

# **Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 102, February 27, 1892 eBook**

## **Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 102, February 27, 1892**

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# Page 1

## CONFESSIONS OF A DUFFER.

V.—*The Duffer at Cricket.*

To hear my remarks on the Cricket, in the Pavilion, you might think that I had been a great player entirely, in my day. “Who is that fine old English sportsman,” you might ask, “who seems to have been so intimate with MYNN, and *Fuller Pilch*, and *Carpenter*, and *Hayward* and *Tarrant* and *Jackson* and C.D. MARSHAM? No doubt we see in him the remains of a sterling Cricketer of the old school.” And then when I lay down the law on the iniquity of boundary hits, “always ran them out in *my time*,” and on the tame stupidity of letting balls to the off go unpunished, and the wickedness of dispensing with a long stop, you would be more and more persuaded that I had at least, played for my county. Well, I *have* played for my county, but as the county I played for was Berwickshire, there is perhaps nothing to be so very proud of in that distinction. But this I will say for the Cricketing Duffer; he is your true enthusiast. When I go to Lord’s on a summer day, which of my contemporaries do I meet there? Not the men who played for the University, not the KENNYS and *Mitchells* and *Butlers*, but the surviving members of College Second Elevens in the old days of Cowley Marsh, when every man brought his own bottle of Oxford wine for luncheon. These are the veterans who contribute most to the crowd of lookers-on. They never were of any use as players, but their hearts were in the game, and from the game they will never be divorced. It is an ill thing for an outsider to drop a remark about Cricket among us, at about eleven o’clock in a country house smoking-room. After that the time flies in a paradise of reminiscences, till about 4 A.M. or some such “wee, short hour ayont the Twal’,” if one may quote *Burns* without being insulted by all the numerous and capable wits of Glasgow. Why is it that the Duffer keeps up his interest in Cricket, while the good players cease to care much about it? Perhaps *their* interest was selfish; his is purely ideal, and consequently immortal. To him Cricket was ever an unembodied joy of which he could make nothing palpable; nothing subject to the cold law of averages. Mine was 0.3.

[Illustration]

My own introduction to Cricket, as to Golf, was peculiarly poignant. I and my brother, aged more or less about six or seven, were invited to play by the local Club, and we each received exactly one very slow and considerate lob. But his lob took him on the eye, and mine, kicking on a bad wicket, had me on the knee-pan. The subsequent proceedings did not interest us very much, but there is nothing like entering children early at a manly pastime.

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Intellectual application will, to some extent, overcome physical difficulties. By working at least five hours a day, and by reading the *Cricket Field* daily and nightly, I did learn to bowl a little, with a kind of twist. This, while it lasted, in a bowlerless country, was a delightful accomplishment. You got into much better sporting society than you deserved, and, in remote parts of the pastoral districts you were looked up to as one whose name had been in *Bell's Life*; we still had *Bell's Life* then. It was no very difficult matter to bowl a rustic team for a score of runs or so, and all went merry as a wedding bell. But, alas, when Drumthwacket played Tullochgorum, there was a young Cambridge man staying with the latter chieftain. I began, as I usually did, by "yorking" Tullochgorum's Piper and his chief Butler, and his head Stalker, and then *Smith* of King's came in. The ground, as usual, had four sides. He hit me over the enclosure at each of the four sides, for I changed my end after being knocked for five fours in his first over. After that, my prestige was gone. The rustics, instead of crawling about their wickets, took to walking in and smacking me. This would not have mattered, if any of the Drumthwacket team could have held a catch, and if the wicket-keeper had not let *Smith* off four times in one over. My character was lost, and all was ended with me north of the Grampians, where the wickets are peculiarly suitable to my style of delivery.

As to batting, there is little that is pleasant to confess. As soon as I got a distant view of a ball, I was ever tempted to whack wildly in its direction. There was no use in waiting for it, the more I looked at it the less I liked it. So I whacked, and, if you always do this, a ball will sometimes land on the driving part of the bat, and then it usually happened that my companion, striving for a five or a six, ran me out. If he did not, I did not stay long. The wicket-keeper was a person whose existence I always treated as *une quantite negligeable*, and sometimes the ball would bound off his pads into the stumps. The fielders would occasionally hold a catch, anything *may* happen. On the other hand there was this to be said for my style of batting, that the most experienced Cricketer could not tell where or in what direction I would hit any given ball. If it was on the off, that was no reason why I should not bang it to square-leg, a stroke which has become fashionable since my time, but in those old days, you did not often see it in first-class Cricket. It was rather regarded as "an agrarian outrage." Foreigners and ladies would find Cricket a more buoyant diversion if all the world, and especially *Lewis hall* and *Shrewsbury*, played on my principles. Innings would not last so long. Not so many matches would be drawn. The fielders would not catch cold.

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To speak of fielding is to revive unspeakable sorrows. For a short-sighted man, whose fingers are thumbs, no post in the field is exactly grateful. I have been at long-leg, and, watching the game intently, have perceived the batters running, and have heard cries of "well fielded!" These cries were ironical. The ball had been hit past me, but I was not fortunate enough to observe the circumstance. A fielder of this *calibre* always ends by finding his way to short-leg. A prudent man can do a good deal here by watching the umpire, dodging when he dodges, and getting behind him on occasion. But I was not prudent. I observed that a certain player hit very much behind the leg, so there, "in the mad pride of intellectuality," I privily stationed myself. He *did* it very fine, very fine indeed, into my eye. The same misfortune has attended me at short-slip; it should have been a wicket, it was a black eye, or the loss of a tooth or two, as might happen. In fact, I sometimes wonder myself at the contemptuous frankness of my own remarks on the fielding at Lord's. For if a catch could be missed (and most catches can), I was the man to miss it. Swift ones used to hit me and hurt me, long ones I always misjudged, little simple poppy ones spun out of my fingers. Now the unlucky thing about Cricket, for a Duffer, is that your misfortunes do not hurt yourself alone. It is not as in a single at Golf, it is not as in fishing, or riding, or wherever you have no partner. To drop catches is to madden the bowler not unnaturally, and to lengthen the period of leather-hunting. Cricket is a social game, and its proficient soon give the cold shoulder to the Duffer. He has his place, however, in the nature of things. It is he who keeps up the enthusiasm, who remembers every run that anybody I made in any given match. In fact, at Cricket, the Duffer's mission is to be a "judge of the game;" I don't mean an Umpire, very far from that. If you once let the Duffer umpire he could ruin the stoutest side, and secure victory to the feeblest. I may say that, at least in this capacity, I have proved really useful to my party in country matches. But, in the long run, my capacity even for umpiring came to be doubted, and now I am only a critic of Cricket. There is none more relentless, not one with a higher standard, at least where no personal feelings are concerned. For I have remarked that, if a Cambridge man writes about an Oxford victory (which he seldom has to do), or if an Oxford man writes on a Cambridge victory (a frequent affliction), he always leaves you with the impression that, in spite of figures, his side had at least a moral triumph. These admirable writers have all been Duffers.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: *Times change.*

*Shade of William the Conqueror.* "WHAT! THE PEOPLE OBJECT TO ENCLOSING A FEW ACRES OF THIS OPEN SPACE FOR STATE PURPOSES—FOR THEIR OWN BENEFIT? BY THE SPLENDOUR OF HEAVEN! I SHOULD HAVE LIKED TO HAVE HEARD THE VARLETS OBJECT TO MY MAKING MILES OF IT SUCH—FOR *MINE!*"

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*Secretary for War.* "AH, YOUR MAJESTY HAD IN YOUR TIMES NO *TIMES* TO RECKON WITH!"]

\* \* \* \* \*

TIMES CHANGE.

[*"The 'Ranges Act' constitutes ... a standing menace to rights of common wherever commons and open spaces exist."*—*The Times*.]

"The old order changes, yielding place to new."

By Phoebus, you are right, mellifluous TENNYSON!  
Could Norman WILLIAM this conjuncture view,  
He'd greet our Progress with—well, scarce a benison;  
He, though ranked high 'midst monarchs and commanders,  
Had the same weakness as our troops in Flanders.

ROBERT the Devil's ruthless son would clear  
A county to make coverts, deer-runs, chaces.  
What had he thought of modern notions queer  
Concerning Common Rights and Open Spaces?  
"The People—who are varlets!—still oppose them,  
Whether the Powers that be make or enclose them!"

"The People *versus* Powers that Be!" Ah, yes!  
Imperious Norman, that's a modern trial  
That's always being argued more or less;  
The Press keeps now such vigilant espial  
On every grasping would-be public plunderer.  
You, Sire, had not to reckon with "The Thunderer!"

Times change, stark soldier, and we have the *Times*  
Premier to check and snub Chief Secretaries.  
Counting land-grabbing high among earth's crimes  
Would have amazed you! Public judgment varies.  
You and your wolf-hound, WILLIAM, would not now  
Try a "clean sweep,"—without a general row.

Ask OTTO! He is somewhat in your style,  
But he could tell you what new risks environ  
The ancient art of Ruling. You may smile  
At Print and Paper *versus* Blood and Iron,

But Sovereign and Crown, though loved by many,  
Stand now no chance against the Popular Penny.

Ask Malwood's Squire again! He knows right well  
The New Democracy,—and the New Forest;  
*Our* great Plantagenet, a true blue "Swell,"  
Fights for the People when their need is sorest.  
In Norman BILLY he'd own small belief;  
The People's WILLIAM is *his* favourite chief.

Your ghostly presence in these verdant glades  
Might startle STANHOPE, musing on his Ranges,  
But not the angriest of Royal Shades  
May now arrest the progress of Time's changes.  
True, much is yielded yet to Swelldom's "Sport,"  
But some aver that even *its* time is short.

No, Clearances and Rights of Common, now  
Own not the sway of autocrats capricious.  
Small use, great Shade, to knit that haughty brow,  
And swear *your* action would be expeditious.  
The days of Curfew and of Forest Law  
Are passed. We're swayed by Justice—and Free Jaw!

\* \* \* \* \*



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“FOR VALUE RECEIVED.”—Aldgate Ward changed Alderman LUSK for one POUND.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: WHAT OUR ARTIST HAS TO PUT UP WITH, BEFORE HE TURNS LIKE A CRUSHED WORM.

*Our Art Critic (patronisingly).* “HA—HUM! WELL, YOUR COLOUR IS FAIRLY DECENT, AND YOU HAVE NICISH FEELING FOR LIGHT AND SHADE, AND *CHIAROSCURO*. BUT WHERE YOB ALWAYS FAIL TO PLEASE, SOMEHOW, IS IN YOUR *EXECUTION!*”

*Our Artist.* “MY *EXECUTION*? AH! JUST SO. I’VE NO DOUBT THAT *YOURS*, NOW WOULD BE MORE GENERALLY POPULAR!”]

\* \* \* \* \*

FROM PARLIAMENTARY EXAMINATION PAPER.

*Question.*—Explain the term “Standing Orders.”

*Answer 1.*—It means that when a visitor to the House has an order for the Speaker’s Gallery, and can’t find a seat, he then becomes one of the Standing Orders.—SISTE VIATOR.

*Answer 2.*—When a friendly M.P. sees three of us waiting for him, takes us to the bar of the House, and orders drinks all round, which we take standing.—BIBENDUM EST.

\* \* \* \* \*

INDIA FOR THE IRISH!—“An amended estimate of the present Paddy Crop has been published by the Local Government.” (*Vide Times* for Feb. 15.) What more can the most thorough Home-Rulers want, if they would only be content to make their home in Burmah instead of Ireland? “Local Government” can soon be developed, for ’tis but Home Rule in the bud, and the “Paddy Crop” is already there.

\* \* \* \* \*

MOTTO FOR THE NEW RECORDER OF THE CITY OF LONDON.—“HALL There!”

\* \* \* \* \*

“COMBINING AMUSEMENT WITH INSTRUCTION.”

(A SKETCH AT THE COLLECTION OF INSTRUMENTS OF TORTURE.)

SCENE—*The Maddox Street Galleries. A large and appropriately lighted room. Upon walls of a sombre crimson, various Implements of Torture are arranged with considerable taste, and an eye for decorative effect, the central space being reserved for more elaborate contrivances in wood and iron. Visitors discovered inspecting the Exhibition by the aid of the excellent Catalogues, with the subdued appreciation of persons conscious that they are spending a very pleasant and profitable afternoon.*

*Mr. Charnelhouse Goole (as he enters, to Mrs. C.G.).* Now, my dear, the first thing I want to see is that Iron Maiden there's so much talk about. I wonder whereabouts it is!

*Mrs. C.G.* I think *that* must be it, up at the other end of the room. But don't you *think*, dear, it would be nicer to see the *other* things first, and keep that for the *last*?

*Mr. C.G. (struck by the refinement of this suggestion).* Well, upon, my word, AMINA, I almost think it would!

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*Mr. Frederic Frivell (to his wife, whom he takes a marital pleasure in shocking).* What fun those old fellows must have had in those days, mustn't they?

*Mrs. Frivell (a serious lady).* I don't think fun is at *all* the right word, FREDERIC. I do *wish* you wouldn't take these things so lightly. I'm sure it's melancholy enough to look at all these horrid machines, and think—

*Mr. F.* That Torture is a lost art? Isn't that what you were going to say? But it's *not*, you know; we've refined it—that's all. Look at the Photographer, and the Interviewer, and the Pathetic Reciter, and the—

*[Mrs. F. endeavours to convince him that she didn't mean that at all, and that he is comparing totally different things.]*

*An Aphoristic Uncle (to an irreverent Nephew).* No. 89. "A Long-spiked Wooden Roller, known as a 'Spiked Hare.'" You see, TOM, my boy, the victim was—(*Describes the process.*) "Some of the old writers describe this torture as being most fearful," so the Catalogue tells us.

*Tom-my-boy (after inspecting the spikes).* Well, do you know, Uncle, I shouldn't be at all surprised if the old Johnnies weren't so far out.

*The Aph. Uncle.* Another illustration, my boy, of "Man's inhumanity to Man"!

*Tom-my-boy.* Not bad for you, Uncle—only you cribbed it out of the Catalogue, you know! [*The A.U. gives him up.*]

*An Indulgent Parent enters, leading a small boy in a tall hat, and is presently recognised by the A.U.*

*The A.U.* So you've brought your son to see this collection, hey? Well, it's of the greatest educational value to a thoughtful youth—rich in moral and historical instruction!

*The I.P.* Well, it was like this, you see. I had to take him to the dentist's, and, finding we should have half-an-hour or so to spare before he could attend to him, I thought we'd just drop in here and amuse ourselves—eh, BOBBY? Wonderfully ingenious, you know, in their way, some of these things! Now, *here's* a thing—"A Spanish mouth-pear, made of iron." You see, BOBBY, they forced it into the mouth and touched a screw, and it sprang open, preventing the victim from screaming.

*Bobby.* Y-yes, father. Should you think Mr. Fawcepps will have one of those?

*The I.P. (annoyed).* Now, what *is* the use of my taking you to a place of this sort to divert your thoughts, if your mind is running on something else all the time? I won't have it, do you hear. Enjoy yourself like a sensible boy!

*Bobby.* Y-yes, Father, I am. It—it's quite cured my toothache already—*really* it has!

*Mrs. Frivell (reading from Catalogue).* "A Penitent's Girdle, made of barbed wire, which, when worn next to the flesh, caused the most unpleasant and uncomfortable irritation."  
Oh, FREDERIC, just fancy that!

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*Mr. F.* My dear CECILIA, I can *quite* fancy it!

*Mrs. F.* But I thought these tortures were only for *Malefactors*. Why do they call it a *Penitent's Girdle*?

*Mr. F.* Can't say,—unless because he generally repented having put it on.

*Mrs. F.* I don't think that *can* be the real reason.

*Two English House-maids (to a small German Page-Boy who is escorting them).* Here, JOHNNIE, what's *this* mean? (*Reads from Catalogue the motto on an Executioner's Sword.*) "Di Herrin' sturin dem Unheel ick exequire ir End Urthile." Come, *you* ought to know!

*Johnnie (not unnaturally at a loss).* It means—it means—somding I do not understandt.

*The Housemaids (disappointed in him).* Well, *you are* a boy! I *did* think, bein' German yourself, you'd be quite at 'ome 'ere!

*Mr. Ernest Stodgely (impressively, to Miss FEATHERHEAD, his fiancée).* Just look at this, FLOSSIE. (*Reading.*) "Executioner's Cloak, very long, of red woollen material; presumably red so as not to show blood-spots or stains." Hideously suggestive that, is it not?

*Miss Flossie.* I shouldn't call it exactly *hideous*, ERNEST. Do you know, I was just thinking that, with a high Astrachan collar, you know, and old silver fastenings, it would make rather a nice winter cloak. So deliciously warm! [*ERNEST avails himself of a lover's privileges to lecture her severely.*]

### IN FRONT OF THE IRON MAIDEN.

*Mr. Ch. Goole.* So *this* is the Iron Maiden! Well, I expected something rather more dreadful-looking. The face has really quite a pleasant expression. [*Disappointedly.*]

[*Illustration: "Oh, but I think that makes it so much more horrible, don't you?"*]

*Mrs. Ch. G. (with subtler appreciation).* Oh, but I think that makes it so much *more* horrible, don't *you*?

*Mr. Ch. G.* Well, I don't know—perhaps. But there ought to be a wax figure inside it. They ought to have wax figures on most of these things—make it much more interesting!

*Mr. Frivell (who is close by).* I quite agree with you, Sir—indeed, I would go farther. I think there should be competent persons engaged to provide practical illustrations of all the more amusing tortures—say from three to five every afternoon. Draw all London!

*Mrs. F. (horrified).* FRED, you *know* you don't mean it! And besides, you would *never* get people willing to be shut up inside that thing!

*Mr. F.* My dear, I'm perfectly serious, as I always am. And as to not getting subjects, why—*(He beckons to one of the Boy-Messengers in waiting, who advances)*. Look here, my lad, you seem a bright intelligent youth. Would you mind just stepping inside and allowing us to close the door? We won't detain you an instant.

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Mrs. F. What a shame, FRED! Don't *think* of such a thing, there's a good boy! Say no—and I'll give you sixpence!

*The Boy (grinning).* Well, Lady, make it a shillin', and I'll stay outside—to oblige you!

Mrs. F. (*giving him a shilling*). There's a good sensible boy! FREDERIC, have you gone quite mad? You know you wouldn't hurt a fly?

*[The GOOLES move away, feeling that they have been trifled with.]*

Mr. F. A fly? Not for the world!—but this is only a boy. I want to know what they're here for. Now, my lad, you're not engaged to be *idle*, you know. Just think of the amount of innocent pleasure you would afford by getting into this spiked cradle and letting me rock you. You won't? Well, will you sit on the Spanish Donkey? come! I'll give you a leg up and fasten the weights on your legs for you. You aren't afraid of a donkey?

*[Bystanders collect in hope of amusement.]*

*The Boy (sulkily).* Not of some Donkeys, Sir, as ain't quite so sharp as that one, whatever they think themselves!

*[Titters. Mr. F.F. feels that he has got rather the worst of it, and collapses, with the dismal completeness of a Funny Man; Mrs. F. remains behind to bribe the boy with another shilling to promise her solemnly never on any account to play with any of the tortures.]*

Mrs. F. (*rejoining her husband*). FREDERIC, how can you? You make me feel perfectly faint when you act like this!

Mr. F. (*recovering*). Faint, CECILIA? Well, I daresay they won't mind if you sit down in one of these spiked chairs for a minute or two.

Mrs. F. (*angrily*). I shall do no such thing, FREDERIC! And you ought to be *ashamed* to suggest it!

Mrs. Borrodale (*choosing photographs of Nuremberg*). Look, JOHN, what a lovely large one of the *Sebald's Kirche*! I really *must* have this. Oh, and the *Insel Schutt*—and this of the *Schoene Brunnen*—and the view from the *Burg*—that makes the half-dozen. They will be joys for ever, JOHN! And *only* three shillings each! Will you pay the boy for them, JOHN, please—it's just eighteen shillings.

John. Can't, my dear. Only half-a-crown in my pocket. Don't you remember, I lent you my last sov. not five minutes ago?

*Mrs. B.* Oh, so you did. Well, on second thoughts, perhaps this size is rather—I think I'll take five of the sixpenny ones instead—they're every bit as good. You can spare me that half-crown, JOHN!

*A Patriot (coming out).* Well, it's just the same 'ere as everywhere else. All the things "made in Germany"! Sickenin' I call it!

\* \* \* \* \*



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[Illustration: A MEETING OF THE “BANDY” ASSOCIATION  
FOR THE PROMOTION OF “HOCKEY ON THE ICE.”]

\* \* \* \* \*

RICE AND PRUNES.

[Illustration]

Rice and prunes a household journal  
Called the chief of household boons:  
Hence my mother cooks diurnal  
Rice and prunes.

Therefore on successive noons,  
Sombre fruit and snowy kernel  
Woo reluctant forks and spoons.

As the ear, when leaves are vernal,  
Wearies of the blackbird's tunes,  
So we weary of eternal  
Rice and prunes.

\* \* \* \* \*

AN OLD FRIEND AT THE CRITERION.—Time flies, and *Fourteen Days*, occupying only a couple of hours or so at the Criterion, goes wonderfully. CHARLES WYNDHAM is the life and soul of the piece, and the giddy GIDDENS is another life and soul. Miss MARY MOORE, charming as ever, with a clearness of “dictation,” as Mrs. MALAPROP would say, that is in itself a delight to the ear. Every word she speaks is distinct, and, which is more to the purpose, every telling word tells. *Fourteen Days* is a survival and revival of one of H.J. BYRON's fittest. If it “catches on” once more, as it ought to do, it might run fourteen weeks, and then,—“Next please!”

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: Q.E.D.]

“MAY I ASK YOU HOW YOU MANAGE TO KEEP YOUR LITTLE PET SO SLEEK AND THIN?”

“I DON'T KNOW. IT HAS ITS LUNCH AND DINNER WITH ME EVERY DAY.”

“WELL, SO DOES MINE!”]

\* \* \* \* \*

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

*House of Commons, Monday, February 15.*—A lively sitting, with an unexpected ending. Debate on Address resumed by SEXTON in excellent speech, an effect largely contributed to by comparative brevity. Only an hour long; remarkable compression. Would have been better still had it been reduced by the twenty minutes occupied in preliminary observations. At twenty-five minutes past four he rose to move Amendment condemnatory of Land Purchase Act of last year. Precisely at a quarter to five came to his amendment, and began to recommend it to House. But mustn't complain. An excellent beginning for new Session that may further develop.

"An oratorical eel," SAUNDERSON, later in sitting, likened Member for West Belfast to; charming simile, with just that mixture of graphicness and incongruity that only Irish wit could flash upon. Not meant to be uncomplimentary, for SAUNDERSON, like the rest, acknowledges capacity of SEXTON in debate; his clear insight, his capacity for grasping a subject, his aptness of illustration, his quickness of retort, and, alack! the embarrassment of the wealth of language. If he could only economise that, and guard against the fatal fluency that besets him, converting what might be a sharp direct speech of twenty minutes into a windy weariness of hour-and-a-half or two hours, he would take high rank among Parliamentary debaters.

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DIZZY once said the occasions when a man addressing House of Commons need exceed twenty minutes, come to him only twice or thrice in a lifetime. He did more than preach; he carried into practice his own principle with success. Very rarely in later years, even when Leader of House of Commons, did he exceed twenty minutes, and all his most successful interpositions in debate were on that plan. When, occasionally, he felt that circumstances demanded a long and laboured address, his labour was in vain.

Capital speech, too, of quite another kind, from DUNBAR BARTON. Most promising maiden speech delivered in present Parliament; of good omen that best parts were not those prepared in leisure of study, put the earlier passages evoked by preceding debate, and necessarily impromptu. As for SAUNDERSON, he was in his best form.

“SAUNDERSON,” said the SQUIRE OF MALWOOD, recognising a kindred spirit, “always reminds me of those Lifeguardsmen you see at the Military Festival, riding round Agricultural Hall slashing off heads. The heads are dummies, and no harm is done; but it’s a pretty sight.”

The Colonel rides well, and is a skilful swordsman.

Delight of audience crowding in after dinner completed by TIM HEALY dashing in with intent to trip up Colonel. Domestic difficulties in the Party have not smoothed down TIM’s natural truculence. With JOHN REDMOND sitting behind him and SAUNDERSON in front, a porcupine in fretful mood is a ball of spun silk compared with TIM.

After this RADCLIFFE COOKE and collapse, with the prospect of proceedings droning on till midnight, then adjournment, and begin again to-morrow. Suddenly, on stroke of twelve, Closure moved. House completely taken aback. Whilst it sat gasping under shock SPEAKER declared Closure carried; bells rang through all the corridors; Members trooped in to find Division imminent. When figures declared, showing Government had been surprised into narrow majority of 21, fresh wave of excitement welled forth, amid which Address was, somehow, agreed to. Members went off into snowstorm, cheering and laughing as if there had never before been such larks.

*Business done.*—Address agreed to.

*Tuesday Night.*—GRANDOLPH turned up to-day; took his familiar corner seat; tugged at his old moustache; caressed his new beard, and listened to SEALE HAYNE recklessly attacking the sacred institution of Justiciary of the Peace.

“Nothing changed, TOBY, dear boy,” he said; “not even the Ministry. When I came back from Mashonaland I was told we were on the eve of political earthquake. The House of Commons was to be transformed into a cockpit; the Benches steeped in the gore of an iniquitous Ministry. But, except for some vacant places and some further advancement

of privates in the little band I once officered, it's all the same, only a little drearier. The same throng in the Lobby, the same rows of Members sitting on the Benches, the same Mace

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on the Table, the same stately figure in the Chair, and the same Sergeants-at-Arms relieving guard at the Cross Benches. There are not quite the same two Irish Leaders, for BRER FOX has 'gone away.' BRER RABBIT I see sitting over there with his kindly face and his friendly smile, perhaps the only Irishman in the House who, if a coat were trailed before him, would turn away from temptation. It's only Irishmen, with their inexhaustible fund of humour, who would have put JUSTIN MCCARTHY in his present place. Doesn't much matter so long as TIM HEALY's around. I'll bet my gold mine at Mashonaland against the Kennel, Barks, that TIM will make up the average of fighting even when BRER RABBIT in the scale."

[Illustration: A GIFT FROM THE GREEKS.

RIGHT HON. ARTHUR. "IF I CAN ONLY GET THIS THROUGH, IT OUGHT TO SETTLE 'EM!"]

There's one thing changed GRANDOLPH did not allude to; perhaps unconscious of it. 'Tis his own appearance. In addition to the beard, he has put on ruddy tint that speaks well for Mashonaland as a health resort compared with Westminster. Amongst the pale-faced legislators his visage shines like the morning sun. "Quite a Colonial look about him," says ALGERNON BORTHWICK, fretfully. "But, after a few dinners at the Amphitryon and a few nights at the House and elsewhere, he'll get over it."

Members from all parts crowd round GRANDOLPH to shake the horny hand of the intrepid explorer, the dauntless lion *dompter*. A cold air whistles along the row of Ministers as he sits behind.

"What's he up to?" JOKIM hoarsely whispered, all his native gaiety eclipsed.

"Come down, I suppose," said Prince ARTHUR, smiling, "to congratulate us on our great victory last night, whereby we escaped defeat in Debate on Address by triumphant majority of 21."

"Quite a stormy petrel don't you think?" JOKIM said, nervously rubbing his hands.

"Not exactly," said Prince ARTHUR; "that usually comes before the storm you know. If you must be personal and ornithological, I should say GRANDOLPH's appearance on the scene is more reminiscent of the vulture; a little hasty in his appearance perhaps, but that is none the less significant."

*Business done.*—Practically none, and so home to dinner at twenty minutes to eight.



*Thursday Night.*—Prince ARTHUR explained provisions of long-looked-for Local Government scheme. A remarkable, unexampled, scene. House crowded on every Bench, with Duke of DEVONSHIRE looking down from Peers' Gallery, thanking Heaven he is out of it. Prince ARTHUR's manner in introducing the measure in keeping with the strange surroundings. Might reasonably have been expected that he would have been at pains to recommend the Bill to acceptance of House. Not a bit of it. If people insisted upon regarding it as the most important business of Session, Prince ARTHUR couldn't help it. But he certainly would not foster the delusion. In its potentiality of beneficent effect, the Bill nothing in comparison with the Coercion Act or the Light Railways Act.

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"A poor thing," he said, in effect, and did not add, "but mine own."

If it was not his, certainly no one else would own it. Irish Members received it with jeers. JOHN MORLEY denounced it as a monstrous imposture. SQUIRE OF MALWOOD benignantly affected to regard it as a little joke with which Ministers designed to vary a dull Session. But a joke may be carried too far; better drop this now, and go to business.

Oddly enough, the storm of contumely had effect of inspiring Prince ARTHUR with new affection for his unwelcomed offspring, adding to the strength of his evidently new conviction that the proposed expedient was sound, and, if accepted, would prove efficacious.

"And what do *you* think of the Tory scheme of Home Rule," I asked JUSTIN MCCARTHY, when it was all over.

"*Timeo Danaos, et dona ferentes*," he said, dropping into his native Celtic speech. "But in this case there is no room for apprehension. BALFOUR may leave this wooden horse outside the gates for a month, and the Trojans wouldn't touch it with a pair of tongs."

Prince ARTHUR grew more confident as the clouds gathered.

"I see very well," he said, "if I'm to stable this horse in the Home Rule Troy, I must drag it all the way myself. I shall get no help from either section of the garrison. But it's got to be done, and I'll buckle-to. Once through, it will settle the more than ten years' siege."

*Business done.*—Prince ARTHUR left tugging away at his wooden horse.

*Friday Night.*—House of Lords almost deserted. HALSBURY punctual in his place, making most of opportunities on Woolsack whilst they yet remain.

"Here to-day and gone to-morrow, TOBY," he remarked, with forced gaiety; "but, when I hand in the Seals of Office, I shall at least have the serene assurance to cheer me in my retirement that the whole of my family, including collateral branches, have been provided for."

Amongst the prevailing dolour, the MARKISS in high spirits.

"Things not looking well in the Commons or the country, I admit," he says; "but all is not lost yet. I have still a card to play, and I believe it will score the trick. We shall presently have to go to the country, and fight a confident Opposition. Successful Foreign Policy is played out. Free Education has brought us no support; trifling with Home Rule in Ireland will bring us enemies. Am convinced that the thing to go to the country on is the fog. MIDDLETON's our man. Been thinking over it for a week. See it now; shall take

up question of London fog; devise some means of battling with it; and then let the worst come. A Government that has fought the fog will at least carry London, and, London ours, we shall be able to stem the tide of anarchy.”

*Business done.*—The MARKISS takes a great resolution.

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[Illustration: “THE HUNTING OF THE HARCOURT.”



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(According to *Fancy Sketch* by "Observer" in the "Times.") "O where and O where is our Harcourt Laddie gone?"]

\* \* \* \* \*

PADDYWHACK AND DR. BIRCH.—Everyone knows what "the Assisted Education (Ireland) Bill" is. Why should not an Assisted Education (England) Bill be brought in to enable public school-boys to secure, without payment of any additional fee beyond that included for "swishing" in the Bill sent home to the parents, the specimen of the legal instrument with which their education may have been most helpfully assisted?

\* \* \* \* \*

"BECKY THE SECOND."—Those comparatively few who answered our query as to where "the good *Becky*, the very opposite of *Becky* in *Vanity Fair*, was to be found in THACKERAY's works," and have referred us to *A Shabby Genteel Story*, are right. The many who hit upon *Rebecca* in the burlesque of *Ivanhoe* mistook the question.

\* \* \* \* \*

A CORRESPONDENT, signing himself "IGNORAMUS," writes to inquire "The address of a Society called 'The London French Polishers.'" He says, "I want my French polished up a bit before going to Paris."

\* \* \* \* \*

"VIVE LA LIBERTE!"

The *Era* at one time used to enjoy a monopoly of strangely, but purely professionally-worded advertisements; but now the *Daily Telegraph* is creeping up and commencing to occupy the *Era*'s special domain. One day last week in the *D.T.* the following notice appeared:—"Mr. CHARLES SUGDEN at liberty.—Address, &c." "At Liberty!" How will this sound to the uninitiated millions? Taking for granted that the readers, whose name is Legion, know perfectly well who and what Mr. CHARLES SUGDEN is, having a lively recollection of this talented actor as among the best representatives of bad characters (excepting perhaps that of *William of Orange*, which was Mr. SUGDEN's *chef d'oeuvre*, and about whose character there are strong differences of opinion), will they not unnaturally be led to inquire how, why, when and wherefore Mr. SUGDEN ever came to be deprived of his liberty, and under what circumstances he has been restored to it, or it to him? "At Liberty!" It has a grand and glorious sound! This distinguished Thespian was never an "hereditary bondsman," then why not always "at liberty"? But, be this as it may, once more "the Rover is free!" SUGDEN is a name honourable behind and before the foot-lights. In the Courts of Law it is a Legal Light, and among Gas Companies the Sugden Burner is, we believe, justly famous. Whatever the announcement may or may



not mean, all sons of Liberty will rejoice that this eccentric comedian is once more free, and on the stage he will be again most welcome.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Are you staying in town?” “No,” answered Mrs. R.; “I’m going *au contraire*.” Which, she subsequently explained, was French for going into the country.

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[Illustration: FANCY PORTRAIT.

GENERAL BOOMBASTES.

*Solo and Chorus.*

AIR—"Piff! Paff! Pouf!" from "La Grande Duchosse."

"ET PUFF! PUFF! PUFF!  
ET TARA PARA POUM!  
JE SUIS, MOI, LE GENERAL BOOM! BOOM!"

*[Repeats it ad lib.]*

\* \* \* \* \*

ON RELIGIOUS CYMBALISM.

The Salvationist Bands which perform in and out of London—(would that they were restricted as the Moore and Burgess Minstrels restrict themselves to one hall, never or "hardly ever," performing out of London!)—everywhere and anywhere without respecting illness, or the hours of public worship in our Churches and Chapels, or the necessities of repose, show thereby a distinct want of that consideration for the feelings of their fellow-citizens which simple Christian folk call Charity. These Booth performers—which designation savours suggestively of Mountebanks—would do well to play their peculiar music and sing their peculiar hymns within the four walls of their own places of worship, employing the intervals essential for gaining of wind and for rest of muscle in meditating, perhaps breathlessly, on the inspired Pauline teaching which will inform them that even the works of an Apostle, if he have not charity, will be as "sounding brass and tinkling cymbals," making indeed a great noise in the world, but as one WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE has said, being mere "sound and fury signifying nothing." "Liberty of Worship" by all means, but not such Liberty for any one particular form of worship which, interfering with the freedom of others, speedily degenerates into fanatical licence, and so becomes a nuisance as intolerant as it is intolerable.

\* \* \* \* \*

ANGLO-AMERICAN FRENCH.—A new word must be added to our French dictionaries. In *Le Figaro* for Feb. 15, in an article on HECTOR MALOT, occurs this expression, "*en ce temps de puffisme litteraire.*" In English we have had the word and the thing too, since the time of SHERIDAN's *Critic*, but is any student of French journalism familiar with it in the Parisian newspapers?

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE FANCY BALL.

[Illustration]

You came as GRETCHEN, hair of gold  
And face so exquisitely sweet,  
That I, like FAUST, had *certes* sold  
Myself, to win you, MARGUERITE.  
Each plait enmeshed my struggling heart,  
That wildly beat against my will;  
And though at last we had to part,  
In Dreamland I could see you still.

Another night, with tresses dark,  
And kirtle strewn with *fleurs-de-lys*,  
You came a flashing JOAN OF ARC,  
Destructive of my bosom's peace.  
The sword was girt upon your hip,  
And thine the Maid's heroic glance;  
I seemed to hear upon your lip,  
The watchword of her life, "For France!"

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Anon I saw thee as the Queen  
Who held so many hearts in fee;  
But MARY STUART scarce had been,  
Methinks, so beautiful as thee.  
I fain had gone and splintered lance,  
As in the old days in our realm;  
To win a kind approving glance,  
And wear your glove upon my helm.

What, stately EDITH! Lives there yet  
The lady of that royal line,  
The peerless proud Plantagenet,  
Will KENNETH's great emprise be mine?  
We saw how high his hopes could soar;  
We know the guerdon that he won.  
Shall I find favour, as of yore  
Did DAVID, Earl of Huntingdon?

'Tis certain, in whatever guise  
You come, as heroine of song  
Or story, to my faithful eyes  
You shine the fairest of the throng.  
However fanciful you be,  
Whatever fancy dress befalls;  
My fancy paints you fancy-free,  
To fancy me at Fancy Balls!

\* \* \* \* \*

THE REAL NINE POINTS OF THE LAW.—Costs.

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THE UNOBSERVED OF ONE "OBSERVER."

From the account given by "OBSERVER" in the *Times*, it might be inferred that "HARCOURT! HARCOURT!" was shouted all over the House, in the lobbies, through the smoking-room, in the library, through the cellars, in fact, everywhere within the sacred precincts, on one memorable night, while at that very moment the wily Sir WILLIAM, tucked comfortably up in his little bed, was murmuring softly to himself, "HARCOURT! indeed! 'Ha! not caught,' more likely!" and so sweetly fell asleep.

\* \* \* \* \*

MRS. R. read aloud from the latest Report of "B. and F. Bible Society," "One cannot help thinking of the glorious field of labour which lies open here before the Colporteur, and of the pleasant way in which his labours are appreciated by all." But the worthy lady pronounced colporteur as coalporter, and so on hearing from a friend that "the Coalporters were on strike," Mrs. R. could not help exclaiming, "Dear! how ungrateful of them, when they were being 'so much appreciated by all!'"

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[Illustration: THE WESTMINSTER WAX-WORK SHOW FOR THE SESSION 1892.  
ROOM 2.]

\* \* \* \* \*

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (published by Messrs. OSGOOD, MCILVAINE & CO.), Mr. THOMAS HARDY has given us a striking work of fiction, bold in design, and elaborate in finish. The characters, with one exception, are as true to life as are his graphic descriptions of nature's own scenery; true that is to the types of such rural life as he professes to represent,—the life led in our Christian country by thousands and thousands of genuine Pagans, superstitious Boeotians, with whom the schoolmaster can do but little, and the parson still less. As to the clergymen who appear in this story, two of them are priggishly academic, a third is a comfortable antiquarian, and the fourth unacquainted with even the A.B.C. of his own pastoral theology.

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[Illustration: A BRIGHT PARTICULAR STAR IN THE MILKY WAY.

Showing how an Angel without wings played on the harp to Milkmaid Tess of the Tubbyveals, who was so proud of her calves.]

Since THACKERAY's *Captain Costigan*, and TOM ROBERTSON's dramatic variation of him as *Eccles* in *Caste*, no more original type of the besotted, no-working working-man, has been given us ("at least, as far as I am aware," interpolates the Baron, with a possible reservation) than *Tess's* father, *Durbeyfield*. His foolish wife, *Joan*, kindly in a way, a fair housewife and helpmate, yet deficient in moral sense, is another admirably-drawn character.

The only blot on this otherwise excellent work is the absurdly melodramatic character of that "villain of the deepest dye," *Alec D'Urbeville*, who would be thoroughly in his element in an Adelphi Drama of the most approved type, ancient or modern. He is just the sort of stage-scoundrel who from time to time seeks to take some mean advantage of a heroine in distress, on which occasions said heroine (of Adelphi Drama) will request him to "unhand her," or to "stand aside and let her pass;" whereupon the dastardly ruffian retaliates with a diabolical sneer of fiendish malice, his eyes ablaze with passion, as, making his melodramatic exit at the O.P. wing, he growls, "Aha! a day will come!" or "She must and shall be mine!" or, if not making his exit, but remaining in centre of stage to assist in forming a picture, he exclaims, with fiendish glee, "Now, pretty one, you are in my power!" and so forth. 'Tis a great pity that such a penny-plain-and-two-pence-coloured scoundrel should have been allowed so strong a part among Mr. HARDY's excellent and unconventional *dramatis personae*. Even the very, very strong ejaculations wherein this bold bad man indulges on the slightest provocation belong to the most antiquated vocabulary of theatrical ruffianism. However, there he is, and all the perfumes of the Vale of Blackmoor will not suffice for dispelling the strong odour of the footlights which pervades every scene where this unconscionable scoundrel makes his appearance. That he is ultimately disposed of by being stuck to the heart with the carving-knife that had been brought in for cold-beef slicing at breakfast, is some satisfaction. But far be it from the Baron to give more than this hint in anticipation of the tragic *denouement*. Some might accuse Mr. THOMAS HARDY of foolhardiness in so boldly telling ugly truths about the Pagan Phyllises and Corydons of our dear old Christian England; but we, his readers, have the author's word for the truth of what he has written, as "the fortunes of *Tess of the D'Urbevilles*, a *Pure Woman*," are "faithfully presented," by THOMAS HARDY, and so his honour is pledged to the truth of this story which his powers of narration have made so fascinating to a host of readers besides the one who is a host in himself, namely,

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THE BARON DE BOOK-WORMS.

\* \* \* \* \*

JUSTICE FOR JUSTICE!

*SCENE—A Court of Justice. Prisoner, a young man of eighteen, in the dock, weeping bitterly. His Uncle stands before him, and occasionally offers him smelling salts. General commiseration amongst the spectators, many of whom are ladies armed with opera-glasses. Police Constable under cross-examination.*

*Counsel for the Defence.* And so, Constable, you had actually the heart to read the warrant to the Prisoner?

*Witness.* I did, Sir, in the execution of my duty.

*Coun. for the Def. (scornfully).* Duty! and to this he said nothing?

*Wit. (in a low tone).* Nothing, Sir—nothing!

*Coun. for the Def.* And I am not surprised! He might well say nothing to such an announcement! HE, a Gentleman by birth—education—everything—to be accused of forgery! It is too cruel!

*Mr. Justice Punch (courteously but firmly).* I do not wish to control the management of your case, Mr. MCSLANGER, but the time for you to address the Jury has not yet arrived.

*Coun. for Def. (submissive but sulky).* As your Lordship pleases.

*[Resumes his seat.*

*Usher (calling).* Admiral CUTTERMAN!

*Admiral (in a low tone).* Here!

*[He leaves the Prisoner, first handing him the smelling salts, and enters the Witness Box.*

*Council for the Prosecution (after the Witness has been sworn).* I think you are here on subpoena served by the Treasury.

*Witness (with a glance of sadness at the Dock).* Had I not been summoned to be present by those in authority, not the entreaties of magicians would have brought me here!





*Coun. for the Pros.* I take it you are an unwilling Witness?

*Witness (with difficulty suppressing acute emotion).* A most, a very most unwilling Witness!

*Coun. for the Def. (scornfully).* Unwilling!

*Coun. for the Pros. (in a tone of remonstrance).* I really must beg my learned friend to refrain from disturbing the proceedings. These constant interruptions are most annoying.

*Coun. for the Def. (with force and violence).* I cannot sufficiently express my indignation

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*Mr. Justice Punch (sharply).* Then do not make the attempt.

*Coun. for the Def. (surlily).* As your Lordship pleases. [*Subsides.*

*Coun. for the Pros.* But, in spite of being an unwilling Witness, you undoubtedly saw the Prisoner forge your name?

*Witness (with his handkerchief to his eyes).* Alas! I did!

[*A pause, during which everyone regains equanimity.*

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*Coun. for Def. (on renewal of proceedings).* And so you are the Uncle of the Prisoner?

*Witness (sadly).* Yes, I am.

*Coun. for Def.* Still you are here, and are pushing that poor lad to the prison-door! (*Prisoner snivels.*) Yes, you are dealing him (one of your own flesh and blood) a never-to-be-recalled injury!

*Witness (plucking up spirit).* Only my duty, Sir. I obey only my duty!

*Coun. for Def.* Your duty! Why, man, how can it be your duty?

*Mr. Justice Punch (seriously).* Again I must interpose. (*To Counsel.*) Mr. MCSLANGER, I must once more remind you that your business at present is to ask questions, not to make speeches.

*Coun. for Def.* But, my Lord, the task is a difficult one.

*Mr. Justice Punch.* If you find it beyond your powers, no doubt some of your colleagues will come willingly to your assistance.

*Coun. for Def.* No, my Lord, I do not mean what your Lordship means. I am quite capable of performing the duties it has been my pleasure and pride to accept.

*Mr. Justice Punch (wearily).* Pray let us get on?

*Coun. for Def.* Do you not think it a grossly cruel and revolting thing that a man should give evidence against his near relative?

*Witness (greatly agitated).* My Lord, I appeal to you, is it fair that I should be treated in this fashion?

*Mr. Justice Punch (emphatically).* No, it is not! You are here, Sir, in performance of a solemn duty—to assist the ends of justice in the punishment, and consequently prevention, of crime. It is not right that in the witness-box you should be badgered and insulted as if you were worthy of the dock! One can feel some sympathy with the relatives of the prisoner, because he appears to have had respectable surroundings. But if he is convicted of forgery, it will be his own fault! I shall accept the verdict as a proof that education and birth are not safeguards to prevent crime. And as for you, Sir (*turning angrily to Coun. for Def.*), let me tell you that you degrade your office when you make the wig and the gown the shield of the brute and the bully. Let us have no more of it!

*Coun. for Def. (subdued but depressed).* As your Lordship pleases.

*Mr. Justice Punch.* It does so please me, and I think that it will equally please all my learned brothers who sit in Royal Courts to follow my example! It is time that the Witness, as well as the accused, received proper protection. I hope my words will be taken to heart in another place!

*[The Scene closes in on his Lordship's suggestion.]*

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