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LA VIE ORMONDAISE.

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Vol. I. No. I.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 1, 1919

GREETING.

Greeting to all members of the floating commonwealth! Drawn together by the bond of a common necessity, isolated from the world at large and yet living in the fresh breath of Heaven, pressing onward always through the great, open spaces; knit together, too, by the ties of blood and young nationhood, by equal service, and by oneness of endeavour, moving surely towards the Southern Cross and Home.

In this effort to grasp an impress of the lighter side of life aboard you will find little of instruction or admonition—there are among you a hundred from whom you may have both; and if the keen barb of wit touch on some tender spot, take it in the healthy spirit of fun in which the shaft is aimed.

We commend your own production on your behalf; we ask your indulgence if our execution is cramped by the limits of our medium, and we launch it, knowing that its mission will have been accomplished if it lighten the tedium of the voyage in any degree, or strengthen our camaraderie.

"The Long Day's Task is Done."

This first number of "*La Vie Ormondaise*" finds us once again in the Southern Hemisphere. It does not seem long since we saw the "Ormonde" lying off Plymouth Hoe, waiting to receive us, but since then the lights of Finisterre have flashed us Europe's farewell, we have raised the Southern Cross, the back of our journey is broken, and in a little while we shall be at home. What may await us in Australia in the shape of quarantine, influenza, strikes and public receptions, we know not, but we do know that somewhere within the boundaries of our undivided island continent there is a private welcome for every member of the ship's company, for, improbable as it may seem to a casual observer, each of us is "somebody's darling."

Our wait for the ship that would take us home commenced the moment we left the shores of Australia. For some the time is measured in months, for some in years; for

all the waiting was weary. Whether we were in the line or out at rest, whether the nations were at one another's throats or enjoying an armistice, whatever our passing feelings of the moment may have been, always we desired beyond all things to get back to that country which—no matter what our feelings may have been before—we have learnt to love and to value at her true worth. That period formerly spoken of as *apres la guerre* has at last commenced, and the arms we took up in a just cause we now lay down in the knowledge that well and truly "the long day's task is done." We are now in the last chapter of a great story of adventure—and the chapter is nearing its close.

"D."

Children's Corner.

Deer Uncle Dinkum,

I'm writin you these few lines for practis, as mother says mi writin is somepin orful.

Mother is takin me out to Ostrayler for the benfit of mi ejucashun, so I want to know things. The ejucashun oficer ses I've eggxhausted his pashence, so I ast a digger, and he said you were a wise guy and new everythin. So wood you, pleas, tell me in your nekst ishew, why—

Digers hav such a set on sargents?

Sargents have more say than oficers?

Only sargents are aloud to get married in the A.I.F.?

Dont the digers saloot sargents?

Sargents are borded off from the digers at meals? Is it becos they eat so much and might get some of the digers food?

Sargents dont sing at conserts?

This is all this time.

Your loving neece,

Pansy Pomegranate.

Aged 7.

P.S.—Why does the singin of a serten populer air get up the digers noses wen its sung by a noficer at a consert?

A Speculation.

As a large proportion of passengers on this boat are girls who have never before left the shores of old England, an idea of

their outlook and expectations may be of interest even to those who are not personally concerned. The general impression gathered from the faces of these deserters of the homeland is of happiness. Everywhere is laughter and gaiety, so much so, that one is inclined to wonder if all the old influences have been lightly thrown aside and forgotten; all the old affections superseded by the glamour of the new and great adventure. To a certain extent, perhaps, this is the case. Many have passed through months and years of anxiety, and have lived in dread of what might happen to the soldier lover.

The blessed knowledge that all danger has passed, together with the happy excitement of reunion, and the busy preparation for the long journey, have for the time being completely eliminated every other consideration. The novelty of the voyage, again, tends to keep the mind fully occupied, but in every stranger's heart must be half formed ideas as to what is really awaiting her in the new country so far away from home and friends. She is, perhaps, a little afraid that the customs of the old life may not be understood by those unknown people with whom she is anxious to make friends, for the old English reserve is not easily lost, and even in these days of progress and interchange of ideas the national characteristic clings very closely to the girl who has lived her life within a hundred miles of her birthplace; she may admire the frank spirit of the Colonial, indeed, the fact of her present position is sufficient proof of her appreciation, but the inclination to respond whole-heartedly will come only with long association. She knows there will be times when thoughts of her childhood and youth will be very near her; the new life will not be composed of lovely sea voyages and mirth and gladness, but will include the taking up of untried responsibilities and the adoption of new ideas and sentiments. She will, in time, be as happy as she expects to be, but she will not lose sight of the fact that in her tender recollection of old scenes in her regret for the loss of old companionship, she is but bringing to her new happiness the great gift of constancy which cannot but be a source of blessing to her husband, and to those who are added to her list of friends.

FIDELIA.

Artemas Abroad. (With apologies).

CHAPTER ONE

1. Now it came to pass that in the fifth month it began to be noised abroad among the Heads that there would shortly sail for AUSTRALIA a cushy ship named "ORMONDE."

2. Then did the purveyors of good oil and they that were known unto the chief rulers of Demob., wangle that they might be entered upon the boat roll.

3. And great was the wangling thereof (Yea, like unto the wangling wherewith thou wanglest leave.

4. Saying unto the Centurion, "Behold, my brother is taken grievously ill with palpitation of the pluck, and I only am left to minister unto him."

5. Yet many there be that do come proverbials.)

6. Nevertheless, there gathered daily within the houses of the chief rulers many that desired urgently that they should be chosen.

7. Then there went abroad among them a vertical draught, for they that did apporportion out the cabins gave forth the entrails,

8. Saying "Know ye that whosoever of you is allotted to another vessel, thereon must he push off."

9. Then the shrewd ones among them gat themselves unto the rulers that did go abroad with hats of brass, and did ply them with blandishments, saying also: "Thus and thus will we do unto thee in civvy life if thou comest not at it."

10. So administered they the hard word.

11. And they of the brazen tiles, being of little understanding, did yield unto them that wangled, and, behold, they were set.

12. Now, when the mixed multitude that was to sail on the vessel came unto the harbour, lo, there was a muck-up.

13. For certain that had taken unto them recent wives, had said unto themselves: "Verily, it seemeth good that we should lay out our shekels among the merehants of the Great City, so that we may arrive at our homes laden with choice goods wherewith we may stunt among our neighbours.

14. Lest, peradventure, the sons of Belial entangle us on the vessel with the old sergeant-major and the hook thereof, and do skin us."

15. Wherefore they gathered unto themselves merchandise of all kinds and enclosed

it, some in boxes and bags, and some in brown paper.

16. Likewise, also, did the chief captains and they that did sport tabs, bring servants laden with many souvenirs, seeking how they might outwit those that gathered war records.

17. And the goods that the multitude brought down to the harbour, lo, they were as the sands of the sea for number.

18. Psalteries and psewing machines, dulcimers and dog-kennels, timbrels and typewriters.

19. And some there were that sought to bring with them motor-cars and fowl-houses.

20. But they were knocked rotten.

How to "Get Off" in four Acts.

1. ATTRACTION! Give the GLAD EYE! Note: Not *too* glad. Remember you have just left home (or are just going there).

2. SUBTRACTION! Lower the eyes quickly! The glad eye was only an accident. How *dare* he stare at you? (Note: You'll still be able to *see*. Probably he went, by now.)

3. DISTRACTION. That is *his* part. *You* show how surprised you are. (Eyes widely extended, brows like perfect arches, etc.) Can he *really* want to know you?

4. OUT OF ACTION. (*Him* again!) Quickly turn on the "soul's awakening" touch. Sigh. Heave. Look trustful. Unconsciously make room on the deck-chair. *Promenade.*

General notes. — Call naval officers "sailors." (Say, for instance: "I *do* like sailors"). Military officers may be called "diggers." Instead of a deck-chair, you may "lean over the taffrail." I don't quite know what this is, but you always lean on it in books. Only four acts are necessary, but *matinées*, special performances, *encores*, etc., may be given.

Things we want to know!

Whether it is the custom of the —th Battalion mess to feed one's lady tête-a-tête on cake-crumbs with a spoon?

Whether the "red-hats" on board have any mission in life other than to wear the decks down; and what is their daily mileage?

Whether it WAS whisky that we smelt passing cabin No. —?

What amount of perspiration the Education Officer exudes per diem?

Whether it is true that a noted ship's orderly room celebrity has taken the advice of the troops and has received his issue of "Brasso" from the Q.M.?

When a beam of sunshine will pass across the face of a certain sergeant who has not yet been seen to smile since he came on board? Perhaps he has lost all his hard-earned cash on the crown and anchor, or has received a cable from "down under" that his flea farm has been totally destroyed by fire, or his dad's blancmange quarry has "gone broke."

What the tall naval officer, in the white suit, thought when a lieutenant on the promenade deck handed him a salver for return to the bar under the impression that he was addressing a steward—whether the former's only comment at the time was a regret that a tip did not accompany the request?

Whether "Sparks," the wireless bloke, is the tightest man on the ship, and when he is going to cough up the doings of the outside world?

Whether Coddard beat Beckett. (Ain't God'ard to Beckett?)

Whether a sergeant hid himself in a haystack at Dartford to miss a boat-roll, and whether the resultant joy was not worth the consequences?

Whether "Blanco" was unprocurable in England at the time the "Ormonde" sailed?

Whether the reason the diggers travel third-class is only that there is no fourth-class?

Who can lend the Editor five bob till the weather breaks?

Answers to Correspondents.

Sister M. asks: "Were they flying fish or swallows we saw?"—It depends whether you were looking into the saloon or out to sea.

Miss J. asks: What are (a) two up; (b) a bint; (c) the Crown and Anchor? We have no idea; we suggest you should ask the padre. The last-named may be a hotel.

Student asks: What is the precession of the equinoxes? Young man, this is a serious column, and this journal will *not* be drawn into a frivolous discussion.

The Corsairs.

The stately "Orinoco" of the Orient line was bowling merrily along south, not many miles from the coast of Morocco. Cecil Hamilton, one of England's "merchant princes," leaning on the rail, gazed at the glorious golden sunset. Not that Cecil had the poetic temperament; by no means. But anything golden excited his interest; even a sunset. The splendour of the western heavens mellowed into pale amber as the evening shades crept along the horizon. Cecil lost all interest in the celestial glories. He also lost his balance, for he had imbibed rather too freely of champagne at lunch. The "Orinoco" was not one of the big ships of this line. Cecil struck the water in an undignified heap. Instantly the alert officer of the watch had a boat lowered, but, although it cruised about for an hour, Cecil could not be discerned in the darkness that now brooded over the ocean. Cecil had noticed the life-buoy which had been thrown overboard, and swam towards it with might and main. For Cecil was a strong swimmer in more senses than one. On the Stock Exchange, and in business, he had seen many a man sink, never to rise again, but he had always managed to keep well afloat.

Cecil reached the life-buoy, and took full possession of it, as might have been expected. The "Orinoco" had gone on her way, blotted out by the night. Cecil's luck stood to him in his present predicament. A Moroccan fishing boat, on its way home, came within hail of him, and Cecil shouted lustily at the sight of its green light. The fishermen were not long in finding him, and he was promptly hauled aboard. Within a few hours they reached the shore, and led Cecil to one of their huts. Followed a savoury supper of *olla podrida*, washed down with copious draughts of red wine. Cecil awoke next day after twelve hours of sleep none the worse for his misadventure.

At the mid-day meal, Cecil made the acquaintance of the head man of the fishing village, Pedro Valdes, a weather beaten Spaniard of four score years. Pedro bade Cecil welcome, telling him in true Spanish fashion that the resources of the little community were at his disposal until an opportunity might offer for him to find passage to England. Pedro led the way into a huge

cave, his particular dwelling place. Blunderbusses and cutlasses of an ancient pattern hung upon the sides of the cave, and these aroused his curiosity. Pedro informed his visitor that they had belonged to his great grandfather, who, in his day, was acknowledged to be the most expert of the persons then engaged in intercepting East Indiamen and other vessels on their way from the Orient to Europe, and appropriating their cargoes to his own use. Cecil's interest quickened as Pedro's narrative unfolded itself. Thus encouraged, Pedro became garrulous. Rising from the camphor wood box on which he was seated, he drew forth a number of articles and spread them on the floor of the cave. Chief among these were a Cashmere shawl, still redolent of the pungent spices of the East; a piece of lace, delicate as a spider's web; a wicked looking Damascus scimitar; a comb of tortoise-shell and gold filagree; a turquoise necklet; and a baby's skull. Cecil handled all, except the skull, with the air of a connoisseur of commercial values, but as a Christian Englishman he could not but be shocked by the knowledge that these were the fruits of robbery.

(To be continued).

A Mixed Metaphor.

"Yes," exclaimed the naval architect, glowing with enthusiasm at the marvellous development in ship-building, "we have bridged the Atlantic with ocean greyhounds that are floating palaces."

Why is a "digger" like the "Ormonde?"
Because few know the pace he can go.

Owing to the few Editorial Articles received, the prize offered for same has been held over until next issue, for which it is hoped, other articles will be submitted by subscribers

Prizes are also offered for—

1. Best humorous anecdote of the war (limit 100 words).
2. Best humorous article arising out of life on the ship (limit 300 words).
3. Best humorous "Glimpse into the Future" (limit 300 words.)

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