

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 102, February 13, 1892 eBook

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PUNCH,

Or the London charivari.

Vol. 102.

February 13, 1892.

“PLEASING THE PIGS!” (FROM A PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL REPORT.)

Mr. *Chaplin* received a deputation on the subject of the Swine-fever last week. True to his dramatic instincts as regards the fitness of things, the Minister for Agriculture was, on this occasion, wearing a Sow-wester. He regretted that he was unable to don a pig-tail, which, as the representative of the Fine Old English Gentleman of years gone by, he should much like to do, but it was a fashion with the pig-wigs of the last century which he hoped to see revived as “a tail of old times.” It was better, far better to be pig-tailed as were their great grandfathers, than to be pigheaded as were so many people with pig-culiar notions, specially in Scotland.

[Illustration]

“I am doing and have been doing,” said the Ministering *Chaplin*, “my very best to please the pigs, but there are some pigs that won’t be pleased when they find that everything is not going to be done for them gratis. You may take this for grunted,—I should say granted. Now let me give you an illustration. There were five pigs belonging to a well-



known littery family. The first pig went to market but no one would purchase him, the second pig stayed at home (not feeling well), the third pig had pleuro-pneumonia, and the fourth pig was in full swing—if you can imagine a pig in a swing—of swine-fever; and the fifth and quite the smallest pig of the lot, a mere sucking-pig, went ‘wheeze, wheeze, wheeze!’ and ‘wheezes’ were always a very bad sign. *A propos* of ‘signs’ I have little doubt but that the well-known sign of the ‘Pig and Whistle’ descends to us from ancient times of Influenza. He trusted that the whole pig-family would soon be pigging up again.”

The Right Hon. Gentleman finished by apologising for not being able to quote anything apposite from the works of either the philosophic *Bacon*, the Ettrick Shepherd *Hogg*, or the poetic *suckling*, his motto for the present being “*porker verba*,” and he had to issue a Circular about the cattle who were all going wrong.

The Deputation thanked Mr. *Chaplin*, and unanimously expressed their opinion, that where pigs were concerned, the Minister should have his stye-pend increased. Noticing that Mr. *Chaplin* had risen from his chair, and had assumed a threatening attitude, the Deputation hurriedly thanked the Minister of Agriculture, and speedily withdrew.



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* * * * *

Answer to the riddle in last week's number.—“Mire + t = Mitre.”

* * * * *

Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

Born, June 19, 1834. Died, Jan. 31, 1892.

Sturdy saint-militant, stout, genial soul,
Through good and ill report you've reached the goal
Of all brave effort, and attained that light
Which makes our clearest noontide seem as night.
How much 'twill show us all! We boast our clarity
Of spiritual sense, but mutual charity
Is still our nearest need when faith grows fierce
And even hope earth's mists can hardly pierce.
You were much loved; you spake a potent word
In the world's ear, and listening thousands heard
With joy that clear and confident appeal.
The lingering doubts finer-strung spirits feel,
The sensitive shrinkings from familiar touch
Of the high mysteries, moved you not. Of such
The great throng-stirrers! And you stirred the throng
Who felt you honest and who knew you strong;
Racy of homely earth, yet spirit-fired
With all their higher moods felt, loved, desired.
Puritan, yet of no ascetic strain
Or arid straitness, freshening as the rain
And healthy as the clod; a native force
Incult yet quickening, cleaving its straight course
Unchecked, unchastened, conquering to the end.
Crudeness may chill, and confidence offend,
But manhood, mother wit, and selfless zeal,
Speech clear as light, and courage true as steel
Must win the many. Honest soul and brave,
The greatest drop their garlands on your grave!

* * * * *

'Look here, upon this picture and on this!'

(THE HAYMARKET HAMLET AS HE IS AND OUGHT TO BE.)



[Illustration]

Mr. H. Kemble. “My dear Tree, *I* ought to have played *Hamlet*. First, my name—Kemble. Secondly, Shakspeare’s authority—’Oh, that this too too solid flesh would melt,’ and again, ’Fat and scant of breath!’”

Mr. B. Tree. “All right, my dear Kemble. Quite true what you say; and, any night I am unable to play, you shall be my double!”

* * * * *

Whipped in vain.

(*BY AN M.P. OF A RETIRING NATURE.*)

The Whip, he writes to me to-day,
Not, as his wont, in tones pacific,
But in the very strongest way,
And using language quite terrific.

He hopes to see me in my place,
And woe betide the sad seceder,
Whose absence helps to throw disgrace
Both on his Party and his Leader.

I throw my hat up to the sky.
At taunts of treason or defection
I flip my fingers. What care I?
For I do NOT seek re-election!



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* * * * *

"*This indenture* WITNESSETH."—According to the *Times* of Friday last, February 5, Cardinal *Manning* died practically a pauper. He had given everything away in charity. He was a "Prince of the Church," and his gifts to others were, indeed, princely. In the wills and deeds of how many of our Very Reverend and Right Reverend Lordships shall we find nothing gathered up and bequeathed of the loaves and fishes which have fallen to their share? Such a testament as the Cardinal's would be in quite a New Testamentary spirit.

* * * * *

Foreign and home news.—"The Prussian Education Bill," remarked an elderly bachelor to. Mr. *Peter FAMILIAS*, "is a very important matter; because you see—"

"Hang the Prussian Education Bill!" interrupted *Peter F.*, testily. "You should see the English Education Bill I've had for my boy's schooling last half!"

* * * * *

Mr. Punch to the lifeboat-men.

[Illustration]

[The President of the Board of Trade has, by command of the *Queen*, conveyed, through the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, to the crews of the lifeboats of Atherfield, Brightstone, and Brooke, Her Majesty's warm appreciation of their gallant conduct in saving the crew and passengers of the steamship *Eider*.]

Your hand, lad! 'Tis wet with the brine, and the salt spray has
sodden your hair,
And the face of you glisteneth pale with the stress of the
struggle out there;
But the savour of salt is as sweet to the sense of a Briton,
sometimes,
As the fragrance of wet mignonette, or the scent of the
bee-haunted limes.

Ay, sweeter is manhood, though rough, than the smoothest
effeminate charms
To the old sea-king strain in our blood in the season of shocks
and alarms,
When the winds and the waves and the rocks make a chaos of danger
and strife;



And the need of the moment is pluck, and the guerdon of valour is
life.

That guerdon you've snatched from the teeth of the thundering
tiger-maw'd waves,

And the valour that smites is as naught, after all, to the valour
that saves.

They are safe on the shore, who had sunk in the whirl of the
floods but for *you!*

And some said you had lost your old grit and devotion! We knew
'twas not true.

The soft-hearted shore-going critics of conduct themselves would
not dare,

The trivial cocksure belittlers of dangers they have not to share,
Claim much—oh so much, from rough manhood,—unflinching cool
daring in fray,

And selflessness utter, from toilers with little of praise, and
less pay.



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Her heroes to get “on the cheap” from the rough rank and file of
her sons
Has been England’s good fortune so long, that the scribblers’
swift tongue-babble runs
To the old easy tune without thought. “Gallant sea-dogs and
life-savers!” Yes!
But poor dribblets of lyrical praise should not be their sole
guerdon, I guess.

On the coast, in the mine, at the fire, in the dark city byeways
at night,
They are ready the waves, or the flames, or the bludgeoning
burglar to fight.
And are we quite as ready to mark, or to fashion a fitting reward
For the coarsely-clad commonplace men who our life and our
property guard?

A question *Punch* puts to the Public, and on your behalf, my
brave lad,
And that of your labouring like. To accept your stout help we are
glad:
If supply of cheap heroes *should* slacken, and life-saving valour
grow *dear*—
Say as courts, party-statesmen, or churches—’twould make some
exchequers look queer.

Do we quite do our part, we shore-goers? Those lights could not
flash through the fog,
And how often must rescuer willing lie idle on land like a log
For lack of the warning of coast-wires from lighthouse or
lightship? ’Tis flat
That we, lad, have not done *our* duty, until we have altered all
that.

Well, you have done yours, and successfully, *this* time at least,
and at night.
All rescued. How gladly the last must have looked on that brave
“Comet Light,”
As you put from the wave-battered wreck. Cold, surf-buffed,
weary, and drenched,
Your pluck, like the glare from that beacon, flamed on through the
dark hours unquenched.



Nor then was your labour at end. There was treasure to save and to
land.
Well done, life-boat heroes, once more! *Punch* is proud to take
grip of your hand!
Your QUEEN, ever quick to praise manhood, has spoken in words you
will hail,
And 'twere shame to the People of England, if they in their part
were to fail.

* * * * *

THE LAST OF THE GUARDS.

*A SONG OF SENTIMENT, TO THE TUNE OF "FAIR LADY ELIZABETH MUGG."
("REJECTED ADDRESSES.")*

["The last of the old Mail-guards is about to disappear from the service of the Post Office. Fifty-six years have elapsed since Mr. MOSES NOBBS—for such is the venerable official's name—was selected to undertake the duties of Guard to one of the Royal Mails."—*Daily Telegraph*.]

Historical Muse! are you sober?
Is he, the old Mail-guard,



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alive,

Who probably swigged sound October
From flagons, in One, Eight, Three, Five?
When PILCH went a-slogging, and CLARKE
Was a-studying slow underhand lobs?
Hooray for that evergreen spark,
The veteran Guard, MOSES NOBBS![1]

Why, MOSES, thus bring to a close
Your fifty-six years on the road?
Do you yearn, after all, for repose,
Who with zeal half-a-century glowed?
The Muse makes her moan at your loss,
And Sentiment silently sobs.
Ah! Time, friend, will play pitch-and-toss
With all of us, even a NOBBS!

One sees your Mail-Coach all a-blaze,
A masterly hand on the rein,
In those rollicking, railway-less days,
Which never shall greet us again.
That tootling tin-horn one can hear;
The old buffers, with breeches and fobs,
One can picture; they doubtless were dear
To the bosom of brave MOSES NOBBS.

That blunderbuss, too! Good old Guard!
At what Knight of the Road has it shot?
And do you remember the bard
Who gave us "*The Tantivy Trot?*"
Mr. EGERTON WARBURTON's gone,
No longer the Highwayman robs;
And silence now settles upon
The Last of the Guards—MOSES NOBBS!

Yet oblivion shall not descend
On that name till a stave hath been sung.
The Muse is antiquity's friend,
And in praise of the past will give tongue.
If CRACKNALL, the Tantivy Whip,
Claimed song, they're but *parvenu* snobs



Who say that the lyre should let slip
The memory of stout MOSES NOBBS.

The Mail-Coach, my NOBBS, is no more
What it was when you put on the man;
We've Mail Trains, all rattle and roar,
And that portent, the Packet Post Van.
A Pullman, and not the Box-seat,
Is the aim of our modern Lord BOBS;
But the old recollections are sweet;
And *Punch* drinks to your health, MOSES NOBBS!

[Footnote 1: The *Telegraph* gives the gentleman's name both as "NOBBS" and "NOGGS." As "NOBBS" comes first, *Mr. Punch* adopts it, he hopes without misnaming the illustrious veteran.]

* * * * *

[Illustration: KIND INQUIRIES.

The Dean's Wife. "IS THE DEAR BISHOP STILL LIVING?"

Episcopal Butler. "OH YES, MA'AM. HE'S BETTER TO-DAY! WE'RE ALL SAYING HE'S GOING TO DISAPPOINT 'EM YET!"]

* * * * *

CONFESSIONS OF A DUFFER.

IV.—THE DUFFER AS COLLECTOR.



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I may be a Duffer, but I hope I am neither an idiot nor a cad. I have never collected postage-stamps, nor outraged common humanity by asking people to send me their autographs. With these exceptions I have failed as a collector of almost everything. To succeed you need luck, and a dash of unscrupulousness, and careful attention to details, and a sceptical habit of mind. Even as a small boy I used to waste my shillings at a funny little curiosity-shop, kept by a nice old lady who knew no more about her wares than I did. Here I acquired quite a series of old coppers, which Mrs. SOMERVILLE said were ancient Bactrian. We asked where Bactria was, and she replied that it was a "country beyond Cyrus." We answered that Cyrus was not a territorial but a personal name, "A fellow, don't you know, not a place," but the old lady's information stopped there. I wonder where my Bactrian Collection is now. Certainly I never sold it; indeed, I never sold anything; not only because nobody would buy, but because, after all, one is a Collector, not a tradesman. Birds' eggs I would have collected if I could, but you had first to find the bird's nest (almost an impossible quest for a born Duffer), and to blow the eggs, which, let me tell you, needs nicety of handling. I did once find a thrush's nest, and tried blowing an egg, but it was not wholly a success, and the egg (the contents of which I accidentally absorbed) was not wholly fresh. Then it is awkward when you are at the top of a tall tree, with an egg in your mouth, for safety, if the other boys make you laugh, as you try to come down. It is the egg which,—but enough! Everyone who has been in that position will understand what is meant. It is not difficult to collect shells on the seashore, but it is extremely difficult to find out what shells they are, after you have collected them.

[Illustration: "And, in shooting at the cats with a crossbow, I had the misfortune to break several windows."]

Conchology is no child's play. As to collecting marine animals for an aquarium, the trouble begins when you forget your acquisitions, and carry them about for some time in the pockets of your jacket. That jacket is apt to be dusted by the bigger boys, who also interfere with your affections for toads, lizards, snakes and other live stock dear to youth. The common ambition of boyhood is to be a great rabbit-grower, but, somehow, my rabbits did not thrive. The cats got at them, and, in shooting at the cats with a crossbow, I had the misfortune to break several windows, and riddle a conservatory.

The chief objects of my later ambition have been rare old books, gems, engravings, china, and so forth. All these things, if they are to be collected, demand that you shall have your wits about you; and the peculiarity of the Duffer is that his wits are always wool-gathering. A nice collection of wool they must have stored up somewhere. As to books, one invariably begins by collecting the wrong things. In novels and



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essays you read of “priceless Elzevirs,” and “Aldines worth their weight in gold.” Fired with hope, you hang about all the stalls, where you find myriads of Elzevirs, dumpy, dirty little tomes, in small illegible type, and legions of Aldines, books quite as dirty, if not so dumpy, and equally illegible, for they are printed in italics. You think you are in luck, invest largely, and begin to give yourself the airs of an amateur and a discoverer. Then comes somebody who knows about the matter in hand, and who tells you, with all the savage joy of a collector, that nobody wants any Elzevirs and Aldines, except a very few, and they must be in beautiful old bindings, uncut down, or scarcely cut down by the binder. These you may long for, but you certainly will never find them in the fourpenny box. The Duffer is always making the mistake of buying small bargains, as he thinks them, and so he will spend, in some time, perhaps, a hundred pounds. With a hundred pounds, and with luck, and prudence, and cunning, he might perhaps buy one small volume which a collector who knew his business would not wholly disdain. But, as it is, he has squandered his money, and has nothing to show for it but a heap of trash, of the wrong date, without the necessary misprints in the right places, ragged, short, and, above all, *imperfect*. I suppose I have the richest collection of imperfect books in the world. One hugs oneself on one’s *Lucasta* (very rare), or one’s Elzevir *Caesar* of the right date, or one’s first edition of MOLIERE, and then comes, with fiendish glee, the regular collector, and shows you that *Lucasta* has not the portrait of LOVELACE, that *Caesar* has not his pagination all wrong (as he ought to have), that the Molières are Lyons piracies, that half of GILBERT’s *Gentleman’s Diversion* is not bound up with the rest, that, generally speaking, there are pages missing here and there all through your books, which you have never “collated,” that “a ticket of PADELOUP, the binder, has been taken off some broken board of a book, and stuck on to a modern imitation, and so forth, all through the collection. You cannot sell it; nobody will take as a present this Library of a Gentleman who has given up collecting; even Free Libraries do not want this kind of treasure, and so it remains, littering your shelves, a monument of folly. Happy are the Duffers whose eyes are impenetrably sealed, and who can go on believing, in spite of a modern water-mark, in their sham BURNS MSS. and their volumes with autographs of all the celebrated characters in history. But my eyes are purged, and I do not think you shall find me collecting old books any more. Certainly I shall not venture into auction-rooms, compete with the Trade, and get left with a book artfully run up, thanks to my enthusiasm, to four or five times its market value.



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As to china, what the Duffer buys is invariably cracked, and the “marks” on which he places confidence are flagrant imitations. He usually begins by supposing that Crown Derby is a priceless possession, also he has a touching faith in chipped blue and white cups and saucers, marked with a crescent. Worcester they may be, but not the right sort of Worcester. And Crown Derby is the very Aldine or Elzevir of this market. You might as well collect shares in the Great Montezuma Gold Mine, and expect to derive benefit from the investment.

Gems are among the things that the Duffer may most wisely collect, for the excellent reason that, in this country, he very seldom indeed finds any for sale. He cannot come to much sorrow, for lack of opportunities. In Italy it is different. How many beautiful works of Art I have acquired in Florence, at considerable ransoms, all of them signed in neat, but illegible Greek capitals. I puzzled over them with microscopes. The names seemed to end in [Greek: ICHLES]. I thought myself a rival of BLACAS, or Lord KILSYTH, or the British Museum. Then my friend, WILKINS, came in. “Pretty enough pastes of the last century I see,” he remarks. “Pastes!—last century!” I indignantly exclaim; “why they’re of the best period: Sardis, all of them signed, but I can’t make out the artist’s name.” “It is PICHLER,” says WILKINS, “he usually signed, for fear his things should be sold as antiques.” I had to give in about PICHLER (which certainly does not sound very Greek); “but here,” I said, “you can’t call *this* paste, you can’t scratch the back of it.” “I know I can’t,” says WILKINS, examining the ring, “for a very good reason, because a thin layer of sard has been inserted behind. But it’s paste, for all that.”

“Well,” I say, “here’s a genuine ancient ring, old gold, and a lovely head of Prosperine in cornelian.”

“Well, this *is* odd,” says WILKINS, “I know the setting is genuine, I have seen it before. But then it had a rubbishy late bit of work in it, and I was in the *atelier* when a gem-cutter shaved away the top of the stone, and copied your head of Prosperine on it from a Sicilian coin. I can show you a coin of the same stamp in my collection.”

[Illustration: “HER MAJESTY’S SERVANTS.”

VIEW OF THE STAGE ON THE RE-OPENING OF THE THEATRE ROYAL WESTMINSTER.]

And he showed me it, otherwise I might have remained incredulous. “These scarabs,” he went on, “are from Birmingham, I know the glaze. That gold Egyptian ring, Queen TAIJA’s do you say, is Coptic, Cairo is full of them. That head of CAESAR is a copy from the one in the British Museum.”

“Why, it is rough with age,” I said.



“Ay, they’ve stuffed it down a turkey’s crop, and it has got rubbed up in the gravel with which the ingenious bird assists the process of digestion. *A man* who could swallow that gem is a goose.”

I am presenting my esteemed collection of ancient engraved stones to my nephew at school, who shows all the character of the collector. He may swop them for bats, or tarts, or he may learn wisdom from the misfortunes of his uncle.



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* * * * *

IN THIS STYLE, SIX-AND-EIGHTPENCE.

Mr. Badgerer, Q.C. (rising to cross-examine). Then you assert that the golden dinner-service which we are inquiring about was in your possession on the evening of July 26th at half-past eight o'clock?

Plaintiff. I do.

Mr. Badgerer, Q.C. And that when you went to take them out of the strong-box at 9:15 for your party they had disappeared?

Plaintiff. Quite so.

Mr. Badgerer, Q.C. Pardon my suggesting such a thing, but I am instructed to ask you whether, when you paid L800 to the rate-collector for arrears of rates on the very next day, you had not obtained that sum by selling a portion of this gold plate yourself?

The Judge. Really, Mr. BADGERER, this won't do at all. "Legal bullying" is a thing of the past, and I shall have to commit you for contempt if you make these unworthy suggestions to the Witness.

Mr. Badgerer, Q.C. But, m'Lud, the whole point of the defence is that the Plaintiff himself sto—

The Judge (hastily interposing). —Sh! You must not talk like that. Remember that "the floor of the Court is *not* the same thing as the interior of a coal-barge."

Mr. Badgerer, Q.C. (sulkily). Very well. But I really don't know how I am to conduct my case if your Ludship intervenes to check me. (*To Witness.*) I can ask you *this* at any rate. Did you or did you not run up to Town by an early train the morning after the robbery?

Plaintiff. Certainly I did. I went to see my tailor, in Bond Street.

Mr. Badgerer, Q.C. And why did you, then, go all the way from Bond Street to the City, eh?

Plaintiff (gravelled). My Lord, I must appeal for protection. The question is a bullying one.

The Judge. Oh, certainly! Counsel has no right to ask such things. He ought to take the charitable view of your actions, and suppose that you went to the City for a mid-day



chop, or because you wanted to look at St. Paul's, or something of that kind. We must really try and conduct our business as nobly as we can.

Mr. Badgerer, Q.C. (pleasantly). "Que Messieurs les assassins commencent!" Then we will presume that your predilection for City chops is so great, that you went a couple of miles out of your way to get one, and that your reason for dropping in at the establishment of Messrs. BLANK, Goldsmiths, and offering them half-a-dozen dessert-plates—

The Judge (interrupting). Oh, really, this is not at all—

Plaintiff. Quite the reverse. I won't stay here to be insulted by anybody!

[Exit hurriedly.]

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Mr. Badgerer, Q.C. I am afraid the Police Officers who are waiting outside to arrest our friend who has just left the box will also be denounced as “legal bullies.” But after all one can’t cross-examine a rogue on rosewater principles. And if we Barristers sometimes do make things rather rough for innocent Witnesses, by dragging out unpleasant incidents in their careers, or suggesting some that never occurred, by so acting we provide a powerful inducement to people to avoid having such unpleasant incidents to be dragged out. And if the fear of cross-examination prevents actions being brought, it thereby also prevents would-be litigants ruining themselves in law expenses. With submission, m’Lud, and if your Ludship pleases, I would say that we “legal bullies” are public benefactors in disguise.

The Judge. There’s something in what you say, Mr. BADGERER. But the disguise need not be so complete as it is. I suppose it’s a verdict for the Defendants? *With costs*, yes. Gentlemen of the Jury, I can’t sufficiently express my sense of the nobility of your conduct in listening to the evidence as you have done—though, of course, if you had *not* listened, I should have committed you all for contempt in double-quick time—and you will now return a verdict for the Defendants.

[*Left sitting.*

* * * * *

“THE TRAVELLING COMPANIONS.”—No. XXVI. next week.

* * * * *

[Illustration: LEGAL IMPROVEMENTS.

ANOTHER SAVING.

DURING THE ADJOURNMENT, THEIR LORDSHIPS WILL ASSIST IN THE
REFRESHMENT
DEPARTMENT.

Thirsty Attorney. “NOT TOO MUCH FROTH ON, MY LUD!”]

* * * * *

TO POLICE CONSTABLES SMEETH AND TAPPIN.

[In endeavouring to capture a gang of burglars at Greenwich, these two constables were dreadfully battered. But they kept up the pursuit until the ruffians were secured.]



Your hand, Mr. TAPPIN, your hand, Mr. SMEETH.
To the men who protect us we offer no wreath.
They face for our sakes all the rogues and the brutes,
Getting cracks from their bludgeons and kicks from their boots.

They are battered and bruised, yet they never give in,
And at last by good luck they may manage to win.
Then, their heads beaten in all through scorning to shirk,
Scarred and seamed they return without fuss to their work.

O pair of good-plucked 'uns, ye heroes in blue,
As modest as brave, let us give you your due.
Though we cannot do much, we'll do all that we can,
Since our hearts throb with pride at the sight of a Man.

Mr. SMEETH you're a man, Mr. TAPPIN's another; *Mr. Punch*—pray permit him—
henceforth is your brother. We are proud of you both, and we'll all of us cheer These
Peelers from Greenwich who never knew fear.

* * * * *



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MORE BONES TO PICK WITH THE SCHOOL BOARD.

We see there has been some churlish cavilling in some quarters because the School Management Committee of the London School Board passed a requisition in November last, sanctioning the purchase of an articulated skeleton for the Belleville Road School, at the very reasonable sum of L8 16s. Why make any bones about the matter? What more ornamental and indeed indispensable article of school-furniture than a human skeleton nearly six foot high? Still, should the past system of expenditure be continued in the future, *Mr. Punch* would suggest that excellent and infinitely cheaper substitutes for skeletons will be found in the persons of the rate-payers themselves.

* * * * *

CUPID'S TENNIS-COURTS.—Under the heading "Tennis in the Riviera," the *Daily Telegraph* recently gave us some important news, which should largely influence the Matrimonial Market. The names of Ladies and Gentlemen, both "singles" (a not strictly grammatical plural, by the way, but what's grammar in a game of Thirty to Love?) were given. There was, however, no mention of "ties" or of matches to come.

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A CORRESPONDENT SIGNING HIMSELF "MINCING LANE" WRITES,—“Sir,—The *Saturday Review* complained of Mr. TREE's gait as *Hamlet*, 'which,' said the Critic, 'reminds one too much of AGAG.' Most cutting comparison for an actor sticking rigidly to the Shakspearian text! If there were interpolations in the text of Mr. BEERBOHM TREE's own introduction, then indeed he might remind them of *A-gag*; that is, if he were continually a-gagging.—M.L.”

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NEW BOOK.—Soon may be expected, *A Guide to the Unknown Tongs*, by the Author of *A Handbook to Poker*.

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[Illustration: THE PARLIAMENTARY SAFETY BICYCLE CHAMPIONSHIP—THE LAST LAP.]

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[Illustration: FICTION—PRESENT STYLE.

Gertrude. "YOU NEVER DO ANYTHING NOW, MARGARET, BUT GO TO ALL SORTS OF CHURCHES, AND READ THOSE OLD BOOKS OF THEOLOGY. YOU NEVER USED TO BE LIKE THAT."



Margaret. "HOW CAN I HELP IT, GERTY?—I'M WRITING A POPULAR NOVEL!"]

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TAKE CARE!

A SONG OF CONVALESCENCE AFTER INFLUENZA.

BY AN IMPATIENT PATIENT.

AIR—"Beware!"

"I feel as well as well can be!"—

Take care!

La Grippe's deceptive dontcher see,
Beware! Beware!

Trust it not,
'Twill be fooling thee;

It's just three weeks since I was "down!"—

Take care!

"I'm wanted very much in town."
Beware! Beware!

Run no risk,
'Tis humbugging thee!

"I feel all right,—as well as you!"—

Take care!

What feeling tells you is not true!
Beware! Beware!

Pneumonia waits
To be nipping thee!



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“You Doctors are such funny chaps!”—

Take care!

We know the dangers of Relapse.

Beware! Beware!

Flout me not,

I'm not fooling thee!

“Too long you pillow us and pill us!”—

Take care!

You don't half know that blarmed bacillus.

Beware! Beware!

Brave it not,

'Twill be flooring thee!

“The fever's gone, the aches seem vanished.”

Take care!

They come back when you think 'em banished.

Beware! Beware!

Trust 'em not,

They'll be dodging thee!

“Oh, come, I say, look here, you know!”—

Take care!

Your pulse is yet two beats too slow.

Beware! Beware!

Trifle not,

Sense is schooling thee!

“Three weeks have I been on my back!”—

Take care!

You don't want to *renew* the rack.

Beware! Beware!

East winds are out,

They'll be cooling thee!

“It is a *beast* of a complaint!”—

Take care!

Don't storm! Your pulse is fluttering, faint.

Beware! Beware!

Worry not,

Think of *syncope*!

“Tush! Taking Care's the awfulest worry!”—

Take care!



For "Complications" punish hurry.
Beware! Beware!
Resist him not,
Who'd be ruling thee!

Keep warm indoors, take lots of rest.
Take care!
That of all counsels is *the* best.
Beware! Beware!
Out? Cert'nly *not!*
For two weeks—or *three!*

[*Left fuming.*

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"ON THE SLY."—The name of Mr. J.E. SLY was mentioned in the *World* last week as a candidate for the office of High Bailiff of the City of London Court. Quite a Shakspearian name is *Sly*. "Look in the Chronicles," quoth *Christopher* of that ilk, "We came in with RICHARD Conqueror." We drink success to him in "a pot of the smallest ale" and "Let the *World* slip,"—whether it did slip or not, the event will prove,—"We shall ne'er be younger."

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"CHARLES, HIS FRIENDS."—The Gentlemen who sought to adorn King CHARLES's statue with wreaths on the 30th January, are not to be beheaded. Like the White Rose League, their Jacobark is worse than their Jacobite.

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ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

[Illustration: (H)]

House of Commons, Tuesday, February 9.—House met to-day for what, the SAGE OF QUEEN ANNE'S GATE tells me, must needs be last Session of present Parliament. Appropriately funereal air over scene and proceedings. Usually Members return to work in highest spirits. Remember, in years gone by, before the blight of neglect in high places fell upon him, how dear old PETER RYLANDS enjoyed himself on these occasions. What long strides he used to take, bustling to and fro! What thunderous slaps of friendly welcome he bestowed on shrinking shoulders! What digs of deep and subtle humour he dealt to unresponsive ribs!

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If PETER were with us to-day, it is probable that even his effervescence of natural spirits would droop under prevalent gloom. The familiar place is a House of Mourning. Members tread softly, lest they should disturb the sick or wake the dead. Everyone has had the influenza, fears he is going to catch it, or mourns someone whom it has snatched away.

When SPEAKER took Chair and business commenced, a glance round crowded benches brought back memory of much that has happened in the Recess.

“Tis not alone this inky cloak, good TOBY, worn in sign of public mourning,” said WILFRID LAWSON, strangely subdued; “the House of Commons has had its losses.”

“Yes,” I say, looking across at the Treasury Bench, where in the last weeks of July we were wont to see the kindly anxious face of OLD MORALITY, never more to cheer us with his little aphorisms, and incite to following his pathway of duty to his QUEEN and country. In his place, alert, youthful, strong, with ready smile breaking the unfamiliar gravity; of face and manner, sits the new Leader, still blushing under effect of ringing cheer that welcomed him to his high position.

Lower down, filled up by another, is the place whence used frequently to arise a tall, almost gaunt, figure, which, with voice and manner indicating close associations with the Church pulpit, read from manuscript neatly-constructed answers designed to crush HENNIKER-HEATON. A kindly man and an able was RAIKES, who did not obtain full recognition for his administration of the office to which he was called.

On the other side of the House a great gap is made by the withdrawal of PARNELL from the scene. A second, of quite other association, yawns where genial DICK POWER used to sit, and wonder what on earth he did in this galley, when he might have been riding to hounds in County Waterford. HARTINGTON gone, too, an unspeakable loss to gentlemen on the benches immediately behind. Many are the weary hours they have wiled away wondering whether, at the next backward jerk of the head of the sleeping statesman, his hat would tumble off, or whether catastrophe would be further postponed. In HARTINGTON’s place sits CHAMBERLAIN, much too wide awake to afford opportunity for speculation on that or cognate circumstance.

In his old corner-seat, in friendly contiguity, with his revered friend on the Treasury Bench, GRANDOLPH lounges contemplative. Met him earlier in afternoon. Passed us in corridor as I was talking to the MARKISS, who was anxious to know how the dinner went off last night, at which nephew ARTHUR appeared in character of the New Host at Downing Street. The MARKISS looked narrowly at GRANDOLPH as he passed with head hung down, tugging at his moustache.

“You remember TOBY, what HEINE said of DE MUSSET? ‘A young man with a great future—behind him.’ There he goes.”

“Don’t you believe it, my Lord,” I said, with the frankness that endears me to the aristocracy. “You’ll make a grave mistake if you act upon that view of GRANDOLPH’s position.”

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“Ah, well,” said the MARKISS, a little hastily; “I must go and see STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL about this Portugal business.”

As he strode off I thought how precise and graphic remains Lord LYTTON’s description of him, written before he came to the Premiership:—

“The large slouching shoulder, as oppressed
By the prone head, habitually stoops
Above a world his contemplative gaze
Peruses, finding little there to praise.”

Sorry I vexed him.

Some disappointment at GRANDOLPH’s appearance. Hoped he might do honour to occasion by presenting himself in the attire clad in which he of late roamed through Mashonaland. It would have been much more picturesque than either of the uniforms in which mover and seconder of Address are obviously and uncomfortably sewn up preparatory to reciting the bald commonplace of their studiously conned lesson.

“He might at least,” said CHAPLIN, who, as Minister for Agriculture, takes an interest in specimens of animal produce, “have brought with him the skin of one of those nine lions he shot from the oak in which CHARLES THE FIRST took refuge.”

[Illustration: “No gun made would carry so far.”]

GRANDOLPH affects not to hear this whispered remark. It was addressed to NICHOLAS WOOD, who, leaning over back of Treasury Bench, laboriously explains that CHAPLIN is a little mixed; that the oak-tree to which he alludes was grown on English ground—wasn’t it in Worcestershire?—and therefore could not afford a safe place of retreat whence lions might be potted in Central Africa.

“There is,” said NICHOLAS, emphatically, “no gun made that would carry so far.”

“Pish!” said CHAPLIN, somewhat inconsequentially.

GRANDOLPH looks across at Front Opposition Bench, and wonders how Mr. G. is enjoying himself in the Sunny South. “Younger than any of ’em,” GRANDOLPH admits. “Odd that with a general sweeping away of the Leaders in their places last Session, only he should be left. Expect he’ll see us all out.”

“Order! order!”

’Tis the voice of the SPEAKER. I thought he’d complain.



“Notices of Motion!” he calls, in sonorous voice. Then the dreary business begins, MILMAN having all the fun to himself as he pulls a lucky number put of the Ballot Box, and Members rise in long succession, giving notice of interminable Bills and Motions, just as they did at the beginning of last Session, when HARTINGTON slept on the Front Opposition Bench, when OLD MORALITY fidgetted uneasily in the seat of Leader, and when PARNELL stood with his back to the wall in Committee Room No. 15.

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TRULY AND REELLY.—Why didn't they at once elect COTTON, Alderman, Poet, and Haberdasher, for the office of City Chamberlain, without waiting for a show of hands and the rest of it? Of course COTTON ought to have been elected right off the reel.

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