You never actually own a Patek Philippe.

You merely look after it for the next generation.
Putin’s world
Is liberalism losing?

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Question th
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The main stories…

What happened

Tory big spenders

The two Conservative leadership candidates engaged in a bidding war over their Brexit and spending plans this week as they took part in a series of events across the UK. The underdog in the contest, Jeremy Hunt, toughened up his no-deal rhetoric, saying that as prime minister he would decide by the end of September whether there was a “realistic” chance of reaching a fresh agreement with the EU. If he thought there wasn’t, he would abandon negotiations and divert all the Government’s efforts into planning for a no-deal exit. The Northern Irish backstop, he said, “has to change or has to go”. Boris Johnson described the Withdrawal Agreement negotiated by Theresa May as “a dead letter”, and hammered home his message that he would take Britain out of the EU at the end of October, with or without a deal.

The Chancellor, Philip Hammond, accused the candidates of making unrealistic tax and spending commitments. Hunt’s plans include reducing corporation tax, boosting the defence budget, and creating a £6bn fund to help protect farmers and fishermen from the impact of a no-deal exit. Johnson’s include tax cuts, a hike in the national wage, more money for schools, and increased borrowing to fund “great projects”.

What the editorials said

“It feels more like a contest than the coronation that was generally expected,” said the London Evening Standard. Yet despite Hunt’s best efforts, Johnson still looks all but certain to become the new Tory leader on 23 July. He has put last week’s fuss over his row with his girlfriend behind him and “wrestled the debate back to where he wants it to be: timetables not temperament”. When not discussing Brexit deadlines, said the Daily Mail, the candidates have been vying to make “ever more extravagant spending promises”. This is reckless. True, if Britain leaves the EU with an agreement, there will be a “£26bn Brexit bonus” from money set aside for a no-deal exit. But if we leave without a deal – which is “worryingly possible”, despite Johnson’s assurances that it is a “million-to-one” shot – that cash “will swiftly be swallowed up”.

The candidates’ wild spending plans risk making Labour look like the party of fiscal prudence and legitimising its claim that the past decade of austerity was a mistake, agreed The Times. The Institute for Fiscal Studies reckons that, in the first full week of campaigning alone, Hunt racked up new spending pledges worth up to £46bn a year. And Johnson wasn’t far behind. It’s a sorry display, said The Guardian. Johnson and Hunt are putting their party before the country, and pandering to the members’ “worst instincts”.

Challenge to Beijing

Protesters stormed Hong Kong’s parliament on Monday night, in an unprecedented challenge to Chinese authority. Masked demonstrators daubed the walls of the Legislative Council with anti-Chinese graffiti, smashed furniture and windows, and hoisted colonial-era flags. The three-hour occupation ended when police charged the building. Beijing accused the rioters of “trampling on the rule of law”, and called on police to “exercise their duties”.

The break-in followed a 500,000-strong march marking the 22nd anniversary of Britain’s handover of Hong Kong to China – the latest in a series of mass protests triggered by an extradition bill that would allow suspects to be tried on the mainland. The bill has since been suspended, but activists want it scrapped, and want Hong Kong’s chief executive Carrie Lam to resign.

Hong Kong: mass protests

Hong Kong “has entered uncharted waters”, said the South China Morning Post (Hong Kong). “The rule of law has been wilfully violated by a small group of radical protesters, and they have to pay the price.” But these events should also be a “watershed moment” for the authorities: they must listen to the people of Hong Kong. The extradition bill, which would put them at risk of political prosecutions in China, is merely one sign of Beijing’s tightening grip over the city. The fear is that China will use the disorder to further curb the special freedoms guaranteed to Hong Kong in 1997, said The Daily Telegraph. “Beijing’s default position when confronted with dissent is to squash it.”

Hong Kong “stands at a perilous turning point”, said the Financial Times. The demonstrators must “return to purely peaceful methods” – so they can “regain their moral force, avoid alienating the more conservative parts of Hong Kong society” and deprive Beijing of a pretext for a crackdown.

It wasn’t all bad

A house in Canada has been built out of 612,000 plastic bottles. The three-bedroom bungalow by the sea in Nova Scotia was constructed over a year using a plastic used for the blades of wind turbines. Building with the tough foam blocks coated in fibreglass costs about the same as with other materials, but they are resistant to mould and offer excellent insulation. Joel German and David Saulnier, who built the house, are looking for investors to expand the project.

Two men have become the first to sail around mainland Britain non-stop and unassisted in a small open dinghy. Will Longson, 42, and Rich Mitchell, 44, completed the endurance task in 15 days and four hours, sleeping squeezed on the floor of their 4.9-metre-long, 60-year-old Wayfarer dinghy. Along the way, they battled gale-force winds, dodged huge container ships and suffered hallucinations. Having on Monday arrived back in Salcombe, Devon, from where they set off, they now plan to apply to Guinness World Records to have their record verified.

A 15-year-old schoolboy from the Somerset city of Wells dazzled Glastonbury after being plucked from the crowd to perform alongside rapper Dave. The rap star sometimes asks for a fan to take on a part in his song Thiago Silva (named after the Brazilian footballer). Alex Mann had come prepared, in a Silva shirt, and was duly picked. Once on stage, he not only did his part, but delivered the entire, complex quick-fire rap, striding up and down like a pro before leaving the stage to the sound of thousands of festivalgoers chanting his name.

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COVER CARTOON: NEIL DAVIES
What the commentators said

Given his slim chance of winning, the “only useful role” Hunt could have played in this contest was “to pull the next prime minister back into the realms of reality”, said Polly Toynbee in The Guardian. How disappointing, then, that this once sensible politician has instead curried favour by peddling the same nonsense as Johnson. It vindicates the view of the Tory peer Andrew Cooper, who earlier this year called Hunt “an unprincipled windsock who will believe whatever he thinks you want him to believe”. If Hunt has tacked close to Johnson this week, it’s because he knows it’s his last chance to stay in the race, said Katy Balls in The Spectator. Although the campaign technically runs until 22 July, the 160,000 Tory party members will start receiving their postal ballots this weekend, and most are expected to vote quickly.

Those hoping for a late upset are destined to be disappointed, said Nesrine Malik in The Guardian. “The prophecy will be fulfilled and Johnson will become prime minister.” It’s likely to prove a disaster for the Tories – and perhaps for the country, too. Critics are assuming the worst, said Fraser Nelson in The Daily Telegraph, but there’s a “decent chance” that Boris will able to strike a Brexit deal. Germany is keen to avoid a rift that would poison relations between Britain and the EU at a time when the bloc needs all the “diplomatic heft” it can get. While nobody expects the EU to rewrite the agreement it negotiated with Theresa May, it could perhaps be persuaded to tweak the backstop, to ensure that Britain “can’t be stuck for ever in what is supposed to be a temporary arrangement”. That would suffice.

Tories are projecting contradictory “fantasies” onto Johnson, said Clare Foges in The Times. To some, he’s the “emollient” who will win the EU round with charm; to others, the hardliner who will send Brussels packing. These expectations will soon “collide with reality– and that is
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What the commentators said

Have the activists fallen into a trap, asked Jamil Anderlini in the FT. Police made an “orderly retreat” from the Legislative Council on Monday night – “a calculated decision that allowed excited young protesters with no clear objectives to run amok”. It is “inconceivable” that they abandoned their posts without the consent of Lam, and it is very unlikely that she made that decision without Beijing’s permission. Lam seems to be gambling “that the scenes of senseless destruction will turn the majority of Hong Kong’s population against the young activists”. It could work, said Katrina Hamlin on Reuters Breakingviews. The violence will “spook big business”. The 1,500 multinationals that have their Asian bases in Hong Kong may now be wondering whether Singapore “might be a better hub”; many locals will be furious.

The good news is that there’s little threat of a Tiananmen-style crackdown, said Malcolm Rikit in The Daily Telegraph. The Chinese economy as a whole also relies on Hong Kong as a link to the rest of the world. A brutal response would wreck it as a financial centre. It would also alienate Taiwan, just when China is seeking to woo the island into rejoining “the motherland”. Don’t be too sure, said Simon Tisdall in The Guardian. The scale and persistence of the unrest in Hong Kong is a major threat to President Xi Jinping’s “strongman” image. “Brute force” may be unlikely, but the persecution of activists isn’t. A few years ago, “the rest of the world gave up caring” about the evils perpetrated by China’s government, said Richard Lloyd Parry in The Times – it’s just too powerful, economically and politically. “The Hong Kong protesters represent the only significant challenge anywhere in the world to the oppression and arrogance of the Chinese Communist Party.” Their courage shame the West.

What next?

Johnson says that every member of his cabinet would have to be “reconciled” to leaving the EU on 31 October, with or without a deal. His stance puts on notice cabinet ministers such as Amber Rudd and David Lidington, who currently oppose a no-deal exit. In a nod to Scotland, he’s also considering adopting the title “Minister for the Union” to go alongside his official position of “First Lord of the Treasury”, should he be PM.

Hunt says that, if he’s elected, he’ll order government departments on his first day to present their plans for a 31 October no-deal exit. He has warned that all August leave for civil servants would be cancelled and that all permanent secretaries confirmed that their department’s plans were “on time and on track”.

The protesters are pressing for an inquiry into alleged police brutality at past demonstrations, as well as for the resignation of Lam, who is seen as Beijing’s nominee. However, the Chinese government may regard Lam’s departure as an unacceptable loss of face.

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt warned China of “serious consequences” if it reneged on the agreements it made with Britain about Hong Kong. In response, Beijing said Britain should “know its place” and stop “gesticulating”.

THE WEEK

We can’t win. The robots are taking over. That’s the big fear. A new report by the Onward think tank identifies 50 areas where automation is decimating low-skilled jobs, 43 of which voted for the Brexit Party in the European election. Without widespread retraining, it warns, there’ll be “a political revolt”. No, that won’t help, says another report (see p.14): the next robot assault, Automation 2.0, is going after high-skilled jobs. It has already clobbered the architects: developers now use standard software to construct their blandly ugly buildings, only calling in an architect for a perfunctory last-minute look over. It’s just a matter of time, we’re told, before the robots surpass us in all areas of mental activity.

And there’s the giveaway. Artificial intelligence, we need to recognise, is as much an ideology as a process. Siliconvalleyism we might call it. No matter that the very idea that the human brain is a kind of computer is, in the words of the late neuroscientist Gerald Edelman, “one of the most remarkable misunderstandings in the history of science”; no matter that human judgement and creativity are not the output of a series of syntactical rules. Silicon Valley makes huge profits by seeking to persuade us that they are – to make us, like the architects, the servants of whatever their algorithms dictate. It isn’t that artificial intelligence is becoming more human. It’s that human intelligence is becoming more artificial, more conformist, more rule-bound. Siliconvalleyism and the flight from critical judgment is a greater threat to the liberal idea (see p.8) than anything in Putin’s armoury.

Jeremy O’Grady
Controversy of the week
The end of liberalism?

It was like that moment in a superhero movie when the villain outlines the plot, said Ian Dunt on Politics.co.uk. “The liberal idea has outlived its purpose,” Vladimir Putin explained to the FT journalist who’d come to interview him before last week’s G20 summit. It allows migrants to “kill, plunder and rape with impunity because their rights as migrants must be protected”, he continued, taking a swipe at Angela Merkel’s decision to allow a million refugees into Germany. Russia’s president may not quite look the part of a Hollywood villain: he’s more “a middle-management type with the eyes of a wolf”. But by pronouncing that liberalism “has come into conflict with the interests of the overwhelming majority of the population”, he was definitely engaging in a malicious act of war: a war against “reason, individual freedom and the protection of minorities”.

But where Russia is concerned, Putin isn’t entirely wrong, said Bruno Maçães in The Moscow Times. There’s no sign that Russians “yearn for contemporary liberal values”. They like the fact that order has been imposed, that Moscow now feels safer than Brussels, for example. And though attracted to the values of the older liberalism – a free press, limits on state power, careers open to talent – they are no great fans of such contemporary liberal values as feminism and multiculturalism. That’s why Putin made a point of identifying liberalism with gay and trans politics. “They’ve thought up six or five genders…Idon’t even understand what it is myself,” he lamented in a post-summit press conference. The underlying message to his global audience was clear. “This is what liberalism has become, do you still want it?” It was a classic demonstration of Putin’s knack for pushing “his KGB-trained fingers on the sorest parts of the Western nervous system”, said Douglas Murray in The Daily Telegraph. Western liberalism has morphed into a crusade for “modern” values. Putin recognises “there is a gap in the market for anyone willing to defend traditional ones.”

Putin may be wrong to say liberalism is “obsolete”, said Kenan Malik in The Observer, but there’s no doubt it’s under threat. And that is because in its latest manifestation it has become “unstitched from the restraints of social need”. Neoliberalism, as it’s called, seeks to introduce market forces “into every nook and cranny of social life”, destroying communities and traditional ways of life as it does so. The populist movements we see springing up across the globe are a reaction to this: they “reveal a yearning for belonging and identity that liberalism cannot satisfy”. That’s why Putin’s comments have had a global impact. But why, asked Natalie Nougayrède in The Guardian, are we paying heed to “a middle-management type with the eyes of a wolf”? But by

The Church of England has issued ten guidelines for social media – or “digital commandments”. Launched by the Archbishop of Canterbury in a live video from Facebook’s British HQ, the guidelines urge users to “speak to others online as you would speak to them in person”, and to check that what they share is accurate.

Good week for:
Gary Lineker, with news that he remains the BBC’s highest-paid presenter, on a salary of £1.75m a year. Although some male news and current affairs presenters accepted pay cuts in the wake of the BBC gender pay gap row in 2017, the overall amount paid to “on-air talent” went up £11m in the last year to £158.6m.
Cori “Coco” Gauff, who – aged 15 – pulled off one of the biggest upsets in Wimbledon history by beating the seven-times Grand Slam winner Venus Williams in the first round, in straight sets. Gauff, who has described the Williams sisters as her inspiration, said that just to face Venus on the No. 1 court was a “dream”, and that it was the first time she’d cried after winning.
Gwyneth Paltrow, who hosted her first UK Goop summit, in a “sanctuary of rest and reflection” in west London. Wellness weekend passes to Goop Health costing £2,500, excluding accommodation, sold out, with people coming from all over Europe to take part in sonic baths and other healing sessions.

Bad week for:
George Osborne, who announced that he and his wife, Frances, a successful author, are divorcing after 21 years. The couple, who have two teenage children, said they’ll remain “good friends”.
Nike, which became embroiled in a political row in the US over its use of the Betsy Ross flag, an early version of the Stars and Stripes, on its special edition 4 July trainers. When people pointed out that the flag, which has 13 stars to represent the 13 colonies, had been adopted by the American Nazi Party, Nike withdrew the “racist trainers”, to the outrage of Republicans.

Wedding rules review
A review of the marriage laws is to examine whether couples in England and Wales should be able to tie the knot wherever they like. Currently, the Marriage Act 1949 states that weddings can only be conducted in places of worship, register offices or other licensed “permanent and immovable” buildings. The Government has now suggested the rule is “outdated”, and that people should be free to marry at home or outdoors. Justice Secretary David Gauke said people should be able to “express their vows in a way that is meaningful to them”. The Law Commission will consult with faith groups and other stakeholders and make recommendations in 2021.

NHS conflicts of interest
A total of 371 NHS consultants own shares in private hospitals to which they refer patients. A study by the Centre for Health and the Public Interest (CHPI) also found that 67 doctors own equipment such as CT scanners in private hospitals and are paid a fee each time these are used; and that in 2017 and 2018, seven private hospital firms gave doctors who sent them referrals gifts and hospitality worth £1.5m. The CHPI warned that such “financial incentives” could lead to patients being given unnecessary procedures.

Poll watch
61% of Tory voters think Jeremy Hunt would make a good prime minister, up from 45% two weeks ago. Only 55% say the same about Boris Johnson, down from 61%. However, when asked who they would prefer to be PM, 48% of Tory voters said Johnson and 39% Hunt.

Among the general public, 41% would prefer Hunt to be the PM, 29% Johnson, and 30% don’t know.

YouGov/The Times

The share of people who believe that in order to be English you have to be white has halved since 2012, from 20% to just over 10%. The biggest change is among over-65s: 16% of over-65s now feel you have to be white to be English, down from 35%.

British Future/The Guardian
Europe at a glance

Strasbourg
New blood: After days of wrangling, European leaders formally agreed this week that Ursula von der Leyen, the German defence minister, should succeed Jean-Claude Juncker as president of the European Commission. A close ally of Angela Merkel, she needs now to have her appointment confirmed by the European Parliament. The European Council also agreed that Belgium’s outgoing PM, Charles Michel, should take over from Donald Tusk as EU council chief, and that Christine Lagarde, head of the International Monetary Fund, should be the next president of the European Central Bank (see page 46).

Reggio Emilia, Italy
Children “sold” by carers: Police in the northern Italian city of Reggio Emilia have arrested 18 people – including doctors, social workers, psychotherapists and a town mayor – on suspicion of conspiring to remove children unlawfully from their parents, in order to “sell” them to foster families. Allegedly, the network used various methods including electric shock therapy to brainwash children from disadvantaged families into thinking their parents had sexually abused them. The children were then given to foster parents in exchange for cash, while letters and gifts from their own parents were hidden in a warehouse that was discovered by police, according to the Italian media. Some of the foster parents have reportedly been accused of abusing the children they “bought”. Police have not said how many children were involved, or their ages.

Berlin
Neo-Nazi “deathlist”: A German neo-Nazi group drew up a “deathlist” of political targets, before stockpiling weapons and ordering 200 body bags and quicklime to dispose of their victims, according to the country’s domestic intelligence agency, the BfV. Sources from the agency told German media that the group, Nordkreuz (“northern cross”), had about 30 members with close links to the police and military. One is said to have been an active officer in a police commando unit. Prosecutors had been investigating the group’s activities since August 2017. They discovered that its members had accessed police files to gather the details of 23,000 politicians who’d supported the integration of refugees. The gravity of the threat posed by right-wing terrorists was underlined last week when a neo-Nazi confessed to the politically motivated killing of CDU politician Walter Lübcke, though he has since retracted the confession.

Montpellier, France
“Saharan Bubble” hits Europe: At least seven people were killed by the heatwave that swept across mainland Europe last week as the result of a “Saharan Bubble” of warm air being carried over from North Africa. Worst hit was France, which recorded its highest ever temperature of 45.9°C last Friday in a village near Montpellier. This temperature was significantly higher, and came far earlier in the summer, than the previous national record of 44.1°C, recorded in the same area during the devastating heatwave of August 2003. Several parts of southern Europe also experienced temperatures well above 40°C last week. In the Catalan province of Tarragona, the heat sparked Spain’s worst wildfires for 20 years. There were also wildfires in Germany and Poland, where temperatures reached the high 30s – a record for June. The World Meteorological Organisation said that 2019 was now firmly on course to be among the world’s hottest ever years, and that 2015-19 would then become the hottest five-year period on record. Europe’s five hottest summers since 1500 have all been this century, according to climatologists at the Potsdam Institute in Germany. The heatwave has renewed calls for action over climate change, and for governments to do more to prepare for a future in which extreme weather becomes more common.

Lampedusa, Italy
Captain cleared: The German captain of a migrant rescue ship who was arrested after disobeying orders not to dock her vessel on the Italian island of Lampedusa, and colliding with a police patrol boat, has been released from custody. Carola Rackete, 31, was in command of the Sea Watch 3, which was carrying 40 migrants rescued in the Mediterranean. It had been refused permission to dock in Lampedusa for 16 days: she says she was obliged to force the ship into port on Saturday owing to the worsening conditions on board. This week a court in Sicily found her not guilty of endangering lives, but she may still face charges of aiding illegal immigration. The incident has sparked a diplomatic row between Italy and Germany. Italy’s deputy PM Matteo Salvini has called her the “outlaw captain” of a “pirate ship”, and said the collision with the patrol boat was an “act of war”.

Moscow
Sub disaster: Fourteen Russian sailors – including seven top-ranking officers – have been killed in a fire on what has been described as a top secret “spy” submarine. Moscow has confirmed only that the “research” vessel was mapping the sea floor in Russian waters in the Barents Sea. However, sources have identified it as a nuclear-powered AS-12 deep-sea submarine known as Losharik (after a cartoon character), which forms part of a secretive division of the Russian navy known as the Main Directorate of Deep Sea Research. Believed to be capable of diving to depths of up to 6,000 metres, Losharik did not carry weapons, but could be used to tap and sever undersea communications cables.

Catch up with daily news at theweek.co.uk

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**Birmingham, Alabama**

**Shot woman charged:** In a case that has outraged liberal America, a woman whose foetus died as a result of her being shot in the stomach has been charged with manslaughter, on the grounds that she allegedly initiated the fight that led to the shooting. Marshae Jones, 28, was five months pregnant when she was shot last December in a supermarket car park on the outskirts of Birmingham, Alabama, following what police say was a row with another woman over the unborn baby’s father. Police originally charged the shooter with manslaughter; a grand jury accepted that she had acted in self-defence, but indicted Jones. Her lawyer is trying to have the charges dismissed. Activists have warned that this is the effect of the “personhood” movement, which insists that the rights of foetuses are equal to those of the mother.

**Cancún, Mexico**

**Seaweed invasion:** Thick mats of sargassum seaweed are washing up on the sandy beaches of Mexico’s Caribbean coast, threatening its vital tourist industry. The authorities have already spent $17m removing half a million tons of the brown algae – but it’s still coming, and with stinking mounds of rotting weed piling up on the shoreline, many tourists are staying away. It’s not clear why the floating mats started reaching the Cancún coast in 2011, though warming waters and increased nutrients from fertiliser run-off are likely to be at least part of the problem. Earlier this year, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador suggested deploying the navy to scoop the algae out of the sea before it reaches the coast.

**San Salvador**

**Migrant deaths “our fault”:** The president of El Salvador, Nayib Bukele, has said that his country’s social and economic problems are to blame for the deaths of two migrants who drowned in the Rio Grande last month. Oscar Alberto Martínez Ramírez, 25, and his 23-month-old daughter, Angie Valeria, died as they tried to cross into Texas from Mexico, and a distressing photograph of their lifeless bodies has sparked intense debate about US migration policy (see page 15). “People don’t flee their homes because they want to, people flee their homes because they feel they have to,” said Bukele. They do it “because they don’t have a job, because they are being threatened by gangs, because they don’t have basic things like water, education, health… It is our fault.”

**Miami, Florida**

**Harris boost:** California senator Kamala Harris has become the bookies’ new favourite to win the Democratic presidential nomination, after a strong performance in the party’s first round of TV debates. In particular, she made headlines for confronting front-runner Joe Biden over his opposition in the 1970s to “bussing” – the policy of transporting black children from poorer areas to better-off white areas as a means of tackling segregation. Harris, who was born in California to a Jamaican father and an Indian mother, revealed in the debate that she had benefited from this policy as a child.

**Caracas**

**“Tortured” naval captain dies:** The Lima Group of 12 Latin American nations and Canada have condemned what they described as the “assassination” – by the Venezuelan authorities – of a Venezuelan naval captain who collapsed and died last week, having apparently been tortured in custody. Rafael Acosta was one of 14 people arrested last week for their alleged involvement in what the Maduro government claims was a failed “fascist” plot, backed by the opposition leader Juan Guaidó, to assassinate the president. Last Friday, Acosta appeared at a military tribunal in a wheelchair, unable to stand and barely able to speak. He collapsed in the court and died in hospital. The US has also condemned what they called the “killing and torture” of Acosta by “Maduro’s thugs and their Cuban advisers”.

**Brasília**

**Drugs bust on presidential plane:** Brazil’s president Jair Bolsonaro was left red-faced last week when a member of his official military detail was arrested for transporting 39kg of cocaine on the presidential plane while it was en route to the G20 summit in Japan. Sergeant Manoel Silva Rodrigues was arrested during a stopover in Seville in Spain, after airport security staff found 37 packages of cocaine in his luggage. The president was not on board at the time: he was following in another aircraft. The arrest is a particular embarrassment for Bolsonaro because he has frequently exalted the integrity, ethics and professionalism of Brazil’s armed forces, and he came to office on a promise of leading a harsh crackdown on the drugs trade.

**New York**

**9/11 campaigner dies:** A former New York police detective who spent three months clearing rubble from Ground Zero has died of cancer 18 days after testifying to Congress about the need for more financial support for the “first responders” to the 9/11 attacks. Luis Alvarez, 53, had received 68 rounds of chemotherapy when he urged legislators to reauthorise the September 11 Victims Fund, which will otherwise expire next year. About 80,000 emergency workers rushed to the site of the destroyed World Trade Centre after 9/11, where they were exposed to toxic fumes and particles including pulverised concrete, lead and asbestos.
Banjul
Rape claims: A former Gambian beauty queen has accused the country’s exiled ex-president, Yahya Jammeh, of raping her five years ago, when she was 18. Fatou “Toufah” Jallow says that after winning a prestigious pageant, the president asked to meet her, and proposed marriage. When she turned him down, she was summoned to the state house for a Ramadan event, where he injected her with an unknown drug and viciously assaulted her. Jammeh, whose brutal rule over the tiny West African state lasted for 22 years from 1994, posed as a pious Muslim and an advocate of women’s rights. But according to a report by Human Rights Watch, he treated women as “his personal property”. Two other women told investigators he’d raped them, and eight officials confirmed having direct knowledge of such attacks.

Jerusalem
Barak back: Ehud Barak, Israel’s 77-year-old ex-PM, is forming a new left-wing party with the explicit aim of removing Benjamin Netanyahu from office. A much-decorated former general in the Israeli army, Barak was PM from 1999-2001 and led the Labor Party until 2011. This week, he said he’d do “everything necessary” to topple Netanyahu, whom he accuses of trying to pass laws to gain immunity from prosecution for corruption. “These are dark days the likes of which we have not known before,” he said.

Tehran
Nuclear breach: Iran’s foreign minister has confirmed that Tehran has allowed its reserves of enriched uranium to exceed a 300kg cap set by the 2015 nuclear deal, but has insisted that this is within its rights under the deal. Mocking a US statement that Iran had been violating the terms since before “the deal’s existence”, Mohammad Javad Zarif – who has been targeted by US sanctions imposed since the US unilaterally withdrew from the deal – tweeted the one-word question: “Seriously?” On Monday, Iran said it would increase its reserves, unless the remaining European signatories to the deal did more to counter the economic impact of US sanctions. President Trump said Iran was “playing with fire”, China urged all sides to show restraint, while France and the US called on Tehran to reverse the breach.

Kushiro, Japan
Whaling resumes: Japan has taken up commercial whaling again after a gap of 31 years, arguing that eating whale meat is part of the country’s history and culture. Five whaling vessels left the port of Kushiro on Monday, with a permit to catch 227 whales before the end of the year. Their first, a minke, was caught within hours. Since 1988, Japan had been party to an international agreement not to undertake whaling on a commercial basis, but had still allowed it for what it said were research purposes.

Osaka, Japan
G20 truce: Donald Trump announced an easing of his trade dispute with China this week, following a meeting with President Xi at the G20 in Japan. He said the US would be imposing no more tariffs for now, and would be partially lifting its restrictions on trade with the telecoms firm Huawei (see page 45). Separately, Trump held cordial talks with Russia’s President Putin, where he quipped that he hoped there’d be no Russian meddling in the next US election. By contrast, Theresa May’s meeting with Putin, her first since the Salisbury poisoning last year, was glacial.

Wellington
Plastic bag ban: New Zealand has become the latest country to ban shops from distributing plastic bags to their customers. Retailers who infringe it face fines of up to £52,000. The ban, which came into force this week, covers thin plastic supermarket bags and the thicker ones typically used by department stores, as well as biodegradable and compostable bags. Plastic bags are now taxed or banned in more than 40 countries. The first ban was imposed in Bangladesh in 2002, after the bags were found to have exacerbated devastating floods by blocking drains.
Alice Cooper on horror

Alice Cooper’s stage shows were infamous in the 1970s for their ghoulishness, with their guillotines and lashings of fake blood. But though he was accused of satanism, they were just a spectacle – inspired by his love of old-school horror movies. “I was a big fan of the classics: Bela Lugosi, Boris Karloff, Christopher Lee,” he told Duncan Seaman in the I newspaper. “We went to the movies every Saturday and watched every one of those [films].” For his act, he simply took their blend of gore, theatrics and comedy, and put it to his music. While his father was a pastor in The Church of Jesus Christ, he had no problem with the shows. What he did think was wrong was the hedonism that went with his son’s rock star life. After a few years of drinking so heavily he nearly died, Cooper realised his father was right and sobered up. “I looked at it this way: God gave me another chance and said, ‘I don’t mind you being a rock ‘n’ roll star at all – but also be a Christian.’ And I went, ‘OK, that sounds good to me.’”

Damien Hirst’s first million

It was in 2000 that Damien Hirst entered the league of big-money artists, said Mick Brown in The Daily Telegraph – and he’s not forgotten that day. His business manager Frank Dunphy told him that Charles Saatchi wanted to buy a piece called Hymn – and he’d asked £1m for it. “It shocked me because I’d always thought I didn’t give a f***. But then I thought, ‘That’s really a lot of money.’ And Frank said, ‘He’s offered me £950,000, and I’ve said no.’ I said, ‘Frank, you can’t say no to £950,000... You could buy a street where I grew up for 50 grand!’ He said, ‘It’s the principle – you have to make the million-pound mark.’ The whole thing just did my head in. I thought, ‘Christ, something’s wrong, it doesn’t make sense.’” But once the sale was made, “I just adapted to it. I never really felt a big number after that.”

David Lynch’s inspiration

David Lynch didn’t start out wanting to become a film director, said Bryan Appleyard in The Sunday Times. He trained first as a painter, at art school in Philadelphia. Then in steep decline, the city would become his “greatest influence.” It affected me profoundly – the architecture, the mood, the people. Tremendous, tremendous, tremendous fear was in Philadelphia. Insanity, corruption, filth, violence just permeated that city. All the buildings had this patina of soot, and they had their way of being. I learnt to kind of love that. But then graffiti artists got to work and ruined the old industrial buildings, by making them merely contemporary. “They say graffiti originated in Philadelphia. It ruined the world for cinema, particularly. You can’t really go back in time any more. The buildings have all been ruined. If they haven’t been torn down, they’ve been graffiti’d.”

Wally Funk has spent her whole life trying to go into space – and though the aviator is now 80, she hasn’t yet given up, says Emine Saner in The Guardian. Growing up in New Mexico, she lef
t every expectation of what a girl should be like: she became such a crack shot, the National Rifle Association sent her shooting results to President Eisenhower; she learnt to fly in her teens; and when, aged 22, she read about a project to see if women had the physical capacity to become astronauts, she applied straight away. Some of the tests were excruciating – for one she had to swallow a three-foot-long hose – and most of the women dropped out. But she never considered it. “Oh, heavens, no. Higher, faster, longer – that is my motto. I can go out there and do anything.” She passed with flying colours – only for the programme to be cancelled, amid doubts that women should even be taking such tests. Undaunted, she took and passed more tests. Then she went to Russia to take cosmonaut tests, and beat all the men. But Nasa still refused to admit her. So she worked as a flight instructor, became the first female federal plane-crash investigator – and in 2010, bought a ticket for one of Richard Branson’s planned suborbital flights. Given the project’s many setbacks, is she worried she might not live to use it? “I don’t worry about anything, honey.” She smiles. “I’m positive – there’s no worry. I will get up there somehow.”

Castaway of the week

This week’s edition of Radio 4’s Desert Island Discs featured academic and author Jared Diamond

1* Nun ist das Heil und die Kraft von Bach, performed by Andrew Parrott and the Taverner Players
2 Piano Quintet in E-flat major by Schumann, performed by Samuel Rhodes, Dolf Bettelheim and the Beaux Arts Trio
3 Das Wandern by Schubert, performed by Gerald Moore and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau
4 Jesu, meine Freude by Bach, performed by Andrew Davis
5 Finlandia by Sibelius, performed by Esa-Pekka Salonen with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra
6 Piano Trio No. 4 by Dvořák, performed by Beaux Arts Trio
7 Intermezzo in A major from Six Pieces for Piano by Brahms, performed by Arthur Rubinstein
8 Symphony No. 9 by Mahler, performed by Klaus Tennstedt with the London Philharmonic Orchestra

Book: The Complete Sherlock Holmes by Arthur Conan Doyle
Luxury: six cases of scharzhofberger kabinett wine

* Choice if allowed only one record

Viewpoint:

Hobbies

“Hobbies are the backbone of this country, and what starts as a hobby can end up changing a whole neighbourhood.” The other day, in a gap between two nondescript buildings near the Elephant and Castle, I saw an explosion of multicoloured hollyhocks. They were standing sentry around a playground, and on social media I was informed that they were the work of a guerrilla gardener named Richard Reynolds who has created this ‘pocket park’ from salvaged plants. These include roses that originally bloomed on a recently demolished local council estate. This information thrilled me. People can do such marvellous things and this park wouldn’t exist if someone hadn’t had an extracurricular interest.”

Jenny Eclair in The Independent

Farewell

Ivan Cooper, Northern Irish politician and civil rights campaigner, died 26 June, aged 75.

Steve Dunleavy, journalist feted by Rupert Murdoch, died 24 June, aged 81.

Min Hogg, designer and founding editor of The World of Interiors, died 24 June, aged 80.

Dr Henry Lynch, cancer research pioneer, died 2 June, aged 91.
WAIT.

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THE WORD
ANY MORE THAN
YOU DO.

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The MINI 5-door Hatch has been awarded Auto Trader's Most Fun Car to Drive 2019. Book your 48 hour test drive and enjoy a twinpower turbo engine and up to 192 HP.

BOOK YOUR 48 HOUR TEST DRIVE.
SEARCH MINI MOST FUN.

Fuel economy and CO₂ results for the MINI 5-door Hatch Range: Combined 39.8-48.7 mpg (7.1-5.8 l/100km). CO₂ Emissions 149-112 g/km.

Figures are for comparison purposes and may not reflect real life driving results which depend on a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. All figures were determined according to a new test (WLTP). The CO₂ figures were translated back to the outgoing test (NEDC) and will be used to calculate vehicle tax on first registration. Only compare fuel consumption and CO₂ figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedure.
**The weird world of whisper porn**

Why are millions of people watching videos of people whispering? Because of the biggest trend you’ve never heard of: ASMR

**What does ASMR stand for?**

“Autonomous sensory meridian response”: a sensation triggered primarily by soft sounds such as whispering, tapping and rustling. It’s often described as a “tingling” feeling, beginning in the scalp and spreading down the spine, accompanied by deep pleasure, calm and relaxation. Although there are no hard figures, it has been estimated that about 20% of the population experience ASMR strongly and another 40% mildly. But even those who don’t experience it at all will have had similar sensations, such as “frisson” – the goose pimples prompted by fear or rousing music. And over the past decade, ASMR has become a form of popular entertainment. Slow-paced, hypnotic videos designed to trigger it have taken over the internet. It’s now the world’s fifth most searched YouTube term.

**How was it discovered?**

Online, of course. ASMR may sound technical, but it’s not: it’s an entirely pseudoscientific term, coined in 2010 by the enthusiast Jennifer Allen. She’d experienced the feeling since her 20s, but could find no scientific explanations for it, only online forums for other people who’d had similar experiences. Giving it a scientific-sounding name – in preference to, say, “head tingle” or “brain orgasm” – would, she hoped, help attract scientific attention. ASMR is a distinctive and search-engine friendly name, and interest ballooned: what had been a private physical response suddenly became a global talking point. People started creating videos intended to prompt ASMR and a phenomenon was born – there are now more than 45 million such videos on YouTube.

**What are the videos like?**

To the uninitiated, extremely strange. Most of the people who make them – “ASMRtists” – are young women, usually speaking in a low, soothing, whispering voice, while making a range of quiet, repetitive sounds, by, for instance, rubbing their hands together, brushing the microphone, tapping on glass, pouring water, crinkling paper or eating food. As well as the auditory triggers, “personal attention” is thought to stimulate ASMR, so this is a big feature of the videos. “Personal attention role play” is a popular subgenre. ASMRtists simulate scenarios in which a helpful person is giving the viewer focused attention: cutting their hair, painting their nails, massaging their back or giving a medical examination, while maintaining eye contact and whispering tenderly to them.

**It sounds sexual. Is it?**

It’s easy to imagine a sexual subtext. ASMR videos are designed to synthesise intimacy and they are sometimes known as “whisper porn”. The Chinese government’s anti-pornography office banned ASMR content in June last year. ASMR fans, however, strongly reject these implications. Research suggests that they are broadly right: a 2015 paper from Swansea University found that the overwhelming majority of viewers use ASMR videos as a form of guided relaxation, to cope with stress or to help them fall asleep. Arguably it synthesises the experience of being mothered as much as anything sexual: shushing, grooming and gazing are all things that parents do to soothe their infants.

**But is ASMR even real?**

Given its origins in an internet subculture, many are sceptical. But there is a growing body of evidence that suggests it does exist. One neurologist has compared ASMR to migraines – “we know they exist as a syndrome primarily because many different people report the same constellation of symptoms”. And ASMR certainly has measurable effects. A 2018 study by the University of Sheffield showed that people who reported experiencing it while watching videos had significantly decreased heart rates and more relaxed mental states. A Dartmouth College study from the same year using MRI scans showed increased activation in specific areas of the brain during moments of ASMR “tingling”.

**Why does it happen?**

There is, as yet, no clear consensus. ASMR could be a type of gentle seizure or perhaps an activation of our pleasure responses, releasing serotonin and the hormone oxytocin. Dartmouth’s brain scans showed significant activity in regions associated with bonding and emotional arousal. Some have given an evolutionary-biological explanation: that it produces the effects similar to those soothing “affiliative” behaviours in mammals, such as grooming. However, these explanations are complicated by the fact that ASMR is idiosyncratic. Many don’t experience it at all and even for those who do, their triggers are different. Over time, people also become desensitised to specific triggers – hence the fast turnover of trends in ASMR videos, from eating pickles to whispering in Latin to simulated cranial nerve examinations.

**Why does ASMR matter?**

Because it’s going mainstream. Celebrities do whispered interviews in an ASMR style – the rapper Cardi B’s has been watched 25 million times. The pop star Billie Eilish used ASMR-tinged production for an advert, which has been a massive hit. It is, it seems, a gift to the hidden persuaders. But it may also have more wholesome applications. Dr Craig Richard of Shenandoah University in Virginia – an expert and author of the book Brain Tingles – is convinced of its real-world potential, persuading ASMR-tinged adverts to help soothe babies. Other research has found that it can, at least temporarily, alleviate depression, anxiety and insomnia – which means it may end up being more than a digital fad.

**The stars of ASMR**

The original ASMRtists were the unintentional kind: the most famous accidental pioneer is the American painter Bob Ross. His 1980s-90s TV series *The Joy of Painting*, known for its close-up shots of repetitive brushstrokes and soft-spoken instructions, draws millions of ASMR fans online. Recently the 78-year-old Welsh stone carver Ieuan Rees has also attained cult following for his videos, in which he taps away and discusses his craft in his gentle, lilting voice.

Documentaries about Japanese printmakers and traditional barbershops have their devotees, too. And some ASMRtists are now more full-time job and a few have become celebrities in their own right. With 2.3 million subscribers, 22-year-old Taylor Darling, aka ASMR Darling, is thought to make more than $1,000 per day in advertising revenue from her videos, which have been viewed nearly half a billion times. She keeps her real name secret, to protect herself from stalkers. Russian-born Maria Viktorovna, known as Gentle Whispering, is another star. ASMR, she says, rescued her from a depression that she fell into after a failed marriage. One of her top videos is called “Sleep-inducing Haircut”; a highlight features her gently flipping the pages of a magazine.
It’s no business of business what I think

Jodie Ginsberg

The Daily Telegraph

Employers are entitled to boss us about, says Jodie Ginsberg. But enforcing standards on how we behave in the workplace is one thing; dictating what staff can and can’t express in their private lives quite another. Too many companies, however, are crossing that line. Last week, Brian Leach, a till worker at Asda, was reportedly sacked by the supermarket chain after he shared a clip on his personal Facebook page of comedian Billy Connolly ridiculing organised religion. Asda “doesn’t tolerate any form of discrimination from colleagues or customers and takes such behaviour extremely seriously” was all the company was prepared to say. Maya Forstater, an internationally renowned researcher on tax avoidance, was fired by the Centre for Global Development think tank after tweeting that in her view transgender women were not women. There are many other such cases, and the climate of fear they create will lead to more people censoring themselves. Companies have a right to protect their reputations, but they’ve no right to “police the opinions of employees”.

We can breathe easier over air pollution

Tom Chivers

UnHerd

“In everyone is freaking out about air pollution,” says Tom Chivers. We keep hearing how toxic fumes are ruining our health. “The rate of fatalities linked to breathing in killer particles” in the capital rose to 6.5% in 2017, said the London Evening Standard. It sounds alarming, but this in fact shows how misleading statistics can be. The overall pattern for air quality in this country has in fact been one of steady improvement in recent decades: emissions of the main pollutants have fallen. And don’t think that 6.5% figure means air pollution kills 6.5% of Londoners. A measure known as the “attributable fraction of mortality” (AF), it means that if you remove all cases where air pollution was a contributory factor, the annual mortality rate would be 6.5% lower. Not the same thing at all. (In 2005, the AF linked to smoking for the UK population was 19% – and 27% among men.) Air pollution is certainly a problem and we need to tackle it. But it isn’t the Great Smog of 1952. This is actually a good news story: air pollution control seems to be working. Things are getting better.

How America affected our mental health

Dr Adrian Massey

The Guardian

In the 1980s we in Britain “smiled bemusedly at neurosis-laden Woody Allen films”, says Dr Adrian Massey. The self-absorption of the characters, their habit of endlessly seeking refuge in therapy and pills – it seemed ridiculous. Not any more. Today, our approach to mental health is as American as America’s. Rates of anti-depressant prescription are rising. The proportion of sickness benefit claims made in relation to mental health more than doubled between 1995 and 2014. And, yes, it’s good that it’s no longer a taboo subject. Attitudes to mental illness 50 years ago were undoubtedly “crude”, with the result that many were denied help that could have transformed their lives. But the pendulum has swung too far the other way. We’re too quick to pathologise normal responses to the trials and tribulations of life, too eager to seek from experts advice that could be “more easily obtained from the hairdresser or landlord”. For our own sake and that of the overburdened NHS, we need to regain some of our old stoicism. “One of the things that is most protective to mental health is not to spend too much of our lives consciously obsessing about it.”

An inhuman assault on people’s jobs

John Naughton

The Observer

Should we fear the march of the robots? Not if the economists are to be believed, says John Naughton. Mechanisation has always destroyed jobs, they cry, but it creates other, better ones in their place; this is how progress works. Tell that to all those production line workers in the car industry, many of whom never did find other jobs and saw their communities devastated as a result. Tell it to all the white-collar workers destined to be made redundant by the new “technologies using machine learning and big data” – what we misleadingly call “artificial intelligence”. Recent studies suggest that this new wave of automation – “Automation 2.0” – will displace accountants, lawyers, management consultants and hundreds of other types of workers. And a “sobering” new report by the Oxford Economics consultancy predicts that it will also exacerbate regional inequalities, with each machine displacing 2.2 jobs in poorer areas, but only 1.3 jobs in higher-income areas. The only clear winners from this process will be big tech firms like Amazon, which employ hardly any people and pay “derisory” amounts of tax on their vast profits. And they call this progress?
A tragic illustration of the US asylum crisis

Oscar Martinez and his daughter died trying to cross the border.

“The cruelty continues even for those who do make it to US soil, said Zoe Carpenter in The Nation. A group of lawyers recently visited a centre in Clint, Texas, designed for the temporary detention of about 100 adult migrants. There they found 250 children living in squalor. Although the government is legally obliged to provide “safe and sanitary” conditions for underage migrants and to transfer them out of Border Patrol custody within 72 hours, the children said they’d been kept in the facility for weeks without regular access to beds, showers or soap. Progressive lawmakers are convinced the cruel detention system is a deliberate attempt to deter other migrants. As Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez put it last week: the dreadful conditions are “not due to a lack of resources; [they’re] due to a desire – an active desire by this administration to hurt kids”.

It’s clear that many young migrants are being held in “appalling” conditions, said Rich Lowry in National Review. Here’s an idea for how the Trump administration could quell the row over its refugee detention centres, says Jonah Goldberg. It should just rename them “vocational skills education training centres”. Then everyone would ignore them. It works for the Chinese. That’s what they call their “gulag archipelago” of internment and re-education camps in Xinjiang province, where an estimated 1.5 million ethnic Uighurs and other Muslim minorities are being held. In this resource-rich region nearly three times the size of France, Beijing is carrying out “the largest attempt at cultural annihilation of the 21st century”. Satellite imagery shows that 36 mosques and other religious sites have been torn down or had their domes and corner spires removed since 2017. Ancient cemeteries have been turned into car parks; morning calls to prayer have been silenced. It’s horrifying, yet American politicians never talk about any of this. In all the debate surrounding the trade war between Washington and Beijing, the authoritarian nature of the Chinese regime has barely featured. Strange. Our leaders are happy to take China to task for bootlegging Hollywood movies, but they’re silent over the fact that it “rounds up internal enemies and puts them in concentration camps”.

The US silence over Chinese oppression

Jonah Goldberg

National Review

Democrats face up to the Wokepocalypse

Kurt Schlichter

Townhall

“By any sane standard, Joe Biden is not a racist,” says Kurt Schlichter on Townhall. But sane standards don’t cut much ice with the identity politics zealots who dominate today’s Democrat Party. They judge leaders by their exquisitely “woke” sensibilities – and Biden has offended these gravely. How? By talking about the good working relationship he forged with some segregationist lawmakers in his early Senate days. Liberals are perfectly aware that Biden isn’t a bigot who secretly hankers for the days of Jim Crow, but that didn’t stop them instantly accusing him of being racist. That the charge is untrue is immaterial – for so-called progressives, “the calling out is the purpose”, not the elimination of bigotry. Another Democratic presidential candidate, Julian Castro, discovered this the other day when, at a public event, a self-identified “non-binary activist” asked him a question. Before answering, Castro earnestly asked what pronoun the activist preferred. The activist replied to applaud that, actually, they didn’t use any pronoun. “Take that, cis expectations!” There are no right answers in this game. You can only win by, like Donald Trump, refusing to play. But Democratic candidates can’t do that. “This election, Wokepocalypse 2020, is going to be hilarious.”
Istanbul’s rebuke: a new start for Turkish democracy?

It will go down as a “turning point” in Turkish history, said Yusuf Kanli in Hurriyet (Istanbul). Last week, tens of thousands celebrated the emphatic victory of opposition candidate Ekrem Imamoglu in the rerun of mayoral elections in Istanbul. His victory means President Erdogan’s ruling party has now been rejected not once but twice in the country’s most populous city. Imamoglu’s centre-left Republican People’s Party (CHP) narrowly won the original vote back in March – but that result was controversially cancelled after Erdogan’s Justice and Development Party (AKP) seized on a spurious legal loophole (complaining that some polling station supervisors had not been civil servants, as required by law) and Imamoglu was kicked out of office after only 18 days. This time, however, he won by an increased margin of 9.2%. The AKP’s political chicanery and “arrogant rhetoric” clearly repelled voters – including many of its traditional supporters, who are also anxious about inflation and unemployment. Now they’ve sent a message that they’re fed-up with Erdogan’s autocratic rule. This could herald a new beginning.

The AKP’s campaign was pure “black propaganda”, said Mine G. Kirikkınanat in La Dépêche (Toulouse). Imamoglu was dubbed “imperturbable”, winning over voters talk of a tolerant new era – but that’s a long way off, said Isso Ehrich in Die Tageszeitung (Berlin). Other results in March’s nationwide regional elections showed big gains by ultra-nationalists, and even the CHP was helped to power by support from the right-wing Iyi Party. The ball is in Erdogan’s court now, said Amberin Zaman in Al-Monitor (Washington DC). Optimists hope that Erdogan’s Istanbul drubbing will make him change course: sacking “hawkish” ministers, getting IMF help to save the economy, and freeing political prisoners. Alas, it’s just as likely that, “scenting the end”, he’ll double down, burning bridges with the West and driving the economy further into the ground. Could Turkey be entering “a darker hell”?

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What the scientists are saying...

A lost wallet honesty test
People are more likely to return a wallet if it has cash in it than if it's empty, a study has found. Researchers posing as members of the public dropped off 17,000 “lost” wallets at the reception desks of banks, hotels and museums in cities in 40 countries. Some contained no money, the others cash worth about £10. They each also had a shopping list, a key and three business cards with contact details for the “owner”, who appeared to be a local. The team expected the person at reception to be more likely to return the wallet if it was empty, but in fact, only 40% of empty wallets were returned, compared with 51% of the ones with cash. (There were regional variations, however: in China, less than 20% of the wallets overall were returned; in Switzerland, more than 75% were.) The researchers were so surprised by the finding, they conducted an extension to the study, using wallets with £75 – and found that in these cases, the rate of return was 72%. They suspect this has less to do with people’s concern for others than their concern for their own self-image: you can let yourself off the hook for neglecting to return an empty wallet, but not for keeping a full one.

“People want to see themselves as an honest person,” said Prof Michel Maréchal of the University of Zurich, who helped oversee the project.

Pollution may affect fertility
Women who live near busy roads have been found to have less active ovaries, raising concern that exposure to airborne pollution might damage fertility. For the study, scientists in Italy tested 1,300 non-runners, to get an impression of their ovarian reserve – the number of viable eggs a woman’s ovaries can produce. They found that the women living in the areas with the highest levels offine particulate matter were two to three times more likely to have severely depleted AMH levels – which may indicate a higher risk of early menopause – than women in the least polluted areas. While it is possible that other factors related to polluted areas are affecting AMH levels, the researchers suspect toxic particles are the main culprit. However, it’s not clear if the reduction is permanent – and having a low ovarian reserve does not necessarily mean a woman will struggle to conceive.

Athletes have a running bug
Elite athletes may get a boost from bacteria in their gut, a study has suggested. Researchers compared faecal samples from 15 runners taken before and after the Boston Marathon with those of ten non-runners, to get an impression of their gut flora. What stood out in the athletes’ samples was an abundance of veillonella, levels of which spiked after the race. Intriguingly, veillonella is a microbe that breaks down lactate, a metabolite that is produced during exercise, and that, if not used, accumulates in the blood, where it can be a marker for fatigue. To find out if higher levels of veillonella reduce fatigue and so promote endurance, the Harvard University team isolated a sample from one of the athletes, and administered it to 16 mice. Sixteen other mice were given a different microbe that does not eat lactate. All the mice were then put on a treadmill, and sure enough the veillonella mice ran for about 13% longer than the rest before being exhausted. The researchers have now set up a company to look into ways of using their findings to create products to boost human endurance.

Long hours linked to stroke risk
People who work at least one ten-hour day a week are almost a third more likely to suffer a stroke than those who do not, a French study has found. In people who work long hours for a long period – more than ten years – the increase in risk rises to 45%. The study was based on analysis of data on age, smoking and working hours from a population study of more than 143,000 adults. Just under a third worked long hours; 10% had worked long hours for ten years or more. Overall, 1,224 had a stroke. “The association between ten years of long hours and stroke seemed stronger for people under the age of 50,” said Dr Alexis Descatha, who led the research. “This was unexpected.” While more research is needed to confirm the link, he said he’d be advising his patients to work more efficiently “and I plan to follow my own advice.”

Clean energy overtakes fossil fuels
The UK is generating more energy from zero carbon sources than fossil fuels for the first time since the Industrial Revolution, the national grid has announced. In what has been described as a “historic milestone” on the way to a net zero carbon future, gas and coal generated 46.7% of Britain’s power in the year to the end of May, while zero carbon sources generated 47.9%. The rest came from biomass burning.

A decade ago, coal plants generated almost a third of the UK’s electricity. Now there are only seven left – two of which are earmarked for closure – and in the first five months of this year, they provided only 3% of UK electricity. Meanwhile, the amount of electricity derived from renewables has risen from 2% in 2009 to almost 25%, with most of that coming from wind. Having generated only 1.3% of our electricity in 2009, wind turbines now produce 18.8% of it. Nuclear power reactors provide most of the rest of the zero-carbon energy. “The incredible progress that Britain has made in the past ten years means we can now say 2019 will be the year zero-carbon power beats fossil fuel-fired generation for the first time,” said John Pettigrew, the chief executive of National Grid.

Trial for male contraceptive
A “groundbreaking clinical trial” is under way for a new male hormonal contraceptive, says The Guardian. The gel, which must be applied daily to the chest, shoulders and upper arms, contains a mixture of progesterone which switches off sperm production in the testes – and testosterone, to replace the loss of the hormone as a result of sperm production stopping. Adding this testosterone back has always been a major challenge in creating male contraceptives: the hormone is metabolised so fast by the liver, it can’t easily be delivered in the form of a pill. The gel is being tested on 450 couples at centres in the UK, Sweden, Chile and Kenya. Edinburgh resident James Owers, 29, who has been using it for nine weeks, said his sperm count dropped to zero within six weeks of starting, and the only real side effect he has detected is a slightly increased sex drive.
**Talking points**

Why do we come back year after year, rain or shine? Because there is simply no other festival like Glastonbury, said Neil McCormick in The Daily Telegraph. This year, 130,000 people paid upwards of £250 to spend the weekend at Worthy Farm, Somerset, and were rewarded with blazing sunshine: it was thought to be the hottest Glastonbury on record, and the first where single-use plastic bottles were banned (in 2017, 1.3 million had been discarded), leading to queues at fountains. But festival-goers are a resilient lot, and despite the heat they sung their lungs out. “Oh my goodness,” was all a tearful Kylie Minogue could say, “as the words of her cheeky Europop hits floated back to her with the spooky beauty of the world’s biggest choir.” Her set was a joy, but the thing about Glastonbury is that it “isn’t one thing or another – it is everything at once”, in a place where everyone seems friendly and “anything is possible”. You could nod along to Steeleye Span, a band as old as the festival itself; spin in a daze to mind-bending techno; thrill to the sight of Johnny Marr on stage with The Killers; or watch Stormzy become the first black British solo artist to headline at Glastonbury.

There was a lot riding on the 25-year-old south Londoner’s set, said Will Hodgkinson in The Times. Although he has only released one album, Stormzy has rapidly become a fixture for young black British culture. The grime artist’s appearance on the Pyramid Stage, following in the footsteps of the likes of U2 and The Rolling Stones, was a landmark cultural moment – and a “triumph”.

Swaggering yet humble, the devout Christian delivered hardcore grime tracks solo, and more spiritual songs backed by a gospel choir, said Ludovic Hunter-Tilney in the FT. Dressed in a Banksy-designed stab-proof vest featuring a dark Union Jack, he reeled off the names of black acts who paved his way, and of others making their way. He showcased the talent of two black ballet dancers; performed his UK No. 1 Vossi Bop (with its crowd-pleasing line, “I could never die, I’m Chuck Norris / F*** the Government and F*** Boris”) amid a group of kids doing wheelies on bikes; and sang a duet with Coldplay’s Chris Martin, in what looked like the “headlining torch” being handed from rock to hip-hop. Stormzy used Glastonbury to show what he represents, said Jude Yawson in The Independent: the celebration and encouragement of black excellence, everywhere from music and the arts to academia. He has made it, and he is intent on pulling others up with him.

**Gossip**

Contrary to popular belief, Conrad Black and his wife Barbara Amiel (pictured) did not go to a party in 2000 at Kensington Palace dressed as Cardinal Richelieu and Marie Antoinette. “Barbara was a friendly barmaid and I was just an ordinary cardinal,” insists the former newspaper magnate, who was recently pardoned by President Trump after serving more than two years in jail for obstruction of justice and fraud. “I did not have the great Richelieu’s goatee and moustache, or his insignia as duke, prime minister, minister of foreign affairs and grand admiral. The historical ignorance of the press is distressing, even after all these years, and it is a relief not to employ them any more.”

Diana, Princess of Wales was in talks to star opposite Kevin Costner in a sequel to his 1992 hit film The Bodyguard, the actor has confirmed. She would, he said, have played a role similar to WhitneyHouston’s in the original, as a VIP he is paid to protect – and they got as far as discussing it on the phone. “I just remember her being incredibly sweet, and she asked, ‘Are we going to have, like a kissing scene?'” Costner, 64, recalled. “She said it in a very respectful… she was nervous because her life was very governed. And I said, ‘Yeah, there’s going to be a little bit of that, but we can make that OK, too.'” He added that the talks were initiated by Sarah Ferguson. “I always respect her because she set up the conversation between me and Diana. And she never said, ‘Well, what about me? I’m a princess too.’”

**Corbyn: is he really “too ill” to be PM?**

The point of the opposition is to provide an alternative government, ready to take power if the need arises, said The Times. But at present Labour isn’t able to perform this role – because Jeremy Corbyn “isn’t up to the job physically or mentally”, or so insiders say. Westminster is awash with rumours about his poor health. One senior civil servant claims that Corbyn, now 70, is “too ill to carry on as leader of the Labour Party, let alone prime minister”; there are even claims that he has had a “mini-stroke”. Labour MPs and officials say that critical policy discussions are forgotten the next day. “Something has happened – he doesn’t seem all there sometimes,” according to one aide to a senior Labour politician. Even members of his own faction say they are concerned that a befuddled Corbyn has become the puppet of a bullying hard-left clique of advisers.

Ignore these rumours, said Robert Shrimsley in the FT. It’s very disturbing that “anonymous civil servants” should have been briefing against the leader of the opposition. Corbyn’s supporters, understandably enough, regard it as an “establishment plot” against their man, who they insist is in perfect health; and No. 10 has promised an official inquiry into the leak. The gossip also distracts from the real issue, which is that Corbyn is incompetent. Look at his weakness over Labour anti-Semitism: last week the MP Chris Williamson, suspended for claiming that the party had been “too apologetic” over the issue, was readmitted because he’s unwell; it’s because he’s no good.”

The reports in The Times shed more light on Corbyn’s conflict over Brexit policy than they do over his health, said John Rentoul in The Independent. The Labour leader is trying to bridge the gap between Brexiters in his circle such as his chief of staff, Karie Murphy, and his spin doctor, Seumas Milne, and the likes of the shadow chancellor John McDonnell, who lean towards a second referendum. When Corbyn suggested supporting a second vote, Murphy reportedly screamed at him: “We’re not doing that, we’re not selling out our class.” It’s no wonder Corbyn prefers not to be pinned down, said The Guardian. “But the cost of ambiguity is diminished relevance”: he needs to take a line on the most important issue facing the country. And with the Tory party charging headlong towards “no deal”, the only sensible option available is continued membership of the EU. Corbyn needs to show some leadership.
Talking points

North Korea and the US: friends... for now

If there is such a thing as a “Trump Doctrine”, said The Wall Street Journal, it’s the conviction that foreign policy issues can be solved through “personal diplomacy and showmanship”. Both were on full display last weekend during the US president’s visit to East Asia. On Saturday, Trump met his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, at the G20 summit in Japan, where the two agreed to a tentative truce in their countries’ trade war. The next day, Trump held a third meeting with North Korea’s Kim Jong Un. Trump had, via Twitter, extended a last-minute invitation to Kim to meet for a handshake in the demilitarised zone between the two Koreas. The leader of the Hermit Kingdom accepted, and Trump became the first sitting US president to set foot in North Korea.

Trump milked his cross-border stroll for all it was worth, said Max Boot in The Washington Post. “Big moment, big moment,” he told Kim. But the reality is that this “historic” meeting was “symbolism utterly devoid of substance. It was a photo op. That’s it. The only agreement was to resume lower-level talks – you know, the photo op. That’s it. There’s no pleasing Trump’s critics, said The Daily Telegraph. If he stokes tensions, he’s a U.S. president visit to North Korea. Trump’s decision to restart negotiations with North Korea and China is welcome news for global security, said The Times. “Nonetheless, it is striking that on both counts, the progress followed concessions by Trump.”

Beijing appears to have offered nothing new to persuade Trump back to the table, whereas he has made a “significant climbdown” by agreeing to let US companies resume selling components to the Chinese telecoms giant Huawei. Likewise, Kim doesn’t seem to have conceded anything to secure the resumption of talks and the coup of a US presidential visit to North Korea. Trump’s new, more conciliatory approach may be an acknowledgement that his previous pressure tactics haven’t paid off. It may also reflect his desperation, as “a self-proclaimed master in the art of deal”, to notch up a foreign policy success ahead of the 2020 presidential election.

Homeopathy: “an outrage to reason”

The world’s scientists and doctors came to a decision some while ago on homeopathy, said Leyla Sanai in The Spectator: it doesn’t work. “There has been extensive research, and the unambiguous conclusion is that it has no more benefit than any other placebo.” In 1986, Queen Victoria’s physician declared that homeopathy was an “outrage to human reason”. A BMA inquiry concluded that it had no scientific validity in 1986. And in 2017, NHS England’s chief executive, Simon Stevens, described homeopathic treatments as a “misuse of scarce funds”, and ruled that they should no longer be available on the NHS. Yet the “heir to the throne, who is neither a doctor nor a scientist, begs to differ”. Prince Charles still believes that homeopathy works, and last week, announced that he has become patron of The Faculty of Homeopathy.

It’s true that homeopathy doesn’t stand up to scientific scrutiny, said Dr Max Pemberton in the Daily Mail. It is based on the idea that infinitesimally small quantities of substances derived from plants and minerals can trigger in the body a healing process. But these ingredients are so massively diluted, often no molecule of the original remains. So it is a nonsense – except for one thing: it does, in fact, work on many patients. That may well be down to the placebo effect, but if people feel better, is there any harm in promoting the practice?

Yes, there is, said Martha Gill in The Times. For one thing, it is not risk-free: the remedies are not rigorously safety-tested and can be unexpectedly strong. Secondly, people who put their trust in “natural” treatments may delay seeking conventional ones for serious illnesses, with disastrous consequences. Finally, its promotion reinforces the creeping view that scientific evidence matters less than anecdote and gut instinct – a trend that has fuelled the lucrative “wellness” industry, as well as the positively dangerous anti-vaxer movement. It’s only a few weeks since Prince Charles was berating Donald Trump for his climate change denial, said Rivkah Brown in The Independent. By continuing to give his “royal seal of approval to a pseudo-science – an anti-science even – he is emboldening the very sceptics he seeks to convert”.

Statistics of the week

Eight out of ten police officers were attacked last year, and a third suffered injuries.

The Times/Home Office

340,488 people moved from London to other parts of the UK in 2018 – 103,228 more than arrived in the capital from the regions.

The Daily Telegraph/Office for National Statistics

6 July 2019 THE WEEK

Wit & Wisdom

“There are no pleasures in life worth giving up for two more years in a care home in Weston-super-Mare.”

Kingsley Amis, quoted in The Times

“If I stop to kick every barking dog I’m not going to get where I’m going.”

American athlete Jackie Joyner-Kersee, quoted on Huff Post

“Progress happens too slowly for people to notice; setbacks happen too fast for people to ignore.”

Morgan Housel on the Collaborative Fund blog

“The difference between successful people and others is how long they spend feeling sorry for themselves.”

Barbara Corcoran, quoted in the San Francisco Chronicle

“Silicon Valley is a bit like the Vatican; slightly insular, massively wealthy... and mostly run by men.”

Miriam González Durántez, quoted in The Sunday Times

“If everybody always lies to you, the consequence is not that you believe the lies, but rather that nobody believes anything any longer.”

Hannah Arendt, quoted in The New York Times

“To be astonished is one of the surest ways of not growing old too quickly.”

Colette, quoted in the L.A. Times

Charles: not a doctor
The stars of the Women’s World Cup

Bronze and Rapinoe: extraordinary talents

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The stars of the World Cup Cup

The stars of the Women’s World Cup

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Fuel economy and CO₂ results for the Maserati Levante MY19 range in mpg (l/100km) combined: 20.7 (13.6) to 30.0 (9.4). *CO₂ emissions: 282 - 207 g/km. Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO₂ figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. *There is a new test used for fuel consumption and CO₂ figures. The CO₂ figures shown however, are based on the outgoing test cycle and will be used to calculate vehicle tax on first registration. Model shown is a Maserati Levante V6 GranSport MY19 at £84,845 On The Road including optional mica paint at £725, Black painted callipers at £200, Pieno Fiore leather interior with heated and ventilated front seats at £6,425, Trident stitching on headrests at £350, Bowers & Wilkins sound system at £2,530, Rear laminated privacy glass at £395, Driver Assistance Pack Plus at £2,530 and 21" Anteo alloy wheels at £2,200.
When designing Calibre JJ04, our in-house moonphase module, we were never interested in giant leaps. In fact, thanks to the precision engineering present inside the C1 Moonglow, the smooth perpetual steps of the highly luminous moon across its dial is also unerringly accurate to a day every 128 years. Released to mark half a century since man first set foot on the Moon, the Moonglow may just be one of the most distinctive moonphase watches ever made.

Do your research.
WHAT IS AVAXHOME?
AVAXHOME - the biggest Internet portal, providing you various content: brand new books, trending movies, fresh magazines, hot games, recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price
Cheap constant access to piping hot media
Protect your downloadings from Big brother
Safer, than torrent-trackers

18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

All languages
Brand new content
One site

AVXLIVE - AvaxHome - Your End Place

We have everything for all of your needs. Just open https://avxlive.icu
Trade secrets
To The Independent
A recent piece of news that largely passed under the radar, such is the UK’s Brexit obsession, was the fact that the EU and South American economic bloc Mercosur has clinched a huge trade deal after 20 years of negotiations.

It is the EU’s biggest deal to date and aims to cut or remove trade tariffs, making imported products cheaper for consumers while also boosting exports for companies on both sides. The agreement is set to create a market for goods and services covering nearly 800 million consumers, making it the largest in the world in terms of population. It should be noted that the EU is already Mercosur’s biggest trade and investment partner.

A matter of days later, adding to the irony, the EU and Vietnam signed a long-awaited free-trade deal that will slash duties on almost all goods. Both these deals neatly highlight that the EU is one of the world’s greatest global trading powers, and follow recently concluded trade deals with Japan, South Korea and Canada.

As an EU member state, the UK automatically benefits from 40 trade agreements the EU has in place with more than 70 countries. These are trade agreements that on leaving the EU the UK will have to renegotiate, in a world that is becoming increasingly protectionist.

So, while Brexiteers talk of a “global Britain” that will trade freely with the rest of the world, they will soon find out, to the detriment of us all, that not only will this take a considerable amount of time, but any terms agreed will not come close to being a match when compared with the benefits we currently enjoy as members of the EU.

Alex Orr, Edinburgh

Quack merchants
To The Times
Martha Gill joins distinguished company in her attack on homeopathy. In 1842 Oliver Wendell Holmes described homeopathy as “a mingled mass of perverse ingenuity, of tinsel erudition, of imbecile credulity and of artful misrepresentation”. He hoped that soon it would be sleeping in the grave of oblivion along with the Royal Touch for scrofula, Bishop Berkeley’s tar-water, and Dr Perkin’s Metallic Tractors. He was wrong. But he wasn’t surprised; he discusses public opposition to smallpox vaccination, linking it to “a spirit of opposition, not merely to medical science, but to all science, and to all sound knowledge”, preferring “the floating fables of the moment” to expert opinion.

Nothing changes. I despair.
Hugh Pennington, emeritus professor of bacteriology, Aberdeen

Exchange of the week
Charging “health tourists”
To The Times
Charging migrants for care will not help to fund the NHS, as by the Government’s own estimate “health tourism” accounts for only 0.25% of the NHS budget, a tiny amount when compared with other costs. The people who will be hit hardest by this policy are long-term migrants who have been unable to regularise their status, asylum seekers trapped waiting years for a decision from the Home Office and those people in the UK who do not have a passport. These are people more likely to be in precarious or low-paid work: they do not have thousands of pounds to pay for the care they need.

In practice, the exemptions for particularly vulnerable people, and for treatment considered urgent, do not work. Research from the Equality and Human Rights Commission found that people seeking asylum were deterred from seeking care despite being exempt. We must not let the NHS become a place of fear that stops the most marginalised people in our society receiving the help they need. Instead we must ensure that the NHS remains open and free for all.

Dr Omar Risk, newly qualified junior doctor, Oxford

To The Times
Perhaps the doctors who feel so strongly about charging tourists could work pro bono when treating them and have their pay reduced proportionally. The tourists would still get an excellent deal by having free access to the other NHS services – nursing care, equipment – but the doctors would salve their delicate consciences. They could of course make exceptions when morally justified, in the case of American Trump supporters, perhaps.

Tony Langley, Chorley, Lancashire

The lot of today’s GP
To The Daily Telegraph
As a retired GP, it comes as no surprise that general practice is finding it hard to recruit doctors. You highlight whose problems are beyond our control – the huge increase in bureaucracy inflicted by successive governments, which includes the creation of a target culture and a vast array of policing mechanisms, then it is no wonder that young doctors are looking elsewhere.

Finally, turning general practice into an academic, rather than practical, subject, has led to the demise of the old-fashioned, anti-intellectual, full-time GP, who was the glue that held the whole thing together.

It is such a shame, because under the right circumstances it is a great job.

Chris Nancollas, Yorkley, Gloucestershire

Heathrow’s transit issue
To The Guardian
Simon Jenkins [writing about Heathrow] focused on the volume of leisure and commercial travel. He omitted the third source of passengers, and one that, while it fits the airlines’ business model, offers very few benefits to west Londoners and southeast England in general. According to Heathrow’s own data, 80.1 million passengers used the airport in 2018, of whom 24 million, or almost one-third, were in transit. While transit passengers by definition contribute little to the massive infrastructure and disruption linked to the project’s road transport plan, they add little to the overall economy other than the sale of millions of coffees, overpriced meals, and duty-free booze and fags. This is a high price for increased air and noise pollution and blighted housing stock for – as Mr Jenkins notes – a 20th century edifice that may well be redundant before the first aircraft lands on the runway.

Gavin Greenwood, Brighton

Choosing a PM
To The Independent
The idea that whoever becomes our next prime minister must call a general election to obtain a “mandate” has no basis in our constitutional history. Since 1945, seven people have become prime minister other than by winning a general election – Anthony Eden, Harold Macmillan, Alec Douglas-Home, James Callaghan, John Major, Gordon Brown and Theresa May. Of these, only two – Eden and May – called a general election when they did not need to. Another two – Douglas-Home and Major – called an election within a year, but only because parliament had run its five-year course.

Michael Clarke, Portishead, Somerset

We’ve completed a 360-degree appraisal of your performance with your workplace colleagues, Maria, and you are assessed as a fibberspigget, a will-o’-the-wisp, a clown.

6 July 2019 THE WEEK
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Review of reviews: Books

**Book of the week**

**The Making of Poetry**
by Adam Nicolson

*William Collins 336pp £25*

The Week Bookshop £19.99

“For about a year – from July 1797 until the autumn of 1798 – two of the greatest poets in the English language lived within walking distance of each other,” said James Marriott in *The Times*. Occupying a “cramped” cottage in the Somerset village of Nether Stowey were Samuel Taylor Coleridge and his young family. Nearby, in a “grand mansion”, were William Wordsworth and his sister, Dorothy. In his “dazzling” new book, Adam Nicolson chronicles this “year of marvels”, during which the poets incessantly talked, rambled across the Quantock Hills and wrote some of their greatest poems: in Coleridge’s case, *Kubla Khan and The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, and in Wordsworth’s *Tintern Abbey* and *The Idiot Boy*. Towards its end, they co-published *Lyrical Ballads*, the volume credited with kickstarting English romanticism.

For all their similarities of sensibility (and shared republican politics), Coleridge and Wordsworth were “wildly different” characters, said Lewis Jones in *The Daily Telegraph*. The dandyish Wordsworth liked to wear cream silk waistcoats and breeches; Coleridge, whose commitment to liberty extended to never using mousetraps or tending his garden, was “frankly a slob”. In their corner of Somerset, the pair soon aroused suspicion, said John Walsh in *The Sunday Times*. One local farmer reported that Wordsworth was always “mumbling to himself along the roads”. Concerned that the poets could be plotting revolution, the government sent agents to spy on them, but they discovered that “what was atoot in the Quantocks wasn’t sedition but a slow-burning experiment in poetic diction”.

This is an “excitingly new kind of literary book”, said Miranda Seymour in the *Financial Times*. Nicolson spent a year living in the Quantocks, visiting the poets’ haunts and retracing their walks. Never before have their lives and habits been so well evoked: Nicolson confirms, for instance, that the moss on which Wordsworth liked to recline is more comfortable than the “spongy” heather favoured by Coleridge.

Nicolson’s book is “one of the most imaginative and luminously intelligent books about poetry I have read”.

**Novacene**
by James Lovelock

*Allen Lane 160pp £14.99*

The Week Bookshop £12.99

Many people believe that super-intelligent robots pose a serious threat to humanity. Not James Lovelock, said Steven Poole in *The Guardian*: in his new book, the 99-year-old scientist and inventor displays a remarkably sanguine attitude to the “coming machine takeover”. Lovelock’s term for the AI-dominated future is the “Novacene”: soon, he argues, this will replace the “Anthropocene”, in which humans have been the dominant influence on the environment. In the new era, cyborgs will emerge that can “think 10,000 times faster than we do” and they will change the planet in unimaginable ways. But crucially, they won’t do away with humans, because they will “realise that they need organic life to keep the planet at a habitable temperature” (even robots, it seems, won’t survive runaway global warming).

Although Lovelock’s speculations sound far-fetched, the underlying science is explained with “beautiful clarity”, and the book is a “bracing corrective to the crypto-Christian guilt and self-loathing of much traditional environmentalism.” It is tempting to dismiss some of the claims made in this book as crazy, said Martha Gill in *The Times*. In the future, Lovelock suggests, we may “provide the decoration” for our robot overlords just as, at present, “flowers delight us”. Martha Gill in *The Times*. In the future, Lovelock suggests, we may “provide the decoration” for our robot overlords just as, at present, “flowers delight us”. Although Lovelock’s speculations sound far-fetched, the underlying science is explained with “beautiful clarity”, and the book is a “bracing corrective to the crypto-Christian guilt and self-loathing of much traditional environmentalism.”

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Nicolson’s book is “one of the most imaginative and luminously intelligent books about poetry I have read”.

**Novel of the week**

**On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous**
by Ocean Vuong

*Jonathan Cape 256pp £12.99*

The Week Bookshop £10.99

Ocean Vuong is a 30-year-old Vietnamese-American who has already won major prizes for his poetry, said Claire Lowdon in *The Sunday Times*. His debut novel seems likely to be an even bigger event. Highly autobiographical, *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous* tells the story of “Little Dog”, who emigrates from Vietnam to America as a young boy and grows up gay in a deprived neighbourhood of Connecticut, sharing a small flat with his violent mother (who works in a nail bar) and schizophrenic grandmother. This is a poetic, ambitious work whose dominant mode is a “high-stakes hyper-lyricism”. While no “polished masterpiece”, it contains some genuinely “startling” writing.

At the story’s heart is Little Dog’s teenage love affair with the gun-toting, 50 Cent-listening Trevor, said Tessa Hadley in *The Guardian*. Their “surpassingly passionate” relationship is captured with “frankness and precision”. Vuong is at his best when focusing on sensory specifics; however, elsewhere, he risks inhibiting the novel’s flow with too much “explicit commentary on the meaning of what’s happening”.

To order these titles or any other book in print, visit theweek.co.uk/bookshop or speak to a bookseller on 020-3176 3835

Opening times: Monday to Saturday 9am-5.30pm and Sunday 10am-4pm

6 July 2019 THE WEEK
Theatre: Present Laughter
The Old Vic, London SE1 (0344-871 7628). Until 10 August  Running time: 2hrs 30mins (incl. interval) ★★★★★

He was unforgettably sinister as Moriarty in the BBC drama series Sherlock. His Hamlet won critical acclaim in 2017. He wowed viewers as the “hot priest” in Fleabag. Andrew Scott is clearly a major talent, said Dominic Cavendish in The Daily Telegraph. But his performance as the preening stage star Garry Essendine in Noel Coward’s Present Laughter, first performed in 1942, is so “revelatory”, even his “expanding congregation of worshippers” are sure to “sit bolt upright in extra excitement”. It’s a star part that requires a star performance and the Irishman gives just that. He brilliantly catches the “musicality” of Coward’s wit. He’s lovable, detestable, winning and haughty; musically vital and yet a bundle of vulnerability.

Scott does not so much play the part of the vainglorious thesp as “grasp it around the waist and do a hot-to-trot tango with it”, said Ann Treanor in The Times. As he “flirts, flounces and flourishes”, his “panache fills the entire theatre”. Coward’s slim plot involves Garry’s team of intimates – his ex-wife, manager, secretary and producer – struggling to keep him away from ruinous romantic entanglements as he prepares for a theatrical tour of Africa. In lesser hands, the piece could feel dated. But director Matthew Warchus has added “zest and surprise” by swapping the genders of two key characters, so that Garry now falls for both men and women. It’s a change that Coward might well have welcomed. And the effect, said Alice Saville in Time Out, is to liberate Coward’s queer subtext from the confines of his time. You feel you’re at a party where “everyone is bisexual, endlessly stylish and schooled from birth in the art of the bon mot”.

And Scott’s is not the only sublime performance, said Paul Taylor in The Independent. Sophie Thompson is terrific as the dourly loyal secretary; Indira Varma is pitch-perfect as Garry’s protective ex-wife; and as the young playwright Roland Maule, Luke Thallon “hilariously suggests a man who is simultaneously close to orgasm and nervous breakdown”. What a giddy, joyous evening.

The week’s other opening
The Hunt Almeida, London N1 (020-7339 4404). Until 3 August

David Farr’s “riveting” stage adaptation of Thomas Vinterberg’s film, about a teacher wrongly accused of molesting a young girl, gets an “electric” production from Rupert Goold. Tobias Menzies is extraordinary as the teacher and Poppy Miller is desperately moving as the girl’s mother (Observer).

The best of summer opera and music

Buxton Festival Buxton Opera House, Derbyshire
To mark its 40th outing, the Buxton Festival has commissioned Georgiana, a “pastiche opera” (with music by composers including Mozart) on the scandalous life of the 18th century Duchess of Devonshire. Other highlights, says The Sunday Times, include the UK premiere of Caldara’s Lucia Papirio Dittatore, 300 years after it was first performed, plus The Orphans of Koombu, an African chamber opera. Until 21 July, buxtonfestival.co.uk.

Glyndebourne Near Lewes, East Sussex
Glyndebourne has impressed this year with a “bizarrely original” take on Berlioz’s La Damnation de Faust, says Rupert Christiansen in The Daily Telegraph. Next up is an “intriguing” staging of Mozart’s Die Zauberflöte, set in the Hotel Sacher in Vienna. Then Robert Carsen’s production of Handel’s Rinaldo, wittily inspired by Harry Potter, returns with a new cast led by Elizabeth DeShong and Polish countertenor Jakub Jozef Orlinski. Until 25 August, glyndebourne.com.

Ryedale Festival North Yorkshire
High-quality music in churches and country houses is the hallmark here, says The Sunday Times. This year’s highlights include Dido and Aeneas, Bach motets performed by Solomon’s Knot, an all-Bach programme from the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and a community-opera staging of The Wind in the Willows. From 12 to 28 July, ryedalefestival.com.

Garsington Opera Wormsley Estate, Buckinghamshire
Garsington’s highlight so far this summer was its tremendous production of Smetana’s The Bartered Bride, says Michael Church in The Independent. It’s closing the season with The Turn of the Screw: Benjamin Britten’s take on the Henry James novella is known for its high drama and gripping score. Until 26 July, garsingtonopera.org.

London highlights: Donizetti and Tchaikovsky
Summer treats for Londoners include a revival of Donizetti’s jolly comedy, La Fille du régiment at the Royal Opera House (8-20 July, roh.org.uk), says Rupert Christiansen. The new cast includes the “divine” French soprano Sabine Devieilhe in the title role and Javier Camarena as her beloved Tonio – a character who gets to sing “nearly” to “top Cs in a row. At Opera Holland Park, fresh from her triumph in Garsington’s Bartered Bride, Alysha Romaniw sings the title role in a new production of Iolanta, Tchaikovsky’s “haunting parable of inner darkness and light”, preceded by Wolf-Ferrari’s comic squib Il Segreto di Susanna (22 July-3 August, operahollandpark.com).

Stars reflect the overall quality of reviews and our own independent assessment (5 stars=don’t miss; 1 star=don’t bother)

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THE WEEK  6 July 2019
**Film**

The best thing about the new Spider-Man movie is its range of glamorous locations, said Jonathan Dean in The Sunday Times. Who could fail to be entertained by the sight of everyone’s favourite schoolboy superhero (Tom Holland) swinging around above London’s Tower Bridge or the canals of Venice?

*Spider-Man: Far from Home*

Dir: Jon Watts

2hrs 9mins (12A)

*Serviceable addition to the Spider-Man franchise*

Trouble is, the plot that takes him there feels more than usually feeble, said Kevin Maher in The Times. While on a school trip to Europe, Spidey – or plain Peter Parker, as most people know him – attempts to ask out a naughty female friend (played by pop star Zendaya) while joining forces with a new superhero named Mysterio (Jake Gyllenhaal), who seems to be wearing an old fish bowl on his head. But thankfully there’s a twist that ushers in a spectacular second half, which upends everything that has gone before. Holland remains “note-perfect” as the lead – funnier and more “believably teenage” in range of glamorous locations, said Jonathan Dean in The Sunday Times. Who could fail to be entertained by the sight of everyone’s favourite schoolboy superhero (Tom Holland) swinging around above London’s Tower Bridge or the canals of Venice?

*Support the Girls*

Dir: Andrew Bujalski

1hr 30mins (15)

*A film for the everywoman*

Support the Girls is a “remarkably compassionate portrait of American womanhood that inspires hope without denying reality”, said Clarisse Loughrey in The Independent. Regina Hall is simply “brilliant” as the long-suffering manager of a “breastaurant” named Double Whammies – a place where men come to drink beer, watch sport and be served by busty young women in skimpy clothing. Over the course of a trouble-packed 24 hours, our protagonist must protect her employees from the unwanted attentions of the clientele, raise the bail money for one of them who has run over her abusive boyfriend, and prevent things unravelling in her own private life. The story “barrels along with wit, flair and gusto”, said Peter Bradshaw in The Guardian. Writer-director Andrew Bujalski shows particular skill in sketching the flawed male characters whose vices serve to point up the virtues of the women in their lives. The real injustice, said Beth Webb in Empire, is that we don’t get to see stories like this on the big screen more often. Support the Girls is “a film for the everywoman, and it’s been long overdue”.

*In Fabric*

Dir: Peter Strickland

1hr 56mins (15)

*Britain’s answer to Luis Buñuel*

★★★★

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*Apollo 11*

Dir: Todd Douglas Miller

1hr 33mins (U)

*Superb documentary about the Moon landing*

★★★★

Using reams of never-before-seen footage unearthed from the archives of Nasa, this documentary tells the story of the first Moon landing on the occasion of its 50th anniversary. And my advice is to “rush out” and see it, said Kevin Maher in The Times. “Find it on the biggest possible screen... and sit back and marvel”. The film has been so brilliantly restored by director Todd Douglas Miller, you’d think it had been shot yesterday, said Peter Bradshaw in The Guardian. Each of the pivotal moments – lift-off, landing the lunar module on the Moon, reconnecting with the spacecraft, re-entering Earth’s atmosphere – feels thrillingly alive. Yet the real emotional kick comes from the footage not of the astronauts, but of the earthbound millions who watched, agog. Our attention isn’t distracted by any voiceover or talking heads, said Ed Power in The Daily Telegraph: strapping three men to a rocket and blasting them into space turns out to be gripping enough. The most moving aspect of this masterly documentary is that it’s “a reminder of national functionality”, said Joshua Rothkopf in Time Out. It reminds us of a time when a country came together in pursuit of a dream, and “without ego or divisiveness”. It’s hard to think there could be a better film of its subject. “Apollo 11 won’t be surpassed.”

*Far from Home*

Dir: Andrew Bujalski

1hr 30mins (15)

*Film*
Exhibition of the week  Cindy Sherman

Her work fetches “immense sums at auction” and she has won every major prize available, said Rachel Campbell-Johnston in The Times. And all this, according to the American photographer Cindy Sherman (b.1954), derives from a childhood fascination with dressing up. Since the mid-1970s, this invertebrate “shape-shifter” has been photographing herself dressed in a variety of different guises, from “biker chick” to “bored housewife” to “society beauty”. Donning fantastical prosthetics and costumes inspired by film, fashion, advertising and art history, she has explored themes including artifice, gender and the very notion of the self. This new retrospective at the National Portrait Gallery – incredibly, Sherman’s first in the UK – brings together about 180 of her photographs, dating from her earliest efforts to entirely new work. What these resonant images all share is “a sense of narrative intrigue”. Each one, Sherman has declared, “must tease with the promise of a story the viewer itches to be told”. It’s a wonderful show, which gives us a chance to get to grips with one of the most influential contemporary artists working today.

Sherman’s earlier work is terrific, said Mark Hudson in The Daily Telegraph. In her breakthrough 1977 series, she takes on a range of “archetypal cinematic personae” in mysterious scenarios: in #13, for example, her “blonde hair and coquettish expression” suggest Brigitte Bardot, while #21 frames her as a Hitchcock heroine on a New York street, looking uncertainly into the distance. In 1981’s Centerfolds, meanwhile, she mimics glamour model poses in a series of “sumptuous” colour images. From here on, her work becomes ever “glossier” and, often enough, less interesting.

True, there are some misfires, said Waldemar Januszczak in The Sunday Times. But most of the work is “fascinating”: one moment, Sherman is acting out Old Master paintings, including Raphael’s La Fornarina and Ingres’s Madame Moitessier; the next, she is ruminating on the ageing process, portraying “an older American woman clinging desperately to the last shards of youth”. Sherman’s great talent is to be both “pioneering and entertaining”, her piercing insights into modern society balanced with a “fine eye for comedy”. “Only rarely do artistic retrospectives feel as useful and perfectly judged as this one.”

Where to buy…

**The Week reviews an exhibition in a private gallery**

**María Berrío, Caroline Walker, Flora Yukhnovich**

at Victoria Miro

This show brings together pieces by three young artists whose work has been championed by the influential Instagram account The Great Women Artists. If that doesn’t sound like the most thrilling premise for an exhibition, the work itself more than makes up for it. María Berrío creates arresting, figurative collages created from layers of Japanese paper, depicting scenes inspired by both folklore and the trials faced by Latin American migrant communities. Meanwhile, Flora Yukhnovich draws on rococo painting traditions to create soaring canvases that balance drama and delicacy to stunning effect. Best of all is Caroline Walker, whose paintings depict women working in apparently mundane environments – open-plan offices, supermarket counters or shopping mall outlets – from odd, fly-on-the-wall perspectives that make the viewer feel uncomfortably voyeurish. It’s terrific stuff. Prices on request.

16 Wharf Road, London N1 (020-7336 8109). Until 27 July.

**The blind art dealer**

Johann König is one of Germany’s most influential art dealers, says Philip Oltermann in The Guardian. He runs a fashionable gallery in a converted brutalist church in Berlin with an annual turnover of €20m. But oddly enough, for someone in his line of work, he can hardly see: aged 12, he was playing with gunpowder when it exploded, severely damaging both eyes. Initially, he dealt in concept art and sound installations, but now he sells paintings too. At first, König was wary of telling people in the art world. “How seriously can you take someone who can’t see the artwork they are trying to sell you?” he wonders. “I always thought someone would find me out.” But now, in what he calls his “coming out” memoir, entitled Blinder Gallerist (“blind gallerist”), he argues that his disability has been key to his success. It has, he thinks, given him unusual powers of concentration and enabled him to navigate an industry that can bedazzle people with flashy exteriors.
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The List

Best books... Michelle Paver
The novelist and author of the bestselling Chronicles of Ancient Darkness series picks her favourite books. Her latest novel for adults, Wakenhyst, a gothic thriller set in Suffolk, is published by Head of Zeus at £14.99

Cold Comfort Farm
by Stella Gibbons, 1932 (Penguin £7.99). Pragmatic Flora descends on her doomed cousins the Starkadders, and the result is a mercilessly funny satire on rural melodramas. I picked it up when I was a teenager and knew nothing about it: a marvellous surprise. I envy anyone reading it for the first time.

Bel-Ami
by Guy de Maupassant, 1885 (Oxford World’s Classics £8.99). The rise of a young man on the make in 1880s Paris. It’s so vividly written you can practically smell the splendour and the squalor, and it has one of the most convincing, forensically described death scenes ever written. Riveting.

Complete Short Stories of Elizabeth Taylor, 2012 (Virago £14.99). I’ve enjoyed all Taylor’s novels, but I especially love her short stories: they’re precise, subtle, often witty and always hugely readable. I’m also fascinated by the world she inhabited: all those upper-middle-class women who had so little to do.

Caravaggio: A Life Sacred and Profane

William Trevor: The Collected Stories, 1992 (Penguin £16.99). Trevor wrote with such precision and richness, such economy and grace. For range, depth of feeling and sheer humanity, he ranks up there with Chekhov.

The Ghost Stories of Edith Wharton, 1973 (Wordsworth £2.99). Wharton excelled at creating an unsettling atmosphere and conveying creeping unease, without ever going over the top. And I love her patrician voice and her insider’s knowledge of New York high society at the turn of last century.

The Week’s guide to what’s worth seeing and reading

Showing now

Equus at the Trafalgar Studios, London SW1 (0844-871 7632). Ned Bennett’s new touring production of Peter Shaffer’s 1973 drama has garnered fantastic reviews. Ethan Kai “is a revelation” in the role of Alan Strang, a disturbed teenager on trial for blinding six horses (Times). Ends 7 September.

Book now

Composer Missy Mazzoli’s operatic adaptation of Lars von Trier’s film Breaking the Waves was acclaimed when it opened in the US in 2016. It gets it European premiere in Edinburgh, 21-24 August, King’s Theatre (0131-473 2000).

The Curious Arts Festival, the delightful, pocket-sized celebration of music and books, has moved from the New Forest to the Ashdown Forest. There will be music from Suggs and talks by Misha Glenny, Philippa Perry and Max Porter. 23-26 August, Pippinfold Park, East Sussex (curiousartsfestival.com).

Jake Gylenhaal will be reprising his role in this “heavenly production” of the Sondheim musical

The Archers: what happened last week

Tom bumps into Jazzer and they agree there are no hard feelings. Jim returns and Jazzer welcomes him back with sherry and coffee cake. When Jazzer and Alistair ask Jim how he’s really feeling, he

Television

Programmes

Arena: That Summer
An extraordinary film that gives the backstory to the much-loved 1975 documentary Gray Gardens, about Jackie Kennedy’s aunt and cousin – both called Edie – who lived in chaos in a crumbling East Hampton mansion. This film is based around recently found footage of an earlier time, when the two Edies were facing eviction. Sun 7 July, BBC4 21:00 (60mins).

Imagine... Edna O’Brien: Fearful and Fearless
Alan Yentob meets the great Irish novelist to talk about her life. Sun 7 July, BBC1 22:30 (65mins).

Dark Money
Four-part drama about a family who accept a pay-off to keep quiet when their son is abused by a film producer. With Jil Halfpenney and Babou Ceesay. Mon 8 July, BBC1 21:00 (60mins).

Britain’s Next Prime Minister: The ITV Debate
Boris Johnson and Jeremy Hunt go head-to-head. Tue 9 July, ITV1 20:00 (60mins).

Charles I: Downfall of a King
in this three-part series, historian Lisa Hilton looks at the 50 turbulent days that led to the end of Charles I’s rule. Tue 9-16 July, BBC2 21:00 (80mins).

Mad Cow Disease: The Great British Beef Scandal
The story of one of Britain’s biggest food crises, which resulted in the death of almost 200 people and more than four million cows. Thu 11 July, BBC2 21:00 (60mins).

Films


What’s My Name: Muhammad Ali
Antoine Fuqua’s terrific two-parter was compiled from 1,000 hours of footage – some previously unseen – to tell the story of the legendary boxer (Sky Atlantic).

A Roma ny Summer
Barry Cockcroft is remembered for his 1972 film Too Long a Winter, about the lonely life of hill farmer Hannah Hauxwell. This lesser-known work about a Roma family is just as interesting (BFI Player).

Docs on demand

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Barry Cockcroft is remembered for his 1972 film Too Long a Winter, about the lonely life of hill farmer Hannah Hauxwell. This lesser-known work about a Roma family is just as interesting (BFI Player).
Houses with lovely views

**Lancashire:** Moorlands, Foulridge, Colne. A renovated country house with period features and panoramic countryside views, located not far from Barnoldswick and Skipton. Master suite with dressing room, 4 further beds, family bath, kitchen/breakfast room, 2 receps, utility, family room, snug, conservatory, study/bed 5, cloakroom, WC, hall, store, 2-bed coach house, courtyard, garage, landscaped gardens, 5 acres. £1,395,000; Dacre, Son & Hartley (01756-701010).

**Orkney:** Graham Place, Stromness. A unique, award-winning waterfront home with wonderful sea views. Master bed with free-standing bath, 1 further bed, jack and jill shower, second-floor artist’s studio/bed 3 with en-suite shower, kitchen, open-plan double recep, hall, cloakroom, utility, boathouse, outside shower, Jacuzzi, terrace, courtyard, off-shore mooring, parking, terrace. OIEO £395,000; Strutt & Parker (01463-719171).

**Cornwall:** Glebe House, Probus, near Truro. A Grade II former rectory with views over the church in this ancient village close to the south coast. Master suite with dressing room, 4 further suites, kitchen/family room, 3 receps, study, WC, playroom/snug, laundry, wine cellar, store room, workshop, walled gardens, courtyard, carport, 1 acre. £1.3m; Lillicrap Chilcott (01872-273473).

**Warwickshire:** Temple House, Harbury, Leamington Spa. An elegant village house with a detached cottage and outbuildings, and wonderful views over open countryside. Master suite, 5 further beds, family bath, shower, kitchen/breakfast room, 3 receps, playroom, utility, large cellars, cloakroom, gardens, 3-bed cottage, party room, stable, tennis court, paddocks, pasture, 7.96 acres. £1.65m; Strutt & Parker (01295-273592).
on the market

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Cumbria: Robin Hill, Bowness-on-Windermere, Lake District National Park. This house has stunning views across Lake Windermere to the Lakeland Fells. Master bed, 2 further beds, family bath, WC, kitchen, dining room, sitting room, hall, utility, garage, gardens, grounds, 0.66 acres. £1.495m; Michael C.L. Hodgson (01539-721375).

Perth & Kinross: Corrieperm, Fearnan, Aberfeldy. A modern country house with fishing rights and fine views over Loch Tay. 4 suites, 2 further beds, family bath, kitchen/dining room, double recep, sun room, study, office, utility, pantry, WC, summer house, orangery, double garage with studio flat, single garage, garden, 1.7 acres; boathouse plot available separately. £830,000; Savills (01738-477519).

Devon: The Golf House, Kingswear, Dartmouth. A contemporary house in a fine location with outstanding views over the River Dart. Second-floor master suite with decked roof terrace, 4/5 further suites, kitchen, recep hall, dining room, sitting room, utility, gym, double garage, infinity pool, helipad, landscaped gardens. £2.95m; Marchand Petit (01803-839190).

South Yorkshire: The Hall, High Hoyland. A Queen Anne house in formal gardens with far-reaching views over the adjacent countryside. Master suite with dressing room, 6 further beds (3 en suite), family bath, kitchen/breakfast room, 3 receps, garden room, utility, cloakroom, office, gym, cellar, stores, parking, double garage, gardens. £1.2m; Carter Jonas (0113-203 1090).
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**What the experts recommend**

**Wild Flor** 42 Church Road, Hove, East Sussex (01273-329111)

There’s a refreshing lack of pomp and pretension at this delightful new modern European restaurant a “mere saunter” from the Hove seafront, says Tom Parker Bowles in The Mail on Sunday. Sunshine streams in through the front windows, there’s a blackboard scrawled with inviting specials, and vast bottles of port and brandy adorn the shelves. We kick off with icy manzanilla, anchovies and a plate of Iberico charcuterie and thick-crusted sourdough, and all is right with the world. Plump fingers of slow-cooked hogget are “heavy on the baa and bleat”. Asparagus with cheddar curds, hazelnuts, chervil and a sharp citrus dressing is a “clever” and precisely balanced dish, with an “absolute control of acidity”. Ox tongue – slow-cooked and then finished on a charcoal barbecue – is “sensationally rich”, buttempered by a tart salad. Of the mains, we loved pork collar, “gently fatty and immaculately cooked”, and an expertly understated dish of grill in the most delicate of spider crab broths. What a place! Extremely friendly, too. “Lucky, lucky Hove.” About £30 a head.

**Emilia** 7 Hanofh of Venison Yard, London W1 (020-7468 5868)

It seems odd, given that it is housed within the art auctioneers Bonhams in Mayfair, that Emilia is merely “average in the visuals department”, consisting of two smallish white rooms linked by a staircase, says Giles Coren in The Times. But everything else about this place is stunning. And the kitchen, run by Clipstone chef Stuart Andrew, “is on absolute fire”. Emilia takes its name from Italy’s Emilia-Romagna region (home to Bologna, Parma and Modena, among other gastronomic citadels), and its food reflects its glorious. We begin with little chunks of “mighty” parmesan, with buttery onion tarts, followed by stunning antipasti: delicious mortadella; a plate of “strong and complex” prosciutto di Parma; and a “really extraordinary” dish of lardo and pressed watermelon with great olive oil, basil leaves and toasted almonds. The rest of the meal is also “unfeasibly delicious” – from a “shatteringly crisp” pig trotter spring roll to the “daintiest” eel tortellini; and an “angicially clean and slippery” brodo (broth) to a “stupendous” lobster with spaghetti. About £60 a head, excluding drinks.

**Hjem** The Hadrian Hotel, Wall, Hexham, Northumberland (01434-681232)

Hjem is the “sort of restaurant that makes me remember why I love this job”, says Marina O’Loughlin in The Sunday Times. I tend to avoid using the word “passionate” (so abused as it is by corporate speak), but “really there’s no escaping it here”. In the middle of ravishing countryside on the hikers’ trail near Hadrian’s Wall, Swedish chef Alex Nietosvuori and his partner, Ally Thompson, “are creating real magic”. There’s a choice of either six or 12 courses, and the food will “make you beam with delighted surprise”: an eel-like strip of mackerel with a sparkling, sweet-sharp gel of gooseberry and a dollop of cool raw cream. Or glassy-crisp chicken skin sandwiching smoked cod’s head. Or heritage potatoes, roughly crushed and dressed with slivers of frozen butter and blackcurrant leaves, some fresh, some pickled. It’s a long time since a restaurant has “moved me” as much as Hjem: a “fiercely independent team creating extraordinary food.” £75 for 12 courses.

**Recipe of the week**

A combination of fatty lamb and chorizo makes this burger a “beautiful gift to humankind” says Christian Stevenson, aka DJ BBQ

**Lamb and chorizo burger with apricot salsa**

**Serves 4**

200g cooking chorizo, skinned and chopped 500g lamb shoulder, minced 4 brioche burger buns

**For the salsa:** 3 ripe, fresh apricots, chopped 1 medium red onion, finely chopped 1 tbsp chopped or torn mint leaves 1 piece of a lemon’s zest (about 5 minutes per side). 1 tsp chilli flakes 40g cheese (gouda is particularly good). Sea salt and black pepper

- Evenly mix the chorizo into the lamb mince. Divide into four balls and flatten into patties a little bit larger than the buns, to allow for shrinkage.
- Get your grill fired up, or if you’re cooking indoors, set a griddle pan over a medium to high heat on the hob.
- Combine all the salsa ingredients in a bowl. Season to taste. The chorizo is quite salty so take it easy on the salt.
- When the grill is rocking or the griddle hot, get the patties over direct heat or into the pan. Watch out for flare-ups due to the fat content in the chorizo and the lamb mince.
- Grill or griddle until you have a lovely crust on the outside and the patties are cooked nicely through.
- Toast your buns, then assemble the burger. If you like, slather the bottom bun with smoked garlic mayo. Then add the burger, top with the apricot salsa and enjoy!

*Taken from The Burger Book by Christian (DJ BBQ) Stevenson, published by Quadrille at £12.99. To buy from The Week Bookshop for £10.99, call 020-3176 3839 or visit theweek.co.uk/bookshop.*

**Summer sherries**

Sherry is not only for Christmas, says Fiona Beckett in The Guardian. Summer is the perfect time for enjoying lighter styles, such as fino and manzanilla, and mixing sherry with soft drinks such as lemonade (known in Spain as a rebujito), or with tonic (popularly known as a sherry & T).

**Williams Humbert Bodegas Lustau Fino en Rama 2018 Jerez de la Frontera (£15.10; gourmethunters.com) is a “rich, complex, nutty fino for hardcore aficionados”. It has a slick label to boot. Alegría Manzanilla Superior (£5.49 for a half bottle; Waitrose) is a distinctively sharp and salty sherry from the coastal town of Sanlucar. Try it with fried fish or salt cod croquetas. Inocente Fino Valdespino (£8.57 for a half bottle; rhudeleigh-wine.com) is a classic, single-vineyard fino. Dry but nicely smooth and rounded, it makes for a delicious she & T.**

**Blueprint Amontillado (£7.29; Waitrose) is “off-dry” and “old-school”, with a hint of raisin sweetness. Drink this one with hot tapas such as fried chorizo or with cheese (gouda is particularly good).**

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The best... summer fashion trends

- Molten gold
  Crinkled, gold-coloured jewellery like this simple pair of Jil Sander hoop earrings has a fun, kitsch aesthetic, but can work for dressed-up too (£102; matchesfashion.com).

- Aviators with a twist
  Never out of style, classic aviator sunglasses can be found in a variety of colours and shapes – like this square pair – this summer (£78; arket.com).

- Molten gold
  Crinkled, gold-coloured jewellery like this simple pair of Jil Sander hoop earrings has a fun, kitsch aesthetic, but can work for dressed-up too (£102; matchesfashion.com).

- Tie-dye
  Back used to make everything from classic T-shirts to striking blue and white denim. If you’re feeling creative, you could tie-dye a d.</p>

- Tailored shorts
  It’s not easy to pull off a look involving formal shorts, so this season the acceptable strategy is to pair them with a matching blazer; the effect can be quite striking (£55; arket.com).

- Utility jacket
  Casual, light jackets in khaki or neutral colours are set to be a wardrobe staple this season. Next’s is a good-value option (£35; next.co.uk).

- Tiny bags
  Absurdly small handbags described as either “micro” or “nano” are selling like hotcakes this summer; they’re best in bold colours to balance out their weeny dimensions (£521; mulberry.com).

- Movie-star swimsuits
  Glamorous swimwear that makes you feel like you’re lounging by the pool in Cannes – easy to wear and timeless (£315; arabellalondon.co.uk).

- Floaty and floral
  Dresses this summer are long, flowing and in floral prints. If the style is too overtly feminine for your taste, try adding chunky sandals, utility boots or an oversized jacket (£65; warehouse.co.uk).

Tips of the week... how to care for cut flowers

- Bacteria are the enemy of cut flowers, so start by making sure your vase is clean.
- Trim the stems at a 45-degree angle to increase the surface area for taking in water and remove all the leaves that sit below the water level in the vase.
- Bacterial growth clogs the stems and stops them being able to take in water, so water should be changed at least every other day. Trimming the stems again will also help, as will washing the vase.
- Mixing new flowers with old ones will dramatically shorten the vase life of the new ones because of the transfer of bacteria.
- Don’t place flowers near a source of heat, or on a sunny windowsill.
- Standing flowers next to a fruit bowl can also shorten their lifespan because fruit and vegetables give off ethylene – a gas that promotes ripening. Delphiniums and carnations are particularly sensitive.
- Cigarette smoke also gives off ethylene, so vase life is cut in heavy smokers’ homes.

And for those who have everything...

Budding musicians can record their work using the iZotope Spire Studio. This jam-jar-sized wireless studio records up to eight tracks at a time, and includes an app, which can add effects and blend them into one seamless song. Members of The Who and Duran Duran are said to be fans. £336; andertons.co.uk.

Where to find... letterbox flowers

Vela Flowers, a small York-based florist, experiments with unusual blooms weekly and sends out surprise bunches. They sell one-offs and flexible subscriptions (from £20; velaflowers.co.uk).

Bunches try to use only the most durable flowers, and send them still in bud, so their arrangements often last more than two weeks (from £20; bunches.co.uk).

Letterbox Flower pioneers Bloom & Wild have some impressive and colourful bouquets, which also arrive still in bud. Styling tips for arranging them come in the pack (from £23; bloomandwild.com).

With Moonpig you can even get a potted oriental lily plant in the post. It is rooted in compressed soil and just needs transferring to the included plastic-lined cotton pot (£20; moonpig.com).

Stems by Tineke’s bunches all have a surprise element, and videos on their website will show you how to arrange them (from £15; stemsbytineke.co.uk).

SOURCE: THE DAILY TELEGRAPH
SOURCE: FINANCIAL TIMES
SOURCE: THE INDEPENDENT

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This year marks the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, says Liz Boulter in The Guardian. Now, in the zone once known as the “death strip”, there’s a fascinating, 160km cycle trail, the Berliner Mauerweg, which traces its path. A route that would once have taken you through a no man’s land of “tripwire machine guns, trenches and dogs, guarded by soldiers in watchtowers” now runs along prosperous streets and woodland paths filled with young oak trees and “dappled sunshine”. Popular among cyclists and walkers, it takes you far beyond the tourist traps of Brandenburg Gate and Checkpoint Charlie.

In place for just over 28 years, the wall has now been gone for longer than it stood and only a few fragments remain. Many East Germans wanted it to be erased entirely, but its footprint has been marked by a double row of cobbles. Along the route you could join the large queue for ice cream at Moin Moin in Grossziethen, before pausing at the cobbles briefly as the sun would once have taken you through which traces its path. Out that route that “dappled sunshine”. Popular among cyclists and walkers, it takes you far beyond the tourist traps of Brandenburg Gate and Checkpoint Charlie.

The wall was built. Further on, there’s the Kieler Eck watchtower, now home to a memorial to 24-year-old Günter Litfin, the first person to be shot at the wall, who was killed in 1961 as he swam across a harbour in the River Spree; today, the tower keeps watch over “high-end waterside apartments”.

The Nare Hotel Cornwall
At The Nare, you feel as though you’ve been “transported” into an Agatha Christie novel, says Hattie Garlick in The Daily Telegraph. Sitting on a cliff overlooking Carne Bay, the hotel is beloved by the elderly smart set, but now offers a four-night family break. It doesn’t come cheap, but the price includes chauffeur-driven transport from anywhere in the UK. On arrival, you’re greeted by “wonderfully old-fashioned” doormen. Children get “their own buggy and spade” while adults are offered Scotch and cold cuts. Cream teas are “laid on every afternoon” and the “sherry decanters are always full”. Spa treatments and “charming” activities add to the fun.

Ultimate Nare Family Break costs £4,195 for four. narehotel.co.uk.

Back to the future in Ibiza
The superyacht set’s latest toy is far less noisy and much more graceful than a jet ski, says Bridget Harrison in The Times. Resembling “Michael J. Fox’s hoverboard in Back to the Future Part II”, the eFoil is an electric-propelled surfboard that levitates silently over the water, making riders “look as relaxed and elegant” as a pro surfer. Getting the hang of one takes practice: on a beginner’s lesson, you may spend more time swallowing water than gliding effortlessly. But the helmet comes with an earpiece so that the instructor can deliver tips and encouragement: “Relax! Keep breathing!” The boards can deliver tips and encouragement:

Getting the flavour of…

Prison dining in Cartagena
It looks like a “tropical speakeasy”, with its plants, palm-print murals and “hot-pink” steel doors. But the “barred gates” are a giveaway that Interno, in the Colombian city of Cartagena, is no ordinary restaurant, says Clare Vooght in The Independent. It’s the first of its kind to open inside a women’s prison: almost all the staff here are inmates of the city’s San Diego jail. The idea is to equip prisoners with “valuable skills to help them find work when they are released”, part of a “wave” of enterprises in the city directing “tourist dollars towards positive social change”. And the menu, created with the help of Michelin-starred chef Koldo Miranda, is a triumph, with such dishes as coconut milk-steeped ceviche, locally caught fish and yuca parcels stuffed with beef and mint salsa. With an atmosphere that’s convivial and relaxed, “it’s definitely worth reserving your night behind bars”.
The “queen of the bonkbuster” who sold 85 million books

Judith Krantz became an overnight sensation at the age of 50, with the publication of her first novel, Scruples. While international brands had yet to take over the world in 1978, it predicted the consumer excesses of the next decade, with its lavish descriptions of international jet-setters and their glitzy, bitchy, sex-filled lives, and helped define a new genre: the bonkbuster, also known as “sex and shopping”. Apparently convinced that women were defined by the clothes they wore, Krantz, who has died aged 91, filled her book with references to designer labels and name-dropped real celebrities. In one, the “brilliant, ambitious” real estate developer Donald Trump appears and when it was (like most of her novels) turned into a glossy miniseries, the future president played himself.

Born in 1928, Judith Tarcher grew up in Manhattan. Her mother had overcome poverty to become a lawyer, specialising in civil rights; her father worked in advertising. The family was well-off and she was sent to a smart private school on the Upper East Side. But Judith was not satisfied with the life she had, said The Guardian. She was, she recalled, appalled that her mother—who was anxious not to spoil her—made her go to school in cheap clothes; and dreamt of a day when her mother would hand her a pile of cashmere sweaters instead. That she did not turned out to be a blessing. “If she had, I never would have known the power, magic and mystery clothes could have,” she reflected. “Out of that yearning you get fiction.”

On leaving Wellesley College, she moved to Paris, where she worked for a couture house and had an affair with an older man. Returning to New York, she started a long career in journalism with a job at Good Housekeeping and married Steve Krantz, a TV producer. It was when her two sons went to college that, aged 49, she turned her hand to fiction. Convinced that what people wanted was a glimpse into the lives of the super-rich, she produced Scruples, a Cinderella tale about an overweight teenager – Wilhelmina “Billy” Winthrop – who goes to Paris, has a glamorous makeover, marries her millionaire boss and when he dies, opens a high-end boutique in LA called Scruples. It topped The New York Times bestseller list and, on the back of it, she secured a record-breaking deal for her second novel, Princess Daisy (1980).

Steamy, breathless and intricately plotted, her books had as their heroines confident, sexually assertive women who strode through the realms with which she was herself familiar – journalism and film, said The Washington Post. Invariably they had showgirl names (Maxi, Kiki) and beauty so dazzling it defied the English language. “Her changeable eyes were an unnameable colour that held in it the bewitchment of a thousand twilights,” she wrote in Mistral’s Daughter (1982). “If she had, I never would have known the power, magic and mystery clothes could have,” she reflected. “Out of that yearning you get fiction.”

Brenda Maddox, who has died aged 87, was an acclaimed writer and biographer with a particular interest in probing the marriages of great literary figures. As she once asked: “What is the unspoken bargain? What do you get out of it? What do you think you are expected to give for what you get?” She wrote about the relationship between D.H. Lawrence and Frieda (claiming that while he was largely faithful, she cheated on him even on their honeymoon); W.B. Yeats’s peculiar late-life marriage to Georgie Hyde-Lees, an English 25-year-old who professed to have psychic abilities; and the relationship between Nora Barnacle and James Joyce. She was drawn to Barnacle “not because I felt I knew her but because I didn’t. She was a mystery to be solved.” Barnacle had long been viewed as dull and unworthy of her great husband. Maddox argued that, in fact, she was witty, earthy and sexy, and a huge influence on his work. Barnacle, she said, had given “her loyalty, her strength and her wit to Joyce” only to go down in history as “a burden”.

Although she lived most of her adult life in England, Brenda Murphy was born in Massachusetts. Her father, a doctor, died when she was three; her mother, who was in a wheelchair, helped make ends meet by giving square dancing lessons. She was able to go to Radcliffe College on a scholarship and, after graduating, found work as a science correspondent for a local Boston newspaper. In 1958 she covered the UN’s “atoms for peace” conference in Geneva, where she fell in love with John Maddox, then of The Manchester Guardian, later editor of Nature. They married in 1960. Among her first books was The Half-Parent, based on her experiences bringing up Piers and Joanna (Imma), his children by his first marriage, whose mother had died. They had two more children: Bronwen and Bruno.

In London, she wrote for The Economist and in the 1980s, started work on Nora: The Real Life of Molly Bloom. She’d been inspired by reading Richard Ellmann’s biography of Joyce, she told The Sunday Times. “It was obvious that there was a woman who had not been covered properly. He made her into Our Lady of Footnotes – she says something funny, it’s down in the footnotes.” In her loo, she kept a framed letter from Ellmann, to whom she had written for advice, saying that too little was known about Nora for a full-length biography and implying that she didn’t merit one. Yet her book was a bestseller. Later, she wrote about women who’d made their own mark, including Margaret Thatcher (“You don’t have to love the person you write about. You just have to show why they made the choices they did”) and Rosalind Franklin. “Unlucky in life, [she] is at least blessed in her biographer,” said The Independent’s critic, of Rosalind Franklin: The Dark Lady of DNA (2002). John Maddox died in 2009. Their children survive her.
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MUST END 2 NOV | THE PLAYHOUSE THEATRE
Global stock markets rallied on hopes of a positive outcome from compromise between President Donald Trump and Xi Jinping at the G20 summit in Osaka. Trump agreed not to impose new tariffs on Chinese goods, and China agreed to buy US agricultural produce. The S&P 500 rose to new record highs as investor expectations for looser monetary policy at major central banks grew. The appointment of the dovish Christine Lagarde to the top job at the European Central Bank cheered traders who expect her to continue the ECB’s “super-accommodative ways”. The Europe-wide Stoxx 600 index reached its highest level since June 2018.

Woodford Equity Income: the freeze continues

“It’s been about a month since Neil Woodford froze up his troubled flagship fund and told investors that he was going to need his time and their money to figure some shit out,” said Thornton McEnery on DealBreaker. At last, a development. “The Oracle of Oxford” has “politely informed investors” that they can get their money out... “when he damn well feels like it”. The £3.5bn fund will remain frozen for at least another 28 days – but will continue collecting fees totalling some £65,000 a day to cover overheads. The suspension of Woodford Equity Income “sparked the biggest controversy in UK fund management” for a decade, leaving “hundreds of thousands of retail investors unable to reclaim their capital”, said Owen Walker in the FT. The firesale of assets continued this week with the disposal of the fund’s 12% stake in Raven, a Russian commercial property specialist. Many reckon the fund will eventually have to be split into a “good bank-bad bank”. Woodford clearly still harbours hopes of a revival, said Nils Pratley in the Guardian. But given his extraordinary “tin ear” on the vexed subject of fees, “even diehard fans” must be tempted to say “good riddance” – should they ever get the chance.

British Steel/Network Rail: pragmatic alliance

The UK railway system is “heavily dependent” on British Steel, which accounts for 97% of the steel used on our railway tracks, said Jasser Jolly in The Guardian. Now that its “bankruptcy” structure, Woodford clearly still harbours hopes of a revival, said Nils Pratley in the Guardian. But given his extraordinary “tin ear” on the vexed subject of fees, “even diehard fans” must be tempted to say “good riddance” – should they ever get the chance.

Huawei: yuge U-turn?

One of the big surprises of the G20 summit in Osaka was the apparent relaxation of President Trump’s ban on US companies doing business with Huawei – “a concession even Beijing had not expected to win as part of a trade truce”, said Demetri Sevastopulo and Tom Mitchell in the FT. The effective ban on selling software, hardware and services to the controversial Chinese group, supposedly on national security grounds, sent shockwaves through the global tech industry in May. This “yuge U-turn” suggests it’s back to business as usual, said John Oates on The Register. At least, that’s what the tech industry hopes, though it’s not clear from the “Trumpian word salad” at Osaka exactly what the move will mean. Moreover, any perceived weakening of resolve is bound to be fiercely opposed by national security hawks in Congress. As the senior Democrat senator, Chuck Schumer, has pointed out: “Huawei is one of the few potent levers we have to make China play fair on trade.” It’s very possible that Trump will change his mind again, but looser rules will certainly take some pressure off Huawei: founder Ren Zhengfei claimed last month that the ban would cost some $30bn in revenues over the next two years.

Merlin Entertainments: staggering off the big dipper

The owner of Alton Towers and Thorpe Park knows a thing or two about rollercoasters, said Alistair Osborne in The Times. Not enough, though, to enjoy its time on the stock market. “What with shares going up and down and up and downtown on the slightest news until everyone felt sick”, it had to get off the ride. Hence the plan to sell out for £5.91bn (including debt), to a consortium of private buyers – Blackstone, the Canada Pension Plan and the Kristiansen family behind Lego. If they succeed in putting a rocket under Merlin, CEO Nick Varney could achieve his dream of “catching the Mouse” by overtaking Walt Disney as the world’s biggest attractions operator.

The buyers have “bagged themselves a bargain” with Merlin, whose assets include Legoland, the London Eye and Madame Tussauds, said Jim Armitage in the London Evening Standard. “More’s the pity... for the London Stock Exchange”, where Merlin has languished as “an unsung British success story”. Shares have “barely moved” since Blackstone (which initially bought the outfit in 2005 for £102m) floated it in 2013 for £3bn. Doubtless Blackstone will eventually “return Merlin to the market at double today’s valuation, to the sound of champagne corks popping. Again.”

It’s “a huge failing” of the City that Merlin couldn’t attract the capital it needed for expansion as a public company, said Alex Brummer in the Daily Mail. Despite a recent recall, there could be as many as 800,000 faulty tumble dryers at risk of catching fire in UK homes. Shares in Tesla shot up after the carmaker delivered a record number of vehicles in the latest quarter. The Italian-born banker, Andrea Orcel, threatened Santander with a £100m lawsuit for withdrawing its offer to make him CEO earlier this year.

Global central banks could issue their own digital currencies sooner than expected to counter Facebook’s plans to create its own “stablecoin”, libra.

Whirlpool admitted that, despite a recent recall, there could be as many as 800,000 faulty tumble dryers at risk of catching fire in UK homes. Shares in Tesla shot up after the carmaker delivered a record number of vehicles in the latest quarter. The Italian-born banker, Andrea Orcel, threatened Santander with a £100m lawsuit for withdrawing its offer to make him CEO earlier this year.
Christine Lagarde’s appointment as president of the European Central Bank (ECB) is “by far the most important” of this week’s EU top jobs announcements, says Ben Hall. After eight years leading the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Lagarde – a skilled negotiator – has become “a superstar of international finance” and will become the first woman to lead “the heavily male” ECB. The question, though, is whether the bank “would be better off” with a more conventional expert to succeed Mario Draghi. Lagarde, a lawyer, “has no monetary policy experience at all” – and she joins at a tricky time. EU inflation is still stuck well below target and “the ECB’s monetary toolbox is looking quite bare”. Moreover, she “will have to go toe-to-toe with other governing council members” like Draghi’s arch-critic, Bundesbank president Jens Weidmann. When Lagarde became IMF chief, sceptics doubted whether she was qualified for the job. She proved them wrong, restoring confidence after the debacle of the Greek debt crisis. “It may be harder to do the same at the ECB.”

This week’s private equity buyout of Merlin Entertainments is “part of a much bigger trend”, says Oliver Shah. The owner of Alton Towers is merely the latest high-profile London-listed company to succumb. This year alone, the satellite operator Inmarsat, the packaging group RPC and the outsourcer Interserve have all quit the market. “De-equitisation, an unsexy term that refers to the shrinking of public equity markets, has become a buzzword.” The total number of shares listed in London “has been whittled down by 3% since the start of last year. We can expect it to continue. Private equity is still a relatively young industry and the scale of fundraisings by giants like Blackstone, KKR and SoftBank is likely to grow. It’s often taken as read that talented executives would rather “mint millions” under private equity than “sweat away at the helm of a public company, enduring questions from pesky analysts”. Fortunately, “there are still very few jobs at private companies that confer the prestige and political access of a FTSE 100 post”. Public company bosses who waste time “whingeing about the City and the media” should “stop complaining and embrace the challenge”.

The recent abdication of Emperor Akihito gave Japan an opportunity “to hark back to rosier economic times”, says James Ashton. During the 1980s, when his reign began, its stock and property markets were booming, its carmakers ruled the world, and “no self-respecting teenager” could be seen without a Sony Walkman. But that boom was unsustainable, and Japan has never fully recovered from the bubble. It is still “struggling to plot a clear course for a prosperous future and define its place on the global stage”; it remains in the grip of an “economic fug” that has arguably been worsened by PM Shinzo Abe’s reforms. Many former flagship companies are beating an international retreat. For all its former exporting prowess, Japan’s corporate culture still faces inwards. Despite a loosening of immigration restrictions, the country faces a population decline in which 20 million inhabitants are forecast to be shed in a generation. It could almost be a warning for post-Brexit Britain, as it decides how to go forward. “Not going backwards like Japan would be a good start.”

Hard-cash payments in Sweden have fallen by 80% over the past decade and Britain is headed in the same direction, says David Smith. The industry body UK Finance reckons cash will account for only 9% of payments by 2028 – from 28% last year and 60% in 2008. Does it matter? The shift to electronic spending has been a boon to banks and retailers, “yet it would be wrong to think that we can, or should, have a completely cashless future”. There are three main reasons for this. The first is “social and economic exclusion”: cash is still reckoned to be “an economic necessity” for some 17% of the adult population. The second is “the libertarian case”: cash offers everybody “an escape from a Big Brother electronic payments system”, should they want it. A third important reason is that it “provides a safety net when technology lets you down”. The Bank of England is currently exploring ways of ensuring that “cash is available even as bank branches close and ATMs are removed”. A good thing, too. “Cash is no longer king, but it does still have a future.”

Jonathan Ive
It’s the end of an era at Apple. Jonathan “Jony” Ive, the London-born designer whose products revitalised the company and heralded the smartphone age, is leaving, said Tim Bradshaw in the FT. He will start a new venture called LoveFrom – with Apple as his first client. When he became leader of Apple’s design studio in 1996, the company was teetering. Yet the release of his first blockbuster – the candy-coloured iMac – “kick-started a prolific and profitable two decades unlike any other in Silicon Valley history”. Alongside his boss and friend Steve Jobs, with whom he ate lunch most days, Ive “sat serenely at the centre of a revolution” that brought the iPod, the iPhone and, latterly, the future “frontier in wearable devices”. Not bad for a boy from Chingford who learnt his trade at Newcastle Poly.

When Jobs died in 2011, Ive “was seen as one of the most valuable people on the planet”, said James Ticomb in The Daily Telegraph. Had he slung his hook then, it was estimated that he would have wiped 10%, or $71bn, off Apple’s value. Yet his departure now is unlikely to “upset the Apple cart”: shares fell by less than a percentage point, “a mere $8bn fall”. Most of the firm’s innovation today is in services, software and advanced processors. Ambitions of building an Apple car, which might have appealed to Ive, “a famous petrolhead”, have been downgraded. Ive will head what he describes as a diverse “collection of creatives” at LoveFrom. He was “crucial to the company that Jobs built. But Tim Cook’s Apple will be fine without him.”

Commentators

A breath of fresh air at the ECB?
Ben Hall
Financial Times

Private equity versus public prestige
Oliver Shah
The Sunday Times

Britain should beware turning Japanese
James Ashton
The Sunday Telegraph

Cash shouldn’t be consigned to history
David Smith
The Times
We've got your summer drinks list sorted

Wine merchants Corney & Barrow are renowned for their UK exclusive agencies for some of the greatest winemakers in the world – Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, Château Pétrus, Domaine Leflaive, Champagne Salon - to name a few. What is perhaps less known is that they also have similar relationships with a much wider range of winemakers than those at the pinnacle of their trade. In fact, they exclusively represent all of the wines mentioned below (except for those of Olivier Leflaive). I was particularly impressed with the Moulin-à-Vent of Domaine Labruyère, which has such class and exuberance it is hard to realise that technically, this is Beaujolais and not a serious Burgundy, even though the grape variety is different. The Pinot Grigio from Recas Cramele was also an extraordinary wine, especially at such a giveaway price. And the sheer class of the two sparkling wines is also a revelation. In fact, these wines are so spectacular, the sensible thing to do is to order a mixed case and take it from there...

From £7.50 per bottle

PRICE PER CASE: £90, saving £9

Double Trouble Shiraz Cabernet Barossa Boy 2016, Barossa Valley, Australia

This classic blend of Cabernet Sauvignon with Shiraz has restored my faith in modern Australian wine making. Although it packs a punch at 14% alcohol, it is wonderfully exuberant yet understated, with none of the fruit bomb elements that can make this blend heavy going. It is a mixture of high altitude Eden Valley Cabernet with the richer Shiraz from the Barossa Valley. Made by fifth generation winemaker Trent Burge, this is his first solo effort, which has a wonderful lightness of touch. It has the expressiveness of a New World wine but with the elegance and balance more reminiscent of Bordeaux. Ideal with any red meat or game.

PRICE PER CASE: £126, saving £23.40

Moulin-a-Vent Coeur de Terroir Vieilles Vignes Domaine Labruyere 2015, Beaujolais, France

This is one of the most delicious Moulin-a-Vent wines I have ever tasted. The introductory wine of Domaine Labruyère; one of the greatest producers of this top of the range Beaujolais. It is addictive with its refreshing cherry and kirsch flavours. The 2015 vintage is especially ripe and generous and I defy anyone who tastes it not to be completely bowled over. Made from 50 year old vines from five separate vineyards, the owners eschew pesticides and make it along strict organic lines.

PRICE PER CASE: £258, saving £29.40

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Talking points

On stage at the Conservative Party conference last autumn, the former CBI director-general Digby Jones launched a full-frontal attack on Boris Johnson, said Callum Jones in The Times. “When I had a former foreign secretary say ‘I’m business’, declared Jones, “it showed him up for the irrelevance and the offensive person that he really is.” The hall applauded; but the celebrations, it seems, “were premature”. Now the Tory favourite, Johnson is seeking to repair the damage: last week, he “went out of his way to reassure the CBI’s leaders”. But industry bosses remain wary. They now speak of two Mr Johnsons: the one with whom they collaborated when he was mayor of London, and the one who dismissed their Brexit fears as “absolute torrents of drivel”. “They know which one they would prefer in Downing Street.”

For all the warnings about the economic damage it would inflict, both Johnson and Jeremy Hunt have now committed to a no-deal scenario as a last resort, said John Collingridge in The Sunday Telegraph. According to Goldman Sachs, stocks exposed to Britain’s rising political risk are currently trading “at a 10% discount to the rest of the market”. The Wall Street bank’s basket of laggards features 17 FTSE 350 stocks either at risk of nationalisation or “reliant on government contracts”, including RBS, National Grid, Royal Mail, Babcock International and United Utilities. These shares “tend to attract a high-risk premium”, said Goldman strategist Sharon Bell. “But that doesn’t mean that ultimately they would be negatively impacted.” Indeed, contrarian investors might even view Goldman’s handy list as a buying opportunity.

● Dread stocks
The deadlock in Westminster has put investors “on snap election alert”, triggering a sell-off in shares “most vulnerable to more political turmoil and a Jeremy Corbyn government”, said Tom Rees in The Sunday Times. Most corporate leaders, particularly manufacturers, fear the consequences. “Preparations for no deal have already created strange peaks and troughs in the economy.” And now, says one FTSE 100 chairman: “We’re exactly where we were in the run-up to March: on the edge of the precipice— but with potentially disastrous consequences. “Preparations for no deal have already created strange peaks and troughs in the economy.” And now, says one FTSE 100 chairman: “We’re exactly where we were in the run-up to March: on the edge of the precipice— but with potentially disastrous consequences.

● Bags are back
Returns from luxury goods have outperformed the FTSE 100 over the past year, with high-end handbags leading the way, said Victoria Brzezinski in The Times. A rare white crocodile Hermès Birkin bag sold for £162,500 at Christie’s in June, “shattering” its £70,000-£90,000 estimate. Old favourites, including the 1999 Dior saddlebag, are creating a lot of buzz, but “the holy trinity” for investment purposes are limited edition bags from Louis Vuitton, Chanel and Hermès. The value of a Hermès Birkin has jumped by 500% over the past 35 years and is “set to double” again over the next decade.

● Bitcoin blitz
“Buy the rumour, sell the news” goes the old market saying, said Dominic Frisby on Moneyweek.com. The recent trajectory of bitcoin has been a classic example. Having begun 2019 at about $3,700, the price more than trebled to $13,850 by the end of June – partly because traders thought that Facebook’s rumoured move into digital currencies would be “incredibly bullish” for bitcoin. Yet the launch of libra “a whopping great sell-off”: Bitcoin has plunged by 30% in little more than a week, because some have concluded that the baton has passed to libra. My advice: “hold” (hold), as they say in the bitcoin community. Bitcoin could still become the net’s “default cash system”. When something has that much potential, “it is absolutely essential that you have a stake in it”.

Making money: what the experts say

● Summer reading

The post-referendum economy has performed far better than expected, said Alex Brummer in the Daily Mail. But the tension is beginning to tell. After a buoyant first quarter (partly the result of stock-building ahead of the missed 29 March deadline), the economy is slowing and “business investment is depressed”. The Bank of England notes that only 40% of Britain’s 250,000 exporters are fully prepared for no deal. “Self-indulgent Tory politics” are making some of Labour’s ideas “sound almost sensible”. It’s crucial now that the Conservatives “pull together a decent economic narrative”– “random tax cut ideas” won’t cut it. “After such a long period of uncertainty, the economy and the City deserve the very best steerage.”

Issue of the week: the Tories and the Brexit economy

Self-indulgent politicking and promises of a “do or die” Brexit do not bode well for business

Hermès Birkin: up by 500%

Manufacturers: fearful of no deal

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**DWF**  
*The Sunday Telegraph*  
Having listed in March, “shares haven’t gone far yet”. But with “savvy veterans” in the boardroom, DWF looks to begin life with the experience and know-how to prosper. Buy. 120p.

**Premier Oil**  
*The Times*  
“There is plenty of potential” on view if you can see beyond the firm’s $2.3 billion net debts. They’ve been “falling fast” since a major oilfield came online – still, it’s “risky”, so watch closely. Buy. 75p.

**Urban Logistics**  
*The Mail on Sunday*  
Specialising in warehouse facilities for e-commerce, it operates in “one of the most exciting areas in the property sector”. Shares are undervalued and a “generous” 7p dividend is forecast. Buy. 123p.

**Jadestone Energy**  
*The Sunday Times*  
High. Hold. £20.56.

**Halma**  
*The Times*  
Company, and shares seem the up” at the technology dividend “all healthily on revenues, profits and the

**Sirius Minerals**  
*The Times*  
The company has reached a pivotal stage in financing its flagship Yorkshire mine, and looks likely to succeed. Future profits “should be high” if so, but it’s “undoubtedly a gamble”. Buy. 14p.

**XPS Pensions**  
*Investors Chronicle*  
There’s a speculative short-term opportunity here after investors were “spooked” when the first full-year results since Punter Southall acquisition showed lower-than-expected revenue growth. “Otherwise, trading looks resilient.” Buy. 99p.

…and some to hold, avoid or sell

**Costain**  
*Investors Chronicle*  
Generally “healthier” than its construction peers, Costain’s shares “plummeted” by 39% when a half-year trading update warned 2019 revenue will be lower than expected. Turmoil may lie ahead. Hold. 184p.

**Kier Group**  
*The Motley Fool*  
Confidence in the crisis-hit construction group has “evaporated”, and job cuts and asset sales were announced this month. But the plan doesn’t go far enough. Share prices could crash yet again. Sell. 110p.

**Marks & Spencer**  
*Investors Chronicle*  
High fixed costs combined with ongoing sales declines have fuelled persistent earnings downgrades over recent years. We’re “not convinced” the turnaround strategy can reverse the direction of travel. Sell. 210p.

**James Latham**  
*Investors Chronicle*  
Spiralling costs have hampered the timber products firm’s profitability. Despite an “encouraging” start to the year, it’s “difficult to see where returns will come from in the near term”. Sell. 848p.

**Trainline**  
*The Times*  
The online ticketing site has enjoyed a “runaway start” to life as a listed company, but many “heroic” assumptions would need to come good to justify its present valuation. Avoid. 410p.

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Market summary

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<td>Latest RPI (yoy)</td>
<td>3.0% (May)</td>
<td>3.0% (Apr)</td>
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<td>Halifax house price (yoy)</td>
<td>+5.2% (May)</td>
<td>+5.0% (Apr)</td>
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<td>£1 STERLING</td>
<td>$1.257</td>
<td>£1.114</td>
<td>£135.382</td>
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| Best and worst performing shares |

**Best performing shares**  
**WEEK’S CHANGE, FTSE 100 STOCKS**  
**RISES**  
Flutter Entertainment 6134.00 +9.15
Kingfisher 218.40 +7.69
Sainsbury J 199.50 +6.17
Avea Group 4166.00 +6.11

**Worst performing shares**  
**FALLS**  
Croda International 4888.00 -8.38
Auto Trader Group 539.00 -4.26
Fresnillo 864.00 -3.25
Rightmove 543.30 -3.02
Rolls-Royce Holdings 857.80 -1.88

**BEST AND WORST UK STOCKS OVERALL**  
Life Settlement Assets 0.95 +726.09
Valiant Investments 4.50 -80.00

Following the Footsie

6-month movement in the FTSE 100 index

Source: Datastream (not adjusted for dividends) Prices on 2 July PM
On 1 October 1949, Mao Zedong stood in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square and declared the beginning of the People’s Republic of China. To the outside world, the country’s transformation over the intervening decades, from a poor agrarian society to one of the 21st century’s most powerful economies, is nothing short of miraculous. But for the ordinary people who lived through those years, the pace of change has been dizzying, and at times jolting. These are their stories.

The early years, 1949-60s: “We can’t have chaos”

Zhang Xizhen was four when the People’s Liberation Army entered Beijing on 31 January 1949. After a 40-day siege of the former imperial capital, the Nationalist army that controlled the city surrendered, hastening the end of a civil war that had taken up most of the past two decades. Zhang’s father, a lieutenant in the Nationalist army, was one of those troops who yielded the city without fighting. After that, things changed quickly. The family, including Zhang and her five siblings, was soon moved out of their hutong and into a small two-room apartment in the east of the city with her husband, taking care of her grandson at the weekend. Experience has convinced her of the importance of maintaining the status quo, whatever others may say about the crucial role of democracy and checks and balances in government. “I don’t know what is better, but we can’t have chaos,” she says. “We just want stability.”

To Zhang, in primary school, the 1950s were a simple time. They didn’t have much after the communist “liberation”, but the flattening of social classes and overhaul of the economy meant no one did. “We just felt happy to have new clothing for spring festival [Chinese new year],” she says. But by the 1960s, when Zhang was a teenager, her family was one of millions across the country struggling for enough to eat, a time known as the “three years of difficulty”. It was caused by the Great Leap Forward, an unrealistic industrialisation programme to put China ahead of the UK in terms of production within 15 years. As many as 45 million people starved to death before the programme was abandoned.

Zhang, a singer, had joined a state dance and ensemble troupe, where her rations were slightly increased. She brought them home every weekend to give to her mother. “My mother weighed the food before each meal, she recalled. “She had to make sure everything lasted until the end of the month.” Sometimes they would grind the core of an ear of corn, add bean curd and make it into a cake. “Everything that could be eaten was eaten,” she said.

In 1966, the “three years of difficulty” were followed by another chaotic political movement, the Cultural Revolution – in which Zhang’s father was sent to serve hard labour, despite his slip of paper signed by Mao. Only in the late 1970s did things calm down, and Zhang began to travel at home and abroad with the state troupe.

Today, Zhang lives in an apartment in the east of the city with her husband, taking care of her grandson at the weekend. Experience has convinced her of the importance of maintaining the status quo, whatever others may say about the crucial role of democracy and checks and balances in government. “I don’t know what is better, but we can’t have chaos,” she says. “We just want stability.”

Cultural Revolution, 1966-76: “A bright red new world”

In the summer of 1966, Zhu Xindi was getting ready to take university entrance exams in the southern city of Kunming when she received news that the Cultural Revolution had been kicked off by Mao in an effort to reinvigorate the country’s socialist spirit, is one of the least understood events in Chinese history. Even decades later, it is hard for Zhu to make sense of it. She spent a year living among the Dai, an ethnic minority group, in a village in Yunnan, near the border with Burma. She woke before daybreak and farmed all day. Most of the young people there had never farmed before – and their revolutionary spirit soon faded. “Everyone thought we were about to make great contributions to the nation, that we were going where the country most needed us,” she says. “When you were actually there, it wasn’t like that. We wanted to leave, but we had no choice.”

Zhu did eventually leave, trekking to Burma in the hope of aiding communist insurgents. Turned away, she travelled through Yunnan, getting sick and almost going blind in one eye. “For three years, I roamed. I didn’t have food to eat.” Her family also

"Looking back, you can say things were irrational. But at the time, the whole country was irrational."
The last word

suffered. Tasked with rooting out counter-revolutionaries, overzealous Red Guards beat her little sister and forced her to shave off her hair. Zhu remembers how the family took a group photo, with each member being given a copy. “In case we lose each other, we’ll be easier to find,” Zhu recalls her mother saying.

After the Cultural Revolution ended in 1976, Zhu finally went to university at 30, studying to become a dentist. Now retired, she lives in the eastern city of Hangzhou. She doesn’t feel angry about the years taken from her. “It was very difficult and every day I didn’t know if I’d make it to tomorrow,” she says. “Looking back, you can say things were irrational. But at the time, the whole country was irrational.”

Reform and opening, 1977-80s: “One step at a time”
Chong Li, native Beijinger, was an early adopter of the market economy. At 19, he borrowed some tools and began fixing bikes for money. It was 1977—a year before Deng Xiaoping, who later succeeded Mao, launched reforms that would transform the economy. Chong’s neighbours were shocked: the Cultural Revolution, when people were severely punished for showing such capitalist tendencies, had ended only recently. “All private businesses and shops had been stopped, so people were scared,” he says of the years before reforms gained speed in the 1980s. “But I didn’t think too much. I took one step at a time.” Chong had little choice. The eldest of four siblings, he had to do something to help support the family. Because he was born with cerebral palsy that affected his ability to walk, he had never been given an official work assignment, or damaier.

Around him, the city was changing. Young people were returning from the countryside to cities, looking for work. People quit their jobs to open restaurants or run businesses. But despite this, people in Chong’s neighbourhood still went about their everyday lives. “People were warm to each other,” he says. “They lived well together and weren’t selfish... and they were sincere. That is what made the biggest impression on me and has become my own standard.”

Chong stopped fixing bikes after injuring his hand about ten years ago, and now runs a small shop selling goldfish and birds. He doesn’t make much money and spends his days chatting with neighbours. “Today there are so many ways of transportation – with shared bikes, DiDi [a taxi app]. Before, there was nothing. Those who had a bicycle were considered well off,” he says.

Struggle for democracy, 1989-90s: “China’s renaissance”
For Duan Peng, from the city of Chengdu, one of the experiences that marked him the most is one he did not understand at the time: the pro-democracy protests that swept across China in the spring of 1989. After more than a decade of the country’s gaige kaifang (reform and opening), young Chinese were emboldened to air their opinions and grievances. In the spring of 1989, Chinese students in Beijing, Chengdu and other cities marched to mourn the death of the country’s reformist leader, Hu Yaobang.

In Chengdu, as in Beijing, the gathering morphed into protests against government corruption and calls for democratic rights. Duan, who was in high school at the time, understood little of the slogans being shouted. But he snuck out to join the students marching through the city. “I thought it was fun, walking along the roads, with no police around. It was exciting,” he says.

On 4 June 1989, the same day protests in Beijing were crushed by the military, police also moved against students in Chengdu, using tear gas and electric cattle prods. Duan had tried to get to the protests that day, but police had blocked off the roads. He heard rumours of gunfire and remembers burning cars and fires in the city’s public squares. He had heard that students in Beijing had been killed and soldiers burnt alive. In Chengdu, an estimated 300 people were killed.

After the protests, Duan finished high school and went on to study architecture. The country was on the cusp of an economic boom. He moved south to Shenzhen, which soon emerged as one of China’s busiest economic hubs. Duan would witness more pivotal events. In 1997, he travelled to Hong Kong to watch the Union Jack lowered on 30 June, marking the city’s handover from British control to Chinese.

Today, he lives in an apartment on the 14th floor, a far cry from his childhood home in Chengdu, which was surrounded by fields. The pace of change is sometimes disorienting to him. “My generation is the one that has been through the agricultural age, the industrial age and now the internet age,” he says. As he thinks about his country’s future, he reflects on the protests he witnessed in 1989. “Looking back, it has had a long-lasting effect,” he says. “The 1980s were China’s renaissance,” he says. “Now, it’s harder. Right now, we are in a period of transition. What we need is time for the seed planted in 1989 to grow. Western countries were born into freedom; if we want that in China, we need the right environment.”

2000s and beyond: “They don’t want to solve the problem”
Xiao Chen, a student at Peking University in Beijing, represents many of the ideals his country was founded upon 70 years ago. The son of uneducated workers, his goal is to aid China’s progress towards true socialism. He grew up in rural poverty – but he studied, and got into the top university in the country. “When I saw the pain of the people around me, I was eager to change this reality,” he says. “I wanted to cultivate myself, and to serve the motherland.” But Chen was soon disappointed after arriving in the capital. He joined the university’s Marxist society, eager to implement the tenets he’d studied in school. He and other members helped campus workers defend their rights and to fight for the minimum wage.

Soon school officials and the police tried to stop their efforts. Many of the students have since been detained – and Chen, who is using an alias, says he and all the other student members are under strict surveillance. Now he can’t leave campus without permission, and his relatives back home have had to cut off contact with him. Mindsers are always within ten metres of him, monitoring him with a camera, even when he is eating at school cafeterias. He believes there are many more young Chinese who agree with his group, who have “seen the inequality the country’s fast economic development has created”. But Chen is quick to stop comparisons between student activists like himself and previous generations – such as the student protesters of 1989 – who called for democracy and other freedoms.

“We do not discuss [the Tiananmen Square protests] because we understand the patriotism and feelings of students,” he says. Still, he believes the student movement today is not dead. “I believe that the future must belong to the Chinese working class and progressive youth. They will definitely be more and more.”

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ACROSS
8 Signal from flying Amy lady long missing? (6)
9 Starts to check out my puzzle? Bliss maybe! (8)
10 Too serious about Hemingway in speech (4-7)
12 Private Eye backed in confidence trick? (3)
13 Slender and tacky person whose name I’ve forgotten (9)
14 Energy used in Scottish family should be this (6)
15 Morning newspaper not working in early evening (7)
17 Do feel USA needing to be relaxed? (7)
19 Stable workers banking nothing very much (5)
21 Discuss party not in office (6,3)
24 River side – no parking (3)
25 Where you find potholes bad for driving? (3)
27 Offensive name used in radio broadcast (6)

DOWN
1 One million letters to be delivered? It’s a handicap (6)
2 Satellite fired up over Scottish island endlessly (8)
3 Rogue not to be served at breakfast (3,3)
4 Short of love, perhaps they learn solo? (6,6)
5 Head of police in US approves move (2,6)
6 Fly first-class out of Burma’s capital twice over (6)
7 Savoury biscuit excellent, in meal regularly (8)
11 Protest about Belgian town’s sleepy state (12)
16 Misplaced semicolons not on – it’s a mistake (8)
18 Side at Lord’s hit out (2,6)
19 Work of Mozart covering the entire range (4,1,2,1)
20 Some characters in Gibraltar mad about Spanish ships (6)
22 String of pearls found in central London street (6)
23 Tip in essay? Yes it’s in! (6)

Clue of the week: Scrapping a not terribly exorbitant arrangement is where we’re heading (6) The Sunday Times’ Clue Contest winner, Steve Randall

Solution to Crossword 1163
ACROSS: 1 Mantua 4 Acker 8 Premise 9 Laptops 11 Codswallop 12 Tart 13 Season 15 Attested 17 Bacteria 19 Issuée 21 Tore 22 Dreadlocks 24 Salerno 25 Ramekin 26 Enamel 27 Severs
DOWN: 1 Marco 2 Nemesis 3 Abstainer 5 Cramp 6 Estates 7 Supersede 10 Alma mater 14 Elaborate 16 Three-rate 18 Theresa 20 Sloane 22 Donne 23 Knits

The winner of 1163 is Prof Peter Rowley-Conwy from Durham

Clue to the week: Scrapping a not terribly exorbitant arrangement is where we’re heading (6) The Sunday Times’ Clue Contest winner, Steve Randall

Sudoku 709 (easy)

Fill in all the squares so that each row, column and each of the 3x3 squares contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

Solution to Sudoku 708

Solution:

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