



THE
POLITICAL STRUWWELPETER

BY HAROLD BEGBIE

Illustrated by F. Carruthers Gould.

LONDON :

GRANT RICHARDS, 9 HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.

1899.



TO

E. K. R.

FOR many days we twain did make
Of harmless jests a little pile,
To earn the staff of life, and wake
The sturdy Briton's tardy smile.

A novice to the stressful Strand
I came to learn the scribbler's craft,
You helped to form a boyish hand,—
Inspired, encouraged, snubbed and chaffed.

So much I owe, and what I pay
So little! Yet, kind Educator,
Because you brushed some specks away
From this new-fangled Struwwelpeter—

The littleness shall be forgot,
And only friendship's tribute stand,—
A modest, frail forget-me-not
Reared in a chamber in the Strand!

H. B.

PUBLISHER'S ANNOUNCEMENT.

A special edition of "The Political Struwwelpeter," limited to 250 copies, will be issued at 21/- net each. This edition will be printed on Japanese vellum, and each copy signed by the Author and Artist.

First Edition (5,000 copies), June.

Second Edition (5,000 copies), July.

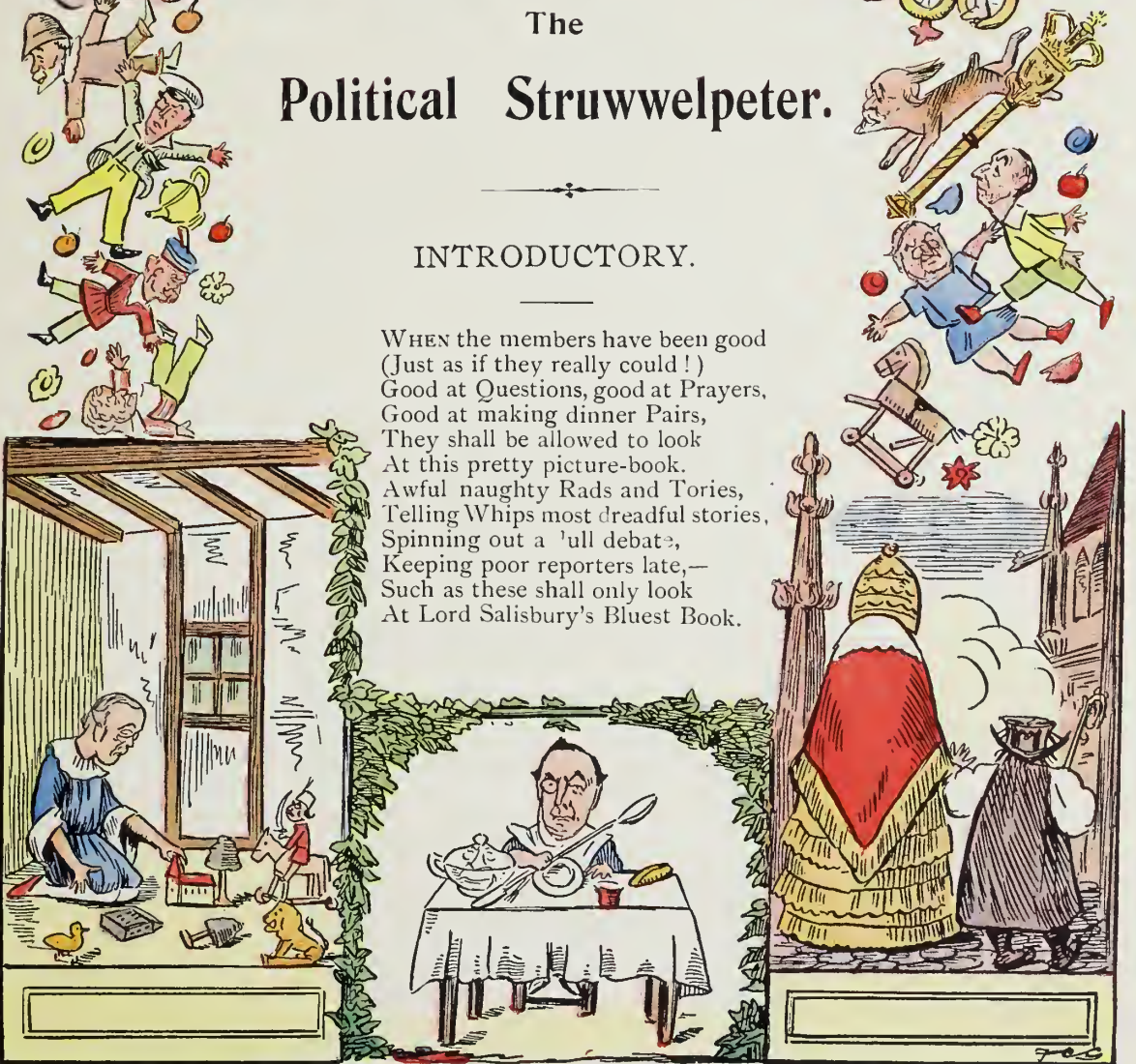
Third Edition (5,000 copies), October.



The
Political Struwwelpeter.

INTRODUCTORY.

WHEN the members have been good
 (Just as if they really could!)
 Good at Questions, good at Prayers,
 Good at making dinner Pairs,
 They shall be allowed to look
 At this pretty picture-book.
 Awful naughty Rads and Tories,
 Telling Whips most dreadful stories,
 Spinning out a 'ull debat',
 Keeping poor reporters late,—
 Such as these shall only look
 At Lord Salisbury's Bluest Book.



1. The Neglected Lion.



See the British Lion pose,
Wildly groping for his foes !
Men who tinker up the laws
Never manicure his claws :
And you will observe with pain
No one ever crimps his mane ;
Seeing that he's so neglected
Do you wonder he's dejected ?

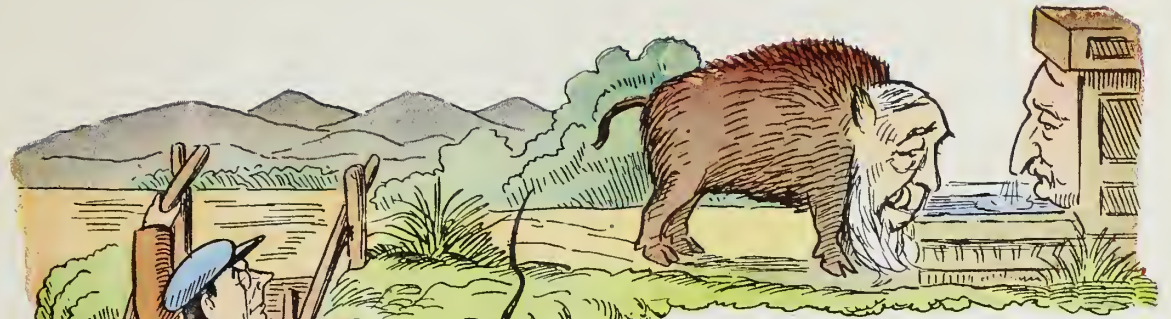


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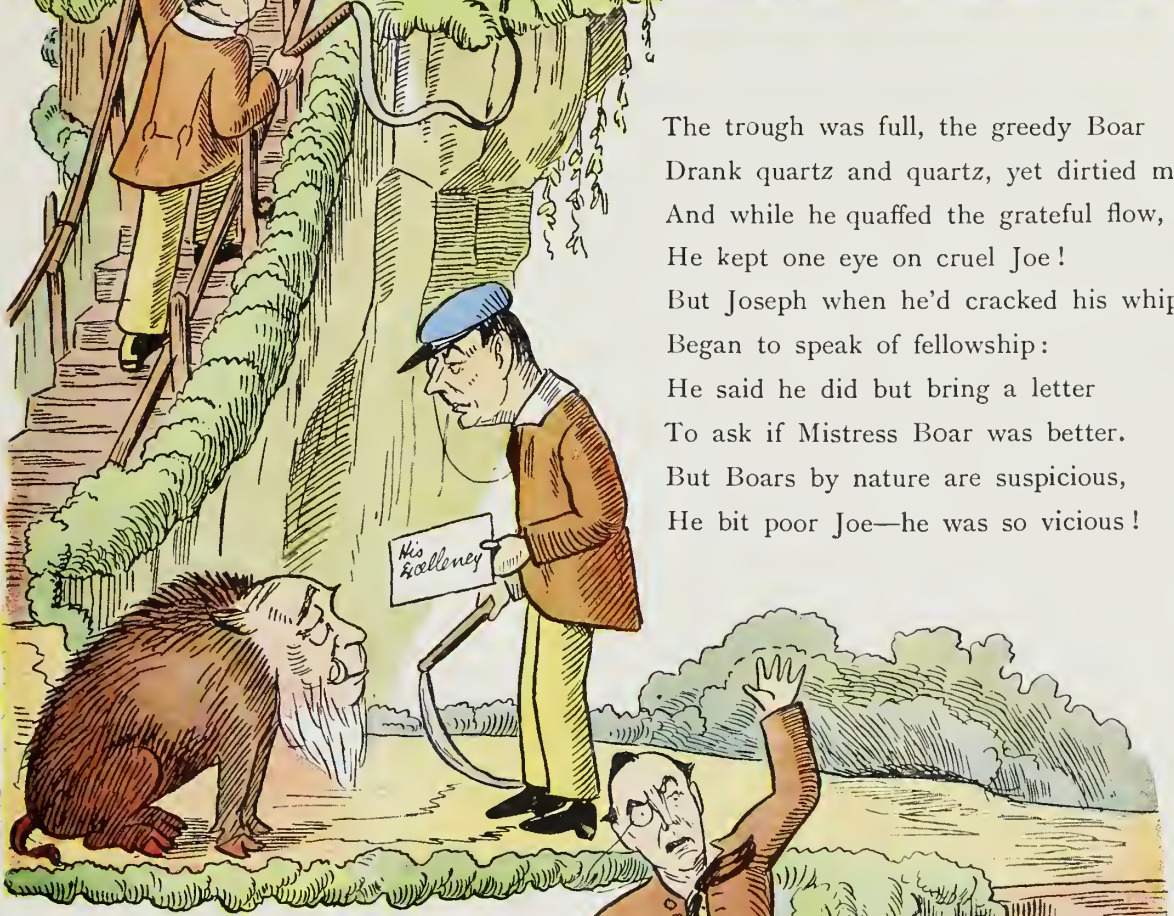
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2. The Story of Cruel Joseph.





The trough was full, the greedy Boar
Drank quartz and quartz, yet dirtied more
And while he quaffed the grateful flow,
He kept one eye on cruel Joe!
But Joseph when he'd cracked his whip,
Began to speak of fellowship:
He said he did but bring a letter
To ask if Mistress Boar was better.
But Boars by nature are suspicious,
He bit poor Joe—he was so vicious!





Then humbled Joseph crept to bed
 With horrid buzzings in his head,
 And visions came; he looked, O lor!
 Beside his couch the horrid Boar
 Whom vainly he had tried to floor!

But Joseph bides his time to smack
 The stolid grinning Kruger back,
 He marks the ghost with steely eye
 And lips that tremble to reply:
 The pill he swallows, and declares
 Long spoons are best for Boars and Bears!



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3. The Dreadful Story about Primrose and the Gee=Gee.

I CANNOT tell you how I hate
This painful story to relate.
Young Primrose found the childish game
Of ploughing sand was rather tame;
And so despite his fellows' frowns,
He took his gee-gee on the Downs.
But Huge Price Hughes and Labby told him
That if he did so they would scold him.
While others had so little grace,
They threw his birth into his face!
But Primrose said, "I'll make a bet
That I will have my own way yet."

They both began to jeer,
"O naughty, naughty peer,
You quite forget—
We never bet,
Oh dear," they cried, "Oh dear, Oh dear,
You are a strangely naughty peer!"

But Primrose would not take advice,
He won a Derby—that was nice!
The papers praised, the people cheered,
And several Interviews appeared.
His correspondence lay unanswered,
He even danced a jig on Hansard!

The cats aware of this,
At once began to hiss,
And raise their backs,
And talk of sacks,
"Oh, really, he must go,
It's very wrong, you know,
Besides—we told him so!"





And see! How well they knew the tide,
A rival now is at his side;
His eyes are dim, his cheeks are white,
And Oh! he cannot sleep at night.

Then how the fussy cats did mew,
What else, poor creatures, could they do?
They shook their heads, they rubbed their chins,
They spoke of Consciences, and Sins;
"Oh dear," they said, "his tastes *are* low,
A dreadful end! We told him so!"

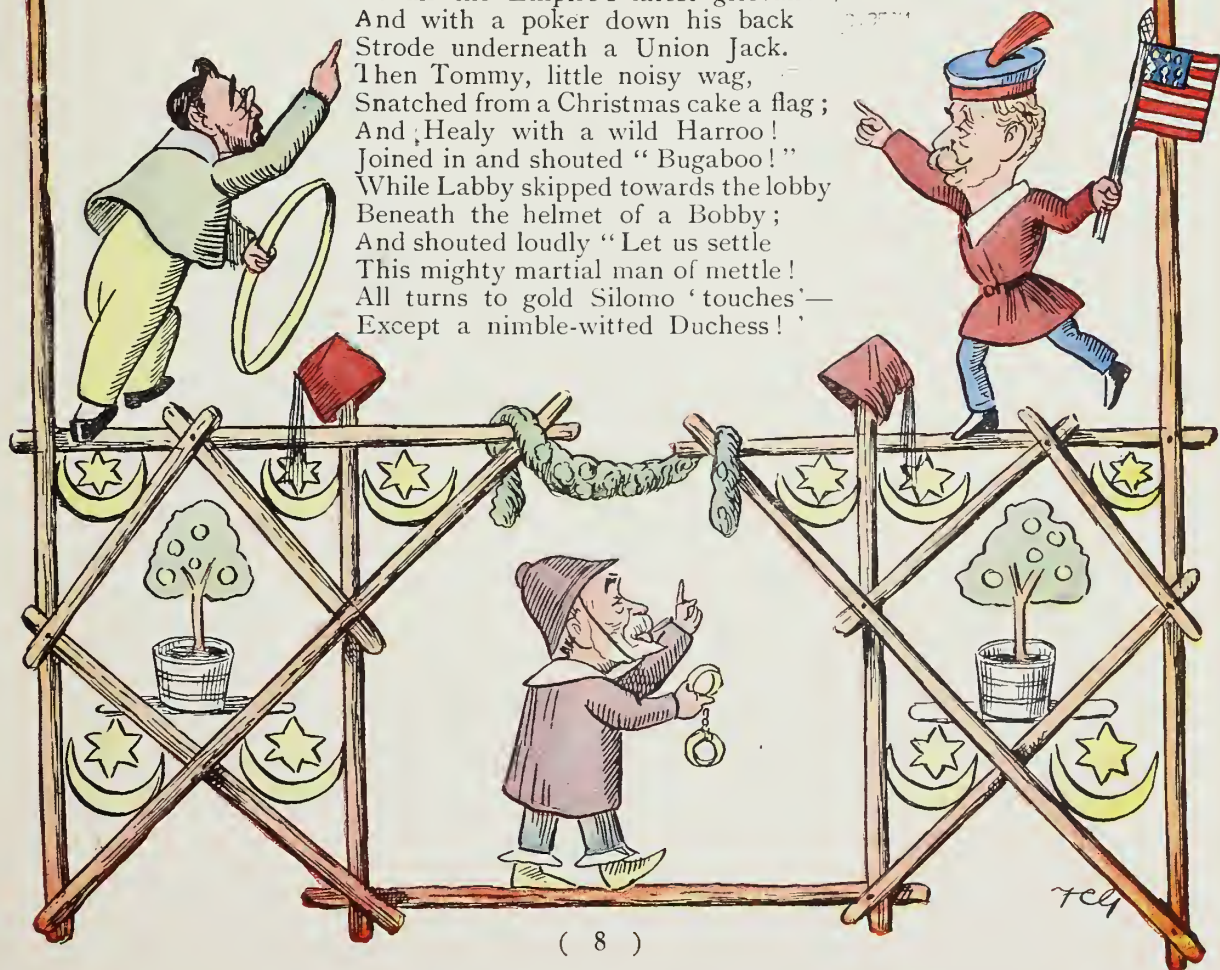
But from the ashes of the past
That smoulder in the feline blast,
The wisest of the prophets say,
That Primrose will arise some day,
Arise to run a longer course,
And ride the very highest horse!

And when the good cats found the day
Was dull without the youngster's play,
"Oh dear," they cried, "although we doubt him,
We really cannot do without him!"
Their coats got dull, their flanks got thin,
He rode his gee-gee with a grin.

4. The Story of the Wicked Wags.



As was Silomo's daily wont,
(Though everybody shouted "Don't!")
One day he hurried to S. Stephen's
To air the Empire's latest grievance;
And with a poker down his back
Strode underneath a Union Jack.
Then Tommy, little noisy wag,
Snatched from a Christmas cake a flag;
And Healy with a wild Harroo!
Joined in and shouted "Bugaboo!"
While Labby skipped towards the lobby
Beneath the helmet of a Bobby;
And shouted loudly "Let us settle
This mighty martial man of mettle!
All turns to gold Silomo 'touches'—
Except a nimble-witted Duchess!"



Just then Sir Wilfrid slowly woke
From pondering a massive joke ;
A well of water stood close by
Which kept Sir Wilfrid's humour dry !
He heard the noise, and roared—"I'm thinking
You noisy youngsters have been drinking!"
And then he said in sterner tone—
"Wags! leave the gentleman alone!
Put up those toys upon the shelf—
He didn't make his mind himself!"
"Yah!" was the sole reply they flung out,
But Labby also put his tongue out.



Then good Sir Wilfrid knits his brow,
And darns the wags who make the row,
He seizes Tommy—squeaky, squealy—
Lays Labby by the heels, and Healy,

And though they kick and swear and yell,
He plumps 'em down into his well;
Into the water—one, two, three,
Till they are just as dull as he,
Turn over now and you shall see.





See, here they tread Silomo's route,
Each black and solemm as a mute,
No harmless persiflage they try,
A sternness broods in every eye,
A pun would almost make them die ;
And oh ! I don't know what they'd think,
If someone offered them a drink ;
A more sedate and sober trio
I'm quite assured there couldn't be O !

5. The Story of the Duke and the Bunnygorst.

THIS is the Duke who little cares
For mere political affairs;
But 'tis his duty, coûte que coûte
To teach the young Idea to shoot.

Though much averse to over-work
A little dose he does not shirk.

The Bunnygorst hides in the grass,
And laughs to see Tarquinius pass.



Now as the world went fairly well
At least, so far as he could tell,
He took, as oftentimes did hap,
A somewhat long and heavy nap
And while with features smoothed and mild
He wooed the winged and chubby child,
The Bunnygorst stole up and took
The loaded weapon, and his hook.

The great man wakes. O! dear what fun!
The Bunnygorst has bagged his gun
And look he's trying all he can
To pot the sleepy nobleman!
The Presidential heart's aflame
To see that Manipurish game;
For pond'rous Virtue 'tis not nice
To be pursued by 'its own "Vice."



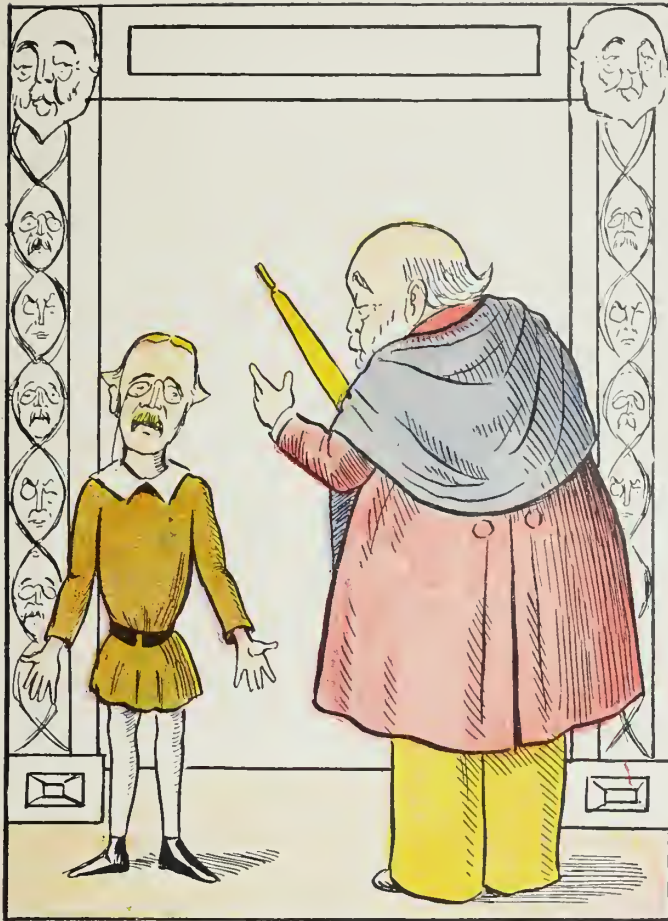
At last he got into a hole
(*It yawned!*—he tumbled in, poor soul)
But Vice will always have its fling—
He banged away like anything.



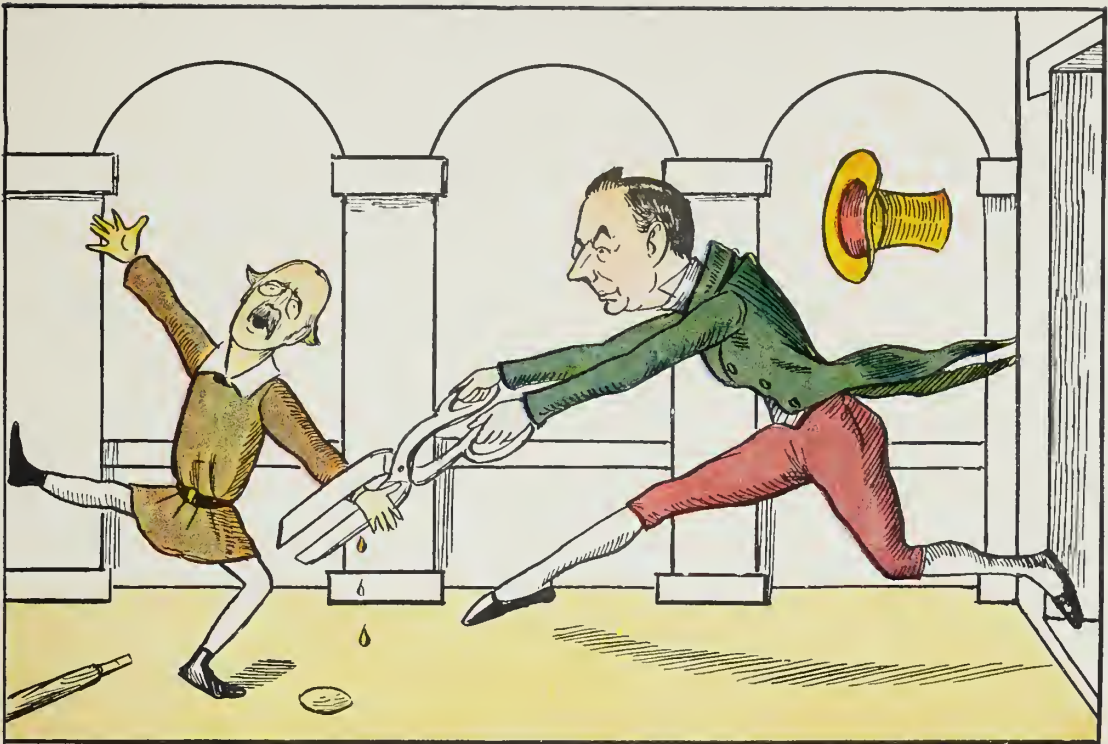
Britannia dropped her cup of tea,
“This noise,” she said, “displeases me!
If your opinions are not fixed
You’ll get your Education Mixed.”
But while she spoke, her little scion,
The playful British baby lion,
Threw down his satchel with a shout,
And jumped, and danced, and skipped about.
“O lor!” he said, “What does it matter,
I work the less the more they chatter!”

6. The Story of the Pushful One.

ONE day said Uncle: "Arthur dear
I must recruit and leave you here.
But O my nephew, concentrate
Your thoughts upon affairs of State,
The Pushful One's a dreadful schemer
He hates a sportsman and a dreamer,
And if you waste your thoughts on golf
He'll cut your pretty hands clean off;
And then, how shall my Arthur try
To keep his finger in the pie?"



Now Uncle scarce had turned his back—
He snatched a gingham from the rack
And gave a paper-weight a whack!



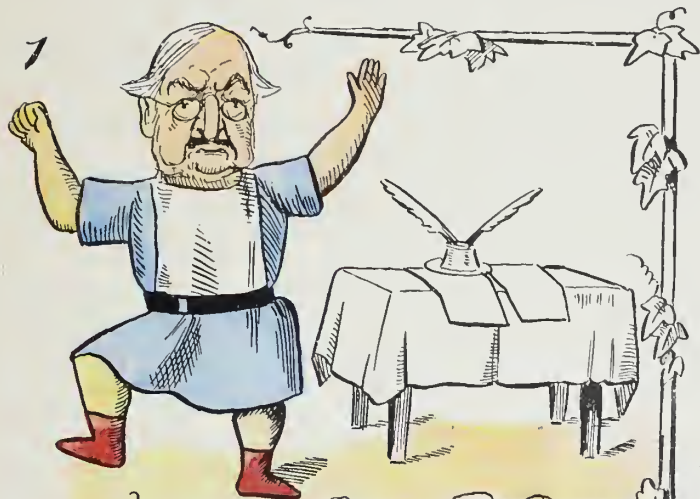
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But ere he'd played it round the floor
 The Pushful One pushed Ope the Door;
 Poor Arthur whitens to his lip
 To see those blades in act to snip;
 But Snip! and Snap! the clippers go
 While Arthur bellows—“*Et tu, Joe!*”
 And prayer and pleading nought avail,—
 He's cut off Salisbury's entail!

Now Uncle comes; there Arthur stands
 With glaring failure on all hands.
 “Ah!” Uncle said, “I told you so:
 ‘Hands Off’'s the thing with Pushful Joe.”

7. The Story of the Protestant Who Wouldn't.



SIR WILLIAM was a brawny Rad,
A wealth of cheek Sir William had;
And every member feared his weight
When sitting on them in debate;
He hit out hard—both left and right,
And really seemed to love the fight.
But one day—one twin-letter day,
He said—"I will not join the fray;
I don't care what the papers say,
No party will I lead to-day!"

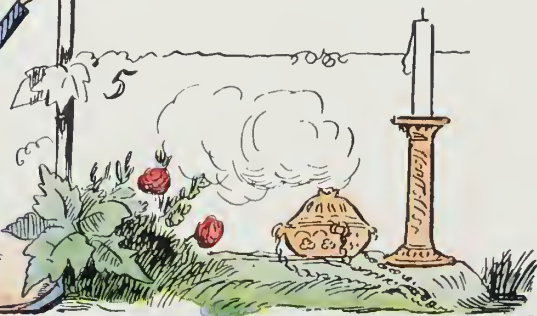


Next stage, behold, the picture shows
Sir William's fighting other foes;
And while the coarser strife he dreads
He thumps Episcopalian heads,
And shouts—"No politics, I say,
O take the horrid thing away,
And bring me priests that I may slay!"



The third stage comes; he's grown a mystic,
His only literature's Patristic.
And though to Rads a cheering sight
'Twould be to see Goliath fight,
He cries—"No politics for me,
My soul from vulgar strife is free;
I'm doctoring Divinity!"

Look at him now, the fourth stage shows
A mysticism in his clothes;
By scripture-jests his soul is pained,
And in the fifth stage—he's ordained!



8. The Story of Rackety Tanner.



“LET me see if little Tanner,
Can assume a suaver manner
Let me see if he is able
To look pretty at the table!”
Thus the Speaker, pained and bored,
While the Serjeant tapped his sword.
But rackety Tanner
He don't care an anna,
He mutters
And splutters,
And then, I declare,
He kicks at the table
And tilts at the Chair.
“Tanner! Tanner! if you can,
Be a little gentleman.”



See the fretful, fractious chit,—
 This is how he likes to sit!
 Mocking all the Speaker's wishes,
 Jarring cutlery and dishes;
 Making all the china jingle,
 Making spoons and glasses tingle;
 Bawling, roaring, ranting, raving—
 Everything except behaving;
 While in vain the Sword and Mace
 Try to keep him in his place;
 He would never you can tell,
 Make a Party go off well.





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Where is noisy .Tanner, where?
He has quite upset the Chair
And you'll note in doing so
He has fallen very low;
All the House is sitting on him,
He has drawn their wrath upon him.
What a terrible to-do!
Tanner, this has done for you.
For although the scene was hateful
See, the Serjeant's truly grateful,
Knowing that the racket's past,
And you're out of sight at last.



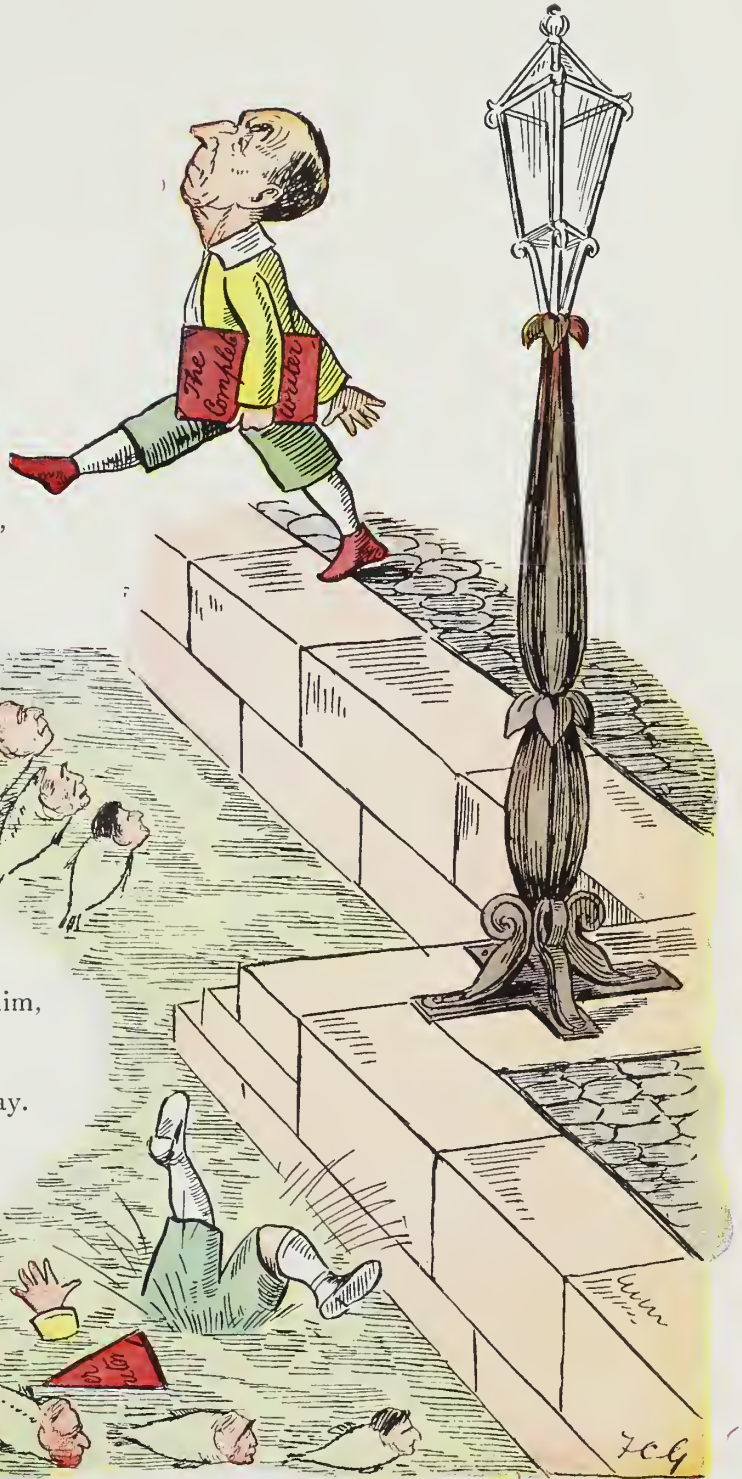
9. The Story of Johnny Head-in-Air.



WHEN he came away from college
With his head stuffed full of knowledge,
Johnny kept his dreamy eye
Fixed on matters rather high ;
But of ordinary acts,
Stubborn facts,
Johnny scarcely thought at all ;
So that people used to bawl—
“ You’re a dreamer ; Oh ! beware,
Honest Johnny Head-in-Air ! ”

Running right in Johnny’s way
Came a Tyneside tyke one day ;
Johnny’s mind was all astray,
Free from care,
With Voltaire,
And the shout he didn’t hear :—
“ *Cave canem, Head-in-Air !* ”
Thump !
Slump !
Such an unexpected Plump !
Johnny got a nasty bump .

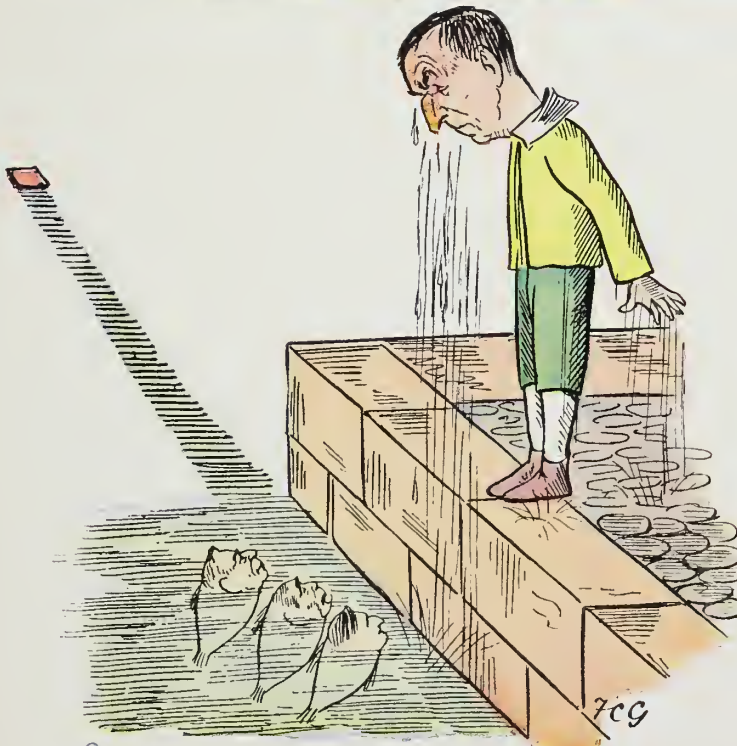
Once again with tilted nose
Johnny, member for Montrose,
Made with Harcourt coalition
In the art of composition.
Such a plan
This was how the letters ran;—
“As cross-currents are about
We two chaps are going out.”
Off he went, and sad to think
Straight to resignation’s brink,
Up at Chelsea by the river;
And it made his colleagues shiver,
When the dear soles, in a row,
Saw their Johnny acting so.



One step more! Too much for him,
He's in, but is not in the swim;
For his friends without delay
Wagged their heads and went away.



Johnny's feeling out of place,
 And he's lost his writing-case ;
 But whilst drifting near the Abbey
 Campbell-Bannerman and Labby
 Saw him, and before he sank
 Hooked him neatly to the bank.



Oh! behold him here regretting
 That he ever got that wetting ;
 He is grateful to the man
 Who, debating the Soudan,
 Managed by his vote and speech
 Johnny's stranded soul to beach ;
 For that vote and speech you see
 Suited ev-er-y-bo-dy !

As poor Johnny's big tears dropped,
 Up the little fishes popped :—
 "So young Johnny, there you are !
 Sorry that you went so far ;
 And there really was no need
 Seeing we were all agreed !
 Johnny! now that you know better
 Ain't you grieved you wrote that letter ?

10. The Story of the High-Flyer.

WHEN the priests and laymen fight
 For a vestment or a rite,
 Bishops who have any sense
 Balance neatly on the fence.
 Temple thought—"No, I should be
 Where the laity can see."
 Then he joined the pious fighters;
 Copes and mitres
 Hurtled round his big umbrella,
 And annoyed the honest fellow.



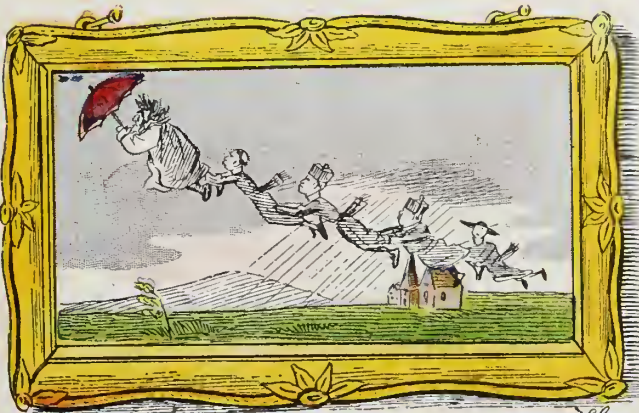
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What a rumpus! Kensit roughs
 Aid the soul with fisticuffs;
 Parson punching and gymnastics
 Please some queer ecclesiastics.
 Temple sighs!
 Then he flies
 From the scrimmage and the cries:
 For the wind in his umbrella
 Carried off the fine old fellow.



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Soon it got to such a height,
 Common-sense was out of sight!
 But you really need not mope,
 They are gone for Good let's hope.
 And though flight we can't defend,
 For we know not where 'twill end,
 You'll admit that flying High
 Ought to lead one to the Sky.



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