



480
AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

PETITE BUNKUM,

THE YANKEE SHOWMAN:

SHOWING HIS BIRTH, EDUCATION, AND BRINGING UP; HIS ASTONISHING ADVENTURES BY SEA AND LAND; HIS CONNECTION WITH TOM THUMB, JUDY HEATH, THE WOOLLY HORSE, THE FUDGE MERCHANT, MAID, AND THE SWEDISH NIGHTINGALE; TOGETHER WITH MANY OTHER STRANGE AND STARTLING MATTERS IN HIS EVENTFUL CARÉER; ALL OF WHICH ARE ILLUSTRATED WITH NUMEROUS ENGRAVINGS.



"Take My Life, and I'll blow no more!"—BUNKUM.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR,

BY A. RANNEY, 195 BROADWAY.

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NEW YORK:
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1856.

My Autobiography.

THE HIGHEST BIDDER.

I hereby officially announce to the public, that I have disposed of the manuscript of my autobiography to Messrs. Harris & Co., 102 Nassau Street, those gentlemen having offered the highest bids for the same. I give below their letter, and the proposals which I have accepted.

PETITE BUNKUM.

NEW YORK, *November 7, 1854.*

To PETITE BUNKUM, Esq.

Dear Sir: Being desirous of immortalizing ourselves, by becoming the medium through which the world shall enjoy the luxury of taking your life, we hereby offer you seventy-five cents for the same, or fifty-two mills for every book we shall issue.

Yours, truly,

HARRIS & CO., Publishers, 102 Nassau Street.

Dedication.

TO THE SWEDISH NIGHTINGALE,
WHOSE GREAT PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS IN THIS COUNTRY IS STILL
FRESH IN MY MEMORY, AND THE PRODUCTS OF WHOSE
TALENTS NOW LINE MY POCKETS, THIS AUTO-
BIOGRAPHY IS RESPECTFULLY DEDI-
CATED BY
THE AUTHOR.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1854, by

P. F. HARRIS,

in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of
New York.

PUBLISHERS NOTICE.

MR. BUNKUM having lately announced his readiness to receive bids for his "*Autobiography*" from responsible publishers, we have, at immense cost, and being determined to have the honor of presenting to the world the history of so illustrious a man, purchased the manuscript, and now give below the

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THAT I have grown fat and rich upon the credulity of mankind, and upon the spoils of humbug, is most true; and it is therefore but proper that I should make some return to the public whom I have so extensively victimized. So I have concluded to bequeath to them the treasure of my life; thus paying a debt of gratitude and filling my pockets at the same time.

In these pages I have adhered to the truth as closely as might suit my purpose.

My career has indeed been a comical one. I have, in my time, been everything and nothing—farmer's boy, merchant in soft soap, manager of monkeys and ancient colored females, clerk, bottle-washer, showman of the world's wonders, and president of banks, temperance societies, and other highfalutin institutions. I have (but this in strict confidence, reader,) been in jails as well as palaces—have known fashion and famine—have shinned it

My master was kind to me, and gave me a plain but solid education. At school, books of natural history, containing pictures and accounts of birds, fishes, mermaids, and animals, were my especial delight and most earnest study.

"That boy will make a great man," said my master one day, while witnessing my successful efforts to make a poodle dog stand upon his head and smoke a short pipe.

"Or a great humbug," responded my mistress, who was busily engaged in peeling potatoes for dinner by the kitchen fire.

Which of these predictions has proved correct, the reader must judge.

On the farm, while driving the cattle to pasture, my meditations have often taken a speculative turn, and I have asked myself the question—

"What is the chief end of man?"

"*To make money and keep it,*" would seem to be the reply by a mysterious voice.

"But how is that to be done?" I again inquired.

"*By humbugging the natives,*" said the voice; while, at the same time, the very cattle themselves would seem to wink at me in a peculiarly knowing manner, as if to say—

"*Go in, lemons!*"

I took the hint, and vowed to study the art of humbug and become rich—a man of wealth and consequence—to whom the vulgar herd would look up with envy and adoration, exclaiming—

"Great is Bunkum, and great must have been his *profits!*"

That vow has been kept, and I am now cock of the walk and the prince of my tribe. But to resume.

Even at that early age, and in that humble position in life, my genius shone forth resplendently, even now as the brilliant lights illuminate the front of my Museum, with its ten millions of curiosities and its "*Happy Family,*" consisting of a tame rat and a small kitten living together in domestic harmony—admission twenty-five cents. But more of that hereafter.

An anecdote will illustrate the peculiar bent of my ambition at that time. Being sent to market in a neighboring town with a drove of sheep, I sheared one close to his skin, cut off his ears and tail, and having placed him in an old shanty, the door of

which I carefully guarded, I announced in a loud voice to the crowd—

“Ladies and Gentlemen, here is now to be seen the greatest wonder in the world—an animal which combines all the looks of the dog, the wolf, the sheep, the goat, and the tiger—aye, gentlemen, and I may say also the *calf*—so walk up, gentlemen, and behold your brother—admission six and a quarter cents!”

The thing took—my shanty was filled with greenhorns, and my pockets with money. This was my first profitable experiment.

I afterwards added greatly to the success of the hoax, by painting the poor sheep over with black stripes, which gave him somewhat the look of a broken-down tiger.

The deception was finally discovered, for the animal did not play his part well, like many other human sheep who strut upon the stage. He, not liking the character which had been assigned him, gave a loud “*ba-a-a-h!*” and my prospects were ruined, for that time at least.

Great was the indignation that was felt against me by the good people of Spunkville.

“Let us flog the imposter at the cart’s tail,” said one.

“No,” suggested another, “we will duck him in the horse-pond!”

“Ride him on a rail!” bawled a savage fellow with a meat-axe look.

“Tar and feather him!” cried a reverend deacon of the church.

“Serve him as he did the sheep,” proposed a demon in human form—“cut off his ears and tail, and stripe him, not with paint, but with a raw-hide!”

Without waiting to see which of these benevolent projects would be carried into effect, I managed to make my escape from the threatening crowd, and privately left Spunkville in profound disgust.

“It is plain,” thought I, “these people can’t appreciate my efforts to amuse them. They are animals of different species, and I should like to exhibit them as such. However, my pocket is full of rocks, and who’s afraid?”

This is one of the many dangers through which I have passed, and to which I alluded in my preface. I have run many other fearful risks, as will appear hereafter.

At the winter school, I was always engaged in some speculation as a showman. A box of curiosities, of some kind or other, was always in my possession, for the purpose of extracting the pennies, not only from my school-mates, but also from the neighboring country people. I was regarded with wonder by all; and I myself became a great curiosity for strangers. "Young Petite Bunkum" was regarded as a prodigy—and his name was always associated with every thing that was talented, enterprising, money-making, and, as we Yankees say, "'cute."

A rather distressing adventure occurred to me about this time. I was perambulating the woods one day in a thoughtful mood, wondering what great things the future had in store for me, when I beheld a certain animal which is often playfully called an "essence pedlar," by genteel people, while vulgar folks do not hesitate to call him a *skunk*. Forgetting the animal's odoriferous propensities in my anxiety to secure him for speculating purposes, I seized upon him, for he was quietly sleeping, not dreaming of my designs upon his savory person. He soon began to scratch and bite in the most furious manner, but I held him fast, until, oh! horrible to relate! he discharged all over me a fluid which was not exactly *eau de cologne*. Overcome by the perfume, I let the creature go; and smarting with the pain of my wounds, I ran home in order to apply suitable remedies. As I approached the house, I saw the farmer, who was repairing a fence, clap his hand to his nose and rush madly away. I entered the farm-house, and the farmer's wife, as well as the hired girl, gave a scream, and bolted for the door. I ran into a neighboring apothecary's, thinking to get some "Russia Salve," when the apothecary, a little Frenchman, leaped over the counter and vomosed, after having overturned numerous bottles and other "fixings" peculiar to such places. I doubt whether he had a perfume in his shop that would begin to compare with the one which issued from my person.—As the little French doctor rushed off, he wildly exclaimed, tearing his hair—

"Mon Dieu! Sacre! Vat is dis I shall smell in my nose? I

shall nevare get over dis, be gar ! Ze d—d skoonk shall ruin me altogezzer ! Murdare—murdare !”

Every person whom I approached, ran from me as if I were infected with the plague. The panic became general ; some cried fire—others swore that a bear had come down from the mountains and was raving through the village, seeking whom he might devour. An old militia captain stoutly affirmed that war had suddenly been declared by Great Britain against this country, and that even then the enemy were approaching, which was the cause, he said, of all that tumult. Citizens rushed pell-mell to the Town House, to deliberate on what was best to be done in the fearful emergency. The bell of the meeting-house was rung by the frantic sexton ; the village fire-engine was dragged out by the rustic firemen, who were crazy with excitement, and half-a-dozen militia men, headed by a fat corporal and armed with old muskets that were for the most part destitute of locks, paraded the principal street and bade defiance to the universe.

“Let them come on and face us !” shouted the fat corporal, flourishing his rusty old cheese-knife of a sword—“the cussed red-coats ! We’ll learn them to invade our country, and be darned to ’em ! Attention, company ! Right face ! Forward—march !”

Some of the village boys struck up an air on old tin kettles, and the valiant troopers approached the apothecary’s shop just as I rushed forth in pursuit of the little French doctor, from whom I desired an explanation.

On detecting the peculiar odor with which I filled the atmosphere, the gallant commander ordered his men to halt ; which they did, each man holding his hand to his nose.

“Feller sojers,” said the corporal, “I smell danger in the breeze.”

“I smell something a pesky sight worse,” remarked a raw recruit, who was the greatest sufferer, because his nose was of very large dimensions.

“I can’t stand it !” roared the military chieftain. “I can face the red-coats, but I can’t encounter this. Disperse !”

Whereupon each valiant trooper took to his heels and fled as if his life were in danger.

"I have put a whole army to flight," thought I, "but what am I to do? I must throw away these clothes, cleanse myself, and put on others. But I can't remain here, to become a subject of constant ridicule on account of this ridiculous scrape. Besides, I have been a farmer's boy long enough, and if I am ever going to be anybody at all, I must begin *now!* So I'll start off as soon as possible, and seek my fortune in the world!"

I made my preparations as speedily as possible—took what few dollars I possessed—slung a small bundle on my back, containing my scanty wardrobe—and marched proudly down the principal street with a feeling of perfect independence, for I felt *free*, and had the utmost reliance upon my own ability to push my way in the world. As I left the village, the excitement seemed to have increased rather than diminished, and I might say, in the words of an old revolutionary ditty—

"Some *fire* cried, which some denied,
Some said the earth had *qua*-ked,
While girls and boys, with hideous noise,
Ran thro' the streets half naked!"

With a light heart, as well as a light pocket, I trudged on my way towards the good city of Norwalk, where I was not long in obtaining a situation as clerk in a store where various articles were for sale—such as soap, gridirons, broadcloth, rat-traps, alcohol, tripe, indigo, jews-harps, boots, brandy, dead hogs, and other hardware "too numerous to mention."



BOOK THE SECOND.

I BECAME A CLERK, A MERCHANT, AND A SHOWMAN.—"GENERAL
TOM THUMB" MAKES HIS FIRST BOW!

I GAVE entire satisfaction to my employer, in my new capacity as clerk. The elegance of my personal appearance, combined with my peculiarly fascinating manners, rendered me a prodigious

favorite, particularly with the lady customers, who all united in declaring that "Petite Bunkum was a dear duck of a young man." And it is almost needless to say that in this very sensible opinion I fully coincided—for I hold it to be an established fact, that if a man does not think well of himself, no one else will. At the same time I hate self-conceit as I hate a slim audience or a rival show-shop.

My employer was a clever man enough, but he took it into his head to die one fine day, and, with my accustomed promptitude in all matters where self-interest is concerned, I immediately stepped into his very comfortable shoes.

Behold me, then, a prosperous merchant! My business was a lucrative and increasing one, and I began to lay the foundation of that vast fortune which I now possess, and which is constantly growing. I redoubled my attention to the fair sex, for the *merchant* could "put on airs" which the poor *clerk* did not dare assume. Bright glances and languishing smiles assailed me everywhere; but, although I was ever polite to the ladies, I steeled my heart against the arrows of Cupid, resolving that whenever I *should* surrender my affections, it would be to make a "ten strike," and to gain a wife and a fortune at one and the same time. Hymen looks best when he comes to us dancing to the music of *golden* bells. Love in a cottage is all very fine, but luxury in a palace is far preferable. What does my friend and brother poet, Nat Willis, say of Love?

"His wing is the fan of a lady—
His foot 's an invisible thing—
His arrow is *tipped with a jewel,*
And shot from a silver string."

I was ever of a restless, roving disposition; and the dull, plodding life of a merchant, however profitable, had no charms for me. Not to weary the reader with details which would be unnecessary, and might prove tedious, I will state that I suddenly sold my store and business at a sacrifice, much to the regret of my numerous female admirers, many of whom had been long industriously "setting their caps" for me. Said I to myself, as I took my place in the cars which were to convey me to another city—

"I will travel, and see the world. I will study mankind, not from books—which are superficial teachers, at best—but from actual and personal observation. I will gaze upon the gilded palaces of the old world, and upon the thriving cities of the new. I will contemplate the strange antiquities of ancient times, and surround myself with all that is curious, remarkable or rare. The earth, the sea, the air, shall supply me with objects of curiosity; gems of painting and of sculpture shall be mine. But not chiefly to gratify my own tastes will I do this. No, that would be selfish; I have a nobler object in view—my own enrichment. The public shall view my splendid collection—and *the public shall pay well for the privilege!* Thus will I be doing mankind a benefit, and filling my coffers at the same time."

Thus did I reason, and thus did I afterwards *do*. With me, to *resolve* is to *perform*, as the sequel will show.

Occupying the same seat with me in the cars, was a queer-looking old fellow, with whom, with a traveller's familiarity, I soon fell into conversation. He was rather intelligent, and was dressed in the garb of a respectable farmer.

In the course of our conversation, I learned that this old gentleman was not very well to do in the world, in consequence of unfortunate land speculations, by which his farm had been heavily mortgaged. He was very anxious to improve his condition, and showed much uneasiness on the subject, as he had a large family to support. Of course, I deeply sympathized with him.

"There is one thing," said the old man, with hesitation, "that I think of doing; and yet I don't like to. But poverty overcomes all scruples. You must know, stranger, that among my children is a son who is one of the most remarkable freaks of nature ever born into the world. He is a *dwarf*, perfectly formed, intelligent and of agreeable appearance—and yet so wonderfully small that I can with ease put him in the pocket of my great coat."

I was a curiosity hunter, as the reader knows; and of course I pricked up my ears on hearing this, and listened to the old man with breathless attention. Here was a chance, not to be neglected, of entering at once upon the darling pursuit of my soul.

The farmer continued:—

"If I could get a good, competent and trustworthy man to act

as the agent, protector and guardian of my little son, attending to his interests and arranging his exhibition throughout this country and Europe, I don't know but that I should be willing to let him go. I might be the means of relieving my embarrassments."

"It would make your fortune!" I exclaimed with enthusiasm, at the same time warmly grasping the hand of the old man; "if your son is all which you have described him to be, he is indeed a wonder and a prodigy, and will attract thousands and hundreds of thousands to his levees, wherever he may exhibit. My dear sir, your fortune is made!"

"But where shall I procure a suitable and responsible man to act as the manager and agent of this business, provided I conclude to enter into it?" demanded *Farmer Homespun*, as I shall call him—trembling with delightful excitement at the idea of making his fortune.

"I am the man," I replied, with an air of confidence, smiting my knee in the most emphatic manner, and punching the farmer in the ribs with a severity that made him wince again, "I am the man! Give me your son, and I will satisfy you of my respectability and responsibility—of my honor, integrity and business qualifications in every respect. I am *Petite Bunkum*, Esquire, late merchant, and now a hunter after curiosities and wonders."

The result of all this was, that *Farmer Homespun* invited me to stop at his residence, which we were then rapidly approaching. I accepted, of course. Visions of presenting the wonderful dwarf to the crowned heads of Europe, to the brilliant circles of the nobility and the aristocracy of foreign courts, arose before me—visions which were destined to be fully realized.

Soon the cars stopped, and we got out. A short walk brought us to *Farmer Homespun's* house, an old-fashioned, roomy and comfortable-looking place, surrounded by every thing that can tend to make a farm-house attractive. It was no wonder that the good old man recoiled from the prospect of being eventually obliged to relinquish the possession of that fine, substantial home.

We entered the house, and I was welcomed by *Mrs. Homespun* with genuine New-England hospitality.

"Where is little Tom?" inquired the farmer, looking around.

"Mrs. Homespun smiled, and pointed to a gallon measure that stood upon a shelf, saying—

"Tom has been naughty, and so I have punished him by putting him in the measure. He *would* persist in sailing on the pond in his cigar-box, which he calls his sloop-of-war; and as I wish to break him of the habit—for he may be drowned some day—I put him in the measure, much against his will. Hark! do you hear the villain, now? What awful language!"

I listened, and to my utter astonishment heard a tiny voice issuing from the gallon measure.

"Let me out!" cried the little voice; and there was a sound as if a woodpecker were striking his bill against the sides of the measure—"let me out, and be blamed to you! Do you hear, old woman? I'll lick you like fun when I get hold of you! Fire—murder—cock-a-doodle-doo—hurrah, and go to the devil!"

At first I was inclined to suspect that this surprising effect was produced by some expert ventriloquist, who was throwing his voice into the measure. But that suspicion was instantly removed when I saw a little head, about the size of my fist, projecting above the top of the measure, while the diminutive owner of the little head wrathfully exclaimed in piping tones—

"Come, old dad, take me down out of this, and be devilish quick about it, or it will go hard with you!"

This terrific threat seemed to have the desired effect, for old Homespun lifted his hopeful son out of the measure, and placed him upon the table.

"Tommy," said the father, "this gentleman wishes to see and converse with you; so make your best bow, and behave yourself, if you can. I'm afraid that you are getting to be a regular rowdy. What do you think of him, sir?" added the old man, turning to me.

"Wonderful! most astonishing!" was my response.

It was indeed most wonderful and astonishing to behold a human being no larger than a junk bottle, walking, talking, and conducting himself in every respect like a person of ordinary size. This dwarf far exceeded my most sanguine anticipations; and I resolved to obtain possession of him, if possible, on any terms.



Tom Thumb proves himself a rowdy, and learns to box.

“How are you, old rooster?” said Master Tom, winking at me in the most patronizing manner. I felt flattered by this condescension on his part, and told him that I was very glad to see him, and so I was.

The little fellow was all that his father had described him, well formed, handsome, and intelligent. There were none of those repulsive characteristics about him which are often seen in dwarfs, and other freaks of nature. The only emotion created by his presence within the breast of a spectator, was one of pleasing astonishment.

“Hurrah!” shouted Master Tom, all of a sudden; “there’s my horse; now for a ride!”

With these words Tom swung himself from the table with surprising agility, and vaulted upon the back of his mettlesome charger, which was no other than a large gray cat that had just entered the room. Away scampered poor Puss, with Tom upon her back shouting with all his might—

“Hip—hip—hip—hurrah! Go it while you’re young!”

“The days of fairies and goblins who used to cut up such strange pranks, seem to be revived,” thought I on witnessing this strange spectacle.

Well, to make a long story short, I made certain arrangements with Farmer Homespun concerning Master Tom, which placed that interesting juvenile completely under my control. The proper documents having been made out and signed before a legal functionary, Tom took leave of his relatives and accompanied me to New York, which he was very willing to do when I had described to him in glowing colors the splendid life that awaited him in this and foreign countries.

"I'm glad to get away," he remarked with an air of reckless and fashionable dissipation, "it was precious dull at home. The old man was getting to be so saucy, that I had almost made up my mind to *lam* him!"

As he uttered these frightful words, the little man doubled up his tiny fists and looked savage.

"Tom," said I, laughing, "you will have some hardships to undergo, after all. The ladies will smother you to death with kisses."

"That will be *capital punishment*," responded Tom, putting on the air of a libertine; "I admire a fine woman amazingly. I expect to make many conquests, particularly among the fair ones of Great Britain. Shall I see Queen Victoria?"

"I shall certainly present you to her majesty."

"Good! Prince Albert may have cause to be jealous of me. Who knows but what I may secure a wife among the nobility? But hang all titles, I say; I am a true American republican, and *nothing shorter*."

General Thumb—for I had already, with his consent, bestowed upon him that celebrated name—now got into my overcoat pocket, and we sallied forth for a promenade.

It is well known that in England the General produced the most profound sensation, especially among the "upper ten." Dukes and duchesses, earls and marquises, lords and ladies, baronets and gentlemen of rank, all crowded to view the Lilliputian wonder. Although the price of admission was half a guinea, our rooms on the Strand, in London, were constantly thronged. The General received many valuable presents; among them were a gold watch richly set with diamonds, worth at least three hundred guineas; a superb gold snuff-box, ornamented with pearls;

a miniature sword of exquisite workmanship, presented to him by the late Duke of Wellington; a splendid court suit, made for him by the most fashionable tailor in London; a handsome little coach, and two elegant little ponies, given to him by Lord Palmerston; a valuable topaz ring, with a suitable inscription, presented by the Duchess of Sutherland, besides many other articles not necessary to be mentioned. In short the General became the centre of attraction, and the lion of the day. The ladies idolized him; and I could not help envying the little rascal the showers of luscious kisses that were bestowed upon him by ruby lips belonging to the most beautiful of the high-born dames of England. The General enjoyed the fun highly; and assured me that he would never regret the day when he left his dull home in America, to enter upon the pleasures of a London life and a foreign tour.

I will here relate an amusing incident which is literally true. One day the Countess of —, who was a woman of remarkable loveliness, paid the General a visit, and appeared to be perfectly fascinated with him. She kissed and caressed him over and over again; lavished upon him the most endearing epithets; and laughingly regretted that she was already married—"for," said she, "I should like you for a husband." The General made a complimentary reply, as he sat upon the lady's arm, and leaned luxuriously against her voluptuous bust. There happened to be but few persons in the room just then, for the time appointed for the opening of the exhibition had scarcely arrived. I was busily engaged in arranging some pictures upon the wall, and did not notice what was going on. Suddenly, on turning around, I discovered that the Countess had vanished, and that the General was nowhere to be seen. The suspicion instantly darted upon my mind that the Countess, overcome by the General's charms, had actually *stolen him!*

I had no idea of being deprived of my profitable little *friend* in so unceremonious a manner. Rushing forth into the street without my hat, and in a high state of excitement, I saw the carriage of the Countess just turning a distant corner.

"Stop thief—stop thief!" bellowed I, tearing like a madman through the street, after the carriage.

Two or three policemen followed in my wake, while twenty or thirty idlers also took up the chase. Apple-stands were upset, dogs barked, children screamed, people wondered, and, to use a common expression, the very devil was to pay generally.

I finally overtook the carriage, stopped the horses, tore open the door, and confronted the Countess, who sat perfectly calm and unmoved.

"What means this outrage?" she demanded, regarding me with a look of lofty disdain.

"No outrage is intended, your ladyship," I replied, respectfully; "I merely wish to claim my property. Will it please you to restore General Tom Thumb to me?"

The Countess smiled scornfully, and without making me any reply, ordered her coachman to drive on.

"No, you don't," said I, growing angry—"I know my rights, and will maintain them. What can't be done by fair means, must be done by foul. Here is the article I want."

With these words, I raised the richly embroidered cloak of the Countess, and there, in the lap of her ladyship, sat Master Tom, looking quite crest-fallen and particularly sheepish.

To seize upon the General and stow him away safely in my pocket, was but the work of a moment. The little villain began to kick and scream, but it was of no use. I forced my way through the mob which had been collected by this extraordinary spectacle, and returned to my rooms in the Strand.

This comical adventure got into the newspapers, and created much merriment. It proved a benefit to me, after all, for the rush to see the General now became greater than ever. I scolded Master Tom for his willingness to be stolen from me, and accused him of a desire to run away. He listened to me in silence, and then folding his arms after the manner of his great model, Napoleon, he said—

"The Countess is a fine woman, and I had no particular aversion to being made her captive. And I'll tell you what, old fellow, if you don't shut up and let me alone, I will give you the slip, and so put a stop to your money-making operations. You think you own me, body and soul; but take care! Remember, sir, I wear a sword, and have learned how to use it!"



General Thumb threatens Bunkum, saying that he "wears a sword, and knows how to use it."

This display of spirit on the part of the General—added to my fear of losing him—silenced me. But I kept a strict watch upon his movements, never suffering him to be out of my sight, either day or night.

Shortly after the attempt of the Countess to steal the General, I had the extreme satisfaction of receiving a message from the First Grand Usher of Buckingham Palace, to the effect that Her Majesty had graciously signified her desire to see General Thumb at the Palace, on a day and at an hour which were expressly designated.

This royal message enraptured the General, who had long earnestly desired to be presented to the Queen. At the appointed time, I repaired to the Palace, accompanied of course by my *protege*, who was dressed in his splendid court suit. We were courteously received by the First Grand Usher, who was expecting us. Having refreshed ourselves with a pint of porter and a

pipe, generously tendered to us by the Usher, whose red nose betokened his love of good living, we were handed over to the First Grand Chamberlain, who conducted us through a suite of rooms and placed us in the custody of the First Gold Stick. This gentleman gave us in charge of the First Lord in Waiting, who confided us to the care of the First Gentleman of Honor, whereupon that personage introduced us to the notice of the First Gentleman in Waiting, who proceeded to place us under the guidance of the First Royal Page. It is, to this day, my firm impression that upon the memorable occasion to which I allude, the First Royal Page was very drunk, for he winked at me in the most familiar and insolent manner, saying—

“Now, then, old top, mind yer eye!”

A pair of folding-doors was thrown open, and, for the first time in our lives, we found ourselves in the presence of royalty.



BOOK THE THIRD.

THE INTERVIEW BETWEEN GENERAL TOM THUMB AND THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND.

THE apartment was spacious, but not particularly gorgeous in its appointments or decorations. Seated upon a rich and elaborately carved sofa were two persons.

One of these was a buxom young woman, splendidly attired in black satin. Her shoulders and bust were particularly fine, and were liberally displayed. Taken altogether, she was a fine-looking woman.

The other occupant of the sofa was a young man, tall and well-formed, but with rather an insipid countenance. He wore a light-colored moustache. Between his lips rested a Dutch pipe, mounted with gold; and, on a table near him, stood a half-emptied mug of lager beer.

The lady was the Queen; the gentleman was her husband, Prince Albert.



Bunkum and the General are ushered into the presence of the Queen.

Both of these august personages uttered an exclamation of surprise and delight, when they beheld the *great* General Thumb, who advanced towards them with easy confidence.

“Goodness gracious!” cried the Queen; “what a very little man, to be sure!”

“Meine Gott!” grunted the Prince, removing the pipe from his mouth—“wegates, lansman?”

Understanding this to mean “How are you?” the General replied—

“Hearty as a buck. Mrs. Victoria, how do you find yourself to-day?”

“Quite well, I thank you, sir,” replied the Queen, graciously. This condescension, affability, and familiarity on the part of

the royal pair instantly relieved me of every feeling of embarrassment, and placed me completely at my ease.

Half an hour afterwards, the General might have been seen sitting upon the knee of the Queen, taking wine with her; while Prince Albert and your humble servant were seated at a game of dominoes—first “fifty up” for the liquor. His Royal Highness made several unsuccessful efforts to cheat me, by laying down the wrong pieces, and other manœuvres; but it was “no go.” I *stuck* him on the game, and he paid for the brandy smashes like a soldier and a gentleman.

We staid to supper, and sat down to a good old-fashioned English rump-steak. This, with stewed tripe and onions, washed down by a plentiful supply of London porter, made a very tolerable repast.

When we separated, we were earnestly invited to call again. It was very evident that the Prince was pretty well “over the bay,” while the Queen was in rattling good spirits. She declared her intention of disguising herself and taking a walk about town, for the purpose of seeing what was going on—which, I have since learned on good authority, was formerly a custom of hers.

That night I carried the General home in a helpless state of intoxication; and the next day he was so ill that we could not exhibit.

After a long stay in Europe, and having sufficiently gratified public curiosity, we returned to the United States. Taking my leave of the General, who was now very rich, I turned my attention towards the procurement of some other object with which to “gull the natives” and coin money. That object was soon found.



BOOK THE FOURTH.

IN WHICH IS INTRODUCED JUDY HEATH, THE NURSE OF WASHINGTON,
ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-TWO YEARS OF AGE.

I WAS travelling in the South for the benefit of my health, being also in search of a curiosity, for which I always had an un

accountable hankering. I stopped and was hospitably entertained at the fine mansion of Mr. Shelby, a gentleman to whom I had letters of introduction. He was the proprietor of an extensive plantation and a large number of slaves.

On the day after my arrival, Mr. Shelby conducted me over his estate. It was evident that he was a kind master, for the negroes all regarded him with looks of respect and affection. He had a kind word for them all; to some he gave money—to others, written orders for little luxuries of various kinds, at the “great house;” and he was very particular in inquiring after those who were sick.

We went down to the “negro quarters;” a very old black woman was sunning herself before the door of a neat, comfortable-looking cabin.

“How are you to-day, aunty?” inquired Mr. Shelby, kindly.

“Bless de Lord, massa,” mumbled the old woman—“I is alive. When is massa goin’ to let de poor ole nigger go to de free States, so dat she may die and go to glory a free woman?”

“Well, well; we’ll see about it soon,” answered Mr. Shelby, carelessly; and then, turning to me, he continued, in a low tone—

“The poor old creature has taken a strange fancy to die in the free States. She appears to believe that if she dies a slave, she can not go to heaven. I would instantly set her free and send her North, were it not on account of the certainty of her coming to suffering and want, for she has no relatives or friends there—no one to take care of her. She has been a faithful servant, and it is my wish that she should pass her few remaining days in peace and comfort. I purchased her some twenty years ago of a gentleman who stated that she had been the nurse of General Washington. I can not vouch for the truth of that statement, however. She must be about ninety years old.”

A luminous idea instantly struck me—an idea that sprang from my ingenious and inexhaustible mind. What that idea was, will be very soon developed.

“Mr. Shelby,” said I, “since the poor old woman wishes to die in a free state, I will take her with me North, and see that she is comfortably provided for. I will give you my word of hon-

or that she shall want for nothing to the end of her days. What do you want for her? Name your price."

"She is yours, a free gift," replied Mr. Shelby; "I am glad to have met so excellent a philanthropist."

In a few days I started for the North, accompanied by the old woman, whose name was *Judy Heath*.

She was rather intelligent, and I sought to adapt her to my purpose. Let me try to describe her personal appearance. Fancy a skin of India-rubber stretched on bones; jaws without teeth; eyes that looked on vacancy; wool as white as snow; a nose and chin in close proximity; her complexion black as jet; her whole form lean and skinny. There you have *Judy Heath*.



Judy Heath, dressed up to receive company.

We arrived in New-York, and, a few days after our arrival, there might have been seen the following announcement in all the newspapers:—

WONDERS WILL NEVER CEASE!!!

Tom Thumb has had his day, and now a still greater curiosity is offered to the world.

THE FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY,

the immortal Washington, stands upon the page of history in all the splendor of his immortal greatness. Everything that has ever been connected with that illustrious man must necessarily be of profound interest. The bosom of every American will throb with national pride, when the fact becomes known that

PETITE BUNKUM,

the great traveller and showman, has effected an engagement with an ancient African lady who was actually

THE NURSE OF GENERAL WASHINGTON!!!

This sacred and sable relic of the past is

ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-TWO YEARS OLD!!!

and in the perfect enjoyment of all her faculties, both mental and physical. She relates many thrilling anecdotes concerning her great master, who as an infant was dandled upon her knee, and whose earliest cries were for "Judy Heath." The old lady is intelligent and sociable, notwithstanding her advanced age. She is indeed a Monument of the Past. Her levees will be held at Humbug Hall, Broadway, for a few days only. Cards of admission, fifty cents. Children, when accompanied by their parents or guardians, half-price. The free list, with the exception of the press and the reverend clergy, is suspended. *Any presents* that may be bestowed upon this venerable woman, will be thankfully received and duly appreciated.

PETITE BUNKUM.

The scheme was perfectly successful. It was astonishing to see the avidity with which the multitude swallowed the humbug. The dollars poured into my pocket with the velocity of the Falls of Niagara. I had completely initiated the old woman in all the mysteries of the part which she was to play. It amused even *me* to see her wag her toothless jaws, and to hear her mumble, as she held out her arms to the admiration of the throng,

"Yes, bless de Lord! Dese ole arms has held Massa Washington, when he was a little pickanninny! He was a good massa, and was kind to de ole woman. Ah! *dem* was de times when de poor nigger was somebody. White folks, give de poor ole woman something to help her into de land of glory!"

Down came the quarters, the halves, and the dollars. Artists came to paint the portrait of Judy Heath; physicians came to contemplate and speculate upon a human system that had so far exceeded, in its existence, the usual time allotted to humanity; clergymen came to prepare her for an immediate entrance into glory; while editors, reporters, and other common loafers, were loud in proclaiming her the greatest "*brick*" that was ever preserved from the crumbling edifice of antiquity.

It may be asked what benefit did Mademoiselle Judy Heath

derive from this arrangement? I will tell you, most inquisitive reader. In the first place, she had her regular rum; and, in justice to her memory, I must say that she was rather fond of that article of refreshment. In fact, the old lady occasionally used to get drunk; and in one instance she bestowed upon me the compliment of a black eye, by a blow of her crutch, because I refused to "come down" with another half pint. Then she had her tobacco, of which she was immoderately fond, smoking it in a pipe of brief dimensions, which perfumed the entire neighborhood. Then she had *my* agreeable society, and could indulge in the pleasing thought that she was making money for *me*. Altogether, the nurse of General Washington, aged one hundred and sixty-two years, was very comfortably situated—at least, *I* thought so; and who was a better judge?

But everything must have an end, including ancient negresses. Judy Heath died one day; her remains were deposited in a respectable pine box, and conveyed to Potter's Field on a wheelbarrow, by a mourning Greek. I shed tears upon her humble grave—not of sorrow for her decease—but of regret on account of my having lost a valuable and profitable curiosity.

"No matter," thought I, "there are other wonders in the world, already made; if not, by Jerusalem! *I'll make them!*"



BOOK THE FIFTH.

THE WOOLLY HORSE!

"Bring forth the untamed Tartar steed,
And lash the tyrant naked to his back!"

MAZEPPA.

I BECAME the proprietor of an extensive Museum in New York—how, or by what means, is none of the reader's business. I had the usual variety of stuffed monkeys, ferocious tigers, and grinning hyenas; but I longed for some *living* curiosity—something that would open the eyes and purses of the wonder-loving community.

“What’s to be done, Major?” said I to my confidential and right-hand man.

The *little* Major scratched his head and considered—then he sipped his rum—then he took another whiff at his pipe—then he winked at me knowingly, and said—

“Bunkum ! are you awake ?”

“Perfectly,” replied I, in surprise.

“Get a horse,” said the Major.

“What for ?” said I.

“None of your d——d business,” said the Major, sternly—
“*you get a horse.*”


I saw that the Major had a plan; and I bought a common cart-horse of indolent habits and an indifferent aspect. The animal was a good feeder; and I purchased him from a bankrupt clam merchant.

The Major superintended the entire operation. He, in the first place, hired an experienced barber to *shave* the horse from stem to stern—a process which the animal must have considered an outrage, inasmuch as he kicked the poor barber very severely on the shin, causing him to execute a frantic polka very amusing to the spectators but rather painful to *him*. Then the Major sent for some tar, and a quantity of wool. The tar, in a melted state, he applied to the poor horse, in every part; then he stuck on the wool—and the gallant steed resembled an enlarged sheep. Next day, the papers were ornamented with the following notice:—

BUNKUM AGAIN IN THE FIELD!!!

THE COUNTRY IS SAFE!!!

Astonishing Freak of Nature!!!

 PETITE BUNKUM, who has so often contributed to the gratification of the wondering community, has now the satisfaction of proclaiming to New York, and the world in general, that he has, at enormous cost, effected a brief engagement with

THE WOOLLY HORSE!!!

This wonderful animal, perfectly formed in every part, and in every respect a regular horse, is, by a strange and unaccountable freak of nature,

COVERED WITH WOOL,

LIKE A SHEEP!!!

He is docile and intelligent, eating his oats whenever they are presented to him, in a manner that would astonish a lover of nature. This great horse will wag his tail in the most affecting manner, upon the reception of a favor. Any small contribution, with reference to extra oats, will be thankfully received. Call at *Awful Hall*, and be victimized to the tune of twenty-five cents.

PETITE BUNKUM.

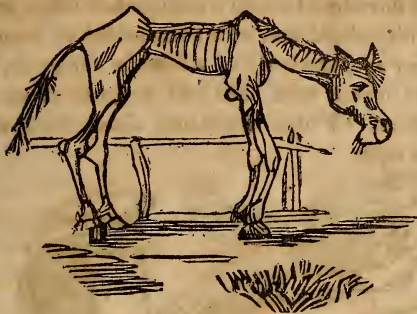
They came—they saw—and were conquered. The “woolly horse” became the lion of the day. Naturalists in vain endeavored to explain his origin; while sheepish lovers of mutton contemplated him with as much satisfaction as if he had been a sheep of an expanded size. As for the horse himself, he behaved beautifully—took his refreshments in admirable style, and submitted to inspection with all the grace of an old philosopher.

About this time, (all great men have enemies,) the following “*Acrostic*” upon me, appeared in one of the newspapers, and was extensively copied throughout the United States; it will be seen that the letters beginning the lines, form this sentence—“*Bunkum, Prince of Humbug.*”

ACROSTIC ON BUNKUM.

B unkum, all hail! the greatest of thy time,
 U pon thee I bestow my graceful rhyme.
 N ow stand thee forth; the biggest of thy race—
 K ing of the universe, with brassy face!
 U pon thee who shall not bestow applause,
 M an of a Million? first in nature's cause.
 P osterity shall own thy deathless fame—
 R ich, poor, the high and low, shall see thy name
 I nscribed upon a pillar of stout brass,
 N ext to the portrait of a braying ass!
 C elestial visions of great heaps of gold,
 E ver encourage thee to actions bold.
 O h! how I do revere the name of “*Thumb,*”
 F amous as Bonaparte in “kingdom come!”
 H ow with affection did we often gaze
 U pon old Judy Heath—and now, to amaze
 M ankind with some new wonder, making fun,
 B ut also coining cash, thou peerless one,—
 U nto thee can we say, without remorse,
 “G reat is great Bunkum, and his *Woolly Horse!*”

This sublime production, instead of injuring, benefitted me greatly, for it increased the celebrity of my “Woolly Horse,” and awakened the public curiosity to behold the wonderful animal. At length, however, the novelty wore off; and the horse, although excellent in drawing a cart, could not always draw good houses. Having realized a small fortune by the speculation, I was perfectly willing to abandon it when it ceased to be profitable. Therefore I caused the horse to be stripped of his wool, and a sorry-looking beast he was. I then sold him for ten dollars to a respectable vender of apples and other fancy hardware.



The Woolly Horse, after being stripped of his wool, and sold.

I now come to my principal humbug, and one which has, more than any other, tended to make me famous. I allude to the great "*Fudge Mermaid*," to which I shall devote a separate chapter.

BOOK THE SIXTH.

THE "FUDGE MERMAID!"

Come, mariner, down to the deep with me,
And hide thee under the wave;
For I have a bed of corals for thee,
And quiet and sound shall thy slumbers be.
In a cell of the mermaid's cave!

OLD SONG.

THE happy idea suggested itself to my mind, that a stuffed specimen of the mermaid tribe, got up and manufactured to order, might "*take*."

"How shall we get a mermaid, Major?" I asked of my worthy and ingenious coadjutor.

"Easy enough," replied the imperturbable Major, with a fashionable yawn—"leave it all to me. In a day or two I will present to you as finely executed a *gag* as you ever saw. Keep perfectly cool, and *wait for the wagging* of the mermaid's tail."

The gallant little Major was as good as his word. In a very

short time he introduced me to a strange-looking object which filled my soul with delight, and with anticipation of immense profits. The head of an ape, the body of a female kangaroo, and the tail of a fish, were united with skill and singular effect. Thus was created the great "Fudge Mermaid," about which so much has been said and sung.



The manner in which the Fudge Mermaid was supposed to have been captured. (A fancy sketch.)

Crowds flocked to see this new wonder of the world. Children screamed when they beheld it; ladies tittered, and gentlemen opened their eyes. Old fogy naturalists put on their spectacles and delivered long harangues on the supposed habits and peculi-

arities of the "critter;" and one fat old parson devoutly exclaimed, "Wonderful are thy works, O Lord!" I could not help thinking that the Major rather deserved the credit of the work; but, of course, I kept my own counsel, and said nothing.

Some sapient individuals pretended to have discovered that my "Mermaid" was a manufactured article—one of my "usual hum-bugs," as they insolently expressed it—and great was the excitement in consequence. Determined not to be put down in that manner, I boldly challenged investigation, and published a card, signed by a number of scientific gentlemen, to the effect that they had carefully examined the object in dispute, and were of the firm conviction that it was the remains of a veritable mermaid. The greater portion of these gentlemen had never seen my "Mermaid" at all; but I easily obtained their signatures to the card, (which I had written myself,) simply by presenting each one of them with a five-dollar bill.

This card silenced, for a time, the clamors of those who suspected the true state of affairs; and my combination of ape, kangaroo and fish was eminently successful. My fortune was very much enlarged by this most fortunate speculation; but, as is too often the case, the richer I got the greater became my thirst for additional wealth. I resolved to become a millionaire before I ceased my operations. I became a man of mark and confidence on 'Change; I traded in real estate, dabbled in stocks, and became connected with banks. To quote the words of a celebrated author, in allusion to me, "I built a house after the model of a castor, with pepper-boxes, vinegar-cruet and mustard-pot in full force. This house I set down in Bridgestout, and from my room in the dome that represents the cover of the mustard-pot, I fulminate my book. The oyster yawns wide open at my feet."

One other brief quotation will serve to show the estimation in which I was held:—

"I spoke—drunkards trembled, and Schiedam Schnapps lost its power. I wrote—authors grew pale with envy, and publishers rent each other's garments in a struggle for my book!"

I became a warm friend and advocate of the cause of total abstinence. The brethren nodded approvingly, the sisters flocked around me, and constantly greeted me with smiles almost as fas

cinating as that which illuminated the charming countenance of the "*Fudge Mermaid*."



BOOK THE SEVENTH

THE "SWEDISH NIGHTINGALE!"

"That strain again!——
Oh, it comes over me like the sweet South wind,
Breathing amid a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odor!"

SHAKESPEARE'S TWELFTH NIGHT.

JENNY, thou charming songstress! The memory of thy heavenly voice, thy gentle beauty, thy matchless grace, the witchery of thy smile, the fascinating elegance of thy manners, and, more than all, thy *capacity for making money*—that memory, I say, will ever linger around my heart like the fragrance of flowers around the vase from which they have been too rudely torn. Peace and happiness be thy portion forever, thou excellent lady; and when at last angels shall beckon thee hence to become the occupant of a brighter sphere, may thy ravishing tones add new beauty to the choral strains sung by celestial beings around the throne of heaven!

"Bunkum is getting poetical!" cries the astonished and sarcastic reader, turning up his or her nose in the most approved style of aristocratic scorn. Let me assure you, O most critical of book-devourers! that Petite Bunkum has some music in his soul, after all. The weight of money has not entirely crushed all the better feelings of his nature. I do not wish to be thought egotistical, or I might relate many good things which I have done in my day—many acts of genuine benevolence. I have set up more than one young man in business, and placed him in a position of manly independence; I have felt for the widow, and relieved the orphan; I have answered the prayers of the destitute, and from my superfluous abundance contributed to the comfort of the hungry and distressed. The many persons in my employ will certify to my fairness and liberality. But a truce to this unnecessary harangue.

My numerous virtues are too well known to require vindication here. And now to resume.

The fame of the "Swedish Nightingale," as a songstress of surpassing beauty, extended throughout the world wherever the divine charm of music was acknowledged and appreciated. Monarchs themselves almost bowed down before the majesty of her talents, while musical critics, however fastidious and accomplished they may have been, had no words in which to express their raptures. Managers, directors and speculators in novelties generally, were all on the *qui vive* to effect engagements with so splendid an attraction.



Bunkum, while at sea in search of the Nightingale, keeps a bright look out from the mast-head.

"I will forestall them all," thought I—"these European

nabobs shall see that a Yankee showman is smarter than any of them. I have capital, enterprise and talent sufficient for the business; and I'll set about it immediately."

Delays are dangerous, and so I repaired to Europe in the very next vessel that sailed. I sought and with some difficulty obtained an interview with the Nightingale. I say with some difficulty, because she was vigilantly guarded by a crowd of interested and selfish persons, who watched any approach towards her with jealousy, distrust and suspicion.

I instantly began to open negotiations with Jenny, for her to accompany me on a professional tour throughout the United States. Although she had an "agent" to transact her affairs, I preferred to treat with her personally. It was finally arranged between us, that she should go with me, at an enormous cost. But I anticipated that a golden harvest would amply repay me for the immense outlay which I was to undergo.



The Nightingale keeps a bright look out for Bunkum.

Great was the excitement created in America by this distinguished arrival. The portrait of the Nightingale adorned every window, and her name sounded upon every tongue. My bills for printing and advertising were incredibly large; but I freely

launched forth my funds, and cared for no expense which could assist in the successful accomplishment of my schemes.

The night for the giving of our first concert approached. The whole city was in a perfect furore of excitement, of which I took a wise advantage by selling the tickets at auction, to the highest bidders. The anxiety to get possession of the first choice of seats was positively fearful. This high honor was finally gained, at an extravagant cost, by a famous hatter, who paid considerably over *two hundred dollars* for his seat, during one evening's performance. He was destined, however, to be afterwards cast into the shade by the *dodge* of a celebrated genius in Boston, as I shall soon relate.

All my plans were attended with singular success. The first concert of the Nightingale was indeed a triumph. Two stout horses, and a guard of twenty armed men, were required to convey to the bank in Wall Street the load of specie which had been received. I became, if possible, a more celebrated man than ever. Artists solicited the honor of taking my portrait—and, in many a show-case of Daguerreotypes, my mild, benevolent and intellectual features well harmonized with the placid countenance of the Nightingale.

At the conclusion of the first concert, the great songstress was loudly called for, and I led her forward amid a perfect whirlwind of applause. White handkerchiefs waved, hands encased in kid gloves clapped, and boquets were profusely showered down upon us.

"Give us a speech, Bunkum—a speech!" yelled the excited and admiring thousands. I complied, with my accustomed grace, eloquence and power. The following is the substance of my remarks upon that memorable occasion:—

"Ladies and gentlemen," said I, placing my right hand upon my left breast and bowing almost to the ground, while at the same time a bland smile overspread my visage like a sunbeam—"good folks, one and all, you know that the inquiry is frequently made, *Where's Bunkum?* I will to-night answer that question. *Bunkum is nowhar!*—I am caved in—gone under—used up—in short, completely flummixed, by this brilliant, this unprecedented triumph. (Loud cheers, and cries of 'How about the Woolly

Horse?' from a fiend in a back seat, who, for some unaccountable reason, seemed to be 'down' upon me.) I can but grovel on the earth, while the Nightingale soars upward towards heaven, saluting the sun, moon and stars with her radiant notes of song. (This beautiful simile, which I had carefully prepared beforehand, was greeted with mingled applause and laughter; hoarse growl of dissatisfaction from the man in the back seat, whereupon he was roughly bundled out by one of the ushers.) My object, in engaging in this expensive speculation, ladies and gentlemen, is not to make money. Of that you are, I am certain, well convinced. My only motive is to please, instruct and entertain you—to afford you a luxury which has been the delight of kings—the luxury of hearing and seeing the greatest vocal wonder that ever the world produced. (Roars of incredulous laughter, which had scarcely subsided, when the man who had been ejected from the back seat thrust his head into one of the windows, and bawled out, 'How about the Fudge Mermaid?' A big fiddler, with great precision and presence of mind, hit him in the eye with an orange, and he was seen no more.) I have, in the course of my eventful career, friends and fellow-citizens, exhibited for your amusement and edification many novelties and wonders. (Cries of 'Oh! oh! oh!' and much confusion generally. Fat woman lugged out in a fainting condition by a stout policeman.) Ladies and gentlemen, I will not detain you much longer, (cries of 'Please don't,') for the Nightingale must be fatigued, I am very sleepy, and I am sure that you must be tired. ('Yes, tired of you!' remarked a demon in the centre of the audience.) I will announce, in conclusion, that the best of wines and liquors may be had at the bar; and also that next Sunday evening I will have the honor of appearing before you in a temperance lecture, admission one shilling. This small charge will be made merely to cover expenses. Thanking you, both on behalf of the Nightingale and myself, for your kind approbation, I now bid you, one and all, good night."

Jenny and I then retired. Three hearty cheers were given for *her*—while for *me* three distinct noises were rendered which sounded uncommonly like *groans*.

"They may groan as much as they like," thought I, "so long

as they cause my coffers to groan with the pressure of dollars. I must expect some people to be envious of my rising fortunes; they may ridicule my eccentricities, but they cannot check my onward progress or imitate my greatness. I can afford to be laughed at, while thousands are pouring in upon me every week!"

After giving a series of concerts in New York, we went to Boston—I and the fair Swede. Having secured the spacious Tremont Temple, I repeated the auction business, and the first ticket was sold for upwards of *six hundred dollars!* This extravagant price rather astonished even *me*, accustomed as I was to all sorts of gigantic financial operations. The purchaser I shall call *Ocean Podge*, a well-known vocalist, remarkable for the extraordinary faces which he assumes whenever he attempts to sing. His six hundred-dollar seat at my first Boston concert must have proved a profitable *dodge* for him, after all, for it made him notorious throughout the country, and aroused the public curiosity to behold him. It has been represented to me—but I will not vouch for the excellence of the authority or the truth of the story—that Mr. Podge had, previous to the sale of tickets, gone around among his friends and made innumerable bets of from ten up to fifty and even a hundred dollars, that the first ticket would sell for over five hundred dollars. Accordingly, Mr. Podge bid over five hundred dollars for the first ticket, in order to win all the bets which he had made, and which would put a couple of thousands into his pocket. It was even said that he had come to the auction prepared to bid over a thousand for the first ticket, had there been any competition to obtain possession of it. If I were certain of the truth of this statement, I should entertain the highest respect and admiration for a gentleman of so much shrewdness and ingenuity, which would almost equal my own; and that is paying him the most distinguished compliment which it is possible for one individual to bestow upon another.

After a brilliant season in Boston, we visited the other principal cities of the Union, and were attended with almost unvarying prosperity. I have reason to believe that the Nightingale became seriously dissatisfied with me at about this time. It was represented to her, by certain evil-minded persons who had not the fear of the great Bunkum before their eyes, that I was merely a

common showman—a heartless speculator—a grasping, avaricious man—an exhibitor of stuffed monkeys and other low humbugs—and she was assured that her reputation, in a professional sense, would suffer in consequence of her connection with me. She was told that people would merely consider her as a common



The Nightingale, becoming disgusted, packs up her baggage and leaves.

curiosity, to be seen and stared at; that she was merely an instrument in my hands for the enlargement of my own fortune; that she would inseparably associate her name with recollections of "Judy Heath" and other "degrading impositions;" and that, when she returned to Europe, she would be neglected and spurned because of her having entered into a co-partnership with a Yankee showman. These absurd representations, originating in the malice of my enemies, all combined to render the Nightingale so uneasy and dissatisfied, that she at last earnestly requested to be released from her engagement with me. This desire I was induced to comply with, because, in the first place, the novelty had somewhat worn off, and she did not *draw* near so well as at first; while, secondly, the sum of money which she agreed to pay me, on condition of being released, was not to be disregarded or looked upon with contempt. So all the necessary arrangements were made—the requisite documents were drawn up—and the Nightingale was suffered to escape from the gilded cage in which she had seemed to be so unhappy.

She gave a few concerts *on her own hook*, as we Yankees say. I cannot, in this place, refrain from making some allusion to the most interesting portion of her eventful history. I refer to her marriage with Mr. Silversmith, a most respectable young man, but merely a third-rate pianist. As all the facts connected with that marriage are not generally known, the following account will be read with interest:—

Mr. Silversmith came to this country, poor and friendless. He flattered himself that his musical education, and what talent he imagined himself to possess, would, by industry, frugality and moral rectitude, in the course of time obtain for him a comfortable competence. But alas! he soon discovered that he would have to compete with musicians of the highest order of talent, many of whom were Americans. Foreign actors, artists, musicians and others, are very foolishly inclined to suppose that there is no true talent in this country, and that, when they arrive here, they will astonish everybody. Well, they *do* arrive here, and sometimes find out, to their intense mortification, that they are mere *nobodies* at all in comparison with many Americans who shine forth pre-eminently in the same professions to which they

respectively belong. Then they return to their own countries, sadder and wiser men; and perhaps seek revenge by writing books full of wholesale abuse of the Americans, who cannot and will not appreciate "foreign talent."

On the other hand, it is too true that the Yankees are often apt to imagine that an adventurer must be a great man just because he is a foreigner and rejoices in a jaw-breaking name; while plain Mr. Smith, the poor *native* artist, or singer, or player—no matter how superior may be his merits to those of his foreign rival—is suffered to live in neglect and die in poverty. It is a significant saying, that "a prophet hath no honor in his own country."

But all this has little to do with what I undertook to relate to the reader, concerning the marriage of the Nightingale to the piano-forte player.

Mr. Silversmith, with some difficulty, succeeded in becoming enrolled among the band of instrumental performers who travelled with Miss Jenny. His salary was small, his prospects dark, and his heart was in consequence very sad, especially as he became painfully conscious of his own inferiority, as a musician, to the majority of his associates, who, with that professional illiberality which is too apt to prevail, sneered at his earnest efforts to excel, called him a "botch" at his business, and shunned him.

But the day of his triumph was soon to arrive, in a manner of which they little dreamed. The Nightingale, with that intuitive delicacy of perception which is more frequently the characteristic of women than men, soon noticed the humble, retiring and unobtrusive young musician; and, despising the selfishness of those who were attempting to crush him, she resolved to take him under her protection and push his fortunes in the world. This resolve, emanating directly from her pure and generous heart, she put into instant execution. Hearing a pompous fellow one day, at rehearsal, address the young man with insolent words of reproof, she severely rebuked the man, at the same time warning him not to repeat his conduct under pain of dismissal from her employ. Then she spoke to Mr. Silversmith in accents of kindness that brought the tears to his eyes in spite of all he could do to restrain them. She caused his salary to be trebled, and placed him in a

prominent position in her company, removing his timidity by encouraging words, and instructing him in his art by her valuable hints and suggestions. He soon became a far better performer, and played so respectably that the Nightingale permitted him to play the piano accompaniments to several of her choicest songs. Thus was the heart of the young musician made happy; and his breast warmed with gratitude towards the illustrious lady who had rescued him from despair and inspired him with hope. Already, in the secret depths of his own soul, did he madly love the Nightingale; and he blamed himself for being guilty of such extravagant presumption.

The many marks of favor which Jenny lavished upon Mr. Silversmith filled his enemies with rage and mortification; but they were obliged to bottle up their wrath and refrain from molesting the favorite of their mistress. There can be no doubt but that the Nightingale soon learned to love her *protege* with all the ardor and truth of her pure and disinterested nature. She was too artless, too ingenuous, to conceal her preference for him. She might have said, with Shakspeare's *Juliet*—

—————“ I am too fond,
And therefore thou may'st think my 'haviour light,
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
Than those that have less courage to be strange!”

When two persons of opposite sexes cherish a sincere affection for each other, the fact *will* manifest itself in spite of the most guarded reserve on the part of each. The language of the eyes—the tell-tale blush—the averted gaze—the faltered words of welcome—the lingering pressure of the hands—all these proclaim the existence of love more eloquently than a formal declaration. Why need I dwell upon the progress of the “tender passion” between the Nightingale and the young pianist? Suffice it to say, they were duly united in marriage, and their union, founded upon mutual affection and esteem, has been sanctified by the birth of a lovely infant. Long may this worthy pair live to enjoy every domestic felicity which the world can afford!

Madame Silversmith is kind enough to write to me occasionally; and her letters are invariably affable and touching—full of all the goodness of her own excellent heart. It is evident that she has long since dismissed from her mind every particle of

prejudice against me. She speaks of the United States and its inhabitants in terms of enthusiastic praise; and has more than once hinted that there is a possibility of her being induced, with her family, to take up her permanent abode in America. I trust that she may yet decide to do so; and I can safely promise her, on the part of my noble countrymen, a hospitable welcome to the shores of

“The land of the free,
And the home of the brave!”



BOOK THE EIGHTH.

SUNDRY MATTERS AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

I HAVE now presented the indulgent reader with some of the most important particulars of my past life. I have journeyed with Tom Thumb—smoked in the chimney corner with Judy Heath—patted the neck of the Woolly Horse—pointed out the beauties of the Fudge Mermaid—and revelled in the heavenly tones of the Nightingale. Considerable yet remains to be told. I must not forget my Great Menagerie—the Happy Family—my Poultry Show—my Whiskered Woman—that cruel hoax, the Fairy Light Guard—besides many other little matters and things of minor interest and importance.

I have concluded to arrange these affairs in systematic order, as follows:—

THE GREAT MENAGERIE.

Being determined to exhibit throughout the country the largest and most complete collection of wild animals ever known, I despatched agents to all parts of the world for the purpose of capturing and concentrating together every beast, and bird, and living thing that could add to the attractions of my proposed stupendous show. Grizzly bears from the Rocky Mountains; serpents and elephants from India; royal tigers from Bengal; lions from the deserts of Africa; hyenas from wherever they could be procured; spotted leopards, graceful zebras, savage panthers, stately

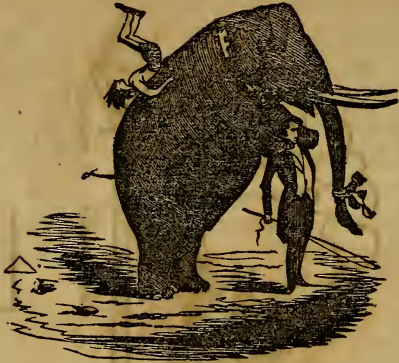


One of the Agents of the Great Menagerie goes forth in search of Wild Anima -

giraffes, curious Chinese hogs, ourang-outangs, monkeys, and other creatures too numerous to mention—all these I resolved should figure in my Great Menagerie.

After a prodigious consumption of time, labor and money, I had the satisfaction of seeing my object in a great measure accomplished. My Great Menagerie, at least, was no humbug. Immense posting-bills, printed in various glaring colors, flooded the cities and towns in which I exhibited. I secured the services of a sort of lecturer, whose duty it was to explain the natures and habits of the principal animals. Speaking of the elephant, he would “get off” something like the following rigmarole:—

“This here animal, ladies and gentlemen, is the *helephant*, an



The Elephant displayeth his agility.

insect that inhabits various parts of the uncivilized globe, living in swamps and other sandy deserts, and subsisting for the most part upon whatever he can pick up or steal. He is very ferocious when he is let alone, but very gentle when he is riled. He is naturally stupid, but at the same time very intelligent. He drinks water like a horse, and rum like a Christian. He is a great traveller, as you may see by his always carrying his *trunk* with him. (This was a stale old joke, but it always took well with the countrymen.) He is usually caught in a common rat-trap, and then brought to this country by swimming. He is a 'tough cuss' in a foot-race or a fight. His tusks are made of ivory, his skin is as thick as a board, and when he bellows, whole nations weep and tremble. He usually lives to the age of a thousand years or less. Notwithstanding his ridiculous size, he is a light and graceful dancer, having a first-rate ear for music; and in order to convince you of this, ladies and gentlemen, I will now cause him to dance a comic polka on three legs—after which he will be happy to partake of refreshments with any individual present who may see fit to ask him to accept of a horn or a snack. Any trifling coin that may be handed to him, will be faithfully appropriated to the purchase of his winter's flannels; he being a beast that can't stand the cold, no how. After the dance, the ladies and children can take a ride on his back around the ring. Fall

back—fall back! Room for the elephant to dance the comic polka!”

Then the crowd would scatter in every direction—the ladies would admire, the gentlemen would applaud, and the children would scream with delight, as the huge animal pirouetted hither and thither in the graceful evolutions of the comic polka.

There was one important deficiency in my collection, which for a long time I in vain endeavored to remedy. I had no *ourang-outang*, my African agent having been utterly unable to procure one. In a private letter to a friend in Boston, I deeply lamented the want of an animal so rare, valuable and attractive. He replied that the deficiency could be easily supplied in a manner which had just suggested itself to his mind. He said—“An artful and ingenious *trick* will completely do the business, and furnish you with the animal you so much desire. Get a suitable *skin* ready, and in a few days I will send on a young man who is in every respect qualified to personate the ourang-outang to your entire satisfaction.”

This plan, which was *à la* the Fudge Mermaid, I prepared to carry out. I got the skin all ready, and impatiently awaited the arrival of the beast that was to be. He came, and proved to be about as perfect a specimen of the *human monkey* as I ever saw. He was full of playful antics, and wore a little jockey cap precisely resembling those usually sported by monkeys attached to hand-organs. His painted cheeks, and a dirty moustache which had been dyed with blacking or some other compound, added to the laughable aspect of his revolting *mug*. His real name, I believe, was *Bill Saunter*—but I immediately conferred upon him the popular cognomen of “Syksey,” which title he bears to this day.

“Syksey” entered into my service with zeal, and obeyed all my orders with the willing submission of a slave. The “South Reading shoe-pegger” and *rat printer* put on the skin, and became a very effective ourang-outang. Confined in a cage, he would grin, and chatter, and cut up a thousand amusing antics. Sometimes the keeper would find it necessary to stir the brute up with his whip; but, generally speaking, “Syksey” behaved very well. When I had done with him, I paid his passage back



"Syksey," whom Bunkum has engaged to personate the Ourang-Outang, mounts a hog-head in order to cut up monkey shins and "show his points;" but slumps through.

to Boston, where he now is. I will cheerfully recommend him to any enterprising showman who may want an efficient and accomplished *ape*.

"Poor Bill, with many an antic,
And his capers all so killing,
Tried to coax a maid romantic
For to chuck him in a shilling!"

But I must now leave my Great Menagerie, and all the beasts connected therewith, in order to give some account of my famous

“HAPPY FAMILY.”

To take a number of animals belonging to entirely different species, and which are naturally deadly enemies to each other, and so domesticate them, and accustom them to each other's society, as to cause them to live together in perfect peace and harmony—this would seem to be not only a difficult, but an impossible task. But that task I have successfully accomplished, as any one may see by calling at my Show Shop—admission twenty-five cents. What says the Scriptural prophecy?

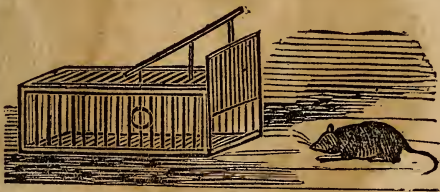
“The lion shall lie down with the lamb,
And a little child shall lead them.”

And what was *Bunkum's* prophecy?

“The cat shall lie down with the rat,
And anybody may feed them!”

Who shall venture to declare that I am not a man of wit, after perusing the above brilliant parody?

Assisted by a very clever naturalist, I set about my self-appointed task. We operated as follows:—we selected twenty or



The first member of the “Happy Family” is caught and caged.

thirty animals and birds of different kinds, including a dog, a cat, a rat, a mouse, a pig, a monkey, (not “Syksey,” but another,) a bull-frog, a goose, a woodchuck, a skunk, (how the old time comes over me!) and several varieties of birds. These creatures we took when they were but a day or two old, before their natural propensities began to develop themselves. We placed them altogether in one large cage, and they have grown up in har-

mony and friendship, because, from the first, they became used to each other's company. Occasionally Miss Puss will bestow



upon Mr. Owl a gentle pat of admonition or remonstrance, when the latter gentleman attempts to appropriate to his own use an unfair proportion of the food ; but the dispute between the two friends never waxes warm. The monkey will sometimes amuse himself at the expense of the dog or the pig ; but, as a general thing, nothing occurs to belie the name of "Happy Family."

Well, it is a satisfaction to make even *animals* happy. I shall now give a very brief description of my

POULTRY SHOW.



The Chief Rooster of the "Poultry Show" thinks it high time to put on airs—as well as a hat and boots.

Thus read my advertisement in relation to this unique exhibition:—

"*Bunkum's Show Shop!*—Grand Exhibition of Foreign Poultry, just received from Connecticut per steamer *Washing-tub*, to be exhibited one week only, and afterwards to be sold at public auction to the highest bidder, for the purpose of improving the breed of Poultry throughout our country. This surpassing display of rare birds and poultry, selected by that experienced Poultry Fancier, Mr. Simon Snooks, of Goose Creek, from the best and most costly stocks in all Great Britain, France, Germany and Cooney Hollow, comprises a choice variety of Black Spanish Fowls, Surrey Fowls, Dorking Fowls, Banty Roosters, Gold and Silver-laced Bantams, Tough Old Turkeys, Strong Scented Old Ducks, Chinese or Mandarin Hogs, Peacocks that put on frightful airs, Gold, Silver, Copper and Iron Pheasants, Black Swans, (including Miss Greenfield,) aged Geese, (*not* including Mr. Bunkum himself,) two Living Giraffes, one Egyptian Mummy, Potted Pigeons, Owls, Oysters, and numerous other inhabitants of the air. Come and see!!!"

This singular exhibition is too fresh in the recollection of the public to need any further description here. Suffice it to say, my usual good fortune did not desert me in connection with this enterprise.

My next presentation to the reader will consist of

THE WHISKERED WOMAN.

This remarkable lady I imported from France, although she is



The "Whiskered Woman" on her way to effect an engagement.

a native of Switzerland. Her husband and father accompanied her, and showed themselves in connection with her. She was also attended by a red-headed interpreter; and being blessed with two children, it will be acknowledged that she had a very pretty little family to support, by the display of her beard.

For three strapping men to live upon the earnings of a woman's whiskers, is a novelty not often seen at the present day.

The lady was indeed blessed with a luxuriant jet-black beard that excited the wonder, admiration, and envy of all the bloods



Portraits of the Father, Husband, and Interpreter of the Whiskered Woman, on salary day.

about town. She freely allowed everybody who wished, to stroke her whiskers, so that the public might be convinced of their being genuine, and no sham. Her neck, shoulders, and as much of her back as she saw proper to display, were thickly sprinkled with hairs. Her bust was feminine, and remarkably full. Several certificates, which had been written and signed by physicians who were present at her *accouchement*, were hung up in the hall of exhibition. These were to convince the spectators that Madame was indeed a woman, and no man, as many foolish persons might have been inclined to suppose. One blockhead summoned both me and the Whiskered Woman before the Police Court, swearing that she was a man, and that I had swindled him out of a quarter! The matter was soon settled in my favor—in what manner, I do not choose to explain.

THE FAIRY LIGHT GUARD.

In this matter I was made the victim of a cruel hoax, although I have been accused of having got the affair up myself, in order to create a great rush to my Show Shop and make money. Here is a true statement of all the facts of the case. Several months ago, I was one day waited upon by a dandified-looking gentleman, who mysteriously requested the honor of a private interview with me, which was of course granted. When we were alone together, the stranger addressed me as follows:—

“Sir, I have come to make an interesting announcement to you, and it is also of great importance. One hundred ladies, belonging to New Jersey, and entertaining strong notions of the “Rights of Woman,” have organized themselves into a *military company*, and adopted the title of the “Fairy Light Guard.” They are fully armed and equipped, and parade in splendid male uniforms. They are all young and beautiful; many of them belong to the most distinguished families in New Jersey, and one



The so-called Agent of the Fairy Light Guard, after his interview with Bunkum.

of them is the daughter of no less a personage than an Ex-Governor of that State. They have attained a high state of discipline; and wishing to make their *debut* before the people of the city of New York, they have appointed me as their agent to act for them in the business. They will make their appearance in Broadway just one week from to-day, at precisely ten o'clock in the forenoon, accompanied by a splendid band of music. I have already engaged rooms for them at the Astor House. They will visit your Show Shop in the afternoon of the day which I have mentioned, if it be agreeable to you."

"My dear sir, I am enchanted with the project," exclaimed I, rapturously—"I will make a small reduction in the price of tickets, and get up an extra entertainment in honor of the ladies. Everything shall be in readiness for them when they arrive.

Meanwhile, if you have no objection, I will announce their appearance upon my Show Shop bills, and also in all the city newspapers."

"I leave the entire business in your hands, having unlimited confidence in your integrity, ability and discretion," said the gentleman, as he took his leave.

Filled with joyous anticipations of the honor, glory and profit which were to result to me from this visit of the Fairy Light Guard, I announced their coming on my bills, and filled all the newspapers with so many notices, puffs and rumors, that the public curiosity was soon at fever heat.

At an early hour, on the day appointed for the visit of the war-like ladies, my Show Shop became crowded almost to suffocation by people of both sexes, all ages, classes and complexions. The balconies of the establishment groaned beneath the weight of the multitudes that occupied them. The "Happy Family" was neglected, and even the "Petri-fied Man and Horse" remained unseen, so eager was the crowd to see the lovely warriors approach. Anxiously did they strain their eyes up and down Broadway, and eagerly did they prick up their ears to catch the first sounds of the music that was expected to accompany the "Guard."

The Park was filled with a dense mass of people, who were almost wild with impatience and excitement. There were bawling brats of children; boys perched in trees; men smoking vile cigars and abominable pipes; drunken fellows staggering about, or lying insensible upon the grass; policemen loafing with their hands in their pockets; women in that condition "in which ladies love to be who love their lords;" while Mr. E. Mason, *alias* "Our Ned," was industriously peddling little penny pamphlets detailing the particulars of his connection with a humbug mesmeric lecturer, who employed "Ned," for a miserable pittance, to assist in his deceptions by *pretending* to be put to sleep, &c. That is supposed to have been the largest gathering that was ever assembled within the precincts of the Park. All classes of people were there represented, from the Wall-street millionaire down to a petty swindler, "publisher," and rival showman in the insignificant person of *George W. Hiller*.

Pretty soon, the sounds of martial music were heard in the distance, and a grand rush was made by the half-crazy throng.



"Our Ned" seats himself in the Park, and solicits pennies with which to pay his fare to Boston.

"Here they come at last!" yelled our Ned,* who had just sold one of his pamphlets for a penny, and was consequently highly elated.

"Yes," responded Hiller, who had been unsuccessfully endeavoring to pick a pocket—"hurrah for the Fairy Light Guard!"

"Dry up!" remarked "Greenhorn," as he vigorously applied his boot to the seat of Hiller's unmentionables, "and make yourself scarce, or I'll impale you on the points of those iron railings. Leave!"

The little rascal sneaked off amid the hootings of the crowd.

Numerous dandies, with whiskers and moustaches, who were present, reminded me of the *Hairy Black Guards* waiting to behold the *Fairy Light Guards*!

The music grew more distinct, and polished muskets gleamed in the bright sunshine.

*The mesmeric experience, and other adventures of this gentleman, (?) are in my possession, and shall soon be given to the world. Prepare to be astonished! P. B.



"Greenhorn," having triumphed over all his enemies, and trodden them in the dust beneath his feet, begins to ascend the steps leading to the Temple of Fame.

"There they are!" roared "Our Ned," a young, fleshy, dissipated-looking individual, who was somewhat intoxicated. (Poor fellow! rum has been his ruin; he is nearly worn out, his hair is grey, his memory has faded, his intellect is impaired, and we now find him a degraded vagabond. However, necessity, and the cold damp walls of a prison, may reform him yet. I occasionally give him a few pence in charity, and pass on. Upon such occasions, he takes an old rag from his pocket, holds it to his face and whimpers—"Oh, my lovely *young* wife—oh, oh, oh!" He sometimes goes without food during a whole week, and at night snoozes on the Common. He may sometimes be found at a *low* place in Devonshire street, in the city of Boston.)

A London cockney, who had been born within the sound of

"Bow Bells," surveyed the approaching company through his eye-glass, and said—

"Bloody my heyes! Those coves may be vimmen, but vot are they doing with *viskers*? Eh, Bob, my boy?"

"Don't you see," replied little Bob, "that they must be female relatives of Bunkum's *Whiskered Woman*? The ladies say they have a right to vote, and hold office, as well as the men; and why shouldn't they wear whiskers, as well as the breeches?"

It was soon discovered that the supposed Fairy Light Guard was neither more nor less than a company of firemen who were going on a target excursion.

Growls of savage disappointment proceeded from many a dry and dusty throat, when this fact became generally known. But, believing that the *real* "Guard" would soon be along, nobody stirred—every neck was still outstretched, all eyes and ears were kept wide open.

Stationed at the ticket office of my Show-Shop, I continued to take in the change, and was completely overwhelmed by the flood of quarters, halves and dollars that poured in upon me in an unceasing stream. I realized between four and five hundred dollars by the hoax which had been played off upon me. How ridiculous it was to accuse *me* of having originated that hoax! What object could I have had in doing so? Can any body imagine that the prospect of making four or five hundred dollars within a few hours, could have prompted *me—me*, Bunkum—to humbug the public so grossly? When was I ever known to impose upon the people who have sustained and enriched me? I pause for a reply.

* * * * *

The Fairy Light Guard never arrived, for no such company had ever existed. What could have induced that dandy "agent" to deceive me so outrageously, I never could imagine. Alas, for the depravity of human nature! I can but exclaim, in the language of Shakspeare, slightly altered—

"Oh, thou invincible spirit of *Humbug*,
If thou hast no other name to call thee by,
Let us call thee devil!"

Towards night the people who thronged my Show Shop gradually left, grumbling fearfully, and hinting at the propriety of

“burning down my shanty;” just as if *I* was to blame! The victims in the Park, and all along Broadway, also began to take themselves off, in no very amiable humor, which is not to be wondered at, considering the fact that they had been standing all day, some of them without food, awaiting with mad impatience the advent of the Fairy Light Guard.

Soon the Park was deserted, except by a few drunken vagrants, including Our Ned, who, poor wretch! instead of purchasing necessary food with the few pennies in his possession, had patronized a Dutch grocery, and got helplessly drunk!

May the downfall and utter ruin of poor Ebenezer Mason



Acrobatic Feats in the Circus.

prove a salutary warning to young men who are inclined to habits of dissipation, and who drink deeply from the intoxicating bowl! I will now say a very few words concerning

MY TRAVELLING CIRCUS.

Like all my other enterprises, this was a gigantic affair, got up on a most magnificent scale. My canvass tent was the largest, my paraphernalia was the costliest, my riders were the boldest, my horses were the fleetest, and my clowns were the funniest, ever known. Constantly moving from place to place, my canvass was always full—and so was my treasury. A drunken Scotch printer, named *Peter C. Cunningbeef*, whom I employed as a



A Lady Performer toes the mark.

comic singer—and who has since turned actor—contributed greatly to my success. This once degraded being is now, I am happy to say, sober and prosperous; for which he would thank me and my influence, were he not a moving monument of empty pride and base ingratitude.

I must now briefly allude to

MY HERD OF BUFFALOES.



Buffalo Sports at Hoboken.

Ever on the alert to dish up something new to the people, I resolved to give them a feast of buffalo flesh. Accordingly, I despatched an agent to our Western prairies, and in the course of time a fine herd of buffaloes arrived here. Selecting a suitable spot in Hoboken, I erected a kind of amphitheatre; and having dressed up several good riders in Indian costume, I advertised the representation of Grand Buffalo Hunts. When this display became old and stale, I sold my buffaloes to a speculator in beef, and the animals speedily disappeared down the throats of the epicures, gourmands and gluttons who frequent our most fashionable hotels and restaurants.

MY FIRE ANNIHILATOR.

As I regard this "invention" rather in the light of a dead failure, I will do no more than merely mention its name, on the



Wanted: a Fire Annihilator! Apply immediately.

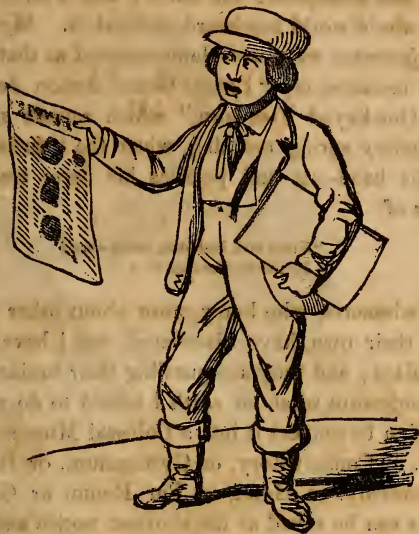
principle that "the least said the soonest mended." This was the only thing in which I ever signally *failed*.

MY "ILLUSTRIOUS NEWS."

— "Thou com'st with *news*—
Thy story quickly!"

—MACBETH.

Behold me an editor! Having gathered around me a host of writers, printers, designers, engravers, &c., I prepared and issued the first number of my "Illustrious News," filled with engravings and good reading matter. But I had a powerful rival in Boston, which, having had the start of me, rather left me in the rear. I



“Here’s Bunkum’s Illustrious News.”

allude to “Greasy’s Pictorial.” After being, for a time, invested with all the high honors of editorship, I found that I had more business on my hands than I could conveniently attend to. Therefore, I determined to relinquish the “News,” and finally sold it and its subscription list to Mr. Greasy, who merged it in his “Pictorial”

My limited space admonishes me to hasten towards the completion of these sketches, which, I trust, have afforded the reader some information and amusement.

THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

—“A Palace, lifting to eternal summer
Its crystal walls.”

BULWEB, (*slightly altered.*)

I became the ruling spirit of the great structure in which was held the “Industrial Exhibition of the Arts, Wonders, Flip-jigs and Gim-cracks of All Nations, and the Whole World, including Ireland and New Jersey.” Frank Pierce—of whom the reader

may have heard—opened the show; and Petite Bunkum—of whom the whole world has heard—closed it. My eminent abilities as an inventor were well demonstrated at that great exhibition. For instance, my “Patent Grand Action Jews-harp,” and also my “One-keyed Fish-horn,” which sounds so melodiously soft on a balmy spring morning, when the “ancient fisherman” trundles his hand-cart and peddles his finny treasures, to the popular air of

“Fresh cod, haddock, mack—erel!
Roo-to-toot-toot-toot!”

Certain wiseacres, who know more about other people’s business than their own, have discovered that I have purchased the Crystal Palace; and they are puzzling their brains—if they have any—to conjecture what on earth I intend to do with it. Some think I design to convert it into a Colossal Museum, or Circus, or Menagerie, or Conservatory, or Gymnasium, or Race Course, or Riding Academy, or Hotel, or Bar Room, or Gospel Shop in which souls can be saved at the shortest notice and on the most liberal terms. Others scratch their heads, look profound, and say—“Ah, you let Bunkum alone; he knows what *he’s* about!”

Christian friends, I should be happy to impart to you all the information which you can desire, but for one important reason: of all these matters I “*Know Nothing.*”

I will say this much, however:—the Crystal Palace, which has been sanctified by Art, and converted into a Temple of Holiness by the presence of so many sculptured forms of divine beauty and grace, shall never be prostituted *by me* to an unworthy purpose. Never shall the immortal name of Bunkum be associated with dishonor. The following quotation from an old play is singularly appropriate here:—

“MY LIFE is yours, if you demand it;
MY *honor* is my own.”

For the benefit of young men, I will here insert a maxim which has been my ruling principle through life:—

HOW TO BECOME RICH.—“*Get all you can, and keep all you get.*”



Piling up the Rocks.



MY PARTING SALUTATION.

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