

You Can't Afford to Have Wet Feet

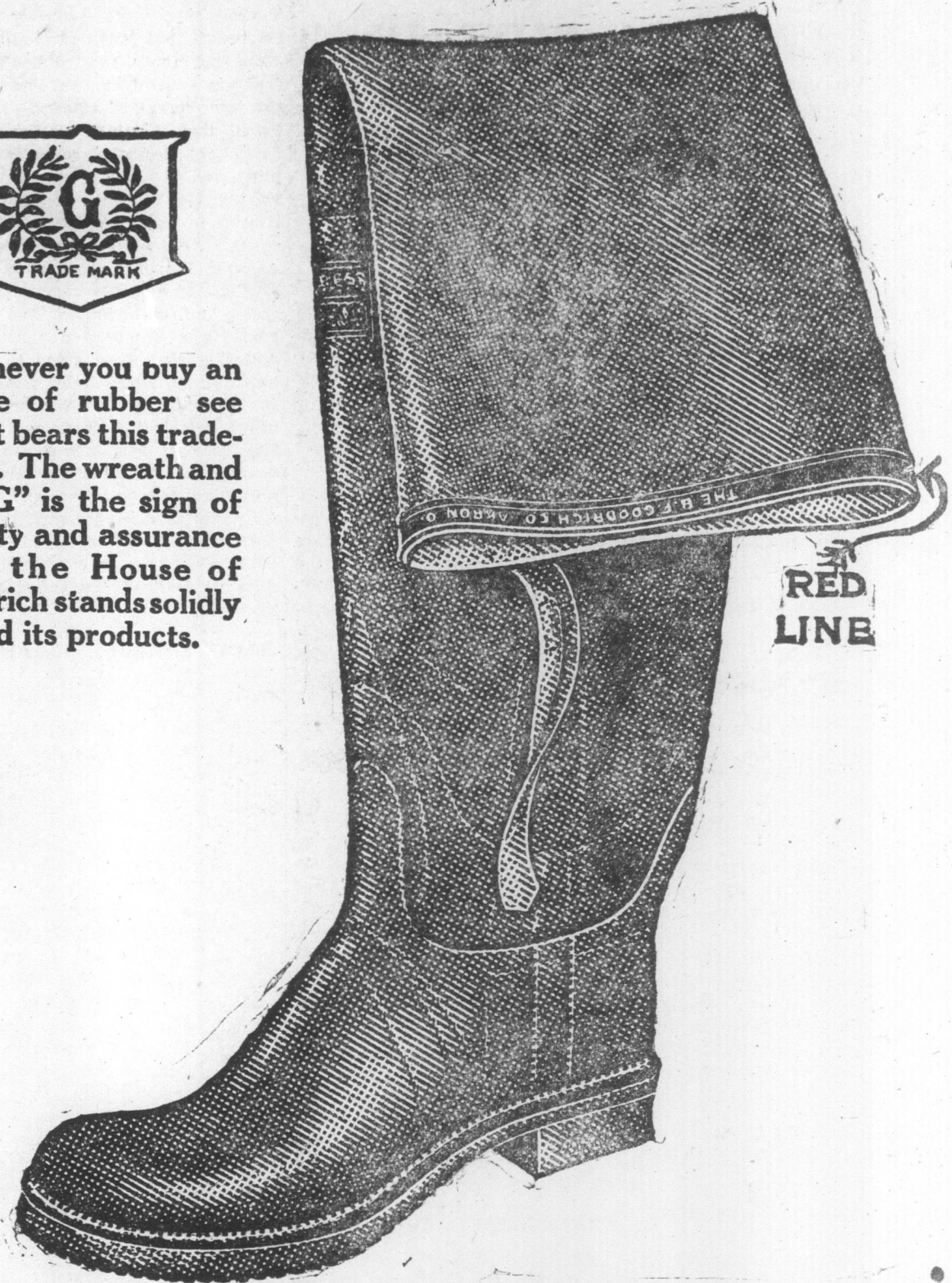
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LONDON GOSSIP.

LONDON, July 28th, 1919.

THE RIVER PAGEANT.

There is a good deal of fine writing about the River Thames pageant on August Bank Holiday. I believe that the Office of Works had prepared plans for a river pageant on a large and picturesque scale, in which high barges with rich coloring, designed for the occasion, would have formed part, but the scheme was not sanctioned by the Treasury on account of the expense. The procession that is to take place, however, will have its splendors in the Royal barge and the Admiralty barge and the Lord Mayor's barge, and its deep significance in the pinnaces, minesweepers, lifeboats, and other small naval craft carrying officers and men of nearly all the shipping houses, marine associations, training ships, fishermen's associations, and Sea Scouts. The Royal barge will be rowed by the King's watermen in their rich liveries. Nothing of the kind has been seen on the Thames in our time, but all who collect or study London topographical views know how big a part the river played in London pageant up to the reign of William IV. London knows little about her ships and sailors, and since the so-called Municipal Reform party succeeded in ruining the penny steamers which gave so much pleasure and instruction to the ordinary Londoner it has been less. The procession on Bank Holiday ought to renew London's sense that it exists by the sea.

EMERGENCY DWELLINGS.

The model of an army hut transformed into a Lanes house whose exhibition to the public has been a long promised is now on view on the Horse Guards' Parade, St. James's Park. Its exterior remains unchanged. It is just as ugly as a dwelling place can be, and will probably look even uglier when given the setting of an ordinary house. But inside it is extremely comfortable, well lighted, heated, and ventilated. The arrangement of the partitions can, of course, be varied as required, but it would be difficult to improve on this model. The main door, set at the side, opens on to a passage wide enough to serve as a playroom for children. At the end is the largest of the three bedrooms, which measures 15 feet by 10 feet. The two bedrooms open from the corridor, and at the other end is a large living room extending right across the hut and so lighted on both sides. Beyond it are the bathroom and scullery. The furnishing of this model has been done at an approximate cost of £1,625. One admires the result, but feels that it would have been better to show how inexpensively such a hut could be furnished. The average cost of an army hut is \$500, the cost of conversion into a bungalow is another \$1,500, and the life of a bungalow is from fifteen to twenty years. The use of these huts will serve to tide people over an emergency, but they cannot take the place of the promised model dwellings.

LADIES AND WESTMINSTER.

The Peace celebrations and the holiday in the provinces brought great numbers of visitors to Westminster and the Houses of Parliament, and members were being kept fully employed piloting their constituents round the House and entertaining them on the Terrace or in the dining room. Ladies are, according to a Parliamentary statistician, ten times as numerous as the men, and far more numerous than in previous sessions. Evidently ladies are more keenly interested in Parliament now that they have the vote, and it is curious that, although tea on the Terrace when the weather is genial is to them an agreeable episode of their visit, the debates are the real attraction. The Ladies' Gallery is nearly always crowded, and at the opposite end of the Chamber ladies predominate in the Strangers' Gallery, where they sit for hours, be the speeches dull or sparkling. It would seem from this that the ladies are earnestly seeking political education—preparing doubtless for the time when they will be called to a place "within the bar" of the House.

BATTLESHIPS' PET NAMES.

The home coming of the fleet and the newspaper accounts of it move one to comment on the fact that all the pet names of British battleships are landmen's inventions and are never used by sailors at all. I have never heard a sailor refer to the "Cat Squadron" or allude to the Queen Elizabeth as "Big Lizzie." As a matter of fact, the sailor never invents nicknames for his ships. He called them by their proper names unless such names are too long for easy pronunciation and lend themselves to abbreviation in a very prosaic and unromantic form. Thus the Queen Elizabeth is simply the "Q. E." and the King George V. is the "G. G. V." The Iron Duke would be the "O. D." if it were not that those initials are universally used in the service for that branch of the Admiralty Staff which is officially styled the Intelligence Division. Even the Grand Fleet was always just the "G. F."

ANCHORING AIRSHIPS.

At Pulham Airship Station the Air Ministry is testing whether airships can safely be moored by the nose to a giant mast from which they swing forward instead of being housed in costly sheds or tied down to the ground at great risk, as the R-34 was in America. These mooring experiments are, I believe, proving satisfactory beyond all expectation. R-34, one of the older rigid airships, has been at the mooring mast for a week, and appears to be perfectly

happy. The steadiness with which she has ridden out winds up to 40 miles an hour has impressed everyone immensely. In fact, the higher the wind the steadier she seems to be.

THE "NOT-WHIPPING-CATS" SECT.

A distinguished visitor from Sudan, El Sayed Aly el Marghani, who is now in London, will certainly be much gratified in hearing of the good treatment that the cats enjoy in this country, unlike the disregard in which the cat is held in other European countries. Indeed, one of the features of the Mohammedan sect of the Marghanites—of which Aly el Marghani is now, I believe, the recognized chief—is the respect for the life and welfare of the cat. It was probably a bit of a very old Egyptian tradition that the founder of the sect, Mohamed el Marghani, introduced among his teachings the teachings of the great Muslim Sheikh, Mohamed el Idrieli. The spirit and the rites of the sect are for the rest purely Mohammedan. The Marghanites believe in the cabalistic sign of their own which has mystic powers, and their chief is dogmatically a saint. The fame of the founder, Mohamed Othman, was mainly spread through

the sudden death of a man while he argued against his teachings. Among the orthodox sects of Islam the Marghanites are still one of the most numerous, though they are not so famous as their rivals and enemies the Senoussis, whose origins are the same. They were very powerful sixty or eighty years ago, their rule extending up to and probably over the Darfour. In the Soudanese wars they sided with the British, rousing the anger of the sympathisers of the Mahdi in the Mohammedan world.

LESSONS ON THE THAMES.

The river Thames from Tilbury to the Nore is full of lessons for British politicians—grey lessons with red funnels and the Stars and Stripes at the taffrail. Some come from New York, some from as far as Los Angeles, but they are all Americans—standard ships, American owned, and carrying American goods to England. Slab-sided, deep-laden vessels, with squat derricks in place of masts, they are even more unlovely than the six-masted American schooner which was off Thames Haven one day this week. But they carry a great amount of cargo, they need but small crews, and they have been made by the hundred. There are oil tankers on the river, too, and even an internal combustion merchantman without funnels. One sees huge Dutch barges towering up from the water, which are towed right over from Rotterdam. There is a revolution going on in water transport. New nations, new methods are coming into competition. The old Red Ensign still predominates, but it is challenged.

"TO THE GLORIOUS DEAD."

Suggestions to the Government are coming from every quarter of the House of Commons that the temporary war memorial "to the glorious dead" in Whitehall, which evoked so deep a display of sympathetic feeling from the Allied troops, as well as the populace, at the peace celebration on July 19th, shall be permanently retained. If there be any imagination existing at the Office of Works there should be an affirmative reply. The design of Sir Edward Lutyens, though intended only to serve a temporary purpose, is of such worth and dignity as to deserve permanent preservation, and it should be on the very spot on which the original received the homage of Field-Marshal Haig, Marshal Foch, General Pershing, Admiral Beatty, and all the other Allied commanders at the head of their troops on the historic day. It would lose a deal of its significance if placed elsewhere.

Dark cloth frocks have their edges bound in silk braid.

Profanity in Boys.

Despite all the efforts being put forward for the moral uplifting and education of the youth of the land, it is a regrettable fact that profanity and obscene language have become common among boys. It is not in the least out of the ordinary, where a group of boys of ten to fifteen years is together upon the roads or in any open space, to hear them using oaths that might suit the tongues of the proverbial fishwife or costermonger, but which are shocking falling from the tongues of children of tender years. Of all stupid and silly vices, profanity is one of the worst and most abominable. A simple statement of fact is much stronger than any statement embellished with cuss words, and no lie is made any the more believable by being framed in profanity. In fact, both truth and falsehood are weakened by swearing and taking the Lord's name in vain. Foul epithets and comparisons are neither manly nor convincing, but are almost invariably disgusting—except to those making use of them. Profanity among men seems to be growing less and less, at least in police places and among those who

may lay claim to decency and some education. But the habit seems to have firmly fixed itself upon a great many of the boys, who may imagine it manly to use profanity and smoke cigarettes. Let us give heed to the words of Solomon, and train up the youth in the way they should go so that as they grow older they will not depart from it.—Western Star.

A WONDERFUL AIR FLIGHT.

Many people still think of the aeroplane as being a highly dangerous contrivance, and that if its engine stops, or any other mishap occurs, it must drop like a stone to the earth and smash itself and its pilot to atoms. Both impressions are erroneous. The following test, which has actually been carried out, shows how stable aeroplanes are. A pilot climbed to a sufficient height and then stopped his engine and took his hands off the control, merely keeping his feet on the rudder bar. He stood for an aerodrome twenty miles away, and, except for keeping her straight, he let the aeroplane do what she liked. She travelled the whole miles as steadily as a bicycle coasting down a long, straight, gentle hill.

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