

PICTURE FUN

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PICTURE FUN

THE BRIGHTEST PAPER ON EARTH

[No. 307. Vol. IX.]

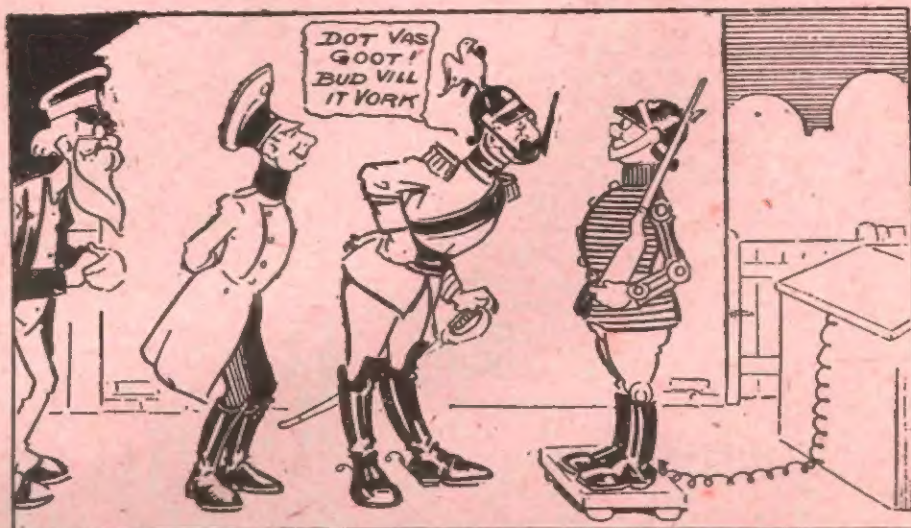
PUBLISHED EVERY TUESDAY ONE HALFPENNY.

DECEMBER 26, 1914.

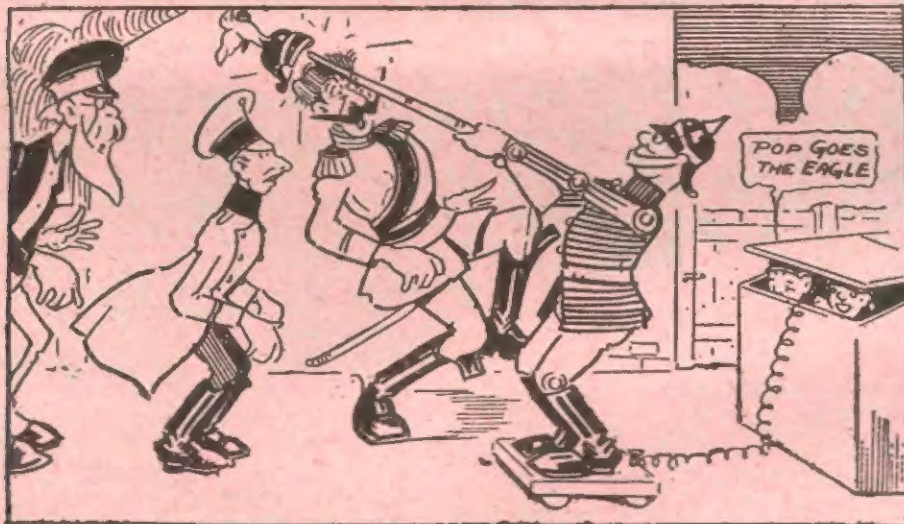
BRIMSTONE BOBS AND THAT BRICK BILLY BELGIUM SPOIL THE KAISER'S 'XMAS BOX.



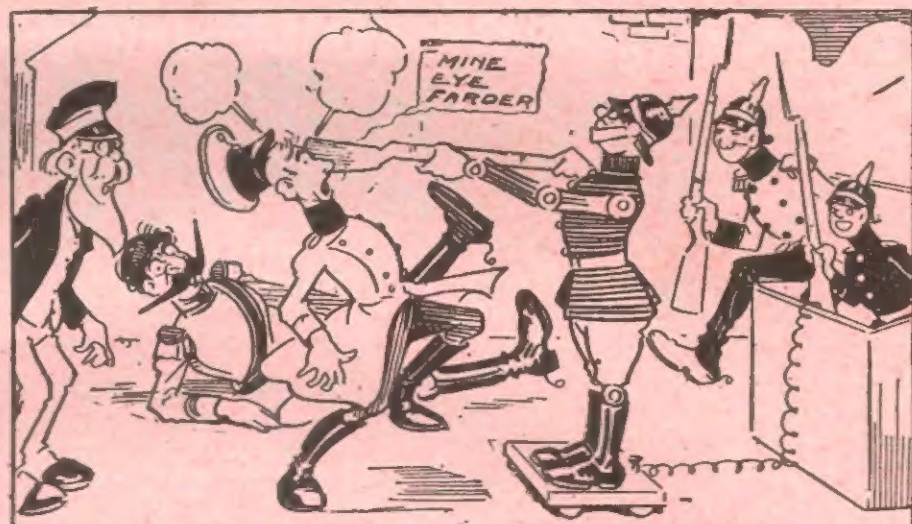
1.—PROFESSOR VON SWANK, the great German scientist, hit upon a splendid idea. Yes, he knew the Kaiser's troops would 'nt face the bayonet, so he invented an electric soldier that would face anything. And here we see him showing it to Little Willie. "It vill vipe der English out," he chuckled, "and it vas a 'Xmas box for der Kaiser."



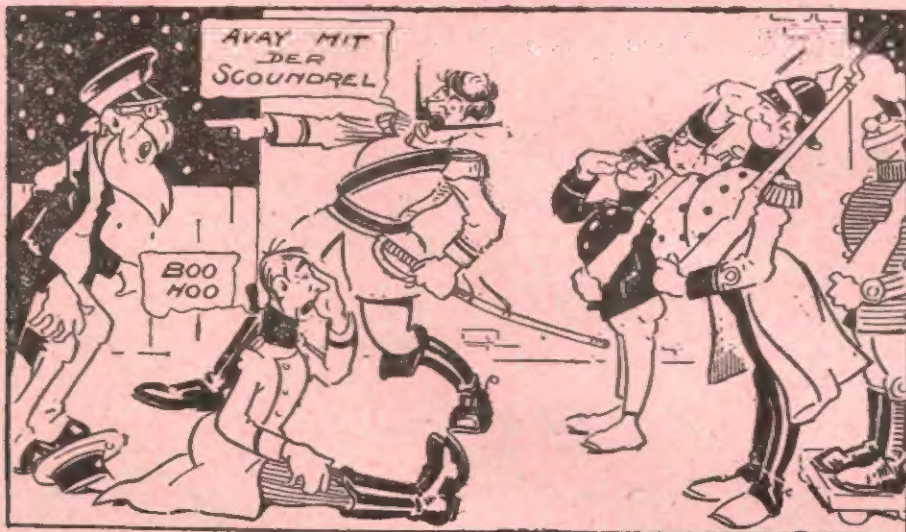
2.—But Brimstone and Billy happened to overhear those few remarks. They were disguised as Germans, and doing a bit of spying on their own. So they made up their minds to be on the job when Kaiser Bill came to see the professor's invention, and although you can't see 'em, our word for it, they're not far off.



3.—Of course the Kaiser was highly delighted with his 'Xmas box. He wanted something of the sort badly, seeing what rotters his men were when it came to facing cold steel. "Bud vill it vork?" sez Kaiser Bill. Then Brimstone pressed the button, and the figure moved, and pop went the eagle off the Kaiser's napper.



4.—Yes, Brimstone and Billy were in that box all the time, and had taken the electric wire in with them. "Now it's Willie's turn!" chuckled Brimstone, as he pressed the button once more, and the figure followed up the attack with the butt-end of its rifle, and Little Willie soon had quite enough, and roared out for his pa. Then our pair saw their chance.



5.—Out of the box they popped and saluted. Of course Kaiser Bill mistook them for two of his own men, and gave the paralysed old professor into their charge. "Take him away und spifikate him," he roared. Then it began to snow, and no wonder, when you come to think about it.



6.—"We're having a merry 'Xmas," chuckled Brimstone, as he and Billy kept the old swankpot nicely on the trot, and they made him keep it up until they landed him right into our lines, where they had a great reception from our lads, who gave them a rousing British cheer! They wish all readers of Picture Fun, far and near, "A Merry 'Xmas."



A WASTREL'S SON

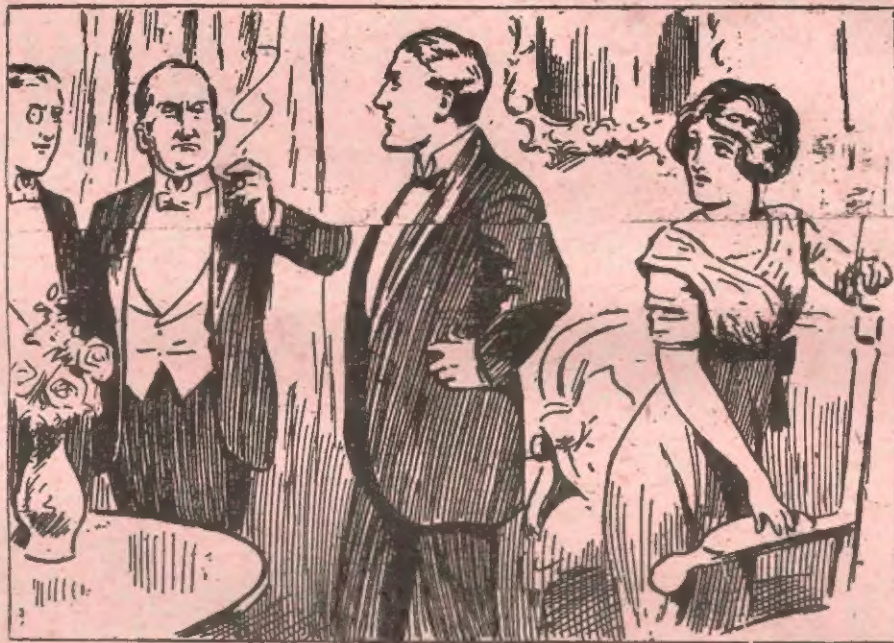
Years passed, and Mr. Perry had almost forgotten that he had a brother.

Now had come this unexpected letter from South Africa containing an unpleasant reminder of the fact.

Dick was dead—Mr. Perry had felt a momentary sobriety on learning that—but it soon passed. He had married in South Africa, and had a son, named Robert, after Mr. Perry. Mr. Perry's lip had curled when he read that. This letter, dictated by the wastrel on his death-bed, a few hours before his death, was an appeal to Mr. Perry to befriend Robert—now a young man of twenty-three. How the Perrys received the appeal we have seen.

Dorothy looked forward with some curiosity to the coming of the young Colonial. The Perrys were curious, too, but uncharitably and irritably. They were prepared to condemn him, whatever kind of young man he proved to be.

He came. And the Perrys had to admit that their fears were groundless. Indeed, Dick's son was altogether too presentable. For beside the handsome stalwart Colonial, Arthur Perry, looked a pale weedy youth, and Mrs. Perry



"I have a few words to say to you first."

could not see them together without feeling angry.

Robert's good looks and perfectly courteous manners to some extent unfroze Adeline. She was pleased to accord him a cold civility. It occurred to her that Robert might be very useful to her, especially as he proved himself to be an excellent dancer. But strange to say, Robert did not seem to be particularly overjoyed by Adeline's gracious condescension. He took it as a matter of course. And when Arthur, too, attempted to patronise, the young Colonial took it quite patiently and good-humouredly, and only a half-hidden smile in his blue eyes gave Arthur the uncomfortable impression that his relation from South Africa was laughing at him. It was not long before Arthur Perry disliked him most intensely.

But between Robert and Dorothy there immediately sprang up a friendship.

It was a surprise to the girl to find that the newcomer took much notice of her. She was so accustomed to being put in the background that she was quite ignorant of what a charming little person she really was. Although Robert was attentive to her in a quiet unobtrusive way, it was not long before Adeline observed it. At first Miss Perry was simply astonished. That any man could look at Dorothy while she was by, she had never deemed possible. If Robert had developed a hopeless passion for herself, she would not have been displeased, and would have enjoyed snubbing him. But that he should love Dorothy Lynn—Her astonishment soon changed to angry pique, and Robert found that he had another enemy at Perry Vale.

All this before a month had passed. Of the Perrys, only one did not intensely dislike

Robert. That was Mr. Perry; and his feeling was one of total indifference.

The question, what was Robert going to do, became a burning one at Perry Vale.

It appeared that the young man was so far not quite without occupation. He had some interest in a business—horrid word!—in connection with the Johannesburg diamond industry. Several times this had necessitated trips to London. He told Mr. Perry that this would afford him a permanent occupation. The question the Perrys asked themselves impatiently was—When?

When, indeed? Robert calmly assuming that he was welcome at Perry Vale, did not seem to be in a hurry. At the end of the month Mrs. Perry asked her husband to give him a hint.

"Certainly I shall speak to him," Mr. Perry answered. "I have already decided to do so. He cannot stay here for ever."

Most men would at least have had the delicacy to give the hint in private, if they gave it at all. Not so Mr. Perry. He brought it out at dinner in his most formal and offensive manner.

"It is now time, I think you will agree, Robert, that we discuss your prospects," he said. "You have been at Perry Vale one month. I trust we have shown ourselves hospitable, and that you have no want of consideration to complain of."

Mr. Perry did not expect an answer to that, which was fortunate, for Robert would not have known exactly what to say.

"But I am sure it was not your father's wish—I am sure it is not your own wish—that you should remain idle for any considerable period. Industry is—"

"I have told you, Uncle Robert, that I

"Such ingratitude," said Mrs. Perry, plaintively.

"A consequential puppy!" from Arthur.

"I hope he is really going," from Adeline.

"My dears," said Mr. Perry, "the young man has taken his fate into his own hands. I neither rejoice nor complain. I am relieved of a great responsibility. I have, I hope, done my duty. I have done my best for Dick's boy. I wash my hands of him entirely."

Only Dorothy sat silent, with burning cheeks. She admired Robert immensely; he seemed like a hero to her. No doubt his father had had faults, but wasn't it noble of Robert to defend him like this? She felt sorry for him. He was going out into the world alone, and unaided. How she wished she could help him.

After dinner, while Mr. Perry and his son lingered over their wine, and Mrs. Perry and Adeline were in the latter's boudoir discussing the details of a new ball-dress, Robert found Dorothy alone in the drawing-room. She thought he had come to say good-bye, and she did not conceal her sympathy.

"Oh! I'm so sorry, Robert," she exclaimed, impulsively.

"Sorry I'm going, Dorothy?" he asked, softly.

"Yes," she said, colouring a little at something in his tone. "We have been good friends, haven't we?"

"I hope so. You were the only one to welcome me to this house," said Robert.

"And I don't count, do I? I think they've behaved shamefully to you, Robert, and I admire you ever so much for acting as you did," continued Dorothy. "I do hope you will be able to get on, Robert. I am afraid Mr. Perry will not assist you now."

Robert smiled slightly.

"If I were to get on, Dorothy, and made a home that I could ask you to share, what would your answer be?"

"Oh! Robert!"

"I love you, Dorothy. If I became something better than a poor relation, could you learn to care for me a little?"

"No, Robert, because—because I've already learned to care for you—a great deal," she whispered, tremulously.

He took her in his arms.

"Dearest Dorothy, you will be my wife?"

"Ye—es."

"The wife of a wastrel's son," Robert said, with a touch of bitterness.

"I believe that your poor father was much more sinned against than sinning, Robert; besides, it is you that I love."

"God bless you, dear. I—"

The door opened. Mr. Perry and Arthur entered.

"H'm!" coughed Mr. Perry.

"Uncle," said Robert, "I am about to go. I have a few words to say to you first, if you will do me the kindness to listen; otherwise, I will write."

Mr. Perry, expecting an apology, said, "Indeed!" in his most pompous manner.

"One minute," he added, as he heard a rustle of silks. "My dear," he continued, addressing Mrs. Perry, who entered with Adeline; "my nephew Robert desires to express his regret or—"

"Pardon me, I desire no such thing," said Robert. "I am, it is true, sorry that you should be offended with me, but—"

"Then what the dickens have you to say?" Mr. Perry asked, again surprised out of his stiffness.

"I will be brief. My father always resented your treatment of him—"

"Upon my soul—"

"But upon his death-bed he thought that perhaps he had judged you too harshly."

"I should hope so," cried Mr. Perry.

"He, therefore, wished to put you to a test. He asked you to take some care of his orphan son. He bade me come to England and take up my residence at Perry Vale. According to your treatment of me, so was I to judge you."

"Judge me! You, a wastrel's son—a pauper—judge me!" cried Mr. Perry, astounded.

"Nice airs for a beggar's brat," sniggered Arthur.

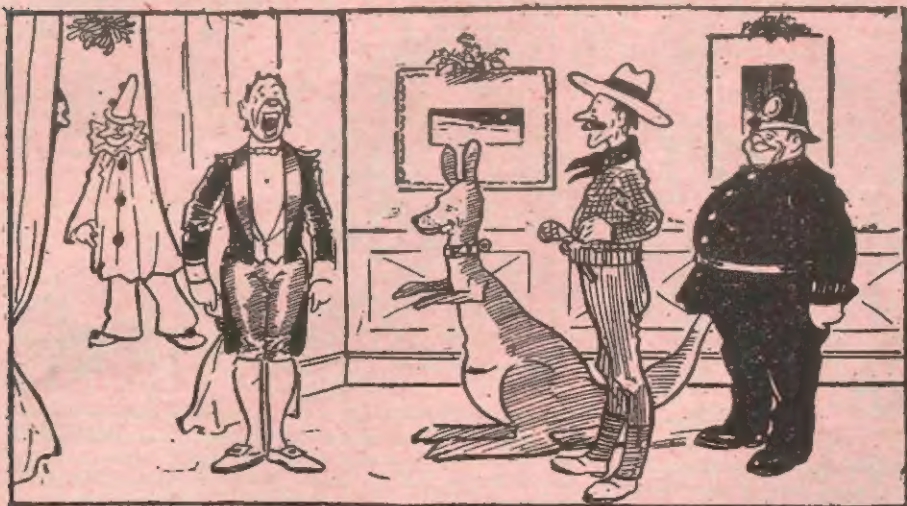
"Indeed, this impertinence becomes unendurable," Mrs. Perry declared in her complaining voice. "I must really request that this—this person—leaves the house immediately."

"Go!" said Mr. Perry, with a wave of the hand; "ungrateful and unfeeling reprobate, go, and never darken my doors again."

Robert was pale with anger, but he kept cool. "A few moments, and you shall have your wish," he said; "but let me finish. My father's instructions were these—I was to judge you by your conduct to me, and if I found you kind, hospitable, and affectionate, as he hoped, I was to deliver to you a certain legacy. If, upon the other hand, I found you as he had found you in his days of struggle, I

(Continued on page 7).

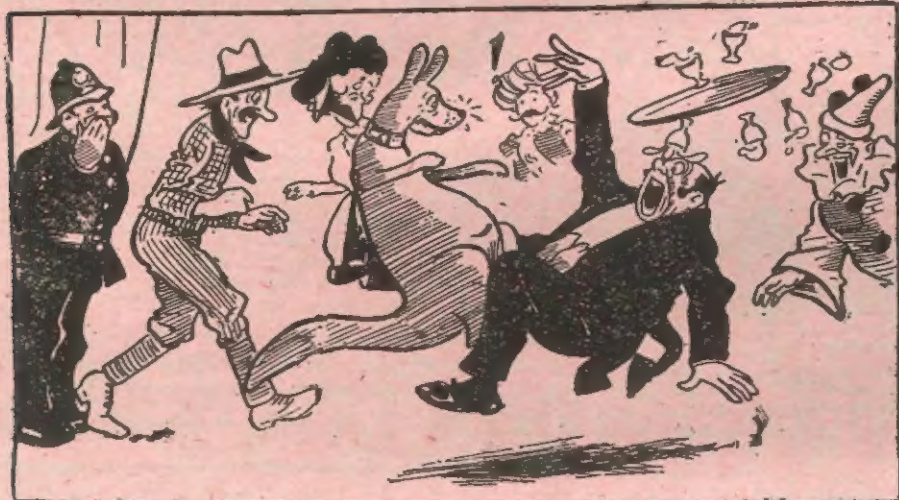
HOW BIRDIE AND NAPOLEON EARNED THEIR CHRISTMAS DINNER.



1.—On Christmas Eve, Birdie and Nap. attended a fancy dress ball, and as Birdie's rich uncle in Australia made him a Christmas present of a real live kangaroo, Birdie decided to go as an Australian bushman, taking the kangaroo with him, being properly trained, whilst Nap. went as a common or garden policeman. "Orsatralian bushman and a wild hanimile, and a perliceman," screamed the flunkies, as he announced them.



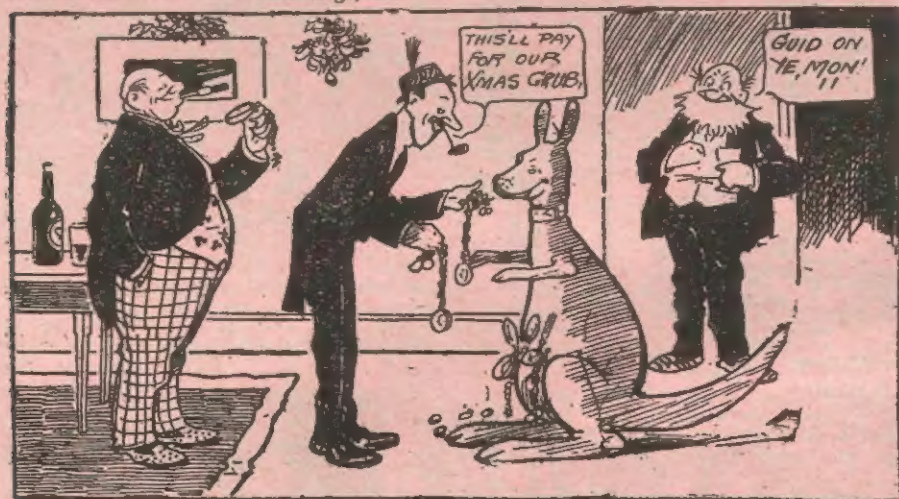
2.—"Well, well! dear us! What a novelty!" screamed everybody. "What a delightful, tame old dear!" said the ladies, as they all petted the kangaroo's neck. "Do make it jump, the pet!" and all the gentlemen got quite envious when they saw how the dear little girls patted and kissed it. And Birdie, being ever willing to oblige, thought he would let the company see the animal jump, so he playfully pinched it, only—



3.—He unfortunately pinched it just as the waiter was passing with a tray of ices, and plonk came that kangaroo's hind paws, or feet, or trotters, bang agin the old chap's tummy! My, talk about winded! Never was a football Johnnie laid out more deader! As to the kangaroo, that creature commenced to let himself go, and—



4.—His next bit of funniness was to tap a gent, who thought he looked sweet as a French soldier, upon his nose, whilst at the same time he gave Major NoCash a swishing bash on his broadside with that powerful tail of his. Well, we can tell you, the kangaroo nearly got chucked out, and it was only by the urgent persuasion of the ladies that it was allowed to stop.



5.—Dear people, the scene has now changed, and the real object of Birdie's visit with the kangaroo is now apparent. Yes, as the people got more friaky and happy towards the end of the ball, Nap. and Birdie, ever on the watch, managed to sneak watches, rings, necklaces, bracelets, &c., by the dozen, and stily dropped them in that kangaroo's pouch. Splendid idea, ain't it, boys? Here we see the bounders on Xmas morning disgorging the pouch's contents.



6.—The festive occasion has arrived—Christmas dinner. The goose and trimmings have been completely annihilated by the united efforts of Birdie, Nap., their pal, McWhiskers, and the kangaroo, and here we see the good old Xmassy, holly-topped Xmas pudden being brought in by Mrs. Wuggles, the landlady. And all done by a little ingenuity to raise the necessary cash. Well, here's a Merry Xmas to all! Chin-chin!!!

HOW BILLY SPOOFED THE TATERS.



1.—When Willie saw that wooden-legged potato merchant snoozing on Christmas Eve, he thought he would indulge in a good feed of roasted murphies on the cheap.



2.—So he piled a lot of snow round the old chap's wooden stumps, and pressed it firmly about them without him knowing.



3.—Then he set to work, and had nearly finished the old cock's stock-in-trade, when he awoke and gaped at Billy summat awful

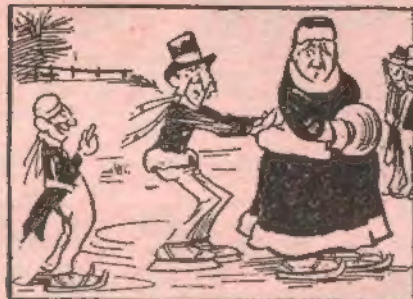


4.—Then he made a spring at Billy; at least, he tried to, but you can't spring far with one leg, and a wooden one at that. You see, the other one had frozen fast in the snow.

HE LET HER WENT



1.—Mr. and Mrs. Gummidge were out for a day's skating, and Mr. G. was doing his best to push his better three-quarter over the ice.



2.—But it was hard work, and when a sharp-looking nipper offered to relieve him for a few coppers, money down, Mr. Gummidge forked out immediately.



3.—But that small boy wasn't going to push half a ton about long for a sprat; he knew a thing or two worth three o' that.



4.—So he guided the old lady to where he knew the ice was a bit thin, then gave her a good push, and let her went.

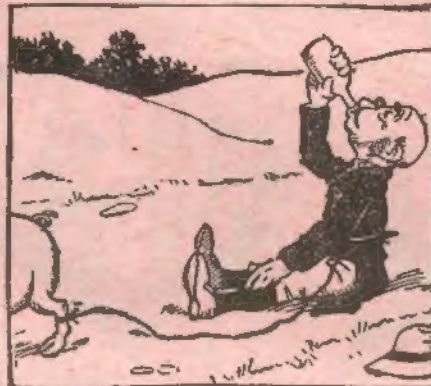


5.—And she went!!! And poor Gummidge had to pull her out. Did she say anything? What do you think?

PATSY'S CHRISTMAS PIGGY TAKES HIM HOME AGAIN.



1.—'Twas a cowl'd mornin' when little Patsy Breen started yut for the market wid his fat porker. But he had armed himself wid a bottle of potheens to keep out the cowl'd, begorrah.



2.—And he hadn't gone very far before he felt a bit shred, so down he sot and got outside the potheen in two shakes o' a cow's tail.



3.—He got so that he didn't care if he never got to market, and the pig squatted down beside him. "Pat, y'ould omadhaun," says the pig, "d'ye think we can stay here all day?"



4.—"It's a good thing (it's the pig still talking) that ye fastened the rope round yer weskit, for it seems t'me I've got to take ye home." And he did, bedad.

CUFFY, THE COLONIAL, AND SINJIN, THE S



—Two Kaiser had sent all his officers a Xmas pudding, and Cuffy spotted a German get ing one ready to serve up to his General. "Ever taste 'Xmas pudding, Singy?" whispered Cuffy. "No! Then we'll have one between us."



2.—Then the German began pouring some white sauce over his pudding. "He blessed!" he grinned.



4.—Then Cuffy put a bomb on the dish instead of the pudding. "We won't rob the General of his sauce," he chortled. "No, gib him plenty ob dat stuff," grinned Sinjin.



5.—But when the German started to eat the pudding, he found it was a bomb. "He blasted!" he roared. "He blasted!" he roared. "He blasted!" he roared.

A SLIP



1.—Tommy was watching cook dish up the plum pudding, and when he saw it his mouth watered thirteen to the dozen.



2.—Now, Tommy had just been playing football, and when cook's back turned he collared the pudding covered up the football instead.

DEAD PEOPLE



1.—It was Christmas Eve, and they wanted to test the nerves of the village cobbler, who boasted he wasn't afraid of ghosts. So they asked him if he'd mind sitting up with a gent who had just died. "Of course, I will, I ain't afraid," said he.



2.—So with a bottle of Scotch some beccy, he took his job on. "It's a long way (Tipperary)," he, merrily. (Do you see the cobbler's chaps at the window?)

KICK, PINCH THE KAISER'S CHRISTMAS PUDDING.



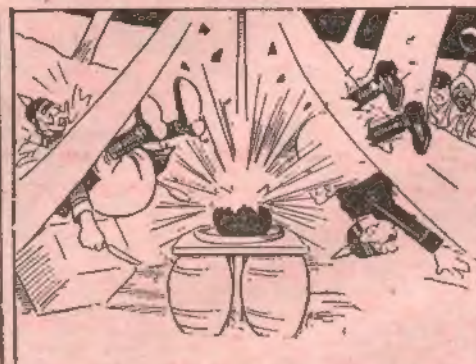
placed the pudding on a barrel, and the stuff all over it. "Der sheneral vill," "He. vas like der sauce on der



3.—"I vos see if der sheneral vos ready!" Then he hopped it, and Cuffy was down on that dumpling in a twink. "Hand up a bomb, Singy," he chuckled, "and we'll do a swap."

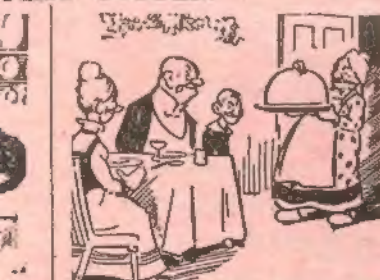


General got his pudding, he was a bit it out; it was so tough. "You l. "You vas boill der pudden a men he gave the supposed pudding a

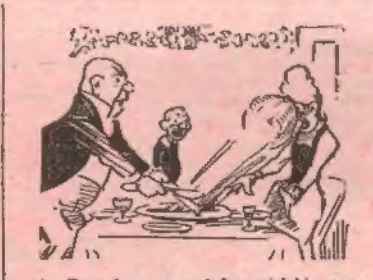


6.—And the General got a surprise. Yes, he won't want any more pudding this 'Xmas. "He, ha!" cried Cuffy, "we've done that very neatly, but we'd better gressae off; it's time we were out of the picture. Besides, we want to sample the Kaiser's pudding."

PERY PUDDEN.



3.—And cooky carried that football into the dining-room in great style.



4.—But when pater tried to stick his spoon into that football it slipped off the dish and squelched mader fair in the dial, whooshter. Wot a merry Christmas!

LE SHOULDN'T SPEAK.



3.—Then up sat the gent who was playing the corpse, and observed in a sepulchral voice: "Watchers ought not to sing ribald songs." (See 'em looking through the window to see the cobbler frightened!)

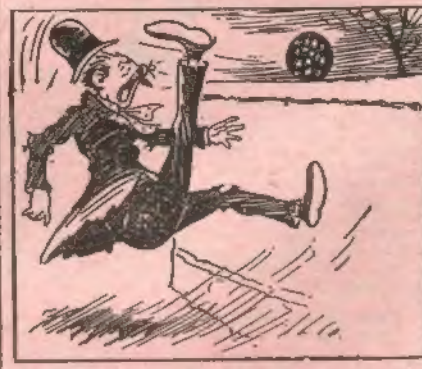


4.—"And dead people oughtn't to talk," said the cobbler, as he banged the corpse on the nose with a mighty sploosh. So they did not frighten the cobbler a bit—it didn't work a bit as they expected. (See those chaps laughing at their friend's trouble!)

WHAT A 'ORRID SELL.



1.—"WELL, I never, if there ain't a plum pudden! Wot a bit of luck. One don't often see puddens lying about like this 'ere. I can jest do with it. I'll adopt it—before it catches cold."



2.—But just as he went to annex it, something struck him—kerbosh!—on the nose. And the yell he gave scared all the robin redbreasts for seven hundred and eighty-six yards around.



3.—And then he found out what it all meant. It wasn't a Christmas pudden at all, but only Potoshot's home-made target, at which he was having a little practice in his back garden, with his air gun. Silly mistake, ain't it?

BREAKING IT GENTLY.



Ma: "Goodness gracious, Freddie! wherever have you been?"
Freddie: "A little boy fell in the muddy pond, and I fished him out!"
Ma: "Oh, my brave boy! Who was the poor lad?"
Freddie: "Me!"

A LITTLE BIT OF XMAS.



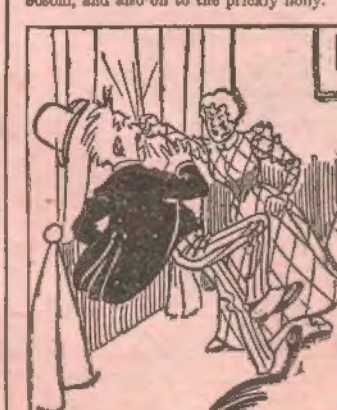
1.—"Har," said Bill Biffkins, "This ere bit of holly 'll be fine for a buttonhole."



2.—Bill visits his best girl. "Come to me arms, me little muffin, come."



3.—And then Bill pressed her to his manly bosom, and also on to the prickly holly.



4.—"Take that—biff—yer silly kipper, for comin' courtin' with a hedgehog in yer blessed pocket."

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The Secret.

In a crowded tramcar a stout woman with a troublesome small boy had to stand with other "straphangers."

"Your little boy is crying dreadfully," re-



marked a sympathetic lady; "Whatever's the matter with him?"

"Nowt," replied the mother, sharply, "he allus yells when he sees me wiv a strap."

James Dryden, 2, Baldovan Terrace, Dundee, N.B.—First Prize, 5s.

Loving His Enemy.

THE VICAR: "Ah, John, this drink is your greatest enemy."

John: "Well, parson, are we not told in the scripture to love our enemies?"

The Vicar: "Yes, but you're not told to swallow them."

Fred Studd, Cove House, Cove, nr. Tiverton, North Devon—Book Prize.

The Diagnosis.

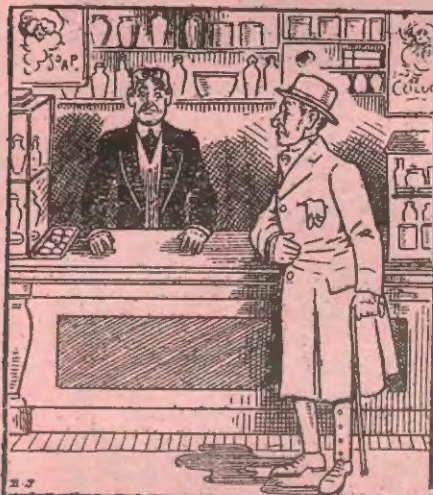
PEOPLE who go to the chemist's to have their diseases prescribed for occasionally get very strange diagnoses.

One day a farmer wearing a long countenance is said to have entered a chemist's shop and remarked:

"I seem to have something queer in my stomach, and I want you to give me something for it."

"What are your symptoms?" the chemist asked.

"Every little while something seems to rise up and then settle back again, and by and by



it rises up and then settles back again, and by then it rises up again."

The chemist put his chin in the palm of his hand and meditated. "Look here," he said gravely, "you haven't gone and swallowed a lift, have you?"

F. Maxwell, 19, East Atherton Street, Durham—Prize, 2s. 6d.

Silence in Court.

THE defendant, who was charged for keeping a dog without a license, made repeated efforts during the hearing of the case to interrupt the evidence brought forward against him, but on each occasion he was called to silence by the pompous dignity on the bench.

Yet still he persevered. Finally the magistrate, now thoroughly exasperated, turned to him and sternly enquired:

"Do you wish the court to understand that you refuse to renew the license?"

"Yes," replied the defendant, "but—"

"We want no 'buts'!" roared the preserver of law and order. "Your dog license, as you must be very well aware, expired so long ago as the first of January. You must either renew it now, therefore, or be fined. Is that quite clear?"

"Yes," sighed the defendant; "quite clear. But, in that case, I may find myself here again next week, charged with keeping a license, but no dog. You see, the latter also expired on the first of January!"

W. E. Scrivener, 32, Essex Street, Forest Gate, E.—Book Prize.

Beyond Recall.

AN engineer from Sunderland was spending a few days in London with a friend, and after a busy morning sight-seeing, the Londoner chose a large restaurant for luncheon, thinking it would be a novel experience for the man from the north.

The visitor appeared to enjoy his luncheon, but kept looking in the direction of the door.

"What are you watching?" asked his friend, rather annoyed.

"Well," was the quiet reply, "A's keepin' an eye on me overcoat."

"Oh, don't bother about that," said the other; "you don't see me watching mine."

"No," observed the guileless engineer, "there has no call to. It's ten minutes since thine went."

R. Hayes, 42, Spencer Avenue, Rock Ferry—Book Prize.

Something About Cats.

A SCHOOLBOY, asked to write something about cats, wrote the following:

"Cats that are made for little boys to maul and tease are called Maltese cats. Some cats are known by their purrs, and are called Persian cats. A very fine cat is called the Magnificat. Cats that have bad tempers are called Angora cats, while cats with deep feelings are called feline cats."

Miss L. Hitchin, 152a, Ternaki Street, Wellington, New Zealand—Book Prize.

A National Question.

JIMMY giggled when his teacher told him a story of a Roman who swam across the Tiber three times before breakfast.

"You do not doubt a trained swimmer could do that, do you, Jimmy?"

"No, sir," answered Jimmy, but I wondered why he didn't make it four, and get back to the side his clothes were on."

Leonard Cook, Letchworth Villa, Baldock Road, Gordon City, Letchworth, Herts—Book Prize.

His Excuse.

HE had been in the habit of playing truant from school, and he had been moderately lucky in getting out of the scrape.

But he was caught one day and brought before the teacher.

"You're late. Where have you been?"

"I've been sick."

"You don't look sick."

"Well, I'm better, but I've been sick, all the same."

"You go right home and get a note from your mother, or I'll punish you severely."

He went off and was gone about ten minutes. It was pretty quick work, and when he handed the note to the teacher she thought that the handwriting did not look altogether like his mother's. She kept her eyes on him as she opened the note, but he was as bland and as innocent as the best boy in the world.

The note read:

"Miss—Please excuse John this mornin fur being late, 'cos he broke his leg." Mrs. J.

E. Reeves, 28, Coningham's Road, Shepherd's Bush, London, W.—Book Prize.

The Bull and the Man.

PATRICK has a great power of enjoyment after all, and always laughs at the right time.

One day he saw a bull attack a man, and had to hold on to his sides with both hands. The scene was so funny.

After a little the animal turned his attention in another direction, and poor Patrick, after exploring the heights, came down with a thump on the other side of the fence.

He rubbed his wounds, and as he trudged along, the worse for wear, he said to himself:

"Faith, I am glad I had my laugh when I did or I wouldn't have had it at all."

W. Reynolds, Preston Building, Cromer Road, Holt, Norfolk—Book Prize.

Proof.

A JOLLY looking Irishman was saluted with the remark, "Tim, you're house is blown away."

"Deed, then, it isn't," he answered, "for I have the key in my pocket."

L. Mason, Market Street, Clay Cross, nr. Chesterfield—Book Prize.

Black Deception.

"Oo!" sobbed Mrs. Smith. "Oo, I've been deceived something cruel, that I ave!"

"Now, don't take on so," ventured her friend, soothingly. "What's the matter?"



Pore dear, you're hupset by the 'orrible accident which your husband was run over in."

"It ain't that," snuffled Mrs. Smith, with a gulp. "'E ain't 'urt overmuch, and they're lettin' 'im out of 'orspital to-day. I've bean deceived cruel, that I have, an' me 'eart's broke."

"Why, you know, when I married Smith I was that proud of 'im! A sweep 'e was, and doing well at 'is trade and always busy. And then there was this 'ere haccident, and when they took 'im to the 'orspital and gave 'im a bath—oor!" Mrs. Smith broke down and gulped. "I'm blowed if my old man didn't turn out to be a nigger after all."

Wm. Green, 4, Claypath, Durham—Prize, 2s. 6d.

A New Diet.

FREDDY: "Mamma, what does pussy eat bees for?"

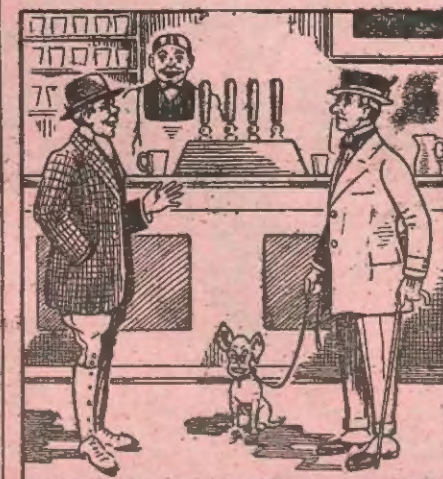
Mamma: "Why, Freddy, pussy doesn't eat bees."

Freddy: "Oh, but she does, for I can hear them humming inside her!"

Miss H. Knowles, Church Place, Great Saakey, Warrington—Book Prize.

One For His Nob.

A ROFFISH looking youth entered an inn with a dog, and an Irishman, who was standing at the bar, asked him what breed it was.



The owner looked the questioner insolently up and down, and then replied with a drawl: "It's a cross between an ape and an Irishman."

"Faith, thin, we're both related to it," was the ready retort.

A. McKie, Jr., 3, Parkview Cottages, Kirkcaldy, Scotland—Prize, 2s. 6d.

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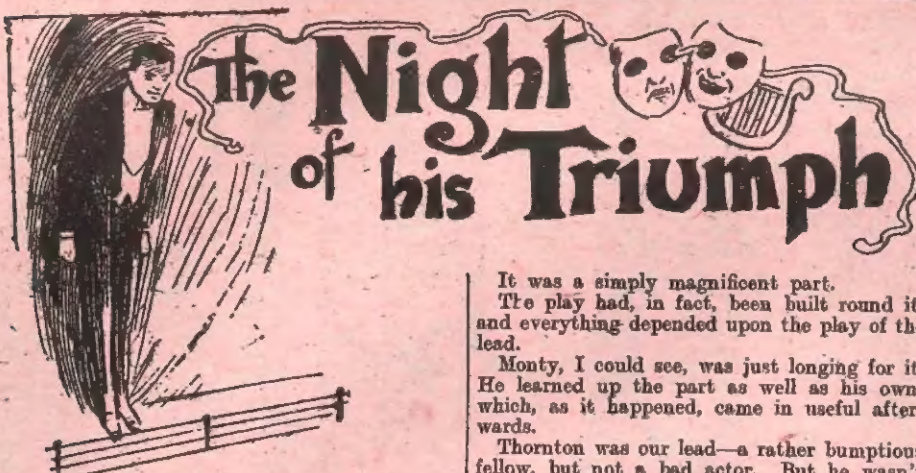
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No. 307.



Nobody had had the slightest suspicion of what wonderful powers lay hid beneath the somewhat commonplace exterior of Monty Redgrave.

His triumph was a surprise for everybody, and everybody admitted it.

Few men could have played lead in "The Silence of Salome" at a moment's warning, but Monty did, and his success was complete.

I believe we were all pleased, too. There was no time for envy to grow up in our hearts; for, poor fellow, his triumph proved to be terribly brief.

When I joined the company at the Minerva Theatre, Monty had been a member of it for some time.

He played small parts, just as I did, but he had aspirations, which, when we came to know each other better, he confided to me.

He believed in himself, as every true actor does. He wanted to get on, as we all did; but later on I found that it was not only personal ambition that urged him to strive to rise in his profession. He had another and a weightier reason.

He was married. The company had never seen his wife. She was an invalid.

Monty told me the story one day. They had been married two years, and had at first followed the profession together. Then came the accident which crippled Milly.

She had been a confirmed invalid for eighteen months now. The doctors held out no hopes of complete recovery, except under conditions impossible to Monty and his wife. A sunny climate, ease of mind, the best skill, the choicest nourishment! I could fancy the grim smile with which Monty listened to the list of requirements. On his present salary the two could just live.

No wonder he longed to get on. He had a kind of faith that his chance would come some day; but it was a long time coming.

We became good friends. He often spoke to me about his wife, and her sweet gentleness and patience. One day he took me home with him, and I made her acquaintance.

She was a sweet little thing, a blonde, pale and slender, and blue-eyed. That she loved her husband devotedly no one could fail to see. And his tenderness to her almost brought tears to my eyes.

I was startled when I saw her by what I read in her face.

It seemed to me that death had set its seal there, and I marvelled that Monty could not see it.

But he did not. He had ceased to hope for a complete recovery. But that his wife was slowly slipping from him into the shadows, he did not suspect.

"If only I could get a chance," he often said to me, "I know I should succeed. I feel it. Then sunny skies and restored health for Milly." And his eyes would sparkle at the thought.

I did not dare to say a word to undeceive him. Besides, I might be mistaken.

I saw Milly several times after that. Poor little Milly!

How sweet, how patient, how loving she was. Every time I saw her I seemed to see a warning in her pale face that the end was nearer.

But Monty was still blind.

With ample funds something might, perhaps, have been done; but it needed to be done at once.

If Monty's "chance" were long delayed, it would come too late for Milly.

And would it ever come?

I doubted it.

I had been waiting for a "chance" for a good many years, and it had not come my way.

There was no reason to suppose that Monty's luck would be better than mine.

Well, I was mistaken in that.

Monty's chance did actually come at last.

"The Silence of Salome" was on the boards of the Minerva, and all of us would have given our souls to play "Lord Ronald."

It was a simply magnificent part. The play had, in fact, been built round it, and everything depended upon the play of the lead.

Monty, I could see, was just longing for it. He learned up the part as well as his own, which, as it happened, came in useful afterwards.

Thornton was our lead—a rather bumptious fellow, but not a bad actor. But he wasn't up to the part. Monty said so, and I agreed with him.

Neither of us dreamed that Monty's chance was near at hand.

But then came the motor-car accident.

Thornton, Daly and Carew were in it, and all three were taken to the hospital in an unconscious state.

It would be weeks before any of them saw the flare of the footlights again.

Old Allison was at his wit's end.

If he hadn't been he would never have given such a glorious part to an actor of Monty Redgrave's standing.

He had to send somebody on, and he sent Monty. It was a case of neck or nothing.



"Tell me what it is. Is my wife worse?"

Monty was letter perfect in the part. That was the main reason, I believe, why Allison chose him before me.

In a hurried rehearsal, he rather astonished the manager, and I could see that the old man's hopes were rising.

"I believe you'll do, Redgrave, by thunder!" he exclaimed. "Anyway, do your best."

"Rely upon me, sir."

"If you can pull it off, all right; it will be the making of you. Don't forget that," Allison added.

Monty came up to me with his eyes glistening. "Congratulations, old man," I said.

He shook my hand.

"It's my chance at last, Woodley," he said in a low voice.

I looked at him curiously.

"You think it'll be a success, Monty?"

"I am sure of it," he answered with conviction.

"Sure?"

"Yes; I feel it."

He was silent for a moment.

"Woodley, it will be a success, I am certain," he went on, thoughtfully. "Heaven grant that it is not too late for Milly."

I was a little startled.

Had he seen it at last, then?

"What do you mean, Monty?"

"I have thought sometimes that"—he

broke off abruptly—"it is nothing. Heaven would not be so cruel."

And he left me abruptly.

I saw that he had begun to share my misgivings concerning Milly; but he appeared to put such fears resolutely from him.

In the evening we had a full house.

"The Silence of Salome" was having a successful run, and there was a good deal of curiosity amongst the public about the man who was to play lead in Thornton's place.

People were disposed to criticise, as is usual in such cases, so Monty's ordeal was likely to be a trying one.

But no veteran of the footlights could have been cooler than he was.

Not a trace of stage fright; not a glimpse of nervousness.

He made an ideal Lord Ronald.

Old Allison rubbed his hands and chuckled when Monty took his cue and went on.

"He'll do; he'll do," I heard him mutter.

And I believe all the company shared his opinion before long.

Never had "Lord Ronald" been played like that before.

It was, as I have said, an exceptional part. Monty did it full justice.

He won applause such as had never been given to Thornton in the part.

It was not only a success. It was a triumph.

And it was a triumph such as the boards of the Minerva had never witnessed before.

Allison was in the Seventh heaven.

But when it was all over, Monty did not show any particular elation.

He bore his blushing honours with a modesty which disarmed envy.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT

EVERY
BOY
AND
GIRL

SHOULD READ

"FUNNY CUTS."

A WASTREL'S SON.

(Continued from page 2.)

was to shake the dust of Perry Vale from my feet, and the legacy was to go to a hospital. The money was left in my hands, and absolutely at my disposal."

"Money—legacy!" ejaculated Mr. Perry. "Is the boy mad?"

"You are not aware, sir, that Richard Perry died a millionaire," said Robert, in the quietest possible tone.

Chorus of gasps!

"Impossible!" cried Mr. Perry, at length.

"The fact, I assure you."

"And you—"

"I am, certainly, a millionaire," said Robert, with a negligent air.

"And the—the legacy—"

"A hundred thousand pounds. It will be a boon to the hospital," said Robert, drily.

"But, my dear nephew—"

Robert smiled ironically. He was a dear nephew now. The change was sudden.

Mr. Perry, in fact, was beaming upon him.

"If any words, spoken in the heat of argument, have escaped me at which you may take offence, I am sorry," said Mr. Perry; "I am sorry. I can say no more. It is human to be hasty. I apologise. Let us say no more about it."

"Willingly. It is not a savoury subject—still, your loss will be the hospital's gain, and as a charitable man you will have cause for satisfaction," said Robert, with grim irony;

"but there was one person in this house, Mr. Perry, who did not despise the poor relation—"

one who did not insult him. He took the amazed Dorothy's hand, "and she has promised to become his wife. She loved me, and was kind to me without knowing that I was a millionaire. Good-bye, Dorothy, dearest, for a little while; good-bye, my kind relations!"

And the wastrel's son was gone.

THE END.

We will not report the mutual recriminations of the Perrys. They would not be pleasant reading.

Robert was inflexible in the matter of the legacy; but the Perrys deemed it best to be on good terms with a millionaire, and they were particularly gracious over Dorothy's wedding.

As for Dorothy, she was pleased, of course, to find her lover a millionaire, but she had loved him as dearly when she deemed him but a penniless WASTREL'S SON.

THE END.

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GWT

"FUNNY CUTS."

THE KING OF COMICS.

Poor Monty!

He never returned to the Minerva. It was said that he had gone abroad. Perhaps he found a darker fate. Since the night of his triumph I have never seen him.

THE END.

THE END.

THE END.

THE END.

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A FAIR "COP."



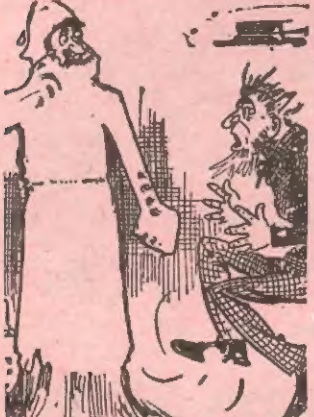
1.—P.C. TROTTERS: "Ha, ha, it'll be odd if I don't catch old Bloskins watering his milk this time. I'll watch till he does it, if it takes me all night."



2.—"Aha! coming on to snow, is it! Good business—make a sort of disguise for me."

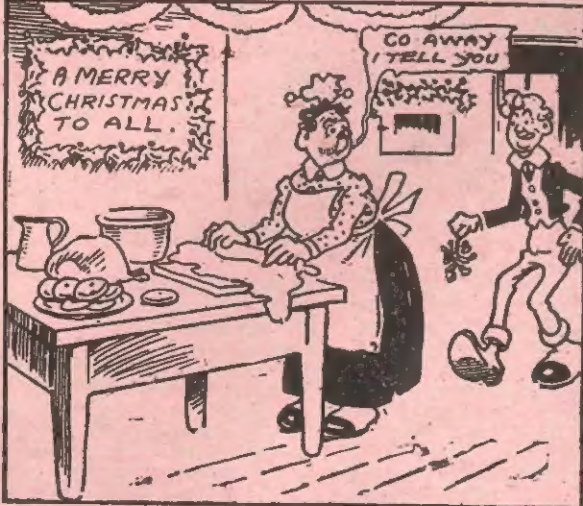


3.—And the snow it snowed, and the freeze it froze, and still that dauntless crusher stood his ground.

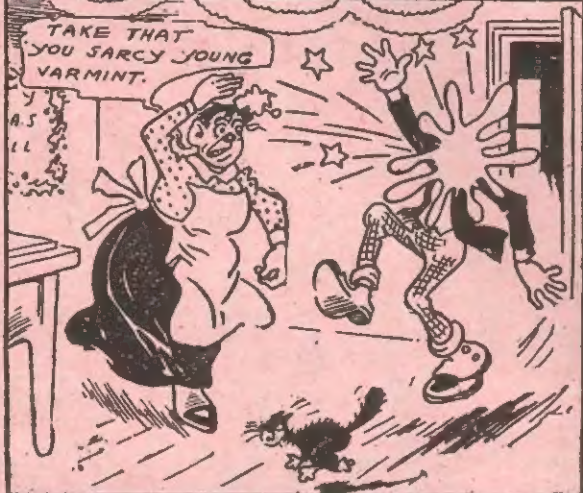


4.—Until, in the small hours of the morning, Bloskins himself (who had had something stronger than milk after his previous night's supper), came on the scene, and I'm bothered if he didn't straightway go and mistake the gallant P.C. for the pump.

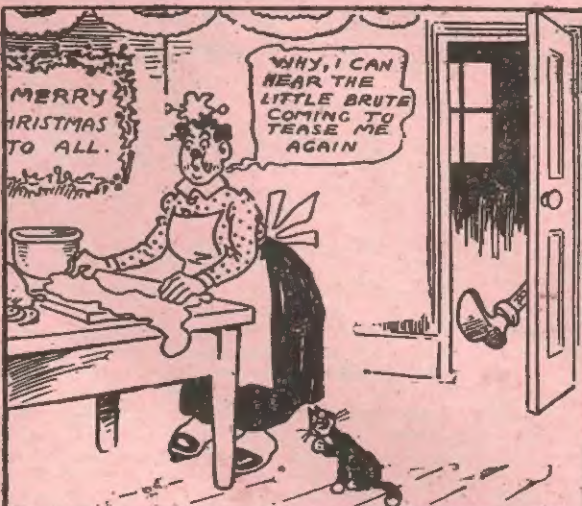
MRS. SUDDS'S MERRY CHRISTMAS.



1.—'Twas Christmas Eve, and Mrs. Suds was busy making mince pies, but she was much annoyed by Freddy, who is home for his holidays—as he would keep on trying to kiss her under a twig of mistletoe; we can't say we admire his taste—that's nothing to do with us. Let's get on with the story.



3.—And then the footsteps got nearer. "There, take that! Now, p'raps you'll stop yer games." And she ups with a lump of dough and let fly at Freddy—only it wasn't Freddy, it was the guv'nor. "Oh, beg pardon, sir. I thought it was Freddy. So sorry, sir." "Sorry, be blowed! I ain't going to have a—



2.—"Just as if I want to be kissed by a kid like that. The idea! A policeman's more to my liking," gasped she. Well, she'd chivvied him off several times, when she heard footsteps. "Why, there he is again. I'll give him something to remember. I've told him a dozen times to stop it," murmured Mrs. S.



4.—Slap of dough jabbed over my face for nothing. You take a moment's notice, and get out," yelled the boss, as he toed her out into the snow. Hard luck, old dear, that you should get toed out over Freddy. Never mind, better luck next Christmas. But see her next week. It's special!

HE GOT IT.



Boy: "Quick, mum, quick! they're a fair 'em all round the square 'forty shillings or a month' for not havin' their doors swept. G'v me and my pal five shillin's, an' we'll do it afore the policeman comes."

QUITE A NOISE.



"And his wife gave him a good blowing up." "Yes, I heard it reported all over the town."

CHAMPION CHEEK.



DILAPIDATED INDIVIDUAL (suddenly stopping extremely stout gent): "Excuse me, sir, but are you aware of the evils of tight-lacing?"

MODEST.

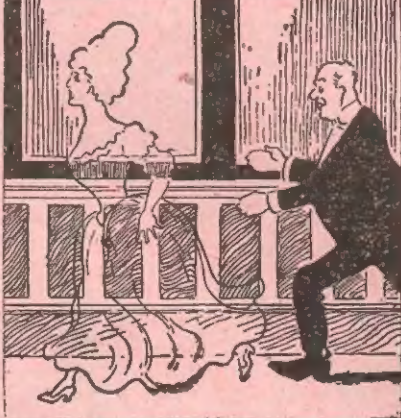


SHE: "Most handsome men seem to be conceited, don't you think?" He: "Oh, I don't know. I'm not."

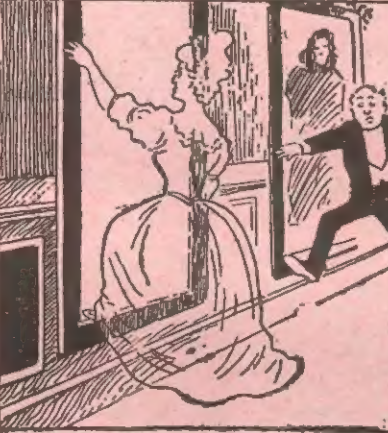
UNCLE JACK'S GHOST.



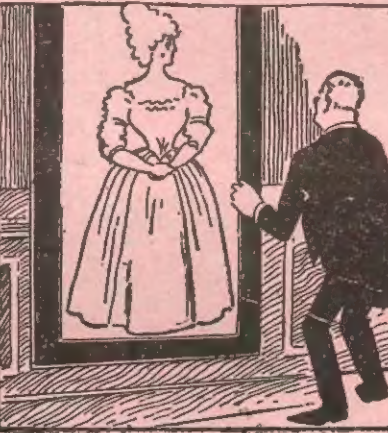
1.—THERE was no disputing the fact that Uncle Jack had been keeping up Xmas; Uncle Jack declared that had nothing to do with his meeting the fair apparition, in powdered wig, in the corridor.



2.—Of course, Uncle was not a man to be scared by midnight ghosts; so, according to Uncle's account, he chased the apparition down the corridor to demand a Christmas kiss under the mistletoe.



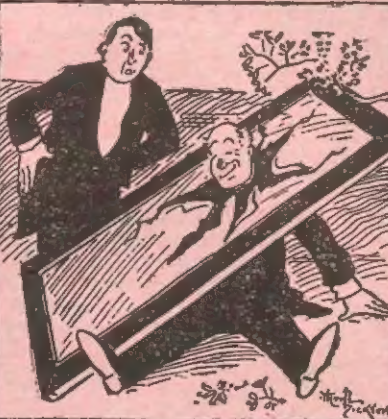
3.—But the fair damsel was too quick for him. She marched to the picture gallery, and stepped up into a picture-frame.



4.—"Why, bless my soul, you are one of the old family paintings," said Uncle Jack.



5.—Well, anyhow, I mean to have a kiss under the mistletoe," said Uncle, and he reached up to take the prize!



6.—When Thomas, the butler, found Uncle Jack with his head through the old family portrait, of course Uncle declared he was quite sober! Well, well! as it's Christmas, we won't be hard on jolly old Uncle Jack!