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FIRST IMPRESSIONS

KING George VI.—Lloyd George.

VULGARITY—other people's behaviour.

N.S.W. his a blind Crown Prosecutor. Why not? Justice is blind.

N these utilitarian days, why not a motor-hearse with a wailing siren?

WHICH travels the faster—prices upward or quality downward?

THE Sydney summer girl in the costume of the day: "Thanks be for the wind on my Umba!"

THE greatest expansion threatened in any article of commerce we know of is in Woodrow's hats.

CABLE: "There is an air of uneasiness" about the Peace Conference." No wonder—sitting on Wilson's 24 points.

CLEAN beds for single men—runs a notice in a Darlinghurst boarding-house. Why this discrimination against the married?

BOXES of Japanese safety matches are labelled thus: "Average contents, 60 sticks." Surely a case of commercial candour.

AUSTRALIA was never nearer an immigration alliance with Japan than when Woodrow Wilson turned his back on William Hughes.

BOLSHEVISM—pshaw! We are the most law-abiding people on earth. We even submit to Fitzgerald's regulation to take our breath away.

MELBOURNE doctors disagreed as to the correct name of the disease that is epidemic there. The "flu" by any other name will kill as quick.

THE worst that can be said of President Wilson's terms of peace is that Germany is the only power that appears to be enthusiastic regarding them.

"TORTOISES are fond of strawberries," says the "World's News." We had an idea of keeping some as pets. But this decides us. Their tastes are too similar to our own.

LORD Robert Cecil says that neither his special League of Nations Scheme nor President Wilson's includes Germany. So that even distraught Germany has something to be thankful for.

GREECE wishes the capital of the League of Nations to be Constantinople—back in Greek hands. That means for her the control of world-politics—as well as control of the world's fish-and-chips.

THE ghost of August Millenski, hanged long ago at Brisbane for murder, appeared at a Northern spiritist seance the other evening. Millenski has not reformed, judging from the company he selected on the occasion.

N. S.W. Attorney-General Davy Hall (in spite of Fitzgerald) allowed judges on the Supreme Court Bench to go unmasked on the hottest February days. What N.S.W. public wants most is to see not present but future judges unmasked.

SURF-BATHING is dangerous for women when men are not present, and it is dangerous for men when women are present. Here arises a problem calling for the intervention, not of J. D. Fitzgerald, N.S.W. Minister of Health, but of the ghost of the late King Solomon.

FROM newspaper report of Sydney insolvent's examination:—

"He had been borrowing money since 1916. In Melbourne he interviewed Mr. Jensen." That bankrupt was on the wrong side of the fence that time.

WHEN Dr. Fox, after driving to Long Bay in his own car on being committed for trial on the charge of not wearing a mask, finally determined to accept bail, we suddenly realised that he was not related to the Fox who wrote the "Book of Martyrs."

IT was rough on Sydney commercial travellers, to be ordered to stay in the country till Fitz's nosebags were off the city. "The gentleman who sleeps in Mummy's room on Saturday nights" was more than ever a stranger to his family.

THE DAYS OF THE PAN(IC)DEMIC

How the Public Grinned and Bore it

AN ATTEMPT TO ESTIMATE THE WEEKLY COST

The Story of King Tinpot and his Toe

THE MAN OF THE HOUR



THE COST A WEEK

While it is practically impossible to obtain reliable figures regarding the weekly loss to the community brought about by the suspension of several branches of industry since the epidemic appeared, the following estimate is based on the most complete information available:—

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Retailers | £50,000 |
| Hotels | 20,000 |
| Theatres | 8,500 |
| Picture Theatres | 25,000 |
| Racing | 10,000 |
| Billiards, Shooting Galleries, etc. | 2,000 |
| Unemployed | 25,000 |
| Relief Depots' Expense | 5,000 |

£145,500

To the foregoing weekly bill must be added the heavy falling off in revenue of the Railway and Tramway Departments. While figures are not obtainable yet, it is known that they will for the month run into a pretty large sum.

For every day that the restrictions are so stringently imposed, so the financial snowball grows. Debts are mounting up. Even the proposed Government relief will not appreciably lighten them. People do not want charity, they want the restrictions lifted at the earliest possible moment so that they may once more become producers.

THE PARABLE OF TINPOT

King Tinpot was a ruler in the days of giants and giant-killers. He was incidentally monarch of all he surveyed, but in those times the telescope was unknown, so his kingdom would not compare in area with, say, even Tasmania.

While hunting dragons one day Tinpot, who, as was customary, wore no covering on his feet, stubbed the royal big toe. After all his subjects had mourned for seven days Tinpot summoned the wisest to consult on the problem of how to obviate future stubbings. When the King explained that he had kicked against the protruding root of a tree the Wisest of the Wise answered that if the hide of the

ox were spread over the entire land, there would be no likelihood of Tinpot injuring that sacred toe.

So a proclamation went forth commanding all loyal subjects to kill their oxen. For miles round the palace hides were laid to cover the virgin earth. More oxen were needed, and despite the protests of the farmers all the stock in the land were killed to safeguard Tinpot's toe. Farmers, slaughtermen, butchers, and many other tradesmen shut up shop and bankruptcy threatened the land, until one unwise, but commonsense, person suggested that it would be easier to cover the King's foot with leather, yet it would afford the same safety for the monarchial toe as if the whole of the earth were given a leather skin. So the trouble ended.

A FEW 'FLU WHEEZES

Bacillus est desceusus Aveni.

Why not call it Flumonia?

"Genuine Flue Sale," announced an Oxford-street trader on his window. Flu! What price!

At last is N.S.W. Health Minister Fitzgerald happy. His position lately has been most influential.

Little girl (kneeling at her bedside): "Dod bless father and mother and keep me safe from fupedemic Fitz."

Parson Hammond's theory that Sydney saves £30,000 a week while the hotels are closed presupposes too much; namely, that those who thirst for beer go without it. Very many get less beer for more money; and so the financial argument dies.

It was in the eternal fitness of things that the example of mask-wearing should be set by professional politicians. Never before was one of the crowd known to muzzle his jaw or hide his cheek. Even in the deadly 'flu can be seen the finger of a merciful Providence.

"He shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and he shall cry, Unclean, unclean."—No, it was not J. D. Fitzgerald who said this; it was Moses, in Leviticus xiii. 45.

Genius consists "in seeing what is right under your nose." It sometimes also consists in seeing what ought to be right under your nose. A statue to the inventor of the smoker's mask!

On the day of humiliation and prayer no one chose the really appropriate text: "He will destroy the covering of the face cast over all people." (Isaiah c. 25, v. 7).

When Sydney had totalled 200 cases of flumonia the Premier announced that restrictions would be relaxed shortly. With the toll at 90 restrictions were at their most rigid stage. It's all very bewildering.

Now Sydney streets are all abloom
With girl faces fresh and fair,
No more like transient from the tomb
The masked maid meets us every-
where;
Red tempting lips once more are bare,
Swifts hisses surely are their doom,
Now girl faces fresh and fair
In Sydney streets are all abloom.

See how the parsons' sons all become doctors! They know from the old man that curing bodies pays better than curing souls.

The poor battered maid-of-all-work came to the doctor to be inoculated at the instance of her benevolent mistress, who herself had a deadly fear of 'flu. "O doctor," said the weary drudge, "Don't do it to my arm—that's in the washing-tub all day." "Then I'd better do it on your leg," quoth Galen. "No, doctor, not there—I've got to be on my feet from morning to night." "Well, now, where on earth can I do it?" "I don't know, doctor, but they never give me any time to sit down."

Prima facie, the presence of a political organiser in any public movement has to do with vote getting. Was it not, therefore, a tactical mistake to include Mr. Percy Hunter upon the administrative board created by the N.S.W. Government to assist in stamping out the influenza? The answer will be forthcoming if political capital is made out of the fight the National Government put up against the epidemic. For that answer it will be necessary to wait until the next State election campaign.

IS IT LOADED?

Proportional Representation GENERAL ELECTION MAY BE SPRUNG

Is there any sinister purpose at the back of the Parliamentary Elections Amendment Act—commonly known as the Proportional Representation Bill? Is the Holman Government going to use it to spring an election on the country in September or at some other unexpected time?

The Act came into force on the 18th December, 1918. But in the form in which it then was—still is—it did no more than affirm generally the principle of proportional representation. The task of working out this principle in detail is allotted to commissioners, who are "directed to distribute New South Wales into electoral districts for the purposes of this Act whenever directed by the Governor by proclamation in the Gazette... provided that the first distribution under the Act shall be complete, not later than the thirtieth day of June, one thousand nine hundred and nineteen," whereupon the Governor "shall" announce in the Gazette the boundaries and electorates determined by the Commissioners, and "on such publication those electoral districts shall be the electoral districts of New South Wales."

In other words, by next July the present electorates will have ceased to exist, and a new set of electorates will have come into being. The constitutional practice in such cases is so well-established by custom that it has the force of law. As the House no longer represents the electorates it must dissolve. Our greatest constitutional authority, Dicey, and, according to him, in the event of the House proving reluctant it is the duty of the King to intervene.

The position, therefore, is that Mr. Holman will be entitled to a dissolution at the hands of the Governor—if he likes to ask for it. And if he does not like to ask for it, the Governor's duty will be to dissolve Parliament himself.

But nobody will know by July next who the electors are. The police are now collecting the names of the voters for the new rolls. This work may not be completed by August next. It is precisely the same situation as existed before the general election in England. There, with a million and a half new voters on the roll, and new constituencies, chaos resulted. Nobody knew who the voters were. The Parliament returned was ably unrepresentative. That fact is now being by advocates of disorder to justify disorder. New South Wales at the present juncture affords a non-representative Assembly? The paper it seems that there never was a time when it could afford it less.

The electors are warned to be on the alert to see that they are enrolled and ready for all surprises that may be sprung on them.

£500 FOR 2,000 WORDS

"Smith's Weekly" to Kipling

"Rudyard Kipling is said to have been paid as high as 1s. a word for short stories," wrote "The Weekly" some time ago.

"Smith's Weekly" wanted an article from the famous author for the present issue, on the story of the Villiers-Brettonneux victory whereby the Australians saved Amiens.

"Smith's Weekly," in view of the importance of securing a record of an immortal national event, justified in cabling the Prime Minister to approach Kipling.

Mr. Hughes was asked to give Kipling access to the military records of the Villiers-Brettonneux fight, and commission him to write 2,000 words, for which we were prepared to pay £500, the article to be cabled in time to reach this issue.

Our offer was therefore 5s. a word. A credit to cover these charges upon "Smith's Weekly" was established in London, and Mr. Hughes advised to that effect. To this cable Mr. Hughes replied:—

"Will approach Kipling if you wish, but as he declined our invitation to visit Australian battlefield he can hardly write effectively. Conan Doyle knows all about it. Shall I approach him?"

To this we cabled:—

"Exhaust Kipling. Doyle unwanted."

After negotiations extending over a week we received this cable from the Prime Minister:—"Kipling declines."