

# Round the World Paragraphs.

## Cockney Twang Condemned.

Professor Alois Brandl, the most distinguished German authority on the English language and literature, is of opinion that English is quite as well spoken in America as in England.

The Professor is President of the German Shakespeare Association, and Professor of English at Berlin University, and recently returned there from England, where he was made an honorary member of the Royal Society of Literature.

During his stay in London he was distressed to hear at some of the board schools which he visited in the west of London school children who recited passages from Shakespeare say that the quality of mercy was not "strymed," that it droppeth as the gentle "ryne" from heaven, was "twice" blessed, and so forth.

This intrusion of the Cockney element, coupled with the influence of the various dialects upon colloquial English, leads Professor Brandl to the conclusion that the English spoken by the English is on the whole not a whit purer than the English spoken by the Americans, of which he has made a close study.

He puts the English of the ordinary educated American quite on an equality with that of the ordinary educated Englishman, basing his opinion on systematic observation during twenty years' continual contact with American students at German universities, and, secondly, on observations made when he visited America as the representative of academic Germany at the recent Benjamin Franklin centenary celebration.

Professor Brandl states that when in America he not only studied the English spoken by American students at the various universities and colleges, but also listened to speeches delivered by thirty-five Americans coming from all parts of the United States. "Of these thirty-five orators," he says, "the American whose English was most un-English was Andrew Carnegie, and he is a Scotsman."

The Professor believes that the American twang is rapidly dying out, and that it will in time become a thing of the past. He believes that the great strides now being made in America in the education of the masses will result in the extinction of the twang. "The average American," says Professor Brandl, "is being educated into consciousness of his accent, and is beginning to criticise and eradicate it."

## The Gospel of Grit.

Many of the mothers of England listened to an impressive address the other day by Canon Lyttelton, the Headmaster of Eton, who warned them that they were in danger of demoralising their boys with self-consciousness and softness. The occasion was the annual meeting of The Mothers' Union, at the Church House, Westminster. The Headmaster of Eton dwelt on the cause, and the Bishop of Auckland pointed out the effect of a too gentle training. The men who were going out to our colonies, he contended, were showing signs of this deplorable weakness in moral courage. "Boys ought to grit their teeth and take courage," Canon Lyttelton said. "Their dangerous tendencies are self-consciousness and softness. Young people think too much about themselves. It is stated that the charm of the great men of long ago was their naive unconsciousness of themselves. These men built up our Empire on absence of mind; only the future can decide if we have enough absent-minded men to carry on the great work."

"The lives of boys and girls have become of such infinite value. If the thought of their preciousness had been kept securely locked up in their parents' hearts all would have been well. But it was not, and children have heard so much about their own preciousness that they have really begun to believe it is true."

"The increased influence of the mother has wrought a blessed change in materially decreasing coarseness—but mothers' influence cannot do all."

"We want more discipline to ensure the fighting of the inclinations. There is not enough quiet endurance of discomfort and pain nowadays. I lately watch-

ed a youngster with a fly in his eye. His mother and three sisters were trying to get it out. One moment's pain, and that fly would have been ousted, but the boy would not bear it. He was sent off in a carriage to a doctor's, five miles away, to have an anaesthetic.

"You will find that most of our great men never shirked discomfort. Endurance must be a matter of course, not of discussion. Ye must work together for robustness of fibre in our young people."

"If the father is not on the spot, you mothers must do your best. But I warn you that it is not only love and sympathy you will need, but knowledge, and often the feeling of the sword going through your hearts."

"My heart goes out to the young people of to-day," the Bishop of Auckland said, "because they have too good a time."

"You are turning out young fellows to us in the colonies who have had too much pleasure, too much money, too much food."

## "The Most Beautiful Woman in England."

An artist's wife who is a woman of great beauty, and has been the model for some of her husband's most successful pictures, had a curious adventure at the Royal Academy private view in London recently (says an English exchange). She was standing in front of one of the miniature cases examining the portrait of a cousin, when a middle-aged foreigner of distinguished appearance, approached, and making a low bow, said, "Forgive me, but I desire you should accept this," at the same time slipping into her hand a small sealed packet.

Before she had time to recover from her surprise the stranger had retreated, and in less than thirty seconds had disappeared in the crowd that thronged the adjoining rooms. When she opened the packet she found it contained a beautiful locket of old-fashioned design and set with valuable stones. Instead of holding a miniature, as might have been expected, all that was found within was a slip of paper with the words, "For the most beautiful woman in England," written in peculiarly small and angular handwriting. The lady's first impulse was to restore the locket at once to the mysterious donor, but all efforts to find him or learn his identity have, so far, been unavailing.

## Shower of Sulphur.

A heavy fall of sulphur, lasting twenty minutes, occurred one day last month in the little town of Charolles, about twenty-five miles from Macon, in France.

Gardens, fields, ponds, vineyards, and houses are covered with a thick coating of yellow powder, and the neighbourhood has become almost unbearable owing to the smell. Scientists attribute the down-pour to the renewed activity of Vesuvius.

## "Ley Roy le Veult."

The Speaker of the House of Commons said recently that the extraordinary continuity of the forms of Parliament delighted him, and he referred to the form of the King's consent to Acts of Parliament, which is still given in the old Norman French, "Le Roy le veult"—the King wills it. A press representative who made inquiries at the House of Commons found that the same medieval form of expression survives in many other directions. The official record of the assent of one House to the bills passed or the amendments made by the other House is still in Norman French.

The Clerk of the House of Commons endorses a bill sent to the Lords with the sentence:—

Soit haillie aux seigneurs.—(To be sent to the Lords.)

The approval of the Upper House is signified as follows:—

A ceste bille, aveuque des amendemens les seigneurs sent assentus.—(To this bill, with the amendments, the Lords have assented.)

Should their lordships have occasion to amend the measure the Commons' ap-

proval of the amendments is expressed in the old Norman French thus:—

A ces amendemens les communes sont assentus.—(To these amendments the Commons have assented.)

In the case of a Supply Bill, such as the Appropriation Bill, where the Commons are voting money to the Crown, the royal assent is given in the following form:—

Le Roy remercie ses bons sujets accepte leur benevolence, et ainsi le veult.—(The King thanks his good subjects, accepts their benevolence, and thus wills it.)

## The Unhappy Czarina.

It is an open secret that the Dowager Empress Marie has had a great deal to do with the bringing about of the meeting of the King and Czar (says a London writer) as it has been known that for a long time King Edward and the present Czar has been anything but good friends. Nor has their estrangement been caused by any management or mismanagement of the affairs of Russia, but simply because of the utter selfish disregard of her feelings with which the Czarina has been treated by her husband.

Through his favourite sister, the Princess Alice, King Edward has always had the greatest affection for the present Czarina of Russia, and has looked with the anxious eye of a fond parent on the sad circumstance of her troubled life, a life which those immediately surrounding her have done little or nothing to alleviate.

A result of this meeting will probably be that early next year the Czar and his wife will pay a state visit to England and should this take place it will be doubly interesting from the fact that it will be the first occasion that a reigning Sovereign of Russia has been there since the Crimean War.

## The Universal Language.

At present the English language comes nearest to filling the claims of universality. And this is where commerce steps in to assert her great worth, for it is the bargainings and dealings of Englishmen with the natives of far-off countries that help to spread the English tongue more than their interest to learn something of the English language, and many of those distant hucksters really do get hold of enough English to help them along in trade. The spots where Cortez shouted his war orders and Pizarro rallied his braves now ring with the hawk's appeal to visitors, "You wantem buy nice fruit! Plentee ice drinks here! don't go and deal with other swindling scamps. You stop here and deal long a me!" The Pyramids, which once heard the stern orders of Cheops and all the other mighty Pharaohs after him, now echo the shouts and shrieks of the ragged little Arab donkey drivers, who scream out to the Cook's tourist: "Here you are, sah! Missa Kerr Hurdie, John Burns, Balfour, all berry good donkeys. You take 'em Missee Langtry, or Sara Bernhardt, or Sarah Grand, all splendid donkeys, an' me wallop 'em all de way, make 'em go plentee quick, sah, by dam!"

## Plunged in Molten Metal.

Three men working round a vat of molten metal met with a terrible death at Rehon, on the Franco-Belgian frontier. One of them, a man of 70, fell headlong into the vat. A young man named Nicholas Wons jumped forward to catch his older comrade, and fell in after him. The third man, the father of Nicholas Wons, in trying to save his son also plunged into the molten metal.

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