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THE GEORGIAN MAIL

Edited by SCOTLAND LIDDELL.

IN A STAMBOUL PRISON.

(By a British Resident in Constantinople.)

In May 1916, I was arrested and imprisoned in Stamboul with seven other Britishers as a reprisal for the alleged arrest and imprisonment of eight Turks somewhere in somewhere (it was all very vague) by the British. We were confined in a room on the first floor in the front of a large wooden house that had been converted into a prison and police station. The room contained one small plank bedstead, without any bedding whatever, three small folding chairs and a rare collection of vermin. Towards the evening we each received a loaf of black bread and were informed that we could have some food brought in from a neighbouring cook-shop—by paying for it! The following day, we were visited by our friends and relatives who had had some difficulty in finding out what had become of us and had brought food and money, for we had been taken away at a moment's notice. We had to interview our wives and friends across a wooden barrier, with a couple of gendarmes standing by, and the conversation was usually cut short after a couple of minutes with a rough, «That's enough. Get away!» However we managed to get in a plentiful supply of «Keating's» and in a few days, thanks to our eternal vigilance, the enemy was kept well within his entrenchments on the other side of the wooden partition which separated us from some wretched Armenians who were not allowed to see anyone or to purchase anything.

One evening the sentry put his head round the door and asked us if we would like a newspaper, as there had been a great German victory at sea. We took the paper for want of something better to do for at first we were not allowed any books, and read the first German account of the Jutland battle. Of course, we did not believe a word of it and just to show we were not downhearted, we sang all the Allied national anthems we knew and refused to be quiet until the sentinel threatened to take the miserable light away. As that was our only means of detecting the «enemy» above mentioned, during a night attack, we decided that discretion was the better part of valour.

I was lucky enough to be released after about a month, but before I went I had striking evidence of Turkish ways

with Christians. I had bagged a place near the window, where I installed the camp chair in which I slept, having been graciously permitted that luxury. One morning, about 5 o'clock, I heard a noise in the yard just below the window and, looking out, I saw ten of the wretchedest human scarecrows that it has ever been my misfortune to behold. There they stood in the still light of dawn, emaciated to the uttermost limit of emaciation which yet leaves just enough strength to stand, unshaven and unshorn, filthy and verminous beyond description, their eyes sunken and lustreless, their cheeks wan and hollow.

And they were Christians who had tried to avoid fighting, or rather slavery and starvation, in the labour corps of the Turkish army, for very few Christians were armed or allowed near the fighting line. They were so unaccountably unpatriotic as to prefer to be taken prisoner!

While they waited there, like broken-down creaks in the knacker's yard—they were none of them over 35 years of age—a thin-lipped, ferret-faced individual came out and, ye gods—began chaining them up to each other to prevent their running away! When the last key had been turned the «commissaire efendi», or police inspector, came out and addressed the unhappy wretches. «Now, look here, up till now I have treated you all as if you had been my children, but if you try the slightest trick, you will see what I will do to you». They had not even the decency to thank him. What are you to do with such ungrateful dogs of unbelievers? Then they all shuffled out painfully—God knows where, but if He was merciful He gave them all a speedy death. None of them were far from it, anyhow.

Rumoured new Azerbaidjan government.

Regarding the recent rumours that there would be a change in the Azerbaidjan government, the Baku papers issue what they allege to be probable members of the new cabinet: Khan Khoisky, Foreign Secretary; Mekhmandarov, War Minister; Melik-Aslanov, Minister of Ways and Means; Djafarov, Minister of Justice; Sultanov, Minister of Agriculture; Mussa-Bey Rafiev, Food Controller.

THE NEW GERMAN POLITICS.

The Government Lays its Programme before the Assembly.

Paris, Friday.—On July 3 the new German Cabinet laid its programme before the National Assembly for the first time since its formation at the time of the signature of the treaty.

The session was opened by the new Premier, Herr Bauer, who said that with the ratification of the peace treaty an epoch of universal advance by Germany, followed by a tragic collapse, had come to an end. There would be no excuse for Germany if the work of fulfilling the peace contract and rebuilding the German nation was not faithfully carried out.

He vigorously attacked the Conservative Party who, he said, were misreading the signs of the times just as they had done for the last 70 years.

He pointed out that German democracy was in its infancy but that its evolution could be carried out without acts of violence. A time of apprenticeship was necessary for the art of governing, although modern demagogues were trying to persuade the people that this art could be acquired by attending a few public meetings. The «dictatorship of the proletariat» at which the Independent Socialists were aiming, was the tyranny of a minority.

The Foreign Minister, von Mueller, then spoke. He said that Germany, in introducing democracy, had introduced the freest system of voting, and had admitted women into public life on terms of absolute equality with men. In the future, he added, the sword would not be an implement in German Diplomacy. German foreign politics would aim at peace.

He declared that there were in Germany political gamblers who were already speculating upon the possibility of future alliances to be formed by Germany in the Near and Far East. The peace negotiations, however, gave no reason for thinking that such alliances would soon arise, and the German Government would work against the unfortunate policy of alliances and counter-alliances, and would aim at making the League of Nations a solid fact. The age of secret diplomacy and intrigue must be brought to an end.

He expressed the hope that the League of Nations would alleviate in some degree the difficulties in which Germany was now placed.

Referring to the invasion of Belgium he said: «Since the beginning of the war the lesson has been taught us that the violation of Belgian neutrality deprived us of the sympathy of the whole world. The devastated districts of Northern France, he added, afforded a terrible picture, and he appealed to the German nation to join in rebuilding the ravaged districts.

The future of St. Sofia.

At Chelsea Town Hall, Prebendary Gough, Vicar of Brompton, gave a lantern lecture descriptive of a recent visit to the British forces in Salonika, Constantinople, and neighbourhood. Speaking of St. Sofia, he said that he went there accompanied by a young English officer, who spoke Turkish and liked the Turks; and, his young friend acting as interpreter, had a long interview with an old man they had seen reading the Koran. The old man took them about the building and showed them all sorts of things, but, although he was obviously very poor and lived, perhaps, on alms, he would not accept any payment. When they left him he looked up to Heaven and, with the sun falling on his face, gave them his blessing.

The lecturer said there were some very ancient Christian churches in Constantinople, now used as mosques, which he thought might be returned to Christian worship; but he was not prepared to advise that St. Sofia itself should be handed over to Christians. It had never been the property of the Greek Church, but of the Byzantine Empire, and the Greek Church was far from being that Empire's heir and successor. But why should not the Turks say that this great building was fit to be the church of all nations, and let it be a place into which any reverent person might go and say his prayers? It was the most wonderful sacred building in the world, the most impressive, the most subduing, and the most uplifting, and he would like to see it a place where there should be no quarrelling of sects, such as disgraced the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, but a place where men could go and think solemnly and sacredly, none disturbing them because of rival creeds. On all grounds, political and religious, this would be the best treatment of St. Sofia.

Of Salonika he said that it had a splendid geographical position; but if neither Serbs nor Bulgars used the port, the prospects of business there were very poor. At the present time he understood that the Spanish Jews, who were the backbone of the industrious population of the town, were beginning to leave it. But while the British Army remained the Jews would still be able to do business.



EDITORIAL.

Will the British go?

These are anxious days. The great question is—Will the British really go?... It is incredible, says the man in the street. He refuses to believe that the British are about to evacuate. They will remain, he declares hopefully, for he realises that it would be a bad day for Trans-Caucasia if the British were to go away and leave the country at the present critical moment. There is peace in Georgia today. There is order. But all this peace would very possibly turn to war: all this order would possibly turn to chaos if the British forces really went.

Trans-Caucasia's Request.

The Georgian Republic as well as the republics of Armenia and Azerbaidjan have sent an urgent message to the Peace Conference petitioning that the British remain a little longer in the Caucasus. And it is the reply to this request that is causing the present anxiety. The Georgians have learned to appreciate the work of the British soldier. The old misunderstandings—fostered chiefly by stupid rumours and the stupid gossip of *provocateurs*—are disappearing and closer and more sympathetic relations are being established.

Decorations.

We heard a very good story the other day. We are unkind enough to hope that it is true. For the sake of the story we will alter the name of the country in question. A certain army had a number of decorations given it for distribution by the King of Gargolia. These decorations were of four orders—first class, second; third and fourth classes. Well then, the Generals of the Army bagged the first class orders: colonels got the second class: captains the third, and subalterns were decorated with the fourth class order. Then, horror of horrors, it was discovered that the Gargolian orders were not like those of other countries, and that the lowest class was the first; and the highest class the fourth!

Georgians in the war.

And this reminds us that in the war 320 Georgian officers received British decorations for their bravery on the various Russian fronts. These decorations included D. S. O. 's, M. C. 's, etc. The population of Georgia is about three and a half millions. Georgia sent upwards of 150,000 soldiers to the front. Traditional

good fighters as they were, they had to bear the brunt of many great battles. When the fighting ceased in Russia, as far as the war against Germany was concerned, only 25,000 of the original 150,000 Georgians had survived.

Many Tongues.

Some time ago we recorded an amusing instance which we cannot do better than repeat here. General B. has an elderly Indian batman. One day we wanted a glass of water so we said to him in our best Hindustani (of which we know only two words), „Pani“. He answered „Kharashol“... We have just heard another such story. A Georgian gentleman of our acquaintance had occasion to visit a British colonel at headquarters. An Indian orderly stopped him at the door. The Georgian asked for Colonel Blank. The Indian said, „Tovarish?“ („Comrade“). The Georgian nodded—and he was admitted.

The English Language.

The language question is a difficult one. We British have an idea that every man ought to be able to speak our language. Therefore we do not trouble to learn other tongues than our own. And we find here, in Tiflis, that there are a surprising number of young men and women who speak English. Even Roussoudana, aged three, accosted us in English one Sunday when we met her in Kodjori. „Good-bye! How do you do?“ she said... The number of English-speaking Georgians will be considerably more in future, because Mr. Tsintsadze, assistant Georgian Minister of Education, decided two months ago to make the teaching of English in all Georgian secondary schools obligatory, and to send about 60 Georgian boys to England for higher education. This is the more necessary as England was always somewhat inaccessible for Georgia—not nearly so easy to travel to as was Germany, to which latter country many Georgian students formerly went.

Closing of parliament.

A week ago the last sitting of the session of the Georgian Parliament took place. It was a very animated meeting, held under the impression that the British were evacuating the Caucasus. All speakers emphasised once more that whilst they would regret very much if the British left Georgia, they were determined to defend their independence at any price. A re-union with Russia was out of the question.

The Georgian Club.

For the benefit of British officers visiting the Georgian Club, three tables opposite the orchestra will be reserved each evening. Of course, one can sit anywhere one likes, but as a rule the tables are all occupied at ten o'clock and this reservation should be beneficial. The club is an ideal place to go to in hot weather. It is always comparatively cool.

Stingless Prohibition.

America has gone dry. There is prohibition throughout the States. Ginger Beer is about the strongest drink one can have from New York to Frisco. Probably the teetotalers will object to the word „beer“ and the word „pop“ will have to be used instead. It is a horrible thought—but some folk at home are advocating a „dry“ England. We dread to think of a return to a dry land. „What! you have?“ our friends will say. „Whisky and soda“, we will reply. They will gaze at us with pity. „Don't you know?“ they will ask. And then they will tell us gently that we can have dry ginger or strawberryade or Horlick's malted milk... But we have recently discovered a drink that will take the sting out of prohibition. It is to be had in Tiflis. The first hot day there is go into the „London“ which is opposite the Majestic, walk right through the shop to the shady courtyard at the back, and ask for „Citro“—you must pronounce it „Seetro“. Then—well, try it for yourselves. We have no interest in the firm of Lagidze, but we have a real interest in putting you on to a good thing. It's perfect.

Russian Chaos.

A Georgian general, formerly a general in the Russian army, has just reached Tiflis from Kharkov. When he found Georgia in such a peaceful condition, he broke down and cried. The contrast of what he found here to what he had left behind him in Russia was so great. Words cannot describe the awful chaos in Russia today. Railway lines are disorganised. Telegraph and telephone wires have been cut down, there is confusion and destruction on all sides. The Bolsheviks have had an orgy of wanton waste and ruin. In connection with all this, by way of comparison, it is interesting to note that the representative of the Indo-European Telegraph Company who has recently arrived in Tiflis, told me that the three lines of the company which are in Georgian territory have not been harmed, whereas their lines in all other parts of the former Russian Em-

pire have been torn down and destroyed.

The Nakhitchevan Affair.

An official communiqué issued by the British Command says that a British officer who left Erivan on August 6 for Tiflis reported that there was at that date a cessation of hostilities between the Armenians and Tartars. The conference which had been arranged for August 4 had not taken place owing to a partial retirement on the part of the Armenians from Davalu which prevented the British Military Governor from getting through to the Tartar lines. It was hoped that a conference might take place on August 6. The report further states that it is probably true that the railway bridge over the river Araks was recently destroyed by the Armenians retreating southwards into Persia and that it is now unfit for the passage of trains. Information regarding this has been asked for from the British consul at Tabriz.

An Appeal.

We reproduce the following appeal from the „Tiflis Gazette“ in the hopes that any of our readers who have not yet had the appeal brought to their notice may read it now and respond to their utmost.

It is one of the sad facts of a writer's life that although he writes he does not always know whether the public reads or not. We want every British officer and soldier to read this little paragraph very carefully. It is an appeal, the first, as it happens, that we have made in the Caucasus.

We want every British officer and soldier to subscribe to what is one of the finest charities in the old country. We refer to Pearson's Fresh Air Fund. We need scarcely explain that this fund has for its object the sending of poor children for a day in the country or for a fortnight's holiday either in the country or at the sea-side. During the war an interesting feature of the fortnight's holidays was that many of the children sent were the motherless children of men at the front or the poor orphans of the men who had been killed. Altogether 1376 such children were made happy for two weeks last year. And in the same time 93,795 poor kiddies had a glorious day's outing far from smoke and the noise of the cities. Others were sent for various terms to seaside and country. Altogether, since the Fresh Air Fund started, 3,896,728 children were sent to the country for a day's outing and 48,111 for a fortnight's holiday.

What these outings mean to the poor little boys and girls in the great cities at home, we need not say. Every man can understand very well. Unfortunately the number of orphans has tremendously increased since the war and funds are needed to carry on. So we appeal to you all.

Thanksgiving Offerings.

In a little booklet we have just received we find that almost every ship in the British navy has sent a subscription. And we find that the boys in France and Palestine and Egypt and Salonica have sent their bit as well. Why should we in the Caucasus not do the same? Let us all subscribe and let the folks at home know that we in Trans-Caucasia are not behind the others in our charity.

Will every officer and man who reads this see that his company is appealed to? All subscriptions sent to Scotland Liddell, Intelligence, H. Q., Tiflis, will be acknowledged in this paper. Let our subscriptions be our thanksgiving offerings for peace. Some of you have kiddies of your own. Let us all do something for the fatherless boys and girls, of the men who have died that we might live.

S. L.

Armenian-Tartar conflicts.

The Armenian Telegraph Agency reports that continuous fighting is going on between Armenians and Tartars in the region of Darlagez, Zindjalu, Tchanhachi, Karagatch and Elpit.

At the same time the Armenians occupied Aslanlu, Karakullu and Golludja. The Armenians assumed the offensive near Beyuk Vedi which was soon checked. In Sarakamish and Novobaizet regions the attacks of Kurdish and Tartar detachments are continuing.

In thanking the Georgian authorities for their kind welcoming reception, the Greek Mission which has recently arrived in Tiflis expressed their admiration for the orderly state of Georgia. The Greek community in Tiflis referred to the kindness always shown to them by the Georgian Government, saying that they looked upon Georgia as a second home. The Chief of the Greek Mission has also expressed his gratitude to representatives of the Georgian Government for the care and consideration shown to Greek subjects in the Caucasus.

THE TURKISH WOMAN.

(By Kim).

Under no aspect is «the eternal question» of more seductive interest than in the East—at all events to the Western mind. What are the secrets of the lives passed behind those latticed windows? What is the real personality behind those veils which lend an added charm to a pretty face? The casual observer gleams nothing from the occasional sound of feminine voices, some times musically attractive, sometimes shrilly repellent, as he passes a Turkish house. In the streets the closely shrouded figures of the old-fashioned are only a small degree more enigmatic than the more up-to-date «hanems» who dress smartly and are not averse to raising their veils.

If the stranger is very lucky, he may succeed in cultivating the acquaintance of a Turkish lady of modern ideas, but even so, there is always a baffling sense of some insuperable obstacle which prevents the acquaintance from advancing beyond the most casual stage. And it is just this sense of mystery, this elusiveness, which seems to hypnotise the Western mind and distort its vision, so that writers like Pierre Loti give an utterly false impression. The days of gauzily-dressed beauties, reclining upon silken divans and lazily toying with a «narguileh», while a negress slave plays weird Oriental music upon a strangely-shaped guitar to the accompaniment of a splashing fountain, are gone for ever. This may be a sad blow to the romantic, but it is the cold, hard truth. Even the traditional «gigantic negro», hideous and ferocious of aspect, is now a very rare bird, and all but the most aristocratic and wealthy households dispense with the eunuch altogether.

In many outward respects, the «unchanging East» seems to have changed considerably of recent years. Fundamentally, however, in respect to women there is very little change, as may be proved by the attitude of the masses in Turkey with regard to this subject, although there are certainly some enlightened Turks who sincerely desire the liberation of their women-folk from the blighting laws which at present fetter them. So recently as October 21-st, 1908, a young Greek was brutally murdered and mutilated at Beshik Tash on account of his relations with a young Mussulman widow who wished to abjure her faith in order to marry him. The couple were arrested by the police and taken to the police station which was stormed by the mob and both the lovers were clubbed to death on the spot. It is true that Stamboul recently witnessed the astonishing phenomenon of a Mussulman woman haranguing a crowd like a Hyde Park Sunday tub-thumper, but that was by a special dispensation.

According to Mahomedan law, polygamy and seclusion are the two factors which define the position of woman.

Following the example of the Prophet himself, the Sultans usually permit themselves nine legitimate wives, but for the rest of Islam the limit is four, as ordained by the Koran. As a matter of fact the practice of polygamy is rapidly diminishing on account of the difficulty and expense of maintaining more than one wife, for the wealthy keep up a separate establishment for each wife.

... Divorce is a perfectly simple affair, for it merely consists of a written repudiation with four months' notice for reflection. If, during that period, the couple come together again, the repudiation is thereby annulled. Otherwise the wife departs, after having received from the husband all her personal property, including what he himself has given her. Adultery is punishable by stoning, although the Koranic precept ordains only one hundred strokes of the whip for each of the guilty parties.

At first, women were not isolated from men, for we read of the Prophet's annoyance because a visitor touched the hand of Ayesha, his favourite wife, and of how he desired no one to enter his dwelling without permission or to speak with his wives except through a curtain. From this curtain arose the lattices and screens without which no Turkish house is complete.

It is said that originally the veil was intended to distinguish the lady of rank from the servant or slave and the rule is certainly not so strictly applied to women of humble station.

Although the Mussulman woman suffers injustice from the laws of inheritance whereby, if there are no children, she receives only one-fourth of her dead husband's property, she is entirely mistress of what actually does belong to her.

In spite of the great obstacles to development, Islam has produced some truly remarkable women, whom one of the most famous was Roxelana, the beautiful and influential wife of Suleyman the Magnificent. Her tomb is still to be seen in Stamboul and it is one of the most beautiful monuments in the city.

It is difficult to say what will happen with regard to the movement for the emancipation of women in Turkey, for as long as the law of the land is based upon religious considerations as at present interpreted, the women must remain in a state of inferiority as is definitely declared in the Koran. «Men are superior to women because of the qualities by which God has raised them above women and because men use their property to endow women. Virtuous women are obedient and submissive; during the absence of their husbands they carefully preserve what God has ordained they should keep intact (goods and purity). You will

reprimand those who are disobedient; you will relegate them to different couches; you will chastise them; but seek no quarrel with them when they obey you". (Ch. IV 38).

ITALY.

The «Times» says: The apparent subsidence of the food troubles in Italy has been noted with genuine relief in this country. While some aspects of the situation remain disquieting and the path of the Nitti Cabinet is beset with difficulties, there seems reason to hope that the crisis may have passed its climax. Nevertheless, the coming weeks and month will be anxious for Italy and the friends of Italy. Her domestic problems are closely associated with the still unsolved questions of her peace policy. While Signor Tittoni's statement in the Chamber holds out a prospect that the latter may be within sight of solution, the inheritance taken over by the present Cabinet from their predecessors is encumbered by the consequences of persistent error and perversity. Rarely have Ministers deserved less well of a great people than those who, at the Conference in Paris, led Italy into her present plight. By a policy bold in generosity and far-sighted in advocacy of the underlying principles of the Peace they might have placed their country foremost among the Allies and have assured to it moral supremacy and economic leadership among the new nations of Europe. They chose another course. Some of the liabilities that weigh upon their successors are indicated in the letter which the Executive Committee of the Serbian Society of Great Britain have addressed to Mr. Lloyd George; others are shown by the appointment of four Allied generals to inquire into the recent Franco-Italian affray at Fiume. The Italian people, who are still largely ignorant or misled both in regard to the deplorable deportations from the Eastern Adriatic and to the origin of the friction at Fiume may be pardoned for not understanding, as yet, the views of the policy of their late Government that are held in Allied and Associated countries. But that policy and its consequences should not deter the Allies and Associates of Italy from lending her every assistance in their power or from seeking to guide her back on to the road which can alone lead her to a position worthy of the sacrifices and of the valour of her sons.

Bigger Trans-Atlantic liners.

A message from Washington states that the U. S. Shipping Board announces the completion of plans for the construction of two gigantic ocean liners, 1,000 feet long, with a speed of thirty knots, designed to cross the Atlantic in four days.



THE LATEST HUMOUR.

The Balaam Stakes.

They were speeding along in the Dispersal Area, and, having moved heaven and earth to achieve mobilisation, were now absolutely miserable on nearing their goal.

"Like to pick your fancy for the Derby, Docker?" asked Jimmy Ferguson, proffering his daily paper with an air of acute cheerfulness.

"Not for me", said Docker Morgan dismally; "I sworn off after the Balaam Stakes".

"I never 'eard tell of that race", said Jimmy.

"Well, it ain't one of the classic events. It were run over there". Docker jerked a thumb vaguely in the direction of France. At a "Concours Hippique", which is posh fer "Race Meeting". Our officers arranged it just afore our troops left the area, and nacherally fixed it fer the most awkward time fer me an' Nigger Rolf, being just between payday's. After payin' to go on the course we'd only got five francs left fer investment purposes. Nigger wanted to plunge right away, but I stopped 'im.

"No", says I, "we don't know 'orses, but we does know mules, leastways as much as anyone does know mules. Let's scoop on this".

"An' I shoved 'im the programme, which said—

5.30.—The Balaam Stakes. For Government Mules ridden or driven by British N. C. O.'s and men during the War".

"We walked round the course an' tumbled across Ping Brown, got up *ong chevalier*.

"Aw-aw, Donoghue", says I, "is it worth while backing you for a cool thou for the Balaam?".

"Well", says he, "I'm riding Perishing Percy. If it was a clog-dancing competition it 'ud be easy money, but bein' a race, back any one, even the starter, sooner than me".

"Then I met Spruggy Boyce, who useter drive with me in the Umpteenth Field Ambulance".

"Glory, Docker", says he, falling on my neck, his top-boots being a bit loose, "I was looking for you".

"I ain't got no money", says I.

"But you *can* 'ave", he whispers confidential, like they do in the pictures. "I'm riding Red Liz in the Balaam".

"Well", I replies, "I'm not denying that Red Liz is a perfect lady; but that's 'er trouble—she's too ladylike to pass anyone".

"Docker", he hisses, "do you remember driving 'er one day down the Menin Road when Fritz started shellin'?"

"Don't I just! Why, she didn't fetch up till nearly at St. Omer, and the shells lost heart becous they couldn't catch 'er. But", I says regretfully, "it takes shells to start Red Liz, an' we ain't got none".

"No, we 'ave'n't got shells", whispers Spruggy, "but I've got some crackers; an' if you sprinkle some on the course it's a cert".

"Right-o!" says I. "Me an' Nigger will see it through, if you 'll lend us another five francs to invest.

"Then I went to *cherchay* a bookie, but I couldn't find one anywheres.

"They don't 'ave 'em 'ere", says Nigger. "You invests at the sheds over there—the *Parce Mutual*".

"That's an insurance company", answers I. "I want to put a bit on, not take out a life policy".

"That's the place, I tells you", says Nigger; "the *Parce Mutual* or the *Total Liza*. If you don't 'urry you won't get it on before the race starts".

So I fights my way through the surging mob to the counter.

"What odds for Red Liz in the five-thirty?" says I.

"*Je ne comprend pas*", says the bet merchant, and before I could say another word the crowd swept me away. I went back to Nigger.

"Look 'ere, Nigger", says I indignantly, "I don't like this way. I likes to speckeriate with a bookie—one with a wooden leg as can't run for preference—who tells you what odds 'e's going to give an doesn't 'ave to work it out in vulgar fractions afterwards".

"You 'eart-breaking turnip!" says Nigger; "give me the money".

"E came back in a few minutes with a bit 'o' card that looked like a pawn-ticket.

"That's done", he says. "If it wins we just takes this ticket an' 'e pays out on it. An' now let's go an' see 'em come out".

"There was ten starters, and four changed their minds at the post! Perishing Percy did some neat 'n' effective steps that would 'ave gone better with music, an' then stopped dead to listen for the applause. Whips nor spurs weren't allowed in the race, an' peaceful persuasion don't go far with a mule; but about five of 'em pursued the narrow and straight path that leads to the winning-post. A big raw-boned animal, named Gentle Maggot, floundering along with one foot in the franc side an' tother in the enclosure, with two other feet that couldn't be simultaneously located, was leading, an' a chestnut named Coughdrop was a good second, Red Liz was flapping her long ears an' coming along very genteelly in the rear.

When they were nearly level to us, Nigger whispers to me to get the cracker ready; but me hands were trembling so with excitement that I couldn't light it.

"Give 'em to me, you idjut!" says Nigger, and he plunked one neatly by Red Liz's ribs. She started, and Nigger plants another one behind 'er. Then she put 'er 'ead down and tore along like mad. She passed three, got level with Coughdrop, passed 'er, an' thirty yards from home was neck with Gentle Maggot. Both jocks were whooping like mad, but just as everyone was swearing it was going to be a dead-heat, I thumped Nigger hard on the back an' yelled out, "We 've won!"

"Spruggy" ad jerked Red Liz's head down just at the post, an' she 'ad won by an ear!"

"Well, that was good enough, wasn't it?" said Jimmy, as Docker finished his narrative with a mournful downward inflexion of voice.

"It would 'ave been", replied Docker; "only Nigger 'ad put the ticket in it mouth while 'e lighted the cracker, an' when I thumped 'im on the back it startled 'im, an'—*e swallowed it*".

"Punch".

In the Witness-box.

A story is told of a witness who was extremely self-possessed in the box, and who told his story with a readiness and consistency which suggested long and careful preparation. The experienced counsel who was to cross-examine him saw perjury, but he also saw the only way of letting the jury see it too was by upsetting somehow or other the self-possession of the witness. He noticed that the witness's nose was very red and swollen, and the first question he put to him was, "Mr. Jones, do you drink much?" The witness was startled and a little disconcerted by this unexpected question; but he quickly recovered himself and replied, sensibly enough, "That, sir, is *my* business". "I see, I see", said the cross-examiner in a reflective tone; and then asked suddenly, "And have you any other business?" The witness's self-possession disappeared, and before he left the box everybody in court saw that he had been lying.

"The Bench and Bar of England", by J. H. Strahan.

A young Hopeful.

To watch the budding genius of their little darlings is the agreeable pastime of all parents. The choice of a career to match that genius is a sterner task. Sometimes a happy father is helped in his choice by observing unmistakable tendencies in his child's character. Such was the case of Mr. Ben Brown and his daughter, Clara.

When dear Clara was quite small she contracted a habit which, her father realised, might be profitably cultivated in the public service of the country. Lively and intelligent as a rule, the child would break off in the middle of the most exciting game directly she heard the tinkle of any bell. Disregarding her surroundings, little Clara would sink down into a peaceful sleep, from which she would not emerge until the ringing had been continued for about ten minutes. Then her beautiful blue eyes would open, and she would exclaim sleepily, "Is oo dere?"

The conclusion was obvious. Mr. Ben Brown decided that little Clara should become a telephone operator.

"Royal Magazine".

Diary of the War

(From "Quoth the Raven", by E. V. L. and G. M.).

Mr. Bottomley discovered beating on the gates of Buckingham Palace.

The Bishop of London photographed in khaki with determined but Christian expression.

Smoking concert at the War Office to inaugurate real activity. Staff join in singing "Heads of Oak".

Mr. Winston Churchill makes resonant two-hour speech at Savoy banquet on the paramount importance of every one saying nothing, but doing his utmost.

Opening of great War Economy Campaign. Mass meeting at the Guildhall. Chair taken by Sir Ernest Cassel, in rags; supported by Lord Pirrie, in tatters.

Mr. Lloyd George, accused of having expressed the wish to give the enemy hell, denies all knowledge even of what the phrase means.

The Poet Laureate takes to his bed on finding that one line in his latest poem could be scanned by a member of the public.

The pinch of war begins to be felt. Scarcity of plovers' eggs at Cyrano's leads to a strike of chorug girls.

Mr. Winston Churchill leaves for the Front. Panic among the enemy.

Mr. Pelman joins the war. Mr. G. K. Chesterton, by successful camouflage, enters the Navy as powder monkey.

By the use of Pelmanism ten thousand second lieutenants become brigadier-generals.

Attempted assassination of Mr. Pelman by a band of politicians who deprecate long memories.

Two hundred and fiftieth night of the successful farce, *Keyholes and Undies*, but for which so many of our brave lads would not have enjoyed their leave.

Sad news from the Front mitigated by five-hundredth performance of the uproarious comedy, *Under the Bed*.

Mr. Pelman sets out to visit the Front, but loses his passport, misses his train, mislays his purse, and cannot remember his destination.

The Armistice sets in with vigour. Honours for every one but soldiers and sailors.

Peace Conference preparations. Arrival in Paris of British civil army of occupation, ten thousand strong, crying, "A Berlitz!"

Battle of the Quai d'Orsay begins. Battle of Versailles ends.

Peace (with anxious glances towards Russia, Finland, Afghanistan, and Ireland).

Discovery of the Hidden Hand. It seems it belonged to every profiteer, and was hidden because it was in the public's pocket.