

WORD FROM THE CLOISTERS

diary@thetablet.co.uk

Getting Hitched...

“SPIKY enough to draw blood and sweet enough to give you a sugar rush”, is how Dan Hitchens describes his new venture, *The Pineapple*, a newsletter now available on the Substack online platform: <https://danhitchens.substack.com/>

Hitchens – son of Peter, nephew of Christopher – has the family knack for fluency and conviction. But even when he is commending the “magnificently unoriginal” *Humanae Vitae* and lamenting the dark night of confusion and muddle that has descended on the Church he’s never less than brilliant company.

Still implausibly young – “I share the year of my birth with *Dead Poets Society*, Francis Fukuyama’s *The End of History?*, and the Stone Roses’ debut album, which has aged somewhat better than the rest of us” – Hitchens joined the *Catholic Herald* as deputy editor in 2016, and took over as editor from Luke Copen in late March last year. After overseeing the transition from a weekly to a monthly he has left after seven issues.

The *Herald’s* new editor is based in Rome: author and seasoned Vatican hand Christopher R. Altieri, who spent more than a dozen years on the news desk at Vatican Radio, has a doc-



torate from the Greg and has appeared in several Catholic newspapers and magazines.

YOU HAVEN’T heard of Substack? Neither had I till a couple of months ago. Founded in 2017, it’s an online platform that allows you to write and send e-mail newsletters without anyone checking your political respectability or your spelling: if you can pull in enough paying subscribers, you can make a living out of it (though only a few do). It’s an increasingly popular online pulpit for freelance journalists like Hitchens, along with philosophers, poets,

mountaineers, cooks, therapists and baseball fans. In return for providing a soapbox for you to perform on, Substack takes a small cut of your income. There are thousands of newsletters on Substack and more than 250,000 paying subscribers

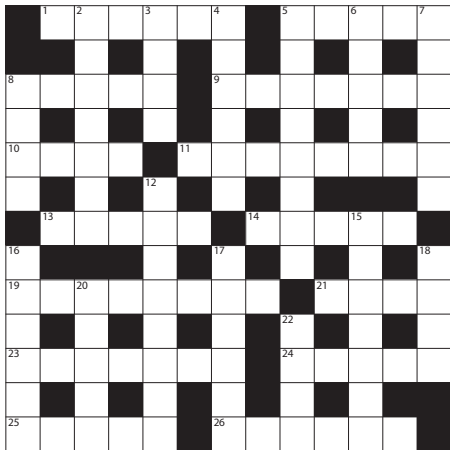
As well as the sweet but prickly fruit Hitchens named his newsletter after The Pine Apple, a tavern in Covent Garden where his great hero Samuel Johnson used to dine out for eightpence in his early years as a journalist. Pineapple is also the name of the modern dance studio nearby which boasted “Here careers are made, dreams are broken, bitching is an Olympic sport and everyone is fabulous!”

At some point we’ll probably have to cough up to enjoy a slice of *The Pineapple*. But for now it’s free.

THE PENN CLUB will close its doors for the last time at the end of March, just as it was about to celebrate its centenary, another casualty of the lockdown. It offered austere but affordable and friendly accommodation around the corner from the British Museum, and has been a favourite of *Tablet* readers visiting London for many years. Even during lockdowns, the Club remained active, providing free accommodation to key front-line workers at the nearby University College Hospital.

PUZZLES

PRIZE CROSSWORD No. 745 Enigma



Across

- 1 See the expressions of the poor, who lose nothing in the setback (6)
- 5 Dance during the dissolution of old Myanmar (5)
- 8 Places of refreshment are not quite safe after the music ends (5)
- 9 Constable Carey disturbed a mammal (7)
- 10 The one we have here is not his (4)
- 11 Gentle President Putin, for example, came from an old German kingdom (8)
- 13 Be quiet, back there, on the way into the mine! (5)
- 14 Something edible takes shape on Saturday (5)
- 19 Cissy art in the church? (8)
- 21 A legendary queen took no action (4)

- 23 Most of the text about myself is beyond the limits! (7)
- 24 Turn pale to see cash ending (5)
- 25 Breaches of the law, but little ones? That’s about right! (5)
- 26 Bashful about being strange and of poor quality (5)

Down

- 2 Unconventionally attractive flyers urging one to have an outdoor pastime (7)
- 3 Set off after the start of the pilgrimage? What a nuisance! (4)
- 4 It’s wonderful that a European is not down at heart (6)
- 5 A bunch of rugby players with old wine in a container (8)
- 6 Make an existentialist statement in the middle of a motorway in this place (5)

- 7 One can hardly fail to find the person who fits this clue (6)
- 8 Reel drunkenly from speed in an urban setting (4)
- 12 Military commanders are bad at putting the finishing touches to cakes (8)
- 15 Repeated what came from the horse’s mouth (7)
- 16 Agree that it’s in the condition in which it was dispatched (6)
- 17 Disseminator of culture as then envisaged (6)
- 18 Depressed by some crossword clues (4)
- 20 An animal would hesitate to provide food and drink (5)
- 22 Oh, Olga! Go away and find something good to wear! (4)

Please send your answers to: Crossword Competition 27 February, *The Tablet*, 1 King Street Cloisters, Clifton Walk, London W6 0GY. Email: thetablet@thetablet.co.uk, with Crossword in the subject field. Please include your full name, telephone number and email address, and a mailing address. Three books – on Paul, Theology and Christian Ethics – from the OUP’s Very Short Introduction series will go to the sender of the first correct entry drawn at random. **■ We cannot process entries or prizes at present. Please keep entering. Winners will be notified and prizes awarded as soon possible.**

SUDOKU | Challenging

8			6	4			5
	2			7			6
		7				4	
7							8
	4	1	3		8	6	7
2							9
		2				9	
	8			3			1
6			9	2			7

Each 3x3 box, each row and each column must contain all the numbers 1 to 9.

Solution to the 6 February puzzle

4	5	8	6	7	9	3	2	1
9	1	7	2	3	5	6	4	8
2	3	6	8	1	4	7	9	5
8	6	3	1	2	7	9	5	4
5	9	1	3	4	6	8	7	2
7	4	2	5	9	8	1	3	6
3	8	9	4	6	2	5	1	7
1	2	5	7	8	3	4	6	9
6	7	4	9	5	1	2	8	3

Solution to the 6 February crossword No. 742

Across: 7 Reeder; 8 Creole; 10 Stirrup; 11 Thule; 12 Eric; 13 Space; 17 Priam; 18 Haka; 22 Aidan; 23 Icarian; 24 Timber; 24 Memory. Down: 1 Dresden; 2 Neritic; 3 Bears; 4 Critics; 5 Jorum; 6 Terek; 9 Apophatic; 14 Frances; 15 Caribou; 16 Tannoy; 19 Malta; 20 Adama; 21 Fates.

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