

SCENE: Sitting-room of small flat. Closed door on right. Girl sitting by open window reading.

Time: A Saturday afternoon in summer.

A knock at the outside door. Girl gets up and admits young man.

He: Hello, young woman! How's life?

She: Not so bad, thanks, Bill. Just got back from Auckland?

He: Yes, this morning. Thought I'd breeze along and see if you would care for a spin up the Akatarawa?

She: Sorry, Bill, but I'm going out for a walk with Mike.

He: Mike? And who the dickens is Mike? A new friend?

She (demurely): Yes, and a very dear friend, too.

He: And a very speedy worker, too! Here have I been away less than a week, and I come back to find you entirely under the spell of a bird called Mike. The inconstancy of women! What's he like, anyhow?

She (rapturously): Oh, he's wonderful, Bill! And so clever, too. When he looks at me with those eyes of his I simply can't help adoring him.

He (viciously): Irish, I suppose?

She: Of course, idiot—Mike.

He: Rhymes with tyke.

She: Don't be poetical, Bill. It doesn't suit you.

He (intensely): Do I know this fascinating male?

She: Not yet, but I'm just going to introduce you.

He (startled): What! Where is he?

She (pointing to door on right): In there!

He (horrified): In your bedroom?

She (calmly): Yes. I don't hear a sound, though. He must have fallen asleep.

He (spluttering with wrath): Asleep? In your bed?

She: I'm afraid so. The floor's a bit hard, you know.

He (looking round for his hat): Well, of all the — I mean to say — oh, hang it all —

The girl goes to the bedroom door, opens it, and calls softly: Mike, darling, come and be introduced.

Bill, who has now reached the sitting-room door, stands petrified as a small fat Irish terrier puppy comes rollicking into the room, yelping excitedly.—Curtain.—L.S.

I, FOR one, am glad to see the protest from Mrs. Snowden, the able wife of Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer. She complains of the pessimistic view Britishers always adopt in speaking of their country. But 'twas ever thus. It is characteristic, but they forget that abroad they are oft taken at their word. Is it not the experience of all of us that the country has always been "going to the dogs?" Is it not equally our experience that, when emergency arises, the Old Country arises to the emergency, and just how well? We quote Mrs. Snowden's words:

"Those people who enjoy being miserable are particularly happy just now! They say our industry is going to pieces, our trade is declining, the unemployed increase daily; we are decadent, we are idle, we are losing our nerve; our old people are senile, our young people are impossible; the country is done for and we might as well all be dead. I feel rather ashamed to hear this feeble whining in the ears of the whole world. We have our sorrows and our difficulties, of course, but we can face them and con-



quer them. We have brains and energy and will, if we care to use them. Why give the impression that we have none of these things? They lie who say we are decadent and done for. There is no freer nation on the face of the earth. There is no nation, where than can be found man for man, a larger measure of goodwill to all. There is no nation which possesses a greater gift of friendship or a more generous attitude to a fallen foe. There is no braver nation, nor one with more sturdiness of character, nor one with a more highly developed social conscience. Then away with depression and foolish fears. We are "up against it" now, but we have been up against it before. We have triumphed over our difficulties in the past. We shall do so again. But do let us go into the struggle with smiles on our faces and shouts on our lips, leading the van, not slinking to the rear; for that which we believe, we can do. And we may believe that Britain can and will be saved."

Great words, these, for any country to take to heart, so away with false modesty, and the "pride that apes humility."—"Ethel."

her rest from hunting curled up in the kitchen fender, getting so warm that her black fur would feel like the cover of a hot water bag. On the day the electricity was installed Rebecca stalked in, waving her tail, and made for her usual bed. She looked at the stove suspiciously for a time, then rubbed her back against its legs and curled up underneath it. Alas! she found this cold comfort, and soon she was roaming round the kitchen mewing loudly.

A special warm cushion was made for her, but nothing would induce her to try another "place in the sun." She grew thinner and more miserable every day, and would sit for hours by the new stove muttering piteous, almost soundless mews. There seemed only one thing to do, and that was to find her an old-fashioned home, but before that could be done Fate settled the question. One morning when the kitchen door was opened, there, under the stove, lay poor Rebecca, dead—a victim to modern convenience.—"Vane."

SAVOIR FAIRE'S problems concerning A, B, and C remind me of a

## Leisure

"His Christian name, I think, 'was John. His surname, Leisure."  
—Austin Dobson.

*What is this life—this quaint vignette  
The poet paints of you? and yet*

*No time we say like ours—but stay!*

*How quiet and peaceful was YOUR day.*

*No time have we to stand and trace*

*The slow hours on the sundial's face.*

*No time to hear the thrushes call*

*Above an orchard's ivied wall.*

*No time for courtliness and grace,*

*For patches, wigs and Flemish lace.*

*A poor life this! 'Tis true, so rest*

*Serenely, John, you held the best.*

—"Vignette."

IT was an exciting day when all the wiring in the house was finished, the appliances installed, and the power turned on. We were, indeed, electrified. No more lamps to trim, no more scattering of dust with a straw broom, no aching back on washing day, and best of all, no scraping out of ashes and soot from the stove in the early hours. Surely there must be some drawback to all this modern convenience. No, there seemed no drawback to the delightful fact that life was going to be easier and more comfortable for everyone in the house—everyone? What about that important member of the family, Rebecca, the big black cat? She was a great hunter, and always took

anything." One problem runs something like this: "If two boarders stay at the same boardinghouse for the same length of time, and the amount of 'side' of one is equal to the amount of 'side' of the other, prove that their bills will be equal." The proof is: "If they are not equal, then one bill will be smaller than it might have been, which is absurd!" Another book by the same author that will cause an hour or two's laughter is "Nonsense Novels."—"Becky."

CAN science provide a substitute for tradition and religion? Philip Gibbs delves deeply into this problem in "The Age of Reason," and shows the drastic results of this new "cult" on people typical of our time. The familiar arguments for materialism are presented through a professor of biology and the family he has brought up under this doctrine. For a second wife he wins the devotion of the daughter of a canon, himself an ardent follower of the new "painless" religion. And here the trouble starts—conscience versus rational thought. As the novel progresses all types of our society are brought in and contrasted with the simple faith (now badly shaken) of the wife and the philosophy of the professor. The insincerity underlying the professions of each to his "cult" is revealed, and when everything is in a maze of contradiction the story is swiftly brought to a conclusion. Science fails. We are left with thankfulness that the age of reason is not yet with us—G.A.G.

PARIS pavements are to have luminous advertisements, over which the people will walk. Thick panes of glass are let into the pavement with electric lamps and mirrors underneath them. Coloured advertisements are thrown up on to the glass. The new advertising signs will also be visible in the daylight, for the sun's rays will shine through the glass on to the mirror, and the mirror will reflect the sign up again on to the glass. The swing of the pendulum! Former economists were strong on the point of keeping advertising down.—"Economist."

NOW that flowers are dear and scarce, it is a good plan to bring home from the country any sprays of berries or hips and haws that are to be gathered. Brush them over with a little gum, and they will not shrivel.

## The Green Way

*I walked a green way  
When the year was spring,  
I saw a red bird  
And a blue bird's wing.  
I saw the buttercups,  
Down a winding lane.  
They shone goldenly  
Through the spring's white rain.*

*I saw a tall youth,  
As he sauntered by.  
He tossed a glad song  
To a larkspur sky.  
I gave him a smile,  
For the year was spring,  
When trees oft are lit  
By a blue bird's wing.  
—"Lucibel Lee."*