

The Hop Leaf Gazette.

The Monthly Journal of H. & G. SIMONDS, Ltd.

Edited by CHARLES H. PERRIN.

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No. 2



MR. H. M. RANDALL.

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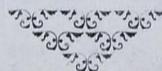
Mr. Randall, whose photograph appears on the frontispiece, has recently completed 25 years of service with the Company and his occupation of the position of honour in this journal will give pleasure to his many friends at the Brewery and Branches.

Mr. Randall commenced his career at the Brewery in February, 1915, and in common with many other members of the clerical staff, received his initial training in the Cask Office. In June, 1918, he joined the R.A.F. as a cadet, but the Great War came to an end before he had completed his training.

On demobilization, Mr. Randall returned to the Brewery where he recommenced his duties as clerk to the Brewery Surveyor. The qualifications for the work in that department necessarily involve a knowledge of costings of building and decorative materials, the making of tracings and photographic copies of plans in connection with rebuilding and alterations to properties. Proving himself capable of good solid work he was transferred to the Accountants' department. For the last 4½ years he has been a tower of strength to that department, in which the work calls for more than the average ability and it would be hard indeed to find a more conscientious and reliable worker.

Mr. Randall has taken an active part in the A.R.P. organization at the Brewery since its inception. He fills the role of telephone warden and takes his turn in manning the exchange, upon which the successful operation of the scheme largely depends. He is also a town warden and has had the necessary training for patrol and other work, including dealing with incendiary bombs, etc.

Both at work and play, Mr. Randall has always been a popular member of the staff and has upheld the sporting side of the business with that same keenness which he displays in the office. He played for several seasons at centre half in the Brewery football team and has also represented the Brewery at tennis. A lover of the open air, Mr. Randall also finds time for swimming and cycling, and may often be seen travelling the Bath Road in company with his young son, en route to his native village of Aldermaston.



Take a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine oft infirmities.—The Bible.

CHAT *from*



THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

(By C. H. P.)

RUM RATION FOR A.R.P. MEN.

Rum or brandy are to be issued to A.R.P. workers in Stoke Newington "at the discretion of the A.R.P. officer. The borough's civil defence committee are getting in a stock of the two spirits. The ration, it is hoped, will buck up the men while they are on unpleasant and exhausting work in wrecked buildings. An A.R.P. officer in one of the worst-bombed areas in London said: "Recently our rescue and stretcher squads were so exhausted that I asked the regional officer to authorise a rum issue. He did so at once. We gave an eggcupful of rum to 300 or 400 workers—half while they were on the job and the other half at the end. It helped them a lot."

WISDOM OF THE GREEKS.

The poets and philosophers of Ancient Greece wrote many precepts for the present day. Here are some of them:—

We must so strive that each man may regard himself as the chief cause of the victory.—*Zenophon.*

The god of war hates those who hesitate.—*Aristotle.*

Our business in the field of fight
Is not to question, but to prove our might.—*Homer.*

It is easier to give counsel than to endure sufferings manfully.—*Euripides.*

The gifts of enemies are not gifts, and have no value.—*Sophocles.*

In a just cause it is right to be confident.—*Sophocles.*

One tyrant helps another tyrant.—*Herodotus.*

Those who go to sea are only four inches from death.—*Anacharsis.*

Libya always brings something evil.—*Aristotle.*

GOD'S GOOD GIFT.

The Rector of Brampton, Rev. H. J. Sillitoe, recently described beer as "God's good gift—a real asset to the social life of the nation." The Licensed Trade had made great progress since his boyhood, and much of the improvement that had taken place was due to the work of women concerned in the trade, he said. The inn or tavern was the social centre of the people of England, the forum of public opinion and the working man's club. Therefore from every point of view it should be worthy of the great office it had to perform. "I go into an inn for a glass of beer whenever I feel disposed, and I always shall do," said the rector. "In the end the really broad-minded, common-sense people of the nation, who are the backbone, the very salt and fibre of the nation, are the men who take their glass of beer. Those are the men who constitute Englishmen as we understand them."

WORDS FOR OUR DAY.

Nearly 80 years ago there came from America the finest and most beautiful statement of those ideals which this nation is now defending at such bitter cost. There could be no greater compliment to our friends in America; no more heartening war-cry for the citizens of the British Commonwealth; and no more dignified defiance of our common enemy, than for those vibrant words to be printed and displayed prominently all over Britain during the period of the war. The words are the conclusion of Lincoln's Gettysburg speech:—

"We here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

A PROPHETIC INSCRIPTION.

An old tombstone in a village churchyard near Maldon, Essex, bears this prophetic inscription:—

"When pictures look alive with movements free,
When ships like fishes swim below the sea,
When men outstripping birds can scare the sky,
Then half the world deep drenched with blood will lie."

STRENGTH IN BEER.

Even in bygone days the *Sheffield Telegraph* could be frivolous on occasion. Here is a little "news item" which appeared in its columns just over 80 years ago. We make our teetotal friends a present of it.

A college student was brought before the authorities accused of having a barrel of ale in his room which was contrary to regulations.

"What explanation can you offer?" he was asked.

"Well, sir," was the reply, "the fact is my doctor advised me to take a little ale each day as a tonic, and not wishing to visit the places where the beverage is retailed I concluded to have a barrel taken to my room."

"Indeed—and have you derived any benefit from it?"

"Oh, yes, sir," said the student. "When the barrel was first taken to my rooms some days ago I could scarcely lift it. Now I can carry it with the greatest ease."

Surely that little anecdote will convert the fiercest teetotaler from the heresy that there is no strength in beer!

THE REV. J. NORTON.

I gladly offer wider publicity to the views of the Rev. J. Norton—a well-known figure in the Chester and Warrington Methodist Synod.

This gentleman has put forward the theory that the Germans have been sparing breweries from their bombing raids, because if drinking continues at the present rate we shall lose the war.

What's the answer—gingerbeer? A nation dazed, soaked and stunned with millions of gallons of vicious lemonade?

Alas, I wish Mr. Norton was right in his suggestion.

But the reverse happens to be the case.

I myself have witnessed a brewery laid in ashes—as melancholy a scene as I ever wish not to see. And as for ale houses—the visitation of Hunnish hate has struck scores of them a cruel, wicked blow that leaves heaps of rubble where once the customers roared for Daisy to give them her answer do.

The strategy of the Luftwaffe is all too plain.

It is to smash Demon Alcohol.

For a nation that was 100 per cent. sober all the time would probably ask if life itself, let alone victory, were worth while.

The hop leaf may not be as powerful a sign as the swastika. But it can mean good cheer in weary days—even though Methodist Synod, lashed into delirium by years of acute sobriety, sees it as Hitler's secret weapon.

—*Cassandra in "Daily Mirror."*

COUNCIL'S OPINION.

Edmonton Council say it costs a mayor more to live in war than in peace-time. So next year the mayor's salary will be increased from £250 to £350.

Islington Council say it costs a mayor less to live in war than in peace-time. So next year the mayor's salary will be reduced from £500 to £400.

POTATO HINT.

The dry summer has made this season's potatoes liable to break during cooking. To avoid this, put them into hot salted water and boil slowly for 15 minutes. Then drain, cover closely with a clean cloth, put the lid on the pan again and let it stand in a warm place for 20 minutes. The potatoes will finish cooking in their own steam. And there will be no waste.

WELL DESERVED PROMOTION.

His many friends, particularly those at the Brewery, extend congratulations to Mr. H. M. P. Ashby on his recent promotion to the rank of Pilot Officer, a well deserved recognition of service before and since the outbreak of war. We all wish him the best of luck and safe landings.

THE CHEDDAR CHEESE.

Mr. V. Burge having left the Cheddar Cheese to join the R.A.F., this House is now under the management of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Harrow. Mr. Harrow has for the past 3½ years been the licensee of the Park Hotel, Hanwell, West London, but recently things have become a little too hectic in these parts, hence the removal. When one bomb falls in the hotel grounds, and six others within 200 yards, one is inclined to think that Fritz has taken a violent dislike to one's presence and it is best to discreetly steal away. The Park Hotel is certainly unique as, apart from a banqueting hall and dance hall, there is a fully equipped theatre attached to the premises which is in great demand in normal times by Amateur Dramatic and Operatic Companies, etc.—the Great Western Railway Companies have performed there for many years. Even Mr. Harrow found time to produce a burlesque pantomime entitled

"Cinderella and the Lost Kipper." His talented daughter, Pauline, arranged the songs and dances and designed and made all the dresses. When you see Mr. Harrow and try and visualise him as a fairy you will realise that it was a scream. Anyway, he raised over £13 for the Red Cross, so he was a good fairy to them. Both he and his good lady regretted leaving many old friends, but hope to make many more to replace them at the Cheddar Cheese.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

Mr. Chamberlain's death is sad tidings for the nation. No Minister of State ever worked harder or spared himself less. That he failed in his greatest aim of peace does not detract from the courage of the attempt. "A noble aim is as a noble deed." It is doubtful whether in the circumstances any other Prime Minister could have succeeded in his place. This is certain—that he, like his illustrious father and distinguished brother, leaves a reputation of unsullied integrity and an example of devotion to duty that have helped to uphold the dignity of our public life. The honoured name of CHAMBERLAIN has suffered no belittlement at his hands, and a sensible part of the loss which his death inflicts is that now for the first time for over sixty years the name of CHAMBERLAIN will no longer be conspicuous in our public life.

TRIBUTES.

"I was profoundly impressed by his effort at Munich to preserve world peace. Looking back on it now, I feel that by that time it was too late, and that he had inherited a situation from predecessors which was beyond repair. But that does not detract from the value of his great work for peace."—*Mr. James Maxton, M.P.*

"From his love of country things he drew not only strength and happiness but also in no small measure that understanding and love of England which made him the devoted servant of his country and a very human friend."—*Lord Swinton.*

"I say thank God for Neville Chamberlain. If he had not humbled himself at Munich and purchased us more than a year's uninterrupted preparation, we might well by now be sharing the fate of France. A great man has gone."—*Mr. Menzies, the Australian Prime Minister.*

HIS PRAYER TO GOD.

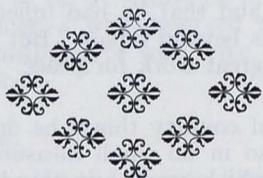
A humorous little story is taken from a parish magazine:—

"His foster-mother asked a little evacuee boy from Yorkshire if he said his prayers, because if so he might like to say them to

her the first night. He knelt down, reverently closed his eyes, put his hands together, and said: 'Please God, bless Mummie, Daddy, little Grace Baby, and this kind leddy who is taking care of me, an—an—please God take care of yourself, for if anything happens to Thee—we are sunk.'"

OUR SPORTS GROUNDSMAN JOINS UP.

During the drought our Sports Grounds assumed a very brown colour, but how quickly the reviving rains have carpeted them with green. Our indefatigable groundsman, with the assistance of his venerable father, maintains them in first-class condition and they are indeed a great credit to all concerned. And now Mr. Povey is called up to serve his King and Country. We shall miss him very much but wish him the best of luck.



NATURE NOTE.

(BY C.H.P.).

A PEG-DOWN FISHING MATCH.

TOUCHING TRIBUTE TO ABSENT ANGLER.

It was a typical September day as we tramped across the meadow to the riverside for a day's fishing. There was sunshine and cloud with alternating spells of mild and cold weather, the very black clouds occasionally appearing in the distance failing to carry out their threats of heavy showers, though we were well prepared for the worst of weather with our Wellingtons and oilskins. High overhead were skeins of wild duck faintly quacking as they winged their way in V-shape formation to their feeding grounds, or rather, waters. A pair of startled snipe, which we flushed, sped before us, pursuing a zig-zag course, and moorhens ran rapidly from the meadow to the rushes in the river. The peculiar notes of a spotted woodpecker were sounded from a willow tree and an old heron voiced his feelings as he flew upstream with measured beat and slow. He apparently objected to us trespassing on what he considered were his fishing preserves.

A DEMOCRATIC GATHERING.

It was a peg-down fishing match on the River Kennet and about a score of us, all ardent anglers, had assembled for the draw of numbered tickets indicating the particular spots at which we were to fish. Some of us had walked miles to the scene of operations, others had come by push-bike or by car. We were indeed a mixed crowd, representing many walks of life. It was a bit of real democracy, where no favours were bestowed and the best men took the prizes.

A VERY MOVING PICTURE.

This was the setting of the following moving picture which I wish there were a worthier pen to paint. We all assembled for the "draw," but there was a touching little ceremony to perform

before commencing operations. It concerned the memory of an absent angler, a man small in body but big of heart who had recently crossed the great river of life to rejoin that happy throng of anglers who had preceded him. Mr. Ward was his name, and it had been my privilege and pleasure to accompany him on fishing expeditions. You could not wish to meet a kinder companion or one more ready to give of his great knowledge of the gentle art to those less experienced than himself. Incidentally Mr. Ward was a member of Messrs. Bradley's staff and assisted in the production of THE HOP LEAF GAZETTE.

VERY SIMPLE AND SINCERE.

Well, there we all forgathered, and the M.C., in a very few, but extremely moving words, simple and sincere, paid tribute to this great little sportsman's memory. Then there were a few minutes' silence as with bared heads we stood there and our thoughts went out to our departed friend and to his wife and two little children who are left behind to mourn the loss of a good father and devoted husband.

Then we proceeded to the business of the day and some of us fumbled with the gentles or found that we had tied on the wrong trace—well perhaps we could not see quite so plainly as usual. But the mists soon cleared and we carried on.

Ward would not have wished it otherwise.

SO THEY'VE ARRIVED!

This was the exclamation of a great gentleman as he entered the office of a friend the other morning. He had previously very kindly sent him some fine quinces which emit a strong perfume, something like that of sour apples, and this evidently indicated to him that they had arrived! The quince is bitter to the taste if eaten raw, but quinces make very fine jelly and add a delicious flavour to the stews of other fruits. A quince tree is easily distinguishable by its tortuous, sloping trunk and twisted branches,

while its autumnal leaves are among the most beautiful to be seen, coloured as they are with orange, yellow, brown and red. Pliny informs us that in days long gone by the ripe fruits of the quince were used to decorate the images of the gods and were considered to be emblems of happiness and love.

FACING THE WIND.

While in our Fermenting Department the other morning I looked out of Mr. Crocker's office window and noticed many sea-gulls on the adjoining roofs. As Mr. Crocker pointed out, these birds invariably face the same way. They were certainly all looking in the same direction on this particular occasion. I noticed they were facing the wind and I suppose they do this to save their feathers from being unnecessarily ruffled.

On the same morning I noticed a kingfisher flying upstream. He settled on a small tree at the end of the Cooperage Island. He had not been perched there many minutes before he dived into the water, seized a little fish, and made off upstream with his prize.

Many other birds assemble on the roofs of adjoining buildings, particularly in the winter months, and are rarely, if ever, sent hungry away from the Brewery premises.

A VERY BLACK-BIRD.

My good friend, Mr. S. J. Moore, tells me that a regular visitor to his garden is a blackbird with black beak and feet—a very unusual feature for a blackbird.

ANGLER, SNAKE AND FROG.

A good story comes to hand concerning an angler, a snake, and a frog. The frog is a good bait, particularly for chub. Well, on arriving at the riverside the fisherman saw a large snake with a frog in its mouth. In order to make the snake release the frog the angler poured some rum down the snake's throat and immediately the frog was freed only to be caught again and used as bait by the

angler. The following day the man with rod and line arrived at the same spot when lo! and behold the snake "ran" to meet him with another little frog.

A very *rum* story, you will agree!

PARTRIDGES' NEST ON SPORTS GROUND.

For some months now I have failed to see the pair of partridges that were so much in evidence on our sports ground during the spring. And it was not until quite recently that I espied their nest. There are still nine eggs in it, of course addled now, and I wonder what happened to the poor mother bird.

Probably some prowling fox had partridge for dinner.



BREWERY JOTTINGS.

(By W. DUNSTER.)

Trade, in spite of everything, is maintaining its high level, keeping us all very busy. If only we could get all we need, what wonderful business we should be doing!

I find the donor of the large cabbage and the prize collection of vegetables on behalf of the Red Cross Fund was Mr. F. J. Benham, of the Cold Room. He not only provided these splendid specimens but also the tickets used in the draw. As already stated, the Fund benefited considerably by reason of Mr. Benham's forethought and he is worthy of the highest praise, not only for his prowess at raising such wonderful vegetables but for raising funds for such a deserving cause. Mr. E. T. Gibbs, of the General Office, the winner of the prize vegetables, tells me they were excellent.

To mark the occasion of Mr. F. C. Smith's recent marriage a subscription list was started, the result being that a canteen of cutlery was forwarded to him. Owing to the exigencies of the service (as they say in the Army) he was unable to receive the gift in person. All good wishes go to both Mr. and Mrs. F. C. Smith.

Reading Football Club are running two teams in spite of the *Blitzkreig* and are doing well. The first team have yet to lose a game at Elm Park, keeping up the old tradition of being a difficult eleven to beat on their home ground. The second team, consisting of young local amateurs, are coming along well and when the right blend is struck will do even better. Already several of these youngsters have turned out for the first team.

The Brewery Minor XI, even though they have not many players to choose from, are doing remarkably well. I am informed they play good football and that these boys will be very useful for building up a good team after the war.

Mr. A. J. Dalton, of the Transport Department, who passed away last month, had been employed at the Brewery for 20 years. He was an ex-Guardsman and when I first knew him he was a member of the Brewery billiards team. He "shone" at this game and you could always count on him to put up a good show. Our sympathy is extended to his relatives in their sad loss.

We also regret the death of Mr. J. Hamblin, of the Maltings, where he had been working during the malting seasons for about 20 years.

The following extracts from *The Berkshire Chronicle* will, I feel sure, be of interest to many friends both on and off the Brewery:—

"The engagement is announced between Norman, only son of Mrs. Lipscombe, of Northfield Road, Reading, and Frances, elder daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Rowe, of Buckfastleigh, Newton Abbot. Mr. Lipscombe, who is now in the R.A.O.C., was formerly chairman of the Reading Junior Conservative Association, and assistant secretary of the Reading Rowing Club."

Congratulations!

"MARRIED 25 YEARS.

Mr. and Mrs. William Thomas Lambden, of 4 Blenheim Gardens, Reading, celebrated their silver wedding on 16th October. They were married by the Rev. A. D. Phillips at St. Luke's, Reading, and have been living at their present address all their married life. They are both aged 61, and have no children. Mr. Lambden has been employed by H. & G. Simonds Ltd. for about 30 years, and is a keen supporter of the Reading F.C. He has not missed a match at Elm Park for many years. He is a native of Wokingham, and Mrs. Lambden was born in Reading. They are both attendants at St. Luke's Church."

Mr. Lambden is employed in the Beer Cellars. More congratulations!

The visits of our boys at present in the Services makes us wonder if there will be many more to go from the Brewery. I should imagine there could not be many more to go from the Offices. By the way, our First Aid Chief, Mr. T. W. Kent, has registered.

A few years ago we little thought there would be another Armistice Day of another war! Unless they are properly designated there will be a mix-up in Armistice Days when this war is over.

The following changes and transfers have taken place recently and to all we wish every success:—

The Dreadnought, Earley (H. & G. Simonds Ltd.)—Mr. C. Mann.

The Ostrich, Colnbrook (H. & G. Simonds Ltd.)—Mr. J. Nicholson.

The Victoria, Hayes (H. & G. Simonds Ltd.)—Mr. C. W. Diment.

The Saracen's Head, Reading (H. & G. Simonds Ltd.)—Mr. J. H. T. Saunders.

The New Chairmakers Arms, High Wycombe (Wheeler's Wycombe Breweries Ltd.)—Mr. L. M. Garland.

The Harrow, Langley (H. & G. Simonds Ltd.)—Mr. W. White.

The New Inn, Postcombe (Wheeler's Wycombe Breweries Ltd.)—Mr. R. Rolfe.

The Griffin, Church Road, Caversham (H. & G. Simonds Ltd.)—Mr. G. F. Pettifer.

Mrs. Taylor, the former tenant of the last-named house for many years, will be missed by her many friends—she has no enemies. Having been at The Griffin for 34 years, prior to which she was at the Leopold Arms for four years, Mrs. Taylor has spent practically all her lifetime in the service of the firm. Although not of robust constitution, she was a hard worker and always had a kind word and smile for everyone. Somehow The Griffin will not seem quite the same without her. Nevertheless I know Mr. Pettifer has had the wishes of Mrs. Taylor for success in his new undertaking, and those of the writer. All will agree with me that Mrs. Taylor was a good sort and her unflinching charm of manner and courtesy were the admiration of all her many customers, who were also her friends.

We are again indebted to *The Berkshire Chronicle* for the following in connection with Mr. Saunders:—

"READING MAN'S RETIREMENT.

A large gathering of officers and staff of the Central Ordnance Depot assembled recently to bid farewell to Mr. J. H. T. Saunders on his retirement after 40 years' service at the depot. A presentation was made by Major T. G. Donovan, M.C., O.B.E., who said that Mr. Saunders had won the respect of all at the depot. An entertainment followed. Mr. Saunders resides at 102 Addington Road, Reading, and is a well-known figure in the social life of the town. He has taken over the duties of mine host at The Saracen's Head, King's Road, Reading."

We much regret to record the following deaths during the last few weeks, and to all relatives and friends we hereby express our sincere sympathy:—

Mr. N. A. Chambers, of The Greyhound, Woodcote, tenant of this house since April, 1931.

Mr. F. Beauchamp, of The Swan, West Wycombe, tenant since June, 1910.

Mr. W. J. Holmes, of the Royal Oak, Chinnor, tenant since November, 1937.

Mr. P. F. R. Walker, of the Boar's Head, Friar Street, Reading, tenant since March, 1907.



Mr. C. T. Rosum and Mrs. Wigmore who were recently married.
We wish them the best of health and all happiness.

THE STORY OF A BRITISH FOREMAN.

By PATRICIA WARD.

(Reprinted from the "Evening Standard.")

His name is Melbourne Johns and he comes from Pembroke-shire; a short, burly, square shouldered man, with an immense head and jutting jaw, uncannily like a bulldog.

He is foreman in an armament factory "somewhere in the Midlands"; a factory which recently was subsidiary to a larger one in South-West France.

When the French firm got delivery from America of certain important machine tools, and had difficulty in assembling them, it was natural that "Mel" Johns should be sent across the Channel to advise, for in the two countries there are few men with a greater knowledge of all types of machinery.

"Come back when the job's done," they said, as they packed him into the R.A.F. airplane that was to fly him to the coast of France. He reached his destination after a further flight and there he remained for several weeks. Then suddenly Hitler burst through the Allied ramparts. Great armies rolled back in headlong retreat upon Paris and beyond. A sea of refugees engulfed the towns and villages, a torrent of humans, horses, cattle and machines. Into this dark tide disappeared "Mel" Johns.

The last British troops reached England. The last refugees from Bordeaux were brought off. Then while the people of his Midland home were reading the fearful and agonising story of the final evacuation from Europe an Army lorry rumbled into the factory yard. In the driver's cab sat "Mel" Johns.

Loaded on that lorry were four machines which he had gone out to inspect; each the size of a baby grand piano, each worth £4,000, all invaluable in the manufacturing of arms, and all irreplaceable under eight to ten months.

From under the nose of the enemy, in the middle of all the confusion and chaos of the German advance through France, this sturdy British workman had snatched his precious tools and brought them safely home. That was "the job" he did; a job ten times the size of the one he was sent out to do, though he doesn't see it that way.

"I only did what anyone else would have done, and I had a lot of luck," he'll tell you in real embarrassment.

But his luck was the result of enterprise, and the story of those salvaged machines is, as an illustration of individual resourcefulness and courage, in the nature of a saga.

When the R.A.F. first landed him in France he was still some way from his factory. News from the North was bad, and the motor-transport was worse because the roads were blocked by endless streams of population in flight.

Johns couldn't get a lift "because I can't speak French and anyway there wasn't room in any of the cars," he told me. So he hung around the airfield until he found an Air-marshal who was flying South in a specially chartered taxi-plane.

Red tape and red tabs mean nothing to "Mel" Johns. So "after a bit of talking, he said I could come too."

Big man and little man flew off together and that's how Johns got to his factory. Almost on arrival he was handed a telegram from the English firm telling him to return at once in view of the gravity of the news.

"I knew I could get back all right in one of the R.A.F. airplanes. But it seemed a terrible pity to leave the 'tools' behind," he said reflectively.

"The men at the factory—they were all French—had decided to pack up. They had a fleet of lorries standing by to take away their own machinery, but they said they couldn't spare one for me."

So off he went into the highways and byways behind the factory to look for help. And drawn up by the side of the road he found an Army lorry manned by four exhausted Tommies.

They were lost. They had been driving south and further south for the better part of a week, without sleep, without food for hours at a time, trying unsuccessfully to rejoin the unit from which they had got separated.

"That lorry was just what I needed for my machines," Johns told me. "So I talked the boys into coming along with me. They didn't much want to—thought their duty was to go on looking for their unit. But I explained how important it was to get those machines back home so we could make more guns to beat the Jerries with. And so they agreed to help."

They drove back to the factory, those four exhausted Tommies and the determined foreman. Between them they dismantled the machines and piled them on the lorry.

"Now drive like hell to Bordeaux—we've got to get there before it's dark," said Johns.

* * * *

It was ninety miles to Bordeaux, but they stopped for nothing on the way. Johns sat in the front with his hand on the driver's arm, shaking him when he threatened to fall asleep over the wheel.

"Three miles outside Bordeaux we met some French soldiers going out with guns to stop the Germans," he told me. "They were only three hours behind us, but that was the first time we realised it—"

And so his resolve to get the machines away was strengthened by the need for haste.

Up to the portals of the British Consulate in Bordeaux dashed the Army lorry.

Up the stairs to the Consul's room rushed Johns, hunting the permit which would give him the right to sling the lorry and its freight on to whichever ship was due to sail immediately.

But the Consul was not there. There was an attache, stiff with red tape and responsibility, who guaranteed John's passage home, but "regretted about the machines—"

It was then that this stocky little man went off the handle. Like the bull-dog he resembles, he tore at that official. He ranted and he roared, he shouted and he bullied.

"It worries me sometimes, to remember the names I called that man," he told me. "But it did the trick all right."

The official gave way. Johns was given shipping-space for his lorry, sailing permits for his four soldiers and himself, and a guide to take him to the quayside and a ship. There he and his tireless Tommies slung the lorry aboard and jumped after it as the first Nazi airplanes appeared over the town.

* * * *

It took three days and nights to reach port on the West Coast of England. The ship was full of refugees; mostly women and children.

There were not enough life-belts to go round, but there were a lot of civilians' cars on board. So Johns went down to the hold and removed the tyres from every car, blew up the inner tubes and handed them to everyone who had not got a life-belt.

Then he found a British officer in charge of a quantity of valuables.

"He didn't tell me what they were, and I didn't like to ask," he explained. "But rumour went that it was radium, plus the Belgian Crown jewels, said to be worth 25 millions, and the question arose as to how they could be saved if the ship got sunk.

"So I thought of a raft, and we made one from the planks that were lying around in the hold. We loaded the 'valuables' on to it on the lower deck. It was a lovely raft—would have floated nicely if anything had happened."

But nothing did happen. And so his journey ended, and this indomitable man, with his travel-stained but jubilant soldiers, and his precious freight, drove his lorry off the ship at the English port and rattled up the road to his Midland home.

I saw him when he had come to London to see one of the directors of his firm. It was the first time he had left the factory since his return and he was impatient to get back. He knows—who better?—that those salvaged machines are immensely important for the building up of our defence, and he can hardly bear to leave them.

"They're single-purpose machines—wonderful jobs," he told me.

It's a nice combination. Single-purpose machines, handled by that single-purpose man.

AFTER THE RAID IS OVER.

SIGHTSEERS WHO HINDER RESCUE WORK.

During air-raids the calm behaviour of the British people is beyond praise. And bitter experience, as well as official warning, is helping to curb rash curiosity "to go out and see what's happening" while raiders are about.

But after the raid is over the curiosity of sightseers is having serious effects which are probably quite unforeseen by the sightseers themselves. From near and far they hasten, on foot, on bicycles, in cars, in their hundreds or even thousands. The roads leading to damaged streets or burning buildings are soon blocked by the throng.

Immediately after a recent air-raid the smoke from a fire attracted vast crowds of sightseers. Pedestrians, cars and bicycles

caused such congestion and chaos that in the words of an ambulance driver "many of my fellow A.R.P. workers were seriously hampered in their rescue work, and in some cases even prevented from reaching the scene of the bombing."

If those sightseers, and others elsewhere, had only realised that by hindering the passage of a crane they were prolonging the sufferings of injured men, women and little children buried beneath debris, they would have stayed away.

Unfortunately many of the public still do not realise the harm caused by their thoughtless curiosity.

After a raid, it is essential that all roads and streets leading to a damaged area should be kept free for ambulances and fire engines. Some of these may have to come from a neighbouring area.

Delay in getting casualties to hospital may often cost lives.

Sightseers delay ambulances.

Delay to fire engines may turn a small fire into a disastrous blaze.

Sightseers delay fire engines.

Need more be said?

Not on that aspect of the question. But there is another side to it. After "Raiders Passed" has been sounded, the raiders sometimes sneak back. What a lovely target a horde of sightseers would make. Jammed on the roads, hurrying to safety, they might remind Nazi airmen of French or Belgian refugees.... An unpleasant thought.

THE CHURCH AND THE PUBLIC HOUSE.

The Rev. George Foster, vicar of St. Saviour's Redland, has made the following interesting observations about the Church and the public-house.

"There are people who feel that the Licensed Trade is suffering from what psychologists call the inferiority complex—that the Trade and everybody connected with it is doing something that is not quite wise, like burglary," he said.

"They say, you get a clergyman, or a bishop, or someone else connected with my kind of life, to come and give you a blessing.

"There are many people like that who think it is a salve for the brewer's trade to have the blessing of the Church."

He said that when they went back to the first connection of the Church and the public-house they went back to the beginning of Christianity. In every village the public-house, the Church, and the vicarage were always close together.

The connection was broken down because of the extreme teetotaler on the one side and the fact that people at one time got drink cheaply. Now the association was beginning again.

"The public-house is the place where I can take my wife, and I can take her into almost any inn," he said. "They are places where a lady can go, and I think the change is due to a certain extent to the ladies in the Trade. The public-house is now not only a place for a drink, but a place where you can get food; it is a club where there is social life, and it is you ladies who maintain the tone of the place."

"RAMSBURY WAY."

Altho, the harvest of the years
Is rip'ning now to golden ears
It only seems as yesterday
That I was young—down Ramsbury way.

By rivered Chilton Foliat
The trout leapt fierce at fly and gnat
Whilst on I sauntered 'neath the may
Past Littlecote, down Ramsbury way :

And when the autumn came a-pace
To bronze the beeches of The Chase,
What kinder folk with whom to stay
Than those who dwelt down Ramsbury way ?

There good companions would I greet
On ale-bench by the village street :
—No greater jollity I pray
Than that I've known down Ramsbury way !

Oh, some gay lads adventure forth
Towards the south—and others north ;
But every dog will have his day
And I've had mine—down Ramsbury way !

S. E. COLLINS.

WORDS OF WISDOM.

He who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters, the plants, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments, is the rich and royal man.

The sweetest music is not in the oratorio, but in the human voice when it speaks from its instant life tones of tenderness, truth or courage.

Think me not unkind and rude,
That I walk alone in grove and glen ;
I go to the god of the wood
To fetch his word to men.

There is no beautifier of complexion, or form, or behaviour like the wish to scatter joy and not pain around us.

Repose and cheerfulness are the badge of the gentleman—repose in energy.

What is man born for but to be a reformer, a remaker of what man has made ; a renouncer of lies ; a restorer of truth and good, imitating that great Nature which embosoms us all, and which sleeps no moment on an old past, but every hour repairs herself, yielding us every morning a new day, and with every pulsation a new life.

Christ left us not a system of logic, but a few simple truths.

It's never too late to learn.

Duty is the demand of the passing hour.

Every little fish expects to become a whale.

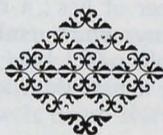
If people would whistle more and argue less, the world would be much happier and probably just as wise.

In proportion as one simplifies his life, the laws of the universe will appear less complex, and solitude will not be solitude, nor poverty poverty, nor weakness weakness.

You do not catch good fish with dry boots.

Let us try what esteem and kindness can effect.

Men are not to be measured by inches.



A GREAT THOUGHT.

The study of nature tends to bring the different ranks of human society together and unite them in a bond far more secure than anything feudal. The owner of an estate will enjoy it all, not merely levy and spend the rent, but claim kindred with, and derive pleasure from, the plants and animals. Without the love and the knowledge of nature he can be said to inhabit only the mansion house, and that but for a portion of the year; but with these he will inhabit the whole domain, however ample; and instead of his importance being rated by the thousands that he can spend in the year, it will be rated by the fields, the forests, the groves, and the waters, which lie around him, as a lovely and ever-open book; and he and his family will find delight there, and they will cleave to their country and their countrymen with heart and soul, and their countrymen will cleave to them, and the whole nation will be linked together by that "cord of nature," which God has made; and sustained by that, all the charities and all the gratitude of heart will be excited; and peasant and peer, while they preserve the ranks which civilization assigns them, will be brothers in nature, and each will vie with the other in striving who shall do the first good office.

This is not the doting dream of a lover of nature, but a plain and philosophic truth. In the city, people of different ranks stand coldly apart; but when they go to hunt, to fish, or to any other sport or occupation in the field, they are fellows. Nature thus makes brotherhood; and if all mankind would study nature, all mankind would be brethren.



CRICKET.

Now that our season has been finished for some little while one is able to look back and get a view of the whole. We were unable to play all the matches arranged—one on account of inclement weather and the remainder through exigencies of the Services preventing our opponents visiting us. Our most consistent period was at the end of the season, for we then had five matches straight off the reel. Two Saturdays were occupied with what are described in the score book as club matches. We then played Captain *versus* Vice-Captain teams, which kept the interest maintained and gave opportunities to a number of members who otherwise would not have played.

Of the eight matches played, four were won and four lost. We scored 721 runs for the loss of 75 wickets, an average of 9.61 and our opponents 809 for 69, which worked out at 11.71. We made scores of over a century on three occasions and five times we had these made against us. On two of these latter the game was very lop-sided, for neither our bowlers nor batsmen could really get going. On second thoughts, perhaps, our bowlers were not so bad as the book would leave one to believe. The fielders were not altogether blameless, for catches were not held.

It is much easier to say what should be done than to do it, therefore, I would ask the younger members of the team not to cavil at these few hints. I would suggest that the most important thing, after being placed in the field, is to watch the batsmen carefully and try to anticipate the direction of his stroke. It is often possible to cut off a ball by this means, and a run saved may make all the difference to the result of the game. Then, with this idea of watchfulness, help the captain who is also studying the strength and weaknesses of the batsmen, by being a little "flexible." Some fieldsmen find a particular blade of grass at the start of a game and make it a permanent station. This often means a succession of trips into the country.

It is preferable to return the ball to the "keeper," who is much better protected than the bowler, and thus able to deal with a hard throw in. The bowler is naturally a little anxious over his hands; there are occasions, of course, when a return to him is necessary. The ideal return is one that comes to the "keeper's" hands "bail high" direct from close in and by a first bounce from farther out.

Just one word to the batsmen. Be ready to back up the man making the stroke and when running get the first one quickly, as maybe a second can then be taken.

We had several good fielding sides against us this year. One was particularly keen and would probably be termed an aggressive "field." Had we played them often we should have required a new "table," for they did not station many in the "deep." Quick off the mark and hands like carpet bags. What a lesson!

Now just a few remarks on our team. Mr. Crutchley was in charge and he fully justified the confidence placed in him. He is a forceful bat and believes in attacking whenever possible. His best score of the season was 68 not out. When bowling he again keeps up the attack and but for the lack of varnish on the stumps would probably have had more wickets to his credit than were recorded. By his example and genial personality he got the best out of his colleagues on the field.

An able assistant to the captain was Mr. F. W. Clark. Here we have a good bowler who, although not quite so fast as when he last played regularly for us, still pitches them down a bit. He was not born under a lucky sporting star, for on the occasions he was O.C. something happened—matches scratched, rain, or else a none too strong eleven to do battle with. Still he generally had a smile ready—except when four catches were dropped in one over and that would upset the most even-tempered individual.

We had one good find this year in K. Organ, and it is pleasing to see a newcomer head the bowling averages. This lad has a happy knack of taking a wicket with his first ball. It does not always happen, but did so a number of times. In a few seasons he should develop into quite a useful player and we wish him luck.

During the season we lost quite a number of our players through the calls to more important duties. This further depleted our strength, but it does give the younger ones more chances to show their mettle. Our skipper was one to don the light blue uniform; fortunately it was at the end of the season when he went. To all of them go the best wishes of the Cricket Club as well as their colleagues throughout the Brewery.

Mention of averages has already been made and a list is given below. It was a little difficult to know how to set these out, but it was decided to take the matches proper and to make two sections, viz., those who played in the majority of matches (five or over) and those who were under that number. It really does not matter as it was the decision of the committee at the beginning of the year not to play for the "Louis Simonds Cup." It will be noticed that twenty-two members, plus one sub., played during these eight games.

BATTING.

	No. of Innings.	Times not out.	Highest score.	Total runs.	Average.
E. G. Crutchley ...	...	...	68*	193	48.25
F. J. Benham ...	...	—	27	81	11.57
W. J. Crisp ...	5	1	19*	40	10
J. B. Doe ...	7	—	15	48	6.85
G. R. Beddow ...	5	1	11	27	6.75
E. C. Greenaway... ..	5	—	8	19	3.8
J. W. Jelley ...	8	—	10	29	3.62
F. W. Clark ...	6	—	12	20	3.33
K. Organ ...	7	1	5	17	2.83

The following played in less than five matches:—

A. V. Hedgington ...	1	—	25	25	25
R. Lambourn ...	4	3	12*	22	22
W. J. Greenaway ...	1	—	19	19	19
A. W. Craddock ...	1	—	13*	13	13
W. Phillpots ...	1	—	11	11	11
E. Clarkson ...	4	—	19	40	10
W. R. Brown ...	2	—	12	13	6.5
K. White ...	3	1	10*	12	6
E. Shrimpton ...	3	—	12	17	5.66
B. Farmer ...	3	—	14	15	5
G. Kelly ...	4	—	16	18	4.5
R. Broad ...	1	—	—	—	—
E. Howe ...	1	—	—	—	—

BOWLING.

	Overs.	Maidens.	Runs.	Wickets.	Average.
K. Organ ...	31	2	166	17	9.764
E. G. Crutchley ...	43	5	165	15	11.
F. W. Clark ...	52	11	183	16	11.437

The following bowled in less than five matches:—

R. Broad ...	2	—	14	2	7
E. Shrimpton ...	5.7	—	36	4	9
B. Farmer ...	4.4	—	25	2	12.5
A. V. Hedgington ...	8	1	28	2	14
E. C. Greenaway... ..	12.5	1	76	5	15.2
J. W. Jelley ...	8	—	47	2	23.5
E. Clarkson ...	2	—	22	—	—
W. R. Brown ...	4	—	26	—	—

CATCHES.

E. Shrimpton, 5.
G. R. Beddow, F. J. Benham, W. J. Crisp, E. G. Crutchley, J. W. Jelley,
Sub., 3 each.
E. Clarkson, K. Organ, K. White, 2 each.
W. R. Brown, W. F. Clark, J. B. Doe, E. C. Greenaway, 1 each.

Before closing down, a word of praise is due to our groundsman, Mr. L. Povey. From a player's point of view the season was ideal, but to get pitches out week after week in a drought must have caused many heartburns and much hard work. We had nothing but praise for the state of the pitches from all our opponents, who were very pleased to play the return game on our ground. Mr. Povey's attention inside the pavilion was always well marked.

Other attention received inside was accorded to the players by the ladies of the Sports Club. It is very kind of them to give up their Saturday afternoons to prepare and serve teas to the cricketers in addition to those playing tennis. All of our visitors expressed their pleasure for the hospitality given to them and we, as a club, tender our heartiest thanks to Miss Prosser and her willing band of helpers for their services.

J.W.J.

HOCKEY.



Above is a picture of the ladies' hockey team who have recently won several good matches.

(Left to right): K. Timms, E. Uzzell, O. Shurmer, M. Beasley, M. Langley, D. Brooks, P. Hammond, E. Bullen, E. Howlett, M. Whichelow, J. Bunce, E. Lawson.

It is pleasing to see that the Ladies' Hockey is retaining the popularity enjoyed last year. The ladies are showing considerable improvement in their play, but the need for a coach is still very urgent. Enthusiasm for the game is very marked and if we could find someone who could give them the necessary finish there is no doubt that a very good team would result. Almost every Saturday is booked for matches and applications for dates continue to arrive.

FIXTURES FOR 1940-41.

November	2nd	Wantage Hall (mixed)	...	...	Home
"	9th	Earley Rangers	...	...	Home
"	16th	Redingas	...	...	Away
"	23rd	St. Mark's	...	...	Home
"	30th	King's Road Fellowship	...	...	Home
December	7th	Huntley & Palmers	...	...	Home
"	14th				
"	21st				
"	28th				
January	4th	Sutton's	...	...	Home
"	11th	Ranelagh	...	...	Home
"	18th	Wantage Hall (mixed)	...	...	Away
"	25th	University	...	...	Home
February	1st	Redingas	...	...	Home
"	8th	Ranelagh	...	...	Away
"	15th	Earley Rangers	...	...	Away
"	22nd	St. Mark's	...	...	Away
March	1st				
"	8th	C.W.S. Printing	...	...	Home
"	15th	Reading Insurance	...	...	Home
"	22nd	Huntley & Palmers	...	...	Away
"	29th				

FOOTBALL.

The Minor Football Team are showing great promise and in the team are several young players who (war permitting) should go far in the local football world. They show dash and courage and a full knowledge of all the rudiments of the game.

W.B.

FIXTURES FOR 1940-41.

November	2nd	" B " Coy. A.T.S.	...	...	Home
"	9th	" A " Coy. A.T.S.	...	...	Away
"	16th	" D " Coy. A.T.S.	...	...	Home
"	23rd	" E " Coy. A.T.S.	...	...	Away
"	30th				
December	7th	Y.M.C.A.	...	...	Home
"	14th	" C " Coy. A.T.S.	...	...	Home
"	21st	Earley	...	...	Home
"	28th	Crown Villa	...	...	Home
January	4th				
"	11th	Battle Athletic	...	...	Away
"	18th	Wilson Athletic	...	...	Home
"	25th	C.W.S. Preserve Works	...	...	Away
February	1st	Huntley & Palmers	...	...	Away
"	8th	Thames Vale	...	...	Away
"	15th	" B " Coy. A.T.S.	...	...	Away
"	22nd	" A " Coy. A.T.S.	...	...	Home
March	1st	Battle Athletic	...	...	Home
"	8th	Wilson Athletic	...	...	Away
"	15th	C.W.S. Preserve Works	...	...	Home
"	22nd	Crown Villa	...	...	Away
"	29th	Huntley & Palmers	...	...	Home
April	5th				
"	12th	Earley	...	...	Away

LORD MAYOR'S MANSION HOUSE RED CROSS FUND.

	October.	Total collected to 30/10/40.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Bottling Department	19 0½	8 2 11½
Beer Cellars	1 7 8½	7 14 3½
Brewery	11 2	5 12 11½
Building	19 2½	8 17 0½
Cooperage and Scalds	8 10½	3 17 3
Delivery Office	18 10½	3 4 10
Engineers	1 0 9	9 4 2½
Maltings	1 0 2½	6 11 0
Offices (Ground Floor)	1 6 9½	10 16 3½
Offices (1st and 2nd Floors)	13 8½	7 17 5½
Surveyors	7 8	3 11 7
Social Club...	3 1½	1 9 0½
Stables	2 10	1 7 4
Sundries	—	6 5½
Transport	11 10½	5 12 4½
Wheelwrights	7 10½	3 14 1½
Wine Stores	10 5½	4 2 5½
	<u>£11 10 2</u>	<u>£92 1 7½</u>



THE LIGHTER SIDE.

"Why that look of despair?"

"Five hours ago I rang up my wife, telling her that I should be detained this evening, and giving her the reason."

"Well, what of it?"

"I've forgotten the reason."

* * * *

JUDGE: "Gentlemen of the jury, have you come to a decision?"

FOREMAN: "We have, my Lord. The jury are all of the same mind—temporarily insane."

* * * *

College man: "What would you like, dear?"

Girl: "Well, I'd like some fruit cocktail, some caviare, some fruit salad, a sirloin steak smothered in mushrooms, a large lobster, and some fruit pie."

College man: "That is all very well. But, now, what will you have?"

* * * *

"Gimme a shillings worth of rat poison."

"Do you want to take it with you?"

"Naw. I'll send the rats in after it."

* * * *

The young man, a sparkle in his eye, walked into the princely-looking boat store. He looked around and picked out a snappy, richly coloured yacht.

"If I bought this yacht on easy payments," he asked the salesman, "how long would it take me to pay for it completely?"

The salesman gazed thoughtfully at the prospective customer.

"How much," he countered, "can you afford to pay each week?"

The young man rubbed his chin.

"Well," he said finally, "I earn five pounds a week. I imagine I can pay off about one pound a week on this boat."

The salesman's eyes popped.

"One pound a week!" he cried. "Why, at that rate, it would take you more than three hundred years to pay off this yacht!"

The young man gazed longingly at the trim craft.

"So what?" he mused. "It's worth it!"

* * * *

A Highland farmer had agreed to deliver twenty hens to the local market. Only nineteen, however, were sent, and it was almost evening before the twentieth bird was brought in by the farmer.

"Man," said the butcher, "you're late with this one!"

"Aye," agreed the other, "but, ye see, she didna lay until this afternoon."

* * * *

The plumber had been called up and entered for the tradesman's test. He was asked to make a joint in a lead pipe. When it was finished the officer reported:—

"Joint very neatly done."

Two days later the plumber was posted as head cook to the officers' mess.

* * * *

Another nice thing about a modern meal is that if one is not enough you can open another tin.

* * * *

Doctor: "To be quite candid with you, your trouble is laziness."

PATIENT: "Yes, doctor, I know; but what is the scientific name for it? I've got to tell the wife."

* * * *

"Wise chap, is he?"

"I should say he is—he can withhold an opinion about any subject you care to mention!"

* * * *

SERGEANT (*explaining mechanism of new gun to squad of recruits*): "Now, as you all see, this piece of the gun is operated by a crank. (*Slight pause.*) Now what the 'ell are you laughing at Awkins?"

Behind the lines the troops were about to rehearse an important attack, and were being addressed by the General.

"There are," he began, "certain essential differences between a rehearsal and the real thing. In the first place, there is the absence of the enemy, and in the second place . . ."

Turning to the sergeant-major, he said, "Tell them the difference."

"The presence of the General," answered the sergeant-major promptly.

* * * *

In the club they were discussing the doings of the R.A.F.

"I heard of one pilot who brought down three Germans in one fight," said the first.

"That's nothing," said the second. "I heard of one who drove off twelve single-handed."

The little man in the corner sniffed loudly. "That's nothing," he said; "a pilot I know once broke a German plane in two in the air."

"He must have riddled it with bullets."

"Bullets nothing! He'd used up all his ammunition, so he threw a spanner at it."

* * * *

"We must grow more wheat," said the Parliamentary candidate in the course of his speech.

"What about hay?" called out a heckler.

"I'm talking about food for human beings at the moment," retorted the candidate. "I'll deal with you later!"

* * * *

The new vicar was calling on one of his parishioners. "I hear," he said, "that you have a son in a film business in Hollywood."

"That I have," replied the woman proudly. "He's been there five years, and he comes back to see me regularly every summer."

"And brings his wife with him, I expect."

"That is so, sir, and they've been five smart girls, too!"

* * * *

A Scotsman entered an off-licence house and asked for a bottle of whisky.

"Sixteen shillings, please," said the proprietor.

The Scot delved in all his pockets and finally managed to produce 15s. 6d. Going to the door, he said to a friend outside: "Give me sixpence, Jock."

"What for?" asked his friend.

"A bottle of whisky," was the reply.

"Here's a shilling. Get two!"

* * * *

The vicar's wife said to her husband: "I think it's about time we discussed our son's career."

"Yes, my dear," agreed the vicar. "The question has already been exercising me. I think I shall endeavour to find a position for him in the publishing business. I have a report from his tutor saying he already appears to be on terms of considerable intimacy with several firms of bookmakers."

* * * *

Full of enthusiasm as a collector for the local hospital, a smart young thing tackled a famous film star who was visiting the town. She returned to the office flourishing a cheque.

"Look what he gave me!" she cried. "It's for ten guineas!"

"Fine!" replied the secretary, looking at the cheque. "But there's no signature here."

"I know," said the girl brightly; "I cut it off for my autograph collection."

* * * *

The recruit was enduring a few rounds in the battalion gymnasium.

"Hit 'im, hit 'im," vainly entreated his second. Hopelessly outclassed, the recruit recoiled. Dazed from a vicious attack by his opponent, he clutched despairingly at the ring-post.

"Not with that, you fool!" yelled the second. "You'll kill him!"

* * * *

"Buy a ticket for the Spitfire, lady?"

OLD LADY: "Certainly, but when will I know if I've won it."

The vicar went to see a new family who'd come to live in his parish. He was shown into the drawing-room by the maid, and a little later Mrs. Browne came in. The vicar started off the conversation by pointing to three decanters on the sideboard and saying, "Madam, you should avoid even the appearance of evil. I do not say you drink, but——."

"Oh, vicar," she said, "you mustn't think anything like that. They're only filled with floor stain and furniture polish. It's the decanters I like, because they look so pretty."

"I know," he said. "I just helped myself to a drink from the middle one."

* * * *

"And how is your son getting on in the Army?" a friend asked Mrs. Smith.

"He's getting on very well," answered Mrs. Smith, proudly, "and he's very highly thought of. Last week when he overstayed his leave the Army authorities sent two Members of Parliament in uniform to take him back!"

* * * *

The wife had been put on the budget plan. At the end of each month she and her husband would go over the accounts together. Every once in a while he would find an item, "H.O.K., 15/-," and a little farther on, "H.O.K., £3."

Finally he asked, "My dear, what is this—'H.O.K.'?"

"Heaven only knows," she replied.

* * * *

A wealthy clergyman called one Sunday upon his favourite nephew, who hoped one day to benefit under the cleric's will. Upon arrival, he was informed by the nephew's wife that her husband was at the golf club.

"Oh, so he plays golf on a Sunday, does he?" he inquired in tones of displeasure.

"Oh, no," replied the wife, doing her best, "he doesn't go to the club on Sunday to play golf—he just goes to drink."

* * * *

An Aberdonian met a friend and invited him to have a drink.

"What'll you have?" he asked when they reached the bar.

"A glass of whisky and a pint of beer," was the reply.

"Here," said the startled Aberdonian, "less of that careless talk!"

"I get wonderful recipes over the radio," gushed the bride who was entertaining her family for the first time. "I got one for Egyptian stew and one for a never-fail stain remover this morning."

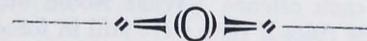
"Which is this?" asked little Willie, tasting the stew with which he had just been served.

* * * *

A Jew was looking very worried and very "jittery." A friend noticing this said, "What is the matter with you, Ike?" Oh, de bombs, de bombs. I'm sure I shall be bombed," said the Jew.

"Don't be so silly," said the friend, "If your name is on it, you'll get it."

"Ah!" said Ike, "Dat is de trouble. I am running de business under twenty different names!"



BRANCHES. PORTSMOUTH.

A MOURNFUL ANNIVERSARY.

It seems difficult to realise that more than a year has gone by since H.M.S. *Royal Oak* was torpedoed at Scapa Flow with the loss of 830 precious lives. October 14th was the sad anniversary of the disaster—the first serious naval setback of the war and Portsmouth was very badly hit, the casualty list contained the names of 140 men belonging to the first naval port, including 40 Royal Marines from Eastney Barracks. Nearly six columns of "In Memoriam" announcements in the local evening newspaper on the day of the anniversary bore eloquent testimony to the grief the disaster brought to many Portsmouth homes.

LAWS OF DEBATE.

Our forefathers had their own ideas concerning the conduct of Council meetings as well as other things. The "antient burrough of Portsmouth" was granted a new charter in 1682, and in due course the Mayor, Recorder and Alderman "of those far off days met in solemn conclave" to make and ordaine bye-laws and constitucons for the better Government of themselves and inhabitants." This was one of their rules of debate: "To avoid confusion in the Councill, it is ordained than one shall speake at a tyme and that none shall breake in upon the person that is speakeing untill such tyme is he hath done speakeing, and that whoever shall move anything in Councill the next on his left hand shall first speake to it and so in order round untill it come to him who was the first mover." "Everyone that shall doe to the contrary" was "fined Ffive shillings for each offence." What would our Councillors of to-day think of these rules if they were still in force?

BILLIARDS "PAR EXCELLENCE."

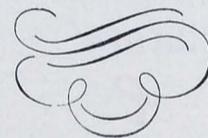
Donald Cruickshank, the boy billiards champion, who is a native of South Shields and in ordinary life a bank clerk, has joined the writer branch of the Royal Navy "for the duration" and he has been delighting the members of a Southsea Bowling Club with some fascinating exhibitions of his prowess. He went to Burnham on Saturday (October 19th), to play a match with Tom Newman in aid of the local Red Cross Fund and also showed some clever trick shots and snooker snags. Unfortunately so far as the Southsea Club mentioned is concerned none of the members is good enough to give Cruickshank a real game and they all seem to be badly smitten with "inferiority complex" directly they go to the table. Perhaps later on a worthy opponent will be found and charity will benefit. Anything doing Reading?

AMIDST THE BOMBS.

Recent visits to our London establishment have brought home to us a full realisation of the terrific strain under which our staff there are working. Situated as they are in a district which has felt the full force of the *Blitzkreig*, the conduct of the whole of the staff can only be described as heroic and worthy of the highest praise. This is equally true of the clerical staff, lorry drivers, mates and all those who, by the nature of their work, are carrying out their duties under the continual menace of the Bosche air raids.

Even in their homes, often within measurable distance of the Branch premises, they are not free of the continual raids and it is truly remarkable that, without exception, the morale of the whole staff is so high.

The working conditions of the office staff have been made as secure and comfortable as possible, but it is with true British grit that offers of removal to a less vulnerable area have repeatedly been declined, under the plea that service to our customers could not be carried out from a distance. One and all they are content to "carry on." Such is the department of our London colleagues, of whom we are proud. But, sad to relate, they have not all escaped. Some have lost dear relatives, homes and furniture, and to these we extend our deepest sympathy.



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