

# The Wide World in a Page

## WAGNER AS GAMBLER

Messrs. Constable, the owners of the English copyright, are doing everything possible to hasten on the publication of Wagner's secret autobiography in England, but it will be some weeks before the book is issued. The book, which is in two volumes, is intensely interesting for its self-revelation and its almost brutal frankness. Wagner writes thus of his mania for gambling:

"It suddenly struck me that only by dint of big stakes could I make big profits. To this end I decided to make use of my mother's pension, of which I was trustee of a fairly large sum. That night I lost everything I had with me except one thaler; the excitement with I staked that last coin on a card was an experience hitherto quite strange to my young life.

"As I had had nothing to eat, I was obliged repeatedly to leave the gambling table owing to sickness. With this last thaler I staked my life, for my return to my home was, of course, out of the question. Already I saw myself in the grey dawn, a prodigal son, fleeing from all I held dear, through forest and field towards the unknown. My mood of despair had gained so strong a hold upon me that, when my card won, I immediately placed all the money on a fresh stake, and repeated this experiment until I had won quite a considerable amount.

"From that moment my luck grew continuously. I gained such confidence that I risked the most hazardous stakes: for suddenly it dawned upon me that this was destined to be my last day with the cards. My good fortune now became so obvious that the bank thought it wise to close. Not only had I won back all the money I had lost, but I had won enough to pay off all my debts as well. . . . Truth to tell, gambling had lost all fascination for me from that moment."

## LORD KITCHENER

The Whitehall correspondent of the Military Mail says:

"There are signs that the military questions to be debated during the forthcoming Imperial Conference will turn largely upon the great idea of bringing the whole of the land forces of the Empire under one supreme command.

"More interesting still is the report, which appears to be well founded, that the new command will devolve, should the proposal find favor among the assembled premiers, upon Lord Kitchener, the one man who is looked upon by everyone at home and abroad as being particularly fitted for so important a post.

"The future of Lord Kitchener rests to a very great extent upon the ultimate results of the Imperial Conference, and already there are strong rumors that the post of Commander-in-Chief will be revived, but with a far wider scope than in the past.

"Canada is deeply interested in the arbitration treaty now under negotiation with the United States, and other questions are likely to arise in the future which may affect various portions of our great Empire. These matters have been discussed for a long time past by the Imperial Defence Committee, and it is practically certain that one result of the Imperial Conference will be the adoption of a plan whereby reciprocal defence throughout the Empire will become an accomplished fact."

## TRAINS ON UNSAFE LINE

Astonishing evidence was given at the inquest at Grahamstown, South Africa, on the victims of the Blaaukrantz railway disaster, in which over 30 people lost their lives.

The stationmaster at Grahamstown, said that he had examined the railway track at the scene of the accident, and he noticed the mark of a wheelflange on the sleepers for a distance of 28 rail lengths from the bridge over which the train fell. He deduced that a wheel left the rail and ran between the rail and the parallel check rail.

The sleepers, he added, were old and in bad order. They were not strong enough. The timbers on the bridge were unserviceable, and the line was unsafe for traffic.

## RUSSIAN MONK'S VICTORY

The authority of the Holy Synod has been shaken in the eyes of the populace by the victory of the recalcitrant monk Ilidor, who remains at Tsaritsin, the demi-god of some 12,000 followers. In February last he criticized the Synod and proposed some reforms. The Synod ordered the monk to proceed to a monastery in the Crimea for two months, but Ilidor snapped his fingers at the Synod, and despite the opposition of the church authorities the Czar permitted him to stay at Tsaritsin, where the Metropolitan authorized him to officiate at the Russian Easter services. Since then Ilidor has been the object of extravagant adoration. He occupies the position of a minor dictator at Tsaritsin.—Reuter.

## APPEAL FOR BEARDS

Among the multitudes of suggestions for fittingly commemorating the reign of King Edward VII, perhaps the most novel of all is that emanating from Captain MacIlwaine, R. N., who says: "Our late king strongly

favoured the growth of the beard, he grew one himself, and, to say the least, encouraged its growth by the members of his personal staff. His brother, the Duke of Edinburgh, a naval officer, grew a beard. Our present king shares the views of his father, grows a beard himself and makes his staff do the same.

"Among the men of the present day, the beard is the exception, not the rule. Is it not incomprehensible that the manhood of the empire, who are otherwise always so ready to accept a royal lead, should in this matter show such indifference, or worse, to the views both expressed and implied of their kings? Is it not time that they emulated their examples and fulfilled their wishes?"

"The British Empire in beards would be a memorial to our late king such as his heart would have loved. Can anyone doubt how such a memorial would be appreciated by his son, our present king?"

## TRAVELING BISHOP

The Bishop of the Falkland Islands, Dr. Blair, who has charge of a diocese nearly 20 times the area of the British Isles, has just returned to England for a missionary campaign on behalf of South America.

Dr. Blair remarked on his arrival: "I have one of the largest dioceses in the world and one becoming of great importance. It is just over two million square miles in extent, and comprises the five great new Republics of South America—Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru and Chili—also part of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego in the extreme south, and the little British group of islands, the Falklands Islands, in the Atlantic ocean, near the southern extremity of the continent, which gives its name to the whole diocese.

"I was consecrated bishop a year ago, and have been traveling over the whole diocese

pressed the muzzle to his temples. Both bullets penetrated his brain. A card directing that his remains should be interred in the family vault close by was pinned to Herr Exel's coat.

## GAMBLING CHARWOMAN

A Paris charwoman named Gougard was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment for thefts amounting to £1,600, of which eight mistresses were the victims.

Mme. Gougard confessed to an insatiable passion for horse-racing. She stayed just long enough in each situation to enable her to appropriate a sufficient sum to visit one of the Paris racecourses. If she lost Mme. Gougard said she sought another situation and repeated the procedure, but she frequently won enough money to live without working for a considerable time.

## BANK DIRECTOR MURDERED

The Milan police are puzzled over the motive for the murder of Signor Setagalli, head director of the Lombard Bank, whose half-stripped body was found in his private office punctured by nine dagger thrusts. His pocket-book, supposed to contain about £60 was missing, but his gold rings were untouched. Although a bunch of private keys, including that of the strong room, was lying on the office table, the steel safe, which contained some £200, had not been tampered with.

The police are divided in opinion as to the motive of the crime. It is known that the director expressed fears of an attack on the bank from suspicious characters haunting the neighborhood, but a circumstance that seems to point to private vengeance is the finding of a lock of female hair on a tiny bed in the corner of the office.

There was but a single entrance to the bank. Some surmise that the assassins were disturbed before they could unlock the safe. The murdered man's wife declares that towards midnight she went to the balcony of their private residence to see if her husband were returning, and discerned a couple of men trying to effect an entrance at the front door. Perceiving themselves watched, they retired into the cover of a shrubbery.

## FAVORS FOR LARGE FAMILIES

Captain Maire, president of the Large Families League and himself the father of eleven, outlines the demands of the league in the Matin. He quotes figures showing that 1,804,710 French homes have no children, that 2,960,171 have only one child, and that 2,661,978 have only two children. "Without the 3,800,000 families with three or more children," he says, "France would be a skeleton. These families are both the principal force and the creditors of the country."

The league urges that taxation be remitted on the birth of a fourth child; that all state "favours" and patronage be reserved for the members of large families; that the number of a state employee's children shall count towards his promotion; that scholarships be reserved for children of numerous families; and that the government legislate immediately to help the members of the league.

"Where is the money to come from?" asks Captain Maire, and answers, "Single persons of the bearded sex, come forth! You are the drones in the hive, from selfish motives and of set purpose. You are the barren trees. France is dying for lack of births. Pay up!"

## FAMOUS BOOK FOR SALE

There will surely be keen competition at Sotheby's on May 26 to secure Foxe's "Book of Martyrs," 1641.

The book, which is the property of the Bedford Literary Institute, is the one which lightened the weary hours of John Bunyan's imprisonment in Bedford gaol. The title page of each of the three volumes bears his autograph signature, whilst the third volume has the date 1662, which corresponds with the second year of his incarceration.

Sotheby's will also put up the original legal settlement constituting the British army, a document dated January 26, 1660, and signed four times by King Charles II.

At Christie's next week there will be submitted the collection of old masters of the late Sir William Aaby. There are two undisputed Botticelli subjects—"The Nativity of the Saviour" and "A Scene from the Life of Saint Zenobius," and two pictures by Giorgione, "Malatesta di Rimini (notorious for his cruelty and debaucheries)," and his Mistress receiving the Pope's Legate, and a portrait of a Venetian gentleman.

## DEADLY SHELLS

Realistic experiments are being made in France to test the destructive power of a new melinite-shell for the guns of the new French Dreadnought battleships.

An old battleship, the Neptune, will be the target, and shells will be fired into her from guns on shore. It is said that sheep and other animals will be placed on board in order to see the effect of the bursting shells upon living creatures. The experiments are being kept secret.

The new shell is a modification of one which has been in use for some time. These shells would make enormous holes in heavy armour plates, but failed to burst when they struck lighter material, and were, consequently, wasted. By a more delicate and duplicate exploding mechanism this defect is to be remedied in the new shells now being tested. It is expected that they will, with the new mechanism, burst on coming into contact with the lightest structures, and will cause terrible destruction all around.

"Did you marry your ideal?" asked a new acquaintance of a bright matron. "Mercy, no! I married my husband."

## Motor-Car Jumps Across Ravine



The "Forty-Foot Ravine Jump Accident" at Brooklands, where the Benz car, driven by Mr. George Wilkinson, left the motor track (X)



After the Forty-Foot "Jump" from the motor track, over a ravine and an iron railing—The wrecked Benz car on its landing-place

One of the most remarkable accidents in the annals of motoring occurred during a race at the Brooklands track recently when a car dashed up the embankment at the rate of ninety miles an hour and cleared a ravine forty feet wide. The driver, Mr. G. Wilkinson, was seriously hurt, his skull being fractured.

Mr. Wilkinson was driving a 27 h.p. Benz car, owned by Mr. A. T. Craig, and he had passed the post at the end of the seventh race when, to the dismay of the onlookers, instead of slowing down his car tore up the side of the banking, which at its highest point is sixty feet from the ground.

It was obvious that the clutch had jammed and that Mr. Wilkinson, an experienced racing motorist, was helpless.

Arrived at the top of the track the car leaped into the air, and, taking its direction from the upward slant of the banking, shot upwards with a momentum which carried it over the telegraph wires, which are ten feet above the top of the track, and over a chasm sixty feet deep and forty feet wide. With the driver still clinging to the wheel the car cleared an iron railing on the other side of the ravine, and then plunged into a maze of treetops, tearing away branches and twigs.

One of the boughs swept Mr. Wilkinson from his seat, and he fell twenty or thirty feet on to some bracken in loose soft soil. He was unconscious, with a cut chin and a fracture at the base of the skull.

Finishing its parabola the motor-car came to earth twenty feet beyond, pitching on to its radiator, and turning a complete somersault. It was found on its left side imbedded in the soft sand among the trees, its wheels and metal body a shapeless mass. Considering the height of the fall it is remarkable that the chassis itself was little damaged.

## HOME GROWN WHEAT

In more than one quarter the fact is gaining recognition that the demand for standard bread is leading to an increased demand for English wheat. In the current number of the Outlook Mr. W. R. Lawson, the well known financial writer, discussing colonial land companies, calls attention to the fact that colonial wheat land "is threatened with an economic revolution" due to the demand in England for home grown wheat. Mr. Lawson writes:

"The revolt against white flour which is now agitating the country is also a movement in favor of home grown wheat. Its ultimate results may be serious—in the first place, for foreign and colonial millers; in the second, for prairie farmers; and finally, for prairie land speculators. It will be seen that the medical experts who have hitherto disparaged home-made flour in comparison with the foreign article are now swinging round to the opposite view. The agricultural authorities who have all these years been telling us that the British climate was unsuitable for wheat growing are also modifying their dicta. It is now being explained to us that our own wheat, if not so highly ripened as that of Canada or Argentina, is more nutritious and sustaining.

"And at last the British wheat grower is going to have a fair chance against his hundred and one foreign competitors. We are to have a home-made standard not only for bread but for flour and for wheat. All of them are to be hereafter judged by British instead of by foreign tests."

## JOAN OF ARC'S SWORD

A sword in the Dijon museum has just been identified as that used by Joan of Arc, and presented to her by Charles VII. of France. On one side of the hilt is engraved a figure kneeling before a cross and the inscription "Charles VII." while the other side bears the name "Vaucouleurs." The sword also bears the arms of France and of the town of Orleans and the date 1419.

during the last 12 months in order to see for myself how things are in connection with the Anglican church, and to learn from personal observation what are its prospects and requirements. I have traveled between 30,000 and 40,000 miles up and down Western South America, under all sorts of conditions, in all kinds of weather, and in all temperatures. In this vast country, into which the British are coming in rapidly increasing numbers, I have only 14 churches and chaplains. The Transandinian railways from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and shortly the Panama Canal in the north, are bringing the whole of the resources of the west coast practically nearer England.

"I have come home now to ask for some of it, to enable me to go back and complete a great organization on the part of the Anglican church, which must be ready by 1915, when the Panama Canal will be opened, and which will bring my diocese into closer touch with Europe. I am compelled to endeavor to raise £100,000 to meet adequately the obvious requirements of more churches and chaplains, of schools and teachers, of doctors, hospitals, and nursing homes, and furnish some reliable income for their support. Contributions can be sent to me at The Lodge, Sandy Lane, Guildford, or to the treasurer of the Bishop's fund, Captain Parsons, Munstead Corner, Godalming, Surrey."

## DREADNOUGHT FEVER TRAGEDY

Speculation in the shares of firms engaged in the armament industry, and especially in the building of Dreadnoughts, has recently reached an extraordinary pitch in Vienna.

Many persons have lost their entire fortunes through mad speculation in shares of the Skoda Works during the past week on the Vienna Bourse. One of the victims committed suicide last night. Herr Josef Exel, director of an insurance company, seeing ruin staring him in the face, went to a lonely cemetery at the foot of the mountains outside Vienna armed with two revolvers.

Taking one weapon in either hand, he

## "CEMENT OF EMPIRE"

Sir Joseph Ward, prime minister of New Zealand, has reached Figgard by the Lusitania to attend the Imperial Conference and the Coronation. He discussed, on landing, the question of Imperial defence and the need for an Imperial Council.

"I hold very strongly," he said, "that the great and rapid development which is going on in the over-sea dominions requires to be dealt with from the standpoint of making our navy stronger and greater than it is now. I recognize as fully as any man that the Old Land has up till now, thanks to the British taxpayer, provided a navy which has maintained its supremacy, and in addition to protecting the Old Country has given the fullest possible support to the over-sea dominions. But it is evident that the time has come when efforts should be made to bring about a better system of control and organization in the interests of all parts of the Empire.

"I am a firm believer in the two-power standard, no matter how swift other countries may be in extending their existing navies or providing fresh ones. New Zealand stands for the old flag, for an invincible navy with adequate support from all parts of the Empire, for itself as a white man's country, for the extension of trade within the Empire, and for cohesion in the way of an Imperial Council.

"Mr. H. G. Wells' demand for some new cement of Empire may be met by the Imperial Council which I suggest."

## RADIUM AND PLANT GROWTH

A series of interesting experiments is being carried on in the laboratory attached to Prof. Noorden's private hospital, writes a Vienna correspondent. Plants have been subjected to radio-active influence and it has been ascertained that such plants grow to nearly twice the size of those not subjected to the influence of radium.

Experiments of the influence of radium on human beings are also being carried on, but no results have as yet been made public.

## The Call

THE CALL  
"Thy lonely glens  
I love thy fields  
Thy leafy shaws  
Thou land with lo  
In ilk wee cot on  
May manly-hearted  
And maids in eve

So sings the white  
ploring and fishing  
in C major, with a str  
leal and love for the  
tho' not of the heath  
braw Scot lovingly  
he loves to seek a h  
No wonder Port Ar  
many sons of "auld S  
ing cities—enough  
the land they loved s  
To us denizens of  
sots, there is someth  
as we stand on the de  
ca and Easton, of th  
rock-ribbed, lying ur  
of hills towering 700  
further eastward the  
until 1,800 feet is re  
Marias and from tha  
of Canada, a monst  
teeth turned up, star  
They who can gaze  
sentiment must need  
quake to wake them  
each summer or fall  
and tell of experie  
lore away back of the  
always enjoyable. Th  
ers are "Smiths"—go  
to the ladies, for al  
rough, stormy Lake  
and know every mile  
experiences are not y  
fighting seas that m  
corks. So, landward,  
of every river and stre  
hunting track in La  
These imbie, just as  
Call of the Open." It  
are on watch! while  
tourists or hunters. T  
even the faintest ripp  
terribly dangerous a  
Lake Superior. We  
of the coming days w  
at "but red caps," or  
cedar brush after the  
As we reach the deck  
sleep, the captain's s  
as he extends a stro  
a grip!

"Well, the 'Call of  
you are going into the  
Partner's reputati  
brook trout fry for su  
streams is known, as  
dle the big brook tro  
duce, so is treated w  
among the steamer's  
Years ago we alm  
a "Call of the Open"  
discussing deer licks  
an old-time friend, e  
know anything. Say  
of daylight when I c  
vinced that deer lick  
sight of the shack."

The call came, and  
my clothes. Charlie  
farm gun, but we su  
abilities of game was  
shooter from an inne  
"Say! this will keep  
ing biting at you, wo  
The old gun was  
started toward a sprin  
said: "Now, down o  
but nary a whisper o  
I crawled until a  
me, and there was a s  
my wood's experie  
does and fawn, at th  
ently intent at watchi  
tree, waiting turns to  
Each licked and drank  
his turn, his dose of  
gan to scatter, grazin  
most an hour I was  
to breathe, never sp  
snapping at the action  
low of the cows, the  
the farm dog—the m  
merry Ki-Hi-Hi as he  
a-running—the deer  
fact that "deer licks"  
my mind, though I co  
in or around that tre  
moistened the ground  
licked.

Visiting the water-  
state on some technic  
was centred on a mag  
uncertain. Whom he  
and had used them on  
descript degree, and  
some way played tric  
tered the enclosure of  
the owner, the buck  
smelling all over me,  
my mustache and lic  
bands. His tongue w  
so I gave the boy a m  
and get me a small lu  
"Say, mamma, look  
says T— has 'hype  
all of them laughing!"