

foot' to wit, has greatly amused the British press. Our American verb 'pussyfooting' will soon be at home in Piccadilly. *Punch* has contributed a poem on the subject.

VERSES INSPIRED BY THE PUSSYFOOT MUSE

I bring new spells from the magic wells
Of the U. S. A.

To banish from earth the excess of mirth
In a world too gay;

I draw fresh forces from watercourses

To work upon British brawn
Till it cease to put out the strength of
the stout

And the day of judgment dawn;
When I've bound the free to cocoa and tea
And all that is unfermented
I tighten the rope till I drive them to dope,
And then I can die contented.

O'er the herring-pond from the back of
beyond

I come to put you wise
In the way to win from original sin
To ultimate enterprise;
In Arkansaw by the strength of my jaw,
In Illinios by craft,

In Ohio by a trick I know
(No, certainly *not* by graft),
I have raised my race to a lofty place
Where only the chained can stand,
And plucked from the fire of Western
desire
A Californian brand,
So that must of wine by a must n't of mine
Shall there be ever banned.

I am the kitten that hands the mitten
To the brewers of beer:
On velvet feet I creep to cheat
Whoever may love good cheer;
If I flatter the mood of the unco' guid,
If I frighten feeble folk,
If I plot and scheme till, half a-dream,
Men pass beneath my yoke,
A day shall break when there may be cake,
For cake is mostly dry,
But naught shall avail the call for Ale,
An exceeding Bitter cry.

DR. BERTILLON's statement in the *Petit Journal* that the war has diminished the French population by 4,000,000 shows — if accurate — that the situation is even

worse than the most pressimistic had supposed. The general estimate hitherto of the decrease in the French population during the war has been from 3,000,000 to 3,500,000.

The agency telegrams from Paris quote Dr. Bertillon as saying that the French population before the war was 38,000,000. This can hardly be the case, since the population at the last census (1911) was, in round figures, 39,600,000, and it had slightly increased in 1914. The excess of births over deaths was smaller in 1913 than it had ever been, but it was still more than 17,000.

It is to be presumed that Dr. Bertillon's estimate is based on official statistics. The exact number of Frenchmen killed in the war is still in doubt, for the figures hitherto published have not been final, and it is believed that they have not included deaths in hospitals. In a speech last January M. Poincaré estimated the French losses in the war at 1,800,000, but he may have been including the deaths among the black troops. The general belief is that the actual French losses by death were about 1,500,000.

The rest of the decline in the population is, of course, accounted for by excess of deaths over births during the war in the non-combatant population. The only statistics yet published are for the four years 1914-1917, and relate only to the seventy-seven uninvaded departments, in which the excess of deaths over births during the period was in round figures 850,000. No general statistics have yet been published for last year, nor, so far as the eleven invaded departments are concerned, for any year since 1913. But in the department of the Seine (Paris and its suburbs) there were only 47,000 births last year in round figures, against 73,000 in 1911, and the infant mortality was 40 per cent, against 10.66 per cent before the war.

The economic consequences of this terrible fall in the population must be very serious. M. Marche, Director of Statistics, has estimated that in 1935 there will not be more than 10,300,000 men in France between the ages of sixteen and sixty-five, or 2,000,000 fewer than in 1911. If Dr. Bertillon's figures are correct this estimate

must be under rather than over the mark. Dr. Bertillon naturally urges an increase of the birth-rate, but that could have no effect on production before 1935. It is difficult to see how the production of France can be secured at all except by a large immigration.

CARDINAL MERCIER has, through the *Courrier de l'Armée*, addressed the following letter to the soldiers of Belgium:

'Mes Braves: You have no idea, I think, of the anguish which we felt concerning you during the long years of occupation. We wondered whether you did or could stand out at Liège, Namur, and Antwerp. And when, after two months' tenacious resistance, your soldier king gave you the order to defend yourselves to the last on the Yser, were you, you living dead, in a state to put up a defense? Again, when you were in the mud of the trenches from 1914 to 1918, were you living, or breathing? Perhaps you, too, wondered about us in occupied Belgium, the silence of which might make you think it was ungrateful to you. But, in truth, the thought of you was ever present to us. We knew our soldiers, and kept up our feelings of intercourse with them, calling them our deliverers, our models, our supporters, our glory. One of our sharpest regrets was that we could not communicate with you, speak to you or hear you, and so hail and thank you. But at last, to-day, through the *Courrier de l'Armée*, I bring you a feeble expression of my heartfelt feelings as a patriot and a Bishop, and I cry out to you with all the energy that a young heart can give to a breast oppressed with the weight of years: Bravo! Thanks!'

THE problem of the ex-officer is engaging attention in many lands. The war has interfered with the careers of practically all able-bodied young men, and some of these soldiers find themselves in a very serious plight. One can not have too much sympathy for many of these lads. In England, thousands of officers do not know what is to become of themselves and their families. A British officer who is thirty years of age and has a distinguished military career thus tells his story:

'I came down from Oxford eighteen months before the war, after taking my degree. I spent that year and a half in European travel, getting a knowledge of economic conditions in several countries and improving my knowledge of languages.

'Then the war came, and I immediately volunteered. I was a junior subaltern for a month, a senior subaltern for three months, and was then made a captain and ultimately adjutant to a new battalion.

'I went out with an expeditionary force, where I eventually became garrison adjutant and, ipso facto, staff officer.

'I was attached as a kind of equerry to Royalty in an expedition of seven weeks' duration; then I went to G.H.Q. and finally became personal military secretary to one of the most famous generals of the war.

'I want to point out that I had no influence behind me. When I took my commission I knew nothing of military life; it was entirely by my own efforts that I got promotion and was in the end attached to General —.

'I was demobilized in Exeter in February of this year, and was quite sure that I should be able to work my way up in civilian life as I had done in the army. I did n't expect to begin at the top; I was quite willing to go slow at first.

'I at once registered at the Labor Bureau and then came up to London, and had my name taken at Horrex's. The only job which I was ever offered through Horrex's I found occupied on application.

'I wrote seven times to Horrex's, but received no reply, and, deciding that it was absolutely useless to get anything through them, I made up my mind to depend entirely on my own efforts.

'I know very many well-known people, and could have asked them to use their influence on my behalf, but I hated the idea of doing that.

'I spent my gratuity in ordinary living expenses, wearing all my pre-war clothes, which had been carefully kept. I spent pounds in stamps for postage, for I answered hundreds of advertisements, and did not get a single reply. I spent pounds in advertising, too, and the only people who answered were "sharks" who wanted me to invest money in rotten concerns.