Margate After Midnight

By CLAUDE LUKE

It was shortly after nine in the evening when, leaving Margate Station, I turned towards Dane Road, which is on the fringe of Cliftonville. Down on the beach groups of bathers were having their last dip, while on the promenade hundreds of families and couples were making their way towards pier, cafe, or dance-hall.

As I entered the Dane Road garage of the East Kent Road Car Co., whose buses serve this part of the coast, an empty omnibus swung in from the road and, like a horse returning to its stall, made for its allotted place.

Zero Hour in the Garage

"That is up first," said Mr. A. Law, the garage superintendent; "about 9.15 p.m. is our zero hour. Then the buses begin to come in for the night, and after that we get them in a steady stream for three hours."

I watched the arrival of these red chariots at regular intervals while the sky deepened and the sounds of merriment faded from the town. By midnight the garage resembled Epsom Road on Derby Day. Tip to tip and side by side they stood, empty and silent, and one wondered how on earth the drivers would sort them out in the morning. At 12.15 a.m. the last bus came in and a tired driver clambered from his box. He had been to London and back that day—no mean run.

The London bus occupied the last remaining space. There were now fifty-five red monsters with dust and mud upon their coachwork and wheels—the dust of Westgate, Ramsgate, Minnis Bay, Deal, Broadstairs, Dover, Faversham, Canterbury and even of London, Brighton, and Portsmouth.

The Driver's Last Duty

An hour or so previously the night staff had come on duty, and now the last of the seventy drivers had gone home.

First, however, each driver had made his report for the day. This is a nightly duty. If his engine is troublesome, or a bolt work loose, or a brake-shoe is worn, he notifies the night staff, who have the defect overhauled by the next morning. If it is a serious matter, the omnibus is taken out of service and given a dock overhaul during the day.

Out on the road a late reveller hummed his way homewards, and while Margate and Cliftonville slept soundly, in the Dane Road Depot things moved with increasing speed. First, there were the minor repairs to be done, and a fitter and his mate worked at a rare pace, passing rapidly from one to another while other workers replenished the machines with oil and petrol.

Trying the Tires

Each car holds from thirty to fifty gallons of petrol; the London bus alone, with its 1,000 miles a week, consumes about 140 gallons. Incidentally, it is a crime to smoke within the garage precincts. Beneath the floor is a small lake of petrol—3,000 gallons—which is forced up into the engine tanks by a special pump.

While this work was in full swing Mr. Law took me to the club room, where a handful of men, who had finished their duty, were playing billiards, darts, and rings. Then he showed me the room where 300 spare cushions are stored against emergency; the carpenter's shop where coachwork repairs are effected; and the upholstery shop where ten men are constantly employed mending and respringing worn and torn seats and cushions. In another place hundreds of spare tires and tubes were stacked, while in the general store there was a marvellous array of spare parts in upwards of 6,000 pigeon-holes.

"Every single detail of an omnibus make-up is on these shelves," said Mr. Law, "from a commutator to a split pin! And no matter what design the chassis or engine may be, all its components are obtainable here."

It was shortly after three in the morning when we returned to the main section of the garage, where the air was filled with sounds of hammering, tapping, racing engines, and the ringing of telephone bells.

"What's that?" I said, referring to a long thin hiss that could be distinguished above them all.

"A special motor-pump we use for the balloon tires," the superintendent replied. "Passengers often ask how we pump them up. The answer is that here one man is kept hard at it all night, doing nothing but testing the pressure of every tire in service—nearly 250 in this depot. Our tire pressure is kept at an average of 95 lb.—nearly five times that of the ordinary small car tire."

It was hard to believe amid this bustling scene that it would still be two hours or more before the earliest riser in Margate would awaken. But these men knew that day was rapidly approaching, and much remained to be done. Two were going from one bus to another playing a hose upon the wheels and coachwork, while two more followed them and attached the windows with leather and cloth. Paintwork began to gleam and the window panes shone. Soon the metalwork was glistening also.

Dawn Over the Sea

Meanwhile, the clop-clop of brooms and the determined flick of vigorously applied brushes sounded everywhere as the insides of the fifty-five buses were swept clean and each of the 2,000 seats and cushions beaten and dusted. On the "Tiger," a new double-decker to hold 46 passengers, a man was testing the small reading bulbs with which each of the outer seats on the open top was equipped—a luxury, incidentally, that London has yet to enjoy.

Only then, as the dawn was beginning to steal up from the sea, did the telephone bell cease to ring. Throughout the night messages had come from private houses, hotels, and boarding-houses in Margate and Cliftonville reserving seats on the morrow for late arrivals.

About five o'clock the buses were thoroughly sprayed, inside and out, with disinfectant, and for a space the garage smelt like a hospital ward.

When They Close Down

A few minutes later a new day had begun. The first driver and conductor signed on, and the first bus to Ramsgate moved out into the morning sun. According to the time of their duty, the drivers appeared. Slowly the packed garage began to sort itself out. At 8 a.m. I bade farewell to the night staff, who went off to bed as the day workers arrived. At 10.15 a.m. the last bus was out. My last view of the garage was of a bus set aside for a dock overhaul being rapidly dismantled, and of another three buses receiving new coats of paint.

Outside the garage gates three girls and three youths in summer dresses and flannels paused on their way to the sea. They looked curiously inside.

"Lum place," remarked one. "Cushy job, I should think, looking after buses."

I looked at the superintendent and we both yawned expressively.

"Don't you ever close down here?" I asked him.

"Certainly! This place is deserted at 5 p.m. on Christmas Day."

"And when do you open again?" I said.

"Oh, at 5 a.m. on Boxing Day!"

The Last Steps

Churches of Scotland to Unite: Merger Favored in Plebescite

Edinburgh, Scotland.—To ascertain finally the decision of the congregations of the United Free Church of Scotland on the subject of the impending union with the Church of Scotland, the Free Church congregations which indicated a desire for a further expression of opinion were authorized to take a plebiscite. The result announced was that of the 1,441 congregations in the church 117 desired a plebiscite; of these 64 were in favor of union and 53 against; 19 made no return and the remaining one had no preference.

Consequently the consummation of union, finally agreed upon last year, will proceed, the Duke of York, as High Commissioner to the Church of Scotland, taking a leading part in the ceremonies next month.

The total membership of the thirty-three congregations of the Free Church voting against union was 8,441, but only 6,566 voted—4,504 being against union and 1,962 in favor. The total membership of the Free Church is about 536,000.

Facts for Coffee-Drinkers

Perhaps a report of investigations laid before the meeting of physiologists at Boston will be read with more general interest than that on the effects of coffee upon the human system. For the moment, researches concerning cancer and other diseases will seem of minor importance. No question affecting diet has probably been so much discussed, with so few positive results arrived at, as that of coffee-drinking.

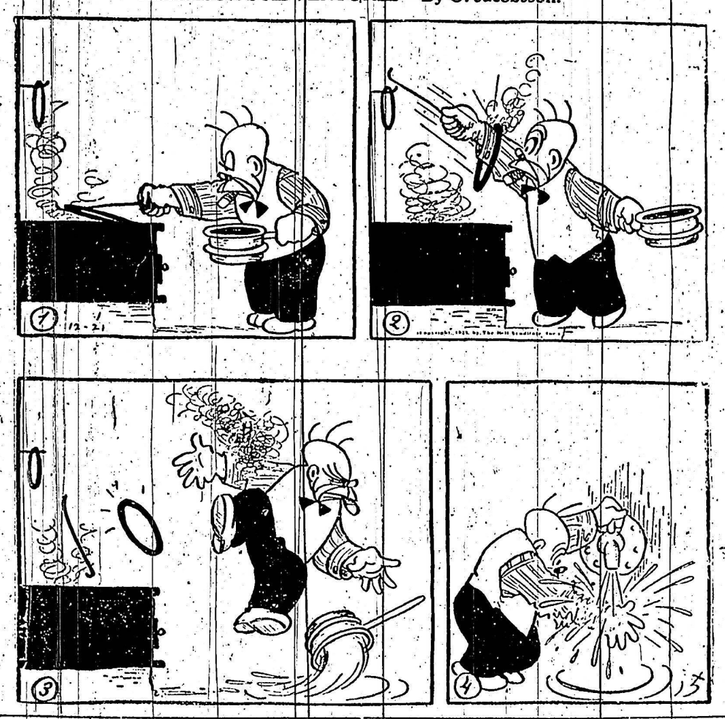
Now we have the conclusions drawn from a scientific and exhaustive study made in the Food Research Laboratories of New York. Experiments with a hundred young men were continued for months, and the results carefully noted and tabulated. One general and (for most people) satisfying conclusion was established. It is that coffee is not the cause of any organic disease. It does not harmfully affect the heart or stomach or kidneys. True, in the case of persons with a highly organized nervous system, excessive coffee-drinking does lead to heightened blood pressure and disturbance of circulation. But there is nothing necessarily alarming about that.

The case is different when it comes to tracing minor physical and mental effects of coffee-drinking. Experiments seem to show that the initial sense of alertness induced by coffee is misleading. The young men who drank coffee were slower and duller and less accurate in the tests devised than were those who did not. Here, however, we are over the verge of physiology. Incurable coffee-drinkers will assert that everything depends upon the young men selected, and that if the right choice had been made all would have come out to the praise and glory of coffee! In any event, the study made is of wide public interest.

"I feel sad—I have just had my handwriting read." "What did the expert say?" "That from the way in which I made the 'l' at the beginning of the word 'elegant,' he knew I had been to school."

Comment is being made that Montreal knows very little about Montreal. Still they occasionally catch glimpses of it through gaps in the traffic.

ADAMSON'S ADVENTURES—By O. Jacobsson.



That Bonnie Fight At the Hague

By J. L. Garvin

Not since 1914 has August made history as now. The Hague Conference claims all the attention of Europe, and its members, realizing that this is indeed the golden moment, are striving that its achievement may not fall short of its aims. The cardinal issues are Reparations and Disarmament, at which Versailles, Spa and Geneva toiled in vain. But to-day, with men's minds schooled to wisdom by ten years of experience and disappointment, they are ripe for effective treatment.

First, the Young Plan was exhibited as the ark of the financial covenant on which Mr Snowden had laid a rash Philistine hand. Self-interest has inspired this indefensible contention. Let us get back to common sense. The plan embodies the recommendations of experts upon a special aspect of the general problem. But it is not a compact. On the contrary, it is the duty of statesmen to re-mould it in so far as it fails to harmonize with average opinion, the ultimate sanction of any settlement.

British opinion, whose detachment renders it a make-weight in European peace, has a special right to be satisfied. Mr. Snowden had to make it clear that the British Government was not only uncommitted, but hostile. It was, indeed, a case for the iron hand in the velvet glove.

The Chancellor's argument was far too strong to be countered by any invocation of the experts' formula. Our war claims to the Allies were enormous. We bear their burden. But we insist that we will not also liquidate borrowings made on their behalf. It is the task now to speak of Europe's payments to America. Mr. F. W. Hirst has given figures which reveal the enormity of the phrase. Up to now the payments have been British rather than European. Out of 1,159 million dollars paid up to April 1 last, 916 millions were found by London. It cannot be supposed that Britain will wipe this enormous sum, found during the years of severest economic struggle, clean off the slate and start fresh.

If it were indeed the case that the back of our claims had been conceded we should be the first to urge a settlement. We would bid Mr. Snowden be content with the honour and victory his efforts had achieved. We would have him remember that conciliation and peace are worth more than money, and not push his point to its extreme extremes. But here again the appeal lies to the common sense of facts. M. Poincare is not the man to give away a point in negotiations. Yet, as is now known, he reached a preliminary agreement with Britain that the 52½ percentages should not be changed. They have been changed and they have not been restored. To make up for their diminution we are offered irrelevant figures drawn from the Enemy Property accounts combined with Micawberlike calculations of surpluses on the experts' estimates. Such paltry devices will never secure that whole-hearted British support which is essential to the effective working of any settlement. Certain minimum rights were secured to this country at Spa. In reliance upon them Britain has settled with her debtors on terms of unparalleled generosity. The country is behind Mr. Snowden in his refusal to have them whittled away.

The British case against deliveries in kind has had a more sympathetic reception. Mr. Graham presented it with all his power of calm, persuasive exposition. Even the German delegation, which has most to gain by the system—for a Reparations delivery often carries a fat contract in its arms, did not seriously contest it. It is, indeed, out of the question that a practice developed without due controls and as a desperate expedient in the evil days of collapsed and collapsing currencies, should now be made legitimate and given ten years' law.

On the commercial no less than on the financial side, the British case is strong by virtue of its imminent justice. From the very outset, from the days when war-exhausted Germany was proclaimed a treasury of wealth and services, the issue has never been examined in the cold light of principle. At last we have made a belated stand in defence of our insular ideal of fair-play.

The political committee has worked in a calmer atmosphere. Quietly functioning under the presidency of Mr. Henderson, it has squarely faced the fact that anything short of complete evacuation would be an idle gesture. Here, too, the British Government has given a notable lead. The Foreign Secretary has made it clear that the British occupation of German territory cannot be prolonged. Evacuation, it is reported, will begin in mid-September, and the last British soldier will be home for Christmas. On the other hand, the situation will not be mended if our troops go and the French troops remain indefinitely in the Third Zone. Mr. Henderson's task is to exercise the war-temper of which the Rhineland occupation is the symbol and the inspiration. He will have done a real work for peace if the new year sees Germany free of the last soldier—British, French, or Belgian.

That will be the beginning. We shall have wound up the war. We shall still have to organize the peace. There can be no real thought of peace while the troops of three nations are encamped on the territory of the fourth. Once the armies are within their own frontiers and Europe ceases to think in terms of military sanctions, it can devote itself to exhibiting the real meaning of its peace agencies, the League and the Pact. The time will then come when it will be possible to view the international situation as a whole, when Mr. Henderson's negotiations with M. Briand and Herr Stresemann will link themselves organically with Mr. MacDonald's discussions with General Dawes. Not till then will statesmen put their hands to the true work of reconstruction. We must build patiently if we build lastingly, but with so much to be done it would be well if this year could at least see the beginning.—Montreal Standard.

Catherine—Will you contribute something to the Old ladies' Home House-holder—with pleasure; help yourself mother in-law.

At Longwood

After our brief tour of the town, we started for Longwood, the objective of our visit to St. Helena, the house where Napoleon spent practically all the time of his exile. It is situated about four miles inland from Jamestown, on an elevated plain two thousand feet high, and the road leading to it is very steep and zigzags as it climbs. Driving up the valley we first came to "The Briars," the house where Napoleon lived for several weeks while Longwood was being made ready for him. This place now belongs to the Eastern Telegraph Company. It consists of some white-washed bungalows made of volcanic rock, with tin roofs painted red, like those of many of the houses on the island. On the way up we also saw the Alarm House where in olden times a gun was fired to warn the natives that a ship was approaching the island.

The bare hills reminded me somewhat of the Canary Islands. Cattle and sheep were grazing in the fields. Little yellow birds and birds with gray and pink bills fluttered about, and we saw red birds and weavers, called Napoleon's birds, and heard the cooing of doves. Pheasants and partridges and Cape Colony duck live here, also deer and mino birds, which are so plentiful they have become a pest. We were passing among hills covered with gold-red cactus blossoms, pink and red aloe, patches of wild geranium, oleander, and wild cotton, and meeting picturesque country people with loaded burros, who bowed and smiled most politely.

We saw the natives gathering fibre or flax, which had been spread to dry and loading it into wagons drawn by mules. This is made into hemp rope and exported. As we rode along we met a school teacher—a white woman—riding a donkey, and a plantation owner on a fine horse, while natives were gathered at various points to watch the tourists.

Finally we came to a gate that led to a grass road and down through a pretty lane to a beautiful little dell, one of the most secluded and serene spots in the world. . . . During Napoleon's stay at Longwood this hollow was his favorite spot. He would ride here almost every day, drink from the spring, and read under one of the willow trees.

Another drive and finally we came to Longwood, situated on a high plateau overlooking the sea seventeen hundred feet below. It was windswept and, somewhat misty. Although the one-storey farmhouse may once have been a barn, it was neat and clean, with a walled garden to one side. Longwood . . . a bit of France in the midst of an English island, for they were presented to Napoleon III. in 1858, and are now in the care of the French Consul. Monsieur Colin, who with his wife and children has lived here for about eight years. They received us and showed us over the house and seemed happy at the chance to talk French. Monsieur Colin had prepared with touching kindness for the coming of the tourists—more, perhaps, than place in at the years had visited the ready seeds and slips from the flowers before. He had in the garden . . . which he hoped would be replanted and thrive in American gardens. To us, who were fortunate in being the first to arrive, he gave a slate from the roof of Napoleon's time.—Isabel Anderson, in "Circling Africa."

Baronial Castle is Fit for King But Price Calls for a Millionaire

Ancient Post-Norman Edifice in Sussex, Built by Hero of Agincourt, Though Up-to-Date, Within, Comes Into the Market Again

London. — Hurstmonceux Castle, Sussex, famous as one of the finest and most beautiful of the baronial strongholds in the South of England, has come into the market, after having been restored to something like its original strength and beauty by Colonel Lowther, its last owner.

It was only natural that a castle which was built in the time of King Henry VI. by Sir Roger de Fiennes, a hero of Agincourt, should show the ravages of time and possibly the neglect of successive owners. The castle is constructed entirely of brick, and is believed to have been the largest post-Roman building of the material in England. It has been described as practically a little town. Within its rough square were to be found four courts, larders, laundries, a bakehouse, a dairy, a guardroom, a chapel and, of course, a dungeon. Upstairs there were lords' and ladies' apartments, "capable of quartering an army," the Bird Gallery, the Armour Gallery, and the Green Gallery.

Entrance to the castle was by a main gateway, with flanking towers 84 feet high, and entrance was not easy, for the whole place was built for defence, with battlements, turrets and loopholes galore, though in all its five centuries, it has never had to resist a siege.

Hurstmonceux had fallen much into [illegible] before the end of the eighteenth [illegible] when Horace Walpole visited [illegible] he found that much decay had gone on, and of the [illegible] that adorned the chapel, he found St. Catherine, and [illegible] woman with a church in [illegible] to the buttery. Many [illegible] had fallen away, revealing [illegible] in their native brick; [illegible] great trunk of ivy clamb[illegible] the principal apartments. [illegible] architect, who "restored" [illegible] so badly, was called [illegible] his advice the interior [illegible] having little more than [illegible] walls, a marvelous [illegible] of the Flemish builders [illegible] them.

[illegible] time before the war Colonel [illegible] bought what was practically [illegible] castle overgrown by ivy [illegible] high rubbish. It is said [illegible] £200,000 in turning the [illegible] into a residence that possesses [illegible] comforts and conveniences [illegible] careful that the [illegible] should be in keeping with [illegible] of the old building. [illegible] Hurstmonceux Castle stands [illegible] it was. It is a place [illegible] but kings are powerless [illegible] days, and the ancient [illegible] for perhaps a [illegible] owner, and [illegible] its [illegible].

A Happy Trial

Farm and Village Folk Entertain Boys and Girls from the City

Two months ago the interesting experiment was tried of getting comfortably-off farmers and villagers to invite children who were wards of the Children's Aid Society to spend a few days as their guests. An appeal made by the Stratford branch was so well taken up that fifteen children were quickly absorbed by these homes. Now the Secretary of the Society writes that seven have been returned greatly improved, physically, mentally and spiritually. The remaining eight are still in their vacation homes, and the Society has received word that several will be kept permanently. In another district there were eight or nine children who were boarded in the city. An appeal was made to a big-hearted clergyman in one of the country parishes and he replied at once—"send them all to me." He has no difficulty in getting them placed with members of his church and now after several weeks they are still there. This is probably the finest philanthropic work that could possibly be taken up by the community, and it might readily be carried on throughout the year.

Naval Parity

Dr. Albert Shaw in the American Review of Reviews: At whatever cost the United States must arrive at naval parity. If drastic reduction is too hard, a doctrine for the British Government, then parity must be brought about by an energetic American building program. President Hoover understands this situation quite as well as any Senator, and he will not fail to uphold what is now an unalterable American determination. If he reaches the opinion that we can afford to modify the fifteen cruiser program, he will in one time present his recommendations and his reasons to Congress.

Literary Garbage

William Lyon Phelps in Scribner's (New York): The majority of "realistic" novels just now are both dull and dirty. It is hard to say which of two respects they most greatly afflict the intelligent reader—boredom or filth. It is astonishing that sex, which after all is a subject of general interest, can be made so dull. Many readers wander over these books like dogs in a vast field, searching from smell to smell and ignoring the odorless tracts between.

REWARDS

Only that love that seeks no personal gratification or reward, that does not make distinctions, and never leaves behind no heartaches, can be called divine.

Farmer—"Hey, there! You come you to be up my apple tree?" Boy—"Please, mister, I just fell off an aeroplane."

A Canadian Road to Yukon

Highway Projected by British Columbia Government

[illegible] ANCES IN SIGHT

[illegible]—With a Pacific highway completed in the south [illegible] Vancouver by [illegible] with Edmonton and other points, and the [illegible] in the north to connect [illegible] and the Yukon, [illegible] is preparing [illegible] road building program [illegible] of Western Canada [illegible] present year the [illegible] called $7,000,000 [illegible] department officials [illegible] that double [illegible] expected to handle [illegible] demands [illegible] for [illegible]

Higher Tax on Gas

[illegible] on the gasoline [illegible] cents [illegible] gallon [illegible] tively by [illegible] in March [illegible] will probably be [illegible] addition [illegible] made [illegible] returns [illegible] 000 [illegible] gasoline [illegible] than $100,000 [illegible] of gasoline tax [illegible] renses, the province [illegible] $2,500,000 [illegible]

Many Millions

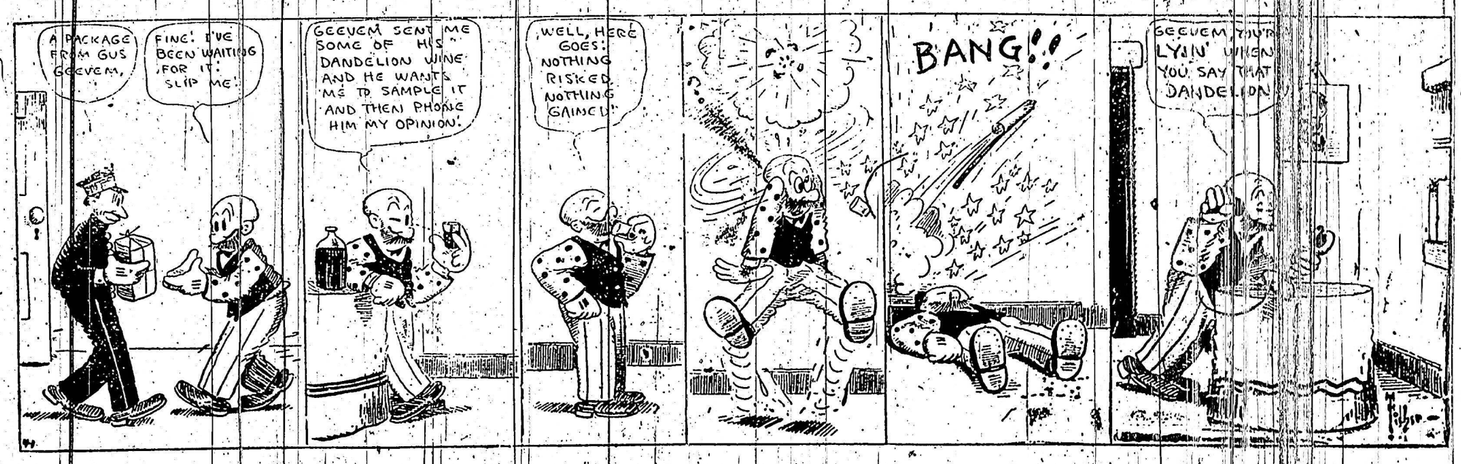
[illegible] are now outstanding [illegible] carrying charges [illegible] that we be left to cover $7,000,000 [illegible] year's program [illegible] from [illegible] case. Since 1919 when the system of financing road projects was inaugurated the province [illegible] $28,432,000. All this has been met out of gasoline tax and licenses. Annual [illegible] have [illegible] consistent growth.

[illegible] Vancouver is connected [illegible] ved highway with Los Angeles [illegible] Diego and other Southern [illegible] cities. The new road continues into Mexico is already being [illegible]

[illegible] ad, Premier S[illegible] Tolmie [illegible] dy sought Federal aid for a [illegible] into Alaska and the Yukon. [illegible] require 460 miles of new [illegible] British Columbia and 12[illegible] in [illegible]. It would have the double [illegible] Dr. Tolmie points out, of [illegible] Americans direct access to the [illegible] without crossing the [illegible] and would [illegible] tourist [illegible] the land of the midnight [illegible] to Scandinavia [illegible] spring [illegible]

Dominion May Help

[illegible] ghway would then [illegible] from [illegible] Mexico, [illegible] the international [illegible] existing [illegible] thence on the [illegible] to Hazelton, B.C. [illegible] Charles Stewart, [illegible] Dominion [illegible] of the Interior, is declared [illegible] willing to have the [illegible] Dominion [illegible] Yukon part of the road, but [illegible] make promises regarding the [illegible] ion, it is understood [illegible]

MUTT AND JEFF— By BUD FISHER

Dandelion Beverage, Perhaps! How Does Geevem Get That Way.