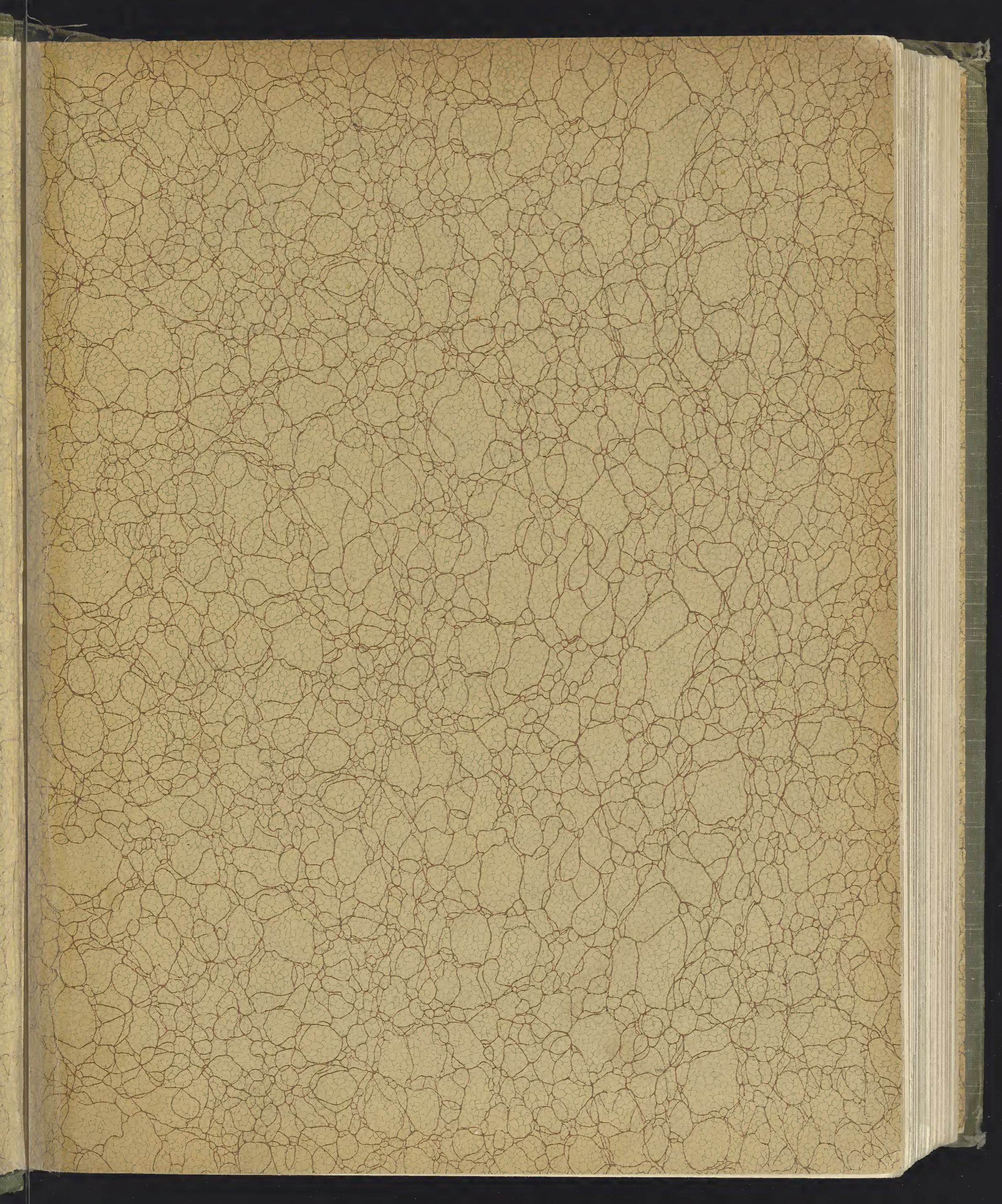


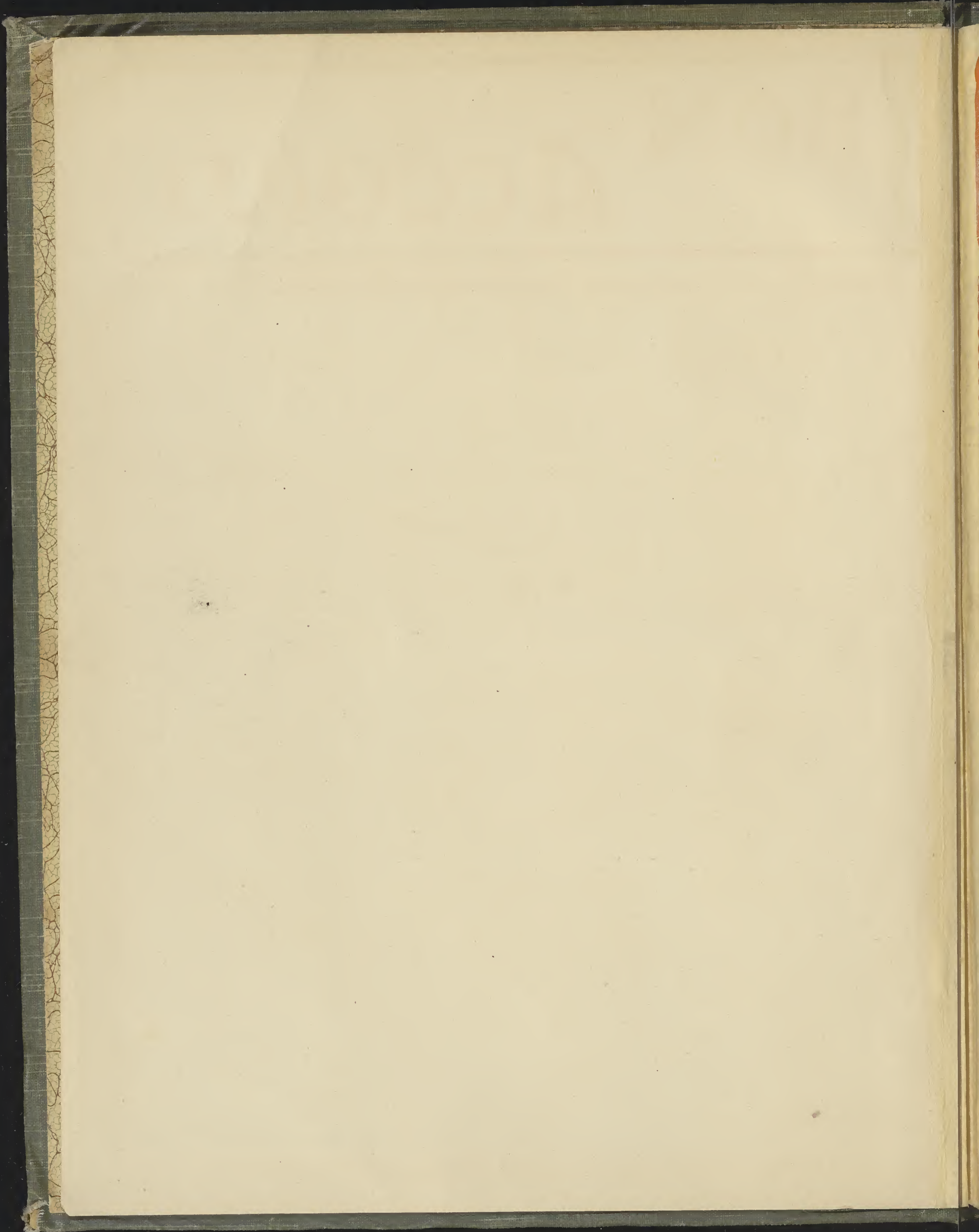


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## THE HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS,

BY

### The Man in the Street.

#### Political Prophets.

Once more are we in the thick of it. There is no escaping the political issues of the day. Our newspapers are full of them. They thrust themselves under our notice on bill boardings, in circular letters, and in fearful and wonderful creations of the printer's art (?). Every second man you meet desires to know your opinion of the situation; whether the Government will be returned; with what majority, if any; and what the result will be then? If you wish to retain the questioner's friendship and to establish for ever your reputation as a good, honest, prophetic soul, you must first ascertain—if you do not know it already—his own political complexion. If he turns out to be a Unionist, then you must assume a wise and knowing air and predict the number of seats which the Government are bound to lose in London, in the South of England, and the Midland provinces. If he be a Liberal, then you must assure him that Lloyd George and winsome "Winnie" are putting up great fights, and are bound to influence an enormous number of electors. It is not necessary, nor even advisable, to be precise in your prophecies. His wish is father to his thought, and he will fill in the blank with matter favourable to his own side.

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#### The Game.

What a topsy-turvy game is politics, after all. In no other walk of life is such unblushing effrontery displayed, so many obvious "crammers" perpetrated, and such primitive credulity shown. Comment is often made on the partisan characteristics of football crowds; why, in comparison with the great mass of party politicians, the frequenters of Pittodrie are impartial to a degree. They may question an "offside" decision, they may rebuke an over forceful member of an opposing team, and smile indulgently at an offence committed by a local favourite, but these are incidents apart from the game itself, and are due merely to the fleeting ebullitions of the moment, to be forgotten, if not repented of, as the game proceeds.

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#### Doubtful Methods.

Politics, on the other hand, seems to be one perpetual round of dissemblment. "They practise to deceive." The most extraordinary attempts are made to twist and contort facts to suit the particular ends in view. To listen to the speeches and read the expositions of one set of campaigners, one would think that this poor old country of ours was in the last stages of senile decay; when the other side of the picture is presented, it seems to be a perfect paradise on earth, the very best of countries in the best of all possible worlds. Between these two extremes there is a

whole gamut of opportunity for the exercise of every degree and variety of opinion and assertion. The game is to win votes, to win them honestly if possible—but to win.

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After all, it is the most fascinating, the most deliciously absorbing game in human ken. It transcends in interest and in importance all other struggles for supremacy in this mundane sphere. Beside it, the rivalries of sport, the pride of material conquest, the prizes of commercialism become tame and insignificant. It touches human life at so many different points and affects so many supreme interests that the wonder is, not that men should differ and squabble and adopt wily, jesuistical arts to score off opponents, but that they can set any bounds to their thoughts, their words, and their acts, beyond—

The good old rule, the simple plan  
That they should take who have the power,  
And they should keep who can.

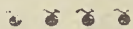
In spite of unusually strong temptations, the combatants in Aberdeen are preserving a wonderful degree of decorum. The personal element is conspicuous rather by its absence than by its presence. In the "khaki" election of eight years ago, there was an infinitely greater amount of bitterness and personal feeling imported into the contest than there has been in the present case. It may be that the issues are more general than particular now, or it may be that Mr. George B. Esslemont has not the same intense faculty for stirring up animosities and personal opposition as Mr. Bryce had, but certainly the discussions have been kept remarkably free from the verbal fisticuff domain, and though, perhaps, less interesting on that account, have been more instructive.

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#### The Players.

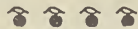
Strong fighter as Mr. McNeill is, he is, withal, a scrupulously fair and chivalrous opponent. His thrusts are more of the rapier-like order than of the broadsword variety. He aims rather to disarm his antagonist than to annihilate him by weight of argument or of personality. If he be of a swashbuckling disposition, he is the most genial and seductive type of that fraternity. One can imagine him acting as host to the other four local candidates, and midst a "flow of soul and feast of reason" cracking jokes and swapping experiences of this and of the other contests in which he has been engaged. His Northern colleague, on the other hand, Mr. J. Scott Brown, seems made of sterner and more pugnacious elements. He honestly believes that, under the present Radical Government, the country is going headlong to the dogs, and he is determined to have no compromising dealings with the powers of evil. Mr. Scott Brown is oppressed with the magnitude of his responsibility and of the seen and unseen dangers that threaten to overpower the solid bulwark of British communal life. Turn in what direction he may, he sees lurking dangers

and ambushing foes. To him, Mr. Pirie and Mr. Kennedy are representative types of social evil, differing only in degree—the latter, perhaps, less objectionable than the former, in that his opportunities for evil deeds are more immediate and pressing.



#### The Northern Goalkeeper.

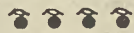
Mr. Pirie has been through so many election mills, and with such unvarying success, that he is becoming somewhat bored with his experiences in this direction. He cannot see any good reason for an attack on his particular preserves, and least of all for a double-headed onslaught. He is absolutely convinced that the electors of North Aberdeen could not be better served by any representative than they have been by him. Has he not, like Jacob of old, served a double term of apprenticeship, of twice seven years? Has he not given of his time, of his means, and of his talents, for the interests of his constituents? How many miles of division lobbies has he walked through in order that the collective voice of North Aberdeen should have adequate expression. How often has he flung the banner of Scottish liberty to the breeze, and boldly challenged the cohorts of the Southern Sassenach for their callous indifference to Scottish national feeling. These services, surely, deserve for him a better fate than to be tossed hither and thither from the Unionist post to the Socialist pillar. Is he not himself a Unionist in the best sense of the term? Is his policy not Socialistic enough to satisfy every reasonable requirement of the workers of North Aberdeen? Why, then, should he be subjected to the inconvenience and annoyance of another contest when the issue is beyond doubt, and when the substitution of either of his opponents for himself would be a local if not a national calamity? Why, indeed? To answer that query is to plumb the very depths of electioneering policy and political adventurings.



#### The Southern.

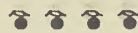
Mr. G. B. Esslemont has neither a personal nor a political grievance at the imminence of a contest. Rather is he inclined to welcome it. He has a vague, hazy notion that he did himself rather less than justice at the last election, and he is not averse to the chance now given him of demonstrating that it is neither as the son of his father nor as the representative of Liberal principles in this North-Eastern stronghold that he sits in Parliament, but as a worthy wearer, on his own account, of the parliamentary mantle of his predecessor. Mr. Esslemont is not like the proverbial young man in a hurry. He makes haste slowly and with becoming dignity. The issues of the present election are not of his own setting, but, had he been given the chance, he would have shown a preference for just the particular points that are being emphasised at this time. Although, by temperament, he smacks more of the House of Lords manner than of the Commons, he has always

had a grudge against that chamber, and even at the risk of banging and barring the door of that house against his own admission in a sweeter by-and-by, he is not to lose the present opportunity of dealing it a destructive blow. He will do it, too, if his good right arm maintains its power and his head its cunning.



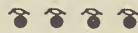
#### "A Passenger."

Mr. Thomas Kennedy is displaying some little irritation—a sure sign of diminishing confidence. Of a surety, his electoral path has not been strewn with roses. He is a candidate, not by the grace of the organised labour forces of Aberdeen, but despite them. He deliberately chose the path of independence, but he is not particularly happy in his voluntary isolation. He evidently anticipated that, if he would not go to the mountain, the mountain would probably go to him. Now that the representative labourists of Aberdeen are not falling over each other in anxiety to enlist under his banner, he is annoyed at their aloofness, and has been relieving his feelings by giving expression to some home truths. To impersonal onlookers, however, it seems that the grievance is somewhat of his own seeking. No man can have his cake and eat it too. Mr. Kennedy preferred the path of "splendid isolation," and there are worse exhibitions of human nature and political warfare than the taking of a man at his own valuation. He who hits out valiantly and indiscriminately at all and sundry must expect, in turn, to receive darts from every quarter.



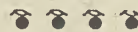
#### A Call to Arms!

Mr. McKinnon Wood's visit is happily over, and all eyes are now anxiously turned towards Mr. A. J. Balfour's visit to Aberdeen next Monday evening. That the ex-Premier is a catch to the local Unionists, and will give a strong impetus to their election campaign, even their hereditary opponents admit. Whether the address will affect the local results is, perhaps, more doubtful. To the converted, Mr. Balfour will be convincing; the opponents of his views will probably turn to him their deaf ear.



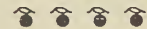
#### A Happy New Year.

If the year 1910 is not a happy one for every mother's son of Aberdeen, it will not be for lack of good wishes strewn abroad at the initial stages of its career. I have seen many a year come and go within the grey walls of the Granite City, and I have seldom seen a new year ushered in under more favourable auspices than the present one. The weather was ideal, the people were happy, and there was a notable absence of those flagrantly regrettable features that sometimes mar all Scottish celebrations.

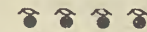


Of course, there are those who are ever bemoaning the degeneracy of the age. To them the "good old times" are alone com-

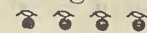
mendable. They see in present-day tendencies nothing but the decay of manly virtues and public spirit. In comparison with the Hogmanay glories of the past, they describe the modern methods of New Year baptism as tame and insipid. 'Tis but an orgie of children, they contend, and every second lad and lass behave in a way that their fathers and mothers would never have dreamt of. I cannot share these pessimistic head-shakings. They are less than ever applicable to the season just passed. It's many a year since I have seen so many people on the streets welcoming in the new year, and never do I remember a more decorous and exemplary celebration than at the present occasion.



Of course, there were those who had imbibed not wisely but too well. Of course, the frailties of human kind and the weaknesses incidental to clime and country were here and there to be witnessed, but for the most part 'twas an orderly and intensely joyous throng that made house and ha' ring with their songs of lofty cheer. If at this street corner and at that, sights were seen and words were heard that grated upon the better susceptibilities of passers-by, they were the exception rather than the rule. They invited notice by their very isolation and infrequency. They thrust themselves into the forefront of impressions, and by their conspicuousness made a deeper impression on the observers than the scores of others who flitted hither and thither with laden arms and hearts filled with good fellowship and social well-being.



It has been my fortune or misfortune to see New Year celebrations in various places, but for leal-hearted joy and unalloyed baptismal pleasure, commend me to Aberdeen on this night of nights, and to the native elements of the city who combine with pleasure-seeking for themselves the spreading of joy amongst others with whom they are brought into association.



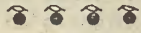
#### Electrics.

Arbitration is a much-cracked-up force. Lovers of peace have hailed it as the panacea for all social and national ills. When brought into active operation, however, it has oftentimes a strange knack of failing to answer expectation and of refusing to promote the peaceful solutions which it was primarily intended to accomplish.

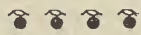


A local case in point is the arbiter's award in the recent inquiry as to the Suburban Tramway Company's indebtedness to the Town for electrical power. When it was mutually decided to refer the much-disputed case of rate charges to an outside arbiter, it was thought that at last a royal road had been found to municipal peace. No more would a squeezing corporation or an interested management play their wits against each other for individual advantages. They each professed unbounded confidence in the fair dealing and expert knowledge of the gentleman

who had been chosen to decide on the outstanding point at issue.

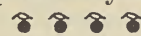


I am not sufficiently expert on electrical questions to hazard an opinion as to whether the award of the arbiter was just or according to the mandate which he received. Evidently the Suburban Tramway Company are not in any doubt as to the incorrect conclusion arrived at by the expert chosen, and, more ominous still, the Electrical Committee of the Town Council are not now so sure of their legal authority to enforce the award as at the outset they were understood to be. Leastwise, that is the interpretation which ordinary people have put upon the decision of the Committee to seek fresh instruction from the Council, rather than to carry out, willy-nilly, the instructions of a former meeting to compel the rebellious company to pay the rates awarded.



#### A Ballicose Baillie.

Of course, Baillie Kemp is all for fighting the issue to the last legal ditch; but, strangely enough, the new convener of the Committee, Dr. Westland, and others, who cannot by any stretch of imagination be termed pro-Suburbanites, demur to continuing on that course without specific instructions from the Council. It is this disinclination of the genial doctor to join issue with the company forthwith that gives pause to many who are otherwise averse to upsetting an arrangement based upon the deliberate finding of a chosen arbiter. There are, at any rate, all the elements of a stiff municipal battle, and if I were inclined to hazard a copper on the result, I should lay odds on the company ultimately coming out on top. The Town Council record in legal battles is none of the best, and the possibilities are that history in this respect may but repeat itself.



#### Record Breaking.

Talk about record meetings of public boards! I have heard of a meeting of a committee of the Aberdeen School Board last week that for prolonged duration will take a lot of beating. 'Tis a case, I understand, in which an employee of the Board brought some rather strong charges against another official servant. The matter was referred to a special committee some months ago, and has dragged on with painful slowness, charge and counter following each other in leisurely succession until last week, when a determined attempt was made to end the matter once for all. From ten o'clock in the forenoon until nearly twelve at night, the committee sat and deliberated with but two brief intervals for replenishing the inner man. Nor is the end come even yet. Indeed, the case is growing in importance as time goes on; and as both parties to the quarrel are represented by counsel at the meetings in question, the outcome of the situation will be difficult indeed to predict. There will be, at all events, plenty of ammunition for report to the Board itself, if ever that culminating stage be reached.



MISS BEATRICE BOARER.

### Visit of the Principal D'Oyly Carte Opera Company.

For two weeks we are certainly in for a great musical treat, for after paying Glasgow a three-weeks' visit, the principal O'Oyly Carte Opera Company will pay Aberdeen a visit for two weeks in a series of Gilbert and Sullivan operas. Since last here, the company has been made very strong indeed with fresh talent, but still we have many old friends left. There is, of course, Mr Fred Billington; then, after many years away in London, Mr Henry H. Lytton is back as Koko, Jack Point, etc. The soprano parts are now shared by Miss Elsie Spain and Miss Mabel Graham, as also are the tenors by Messrs Henry Herbert and Strafford Moss. Miss Beatrice Boarer is the Tessa, Pitti-Sing, and Miss Bertha Lewis is the Katisha. The

chorus is spoken of as the strongest in the history of the D'Oyly Carte Company. The programme for the first week will be a most popular one, for on Monday we are to have "The Mikado," likewise on Thursday and Saturday evenings; Tuesday will be "Iolanthe," Wednesday night and Saturday matinee "The Gondoliers," Friday will be "The Pirates of Penzance," to be followed by "Trial by Jury." During the second week "Patience," "H.M.S. Pinafore," "The Yeomen of the Guard," "Princess Ida" will be the new operas. Mr Francois Cellier is the musical director, Albert James the stage manager, and Mr H. E. Bellamy the manager for Mrs D'Oyly Carte. Seats for any of the operas should be booked early.

## Musical and Dramatic Gossip.

Bl "Vox."

### "Bringing In the New Year."

Even the musical enthusiast likes to festivate, and in these early days of the year I have flown from serious consideration of music as from a plague, and taken to—rinking. Oh, yes, I still am fond of the excellent pastime, which I learnt at the rink at Queen's Cross a good many years ago. But the difference between a rink in those days and a modern one is very marked. To-day one glides over a floor with a surface akin to ice, while the skates give a minimum of foot friction. I cannot sacrifice the time that so many people nowadays devote to the pastime, but I enjoyed those "gliding hours" with rare zest—not without some sore spots, however, in my anatomy.

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

### Songs of the Hour.

There is certain music one cannot escape from at the New Year season—the popular pantomime ditty—and I have been wondering how many went through the streets in the early hours of 1910 singing "Don't take me home" and "Somewhere the sun is shining." I have not heard any of the street organs with these songs in their "repertoire," but we won't have long to wait; moreover, we are sure to have a nauseating dose of "Has anyone here seen Kelly?"

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

### Visit of D'Oyly Carte Opera Co.

Next week the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company pay their annual visit to His Majesty's Theatre, and will present all the old Sullivan favourites for a fortnight. Included in the company on this visit are many of the old favourites, while several excellent new artistes will take the places of those who have retired through marriage (Miss Clara Dow, the pretty soprano of last year, has been won by an Edinburgh gentleman) or who are now associated with Mr. Workman in London, who has been remarkably successful in his enterprise as actor-manager of the Savoy. The names of the principals who are on tour with the company are:—Misses Elsie Spain, Mabel Graham, Beatrice Boarer, Marjorie Stone, and Bertha Lewis, and Messrs. Fred Billington, Henry Lytton, Henry Herbert, Strafford Moss, and Leicester Tunks.

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

### "The Bells of Corneville."

The performances of this charming opera by Madame Shirley Jackson's Junior Choir, in the Union Hall, were thoroughly enjoyable. The principals were all competent, and of these the most outstanding was Mr. James M'Adam, who gave a fine impersonation of the ghastly, greedy Gas-

pard. Work so excellent is seldom witnessed in amateur performances. Mr. A. J. Wiseman, as the Marquis, was quite familiar with his part, and his pleasant voice gave fine effect to the melodious solos. Mr. R. Lawrence Anderson has also to be commended for his good singing. When there was fun to be given, Mr. M'Donald (Bailie) and Mr. Philip (Gobo) provided it in full measure. The two principal ladies, Miss R. Murrison and Miss Liza Copland, are the possessors of pleasant voices, and their songs merited much applause. Madame Jackson's chorus always sings well, and on this occasion it was no exception to the rule. It had been well drilled; there was smartness in their stage deportment, brightness and spirit in their singing, and an eagerness which betokened enthusiasm in their work, and attention to their conductor.

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

### The City Concert.

Variety will be a strong point at Saturday's City Concert, to be held in the Music Hall. Mr. Wingate Kirk will manipulate his wonderful living marionettes, and give ventriloquial and conjuring entertainments. The Stoneleys, a popular pair of Beach Pavilion artistes, will appear in their musical specialties, and the vocalists will be Miss C. Mentiplay (contralto) and Mr. John Jamieson (tenor).

### The Gaiety.

To keep pace with the spirit of festivity abroad at this season, Mr. Dove Paterson's resources as a public entertainer have been kept on the stretch for about a fortnight, but hitherto he has proved equal to the occasion. Five shows on Monday took a bit of doing, but they were successfully carried out, and to large audiences on each occasion. The same fine programme is to be run all this week, and includes such fine picture displays as the following:—"Muggins, V.C.," a stirring military sketch; "The Artist's Sweetheart," in the dramatic vein; "His New Situation," a very funny episode; and many others intensely interesting, picturesque, and amusing. The cinephone selection is entitled "The Royal Trumpeters"; while the picture pilgrimage undertaken is to classic Athens. Altogether the entertainment is worthy the Gaiety traditions, and is receiving well-merited patronage.

### CITY CONCERTS, MUSIC HALL,

**SATURDAY, 8th January, 1910,**

At 7.45 p.m.

ARTISTES:—

Miss S. MENTIPLAY,  
Contralto.

Mr. JOHN JAMIESON,  
The Famous Tenor.

THE STONELEYS,  
The Marvellous Child Musicians.

Mr. WINGATE KIRK,  
In his Wonderful Living Marionettes and  
Conjuring Entertainment.

Admission:—1s., 6d., and 3d.

## GREAT Unionist Demonstration

MUSIC HALL, ABERDEEN,  
MONDAY, 10th January, 1910.

SPEAKER—

The Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour,  
M.P.

GENERAL ELECTION, 1910.  
NORTH ABERDEEN.

NOTICE.

I, the Undersigned, being the appointed Election Agent for Mr ROBERT SCOTT BROWN, 30 Drummond Place, Edinburgh, a Candidate at the above Election, HEREBY GIVE NOTICE that, in view of the provisions of the Act, 46 and 47 Vict. c. 51, the said Candidate will not be answerable or accountable for any payment for goods supplied, services rendered, or expenses incurred by any person acting, or claiming to act, on his behalf, unless such purchase, service, or expense has been previously authorised in writing under my hand.

A. SANDS, Election Agent.  
Central Committee Rooms, 24 King Street,  
Aberdeen, 4th January, 1910.

## WEST ABERDEENSHIRE.

Mr. J. M. HENDERSON

Will address the Electors as follows:—

ECHT.—Public Hall, on Saturday, 8th Jan., at 6.30 p.m.

SKENE.—Milne Hall, on Saturday, 8th Jan., at 8 p.m.

MIDMAR.—Public Hall, on Monday, 10th Jan., at 6.30 p.m.

CLUNY.—U.F. School, on Monday, 10th Jan., at 8 p.m.

ALL INVITED.

### The Empire.

The pantomimic innovation at the popular hall in George Street has met with the most unqualified success, and is now running through its second week to packed houses at each representation. "The Golden Locket" is indeed a bright and merry show, and now that all the artistes may be said to have got thoroughly into the skin of their characters, joviality reigns supreme. Miss Nell Brough and Miss Louie Fuller have scored most decidedly as the sweethearts, Will Scarlet and Marjory; while Sandy Beach and Sammy Kelly have worked up Weary Willie and Tired Tim until they have become two of the funniest characters imaginable. There's nothing but fun and frolic of the most rollicking description when they hold the stage, and the audience can scarcely be persuaded to let them off. In addition to the pantomime there is also a very fine cinematographic display.

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

### Rating of Railways.

The arbitrator, the Right Hon. Alfred Lyttleton, K.C., M.P., has issued his award in the appeal of the Great Western Railway Company against the assessments of their line and stations in the Cheltenham Union, reducing the rateable value of £8033, which has been in force for many years, to £4556, and ordering the union to pay the costs of the appeal, and to refund to the company the over-payments in respect of two years' rates.

### His Majesty's Theatre.

"The Flag Lieutenant" is a thoroughly wholesome, delightful play, and was on Monday evening received with the greatest appreciation by an audience which completely filled every part of His Majesty's Theatre. It is a play without a villain. The theme is thoroughly human at every point, and develops a fine story of self-sacrifice, self-effacement, and heroism.

Dick Lascelles is flag lieutenant on board H.M.S. "Royal Edward." His friend, Major William Thesiger, is thirsting for fame and honour. Bill has been unlucky all his life, but is suddenly raised to the seventh heaven by being placed in command of a reinforcement party bound for Crete. The second act depicts the British camp on the plains of Kandia. Things are going hard with the little British force, and Thesiger suddenly conceives the only plan which looks like saving them from total destruction. Disguised in the robes of one of the enemy, he resolves to dash through their lines to the nearest signal station, and thus get in touch with the British warships. But his luck is again against him, and before he has gone a dozen steps, a stray bullet from the enemy enters his forehead, and he falls senseless into the arms of his friend Dick. Dick immediately dons the robes, and successfully accomplishes Thesiger's scheme. Hearing from the doctor that his friend's memory of the immediate past has gone, Dick conceives his great act of heroism, and, in expiation of his debt to Thesiger, resolves that Thesiger shall get the full honour of the daring deed. Unfortunately, this act of self-effacement brings upon Dick no end of trouble, for he is called upon to explain his whereabouts at a time when his services as interpreter were in urgent demand. Dick can only prove an alibi by shifting the honour from his friend to himself, and this he refuses to do. The position is a most interesting one, and is most delicately worked out in the last act to the complete satisfaction of everyone.

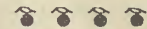
The title-role is in the hands of Mr. Edgar Kent, and it is difficult to conceive a truer representation than he gives us of a bright, irresponsible, lovable young naval officer. Mr. Kent is a delightful actor, and within a few minutes of his first entrance on the stage completely won the hearts of the audience by his droll mimicry of the admiral's mannerisms. Mr. Montagu Love, as the major, portrayed the true soldierly bearing throughout. George Mallet as vice-admiral was the right man in the right place. The ladies are charming: every one of them. The company is a strong one, excellent in every respect. The scenery is realistic and impressive, the quarterdeck of H.M.S. "Royal Edward" being specially true in its details. The play is one to attract all theatre-lovers, and is most fitting for the holiday season.

### The Palace.

Tremendous audiences have been making the Palace rock with hilarity this week o'er the outrageously farcical doings (and sayings) of Mr. Fred Karno's company of comedians in their inimitable sketches, "Early Birds" and "Mumming Birds." The former may be taken as a rather highly flavoured but amusingly realistic representation of life in metropolitan slumdom, the various types of the "submerged" introduced creating no end of diversion by their gutter gambols and general proneness to indulge in a high old beano. The other sketch deals with what may be reckoned London swelldom. The action takes place on a music hall stage, ingeniously constructed at the back, with tiered boxes on either side, and it is in the very free and familiar interchange of "compliments" between the occupants of these boxes and the artistes as they come on that the fun of the sketch consists. These "Karnos" are very knowing birds indeed, and their double "flutter" per show is received with tremendous enthusiasm.

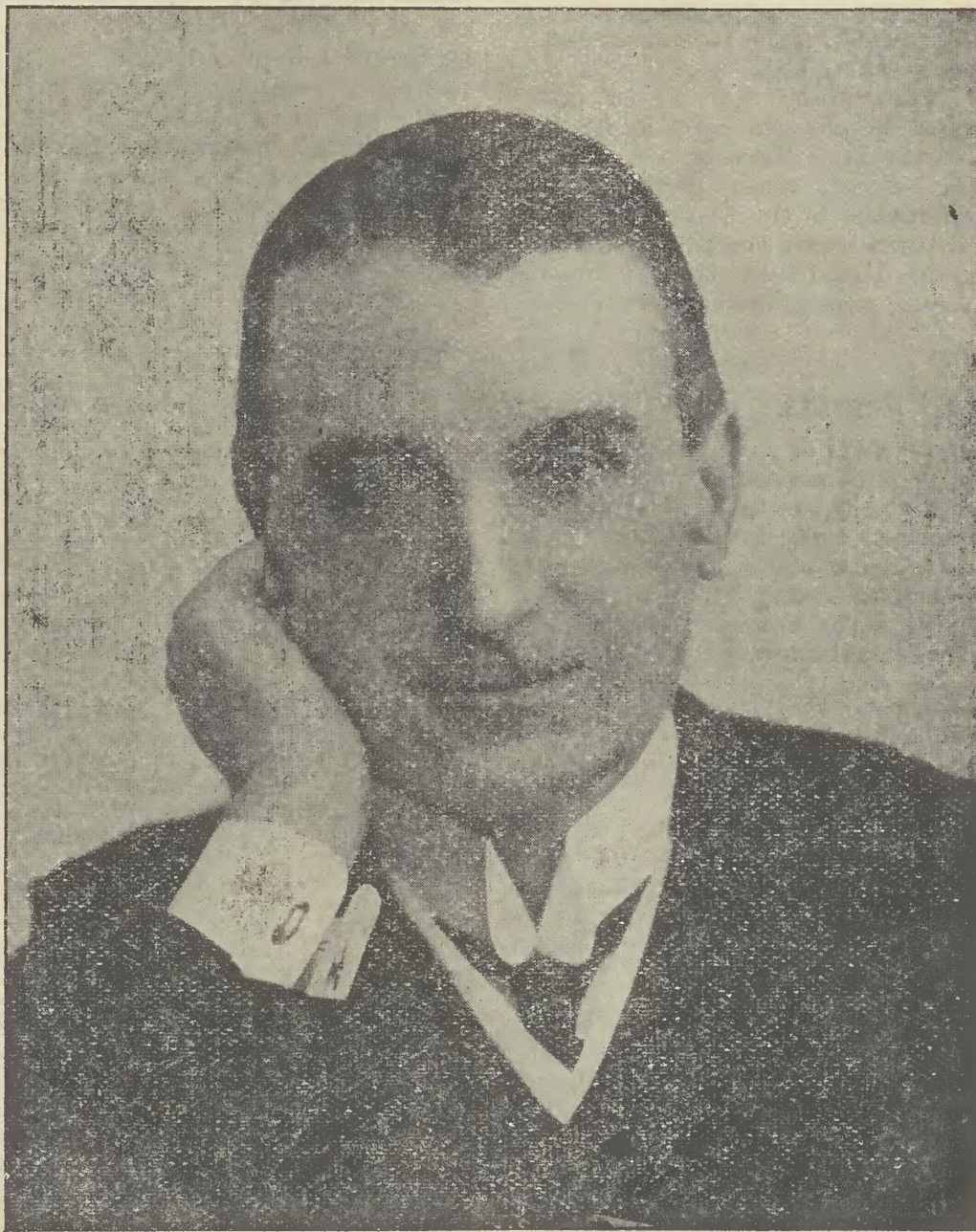
Among the other turns in a fine pro-

gramme, perhaps the "biggest" favourites are that wonderful little pair of comedians The Real Mackays. Their saucy singing and clever dancing prove very much to the liking of the audience. Miss Ray-Raymond approves herself as a sweet-singing comedienne much above the average; Lily Belle a barefoot dancer of ability; and Mark Hanbury a comedian of most amusing insouciance.



### The Olympia Skating Rink.

The popularity of this rink was greatly in evidence on Hogmanay and New Year's Day, when at each session there was a crowded skating area. The competitions were an attractive feature, and so numerous were the competitors that the events had to be run in heats. The carnival held under the auspices of the Aberdeenshire Cricket Club last week was a decided success. The fancy costumes of the skaters made the scene quite picturesque. Miss Mackie, in a faithful representation of a Jap lady, was first prize-winner, and Miss Young, dressed as Autumn, second. Master Williams won the prize for gentlemen, as a fairy. In the balloon race, Mr. Newton was first and Mr. Stephen second, and the potato race found Mr. Newton first and Mr. Stewart second. The switchback at this rink provides great amusement for spectators, and is an exhilarating pastime for the daring skater.



Mr. HENRY A. LYTTON, D'Oyly Opera Company.

### Calendar for 1910.

January. — Average temperature (and Radical spirits) very low this month, with a perceptible rise, locally, after the 17th. G. B. and D. V. spill a jubilant gingerade o'er "Our noble selves, and confusion to the Lords!"

February.—Rain, snow, frost, fog, with political disturbances, aristocratic apprehension, and other spring delights.

March.—Wind, rain, and an epidemic of lunacy amongst hares and taxpayers.

April.—Budget in full bloom, with corresponding Primrose blight. North Pole again discovered. Commander Spooft does it "on his head" and a bottle of cham.

May.—Thirty-one days of variegated weather. Unsuspecting young leaves lured from their downy bed will get severely nipped for their pains. Cricket season opened at Mannofield—on skates.

June. — Seasonable summer weather. Rain and roses. If we survive the comet, we shall in due course come to

July.—Hailstones and holidays.

August.—Same as July, only more so, with flashes of thunder. Two warm days may be confidently expected this month.

September.—Grouse, rain, and harvest seasons now in full swing.

October.—Trees and taxpayers preparing to shed their annual unearned increment.

November.—Rain, fog, frost, and mud. Municipal rhetoric in full flower, and Baillies robed by electric light under the very nose of the Lord Provost.

December.—Snow, slush, and all the other compliments of the season. Earth supposed to turn about the 21st and do it all over again. Exit 1910 to the accompaniment of cheers, whisky, and universal execrations.

### New Year Regrets.

I've done all sorts of wicked things,  
I fear, in Nineteen-Nine;  
And now the year has taken wings,  
The memory of those follies flings  
A shadow o'er my path, and wrings  
Some eye-bedimming brine.  
I've done all sorts of wicked things,  
I'm sure, in Nineteen-Nine.

I don't suppose I shall improve  
A bit in Nineteen-Ten;  
Though memory have the power to move,  
To sadden, chasten, and reprove,  
It's ten to nine the same old groove  
I'll slide along again.  
I don't suppose I shall improve—  
Do you?—in Nineteen-Ten!

### The Way to get the Vote.

"Cynicus" writes: — "My dear girls, you have been going on the wrong tack altogether in the year that's dead. Heaving bricks, slates, pieces of old iron, and other unlearned implements, will never cleave a passage to the hearts of adamant vote-withholders; you must try some more subtle strategy than that. You don't seem quite to have grasped the fact that

man, first and foremost, is a sportsman—that the surest and quickest way to get at him is through his sporting instincts. Every politician worth his salt is a golfer, and you may take it from me that Asquith, Balfour, Lloyd-George, and all the rest of the big pots are more concerned over maintaining their putting than Parliamentary record, keener on negotiating the hazards of the bunker than the Budget. That's their weak spot, my dears—the most vulnerable in the masculine armour. Get at it! Let no false notion of good manners or feminine delicacy restrain you; if you see a statesman on the links, sail in at once, and get in the game. Talk to him, especially when he's putting, and if he's any kind of golfer at all, he'll promise you anything you want if you'll only go away. That is good advice, if cheap. Put it to the test, and if you have not won your way to the ballot-box by the end of 1910, then you may set me down as a silly as well as a cyni-cuss!"

### Who would not be an Optimist?

Judge Willis says—"I have never seen any awful weather since I have been on earth. There is no awful weather, it is all beautiful weather. Be cheerful, and the weather will be enjoyable." Sorry to disagree with the pronouncement of a judge—and such a wise judge too—but though we tried hard to view the world and the weather through his cheerful glasses on New Year's morning, we had to give up the heroic attempt and go home. Had Willis been with us, he might have seen cause to "modulate his exports" too.

### Vindictiveness: A Comedy in Three-and-a-Half Acts.

#### ACT I.

Taking place behind the scenes, is explained by the Prompter as follows:—

I reckon Pitt's, Peel's, or Gladstone's ghost  
Has got the Chancellor on toast,—  
Saying, "Taffy, my lad, for all your toil,  
This kind of thing is not in Hoyle!"

#### ACT II.

The Chancellor appears, and vindicates himself in the choicest language of the day:—

Your blessed Tory ghosts are vain  
To frighten a true child of Paine!  
Hoyle is an antiquated b——!  
I take things out of Cavendish.

#### ACT III.

A figure in ducal robes appears, and soliloquises:—

Yea, by St Victor! that is true,  
If nothing else we've had from you!  
I can't complain, your lot are sich  
As take things out of any ditch!

#### HALF-ACT IV.

Explained by Prompter as follows:—

Here someone sighs, I am not sure,  
But rather think that it is Ure!  
Curtain falls.

J. G. F. MOODIE HEDDLE.

### Pantomime and Politics.

One of the most noticeable features of the pantomime this year is the scarcity of the political allusions in them. One would have thought, at a crisis like the present, gags and puns on Lloyd-George, Winston, etc., would have been as plentiful as holly-berries; but no, there seems to have been some tacit understanding on the part of pantomime writers to leave the field of politics most severely alone. Managers, too (very wisely, we think), have laid their ban on the artistic "gagger," and it is said that Mr. Robert Arthur has issued instructions that no political allusions are to be allowed at the theatres under his control. How religiously that order in council has been observed in Aberdeen, all who have visited our dainty production of "Cinderella" can testify. Perhaps 'tis just as well; for nothing is easier to raise, or so cheaply earned, as a laugh or a "ruff" at the expense of prominent politicians. As witness:—First Robber in "Babes in the Wood":—

Ha, ha! Who's that with bulging sack I see?  
'Tis Lloyd George — robbing hen-roosts!  
Deary me!

That's one for Radical patrons, who get their own back when No 2 enters and exclaims:—

Nay, I'm no Welsh attorney, but a peer;  
This bag is full of unearned increment—and beer!

Ha, ha! Wild hilarity of Budgeteers. Let's be thankful for this wise move on managers' part; for the number of irrepressible comedians who would have informed us all over the country that Lloyd-George would have to budge it would take the Chancellor himself to compute.

### A Musical Note.

We observe that the Army Council has issued a circular which says that a frequent cause of the faulty pitch of brass and wood-wind instruments is the presence of dirty matter inside. The following articles, it seems, have been found inside instruments when sent to be cleaned—clothes brush, dead sparrow, euphonium mouthpiece, sprouting potato, clips to hold music. That looks a fair enough assortment in its way, but we should have looked for more than one dead sparrow—that's certainly a poor bag.

Telegram—"Central Bakery." Telephone 753.



**A. B. HUTCHISON'S**  
FAMOUS  
**BREAD.**

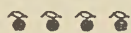
**THE CENTRAL BAKERY.**

Shops throughout the City.



### L'INCOGNITA.

Who comes to the Palace Theatre next week, direct from the Alhambra, London. The great range of this famous Soprano is unbelievable until actually heard, and has puzzled the great masters of singing to explain.



### Polls or Goals.

The polling days for Manchester and Salford have been fixed for Saturday, 15th January. In itself this piece of information has no special interest for Scottish readers, but when it is added that that day has been chosen for the first round of the English Cup, readers will begin to realise the gravity of the situation. Both the big clubs in Manchester have been drawn to play their ties away from their native city, and as they will be accompanied by thousands of supporters who are also voters, the Manchester poll is sure to suffer, for how many enthusiasts are likely to place Free Trade or Fiscal Reform before Free Kicks? It was really too bad of Mr. Lloyd-George or the Dukes or whoever was responsible for making the General Election clash with the English Cup; and if the country shows its reprehension of such practices by inflicting upon them—that is, upon Mr. Lloyd George or the Dukes—a crushing defeat at the polls, they will know that in future they cannot with impunity interfere with the will (or the pastimes) of the people.

### Aberdeen & Northern Friendly Society.

Assurance and Endowments granted for any amount up to £200.

Endowments payable at any age.

Bonus additions on Life Assurance and Endowment Assurance Policies 30s. per cent. per annum. The Funds are very strong, being a reserve of over six years' premiums.

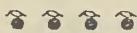
Copies of the Reports and of the Rules may be had from any of the Agents, or at the Office,

213 GEORGE STREET, ABERDEEN.

J. F. MACPHAIL MASSIE, Treasurer.

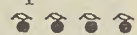
### New Year Gifts and Wishes.

His Gracious Majesty—good health.  
Her Gracious Majesty—good health.  
Righ Hon. H. H. Asquith—a minority.  
Right Hon. A. J. Balfour—a premier-ship.  
Mr. Lloyd-George—a long holiday.  
Mr. Winston Churchill—a muzzle.  
All single Suffragettes—husbands.  
All married Suffragettes—babies.  
Town Councillors—sense and sociability.  
The Wasps—Scottish Cup.  
M'Neill and Scott Brown—better luck next time.  
Everybody—a clean sheet.  
Ourselves—our readers' goodwill.



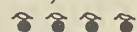
### "The Man in the Street."

"The man in the street" is a phrase which came into journalistic use a few years ago, and has been found so expressive that it has been widely accepted as a useful periphrasis for the formal term "public opinion." From Fleet Street it soon rose to the heights of Westminster, and became a familiar term in Parliament. Few, perhaps, know of its origin. The inventor of its use in the modern sense, as an authority has reminded us, was Ralph Waldo Emerson, and it occurs in his "Conduct of Life," in the section on "Worship," which was published in 1860. The passage is as follows:—"Certain patriots in England devoted themselves for years to creating a public opinion that should break down the Corn Laws and establish Free Trade. 'Well,' says the man in the street, 'Cobden got a stipend out of it.'"



### January (by an Old Timer).

Fare thee well, Old Year,  
Heres' a silent tear  
Dropt upon thy bier.  
January's here,  
Crisp and cold and clear.  
Poultry getting dear.  
Taxes in arrear.  
Liver out of gear—  
Feeling rather queer  
After Christmas cheer;  
Ate too much, I fear.  
What is that I hear?—  
Pipes burst; and that we're  
Flooded front and rear?  
Frost makes his appear-  
ance felt far and near;  
Takes you by the ear.  
Well now, just look here,  
Thermometer at zer-  
O—oh—(shivers).



### One on the Ear!

Miss Helen Mather's Christmas "box" to the members of her own adorable sex who want votes is not, I fear, conducive to peace on earth, although it may breathe the spirit of good-will to men:—"Instead of object-lessons, the militant Suffragettes are a shame and disgrace to all womanhood." Tut, tut; Miss Mathers takes life far too seriously—we shall really begin to fear that there is some truth in the assertion, after all, that women have no sense of humour.

### Election Party Cries.

Vote for the Unionists and a Greater Britain—(if a smaller loaf).

Vote for the Rad-Sosh-Pad Party, Home Rule for Ireland, bedad, and the end of all things.

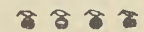
Vote for the Big Navy Party and command of the blue blue C.

Vote for the Little Navy Party, and go to the red red D.



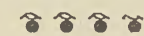
### A Happy New Ure.

It is confidently expected that Alexander the Whoppersmith will be rewarded according to his works in 1910.



### Winnie Warfare.

I see that Radical dog, Winston, who, along with his pal Taffy, has been preaching lurid death and—(hem!)—anti-blessing on the poor doomed dukes, is not to be allowed to have all the afflative denunciation on his side the festive board. The Unionist candidate for Burnley, who evidently takes the windy Winnie all too seriously, has been making bitter reference to the fact that, despite all the contumely he has recently been pouring o'er aristocratic heads, he very frequently hangs up his hat in Blenheim Palace, and scorns not to smoke the ducal cigars and sip the ducal champagne, what time he may be composereal nasty ones for offensive use against the wicked dukes and earls. There's ingratitude for you: who may plumb the depth of such turpitude? Imagine the peer-pulveriser down for the week-end at uncle's. "Winston, dear boy," says the duchess at dinner, "do have another glass of port." "Delighted," says Win, with a mental wink, and straightway coins the phrase "Guzzling grandees" for his next speech. In the billiard room—"Come down for a day's shooting next week," says the Duke. "Delighted," says Win as before; books the engagement, and makes a mem.—"Baronial bird butchers": good phrase for next speech. And then off he goes on Monday, with a pocket full of the Duke's best Havanas and no end of bon mots for the week's oratory.



### Germany's New Year Wishes.

It must be very gratifying to patriotic Britons to receive the assurance, through one of the leading Berlin papers, that Germans are following our political struggle with absorbing interest, and that they wish us a happy new year and a Radical victory. The two latter contingencies may be compatible, from a German point of view, but—well, we hae oor doots.

DRINK

**HAY & SON'S**  
XL., No. 1, and  
**SCOTCH BREW**



"CODLIN'S THE FRIEND, NOT SHORT!"

Working Man—"This General Election is fair spoilin' me. I never knew I was so bloomin' popular."



“Men we know” (Second Series):

XXIV. Mr. ALFRED A. PROSSER, Solicitor.

# Should Christmas Be Abolished?

INTERESTING DEBATE.

Under the auspices of "The Strathbogie Parliamentary Debating Society," "The Footdee Farmers' Club," and "The Cairnbulg Domino League," a large and representative gathering met in the Odd-fellows' Hall on Friday evening. The object of the meeting was to ascertain, if possible, whether Christmas should be abolished or not, and to acquaint both Houses of Parliament with the result of their deliberations. On the motion of Sir David Stewart, Mr G. B. Esslemont, M.P., was called upon to preside. Telegrams (mostly apologies for absence) were read from the German Emperor (who subsequently sent a second one cancelling the first), Peter Green, Hall Caine, Dr Bodie, Baillie Kemp, D. V. Pirie, Wallace Thom, and M. Ivolsky (who thought our Christmas ridiculously early); wireless messages from Ananias, Dr Cook, George Washington, Father Christmas, J. Frost, and Charles Dickens; while a picture postcard was sent by Dr Andrew Carnegie of Skibo.

In the course of a few introductory remarks, Sir David Stewart said he was only too ready to attend such a meeting, as he wished it to be generally known that the Christmas season had been to him, of recent years, a most melancholy period. (Laughter.) The Great North of Scotland Railway had been regularly and systematically blocked, traffic had been interrupted, and dividends reduced. (Loud laughter.) This year, he was glad to say, had proved an honourable exception. Turkeys, moreover, did not agree with him, and the presentation of gloves and handkerchiefs, when coal was 1s 8d the bag and gas 2s 7d the thousand feet, was simply preposterous. He for one was to stand it no longer, and he hoped the meeting would unanimously agree with him that Christmas should be peremptorily and immediately wiped from the calendar.

Mr Esslemont, who was received with cheers, counter cheers, and groans, said that, speaking on behalf of the Government — (interruption) — he could assure them that, no matter what decision the meeting arrived at, neither Mr Asquith nor Mr Balfour would favour the abolition of Christmas, as they were too fond of the temporary respite, and that a bill with any such object would not receive the support of the party in power. (At this point Sir D. Stewart left the meeting, with the intention, it was understood, of motoring to Inverurie to inspect the lifeboat and rocket apparatus.) Continuing, Mr Esslemont said he had had the unique pleasure of travelling north in a first-class "smoker" with—whom did they think? (A Voice—"Kelly," and laughter.) No, it was Mr Balfour, and the right hon. gentleman sat most of the time with legs crossed and back bent forward, studiously engaged upon a manifesto to the Whittinghame Conserva-

tive and Poultry Fanciers' Association. (Cheers.) They heard much nowadays about Mr Balfour's uncertain attitude. "That," said Mr Esslemont triumphantly, "was Mr Balfour's attitude, and there was no uncertainty about it." (Laughter and cries of "No politics.")

Mr A. M. Ogston of Ardoe was of opinion that Christmas brought with it much genuine artistic pleasure. Nothing delighted him better than a good old-fashioned Christmas-tree, covered with innumerable wax-candles. (Cheers.) As Chaucer so beautifully remarked to Nell Gwyn, "a thing of beauty is a joy for ever." (Prolonged cheers.) He trusted the meeting would have the good sense not to interfere with a time-honoured, merry-making celebration.

Councillor Chalmers, in the course of an eloquent address, said that, as a postman, he naturally favoured the abolition of Christmas. Hours were long, work diabolically heavy, and "tips" growing fewer and fewer. Whatever it was—the Budget, the General Election, the Holburn licence, or the recently published report of the "Society for the Provision of Hip-Pockets for Postmen," the people were not so generous nowadays as they were wont to be. He had therefore much pleasure in supporting Sir D. Stewart.

The Chief Constable, who was greeted with the singing of "For he's a jolly good fellow," stated that he had just come out of prison. (Laughter.) At the moment of his leaving there were only 32 persons in the cells, and his men had only "run them in" with the greatest reluctance, as Christmas was a time for good-fellowship and general merriment. (Loud cheers.) As a matter of business, however, he was obliged to vote for the abolition of Christmas, as the amount of bails collected at that season seldom paid for the courtroom "gas." (Cries of "Hear, hear.")

A representative of the "Bakers' Incorporation" drew attention to the fact that, as Christmas meant employment for hundreds of men, they could not conscientiously support its abolition; while the manager of the Northern Co-op. Drug Department deplored the decrease in the sale of castor oil, etc., which must result if the festivities of the season were tabooed, and the customs not duly and properly observed. (Loud cheers.)

Mr Alexander Mackilligan, of the "Free Press," addressing the meeting, said he would be truly sorry to miss his usual Christmas morning experience—that of sprinkling the pavement near his house with sodium chloride—(interruption)—a composition which is found both in the solid form as in rock salt—(laughter)—and in solution in sea-water and brine springs. Speaking for himself—(a Voice, "And for Betsy Jane"—laughter)—the shop windows on Christmas Day afforded him a

tantalising delight—tantalising as he could not obtain the many good things he saw; but delightful, nevertheless, to look at. The day, too, was not without its sanctity, and no one there could say that he (Mr Mackilligan) had ever been seen on his bicycle on the 25th of December—in fact, he did not even oil it. (Loud cheers.) He much regretted the organisers of the meeting had not invited him to show a few lime-light views of Christmas scenes in different Scottish counties. Some people imagined that one county did not differ from another in habits and customs at this time of year, but he could assure them that, while a cock in Banffshire on Christmas morning might crow at 7.10, one in Morayshire might not crow till 7.15. (Sensation.)

The Rev. James Smith reminded the meeting that, as the author of "Over the Hill to the Poorhouse" so well put it, "Christmas comes but once a year." (Prolonged cheers.) His friend, Mr G. M. Fraser, librarian, who, as they were all aware, was a great antiquarian authority, had informed him that, after thirty years' arduous labour and minute investigation, he had discovered, and was perfectly convinced, that Christmas was not observed prior to the year 1 B.C., and Sir William Ramsay had found no reference of any kind among the ruins of Mesopotamia to any celebration of Christmas except the appearance on a leaf of papyrus of a word which meant "Turkey," but Professor Mommsen believed this word to refer to the Ottoman Empire and not to the bird of that name. At this point of the proceedings some interruption took place in the back of the hall, two members of the Cairnbulg Domino League being desirous of giving a free exhibition of "catch-as-catch-can," which necessitated their immediate ejection. After order was restored, Mr. Smith said that, in view of what he had already said, and seeing he possessed a barrel of undelivered Christmas sermons, he must continue to observe that season.

Councillor Wilkie, photographer, said, if asked if he were in favour of the abolition of Christmas, his answer would be a distinct "negative." (Disorder, during which two more members of the C.D.L. had to be forcibly ejected, as they persisted in addressing the meeting on "Tariff Reform.")

The Chairman then requested a show of hands "for" and "against" the abolition of Christmas, and in each case the meeting seemed to be unanimous! The question was therefore left undecided, and the meeting broke up in great confusion.

J. W. O.

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(Two doors from Bank), ABERDEEN.

**HERE COMES IN !**

Dear Bert,—Thanks for good wishes; same to you, old man, and many of 'em. Hope you've had a jolly time; guess I had. Fact is, I cut footer last week, and went on holiday. Can't understand these johnnies, Bert, who pretend to scoff at "popular customs," and want to do away with our New Year holidays. Bah! A lot of pragmatic prigs! Abolish holidays, indeed! Why, in these days of commercial stress and strain, the bare suggestion of cutting off our brief mid-winter respite is enough to give one the Polar needle, and freeze the very ink in one's fountain pen. I don't know how such a calamity would affect you, dear boy; but as for myself—why, I'm afraid I should become a regular social pariah.

I'm such a shocking correspondent, you see, that I've got to make amends somehow. Right joyfully, therefore, do I seize on the opportunity afforded by Old Father Time's annual spiritual bath and January rejuvenation to trot around in metaphorical sackcloth and ashes, doing apologetic penance and craving absolution for fifty-two weeks' most shameful lethargy and neglect. Deprived of this annual "restoration," Heaven knows what would become of me. I should be "cut"—branded as an incorrigible and hopeless derelict, I suppose—by all who once were generous enough to claim me as friend and acquaintance. But, praise be, that disaster has been providentially staved off for another year: I am still in the land of hope!

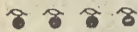
Have you ever heard of Banff? Yes!—well, I went there. Not quite a cyclonic city, to be sure, nor one offering a choice of continental frivolities; but as a field for reflection on bygone follies, and the registration of heroic resolves for the future, I should think 'twould take some beating. The distractions are few. For the dissipated celebrationist (with the pubs closed down) the choice on Saturday lay between threepence worth of football and a rehearsal of "The Messiah"! Owing to the foresaid clerical crimes clamouring for expiation, I had, perforce, to deny myself the giddy joys of football, and seek instead the solace of Handel. In this, however, I was balked. Not having the prescience to provide myself with the necessary pasteboard, the choice was presented me of standing two hours in a draughty ante-room—at a bob an hour—or remaining in the outside world; and I chose the latter. I hate draughts of all kinds—always did have a preference for bottled, you know. The show got on all right without yours truly, however. Scored quite a record, I believe.

Had the good fortune, on the way home, to run up against Mr. J. S. Jackson at Tilly-naught. He had been through singing the tenor solos, and expressed himself as highly delighted with the whole performance. Laudation from such a past-master was good to hear, and inspires the hope that when the Festival comes off in June, Tom Wright and his melodic band from Banff may justify their Granite City incursion in search of laurels.

Well, well, Bert, here we are again—ready and eager for the fray. By the bye, took a turn out to Pittodrie on Monday to glimpse the Wasp versus Thistle fight. Quite disappointing! Why, you'd thought the way the Stripes started off, they mean to strip the Southron bare; but they didn't. Granted that, with a tiny bit of luck, they might have crossed over with a goal or two in hand, yet, as things went in the second half, honours easy was no more

than they deserved. The halves were the pick of the lot, with Millar a good first. There's no doubt about it, old man: Jamie's a sterling player—not one of your so-called "stars," whose indulgent career is spotted by so many "off-days"—but a thoroughly competent, conscientious, reliable, hard-working chap, whose "form" and deportment never cause his management a moment's uneasiness. Good luck to him! No more at present from yours, New-yearishly,

Grs.

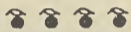


**A Terrible Menace.**

Noo, by St. George an' a' the Poors,  
Tak' care what ye're aboot, ye Boers!  
Or Baron Gladstone o' Majuba  
Will Spankify ye, a la Cuba!

You set a thief to catch a thief,  
The plan will sometimes come to grief;  
But what about the precious fool  
That sets a child to hold a bull?

M. H.



**How It Was Done.**

Tom was very much in love with Mabel, and she was not unwilling, but as yet had given no sign. One evening they were sitting on the Esplanade, looking silently o'er the murmurous waters of the Dee.

"I dreamed of you last night," at last he said tenderly.

"Oh, how nice," responded Mabel, without betraying very much emotion; "I hoped it was a good one: tell me't, please."

"I dreamt we were sitting together on the banks of a beautiful stream," he began, "just as the sun was sinking away to rest in the purpling stars, and we talked of birds, of music, of flowers, and of love. Your face glowed as if a great light shone on it, but when I spoke of love you grew cold and distant, and I could feel the chill air touching my heart, and see the buds of my hope wither in the frost of your disapproval. I knew then how useless was all I could do, how futile was effort, but, urged on by that mysterious power no man can explain and none resists, I cast the fatal die and asked you to be mine." He stopped a moment, trembling.

"And what did I say?" she asked.

"No"; and his voice grew husky and his lips quivered.

She put out her hand to him softly. "Dreams go by contraries, dear," she murmured; and then he gathered her in.

And the Dee winked in the moonlight, and laughed silently on.



**"A Consumption Devoutly——"**

I wish I had a ring to wear,  
Whose magic energy was such,  
My finger that 'twould pinch when'er  
My next drop would be one too much.  
Then should I hit the happy mean  
Aimed at by every man of sense,  
And all next week walk straight between  
The states of "beer" and "abstinence."

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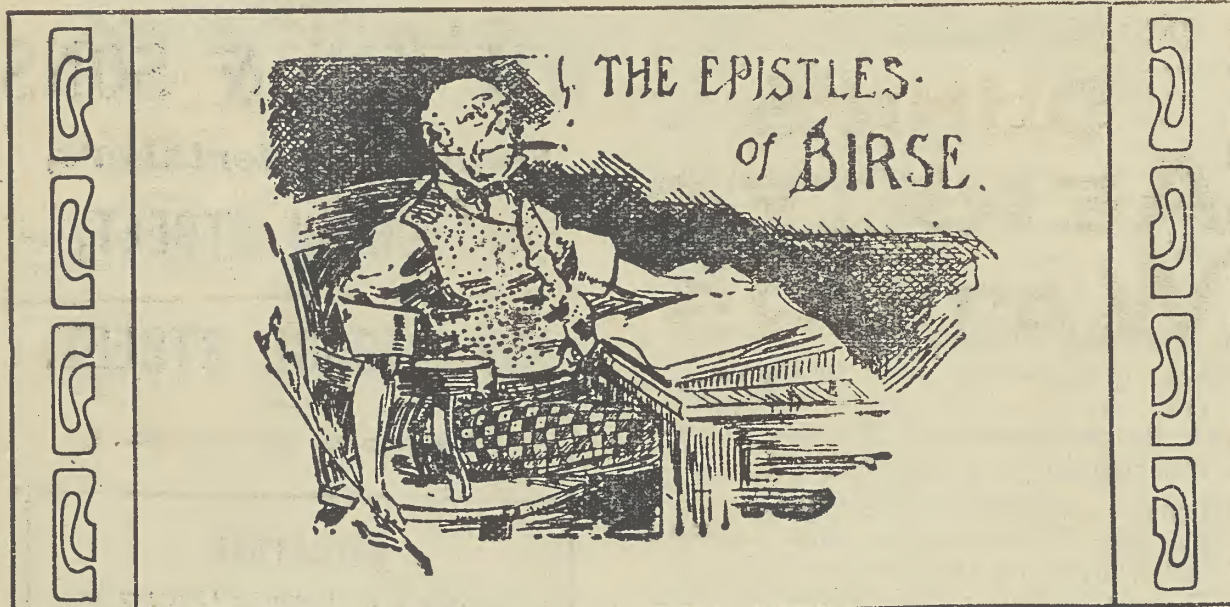
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### HE SPENDS THE NEW YEAR AT HOME.

DEAR MR EDITOR,

Tho' I hereby tender ye an' yer readers the compliments o' the sizzon, and sincerely houp that durin' the comin' year ye may a' be able to live at peace wi' yer neipours, which is mair than I cud ever manage, the follain mak's nae claim t' rank as a sizzonable epis'le. In my present frame o' min' I cudna vreet styte o' that kin' though ye wis to offer me a king's ransom. The present New Year wis the most mees'able I ever spent in Aiberdeen—that's a' I hae to say about it. If I wis ane o' thae unscrup'lis scribblin' rascals that's noo sae common in the toon I cud easy mak' up a sufficiency o' amusin' incidents to fill my allotted space. But as a stric'ly conscientious man I scorn sic an action, an' ye can depen' on't that, in the futur' as in the past, ilky narration o' my life's varied experiences that I contribut' t' yer pepper will contain naething bit the naked gospel trowth. As a'body that kens me wi' ony degree o' intimacy is awaur, my veracity has never yet been

#### PUBLICLY CALL'T IN QUESTION.

Leein' an' deceit in every shape an' form are absolut'ly repugnant to my natur'; so hateful, in fac't, that if I even imaged my nearest an' dearest relatives capable o' sic abominations I wid at aince an' athoot falterin' cut them oot o' my will, heart, an' min'. In several cases that's jist fat I've deen, an' if some fouk I cud mention dinna tak' tint there 'ill be mair to folla. This is nae a threat—only a warnin'. A' my life I've struggled to play the straucht game, an' that tee, as I flatter mysel', wi' conspeeshis success, which moves me to express the confident belief that in futur' ages, an' for the same rizzon—their unswervin' devotion to the Trowth—the humble name o' Peter Birse 'ill be as much a household word wi' the public as that o' the famous

AMERICAN HERRO, GEORGE WASHINGTON.

As a graduat o' ane o' the Universities o' the gryte country George discovered an' foundit, I hereby pledge his solem' mem'ry an' drink heartily till's continued gweed health,

Haein' made the declaration o' my leeterary integrity, which nae doot the bulk o' yer readers 'ill consider utterly superfluous, I sall noo proceed wi' my subject proper. I've already warned ye that this isna a tale o' Hogmanay or New Year rejicin's. There wis nae observance o' that natur' at Kettybrowster. Time wis fin wi' me, as wi' my neipours, the present wid' 'a' been the merriest, maddest sizzon o' the year. Bit as a result o' that terrible misadventur', which left me saidd't wi' a randy o' a wife, the joy has depairtit frae my existence. Cud I gotten redd o' 'er athoot a scandal I widna muckle tribblet mysel'. Bit as I've alreddy taul ye, that wis impossible. Tho' on discoverin' 'er unworthiness to be an honest man's partner, I at aince thrust oot this

#### DO'THER O' BELZIBOB

fae my hearth an' heart, she hid the owdacity to ging het-fit till a law-awgint, wi' the result that I'm noo defender in an action for alyment, which is laid at the enormis sum o' three poun' a week.

Ye nicht weel imegine that I wid at least hae the sympathy o' my neipours in my distress. That, sir, I can tell ye is not the case. The place has been seethin' wi' the scandal for the last fortnicht. In fac', I canna ventur' on the street athoot bein' molested by respectably dress't hooligans an' follut by jeerin' croods o' bairns. On Hongmanay three drunken wastrels serenadet the hoose, an' efter haudin' a concert, in which ilky sang wis mair abominable than its predecessor, ane o' them threw a teem fussy bottle thro' the parlir winda. Fortunat'ly at that junctur' a couple o' bobbies cam' up an' hauled the offenders doon to Lodge Walk, faur on Tyseday they were sev'rally fined ten shillin's for breach o' the peace an' maleeshis mischief. Ony feelin' o' setisfaction I felt at the imposition o' this penalty wis speedily dampit, for in less than three 'oors efter my appearance in the witness-box I wis subjectit t' the atroschis ootrage which noo keeps me confined t' the ceety in a condeetion little better than that o' a prisoner at lairge. In fac', fin attemptin' t' leave the ceety for Glesca I wis arrestit on a Fujie warran'. There wis absolut'ly nae

necessity for this vindictive step, as I've neither assigned my property till a trustee nor itherwise made ony attemp' t' evade the consequences o' the said action for alyment. Athoot doot my arrest is purely due to the malice o' the purshooer's soleecitor. Fin that disreputable character interviewed me on the subject at Kettybrowster I frankly declared that, whether he got decree or no, his client wid

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never finger a copper o' my siller; an' syne on's gi'ein' me some lip I lost comman' o' my temper an' summarily kickit 'im oot o' the hoose. By fat speeshies o' misrepresentation he induc't the Shirra's fouk to issue the warrant I canna say; bit get it he did, wi' the result that jist as I wis about t' step int' the 3.40 train at the J'int Dauvit Hendry, fa wis accompaniet b' ane o's concurrents, drew me aside an informed me ceevily enouch that the Shirra widna permit me to leave the toon until I'd gien security for the peyment o' my creditors—or something to that effec'. Sae enragt wis I that, big chiel tho' Dauvit is, I wid 'a' shown fecht, bit he made licht o' the occurrence, which he describit as the cutest lyar's trick that had ever been play't in his experience, an' further soothed me b' the reminder that on the circumstances bein' explaint to Mr Duthie, the Caley's superintendent, I wid either get my ticket exchangt for some ither day or my siller refundit. Recogneesin' efter some mair argyment that it's nae eese fechtin' ag'inst the law, I at last consentit to forego my journey an' peaceably accompanied my captor up the road t' Union Brig, faur I drappit in to see my own awgint.

Yours truly,

PETER BIRSE.

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# SPORTS AND PASTIMES

## FOOTBALL.



A POPULAR BENEFIT.

If there was any doubt as to Lennie's popularity as a player, it was easily dispelled by the enthusiastic crowd that assembled at Pittodrie on Tuesday to do honour to the clever left-winger, who has completed five years' service with the club. Coming to Aberdeen after a season with Fulham, he early won favour with the crowd, and has retained that confidence against all-comers. He got an enthusiastic reception on stepping out to the field of play on Tuesday, when his opponents were Dundee, with whom he played prior to going to England. Dundee paid him the compliment of playing as strong a team as they could command, and though the play was sometimes a bit dull, there were some capital passages which amply rewarded the spectators. The visitors were early on the job, and had the ball in the net twice inside five minutes, before the home crowd had time to realise that the game had well begun. A new centre in the Aberdeen attack was being eagerly watched, and he came out of his shell with honours. The manner in which he scored the first goal was quite a treat, demonstrating that he knew where the space was to receive the ball. On registering a second one, and equalising the game, he had more work to do, cleverly outwitting Lee and M'Ewan, and then scoring with a high shot, which fairly put the spectators in good humour. The second period was poor in comparison with the first, the players having taken a good deal out of themselves in the opening stage. Lennie almost put his side on the lead, but Simpson had the honour with a high shot which went over the goalkeeper's arm. Aberdeen won an interesting game by 3-2. It is expected that, with tickets sold and the gate-money, the guarantee of £150 will be realised, and Lennie will be the richer for his season's work to that extent.

### HONOURS DIVIDED.

The new arrangement arrived at between Dundee and Aberdeen whereby New Year's Day fixtures in the League to be played alternately at Dens Park and Pittodrie has come to stay. No one who was at Dundee on Saturday

will deny this, for some 12,000 spectators were crammed into the enclosure, and they got splendid value for their money. It only remains for the Aberdeen spectators to patronise the venture in the same numbers when their turn comes, and the fixture is assured for all time. Dens Park was not in its best condition when the teams arrived, a liberal supply of rain during the morning and early forenoon making the surface look rather moist. However, once the teams went off, there was little signs of heaviness in anything, for the pace was fast, Aberdeen being determined to get there. Only once could we say that we were really afraid of Aberdeen's downtall, and that was when the back, M'Ewan, with a mighty drive almost sent the goalposts out of the ground, the ball rebounding back to the same player, so great was the force with which he propelled it. On the other hand, Aberdeen deserved to have had a couple of goals at least out of the many chances that came their way. They were pressing so hard that Murray sent in a teaser to Crumley, who could only partially clear, and Bobby Simpson fastening on struck the post with the shot. What a fine chance it was!

But this was not the only one, for Soye had another cross from Lennie which he should have scored with, but just failed to get there in time before Chaplin. There were other good shots sent in, but these were not so palpable as these we have mentioned, and at the close of the first forty-five we felt quite confident of Aberdeen pulling it off. Quite a transformation ensued when they commenced again, for Dundee forwards seemed to get into their short passing game, and try as they could the Aberdeen halves could not hold them in the same way as in the opening period. Their marksmanship was none better than Aberdeen's, however. Mutch dealt with every shot that came his way, never relaxing a muscle the while. Dundonians were roused to a great pitch when Hunter towards the finish made a gallop away on his own to shoot, and although he missed everything in his parting effort, Sandy Mutch seemed so cool between the posts that nothing could have beaten him. That points were divided through neither team being able to score was really a fair reflex of the run of the play.

### THE PLAYERS.

One gratifying feature of Saturday's game at Dens Park was the absence of "feeling" throughout the game between the players, and this led to the play being more interesting than we have seen for some time between the teams. We have said so much about Dundee that we need not repeat it over again, but their salvation on Saturday was entirely due to their half-back line. Their forwards seem useless when opposed by bustlers. Aberdeen's halves on Saturday were triumphant during the first period, but did not sustain their brilliance in the closing half. The forwards played well, though their shooting might have had more sting in it. Of the lot we would say that none deserves more credit than Sandy Mutch for his work between the sticks.

### IN HOLIDAY MOOD.

Aberdeen were not the same team as that of Saturday, although there was only one change on the side, Macfarlane playing centre-half, and Wilson at right-half in place of Davidson. Their play against Partick Thistle lacked cohesion, whilst it was void of good

finishing, the forwards suffering from over-confidence. The Thistle, though they did not put in the same amount of outfield work, when they did get away their shooting was not so far off the mark as that of the home side. On the run of the play during the first half Aberdeen should have scored more than one goal, the many opportunities that were lost, or missed being quite exasperating to the on-lookers. When O'Hagan did rush the ball through, we expected to see more, once the spell had been broken, but no such luck, for Aberdeen could do everything but beat Howden. The second period was pretty much a repetition of the first; with this exception that the Thistle equalised with a good effort. Aberdeen took a breather at this time, and the Thistle seized their chance, and made good what they had been lacking in during the first portion. A romping finish saw the teams divide the points, the same result—one goal each—as occurred at Firhill Park on December 11.

Play was interesting at times, and on occasion, truth to tell, somewhat dull. We took it that the players were suffering after the hard gruelling they got on Saturday at Dens Park. On the visiting side, the defence of M'Kenzie was specially noteworthy, and the goalkeeping of Howden was praiseworthy. The halves were a hard-working lot; and the forwards were as nippy a set as we have seen for some time. Mutch did everything he got to do well, but we have seen the backs in better trim; and of the halves, Macfarlane and Millar had the pull. Bert Murray was the outstanding forward of the day, and next to him we should say O'Hagan deserved praise for the way he drew out the defence, and let the extreme men away. Soye was no better and no worse than he usually is, while Lennie and Simpson have both done better than on Monday.

### THE LEAGUE PROGRAMME.

New Year's Day opened with a full League list of fixtures, and but for wet weather prevailing in many districts, record crowds would have been the rule. Nevertheless, the attendances all over are reported to have been good, thus showing that holiday football of the League order has a strong power over the people, and is a recognised institution at this season. On Monday Queen's Park had their annual "friendly" with the Northern Nomads, and Falkirk played their North-Eastern semi-final tie with Leith.

The foremost fixture on Saturday was that between Celtic and Rangers, which, despite the bad weather, drew an enormous crowd. Play was poor, and several accidents occurring, robbed the game of a good deal of interest. It was anybody's game throughout, each side scoring one goal, and trying more to spoil the other from scoring than doing much in that way themselves. It was a poor exhibition, but the draw will do more to create interest in the League competition than a win to either side. On Monday, they had a stiff struggle with Clyde at Shawfield, and the play was fully more interesting, Celtic winning by 1-0.

The team that has suffered most at this time has been St Mirren who have dropped full points in both their holiday fixtures—a new experience to the Saints. They lost to Kilmarnock on the first day of the year by 2-1, and on Monday were defeated by 5-2 at Cathkin Park.

Falkirk have held their own all through their programme, taking a win from Airdrie on Monday by 4-1, and then qualifying for the final of

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The feature of the New Year games was the large number of drawn games, and the general close results that occurred. We have already mentioned Celts and Rangers and Aberdeen and Dundee. These great rivals, Hearts and Hibs, held their usual stand-up at Tynecastle, which ended in 1 goal each. Morton and Port-Glasgow finished with a similar score, while the game between Motherwell and Hamilton Academicals finished with the score at 2-2.

Clyde did one of the best performances they have done this season when they beat Third Lanark by 3-1 at Cathkin. That between Queen's Park and Partick Thistle resulted in favour of the amateurs by 2-0—a most creditable result indeed.

Hearts and Hibs both secured victories on Monday over Dundee and Morton respectively, while the Rangers rubbed it into Port-Glasgow to the tune of 4-0. Hamilton "Acas." got beat by Airdrie, the 'Onians winning by 2-1. These results show a curious state of form—most unreliable.

SATURDAY'S LEAGUE RESULTS.

a Celtic	...	1	Rangers	...	1
a Kilmarnock	...	2	St. Mirren	...	1
a Dundee	...	0	Aberdeen	...	0
a Hearts	...	1	Hibernians	...	1
a Morton	...	1	Port-Glasgow	...	1
a Queen's Park	...	2	Partick Thistle	...	0
a Falkirk	...	4	Airdrieonians	...	1
a Motherwell	...	2	Hamilton Acas.	...	2
Clyde	...	3	a Third Lanark	...	1

MONDAY'S LEAGUE MATCHES.

a Hearts	...	1	Dundee	...	0
Celtic	...	1	a Clyde	...	0
a Third Lanark	...	5	St. Mirren	...	2
a Airdrieonians	...	2	Hamilton	...	1
a Aberdeen	...	1	Partick Thistle	...	1
a Hibernians	...	2	Morton	...	1
a Rangers	...	4	Port-Glasgow	...	0

a denotes the home club.

DUNDEE "A" AT PITTODRIE.

The New Year's fare at Pittodrie was Dundee "A," who opposed the local reserves in the Reserve League competition. A stiffish breeze blew down the field, which had the effect of making the ball take peculiar turns at times, and greatly disconcerted the players till they caught on to its vagaries. From the manner in which the visitors started, and the rocky defence set up by the home side, it was confidently expected that, before the finish, Aberdeen "A" would be a few goals to the bad. Though the Dundonians had many opportunities to score, they failed to get the ball in the net, the teams retiring at the end of 45 minutes without a goal being notched. Trainer Forsyth had surely some special mixture for his men at half-time, for they went at it with refreshing vim on resuming, and were more in the picture than ever they had been before. After a spell of give-and-take sort of play, Aberdeen got into their stride, and, after peppering Philip for a time, a penalty was given against the left back, from which Scott opened the score. Shortly after the Peterhead player picked up a nice pass, and wormed through the defence on his own, landing the ball in the net, well out of Philip's reach. It was a splendid effort, and settled the issue, for Dundee were hard put to it to keep the home side from adding to their

total. From a bad beginning, the game was full of interest at the finish, Aberdeen being worthy winners by 2-0.

On the Dundee side Philip was as alert as ever in goal, while Lawson was the better of the two backs. The halves indulged in strong kicking, and were specially at fault in the second period. In the attack Dinnie was most prominent, but we could not say any of the others caught our fancy for anything they did. King did a lot of good work in goal—at times risking a bit too much, but it always came off. Hannah also played a good game, but Low was not a patch on what we have seen him at left back, and was better when he changed places with Macfarlane. "Mac" put in a lot of sterling work along with Moffat and easily took honours in the middle line. The front line all did well, Scott being the "star" of the lot, closely followed by the extreme men—Hay and Jaffray. Edgar and M'Kenzie also did some smart work, but were well watched by the Dundonians' defence.

THIS WEEK'S PROGRAMME.

Aberdeen will be from home this Saturday again, when they travel to Motherwell to play their return match with the team of that name. On October 23, at Pittodrie, Motherwell were very fortunate in drawing with Aberdeen, the score being 2-2, and as the Fir Parkers have improved greatly since that time, Aberdeen will have to be in great form to beat them in their own pitch. With such a hard lot of games during the past fortnight, the Aberdeen players are a bit stale, and though no change is contemplated meantime, some of them will require a rest before the ties come on. The team to travel will be as follows:—Mutch; Colman and Hume; Davidson, Wilson, and Millar; Murray, Simpson, Soye, O'Hagan, and Lennie.

Pittodrie will be occupied with Motherwell's reserves, and a good lot the Fir Parkers are, as they beat Aberdeen "A" by 5-1 on October 23 at Motherwell. This was during Aberdeen "A's" spell of bad luck, so we expect a different result on Saturday. Aberdeen "A" will be represented by the following:—King; Hannah and Low; Moffat, Macfarlane, and Henderson; MacEchern or Hay, Towns, M'Kenzie, Edgar, and Jaffrey.

CHATTY BITS.

General regret has been felt all over Scotland at the unexpected death of James Main, of the Hibs, as the result of an accident the previous week while playing against Partick Thistle. Off or on the field, Main was a well-behaved player, and the game and the Hibs are the poorer by his sudden call from play.

The feature of the New Year games in the Scottish League was the close scoring by the teams.

Falkirk now tread dangerously close on the Celts' heels for the championship, and should keep the Parkhead team going to the finish.

The Celts have been unfortunate through accidents this season, and they had more added to their injured list on Saturday.

Aberdeen enjoyed the Belfast trip immensely, but it took rather much out of the players, in view of the stiff programme set them for the New Year.

They were very popular with the Irishmen, and received quite an ovation on leaving. Their popularity had evidently preceded them, for they shared in one of the largest gates the Distillery have taken this season.

Aberdeen were guaranteed £40, and they came back with about £50 more, not bad work for such an enjoyable trip.

There is a strong outcry that the local club should get a new centre forward. None of the aspirants to that position have given satisfaction as yet.

We would suggest that George Wilson should get a trial at centre. He has learned how to

control the ball since he figured in that position, and is all over a more experienced player.

There can be no doubt about his abilities as a shot, the only difficulty would be the finding of a suitable man for his place in the middle line, and we think "Pim" Henderson might be tried there.

The Dundee-Aberdeen fixture has come to stay. Over £300 was taken at the "gates" on New Year's Day.

Less than £40 was taken at Pittodrie, where a good game was served up. This will improve as the reserves keep in a winning mood.

They have a 5-1 defeat to wipe off this week, and, granted they are all sound and fit, it will not be for want of trying if they do not win.

It is generally conceded to have been a good idea to have the players away on Hogmanay night, as they were saved a lot of useless worry at this season of the year.

They were all very high in their praise of mine host Burnetsley, of Carnoustie, who did everything to make the players comfortable and at home.

In the next round of the Aberdeenshire Cup, Aberdeen "A" have been drawn against Buckie Thistle or Harp at Pittodrie. This tie should be played on January 15th, but we learn that Clyde will be at Pittodrie on League business on that date. An extension of time will have to be made.



JUNIOR FOOTBALL.

(By "The Rover.")

East Fife v. Aberdeenshire.—The A.J.F.A.'s unbroken home record has gone in a somewhat easy fashion. On Saturday what was thought to be a very strong team, representative of the association, took the field to oppose the pick of East Fife. The result 4-2 for the Fifeshire Juniors plainly showed that the team chosen was not equal to those which had represented the association on former occasions. This opinion, however, is not calculated to in any way detract from the visitors the honour of their victory, for it may at once be said that whatever team the local association had decided upon, a stiff fight would had been put up by the Fifers.

Coming to the game, East Fife were soon on the lead, Watt scoring with a brilliant effort. This success imbued the team with confidence, and for a time they were masters of the situation. Backed up by strong half-back play, the visiting van gave a fine exhibition of correct football, and ultimately their lead was further increased, Niblo scoring from a weak save by Greig. Crossing over with a two-goals lead, the visitors immediately assumed the aggressive, despite the fact that the locals had now the advantage of the incline. Aberdeen had one run down, but were easily repulsed. The game became more evenly contested, and Brown scored with a soft shot for Aberdeen. The home forwards were game, having to find the ball for themselves, as the middle line was practically useless. At this stage, Aberdeen were decidedly unlucky when Dignan put the ball past Greig while he was endeavouring to cover up the latter. Fifeshire attacked on the left, and from a free kick, followed by a fine concerted forward movement, their fourth point was registered. Aberdeen, despite the big leeway, rallied towards the finish, and Brown succeeded in again scoring. This ended the game, with the visitors victors by 4 goals to 2.

There was no mistaking the better team: Fifeshire were winners all over. The whole team gave a splendid account of themselves, every position, from goal to centre-forward, being admirably filled.

Swain was the better of the two backs, while the leading half was Carrigan at centre. The middle line was the mainstay of the team, all three tackling grandly, and placing with excellent judgment.

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The forwards gave a fine display of open work. Watt at centre was really good, while Donaldson at the extreme left caught the eye with fine footwork and a nice turn of speed.

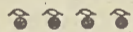
For Aberdeen, Greig in goal was fairly safe, but was directly responsible for the second goal got by Fifeshire.

At back, the Association were well served in both positions, although Dignan should have left the goalkeeper to deal with the ball when the visitors obtained the third point through the medium of the right back.

The forwards were good, although severely handicapped by the weakness of the halves.

#### BUCHANAN SHIELD.

The Aberdeen Boys have succeeded in passing into the second stage of the Buchanan Shield competition, having beaten the Inverness Boys by one goal to nil. The Highland team gave a good display, the combination shown by them being ahead of that of the Aberdeen Boys. Taken all over, the game was value for a draw, with the honours slightly in favour of the Aberdeen team.



#### "The Dollar Princess" to Visit Aberdeen shortly.

Mr. George Edwardes' company in the latest Daly's Theatre success, "The Dollar Princess," will pay a visit to His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen, on January 31st, for one week. Mr. Edwardes has achieved what we all regarded as the impossible. He has found us a musical play as delightful as "The Merry Widow." The music is the essence of tunefulness. The whole of the musical embellishment to this romantic and humorous story of a modern Petruchio and Katherine is so graceful, that the composer, Dr. Fall, might well be christened the duet waltz king. His most haunting numbers are cast in vocal duet form, and the way in which he revels in the waltz rhythm without the slightest suggestion of the musically commonplace—so easy a pitfall in this style of composition—is positively remarkable. It should be mentioned that, when in London, the King of Portugal went twice in the one week to see "The Dollar Princess." Never before in the history of musical comedy in London has a similar compliment been paid to any play.

## FOOTPRINTS IN THE SNOW.

### Tale of a Plucky Boy.

It was New Year's Eve. The weather clerk had attended to his duty for once, and made the atmosphere decidedly wintry in every sense of the term. Tom Drake, the son of Squire Drake, had been to the village to procure everything which went to make a happy New Year at the isolated manor. When clear of the village, and well advanced on his way home, the snow, already several inches deep, began to fall in large flakes, and, the wind rising, was being drifted fiercely. Tom was quite as plucky as any lad of his age, but the elements seemed likely to gain the upper hand. He drew his cap over his eyes, however, and set out doggedly, seeing nothing but the snow at his feet. Before he had travelled thus very long, he noticed the marks of a man's feet in the snow. He took little notice of this at first, but his interest was aroused when he saw a second track joining the first. That made him look up, and when he observed that the footprints proceeded together in the direction of the manor, he commenced investigations, and summed up in a manner which (to judge from his own report) would have done credit to Sherlock Holmes.

He noted that the first track came straight from the village which he had just left, and that the second seemed to advance towards it from the Nether Head Inn—a small hostelry on the high road, about two miles off.

"Rather suspicious," muttered Tom; "better get to the bottom of this job."

So he started off at a sharp trot, in the teeth of the wind, bearing up manfully against the drifting snow, and after about half an hour's running arrived at the inn. The landlord was in the kitchen, which was decorated with festoons of holly and ribbons. He was standing with his back to a roaring fire, on which a savoury turkey was simmering for supper, with a long clay pipe in one hand and a glass of ale in the other, heartily joining with his rustic cronies in an old song, while out in the lobby the cook and the stable-boy were busy under the mistletoe. In the midst of all this festal joy, Tom rushed in, interrupting the very interesting occupation of the couple in the lobby, and alarming the landlord and his friends.

"Bless us!" exclaimed the innkeeper. "Be the manor took fire?"

"No," gasped Tom.

"Well, 'n what's up?"

It was now that Tom realised he had really nothing to be alarmed about.

"Oh, nothing's exactly wrong," he replied, somewhat embarrassed; "I only wanted to know if any strangers had been here."

"Why, help us, yes! A queer cove came last night, and went away 'bout two hour ago. Paid 'is bill 'e did, and I ain't a-going to speak nought 'gainst he."

Perfectly satisfied, Tom grunted an apology, and took his leave. Retracing his steps, he again arrived at the convergence of the footprints, and, guiding himself by the double track, quickly reached home.

On examination, he noticed that both men had gone twice round the house; then one had climbed up the spout to the children's bedroom, while the other went round to the front, apparently to watch. Tom saw the marks in the snow where the watcher had stood, but he was not there now, nor was there any track leading away from the spot. This was singular; but Tom was determined to get to the bottom of the business, and so went into the house as if nothing had happened, announced his arrival, and, when the opportunity offered, crept upstairs to the night nursery, and waited at the door to listen.

"Oo Santa C'aus?" he heard his little brother Harry say.

"Yes; and I've got a lot of nice things for you; and now—"

"An' for me too?" interrupted Sis—"a mail-cart—"

"Yes, yes—everything!" said the mock Santa Claus, somewhat impatiently; "but I've got things for mother as well, so tell me where her jewel-case is. I want to put a gold brooch in and surprise her."

Tom was downstairs in two seconds. He hurriedly told everything to his father, who telephoned to the police-office at the village; then they and the coachman sprang upstairs, and met the burglar on the landing. The latter gave a hoarse yell when he saw them, rushed back to the children's room, and, locking the door, called out that he would murder the youngsters if he wasn't set free. Without replying to the threat, the squire broke down the door, and the three rushed in. The alarmed housebreaker dashed towards the window, but this was closed, and before he could make further resistance he was overpowered and made prisoners by the officers, who had hurried to the scene.

With regard to the other burglar, the sergeant of police suggested that he must have seen them coming, and made off—probably towards the railway station, on the other side of the village. This surmise proved correct, and after an exciting chase the police were just in time to catch their man as he attempted to board the London train, which was about to leave the platform.

"A happy New Year, and many of 'em," remarked the sergeant cynically, as he fixed the handcuffs on the panting thief's wrists.

W. M. RAMSAY, JUN.

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# ESSLEMONT & MACINTOSH

TAILORING DEPARTMENT—NO. 24 UNION STREET.

## EVENING WEAR FOR GENTLEMEN.

- Dinner Jacket Suit, £4. Lined with Silk Serge and Rich Silk Facings.  
 Dinner Jacket Suit, £5. Lined throughout with Silk and Fine Silk Facings.  
 Evening Dress Suit, £4 4s. Lined with Silk Serge and Rich Silk Facings.  
 Evening Dress Suit, £5 5s. Lined throughout with Silk and Fine Silk Facings.

Every Evening Wear Requisite for Gentlemen.

ALL PRICES ARE QUOTED FOR CASH WITHOUT DISCOUNT.

# ESSLEMONT & MACINTOSH



## LIKE WALKING ON AIR!

In an hour's walk your heel strikes the pavement from 10,000 to 15,000 times. Think what this means in a day.

The difference between the heel letting soft instead of hard, accounts for the extraordinary influence on health exercised — by —

## Wood-Milne Rubber Heels

They are money savers too. They wear four times as long as leather, thus saving repairs and keeping the boot in shape.

They save at least ten times their cost in the boot bill.

Look for  
WOOD-MILNE



on the heels, as they are the only ones that can be depended upon for reliable wear.



When you see a man with dirty boots—What do you think? Good positions have been lost before to-day—on dirty boots.

The coming of

## WOOD MILNE SHOE SHINES

leaves NO excuse

Time—trouble—expense—reduced to the absolute minimum.

As much as you get of other polishes for 4½d., WOOD MILNE SHOE SHINES give for 3d.

Get a tin to-day and prove what it can do.

Brown or Black—equally good. In Tins, like the picture. Ask for Wood Milne Shoe Shines at any bootshop.

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