

The French Hostess.

Amongst the many fallacies which have been foisted on a long suffering public, I place first the "French Hostess". As she exists in the pages of the romantic writers, she is generally a person of "refined and pleasant exterior". She may even be an exponent of "rustic health and elderly grace". It is usually hinted that she is "a descendant of noble ancestors", and infallibly she "carries the marks of once great beauty". Her hair has a habit of "straying rebelliously from beneath a cap of old lace".

Invariably her name is "Madame". Why this should be when the French have such a wealth of charming names to choose from, such as Yvonne, Mimi, Antoinette and others is quite beyond me, but so it is. Her "red gabled inn nestles cosily in a bower of greenery".

You fling the reins of your horse to a "gaping ostler" stride through the courtyard and enter a dining room or banquet hall which ever you prefer, where the silver gleams, and the glasses sparkle and do all the things self-respecting silver, and well brought up glasses are supposed to do. But, it is on her omelette that Madame's reputation chiefly depends.

Egg architecture is her strong suit. With the help of a hen or two, some clothes pins and a teaspoonful of washing soda she constructs an omelette of a flavour, of a savour of an appetite provoking aroma and consistency, coffee, with it's accompanying adjectives, and "petit pains"—a kind of bun, you know. You down the lot, press a piece of silver into Madame's protesting palm and are off with a "rare clatter of hoofs"—Oh. Wait a minute. You'll have to come back. You are supposed to have a brief but comprehensive love affair with the "Daughter of the house. that done, you are finally free to go. The "French Hostess" I have had to do with is not like that. She lives in the annex to the cowbyré. You stumble over the third younger child but two, taking a header into the oven from which you are ejected by several other soldiers because they were there first, but finally at the cost of a discoloured eye secure a seat on the mantle-piece. Then, if there are no parades that day, you clear your throat and say for the 93rd time "Madame, une omelette, si'l vous plait". Madame who is nonchalantly sifting cinders from the coffee from sheer "joie de vivre" responds "Oh egg eh?" pushes half a platoon aside, helps you wrest a knife and fork from a struggling infantryman, feeds you, trifles with your last pay and pushes you over the doorstep with ever mark of respect. The omelette is not what you have been educated to expect, but perhaps Madame is not wholly to blame, the hen may be at fault. Madame herself deserves a little mention. Her hair is done the new way, pulled straight back and twisted into a tight knob, her lace cap must have been accidentally left amongst the moth balls, in the top left hand drawer of the bureau. She wears army boots and it is rumoured, puttees, although of this I have no actual evidence. Yes, decidedly the "French Hostess" has been overdone.

CANADA

Celt, Angle, Norman and Dane, arise,
And crown your name with glory,
Not for the glory of looted prize
All this grown old in story,
Duty calls for a far nobler theme,
And must work out in this great scheme.

—Sgt. J. W. Cook.

Sympathetic one: "Well, what did spoil your leave, was it the weather?"

Sad one: "Well, not exactly but the 'glass' was going up and down all the time".

Stray Shots from our Contemporaries, and Books we have Read.

The following lessons in Geometry are taken.

- "The Lyonian" the organ of the lower School at Harrow.
- A subaltern is one who has position but no magnitude.
- A Turkish communique lies equally on any point.
- An obtuse officer is one more stupid than a superior officer but less so than two Staff Officers.
- A trench is that which has length, breadth and thickness.
- Two officers in mufti from Brixton and Mayfair respectively cannot be in the same circle, and if they meet will cut one another.
- A soldier equal to a Tommy is equal to anything.
- An observer and a pilot who are in the same line meet in the same plane.
- An "old dug-out" is often a plain figure with a Sam Browne belt round it's circumference.
- If things are double the price of the same thing obtainable elsewhere, it is a War Office contract.

In speaking of Imperial Democracy and especially of the clear-cut policy of Mr. Hughes, the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia, "CANADA" says: "Mr. Hughes came over to the Mother Country with a definite message and a clear-cut policy. Australia is ahead of Canada in this respect. It is thoroughly recognized that any advances must come from the Dominions. In defining his policy, this Imperial Democrat (Mr. Hughes) urges three necessary things; (1) To ensure the National safety. (2) To conserve and extend the Empire's trade, and (3) To improve the conditions of the working classes. He rightly urges that no policy will be satisfactory which does not achieve all these three objects—not merely one of them. To affect this result National Organization is imperative, and at least two tariffs, i.e., Extra-Imperial and Inter-Imperial. The Empire must be entirely self supporting in all the industries required, both for war and peace, and it's working classes must be protected against the competition of under-paid foreign labour. If this is done the British Empire will be more powerful, and it's citizens more prosperous and contented than ever before. It will be a guarantee of peace and safety for small nations. The vision of Empire as seen by the Australian Premier and now, to-day, actually in our hands to achieve is a true Imperial Democracy". (We commend "CANADA" to all readers of the "Listening Post" interested in Canada. It is a magazine of purpose, well written, printed on excellent paper, and profusely illustrated. "CANADA" is a credit to it's publishers and an asset to the Empire. Annual subscription, 25 s. or 7 dollars 50 cents. Address, "CANADA", Kingsway House, Kingsway, W.C., London and, Tyrrell Building, 95 King St., East, Toronto, Canada).

The Bird Cage.

The entertainment varies with a hand grenade or so,
And snipers clip the parapet above you.
The Bosche is busy burrowing his galleries below,
And if his mine is fired first—Lord love you
Up in a blaze of glory you'll go sailing through the air,
You won't know where you're going but you'll hope it
won't be—there.

So with a sigh you paddle to the trenches in the rear,
Your bach has got a kink you can't unravel.
You avoid the smell of sausage but there falls upon your ear,
The whistle of the "big stuff" as they travel.
Ker-rump! a big black shrapnel followed by a "wooly bear".
You don't know where they're going, but you hope you
won't be there.

The ghosts of fallen heroes hover through that stricken wood,
Where gas and liquid fire could not turn them.
But the gallant sons of Canada will stand as once they stood,
And vengeance on the vanquished Hun shall burn 'em.
The Hell of our forefathers is an out-of-date affair,
We could give the devil pointers, but the Kaiser will
be there.

—W. H., 4th C. M. R.