

'AROLD, NEW STYLE

BY A. NEIL LYONS

My name is Arthur Clapshaw Baffin, and it is probably familiar to the reader. I am the author of those drawings, in line and wash, which appear so often in the pages of certain illustrated weekly journals. The signature 'Baffin,' or, sometimes, 'Baff,' at the foot of a drawing is a guaranty that you are sure to laugh at it; for it is very, very seldom that I present a joke which is not immediately recognizable as such.

There is no doubt that my artistic career has prospered, although I am still under forty years of age. When, last year, I was interviewed by *Game-age's Weekly*, in connection with a 'symposium' which they were publishing under the title of 'Why I Have Got On,' I attributed my success to having shown a strict regard for tradition and formula. If I draw a picture of a comic hypocrite, everybody knows that I *have* drawn a picture of a comic hypocrite, because the picture which I draw embodies the universal conception of what a comic hypocrite ought to look like.

Thus, a hypocrite is confidently expected to look religious, so I always put my hypocrite into a black coat. I aim at presenting the common idea of a Nonconformist clergyman, and I dress him in 'Jemima' boots, white gloves, very short sleeves, and a top hat with a sash round it. The gloves, of course, are much too long in the fingers, and are wrinkled round the wrist. I have never seen a Nonconformist clergyman who wore these gloves, or 'Jemima' boots, or an un-

dertaker's hat, or who, indeed, resembled even remotely the extraordinary figure which I am paid to depict. But people love me for drawing these diagrams, so I draw them. The populace grasps my meaning instantly, exclaiming, 'Good old Stiggins!' and performing winks and stomach laughs.

This is all I propose to say about my 'Art.' I feel I have done well in mentioning the subject, however, because, although I am a novice in literature, I have read much, and I know that the principal duty of a story teller is to tell the reader about himself. I may, indeed I ought to, add one other fact to the biographical notes already offered. I forgot to state that my humorous hypocrite is now a creature of the past.

Since the outbreak of this dreadful war, which has so utterly changed our conception of social values and which has so greatly aided the development of illustrated journalism, I have devoted myself to portraying the British soldier. These efforts at creating a standard figure of the returned soldier have been highly successful. My soldier is a stubborn, leathery individual — 'hard bitten' is, I think, the word — who exhibits a great contempt for the civil population and for the amenities of a peaceful existence. You will perhaps remember my Major Fitz-Shrapnel, who caught on wonderfully at the clubs. I showed him beguiling the tedium of ten days' leave from France by reconstructing his wife's drawing room. He had thrown all the cushions out of the window and

had sawed up the sofa, and was seen reclining on a wooden bunk, amid a homely confusion of petrol cans and bully tins and telephone receivers.

Then there was my Cuthbert Clare, the bank clerk. The idea was that the unnatural calm prevailing in England had wrought upon his nerves and produced insomnia. I showed Cuthbert sleeping soundly on a narrow bed in the rain, while a hired boy in his garden exploded squibs to simulate the congenial stir and bustle of Flanders.

The object of these pictures, and of many similar ones, was to demonstrate to the public the truth of the belief that war has utterly destroyed the young man's taste for peace. The lesson which I wished to inculcate, or which I felt that my admirers wished me to inculcate, was that, when at last our lads return to us, they will no longer be contented with a humdrum life of ease. They will have acquired a taste for the open air, for rheumatism, for cold tea, and for all the hearty pleasures of bodily discomfort. No banks and counting houses for them! No feather beds and carpet slippers! They will demand a fuller life; the right to a shakedown on the rockery, with a waterproof sheet for covering and forked lightning and cloudbursts for companionship. Or the ice-bound North, Our Lady of the Snows and all that.

In order to secure the repose which is necessary to the rapid depiction of returned soldiers, I live under conditions of strict isolation in a remote country lane. My dwelling is a three-roomed cottage, of late habitation of chickens, but now, by restoration, the abode of a gentleman and an example of the picturesque in architecture. And this morning I took a walk in my lane.

I had not walked far along my lane when my eye was attracted to a

stretch of greensward which borders the hedgerow. Somebody had performed an unauthorized action here, having erected three arches of hazelwood and draped them with fragments of blankets. These sticks and these blankets formed a tent at which I stared with a curious satisfaction. It was such a sly little, sleek little tent.

When the inevitable authority emerges from the womb of destiny to write a 'History of Tents and Portable Dwelling Houses throughout the Ages,' I do hope that he will not forget to mention the impromptu blanket house of Little Egypt. If he writes intelligibly about these battered relics of the pilgrim Adam, I for one will promise to subscribe to his four stout volumes. But if we are to have a mere history of striped canvas, alphabetically arranged,—B for bathing, R for refreshment, and V for viceregal,—then I am afraid that all I can do for him is to recommend his book to clergymen and schoolmasters.

While I was looking at this small, brown tent, an incident occurred. A patch of brown fabric was suddenly withdrawn from the front of the tent, and through the narrow opening which had been thus created there extruded itself a woolly, flocculent object. It was the head and hair—the sleep-tossed, tumbled hair—of a young girl.

The girl crawled out from beneath her dew-stained canopy and stood upright in the flickerless, cold glow of that October morning. She was dressed, not wisely but quite well, in a simple combination of two garments—an old flowered petticoat, terminating far short of her bare brown ankles, and a scanty whitish bodice. The bodice left her bosom and arms very bare. She stood before me, with her body arched, her arms outstretched, yawning, with a cat-like care and pleasure in the sensuous act. Her arms

were white to the wrist, her bosom was white to the neck; beyond these points her skin was richly tanned. She was a tall, strong girl, with a deep chin, a wide mouth, a broad brow, white teeth, short top lip, large eyes, wide lids, long lashes, a firm neck, a quick brown hand, and freckles. She arched her back and stretched her arms, her eyelids all but closed, her mouth open, her strong white teeth exposed, her nostrils and her shoulders and the blue veins in her throat all dancing to some tune I could not hear.

When she had stretched her limbs and rubbed her eyes, the young girl put a lazy hand up to her hair, tugging at it harshly with a piece of comb. It set my teeth on edge to watch that crude, barbaric, ruthless act of decency. But the young girl closed her eyes and bared her teeth, and tugged and tore away, half smiling, as if she were rather pleased to be enduring pain.

Having bullied her hair into a state of order, the young woman threw her comb into the tent, and sauntered to a spot some few yards distant, upon which there stood (as I now saw for the first time) a two-wheeled push-cart. It was fitted with stumps to maintain the deck in a horizontal poise. Close to the cart an iron tripod had been erected, from which there depended an iron hook. Beneath this hook a fire of sticks and furze and touchwood had been constructed. This fire burned dimly.

The young girl, having borrowed an ash stake from the adjacent hedge, proceeded to poke the fire about. She then poked among the blankets, which were strewn about the deck of her push-cart, and produced a two-ounce packet of tea, and then she looked about her for the kettle, and, in looking about her, found me. The brown girl was evidently surprised to find

me, but she did not make a show of her surprise, saying, quite lightly:

'Why, Sport! good morning! Up before yar bed's made, ain't ya?'

I pointed out to the lady that my virtue was little in excess of her own, to which she responded: 'Well, yes; but then you live in a house'— the implication being that, as a householder, I was exempt from those constabulary influences which govern the habits of travelers. The brown girl then asked me if I had seen a young man about the road.

'What sort of young man?' I asked.

'One as looks like he's been a soldier,' was her not very illuminating reply.

The only young man I had seen had the look and bearing of a rate collector, and, therefore, did not seem to conform to the particulars now circulated by the young lady. I, therefore, told her that I had not seen her young man.

'Urgh!' exclaimed the brown girl, in a tone of bitterness, speaking half to herself. 'He's gone creepin' into some house, should n't wonder.' She had found her kettle, and now she dabbed it on to the fire, resentfully.

'This young man is your husband?' I ventured to suppose.

'Not likely,' replied the girl.

I made excuses for my blunder. 'You somehow don't look as if you were traveling alone,' I explained.

'No more I ain't,' said the girl. 'This here young fellar I spoke about, he's along with me. But he ain't my husband.'

'No, no, of course not,' I murmured, trying to accept her statement in a quiet and orderly manner.

'You see,' continued the brown girl, 'I looks arter him like, and he looks arter me like. That's the way of it. 'E's a nice, 'ot-tempered chap, is 'Ar-old,— knock anybody down as soon as look at them,— and 'e did 'ave a

fancy once for to 'ang up 'is 'at permanent, and I 'ad a fancy for to let 'im. But not now. Not since 'e's been a soldier. The army's spoilt him.'

'In what way?' I asked.

'In the way of 'is fancies,' replied the brown girl. 'The army's made a gentleman of 'im. A tent ain't good enough for 'Arold any longer. 'E's got a fancy now to live in a house, the same as if 'e wos a little *garjer* like yaself.'

'Garjer! What's that?' I demanded.

'A person as ain't like us,' replied the brown girl. 'One as likes indoors. One as don't get about much. A *fuggy* person. You see,' she continued, 'they got my 'Arold into the 'abit of bricks and mortar, time 'e was serving the King. They put him to sleep in barns and pigsties and cow-houses, and such. They filled 'is 'ead with swanky notions, and turned 'im against the ditch. They spoilt 'is taste for laying rough. A greenwood fire brings on 'is cough, 'e says.'

All this surprised me — this story of a soldier who had acquired a taste for indoor life. It did n't seem to correspond with my drawings. But it is the custom of life to oppose itself to art. I am familiar with that phenomenon, and I showed no emotion.

The brown girl continued her monologue: 'E says 'e got enough ditch to last 'im — time 'e lay in the trenches. And then 'e stopped one with 'is ankle, and they sent 'im into 'orspital. That just about finished 'im orf, that did, sending him into the 'orspital. It made a regular old gal of 'im. 'Im and 'is diddy brush!'

'What's a diddy brush?'

'You may well ask,' replied the brown girl. 'It's a little thing with a bone 'andil, what he carries in his pocket. And every morning 'e dips it

into water and shoves it in his mouth and juggles it about. And then 'e swallows water — *water*, mind you! — and then 'e spits it out! And 'e's full of everlasting talk about this 'orspital — 'ow there was a wooden floor with hoil-cloff on it, and calico between 'is blankets; and 'ow they made 'is tea for 'im first thing of a morning, and brought it to 'is bed. And then 'e talks about the sisters. If I could get 'old of one o' them upstarted shes —. Below! Ther's 'Arold! Good morning, sir.'

'There is no doubt,' I began 'that Harold will soon settle down again to the discomforts of civil life. Perhaps——'

'*Good morning*, sir,' repeated the brown girl, significantly. Then, as I still lingered, she added a further hint: 'Arold's 'ot-tempered, sir, and if 'e 'its you, 'e'll 'urt you.'

I went away from her, and, returning along the lane, encountered Harold, who nodded to me curtly. He was a swarthy young man, with a furtive eye; but he was dressed in dark clothes, and carried himself like a rate collector. An hour later I saw him again.

He came to my cottage door, escorting the brown girl, who was wheeling the push-cart. He wished to buy a rabbit skin, or, alternatively, to sell me one. He looked about him with a covetous eye.

'You got a nice little place, sir,' he said. 'Wooden floors, I see, and a well o' water.' He took his place beside the brown girl, and added, with a sigh, 'Some people have got it very comfortable.' He nodded to me, and trudged away.

The brown girl took up the handles of her push-cart, and followed him, looking back as she did so, and tapping her forehead and shaking her head.

THE WRITINGS OF M. CLEMENCEAU

BY EDMUND GOSSE

IN the year 1893, after a succession of events which are still remembered with emotion, M. Clemenceau fell from political eminence, not gradually or by transitions of decay, but with theatrical suddenness like that of a Lucifer 'hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky.' His enemies, rewarded beyond their extreme hopes, gazed down into the abyss and thought that they discerned his 'cadavre politique' lying motionless at the bottom. They rejoiced to believe that he would trouble them no more. He had passed the age of fifty years, and all his hopes were broken, all his ambitions shattered. They rubbed their hands together, and smiled; 'we shall hear no more of *him!*' But they did not know with what manner of man they were dealing. What though the field was lost? All was not lost:

The unconquerable Will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield;
And what is else not to be overcome?

So brilliant an array of mingled intelligence, pertinacity, vigor, and high spirits has rarely been seen united, and the possessor of these qualities was not likely to be silenced by the most formidable junta of intriguers. As a matter of fact, he turned instantly to a new sphere of action, and became the man of letters of whom we propose to speak in these pages. But for his catastrophe in 1893, it is probable that M. Clemenceau would never have become an author.

A brief summary of his early life is needed to bring the series of his pub-

lished works into due relief. Georges Clemenceau was the second son of a family of six; he was born on the 28th of September, 1841, and was, therefore, a little younger than Joseph Chamberlain and Lord Morley, and a little older than Sir Charles Dilke. His birthplace was a hamlet close to the old and picturesque town of Fontenay-le-Comte, in the Vendée, where his father practised as a doctor. There can be no doubt that Benjamin Clemenceau, an old provincial 'bleu,' materialist and Jacobin, exercised a great influence on the mind of his son, who accepted, with a docility remarkable in so firm an individual, the traditions of his race and family. We are told that the elder Clemenceau 'communicated to his son his hatred of injustice, his independence, his scientific worship of facts, his refusal to bow to anything less than the verdict of experiment.' There was also a professional tradition to which young Georges Clemenceau assented. For three hundred years, without a break, his forbears had been doctors. I do not think that any of his biographers has observed the fact that Fontenay-le-Comte, though so small a place, has always been a centre of advanced scientific thought. It has produced a line of eminent physicians, for Pierre Brissot was born there in the fifteenth century, Sébastien Collin in the sixteenth, and Mathurin Brisson in the eighteenth. There can be little doubt that these facts were in the memory of the elder Clemenceau and were transmitted to his son.

Fontenay-le-Comte is on the western