

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 100, March 14, 1891 eBook

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 100, March 14, 1891

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SPECIMENS FROM MR. PUNCH'S SCAMP-ALBUM.

No. III.—*The biographer.*

We will ask you, reader, this week, to compel your fancy to take a further flight, and kindly imagine yourself a worthy merchant, who has exchanged the turmoil of City-life for the elegant leisure of a suburban villa—let us say at Norwood. You are in your dining-room, examining the sky, and thinking that, if the weather holds up, you will take your big dog out presently for a run before lunch, when you are told that a gentleman is in the study who wishes to see you “on particular business.” The very word excites you, not unpleasantly, nor do you care whether it is Churchwarden’s business, or the District Board, or the County Council—it is enough that your experience and practical knowledge of affairs are in request—and, better still, it will give you something to do. So, after a delay due to your own importance, you march into your study, and find a brisk stranger, with red whiskers and a flexible mouth, absorbed in documents which he has brought with him in a black bag.

[Illustration: “Your Visitor has his Note-book out.”]

“*I have the pleasure of addressing Mr. Mark Lane, I think?*” he says. “Just so. Well, Mr. *Mark Lane*, I consider myself extremely fortunate in finding you at home, I assure you, and a very charming place you have here—abundant evidence of a refined and cultivated mind, excellent selection of our best-known writers, everything, if I may say so, elegant in the extreme—as was to be expected! Even from the cursory glimpse I have had, I can see that your interior would lend itself admirably to picturesque description—which brings me to the object of my visit. I have called upon you, Mr. *Lane*, in the hope of eliciting your sympathy and patronage for a work I am now compiling—a work which will, I am confident, commend itself to a gentleman of your wide culture and interest in literary matters.” (*Here you will look as judicial as you can, and harden your heart in advance against a new Encyclopaedia, or an illustrated edition of SHAKSPEARE’s works.*) “The work I allude to, Mr. *Lane*, is entitled, *Notable Nonentities of Norwood and its Neighbourhood.*” (*Here you will nod gravely, rather taken by the title.*) “It will be published very shortly, by subscription, Mr. *Lane*, in two handsome quarto volumes, got up in the most sumptuous style. It is a work which has been long wanted, and which, I venture to predict, will be very widely read. It is my ambition to make it a complete biographical compendium of every living celebrity of note residing at Norwood at the present date. It will be embellished with copious illustrations, printed by an entirely new process upon India and Japanese paper; everything—type, ink, paper, binding, will be of the best procurable; the publishers

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being determined to spare no expense in making it a book of reference superior to anything of the kind previously attempted!" (*As he pauses for breath, you will take occasion to observe, that no doubt such a work, as he contemplates, will be an excellent thing—but that, for your own part, you can dispense with any information respecting the Notabilities of Norwood, and, in short, that if he will excuse you—*)

"Pardon me, Mr. Lane," he interrupts, "you mistake my object. I should not dream of expecting you to *subscribe* to such a work. But, in my capacity of compiler, I naturally desire to leave nothing undone that care and research can effect to render the work complete—and it would be incomplete indeed, were it to include no reference to so distinguished a resident as yourself!" (*"Oh, pooh—nonsense!" You will say at this—but you will sit down again*) "Norwood is a singularly favoured locality. Sir; its charms have induced many of our foremost men to select it for their *rus in urbe*. Why, in this very road—May I ask, by the way, if you are acquainted with Alderman *mincing*? Alderman *mincing* has been good enough to furnish me with many interesting details of his personal career, a photo-gravured portrait of him will be included, with views of the interior and exterior of 'The Drudgeries,' and a bit from the back-garden." (*You do know mincing—and you cannot help inwardly wondering at the absurd vanity of the man—a mere nobody, away from the City!*) "Between ourselves," says your interviewer, candidly, having possibly observed your expression, "I am by no means sure that I shall feel warranted in allotting Alderman MINCING as much space as I fear he will consider himself entitled to. Alderman MINCING, though a highly respectable man, does *not* appeal to the popular imagination as others I could mention do—he is just a *little* commonplace!" (*"Shrewd follow, this!" you think to yourself—"Got MINCING's measure!"*) "But I should feel it an honour, indeed, if such a man as yourself, now, would give me all the personal information you think proper to make public, while, as a specimen of what Norwood can do in luxurious and artistic domestic fittings, this house, Sir, would be invaluable! I do trust that you will see your way to—" (*At first, you suggest that you must talk it over with your Wife—but you presently see that if MINCING and men of that calibre are to be in this, you cannot, for your own sake, hold aloof, and so your Visitor soon has his note-book out.*) "Any remarkable traits recorded of you as an infant, Mr. LANE? A strong aversion to porridge, and an antipathy to black-beetles—both of which you still retain? Thank you, very much. And you were educated? At Dulborough Grammar School? Just so! Never took to Latin, or learned Greek? Commercial aptitudes declaring themselves thus early—curious,

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indeed! Entered your father's office as clerk? Became a partner? Married your present lady—when? In 1860? Exactly!—and have offspring? Your subsequent life comparatively uneventful? That will do admirably—ininitely obliged to you, I am sure. It would be useless to ask you if you would care to have a copy of the work, when issued, forwarded to you—we can do it for you at the very nominal sum of two guineas, if paid in advance—a gratifying possession for your children after you have gone, Mr. LANE! I *may* put you down? Thank you. For *two* copies?" (*On second thoughts, you do order two copies; you can send one out to your married Sister in Australia—it will amuse her.*) "One, two, three, four guineas—*quite* correct, Mr. LANE, and you shall have an early opportunity of revising a proof, and we will send down a competent artist, in a day or two, to take the photographs. Quite an agreeable change in the weather, is it not? *Good day!*"

[Illustration: "You may have to wait."]

He is gone, leaving you to wait for the proof, and the photographer, and the appearance of that great work. *Notable Nonentities of Norwood*,—and it is not at all unlikely that you may have to wait a considerable time.

* * * * *

IAGO ON THE GREAT SERMON QUESTION.

Good name in Mayor or Parson, dear my public,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls.
Who steals my *sermon*, steals trash; 'tis something, nothing;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been mouthed by dozens;
But he who "splits" on me as plagiarist,
Robs me of that which is no good to him,
And leaves me poor—in credit.

* * * * *

"WHEREVER WE WANDER," &c.—A new book of advice for intending Travellers has recently been published, entitled, "*Where to Stay*." It is both ornamental and useful; but so much depends on ways and means, that, after careful consideration, *Mr. Punch*, when asked "*Where to Stay*," considers the safest answer will always be, "*At home*."

* * * * *

[Illustration: "CHUCKED!"]

["The Bookmakers are in consternation, the Chamber having yesterday (Feb. 28), by 330 Votes to 144, rejected a Bill legalising the *pari mutuel*, and the Government having pledged itself to enforce the law against gambling."—*Times Paris Correspondent*.]

The Bookie. "ALL RIGHT, MOSSOO, I'M OFF TO ENGLAND! THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE 'OME!"]

(EXTRACT OF LETTER FROM DICKY DIDDLEM, BOOKMAKER, PARIS, TO BOUNDING BOB, DITTO, NEWMARKET.)

"... Our game here appears to be as decidedly *hup* as the top of the Awful Tower! Regular mugs, these Mossoos, after all. Thought we *had* taught 'em a bit about *Ler Sport* by this time: but, bless yer, BOB, once a Pollyvoo, always a Pollyvoo! No Frenchy really hunderstands a 'Oss, or knows 'ow to make a Book!

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“Abolish Betting!!! Wot next, I wonder? Wot with County Councils, dunderheaded Deppyties, and Swells who do the Detective bizness in their own droring-rooms, pooty soon there won’t be a safe look in for a party as wants to do a nice little flutter—unless, of course, he’s a Stock-Exchange spekkylator, or a hinvestor in South American Mines. *Then* he can plunge, and hedge, and jockey the jugginses as much as he’s a mind to. Wonder how that bloomin’ French *Bourse* ’ud get along without a bit o’ the pitch-and-toss barney, as every man as *is* a man finds the werry salt of life. Yah! This here Moral game is a gettin’ played down too darned low for anythink. And wot’s it mean, arter all? Why, ‘No Naughtiness, except for the Nobs!’ That’s about the exact size of it, and it’s blazing beastly, BOB!

“Only one of the dashed Deppyties talked a mossel o’ sense, fur as *I* see. A certain MOSSOO DER KERJEGU, a Republican, too, bless his boko! said as ‘races were essential to ’orsebreeding, and that without betting there would be no races.’ O.K. you are, MOSSOO DER K.! And then they up and chuck hus Bookies! No bookies, no betting; no betting, no races; no racing, no ’osses; no ’osses, no nothink! That’s how it runs, BOB, or I’m a sossidge!

“But this here bloomin’ Republick is too rediklus for anythink. Look at the kiddish kick-up along o’ the visit of the Hempress! Why, if we ’ad that duffer, DEROULEDE, on Newmarket ’Eath, we should just duck him in a ’orsepond, like a copped Welsher. Here they washup him, or else knuckle under to him, like a skeery Coster’s missus when her old man’s on the mawl, and feels round arter her ribs with his bloomin’ high-lows. *That’s* yer high-polite French Artists and brave booky-banishin’ Dippyties! Yah!

“Owsomever, I suppose, BOB, I must clear out of this. MOSSOO CONSTANS, he said, ‘if the Bill were carried there would be an end to bookmakers.’ And it *was* carried, by 340 mugs against 144 right ’uns. And arter all me and my sort has done for Parry! It’s mean, that’s wot it is, BOB. P’raps they’ll chuck British *jockeys* next! Much good their *Grong Pree*, ancetrer, will be *then*, my boy. *Our* ’osses, *our* jockeys, *and* our bookies has bin the making of French Sport,—and werrv nice little pickings there’s bin out of it take it all round. Wot’ll *Ler Hig Life*, and Hart, and Leagues o’ Patriots, and miles o’ bullyvards, and COOK’s Tourists and Awful Towers do for Parry without *hus*, I wonder? We shall see! Ah, Madame *Iar Republick*, maybe you’ll be sorry, you and your bullyin’ jondarms, for chucking o’ me afore you’re through. As MAT MOPUS put it:—

It was all werry well to dissemble yer love,
But wy did yer kick me down-stairs?

Chucked it is, though, and I shall probably see yer next week, BOB. Thanks be, the Flat Season’s at ’and! Arter all, there’s no place like ’ome! No!—

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'Mid Boises and Bullyvards tho' we may roam,
Be it hever so foggy, there's no place *like* 'ome;
A smile from the Swells seems to 'allow sport there,
Wich, look where you will, isn't met with elsewhere.
'Ome, 'ome, Sweet, sweet 'ome,
Be it hever so fog-bound, there's no place like 'ome!

A hexile from Parry, I'm off o'er the main;
Ah! give me my native Newmarkit again;
The mugs, smiling sweetly, wot come at my bawl,
Give me these, and the "pieces," far dearer than all.
'Ome, 'ome,
Sweet, sweet 'ome,
With RAIKES[1], LOWTHER, CHAPLIN, there's no place like 'ome.

"Mean to sing *that* at our next 'Smoker,' BOB. But till then, Ta—ta!!"

[Footnote 1: Which gentleman declined to find out for Mr. SAMUEL SMITH, "what proportion betting messages bear to the other telegrams transmitted by the Post-office Department."]

* * * * *

DESDEMONA TO THE AUTHOR OF "DORIAN GRAY."

(*A PROPOS OF HIS PARAGRAPHIC PREFACE.*)

"These are old fond paradoxes, to make boys crow i' the Club corner. What miserable praise hast thou for him that's foul and foolish?"

* * * * *

SOMETHING IN A NAME.—A recent theatrical announcement informed us that a new comedy would be produced from the pen of a Mr. HENRY DAM. If successful, imagine the audience calling for the Author by name. If a triumph, the new dramatist will be known as "The big, big D."

* * * * *

BY A TIRED AND CYNICAL CRITIC OF CURRENT FICTION.

A "School for Novelists," they say, has risen. A School? What's really wanted is a Prison. Life-long confinement far from pen and ink *Might* cure the crowd of fictionists, I *think*. Or, if by Lessons you'd arrest the blight, Go teach the Novelist how *not* to write!

* * * * *

ATHLETICS.—It is said that the County Council are resolved to forbid the popular feats of raising heavy weights, upon the ground that it may lead to shoplifting.

* * * * *

WORKING AND PLAYING BEES.—*Lady B-ountiful* first, at the Garrick, and *Lady B-arter* at the Princess's.

* * * * *

[Illustration: OLD FRIENDS.

Big Ben. "OH, FLATTERY'S THE BANE OF FRIENDSHIP! JUST LOOK AT YOU AND ME, OLD MAN! WHY, I'VE ALWAYS TOLD YOU THE TRUTH ABOUT YOURSELF, HOWEVER DISAGREEABLE! IT'S A WAY I HAVE. AND YET WE'VE BEEN FAST FRIENDS FOR FORTY YEARS, AND I LIKE YOU BETTER THAN ANY FRIEND I POSSESS! INDEED, YOU'RE ABOUT THE ONLY FRIEND I'VE GOT LEFT!"

Little Dick (dreamily). "AH, BUT YOU MUST REMEMBER THAT I'VE NEVER TOLD YOU THE TRUTH BACK AGAIN!"]

* * * * *

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THE FIRST ACT—AND THE LAST.

(A DEPARTMENTAL TRAGI-COMEDY, IN ACTIVE REHEARSAL.)

ACT I.—*The Scene represents the Interior of a Military Instruction Room. Black Boards, on which are displayed advanced Problems and Calculations in the Higher Mathematics, and various Scientific Charts cover the Walls. Models of mechanical contrivances and machinery used in the construction of complicated Small Arms approved by the Authorities, are scattered about in every direction. TOMMY ATKINS is discovered, giving his best attention to the conclusion of a very lengthy but rather abstruse explanatory Lecture.*

*Military Instructor (who has been for an hour and a half explaining the intricate mechanism of the new Magazine Rifle, finally approaching the end of his subject). Well, as I have fully explained before, but may state once more, so as to firmly impress it on your memory, you will bear in mind that the cylindrical portion will be shortened in front, the end of the rib being provided with tooth underneath, and stud on top, both studs on rib to have undercut grooves, a small keeper-screw, and bolt-head for cover, being added, while the cocking-stud is enlarged. Then do not forget that jammed cases or bullets are removed by two ramrods, screwed together by the locking-bolt being omitted. I needn't again go over the twenty-four different screws, but, in ease of accident, it will be well to retain their various outside thread diameters in your memory, specially not forgetting that those of the Butt Trap Spring, the Dial Sight Pivot, and the Striker Keeper Screw, stand respectively at .1696, .1656, and .116 of an inch. Of course you will remember the seven pins, and that, if anything should go wrong with the Bolt Head Cover Pin, as you will practically have to take the whole rifle to pieces, you should be thoroughly familiar with the 197 different component items, which, properly adjusted one with the other, make up the whole weapon. I think I need not refer again to the "sighting," seeing that the Lewes system is abolished, and that the weapon is now sighted up to 3,500 yards, "dead on," no matter what the wind may be. With this remark, I have much pleasure in placing the rifle in your hands (*gives him one*), at the same time advising you, if called upon to use it in the heat of action, to be prepared with the knowledge I have endeavoured to impart to you to-day, and, above all things, to keep your head cool. I don't think I have anything more to add, ATKINS. I have made myself pretty clear?*

Tommy Atkins (with a grin). 'Ees, Sir!

Military Instructor. And there is nothing more you wish to ask me?

Tommy Atkins (still grinning). Noa, Sir!

Military Instructor. Ah! well then, good morning. I trust you will find it, what they assure me it is,—a most serviceable weapon.

Tommy Atkins (saluting). 'Ees, Sir!

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[Exit, still grinning as Act-Drop descends.]

ACT II.—*The Scene represents a Field of Battle (after the fight) in the immediate neighbourhood of London. TOMMY ATKINS and the Military Instructor discovered lying badly wounded amidst a heap of the slain. A European War having broken out suddenly, from which the Country could not escape, and the Fleet at the last moment, finding that it had only half its proper supply of guns, and that the very few of these which did not burst at the first shot had ammunition provided for them that was two sizes too large, the Country is invaded, while a Committee of Experts is still trying to settle on a suitable cartridge for the new Magazine Rifle. The result is, that after a couple of pitched battles, though in an outburst of popular fury, Mr. STANHOPE is lynched by the Mob to a lamp-post in Parliament Street, London capitulates, and the French Commander-in-Chief, breakfasts, waited on by the LORD MAYOR, in the Bank of England.*

Military Instructor (sitting up and rubbing his eyes). Dear me! we seem to have been beaten. That Rifle was no good, after all. *(Recognising him.)* Halloa, ATKINS!

Tommy Atkins (with a grin). 'Ees, Sir!

Military Instructor. You remember all I told you?

Tommy Atkins (still grinning). 'Ees, Sir!

Military Instructor. I'm afraid that wasn't such a serviceable weapon, after all!

Tommy Atkins (still grinning). Noa, Sir!

Military Instructor. Dear me! Well, we had better get out of this! By Jove! it looks like the last Act!

[Mutually assist each other to rise and quit the Battle-field, the Military Instructor threatening to write to the "Times," and TOMMY ATKINS still grinning as Curtain falls.]

* * * * *

[Illustration: Sylvanus. "FOXES ARE SCARCE IN MY COUNTRY; BUT WE MANAGE IT WITH A DRAG NOW AND THEN!"]

Urbanus. "OH—ER—YES. BUT HOW DO YOU GET IT OVER THE FENCES?"

* * * * *

UNDER A CIVIL COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.



["What possible chance would Col. X., Member for —, feel that he had of fair play if he walked into the Opposition side in a Division?"—*Evening Paper*.]

SCENE—*A Battle-field. Colonel X. discovered apparently dying in the hour of victory.*

Faithful Aide-de-Camp. The enemy run, Sir! We have beaten them off on every side!

Colonel (faintly). That is well! (*with a sigh*) and yet my heart is heavy within me! Believe me, SMITH, I cannot die easily.

F.A.-de-C. And yet the vacancy thus created would be found a stimulus to promotion! Have you thought of that, Sir?

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Col. X. I have not forgotten it, SMITH, and as a politician the idea is comforting. Ah, SMITH, would that I had always done my duty in the House of Commons! But no, with a view to obtaining this command, I voted against my convictions! I supported the Government in their proposal to tax perambulators! It was cruel, unmanly so to do, but I was weak and foolish! And now I cannot die easily! Would that I could live to repair the past.

Opposition Whip (suddenly springing up from behind a limber a la HAWKSHAW the Detective). It is *not* too late! Return with me to Westminster forthwith. The Third Reading is down for to-night! With a special train we shall be in time! You can yet record your vote!

Col. X. *(suddenly reviving).* Say you so? Then I *will* recover! I *will* do my duty!

[Exit, to vote against his Party, and to be put permanently on the shelf, from a military point of view!]

* * * * *

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD's paper on Japan, in *Scribner*, for March, is interesting and also amusing. The Japanese seemed to be a charming people; and the Japanese women delightful as wives; but then they can be divorced for being talkative.

A propos of Japan, to judge from one of our LIKA JOKO's capital illustrations of Hospital Nursing in *The English Illustrated Magazine*, the Matron's room must be "an illigant place, intoirely"; while as for amusement, if the picture of a nurse giving a patient a cup of ink by mistake for liquorice-water isn't a real good practical side-splitter, the Baron would like to be informed what is? Then we come upon a delightful little picture of "*The Pet of the Hospital*"; and so she ought to be, for a prettier pet than this nursing Sister it would be difficult to find. What becomes of her? Does she marry a "Sawbones," or run off with a patient? Anyhow, she must be a "great attraction," and if anything were to happen to the Baron, and he couldn't be removed to his own palatial residence, he would say, "Put me in a cab, drive me to the Furniss Hospital, and let me be in Pretty Pet's Ward."

The Baron has just been dipping into Mr. JUSTIN HUNTLY MCCARTHY's "Pages on Plays" in *The Gentleman's Magazine*. JUSTIN HUNTLY expresses his opinion that "*The Dancing Girl* will almost certainly be the play of the season; it will probably be the principal play of the year." "Almost certainly" and "probably" save the situation. The Baron backs *The Idler* against *The Dancing Girl* for a run. In the same Magazine Mr. ALBERT FLEMING has condensed into a short story, called *Sally*, material that would have served some authors for a three-volume novel.

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It is a pleasure for the Baron to be in perfect accord on any one point with the Author of *Essays in Little*, and in proportion to the number of the points so is the Baron's pleasure intensified. Most intending readers of these Essays, on taking up the book, would be less curious to ascertain what ANDREW LANG has to say about HOMER and the study of Greek, about THEODORE BE BANVILLE, THOMAS HAYNES BAYLEY, the Sagas, and even about KINGSLEY, than to read his opinions on DICKENS and THACKERAY, placing DICKENS first as being the more popular. The Baron recommends his friends, then, to read these Essays of ANDREW's, beginning with THACKERAY, then DICKENS; do not, on any account, omit the delightfully written and truly appreciative article on CHARLES LEVER; after which, go as you please, but finish with "*the last fashionable novel*," wherein our M.A., in his Merriest-Andrewest mood, treats us to an excellent parody.

The Baron has appointed an extra Reader, and this Extra-Ordinary Reader to the Baron has just entered upon the discharge of his duties by reading *Monte Carlo, and How to Do It*, by W.F. GOLDBERG, and G. CHAPLIN PIESSE (J.W. ARROWSMITH). He reports in the following terms to his loved Chief:—This book achieves the task of combining extraordinary vulgarity with the flattest and most insipid dulness—not a common dulness, but a dulness redolent of low slang and dirty tap-rooms. The authors seem to plume themselves on their marvellous success in reaching Monte Carlo, which, with their usual sprightly facetiousness, they call "Charley's Mount." They are good enough to tell such of the travelling public as may want to get there, that the train leaving Victoria at 8.40 A.M. reaches Dover at 10.35. Stupendous! These two greenhorns took their snack on board the steamer (Ugh!), instead of waiting until they reached Calais, where there is the best restaurant on any known line. Instead of going by the *Ceinture*, they drove across Paris. The greenhorns arrive at Monte Carlo, and then settle on their quarters. Anyone but an idiot would have settled all this, and much more, beforehand. One gentlemanly greenhorn, who wishes us to think that "*il connait son Paris*," talks of "suppers of Bignon's" (which must be some entirely new dish), and informs us that, "at the Hotel de l'Athenee, the staff esteem it rather a privilege, and a mark of their skill in language, to grin and snigger when sworn at in English." Oh, sweet and swearing British greenhorn! now I know why the French so greatly love our countrymen. But why, oh why do you imagine that you have discovered Monte Carlo? For the details of the journey, and the instructions to future explorers, are set out with a painful minuteness which not even STANLEY could rival. As for Monaco, dear, restful, old-fashioned, picturesque Monaco, whither the visitor climbs to escape from the glare and noise of Monte Carlo, the greenhorn dismisses it scornfully, as having "no interest."

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How much does this ten-per-center want? He “waggles along the Condamine;” he mixes with many who are “pebble-beached;” he speaks of his intimates as “Pa,” “The Coal-Shunter,” “Ballyhooly,” &c., and declares of the French soldier that “the short service forty-eight-day men don’t have a very unkyperdoodlum time of it.” There’s wit for you, there’s elegance! Then he becomes Jeromeky-jeromistically eloquent on the subject of fleas, throws in such lucid expressions as “chin music,” “gives him biff,” “his craft is thusly,” and, altogether, proves himself and his fellow-explorer to be a couple of the slangiest and most foolish greenhorns who ever put pen to any sort of paper. I can imagine the readers who enjoy their stuff. Dull, swaggering, blatant, gin-absorbing, red-faced Cockneys, who masquerade as sportsmen, and chatter oaths all day. “Ditto to you,” says the Baron to his Extra-Ordinary Reader, and backs his opinion with his signature,

THE BARON DE BOOK-WORMS.

* * * * *

MORE IBSENITY!

[Illustration]

Dear EDITOR,—Noticing that the author of *The Doll’s House* was to have another morning, or, to use an equally suitable epithet, mourning performance devoted to his works, I made up my mind, after bracing up my nerves, to attend it. The 23rd of February (the date of the proposed function) as the second Monday in Lent, seemed to me, too, distinctly appropriate. By attending the performance—IBSEN recommends self-execution—I sentenced myself to three hours and a half of boredom, tempered with disgust. I cannot help feeling that whatever my past may have been, the penance paid to wipe it out was excessive, and therefore rendered it unnecessary that I should attend a second performance announced for last week.

Rosmersholm is in four Acts and one Scene—a room in *Rosmer’s* House. Act I. *Rector Kroll*, who is the brother-in-law of *Pastor Rosmer*, calls upon the latter, to ask him to edit a paper in the Conservative interest. *Kroll* (who, by the way, is a married man) before seeing the widower of his dead sister, has a mild flirtation with *Rebecca West*, a female of a certain age, who has taken up her abode for some years in the Rector’s house. And here I may observe that the Rector’s housekeeper, *Madame Helseth*, presumably a highly respectable person, although she has excellent reasons, from the first, for believing that the relations between her Master and *Rebecca* are scarcely platonic, accepts the domestic arrangements of the Rosmer *menage* with hearty acquiescence, not to say enthusiasm. *Rosmer* interrupts the Rector’s *tete-a-tete* with the fascinating *Rebecca*, and declines the proffered editorship, because he is a

Radical, and an atheist. End of Act I.,—no action to speak of, but a good deal of wordy twaddle. In Act II. we learn that the late *Mrs. Rosmer* has committed suicide,

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because she was informed that the apostate Pastor could only save his villainy from exposure by giving immediately the position of wife to her friend *Rebecca*. She has had this tip on the most reliable authority,—it has been furnished by *Rebecca* herself. Then the Pastor asks *Rebecca* to marry him, but is refused, for no apparent reason, unless it be that she has tired of her guilty passion. In Act III. *Rebecca* admits to the widower and his brother-in-law that she has deceived the deceased, and prepares to decamp. In the final Act the apostate Pastor declares that he has been in love with *Rebecca* from the first, loves her now, but is not sure that she loves him. To set his mind at rest on this point, will she do him a small favour? Will she be so good as to jump into the mill-stream, and drown herself? With pleasure—and she takes a header! He explains that courtesy forbids him to keep a lady waiting, and follows her example! So both are drowned, and all ends happily!

And this is the plot! And what about the characters? *Rebecca* is merely a hysterical old maid, who would have been set right, in the time of the Tudors, with a sound ducking; and nowadays, had she consulted a fashionable physician, she would have been probably ordered a sea-voyage, and a diet free from stimulants. The Pastor is a feeble, fickle fool, who seemingly has had but one sensible idea in his life. He has believed his wife to be mad, and, considering that she married him, his faith in the matter rested upon evidence of an entirely convincing nature. The *Rector Kroll* is a prig and a bore of the first water. When he discovers *Rebecca*'s perfidy, he suggests that she may have inherited her proneness for treachery from her father—and, to her distressed astonishment, he gives the name of a gentleman, not hitherto recognised by her as a parent! The best line in the piece, to my mind—and it certainly “went with a roar”—is a question of the housekeeper—answered in the negative—“Have you ever seen the Pastor laugh?” Laugh! with such surroundings! Pretentious twaddle, that would be repulsively immoral were it less idiotic. And so dull!

As a theatre-goer for more than a quarter of a century, I dislike undue severity, and am consequently glad to find my opinion is shared by others. “SCRUTATOR,” the Dramatic Critic of *Truth*, wrote last week—“The few independent persons who have sat out a play by IBSEN, be it *The Doll's House*, or *The Pillars of Society*, or *Rosmersholm*, have said to themselves. ‘Put this stuff before the playgoing public, risk it at an evening theatre, remove your *claque*, exhaust your attendance of the socialist and the sexless, and then see where your IBSEN will be.’ I have never known an audience that cared to pay to be bored, and the over-vaunted *Rosmersholm* bored even the Ibsenites.” I only hope it did, for they deserve their martyrdom! I believe that you personally, my dear Editor, have never seen a dramatic performance of the “Master's” work. I wish I could say as much, and I shall be surprised if you do not appreciate the feeling, after you too have partaken of this truly Lenten fare. Yours sincerely,

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ONE WHO LIKES IBSEN—AT A DISTANCE.

* * * * *

STRIKING TIMES.

NEW VERSION OF AN OLD STREET BALLAD.

(BY A LABOURING ELECTOR.)

Cheer up, cheer up, you sons of toil, and listen to my song.
The times should much amuse you; you are up, and going strong.
The Working Men of England at length begin to see
That *their* parsnips for to butter now the Parties all agree.

Chorus.

*It's high time that the Working Men should have it their own way,
And their prospect of obtaining it grows brighter every day!*

This is the time for striking, lads; at least, it strikes me so.
Monopoly has had some knocks, and under it must go.
NORWOOD we licked; LIVESEY licked us; his was an artful plan;
But luck now turns. Ask JOHNNY BURNS, and also TOMMY MANN!

Chorus—It's high time, &c.

It isn't "Agitators" now, but Parties and M.P.'s,
Who swear we ought to have our way, and do as we darn please.
Upon my word it's proper fun! A man should love his neighbour;
Yet Whigs hate Tories, Tories Whigs; but oh! they *all* love *Labour*!

Chorus—It's high time, &c.

There's artful JOEY CHAMBERLAIN, he *looks* as hard as nails,
But when he wants to butter *us*, the Dorset never fails;
He lays it on so soft and slab, not to say thick and messy.
He *couldn't* flummerify us more were each of us a JESSE!

Chorus—It's high time, &c.

Then roystering RANDOM takes his turn; *his* treacle's pretty thick; *He* gives the Tories
the straight tip,—and don't they take it—quick? And now, by Jove, it's comical!—where
will the fashion end?— There's PARNELL ups and poses as the genuine Labourer's
Friend!

Chorus—It's high time, &c.

Comrades, it makes me chortle. The Election's drawing nigh,
And Eight Hours' Bills, or anything, they'll *promise* for to try.
They'll spout and start Commissions; but, O mighty Labouring Host,
Mind your eye, and keep it on them, or they'll have you all on toast!

Chorus.

*It's high time that the Working Men should have it their own way.
They'll strain their throats,—you mind your votes, and you may find it pay!*

* * * * *

WILDE FLOWERS.

Some other fellow, in the *P.M.G.*, has been beforehand with us in spotting "A Preface to *Dorian Gray*," by our OSCAR WILDE-r than ever, in this month's *Fortnightly*. *Dorian Gray* was published some considerable time ago, so it belongs to ancient history, and now, after this lapse of time, out comes the preface. And this "preface" occupies the better part, I

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use this expression in all courtesy, of two pages; which two pages represent a literary flowerbed, where rows of bright asterisks are planted between lines of brilliant aphorisms. The rule of the arrangement seems to be.—“when in doubt, plant asterisks.” *Sic itur ad astra*. The garden is open to all, let us cull; here one and there one. “*To reveal Art and conceal the Artist, is Art’s aim.*” Is there not in this the scent of “*Ars est celare artem*”? “Art” includes “the Artist,” of course. Then “*Puris omnia pura*” is to be found in two other full-blown aphorisms, if I mistake not. St. PAUL’s advice to TIMOTHY is engrafted on to the stalk of another aphorism. “Why lug in TIMOTHY?” Well, to “adapt” Scripture to one’s purpose is not to quote it. *Vade retro!* Do we not recognise something familiar in “*When Critics disagree the Artist is in accord with himself?*”

But after it is all done, and the little flower-show is over, then arises the despairing cry of our own cherished OSCAR. It is in the *Last of the Aphorisms*; after which, exhausted, he can only sign his name, fling away the goose-quill, and then sink back in his luxurious arm-chair exhausted with the mental efforts of years concentrated into the work of one short hour. Ah! “*La plupart des livres d’a present ont l’air d’avoir ete faits en un jour avec des livres lus de la veille.*” Ask Messrs. ROCHEFOUCAULD, CHAMFORT, RIVAROL, and JEAN MORLE. “*Ai! Ai! Papai! Papai!*” Phillaloo! Murther in Irish!” Let us be natural, or shut up shop. Yet there is a chance,—to be supernatural. The great Pan is dead, so there is a seat vacant among the gods, open to any aspirant for immortality. “*All Art is quite useless!*” cries OSCAR WILDE-ly. And has it come to this? “Is this the HEND?” Yes, this is his last word—for the present. Pan is dead! *Vive Pannikin!*

* * * * *

[Illustration: “CES AUTRES.”

(HEARD AT CHURCH-PARADE.)

Captain Bergamot. “ARE ANY OF YOUR BROTHERS IN THE SERVICE, MISS DE BULLION?”

Miss de Bullion. “YES; ONE IN THE GUARDS, AND—A—” (*with disgust*)—“THE REST IN THE COMMON ARMY, YOU KNOW.”]

* * * * *

“ADVANCE, AUSTRALIA!”

A SONG OF SYMPATHY.

(SOME WAY AFTER A CELEBRATED BOATING SONG.)

["Sir HENRY PARKES concluded by declaring that if the Colonies continued separate they must become hostile communities, and, in order that they might prevent that, it was for the whole people to join in creating one great Union Government."—REUTER.]

Mr. LEO BRITANNICUS, *an Old Blue, and a sympathetic on-looker, loquitur*:—

Capital boating weather!
Ay, and a favouring breeze!
Oars upon the feather!
Sun of the Southern Seas!
Brave boys! Swing together,
Your bodies between your knees!

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Pheugh! How old memory rushes
Over me!—Pulled indeed!
Though LEO seldom gushes,
And these be of LEO's breed,
The blood of an Old Blue flushes
At the Young Blues' power and speed!

Coach them, or patronise them?
Nay, I've no call for that.
To cheer them, not to advise them,
I'm on this path,—that's pat!
Affection admiringly eyes them:—
Once in a boat I sat!

Pulled my weight at a pinch,
For odds cared never a "cuss;"
No stern-chase caused me to flinch,
But—always detested fuss.
Strain the last ounce, and inch!
Races are won, boys, *thus*!

Look a most likely lot,
Lionlets lithe and young.
Pace? They will make it hot.
Few can have feathered and swung
Better. Tall talk is rot;
But, hang it! I *must* give tongue!

There's "Queensland" and "New South Wales,"
"Australia South" and "West,"
"Victoria,"—each one scales
Good weight, and with girth of chest;
"New Zealand's" zeal prevails,
He'll swing in time with the rest.

The hero born of Thetis
Had pluck enow. What then?
Each hero here, whose meat is
"Hard steak and harder hen,"
As stalwart and as fleet is
As the Greek first of men!

"Stroke" sets it long and steady;
That gladdens a true Old Blue.



There's nothing hot and heady
In sturdy Number Two.
There are coxens sharp and ready
In the Land of the Kangaroo!

Go it, lads! Swing together!
Push elders from their stools?
Pooh! / shall moult no feather;
Old boys are not always old fools.
Out upon jealous blether!
You've learnt in the best of schools.

I want to see you win, lads;
Old LEO loves his cubs.
If cynics growl or grin, lads,
We'll drive them back to their tubs.
Do you think my blood's so thin, lads,
I'd diet upon cold snubs?

The cynics think they're clever;
Beshrew their big bow-wow!
Boys, swing together ever,
Steady from stroke to bow;
One chain shall sever never—
The love-links round us now!

* * * * *

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Will someone gifted with the *nous*,
Explain the "why" of Spinning House?
Is it to strike with wholesome fear
The thoughtless Maiden whose career
Looks like a sinning one?
And thus the Judge her conscience wakes,
Since he, when passing sentence, takes
Good care to name a *Spinning* one?
Or is it that in such a habitation,
Herself a spinster more at home might feel;
And in a Spinning House find occupation,
Provided with a decent spinning-wheel;
But there,—no matter whence

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it came,
Or what's the meaning hidden in its name,
About its destination there's no fear;
And judging from a noted recent case,
The Spinning House will,—it is pretty clear,—
Itself be soon sent spinning into space.

* * * * *

“Is a husband worth having?” asks *Woman*. One reply would be, “Well, that depends on whose husband it is.” But, by the way, this view was not under consideration.

* * * * *

[Illustration: “ADVANCE, AUSTRALIA!”

BRITISH LION. “BRAVO, BOYS!—SWING TOGETHER!!”]

* * * * *

A WILD WELCOME.

February's reign of gloom
Out of mind and sight is,
Noonday darkness of the tomb,
Carbon and bronchitis.

Though the air is keen and chill,
Cloudy though the skies are,
Buoyant breaths our bosoms fill,
Free from smart our eyes are.

Bursting on the lengthening day
Bellows March the Viking,
“I have blown the fogs away;
Is this to your liking?”

Yes, thy voice o'er moor and mead
Sets the spirits bounding,
Like the Major's chartered steed
At the trumpet's sounding.



Welcome, roaring moon of dust,
Welcome, Spring's reviver;
On the race again we must
Risk the wonted fiver;

Fields are showing brighter green,
Early buds are shooting;
On the early youth is seen
The new season's suiting.

Long it is since sparrows shrill
With their chirping woke us;
There is one with busy bill
Worrying a crocus.

How they love the flow'r of spring—
Never can resist it;
What a graceful little thing—
Bother, I have miss'd it!

Now the wind along the plain
Comes with roar and clatter—
There, my hat is off again!
Let it go—no matter.

What am I, to say thee nay
In thy rudest phases?
Blow my Sunday hat away.
Blow my hat to blazes.

'Tis but little we can do
For thy bounty's measure—
Sacrifice a hat or two?
Forty hats, with pleasure.

* * * * *

KENSINGTON GARDENS SMALL TALK.

FROM THE RAILWAY IMPROVEMENT PHRASE-BOOK.

That Nursery-maid with the three children and the perambulator will certainly get run over by the train if she stands there gossiping with the man in the signal-box.

That is the nineteenth horse that has run away and thrown its rider this morning, frightened by the smoke of the passing engine.

So it is not, after all, a tornado that has swept across the Gardens, and rooted up all these trees, but merely the firm that has taken the contract for the making of the new line.

Yes, there is no doubt that this wooden fence, stretching right across the Gardens, relieved by overseers' moveable hatch-houses, puffing steam-cranes, and processions of mud-carts, rather interfere with the beauty and tranquillity of the place, but one must really bear in mind *that it is, after all, only to last for live years.*

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Ha! I thought so! There go the whole of the water-fowl under that luggage-train.

It is true, the Gardens are ruined, but one must not forget the inestimable advantage to the shareholders of the public being able to get from Paddington to Chelsea in a tunnel for twopence.

* * * * *

QUERY FOR NEXT ELECTION.—No man has a vote until he has attained his majority. How about some districts where they are nearly all Miners?

* * * * *

MEN WHO HAVE TAKEN ME IN—TO DINNER.

(BY A DINNER-BELLE.)

NO. II.—DON JUAN SENIOR.

To share with men the prandial gloom
Of union forced that fatal custom
Decrees to wither “youth and bloom,”
(The phrase is from *Sohrab and Rustum*)
I’ve suffered boredom to the full;
Professors dull—of Hindostani!
Dull wits, dull statesmen, dandies dull—
He wasn’t dull—was Don GIOVANNI.

A widower *feted* far and wide,
The jauntiest Rake who drinks the waters,
Smartest of “smart” vulgarians, pride
And terror of his decent daughters;
Old Don GIOVANNI, fraught with warm
Flirtations, free to fling his cash on
The dining Duchess, “mould of form!”
Antique, good-looking “glass of fashion.”

[Illustration]

He gossiped how the Viscount bets
(Some heiress he must really “pick up”),
How noble dames smoke cigarettes
And noble heels in ballets kick up.
How “H.R.H.”—*n’importe!* my friend
Experience shows me that the *laches*

Of such as air these letters tend
In the direction of their "H"s.

He chatted next of German Spas,
Of Continental, English "P.B.'s,"
And how our matchmaking Mammias
Are scared by Transatlantic Hebes,
How he with Royalties had graced
The latest function—genial patrons—
While Beauty, perched on barrows, raced
Before the virtuous British matrons.

And then his compliments began
To rain like drops of Frangipanni,
A most insinuating man
He was, this ancient DON GIOVANNI.
You felt, if you could half believe,
You'd but to word a whim to find it,
You quite forgot he owned a sleeve,
And several teeth to laugh behind it.

There may be kindness, lofty souls,
Great Brains, and whatso ne'er grows older,
Him the Material controls:
He shrugs a sleek, good-natured shoulder.
Time scatters dalliance, joy, and joke;
Your choicest vintage passes; e'en your
Supreme tobacco ends in smoke—
And so will poor DON JUAN, Senior.

* * * * *

MRS. MALAPROP is much puzzled at the announcement that it is proposed to
construct a new Tubercular Railway between England and France.

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* * * * *

SONGS BY A CYNIC.

LOVE.

What's Love, and all that Love can bring,
Youth's earliest illusion:
What tender words *she* used to sing,
And blush with sweet confusion.
How you would hang upon each word,
When under spells of Cupid;
When half she said was most absurd,
And all extremely stupid.

You loved her for her hair of gold.
Unwitting that she dyed it;
She vowed her love could ne'er grow cold,
Though Time had never tried it.
Your worship came to such a pass,
That, when you calmly view it,
You feel you were an utter ass,
Though then you never knew it.

What happened? Why, the usual thing:
While round her you would linger,
Her love was fragile as the ring
You bought to grace her finger.
She went off with another man,
And so you had to sever:
Thus women since the world began
Have done, and will do ever.

* * * * *

REVELATIONS OF A REVELLER.

I revelled at the Albert Hall, which last week was given up to a festival called "*The Coming Race*." I was there at the opening on Thursday, the 5th, when Princess BEATRICE, attended by her husband, Prince HENRY of Battenberg, declared the Bazaar open. A gay and festive scene. Here, there, and everywhere, Egyptian houses made of cardboard, containing stalls full of the most useful articles imaginable. On the dais, a number of sweet-faced ladies presenting purses (containing L3 3s. and upwards) to the Princess, who received them with an affability which won the hearts of



all beholders. On the floor of the building was a gaily-dressed throng, which included many a distinguished person. The revelry continued for three days, and was, I trust, the means of obtaining funds for a charity which, no doubt, is most deserving of support. And here, I may say, I revelled so much at the Albert Hall, that I had no desire to revel anywhere else.

* * * * *

FETE OR FATE?

OR, HOPPERS IN COVENT GARDEN, MARCH 4TH.

(BY MR. PUNCH'S OWN IMPRESSIONIST.)

Lights and bouquets—flush and flare—
Motley medley—splash affair—
Deft disguises—flute and fife—
Half the world without his wife—
Dominos, and masks, and faces—
Graces three—and three Disgraces.
Jacks-in-boxes—tambour-majors—
Janes in office—ancient stagers—
REYNOLDS' Duchess—Shepherdesses;
(Burlington) Arcadian tresses—
Primrose damsels,—clowns and follies,—
Organ-grinders—Flemish dollies—
Macaronis, rather muddy,
Of the central stud a study—
England's mashers, Afric's dark sons—
NATHAN's stock-in-trade and CLARKSON's—
All costumes not apt the back to,
Some of them inclined to crack too—
Martyred revellers in upper
Rooms, and singing for their supper.
Bright confusion—many a mad hunt—
Five o'clock—and wish I hadn't.

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SOMETHING MARVELLOUS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.—Revival of *Charles the First!!!* (at the Lyceum).

* * * * *

[Illustration: ALL-ROUND POLITICIANS. NO. 2.—ARTHUR GOLFOUR.]

* * * * *

MR. JONATHAN AND MISS CANADA.

“What are you doing, my pretty Maid?”

“I’m coming from voting, Sir,” she said.

“May I question you, my pretty Maid?”

“Yes, if you please, kind Sir,” she said.

“Who is your father, my pretty Maid?”

“JOHN BULL is my father, Sir,” she said.

“And what is your fortune, my pretty Maid?”

“My race is my fortune, Sir,” she said.

“Then I can’t annex you, my pretty Maid!”

“Nobody axed you, Sir!” she said.

* * * * *

GIVING A LODGER NOTICE TO QUIT.—*Mr. Punch*, Perpetual Universal Grand Past, Present, and Future Master, congratulates H.R.H., Grand Master of English Freemasons, on his plucky and straightforward action with regard to the G.M. of Otago and Southland, New Zealand, who, having contravened the resolution of Grand Lodge, March 6, 1878, may now exclaim, in bitterness of spirit, “O for a Lodge in some great Wilderness!” “for,” says in effect, H.R.H., G.M., as the once frequently quoted Somebody observed to a person whose name was *not* Dr. FERGUSON, “you don’t lodge here!”

* * * * *

RECIPROCITY.—“MACE,” in *The Illustrated London News*, says, sweepingly:—“No Under-Secretary ever has any opinion of his own.” Perhaps that is why the Public seldom has any opinion of an Under-Secretary!

[Illustration: AMERICAN “COPYRIGHT BILL” IN A NEW PART.

“DIE, VILLAIN!”

“The extinction of literary piracy in America has been decreed.”—*Times Leader*, March 5.]

* * * * *

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

House of Commons, Monday, March 2.—Navy Estimates on to-night. Millions of money to be voted, and only fourteen Members present. One, it is true, is HARCOURT; so perhaps the most accurate enumeration of the aggregate would be fifteen.

“*Que diable allait-il faire dans ce jolly-boat?*” GEORGE HAMILTON asks, pausing for a moment in his incessant occupation of tearing up strips of paper to glance across table at portly figure reclining on Front Opposition Bench. Several Admirals and Captains have spoken. Members generally have fled the burning deck. Even OLD MORALITY’s sense of duty to his Queen and Country cannot restrain his flight; but CASABIANCA HARCOURT still remains. A little provoking for the Old Salts descanting on Naval affairs to observe smile of pitying toleration with which he listens. Doesn’t say they’re all wrong, but smiles it. Even the voice of the Reverberating COLOMB falters when, glancing round the great gaps of empty Benches opposite, his eye falls on HARCOURT.

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"Sir, I repeat," he said, quite angrily, though no one had contradicted him, "that during the period that has elapsed since commencement of the present reign, the revenue of the United Kingdom has increased only one-and-a-half times, while that of the outlying Empire has multiplied five-fold."

General admission that HARCOURT is a master in nearly every department of human knowledge. Up to to-night fondly thought that at least he knew nothing about the Navy. But he does; knows more than Admiral FIELD, or Admiral MAYNE, or even Colonel GOURLEY. Presently rose and delivered slashing speech, laying low the Reverberating COLOMB as if he had been set up in the Place Vendome; reviewing the British Fleet in masterly style; nimbly running up the mainmast and sighting Jerusalem and Madagascar, to the absolute confounding of the First Lord of the Admiralty.

[Illustration: Something more than his full height.]

"Well," said KERANS, drawing himself up to something more than his full height, "that's the most remarkable exhibition I ever heard, even from HARCOURT. We've nothing like it on our side. HOWORTH knows a thing or two, and HANBURY isn't lacking in accomplishment; but for versatility, for profundity of knowledge, for readiness of grasp, whether the object be a lawyer's brief, a Chancellor of the Exchequer's ledger, the hilt of a sword, or the tiller of a ship, give me HARCOURT."

Business done.—Committee on the Navy Estimates.

Tuesday.—WOLMER asked OLD MORALITY what about the Fog? Couldn't something be done to lighten it, say by appointment of Royal Commission? OLD MORALITY beamed across House upon his young friend with expression of almost paternal solicitude. WOLMER is Whip of the allied force. What did he mean by suddenly springing this question on the First Lord of the Treasury? Was there more in it than met the eye? Had it something to do, however obscurely, with the maintenance of the Union?

CHAMBERLAIN sat on the Front Bench opposite, staring straight into space with Sphinx-like countenance. HARTINGTON, with hat cunningly tipped over eyes, hid what secret may have lain far in their pellucid depths. HENRY JAMES became suddenly absorbed in the brown gaiters he has recently added to the graces of his personal appearance, in pathetic admission that the natural charms of youth are at length fading.

Nothing to be gained by the inspection. If the cause of the Union really was at stake, the springs of motive were hidden behind the smiling countenance of the Machiavellian WOLMER. The only thing to do, and it is quite foreign to the habits of OLD MORALITY, was to meet guile with guile. WOLMER's question, plain enough as it appeared in print on the prosaic Orders, was, "Will Her Majesty's Ministers consider the advisability of

appointing a Royal Commission to examine and report how far the evil of Fog is one that may be mitigated by legislation?"

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“Sir,” said OLD MORALITY, rising to the occasion, “I have to assure my Noble Friend that Her Majesty’s Government are, in common with other inhabitants of the Metropolis, extremely sensible of the serious injury, disturbance, and hardship inflicted by the increasing prevalence of fog. What, it may be asked, is the cause of the London fog? These fogs, which occur generally in the winter time, are occasioned thus: some current of air, being suddenly cooled, descends into the warm streets, forcing back the smoke in a mass towards the earth. But, my Noble Friend might ask, why are there not fogs every night? I will tell him, for this is a matter in which Her Majesty’s Government have nothing to hide, or, I may add, to conceal. Our wish is to meet the convenience of Hon. Gentlemen in whatever part of the House they sit. Fogs—this I have no hesitation in stating—do not supervene without intermission on successive nights, because the air will always hold in solution a certain quantity of vapour which varies according to its temperature, and when the air is not saturated, it may be cooled without parting with its vapour. Yes, I know. My Right Hon. Friend, the Member for West Birmingham, with his usual acumen—which I am sure we all recognise—asks me, In what circumstances do fogs occur at night? I am much obliged to him for reminding me of the point. Fogs happen at night, when the air has been saturated with vapour during the day. When this is the case, it deposits some of its superabundant moisture in the form known in rural districts—as my Hon. Friend, the Member for the Bordesley Division, is well aware—as dew. In the Metropolis it is more familiar as fog. This process of deposition commences as soon as the capacity of the air for holding vapour is lessened by the coldness of advancing night. I think I have now answered the question of my Noble Friend fully, and, I trust, frankly. He will, I am sure, upon consideration, see that this is not a matter with which a Royal Commission could be expected successfully to cope, and, therefore, I may add, Her Majesty’s Government do not, after full consideration of their duty to the QUEEN and Country, think it desirable to adopt the suggestion thrown out by my Noble Friend.”

[Illustration: Feeling his Way through the Fog.]

BRAMSTON BEACH’s face during this subtle discourse a study; remained very quiet for rest of sitting; told me at ten minutes to eleven he thought he was beginning to grasp OLD MORALITY’s meaning. “Yes,” he added, with more cheerfulness, “I’m feeling my way through the fog.”

Business done.—STANSFELD’s Franchise Resolution negatived by 291 Votes against 189.

Thursday.—In Lords to-night, three white figures fluttered down gently on to red Benches, like virgin flakes of snow. But, unlike snow, they didn’t melt. On close examination, turned out to be three new Bishops; two of them old friends, with new titles.

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“Like *Bottom*, translated,” BRAMWELL growls.

Dr. MAGEE, walking out Bishop of Peterborough, comes back Archbishop of York. The ceremony of their installation not nearly so comic as that of ordinary Peers of Parliament. Garter King-at-Arms does not appear; nor Black Rod; nor is there any game of Follow-my-leader round the Benches.

“No, no,” said the MARKISS, who Mr. G. quite unjustly says has no strain of reverence in his disposition, “that would never do. Must be careful with our Bishops.”

[Illustration: The Inflammable Liquor Bill.]

So the three new-comers, having paid their respects to the LORD-CHANCELLOR, straightway took their seats on the Episcopal Bench, folded their hands over their surplined knees, and lent an added air of peace and purity to the precincts.

DENMAN bustling about, weighed down with cares of State. Had promised to bring into Lords ATKINSON's Muffin-Bell Bill, limiting duration of Speeches. But Bill stuck in the Commons, whilst ATKINSON turned his attention to his Dowagers Bill.

“ATKINSON's a good fellow,” said DENMAN. “Have sometimes thought an alliance between him and me, a sort of coalition between two estates of the realm, might work great things. But I'm beginning to lose confidence in him. At certain periods of the lunar month he's too comprehensive in his legislative ambition. Why wasn't he content with his Muffin-Bell Bill? Why drag in the Dowager? These Dowagers, dear TOBY, have, if I may say so—using the phrase strictly in Parliamentary sense—got their arms round the neck of my friend ATKINSON, and will pull him down. It's a pity, for I think, between us, we could have put things straight generally.”

Business done.—Navy Estimates in Commons.

Friday.—PHILIPPE EGALITE very rarely troubles House with ordered speech. A good deal on his mind looking after JACOBY, and keeping the Party straight. But his silence doesn't arise from incapacity to speak. This shown to-night in his speech on Railway Rates and Charges. Full of good matter, admirably delivered. After this, Dr. CLARK proposed to discuss Home Rule; but House didn't seem to care about it particularly. So at Half-past Eight was Counted Out. This was the chief *Business done*.

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THE FINE YOUNG GERMAN EMPEROR.

(A NEW SONG TO AN OLD TUNE.)

I'll sing to you a brand new song, made by a modern pate,
Of a fine young German Emperor, an Oracle of State,
Who kept up his autocracy at the bountiful old rate,
With the aid of Socialism for the poor men at his gate;
 This fine young German Emperor, all of the modern time.

His ancestors had "kept their fingers on the pulse of time"
(He said), and he'd do ditto in a fashion more sublime;
For, as BACON said of Nature, he who'd rule her must obey.
And that with modern "tendency," is the new imperial way,
 Of this fine young German Emperor, &c.

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He'd "mastered the new Spirit," which (how kind!) "he'd not oppose."
Social reform or Education *he'd* not treat as foes,
But keep step with the "Tendencies" which else might trip his toes,
And thus he'd "head the movement," and would lead it (by the nose?),
This fine young German Emperor, &c.

Now surely this is better far than all the old parade
Of tyranny in mufti, and of greed in masquerade;
And of this young German Emperor, whatever may be said,
Or of his new vagaries, you'll allow *he knows his trade*,
Does this fine young German Emperor, &c.

There were some who did not like it,—there are always such, one knows,
Who Ancient Order patronise, and Modern Style oppose.
Particularly one Old Man, who plainly did not see
Laying down his long-held power, and submitting tranquilly
To this fine young German Emperor, &c.

He was no CINCINNATUS, and he did not love the plough,
So he talked, inspired the Papers, and, in fact, roused lots of row.
For this man of Blood and Iron, when thus laid upon the shelf,
Found that long control of others did *not* mean control of self,
Or this fine young German Emperor, &c.

Then this fine young German Emperor, who aims to lead the dance,
Has a very trying *vis-a-vis*, that fractious dame, *La France*,
To keep step with that lady, without treading on her train,
Would tax Terpsichore herself; *he* finds the effort vain;
Does this fine young German Emperor, &c.

So this fine young German Emperor has got a stiffish task,
That all his strength will occupy, and all his tact will task.
Let us wish him patriot wisdom, *and* respect for Elder Fame,
And then he'll give his country peace, and leave a noble name,
This fine young German Emperor, all of the modern time!

* * * * *

A ROUGH CROSSING.

That military-looking gentleman, with his arm in a sling, and his head covered with bandages, has, I suppose, just returned from fighting the Dacoits in Upper Burmah?

I certainly *am* surprised when you inform me that he has only tried to cross a London street in a fog.

Do you really mean to say that the vehicle that just thundered past at twenty miles an hour, in the mist, was *not* a fire-engine, but only a covered Van?

Yes, I believe it *is* a fact that special beds in all the Hospitals are now reserved for Van-victims.

Of course it is difficult for a man in the Van to look to the Rear; still he need not swoop down on pedestrians quite so much like a highwayman, saying, "Your collar-bone or your life!"

If things go on as they are now doing, every covered Van will have to carry its own Surgeon and ambulance about with it.

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What is that crowd for, and why is somebody shouting angrily? Oh, I suppose the old gentleman, who has been run over by the Coal-waggon and is lying bleeding on the asphalte, is remonstrating with the driver?

What? Can it really be the case that the driver is abusing the old gentleman for his stupidity in getting in his way?

I *have* heard that the Insurance Companies now insert in their policies a condition forbidding the crossing of any street in London, except under police escort.

And, finally, as nearly six thousand persons were run down in the streets of the Capital last year, is it not almost time that something were done to check the Van Mazeppa-Juggernaut in his wild career?

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