

Punch, Or The London Charivari, Volume 102, January 30, 1892 eBook

Punch, Or The London Charivari, Volume 102, January 30, 1892

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CONFESSIONS OF A DUFFER.

III.—*The literary Duffer.*

[Illustration: "I have worn a cloak and a Tyrolese hat, and attitudinised in the Picture-galleries."]

Why I am not a success in literature it is difficult for me to tell; indeed, I would give a good deal to anyone who would explain the reason. The Publishers, and Editors, and Literary Men decline to tell me *why* they do not want my contributions. I am sure I have done all that I can to succeed. When my Novel, *Geoffrey's Cousin*, comes back from the Row, I do not lose heart—I pack it up, and send it off again to the Square, and so, I may say, it goes the round. The very manuscript attests the trouble I have taken. Parts of it are written in my own hand, more in that of my housemaid, to whom I have dictated passages; a good deal is in the hand of my wife. There are sentences which I have written a dozen times, on the margins, with lines leading up to them in red ink. The story is written on paper of all sorts and sizes, and bits of paper are pasted on, here and there, containing revised versions of incidents and dialogue. The whole packet is now far from clean, and has a business-like and travelled air about it, which should command respect. I always accompany it with a polite letter, expressing my willingness to cut it down, or expand it, or change the conclusion. Nobody can say that I am proud. But it always comes back from the Publishers and Editors, without any explanation as to why it will not do. This is what I resent as particularly hard. The Publishers decline to tell me what their Readers have really said about it. I have forwarded *Geoffrey's Cousin* to at least five or six notorious authors, with a letter, which runs thus:—

"*Dear sir,*—You will be surprised at receiving a letter from a total stranger, but your well-known goodness of heart must plead my excuse. I am aware that your time is much occupied, but I am certain that you will spare enough of that valuable commodity to glance through the accompanying *Ms. Novel*, and give me your frank opinion of it. Does it stand in need of any alterations, and, if so, what? Would you mind having it published *under your own name*, receiving one-third of the profits? A speedy answer will greatly oblige."

Would you believe it, *Mr. Punch*, not one of these over-rated and overpaid men has ever given me any advice at all? Most of them simply send back my parcel with no reply. One, however, wrote to say that he received at least six such packets every week, and that his engagements made it impossible for him to act as a guide, counsellor, and friend to the amateurs of all England. He added that, if I published the Novel at my own expense, the remarks of the public critics would doubtless prove most valuable and salutary.



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This decided me; I *did* publish, at my own expense, with Messrs. *Saul, Samuel, Moss & Co.* I had to pay down L150, then L35 for advertisements, then L70 for Publisher's Commission. Other expenses fell grievously on me, as I sent round printed postcards to everyone whose name is in the Red Book, asking them to ask for *Geoffrey's Cousin* at the Libraries. I also despatched six copies, with six anonymous letters, to Mr. *Gladstone*, signing them, "A Literary Constituent," "A Wavering Anabaptist," and so forth, but, extraordinary to relate, I have received no answer, and no notice has been taken of my disinterested presents. The reviews were of the most meagre and scornful description. Messrs. *Saul, Samuel, Moss & Co.* have just written to me, begging me to remove the "remainder" of my book, and charging L23 15s. 6d. for warehouse expenses. Yet, when I read *Geoffrey's Cousin*, I fail to see that it falls, in any way, beneath the general run of novels. I enclose a marked copy, and solicit your earnest attention for the passage in which *Geoffrey's Cousin* blights his hopes for ever. The story, Sir, is one of controversy, and is suited to this time. *Geoffrey McPhun* is an Auld Licht (see Mr. BARRIE's books, *passim*). His cousin is an Esoteric Buddhist. They love each other dearly, but *Geoffrey*, a rigid character, cannot marry any lady who does not burn, as an Auld Licht, "with a hard gem-like flame." *Violet Blair*, his cousin, is just as staunch an Esoteric Buddhist. Nothing stands between them but the differences of their creed.

"How can I contemplate, GEOFFREY," said VIOLET, with a rich blush, "the possibility of seeing our little ones stray from the fold of the Lama of Thibet into a chapel of the Original Secession Church?"

They determine to try to convert each other. *Geoffrey* lends *Violet* all his theological library, including WODROW's *Analecta*. She lends him the learned works of Mr. SINNETT and Madame BLAVATSKY. They retire, he to the Himalayas, she to Thrums, and their letters compose Volume II. (Local colour a *la* KIPLING and BARRIE.) On the slopes of the Himalayas you see *Geoffrey* converted; he becomes a Cheela, and returns by overland route. He rushes to Ramsgate, and announces his complete acceptance of the truth as it is in Mahatmaism. Alas! alas! *Violet* has been over-persuaded by the seductions of Presbyterianism, she has hurried down from Thrums, rejoicing, a full-blown Auld Licht. And, in her *Geoffrey*, she finds a convinced Esoteric Buddhist! They are no better off than they were, their union is impossible, and Vol. III. ends in their poignant anguish.

Now, *Mr. Punch*, is not this the very novel for the times; rich in adventure (in Kafiristan), teeming with philosophical suggestiveness, and sparkling with all the epigrams of my commonplace book. Yet I am about L300 out of pocket, and, moreover, a blighted being.



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I have taken every kind of pains; I have asked London Correspondents to dinner; I have written flattering letters to everybody; I have attempted to get up a deputation of Beloochis to myself; I have tried to make people interview me; I have puffed myself in all the modes which study and research can suggest. If anybody has, I have been “up to date.” But Fortune is my foe, and I see others flourish by the very arts which fail in my hands.

I mention my Novel because its failure really is a mystery. But I am not at all more fortunate in the reception of my poetry. I have tried it every way—ballades by the bale, sonnets by the dozen, loyal odes, seditious songs, drawing-room poetry, an Epic on the history of Labduco, erotic verse, all fire, foam, and fangs, reflective ditto, humble natural ballads about signal-men and newspaper-boys, Life-boat rescues, Idyls, Nocturnes in rhyme, tragedies in blank verse. Nobody will print them, or, if anybody prints them, he regrets that he cannot pay for them. My moral and discursive essays are rejected, my descriptions of nature do not even get into the newspapers. I have not been elected by the Sydenham Club (a clique of humbugs); I have let my hair grow long; I have worn a cloak and a Tyrolese hat, and attitudinised in the picture-galleries, but nobody asked who I am. I have endeavoured to hang on to well-known poets and novelists—they have not welcomed my advances.

My last dodge was a Satire, the *Logrolliad*, in which I lashed the charlatans and pretenders of the day.

While hoary statesmen scribble in reviews
And guide the doubtful verdict of the Blues,
While HAGGARD scrawls, with blood in lieu of ink,
While MALLOCK teaches Marquises to think,

so long I have rhythmically expressed my design to wield the dripping scourge of satire. But nobody seems a penny the worse, and I am not a paragraph the better. Short stories of a startling description fill my drawers, nobody will venture on one of them. I have closely imitated every writer who succeeds, but my little barque may attendant sail, it pursues the triumph, but does not partake the gale.

I am now engaged on a Libretto for an heroic opera.

What offers?

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE IMPERIAL JACK-IN-THE-BOX.

Chorus (Everybody). “EVERYTHING IN ORDER EVERYWHERE! O! WHAT A SURPRISE! SOLD AGAIN!”]



* * * * *

THE IMPERIAL JACK-IN-THE-BOX.

A SONG FOR THE SHOUTING EMPEROR.

AIR—“*THE MAJOR-GENERAL.*”

I am the very pattern of a Modern German Emperor,
Omniscient and omnipotent, I ne'er give way to temper, or
If now and then I run a-muck in a Malay-like fashion,
As there's method in my madness, so there's purpose in my passion.
'Tis my aim to manage *everything* in order categorical—

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My fame as Cosmos-maker I intend shall be historical.
I know they call me *Paul Pry*, say I'm fussy and pragmatical—
But that's because sheer moonshine always hates the mathematical.
I'm not content to "play the King" with an imperial pose in it—
Whatever is marked "Private" I shall up and poke my nose in it.

ALL.

He won't let drowsing dogs lie, he'll stir up the tabby sleeping Tom—
In fact, he is the model of a modern German Peeping Tom!

I bounce into the Ball-Room when they think I'm fast asleep at home,
And measure steps and skirts and things and mark what state folks keep
at home;
Watch the toilette of young Beauty on the very strictest Q.T. too,
Evangelise the Army and keep sentries to their duty, too,
On the Navy, and the Clergy, and the Schools, my wise eyes shoot lights,
Sir.
I'm awfully particular to regulate the footlights, Sir.
I preach sermons to my soldiers and arrange their "duds" and duels, too,
And tallow their poor noses, when they've colds, and mix their gruels,
too;
I'll make everybody moral, and obedient, and frugal, Sir—
In fact I'm an Imperial edition of MCDUGALL, Sir!

ALL.

He'd compel us to drink water and restrain us when to wed agog;
In fact he is the model of a Modern German pedagogue.

I've all the god-like attributes, omniscient, ubiquitous, I mean to squelch free impulse,
which is commonly iniquitous. But what's the good of being Chief Inspector of the
Universe, And prying into everything from pompous Law to puny verse, If everything or
nearly so, shows a confounded tendency *To go right of its own accord*? My Masterful
Resplendency Would radiate aurorally, a world would gaze on trustingly If only things in
general wouldn't go on so disgustingly. Where *is* the pull of being Earth's Inspector
autocratical, When the Progress I'd be motor of seems mainly automatical?

ALL.



Hooray! My would-be Jupiter, a *parvenu* is told again
He's not the true Olympian, Jack-in-the-Box is "Sold Again!!!"

* * * * *

"ARTIFICIAL OYSTER-CULTIVATION," read Mrs. R., as the heading of a par in the *Times*. "Good gracious!" she exclaimed, "who on earth would ever think of eating 'artificial oysters!'"

* * * * *

NOTHING is certain in this life except Death, Quarter Day and stoppage for ten minutes at Swindon Station.

* * * * *

[Illustration: SO CONVENIENT!

Young Wife. "WHERE ARE YOU GOING, REGGIE DEAR?"

Reggie Dear. "ONLY TO THE CLUB, MY DARLING."

Young Wife. "OH, I DON'T MIND THAT, BECAUSE THERE'S A TELEPHONE THERE, AND I CAN TALK TO YOU THROUGH IT, CAN'T I?"



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Reggie. "Y-YES—BUT—ER—YOU KNOW, THE CONFOUNDED WIRES ARE ALWAYS GETTING OUT OF ORDER!"

* * * * *

PARLIAMENT A LA MODE DE PARIS.

SCENE—*The Chamber during a Debate of an exciting character. Member with a newspaper occupying the Tribune.*

Member. I ask if the report in this paper is true? It calls the Minister a scoundrel! [*Frantic applause.*]

President. I must interpose. It is not right that such a document should be read.

Member. But it is true. I hold in my hand this truth-telling sheet. (*Shouts of "Well done!"*) This admirable journal describes the Minister as a trickster, a man without a heart! [*Yells of approbation.*]

President. I warn the Member that he is going too far. He is outraging the public conscience. [*"Hear! hear!"*]

Member. It is you that outrage the public conscience. [*Sensation.*]

President. This is too much! If I hear another word of insult, I will assume my hat.

[*Profound and long-continued agitation.*]

Member. A hat is better than a turned coat! (*Thunders of applause.*) I say that this paper is full of wholesome things, and that when it denounces the Minister as a good-for-nothing, as a slanderer, as a thief—it does but its duty.

[*Descends from the Tribune amidst tumultuous applause, and is met by the Minister. Grand altercation, with results.*]

Minister's Friends. What have you done to him?

Minister (*with dignity*). I have avenged my honour—I have hit him in the eye!

[*Scene closes in upon the Minister receiving hearty congratulations from all sides of the Chamber.*]

* * * * *

PRESERVED VENICE.



(SPECIALLY IMPORTED FOR THE LONDON MARKET.)

A SATURDAY NIGHT SCENE AT OLYMPIA.

IN THE PROMENADE.

A Pessimistic Matron (the usual beady and bugle-y female, who takes all her pleasure as a penance). Well, they may call it "Venice," but I don't see no difference from what it was when the Barnum Show was 'ere—except—(regretfully)—that then they 'ad the Freaks o' Nature, and Jumbo's skelinton!

[Illustration: "I'm sure I'm 'ighly flattered, Mum, but I'm already suited."]

Her Husband (an Optimist—less from conviction than contradiction). There you go, MARIA, finding fault the minute you've put your nose inside! We ain't *in* Venice yet. It's up at the top o' them steps.

The P.M. Up all them stairs? Well, I 'ope it'll be worth seeing when we *do* get there, that's all!

An Attendant (as she arrives at the top). Not this door, Ma'am—next entrance for Modern Venice.



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The Opt. Husb. You needn't go all the way down again, when the steps join like that!

The P.M. I'm not going to walk sideways—I'm not a crab, JOE, whatever *you* may think. (*JOE assents, with reservations*). Now wherever have those other two got to? 'urrying off that way! Oh, *there* they are. 'Ere, LIZZIE and JEM, keep along o' me and Father, do, or we shan't see half of what's to be seen!

Lizzie. Oh, all right, Ma; don't you worry so! (*To JEM, her fiance.*) Don't those tall fellows look smart with the red feathers in their cocked 'ats? What do they call *them*?

Jem (a young man, who thinks for himself). Well, I shouldn't wonder if those were the parties they call "Doges"—sort o' police over there, d'ye see?

Lizzie. They're 'andsomer than 'elmets, I will say *that* for them. (*They enter Modern Venice, amidst cries of "This way for Gondoala Tickets! Pass along, please! Keep to your right!" &c., &c.*) It *does* have a foreign look, with all those queer names written up. Think it's like what it is, JEM?

Jem. Bound to be, with all the money they've spent on it. I daresay they've idle-ised it a bit, though.

The P.M. Where are all these kinals they talk so much about? I don't see none!

Jem (as a break in the crowd reveals a narrow olive-green channel). Why, what d'ye call *that*, Ma?

The P.M. That a kinal! Why, you don't mean to tell me any barge 'ud—

The Opt. Husb. Go on!—you didn't suppose you'd find the Paddington Canal in *these* parts, did you? This is big enough for all *they* want. (*A gondola goes by lurchily, crowded with pot-hatted passengers, smoking pipes, and wearing the uncomfortable smile of children enjoying their first elephant-ride.*) That's one o' these 'ere gondoalers—it's a rum-looking concern, ain't it? But I suppose you get *used* to 'em— (*philosophically*)—like everything else!

The P.M. It gives me the creeps to look at 'em. Talk about 'earses!

The Opt. Husb. Well, look 'ere, we've come out to enjoy ourselves—what d'ye say to having a ride in one, eh?

The P.M. You won't ketch me trusting *myself* in one o' them tituppy things, so don't you deceive yourself!



The Opt. Husb. Oh, it's on'y two foot o' warm water if you do tip over. *Come on!*
(*Hailing Gondolier, who has just landed his cargo.*) 'Ere, 'ow much'll you take the lot of us for, hey?

Gondolier (gesticulating). Teekits! you tek teekits—la—you vait!

Jem. He means we've got to go to the orfice and take tickets and stand in a cue, d'yer see?

The P.M. Me go and form a cue down there and get squeegeed like at the Adelphi Pit, all to set in a rickety gondoaler! I can see all / want to see without messing about in one o' them things!



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The Others. Well, I dunno as it's worth the extry sixpence, come to think of it. (*They pass on, contentedly.*)

Jem. We're on the Rialto Bridge now, LIZZIE, d'ye see? The one in SHAKSPEARE, you know.

Lizzie. That's the one they call the "Bridge o' Sighs," ain't it? (*Hazily.*) Is that because there's *shops* on it?

Jem. I dessay. Shops—or else suicides.

Lizzie (more hazily than ever). Ah, the same as the Monument. (*They walk on with a sense of mental enlargement.*)

Mrs. Lavender Salt. It's wonderfully like the real thing, LAVENDER, isn't it? Of course they can't *quite* get the true Venetian atmosphere!

Mr. L.S. Well, MIMOSA, they'd have the Sanitary Authorities down on them if they *did*, you know!

Mrs. L.S. Oh, you're so horribly unromantic! But, LAVENDER, couldn't we get one of those gondolas and go about. It would be so lovely to be in one again, and fancy ourselves back in dear Venice, now *wouldn't* it?

Mr. L.S. The illusion is cheap at sixpence; so come along, MIMOSA!

[He secures, tickets, and presently the LAVENDER SALTS, find themselves part of a long queue, being marshalled between barriers by Italian gendarmes in a state of politely suppressed amusement.

Mrs. L.S. (over her shoulder to her husband, as she imagines). I'd no idea we should have to go through all this! Must we really herd in with all these people? Can't we two manage to get a gondola all to ourselves?

A Voice (not LAVENDER's—in her ear). I'm sure I'm 'ighly flattered, Mum, but I'm already suited; yn't I, DYSY?

[DYSY corroborates his statement with unnecessary emphasis.

A Sturdy Democrat (in front, over his shoulder). Pity yer didn't send word you was coming, Mum, and then they'd ha' kep' the place clear of us common people for yer!
[Mrs. L.S. is sorry she spoke.

IN THE GONDOLA.—*Mr. and Mrs. L.S. are seated in the back seat, supported on one side by the Humorous 'ARRY and his Fiancee, and on the other by a pale, bloated*



youth, with a particularly rank cigar, and the Sturdy Democrat, whose two small boys occupy the seat in front.

The St. Dem. (with malice aforethought). If you two lads ain't got room there, I dessay this lady won't mind takin' one of yer on her lap. (*To Mrs. L.S., who is frozen with horror at the suggestion.*) They're 'umin beans, Mum, like yerself!

Mrs. L.S. (desperately ignoring her other neighbours). Isn't that lovely balcony there copied from the one at the Pisani, LAVENDER—or is it the Contarini? I forget.

Mr. L.S. Don't remember—got the Rialto rather well, haven't they? I suppose that's intended for the dome of the Salute down there—not quite the outline, though, if I remember right. And, if that's the Campanile of St. Mark, the colour's too brown, eh?



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The Hum. 'Arry (*with intention*). Oh, I sy, DYSY, yn't that the Kempynoily of Kennington Oval, right oppersite? and 'aven't they got the Grand Kinel in the Ole Kent Road proper, eh?

Dysy (*playing up to him, with enjoyment*). Jest 'aven't they! On'y I don't quoitte remember whether the colour o' them gas-lamps is correct. But there, if we go on torkin' this w'y, other parties might think we wanted to show orf!

Mrs. L.S. Do you remember our *last* gondola expedition, LAVENDER, coming home from the Giudecca in that splendid sunset?

The Hum. A. Recklect you and me roidin' 'ome from Walworth on a rhinebow, DYSY, eh?

Chorus of Chaff from the bridges and terraces as they pass. 'Ullo, 'ere comes another boat-load! 'Igher up, there!... Four-wheeler!... Ain't that toff in the tall 'at enjoyin' himself? Quite a 'appy funeral! &c., &c.

Mrs. L.S. (*faintly, as they enter the Canal in front of the Stage*). LAVENDER, dear, I really can't stand this *much* longer!

Mr. L.S. (*to the Bloated Youth*). Might I ask you, Sir, not to puff your smoke in this lady's face—it's extremely unpleasant for her!

The B.Y. All right, Mister, I'm always ready to oblige a lydy—but—(*with wounded pride*)—as to its bein' *unpleasant*, yer know, all I can tell yer is—(*with sarcasm*)—that this 'appens to be one of the best tuppenny smokes in 'Ammersmith!

Mr. L.S. (*diplomatically*). I am sure of that—from the aroma, but if you *could* kindly postpone its enjoyment for a little while, we should be extremely obliged!

The B.Y. Well, I must keep it *aloive*, yer know. If there's anyone 'ere that understands cigars, they'll bear me out as it never smokes the same when you once let it out.

[The other Passengers confirm him in this epicurean dictum, whereupon he sucks the cigar at intervals behind Mrs. L.S.'s back, during the remainder of the trip.]

Mr. L.S. (*to Mrs. L.S. when they are alone again*). Well, MIMOSA, illusion successful, eh?

Mrs. L.S. Oh, *don't!*

* * * * *



[Illustration: ABOMINATIONS OF MODERN SCIENCE.

MARIANA ARRIVES AT THE MOATED GRANGE (AFTER A LONG, DAMP JOURNEY)
JUST IN TIME TO DRESS FOR DINNER, AND FINDS, TO HER SORROW, THAT HER
ROOM IS WARMED BY HOT WATER PIPES AND LIGHTED BY ELECTRICITY.]

* * * * *

TO MY CIGARETTE.

[Illustration]

My own, my loved, my Cigarette,
My dainty joy disguised in tissue,
What fate can make your slave regret
The day when first he dared to kiss you?

I had smoked briars, like to most
Who joy in smoking, and had been a
Too ready prey to those who boast
Their bonded stores of Reina Fina.



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In honeydew had steeped my soul
Had been of cherry pipes a cracker,
And watched the creamy meerschaum's bowl
Grow weekly, daily, hourly blacker.

Read CALVERLEY and learnt by heart
The lines he celebrates the weed in;
And blew my smoke in rings, an art
That many try, but few succeed in.

In fact of nearly every style
Of smoke I was a kindly critic,
Though I had found Manillas vile,
And Trichinopolis mephitic.

The stout tobacco-jar became
Within my smoking-room a fixture;
I heard my friends extol by name
Each one his own peculiar mixture.

And tried them every one in turn
(*O varium, tobacco, semper!*);
The strong I found too apt to burn
My tongue, the week to try my temper.

And all were failures, and I grew
More tentative and undecided,
Consulted friends, and found they knew
As little as or less than I did.

Havannah yielded up her pick
Of prime cigars to my fruition;
I bought a case, and some went "sick."
The rest were never in condition.

Until in sheer fatigue I turned
To you, tobacco's white-robed tyro,
And from your golden legend learned
Your maker dwelt and wrought in Cairo.

O worshipped wheresoe'er I roam,
As fondly as a wife by some is,
Waif from the far Egyptian home
Of Pharaohs, crocodiles, and mummies;



Beloved, in spite of jeer and frown;
The more the Philistines assail you,
The more the doctors run you down,
The more I puff you—and inhale you.

Though worn with toil and vexed with strife
(Ye smokers all, attend and hear me),
Undaunted still I live my life,
With you, my Cigarette, to cheer me.

* * * * *

[Illustration: SOMETHING WRONG SOMEWHERE.

“HOW CHARMING YOU LOOK, DEAR MRS. BELLAMY—AS USUAL! *WOULD YOU MIND TELLING ME WHO MAKES YOUR LOVELY FROCKS? I'M SO DISSATISFIED WITH MY DRESSMAKER!*”

“OH, CERTAINLY. MRS. CHIFFONNETTE, OF BOND STREET.”

“CHIFFONNETTE! WHY, I'VE BEEN TO HER FOR YEARS! THE WRETCH! I WONDER WHY SHE SUITS YOU SO MUCH BETTER, NOW!”]

* * * * *

A TALK OVER THE TUB;

OR, LEGAL LAUNDRESSES IN COUNCIL.

[“The whole legal machinery is out of gear, and the country is too busy to put it right.”—*Law Times.*]

A LEADING LAUNDRESS.

Wich I say, Missis 'ALSBURY, Mum,
We are all getting into a quand'ry;
You and me can no longer be dumb,
Seein' how we're the heads of the Laundry:
It is all very well to stand 'ere,
Sooperintending the soaping and rinsing;
Old pleas for delay, I much fear,

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Are no longer entirely conwincing.
Just look at the Linen—in 'eaps!
And no one can say it ain't dirty!
Our clients, a-grumblin' they keeps,
And some of 'em seem getting shirty.
Wotever, my dear, shall we do?
Two parties 'as axed me that question;
And now I just puts it to *you*,
And I 'ope you can make some suggestion.

HEAD LAUNDRESS.

My dear Missis COLEY, I own
I ain't heard from the parties you 'int at.
But them Linen-'eaps certny *has* grown,
Wich their bulk I 'ave just took a squint at.
We sud, and we rub, and we scrub.
And the pile 'ardly seems to diminish.
It tires us poor Slaves of the Tub,
And the doose only knows when we'll finish,

A LEADING LAUNDRESS.

Percisely, my dear, but it's *that*,
As the Public insists upon knowin',
Missis MATHEW 'as told me so, pat,
Wich likeways 'as good Missis BOWEN.
You can't floor their argyments, quite,
'Owsomever you twirl 'em or 'twist 'em;
They say, and I fear they are right,
There is somethink all wrong with our System!

HEAD LAUNDRESS.

Our System! Well, well, my good soul,
You know 'twasn't *us* as inwented it.
We wouldn't have got into this 'ole,
If *you* and *me* could 'ave perwented it.
I know there's no end of a block,
That expenses is running up awfully;



The sight of it gives me a shock,
But 'ow can we alter it—*lawfully*?

A LEADING LAUNDRESS.

I fear, Mum, I very much fear,
That word doesn't strike so much terror
As once on the dull public ear;
Times change. Mum, they do, make no error!
Our clients complain of the cost,
And lots of Commercials is leaving us.
I think, Mum, afore more is lost,
We had best own the block is—well grieving us!

HEAD LAUNDRESS.

There can't be no 'arm, dear, in *that*.
Let's write to the papers and 'int it.
I know with your pen you are pat,
And the *Times* will be 'appy to print it.
If we are to git through *that* lot,
We must 'ave some more 'elp—that's my notion!
Let's strike whilst the iron is 'ot,
The Public may trust our dewotion.
We'll call the chief Laundresses round;
Some way we no doubt shall discover.
At least, dear, 'twill 'ave a good sound,
If we meet, and—well *talk the thing over!*

[*Left doing so.*

* * * * *

A MENU FROM HATFIELD.

POTAGES.

Consomme de Neveu aux Balles de Golf.
Au Jo poche.

ENTREES.

Supreme de Livres Bleus.
Irlandais Sauvages en Culottes.
Filou Mignon Randolph, Sauce Tartarin.
Degout de Goschen a la Financiere.



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ROTS.

Canards Portuguais.
Entrecote d’Afrique a l’Allemande.

RELEVES.

Terrine de Fermes Vendues a la Parnell.
Pate de Loi a l’Ordre Publique.

LEGUMES.

Petits Soupcons Francais, Sauce Egyptienne.
Vepres Ceciliennes.

ENTREMETS.

Absorbe de Birmingham.
Succes de Whitehall aux Affaires Etrangeres.

DESSERT.

Amendes Parlementaires.
Raisons de Plus en Defaites.

* * * * *

[Illustration: “SHORT ’ANDED.”

MRS. H-LSB-RY. “I TELL YOU WHAT IT IS, MRS. COLEY, MUM,—IF ALL THIS
’ERE DIRTY LINEN’S TO BE GOT THROUGH, WE MUST ’AVE ’ELP, MUM!!”]

* * * * *

“THE MUSIC IN OUR STREET.”

(A WORD FROM A GIRL WHO LIVES IN IT.)

[Illustration]

Did you ever ’ear our music? What, never? *There’s* a shame; I tell yer it’s golopshus, we do ’ave such a game. When the sun’s a-shinin’ brightly, when the fog’s upon the town, When the frost ’as bust the water-pipes, when rain comes pourin’ down; In the mornin’ when the costers come a-shoutin’ with their mokes, In the evenin’ when the gals walk out a-spoonin’ with their blokes, When Mother’s slappin’ BILLY, or when Father wants ’is tea, When the boys are in the “Spotted Dog” a ’avin’ of a spree, No matter



what the weather is, or what the time o' day, *Our* music allus visits us, and never goes away. And when they've tooned themselves to-rights, I tell yer it's a treat Just to listen to the lot of 'em a-playin' in our street.

There's a chap as turns the orgin—the best I ever 'eard—
Oh lor' he does just jabber, but you can't make out a word.
I can't abear Italians, as allus uses knives,
And talks a furrin lingo all their miserable lives.
But this one calls me BELLA—which my Christian name is SUE—
And 'e smiles and turns 'is orgin very proper, that he do.
Sometimes 'e plays a polker and sometimes it's a march,
And I see 'is teeth all shinin' through 'is lovely black mustarch.
And the little uns dance round him, you'd laugh until you cried
If you saw my little brothers do their 'ornpipes side by side,
And the gals they spin about as well, and don't they move their feet,
When they 'ear that pianner-orgin man, as plays about our street.

There's a feller plays a cornet too, and wears a ulster coat,
My eye, 'e does puff out 'is cheeks a-tryin' for 'is note.
It seems to go right through yer, and, oh, it's right-down rare
When 'e gives us "*Annie Laurie*" or "*Sweet Spirit, 'ear my Prayer*";
'E's so stout that when 'e's blowin' 'ard you think 'e must go pop;
And 'is nose is like the lamp (what's red) outside a chemist's shop.
And another blows the penny-pipe,—I allus thinks it's thin,

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And I much prefers the cornet when 'e ain't bin drinkin' gin.
And there's Concertina-JIMMY, it makes yer want to shout
When 'e acts just like a windmill and waves 'is arms about.
Oh, I'll lay you 'alf a tanner, you'll find it 'ard to beat
The good old 'eaps of music that they gives us in our street.

And a pore old ragged party, whose shawl is shockin' torn,
She sings to suit 'er 'usband while 'e plays on so forlorn.
'Er voice is dreadful wheezy, and I can't exactly say
I like 'er style of singin' "*Tommy Dodd*" or "*Nancy Gray*."
But there, she does 'er best, I'm sure; I musn't run 'er down,
When she's only tryin' all she can to earn a honest brown.
Still, though I'm mad to 'ear 'em play, and sometimes join the dance,
I often wish one music gave the other kind a chance.
The orgin might have two days, and the cornet take a third,
While the pipe-man tried o' Thursdays 'ow to imitate a bird.
But they allus comes together, singin' playin' as they meet
With their pipes and 'orns and orgins in the middle of our street.

But there, I can't stand chatterin', pore mother's mortal bad,
And she's got to work the whole day long to keep things straight for dad.
Complain? Not she. She scrubs and rubs with all 'er might and main,
And the lot's no sooner finished but she's got to start again.
There's a patch for JOHNNY's jacket, a darn for BILLY's socks,
And an hour or so o' needlework a mendin' POLLY's frocks;
With floors to wash, and plates to clean, she'd soon be skin and bone
('Er cough's that aggravatin') if she did it all alone.
There'll be music while we're workin' to keep us on the go—
I like my tunes as fast as fast, pore mother likes 'em slow—
Ah! we don't get much to laugh at, nor yet too much to eat,
And the music stops us thinkin' when they play it in the street.

* * * * *

"MARIE, COME UP!"—When Miss MARIE LLOYD, who, unprofessionally, when at home, is known as Mrs. PERCY COURTENAY, which her Christian name is MATILDA, recently appeared at Bow-Street Police Court, having summoned her husband for an assault, the Magistrate, Mr. LUSHINGTON, ought to have called on the Complainant to sing "*Whacky, Whacky, Whack!*" which would have come in most appropriately. Let us



hope that the pair will make it up, and, as the story-books say, "live happily ever afterwards."

* * * * *

NIGHT LIGHTS.—Rumour has it that certain Chorus Ladies have objected to wearing electric glow-lamps in their hair. Was it for fear of becoming too light-headed?

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE POLITICAL WIREPULLER AT WORK.]

* * * * *

POLITE LITERATURE.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—Having seen in the pages of one of your contemporaries several deeply interesting letters telling of "the Courtesy of the CAVENDISH," I think it will be pleasing to your readers to learn that I have a fund of anecdote concerning the politeness—the true politeness—of many other members of the Peerage. Perhaps you will permit me to give you a few instances of what I may call aristocratic amiability.



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On one occasion the Duke of DITCHWATER and a Lady entered the same omnibus simultaneously. There was but one seat, and noticing that His Grace was standing, I called attention to the fact. "Certainly," replied His Grace, with a quiet smile, "but if I had sat down, the Lady would not have enjoyed her present satisfactory position!" The Lady herself had taken the until then vacant place!

Shortly afterwards I met Viscount VERMILION walking in an opposite direction to the path I myself was pursuing. "My Lord," I murmured, removing my hat, "I was quite prepared to step into the gutter." "It was unnecessary," returned his Lordship, graciously, "for as the path was wide, there was room enough for both of us to pass on the same pavement!"

On a very wet evening I saw My Lord TOMNODDICOMB coming from a shop in Piccadilly. Noticing that his Lordship had no defence against the weather, I ventured to offer the Peer my *parapluie*.

[Illustration]

"Please let me get into my carriage," observed his Lordship. Then discovering, from my bowing attitude, that I meant no insolence by my suggestion, he added,— "And as for your umbrella—surely on this rainy night you can make use of it yourself?"

Yet again. The Marchioness of LOAMSHIRE was on the point of crossing a puddle.

Naturally I divested myself of my greatcoat, and threw it as a bridge across her Ladyship's dirty walk.

The Marchioness smiled, but her Ladyship has never forgotten the circumstance, and I have the coat still by me.

And yet some people declare that the wives of Members of the House of Lords are wanting in consideration!

Believe me, dear *Mr. Punch*,

Yours enthusiastically, S. NOB.

The Cringeries, Low Booington.

* * * * *

NOTICE—No. XXV. of "Travelling Companions" next week.

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[Illustration: FANCY PORTRAIT.

SEÑOR DRUMMONDO WOLFFEZ, REPRESENTING THE JOHN BULLFIGHTER AT MADRID.

"TOREADOR CONTENTO!"]

* * * * *

THE JUDGES IN COUNCIL.

["All the judicial wisdom of the Supreme Court has met in solemn and secret conclave, heralded by letters from the heads of the Bench, admitting serious evils in the working of the High Court of Justice; a full working day was appropriated for the occasion; the learned Judges met at 11 A.M. (nominally) and rose promptly for luncheon, and for the day, at 1.30 P.M. Two-and-a-half hours' work, during which each of the twenty-eight judicial personages no doubt devoted all his faculties and experience to the discovery, discussion, and removal of the admittedly numerous defects in the working of the Judicature Acts! Two-and-a-half hours, which might have been stolen from the relaxations of a Saturday afternoon! Two-and-a-half hours,



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for which the taxpayers of the United Kingdom pay some eight hundred guineas! Truly the spectacle is eminently calculated to inspire the country with confidence and hopes of reform.”—*Extract from Letter to the Times.*]

SCENE—*A Room at the Royal Courts. Lord CHANCELLOR, Lord CHIEF JUSTICE, MASTER of the ROLLS, Lords Justices, Justices.*

L.C. Well, I'm very glad to see you all looking so well, but can anyone tell me why we've met at all?

L.C.J. Talking of meetings, do you remember that Exeter story dear old JACK TOMPKINS used to tell on the Western Circuit?

[Illustration: Fee-simple.]

[Proceeds to tell JACK TOMPKINS's story at great length to great interest of Chancery Judges.]

M.R. (*who has listened with marked impatience*). Why, my dear fellow, it isn't a Western Circuit story at all. It was on the Northern Circuit at Appleby.

[Proceeds to tell the same story all over again, substituting Appleby for Exeter. At the conclusion of story, Great laughter from Chancery Judges. Common Law Judges look bored, having all told same story on and about their own Circuits.]

L.C. Very good—very good—used to tell it myself on the South Wales Circuit—but what have we met for?

Lord Justice A. I say, what do you think about this cross-examination fuss? It seems to me—

L.C.J. Talking of cross-examination—do you fellows remember the excellent story dear old JOHNNIE BROWBEAT used to tell about the Launceston election petition?

[Proceeds to tell story in much detail. L.C. looks uncomfortable at its conclusion.]

M.R. (*cutting in*). Why, my dear fellow, it wasn't Launceston at all, it was Lancaster, and —

[Tells story all over again to the Chancery Judges.]

L.C. Yes—excellent. I thought it took place at Chester—but really, now, we must get to business. So, first of all, will anyone kindly tell me what the business is?



Mr. Justice A. (a very young Judge). Well, the fact is, I believe the Public—

Chorus of Judges. The what?

Mr. Justice A. (with hesitation). Why—I was going to say there seems to be a sort of discontent amongst the Public—

L.C. (with dignity). Really, really—what have we to do with the Public? But in case there should be any truth in this extraordinary statement, I think we might as well appoint a Committee to look into it, and then we can meet again some day and hear what it is all about.

L.C.J. Yes, a Committee by all means; the smaller the better. “Too many cooks,” as dear old HORACE puts it.

M.R. Talking of cooks, isn’t it about lunch time?



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[General consensus of opinion in favour of lurching. As they adjourn, L.C.J. detains Chancery Judges to tell them a story about something that happened at Bodmin, and, to prevent mistakes, tells it in West Country dialect. M.R. immediately repeats it in strong Yorkshire, and lays the venue at Bradford. Result; that the whole of HER MAJESTY'S Courts in London were closed for one day.

* * * * *

THE LAY OF THE LITIGANT.

(AFTER HOOD. ALSO AFTER COLERIDGE'S (C.J.) LETTER TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR ON THE DECAY OF LEGAL BUSINESS.)

I remember, I remember
The Law when I was born,
The Serjeants, brothers of the coif,
The Judges dead and gone.
The Judicature Acts to them
Were utterly unknown;
It was a fearful ignorance—
Oh, would it were my own!

I remember, I remember
The worthy "Proctor" race,
The "Posteas," and the "Elegits,"
The "Actions on the Case."
The "Error" each Attorney's Clerk
Did wilfully abet,
The days of "Bills" in Equity—
Some bills are living yet!

I remember, I remember
The years of "Jarndyce" jaw,
The lively game of shuttlecock
'Twixt Equity and Law.
Tribunals then were "Courts" indeed
That are "Divisions" now,
And Silken Gowns have feared the frowns
Upon a "Baron's" brow.

We remember, we remember
The flourishing of trumps,
When Parliament took up our wrongs,
And manned the legal pumps.



Those noble Acts (they said) would end
Obstructions and delay,
And ne'er again would litigants
The piper have to pay.

I remember, I remember
Expenses, mountains high;
I used to think, when duly "taxed,"
They'd vanish by-and-by.
It was a foolish confidence,
But now 'tis little joy
To know that Law's as slow and dear
As when I was a boy!

* * * * *

THE HERO OF THE SUMMER SALE.

(BY OUR OWN PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL POETESS.)

[Illustration]

I would I loved some belted Earl,
Some Baronet, or K.C.B.,
But I'm a most unhappy girl,
And no such luck's in store for me!
I would I loved some Soldier bold,
Who leads his troops where cannons pop,
But if the bitter truth be told—
I love a man who walks a shop!
For oh! a King of Men is he—
With princely strut and stiffened spine—
So his, and his alone, shall be,
This fondly foolish heart of mine!

On Remnant Days—from morn till night,
When blows fall fast, and words run high,
When frenzied females fiercely fight
For bargains that they long to buy—
From hot attack he does not flinch,

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But stands his ground with visage pale,
And all the time looks every inch
The Hero of that Summer Sale!
For oh! a King of Men is he—
Whom shop-assistants call to “Sign!”
So his, and his alone, shall be
This fondly foolish heart of mine!

* * * * *

MONDAY, *Jan.* 18, 1892. “Bath and West of England’s Society’s Cheese School at Frome.” Of this School, the *Times*, judging by results, speaks highly of “the practical character of the instruction given at the School.” This is a bad look-out for Eton and Harrow, not to say for Winchester and Westminster also. All parents who wish their children to be “quite the cheese” in Society generally, and particularly for Bath and the West of England, where, of course, Society is remarkably exclusive, cannot do better, it is evident, than send them to the Bath and West of England Cheese School.

* * * * *

ON THE TRAILL.—It is suggested that in future M.P. should stand for Minor Poet. Would this satisfy Mr. LEWIS MORRIS? Or would he insist on being gazetted as a Major?

* * * * *

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

[Illustration: The following Page.]

One of the Baron’s Deputy-Readers has been looking through Mr. G.W. HENLEY’s *Lyra Heroica; a Book of Verse for Boys*. DAVID NUTT, London.) This is his appreciation:—Mr. HENLEY has tacked his name to a collection which contains some noble poems, some (but not much) trash, and a good many pieces, which, however poetical they may be, are certainly not heroic, seeing that they do not express “the simpler sentiments, and the more elemental emotions” (I use Mr. HENLEY’s prefatory words), and are scarcely the sort of verse that boys are likely, or ought to care about. To be sure, Mr. HENLEY guards himself on the score of his “personal equation”—I trust his boys understand what he means. My own personal equation makes me doubt whether Mr. HENLEY has done well in including such pieces as, for instance,



HERBERT's "*Memento Mori*," CURRAN's "*The Deserter*," SWINBURNE's "*The Oblation*," and ALFRED AUSTIN's "*Is Life Worth Living?*" If Mr. HENLEY, or anybody else who happens to possess a personal equation, will point out to me the heroic quality in these poems, I shall feel deeply grateful. And how, in the name of all that is or ever was heroic, has "*Auld Lang Syne*" crept into this collection of heroic verse? As for Mr. ALFRED AUSTIN, I cannot think by what right he secures a place in such a compilation. I have rarely read a piece of his which did not contain at least one glaring infelicity. In "*Is Life Worth Living?*" he tells us of "blithe herds," which (in compliance with the obvious necessities of rhyme, but for no other reason)

"Wend homeward with unweary feet,
Carolling like the birds."

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Further on we find that

“England’s trident-sceptre roams
Her territorial seas,”

merely because the unfortunate sceptre has to rhyme somehow to “English homes.”

But I have a further complaint against Mr. HENLEY. He presumes, in the most fantastic manner, to alter the well-known titles of celebrated poems. “*The Isles of Greece*” is made to masquerade as “The Glory that was Greece”; “*Auld Lang Syne*” becomes “The Goal of Life,” and “*Tom Bowline*” is converted into “The Perfect Sailor.” This surely (again I use the words of Mr. HENLEY) “is a thing preposterous, and distraught.” On the whole, I cannot think that Mr. HENLEY has done his part well. His manner is bad. His selection, it seems to me, is open to grave censure, on broader grounds than the mere personally equational of which he speaks, and his choppings, and sub-titles, and so forth, are not commendable. The irony of literary history has apparently ordained that Mr. HENLEY should first patronise, and then “cut,” both CAMPBELL and MACAULAY. Was the shade of MACAULAY disturbed when he learnt that Mr. HENLEY considered his “*Battle of Naseby*” both “vicious and ugly”?

BARON DE BOOK-WORMS & CO.

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