

OUR PUZZLE POEM REPORT: "COFFEE-MAKING."

SOLUTION.
COFFEE-MAKING.

How strange it is that we on English soil
So often fail, however much we toil,
In making coffee such as Frenchmen boil!

Do we lack sense, or pots, or water pure?
Do we bad coffee or thin milk procure?
Tell me, ye careful housewives, I adjure!

The coffee-pots rare-fashioned are to please
There English, German, French and Viennese,
So different from the simple pots for teas.

So this I urge—that girls should take a turn
With fresh-ground berries at the coffee-urn,
Greeting, with smile, the breakfast-cups'
return.

PRIZE WINNERS.
Ten Shillings Each.

Mrs. J. Brand, 13, Windsor Circus, Kelvinside, Glasgow.

Edith Dewey, c/o Mr. F. A. Rogers, 327, Oxford Street, W.

Mrs. F. Farrar, Westridge, Whitefield, near Manchester.

Caroline Gundry, The Vicarage, Cerne Abbas, Dorchester.

Mrs. E. L. Hamilton, 44, Marquis Road, Stroud Green, N.

Fanny K. Handie, c/o Kirk Street, Oldmeldrum, Aberdeenshire.

J. Hunt, 42, Francis Road, Birmingham.

Elizabeth Rose, 5, Rubistaw Terrace, Aberdeen.

Edith F. Sellers, c/o Miss Hall, Stanley House, Oundle, Northamptonshire.

A. A. L. Shave, 6, Craufurd Rise, Maidenhead.

Isabel Snell, 51, Mere Road, Leicester.

Emily C. Woodward, Handsward Villa, Albert Quadrant, Weston-super-Mare.

Special Mention.

Emily L. Reid, Eliza J. Stable.

Very Highly Commended.

C. Adams, Ethel B. Angear, Florence M. Angear, Annie Arnold, Annie A. Arnott, Annie Barker, Edith Barnes, Lily Belling, Isabel Borrow, Melinda S. Bourne, Herbert A. Brown, Beatrice C. Brooks, William E. Bryant, B. Bryson, Louie Bull, Edith Burford, A. Burrell, Edith Carpenter, Elizabeth M. Caple, F. T. Chamberlain, M. J. Champneys, Agnes B. Chettle, Muriel L. Clague, Frances J. Cox, M. A. C. Crabb, Mrs. Crossman, Ellie Crossman, Janet Cumming, Mrs. Ranald Daniel, E. H. Duncan, Louie Drury, Maud C. Fisher, C. M. A. FitzGerald, M. J. FitzGerald, Annie French, Edith E. Gotobed, Edith E. Grundy, Mrs. G. Hardman-Hoyle, Mrs. A. D. Harris, Beatrice A. Harrison, Ethel Hodgkinson, Mary Hodgkinson, H. Hopkins, M. L. Hopkins, Rosa S. Horne, Edith L. Howe, Alice E. Johnson, Mrs. A. L. Kendall, Helen M. Keys, Carina Leggett, Grace W. Lewis, Winifred A. Lockyear, J. S. Longland, C. Y. MacGibbon, Donald Mackenzie, Martin McKenzie, S. Mason, Bertha Medley, Marian E. Messenger, Margaret Murray, Maggie Ormond, Gertrude Peace, Lizzie Peacock, Mrs. Pinney, Ellen M. Price, Eliza J. Scarle, Florence Scott, Janet Scott, A. C. Sharp, Ethel J. Shepard, Mildred M. Skrine, Jenny Smedley, Ada Smith, Ellen R. Smith, Harriet C. Smyth, Mrs. G. M. Thompson, L. M. Todd, E. G. Trezise, Daisy Tyler, Ada C. F. Walker, Camilla F. Walker, Vera H. Walker, Ethel M. Warner, Mrs. Watson, Florence Watson, G. S. Wilkins, Freda M. Wood, Edith M. Young, Helen B. Younger.

Highly Commended.

Eliza Acworth, Mrs. J. P. Ansell, A. E. Ashton, Mabel Bacet, M. Bolingbroke, A. C. Carter, Mary I. Chislett, L. H. Clark, Edith Collins, Rev. Joseph Corkey, Mrs. A. C. Coombs, F. Cunliffe, Florence E. Deeth, Ethel Dobell, Miss Franklin, Daisy Gurman, Miss Hedderwick, Annette E. Jackson, R. V. R. James, Miss Japp, M. Keene, Evelyn M. Kent, Janet Kidd, Elsie B. F. Kirkby, Margaret S. Krauss, Dorothy Lang, Emily Lethem, Mabel J. Lewis, Emmie Lock, Donald McLean, E. MacMichael, Lucretia Milton, Miss Mingo, Mrs. A. M. Motum, Mrs. F. C. Nash, Rev. V. Odum, Miss Oldfield, Alice G. Page, Marian Pinder, M. Poole, Mrs. Pratten, May E. Purser, Nina E. Purvey, Florence E. Russell, E. M. Sanderson, L. E. Saul, Alfred Scott, Ida Seabrook, Gertrude Smith, R. E. Carr-Smith, Clara Souter, Ethel E. Spencer, Rosi Spencer, Alice E. Stretton, Alice Taylor, Bettie Temple, Evelyn Townend, Annie L. Trendell, W. Fitzjames White, Henry Wilkinson, Ethelwynne Wilson, W. L. Wishart, Josephine Woodrow.

EXAMINERS' REPORT.

Had we been free to gratify our sense of justice to the full, we should have awarded about half-a-gross of prizes this month. But the resources of even a puzzle treasury have their limits, and though it seems a shame to suppress such generous instincts, they may not be indulged. Accordingly, we have followed the time-honoured plan of awarding prizes for only the very best solutions, and twelve hearts may rejoice over notes of interrogation and commas rightly placed and over apostrophes remembered.

Unhappily there was a weak spot in the puzzle itself. At least, we were unhappy about it until we read (on page 811 of the part in which the puzzle appeared) "The man who never makes a mistake never makes anything." This comforted us, and we carefully refrained from reading the rest of the article lest we should find anything to detract from such a beautiful yet common-sense observation.

Line 8 began with the word "There," and we may as well confess that it was intended to be read "there" as a contraction for there are. But there are cannot be contracted by any rules of grammar whatsoever, and we have to face an awkward dilemma. There is one way of working the word as it stands into the line and that is to use it as a triumphant exclamation:—

There! English, German, etc.;

the sense being "just look at the variety of coffee-pots—what more can you want?" But we cannot adopt such a clumsy reading to the exclusion of others more reasonable even though they imply a mistake. The favourite reading was "they're," and we accepted that and almost any other except "there's," which would almost horrify the Lindley Murrays out of existence.

"There is English coffee-pots." How truly dreadful!

The background of the title was merely intended to show up the drawings, but it was not to be wondered at that some solvers wrote "On black coffee-making." The reference to milk, however, in line 5 shows that it is the breakfast-table coffee which is in the poet's eye—poor fellow!

We were interested to note a curious touch of patriotism in some solutions, English being spelt with a capital "E" and Frenchmen with

a small "f." Is this one of the results of modern education? It is quite possible to show a healthy pride in one's country without indulging in orthographical freaks on her behalf.

The Frenchmen were also variously described as gendarmes, soldiers and postmen, these professions probably being suggested by the peaked caps. We are not aware, however, that there is anything particularly illustrious about the coffee-making of any one of them.

The attenuated r in line 5 was supposed by some solvers to be "pale," but even the best of milk does not affect a very ruddy hue, and "pale" could not be accepted as a good rendering. In line 8 Viennese was often spelt with only one n.

Very many competitors failed to grasp the idea of "fresh-ground" in line 11, their reading of the line being—

"With coffee berries at the coffee-urn."

Those of our readers who, in their desire to have pure coffee, put the actual berries into the urn have themselves to thank for a very un-French result.

The last line gave much trouble, and not one competitor gave it exactly as the author wrote it. In some solutions it begins "and greet" (hand greet), and after all we have said upon this cool ignoring of the aspirate, it is very, very grievous to find the offence committed again. Another common but indifferent reading runs:—

"Salute with lips the coffee-cups' return."

Why such an exhortation? However good the coffee may be, it is not, as far as our experience goes, at all usual to kiss the cup.

Again:—

"Greeting with parted lips the cups' return,"

suggests a greediness of demeanour which would ill become the breakfast-table of any one of our readers. Furthermore both these readings miss the point of the lesson, which is: learn to make good coffee, and you will be rewarded by the return of the cups for a further supply; and, if you take any pride in your work, you will smile with delight.

We have never understood why English homes cannot or do not produce better coffee. Possibly the reason given by

A daughter of la belle France—who, by-the-way, is also an English wife—is the true one. She writes: "You ask 'Do we lack sense?' No, but we do lack the soft water; the *bruite* to burn in the brasier over which the water is boiled, and the rich uncreamed milk brought to table in the vessel in which it is cooked and poured foaming upon the coffee. Let the 'careful housewives' be supplied with these aids, and she need no longer fear the competition of her sisters over the sea."

There is such a ring of probability about these suggestions, that we commend them to our readers with much confidence, though we (the puzzle editors be it understood) have no idea what *bruite* is. We must look it up.

The number of solutions which omitted the interrogation-marks at the end of lines 4 and 5 was quite surprising. Several also left out the apostrophe in cups' (either singular or plural will do), while very many more omitted the two important commas in line 6.

The adjudication turned upon these minor points, which, as far as the first two are concerned, are not so very insignificant after all, and no solution which showed any failure in solving receives any mention this month. This report finishes the puzzles in the last volume, and the consolation prize will be awarded shortly.