

WHAT THEY WILL SAY ON JUBILEE DAY.

BY W. PETT RIDGE.



YOUNG LADIES (*log.*): *Such a time we've been coming up by train!—you can't think Mr. Miller. Nothing but stop, stop, stop, all the time! I'm sure you must have got tired of waiting there two hours and a 'alf. All in the day's work you say? (Amused.) You begin your capital jokes the very first thing. And I do so hope we catch sight of her as she goes by because it'll be something to say afterwards.*

Aren't there an *awful* number of people though in the streets? Makes you wonder where they all come from, don't it? And, oh (*pathetically*), I *did* 'ave to put up with some chaff— Isn't that a pretty decoration over there? — some chaff this morning before I left 'ome! (*Details demanded.*) Oh, I couldn't, reely. I reely couldn't tell you what they said because, as a matter of fact, *your* name was mentioned, and — (*Points.*) *That's* the kind of hat I want for the 'olidays. It's gone now. (*Resumes.*) — and they jollied me about you till I got quite cross. (*Deferential expression of doubt.*) Oh yes, I can. I can get *dreadfully* cross when I like—I can reely. And the last thing, what must my young sister do but go and 'ide that pair of gloves you gave me! I *did* think it was a shame! I didn't say nothing, but they could tell I didn't 'alf like it by the way I slammed the door.

It is kind of you, Mr. Miller, to buy me one of those twopenny favours to wear. Only I don't like seeing you squander your money on poor little me. It's got on it V.R., and 1837 and 1897. (*Delightedly.*) Oh, *isn't* that ingenious now! Wonder who in the world thought of that. I've been talking about this — (*Breaks off.*) *That's* rather a nice sunshade over there in the crowd. You're too late again; it's smashed now. (*Resumes.*) — about this affair so much that mother got quite 'uffy about it. "You and your jubileeing!" she says. "Anybody'd think *you'd* been reigning sixty years instead of the poor dear old Queen! I shall be glad," she says, "when it's all over and done with, and so will she, bless her!" (*With glee.*) Oh, mother won't 'ear a word said against the royal family, bless

you. My sister's young gentleman 'appened to mention once in our 'ouse that he considered it cost a tidy bit of money keeping up royalty, and mother was *so* mad with him; he's never been allowed to come to tea again. And (*with enthusiasm*) isn't that a sweet band! And aren't they pretty horses! And aren't they nice soldiers! And (*ecstatically*) isn't everything simply lovely! (*Glows with general sense of content.*)

MATRONLY LADIES (*log.*): I shall never forget that day, my dear, never! Just such another performance as this it was, and the crush (*hands lifted to indicate hopelessness of attempting description*)—well it was something awful! I was a mere chit of about twenty-eight at that time, and (*with some pride*) I fainted over and over and over again. When I got 'ome I said, "No more of your Thanksgiving days for me so long as I live." But here I am, and I reely think it's true that the older you get the bigger — (*Question interposed.*) 'Ot in this mantle? My dear I'm simply *roasting*. I shouldn't 'ave put it on only that I've just had it done up and some more beading put on, and I thought it'd be a pity not to wear it. It's showing a little respect for *her* at any rate. Of course I don't seepose she'll notice it as she goes by, but if she *should* cast her eye in my direction, and if (*strenuously to moving crowd*), if I ain't trampled under foot by a parcel of clumsy louts!—yes (*to square of youths*), it's *you* I mean. Clumsy louts I said, and clumsy louts I mean! (*Satirical inquiry.*) No, I know it's not my jubilee, but all the same it's no reason why you should go rushing about —

Oh, wherever has my friend gone? (*Calls.*) Mrs. What-is-it! Mrs. What-is-it! Where are you? Where've you got to? Why (*annoyed*), here you are standing behind me all the time! Why on earth couldn't you tell me? If you're going to play 'ide and seek, say so, and then I shall know. (*Apology.*) Of course there's a crowd—too much of a crowd to my way of thinking. Pity people 'aven't the sense to stay at 'ome on a day like this instead of — (*Grumbles until tea-time.*)

INFANTS (*log.*): Mamma, mamma! 'Ook

at the pitty gee-gees! Mamma, buy me a gee-gee. Mamma, ark at the pitty musegic. Mamma, buy me some musegic. Mamma, 'old me up 'igher. Mamma, I tan't see muffin'. Mamma (*scream with terror*), here's a piceman! Mamma, I don't want the piceman to see me. Mamma, I wish I was home. Mamma, make the Tween tum along soon. (*Warning that if infants are not very careful they shall never be brought out to the Queen's Jubilee again!*) Tate me 'ome, mamma, tate me 'ome! Mamma, what made you bing me out for? (*General inability to answer this question.*)

MATURE GENTLEMEN (*log.*): As a matter of fact, you know (*confidentially*), this is a capital thing for London. I should estimate—speaking roughly, mind—that these foreigners and what not will spend to-day (*thoughtful mathematics*)—well, some hundreds of thousands—hundreds of thousands of pounds, my dear sir. And (*generous'y*) I like to see it. I think we ought to make 'em welcome on an occasion like this. I think we ought to hold out what I may term the hand of welcome and — (*Foreign gentleman demands in French the way to Pil-Mil.*) Oh—er—ah, let me see. (*With sudden inspiration.*) “Alley-vous en, cochon!” (*Foreign gentleman disappears amazedly in crowd.*) I forget exactly what that means, but it always seems to satisfy 'em. As I say, I think on a day like this we ought to take a little trouble to do the amiable. We can't expect to have her Majesty with us another sixty years. I say (*emphasising the point*), I say we can't expect to have her Majesty with us another sixty years. No, sir!

Fine body of men the police are, to be sure! See how they keep their temper! Marvellous, 'pon me word! Good example for the people. Everybody's so orderly and so well behaved! (*With pride.*) They can't do things like this abroad, mind you. If this was abroad there'd be shouting of *vive la* something or other and a lot of tom-foolery; whereas here you see everybody's quiet and sober and courteous, and I don't know what all. (*Increasing pride.*) You can't beat an English crowd for this sort of thing, my dear sir! You may talk to me all day but you'll never convince me. (*Swaying of crowd to popular air.*) Here, (*commandingly*) stop that, please! Don't you dare to push me, my good fellow! (*Explanation.*) They're pushing you at the back? What do I care about that? (*Is carried to*

and fro by restless, turbulent wave of people.) Stop it, I say! Lemme get out! I insist! Police! Fire! I'll write to her Majesty about it! Take your elbow out of my chest, sir! (*Offer from neighbour.*) No, my lad, I do not want my hat bashed. (*His hat flattened over ears, he joins folsam and jelsam of the crowd and vanishes.*)

YOUNG GENTLEMEN (*log.*): We're going to 'ave the biggest old Barney you ever dreamt of in the course of your 'ole existence, my boy! (*Confidently.*) You leave it to me. Once we get out of this blooming crowd we'll simply join arms, all ten of us, and march along singing—that is (*apprehensively*) if we can. Meanwhile (*they sway to and fro*), this way for the largest and fastest! Shilling a hour out on the briny! Now then, gent'men, *al-together!* (*Thoughtful constable takes two by the ear and leads them away from companions. Less hilarity.*)

Too much interference with the liberty of the subjeck, that's what there is in this so-called England of ourn. You'd think there *would* be a little more give and take on a day like this; 'stead of which they put their foot down on a little quiet fun. (*Aggrievedly.*) Got no sense of humour somehow, these p'lice; can't see a joke like ordinary people can. We shan't run across Gus and 'Eney now for the rest of the day, very like. Like looking for a bottle in a needle of 'ay to try and find anyone in a blooming crowd like this! Where's your flask, old man?

Still (*recovering spirits*) it's no use repinin', as the song says. Twig them toffs up at that window there? Got anything you can shy at 'em? Orange peel'd do, or anything. Fancy 'emselves, I lay, jest because they've got a window-sill to sit on. Now watch! (*Throws something and hits somebody at window.*) I'll 'ave a coker-nut, please, Miss, not a cegar. And I say, you cheps, let's give 'em a poplar ditty. Let's start a bit of a sing-song jest to wile the weary hours away whilst we're witin'. Go on! Someone start and then we'll all join in. (*Patriotic song with chorus. Crowd in various quarters joins.*)

Then bless our good Victorier,
For sixty years she's been
The best and kindest woo-man
And England's noblest Queen!

Ip-ip-ooray! Ip-ip-ooray! Ip-ip-ip —

EVERYBODY (*young and old, with sincerity*): God save the Queen!