

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 101, August 29, 1891 eBook

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 101, August 29, 1891

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STORICULES.

I.—*The suicide-advertisement.*

[Illustration]

As you stood before the automatic machine on the station platform, making an imbecile choice between a packet of gooseberry nougat and a slab of the gum caramel, you could not help seeing on the level of your eye this notice:—“*Blacking-cream. Ask for HIGLINSON’S, and take no other.*”

Similar announcements met you on every hoarding, in almost every paper and magazine, on every omnibus. Neat little packets of HIGLINSON’s Blacking-cream were dropped through your letter-box, with a printed request that you would honour Mr. HIGLINSON by trying it. Leaflets were handed you in the street to tell you what public analysts said about it, and in what great hotels it was the only blacking used. Importunity pays. Sooner or later you bought HIGLINSON’s Blacking-cream. You then found out that it was just about as good as any other, and went on buying it.

In one way this was very good for Mr. HIGLINSON, because he became very rich; in other ways it was not so good for him. For a long time he had nothing to do with public life; the public never thought about his existence; to the public he was not a man at all—he was only part of the name of the stuff they used for their boots. If he had introduced himself to a stranger, giving the name of HIGLINSON, it is probable that the stranger would have remarked jocularly, “No relation to the Blacking-cream, I presume?” HIGLINSON knew this, and it pained him deeply, for he was a sensitive man.

Because he was sensitive and felt things so much, he wrote a volume of very melancholy verses. He was unmarried and lonely, and he wanted to lead a high life. He said as much in his verses. But what comes well from Sir *Galahad* comes ill from the proprietor of a Blacking-cream; and—from idiotic notions about pluck and honesty—he had put his own name to his book. Unfortunately, those who feel much are not always those who can express much; and HIGLINSON could not express anything. So critics with a light mind had a very fine time with these verses. They quoted them, with the prefatory remark:—“The cream of the collection—perhaps we might say the Blacking-cream of the collection—is the following,” and they wound up their criticism with saying that the book must have been simply published as an advertisement. Mr. HIGLINSON could hardly have been mad enough to have printed such stuff from any other motive.

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Of course HIGLINSON should have changed his name, and should have married. But the idiotic notions about pluck prevented him from changing his name; and he would not marry a woman who accepted him from only mercenary motives. He was so unattractive that he did not think it possible a woman would marry him for any other reason. However, he could not always be superintending the manufacture of Blacking-cream; and it was obvious to him that he could publish no more verses. So he devoted himself to philanthropy in a quiet and unostentatious way. He attempted the reclamation of street-arabs. He worked among them. He spent vast sums on providing education, training, and decent pleasures for them. A man who wrote for *The Scalpel* found him out at last. Next day there was a pretty little paragraph in *The Scalpel*, showing Mr. HIGLINSON up, and suggesting that this was a clever attempt to get the London shoe-blacks to use HIGLINSON's Blacking-cream. The Blacking-cream, by the way, had never been advertised in *The Scalpel*.

HIGLINSON was furious. He spent a little money in finding out who had written the paragraph. Then he walked up to the writer in a public street, with raised walking-stick. "Now, Sir," he said, "you shall have the thrashing that you deserve."

[Illustration]

But it happened that the writer was physically superior to HIGLINSON; so it was the writer who did the thrashing, and HIGLINSON who took it. Next day, *The Scalpel* amused itself with HIGLINSON to the extent of half a column. The notice was headed:

"Mr. HIGLINSON advertises himself again."

Other newspapers also amused themselves, and HIGLINSON became notorious. The Blacking-cream sold better than ever, and brought him enormous profits. But if he attempted to spend those profits on any object, good or bad, it was always insisted that he was simply doing it for advertisement. The public became interested in HIGLINSON; and untrue stories about his private life appeared freely in personal columns. He was rich enough now to have relinquished his business, but those idiotic notions about pluck prevented him from doing this. He meant to go through with it, and to make the public believe in him just as much as they believed in the Blacking-cream. He found about this time someone who did believe in him; he began to change his views about marriage; he was to some extent consoled.

He was passing over the bridge one night, and had just bought an evening paper. His own name caught his eye. It was the usual paragraph, not more hateful to him than others that had appeared, as far as he himself was concerned; but her name was in it as well, and he imagined to himself just how she would feel when she read it. He walked on a few paces, and then his pluck all vanished suddenly, as if it had been

blown away into space, and it did not seem to be worth while to stop in such a world any longer.

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The jury returned the usual verdict; but *The Scalpel* did not hesitate to hint that this suicide had simply been intended as an advertisement, and that HIGLINSON had always supposed that his rescue would be a certainty.

He might have saved himself all this, of course, by a few full-page advertisements in *The Scalpel*. But then he had those idiotic notions about pluck, and he was reluctant to bribe his enemies. It is a very dangerous thing to have notions about anything.

* * * * *

Wanted, A word-slayer.

Fin de Siecle! Ah, that phrase, though taste spurn it, I
Fear, threatens staying with us to eternity.
Who *will* deliver
Our nerves, all a-quiver,
From that pest-term, and its fellow “modernity”?

* * * * *

[Illustration: *At the door; or, paterfamilias and the young spark.*

Electric Light. “What, won’t you let me in—A dear little chap like me?”

Householder. “Ah! You’re A little too dear for me—at present.”]

* * * * *

At the door; or, paterfamilias and the young spark.

(AN ELECTRICAL ECLOGUE.)

[“The cost is still heavy, no doubt, and the electric light still stands in the category of luxuries which are almost beyond the reach of average middle-class incomes.”—*The “Times” on the growth of Electric Lighting in London.*]

ELECTRIC SPRITE.

Old boy, let me in! Come, now, don’t you be stupid!
Why stand at your door in that dubious way?
Like the classical girl who was called on by Cupid,
You seem half alarmed at the thought of my stay.
With meanings of mischief *my* mind is not laden;
Be sure, my dear friend, that *I* shall not sell *you*,
As the artful young archer-god did the poor maiden,



Who let him in only his visit to rue.
I hope you've not listened to enemies' strictures,
They've warned you, perhaps, against letting me pass,
/ shan't soil your ceiling, / shan't spoil your pictures,
Or make nasty smells like that dirty imp, Gas!
You're prejudiced clearly, and that is a pity,
Why, bless you, I'm spreading all over the place!
My spark is pervading the whole of the City;
The dingy old Gas-flame must soon hide its face.
I'm brilliant, and clean, and delightfully larky;
Just look at my glow and examine my arc!
Fwizz! How's *that* for high, and for vivid and sparky!

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I obviate dirt, and I dissipate dark.
You just let me in; the result you'll be charmed at.
Objections, Old Boy, are all fiddle-de-dee.
Come now! I'm sure you cannot be alarmed at
A dear little chap like me!

PATERFAMILIAS.

A dear little chap! Very true; but I'm thinking
That you're just a little *too* "dear" for me—yet!
Ah, yes! it's no use to stand smiling and winking;
I like the bright ways of you, youngster,—you bet!
You're white as the moon, and as spry as a rocket;
No doubt all you say in self-praise is quite true,
But you see, boy, I *must* keep an eye to my pocket!
The Renters and Raters so put on the screw,
That a "middle-class income" won't stand much more squeezing,
And Forty or Fifty Pounds more in the year.
For *your* bright companionship, albeit pleasing,
Would come pretty stiff, my boy. *That* is my fear.
Just cheapen yourself, in supply and in fitting,
To something that fits with my limited "screw,"
And you will not find me shrink long from admitting
A dear little chap like you!

* * * * *

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

[Illustration]

The Baron's Assistant Reader reports as follows to his chief—If you want a really refreshing book, a book whose piquant savour and quaint originality of style are good for jaded brains, buy and read *In a Canadian Canoe* by BARRY PAIN, the sixth volume of the Whitefriars Library of Wit and Humour (HENRY & Co.). Most of the stories and, I think, the best that go to make up this delightful volume have already appeared in *The Granta*, a Cambridge magazine, which London papers are accustomed to speak of as "our sprightly contemporary." They now seek and are sure to obtain a wider public and a more extended fame. There is in these stories a curious mixture of humour, insight and pathos, with here and there a dash of grimness and a sprinkling of that charming

irrelevancy which is of the essence of true humour. Occasionally Mr. BARRY PAIN wings a shaft against the comfortably brutal doctrines of the average and orthodox householder, male or female. But on these occasions he uses the classical fables and the pagan deities as his bow, and the twang of his shot cannot offend those who play the part of target and are pierced. Read the four stories from the "Entertainments of Kapnides" in the "Canadian Canoe" series, or, "An Hour of Death," "The Last Straw," and "Number One Hundred and Three" in "The Nine Muses Minus One," and you will see at once what I mean. Then for run-away, topsy-turvy wit I think I would back "The Story of the Tin Heart" and "The Camel who never got Started," against most stories I know. Mr. BARRY PAIN's stories sometimes make me feel as if I had got hold of the key-handle of things which have hitherto been puzzles to me. I turn it, open the door ever so little to peep inside, and before I have taken a

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good square look, Mr. BARRY PAIN slams the door in my face, and I think I can hear him laughing on the other side at the bruise on my forehead. That's not kind treatment, but it promotes curiosity. As for "The Celestial Grocery," I can only say of it that it is in its way a masterpiece. Mr. PAIN sometimes gives way to a touch or two of sentiment, but he abstains from sloppiness. His book is not only witty and humorous but fresh and original in style. It is admirably written. His prose is good,—which is moderate praise, striking a balance between the *pros* and *cons* of criticism. *Prosit!* To all holiday-makers who like quaintness and fun touched with pathos and refinement, I say again, buy and read *In a Canadian Canoe*.

BARON DE BOOK-WORMS.

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE HEIGHT OF FASTIDIOUSNESS.

Elder Brother. "HULLO, FRANK! HOW IS IT YOU'RE NOT IN MOURNING FOR POOR AUNT GRACE?"

Frank. "AH—WELL—FACT IS, I TRIED ON SIXTEEN OR SEVENTEEN HAT-BANDS, AND COULDN'T GET ONE TO SUIT ME!"

* * * * *

"PUGS" AND "MUGS."

(A QUOTATION WITH A COMMENT.)

"The faithful study of the fistic art
From mawkish softness guards the British heart."
The study of the betting British curse
From swift depletion guards the British purse!

* * * * *

THE TRAVELLING COMPANIONS.

NO. IV.

SCENE—*The Wiertz Museum at Brussels, a large and well-lighted gallery containing the works of the celebrated Belgian, which are reducing a limited number of spectators to the usual degree of stupefaction. Enter CULCHARD, who seats himself on a central ottoman.*



Culchard (to himself). If PODBURY won't come down to breakfast at a decent hour, he can't complain if I—I wonder if he heard Miss TROTTER say she was thinking of coming here this morning. Somehow, I *should* like that girl to have a more correct comprehension of my character. I don't so much mind her thinking me fastidious and exclusive. I daresay I *am*—but I *do* object to being made out a hopeless melancholiac! (*He looks round the walls.*) So these are WIERTZ's masterpieces, eh? h'm. Strenuous, vigorous,—a trifle crude, perhaps. Didn't he refuse all offers for his pictures during his lifetime? Hardly think he could have been overwhelmed with applications for the one opposite. (*He regards an enormous canvas, representing a brawny and gigantic Achilles perforating a brown Trojan with a small mast.*) Not a dining-room picture. Still, I like his independence—work up rather well in a sonnet. Let me see. (*He takes out note-book and scribbles.*) "He scorned to ply his sombre brush for hire." Now if I read that to PODBURY, he'd pretend to think I was treating of a Shoe-black on strike! PODBURY is utterly deficient in reverence.

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[Illustration: "I presume, though, he slept bad, nights."]

[*Close by is a party of three Tourists—a Father and Mother, and a Daughter; who is reading to them aloud from the somewhat effusive Official Catalogue; the Education of all three appears to have been elementary.*

The Daughter (spelling out the words laboriously). "I could not 'elp fancying this was the artist's por-portrait? portent? no, *protest* against des-des (*recklessly*) despoticism, and tyranny, but I see it is only—Por-Porliffymus fasting upon the companions of Ulyces."

Her Male Parent. Do it tell yer what that there big arm and leg be a' doin' of in the middle of 'em?

Daughter (stolidly). Don't you be in a nurry, Father (*continuing*) "in the midst of some colonial? *That* ain't it—*colossal* animiles fanatically—fan-tasty-cally—" why, this catalogue is 'alf foreign!

Female P. Never mind, say Peterborough at the 'ard words—we shan't be none the wiser!

Daughter. "The sime-boalic ram the 'ero is to Peterborough and leave 'is Peterborough grotter—"

Male P. That'll do—read what it says about the next one.

Daughter (reading). "The Forge of Vulkin. Words are useless 'ere. Before sech a picture one can but look, and think, and enjoy it."

Both Parents (impressed). Lor!

[*They smack their lips reverently; Miss TROTTER enters the Gallery.*

Culch. (rising and going to meet her). Good morning, Miss TROTTER. We—ah—meet again.

Miss T. That's an undeniable fact. I've left Poppa outside. Poppa restricts himself to exteriors wherever he can—says he doesn't seem to mix up his impressions so much that way. But you're alone, too. Where've you hitched your friend up?

Culch. My friend did not rise sufficiently early to accompany me. And, by the way, Miss TROTTER, I should like to take this opportunity of disabusing your mind of the—er—totally false impression—



Miss T. Oh, *that's* all right. I told him he needn't try to give me away, for I could see you weren't *that* kind of man!

Culch. (gratefully). Your instinct was correct—perfectly correct. When you say “that kind of man,” I presume you refer to the description my—er—friend considered it humorous to give of me as an unsociable hypochondriac?

Miss T. Well, no; he didn't say just that. He represented you as one of the fonniest persons alive; said you told stories which tickled folks to death almost.

Culch. (annoyed). Really, this is *most* unpardonable of Mr. PODBURY! To have such odious calumnies circulated about one behind one's back is simply too—I do *not* aspire to—ah—to tickle folks to death!

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Miss T. (soothingly). Well, I guess there's no harm done. I didn't feel like being in any imminent danger of perishing that way in your society. You're real high-toned and ever so improving, and that's better than tickling; every time. And I want you to show me round this collection and give me a few notions. Seems to me there was considerable sand in WIERTZ; sort of spread himself around a good deal, didn't he? I presume, though, he slept bad, nights.

(She makes the tour of the Gallery, accompanied by CULCHARD, who admires her, against his better judgment, more and more.) ... I declare if that isn't your friend Mr. PODBURY just come in! I believe I'll have to give you up to him.

Culch. (eagerly). I beg you will not think it necessary. He—he has a guide already. *He* does not require my services. And, to be plain, my poor friend—though, an excellent fellow according to his—ah—lights—is a companion whose society occasionally amounts to a positive infliction.

Miss T. Well, I find him too chinny myself, times. Likely he won't notice us if we don't seem to be aware of him.

[They continue to inspect the canvases.]

A Belgian Guide (who has made an easy capture of PODBURY at the Hotel entrance). Hier now is a shdrainch beecture. "De toughts and veesions of a saivered haid." Fairsst meenut afder degapitation; de zagonde; de tirt. Hier de haid tink dey vant to poot him in a goffin. Dere are *two* haid—von goes op, de udder down. Haf you got de two? Nod yet? No?

Podbury (shaking his head sagaciously). Oh, ah, yes. Capital! Rum subject, though.

Guide. Yais, vary magnifique, vary grandt, and—and rom also! Dees von rebresents Napoleon in hail. De modders show him de laigs and ahums of dair sons keeled in de vars, and invide him to drink a cop of bloodt.

Podb. Ha, cheery picture that!

Guide. Cheery, oh, yais! Now com and beep troo dis 'ole. (*PODBURY obeys with docility.*) You see? A Mad Voman cooking her shildt in a gettle. Hier again, dey haf puried a man viz de golera pefore he is daid, he dries to purst de goffin, you see only de handt shdicking oudt.

Podb. The old Johnny seems full of pretty fancies. (*He looks through another peephole.*) Girl looking at skeleton. Any other domestic subjects on view? (*He suddenly sees Miss TROTTER and CULCHARD with their backs to him.*) Hal—lo, this *is* luck! I must go to the rescue, or that beggar CULCHARD will bore her to death in no time. (*To Guide.*) Here, hold on a minute. (*Crosses to CULCHARD, followed by Guide.*) How d'ye do,

Miss TROTTER? Doing the Wild Wiertz Show, I see. Ah, CULCHARD, why didn't you tell me you were going—might have gone together. I say, I've got a guide here.

Culch. (drily). So we perceive—a very sensible plan, no doubt, in some cases, my dear fellow.

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Podb. (to Miss T.). Do come and listen to him, most intelligent chap—great fun. Mr. CULCHARD is above that sort of thing, I dare say.

Guide. Your vriendts laiike to choin, yais? Same for tree as for von. I exblain all de beecture.

Miss T. You're vurry obliging, Mr. PODBURY, but your friend is explaining it all just splendidly.

Podb. (piqued). Perhaps I had better dismiss my chap, and take on CULCHARD, too?

Miss T. No, I'd just hate to have you do that. Keep on going round. You mustn't mind us, indeed!

Podb. Oh, if you'd rather! (*Gloomily, to Guide.*) They can do without *us*. Just show me something more in the blood-and-thunder line—no, at the other end of the room. [*They withdraw.*]

Guide. Hier is von dat is vary amusant. You know de schtory of de Tree Vishes, eh?

Podb. Macbeth, eh? oh, I see—*Wishes!* No, what was that?

Guide. I dell it you. (*He tells it; PODBURY falls into gloomy abstraction.*) ... And inschdantly she vind a grade pig soasage at de end of her noase. So de ole voman—

Podb. (wearily). Oh, I've heard all *that*. What's this one about?

Guide. Dis is galled "De lasht Gannon." You see de vigure of Ceevilization flodderin op viz de vings, vile Brogress preaks asonder de lasht gon, and in a gorner a Genius purns de vrontier bost.

Podb. (captiously). What's he doing *that* for?

Guide. I tont know. I subbose begause dey are bosts, or (*dubiously*) begause he is a Genius.

Culch. (touching PODBURY's arm as he goes out). Oh—er—PODBURY, I'm off. Going to lunch somewhere with the—ah—TROTTERS. See you at *table d'hote* this evening, I suppose? Good-bye.

Podb. (savagely). Oh, ta-ta! (*To himself.*) And that's the fellow who said he wanted to keep out of making friends! How the dickens am I going to get through the time by myself? (*To Guide.*) Here, that's enough for one day. When I want you again, I'll let you know.

[He dismisses him, and stands forlornly in the Gallery, while the Imperfectly Educated Daughter goes on spelling out the Catalogue for her Parents' edification.

* * * * *

A STORY—OUT OF SEASON.

[Illustration]

So she's married to *him*! Whilst I travelled and wandered
Far away, for the lack of aught better to do;
Whilst my time and my money I recklessly squandered
In a hunt for big game—she was doing it too!
And I am not surprised he has fallen a prey to
The graces and wiles of a maiden so fair;
I must take a back seat as I humbly give way to
The Earl and the Countess of Hanover Square.

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What a stroke of good luck! For, like little Jack Horner,
She put in her finger and pulled out a plum;
Yet there once was a time when we sat in a corner—
AMARYLLIS and I—though her mother looked glum.
If I do not forget, it took place in December,
But I recollect better one evening in June,
And, for all that has happened, I like to remember
What we whispered and said by the light of the moon.

But a truce to such thoughts, she has married another,
I must tidy away all the memories of yore.
There's a smile on the face of her match-making mother,
And her family rejoice as they ne'er have before.
It has happened. Her mother, I know, always said it
Would prove to be so with her beautiful girl,
And the fair AMARYLLIS has done herself credit
Now she's married the catch of the season—an Earl.

What she did, after all, was perhaps for the best meant.
She may even be fond of her Earl—who can tell?
In the business of Life she has made her investment,
Which I trust most sincerely she will find pay her well.
And as for myself my ambition just *nil* is,
With my pipe and my dog I shall stay on the shelf,
Though allow me to tell you, my dear AMARYLLIS,
I'd have made you an excellent husband myself.

* * * * *

[Illustration: What will he do with it?]

A PUZZLER, FOR EVEN SIR ANDR-W CL-RK, BART. M.D.—Case of dyspepsia.
What ought to be prescribed for a patient suffering from severe indigestion, caused *by having eaten his own words*? Perhaps one of the most distinguished members of the Medical Congress, possessing a great experience among Cabinet Ministers and other Parliamentary celebrities, will oblige with “a solution”? And this is a perfectly serious question, although it certainly sounds as if it were only intended for a Roose.

* * * * *

MR. CLIP'S APPEAL.

[The Hairdressers' Early Closing Association of London (whose Central Office is at 6, Swallow Street, Piccadilly, W., and whose President is Mr. W.J. REED, and Hon. Sec.,

Mr. A.M. SUTTON), has for object “to secure and maintain one early-closing day per week, suitable to the neighbourhood, and to generally assist in obtaining time for rest and recreation, and promote better and healthier conditions for hairdressers.”]

[Illustration: HAIR AND HEXERCISE; OR, TAKING THE HAIR ON A 'OLE 'OLIDAY.]

Dear BOB,—There's a stir in our noble Profession.

The hope of the Hairdresser, silent so long,
At last, like most others, is finding expression.

We've started, dear BOB, and are now going strong.
Early Closing's our object, which means that on *one* day
We want to shut up shops and scissors at five!
Perhaps Saturday's best, BOB, as coming next Sunday—
Don't seem asking *much*, if they'd keep us alive.

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You cannot imagine how grinding our trade is—
Long hours, and long waits, BOB, when custom is slack!
When the premises hold one old gent and two ladies,
'Tis hard for twelve chaps to be kept on the rack.
To knock off at five on a Saturday eases
Our week's work a little. One evening in six
Ain't more than the Public can spare—if it pleases—
If only its hours 'twill conveniently fix.

When a swell wants a shave, a shampoo, or a clipping,
He likes to drop in at *his* pleasure, no doubt;
But surely he'd not keep us scraping and snipping
To save him from being a trifle put out!
If he'll but get fixed before five on a Saturday,
We poor Hairdressers may get just a chance
Of an hour or two's pleasure or rest on the latter day;
Prospect to make many dreary eyes dance!

And yet some object to this small "Early Closing,"
I wish they could know what it is to chop, chop,
When your feet are one ache and your eyes drawn to dozing
And you're sick of the sight and the smell of the shop!
When a whiff from the meadows appears to come stealing
Above all our washes, and powders, and soaps;
And the whirr of the brush which revolves near the ceiling
Seems pain to our ears and seems death to our hopes!

True, most of the Masters will yield to our yearnings,
A lesson I think to the few who stand out!
I wager the change won't diminish their earnings,
W. REED and A. SUTTON know what they're about,—
Our President, BOB, and our Hon. Sec. Address 'em
At "fair Piccadilly," 6, Swallow Street, W.
Hairdressers' Assistants unitedly bless 'em,
If you, BOB, or others *can* help us, I'll trouble you!

'Tis long, my dear BOB, since I sent you a letter,
And this you'll admit is a practical one.
We Hairdressers wish our condition to better,
And get our fair share of rest, leisure, and fun.
One Five o' Clock Close every week is our plea, BOB,
Not much for the slaves of scrape-scrape and snip-snip!
The fairness of it I'm convinced you will see, BOB,
And so should the world, says

CARACTACUS CLIP.

[*Mr. Punch*, who knows how much his own personal comfort is dependent upon the adroit ministrations of the “Sons of the Shears,” cordially seconds the appeal of his old Correspondent.]

* * * * *

A CASE OF FRENCH LEAVE.—The Gallic Fleet have gone to Cherbourg—as if they had not had enough “cheers” before leaving England!

* * * * *

[Illustration: DIFFERENCE OF OPINION.

Jones (reading aloud). “A TRUE, GOOD, NOBLE WOMAN IS EVER READY TO MAKE HERSELF A DOOR-MAT FOR THE MAN SHE LOVES!’... AH, DOLLY, *THOSE* ARE THE WOMEN WHO MAKE THE BEST WIVES!”

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Mrs. J. (who is not of this type). "YES, DEAR—AND THE WORST HUSBANDS!"]

* * * * *

MR. PUNCH'S ANTI-LABOUR CONGRESS.

MR. PUNCH (IN A MARINE LOTOS-LAND) SINGS HIS SEA-SIDE VERSION OF THE LAUREATE'S LOVELY "CHORIC SONG."

I.

There is a slumber here that softer falls
Than forty-winks where dull, dull Bills they pass;
Oft have I drowsed within those dreary walls,
Where brays the pertinacious party ass.
Here sleep more gently on the spirit lies
Than where the SPEAKER tells the Noes and Ayes.
The wave-wash brings sweet sleep down, from the summer skies,
Here laps the azure deep,
And through the weed the small crabs creep,
And safe from prigs who plague and nymphs who peep,
Sagacious *Punch* reclines and woos benignant sleep.

II.

Why are we weighed upon with Politics,
And, utterly fatigued by "bores" and "sticks,"
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest: why should we toil alone,
We only toil, who are "*such* clever things!"
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one "Question" to another thrown?
Gulls, even, fold their wings,
And cease their wanderings,
Watching our brows which slumber's holy balm
Bathes gently, whilst the inner spirit sings
"There is no joy but calm!"
Why should *Punch* only toil, the top and crown of things?

III.

How sweet it were, dodging the urban stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half dream!
To dream and dream that yonder glittering light
No more shall top the tall Clock Tower's height;
To hear no more the party speech;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach;
(No, no, *not* HICKS! Thank heaven, he's far away!)
To lend one's mind and fancy wholly
Unto the influence of the calmly jolly;
Forgetful, whilst the salt breeze round one rustles;
Of all the clamorous Congresses of Brussels,
Of all the spouting M.P.'s party tussles,
Of all the noisy votaries of CARL MARX;
Of all save slumber and Unmitigated Larks!

IV.

Dear are the memories of our wedded lives,
Dear also are the outfits of our wives,
And their huge trunks: but this is a sweet change!
For surely now our household hearths are cold,
Charwomen prowl thereby: our halls look strange,
Our suites are swathed like ghosts. Here all is joy,
And, by the stirless silence rendered bold,
The very gulls stand round with furred wings.
What do *you* think of it, TOBY,

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my boy?

The Session's Bills are half-forgotten things.
Is there discussion in our little Isle?
Let Parties broken so remain.
Factions are hard to reconcile:
Prate not of Law and Order—by the main!
There *is* a fussiness worse than death
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
Lost labour, and sheer waste of breath,
Sore task to hearts dead beat by many wars,
And ears grown dumb with listening to loud party jars.

V.

But propt on sand and pebbles roly-olly
How sweet (while briny breezes fan us lowly)
With half-dropt eyelids still,
Beneath a boat-side tarry, coally,
To watch the long white breakers drawing slowly
Up to the curling turn and foamy spill—
To hear far-off the wheezy Town-Crier calling,
“Oh, yes! Oh, yes!” Truly, TOBIAS mine,
This *solitude a deux* is most divine;
A Congress we—of Two; where no outfalling
Is possible. Our Anti-Labour line
Is wordlessly prolonged, stretched out beside the brine.

VI.

Such Lotos-eating all at times must seek! The Lotos blows by many an English creek.
Punch is no “mild-eyed melancholy” coon, Born, like the Laureate's islanders, to moon
In lands in which 'tis always afternoon. No, TOBY, no! Yet stretch your tawny muzzle
Upon these tawny sands! We will not puzzle, For a few happy hours, our weary pates
With Burning Questions or with Dull Debates. We have had enough of Measures, and
of Motions, we, “Ayes” to starboard, “Noes” to larboard (in the language of the sea),
Where the wallowing SEYMORE spouted like a whale, and COBB made free. Let us
take our solemn davy, TOBY, for a space (*Punch* perceives complete approval in that
doggish face)—Let us take our davy, TOBY—for a time, now mind!—In this briny Lotos
Land to live and lie reclined, On the sands like chums together, careless of mankind!

[Sleeps.

* * * * *

[Illustration: MR. PUNCH'S ANTI-LABOUR CONGRESS.]

* * * * *

SOME CIRCULAR NOTES.

CHAPTER II.

*ON TOUR—RESTAURATION—METHOD—RAPID ACT—PATRIOTISM—CHORUS—
DINNE
R—FORWARDS—ENTREE—EXIT—DESTINATION.*

With DAUBINET I soon acquire the careless habit of speaking any French that comes into my head, irrespective of grammar, genders, or idioms. If he doesn't understand it in French he will do so in English, or *vice versa*. On this mutual comprehension system we get along as easily as the express does, and as easily as the boat does too, to-day, —for we are in luck, the weather is delicious and the sea propitious,—and so we arrive hungry and happy at the excellent buffet at the Calais Station, the praises of which I have sung more than once in my lifetime.

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[Illustration]

Far be it from me to draw comparisons, but I if want to start well and wisely for the Continong, give me the short sea-passage *via* Dover and the excellent restauration at Calais, with a good twenty-five minutes allowed for refreshment; *though why this interval shouldn't be extended to three-quarters of an hour, and less time occupied on the journey to Paris, I have never yet been able to ascertain.* In the not very dim and distant future no doubt it will be so. I record the above observation in italics, in order to attract the attention of all whom it may and does and ought to concern. Perhaps they'll kindly see to it.

Our *dejeuner* at Calais is as good as it usually is at that haven of Restauration. After the buffeting of the waves, how sweet is the *buffet* of the shore. I sit down at once, as an old Continental-travelling hand, tell the waiter immediately what I am going to take, and forthwith it is brought; then, in advance, I command the coffee, and have my French money all ready in an outside-pocket, so that there shall be no unnecessary delay. All station-feeding is a fearsome pastime. You are never quite sure of the trains, and you never quite trust the waiter's most solemn asseveration to the effect that you have still so many minutes left, decreasing rapidly from fifteen to five, when, time being up and the food down, you find yourself hurrying out on to the platform, plunging recklessly in between the lines, uncertain as to your carriage, and becoming more and more hot, nervous, and uncomfortable up to the very last moment, when the stout guard, with the heavy black moustache, and the familiar bronzed features set off by a cap-band which once was red, bundles you into your proper place, bangs the door, and you are off,—for Paris, or wherever your destination may be.

DAUBINET knows the proprietor of the restaurant, likewise the proprietor's good lady and good children. He has a great deal to say to them, always by means of working the semaphore with his arms and hands, as if the persons with whom he excitedly converses were deaf; and having lost all count of time, besides being in a state of considerable puzzle as to the existence of his appetite, he is suddenly informed by the head-waiter,—another of his acquaintances, for DAUBINET, it appears, is a constant traveller to and fro on this route, that if he wants, any thing he must take it at once, or he won't get it at all, unless he chooses to stop there and lose his train. So DAUBINET ladles some soup into his mouth, and savagely worries a huge lump of bread: then having gobbled up the soup in a quarter of a second, and having put away all the bread in another quarter, he pours a glass of wine into a tumbler out of the bottle which I have had opened for both of us, adds water, then tosses it off, wipes his lips with the napkin which he bangs down on the table, and, with his hat and coat on, his small bag in his hand, and quite prepared to resume the journey, he cries, "*Allons! Petzikoff!*" (or some such word, which I suppose to be either Russian or an ejaculation quite new and original, but *a la Russe*, and entirely his own invention), with the cheery and enthusiastic addition of, "Blass the Prince of WAILES!"

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"By all means," I cordially respond, for we are on a foreign soil, where loyalty to our Royal Family is no longer a duty only, but also a mark of patriotism, which should ever distinguish the true Briton,—though, by the way, now I think of it, DAUBINET is a lively Gaul. Subsequently, observing my friend DAUBINET, I find that he is especially English in France, and peculiarly French in England. On what is to me foreign, but to him his own native soil, he is always bursting out into snatches of our British National Anthem, or he sings the line above quoted. In France he will insist on talking about London, England, Ireland, Scotland, with imitations in slang or of brogue, as the case may be, on every possible or even impossible opportunity; and, when the subject of conversation does not afford him any chance for his interpolations, then, for a time, he will "lay low," like Brer Fox, only to startle us with some sudden outbursts of song, generally selected from the popular English Melodies of a bygone period, such as "*My Pretty Jane*," "*My Love is like a red, red Rose*," or "*Good-bye, Sweetheart, good-bye*," and such-like musical reminiscences, invariably finishing with a quotation from the National Anthem, "*Rule Britannia*," or "Blass the Prince of WAILES!" He is a travelling chorus.

We stop—I don't know where, as I trust entirely to my guide and fellow-traveller—for a good twenty minutes' stuff, nominally dinner, *en route*, about seven o'clock. It is the usual rush; the usual indecision; the usual indigestion. DAUBINET does more execution among the eatables and drinkables in five minutes than I can manage in the full time allotted to refreshment; and not only this, but he finds plenty of time for talking nonsense to one of the nicest-looking waitresses. Of course, he positively refuses to speak a word of his own native language, but gives his orders in English, Spanish, and Russian, to the despair of all the attendants, with the exception of the pretty waiting-maid, to whom he addresses himself in colloquial French. She quite enters into the joke; can give and take as pleasantly as possible; can also fetch and carry; and when, finally, DAUBINET *en bon prince* rewards her intelligence with a two-franc piece, her bright smile, and her courteous "*Merci beaucoup, Monsieur*," prove once more that she can take as well as give,—nay, even better, and yet leave the donor her debtor. "*Da Karascho!* Yes, all right! *Montez donc!*" cries my mercurial friend, hurrying to the train; then, as he once more settles himself in the compartment, he sings "Rule Britannia! Blass the Prince of WAILES! O Maman!" and before I have lit my after-dinner cigar, he has made himself quite comfortable, lying at full length, and is fast asleep. So am I soon. When I awake, it is night; pitch-dark, and very cold. We are stopping at some station. A stout Frenchman enters our carriage; not that there is anything remarkable about his stoutness, as it seems to me that the majority of middle-class and middle-aged Frenchmen, and Frenchwomen, too, are all, more or less, of considerable corpulence.

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[Illustration]

The new arrival recognises DAUBINET, and salutes him. DAUBINET warmly acknowledges the recognition, and in a few moments they are engaged in an animated conversation, one commencing his reply before the other has finished his question, neither permitting the other to complete a sentence, whether interrogatory or declaratory; so that, during the greater part of their conversation,—which lasts till, thank goodness, the stranger has to get out, which he does at the next station, and disappears in the darkness,—I can only pick up a word or half a sentence here and there, and, in a general way, wonder why they become so earnest and emphatic about the most ordinary topics. For an English listener, however, it is an excellent lesson in colloquial French; only I cannot help wishing that they would take the “*tempo*” just a little slower, and that their tone were not necessarily up to concert pitch, in order to keep itself well above the running accompaniment of railway-wheels, which seems to fit all modes of counting from two to sixteen in a bar. At last the train stops, the dialogue becomes jerky, our companion salutes us politely, wishes us “*bon voyage*” and descends.

After his departure, I ask DAUBINET, “Who is your friend?” as I should like to know the reason of DAUBINET not having introduced us. His reply at once resolves all my doubts and difficulties on the subject; it is simply, “Heaven knows! He is a nice fellow. I have met him *quelque part*. Ah! *v’la!*” He rushes to the window. “Hi! hi! Guard! Conducteur!” The Conducteur appears, and informs us that we descend at the next station, and, after that, in another five minutes we shall be at Reims.

And so we are. Reims at last! Not brilliant is Reims on this dark night. There are several omnibuses and other vehicles waiting to take the very few passengers who alight from the train, and who, it appears, as a rule, prefer to walk. Having no baggage beyond a few bags and a small portmanteau which travel with us in our compartment, and which the porter can wheel on a truck, or indeed carry if he chooses, we are soon in the ‘bus, and rattling over the stones to the Hotel.

* * * * *

[Illustration: “NEB’LAR (HIC) ’POTHESIS.”

Elderly Gentleman (overcome by gravitation). “ORRIGHT, INSPECTRUM. BEEN READING SPEESH—PRES’DENT BRI’SH-SOSHIASHLEM. SHPLENDID SPEESH! I’M IN ’UNIQUE POSISHN ’F (HIC) ABSOLUTE IMM’BILITY IN MIDSHT OF WHIRLING ’N DRIFTING SUNS, ’N SYSHTEMS ’F SUNS.’ GOOD OLD HUGGINS!!”]

* * * * *

ODE TO A BAROMETER.

(BY A TROUBLED TAPSTER.)

I tap you early, tap you late,
In vain!
We get—whatever *you* may state—
Much rain.
The Woodpecker of which fools sing
Ne'er tapped
Half so persistently. Since Spring
I've rapped
Your fair false dial day by day,

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And yet
The end—whatever you may say
Is wet!
'Twas wet in June, and in July
Wet too;
In August it is wetter. Why,
Trust *you*?
Barometer, you false old chap,
You bore!
I'm no Woodpecker, and I'll tap
No more!

* * * * *

“NOTHING IN THE PAPERS!”

OR, VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS UN-GRATEFULLY RECEIVED.

SCENE—*A Railway Compartment. BROWN and SMITH* looking up from their Daily Papers._

Brown. Now that Parliament stands prorogued, I suppose there is nothing to read?

Smith. Nothing. Except this article upon Australia. Tells one all about Capital and Labour in *that* part of the world. Most interesting. Wonder how they found room for it! Have you seen it?

Brown. Well, no. Fact is I have been reading about Argentina. Very exhaustive article this, and on a matter of serious moment. I hold some shares as a trustee. Seems that they will all come right in the end. Would you like to see it?

Smith. When I have time to read it. But, to tell the truth, it takes me a good hour to get through the City Intelligence. And the racing, too, that always interests me; but I don't think it is so exciting as the Stock Exchange.

Brown. No more do I. By the way, is there anything good in the correspondence line in your paper?

Smith. The usual sensational recess subjects. Some of the letters are too good for the general public; they must have been written in the office.



Brown. I daresay. And perhaps these sketches of places away from Town are also written in London?

Smith. Not a bit of it! I happen to know that the papers spend thousands and thousands upon obtaining information in every quarter of the globe. Bogus articles are things of the past.

Brown. Only fancy! And all this expense for nothing in the recess! When no one reads the papers!

Smith. Yes, and when there's nothing in them!

[They resume perusal of their papers until interrupted by a tunnel. Curtain.]

* * * * *

THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION.

[Illustration]

Oh, Sir, I read the papers every day,
To amuse myself and pass the time away;
But they've got so hard to follow that they simply beat me hollow
With the learning and the culture they display;
And they wouldn't be so hard if those good people down at Cardiff
Would but be a shade more careful what they say.

The President's address, I think, will tax
My intellectual organ till it cracks;
The Association British isn't wanted to be skittish,
Wear the motley, nor to run a race in sacks;
But 'twas getting awkward rather when my youngest asked his father
What the President implied by parallax.

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The money market often puzzles me;
I've no notion what the Funding Loan may be;
In the sales of corn (Odessa), jute and sago, I confess a
Sort of feeling that I'm very much at sea;
But couldn't the reporter keep this science rather shorter,
Or at any rate provide us with a key?

* * * * *

QUEER QUERIES.

HOUSE DECORATION.—What am I to do under the following circumstances? I took a house a year ago, and painted the outside scarlet, with gold “facings,” to remind me—and my neighbours—of the fact that I am highly connected with the Army, my deceased wife's half-brother having once held some post in the Commissariat. I am leaving the house now, and my landlord actually insists on my scraping all the paint off! He says that if any bulls happen to pass the house, they will be sure to run at it. Am I obliged to yield to this ridiculous caprice?—LOVER OF THE PICTURESQUE.

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[Illustration: ALL-ROUND POLITICIANS.—SIR RICHARD.

Mr. Punch's Parliamentary Artist reads in the Papers that Sir Richard T—— does not intend to Stand for Parliament again!]

* * * * *

SEASIDE ASIDES.

(PATERFAMILIAS IN NORTH CORNWALL.)

[Illustration]

Oh! how delightful now at last to come
Away from town—its dirt, its degradation,
Its never-ending whirl, its ceaseless hum.
(A long chinks better, though, than sheer stagnation.)

For what could mortal man or maid want more
Than breezy downs to stroll on, rocks to climb up,
Weird labyrinthine caverns to explore?
(There's nothing else to do to fill the time up.)

Your honest face here earns an honest brown,
You ramble on for miles 'mid gorse and heather,
Sheep hold athletic sports upon the down
(Which makes the mutton taste as tough as leather).

The place is guiltless, too, of horrid piers,
And likewise is not Christy-Minstrel tooney;
No soul-distressing strains disturb your ears.
(A German band has just played "*Annie Rooney*.")

The eggs as fresh as paint, the Cornish cream
The boys from school all say is "simply ripping,"
The butter, so the girls declare, "a dream."
(The only baccy you can buy quite dripping.)

A happiness of resting after strife,
Where one forgets all worldly pain and sorrow,
And one contentedly could pass one's life.
(A telegram will take *me* home to-morrow.)

* * * * *

[Illustration]

CANINE SAGACITY.—Numerous instances of this have been quoted in the *Spectator* and other papers. Our *Toby* would like to be informed how one clever dog would communicate with another clever dog, if the former were in a great hurry? The reply from a great authority in the K9 Division, signing himself "DOGBERRY," is that "the clever dog would either tailegraph or tailephone; but that, anyhow, in the strictest confidence, he would tell his own tail."

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THE MANNERS OF OUR CHILDREN!

(FRAGMENT FROM A TRAGIC FARCE, SUGGESTED BY A CORRESPONDENCE IN A DAILY PAPER.)

SCENE—*The Sanctum of Paterfamilias*. Enter to him JACKY, his eldest born.

Pater. (cordially). How are you, old chap?

Jacky. Very well, thank you, Father. And will you forgive me—is not “chap” a trifle slangy?

Pater. (astonished). Eh! what?

Jacky. You were good enough to write to my Form Master after the Easter Vacation, complaining of my style. Consequently that worthy pedagogue has given more than usual attention to that part of my education.

[Illustration]

Pater. Well, now you are home for the holidays! As for your Form Master—hang him and all his works!

Jacky. Are you quite sure that you are quoting correctly? To the best of my belief the line goes, “hang him with his pen and ink-horn.”

Pater. Eh! what? I don’t understand you.

Jacky. Why, my dear Father, I naturally concluded that you were quoting; from the Immortal Bard. You will find the passage in *The Second Part of King Henry the Sixth*, scene iv., line 2.

Pater. What are you talking about?

Jacky. Why your misquotation. And will you forgive me—but do you not think it would sound better if you were to ask me—“about what I was talking”? I might add that my Form Master and I—

Pater. Your “Form Master and you.” Rot and bosh! I should say—

Jacky (with a twitch of pain). Oh, my dear Father, more slang, more slang!



Pater. (getting very red). And what if there is? What's that to you? You don't pay for my education, do you?

Jacky (quickly). No. If I did, I could not declare that I was satisfied with your progress!

Pater. (indignantly). You little prig, I—

Jacky (calmly interrupting). Pray do not excite yourself. I am only doing my duty. I am merely attempting to instruct those less polished than myself. Surely I may regard such an action with satisfaction?

Pater. (furious). You shall go back to school at once!

Jacky. I am afraid that that is scarcely practicable. If you will refer to the slip that accompanied my school-bill, you will notice that the Vacation does not cease until the 20th of September.

Pater. And a nice school-bill! Why they charged everything as an extra!

Jacky. Surely such a matter is scarcely within my province? According to statute, my dear Father, you are bound to provide for me until (if my memory does not betray me) I reach the age of sixteen. As I am now five years younger than that limit, it is clearly your duty to support me.



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Pater. Why, Sir, you are insupportable!

Jacky (smiling). I see—a joke—very good! But, my dear Sir, do you think it quite dignified to make so small a jest in my presence? It is calculated to lessen my respect for you.

Pater. Well I never!

Jacky. Never what? You have not completed the sentence.

Pater. Sir, you are an insolent young puppy!

Jacky. I am forced to contradict you—in justice to yourself. You cannot be willing to let me regard you as a dog?

Pater. (after a pause). Well, the sooner you get back to the school the better.

Jacky (promptly). I have no doubt you are right, my dear Father; and, as I take a sincere interest in your welfare, I would respectfully suggest that you should accompany me. It must be patent to us both that you are lacking in polish.

Pater. (losing his patience). You young cub! I will give you the soundest thrashing you ever had in your life!

Materfamilias (interposing). Oh, you cruel man! What has the poor child done?

Jacky (with ready tact). Nothing, dearest Mamma, except to take after his kind, clever and accomplished Mother!

[Scene closes in upon a family group not entirely free from domestic complications.]

* * * * *

THE SURREY ABC.

[Illustration]

A is for ABEL, who can certainly block well;
B stands for BOWLEY, and BEAUMONT, and BROOKWELL;
C is the Captain, JOHN SHUTER his name;
D is the Devotion he gives to the game;
E is the Eleven, deservedly great;
F is the Funk which their bowlers create.
G stands for GEORGE—our only GEORGE LOHMANN;



H for young HENDERSON, valiant young foeman.
I is the Innings, beloved of the gapers;
J is the Jargon they put in the papers.
K is for KEY, the accomplished Dark Blue;
L is for LOCKWOOD, who bowls a bit too;
M is for MAURICE, his other name READ;
N poor old Nottingham, beaten indeed.
O is the Oval, the home of the crowd;
P the Pavilion, the seat of the proud.
Q is the Question, "Oh, Umpire, how's that?"
R is for Gentleman READ, who can bat.
S stands for SHARPE, it will pay you to mind him;
T is the Trouble they were put to to find him;
U their United attempts—hard, to beat them;
V the Vain efforts oft made to defeat them.
W represents WOOD at the wicket;
X is the Xcellent style of their cricket.
Y ends the county, not played out in a hurry.
Z stands for Zero, a stranger to Surrey!

* * * * *

[Illustration]

A GENUINE REGRET.—The French Admiral had one regret in leaving Albion's hospitable shores, and that is that he didn't go up to London and get a taste of a real City Savory at a Munching House banquet. He wouldn't have found The Albion "perfidious" in the matter of "turtle and fine living,"—which was Mrs. R.'s description of the Pharisee. Their French leave is up, and they're on sail or return.

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