. The men usually took some account of form but the women went berserk. They would bet on their horoscope, the colour of the horse's fetlocks, the horse placed third on the race card, bald jockeys, royal owners, or even anything I myself fancied. This was a sure sign that they were turning into Carey Street. Unable to bear their own luck any longer they wanted to cash in on somebody else's. Once in sheer desperation at the sobs on the line I gave Fur Baby simply because it made me think of my dog. It came in at twenty to one and for weeks they were circling the office like vultures, demanding the lady who gave out the tips.

Larboard and the runners bet very little. But the sergeant had a weakness for a one cross two bet on which he placed a modest sum whenever the fancy took him. As a member of the force it was hardly seemly to open an account so he sent in his slips through various channels under the name of Nimrod, and if he won, as he frequently did, no one begrudged it less than Larboard. As I said, there was a harmony between them that only years of working together can achieve. Yet there was respect on either side. Larboard knew just how far he could go with impunity. Illogical it may have been, but workable, though maybe not outside Britain.





"Wonderful . . .



Marvellous . . .

# WHO DECEIVES WHOM?

By A. P. H.

*Regina v. Rake, Smoot and Shepley*

**P**residing over the Court of Criminal Appeal, the Lord Chief Justice gave judgment in the Soho counterfeiting case. He said:

This is an appeal upon a novel point of law. The appellants were convicted at the Old Bailey, and sentenced to terms of imprisonment, for counterfeiting banknotes, of the value of one pound, and for uttering the notes they made. The facts are not in dispute, and the appellants pleaded guilty. The notes were not numerous, and the appellants said that their main purpose was a worthy one, to show with what dangerous ease "money" can now be made: but no one paid much attention to that. After the trial, belatedly, he admits, there moved in the mind of Sir Godfrey Lawn a new and ingenious defence. He has submitted to the Court that in law no felony was here committed.

Now, in the common forgery the essence of the offence is an intent to defraud: but in this affair it is sufficient for the Crown to prove that there was intent to deceive. It is the prerogative of the Crown to create and manage the currency of the realm, and counterfeiting or defacing it has always been punished with especial severity. But Sir Godfrey has asked the court



*How about dinner tonight?"*

*Eric Burgin*



to distinguish between metal and paper currency. In the days of my youth, when golden sovereigns and silver crowns were common in the pockets of the citizens, it was certainly an odious crime "to make or counterfeit any coin resembling or apparently intended to resemble or pass for any current gold or silver coin of the realm." Indeed, it was once High Treason. The recipient, for value, of a spurious sovereign was not only deceived but defrauded, for when he took it to the bank the watchful officials would detect the deceit and refuse to place a pound to his credit.

But the appellants made no false coins. They have confined their manufactures to paper. They are skilled craftsmen, and the work, arduous, they said, and trying to the eyes, was well done. In appearance, in printing style and pictorial design, their notes were precisely similar to the Crown's. Many of those to whom they were "passed" presented them without question at shops and hotels and received full value for them. Those establishments passed them to their servants by way of wages, and many were happily accepted by banks. Indeed, says Sir Godfrey, until the Crown began to make a fuss, no one was damaged or defrauded, and very many were made content, so far as true content can be attained through material possessions.

Now on these notes were printed the words:

BANK OF ENGLAND I promise to pay the Bearer

*"Of course, beauty treatments aren't what they were before the war."*

on demand the sum of ONE POUND London. For the Governor and Company of the BANK OF ENGLAND L. K. O'Brien Chief Cashier

In these words, according to the Crown, reside the intent to deceive and defraud: for the appellants knew very well that if one of their notes were taken to the Bank of England the bearer would be sent away poundless. This, at first, seems an unanswerable accusation. But Sir Godfrey informed the Court, to our astonishment, that the same result would follow if a genuine pound note were presented at the Bank of England.

At our request O'Brien was called and gave evidence. His testimony was frank, but, I must say, shocking.

Q. 23. THE COURT. You have brought with you a genuine pound note? Thank you. Did you in fact put your name to these words - "I promise to pay," and so on?

WITNESS: Yes, my lord, under orders. I was by no means the first.

COURT: Very well. Does the promise mean what it says? If I bear a note to you to-morrow, will you give me a pound?

WITNESS: Not a gold pound, my lord. I shall give

you value – twenty shillings or two hundred and forty pennies.

COURT: But I can get them anywhere. And that is not what you say. This is the Bank of England, “promising” me “One Pound.”

WITNESS: No, my lord, the *sum* of one pound.

COURT: Certainly – as you might say “the sum of one penny,” in which case I should expect a penny coin, not a penny stamp.

WITNESS: My lord, originally “a pound” meant a pound weight of silver.

COURT: That, again, is not what you say on this document. You do not even say “the sum of twenty shillings,” in the style of a ten shilling note. The words “the sum of” are small: the words “One Pound” are large. When I was born “One Pound” meant a golden sovereign.

WITNESS: Not recently, my lord.

COURT: Then the Bank of England should amend its vocabulary. Do you know the old election story?

WITNESS: No, my lord.

COURT: A sound, but pompous candidate was complaining about the fall in the value of money. Finally, he took out one of your pound notes and said: “Look at this! What is it worth to-day? Seven and sixpence.” And a genial voice at the back said: “I’ll give you ten bob for it, govnor.”

WITNESS: Ha!

COURT: Showing the importance of precision in the use of language. We agree, then, that this note does not mean what – to me, at least – it seems to say?

WITNESS: My lord, I think everyone knows what we mean. It is only the occasional joker who comes in and demands a pound.

COURT: Is this court being compared with the occasional joker?

WITNESS: No, my lord.

COURT: Have we got it right? “Everyone knows” that a Bank of England note is a lie?

WITNESS: I did not say that, my lord.

COURT: You are aware that the appellants in that dock have been convicted of a fraudulent offence?

WITNESS: Yes, my lord.

COURT: And their offence is that they made faithful

copies of a Bank of England note?

WITNESS: Yes, my lord.

These, we think, were damaging admissions: and there were more. It is an old and honoured tradition of British law that he who comes to the courts for assistance must come “with clean hands.” The Crown asks the court to punish these three men for putting “false” currency into circulation in competition with what the Crown is pleased to call “genuine” notes. The charge, it seems to me, can only be sustained if it is shown that citizens who took these notes were deceived into supposing that they were getting something of a higher quality than they were in fact. But for the main purpose expressed on both kinds of note, the acquisition of “one pound”, the “false” and the “genuine” are equally worthless: and for ordinary purposes, as we have seen, both were equally useful, until, that is, the interference of the Crown. Moreover, as O’Brien rashly admitted, “everyone knows” that the “promise” on the genuine notes does not mean what it says, and the people have ceased to rely upon it. Where, then, was the deception? Who was deceived? In the old days, when paper money was solidly and scrupulously backed by gold, it was, without doubt, harmful to the realm to increase without authority the amount of paper money in circulation, for this, in emergency, might make the nation’s gold resources insufficient. But now that the Crown, it seems, can issue notes at will, without much reference, if any, to the stocks of gold, no great harm can have been done by the tiny trickle which the appellants added to the ocean of paper in which we flounder. It is true that they have no authority to make notes at all, that they have used without permission the Crown’s designs and forms of words. I imagine, therefore, that a civil action for damages might lie against them for breach of copyright, though the Crown will hardly be able to show that the circulation of their own commodity has suffered severely. But to the charge of felony we must oppose the doctrine of “clean hands.” “Who,” as Sir Godfrey said in his eloquent address, “can counterfeit a counterfeit?” The conviction is quashed, and the appellants must be discharged.



# POET AND PRESENT

O blithe New-comer! I have heard  
And striven to rejoice,  
Though frankly I'd have much preferred  
A singer with a Voice.

Whenas in silks my Julia goes  
Her friends dismiss it as a pose,  
For silks are out, as well she knows:  
Synthetic fibres are the job,  
But they've been seized on by the mob,  
(My Julia's an inverted snob).

Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing,  
I feared as much, hoping those fears unsure.  
Alas! The ten-year-test report's depressing,  
I can't afford to run you any more.

Who is Silvia? What is she  
That *TV Times* commends her?  
She preens in tights on quiz-game nights,  
And how the role extends her!

It is an Ancient Mariner  
And he stoppeth one of three,  
The two are from the wildcat lot,  
The one from the T.U.C.  
The cranes are idle overhead,  
The cargo's in the hold,  
"And that's the way it's staying, mate,  
And the lads have all bin told."

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,  
A new reactor's building, with gas-cooled graphite rods,  
Some marchers will I join there, protesting, making tea –  
The usual rum assortment of bods.

I shot a rocket into the air,  
It fell I know precisely where,  
Moreover I could shoot a second,  
Its landfall just as neatly reckoned.

He first deceased; she for a little tried  
To live alone, then rebecame a bride.

She walks – the lady of my delight –  
Though she alone knows how,  
On spikes of an enormous height  
That make an awful row;  
Our lino once was smooth and bright,  
It's perforated now.



*"Don't just sit there – out-chic Jackie Kennedy!"*

Two voices are there; one is of the sea,  
One of the stratosphere; and each competes  
For space on grey tycoons' expenses sheets,  
Which, fortunately, doesn't worry me.

Where the remote Bermudas ride  
Distinguished actors tan their hide  
Beneath the heavens' unending blue  
And laugh at the Inland Revenue.

A sweet disorder in the dress,  
By any other name, a mess,  
Hair all uncombed since restless sleep  
Its tresses knotted;  
A plimsoll'd foot, as if for tennis,  
A sweater labelled, "Kiss me, Denis,"  
Reduce the menfolk to a jelly  
Undreamed of by Schiaparelli.

About Ben Adhem (see his pride increase!)  
No longer dreams to head an angel's list,  
But lies awake and thinks whom he can fleece,  
And whether there's an oil-well that he's missed.

Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,  
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,  
I think it starts at five-and-twenty past,  
You do the Brightness, I'll turn up the Sound.

– J. B. BOOTHROYD

TYPICAL ATTITUDE  
OF DOG TO OWNER  
AFTER OWNER  
TOLERANCE TEST



# Which Dog?

*In two days' time Cruft's will be here. The daily press will feature pictures of chihuahuas peeping out of pockets, great danes lounging against their owners' shoulders, pokes being pomaded and a welter of other dogs. It will be surprising if the Consumers' Association does not seize the opportunity to advise the readers of "Which?" on how to choose a dog.*

## Brands

There are far too many brands of dog for a really comprehensive test, but these can be divided into three basic classes:

- (1) Brands advertised as having some special function, e.g. beagles.
- (2) Brands produced solely as pets.
- (3) Unbranded models, technically known as mongrels.

We were tempted to eliminate class 1 altogether, as it is impossible to devise a test that will adequately compare the capabilities of a retriever and an otter-hound, but eventually included some of this class in our tests because we find that many people like to keep a gun-dog as a pet, for reasons connected with "status." Otherwise we tested a typical range of about twenty\* branded dogs mostly in the small-to-medium range, and added one mongrel.

## Standards

There is, mysteriously, no British Standard for dogs; instead there are Kennel Club Standards for each particular breed. These should be treated with the suspicion proper to all standards issued by associations of manufacturers, and are really only of use to those consumers who have already made up their minds and wish to check up that what they are buying is in fact, say, an Airedale.

## Tests

The questions we asked ourselves were: What does it cost to buy? to maintain? Is it safe? Is it intelligent? How soon will it wear out? wear its owner out? Is it lovable? Is it any use?

## Costs

With the exception of the mongrel all models tested cost between £15 and £30. The mongrel picked up our assistant editor while she was carrying out a road test on children's scooters (Which? May 1959) and would not leave her. He has been valued by an expert at 4s. 6d.

Large dogs eat more, but not in proportion to their size. On the basis of our Pet Food test (Which? November 1960), a small dog costs 10s. a week to feed and a large dog £1. Add to this the cost of vet's fees, dog-tickets, litigation, neighbour's ornamental ducks, painting of scratched doors, tips to park-keepers, etc., and the total cost of keeping a small dog, other than a mongrel, averages out at £65 a year. The owner of a mongrel enjoys a lower "anxiety factor," and tends to spend less on his pet; he seldom, for instance, takes it to a canine beautician; upkeep of the mongrel for 1960 cost £38 6s. 7d.

## Safety

In the absence of a British Standard for dogs, we modified that for electric blankets (Which? October 1960) and gradually applied a pull up to 35 lb. at the point where the tail enters the dog. All models except the mongrel proved to be thoroughly unsafe, though we gained valuable data for our forthcoming report on dog-bite remedies. The mongrel did not have a tail.

## Intelligence

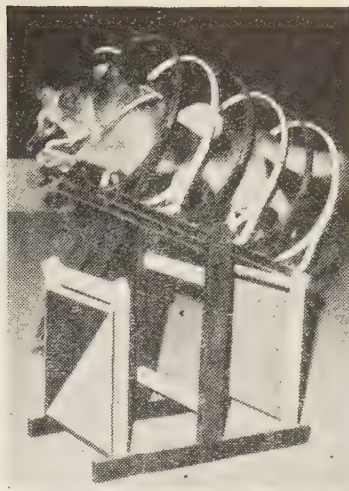
It is tiresome for the owner if a dog is really intelligent; he never knows where he is\*. But it is just as tiresome if the dog is profoundly stupid and, for instance, lolls without moving by the hot-water boiler while it is being filled, even though this means that every scuffleful of fuel catches it on the ear. We therefore applied maximum and minimum intelligence tests. The maximum consisted of the standard 11-plus examination which all dogs failed with flying colours, and the minimum of two simple tests: we dressed the dogs up in fancy clothes, as for a press photograph; and we put four eggs in their baskets. All dogs except the mongrel bore both tests as another manifestation of a confusing environment. The mongrel ate the eggs, was sick on the clothes, and went off to look for a new owner. We considered it the only dog to display minimum intelligence.

\* We were unable to devise a method of counting them all at any one moment.

\* There is no harm in a dog looking intelligent—indeed some of the Kennel Club Standards require it.



DOG FLEA  
(CTENOCEPHALUS  
CANIS) RATHER  
LARGER THAN LIFE  
SIZE.



1 THE START OF AN OWNER TOLERANCE TEST. LATER STAGES OF THE TEST WERE TOO CONFUSED TO PHOTOGRAPH.

2 APPARATUS FOR TESTING MAXIMUM SUDDEN PULL OF DOG ON LEAD.

3 THE MAXIMUM INTELLIGENCE TEST. NOTE THAT THE DOG IS MORE INTERESTED IN THE CAMERA.

4 ADDITIONAL ITEMS IN THE UPKEEP OF AN EXPENSIVE BRAND OF DOG.

5 & 6 TWO SPECIALISED BRANDS (BORZOI AND DACHSHUND) UNDERGOING THE MINIMUM INTELLIGENCE TESTS. NOTE THAT THOUGH THEY ARE DISCONTENTED WITH THEIR ENVIRONMENT, THEY ARE NOT DOING ANYTHING ABOUT IT.



## Durability

We have not completed these tests yet, but all models are expected to last about ten years, and all owners rather less.

## Lovableness

This is difficult to assess objectively, but we collected a panel of eighteen volunteers (6 sentimental, 6 normal and 6 hard-boiled) and confronted them with all the dogs in turn, while we measured their pulse, respiration, temperature, blink-rate, etc. The dogs which caused the highest lovability symptoms among the sentimental were, unfortunately, just those which caused the most hate-symptoms among the hard-boiled. So we were forced to rely on our six normal volunteers, who assessed the lovability of all models shown, except the mongrel,

as "fair." The mongrel appeared with a dead starling, which it put in a bowler hat belonging to one of our test officers, and was classed "excellent."

## Usefulness

Most dogs can be taught certain "useful" tasks, such as fetching newspapers, frightening burglars, etc. All the models tested could perform these tasks, except the mongrel. However, they performed them completely at random, sometimes licking the "burglar's" hand, sometimes biting his calf. The newspaper, if brought, was seldom legible. The mongrel did nothing and so was completely reliable.

## VALUE FOR MONEY

▶ BEST BUY MONGREL 4s. 6d.

# GHOSTS

By

P. M. H u b b a r d

Census information in the United States reveals that there are now no inhabitants in the cities of Ophir, Peacock, Eureka and Torino.

*“Right. That’s that. Now get cracking on designs for a flag, coat of arms, postage stamps . . .”*



Gone is the gold they gloried in at Ophir,  
Pale and apocryphal is Peacock’s pride,  
Nothing can be found now in all Eureka  
And Torino’s matadors have long since died.

Once upon a time there was gold in Ophir,  
Plentiful and pure in the surrounding rocks.  
The dance-hall dames had twenty-carat hatpins,  
The wives had nuggets in the pockets of their frocks.  
They ballasted their saddles with the rich red dust,  
And the banks had barrels of the stuff on trust,  
But they wagered it and wasted it and took to paying taxes,  
And the gold of Ophir went to fill Fort Knox.

Dandified and dainty were the Peacock people,  
Scented and splendid were the clothes they wore;  
They preened and paraded in the Texan sunlight,  
The soberest of citizens had suits by the score.  
The men stepped out with an exaggerated gait  
Noticeable even in the Lone Star State:  
But pride could not preserve them as a substitute for progress,  
And Peacock’s citizens are proud no more.

Talented and fertile were the people of Eureka,  
Varied in invention and ingenious of bent.  
The whole town hummed with a multitude of gadgets,  
They had every apparatus that a person could invent.  
They thought up thousands of unhandselled ways  
Of living and of loving and of lengthening their days,  
Till the age of science triumphed over native ingenuity  
And Eureka’s talents went the way the pride of Peacock went.

Huge were the horns of the bulls of Torino,  
Savage was their habit and as satin was their hide;  
Their bellowing fell heavy on the sultry air of summer  
As they drove them into market from the quiet countryside.  
The bullrings echoed to the deep-voiced shouts  
Of tense Torino citizens attending at the bouts:  
But Chicago wanted Shorthorns and the bulls have been forgotten  
With Eureka’s ingenuity and Peacock’s pride.

Gone is the gold they gloried in at Ophir,  
Pale and apocryphal is Peacock’s pride,  
Nothing can be found now in all Eureka  
And Torino’s matadors have long since died.





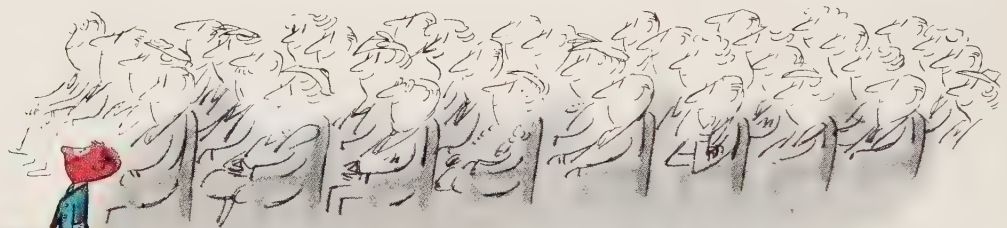
*"Are you aware, sir, that there are only three shopping days to Christmas?"*



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Handwritten text in a stylized, cursive script, similar to the first panel.



Handwritten text in a stylized, cursive script, similar to the previous panels.



Handwritten text in a stylized, cursive script, similar to the previous panels, with the word "sempé" written at the end.

## TYSON: AN APPRECIATION

By H. Grayson

It is difficult to realize that Tyson has gone. As recently as last week we were working together on the draft of his latest book and I still hear the sound of his voice as he recounted one of the more outrageous examples of car worship with which, as he put it, he had got to interlard my statistics to make the damned thing readable.

Tyson's first book *Car Worship – A New Religion?* is of course standard reading now, so much so that it is surprising to reflect that it was published only six years ago.

He often recalled the experience which first gave rise to his interest in the subject. It was soon after he had moved to Surbiton and he was on his way to Communion one Sunday morning. Thinking to step into a sleeping avenue he was alarmed to find it alive with car-washers. "The gutter," he would croak, "was a Ganges of holy water and the tins and oils were spread out as in a Dublin Christening." The realization that this was now the established religion came upon him so strongly that for the rest of his journey he felt like a druid hurrying to ancient rites in the dawn of Christianity.

As a theologian with more than an interest in sociology he knew immediately that he had found his life's work. He published within a year and made an immediate impact, particularly in America.

Some of his earliest prophecies were uncannily on the mark. It was in *Car Worship* that he first drew attention to the tendency for more garages to be furnished with fitted carpets. Not long afterwards the ad-men took this up fairly seriously ("Spend the evening with your car") and one or two had their garages integrated with the open plan. Tyson always said that the sociological consequences of all this would be far-reaching and he ventured to suggest that it would be one more nail in the coffin of stability

of marriage. He lived just long enough to see the case of *Dallow v. Dallow* decided in which, it will be recalled, a wife obtained her decree on the ground that her husband had taken to sleeping with the car.

To his larger public Tyson is the man who spotlighted the spectacular side of car worship. One calls to mind his delighted discovery of a custom-built American sedan with a radiator grill of organ pipes that played built-in hymn tunes, the Mormonomatic, and it had stained glass panoramic windows. My favourite was his discovery of the little man in Tunbridge Wells making garage ikons – and doing remarkably well out of it.

With this of course went his unerring sense of the ludicrous. Which of us does not know his story of the Hampshire vicar who was run over one Monday by a car he had blessed the day before at one of those special services for cars and owners?

The more serious part of the subject is the close similarity which has been shown to exist between some aspects of car worship and those of the orthodox religions, and here Tyson did some superb work. One remembers especially his masterly analysis of the organization of the Motor Show, demonstrating as it did its clear analogy with the annual Methusalists Conference; of the parallel he so brilliantly drew between the training of car salesmen and that of certain orders of Coptic monks and, lastly, his posthumous article in the *Theological Review* on "Showroom altars, static and revolving".

Tyson's subtlety of approach in this comparative field is well exemplified by his intense little study of the all-night Kar Sales. Tyson knew what we all know, that nobody sober buys a car between midnight and four a.m. Why then do the showrooms stay open, with lights blazing? His answer was simple but profound. No one, he explained, goes to Church in the small hours either but the doors are not locked,



because the Church is a place of refuge where a man may go to refresh himself at any hour of the day or night. So is a Kar Sales. He neatly illustrated the parallel by quoting several cases of intending suicides who had stopped at Kar Sales, sat quietly in a car for an hour or so contemplating the fascia and then gone home to lead normal lives.

For the last year or so of his life Tyson became increasingly immersed in what he called "future trends". Indeed at the time of his death he was engaged in ferreting out the facts about the celebrated drive-in Chapel near Brighton which was about to be officially opened. I recall his distaste as he quoted from the bit in the advertising blurb which described how men in sober pinstripes would "reverently" wash and grease your car as you sat in it during devotions. His worst fear – that someone would call the place a

mo-chapel – has of course been realized in this week's headlines but I doubt if even he realized how far and how quickly the idea would develop. I refer of course to the church of a different denomination which is projected in the same area and at which, if my information is correct, it was the original intention to baptise cars by total immersion. On the other hand I am sure his sense of irony would have been tickled by the news that the promoters have got to modify their plans because of the poor quality of modern chromium plating.

It is perhaps this sense of irony which will preserve intact the serious body of his work. I do not think it unfitting to suggest that his own death in collision with a car on his way to a meeting of the Pedestrians' Association must be calling forth an occasional cackle, wherever he may be.

*"Take him to a cricket match, it might cure him of all interest in the game."*



"Ever notice how their eyes seem to be set close together?"



## ONE IDEA ONLY,

## PLEASE

By H. F. Ellis

I have not yet submitted anything to Ideas Marketing Pool. But I have not been idle.

"Your brain is unique," say I.M.P. in their Explanatory Notes and Instructions, which reached my desk by a devious route, "because it has a combination of thoughts different from any other brain. Its factory section can produce entirely new, exciting, valuable Ideas which Industry, Commerce, Governments, Groups and Individuals badly need . . . and are willing to pay for." (The dots are theirs.) "You may already have a brilliantly worked out Idea or Ideas humming away in your mind just waiting to be noticed and admired and developed. This or these you can enter straight away. (ONE Idea ONLY per entry form, please.)"

The Idea that was humming away in the mind of whoever invented Ideas Marketing Pool was the admirable one of acting as a kind of middleman

between people who have ideas and people who can use them. For a trifling fee I.M.P. Ltd. will examine and register your IDEA, DISCOVERY, INVENTION or FORMULA in their files and send you a Die-Stamped CERTIFICATE recording the fact. They further undertake "to bring this Registered Number and Brief Description to the notice of those in a position to Convert it into Practical Form", and to remit 75 per cent of all net monies received in connection therewith, though they naturally reserve the right to refuse to Register Ideas, etc., "which are contrary to the National Interest or of a Frivolous, Obscene, Offensive nature, or in any other way unacceptable or undesirable".

It is hard for anyone who likes money or, failing that, Die-Stamped CERTIFICATES, to resist such an invitation. What to do, though, if on examination it turns out that one has *not* got a brilliantly worked

out Idea humming away in one's mind? The Explanatory Notes and Instructions are ready with the answer.

"Your brain is capable of much more than this. It can turn out as many Ideas as a calculator can turn out answers; and the procedure is exactly the same – you simply pose the problem.

"There are so many things which cry out for improvement. Look around you, about you, above you, below you. Ask yourself – Who? What? Why? How? Where? When?

"Write down any and everything that comes to your mind however wild or crazy it may seem at the time.

"Take each thought and follow it to its logical conclusion, your standard always being . . . WILL IT WORK?"

So I did that. I looked around me, about me, above me and below me, and asked myself, for a start – Who? I saw a good many things that cried out for improvement around and about me. Above me I saw a thundering great crack in the ceiling, and below me I saw that my right shoe had split at a point midway between the toecap and the lacing. To the question Who? I answered Me, and I wrote down "Uncrackable ceilings and ditto shoes". This should have led to the more testing question Why?, but for some

inexplicable reason the thought came into my mind that bread-and-butter would not fall on the carpet butter-side-down if the unbuttered side were the heavier. Following this thought to its logical conclusion I realized that the only way to achieve this would be to spread on the unbuttered side some substance heavier than the butter spread on the buttered side, but the only palatable substance I could think of was a thicker layer of butter.

This did not seem to me to be in the National interest. So I let that Idea go and simply wrote down, as instructed, any and everything that came into my mind, with results as follows:

Good Ideas – How? Whence?

Often by happy accident, e.g. storing photographic plates near source of electrical discharge, watching cathedral roof-lamps swinging in breeze, being hit on head by apples, etc. Why not increase chances of accidental discovery by deliberately causing unlikely collocations, e.g. keeping mice on top of television set, hanging drip-dry shirts in strong magnetic field, etc.? What happens when boiling milk is struck by lightning?

Wet blotting paper stored near deposits of yeast might provide answer to chronic catarrh. Or vice versa. Smear mouldy fish-paste on diseased rose trees,



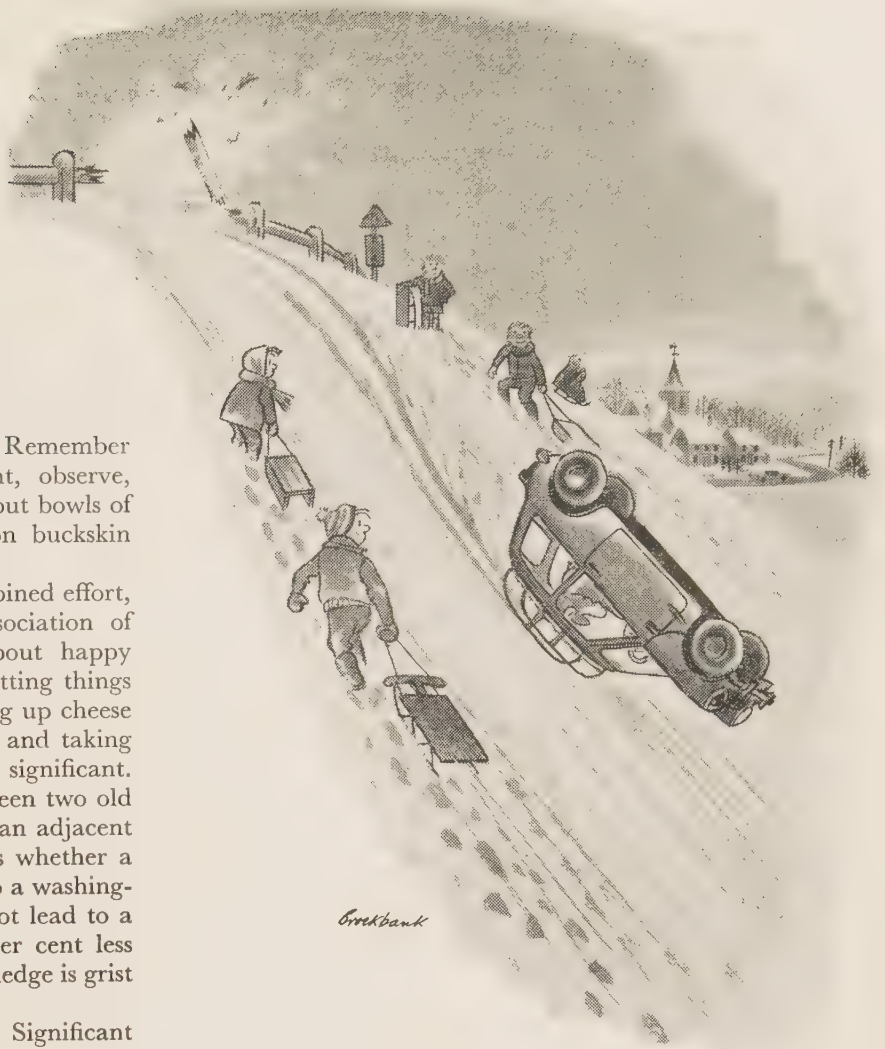
however crazy it may seem at the time. Remember Fleming, Newton, Röntgen. Experiment, observe, note. Mix things together and wait. Put out bowls of mercury during eclipses. Spill whisky on buckskin boots. The possibilities are endless.

Too much for one man? Need for combined effort, volunteers, organization. Query an Association of Idea Stimulators, pledged to bring about happy accidents? How? Where? When? By putting things between other things in cupboards, rolling up cheese or barometers in electric blankets, etc., and taking notes in leisure time. Of what? Anything significant. A roll of barbed wire left carelessly between two old car batteries may cause water to boil in an adjacent goldfish bowl. Note that. Nobody knows whether a pound of lentils accidentally dropped into a washing-machine half full of golden syrup may not lead to a substitute for string vests or cause 40 per cent less wear in hydraulic buffers. All exact knowledge is grist for the mill.

Members of the A.I.S. who observe Significant Results should send a Brief Report to me, preferably enclosing a small fee. Why? Because, if a feasible Idea occurs to me after reading the Report, I shall send it on to Ideas Marketing Pool and get 75 per cent of all net monies received in connection therewith. Originators of the Report acted upon may or may not receive a Handsome Notification on embossed paper. But I must obviously reserve the right to refuse to consider Reports of an Explosive, Unseemly or Odoriferous nature.

Such was the Idea that I worked out to its logical conclusion. That I have not yet sent it to I.M.P. Ltd. is in no way due to a fear that they might regard it as Frivolous or Offensive. On the contrary, it is so clearly feasible that they would be bound to "bring it to the notice of those in a position to Convert it into Practical Form," and the whole basis of the Idea is that that means me. So back it would come to me for Development, and I.M.P. would find themselves in the extraordinary position of acting as middleman between me as Originator of the Idea and myself as User. I believe that this would lead to difficulties. I cannot, for instance, get clear in my mind who would pay 75 per cent of what to whom.

Perhaps some other Originator would care to provide the answer. I simply pose the problem.



*Brekbank*

## Planets

THE nearer planets are as dead as nails.  
 On Mars, for instance, very little grows;  
 In Mercury's attenuated gales  
 Pebbles would burn their non-existent toes;  
 The seas of Venus are too hot for whales,  
 The skies too cloudy to encourage crows.

The planets even farther from the sun  
 Are colder than the seats of metal chairs.  
 On Jupiter a mouse would weigh a ton,  
 Which holds out little hope for Polar bears.  
 There is no food, no future and no fun  
 Inside those ghastly rings that Saturn wears.

They say a gram weighs more or less a gram  
 Upon Uranus; otherwise it's hell.  
 Neptune, quite briefly, is not worth a damn;  
 Pluto much less, as far as I can tell.  
 Earth's far from perfect, but it's where I am  
 And where I'll stay. It suits me pretty well.

— R. P. LISTER



# ESCAPE WITH MRS. DYSON

By Alex Atkinson

I think I should make it clear at the outset that when Mrs. Dyson abruptly laid down a Royal Marriage during a game of four-handed bezique one November evening three years ago in Dr. Chetwynd's front parlour in Streatham, peered across the table with a characteristically pugnacious expression, and asked me how I would like to push south from Sala through the impenetrable Logarre jungle and then turn left and try to reach the coast some six hundred miles below the port of Lo, I hardly knew the woman.

When I tell you further that I had never heard of any of the places she mentioned, and that Dr. Chetwynd had advised me only the previous week not to run up too many stairs at a time if I could avoid it, you will be astonished to learn that I instantly replied "Very much indeed" and made a note in my diary to meet her at Victoria Station on the following Thursday morning with a supply of open-necked shirts, two pairs of stout boots and something to keep specimens in.

But that is the kind of effect Mrs. Dyson is apt to have on people. I once saw her convert a tribe of fifth-generation headhunters from *m'groco*\* to iced tea with lemon in a single afternoon; and to watch her smuggling giraffe-necked women through the Liverpool customs is an education in tact and bombast.

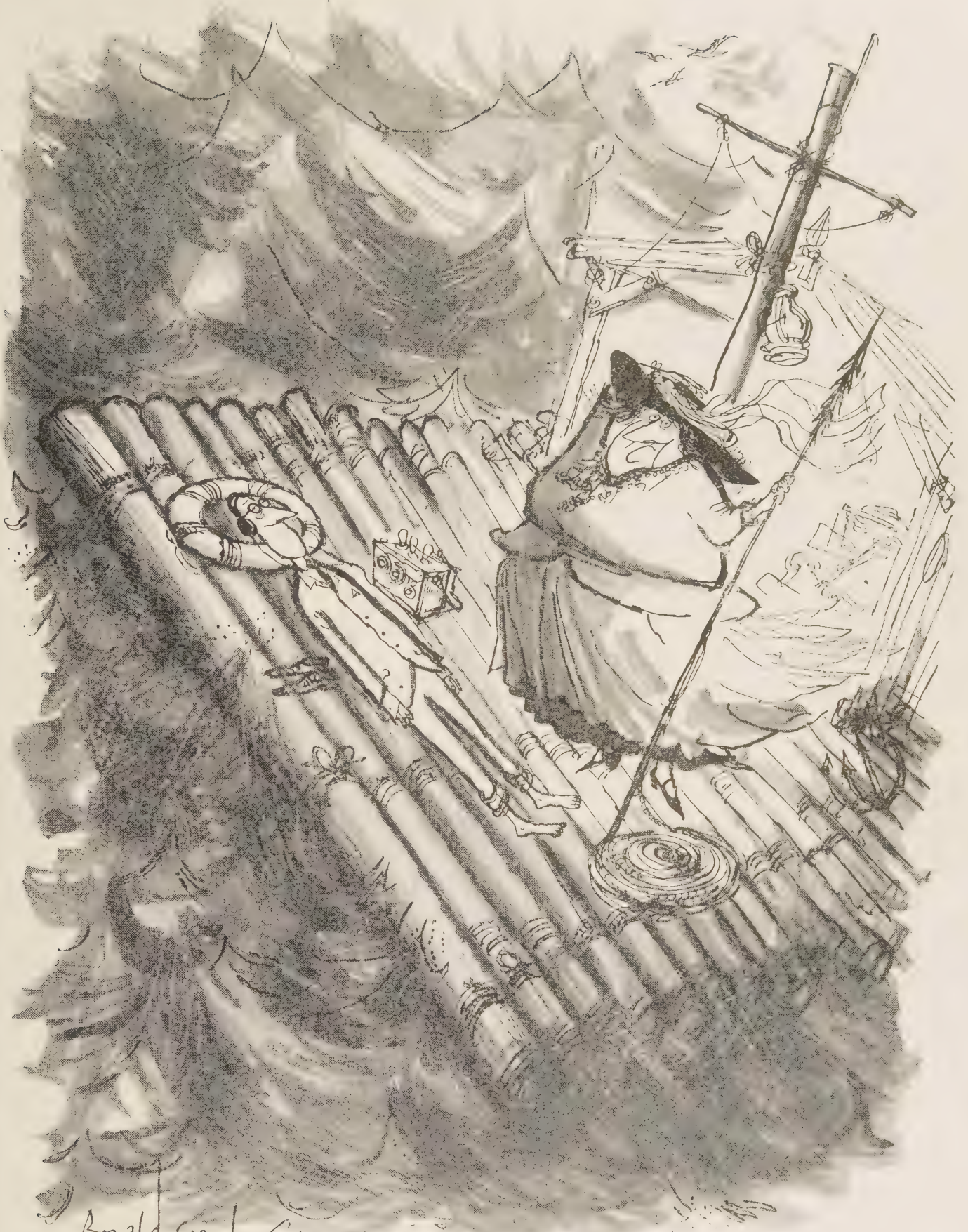
Her reputation was already known to me on that evening in Streatham. Which Englishman had not heard of the indomitable ex-botany mistress who gave up a life of ease and comfort at the age of fifty to ransack the far corners of the earth for rare plants, dwindling *fauna*, buried treasure, lost explorers, or colour films of the more recherché traditional native games? Her name was a byword. There was no outlandish job she would not tackle, provided it was far enough away and a publisher had guaranteed her a sale of at least fifty thousand copies of the book she would write about it, with photographs showing her being kissed by gibbons, tattooed by medicine men, or roasted over a slow fire by man-eating pygmies.

(I found later that the books are actually written by an elegant young man called Griffiths, who has never been further afield than St. Malo. He works from tape-recordings or rough memos scribbled on the spot by Mrs. Dyson. He is crazy about elephants, and will contrive to work them into the story whenever he possibly can. One of Mrs. Dyson's most popular works, *Among Bolivian Butterflies*, was practically on the way to the printers when somebody noticed that Chapter Seven contained a description of the intrepid lady being chased through the Mato Grosso by a herd of fear-maddened elephants. Luckily Rhoda, the publisher's secretary, found it possible to substitute a herd of fear-maddened ant-eaters at the very last moment, and the passage has become a classic in its field.)

Until I thought about it seriously it seemed to me that Mrs. Dyson's suggestion offered the opportunity of a lifetime. Here at last, I thought, was my chance to

\* There is a Glossary.





Ronald Searle

get away from it all! For too long I had dozed in the humdrum shallows of civilization, wondering whether to change to filter-tips or become a Liberal. I must escape, while there were still new tribes to pester, new carnivores to classify, untamed prehistoric creatures to hide behind trees from in the uncharted corners of the globe! Why not, then, with Mrs. Dyson?

Unfortunately, by the time I *had* thought about it seriously it was too late, for I had sold my second-hand bookshop at an overall loss of twenty-three pounds and was standing in Victoria Station watching Mrs. Dyson march out of the Golden Arrow Bar with a dozen native bearers at her heels. "I never go anywhere without them," she said, bearing down upon me with an eight-foot harpoon under her arm. "I get them from Harrods".

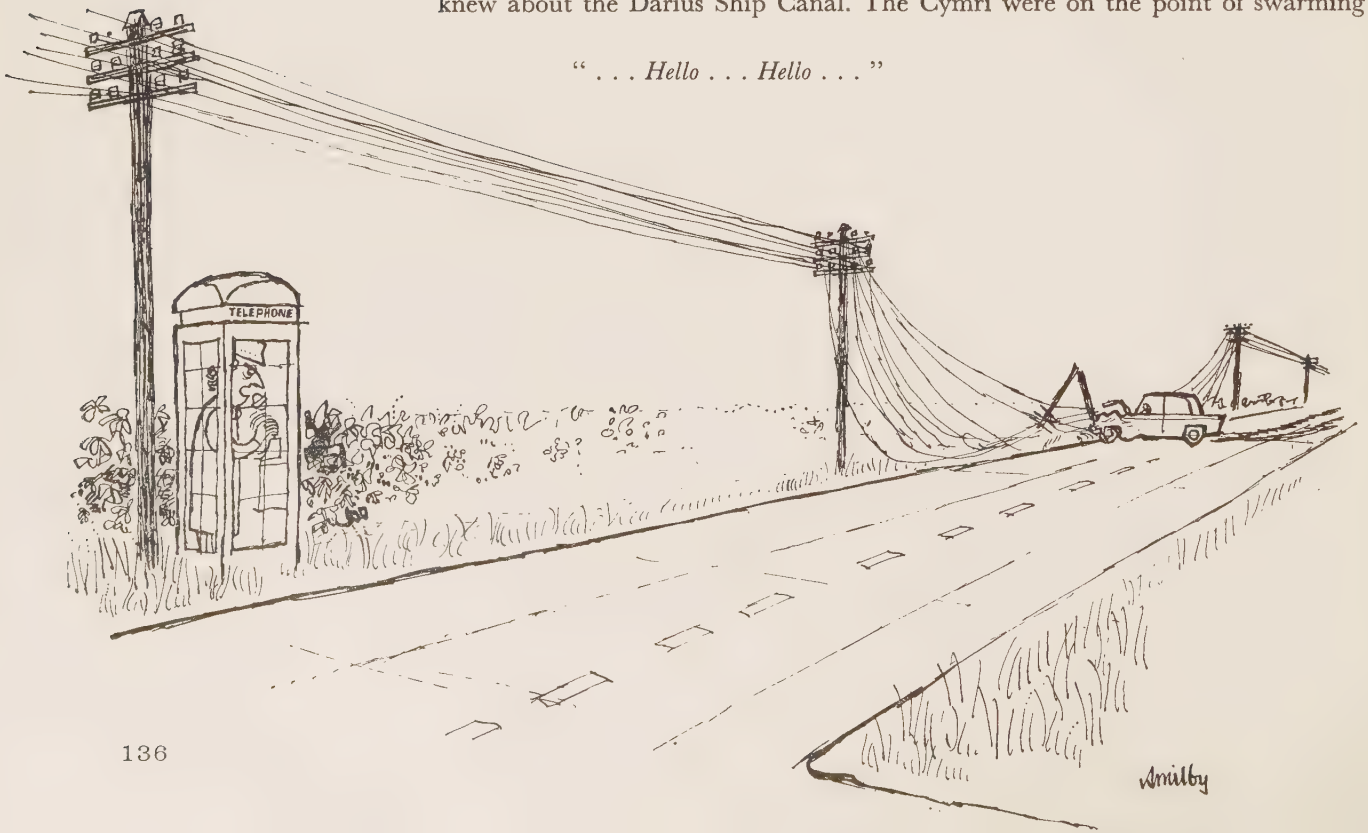
"What's this harpoon, then?" I said. "I thought we were going to push south from Sala through the impenetrable Logarre jungle, and then turn left and try to reach the coast some six hundred miles below the port of Lo?"

"Oh, rubbish," said Mrs. Dyson. "The plans are changed. Didn't you get my postcard? We're going to the Spanish Sahara to make a raft. Look sharp, now, and I'll fill you in with the details on the train".

Thus began one of the most daring ethnological and anthropogeographical investigations of our time, which proved among other things that plankton gives you a pain in the stomach unless you chew it, and which was subsequently made into a film. The task Mrs. Dyson had set herself was to explain once and for all the existence of those crude but unmistakable castanets on Anfodo, one of the smallest and at first glance certainly the most insignificant of the Cocos Islands, which lie in the Indian Ocean about midway between the Java Trench and the Cocos-Keeling Basin. The mysterious presence of these castanets, coupled with the fact that some of the island natives bear to this day a strong resemblance to a fisherman called Miguel from Cape St. Vincent, had led Mrs. Dyson to formulate a theory which was soon to capture the imagination of the whole western world.

"I want you to take your mind back," said Mrs. Dyson, as our train sped through Clapham, "to the Achæmenian Empire, with its viceroyalties and its near neighbours, just prior to Xerxes' invasion of continental European Greece around 480 B.C. What was the situation? Pretty black, I need hardly tell you. Darius had established an oceanic line of communication between the Nile Basin, the Indus Basin and the Tigris-Euphrates Basin, as well as making a naval reconnaissance of Hellas. Carthage had erected a Wooden Curtain extending from Hermeros-Copium right down through Sicily into Libya. Everyone in Memphis knew about the Darius Ship Canal. The Cymri were on the point of swarming

" . . . Hello . . . Hello . . . "





*“Do you ever get the feeling our flag’s fallen off their map?”*

into Britain. Cære was an Etruscan colony, Hadrumetum and Sabraia were in the hands of the Phœnicians, and all manner of fly-by-nights were tramping down the Scythian Trail from Mukallah to Tyre and Sidon. Byzantium and Chersonnesus were Greek. Are you with me?”

“Yes,” I said.

“Very well, then. Now, in the face of all this, what do you think would be the natural reaction of the Portuguese?”

“Why,” I cried, “it’s obvious! They would make a raft and get away from it all! They would put to sea, hoping the Canary Current would carry them across the North-Eastern Atlantic Basin into the North Equatorial Current, and so *via* the Gulf Stream to a point on the coast of North Carolina!”

“Exactly. But obviously something went wrong with their calculations, and I think I know what it was. Therefore, my friend, you and I are going to make that historic voyage all over again. We are going to prove that in fact the raft, starting from the Spanish Sahara coast in order to catch the Canary Current at its strongest, just about the Tropic of Cancer, was drawn by mistake down towards the North-Western Atlantic Basin, forced by the prevailing high winds across the track of the South Equatorial Current, caught up in the Brazil Current, carried down past the Falkland Islands, and so irretrievably swept into the northern edge of the West Wind Drift, which took it clean across the Indian Ocean. From a point about latitude 40° S., longitude 100° E., it was then picked up by the cold West Australian Current, rushed across the Tropic of Capricorn, and deposited safe and sound in the Cocos Islands – Miguel, castanets and all. Let me see now, we’re just outside Woking. If I were you I’d put my feet up – we’ve quite a journey ahead of us.”

Three days later, having made camp some two hundred miles south of Cape Bojador and paid off the native bearers, we began the task of constructing a raft of cork trees, lashing them together with strong rope. “I don’t know how the Portuguese lashed them together,” said Mrs. Dyson, “but I’m damned if I’ll let a



*"If the floods go on subsiding at this rate we'll be faced by a serious drought."*

little thing like that stand in my way. You can easily land yourself in difficulties in an experiment of this sort if you carry your passion for historical accuracy too far. For one thing, I don't propose for one moment to dress up like a 500 B.C. Portuguese, and I don't expect you to, either."

As a result of this line of reasoning our equipment included a portable gramophone and two large tins of instant coffee. "If the Portuguese had had instant coffee you don't think they'd have been fools enough to leave it behind, do you?" said Mrs. Dyson. We also had harpoons, hot-water bottles, an anchor, a Skye terrier, a radio transmitter, knives, forks and spoons, an outboard motor to be fitted only in the direst need (it was washed away on the second afternoon), a paraffin stove, some eggs, and Mrs. Dyson's piano-accordion. I never found out what was in all the crates and wicker baskets which were stacked in the living quarters (a kind of summer-house aft), but the presence of a framed reproduction of *A View of Delft* led me to the conclusion (subsequently confirmed) that Mrs. Dyson habitually took with her on her trips as many of her earthly possessions as could conveniently be carried by somebody else.

I shall never forget the scene some twelve days later as we scrambled aboard the raft\* and were pushed out into the current by sixty small boys in loin-cloths. It was raining slightly. Overhead the helicopters circled like huge birds as daring cameramen recorded our departure for posterity. The B.B.C. interviewers politely waved goodbye from the shelter of a group of palm trees. The I.T.N. interviewers waded out up to their brocade waistcoats, brandishing microphones for a last-minute message.

"Tell England," said Mrs. Dyson, "that the spirit of Raleigh and Frobisher lives on!"

"Thank you, Mrs. Frobisher. And now, Mr. . . ."

But we were by this time heading out to sea at a speed of about a knot. Fireworks made a brave display along the shore. From the top of a minaret an enormous banner floated in the breeze: *The Ken Tuki Expedition Relies On Tylers' Tubeless Tyres—Why Don't You?* Out in the bay a motley flotilla of native craft raised oars

\* Mrs. Dyson had whimsically christened it the Ken Tuki, her maternal grandmother having been born in the U.S.A.

or dipped tops'ls in salute – dhows, proas, sloops, galleys, coasters, junks, barquentines, sampans, feluccas, brigs, catamarans, coracles and what I took to be a skiff. In twenty minutes the coastline was but a misty blur behind us. Before us stretched the ocean. Above us gathered the storm clouds. Into the only easy chair in the summer-house flopped Mrs. Dyson, looking green. The great adventure had begun!

As I think of it now, I cannot help feeling that if Mrs. Dyson had not succumbed to seasickness at quite such an early stage in the proceedings, leaving me to do the cooking, mark our progress on the chart, exercise the dog, deal with sharks, and carry out various scientific experiments for the benefit and enlightenment of the Royal Society, *The Lancet*, the Astronomer-Royal and a man in Northampton who had invented a foolproof unsinkable rubber duck with a self-rotating propeller, things might have turned out differently. As it was, we were washed ashore about a fortnight later on a deserted stretch of beach between Ynysdeullyn and Penclegyr; and when Mrs. Dyson, soaked to the skin and holding out a few strings of brightly coloured beads, knocked at the door of the nearest cottage and asked in halting Portuguese if the chief or one of his warriors would take us to the place of the castanets I was surprised that we got away with our lives. In point of fact we only just caught the last train to Swansea, and it stopped at every station.

I am often asked whether I consider the great Anfodo Expedition to have been worth the trouble, since it did not, on the face of it, seem to throw much light on the castanets whose presence on that far-off island had baffled mankind for over eight years; and I never have any hesitation in replying that for me it was worth every moment. For one thing, I had not previously had an opportunity to see the wild beauty of Wales. For another thing, the voyage itself was crammed with dramatic incident. There was the fight with the giant squid, which came aboard at midday on the Tuesday and led Mrs. Dyson a merry dance before she managed



*"I thank God for television. He used to sit and stare at me like that."*

to fling herself on it and tie its legs together, when it proved to be a lot of seaweed. There were those idyllic evenings while we lay becalmed off Ilfracombe and Mrs. Dyson, now convalescent, brought her armchair out on deck and played some of Ketèlby's works on the piano-accordion. There were nights of fearful tempest, when the waves broke over our frail craft like liquid mountains and we couldn't get the stove going for love or money. There were the arguments about the proper way to read the compass, the fruitless search for the Book of Instructions that came with the radio transmitter, and Mrs. Dyson's exciting discovery that we had forgotten to bring a rudder. There was the pleasure steamer that pulled up alongside while its passengers took snaps and tossed us pieces of ham roll. There was the fascinating experiment conducted by Mrs. Dyson on the fifth day, when she threw me overboard on the end of a rope to prove that barracuda will not deliberately attack a drowning man except in cases of extreme hunger. There were the playful dolphins, the wonder of phosphorescence glowing on our pilchards as we turned them out of the tin, the feeling of being free at last from the evergrowing tedium of city life . . .

And of course there was our encounter with the fearful *cupressus macrocarpa* – that fabled monster of the deep about whose existence terrified mariners have hinted ever since mediæval times, but of whose actual appearance or behaviour no authentic record was available until Mrs. Dyson's article in last July's *Science is Fun*. I cannot do better than quote from the article:

Contrary to popular belief the *cupressus macrocarpa*, or two-toed sea monster, does not noticeably suckle its young and has only six humps. The specimen which attempted to overturn our raft on November 30 was approximately fifty yards long when fully unfurled, and rather thin. Its tongue was dusty. Its hide was encrusted with limpets or something, and its head seemed to be on upside-down. When my assistant tickled it behind the ears (he is by nature foolhardy\* and was suffering from the effects of over-exposure) it made snuffling noises and tried to bite his leg off. It would not look at worms, but appeared to like bread and butter. It propelled itself along just below the surface by wagging its feet about. It didn't seem to have any friends. On the second day of its visit, while trying to eat the port side of the raft, it got a cork tree stuck in its throat and went away. Before that we were able to take flashlight photographs of the monster in eleven different poses, but they didn't come out.

I must say I am proud to have been associated with this investigation into one of the age-old mysteries of the deep. As to the riddle of the castanets, I am able to add a happy postscript. The solution came, to Mrs. Dyson's deep gratification, just over a week after our return, when a sailor in Walton wrote to tell us that he had left the castanets behind by mistake when his schooner put in to Anfodo for water some ten years ago. He had bought them second-hand in Brazil as a present for his sister. With regard to Miguel, probably the less said about him the better.

\* This is an exaggeration.

#### GLOSSARY

Royal Marriage	K & Q of trumps
Dr. Chetwynd	a mutual friend
<i>m'groco</i>	a drink made from fermented hats
St. Malo	a French resort
civilization	a colloquialism for the south of England
Byzantium	Istanbul
<i>A View of Delft</i>	a painting by Vermeer
knot	a nautical mile per hour
sloop	a one-masted cutter-rigged vessel
pilchards	sea fish





*"Yes, with hard work and evolution this could be a paradise."*

# THE LAST OF THE

# HYPOCHONDRIACS

By David Stone

IT was a lot of things – being thirty, the opening of the rugby season, the tailor saying he thought he ought to remeasure me. I felt *mortal*, trapped in a circle of getting up, working, drinking and smoking overmuch, going to bed . . . I had to face the fact I was no longer the clean-cut hero of the Freshmen's Trial.

Then someone suggested: "Why not go to Botsey Manor for a week or so?"

My first reaction was to laugh. Botsey Manor is a back-to-Nature hydro near Andover, featured in the papers from time to time as a rustic decoking unit for over-indulgent and ageing millionaires; a place for those with genuine ailments, as well, but surely not somewhere to provide solace for a hypochondriac with a normal London syndrome.

Then someone else – a fortyish P.R. man – said he'd lost two stone there. But it was a journalist's description of Botsey as "full of the most tremendous willing fruits" which finally made my mind up for me.

That afternoon I telephoned Botsey. A thin voice, redolent of Earth Ray Thought-Forces, diffidently said I could have a single room on the Sunshine Floor for thirty guineas a week. *Thirty!* But I rationalized: less than the night flight to Lisbon, half the fare to Catania, – in a word, a snip. And how well it will make me feel, how much good it will do me!

On the letter from Botsey Manor confirming my reservation was printed in red:

PLEASE ARRIVE BEFORE  
THE CLOCK STRIKES FOUR

In fact, it was just before ten when I crunched up the driveway. SLOW DOWN, said a notice, PATIENTS WALKING. *Patients.* I shivered slightly. My headlights caught the tails of parked cars: a 1961 Cadillac, a new Rolls-Royce, several Bentleys, a Thunderbird, a Facel-Vega . . .

No SMOKING IN THE MANOR, said an ashtray by the front door. I dogged out my butt and went in.

"I'll show you where to park your car," said a small woman in brown lace.

"What about my suitcases?" I asked.

"Oh, the porter'll bring those," she said, and directed me to a car park about half a mile away.

"What about my suitcases?" I asked the woman when we got back to the Manor.

She looked around for them, and I explained they were in the car.

She watched me carry them back to the house.

"You're sure it's all right?" she whispered suddenly. "You haven't got a *condition*?"

"Goodness me, no," I found myself booming. "I feel in tiptop shape."

The Manor was like the Great Eastern Hotel. Two ladies who looked as though they had stayed alive to





greet an Army of Liberation shuffled by.

My room on the Sunshine Floor was perfectly adequate, and I lit a cigarette and took a soothing puff. Suddenly my door opened, and a man wearing what looked like fencing kit came in. I tried to hide my fag behind my back, but he smiled amiably.

"It's quite all right to smoke in here," he said, and he introduced himself as Mr. Singleton, the Chief Specialist. The fencing clothes were, in fact, his professional dress.

He sat down and gave me a pep talk about Botsey.

"We're all human," he observed in a rich Welsh voice, "and we all know the perils of modern civilization. We abuse Nature. What we try to do at Botsey Manor is give you a real clean-out, get rid of all that tension. You're very tense, aren't you?"

I was, and there was a very simple reason: the relish he had put on the word "clean-out." However, I merely nodded.

"What we do here," he went on, "is get you back into fighting trim. You'll feel better, you'll look better, you'll be ready to return to your business life rejuvenated."

As he spoke I studied him closely. He was one of the most desperately unhealthy looking men I had ever seen. He was about fifty, and he looked as though he would have a good story to tell Mr. Maugham. Also he had a slight cold.

"I'm putting you on the juice diet for a few days, and to-morrow there'll be massage, a salt rub and we'll have another talk."

Just as he was going I remembered something I'd been meaning to ask.

"Where's the bathroom?" I said.

"We don't have baths," he said, and was gone.

At seven the next morning a cheery voice bounced me from sleep. A white-coated figure was putting a tray by my bed. On it was a glass of hot water and half an orange.

Mr. Singleton breezed in again for our talk. His cold was worse.

"We all wear dressing gowns here during the day," he said.

I put on my woolly robe and went downstairs to the hall. All that it needed was a band playing "Nearer my God to Thee" and it would have been a dead ringer for the *Titanic*.

Many of the people had towels over their arms, and



"It's a father fixation."

\*  
JAC/KW

were hobbling to and from rooms marked MASSAGE, COLONIC, SMOKING, JUICE DIET, and SALT RUB.

On some people the effects of the grain and the grape were clearly visible; with others, time alone had been less kind than he might. I was overcome with two emotions: acute embarrassment, and the feeling of being an impostor.

The massage was harmless, and the salt rub turned out to be just what it said. Then I went to lunch.

The waitress put a meat cube in a cup and poured hot water on it, then handed it to me.

I took it and sat next to three dowagers who had finished their meal.

"I never think the *canard pressé* at Lapérouse is as good as the Tour d'Argent," said one.

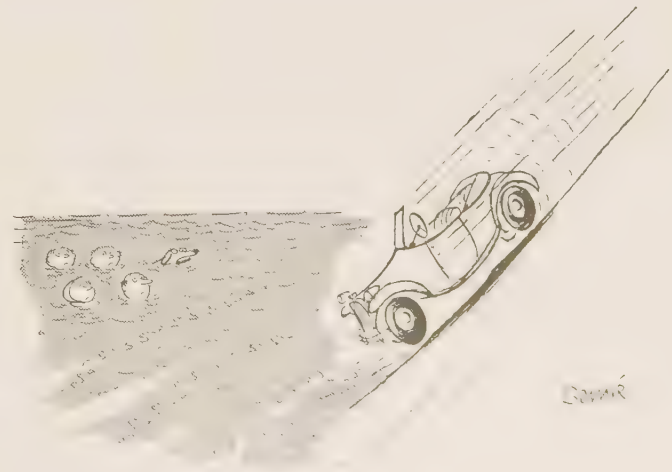
"Especially with game chips and that *thick* gravy," said another.

"And those *ices*!" said the third.

I walked away quickly and went into SMOKING.

There was a large, red-faced man in the room, puffing away on a huge cigar. When he saw me he started laughing.

"Damn fine show here," he said. "I've had nothing





but hot water for a fortnight. Lost two stone. Ha ha ha." I got the impression that he was going mad, and I went as quickly as I could.

I had nothing to do until dinner, and after that nothing until bed. There was a notice board on the wall, and I thought it might suggest some diversion.

One postcard was pinned on it: WILL WHOEVER TOOK MRS. MIRVINGTON'S COPY OF THE WAY OF REDEMPTION PLEASE RETURN IT IMMEDIATELY, it said.

Mr. Singleton sent for me. He now had a cough as well.

"Well, clead oud do-morrow. You're dowed for a colodic."

The buffoon from the smoking-room was in the hall as I walked through.

"Had your clean-out yet?" he said, roaring with laughter, and mimed what would happen.

An old lady saw my horror-struck face and asked me what was the matter with me.

"Nothing," I said, and went over to the telephone booth.

I got through to London Airport promptly and the man said there was a night flight to Lisbon and they would gladly take a cheque.

I packed, and then sought out Mr. Singleton and told him I was going. He sneezed heavily.

"You nebber doe wed you mide *hab* do cub bag," he mumbled, and shook my hand.

The buffoon watched me carry my cases out.

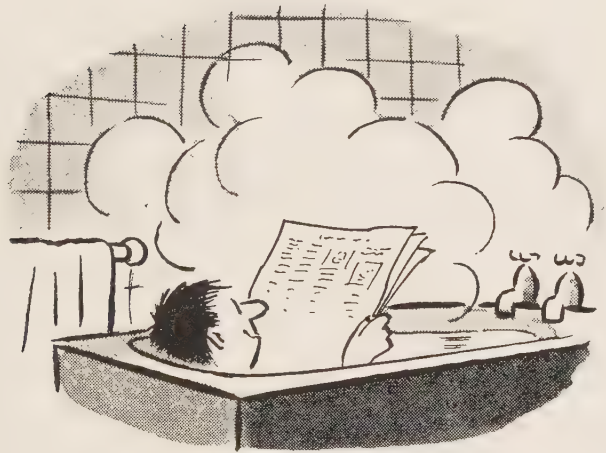
"Whatever you do, don't have a heavy meal," he shouted. "Chap last week ate twenty-four Mars bars on the trot and they had to use the stomach pump." This was so funny I think he had a stroke, but I didn't look in my rear-view mirror.

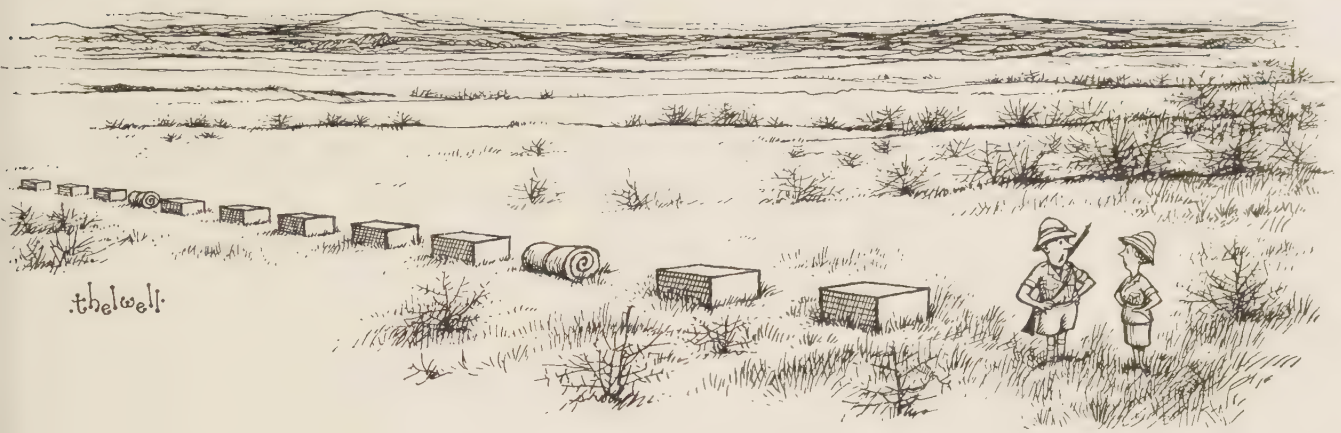
I reached Lisbon in the wee small hours, and my kindly host was there to greet me.

"How are you?" he said.

"Never felt better," I replied.

Then I sneezed.





*“I’d forgotten that they’d achieved their independence as from today.”*

# NATIONAL LOVE INSURANCE

By Judith Kreuser

**D**on’t get me wrong; there are a bunch of things over here in England that I think are really *great*, but sometimes I get teed off with the way you British will get a good thing going and then just drop it. Take this National Insurance bit – it’s a swell idea, but you stop with health. I know as sure as shooting that if ever the U.S. latches on to your plan, it won’t be long before we have something like National Holiday Insurance, protecting us from other Americans while touring Europe, or National Status Insurance, protecting our investments in foreign sports cars. For Pete’s sake, don’t let the U.S. get the better of you in a field where you have such a head start. For instance, I’ve got an idea that should really swing over here; how about National Love Insurance?

All you have to do is knock another deduction off the weekly pay; most people won’t even notice one more or less. And then you print up a lot of official-looking (“said persons” and “aforementioned”, etc.) forms called Serious Intentions Claims. You get the guy and his girl to sign one – that will make two people happy, her and her mother – and then they start collecting.

Start off with courtship, which is usually pretty expensive. See, you give the two a whole bunch of

coupons. Then the fellow can get her flowers and candy, they can go to the movies cheap, and he gets a cut on the price of gas. She can buy some clothes and stock up on stuff for the new home. You’ll have to set up a string of national stores; call them HOPE CHESTS or something schmaltzy. They can get more coupons with a written recommendation from a doctor.

When the guy pops the question, you have them show the written proposal and then give them the rings. Get this; have the rings fitted by your N.H.I. people who aren’t busy taking out foreigners’ appendixes. And keep the human touch; give them back the proposal as a souvenir, maybe even framed.

The weddings can really be a blast. Dignified, though, of course. Start with an Office Collection Bonus. Give them the gowns and top hats. Let them invite a hundred people each, and give these people coupons for wedding presents. Then every month have a big mass wedding. Use the biggest church of each religion (like Westminster Abbey) and let the Lord Mayor run the civil marriages. How about an off-season bonus to avoid the June rush? Huge receptions can be held, with name bands and people like Adam Faith singing, and everyone will have a ticket for a good feed and enough booze for a couple of toasts. Then give the newly-marrieds passes on British Railways for honeymoons; they can stay in the remote hotels that aren’t doing so well.

So we’ve got them hitched, but N.L.I. doesn’t stop now. There will be automatic anniversary gifts every year. They can pay a little extra and get annual remembrances of their first date, first lovers’ quarrel, etc. And free counselling, of course. Trips home to Mother can be tossed in, too. But the biggest deal will be the Happy Marriage Bonus. See, give them an annual bonus for every year they manage to stick

together, and see what happens to the divorce statistics!

But suppose a marriage hits the rocks, and they decide to call it quits. Then N.L.I. can pay legal fees and alimony. And throw in a Second Try List, a catalogue (illustrated, Technicolor) of available males and females – get them over the hump and back in circulation.

Let's say someone just doesn't dig marriage – okay, have a Conscientious Objectors Claim; anyone that signs it doesn't have to chip in on the insurance. And limit the plan to the people who pay in, or England will be for marriages what Reno is at home for

divorces. Here's a neat catch; the Diminishing Returns Clause. With each wedding the benefits decrease, and after the fifth wedding the applicant is on his own. So much for opportunists!

Here's why I think this love insurance would really click. Now people don't want to pay into something unless they're going to get something back, right? So with N.L.I. the people who might have stayed single and raised chrysanthemums or something are all going to head for the nearest altar. You used to be a maritime power; now you'll be a married-time power. And believe me, you'll have caught the Yanks with their pants down!



*Brockbank*

# THE CARE OF THE MIDDLE-AGED

By H. F. Ellis

**T**he Law of the Excluded Middle, well known to logicians, asserts the principle that between two contradictories, A and not-A, no third or middle term is possible. There appears to be a widespread and dangerous belief among sociologists and others that this Law can be extended from logic to life. So much emphasis is now placed upon the Care of the Young and the Care of the Old that the very existence of those who are neither the one nor the other is in danger of being forgotten or at best ignored. For every hundred books, pamphlets and articles dealing with Babyhood, The Growing Boy, Teenage Problems, or the Old Folks, it would be difficult to find one that tackles, frankly and knowledgeably, the distresses and difficulties of the Forties and Fifties. The same is true of TV programmes, films, lectures, even plays. Clubs, centres, societies, clinics and institutes designed exclusively for young or old spring up almost daily. How many Homes for the Middle-aged have been built in the past ten years? Where is the man of forty-five to look for the guidance and help he so badly needs? The answers to these questions reveal an almost total disregard for what is perhaps the most vital bracket in all our age-groups.

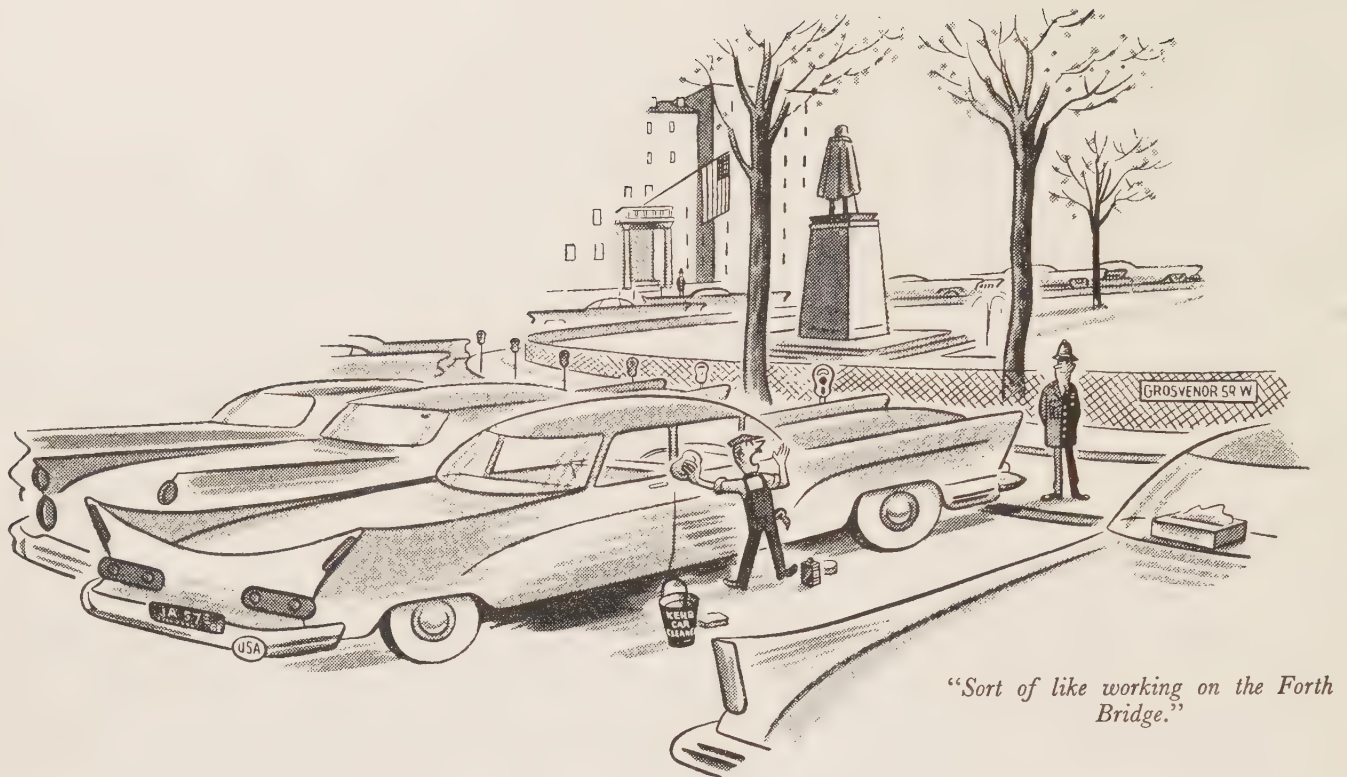
What are the facts? The latest figures available at the present writing show that there are some 17,468,000 persons in the United Kingdom between the ages of thirty-five and fifty-nine. No precise definition so far as I know has ever been laid down for middle age, but the above limits will probably be generally agreed, with some dissent from those in their late thirties and early sixties. Out of a total population of rather more than fifty-one million *over a third* belong to this Forgotten Bracket, as compared with less than a sixth (at 8,371,000) for the Old and only 18,279,000, or not much more than a third, of the pampered Young. Numerically at least the middle-aged have a right to demand equality of care and consideration with any other group.

But mere numbers are not a conclusive argument. What is of far more consequence is that the Middle Group is without question the most important of all to the nation's daily life. The Future is said to belong to Youth and they are welcome to it. But it has not arrived yet; and when it does they will be middle-aged. The Present, which is a far heavier responsibility, is in the hands of the forties and fifties. I will not dwell on the multifarious duties and burdens, the high executive posts, directorships, headmasterships, colonelcies, the financial strains, all the intolerable stresses of life and leadership that fall upon this age-group at a time when its physical and mental powers are on the decline. A single pointer will serve. Were it not for the middle-aged, who would exercise that constant care of the Young and the Old, upon which so much emphasis is placed? Is it to be supposed that the young would take soup to septuagenarians or the old run rock-'n'-roll clubs for the teenagers? It is not. Only the middle-aged, busiest and most harassed of all brackets, can find the time and energy to manage other people's lives for them.

And yet for this splendid, hard-pressed section of the population, despised by the young and pestered by the old, frustrated, balding, rushed, dyspeptic, over-



*"Cut the imitations and get on with the job."*



“Sort of like working on the Forth Bridge.”

taxed and indispensable, next to nothing has up to now been done.

It is my hope in later papers on this very new science of mediatrix to deal in detail with a number of the special problems that beset the middle-aged, their causes, symptoms and consequences, and to suggest in outline some of the means by which they may be overcome, or at least ameliorated. We shall have to speak of Neaniaphobia and of the organization of anti-youth clubs; of personal problems connected with clothing, drink, the dropping of tobacco ash and kindred matters; of the ever-present fear of becoming a bore, or its even more disastrous absence; of the so-called Dependability trauma; of pin-pricks and how to guard against them; of rehabilitation clinics; of ailments, more particularly in others; of pomposity and the onset of spectacles; of advice-resistance in other age-groups and modern methods of treating the resulting neuroses; of wise and timely preparation in the late fifties to fit men and women to play their full part in the calmer bracket that will soon enclose them. We shall probably not have to speak of sex, which mediatrix agrees is better handled on TV.

But first it is necessary to face up boldly to the question. What *is* middle-age? Nobody can be helped who is either unable to recognize it or unwilling to own up to it. Admission, as with alcoholics, is of course an essential preliminary to treatment.

It is customary among mediatrix to adopt approximately the method of classification employed by the late Sir Arthur Evans to distinguish the successive phases of Minoan civilization. Thus Early Middle Age I and II (E.M. I and II) are followed by Middle Middle Age, which is divided into three phases and in turn gives way to Late Middle I and II. This is greatly to be preferred, owing to individual idiosyncrasies, to any attempt to sub-classify by actual years of age. The classification generally accepted, together with the characteristics symptomatic of each phase, is as follows:

E.M.I (Transitional A.) Amusement at being called “sir” by young fellows of eighteen. First signs of pomposity, e.g. when discussing school reports, smoking cigars or preparing car for long journey. Pyjama coat no longer tucked inside trousers. Home carpentry may begin.

#### “LENINGRAD AND MOSCOW

We still have a few places on our combined sea cruise to Leningrad with return by air from Moscow at 77 gns., all inclusive, for 16 days. Nine whole days in the U.S.S.R. – room with bath and sightseeing included.”

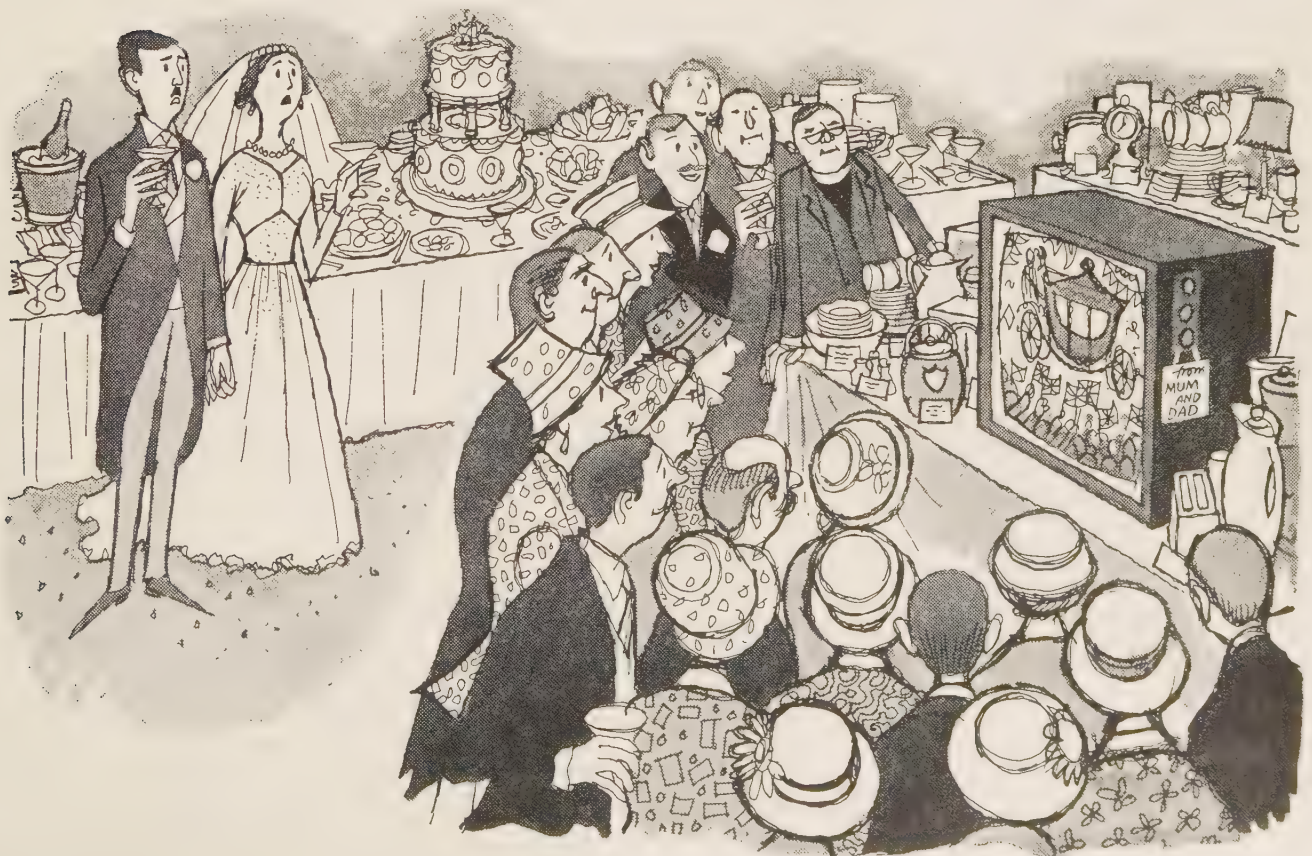
– *Sunday Times Advertisement.*

Decadence, decadence.

- E.M.II Collar up to 15½. Stem of pipe freely pointed at opponent when arguing. Phrase "I'm not as young as I was" still used playfully and without conviction. Tendency to ask to see the manager when annoyed in restaurants and shops. Incipient petrification of views (watch for inclination to classify other people as "sound" or "unsound").
- M.M.I First Vice-presidency of local club offered. Reluctance to look closely at crown of head in tailor's fitting-room. Change from gin to whisky before dinner. Sudden aghast realization in mid-sentence that one is in fact saying that manners/summers/new potatoes/batsmen/cars were better in the old days. Touch of defiance when eating shell-fish.
- M.M.II Headmasters look too young for the job. First use of phrase, expressed or unexpressed "It's hardly worth getting a new tennis racket/dinner jacket/pair of bathing things". Short-lived decisions to take things up (painting, reading history, cactuses). Annoyance when young men of twenty-five do not call one "sir".
- M.M.III Involuntary grunts when picking objects off floor still thought to be half-humorous and deliberate. Feeling of surprised nausea when school contemporaries get knighthoods. Final abandonment of inverted commas when saying "At my age . . ." coupled with delayed dismay at instinctive pleasure on seeing somebody of same age described in print as "comparatively young man".
- L.M.I Absolute conviction that manners/summers/batsmen/etc. were better in the old days. Waistcoat almost permanently covered with tobacco ash. Lobster finally given up. Dislike of young people beginning to fade. Occasional doubt whether one has not said the same thing to the same person quite recently. Walking stick carried in the country to point things out with.
- L.M.II (Transitional B.) Indifference as to whether one has said the same thing to the same person recently or not. Longing for panama hat. Pity for what life has done to contemporaries. Belief that one has a certain quiet distinction when nodding off after luncheon. Tendency to overplay amusing premature traits of old age. Brandy.

"Part of the regular publicity job of the great champagne firms is to conduct parties round their impressive cellars; even Mr. Khrushchev included them in his tight French itinerary last spring . . ." - *The Times*.

Explains a lot.



UMPIRES, REFEREES AND  
GENERAL ASSURANCE  
SOCIETY

Cover Against ALL  
Contingencies

Injuries at Square-Leg  
a Speciality

CUN. 80113

# OWZAT!

The Weekly Journal for Umpires, incorporating 'Round or Over'; 'White Coat Weekly', etc. etc.

## SLEEPY?

It is fatal to doze in the field. Something might happen

Suck a  
**PEPPO-STICK**

"It Looks Like a Bail"

## EDITORIAL

IT seems that we are always recommending changes in the Official Laws in this column, and we make no apologies for so doing. "What was good enough for J. W. H. T. Douglas is good enough for me" may be all right for the Players, but Umpires must move with the times.

May we therefore draw attention to Law 46, and the long-standing tradition that in any appeal against the light "it is the light as it affects the striker which is the deciding factor." Our point is so obvious that we wonder we have not raised it before, viz., how is an umpire to decide whether or not a batsman (who under modern slowcoach conditions may not in fact be a striker) can

see? Surely the vital factor should be the light as it affects the umpire? Mr. E. W. Swanton, as is well known, has been agitating for yet a third interpretation, that the important thing is the light as it affects the commentator, but we would remind Mr. Swanton that umpires came before wireless telegraphy in any form. Let Mr. Swanton and other men of influence instead champion the umpire's cause, and ask themselves how they would like to be watching Griffin's elbow, Dexter's bat and Waite's gloves at one and the same time under a ten-tenths thunder-cloud at Old Trafford!

But I suppose we should be grateful that the Advisory County Cricket Committee have at least shelved the smaller ball.

## ROY WEBBER'S CORNER

Village and Club Cricket are rich in umpiring records, and the year 1925 outstanding. In that year, A. Pilcott, playing for Little Wameley v. Col. Bott's XI, umpired for half his own side's innings, giving five batsmen Out (one of them twice); himself went in to bat, in pads and umpire's coat as time was pressing, scored 28, gave out his fellow-batsman l.b.w.—a mild man who retired to the pavilion without protest—gave himself out for obstruction; and, when Col. Bott's men batted, bowled at one end throughout the innings (8 for 19) and, umpiring at the other, threw down the remaining three wickets. Local advocates of Brighter County Cricket lobbied for his appointment to the official Umpires' List, but nothing came of it.

It was in the same eventful year that B. H. Wetford (East Rumbling C.C.) sent three players off for eating.

## ARE OUR SIGNALS OUTDATED?—IV

### Noise

No one denies that cricket is noisier than it was, with helicopters clattering overhead and crowds doing the slow hand-clap. Many a snick now passes unheard that in Trouncer's day would have sounded like thunder. The hand cupped behind the ear, as a sign that the umpire heard nothing, would keep tempers on the field equable and cost nothing. More open to dispute is Umpire Frith's suggestion about the shout of "No Ball." Frith points out that umpires are in danger of straining their voices to pierce the prevailing hubbub, and suggests that a simple device would enable the umpire to administer a small electric shock to the batsman on the delivery of a no ball. Electricity travels faster than sound, so that the batsman would get a little extra warning. But it would be an irreparable loss if the umpire were deprived of one of his most important means of impressing his personality on the game.

Last month's article on throwing and dragging has produced a remarkable response from readers, with many suggested signals. We reproduce the most interesting on the right.



"He's throwing"



"He's dragging"



"He's throwing and dragging"



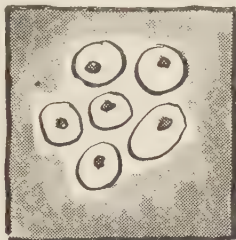
"He's pulled my trilby down over my eyes so that I can't see what's happening."



## GENUINE QUARZITE COUNTING PEBBLES

(Six in Set)

As used at Lord's, Tunbridge Wells, etc.  
Recommended by leading umpires



These improved pebbles are now obtainable in the smart new shape—"The Pebble with the Hole in it"—from all leading outfitters or direct from Cairngorm Quarries Ltd., Cairngorm, Scotland.

*The Pebbles You Can Trust*

## SOME HEALTH TIPS

DON'T remove the bails with an over-dramatic flourish at close of play, even if the TV cameras are watching. You are not as young as you were, and painful back injuries can result.

Do make sure of comfortable footwear. Even three days in the field in tight boots can be purgatory. H. W. Bagwood (Staffordshire) was dropped from the Minor Counties List in 1878 for persistently groaning "My feet are killing me" during bowlers' run-up.

DON'T move too fast at changeovers. Smouldering pipes can easily be fanned to life in the pocket, and even if a burned thigh is not sustained, it's no joke counting with a pebble that's been lodged in a red-hot bowl!

DON'T (except with very slow bowlers) try to focus your eyes on the bowling crease as the ball is delivered and then instantly refocus on the batsman at the far end in time to see the ball arrive. Continued focusing and refocusing can damage the eyes and confuse the brain. Experienced umpires have learnt to squint at one end. It doesn't matter which, though Elia Boothroyd (now retired) used to maintain that squinting at the far end made l.b.w. decisions child's-play.

— W. Grace, M.D. (No relation)

## CORRESPONDENCE

SIR,—In common with many others watching the Worcester-Glamorgan game I was horrified to see the square-leg umpire fall over while signalling a leg-bye. In my day it was a recognized thing that during the preliminary "knock" by the players the umpires practised standing on one leg—which, of course, is not as easy as it looks. One good tip is to turn out the toe of the supporting leg to as wide an angle as possible. An even distribution of players' caps and sweaters is also an aid. But practice, practice, practice is the only complete answer!—*H. Edgar Foleshill, Sevenoaks*

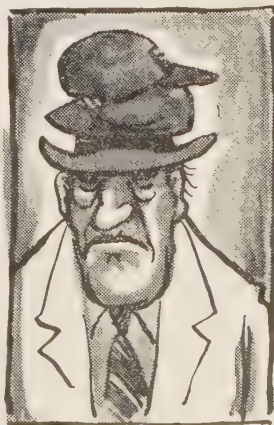
SIR,—Many are ready to raise a laugh at the expense of the umpire. It is hard to see why, unless it is a mere nervous reaction, like jokes about death and other unpleasant episodes in life. But need we play into their hands by sending them out into the middle in coats of ludicrously disparate lengths? If the TV toppers can all have their skirts the same distance from the ground, or even members of the Womens' Services on parade, surely it can be managed for two umpires. But it always looks as if the tall ones have got the short one's coats on. No wonder a titter so often runs round the spectators.—*Brian Piggish, Womersley*

SIR,—I know you like an umpiring anecdote. When P. W. Butterson was giving guard to Frank Woolley the batsman positioned his bat and said loudly, "Two leg." P.W.B., who had a "dry" wit, responded with, "The usual number, I believe." Shortly afterwards he bought a house in Finchley.—*Arthur Cream Dinger (100 next birthday), The Manse, Penzance*

SIR,—In common with your reader who signed himself "Old Lag," I feel that umpires generally could learn much from our brethren in the other legal profession. But I cannot agree with him that wigs would enhance our dignity on the field. They would be hot and uncomfortable. But the use of the black cap for "out" decisions would certainly be impressive.—*Edgar Thwaite, Painswick*

## CHESTER CUP

The Frank Chester award for this month goes to Umpire S. R. Boot of Bacup (Lancs.). In a League match he no-balled the "home" professional five times in an over for unfair tactics (using nail-file on seam of ball) and in the very next over dismissed three consecutive appeals for lbw from a bowler bowling left-arm round the wicket and outside the sight-screen. Well done, Sid!



LUBRO, 1s. 3d. and 2s. A fine oil in handy self-dispenser. Prepared especially for sight-screen wheels. Avoid play delays and angry barracking with LUBRO.

ANY OLD UMPIRE's coats gratefully received. All gifts acknowledged. Army & Navy Stores (Sports and Culture Section), Vitebsk, Belorussia, U.S.S.R.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS. Have You Read "The Hambleton Man"? Thrills of a little-known dig that disclosed a skeleton and six smooth stones. (Foreword by Frank Lee.) 6s. 6d. all outfitters.

DID YOU KNOW YOU COULD appeal against excessively harsh cries of "Score Card?" Get your copy of *Umpiring In Depth*, with 1001 little known legal rulings. M.C.C. Bookshop, Lord's.

Fit the famous ELASTOPOCKET in your coat. Springs back to shape on release of spare ball. Why be dowdy in the field? Box No. 41, all details.

FOR SALE. Genuine phonograph cylinder of W. G. Grace appealing for catch at wicket and Curls Rimmer on the "Not out." Very rare. Offers to Crickedisks, Marylebone Rd.

## CONFERENCE NEWS

The last get-together of the Midlands Branch was held at the "Blue Sight-screen," Burslem, Umpire Foulough in the chair. Umpire Cromp read a paper on "Wind Velocity in Relation to Stability of Bails" and a lively discussion ensued. Umpire Wardle reported a curious incident in a match at Porthall where he had had occasion to reprimand a visiting batsman for appearing without a shirt against a very hostile fast bowler. (Note: there is nothing in the laws about the batsman's attire above the waist.) Umpire Wood was severely censured by the Watch Committee for knocking up a return ball ("It were done in self-defence" he said) thus enabling a Crewe bowler distantly related to Mr. Wood to make a smart c. & b. which dismissed Grantham's top scorer and perhaps led to Crewe winning the B.R. Inter-junction Cup for the fourth year in succession. Umpire Foulough ruled, on an objection, that evidence of previous censurings of Mr. Wood for conduct during matches (whether B.R. matches or not) was inadmissible. Umpire Hewison called for a clarification of the word "normally" in note 4 to rule 25. Does it, he asked, mean dress as normally worn by the umpire in question or dress as normally worn by umpires generally? What of Umpire Bigg's ear-muffs? (Laughter). There was a disturbance in

(continued on page 706)

## OUR BOOK REVIEW

Books on umpiring continue to tumble from the presses, but Ronald Bolfin's *Thumb in the Sward* (Batter and Fritter, 9s.) is probably the only one to deal throughout with the state of the field of play. The whole business of covers or no covers is exhaustively discussed by eminent authorities, and the chapter on Outfield Grass in the Villages is instinct with the romance of the great old game. Mr. Bolfin, we feel, would be happy with the field alone; the arrival of the opening pair must seem almost an anti-climax. An appendix gives some invaluable tips on the removal of grass-stains, and the question of sawdust quality is raised at length. A book for every umpire's shelf.

# HEMINGWAY IN SPACE

By Kingsley Amis

The woman watched him and he made another sweep. There was nothing again but he knew one of them was around. It got so you always knew. After twenty years it got so you always knew when one of them was around.

"Anything?"

"Not yet."

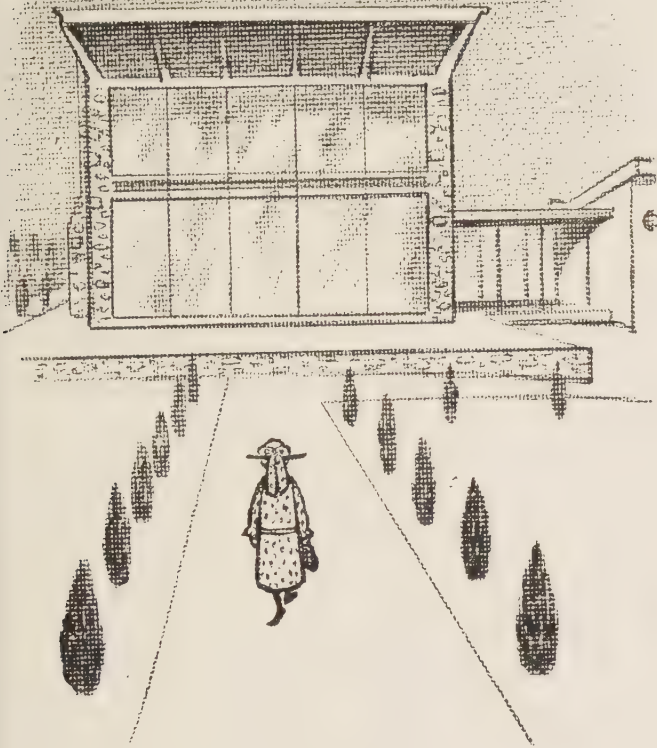
"I thought you could tell just where to find these things," she said. "I thought we hired you because you could take us straight to one of these things. I thought that was why we hired you."

"Easy now, Martha," the young fellow said. "Nobody can find xeeb where there aren't any xeeb, not even Mr. Hardacre. We'll come across one any minute now."

She moved away from the three of them at the instrument panel and her thighs were arrogant under the tight space jeans. You bitch, Philip Hardacre thought suddenly. You goddam, bored, boring, senseless bitch. He felt sorry for the young fellow. He was a pretty nice young fellow and here he was married to this goddam senseless bitch and it looked like he was too afraid of her to tell her to get the hell out although you knew he wanted to.

"I feel him near," the old Martian said, turning the bigger and more grizzled of his two heads towards Philip Hardacre. "We shall see him soon now."





*Sillince*

The woman leaned against the ship's side and stared out the port. "I can't think why you have to go hunting these monstrosities. Two days it's been since we left and we could have been in Venusport all that while instead of cooped up in this steel jalopy a couple of light years from civilization. What's so good about getting a xeeb even if you do get one? What does it prove, getting a xeeb?"

"The xeeb is the largest life-form in this part of the galaxy." The young fellow was a school professor or something like that and you could tell it from the way he spoke. "More than that it's the only sentient creature living out here in free space and it's ferocious, it's been known to take on a scout ship. It's the toughest damn thing there is. That's it, isn't it?"

"That's part of it," Philip Hardacre said. There was that although there was much more, the freedom out there and the stars against the black and the men small in their suits and afraid and yet not afraid and even the xeeb small in the vastness and the cool joy if the xeeb was a good one.

"He comes," the old Martian said in his whistling tones, his smaller head bent towards the screen. "See, lady."

"I don't want to see," she said, turning her back. It was a deadly insult under the ancient Martian code of honour and she knew it and Philip Hardacre knew she knew it and there was hate in his throat but there was no time now for hate.

He got up from the panel. There was no doubt about it. An amateur could have taken the blip for an asteroid or another ship but after twenty years you knew immediately. "Suit up," he said. "Spaceside in three minutes."

He helped the young fellow with the helmet and what he had been dreading happened, the Martian had taken out his own suit and was stiffly putting his rear pair of legs into it. He went over to him and put his hand between the two necks in the traditional gesture of appeal. "This is not your hunt, Ghlmu" he said in the archaic Martian courtly tongue.

"I am still strong and he is big and he comes fast."

"I know it, but this is not your hunt. Old ones are hunted more than they hunt."

"All my eyes are straight and all my hands are tight."

"But they are slow and they must be quick. Once they were quick but now they are slow."

"Har-dasha, it is thy comrade who asks thee."

"My blood is yours as in all the years, it is only my thought that must seem cruel, old one. I will hunt without you."

"Hunt well, Har-dasha, then. I await you always," the old creature said, using the ritual formula of acquiescence.

"Are we going to shoot this goddam whale or not?" The woman's voice was shrill. "Or are you and that thing going on whistling at each other all night?"

He turned on her savagely. "You're out of this. You're staying right here where you belong. Put that blaster back on the rack and take off that space-suit and start making food. We'll be back in half an hour."

"Don't you give me orders, you bum. I can shoot as well as any man and you won't stop me."

"Around here I say what everybody does and they do it." Over her shoulder he could see the Martian hanging up his suit and his throat went dry. "If you try to get in that airlock with us we head right back to Venus."

"I'm sorry, Martha, you'll have to do as he says," the young fellow said.

The two big Wyndham-Clarke blasters were ready primed and he set them both at maximum while they stood in the airlock and waited for the air to go. Then the outer door slid into the wall and they were out there in the freedom and the vastness and the fear that was not fear. The stars were very cold and it was black between the stars. There were not many stars and the black was vast where there were no stars. The stars and the black together were what gave the freedom. Without the stars or without the black there would not have been the freedom, only the vastness, but with the stars and the black you had the freedom as well as the vastness. The stars were few and the light from them was small and cold and around them there was the black.

He spoke to the young fellow over the suit radio. "Can you see him? Towards that big star with the small companion."

"Where?"

"Look where I'm pointing. He hasn't spotted us yet."

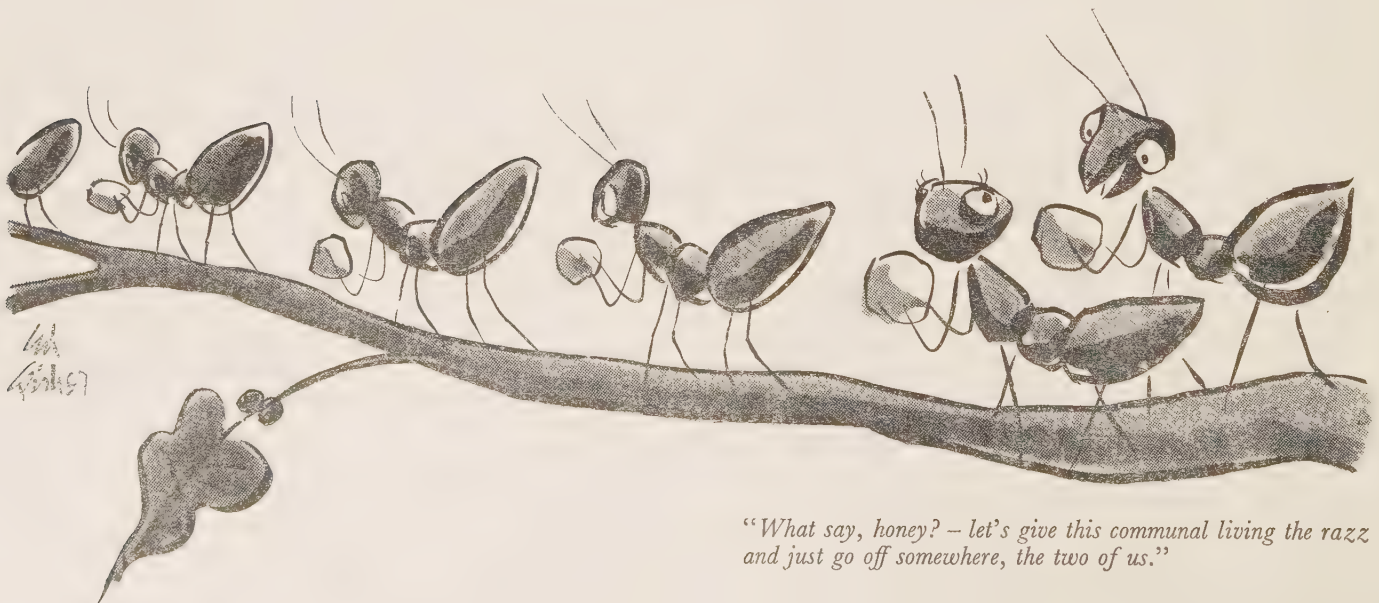
"How does he spot us?"

"Never mind that. Now listen. Each swoop he makes give him one shot. Just one. Then go forward on your suit jet fast as you can. That confuses him more than lateral movement."

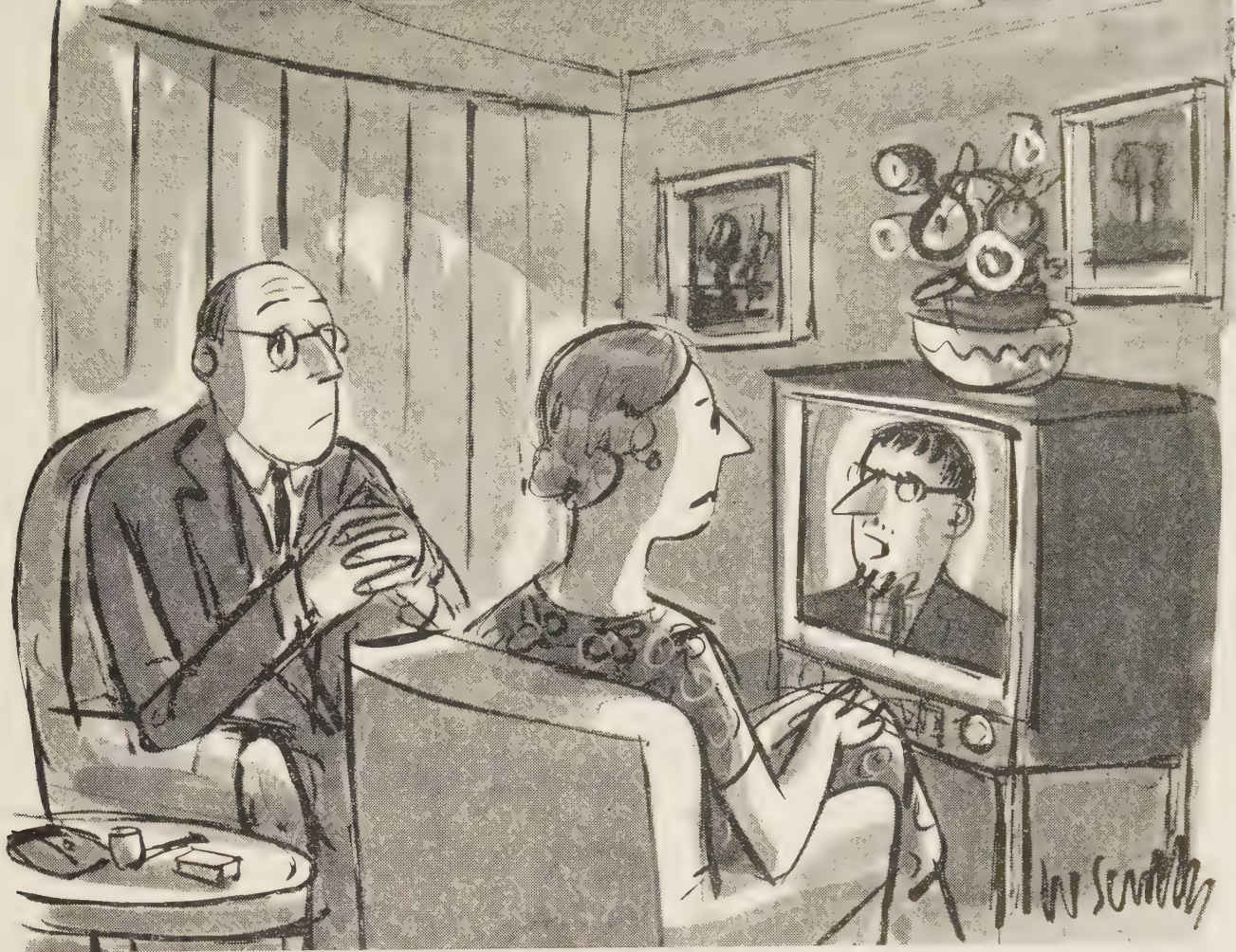
"You told me."

"I'm telling you again. One shot. He homes on your shot. Get ready, he's seen us, he's turning."

The great beautiful phosphorescent shape narrowed as it came head-on to them, then appeared to swell. The xeeb was closing fast, as fast as any he'd known. It was



*"What say, honey? — let's give this communal living the razz and just go off somewhere, the two of us."*



*"It is a typical story of family life: a nagging wife, her boozing husband, a stiletto-heeled sexy daughter, and the son out on bail."*

a big, fast xeeb and likely to be a good one. He'd be able to tell for sure after the first swoop. He wanted the xeeb to be a good one for the young fellow's sake. He wanted the young fellow to have a good hunt with a good, big, fast xeeb.

"Fire in about fifteen seconds, then jet," Philip Hardacre said. "And you won't have too long before his next swoop, so be ready."

The xeeb closed and the young fellow's shot arced in. It was too early to be a good shot and it barely flicked the tail end. Philip Hardacre waited as long as he dared and fired toward the hump where the main ganglia were and jetted without waiting to see where he had hit.

It was a good xeeb all right. From the way its phosphorescence had started to pulsate you could tell it had been hit somewhere in the nervous system or what passed for that but within seconds it had turned and begun another great beautiful graceful swoop on the two men. This time the young fellow held his fire a little longer and got in a good shot near the hump and jetted as he had been told. But then the xeeb dropped in the way they did once in a hundred times and xeeb and man were almost on each other. There was nothing for Philip Hardacre to do but empty his Wyndham-Clarke all at once in the hope that the loosing of so much energy would get the xeeb to change its mind and home on him instead. Then he was jetting forward at top speed and calling over the suit radio to make for the ship at once.

"It puffed something at me and I lost my blaster," came the young fellow's voice.

"Make for the ship."

"We won't get there, will we?"

"We can try. You may have damaged him enough with that last shot to slow him down or spoil his sense of direction," Philip Hardacre said. He already knew

that it was all over for them. The xeeb was only a few miles above them and beginning to turn for a fresh swoop, moving slower but not slow enough. The ship was above them too in the other direction. This was what you faced every time you hunted xeeb and when it happened at last it was just the end of the hunt and the end of the freedom and the vastness and they would have had to end some time.

There was a long arc of light from the ship and the xeeb was suddenly brighter than ever before for an instant and then the brightness went out and there was nothing there.

The Martian had fallen into a crouching position in the airlock and the third Wyndham-Clarke was still in his pincers. The two men waited for the outer door to close and the air to flood in.

"Why didn't he put on his suit?" said the young fellow.

"There wasn't time. He had about a minute to save us. A Martian suit takes much longer than that to put on."

"What would have got him first, the cold?"

"Airlessness. They respire quickly. Five seconds at most. Just enough to aim and fire." He was quick after all, Philip Hardacre thought.

Inside, the woman was waiting for them. "What happened?"

"He's dead, of course. He got the xeeb."

"Did he have to get himself killed doing it?"

"There was one weapon on board and one place to use it from," Philip Hardacre said. Then his voice went quiet. "Why are you still wearing your space-suit?"

"I wanted to get the feel of it. And you said to take it off."

"Why couldn't you have taken the gun into the airlock?"

Her eyes went dull. "I didn't know how the lock worked."

"But Ghlmu did. He could have operated it from in here. And you can shoot, or so you said."

"I'm sorry."

"Sorry I like," the young fellow said. He didn't sound like a school professor now, or afraid of her. "Sorry brings back that old guy as alive as ever he was, doesn't it? Sorry is about the best I ever heard. And sorry is something else too. Sorry as all hell is how I'll feel when I drop you off in Venusport and take the shuttle to Earth by myself. You like Venusport, don't you? Well, here's your chance to get lost in it."

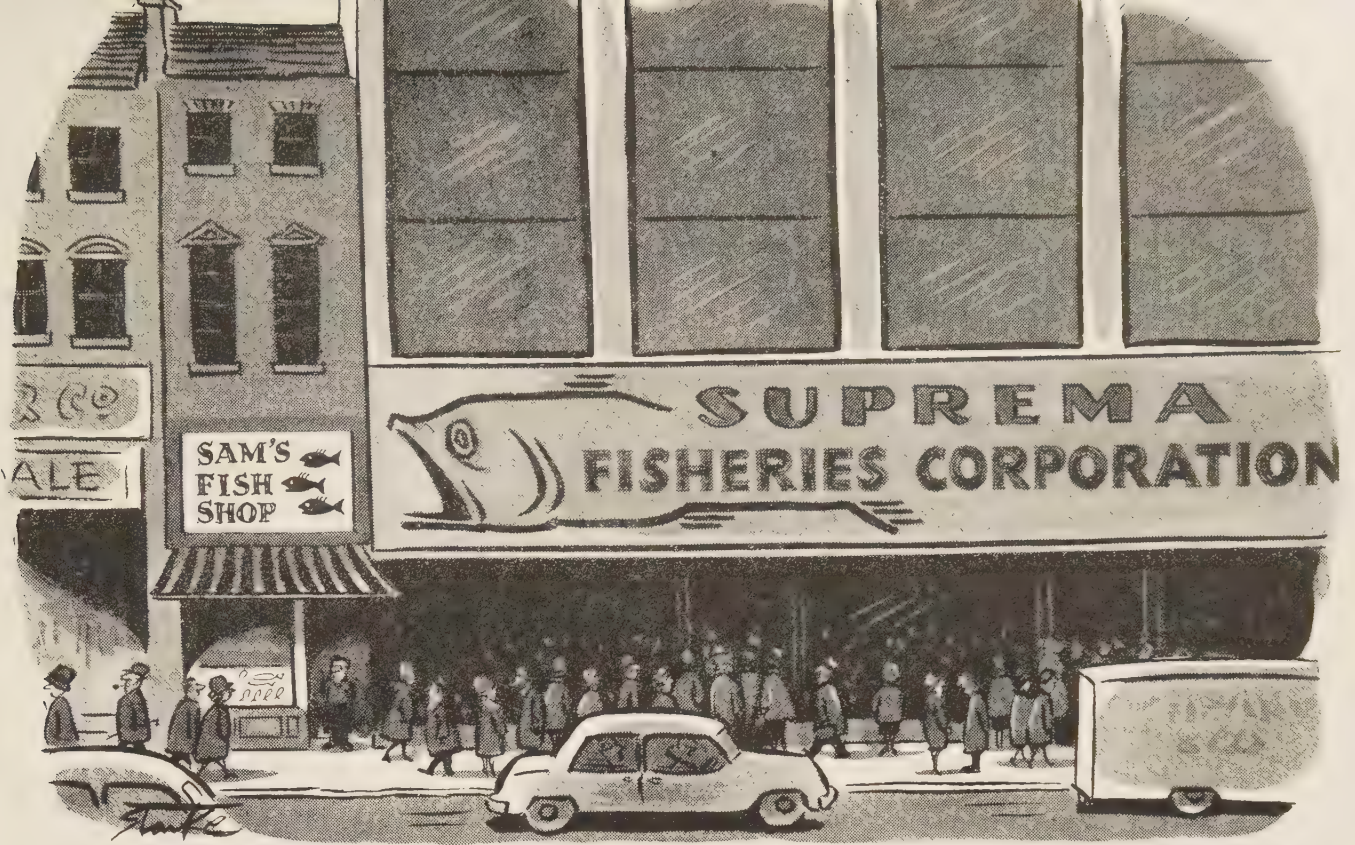
Philip Hardacre finished composing the old Martian's limbs and appendages and muttered as much as he knew of the prescribed incantation. "Forgive me," he said.

"Get supper," the young fellow said to the woman. "Right away."

"This was your hunt," Philip Hardacre said to his friend's body.



"Go on then, run with the herd."



## Flotsam

*An expedition has returned from Mount Ararat after an unsuccessful attempt to confirm the existence of the remains of Noah's Ark. Aerial photographs appeared to show a rotted structure beneath the snow*

It was after the hundred-and-fiftieth day,  
 When the Flood was finally dried,  
 They had sent the menagerie two by two  
 To fill the unfurnished world anew,  
 Till the last of their vanishing backs had been  
 Lost in the lush postfluvial green,  
 And the grunts and the bellowings died away  
 On the long wet mountain-side.

And the ship's company, tired of the trip,  
 Had gathered their gear below:  
 Puzzled to find how fond they had grown  
 Of the boxed-in berths that had been their own,  
 And half afraid of the new-found, wide,  
 Waiting wilderness over the side,  
 They had hung about in the silent ship,  
 Not wholly happy to go.

Everything even slightly small  
 Was bundled in bags and trunks;  
 Line and canvas, metal and wood,  
 Unscrewing whatever could be unscrewed

And beaten only by weight and bulk,  
 They had stripped her down to a standing hulk,  
 With the pencilled calendars up on the wall  
 And the pin-ups over the bunks.

And they in their turn went down the hill  
 With lebensraum and to spare:  
 And nothing came back to gnaw the wood,  
 And the weather, as promised by God, was good,  
 Till the climate changed in the world below  
 And a thin, preservative pall of snow  
 Covered the Ark, and does so still  
 In the cold dry upland air.

There it stands if you search for it,  
 Where it's stood these centuries long,  
 With the crabbed graffiti on shrunken walls  
 And over the rotted straw of the stalls  
 The names of the animals plain to see  
 In hieroglyphic or Linear B:  
 And the men who have cavilled at Holy Writ  
 Will have to admit they're wrong.

— P. M. HUBBARD



"Keep 'em flying, chaps."

# WHICH ?

# WHERE ?

# WHACKO !

By R. G. G. Price

"Don't you see yourselves as scourges?" I asked in a disappointed tone. I had hoped that the new Advisory Centre for Education, a sibling of the Consumers' Association, would not just be replying to inquiries from parents with judicial summaries of information about schools but would expose bad ones. I assumed their periodical *Where?* would go at least as far as *Which?* in giving details of bad buys. Mr. John Vaizey, the secretary, explained that, whatever the private opinions of himself and the chairman, Dr. Michael Young, the co-operation they were getting from the educational world was much too valuable to be dissipated by attacks on a small minority of blackspots. A.C.E. was not even going to say "This school is better than that." It was concerned simply with telling parents what kind of choice they had and how to pick out a good secondary modern school and answering their inquiries with

hard fact. It sounds as though many parents are going to find them useful and think them well worth the ten bob a year it costs to join. (They live in Bethnal Green: 18 Victoria Park Square, E.2.)

I should think that even deadpan recounting of facts could be pretty damaging, and I am perfectly sure that once Mr. Vaizey, who is, after all, already known as a tough commando on the educational front, gets really going he will find himself drawn into controversy, whether he likes it or not. One of the weaknesses of English education is that while everybody makes snooty remarks about headmasters and councillors and proprietors of private schools and teddy-boys and old boys and embittered class teachers and parliamentary complacency, there is not much specific, stinging, salutary criticism.

I was hoping that *Where?* was going to print things like this:

SHUPHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR THE SONS OF GENTLEMEN

Although the prospectus claims it stands in its own grounds, when you get right up to it you find all that shrubbery really belongs to the cemetery next door. "Fully qualified staff" means, in most cases, G.C.E., O level. Mr. T. Pinchin, who takes the Upper Sixth for Classics and Divinity, coaches the First XV, First XI and Shooting VIII, is Housemaster of School House, produces the end-of-term plays and concerts, is Scoutmaster and Cubmaster and is Chairman of the Debating, Literary, Philatelic and Handwork Societies, was dismissed from the Consular Service for pilfering. The boast that boarders are weighed fortnightly does not mention that the scales are never tested by the Weights and Measures Department. The examination success claimed ignores the fact that the boy had seven months' intensive cramming after leaving the school.

CHUMLEIGH MAGNA COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

Operative 4 gained admission to the B stream, sub-stream 11. He reports that the standard of staffing and equipment is high. Results are good. Discipline is maintained without undue severity. Mr. Hawtinglass wears a toupee and this tends to undermine his subject - Economic Geography. Accommodation for bicycles is inadequate.

SCREEP JUNIOR GIRLS' SCHOOL

Although praised for its architecture in a self-congratulatory brochure published by the County Council, the school is shoddily built. Pupils leaning too heavily against the walls of the cloakroom can divert the water supply. The headmistress has written innumerable articles in educational periodicals but spends very little time in the school. The deputy-head is always ready to sacrifice teaching to organizing litter-clearance. Operative 9 reports that the mistress taking nature study in the upper forms was unable to



## An Urban Artemis

recognize three common seaweeds. The prevailing wind is S.W. and blows from the Corporation dump.

### GREYMINSTER

This minor public school has only one really quotable old boy, Major-General Sir Hubert Pribham, and he is the author of *St. Paul, Letter-writer* and *Sayings of Stonewall Jackson*. It is going gently downhill under the present headmaster, a compromise appointment between two strong candidates in 1933. Operative 7 reports that the prefects are given excessive powers and the second master is generally believed to have been blackballed by a London club. Economy in the laboratories results in the distortion of many aspects of science. Food is adequate and samples analysed show no undue proportion of preservatives or decaying matter. The beds in C dormitory are too short.

### WICKERY LODGE

This residential nursery school advertises freedom, love and home cooking, but the standard reached in handwork and music is low. Operative 13 obtained a post on the staff with an unsatisfactory reference (Model C). There have been several cases of children being issued with a worn-out abacus and detaching and swallowing beads. Miss Primrose de la Tour, who produces fairy plays, has an infectious Northumbrian accent.

### ULCHESTER SECONDARY MODERN

The buildings are magnificent. The staff is large, well qualified and enthusiastic. There is a plentiful supply of good textbooks and demonstration material. Unfortunately the school is dominated by the Red Slashers gang. The wastage-rate of pupils is high. New boys have to dance on live coals. Lots are drawn for new girls. The extent of the use of home-made bombs is beginning to cause concern to the Education Committee.

### ST. HROSWITHA'S COLLEGE, OXFORD

Teaching in most subjects is sound, if tedious, though in theology it consists of little more than listening to essays and mumbling "Very good. Don't I remember your father?" The Master's long-awaited edition of the *Catullan Apocrypha* is no nearer completion and doubts of whether he has even begun it are having a degenerative effect on the esteem in which learning is held in the college. The attaching of the new Chair of Ballistic Engineering to this college has resulted in the addition of a dipsomaniac Tasmanian to the hazards of the front quad.

### JUDHAM HIGH SCHOOL

Exceptionally good examination results are obtained at the expense of . . .

Unhappily, it does not look as though *Where?* is going to be an educational popular paper. Useful, yes. Interesting, yes. Even entertaining. But lid-removing, I'm afraid not.

I loved a huntress once – an exquisite  
Small-handed, high-cheeked girl with raven locks.  
The streets we strolled had never seen a fox,  
Or if they had no one had hunted it.

She owned one record and it haunts me still,  
*The Noises of the Hunt* – all yelping hounds,  
Half-human shouts, horns blowing raspberry  
sounds;  
The whole thing culminating in "The Kill."

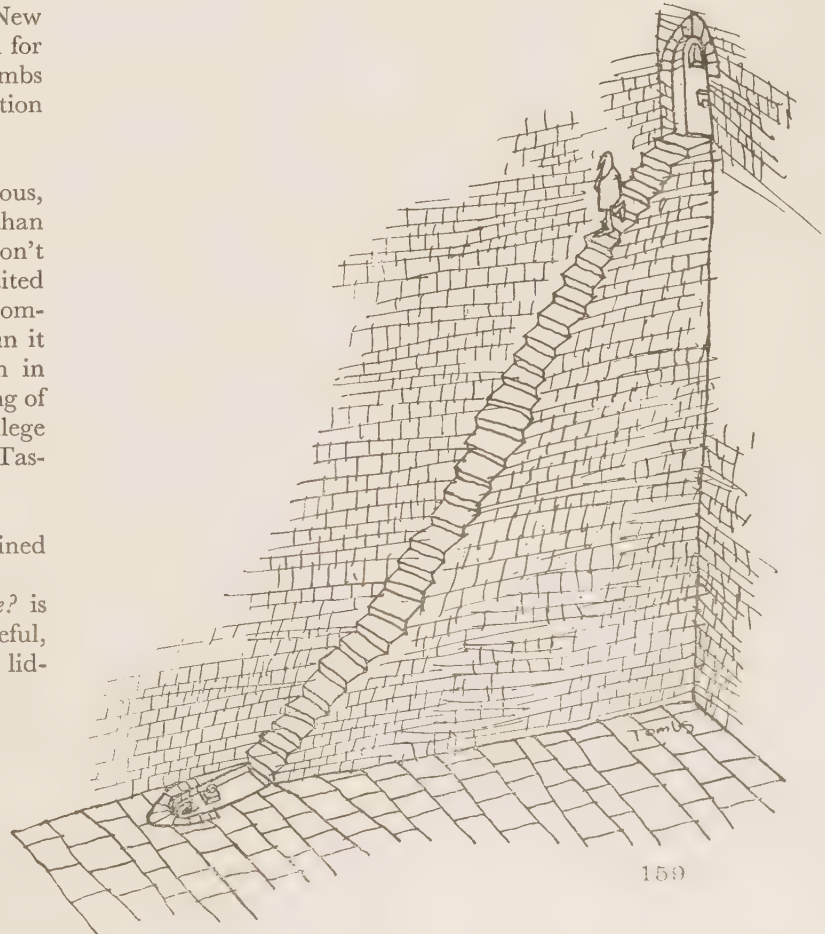
She played it every evening. I would wait  
And watch, while that cruel music clashed and  
jarred,  
The muscles of her face grow round and hard,  
The nostrils of the nose I loved dilate,

Smelling imagined blood. I did not mind;  
Without this odd arrangement to set free  
The black, ancestral longings in her, she  
Might, when it came to me, have been less kind.

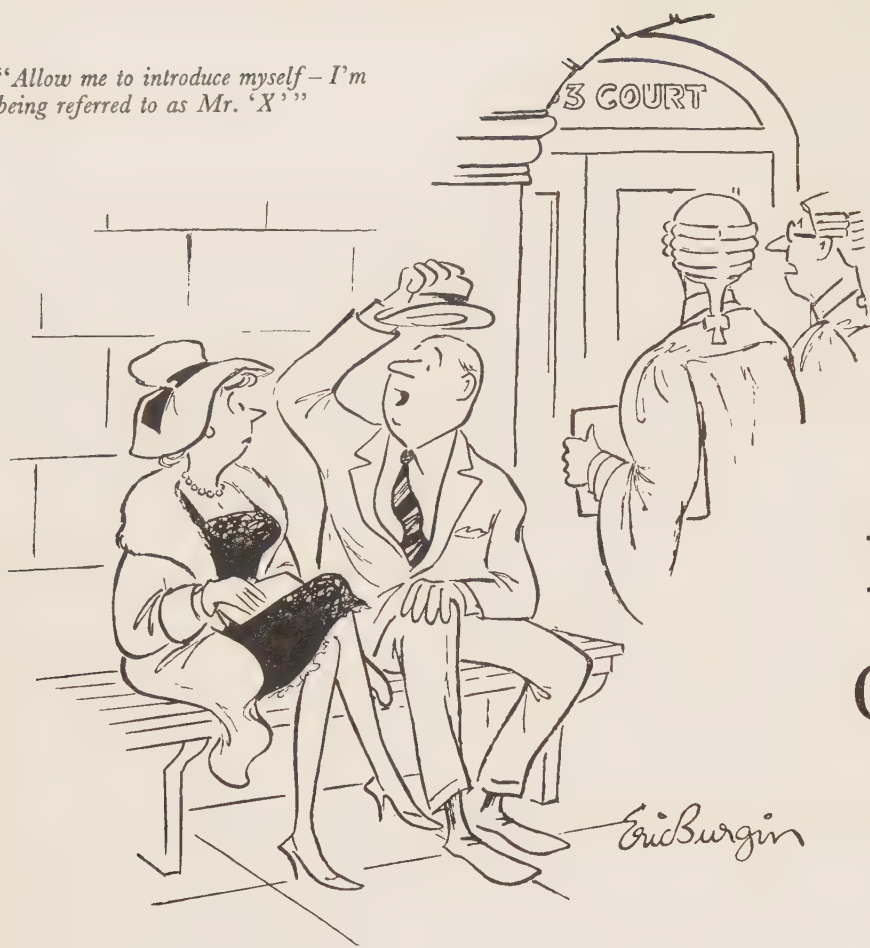
### MORAL

Though you suppress the Whaddon and the Vine  
You will not change this immemorial, crude  
Desire to hunt some beast and smell its blood –  
Only the blood may then be yours or mine.

– PETER DICKINSON



*"Allow me to introduce myself - I'm  
being referred to as Mr. 'X'."*



# THE DAY OF THE MIGWITCH CRACKENS

By Alex Atkinson

**N**obody ever knew for sure why they came to be called Crackens. Some said it was a word that had been buried in man's collective unconscious for untold centuries, a legacy from the days when unknowable horror lurked in caves or the deep primeval shrubberies. Some said it was a spontaneous invention of little Jimmie Cowslip's on that fateful February evening in 1960. A few older people pointed out that it was a local word for the stuffing in sofas and was therefore neither mysterious nor completely irrelevant. Perhaps it doesn't matter. Perhaps it does . . .

One thing is certain: the Crackens awoke that night in Migwitch, and some authorities (Arnold Ffeipher, one-time Reader in Parapatetical Metabogology at Reading University is one) believe that Migwitch will never be quite the same again. There are those who would be inclined to agree . . .

\* \* \* \* \*

I remember that Milly had a slight cold that evening, and as we drove through a drizzle of rain in the direction of Dorset the car windows were tight shut. It may have been for this reason that as we reached the outskirts of Migwitch neither of us heard anything untoward. Moreover the car engine was inclined to be noisy, which didn't help. As it turned out, there was actually nothing untoward to hear, but we didn't know that at the time and we were uneasy.

"I feel . . . somehow . . . uneasy," said Milly, reaching for a fresh tissue in the glove compartment.

"I know," I said.

The windscreen wipers swept to and fro, to and fro, as windscreen wipers will. Ahead lay the road, curving through the village. How very ordinary it all seemed! In the glare of the headlights I could see a horse-trough . . . a group of stately elms at the edge of Migwitch Green . . . the inn-sign of the "Ring o' Bells" . . . the local bobby on his solemn rounds . . . a few children playing tag beside the smithy . . . a belated Morris dancer making his way home to roast saddle of mutton in the

warm haven of his thatched cottage . . . a whiskered ploughman dallying with a couple of milkmaids in the doorway of the radio and television shop. On the surface, a placid English scene, without a hint of terror. And yet . . .

"Let me see," said Milly, as we splashed past the vicarage, "isn't Migwitch the place where the government have some top secret work going on in a requisitioned mansion, with boffins locked in labs and Alsations prowling the grounds all night?"

I nodded briefly. It is the only way I can nod.

"I wonder what they're up to," said Milly. Milly is a typical modern girl, bless her, fond of Toulouse-Lautrec and canasta, and always keen to probe into the truth of things. You can't hide much from Milly.

"Sir Charles Flake, with whom I sometimes lunch," I said, "tells me that they are probably concerned with radioactive things of one sort or another."

"I see," said Milly thoughtfully.

I thought little of her remark at the time, but I was to remember it later.

Meanwhile, as we approached a group of farm buildings which stood grey and silent in the rain, Milly suddenly clutched my arm.

"Here, I say, old girl," I murmured, for my first thought was that on some sudden impulse she had decided to snuggle up close and put her cheek to mine. She was always a warm-blooded creature, and we were certainly engaged, but I was alarmed just the same. For one thing, I didn't want to catch her cold. Then, in the nick of time, I saw what she had seen, and jammed on the brakes so abruptly that the engine stalled. Apart from the steady drumming of rain on the roof there was silence. Milly put her hands over her face and seemed to shrink beside me.

Approaching us down the middle of the road, at a sort of shambling jog-trot, was an armchair with a faded loose-cover of chintz.

At such a time it is often some trivial, homely detail that impresses itself most forcibly on the mind, and just before I blacked out I noticed that one of its castors was missing.

\* \* \* \* \*

For much of what follows I have had to rely on eye-witness accounts collected months later from Migwitch inhabitants, furtive hand-outs from War Office spokesmen, notes taken by a reporter at a secret session of the National Society for the Prevention of Psychical Research, and conversations with Edward Longrow, who was one of those who elected of their own free will, and against the express orders of the Ministry of Works, to live through the whole Migwitch nightmare



R.S.M.'s.

## WEDDING

By *Larry*



from little Jimmie Cowslip's terrifying encounter with his granny's fireside chair to the last, menacing March of the Chesterfields and Sofas.

They didn't believe little Jimmie Cowslip, because at the age of thirteen he was already the second biggest liar in the village. Besides, the idea of a fireside chair lurching across the room and fetching anyone a clout on the shin with its rocker seemed unlikely by any standards. At the police-station Jimmie explained how he had run screaming from the house (his granny was up in the village buying snuff when the incident occurred) and how, looking back over his shoulder, he had seen the chair standing in the front garden, *watching him*.

"How could it?" asked the constable. "It bain't got no eyes, do 'ee?"

"Eyes or no," said Jimmie, "watching me it were, I'll stake my oath on 'un. I tell 'ee I don't like 'er. 'Er's a rum go and no mistake, dang 'un."

He then signed a statement, and the constable put the whole affair out of his mind until the evening of the following Wednesday, when Mrs. Fortescue, the doctor's wife, telephoned to say that her four dining-chairs had just marched out in single file through the french windows and were romping in a meadow. "I can see them clearly from the bathroom window," she said. "Quite frankly, constable, I'm a little disturbed, and so is my husband."

"Those early days were nerve-racking," said Edward Longrow. "One could never be sure from one minute to the next whether one's own chairs were in the plot or not. If it *was* a plot – we didn't even know that. The incidents were isolated at first: an armchair prowling here, a sofa trotting there. There was no actual violence at the beginning, but more than one victim reported an expression of malevolence on this or that piece of furniture as it became mobile. 'It seemed to be somehow *threatening*,' they used to say, 'and cocky with it.' It was round about this time that people began to refer to affected pieces of furniture as Crackens . . .

"Gradually, of course, the situation became unbearable. By the middle of the

third week there was hardly a house in Migwitch that hadn't a distressing incident to report. Chairs were unaccountably missing; Mrs. Elphinstone's chaise-longue broke a leg coming downstairs and the distraught woman wanted to have it shot; a studio couch was seen holding what appeared to be a meeting on the village green, surrounded by a large number of occasional chairs and some piano-stools; Dr. Fortescue reported unusual tramping sounds from his waiting-room in the dead of night; my own sofa turned nasty one evening while I was entertaining Phoebe Wheycurd, and tipped us both on to the floor: the whole village was on the verge of hysteria. On the third Saturday a detachment of the R.A.S.C. moved in, and a voluntary evacuation scheme was announced for all inhabitants who could be spared. By the Monday Migwitch was to all intents and purposes a deserted village, and a feeling of dread hung in the air. I stayed on despite my uneasiness, because I had a theory."

\* \* \* \* \*

On a crisp morning in the middle of March the Superintendent held an inquiry in the main conference room at Migwitch Priory. The entire staff was present, the research labs having been left in the charge of junior lay attendants.

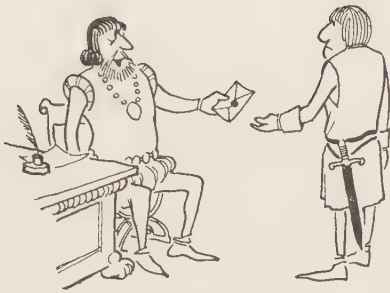
The expectant buzz of talk in the conference room subsided as the Superintendent put on his spectacles and consulted a notebook.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said. "I need hardly remind you that there is something funny going on in Migwitch. The few inhabitants remaining have had to nail their chairs to the floor. Couches are lurking in gangs in the woods and copses. An R.A.S.C. corporal was yesterday deliberately *sat on* by a kitchen stool: we can only thank God it was nothing heavier. Obviously, these . . . things . . . Crackens . . . call them what you will . . . have become *animate*."

There was an excited stir among the white-coated scientists.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," said the Superintendent, "I want you to cast your minds back a matter of eighteen months, to a rumour here in the Research Establishment that a small bottle of assorted genes had been mislaid by one of you





in the village. It was hinted at the time that apart from a few billion genes of one kind and another, the bottle also contained some radioactive molecules, together with a number of isolated positive nuclei in series, the whole preserved in alcohol and labelled, for some reason I have never been able to determine, *Poison*. Now I want the person who was responsible for this regrettable slip, if he or she will be so kind, to raise his or her right hand . . .”

\* \* \* \* \*

Tension mounted in Migwitch. Chairs were now openly gathering in the lanes and byroads. As one passed they would rustle and squeak together, and then fall silent. They would seem to *watch* people. They seemed, too, to have some system of actual communication. Albert Fernside, the postman, told of one old armchair, standing on a corner with its antimacassar awry and a sulky look on its upholstery, which summoned four settles and a dangerous-looking divan apparently from nowhere, and set upon him. Edward Longrow saw Fernside in hospital. He was not a pretty sight.

“I’m all right in *myself*,” he said. “But I keep a-hearin’ of them a-patterin’ after me along the High Street. Why did they a-pick on *I*, zur? I warn’t a-doin’ of them no ’arm. I tell ’ee straight, I wouldn’t ’urt a *footstool*!”

It was shortly after this that the crew of a helicopter on loan from the Fleet Air Arm reported an immense concentration of Crackens on the north-west boundary of the village, drawn up in ranks, with chesterfields and sofas in the van and rush-bottomed chairs in rear. “Indications are,” said the report, “that this whole force, comprising divans, easies, tabourets, benches, rocking-chairs, ottomans, sofas, deck-chairs, settees, *fauteuils* and couches, is preparing to advance on a wide front beyond the frontier of the village and march in warlike order in the general direction of the capital. I say again, the capital. Over to you – over . . .”

\* \* \* \* \*

Some said it was a great waste of furniture, and there were even murmurs about compensation from some of the more mercenary Migwitchians. All I know is, it made a splendid bonfire. From where we stood, on rising ground a quarter of a mile beyond the village, we could see the flames leaping into the night sky, and hear the merry crackle as the sparks flew upwards. Now and then we heard a distinct musical note as a spring, set free by the smouldering of its confining webbing, shot high into the air above the conflagration.

“Well, I don’t think we should have any further trouble there,” said the Colonel in charge smugly, as he peered down at the fire through his field glasses. “Damn good job it didn’t affect the sideboards and the tables and the wardrobes too, what?”

Milly clutched my arm.

“I *still* don’t understand,” she said. “If they *didn’t* come from outer space, how—”

“My dear old thing,” I said softly, “you mustn’t blame *everything* on outer space, you know.”

“You beast, you know I don’t do that!”

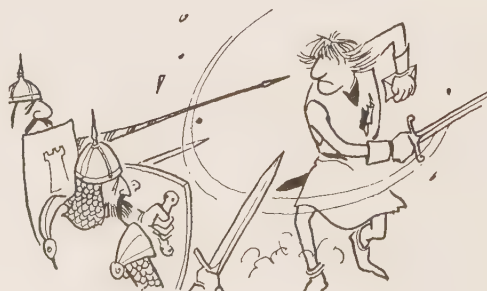
“There’s such a thing as mutation too, isn’t there?” I added enigmatically.

“Chairs are mostly made of atoms, aren’t they?”

“Well, yes, atoms and glue, I suppose. But—”

“Well, then!” I said.

And, suddenly, she shivered.





"I hope that's the end of that species!"

# "FAIR" COMMENT? CRITIC INCARCERATED

By A. P. Herbert

*The Queen against Quirk*

At the Old Bailey to-day Mr. Justice Ploon, the latest addition to the Queen's Bench, summing up to the jury, said:

This is the first time I have seen a dramatic critic in the dock – though it may not, I fancy, be the last. I asked the prosecuting counsel, Sir Adrian Floss, why the aggrieved persons had not taken the ordinary course of a civil action for damages for defamation. He replied, as you heard: "My lord, the newspaper in which the words complained of occurred is, without doubt, insured against the results of suits for defamation, and the man Quirk would not be allowed to suffer. The author and manager of the play in question feel that he ought to suffer. It is not possible to insure against the consequences of crime; and, to be frank, we hope that he will be found guilty and sent to gaol. Moreover, the words and circumstances of the libel in this case are exceptionally likely to provoke a

breach of the peace, which is the main justification for criminal proceedings." This, I must say, seems reasonable to me.

Now, it is common ground that the play *Queen Rat* was not a shining success. Few critics praised it, and many were hostile, as they are entitled to be. Most, however, expressed their disapproval in moderate and careful language. None ventured to say, as one critic did not long ago: "If this play is still being performed next Monday I shall return and abuse it again." But Mr. Quirk wrote:

*"An onset of nausea prevented me from seeing more than the first half of 'Queen Rat' . . ."*

and after the first act, as he has admitted, he left the theatre.

I have already held that these words are capable of a defamatory meaning, for, according to the dictionary, "nausea" means "a feeling of sickness, with loathing of food, and an inclination to vomit." The accused does not claim that his condition was due to any stomactic or abdominal disturbance: indeed he could hardly do that, for the evidence is that, having left the theatre, he ate a very good dinner. No, the "onset of nausea" was caused, metaphorically, by his seeing and hearing the first act of this play. Few more damaging things could be said about a dramatic work.

I must now inform you that in criminal proceedings for libel, where a statement of fact is in question, it is not enough to show that the statement was true: it





*"One cold day and he starts talking about a cooling in the earth's crust."*

must be proved that the publication was "for the public benefit". Here, as we have seen, the assertion of nausea was not true, in substance and in fact: nor, you may think, if it had been true would it have contributed much to the public benefit. According to the evidence a new but small class of critics has appeared who, somewhat exaggerating their own importance, like to make a parade of their personal sensations: "I wanted to scream," says one; "I felt like sleep," says another; "I gnashed my teeth," "I could hardly sit still," "I closed my eyes," "I suffered from indigestion." You may well think, as I do, that the physical state of a critic, unless put forward as an excuse for folly or rudeness, is not a matter of the slightest public interest.

I pass to the main, and famous, defence of "fair comment": and I shall begin with the most difficult of the many questions which I see sparkling in those innocent eyes—"What exactly is meant by *fair comment*?" This has been the subject of engaging and profitable dispute among jurists, judges, and members of the Bar for at least one hundred years. "Fair comment," properly interpreted, is a grand ingredient of our justly boasted political freedom. It is not the privilege of a few but the right of all to comment loudly on "matters of public interest," meaning the affairs of Parliament, the public conduct of Ministers

and Councillors and public servants, and even, within limits, the administration of justice, and so on. But this original freedom was extended to cover comment upon works of art or literature or music, exposed to the public and thus, it is said, "submitted to criticism." These, it is true, are "matters of public interest," but not to the same extent as the conduct of the nation's rulers. A work of art, however disappointing, can seldom do so much damage as the foolish speech or wrong decision of a Minister. Moreover, the production of a satisfactory play is an enterprise much more difficult and dubious than the formulation of political policy. Unhappily, many distinguished jurists, misled by a false equation, have spoken as if "fair comment", in both departments of life, meant exactly the same. Respected judges have said that "fair" does not mean what the ordinary citizen would consider to be "fair". Words which to you or me would appear to be unreasonably or unnecessarily offensive, violent, extravagant, exaggerated, not far from mere invective or abuse, may still, according to these authorities, be "fair comment" if the opinions, however expressed, are "honest", that is, not inspired or swollen by "malice". Such a doctrine may well be accepted in certain forms of political comment. A simple, angry, but honest citizen who cries "Murderer!" from the back of the hall when the Prime Minister defends the



nuclear deterrent will probably be excused in the unlikely event of an action for slander. But a dramatic critic, writing in cold blood and, by the way, for money, must surely be judged by different standards. It seems to me to be nonsense to say that any insult he cares to use is "fair", provided that it is "honest". "Fairness" and "honesty" are different qualities and do not necessarily travel together. I might most "honestly" dislike Mr. Quirk and regard him as a public pest. But if I walked across the Court and punched him on the nose the blow would hardly be considered "fair". I should, if necessary, be willing to defy the authorities of the past, risk the rebukes of the Court of Appeal or House of Lords, and say that in relation to a work of art "fair comment" means comment that a jury would consider fair, whether honestly conceived or not: and I could pursue this line of thought for many days.

But in this case, I believe, I may be able to spare you from tiresome mental toil by shifting your attention from the words of the defendant to his deeds. He left the theatre after the first act, dined enjoyably while the second act was being performed and thereafter wrote and published more than a hundred words in terse but cruel condemnation of the whole. Nor, according to one witness, was it the first time that this particular critic has behaved in this manner, and publicly, even arrogantly, confessed it. Such conduct may be forgiven in the critic of an egg, where the lower half is unlikely to amend substantially an unfavourable verdict pronounced upon the upper. But a play is a very different affair. The first act may deliberately create an unpleasant effect or atmosphere which is to be cunningly corrected or dispersed in the second and third; just as a musical composer may

resolve a whole series of hideous dissonances into a final, noble, soul-satisfying chord. For all he knew, for all we know now, his inclination to vomit would have been abated by the final curtain. How, when Quirk left the building, can he have been sure that this was not the purpose of the dramatist? Even if he did impute to himself such supernatural powers, what right had he to abandon his place of duty? No man is compelled to be a professional dramatic critic; but, having accepted the office, he enjoys certain privileges and may, you think, have certain obligations. He is paid by his newspaper to write just and careful accounts of the new plays. Accepting him, on his credentials from the newspaper, as a fit and proper person, the theatre provides him with a free seat – sometimes two – which might otherwise have been sold. He is not bound thereby to praise the piece, but he may be expected to behave with reasonable courtesy. If through an onset of nausea, neuralgia, headache, stomachache, or sheer intellectual distaste he finds it impossible to return to his place after the first interval, his proper course, you may think, is to make no comment on the piece at all, for in the circumstances no comment can be "fair". No judge, no jury, may go out in the middle. What, I wonder, would the defendant have said if after the case for the prosecution was closed you and I had said "So far, this case seems dreary and disgusting. Let us go out and have a drink. And then, without hearing the case for the defence, we will find the prisoner guilty." He would hardly, I think, have agreed that that was a "fair" trial. Pray consider your verdict.

The jury found the prisoner guilty, and Quirk was sent to prison for twelve months.

*"Hey! Cut that out, you two!"*



# NO RUBBISH PLEASE

By E. S. Turner

At any given moment, the number of citizens who are willing to hand over a motor car in return for a batch of pregnant chinchillas must be small; even smaller, I would say, than the number of persons prepared to exchange a tape recorder for an unfinished course in super-salesmanship. But, thank goodness, lovers of simple barter are still with us. They find, and make, their opportunities in the columns of *Exchange and Mart*, that admirable organ in which our grandfathers traded pianolas for smart cobs and our great-grandmothers offered canaries for bishops' autographs.

Among to-day's offers I notice a disturbing tendency for an advertizer to say, "No rubbish, please" (eventually this will be printed as n.r.p., just as "or nearest offer" and "what have you" appear as o.n.o. and w.h.y. respectively). It is understandable, I suppose, that a man who offers his wife's new spin-dryer for a two-seater canoe (presumably after a good deal of nattering about holidays) does not want to be fobbed off with a craft which will sink a couple of yards from shore; the domestic situation is tense enough already. Equally, a man who offers a fortnight's caravan holiday at Filey in exchange for a portable grinder wants a real chrome-plated job which will make his family feel they have not forfeited their holiday for nothing.

These columns, it will be apparent, are not run purely for the exchange of *bric-à-brac*, unless *bric-à-brac* is held to include fish-and-chips ranges, plots of land and council houses. Yes, council houses. There it is, with a Gravesend address: "Exchange three-room council house for similar, South-East London." Well, there's no harm in trying.

After all, clergy used to exchange livings in these very pages. In the 1860s they would insert announcements like this: "Exchange: A living in Derbyshire. Good family parsonage. Garden. Stabling. Income £323. Views, sound evangelical. South coast or Isle of Wight preferred." A parson in Staffordshire was willing to



*"Ever notice how all the criminals  
seem to look younger nowadays?"*

make a financial sacrifice so long as he could get "a living on a gravelly or limestone soil," evidently not caring whether the local sentiment was evangelical or Fifth Monarchy.

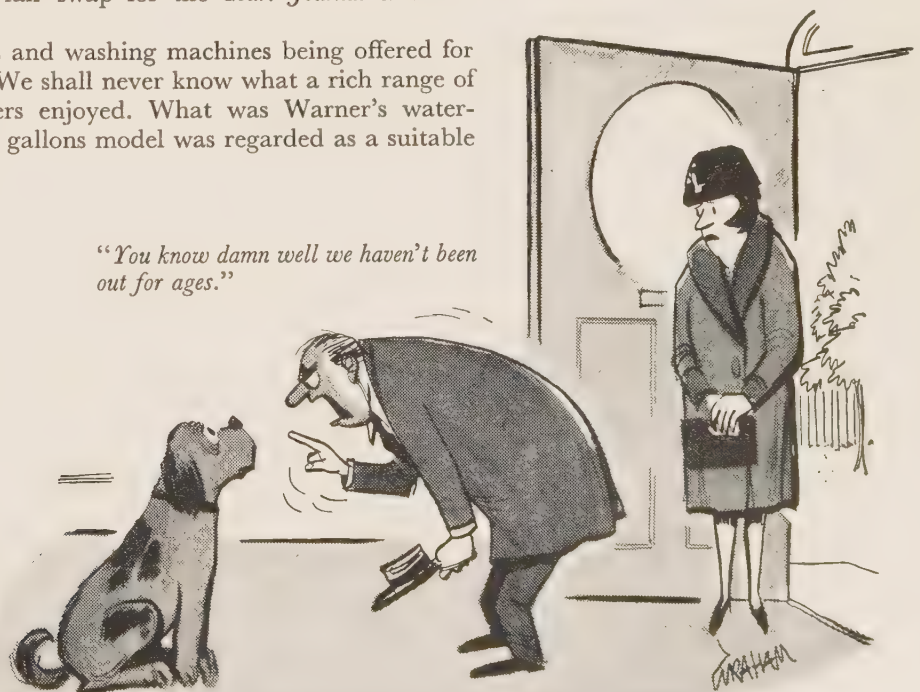
The clergy of England were among the first to see the possibilities in the exchange columns. They offered alms bags, cassocks and pocket communion services and accepted carved oak finials and Durham B.A. hoods. Some slight mystery surrounds advertisements like the following: "An original manuscript sermon sent weekly. Country produce free of carriage, taken in exchange"; and "Sermons written upon any text, for game and poultry. Correspondence strictly private." Were these the offers of hungry but literate laymen, coveting the rector's resources? Or did they come from hungry clergymen, envying richer, idler clergymen with gardens and coverts?

Military gentlemen did not, apparently, try to exchange regiments in these columns, preferring to use the *Morning Post*, nor did doctors swap practices here. Under "Scientific, Medical", however, an attractive variety of goods was offered, as for example, "Child's caul, has been at sea for over twenty years. Open to good offers of jewellery or useful things." A number of cabinets of homœopathic medicines found their way into this section, and so did second-hand surgical instruments, skeletons, portable vapour baths, *irrigateurs*, "a wooden leg, never been used," organic vibrators and all the riches of the electrical healer.

Hobbyists, of course, were the backbone of the barter trade. They drifted, with unaccountable abruptness, from one enthusiasm to another: "Wanted, a good entomological cabinet in exchange for a set of assaying apparatus, containing platinum crucibles, brass spirit lamp and blow-pipe, quartz crushers, etc., in two japanned tin boxes"; "I want a machine for cutting and polishing pebbles. Exchange photographic apparatus"; "I have a Bunsen's voltaire battery with acids, copper wire, book of instructions by Lardner and pencils for electric light. Want a small fernery." Collectors of humming birds' skins expressed a desire to take up conchology; students of dried seaweed switched over to royal autographs; the man with a digitorium (a musical device) cast round for eccentric monograms.

Another busy section was devoted to Music and Literature. The reader who sought to trade the songs "Far Away Where Angels Dwell" and "The Lord Will Provide" for "Those Precious Graves" and "Fading Away" seems to have struck a very fair balance. Less equitable, perhaps, was the offer of a single pheasant plume, mounted, for "a stamped edition of *Punch* sent every Saturday for six months." Another reader asked: "Will anyone send me a stamped *Punch* every Saturday for the *Saturday Review* a fortnight after publication?" and another thought the *Queen* and *Punch* were a fair swap for the *Court Journal* and the *Athenæum*.

It is a trifle odd to find refrigerators and washing machines being offered for exchange nearly a hundred years ago. We shall never know what a rich range of engines and appliances our fore-fathers enjoyed. What was Warner's water-barrow? All we know is that the 30-38 gallons model was regarded as a suitable





*The Quasi-Beatnik busker playing the beaches. Three chords on the guitar and all the Burl Ives songs, flat.*

WATCH  
OUT  
FOR  
THESE  
ON  
HOLIDAY

exchange for Hancock's patent butter-presser plus a set of maps of the Universal Knowledge Society.

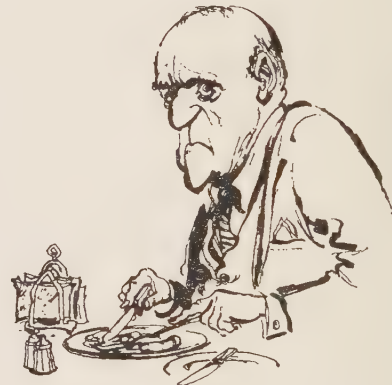
The financial section never really caught on, but now and then you would find a gentleman eager to exchange two shares in a screw steamer for a suitable quantity of wines and spirits, or five shares in the Universities Co-operative Association for a good pony. A citizen having a very large *bona fide* claim against the Crown was willing to exchange a £200 bond for produce or livestock worth half that amount.

Then, as now, there were persons who did not mind, within reasonable limits, what they got in exchange. A "handsome, curly liver-coloured retriever" was offered for "any good ornament for the drawing room"; a refrigerator ("cost £6") was offered "for anything". The phrase "or what have you" was not then current, but there were obviously many people who derived the purest pleasure from changing and changing their possessions so long as they got "something nice", "anything useful" or "something suitable to a gentleman".

Such persons manifestly still exist. Some of us may think it would be easier to sell off our pregnant chinchillas and then use the money to buy a motor car, instead of trying to find a car-weary motorist who yearns for pregnant chinchillas, but that is to lose the whole thrill of barter.



*The couple who discovered this hidden beach some years ago and have surrounded it with invisible barbed wire.*



*The man who can't get the 'Guardian' and lets everyone know it.*



*They've been coming here for years and years and know all the staff by their first names. Go behind the bar to serve their own drinks. Tend to be called Don and Fiona.*



*The man who has seen himself in one of those Jaeger holiday-wear ads., but doesn't own a long mirror.*



*The man who has clocked 350 miles from Calais since breakfast and will knock off another 150 before dark.*

*It must have been a bitter disappointment for Mr. Terence Rattigan when his musical "Joie de Vivre" only ran for four performances. By way of compensation we offer this suggestion for a musical adaptation of his current success "Ross." It is appropriately re-entitled*

# SHUFTI BINT

By  
B. A. Young

## SCENE I

*The Orderly Room in "B" Flight. FLIGHT-LIEUTENANT STOKER sits behind his desk. AIRCRAFTMAN ROSS, alias T. E. LAWRENCE, stands before him under escort.*

STOKER:

Your conduct's prejudicial to good order  
And to Royal Air Force discipline too,  
So if you've no excuse I must award a  
Salutary punishment to you.  
But you're a man with some education –  
Can't you offer an explanation?

ROSS:

O-O-O-O, I went out to dine with some friends,  
A gay intellectual pack.  
We had whisky and wine  
Where I went out to dine,  
And I fell off my bike coming back.  
They're respectable folk, are my friends,  
And we'd hours of intense conversation.  
But I cannot produce  
This as any excuse  
For being back late on the station.

STOKER:

So-o-o-o you went out to dine with some friends!  
Well, airmen get up to some games.  
You insolent chap,  
Take that smile off your map  
And just tell me some of their names.

ROSS:

I doubt if the names of my friends  
May be asked under R.A.F. law,  
But there were the Astors,  
The Leicesters, the Worcesters,  
Archbishops and Dukes by the score –  
Yes, I'm ready to bet  
We'd the whole Cliveden Set,  
To say nothing of George Bernard Shaw.

*Black-out. The lights fade up on a dream-ballet, choreography by Agnes DeMille, in which GENERAL ALLENBY, RONALD STORRS, COLONEL BARRINGTON, AUDA ABU TAYI and the Turkish Military Governor of Deraa remove ROSS's uniform and dress him up as an Arab sheikh.*

## SCENE 2

*A tent in the desert. LAWRENCE is putting on his Arab clothes, watched by STORRS and BARRINGTON in their dress uniforms.*

BARRINGTON: I say, it's a bit thick, old chap, what? You're as much like an Arab as my old Aunt Beulah.

LAWRENCE: Ah, but I'm a Circassian. They have fairer skins than the other sort.

STORRS: As long as they have whole skins, eh, Lawrence?

BARRINGTON: Well, frankly I think the whole thing's a lot of dashed nonsense.

LAWRENCE: Perhaps. . . . Who knows? . . . At any rate it will be a great test of the will.

BARRINGTON: Come on then, Storrs, we'd better be toddlin'.

STORRS: Good luck, Lawrence. (*He tries to clasp his hand, but LAWRENCE ducks it.*) Oh, I forgot you don't like shaking hands. (*Raises his hat.*)

STORRS and BARRINGTON go back to Cairo. LAWRENCE sits cross-legged on the sand.

LAWRENCE (*sings*):

Where shall I at last find peace?  
Does it come from Ancient Greece?  
Here, enfolded by solitude's wings,  
Or in some deep dig in the Valley of Kings  
Shall I at last find peace?

I seek it like the Golden Fleece,  
And it may be my projection of an Arab insurrection  
Will bring me in the end to peace.

*Enter HAMED, a young tribesman with a rifle and a scowl.*  
Ah, my bodyguard.

HAMED: *Aiwa.* (*Spits.*)

LAWRENCE: Allah will forgive you if you refrain



*"You don't think by any chance that clover could be an aphrodisiac?"*

from spitting until the end of the present emergency, I'm sure.

HAMED: It helps to keep the sand down. (*Spits.*) Besides, I have to spit now so that I can stop spitting when I get to like you. (*Spits.*)

LAWRENCE: May it be soon. Meanwhile, saddle the camels, Hamed, and let us make haste to join Prince Feisal.

HAMED: *Kuwais qetir, effendi.* (*Spits.*)

### SCENE 3

*Headquarters, Deraa District. The TURKISH MILITARY GOVERNOR sits (on an ottoman, of course) drinking French wine and dictating into his Dictaphone. A Turkish CAPTAIN watches him coldly.*

GOVERNOR:

I love cruelty, I love lechery,  
I love victory, I love Beaune;  
I love subtlety, I love treachery,  
But most of all I love my Dictaphone!  
I get passions for fair Circassians  
In curious fashions that I can't condone,  
But the loveliest slave, or a vintage St. Estéphe,  
I never would crave like my Dictaphone!

(*Dictates*): To all troops in the District. Watch out for Lawrence, alias El Arauns, alias Emir Dynamite, believed to be heading north on Highway 69. A reward of ten thousand pounds will be paid to anyone who captures this man alive. That is all.

CAPTAIN: You make him sound too important.

GOVERNOR: He *is* important. He is a menace. A menace.

### SCENE 4

*Another part of the desert. LAWRENCE is talking with AUDA ABU TAYI and his troops are singing a ballad off-stage.*

LAWRENCE: Anyone for menace?

AUDA and his men gallop off on camels to capture Akaba. Enter HAMED.

HAMED: El Arauns, before we attack Akaba there is something you must know.

LAWRENCE: Why, Hamed, you have stopped spitting.

HAMED (*adjusting the folds of his robe*): You will see why. *Shufti.*

LAWRENCE: Why, Hamed!

HAMED: Yes, El Arauns, now you know my secret. I am no desert Beduin warrior. Once I danced at Madame Badia's. And now, El Arauns, I love you, and I will follow you to the end of the world.

(*sings*) O'er the burning sands of the desert,

'Neath the pitiless skies above,

Take me, kiss me, hold me,

Your Oriental love.

(*and so on - sixty-four bars altogether*)

LAWRENCE: Hamed! And I - never guessed. But there is sterner work before us now. On to Akaba!

HAMED: To Paradise!

### SCENE 5

*Headquarters, Deraa District. The GOVERNOR switches his Dictaphone on and off a couple of times. Useless! It doesn't work.*

GOVERNOR: Are they still flogging him?

CAPTAIN: It's inhuman! Tell them to stop!

GOVERNOR: Inhuman? Do you know what this man has done? Bridges blown; trains destroyed; hundreds of soldiers massacred.

CAPTAIN: I say it's inhuman.

GOVERNOR (*inexorably*): In Akaba there was a consignment of new cylinders for my Dictaphone. They destroyed them all. Every one. Without mercy. (*Calling.*) Bring him up here!

LAWRENCE is brought in, and collapses on the floor.

CAPTAIN: No, no! It's too much! (*He rushes off.*)

GOVERNOR: Now, I think we understand one another. You have the plans for General Allenby's offensive? (*LAWRENCE takes no notice.*) So you will not speak? Then we shall have to use other methods, shall we not? (*Flicks his fingers.* HAMED (*or FIFI, as she is really called*) is dragged on in chains.) You see, Major Lawrence, that no harm has come to her - so far.

FIFI: For Prince Feisal and an independent Arabia - and for our love!

(*sings*) Whate'er misfortune befall us,

My faithfulness naught shall move.

I'll cling to you now and for ever,

Your Oriental love.

GOVERNOR: As I thought. He is lost, utterly lost. (*To an orderly*): You can release them both.

### SCENE 6

*GENERAL ALLENBY'S Headquarters at Gaza. ALLENBY is in conference with STORRS and BARRINGTON.*

ALLENBY:

The gentlemen of the press

Are crawling all over the place.

They lurk in the Officers' Mess;

They keep photographing my face.



BARRINGTON:

How can we get rid of them all?

They fill me with deepest abhorrence.

STORRS:

Distract their attention  
By chancing to mention

Another great hero.

BARRINGTON: Who?

STORRS: Lawrence.

Yes, Lawrence must rate as a hero –

They'll all want a story from him.

BARRINGTON:

For me his attraction is zero –

Conceited and cruel and dim.

But still, if you think it would do,

I s'pose we can send him a 'plane.

ALLENBY:

Forgive the rebuff,  
But oddly enough

I need him to lead a campaign.

Incidentally, I wonder where he is?

LAWRENCE: (*entering dramatically*) He is here. But General, don't send me back. I'm finished. Send me to GHQ. Send me to Abbassia Transit Camp. Send me anywhere. I'm a broken man.

STORRS (*quietly*): And how about that will we were so proud of?

LAWRENCE: I've made it and sent it to my solicitor.

ALLENBY: Very well, if that's how you feel, you shall stay here with me and bask in the limelight you have earned.

LAWRENCE: Will it be all right if I back into it?

ALLENBY: Certainly, if that's the way you like it. You can begin straight away by backing into a press conference in half an hour's time.

(*sings*) The gentlemen of the press  
Are waiting to file their stories.

So give them the works

On your fights with the Turks,

And stand by for the cheers and the glories.

ORDERLY (*entering hurriedly*): Sir, there's a lady to see Major Lawrence.

ALLENBY: A lady?



ORDERLY: An Arab lady. If you will pardon the expression, sir, a bint.

LAWRENCE: No, no! General, send me back to the desert!

*The stage darkens. A spotlight picks out FLIGHT-LIEUTENANT STOKER behind his desk and AIRCRAFTMAN Ross at attention in front of it.*

ROSS: So you see, it was quite necessary for me to change my name and sink my identity in a serial number. Ross . . . Shaw . . . Guinness . . . Brando . . . somewhere, some day, in some metamorphosis, I may perhaps find peace.

(*sings*) Where shall I at last find peace?

In the Palestine Police?

I must bear life's banderillas till I've

done *The Seven Pillars*,

And then I shall perhaps find peace.

– B. A. YOUNG



# MY PROBLEM PLAY

By J. B. Boothroyd

I'm glad to see that the dramatic critics have at last dropped all pretence and are frankly admitting that they don't know what the new plays are about. Pick up any notice you like and you'll find it thick with wild guesses at the author's intention. "Are we meant to infer . . .?" "Is Mr. X. trying to make the point that . . .?" "A possible interpretation may be . . ." "We are left in some doubt whether . . ." Between the guesses are the usual adjectives: scintillating, vital, profound.

I welcome this. I used to feel terrible in the old days, foxed by Eliot and Beckett, at sea with Ionesco and Brecht. I didn't know what they were up to even when the critics had told me. Now we're all in the same boat. They don't know either. Splendid. Over the not unreasonable inference that they never did, however, I confess to a touch of pique, because I should have been posting my own MSS round the West End managements years ago if I hadn't been led to believe that playwrights were expected to have a message of some kind. The itch for dramatic writing has always been with me, but the lack of anything to say damped my confidence. Now that this no longer matters I have made up a neatish parcel of *Truepenny Chowder*, *A Play in Three Acts*, and H. M. Tennent can have first refusal.

Place what interpretation you like on the title. There's no chowder in the play, and no one called

Truepenny. But that's life, after all. And in case you want to puzzle over it a bit more there's a quotation on the title page:

"'Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay'. - Sayers."

Now for the story.

Gavin Blakelock, a retired public man (there is a hint at the Ministry of Works, though this can hardly account for his outbursts of fury whenever the name of Jellicoe is mentioned), shares a house in Ealing with Mrs. Hill-Booker, and the action of the play revolves largely, in so far as it revolves at all, round the question of whether two of the upstairs rooms should be knocked into one and thus afford Blakelock more space for the repair of old water-butts, to which he devotes his leisure time. Mrs. Hill-Booker, in a long telephone call in the middle of act one, leaves us in no doubt that she is fanatically opposed to the scheme, partly because she occupies the rooms, partly because of the noise that is bound to result from the constant manœuvring of the water-butts up the stairs. She tells the distant subscriber, whose identity is never established, that the situation is dangerous and "looks like becoming another Eaton Square business." After this conversation a curious sound is heard in the street outside. Whether a stage manager can get the exact effect I don't know, but it is described as half dull explosion, half child's cry, and should seem to occur about six feet off the ground. When Mrs. Hill-Booker hears it she becomes greatly alarmed, locks a corner cupboard and falls on her knees as if to pray. When her murmurings become clearly articulated we realize that she is repeating a knitting-pattern. Here the curtain falls to denote a three-hour lapse of time, and when it rises again there are three men sitting at the table - according to the *dramatis personæ* they are, from left to right, Man in sou'-wester, Man in Frock Coat, and Man with Eye-Patch. They tell stories of their war experiences until the curtain comes down on act one.

Act two is much the same, except that the three men have gone, Mrs. Hill-Booker doesn't appear, Blakelock does the long telephone call, and two nuns, who seem to be old friends of his, come in and stick auctioneer's lot-numbers on the furniture. The sound of builders working overhead is heard throughout. A dramatic climax is reached when the door is





relationships satisfactorily defined? (That between Blakelock and Mrs. Hill-Booker is never established, and subtle hints suggesting that one is mad and being looked after by the other aren't much help owing to the difficulty of guessing which is which.)

Anyway, there's a lot of good stuff here, particularly if we can get some performances by plenty of knights and dames. I'm looking forward to the notices already – though not as eagerly as I might have done in the old days, when a playwright could open his paper on the morning after the first night and really get a few clues about what he'd been trying to say.



suddenly thrown open at the end of the act and a footman, making his first appearance of the play, loudly announces: "Mr. and Mrs. West, Miss Jennifer Ibbotson and Detective-Superintendent Masters." Blakelock is clearly frightened, but backs to the corner cupboard and stands spread-eagled before it in a protective attitude. "Show them in," he says, "and take the rest of the evening off." Slow curtain.

I could tell you about act three, but you may prefer to take my word that it doesn't really add anything storywise; at least I hope not, because it would obviously be fatal if intelligibility began to creep in here. There are a few oddities of plot – the newspaper picture of Jellicoe that falls out of Mr. West's paperback . . . Mrs. Hill-Booker's appearance in a postman's hat . . . but we never learn the significance of the corner cupboard, and it turns out that the workmen upstairs were actually repointing a brick fireplace.

The great strength of the play, I think, is that the possible interpretations are limitless. There is insecurity here, of course, and fear; the quest for a faith, I daresay; a consciousness of old guilt; preoccupation with trivialities (the water-butts) when real problems are crying out for solution (the noise in the street, very likely symbolic of the wheat shortage among backward nations, I shouldn't wonder). Have we all unreasoning antipathies (Jellicoe)? Do we yearn for a father figure (the distant subscriber)? Are our social



Sempé

# THE ISLE OF LITERARIA

## AMIS BRIDGE

This popular inland resort has been rapidly changing in character. Alongside the old-established educational institutions has grown up a whole new life fashioned by the pleasure-loving members of the younger generation. Next door to the Technical College (Battlemented for the Diamond Jubilee) is the Palais de Dance (open from mid-morning to dawn). The town contains three other dance-halls. There are several road-houses within easy reach. For those who find the larger type of establishment spurious, there are homely beerhouses and fish-and-chip shops. Such interests as cycling



and jazz are liberally catered for. The shelves of the Public Library are kept weeded of stuffy old books by a Joint Committee of Rotary and the Youth Club. Beyond the University Museum and the Fun Fair is the Little - Church - Round - the - Corner.

**Mon Repos.** Particularly suitable for working girls, young businessmen, dons, etc. Home comforts and music-making.

**Ye Olde Priory.** Swimming-pool. Two cocktail lounges. Seafood bar. Jumbo-size lockup garages.

Expeditions may be made to **NORTH WAIN**, famed for interesting industrial developments, a fine selection of inns and the new dormitory estate, and to **HUGH MCGRAW HILL**, an earlier settlement of not dissimilar type.



## WAUGH HEIGHTS

The Country Club district of Literaria contains a number of quiet, comfortable establishments catering for visitors of good family, with riding, rich parkland and extensive formal gardens.

**The Castle.** Palladian with Adam wings. Music-room by Wyattville. Hall of Looking-Glasses. Rococo chimney-breasts. Guards' Mess. Private Chapels (Full members, Temporary members, Servants). The grounds contain several Follies, a Chinese Ossuary and Hermits (armigerous).

**Thrupp's.** A proprietary Club, hereditary in the family of J. Macvish, butler to the third Duke of Buccleuch. Entry is difficult but not impossible. Members interested in horses, cards, wine, genealogy. Cuisine solid.

**The Charleston.** Though it lies outside the walls, draws much of its clientèle from within them. Lively and amusing. Nostalgic meeting place of show business, big business, younger scions of the older families and the demi-monde.

Expeditions may be arranged to **POWELL VAVASSORUM**, with its picturesque artists' colony living amid the dilapidated splendours of what were once the elegant town houses of the aristocracy, to **WODEHOUSE MAJOR**, with its gay colouring and excellent golf, and to **COMPTON BURNETT**, the ivied house long renowned for the brightness of its wit and the grimness of its tragedies.

## HORNBLOWER HARD

This coastal resort attracts all who love the sea or at least the seashore. Those with a taste for the company of seafaring folk, equally with those who prefer to sit in the window or on the jetty with a glass to their eye, will find everything requisite for an agreeable sojourn. During storms visitors can lie snug on land and enjoy the magnificent howling of the tempest, the foaming waves, the harsh glitter of the lightning and the efforts of mariners in the roads to preserve their craft from destruction. Fishing, gunnery, hornpipes, and keel-hauling (May-Sept.).

**The Admiral Benbow.** Good, plain fare for gentlemen and fancy kickshaws for their ladies. Hollands, rum and all other spirituous liquors. Very snug. Bow windows to card-room.

**The Fore Peak.** Mahogany fittings throughout. All chambers contain teak Dutch-ratchets countersunk in yarn-plate and fitted with bowders, mibs, hoy-snaggles and spirittoes. Try the chef-cooked salmagundi.



The Golden Anchor. *Withdrawing-room panelled in Malabar silk. Fiddles. Lachrymatorium for half-pay officers.*

Expeditions to MONT SARRAT, for luxuriant undergrowth, affable inhabitants, danger and excitement, and to DUGGAN CASTLE, where the visitor can feel as though he were actually living in the past.



## CHRISTIE SANDS

This homely seaside town is a great favourite with retired people, single ladies starting a new life and families who for one reason or another desire seclusion. The town is well provided with public clocks and chemists noted for their memory for detail. There is a variety of well-screened cliff walks, with gazebos round many corners, and picturesque drops. The pier penetrates into really deep water: (low rail at end). There is a knitting-pattern lending library. Amusements cater for all tastes. Tea dances and inquests are frequent during the season.

**Hotel Splendid.** *All mod. con. Rather gay but still cosy. Residents' lounge. Special terms for executors.*

**Ventnor House.** *Guests are encouraged to take an interest in one another. Punctual meals. Very observant staff.*

**Mrs. Higgle's.** *Caters for visitors of restricted means, dependants and the like. Period furnishings. Plain cuisine. Staff full of "characters." Foreigners taken.*

There are frequent tours to the JOSEPHINE BELL MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, with its up-to-date post-mortem unit and delightful staff common rooms, and the NGAIO MARSHLANDS, famed for their strange shapes, smooth surfaces and local theatre.

## BOND HAVEN

This exclusive plage, with its well-groomed sands, sparkling waves and remarkable clientèle, is a favourite with the discriminating traveller who requires a blend of high-quality and primitive excitement. The pleasure-seeker has the choice of mixed skin-diving, shark-wrestling, no-limit baccarat and Wheel of Death competitions. To seductive music the observer of life's comedy can eat exquisitely, drink divinely, flirt ecstatically and feel himself both hunted and hunter. In the boutiques may be found an unparalleled range of men's personal gear from body-fitting guns to transistorized cuff-links. The three hotels, all five-star, and the luxurious private villas together make provision for every taste.

**Hotel Floreat.** *First-class security. Triple-walled safe. Hostesses swim, shoot, lip-read and break all codes.*

**St. James's Chambers.** *All suites checked for microphones daily. Finest cellars in Europe. Own lamprey pond.*

**La Splendiale.** *Perfect cooking, discretion and cigars. Sound-proof gymnasium.*

Bond Haven is also a convenient starting point for expeditions to AMBLERVILLE, with its collection of Wagons Lits, mountain walks and picturesque Foreign Exchange Bureaux, and to the peninsula of SPILLANIA, with its multifarious hazards presenting a real test of virility in all its forms.



## GREENEVILLE

More and more visitors are attracted every year by the striking contrasts to be found in this watering-place. A few steps away from the glittering world of the Alexandra Promenade are the twisting streets of the old town with their attractively sinister air of decay. Here beauty and squalor, saints and sinners, live cheek by jowl. Much enjoyed annual events are the luxury yacht races, the Grand Guignol Season at the Whittaker Wright Memorial Bandstand and the Scapegoat Hunt. The pier, famed for its novel slot-machines which include The Rack, Russian Roulette and What the Confessor Heard, is the scene of the final stages in the Lenten Rag Week.

**Hotel Imperial.** *The ornate interior is a welcome reminder of the golden age before the first World War. Ample accommodation. Palm Court trio. The centre of social life is the cocktail inglenook.*

**Station Hotel.** *Inexpensive and discreet. Special terms for Commercials, Dentists and other professional gentlemen. Hotel detective (Public School man).*

**Betty's.** *Bed and breakfast. Tequila, saké, groundnut-stew, curries. Smoking dormitory. Phonograph.*

**The Hospice.** *Single rooms. Fasting. Special penances for residents.*

Expeditions may be made via an unobtrusive path over the crags to AMIS BRIDGE and BOND HAVEN.

# MY NEXT HUSBAND

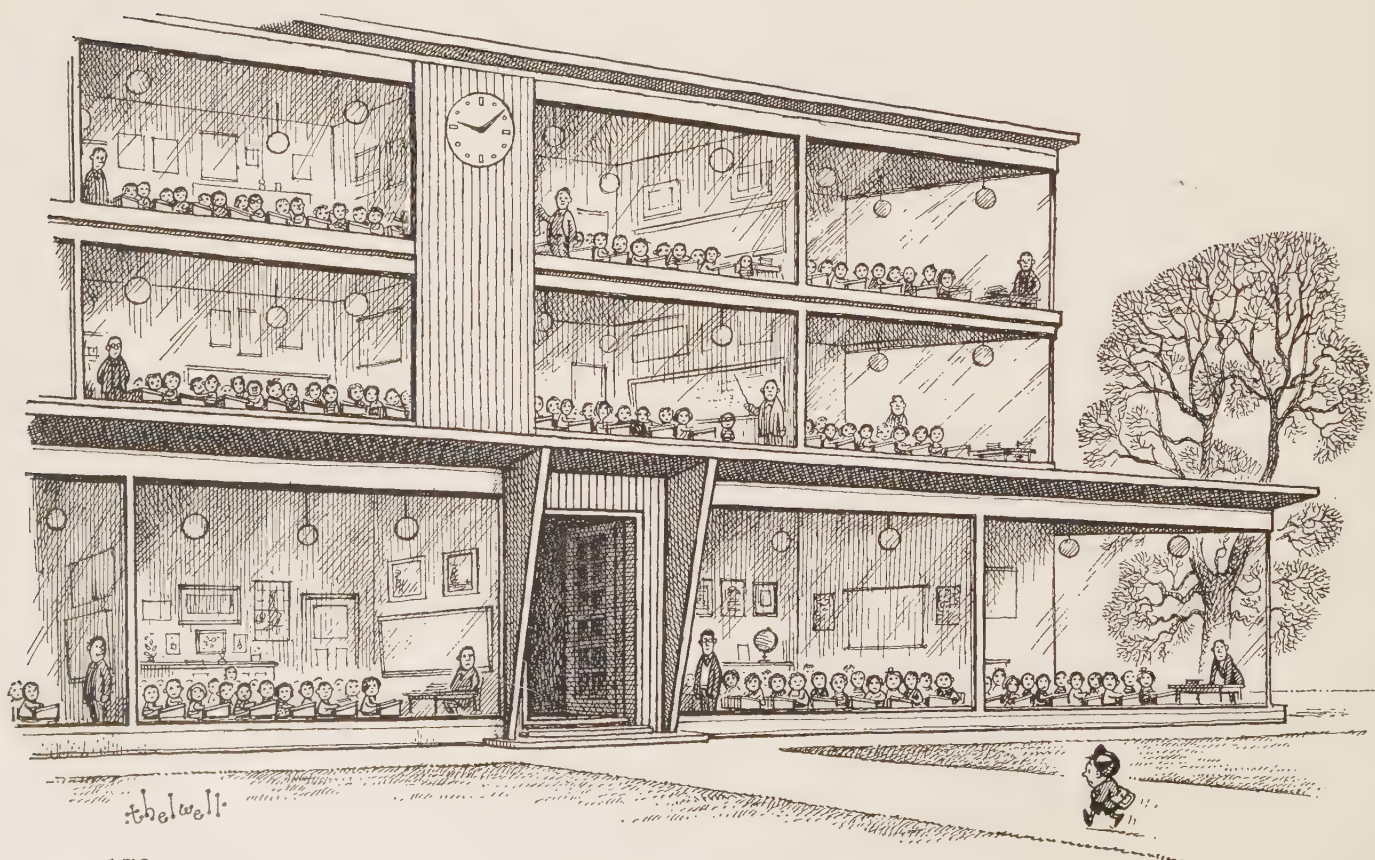
By Siriol Hugh-Jones

I am married to a mothy old Tory duke. My next husband will be a far out left-wing dissenting playwright called Bill Whisker, and together we are going to put the skids under Eton, the middle classes, Hugh Gaitskell, Nancy Mitford, the Archbishop of Canterbury, my Ex, and a whole lot of terrible old reactionary bores like that.

No one could possibly say I didn't work my fingers to the bone for the Duke, poor sweetie. His name is Dagobert, and though all his best chums call him Dotty Daggers he used to try madly to get them to say Bert instead in a pathetic attempt to keep up with the times. We lost butler after butler that way, until Daggers sacked all the staff on a matter of principle. In the ghastly days before some nice advertising people gave him a washing machine we used to spend practically every evening scraping the scrambled egg

off the Spode, with no help except the men from Sotheby's and a lot of layabout cameramen taking pictures of Daggers in his surplus stores striped pinny for whatever paper was running the Woman's Page article on Does Your Husband Help Around the House that week.

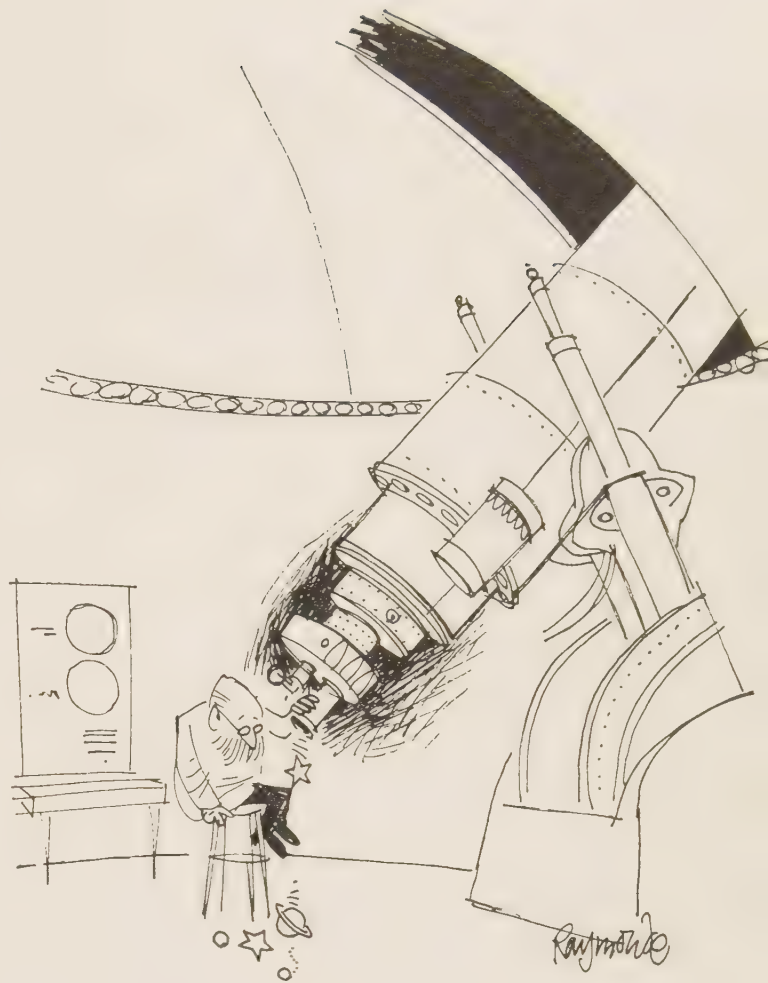
Of course we had absolutely crippling expenses, what with the income tax, the foot and mouth, entertaining the press, and paying the wages for three Norlands to staff the Park Your Baby crèche Daggers started in the real tennis court Henry VIII used to knock up on. Then there were the models' school fees for Daggers' two bone-headed girls to learn to stand with their feet at a quarter to three, and what with one thing and another we were hard put to it to rustle enough money to put the Marquess through a full analysis and a home-study course in journalism



after he'd spent a pretty pricey five years majoring in Accountancy and First Aid at the University of Detroit and having to fly back and forth to Klosters to keep up his place in the ski team. Things got a bit better when some agency ran a series of colour ads showing Daggers in Epping Forest and his socks and underpants with his arm in a sling and a glass of mead in the free hand, but it didn't last. And anyway, what with his having to be in London so much to be interviewed and me slaving away raffling teddy bears and ghosting the poor old thing's memoirs in the evenings, you might say our respective careers came between us. I always hated living in the Midlands, which is another thing Bill and I have in common.

Unlike the Duke, Bill is terrifically class-conscious and made a big success of this as his American lecture-tour theme. Of course he has been very fortunate in having a father who actually was a miner, as this meant he knew and talked to other boys whose fathers were miners and it now affords him good solid background material, unlike some of those poor middle-class writers who can't get over the shame of their birth. Bill has never lost touch with reality, and spent every Long Vac widening his practical experience of working-class life, as refuse collector, rodent exterminator, and the only porter at Victoria Station. He also worked for a spell in a classy soup-kitchen so as to get the hang of Vichyssoise, but all the other waiters only went to H. M. Tennent shows and used to scratch whenever there was a fight, so he packed it in. He works amazingly fast – eight plays already during the past couple of years; most people just call them The Octet since you can't sometimes recall all the titles in a hurry, and ideally they should be played right through in sequence using a fair-sized truck as an open-air stage, but you've got to wait till the public catches up with this sort of idea.

After those years of pigging it on Daggers's dwindling capital and never being able to install any decent central heating, I'm going to enjoy opening some accounts and making Bill's Eaton Square flat really cosy. He's got three or four film scripts nearly finished and a couple of television plays and a pretty ruthless travel-series with notes on regional cooking for one of the Sundays to finish off before Christmas, and one way and another I don't expect we shall be able to get away much before Aldermaston, so I want to provide him with somewhere really homely and peaceful where just a few friends can drop in for a drink and some serious discussion. Daggers couldn't seriously discuss anything because he was always so exhausted with supervising the fun fair and talking to the Norlands about Farex. And as far as he was concerned the theatre stopped at *Under Your Hat*. Bill says you simply can't do anything about people like that, they're just dead inside their dinner jackets



and ought to be buried out of pure kindness.

It's going to be nice talking to real committed people at last, and seeing one's name on the serious pages in the *Queen* and not as part of a Duchesses with Less than Three Tiaras illustrated feature. Daggers is so pre-Hoggart about everything – I told Bill he'd giggled coarsely about those beautiful symbolic forget-me-nots in *Lady Chatterley*, and Bill said he was surprised the peerage could read at all.

We thought we might dash over to the Congo and Cuba after Easter, if Bill can sort out his Hollywood commitments, and he's got a lecture-date in Prague on the responsibility of the artist towards heavy industry that we'll have to fit in somewhere. It'll be a very un pompous wedding, just Bill's dear old Mum (she was a bit moody about being identified as the drunken landlady in his last play, but Bill explained to her about it being so necessary to him to write with feeling about the things he really felt about) and one or two serious actors who feel about things the way we feel about them. All my life I've wanted to make some sort of viable contribution, to be part of the breakthrough. When I think Bill's next trenchant musical's going to star either Sir John Gielgud or Albert Finney as Erasmus, I can hardly wait.

# THE STAMPA-DA-GRAPE AVATISM

By Patrick Ryan

It is in the bottom corners of inner pages rather than the headlines, in those six-line column-fillers about Life backing up on people of all nationalities, that the world of my reality rides by. And my apathetic geist found total engagement in this twenty-nine word dispatch in the *Daily Telegraph* from Our Own Correspondent in Kuala Lumpur:

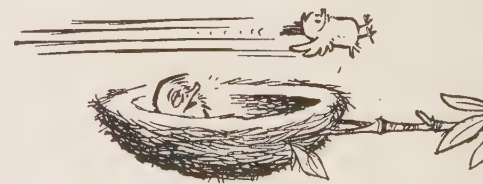
Tan Teong Swee, 60, accused here to-day of illegally distilling rice wine at his home, told the court, "I bathe in it for my lumbago." He was fined £23.

Judy O'Grady and the Colonel's Lady have nothing over Tan Teong Swee and me. We are blood-brothers, both do-it-yourself vintners, both victims of lumbago, each suffering the same misfortunes, he in Kuala Lumpur and I in the Balham High Road. Had I been the judge when they wheeled him in I'd not have fined him twenty-three quid. I'd have given him a few dollars out of the poor-box in memory of an affair I once had with nine and a half gallons of elderberry wine.

We bought our house from a man who loved hock and hated horticulture. Thus, we took over a coal-shed full of slim-jim bottles and a jungle of elderberries. I washed the bottles, and picked the fruit until I was waist-deep in black beauties. The bending freshened up my lumbago and it gave me a couple of searing twinges, but it didn't fix me solid. My lumbago is the self-locking type. It can paralyse you at the door-knob or hoop you helpless over a spade.

"Strip the berries from the stalks," ordained Mrs. Beeton, "and pour over them three gallons of boiling water to each seven pounds of fruit, bruise well and strain through a hair-sieve or jelly-bag."

I had about twenty-six pounds in my harvest. That had me coming up for ten gallons of water and the sheer liquid bulk of the project frightened me. I am one of the smaller châteaux and all my previous vintages had been handled within the confines of a rose-red plastic bucket.



HARGREAVES.

“Wait till you see the new, thrilling me!”



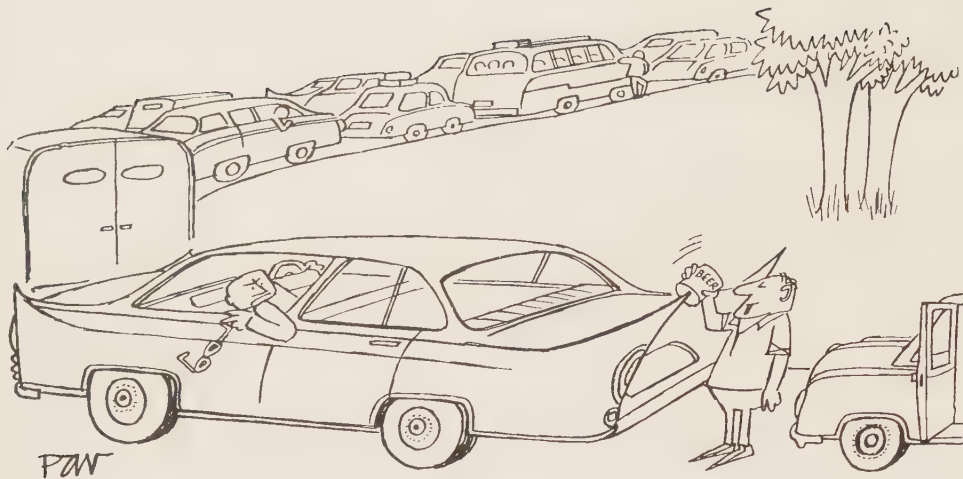
The only possible vat for this brew was the bath. My wife and daughter had forbidden me fermentation in the bathroom. The smell, they said, gets in their hair. But they were out for the afternoon and so I lugged my lot upstairs and dumped it in the bath.

It was a gorgeous sight when I poured in the water. A purple, foaming sea, fit for any Nicean bark of yore, steaming and black-dimpled all over with floating berries like a sheet of hot, magnified caviar. When it cooled down I started in to bruise the fruit with my daughter's table-tennis bat, crushing the bobbles between racket-face and porcelain. This was slow work, however, and I had to give up when the sandpaper began peeling off the masher.

As I stood back to survey the brew I suddenly felt my toes curling and tromping inside my shoes. It was, of course, the old stampana-grape atavism. Never mind the thin man screaming inside the fat man. As any psychiatrist will tell you, inside every human being there is a stampana-grape crying for release, bursting for the chance to leap into the vat and get splashing around with all those dark-eyed, warbling peasants. The desire frequently expressed by English heroines to run barefoot through the grass is but a sublimation of the stampana-grape atavism. Children only slosh through puddles because they can't get grape-juice. And it all comes out in the theatre; most times I've seen a true-blue British musical, the chorus, somewhere about the second curtain, have come prancing on as hep-cat wine-stompers from way up the Douro. The glistening berries called to my old Adam and I was overwhelmed by the primeval longing to feel grapes squelching under my instep and juice spurting between my toes. Stripping off like a murderer dismembering, I put on my leopardskin bathing trunks, scrubbed up and stepped into the bath.

The release! It was wonderful . . . Age-old knots untied inside my head, neck-muscles came out of spasm and tension flowed out of my ears. Sex, power-drive and death-wish can no doubt do their Freudian bit to scramble your id, but it's the stampana-grape frustration that tightens the final bowstring across your temples. Twice up and down the length and I was a new man. Not only was I captain of my fate and master of my soul, I was their shop-steward as well.

Happy as Guétary was I as I bounced my *bel canto* off the ceiling . . . Ah! *Belle Marguerite, So wonderful to see, Les pieds de ma petite, Marguerite treads the grapes with me!* . . . Half a hundred berries fell at every footprint and if Hilaire Belloc had been there he'd have written a ballade about me. My lumbago protested a bit at my



high-stepping action but I ignored it and slished and sloshed merrily away, taking it carefully on the turns, however, in case the chain caught in my toes and I lost the whole vintage down the plug-hole.

Twenty minutes of elemental ecstasy I was allowed and then, Life being what it is to such as T. T. Swee and me, the blunt head of bathos came grinning in. He was surprised in his rice-wine bath by Malayan Excisemen; I was coming up to the fifth encore when I heard the front door open and my women come in . . . I turned to leap out . . . slipped on a footfull of skins . . . twisted sideways as my legs shot from under me and the screws flashed up my back like zippers . . . lost control completely and fell face-up, full-length in the purple bath of Bacchus.

I rested a moment to take in the event and then reached forward to haul myself up . . . I couldn't move! I was fixed solid! My self-locking lumbago had come on with all anchors out. My sacro-iliac and parts that there adjacent lie were set in concrete, the padlock was on my lumbar region and Hackenschmidt held my by the hips. I was trapped, helpless as any bride in a bath, measuring my length in nine and a half gallons of elderberry wine.

They came running upstairs, discovered me lying there a lilac Ophelia, and both screamed at once. The child yelled at the prospect of life with a lunatic father, while her mother thought I had done myself in Roman. The blood-red bath-water gave her the impression that I had opened a vein in classic comfort, but she was reassured when she saw the fruit floating around. She knew, as she explained later, that I could not have bled elderberries.

They wouldn't touch me lest they were marked indelibly for life, so my daughter got her skipping rope. I held the handles while they hauled away on the loop till they finally pulled me erect. There were little bells in the handles and they tinkled prettily as I rose like Venus from the wine-dark sea.

The mush hadn't been deep enough to cover me and I came out like a pennyplain harlequin. Facing you, I was a paleface; back-view, I'd been done over with permanganate of potash. From the rear I was wearing tights of gentian violet; at the front I was white as Christmas. Dressed, I didn't look so bad, except that my head was encased in a purple scrum-cap.

They kept asking me what-in-God's-name I was doing bathing in elderberry wine. I tried my usual escapist ploy of pretending to be blind drunk, but it didn't wash, so I finally said that a man had told me that bathing in young wine was a cure for lumbago. I think my wife believed this and passed it around her coffee-mates, the finest broadcasting system in the world. That may have been how the idea got out to Kuala Lumpur and I'm very sorry that T. T. Swee didn't get away with it in his defence.

My judges carried on at me like the black death, but they didn't fine me £23. And, although they let my vintage down the drain, there was one good thing came out of it all. The next war we have there'll be no need to paint any five-inch limit round our porcelain. All we'll have to do is fill up the bath as far as it's purple.





# MATING CALL WITH VARIATIONS

By Beata Bishop

**I**t seems to me that British lonely-hearts of either sex aren't half as efficiently served by the popular press as their Continental colleagues. All they can do is to write to the problem page editors of certain publications (mostly women's magazines which frighten the men away) and explain that they're shy, lonely and friendless. All they can expect is some hearty advice on joining a club and being less self-absorbed.

Continental tackle the matter more adventurously. When they write to their favourite mixed-readership magazines they waste no time on corresponding with the editorial staff. Instead, they describe themselves and the kind of partners they want, and the magazine publishes the text, leaving the rest to Fate. This method is profitable – normally there is a charge for publishing heart-cries – besides saving the staff the trouble of answering letters. The resulting copy gives much food for thought to the student of national character.

Trust the Austrians to use the sentimental approach. Judging by one Viennese journal the country must be bursting at the seams with blonde, blue-eyed lady orphans who love listening to string quartets and are

equally quick to laugh and cry, which doesn't promise domestic peace. But then the men seem equally volatile. One gentleman rises to rhapsodic heights in his appeal.

"I've been dreaming of you for so long, will you materialize at last?" he asks passionately, using the intimate "Du", although they haven't even been introduced. "You will be between 19 and 24, romantic, pretty, home-loving and full of tender feelings." Now he bursts into verse: "I want to grow old but not alone, let me be with you, not on my own." He then shrewdly concludes by saying: "If you write to me, I'll tell you all about myself," this time using the formal "Sie", presumably to show that he is well-bred. He deserves one of those laughing-crying charmers.

The Swiss show more moderation and common sense. The qualities they look for are fidelity, honesty and dignity; the hobbies they want to share include Nature, folklore, stamps and decorous dancing. The men also want to share expenses.

One of them, using the nom-de-plume of Mercury, wants a young, pretty girl to fly with him to Rhodes, magical Isle of Roses, for "a wonderful independent holiday." But wait, he is no wolf. The next sentence –

*"Bon voyage? Where am I going?"*



"Exceptional opportunity at half the usual cost" – explains everything. Mercury works in a travel agency and hasn't got the heart to waste a holiday-for-two at cost price. At least he's honest. He doesn't breathe a word about marriage.

And then the French. One mass-circulation weekly devotes a whole page to great Gallic effusions of emotion and yearning. Each one is accompanied by the writer's photograph, and the small, grim faces make a strange contrast with the melting appeals.

A bullet-headed, bespectacled, 42-year-old Frenchman, having waited for twenty years for someone to end his solitude, has at last decided to do something about it. "I am sentimental, gay and optimistic," he pleads, "with so much affection and devotion to offer that I shall make happy any woman willing to give me her heart. Hope and sincerity are my guides; will they lead me to bliss?"

He ought to get in touch with the lady in the next column, although she sounds a gloomy sort. "A spoilt life, that's what I keep saying to myself from dawn till dark," she grumbles. "Alas, my first marriage was a disaster." One can almost hear her deep, irritable French voice warming up to the story. "I own some magnificent property and have a large

private income, but I don't want to be wooed once more for my fortune."

Possibly not. Yet, going by her photograph, even that magnificent property would be a paltry consolation prize for a very brave man. Why not have a hair-do, spend some of that private income on a really good photograph and keep quiet about the money? "*Mais voyons, Jean-Pierre*, you really love me for my own sake," she could then murmur one fine afternoon, producing her De Luxe Peugeot and driving him out to the old château.

But no, they all spill the beans and ramble on endlessly. "Ah! when you suffer, you think you are the only one to do so," exclaims a 32-year-old secretary with a fractured heart and a pretty home in Clermont-Ferrand. "I've broken my unhappy engagement and want to find a girl who has also suffered in her youth," writes a 22-year-old railwayman, weighed down by middle-aged despair. No detail is withheld. One has the uncomfortable feeling of overhearing the intimate secrets of strangers.

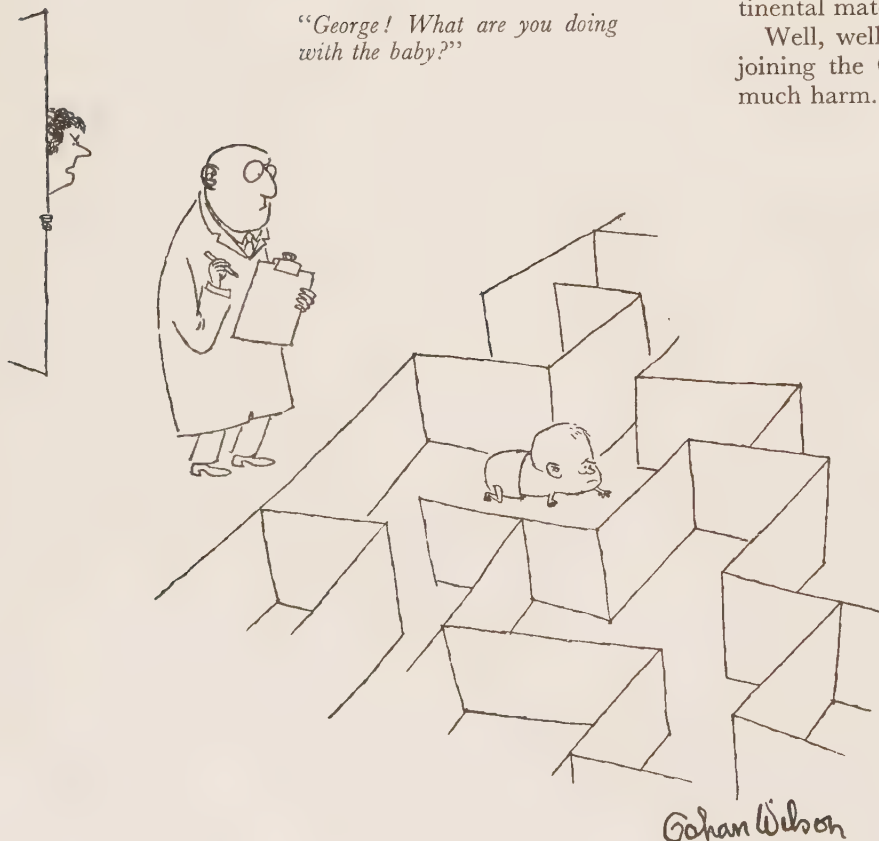
Perhaps it's not such a good idea, after all, to let readers loose on the editorial pages.

Oh, for a touch of discretion, for the tongue-tied brevity of fully paid-for matrimonial ads in a well-known London weekly – unflamboyant requests for sincere, genuine partners, homely widows and refined bachelors!

But what's this?

While the Continentals limit their quest to their own compatriots, a single issue of the London weekly lists sixty-four British advertisers clamouring for Continental mates.

Well, well. If this is how they feel about it, even joining the Common Market won't do the country much harm.



# HEALTHY RETREAT

By Hazel Townson



*"They don't make frames like that nowadays."*

When I went into hospital my children went too, there being no one but my thankfully inexperienced husband left to care for them.

We arrived one Monday morning in a bulging ambulance, accompanied by four suitcases, three hefty picture-books, two teddy-bears, one miniature carpenter's bench and half a battalion of Breakfast Cereal Infantry. My daughter, five months old, clutched also one pink rattle, one blue-green rubber-foam giraffe and a shred of her three-year-old brother's best nylon tartan shirt. The driver, heaving out her Carricot, ripped "L" from his trouser-leg on the half-extended ladder of a fire-engine I thought we'd left behind. This time the only curly mop he ruffled consolingly was his own.

We entered the reception office where a smart young lady clerk inquired which child needed treatment. "Neither," I lied; for by now one had his hand trapped in the strained mesh of an In-tray and the other was choking purple on a green lump of giraffe.

We reached the children's ward at dinner-time.

Blobs of rice pudding caught my attention smartly as we neared an empty cot. "This one's for Christopher," the sister threatened grimly. "Baby will have a small room to herself."

"You don't mean Christopher will be IN BED? In his pyjamas? All day long?" I had imagined in my innocence a sort of convalescent day nursery where bandaged babes would romp and scream and rip each other's stiches with delightful unconcern. If I had only known . . . But it was too late now. I staggered to my lonely bed three wards away and gnawed my Spock with ravenous disillusion.

I soon found I need not, as my husband had suggested, bribe a messenger; some eager young probationer who would dash back and forth between the children's ward and mine with news of how my offspring were progressing. The whole staff knew already. Nurses stared at me with more than professional interest, sisters frowned, passing housemen grinned; even consultants halted their processions to inquire if I were the parent of the child who filled his pillowcase

with liquid Acriflavine, or borrowed his neighbour's splint to make a surplus-food-chute. I was proudly defiant. "Well," I sniffed, "if you *will* keep him in bed all day . . . !"

So Christopher got up. He "helped" about the ward. He wrote me notes with a thermometer dipped in Gentian Violet and tied two small boys together by the draw-strings in their nighties. He escaped into the garden, gathered me a gorgeous bunch of flowers and asked a passing matron if she'd kindly deliver them and at the same time get some money from me for a tube of Smarties each for all the children.

When father visited him and took him out for "walks" our son was so full of thwarted energy that he ran non-stop up the nearest Pennine and turned cartwheels on a quarry-rim until the shale ran through his shirt.

Then they let him visit mummy, and I almost died of fright when he sat still as a bad concussion, with his eyes fixed on his sandals and his arms serenely folded. In exaggerated whispers he informed me, on departing, that you mustn't make a noise where people were ill, but he'd be glad if I had the money for a box of liquorice allsorts.

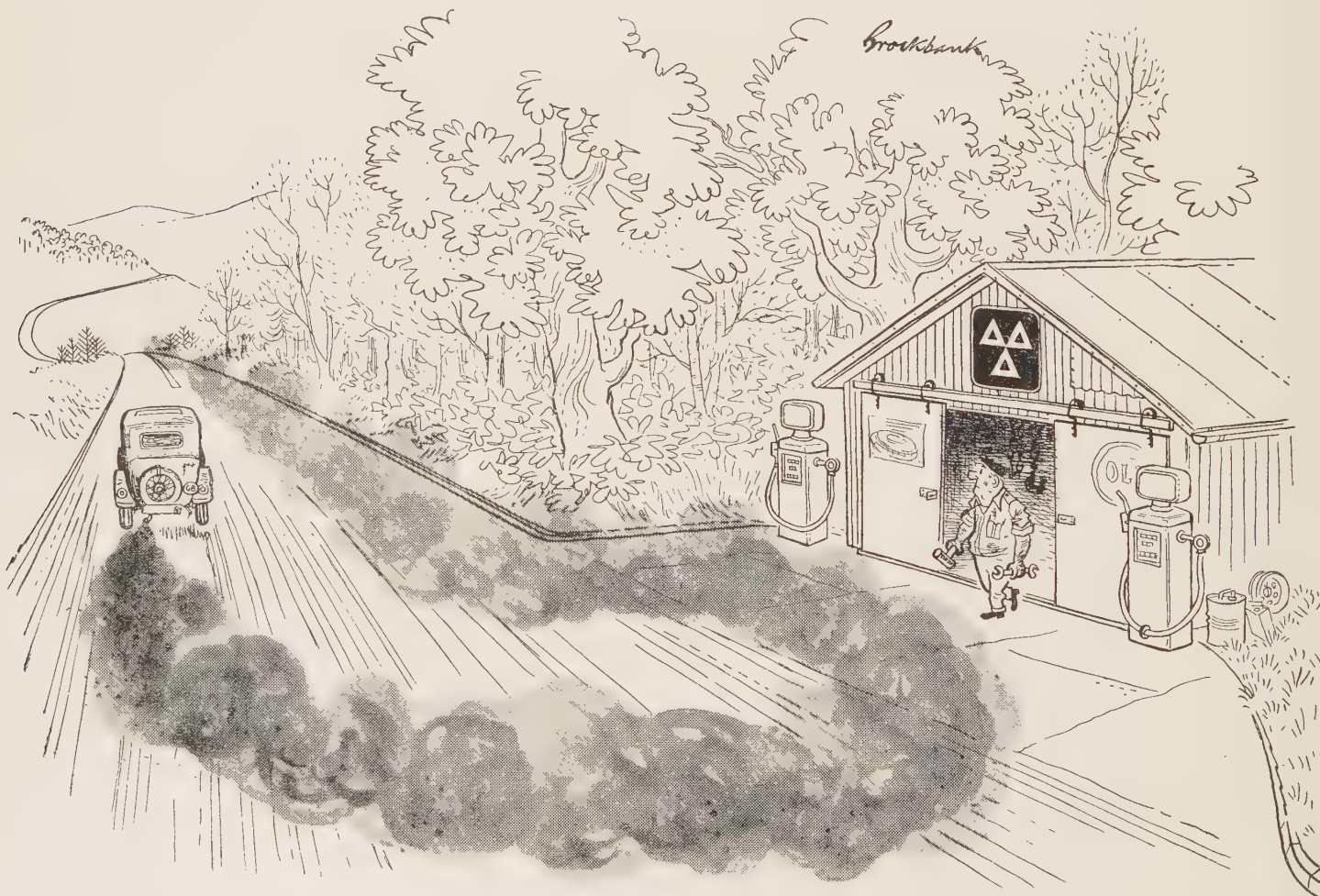
Personally, I had nothing to complain of. I received wonderful attention. The doctors couldn't cure me fast enough, and I broke several records for the speed with which I rallied, responded, convalesced and was finally discharged.

Baby, who had thrived and slept and gurgled in all the right places, departed heavier but none the wiser. Christopher, who helped, with astonishing calm, to pack his things, announced that he knew what he'd like to be. No, not a surgeon or a male nurse, but the man who went round with a step-ladder changing the light-bulbs.

To the sister on the children's ward I found it hard to express my gratitude. Dared I hope that my two had not been too much trouble? She gave me an infinitely weary and bewildered smile. "We've never had to cope with healthy ones before. It's made us realize just how ill our genuine patients feel."

The ambulance-driver with the almost-invisible repair in his trouser-leg glanced resignedly up to Heaven.

"I've been in hospital," my son explained to him. "So you'd better not grab my fire-engine like that. It might be infectious."



# LOVE ON THE LAUNCHING PAD

By H. F. Ellis

Here before me, wrenched from the pages of an American magazine, is a picture of a slim blonde dressed in purple trousers, a red cummerbund and a frilly white blouse. Such at least is the description I should have given, in my rough manly way, of the lady's clothing were I not told underneath that her chore-saving lace-frilled white shirt is in no-iron 65% Dacron polyester, 35% cotton touched with Dacron polyester lace and that her tapered pants are in richly hued 100% cotton velveteen. You can have the whole lot – less the lady, who is not for buying – for about \$23.50 (“Prices slightly higher in the west,” which brings home the enormous size of the United States and/or the scandalous freight rates for lace-frilled shirts and tapered pants). Below the picture of the lady (for her picture is a picture within a picture; she is in a *frame*, you see) are a pipe, a technical drawing and some kind of optical instrument, and beside it stands what I take to be a model of a smallish I.C.B.M.

But these details are by the way. What interests me chiefly about this attractive advertisement is the title or “message”

“He Married the Lady in the Lady Manhattan” with its supporting legend “The rocket expert's wife, glamorous at home, in Lady Manhattan's three-stage fashion plan.”

Advertisements in these days of Motivation Research are not put together idly or at random. The appeal, as I understand it, is to hidden depths, subconscious yearnings, “blank mis-givings”, as Wordsworth (first in the field as ever) put it, “of a



Eric Burgin

*“I'll thank you to return us to the Dolly  
Fenhurst Formation Team this very minute.”*

creature Moving about in worlds not realized.” This must mean that American women, consciously or otherwise, long to marry rocket experts. Given tapered pants and a 65% Dacron polyester shirt – such I take to be the advertisement's subtle message – they might just about pull it off.

Not so very long ago I wrote with raised eyebrows in these pages about the tendency of popular women's magazines in this country to run stories about girls in love with architects. It seemed to me that even the nicest A.R.I.B.A. lacked something in romantic appeal compared with the sheikhs, R.A.F. pilots and tanned men from *Out There* of an earlier generation. But I did not doubt that the women's magazines had their fingers on their readers' pulses and knew exactly what their secret yearnings were. Now it looks as if we were moving on. What America thinks to-day Britain will think to-morrow. The indications are that the architect's brief day is over and that a bright new star is arising in the dream-world of love and marriage. How will the rocket expert square up to his new responsibilities as Ideal Man?

I am in something of a difficulty here. No very clear picture of a rocket expert emerges, unless it be of Dr. von Braun, who is hardly eligible. The “image” has not yet crystallized. Certain characteristics are known from short film sequences at Cape Canaveral. He is cool during count-downs, staunch in the face

of disappointment when Stage 2 refuses to function, human enough to register a grin of satisfaction if all those instruments oscillate as desired and his closed-circuit TV screen shows the long white snake rearing endlessly up into the sky. But what kind of hat does he wear? Has he got slim, strong fingers? Is he musical? We know that he smokes a pipe because Lady Manhattan has put one in, but is he fond of animals? And how – ah, how is he as a lover? Patient, perhaps, as he must be in his chosen work? Indomitably refusing to be discouraged? Even a shade too deliberate in his wooing? Does he, one is bound to ask, carry the count-down into his private life?

Deep down in their hearts the women of America must know the answers to these questions. One does not yearn to become the wife of a rocket expert, dream of him as the ideal mate, slip into tapered pants on the off-chance of running across one at the country club, without having a pretty clear idea of what he looks like. But the women of America have not yet taken me into their confidence. Their magazine story-writers must be busily at work even now on the chequered romances of pretty girls from Baltimore and Omaha entranced by dedicated scientists with their strange talk of nose-cones and umbilicals; a thousand pens are fixing for ever the image of the rocket hero. But the results of their labours have not so far come my way.

Still, if the hero's lineaments are as yet dim on this side of the Atlantic, it is easy to see that his setting is

admirably adapted for the tender passion. There is no difficulty whatever over the girl-meets-man business. In the old sheikh days a good many pages had to be wasted getting the girl out to Arabia; she could meet a rocket expert on page one. She would be in charge of the white mice, I fancy, and would naturally not be noticed at all by the expert at first, except for an occasional over-the-shoulder "Not too much cheese, Miss Bryce!" Well, of course after a bit something brings them together. He is working late over a tricky modification to the aft stabilizer cut-out and there is nobody else left in the building to hold that technical drawing for him while he rules some fresh lines on it. He is absorbed, intent on his work, scarcely speaking for hours at a time. "Hand me that optical instrument," he says once, and bitterly though she resents being addressed as if she were assisting at an operation ("He treats me like a sister," she told herself angrily) she cannot help noticing how the long lean line of his jaw is pitted and scarred by the tell-tale marks of a hundred misfires. Around five o'clock in the morning he runs his fingers through his hair (which is crisp, I think), muttering "It's this negative feed-back we've got to eliminate somehow," and as she leans over to see what he is jabbing at with the stem of his pipe her hair accidentally brushes his cheek. "You must be tired, Miss Bryce," he says, and I need scarcely add that the momentary contact, combined with his kindly thought for her ("So he *is* human after all!" she whispered later, in the privacy of her simply furnished apartment, albeit not without soft feminine touches) made her quiver all over like a Titan undergoing an anchored test-firing on the launching pad.

There is no need to pursue the matter. The days slip by and his apparent indifference as he watches her strap the neurometers on her charges before popping them into their containers pains her deeply. But what of it? The man is under a considerable strain. Later on, when all those tense men with headphones have pressed their switches and reported "Switches Pressed!" and all the green lights have flashed, and all the umbilicals have done what umbilicals are meant to do, and the count-down is over and the rocket has soared away on its appointed course, OK for thrust and boost and separation, and the little screens and dials are flickering their cheerful messages on every side, why then the rocket expert can relax and let his heart have its way with him. There is a new light in his eyes as he comes to stand beside her where she is methodically logging the heartbeats of the mice, despite the thumping of her own; and she, with a woman's swift intuition, slips off her working overalls and stands revealed before him in richly hued tapered pants and no-iron 65% Dacron polyester. And that, in a word, is that. He marries the lady in the Lady Manhattan.



*"He never was much of a conversationalist."*

# BOOKS

## AGAINST THE WALL

By Wanda Burgan

In case you think that here in America we have gone about as far as we can go in the matter of doing away with books, just wait. The worst is yet to be.

Books have been digested and re-digested and now, so help me Gutenberg, they are disappearing right into the wall.

A recent newspaper article claims that one can now "enjoy the decorative effect of rich-looking books by using a panel of specially designed wallpaper."

There are one or two bonuses along with the rich-looking book effect. You get "wall interest and a strong vertical accent".

I haven't been so upset since the cranberry scare. Here I am, with several long squat bookcases that are giving me a strong horizontal accent, when what I apparently need is a strong vertical one.

Well, one must try to keep up with the times, so I suppose I'll have to get rid of the books and bookcases and shop around for a little wall interest. I wonder if I might be able to find a yard or so of Shakespeare and the romantic poets and a few feet of Dickens and Thackeray. I certainly wouldn't want to settle for best-seller paper and then find that the Joneses have the Greek and Roman poets on theirs.

Being sentimental about books, I'll need a good thought to hold while making the change-over. I'll concentrate on an important advantage of a wallpaper library that the article overlooked. No one could borrow a book and forget to return it, or bring it back looking like something that had been dug up with the Dead Sea scrolls.

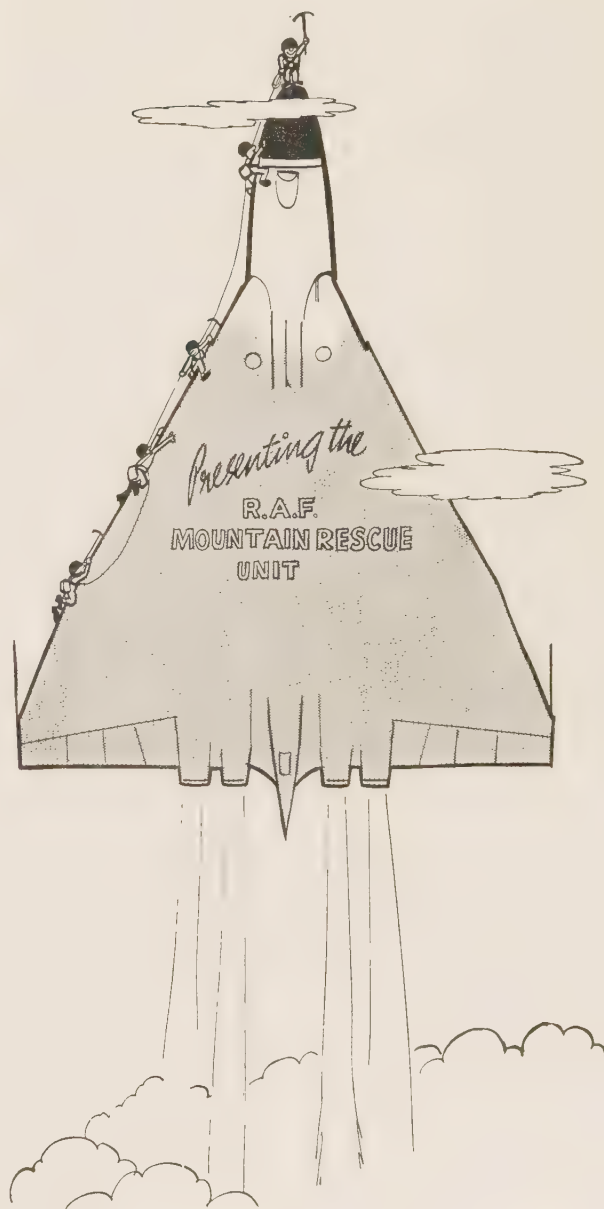
I'll try to remember, too, that wallpaper panels eliminate "the expense and maintenance" of books. I haven't done much about maintaining mine, and am not even certain whether this would involve furnishing plastic jackets all around or numbering them according to the Dewey decimal system. But wallpaper books will free me from maintenance worries, whatever they are.

Still, in spite of all the arguments, I am not convinced. I want my books, and hang the expense and the maintenance.

Just the same, I'm glad I saw the article, because it opens up such an interesting vista. It may be that other things are available in wallpaper now, and I intend to find out what they are. I have always wanted a grand piano. I can't squeeze a grand into a spinet-size house, but what's to stop me from having a wallpaper one?

I can picture my freshly-papered home now—wallpaper piano, a couple of wallpaper Monets, a nice collection of wallpaper Wedgewood, a wallpaper marble-topped cocktail table . . .

No, the last item won't do. You know how people are. All that broken glass.



# SUMMONED BY

## BETJEMAN

### A Grocer's Boyhood

OVER the shop my big, fat Uncle Frank  
(Frank GROCER Harrap, as the fascia said)  
Played the harmonium, with *Traumerei*,  
*The Broken Melody* and *Edelweiss*,  
His pipe-ash flaking on the yellow keys,  
*Jets d'Eau* (by Sydney Smith). He sometimes sang  
"When Father Laid the Carpet on the Stairs,"  
But this, his comic song, would make me cry,  
Thinking of Father, gone so long before  
To carpetless last rest. "Music for you,  
My Boy," my Uncle said.

But down below,  
Behind the mahogany counter's stalwart sheen  
I wandered in an acrid, secret land  
Where scent of fresh-sliced ham married with soap  
And Robin Starch and turpentine and cheese.  
For I must be a grocer. Auntie Beth,  
Short, brisk, tone-deaf, no nonsense, shrewd with scales,  
Knew this, and weighing broken biscuits out,  
Precise, square-fingered, blackly bodiced, boned,  
Was on my side. "Pass me the Drummer Dye,  
And here's the string, now make a tidy parcel."  
Above us, Uncle boomed a double chant,  
Pulled out the Tuba, nobly swelled the bass,  
"He's off again," she said.

Ah, Worksop, Notts!  
I see thy wet streets still: sharp off the Bridge  
A sign said DANCER (DANGER, but the G  
Was chipped). Beyond, the grey Infirmary,  
Where Uncle organed hymns on Sunday nights.  
I feel the hand-smooth oaken handle yet,  
Too big, when first I pumped the harmless wind  
That Uncle at the keyboard turned to din,  
While reedy vagrants sang. Would they, like me,  
Have rather had an Oxo-cube or two  
Than "Brightly Gleams our Banner"? Was I wrong,  
When Uncle's "Onward Christians" wheezed aloft,  
To think of H.P. Sauce and Quaker Oats,  
Snug-packaged sausages, or marmalade  
Perky with gollywogs in neat-ranged jars?  
I ached to get my little apron on  
And be a grocer. "Pound of lard? Obligated  
To you, Miss Welkin. Margarine? Of course.  
Oh, yes, the Kaiser can't last long, I'm sure,  
Over by Christmas."

Christmas was the time  
My Uncle pressed the music on me most.  
"Come boy, one finger, 'Hark the Heralds' now!"  
He never knew that music soured my dreams.

And then came school. My ruddy Uncle Frank,  
Sonorous-humming "Rule, Britannia!" walked  
Me there on my first day, then changed his tune  
To "Down Among the Dead Men." Teacher smiled  
To hear that I should learn the violin.  
"He'll play to us in Sheffield Town Hall yet,"  
My Uncle said, "or I'll be much surprised."  
Surprised he was. I never played, except  
At grocers. My young head was bright and sharp  
With images of ginger-nuts in tins,  
The holy cleanliness of string-cut cheese  
Whose fumes, astringent in my nose's mind,  
Filled all my days at school.

One day (in March  
Of 1922) quick-scampering home,  
I found my Auntie weeping at the till.  
"He'll have to stop his music now," she said,  
Mopping with butter-muslin at her sniffs,  
"I can't keep on alone, with times so bad,  
Not now that wicked Co-Op's started up  
Across the street."

Was this my earliest brush  
With grief? I think my little grocer's heart  
Grew up just then, knowing that days gone by,  
Safe, in a world of pies and potted meat,  
Sugar's harsh granulations underfoot,  
Fly-papers hanging, Golden Syrups piled,  
(And *Edelweiss* down-twining) were no more.

\* \* \*

They buried Auntie. Customers sent flowers.  
We creaked in Mr. Henshaw's taxi home.  
The leaf-green shop blinds (one a little cracked  
To make, as it had always seemed, the shape  
Of tied string, hanging, waiting for the snip  
Of scissors), masked the mourning windows off.  
Oh, little place! I deeply loved thee then.  
And thought "Now, surely now, must Uncle Frank  
Need me, beladdered to a topmost shelf,  
To reach the Sarson's Vinegar, the yeast;  
Wrap candles, measure cocoa, hand the change!  
I'll be a grocer now!"

"Your Aunt," he said,  
Heaving his sorrow up the narrow stair,  
"Had no great love for music. Dr. Arne  
Was just a name to her, like Sterndale Bennett.  
I fear she held you back." "But, Uncle, please—"   
"She meant no harm, she didn't understand."  
And handing me the Star Portfolio  
Open at page nineteen, *qui Vive: Duet*,  
He bade me read the thick-packed notes by name.  
"F sharp," I said. And choked.

But through my tears  
Saw, winking yellow at the curtain's edge,  
The lights of the Co-Operative Store . . .

(To Be Continued Any Time and at Any Length)

— J. B. BOOTHROYD



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