

Punch, Or The London Charivari, Vol. 100., Jan. 24, 1891.
by Various

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PUNCH,

OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.

VOL. 100.

January 24, 1891.

MR. PUNCH'S PRIZE NOVELS.

NO. XII.--THE MATE OF THE MARLINSPIKE.

(_BY SHARK MUSSELL; AUTHOR OF "ERECT WITH A STOVE IN HER," "MY GYP
MADE TO WHEEZE," "THE ROMANCE OF A PENNY PARLOUR," "A HOOK FOR THE

BANNOCK," "FOUND THE GAL ON FIRE," "THE MYSTERY OF THE LOTION JAR,"
"THE JOKES O' LEAD," &C., &c., &c._)

["Here you are, my hearty," writes the Author, "this is a regular briny ocean story, all storms and thunderclaps and sails and rigging and soaring masts and bellying sails. How about 'avast heaving' and 'shiver my timbers,' and 'son of a sea-cook,' and all that? No, thank you; that kind of thing's played out. MARRYAT was all very well _in his day_, but that day's gone. The public requires stories about merchant ships, and, by Neptune, the public shall have them, with all kinds of hairy villains and tempest-tossed wrecks and human interest and no end of humour, likewise word-pictures of ships and storms. That's me. So clear the decks, and here goes."]

CHAPTER I.

We were in mid-ocean. Over the vast expanses of the oily sea no ripple was to be seen although Captain BABBIJAM kept his binoculars levelled at the silent horizon for three-quarters of an hour by the saloon clock. Far away in the murky distance of the mysterious empyrean, a single star flashed with a weird brilliance down upon the death-like stillness of the immemorial ocean. Yet the good old _Marlinspike_ was rolling from side to side and rising and falling as if the liquid expanse were stirred by the rush of a tempest instead of lying as motionless as a country congregation during the rector's sermon.

Suddenly Captain BABBIJAM closed his binoculars with an angry snap, and turned to me. His face showed of a dark purple under his white cotton night-cap.

[Illustration]

"The silly old ship," he muttered, half to himself and half to me, "is trying to make heavy weather of it; but I'll be even with her. I'll be even with her."

"You'll find it a very _odd_ thing to do," I said to him, jocosely.

He sprang at me like a seahorse, and reared himself to his full height before me.

"Come, Mr. TUGLEY," he continued, speaking in a low, meaning voice, "can you take a star?"

"Sometimes," I answered, humouring his strange fancy; "but there's only one about, and it seems a deuce of a long way off--however, I'll try;" and, with that, I reached my arm up in the direction of the solitary planet, which lay in the vast obscure like a small silver candlestick, with a greenish tinge in its icy sparkling, mirrored far below in the indigo flood of the abysmal sea, while a grey scud came sweeping up, no one quite knew whence, and hung about the glossy face

of the silent luminary like the shreds of a wedding veil, scattered by a honey-moon quarrel across the deep spaces far beyond the hairy coamings of the booby-hatch.

"Fool!" said the Captain, softly, "I don't mean that. If you can't take a star, can you keep a watch?"

"Well, as to that, Captain," said I, half shocked and half amused at his strange questionings, "I never take my own out in a crowd. It's one of DENT's best, given me by my aunt, and I've had it for nigh upon--"

But the Captain had left me, and was at that moment engaged on his after-supper occupation of jockeying a lee yard-arm, while the first mate, Mr. SOWSTER, was doing his best to keep up with his rough commanding officer by dangling to windward on the flemish horse, which, as it was touched in the wind and gone in the forelegs, stumbled violently over the buttery hatchway and hurled its venturesome rider into the hold.

CHAPTER II.

On the following morning we were all sitting in the palatial saloon of the Marlinspike. We were all there, all the characters, that is to say, necessary for the completion of a first class three-volume ocean

novel. On my right sat the cayenne-peppery Indian Colonel, a small man with a fierce face and a tight collar, who roars like a bull and says, "Zounds, Sir," on the slightest provocation. Opposite to him was his wife, a Roman-nosed lady, with an imperious manner, and a Colonel-subduing way of curling her lip. On my left was the funny man. As usual he was of a sea-green colour, and might be expected at any moment to stagger to a porthole and call faintly for the steward. Further down the table sat two young nincompoops, brought on board specially in order that they might fulfil their destiny, and fill out my story, by falling in love with the fluffy-haired English girl who was sitting between them, and pouting equally and simultaneously at both. There was also the stout German who talks about "de sturm und der vafes." And beside him was the statuesque English beauty, whose eyes are of the rich blackness of the tropic sky, whose voice has a large assortment of sudden notes of haughtiness, while the studied insolence of her manner first freezes her victims and then incontinently and inconsistently scorches them. Eventually her proud spirit will be tamed, probably by a storm, or a ship-wreck, or by ten days in an open boat. I shall then secure your love, my peerless ARAMINTA, and you will marry me and turn out as soft and gentle as the moss-rose which now nestles in your raven tresses. The Colonel was speaking.

"Zounds, Sir!" he was saying. "I don't know what you mean by effects. All mine are on board. What do you say, Mr. TUGLEY?" he went on, looking at me with a look full of corkscrews and broken glass, while his choleric face showed of a purple hue under the effort of

utterance.

"Well, Colonel," I replied, in an off-hand way, so as not to irritate him, "I keep my best effects here;" and, so saying, I produced my note-book, and tapped it significantly. "What, for instance, do you say to this?"

But, what follows, needs another chapter.

CHAPTER III.

I found the place in my notebook, cleared my voice, and began.

"The ship was sailing gloriously under a press of canvas. Her foretopgallant-sail swelled to its cotton-like hue out of the black shadow of its incurving. High aloft, the swelling squares of her studding-sails gleamed in the misty sheen of the pale luminary, flinging her frosty light from point to point of the tapering masts, which rose, rose, rose into the morning air, as though with intent to pierce the glowing orb of day, poised in the heavens like one vast ball of liquid fire. Through the wind-hushed spaces of the canvas, where the foretopmaststay-sail--"

"I know that foretopmaststay-sail," said the funny man, suddenly. I withered him with a look, and turned over the page.

"Here," I said, "is another tip-topper. What do you think of this for a storm?--'The liquid acclivities were rising taller, and more threatening. With a scream of passion the tortured ship hurled itself at their deep-green crests. Cascades of rain, and hail, and snow, were dashing down upon her unprotected bulwarks. The inky sky was one vast thunder-clap, out of which the steely shaft of an electric flash pierced its dazzling path into the heart of the raving deep. The scud--'

"I know that scud," said a hateful voice. But, before I could annihilate its owner, the pale face of Mr. SPILKINGS, with his dead-eyes turned in, dashed breathlessly into the saloon. "By all that's holy," he shouted, "the Captain's gone mad, and the crew have thrown off all disguise. We are manned by ourang-outangs!"

CHAPTER IV.

Never shall I forget the horrors of the scene that ensued. We clewed up the mizzen royal, we lashed the foretop to make it spin upon its heels. The second dog watch barked his shins to the bone, and a tail of men hauled upon the halliards to mast-head the yard. Nothing availed. We had to be wrecked and wrecked we were, and as I clasped ARAMINTA's trustful head to my breast, the pale luminary sailing through the angry wrack glittered in phantasmal splendour on the scud which--

[Here the MS. ends unaccountably.--ED. _Punch_.]

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[Illustration: AN INTERESTED PARTY.

St. Bernard's Dog (_confidentially to Mr. Chaplin_). "NEVER MIND
THE OLD WOMAN; LET'S KEEP THE MUZZLE ON FOR A YEAR, AND HAVE DONE WITH
IT!"]

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CANINE CONFIDENCES.

Clever Dog, to the Minister of Agriculture, loquitur--

POTTERER, put the muzzle on! Potterer, take it off again!

That is not the way, my friend, cruel _rabies_ to restrain.

Take my tip!

As to self-styled "friends of dogs," too preposterous by half,

Who object to all restraint, they deserve on seat or calf

One sharp nip.

It is _doggish_ interest hydrophobia to stamp out;

'Tis a curse to us canines; that no person well can doubt

Who has sense.

They who think we doggies share old maid's sentimental fad,

Just as though it really were a dog's _privilege_ to go mad,

Must be dense.

Muzzles are a bore, of course, rather troublesome at times,

But I'd rather have my nose made incapable of crimes,

Than go free,

With the chance of "going off," giving friend or foe a bite.

And be clubbed to death or shot, murdered in my master's sight,

Don't suit _me_!

Never mind the fussy frumps, the old women of each sex;

Better raise their ready wrath than the prudent public vex

With crass rules.

Muzzles now and collars then, partial orders soon relaxed;

Men rebel when with caprice they are tied, or teased, or taxed,

Else they're fools.

Keep the muzzles on a year, regularly, and _all round_,

Every doggy of high breed, mongrel puppy, whelp or hound,

Will give thanks

To the Minister who tries hydrophobia to stamp out

Once for all o'er all the land, with consistency, and without

Pottering pranks!

Mr. CHAPLIN, take my tip! Science speaks in the same sense,

So does true philanthropy. Ought to have effect immense,

What they say.

Heed not that old woman there, with her spoilt and yelping pet;

I for every dog of _nous_ in the country speak, you bet.

Try! _Good_-day!

[_Trots out, comfortably muzzled_.

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MOST APPROPRIATE.--We see, from some recently-reported proceedings,

that the present Inspector appointed under the Infant Life Protection

Act is "Mr. BABEY."

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE SECRETS OF LITERARY COMPOSITION.

_The Fair Authoress of "Passionate Pauline," gazing fondly at her own

reflection, writes as follows:--_

"I look into the glass, Reader. What do I see?

"I see a pair of laughing, _espiegle_, forget-me-not blue eyes, saucy and defiant; a _mutine_ little rose-bud of a mouth, with its ever-mocking _moue_; a tiny shell-like ear, trying to play hide-and-seek in a tangled maze of rebellious russet gold; while, from underneath the satin folds of a _rose-the_ dressing-gown, a dainty foot peeps coyly forth in its exquisitely-pointed gold morocco slipper," &c., &c.

(_Vide "Passionate Pauline," by Parbleu._)]

* * * * *

A COMING MEETING.

(_REPORTED FROM THE RAILWAY INTELLIGENCE OF 1892._)

The Chairman, who on opening the proceedings was received with a feeble chorus of melancholy groans, said that he feared he had no better Report to make to the shareholders. ("_Oh! oh!_") It is true that he had one fact to mention, which was a matter of supreme congratulation, and he needn't say that that was that they hadn't yielded a single inch to the men. ("_Oh! oh!" and a Voice, "Oh!

we've had enough of 'that!')_ It is also true that this firm and unflinching front had necessitated some sacrifice, and had involved the Company in no little difficulty. (_Prolonged groans._) He was sorry to note these manifestations, for he had not only to announce to that meeting the non-payment of any dividend, even to the holders of the Company's Debenture Stock, but he had further to inform them, that, owing to some difficulty in settling the account of their coal contractors, these last had taken proceedings against them, and had seized not only all the contents of their refreshment-rooms, but also the whole of their rolling-stock. (_Prolonged wailing._) He grieved to say that the last two engines that the Company possessed, and which they had up to now hidden in the cloak-room at the Edinburgh terminus, were unfortunately discovered and seized last night. (_Groans._) Still, the Company did not despair of being able to carry on, at least, a portion of the Passenger Traffic (_Feeble laughter._) They might meet the statement with a manifestation of ridicule--but such was the case. It was with a sense of pride in their method of triumphing over difficulties, that he announced to the meeting, that a train of cattle-trucks would be started for the North daily at twelve o'clock, the motive power of which would be the Directors themselves. ("_Oh! oh!"_) They could not say anything about _the pace_ at which the train would travel, but that, _with time_, it would do the distance he had little, if any doubt. It is true that in a similar experiment on a neighbouring line the train came to a dead halt in the first tunnel, and the passengers had to descend in the dark and grope their way out to the nearest station as well as they could, but this unsatisfactory experience would in no way deter them from making the experiment on their own behalf. (_Jeers._) He was sorry to see that

the ordinary stock of the Company, which, a twelvemonth since, had touched 128-3/8,--could not now find purchasers in the Market at 7-1/2. (_Groans._) But he hoped for better times. ("_Oh! oh!_") But, come what would, he would hold fast by his principles, which were, "_No Compromise, No Meeting Halfway, No Arbitration, No Concession!_" Men might starve, Trade collapse, the Country come to ruin, the Company disappear in Bankruptcy, but he cared not. The Directors had put their foot down, and, whether right or wrong, whatever happened, _there_ they meant, with a good down-right national and pig-headed obstinacy, to keep it.

The Chairman was continuing in this strain, but, being interrupted by a shower of inkstands, was compelled to close his remarks, the proceedings coming to a somewhat abrupt conclusion, in a scene of considerable confusion.

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THE "STRAIT" TIP.

Oh, Mister BLAINE, we don't complain
That for your country's weal you're caring;
But, clever Yankee, _Punch_ would thank 'ee
Not to be quite so _over-Behring!_

* * * * *

NEW VERSION.--Every dog must have his--_year_ (of muzzling).

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THE GAME OF PEACE.

[Illustration]

April.--Grand informal meeting of the Crowned Heads of Europe (with the CZAR in the chair) to discuss a scheme of general disarmament, at which the Emperor of GERMANY creates a profound sensation by the announcement that, as a hint to his brother Monarchs, he has himself gone on to the retired list, burnt his cocked-hat, disbanded the Pomeranian Grenadiers, and confined Herr KRUPP for ten years in a second-class fortress.

May.--By arrangement, all the great powers call in the uniforms of all their troops and present them to the King of the BELGIANS, on the understanding that, as the Emperor of the Congo, he shall forthwith transport them to Africa, and instantly commence the clothing of seven millions of the naked native population.

June--One hundred and eighty thousand horses, with military training, coming suddenly on to the market, four-in-hand Hansoms at a penny an hour, become common in all the great European capitals, and the Derby, for which there are 1371 entries, is won by a Cossack pony, trained in Siberia.

July--The barrels of all the magazine rifles melted down, and recast, utilised for the production of type-writers, which, being produced in large quantities, are supplied with instruction gratis to all the children attending the establishments of the London School Board, the stocks of the rifles being utilised for the manufacture of billiard-cues, walking-sticks, and umbrella-handles.

August--It being resolved to use up all the gunpowder without delay, a perpetual display of fireworks is inaugurated at Vienna, St. Petersburg, Berlin, Paris, and London, the show in the last-named capital including a gigantic set-piece of the Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World, which is given five times successively every evening at the Crystal Palace for three months, Piccadilly being illuminated from 6 P.M. to 3 A.M. by the continuous discharge of coloured rockets.

September--The last 101-ton gun having been melted down for the forging of the metal piles for one of the four newly-projected Channel bridges, a nasty international feeling, fermented by General Officers who are obliged to sweep crossings and drive four-wheeled cabs for a livelihood,--and who do not like it,--begins to manifest itself, and

diplomacy intervening irritably only to make matters worse, several ultimatums are dispatched from some of the Great Powers to others, but owing to the want of soldiers, the matter is put into the hands of International Solicitors, who, arranging a stand-up fight for the President of the French Republic and the CZAR against the Emperors of GERMANY and AUSTRIA, and the KING of ITALY, the matter somehow falls through for the moment, and the public excitement subsides.

October--General note from all the Great Powers to each other announcing their secession from the "League of Peace," and declaring their intention of resorting again to "_Protective Armament_" as soon as possible. War declared all round before the end of the month.

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VOCES POPULI.

AT THE GUELPH EXHIBITION.

IN THE CENTRAL HALL.

A Thrifty Visitor (_on entering_). Catalogue? No. What's the use of a Catalogue? Miserable thing, the size of a tract, that tells you nothing you don't know!

His Wife (_indicating a pile of Catalogues on table_). Aren't
these big enough for you?

The Thr. V. Those? Why, they're big enough for the _London
Directory_! Think I'm going to drag a thing like that about the place?
You don't really want a Catalogue--it's all your fancy!

Mr. Prattler (_to Miss AMMERSON_). Oh, _do_ stop and look at these
sweet goldfish! Pets! Don't you _love_ them? _Aren't_ they tame?

Miss Ammerson. Wouldn't do to have them _wild_--might jump out and
bite people, you know!

Mr. P. It's _too_ horrid of you to make fun of my poor little
enthusiasms! But really,--couldn't we get something and feed
them?--_Do_ let's!

Miss A. I daresay you could get ham-sandwiches in the Restaurant--or
chocolates.

Mr. P. How unkind you are to me! But I don't care. (_Wilfully._) I
shall come here all by myself, and bring biscuits. Great big ones! Are
you determined to take me into that big room with all the Portraits?
Well, you must tell me who they all are then, and which are the

Guelphiest ones.

IN THE ROYAL ROOM.

Considerate Niece (_to Uncle_). They seem mostly Portraits here.

You're sure you don't _mind_ looking at them, Uncle? I know so many people _do_ object to Portraits.

Uncle (_with the air of a Christian Martyr_). No, my dear, no: _I_ don't mind 'em. Stay here as long as you like, I'll sit down and look at the people, till you've done.

First Critical Visitor (_examining a View of St. James's Park_).

I wonder where that was taken. In Scotland, I expect--there's two Highlanders there, you see.

Second C.V. Shouldn't wonder--lot o' work in that, all those different colours, and so many dresses. [_Admires, thoughtfully._

A Well-read Woman. That's Queen CHARLOTTE, that is. GEORGE THE THIRD's wife, you know--her that was so _domestic_.

Her Companion. Wasn't that the one that was shut up in the Tower, or something?

The W.W. In the Tower? Lor, my dear, no, _I_ never 'eard of it.

You're thinking of the TUDORS, or some o' that lot, I expect!

Her Comp. Am I? I daresay. I never _could_ remember 'Istry. Why, if you'll believe me, I always have to stop and think which of the GEORGES came first!

More Critical Visitors (_before Portraits_). He's rather pleasant-looking, don't you think? I _don't_ like _her_ face at all. So peculiar. And what a hideous dress--like a tea-gown without any upper part--frightful!

A Sceptical V. They all seem to have had such thin lips in those days. Somehow, I _can't_ bring myself to believe in such very thin lips--can _you_, dear?

Her Friend. I always think it's a sign of meanness, myself.

The S.V. No; but I mean--I can't believe _everyone_ had them in the eighteenth century.

Her Friend. Oh, I don't know. If it was the fashion!

ABOUT THE CASES.

Visitor (_admiring an embroidered waistcoat of the time of GEORGE THE SECOND--a highly popular exhibit_). What lovely work! Why, it looks as if it was done yesterday!

Her Companion (_who is not in the habit of allowing his enthusiasm to run away with him_). Um--yes, it's not bad. But, of course, they wouldn't send a thing like that here without having it washed and done up first!

An Old Lady. "Tea-pot used by the Duke of WELLINGTON during his campaigns." So he drank _tea_, did he? Dear me! Do you know, my dear, I think I must have _my_ old tea-pot engraved. It will make it so much more interesting some day!

IN THE SOUTH GALLERY.

Mr. Prattler (_before a Portrait of Lady HAMILTON, by ROMNEY_). There! Isn't she too charming? I do call her a perfect _duck_.'

Miss Ammerson. Yes, you mustn't forget her when you bring those biscuits.

An Amurrcan Girl. Father, see up there; there's BYRON. Did you ever see such a purrfectly beautiful face?

Her Father (_solemnly_). He was a beautiful _Man_--a beautiful Poet.

The A.G. I know--but the _expression_, it's real saint-like!

Father (_slowly_). Well, I guess if he'd had any different kind of expression, he wouldn't have written the things he _did_ write, and that's a fact!

A Moralising Old Lady (_at Case O_). No. 1260. "Ball of Worsted wound by WILLIAM COWPER, the poet, for Mrs. UNWIN." NO. 1261. "Netting done by WILLIAM COWPER, the poet." How very nice, and what a difference in the habit of literary persons _nowadays_, my dear!

IN THE CENTRAL HALL.--_MR. WHITEROSE, A JACOBITE FIN DE SIECLE, IS SEATED ON A BENCH BESIDE A SEEDY STRANGER._

The S.S. (_half to himself_). Har, well, there's one comfort, these 'ere GUELPHS'll get notice to quit afore we're _much_ older!

Mr. Whiterose (_surprised_). You say so? Then--you too are of the Young England Party! I am rejoiced to hear it. You cheer me; it is a

sign that the good Cause is advancing.

The S.S. Advancin'? I believe yer. Why, I know a dozen and more as are workin' 'art and soul for it!

Mr. W. You do? We are making strides, indeed! Our England has suffered these usurpers too long.

The S.S. Yer right. But we'll chuck 'em out afore long, and it'll be "Over goes the Show" with the lot, eh?

Mr. W. I had no idea that the--er--intelligent artisan classes were so heartily with us. We must talk more of this. Come and see me. Bring your friends--all you can depend upon. Here is my card.

The S.S. (_putting the card in the lining of his hat_). Right, Guv'nor; we'll come. I wish there was more gents like yer, I do!

Mr. W. We are united by a common bond. We both detest--do we not?--the Hanoverian interlopers. We are both pledged never to rest until we have brought back to the throne of our beloved England, her lawful sovereign lady--(_uncovering_)--our gracious MARY of Austria-Este, the legitimate descendant of CHARLES the Blessed Martyr!

The S.S. 'Old on, Guv'nor! Me and my friends are with yer so fur as doing away with these 'ere hidle GUELPHS; but blow yer MARY of Orstria, yer know. Blow _'er_!

Mr. W. (_horrified_). Hush--this is rank treason! Remember--she is the lineal descendant of the House of Stuart!

The S.S. What of it? There won't be no lineal descendants when we git _hour_ way, 'cause there won't be nothing to descend to nobody. The honly suv'rin _we_ mean to 'ave is the People--the Democrisy. But there, you're young, me and my friends'll soon tork you over to hour way o' thinking. I dessay we ain't fur apart, as it is. I got yer address, and we'll drop in on yer some night--never fear. No hevenin' dress, o' course?

Mr. W. Of course. I--I'll look out for you. But I'm seldom in--hardly _ever_, in fact.

The S.S. Don't you fret about _that_. Me and my friends ain't nothing partickler to do just now. We'll _wait_ for yer. I should like yer to know ole BILL GABB. You should 'ear _that_ feller goin' on agin the GUELPHS when he's 'ad a little booze--it 'ud do your 'art good! Well, I on'y come in 'ere as a deligate like, to report, and I seen enough. So 'ere's good-day to yer.

Mr. W. (_alone_). I shall have to change my rooms--and I _was_ so comfortable! Well, well,--another sacrifice to the Cause!

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OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

[Illustration]

There was a bronze group by POLLET among the specimens of sculpture in the French _Salon_, some twenty years ago,--"It may be more or less an hour or so," as the poet sings,--representing a female form being carried upwards in the embrace of a rather evil-looking Angel. It illustrated a poem by the Vicomte ALFRED DE VIGNY, which I remember reading, in consequence of this very statue having come into my possession (it was afterwards sold at Messrs. CHRISTIE, MANSON & WOODS, under the style and title of "Lot 121, _Elsa_"), and it occurs to me that it was on precisely the same theme as the other ALFRED's--not the _Vicomte_ but _Mister_ ALFRED AUSTIN's--"_The Tower of Babel_," which I have just read with much pleasure, and, with some profit; the moral, as I take it, being favourable to the Temperance cause, as a warning against all spirits, good, bad, or indifferent.

Afrael, the inhabitant of a distant star, falls in love with _Noema_, the wife of the atheistical Babelite _Aran_, to whom she has borne a son, aged in the poem, as far as I can make out, about eight years, and a fine boy for that. Anyhow, it makes _Noema_ at least

twenty-five, supposing she married at sweet seventeen, and, indeed, she alludes to herself in the poem as no longer in her first youth.

Well, _Aran_, who is very far from being a domestic character, is struck down by avenging lightning at the destruction of the Tower of Babel, and _Noema_ is left a widow, with her child, who has been protected in the _melee_ by the Spirit _Afrael's_ taking him out of it, and restoring him to his mother's arms. When, after this, the infatuated spirit-lover _Afrael_ requests _Noema_ to say the word which shall make a man of him, and a husband of him too at the same time, she modestly refuses, until she has had a decent time to order her widow's weeds at her milliner's and wear them for about a month or so, at the expiration of which interval _Afrael_ may, if he be still of the same mind, call in again, and pop the question.

Afrael bids good-bye to the Upper House, and, his heart being ever true to _Poll_--meaning _Noema_--he returns, makes an evening call upon her, and asks her, in effect, "Is it to be '_Yes-ema_,' or '_No-ema_'?" The bashful widow chooses the former, and the Spirit-lover _Afrael_, renouncing his immortality, i.e., giving up spirits, becomes plain _Mr. Afrael_, and an ordinary, as far as anybody can judge, a very ordinary mortal, showing what a change a drop of spirits can effect in a constitution. Now I should like the poem "continued in our next." I should like to hear _how_ they got on together: and, as longevity was considerable in those patriarchal days, I should like to know how they got on together when _Afrael Esquire_ was 195, and his wife, _Noema_, was 200. Did _Afrael_ never

again take to his spirits? Or, did he become miserable and hipped
having entirely lost his spirits? Did his wife never make sarcastic
reference to the "stars" with whom he had formerly been acquainted?
And how about her boy, his step-son? Did they have any family? Whence
came the money?

Perhaps Mr. ALFRED AUSTIN (whose works are being printed by MACMILLAN
in a collected form, and among them *The Satire* now historic)
will give us an entirely new volume on the same subject, telling an
expectant public all about *Mr.* and *Mrs. Afrael chez eux*, and, in
fact, something spicy about this strangely assorted couple; for Poet
ALFRED will do well to remember and act upon his own dictum when, in
the preface to *The Satire*, he observed, and with truth, that had he
originally "written with the grave decorum of a secluded moralist,
he would" by this time "have gone down into the limbo of forgotten
bores."

Into that limbo A.A. will never descend. It is delightful to find
him dedicating his book to Lord LYTTON, to whom--when L.L. was
OWEN MEREDITH, ALFREDO *mio* had pointed out that, "in one serious
particular, he had overlooked parental admonition," and observing on
that occasion that, "had OWEN MEREDITH even a glimpse of the truth,
we" (A.A. himself, in 1861, much "we"-er then than now--"*et alors, il
grandira, il grandira!*") "should have been spared the final *tableau*
of repentance and forgiveness which concludes *Lucile*." But, thank
goodness, we (the Baron, and his literary friends) have *not* been
spared the touching picture of repentance and forgiveness in ALFRED

AUSTIN's dedicating his latest poem to Lord LYTTON. _Sic transit ira poetarum!_

In _The Season_ ALFREDO sang--

"I claim the precious privilege of youth,
Never to speak except to speak the truth."

But those lines were not written the day before yesterday, and as he can no longer "claim" the aforesaid "precious privilege," he can in his more mature years "go as he pleases." And there is so much "go" in him that he always pleases; so the Baron anticipates the sequel to _The Tower of Babel_ on the lines already suggested, presumptuous as it may seem to suggest lines to a poet.

Phra the Phoenician, a very clever idea, with which BULWER would have performed mysteriously thrilling wonders, but which Mr. ARNOLD has written at once too heavily and treated too lightly, in too much of a "so-called nineteenth century style;" which is a pity, as it is full of dramatic incident, and the interest well kept up through some two thousand years or so, more or less. He is a wonder is _Mister Phra_, and might well be called _Phra Diavolo_ instead of _Phra the Phoenician_. Sir EDWIN ARNOLD has written a preface to the volume, and seems to express a wish that the wonders here recorded could be possibilities of everyday life. But, if so, as _Mr. Weller, Senior_, observed, _a propos_ of "there being a Providence in it," "O' course

there is, SAMMY; or what 'ud become o' the undertakers?" And as to cremation--well, such an utter corporeal extinction would be the only way of putting an end to the terrestrial existence of _Phra the Phoenician_, who, however, "might rise," as _Mrs. Malaprop_ would say, "like a Phoenician from the ashes."

The appearance of _A New Lady Audley_ is rather late in the half-century as a "skit" on Miss BRADDON's celebrated novel. Now and then I found an amusing bit in it, but, on the whole, poor stuff, says THE BARON DE BOOK-WORMS.

My faithful "Co." has been reading poetry and prose, and thus communicates the result of his studies:--There is genuine but unassuming poetry, which is, after all, only another way of saying fine feeling finely expressed, in _Corn and Poppies_, by COSMO MONKHOUSE (ELKIN MATHEWS). Much of the verse is musical, and there is throughout a vein of thoughtfulness which never degenerates into a morbid brooding. I commend particularly "Any Soul to any Body," "A Dead March," and "Mysteries," as good examples of Mr. MONKHOUSE's style. So much for verse. Let me now to prose. Like my baronial Chief, I say, "Bring me my boots!" and let them be thick, so that I may trudge safely through Mr. RUDYARD KIPLING's latest, "_The Light that Failed_" (Lippincott's Monthly Magazine_, January). This is described as Mr. KIPLING's first long story. His publishers, moreover, are good enough to take all the trouble of criticism upon their own shoulders. They declare that "there is more stern strength in this novel than in anything which Mr. KIPLING has written;" but that is, after all,

only a comparative statement, which profits me little, as I never yet estimated the amount of "stern strength" in Mr. KIPLING's previous writings. I am, however, told, in addition, that the tale "is as intensely moving as it is intensely masculine" (there's lovely language!) "and it will not be surprising if it should prove to be the literary sensation of the year." To such an expression of opinion by competent judges it would be futile to attempt to add very much. I will only say, therefore, that the "sensation" produced in me by this novel is one of the most disagreeable I ever experienced. The characters are, for the most part, inordinately dull, preposterously conceited, and insufferably brutal. As for _Dick Helder_, the hero, no more disagreeable and hateful bully-puppy ever thought and talked in disconnected gasps through ninety-seven pages. The catastrophe moves no pity. Mr. KIPLING seems to despise the public, "who think with their boots, and read with their elbows;" but so clever a man might surely show his contempt less crudely. KIPLING, I love thee, but never more write such another tale!

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[Illustration: INFELICITOUS QUOTATIONS.

Hostess. "WON'T YOU TRY SOME OF THAT JELLY, HERR SILBERMUND?"

Herr Silbermund (_who has just been helped to Pudding_). "ACH, ZANK YOU, NO. I VOOT 'RAHZER PEAR VIZ ZE ILLS VE HAF, ZAN VLY TO OZZERS ZAT

VE KNOW NOT OF." [_Herr S. is particularly proud of his knowledge of
Shakspeare._]]

* * * * *

"WORSE THAN EVER!"

FARMER SMITH _LOQUITUR_:--

"To market, to market, to buy a fat pig!"

Yes, so runs the old-fashioned nursery rhyme,

And a porker that's plump, and round-barrel'd and big,

Is good business,--or used to be once on a time.

But now, they're the horriblemst nuisance on earth

Are Pigs, and a great deal more plague than they're worth.

I begin to believe 'twould be better by far

If Pigs, like the Dodo, extinct could become.

They involve one in nothing but jangle and jar,

And as to large profits, why that's all a hum.

"Please the Pigs?" That's absurd, a mere obsolete wheeze,

For Pigs are precisely the beasts you _can't_ please!

Gee up, _Dobbin_, old lad! Home's in sight; you have borne

My burden, and that of my basket, right well,

Your carrying power some neighbours would scorn,
But you're sound and good grit, though you mayn't look a swell.
We're starting, lad, after our short half-way halt,
If we don't make good time it will not be our fault.

We did the first stretch unexpectedly slick,
My basket well loaded a feather-weight seemed,
The road was so smooth, and your canter so quick,
'Twas better, old lad, than we either had dreamed.
A great disappointment to some folk, I think.
Then we halted half-way for a rest and a drink.

That big Irish Pig, which had plagued us so oft.
Was away,--running after its head or its tail!
Oh joy, _Dobbin_, dear, to jog on, and go soft,
No row, no obstruction by hedge-gap or rail.
Ah, then they discovered the pace and the pith
Of _Dobbin_ the dull, and his mount, Farmer SMITH.

Now all seems smooth sailing! Hillo! What was that?
A squeak? Nay, it sounds like a chorus of squeaks!
Don't shy, my dear _Dobbin_--you'll shake off my hat.
The lane here grows narrow. Who's there? No one speaks.
But that raucous "hrumph! hrumph!" that cacophonous yell!
'Tis Pig-noise, and Irish--I know it so well.

It is right in the road, it is plump in the gap.

Steady, _Dobbin_! Don't halt for this hullabaloo--

Gee up! and go steady, now there's a good chap.

What, the same plaguy Pig! Nay, by Jove, _there are two!_

And they're fighting each other, these porkers perverse,

In the gap we must pass! Oh! this grows worse and worse!

[_Whips up Dobbin._]

* * * * *

KOCH SURE!

SCENE--_A PLACE OF MEETING. ENTER BROWN AND JONES. THEY SALUTE ONE ANOTHER._

Brown (_excitedly_). Have you heard the good news?

Jones (_stolidly_). What good news?

Brown. That Dr. KOCH has at length revealed his secret?

Jones (_startled_). No, has he! Dear me! And that I should have

missed so pleasant a piece of intelligence! And so he has told an anxiously-expectant world the cause of his success! Can _you_ explain the matter to me?

Brown (_cheerfully_). With the assistance of the Public Press, to be sure I can. See here, I will give you the solution to the problem, as told by the Journals, "without puzzling technicalities."

Jones. I hang upon your words with an impatience that politeness--the outcome of civilisation--alone renders endurable.

Brown. Then you must know that Dr. KOCH has discovered that the remedy for tuberculosis consists of a glycerine extract of a pure cultivation of tubercle bacilli, the local effect of which, when injected into a healthy guinea-pig, produces a nodule found at the point of inoculation, which, when a second puncture is perpetrated, causes what may be called the bacillary fluid to be brought into the current of its circulation, so that the infected tissue may react upon the agent which it had previously been able to resist. I am not quite sure that I have got the _exact_ words, but that's the idea. Simple, isn't it?

Jones. Very! [_Exeunt severally._

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[Illustration: "WORSE THAN EVER!"]

FARMER SMITH. "TUT-T-T! _TWO OF 'EM!_ BAD ENOUGH WHEN THERE WAS ONLY ONE!!"]

* * * * *

DOMESTIC MELODIES.

(_BY SANCHO PRESTON PANZA._)

WINTER BATH-SONG.

For weeks the sun each morn arose

As 'tis his nature to,

But little difference he made

Sopp'd by the fog's asthmatic shade;

From day's beginning till its close

The day no brighter grew.

Above the sheets, the sleeper's nose

Peep'd shyly, as afraid,

While 'neath the dark and draughty flue

The burnt-out cinders meanly strew

The hearth, where now no firelight glows,
No waiting warmth is laid.

Full many a morn I sprang from bed,
As o'er the deadly brink
The wretch, with courage of despair,
Leaps from the slimy river-stair,
By hopeless hope unthinking sped,
Ere he can pause to think.
Cold as the efforts of the dead,
The needle-atom'd air,
Impinged upon the limbs that shrink.
On shivering shanks, and eyelids pink,
And bound its bands about the head,
And chill'd the underwear.

The frost that held us in its grip,
Would raise the prisoning paw,
And Nature, like a mouse set free,
Enjoyed delusive liberty,
While every water-pipe must drip
To greet the passing thaw.
Then rudely dashed from eager lip
The cup of joy would be,
And fingers numbed, and chattering jaw,
Owned unexpelled the winter's flaw,
And on the steps the goodmen slip,

And shout the major D.

Long like a fossil tipsy-cake

The sponge each morn appeared;

The bath, if plenished over-night,

Was frozen ere the morning light,

And more that frigid water-ache

Than unwashed days I feared,

Now while the milder zephyrs shake

Once more the winter's might,

My sponge, my bath, by loss endeared,

Shall dree no more a lonely weird;

And as young ducks to water take,

Shall be my bath ward flight.

* * * * *

GOOD DEVON!

Mr. W.H. SMITH will return to Grosvenor Place from Torquay on Monday,
for the opening of Parliament.

'Tis pity of you, OLD MORALITY,
Back from your rest to loud banality.
After St. Stephen's shindy, Devon

No doubt appeared a very heaven:

But cream's as much like water chalky

As Torquay Torrs to Talky-Talky!

* * * * *

CHANGE OF INITIALS.

"Often as I may have been invited," Mr. T.M. HEALY is reported to have said, in the course of a recent speech, "I never yet put a toe inside his house." Memorable words. Henceforth, name changed to TOE-AND-HEALY, M.P.

* * * * *

A WORD TO MOTHERS.

[A well-known Dramatic Critic has recently spoken of a play as "just the play in which growing girls will delight."]

O Anxious Mothers, come and listen

To what just now I've got to say.

If I'm not wrong, your eyes will glisten

Before the end of this my lay.

With strong affection overflowing--
Your children are indeed your pearls--
You can't help feeling pleased at knowing
The play's the thing--for growing girls!

The pages of a lady's journal
I've very often read with care,
The news, the gossiping eternal,
You're always sure of getting there.
Of how you ought to bind your tresses,
The latest styles, the tint in hair,
And there I've seen the kind of dresses
It's right for growing girls to wear.

But never once the slightest mention
Of what they'd better go and see,
And yet it's clear that some attention
To such a thing there ought to be.
For sentiment and love they're frantic,
They're fond of knights and belted earls,
A play that's just the least romantic--
Yes, that's the play for growing girls.

A crowing child, who loves to prattle,
Can easily be kept at rest.
You've only got to get a rattle,

Or p'raps a dolly would be best.

A bouncing boy will blow a bubble,

And want no more the livelong day;

But if a growing girl gives trouble,

You've got to take her to the play!

* * * * *

A PIONEER IN PETTICOATS.

[An American Lady is about to explore Africa, on humane principles.]

Arrive in Africa--Convinced that real way of taming the savage heart is by _Feminine Tact_. No need of brutal habits of male adventurers. Two negresses, from "Ole Virginny," with me, who said they would like to "see Africa again"; a few Arabs, to carry our baggage. Intend to study home-life of African tribes, and to get them to talk into my phonograph.

[Illustration]

Month Later--Have had to exhibit more Feminine Tact than I expected. Got entangled in swampy forest on Zambesi (I think), and Arabs declined to extricate us unless their pay was doubled! Also one

of negresses--horrid woman!--has deserted me--come to place that she pretended to recognise as her native village, and said she meant to stay! Tact useless with females!

On Lake Tanganyika--or if it isn't Lake Tanganyika, it's _an entirely new lake_,--which I have been the first to discover! Suffer a good deal from fever and queer diet. Am studying native home-life.

Later--Have left two Arabs and my remaining negress on Lake, and gone myself to look for STANLEY's Dwarfs. Told that TIPPOO TIB is somewhere about. Also advised to be very careful not to fall in with the "man-eating Manyema."

Still Later--Did fall in with them! Also fell out with them. They made all preparations for using me as a side-dish at a cannibal banquet, when TIPPOO TIB arrived and released me.

Tanganyika again!--Back here safe and sound! TIPPOO TIB turned out most unsatisfactory. Wanted to marry me!--with a hundred other wives already! Not prepared for _this_ sort of home-life. Managed to get away by describing to him a Remington typewriter, and promising if he let me go, to bring one back _at once_.

Find that my "rear-guard"--the negress and Arabs--have been up to fearful pranks during my absence. Negress killed and ate one of Arabs,

and then other Arab killed and ate negress! Tell remaining Arab I shall have him punished when I get to Coast. Arab says he'll get there first, and publish a book showing _me_ up!

Latest.--Left alone in middle of Africa, with a phonograph, several bales of baggage, and a diary. Question now is--will Feminine Tact show me road to Zanzibar?

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UNIVERSITY HONOURS.--"SMITH's Prizeman"--ARTHUR BALFOUR. The "Senior Wrangler" (for several years past)--Mr. GLADSTONE.

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THE AMUSING RATTLE'S TOPICAL NOTE-BOOK.

(_FOR THE USE OF PROFESSIONAL DINERS-OUT AND OTHER AMATEUR ENTERTAINERS._)

The Meeting of Parliament.--This is not a very promising subject, but mild mirth may be produced in outlying districts (say Southend or Honiton, Devon) by observing, that the rock upon which the Irish Party went to pieces was a happy one--in fact, a GLAD-STONE. This, strictly

speaking, is not a new jest, and therefore must be helped out by a burst of self-supplied laughter. You might add, that as Members of Parliament are obliged, by the rules of the House, to address their colleagues standing, there would be little chance of a seated discussion. But you must, however, take care to cough when you say seated, so that those on the look-out for a brilliant bon-mot may know that you mean heated.

The Revolt in Chili.--The name of the place in which the disturbances have occurred will help you effectively to remark that the outbreak is seasonable during the present inclement weather. As the Army sympathises with the Government, and the sister service with the rioters, you can suggest "that knaves would, of course, be supported by the Navy!" This may lead up to a really magnificent burst of waggery in the assertion that the dissentients must of necessity be "all at sea."

The New Archbishop of York.--Insist that his Grace is a Scotchman, and not an Irishman, and prove your proposition by declaring that the road to success was "MACGEE's (pronounced MAGGIE's) secret!" This really splendid flash of humour will bear polishing--as written it seems a little in the rough. You may refer to the Primate's universally acknowledged partiality for quiet sarcasm, by saying that "ever since he joined the ecclesiastical Bench he has been known as an arch Bishop!" These entertaining quibbles, delicately handled, should be received with enthusiasm at a five o'clock tea in a Deanery.

The New Play at the Haymarket--As the plot turns upon the doings of the Society of Friends, you may extract a jest by saying "that many of the characters trembled with anxiety before its production--in fact, were _quakers_!" The name of the Manager of the Haymarket has frequently been the subject of a quip, if not a crank; still it may yet serve as a peg for slyly observing that, "At the fall of the Curtain, TREE, naturally enough, appeared with a _bough_!"

The Weather--Of course you must introduce this subject, and as everything that _can_ be said _has_ been said about it, you may quote SYDNEY SMITH as your authority for observing, that the only possible sport for M.F.H.'s at this time of the year must be "_hunt--the slipper!_" If the point of this "good thing" is not immediately obvious, the fault will be with SIDNEY SMITH, and not with you. And this quaint oddity should satiate your audience with mirth and merriment until next week--and even longer!

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[Illustration: A COLD RECEPTION: OR PARLIAMENT MEETING IN A BLIZZARD.]

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STILL ANOTHER CHAPTER OF MY MEMOIR.

(_IN SUPPLEMENT OF "HARPER."_)

BY MONSIEUR VAN DE BLOWITZOWN TROMP.

[Illustration]

Forget at this moment where I was born, but I lived long enough at Marseilles to be married in that great southern French city. My wife's father had been in the Marines; her uncle (on the grandfather's side) had been a _Sapeur pompier_. Thus did I, as it were, become _lie_ with the sea and land forces of my adopted country. My wife's mother was a descendant of a noble but anonymous family in the Vosges, whilst her maternal uncle was accustomed to attach to himself some local unpopularity by preferring for investigation a complicated sheet which set forth his genealogy, tracing his origin back to the Bourbons.

You ask me which Bourbon? I frankly answer, I cannot tell. My wife's maternal uncle spoke of them as "_the_ Bourbons," just as you talk of "_the_ Groceries," and no one asks you _Lequel_? As for my own ancestry, I do not speak of it. I have never been in the habit of thrusting myself on the attention of the public. It is sufficient for me that my wife's maternal uncle's ancestors were Bourbons.

I first began to take charge of public affairs in connection with

an election that took place in the city where I found myself. M. DE LESSEPS opposed THIERS and GAMBETTA. He presented himself as an independent candidate. Was he? I suspected. Already I had my secret agents in every centre of population. One, whose letter bore the post-mark the Pyramids, placed in my hand proof that DE LESSEPS was an official candidate of the Empire. I secretly conveyed this information to a local newspaper. The news burst like a tempest on the public of Marseilles, and swept away in its irresistible whirl the candidature of M. DE LESSEPS.

This was pretty well for a first newspaper paragraph, worth at the time, as I remember thinking, more than the paltry three sous a line that became my due. But I had made more than a few sous--I had made an enemy! Years after, BISMARCK told me how, chatting with NAPOLEON THE THIRD at Donchery, that fallen monarch had recalled this incident, in which his prophetic eye justly discerned the beginning of the end. He admitted that he had said to the EMPRESS, "France is too small for me and VAN DE BLOWITZOWN TROMP. One of us must cross _la Manche_"

Sublime! One of us did.

But my time was not yet. My friends advised, nay, besought me to leave Marseilles. Towards the end of this year (1869) I took their advice, and retired to a small property I chanced to have in the centre of the Landes. This place being dry, and somewhat remote, was peculiarly suitable for watching the growth of great problems with a mind

unbiased by any knowledge of facts. I saw the Franco-German question grow, and I foresaw how it would end. I wrote to THIERS, and told him all about it. When the war broke out I mounted my stilts, and cautiously made my way across the untrodden track, following my Destiny. I had predicted the downfall of the Empire, and, in its last gasp, the Empire strove to wither me. Proceedings had been commenced, when Sedan put an end to them.

At this epoch France was on her knees, beaten down by the German hand, her eyes blind with blood and tears. One thing alone could cheer her.

I could do it, and I did. I applied for Letters of Naturalisation.

Some weeks later I became a French citizen, and received a letter from M. ADOLPH CREMIEUX, then Minister of Justice, and never suspected of being a wag. He wrote: "Your application for Naturalisation in the midst of our great disasters, is for me the signal of a new life for us. A country which in the midst of such catastrophes recruits citizens like you, is not to be despaired of."

Years after, THIERS, then President of the Republic, said, "I never will forget that you became a Frenchman in the time of our misfortunes." EDMUND ABOUT picturesquely said, "_Il s'est fait naturaliser vaincu._" BISMARCK has told me that the Emperor WILLIAM, then at Versailles, in the first flush of triumph at touch on his brow of the Imperial diadem, hearing of the event through the capturing of a balloon despatched with the news to dolorous Paris, passed a sleepless night.

"I fear me" he said, "all will now be lost."

"Not at all, your Majesty," said BISMARCK, affecting an indifference he assures me he did not feel. "There is not even a Frenchman the more. They have lost an Emperor and gained VAN DE BLOWITZOWN TROMP. _Ce met egal._"

"Not quite," said the Emperor, with subtle flattery. The Emperor WILLIAM, though he had his failings, was a keen judge of the comparative value of men.

The limits of this article compel me to glance hastily over succeeding epochs in a career with the main drift of which the civilised world is already familiar. After saving Marseilles to the Republic, by a series of actions alternating between desperate valour and brilliant strategy, I went to Paris to report on the great event. Calling on the official entrusted with the duty of considering claims to decorations, I began at once by saying that my own name must not be taken into consideration.

"Let my name," I said, gently but firmly, "be scored out in the proposed list of decorations."

"_Mais, Monsieur_" he said, "there is no such list."

I, however, was not to be put off with excuse of that kind. I insisted, both to the Secretary of the Minister of War, to M. THIERS, that I should not be decorated. I was only too successful. When the list came out, all my associates at Marseilles were decorated. I was not included. This was all right. It was what I had requested. I could say nothing. All the same, I could not help thinking that my advice had been too literally accepted.

Every morning, for a week after, I called on M. THIERS. At the end of the sixth day he said, "You must go to Riga. I do not quite know where it is, but it sounds remote. You shall be Consul at Riga." I was delighted. Like the President, I was not sure where Riga was; but the salary was certain, and there was fine old Roman flavour about the title Consul.

But it was not to be. I was predestined to be a great Newspaper Correspondent. How that came about cannot be told in this chapter. I will only say that early in my new career I secured the approbation of Mr. DELANE, who, I need scarcely say, was the most competent judge the world ever saw of the merits of a journalist.

At the risk of being dry and bald, I have confined myself to telling accurately what has happened, my greatest ambition being to leave no one the chance of misrepresenting, as his whim, fancy, or passion may dictate, facts in which I am so deeply interested. Let those note

them who, after my time, have to defend my memory should it ever be attacked.

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[Illustration: "The Shinner Quartette;" or, Musical Football.]

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"MORE HONOURED IN THE BREACH THAN THE OBSERVANCE."--Breach of Promise cases--as a rule.

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A GENERAL VIEW OF "PRIVATE INQUIRY."

[Illustration]

I am sufficiently old-fashioned, when I go to the play, to wish to be amused. I frankly admit I do not care to be taught a lesson, or to have my mind harrowed by the presentation of some psychological study. I can remember WRIGHT, and even HARLEY, and the days when a good piece of fun was the last item of the programme at the Adelphi and the Olympic--the chief attraction of the Pittites, who patronised

"half-price." This being so, I am glad to find at the Strand--a theatre recalling memories of JIMMY ROGERS and JOHNNY CLARKE, PATTY OLIVER and CHARLOTTE SAUNDERS, to say nothing of a lady who was not only Queen of Comedy but Empress of Burlesque--"_Private Inquiry_", a thoroughly well acted and rattling farce in three Acts. It is from the French, but as the task of adaptation has been entrusted to the Author who turned _Bebe_ the Frisky into _Betsy_ the Wholesome, any scruples of conscience that the LORD CHAMBERLAIN may possibly have entertained on reading the original have been successfully removed, and the play, consequently, is not only highly entertaining, but absolutely free from offence. I did not see it until it had reached its eighth night, and I do not remember a piece, taken as a whole, so excellently acted. Although he does not appear until the Second Act, Mr. WILLIE EDOUIN, as _'Arry 'Ooker_, the Private Inquiry Agent, is _the_ feature of the performance. His politeness to ladies, his assumption of businesslike habits, suggested by his reading and spiking of bogus telegrams brought to him when he is engaged with a client, his urbanity under difficulties, and his cheerful acceptance of the inevitable in whatever shape presented, are all admirable points, and points that are fully appreciated by the audience. Roars of laughter follow the one after the other when _'Arry 'Ooker_ is on the stage. Nothing can be more absurd than his make-up, his bows, his grimaces, and yet under the surface there is a vein of pathos that causes one to feel a pang of genuine regret when the poverty-stricken, light-hearted rogue, who, if he cannot secure a hundred guineas, is equally ready to accept a "tenner," is marched off to penal servitude as the Curtain falls. The clerk of this entertaining individual, _Toby_, is played by a boy like a boy, by Master Buss. Farther, Mr. ALFRED MALTBY could not be better

as the suspicious and bamboozled husband, _Richard Wrackham_. Again, even the small part of _Alexander_, a Waiter, is well played. Once more--the ladies, without exception, are capital; and as a result of this all-round excellence, the piece "goes," from a quarter to nine till just eleven, with a _verve_ that must be most satisfactory to all concerned. So I can congratulate the Author upon a piece full of lines that tell, and the Manager upon a play that is likely to rival in popularity its predecessor, the phenomenally-successful _Our Flat_. And I can offer these congratulations with a dear conscience, because I am neither Author of the piece nor Manager of the theatre, but as Mr. RUDYARD KIPLING might observe, QUITE ANOTHER FELLOW.

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LARKS!

SIR,--I am surprised that any of your Correspondents should doubt that birds eat snow. There is a bull-finch in my aviary, and I tried him. He ate it ravenously. Strange to say, he has not uttered a sound since! My wife says, "Probably his _pipe_ is frozen." This is such a good joke, I think you ought to have it.

Yours, LOVER OF NATURE.

SIR,--You may like to have the following story in support of the idea

that animals are aware that snow is frozen water. It was related to me by a rather rickety nephew, who has lived part of his life in South America, and whose word can be strictly relied on. He relates that once, when he was travelling among the Andes, at an elevation of some twenty thousand feet, his mules became very thirsty, and no water was obtainable. Each animal seized a _calabash_ with its teeth, filled it with snow, and trotted off to the crater of an adjacent volcano; it then waited till the lava melted the snow, which it drank up, and finally trotted back again. My nephew says he should not have believed a mule could be so clever, if he had not seen it.

Yours obediently, SAMUEL SOBERSIDES.

SIR,--Since writing you that letter about our bull-finch, I have discovered an even more surprising fact, which I am sure no Naturalist has yet dreamed of. Not only do birds appreciate snow, but they are very fond of _iced beverages_. A tom-tit, who often drinks water from a saucer which we put on our window-sill, one day found the water frozen. What did the intelligent creature do? Why, it rapped on the window-pane with its beak till the window was opened, then hopped on to the sideboard, and began trying to peck the cork out of a whiskey bottle! I took the hint, and poured some of the spirit into the saucer; the bird drank it greedily! My wife's comment on this occurrence is really too good to be lost, so I send it you. She said, "Evidently the bird was not a _tomtitotaller_!"

Yours, in convulsions, LOVER OF NATURE (_as before_).

* * * * *

A PINT OF HALF-AND-HALF.

"_Qui va la?_' says he."

"_Je_, ' replies I, knowing the language."

"_Jeames" and another Old Story_.

The international susceptibilities of Sheriff DRURIOLANUS--henceforth to bear the Anglo-French title, _Monsieur le Sherif 'Arris de Paris_, or _'Arry de Parry_,--appear to have been considerably hurt by a statement in the _Debats_ to the effect that the appearance in the London streets of men dressed as Gendarmes--"_en gendarmes francais_," writes MOSSOO DRURIOLANE--intended as perambulating advertisements for the Waterloo Panorama, was due to a supreme effort of his managerial genius. So Sherif DRURIOLANE wrote at once to the London Correspondent of the _Figaro_, who bears the singularly French name of JOHNSON, denying, in his very best French, that he, M. le Sherif, had had anything to do with these walking advertisements, or, indeed, with the Panorama Company at all, from which he had retired a year ago. Then he adds, like the _preux chevalier_ he is known to be, that had he still been on the direction of the aforesaid _Compagnie_, he, at all events, would never, never have committed the enormity of even suggesting, however vaguely, an idea so calculated to needlessly insult "_les

susceptibilites francaises_" (" _Hear! hear!_" and " _Tres bien!_"
from the left.) Then M. le Sherif DRURIOLANE, rising to the occasion,
finishes with this magnificent flourish on the French horn--" _Je
suit ne en France_"--(Isn't it very much "to his credit," we ask
with W.S.G., that, "In spite of all temptations, To belong to other
nations, He remains an Englishman?" Why, certainly)--" _j'ai vecu parmi
les Francais, et je suis a moitie enfant de Paris_."

Beautiful! _Magnifique!_ Our DRURIOLANUS is surpassing even the
G.O.M., who has been born, more or less, everywhere, except in
Paris. Should the Republic be in danger, or should Monarchists
or Imperialists get a chance and want a man for the place, let
them wire to DRURIOLANUS, " _a moitie enfant de Paris_" and the
" _Enfant_"--" _Enfant_ ARRIS," not " _Enfant_ GATTI"--will be ready, aye
ready, to assume the purple, and to bring all his properties with him.
" _A moitie_"--and the other half? That will ever remain British. So _a
la sante de Monsieur le Sherif-enfant-de-Londres-et-Paris_, in a pint
of Half-and-half, and let it, like Le Sherif himself, have a good head
on!

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THE ROLLING OF THE R'S.

"We are told that the omission to roll it (the letter _r_) is as
flagrant a misdemeanor as the dropping of the _h_"--_James Payn

in the Illustrated News_.

AIR--"_THE WEARING OF THE GREEN_."

SOFT-SPOKEN PERSON SINGS:--

It's vewy wong, widiculous, and howwid, I've no doubt,
To leave that little letter _r_ unuttahed or unwolled;
But if you _haven't_ any _r_'s you've got to do without,
And I can no maw woll _my r_'s than dwink my clawet cold.
A Dowie wuggedness of speech I weally _can't_ attain,
And though gwammawians may wave in leadewetts and pars,
I quite agwee with good JAMES PAYN that all their wow is vain,
The angwy wout must do without "the wolling of the _r_'s!"

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HAGIOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL NOTE.--Dr. HAROLD BROWNE, "the retiring
Bishop" of Winchester, as he is called, on account of his innate
modesty, wrote to the people of Farnham to say that, "never was there
a Bishop since the time of his earliest predecessor in the See, St.
Swithin, more literally 'at home' at Farnham Castle than himself."
To this fact Dr. H.B. is, perhaps, unaware that the Saint in question
owed his name, as when any visitor called to ask if he were at home,
the Hall-porter of the period invariably answered, "Yes, Saint's

within." Dr. HAROLD BROWNE is welcome to this information, which ought to have been in _Notes and Queries_.

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It is said that the invitations for the Drury Lane celebration of Twelfth Night will not be sent out with so free a hand next year, the young men on the recent occasion having been so Baddeley behaved.

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NOTICE.--Rejected Communications or Contributions, whether MS., Printed Matter, Drawings, or Pictures of any description, will in no case be returned, not even when accompanied by a Stamped and Addressed Envelope, Cover, or Wrapper. To this rule there will be no exception.