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## Beyond a Joke

By C. L. Everard, in the Daily Herald, London, England.

I first ran across Jim Mullins seven
years ago in a Canadian forest. He
was a lumber jack then, a big, broadshouldered fellow, with a temper
which he'd brought from the Kerry
mountains, a punch like the kick of
a frolicsome mule, the thirst of a
brace of camels, and a desire for a
literary life. I suspect that Jack
London had bitten him; it was a bad
case, anyhow.

London had butten nim; it was a secase, anyhow. . .

Business took me into Fleet street a few weeks ago, where I had an appointment with my old friend and fellowsinner the editor of the "Evening Yawp." Passing through the corridors of Bilge House, that hive of intellect, I noticed on one of the doods the inscription: "Mr. James Mullins." Later, I broached the matter to the editor. "What sort of a Mullins." Later, I broached the matter to the editor. "'What sort of a man is your James Mullins?"
"Oh, Jim's our tame humorist. At least, he was. As a matter of fact, poor old Jim's been getting more and more tame, and less and less humorous every day. Ever met him?"
"Think so," said I. "Could I have a chat with him?" The Chief rang the bell. "Take this geutleman through to Mr. Mullins," he said to the messenger.

It was Jim right enough. But Lord, what a difference! He turned a pair of filmy eyes towards me as I entered. He had scarcely sufficient strength to rise from his seat to greet

me.

"You don't remember me, Jim,"
I said, as he shook hands limply.
"Met you at Dead Hoss a couple of years before the war, when I was over there for the 'Daily Snoop."
"Dead Hoss," he muttered. "Dead Hoss. Ah, yes. Up in British Columbia, wasn't it? What was I deing? Felling trees, wasn't t?"
"You were Jim," I said. "Felling trees and hankering for the literary life."

life."

"God forgive me," he groaned.
"It's true. Look at the result!"
"I warned you at the time, Jim,"
I said. "It's a rotten life." He groanel agreement. "But you've got to buck up, my lad. Take yourself in hand. Knock it off gradually."
"Knock what off?" he stammered. ered. "The booze," I said firmly. "It's

killed many a better man."
"I don't drink," said Mr. Mullins.
"Well, then, you'r'e doping, I suppose," I said, helpfully. "Cut it out,

"I don't dope," moaned the poor writch. "Sometimes I wish I did!" Prize Humour.
"Then what's the trouble? Out with it."

"Then what's the trouble? Out with it."

"Do you ever see the old rag?" he asked, pushing across a damp copy of the "Evening Yawp." I modded.
"You know we run a prize joke every day?" I nodded again.
"That's what's caused it, "he almost whispered. "That's my job."
"Do you mean," I asked, in herrofied accents, "do you mean you have to write those jokes?"
"Worse," he replied, wearily. "We buy those jokes. Actually buy them from our readers. Guines a time, you understand. And—and I have to read all they send in! My God—"."
His voice trailed away. He seemed on the verge of collapse.
"Poor old Jim," I said, softly. "That's worse than even I bargained for. Why don't you chuek it?"
"Can't," he replied. "It'll chuek me first. You see, I'm on a three year's contract, and they say they can't get anyone else with sufficient sense of humour to do the job." He laughed like a lost soul.

I was trying to think of a way out for poor old Mullins when there came a tap at the door and a bright boy in buttons entered. In his arms he bore a great basket full of letters.
"To-day's jokes, Mr. Mullins," said the boy, in a toneless voice, and departed.

Poor old Jim looked at the basket-ful of horrors, and shuddered all over like an electric train at a standstill.

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"To-day's jokes, Mr. Mullins," said the boy, in a toneless voice, and departed.

Poor old Jim looked at the basketful of horrors, and shuddered all over like an electric train at a standstill. Then, with a perfect outsize in greans, he half rose from his chair and stretched out a trembling hand in the direction of a small bottle which stood on the other side of the deak. The bottle bore the label:
"STRYCHININE,—POISON."
"Stop!" cried. "Stop, Jim! For the love of Heaven sit down and let me pass it to you."

Which I did. One could do no less for as old pal.

At the time of going to press the "Evening Yawp" is still looking for a successor to Mr. Mullins. The pay I understand is good.

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"To-day's jokes, Mr. Mullins," and shuddered all over departed.

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THE GEGORGGIAN BAY. The Georgian Bay, that great arm of

No money for establishment of new industries;
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But there is plenty of money to send Mr. Pattullo with his entourage on a useless trip to Europe at the expense of the taxpayers.
Mr. Pattullo says he is going to find a market for B.C. timber. There is already an army of B.C. lumber representatives in London, including Commissioner F. C. Wade, who is costing B.C. \$80,000 a year to look after her interests.

her interests. -- Vancouver Sun.

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