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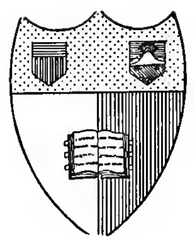

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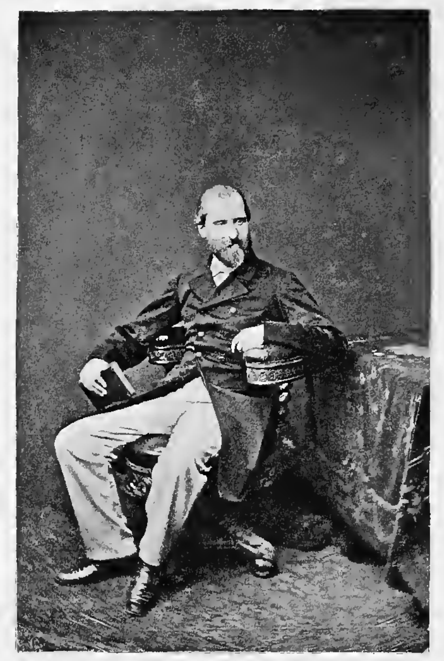
GLANCES BACK
THROUGH SEVENTY YEARS.



Henry Vizetelly

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN 1863

GLANCES BACK THROUGH SEVENTY YEARS:

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL AND OTHER REMINISCENCES.

BY HENRY VIZETELLY,

CHEVALIER OF THE ORDER OF FRANZ-JOSEF,
AUTHOR OF "THE STORY OF THE DIAMOND NECKLACE,"
"BERLIN UNDER THE NEW EMPIRE," "PARIS IN PERIL," ETC.

"And sometimes I remember days of old
When fellowship was not so far to seek,
And all the world and I seemed much less cold,
And at the rainbow's foot lay surely gold,
And hope felt strong and life itself not weak."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRÜBNER & CO., LTD.
1893.

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" Looking back along life's trodden way,
Gleams and greenness linger on the track ;
Distance melts and mellows all to-day,
Looking back.

" Rose and purple and a silvery grey,
Is that clond the cloud we called so black ;
Evening harmonises all to-day,
Looking back."

The public will be the best judges whether the author of the following pages was well or ill-advised by partial friends to pen these rambling reminiscences of an active, if not an exciting career, covering well-nigh three reigns. The chapters that form a contribution to the history of Pictorial journalism, and the recollections of Mr. Thackeray and a few other notable men, French as well as English, may possibly have a certain value, mixed up though they be with notices of men and things which the world, in its peremptory way, has made up its mind to forget. Yet readers, on the whole, may find the writer's reminder of such matters not uninteresting, and the volumes generally neither prosy nor dull. This is the utmost the writer pretends to claim for them, and in this spirit he commends the book to his brethren of the press.

Heatherlands, near Farnham,
September 1893.

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Glances Back Through Seventy Years.

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I.

(1820-30.)

WHEN GEORGE IV. WAS KING.

I was born within sound of Bow-bells, and certain old lady relatives of mine used to consider I enjoyed an exceptional honour in having been christened by a clergyman who subsequently rose to be a distinguished bishop. This was Dr. Blomfield, rector of the rich living of St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate, the registers of which record the baptism of Edward Alleyn, the actor-manager and founder of Dulwich College, and the marriage of the great Marquis of Argyle of the Scottish Covenant.

The rector of St. Botolph's was noted for his scholarship; and as in those days (private patronage being lacking) the classics were a surer passport than theology to advancement in the Church, Dr. Blomfield, whilst still holding on to his wealthy city benefice, secured first of all promotion to the see of Chester, and eventually to that of London, when he lost no time in well-feathering his comfortable episcopal nest. It was of this aggrandising prelate that Hartley Coleridge once remarked, "There are only two individuals who know what his income is—himself and

the devil." Bishop Blomfield used to be twitted with having requited the Duke of Wellington, to whom he owed his appointment to the metropolitan see, and who counted upon the customary suit and service being rendered in return, by voting against Catholic Emancipation, when, regardless of the fierce agitation which this measure provoked, and "No Popery!" inscribed on every blank wall, his patron was convinced of the danger of its being any longer withheld, and in favour of Reform when the duke and the rest of the tory peers still offered this their strenuous opposition. The bishop, however, simply went with the mob, who, in its usual illogical way, shouted, "Reform!" and "No Popery!" in the same breath.

Charles Greville tells a story of Bishop Blomfield and a disreputable parson of his diocese—Capel, rector of Watford, and brother of the Earl of Essex—who notoriously neglected his clerical duties. To get rid of the scandal, Capel had been ordered to provide himself with a curate, but flatly refused to do so, whereupon the bishop appointed one himself. Certain informalities having occurred in connection with this proceeding, the refractory rector brought an action against his spiritual superior which cost the latter nearly a thousand pounds. Years afterwards the bishop went to Watford to preach a charity sermon, and to everybody's astonishment was Capel's guest on the occasion. Lord Clarendon, the don of the district, was especially perplexed at the circumstance, and asked Capel, "How was it you managed to get the bishop to come to your house?"

"Why," replied the other, "don't you remember the good licking I formerly gave him? That made him civil, and we are now excellent friends."

There was a tradition in our family that the first Vizzetelli—so the name is understood to have been originally spelt—who settled in this country came from

Venice, and had to do with introducing the manufacture of plate glass into England. The spelling of the name was changed during the great Continental War—when considerable prejudice against foreigners prevailed—with the view of imparting to it an anglicised appearance. Both my grandfather and father were printers, and my grandfather having died when my father was a boy, the latter served his apprenticeship with Cox & Son, of Great Queen-street, Lincoln's-inn-fields, printers to the then powerful East India Company. I have heard my father say that in his father's time it was the custom for journeymen pressmen—now gradually becoming an extinct class—to wear swords at their sides and silver buckles in their shoes. But this most likely referred to particular instances only, and to the epoch when public lotteries were in full swing, and exceptionally high wages were the rule with the handicraftsmen who worked off the attractive coloured and pictorial broadsides which the more energetic lottery office-keepers kept the town liberally posted with.

In my juvenile days (1823 to 1829) I lived for a little while at Ealing, and then at Kennington, principally with my maternal grandparents, who were Cheshire people, and strongly imbued with those superstitious notions which have been such a long time dying out in the remoter provincial districts. My grandfather after he had been settled for years near London still continued to be a stout believer in Mother Shipton's prophecies, and to place implicit credence in the predictions of Mr. Francis Moore, physician, whose then highly-priced almanack, after a century and a quarter of existence, sold by hundreds of thousands yearly,[1] greatly to the profit of the Stationers' Company, who, so long as almanacks were liable to a

[1] According to Haydn's "Dictionary of Dates," at one time as many as 430,000 copies were sold of this publication annually, and in the first number of the "Athenæum" (1825) it was stated that the Stationers' Company paid the Government £40,000 yearly for stamp duty on the almanacks which they issued.

heavy stamp, enjoyed almost a monopoly in respect of the production of these essentially useful publications.

This old grandfather of mine boasted possessing what he maintained to be an infallible recipe for getting rid of warts, his plan being to cut as many notches in a small piece of wood as there were warts to be charmed away, and then submitting this to certain incantations. On one occasion I was selected to be the subject of his experiments, and was taken at daybreak, on a raw, misty morning, to some unfrequented common, where after a muttered exorcism the notched stick was mysteriously spirited away, and my warts were absurdly supposed to have been effectually got rid of.

While we lived at Kennington a sedate-looking gentleman, dressed in black, and inclined to be portly, occasionally visited my grandfather, and took a good deal of notice of me. By promises of presents of one kind and another he induced me, I remember, to learn by heart many of Dr. Watts's hymns, and to recite them to him. He was a near neighbour of ours, and a clergyman, with manners so singularly gentle and engaging that everyone who knew him became attached to him. Subsequently he distinguished himself by his missionary zeal, and quitted England to both christianise and civilise the heathen in some remote tropical region; but after a few years' earnest labour, which found its reward in the attachment of those whom he came to rescue, he fell a slow victim to the unhealthy climate, passing sadly away, like many another silent martyr, the record of whose self-sacrifice fails to get trumpeted to the ends of the earth.

In the pre-Reform days Kennington-common was the frequent scene of boisterous political meetings, at which Orator Hunt and others vociferated against current abuses to a hungry and excited crowd—the price of the quartern loaf, it may be mentioned, was then a shilling and up-

wards. Hunt and his party, with a contingent of drums and trumpets and bespangled banners, the inscriptions on which trenched as closely on the seditious as the political agitators of those dangerous days dared venture upon, used to drive on to the common in Hunt's "Matchless Blacking" vans, after the mob had levelled sufficient of the surrounding railings to give admittance to the cumbrous vehicles. It should be remembered there were then no dictatorial police to interfere with the "sovereign people" at their gatherings. The speeches delivered from the principal van were mostly after one pattern—fierce and well-merited denunciations of pensioners and pluralists, rotten boroughs and ratting placemen, a rapacious Church, a vicious aristocracy, and a venal House of Commons.

These were the days when taxation was scandalously unequal—years previously Pitt had maintained that three-fifths of a poor man's wages passed into the public exchequer—and when distress in the manufacturing districts was chronic. Then the operatives, in their ignorant despair, wrecked factories, and smashed frames and power-looms at the rate of 10,000 a month. A parliamentary committee reported that many families in the disturbed districts had to subsist on sixteenpence per head per week, and that there were some who starved on a weekly pittance of fourpence per head. There was rioting at the ports owing to shipments of corn, at the same time that the famished weavers of Carlisle and Bethnal-green were clamouring loudly for the repeal of the laws which interfered with its free importation. All that was done was to stifle their forlorn cries by calling out the military and passing heavy sentences upon the disaffected at special assize commissions; and this too under the administration of the same statesman whose boast it was twenty years later that he had enabled the toiling masses "to eat their hard-earned bread unleavened by the bitterness of taxation."

In the latter part of George IV.'s reign the Conyngham family were the especial objects of popular derision, and were vehemently abused by Hunt and his friends—the marchioness for her depravity and rapaciousness, which stuck neither at crown jewels, nor at hot dinners conveyed from his majesty's kitchen to banquet guests bidden to her own home;[1] the marquis for his disgraceful complacency, and the young lord, their son, for the degrading services which he was supposed to render to the king.

Hunt, who had been a country squire before starting as a political agitator and blacking manufacturer, was a very tall stout man, with a fat face and a ruddy complexion, which was invariably set off by a white beaver hat. This led, after a while, to the white hat being regarded as symbolical of radicalism, as the *bonnet rouge* was of republicanism at the time of "the Terror." While playing the part of a political agitator, Hunt always kept up the appearance of a country gentleman, sporting the orthodox blue coat, light waistcoat, knee breeches, and top-boots—polished, of course, to perfection with his own matchless blacking. He was undoubtedly a typical demagogue of the "thump it and stump it, and blow his own trumpet" order—blustering and passionate in speech, and vain, like leaders of the democracy usually are.[2] His jovial manner, however, made him a great favourite with the multitude, and what largely added to his popularity was the imprisonment he had undergone for presiding at the famous Peterloo meeting, when the raw yokels of the Cheshire yeomanry

[1] Greville recounts that when the Conynghams gave a dinner party, the dinner was cooked at St. James's-palace, and conveyed in heated receptacles constructed for the purpose in hackney coaches to their family residence in Hamilton-place. All their servants, too, held sinecure appointments in the king's household in order that their wages might be charged on the royal establishment.

[2] While Hunt was railing against the aristocracy his son was hanging on to the fringe of that exclusive order. Young Hunt's sporting propensities brought him into contact with men of rank, with one of whom he made a bet during the severe frost of 1826 that he would drive his father's blacking van with four blood horses across the frozen Serpentine at its broadest part without accident, a feat he successfully accomplished.

flushed their maiden sabres, slashing right and left at the crowd, killing a dozen persons and wounding, it was said, six hundred others.

Ten or twelve years afterwards (1830) Hunt managed to get elected to the unreformed parliament for the pot-walloping borough of Preston, beating the future Rupert of debate, then Irish secretary, who accused the timorous returning officer of having permitted Hunt's supporters to vote over and over again at different polling booths.

Parenthetically it may here be noted that the expenses of contested elections at this period were usually enormous. A few years before Lord Althorpe stated in the House of Commons that a recent election for Yorkshire had cost the candidates £120,000, although it never came to a poll, and had it gone to a poll the cost would have been at least half a million! When it was proposed to prohibit the use of bands, flags, and ribbons, one member pathetically pleaded that if this were done, the electors would not know whose heads they were breaking, and added that it was downright folly to attempt to make an English election as demure and orderly as a Methodist love-feast.

The traditions of the executions that had taken place on Kennington-common, first of the unfortunate adherents of the pretender, implicated in the rising of '45, and then of highwaymen and others at a later date, still survived in the neighbourhood. Many had heard their fathers tell of the former, and of the appalling barbarities perpetrated on these unhappy enthusiasts in a worthless cause; and plenty, in their youthful days, had themselves been witnesses of the latter.[1] Since the removal of the gallows the locality had been completely transformed, the common being enclosed and built round, and a new church, St. Mark's, erected on the very spot where the gibbet, on which the

[1] Ten years before, Townsend, the Bow-street runner, told a committee of the House of Commons of eight men being hanged on Kennington-common on the same morning.

Surrey highwaymen used to swing, formerly reared its head. A favourite huntiug-ground of these gentry was the then lonely neighbouring St. George's-fields, where Bedlam and the Surrey theatre now stand. The locality seems to have been an equivocal one even in Shakespeare's time, for we find mad Master Shallow reminding his old boon companion, Falstaff, of the "merry night they had when they lay in the windmill in St. George's-fields."

My grandfather, who had been part owner of several stage coaches, and who occasionally drove one of his own vehicles, had no end of stories about the highwaymen's daring in his younger days. One of these, I remember, referred to a couple of confederates, who, got up to look like a young squire and his tutor, secured two of the back seats on the coach, and managed to have the guard in their grip, as well as his blunderbuss, at the critical moment when their accomplice rode up in the darkness, pistol in hand, and called on the driver to stop, a summons at once obeyed in order to save the horses from being shot. When the occupants of the vehicle had been duly despoiled of their valuables the coach was allowed to proceed with two passengers the less, and the discomfited guard minus, of course, his blunderbuss.

In the days, however, when George IV. was king, the regular highwayman may be said to have been extinct; but the sneaking foot-pad, undeterred by a death penalty never enforced, still lingered in the more lonely London suburbs, and on dark evenings would lie in wait and relieve timid pedestrians of their purses and watches. It was the custom in a few suburban places for a horn to be blown at stated intervals as a signal for people to cross some particularly dangerous spot in a body for mutual protection. The more general use of gas, combined with Peel's new police, however, speedily rid the suburbs of these depredators. Culprits guilty of petty thefts from

shopkeepers, which a few years previously had ranked as capital offences, were then frequently punished with the lash, and I recollect seeing one of these delinquents whipped at a cart's tail, under a broiling sun, along the dusty road between Kennington-turnpike and the Elephant and Castle at Newington, the perspiration streaming down the parish constable's face as he administered the regulation stripes. These public floggings were of frequent occurrence in the London suburbs, and were only abandoned after the newspapers had protested energetically against such brutalising exhibitions.

In the early part of George IV.'s reign society was accustomed to revenge itself upon suicides by burying them at cross roads at night time, with a stake driven vindictively through their bodies; and for several years subsequently the favourite discipline for bringing about the reformation of drunkards and rogues and vagabonds generally were the stocks. A disused example of this once familiar instrument of correction, and the last specimen remaining in the metropolis, used to exist, I remember, in Portugal-street, Lincoln's-inn-fields, famous for that accommodating tribunal to which insolvent spendthrifts resorted from the spunging houses in the neighbourhood to purge themselves of their loads of liabilities.

During my midsummer holidays, and only a day or two before George IV. died, I recollect seeing, one hot summer's afternoon, a terrified-looking individual standing in the pillory, put up for the occasion, immediately facing Newgate. He had been convicted of perjury, and quite as great a crowd as the execution of some remarkable criminal usually got together was attracted by this novel exhibition. The pillory, mounted on a raised platform, comprised simply an upright pole, with a cross board pierced with holes for the culprit's arms and head. This board moved on a pivot, and when the poor terrified

delinquent had been placed in position by the Jack Ketch of the period, he was required to perambulate round and round, like a horse in a mill, for the space of an hour. The authorities had mercifully forbidden missiles being thrown, and as the crowd was more curious than vindictive, the victim of this almost obsolete mode of punishment escaped the rough handling that usually befel pilloried culprits.

One of my earliest recollections extends back to a tranquil autumn evening in 1823, when our quiet neighbourhood was suddenly disturbed by the sonorous shouting of several of Mr. Catnach's gruff-voiced hawkers, but the only words one could distinctly catch were, "'orrible murder of Mr. William Weare!"[1] The excitement over this brutal affair was immense. People were almost as much horrified at the idea of the murderers sitting down to a supper of hot pork chops, as soon as Mr. William Weare's brains had been effectually battered in, as they were at the atrocity of the crime itself. Before the trial of Thurtell and his accomplices, the incidents of the murder had been worked up into a sensational and realistic melodrama for the Surrey theatre, when there figured on the stage the hired gig in which Thurtell had given the first murderous blow to his victim, the "iron grey horse with white face and legs," the table round which the murderers had feasted, and the sofa whereon Thurtell had snatched a brief repose after the fatigues of this terrible night. The theatre was crowded from floor to ceiling for the few nights the piece was played; and then a promising long run was suddenly cut short by the Court of King's-bench interdicting any further performance.

[1] In Hindley's "Life and Times of James Catnach," it is stated that a quarter of a million copies of the broadside giving particulars of Weare's murder were sold during the first week of its issue, and that double that number were sold of the sheet giving an account of the trial. Catnach seems to have netted £500 by the affair.

At the Coburg theatre a play with the same title, "The Gamblers," was simultaneously produced; but although the scene was laid in France, and the leading incidents in the Weare murder were by no means closely followed, Davidge, the manager, thought it prudent to withdraw the piece as soon as the Court had expressed its opinion with regard to the play at the rival establishment.

Davidge, I may mention, had been a fellow-apprentice of my father's at Cox & Son's, the printers; but he had forsaken the composing stick for Harlequin's wand, and after pirouetting in pantomime for a time he trod the boards in melodrama, and finally became lessee and manager, first of the Coburg and then of the Surrey theatre, where he made a comfortable fortune.

Douglas Jerrold, who was hack-dramatist at the Coburg for several years during Davidge's reign, had a good story, which I once heard him tell at Orrin Smith's dinner-table, before he used it up in his "Men of Character," respecting the manager and a certain performing pig, a former member of the Coburg company. It seems that the performances of a cleverly-trained porker, known as "the learned pig," were all the rage at some London exhibition, and that Davidge was seized with the idea that the introduction of an intelligent animal of the same species on the Coburg boards would attract crowded houses. A trained pig was accordingly secured from some travelling showman, and Jerrold was instructed to write the necessary piece in which the intelligent Toby might display his surprising talents. The dramatist by no means relished the idea, and raised endless objections, but Davidge was obdurate, and in the end the piece was written.

The play, with the pig in the principal part, proved fairly successful, but at length the time arrived when it became necessary to withdraw it, and the question then arose what should be done with the pig. "Eat him,"

bluntly suggested Jerrold, "Toby's still young and succulent." "Good heavens! how can you propose such a thing?" rejoined the indignant manager. "To eat one's benefactor would be the basest ingratitude—worse, indeed, than cannibalism. I couldn't swallow a mouthful even." The dramatist, abashed by the reproof, made no reply.

A few weeks afterwards Jerrold happened to call on Davidge at his private residence, when the manager and his wife were dining. He was about to retire, but Mrs. Davidge pressed him to stay, coaxingly adding, "I am sure you'll not refuse when you know what we have for dinner." Whereupon, raising a cover, she exposed to view an inviting hand of pickled pork in which a tolerable inroad had been made, remarking as she did so, "It's a piece of your old friend Toby." Jerrold could not conceal his surprise, and turning to Davidge, exclaimed reproachfully, "*Et tu, Brute!* Why, only a fortnight ago you pretended you couldn't swallow a mouthful of your benefactor." "No more I could, sir," urged Davidge gravely, "if the animal hadn't been salted."

"Tom and Jerry, or Life in London," on its revival, either at the Adelphi or the Coburg, was the first play I remember having seen performed. Its original success had been phenomenal, and its mere revival sufficed to produce a new crop of imitators of the "sprees and rambles, larks and gambols" of the rowdy trio, whom Pierce Egan and the Cruikshanks had rendered so immensely popular. Now-a-days we find the letterpress of "Life in London" sad rubbish, and yet the first gentleman in Europe, charmed with so congenial a subject, gave his gracious permission for the work to be dedicated to him. Moncrieff had a contemptible opinion of Pierce Egan's share in the performance from the very outset, for years afterwards I heard him tell my father that when he dramatized the work he pitched the letterpress into the fire, and wrote the play from the

etchings alone, remarking that he had often nettled Pierce Egan by telling him the same thing. On the revival of "Tom and Jerry," onslaughts on the decrepit old charlies once more became the fashion, and even in so quiet a neighbourhood as Kennington then was, the watchman's box posted at the corner of a narrow turning[1] facing the common was on several occasions toppled over on its slumbering inmate, by parties of young bloods fresh from flowing bowls of punch at the neighbouring Vauxhall-gardens.

Prize fights and duels were of common occurrence during George IV.'s reign, and, indeed, for several years afterwards. Under the heading of "Affairs of the Fancy," the numerous pugilistic contests were regularly chronicled in the newspapers, and every week one might read of some "game one," battered well-nigh beyond recognition by his intimate friends, coming up smiling in the orthodox fashion to receive the remainder of his punishment. Whenever one of the combatants chanced to get killed, and his opponent was put upon his trial, he was certain to be acquitted by a sympathising jury—upholders to a man of the "noble art of self-defence,"—spite of the strong counter-opinion which was persistently expressed by the judges. It came, therefore, as a surprise to a notorious pugilist of the period who had hired himself out, according to custom, to pommel reform voters at some contested election, and was tried for assault, to find himself sentenced to four months' imprisonment. While prize-fighting met with general encouragement it is scarcely surprising that bear and badger baiting continued favourite amusements with a certain section of the community, who flocked twice a week to the Westminster pit in Duck-lane to witness these barbarous contests.

[1] This was at some little distance from the Horns tavern, the then famous hostelry of the locality, in the assembly rooms of which balls, attended by the neighbouring gentry, used periodically to be given. When the tavern was originally built it stood quite in the country, and had its tea-gardens and bowling-green attached to it.

I remember there used to flit about Kennington a mysterious-looking lady, dressed in the deepest black and wearing a long thick veil, through which not the faintest glimpse of her features could be obtained, and which she had never been known to raise. No one spoke to her or knew where she came from, but she was commonly alluded to as the pig-faced lady. Pig-faced women were believed to be common in these days, and my grandmother was firmly convinced that the poor lady had a porcine countenance, and that this was the reason why she concealed it. I and other youngsters, I know, always shrank from the poor woman with the greatest dread. Years afterwards I learned that this mysterious person was the sister of some Bank of England clerk who had been hanged either for embezzlement or forgery, and that she had a habit of calling regularly at the bank on stated days in expectation of seeing her brother, whose unhappy fate had affected her reason.

My father was in partnership with Mr. R. Branston, son of Robert Branston, a wood-engraver of note in the days of the revival of the art, and contemporary with Bewick. There was also a sleeping partner in the concern named Whitehead. The business was originally carried on at No. 135 and subsequently at No. 76 Fleet-street. The first publication issued by the firm was the well-known "Boy's Own Book," "the Justinian of the playground," as one of its critics happily designated it. The immediate and continuous success of the work was very great; and after it had been published seven and twenty years the copyright readily realized £1000. The idea of the work was my father's, and it had been arranged between him and a couple of friends—one Mr. Wm. Clarke, author of "The Cigar," and the other Mr. T. Richardson, a well-known printer,—to produce the work in conjunction and divide the profits. On my father joining Mr. Branston, however, Richardson was bought out of the scheme for £100, and

Clarke was assured a liberal sum for writing the book in consideration of his waiving all future interest in it. The "Boy's Own Book" was followed by the "Young Lady's Book," the success of which, though considerable, was not to be compared with that of its famous predecessor.

Clarke's talents were of a very versatile order. He was, I believe, an Irishman, but at any rate he had Celtic blood in his veins. He was big built, witty in conversation, and a capital story teller, and like most literary men of his day, of a decidedly convivial turn. He had written "The Cigar," and was subsequently author of numerous stories and essays in the "Monthly Magazine," of which he was for some time editor. With the exception of two or three leading novelists, few prose writers made incomes of any amount in those days; and so uncertain were Clarke's earnings that he was glad to hire himself out as literary hack to Vizetelly, Branston & Co., to do whatever work was required of him, and under the obligation to write for no one else, at a weekly salary of £6. I have frequently heard my father express surprise at so able a man selling himself for years for such a pittance; yet the upshot proved, as I shall presently show, that Clarke had by far the best of the bargain.

After editing the "Young Lady's Book," Clarke wrote the clever collection of tales, published anonymously under the epigrammatic title of "Three Courses and a Dessert." The book was illustrated by his intimate friend, George Cruikshank, who was aided in his task by the author's own suggestive sketches. In the preface Clarke acknowledged his indebtedness to the artist for "translating his rude sketches into a proper pictorial state," and certainly Cruikshank's clever designs have been the means of saving the work from oblivion.

George Cruikshank's recent critics have vied with each other in their admiration of one particular illustration to

the "Three Courses," namely, the inimitable deaf postillion. But Clarke was himself the first to recognize the great merits of this design in his essay on the "Life and Genius of George Cruikshank," published in the "Monthly Magazine" shortly after "Three Courses and a Dessert" made its appearance. Among the subordinate illustrations to the volume the palpable human character, which the artist has succeeded in imparting to the bacchanalian group of lemons, the supercilious mushroom, and the contented, jovial-looking oyster, is scarcely less deserving of admiration than his felicitous rendering of the highly praised deaf postillion.

The reviewers of 1830 had much to say in favour of Clarke's share in the volume, besides which several of his stories were seized hold of by contemporary playwrights and put upon the stage. This induced Chapman & Hall, when they were casting about for a smartish writer to pen the letterpress to some cockney sporting sketches by Seymour, which they contemplated publishing, to make an offer to Clarke, who, by reason of the engagement he was under, was constrained to decline it.[1] Dickens was then applied to, and "Pickwick," as we all know, was the result.

Clarke's next employment was in connection with a comprehensive "Natural History," the text of which, after being prepared by a scientific naturalist of repute, was to be popularized by the author of "Three Courses and a Dessert." As may be supposed, the dry man of science and the lively man of letters failed to work in harmony,

[1] In a brief memoir of Seymour prefixed to an edition of his "Humorous Sketches," Mr. H. G. Bohn, the publisher, makes the absurd statement that the reason why Clarke was not entrusted with the letterpress to Seymour's sketches was because there had been a quarrel between the two respecting some bill of costs which Clarke had sent to the artist for whom he acted as solicitor. I have a faint recollection of once hearing that Clarke had been in a lawyer's office in his youth, but he certainly never practised as a solicitor. Besides I frequently heard both Clarke and my father speak of Chapman & Hall's offer and of the reason why Clarke was unable to accept it.

and the result was the retirement of the former. It was then settled that Clarke, assisted by certain scientific *confrères,* should write the work himself. William Harvey, Bewick's cleverest pupil—well known to connoisseurs as the engraver of the large woodcut after Haydon's "Dentatus," and, moreover, an accomplished draughtsman on wood especially clever at animals—had had *carte blanche* given to him to draw from life all the suitable subjects he could find in the gardens of the Zoological Society, and the Tower and other menageries. The scientific editors were charmed with his designs, but Kenny Meadows, I remember, used to chaff Harvey, whose well-known love for the graceful had caused him, he said, to make all his wild beasts turn out their toes as though they had been taught their steps by a fashionable dancing-master. "Beauty," Meadows would jestingly insist, "was Harvey's evil genius, and grace was his damnation."

By the time that some hundreds of Harvey's drawings were engraved and several thousand pounds had been expended upon the work, disagreements on other matters arose between the members of my father's firm, and the natural history project was shelved for a time. Clarke, however, continued to be paid his customary salary for several years, on the presumption that he was steadily progressing with the text. One day, however, he suddenly dropped down dead in his garden at Hampstead, and, on search being made among his papers for the "Natural History" manuscript, for which he had received about £1200, there was great consternation when merely a quantity of rough notes relating to the subject, and these, too, of no kind of value, could be found.

The truth was, Clarke loved convivial in preference to learned leisure, and for nearly five years past had troubled himself in regard to the "Natural History" only so far as to pay occasional visits to the Zoological-gardens and

make weekly calls in Fleet-street, invariably primed with a capital story, over which the cashier duly chuckled as he handed him the customary half-dozen sovereigns. The writer of the brief memoir of Clarke in the "Dictionary of National Biography" observes that "in the last years of his life he devoted himself to an elaborate work on Natural History which does not appear to have been published." How it was that the world came to be deprived of this advantage, the writer of the memoir will now understand.

My father had been a clever amateur actor in his younger days, and had played the part of Sir Edward Mortimer in Colman's "Iron Chest" with some success in public. His fondness for things theatrical led to his keeping up an intimacy with his former fellow-apprentice, Davidge, and through him making the acquaintance of Clarkson Stanfield, when the latter, fresh from the sea, was painting scenes at the Coburg theatre. At this time Mr. Frederick Gye had just started what he termed the "London *genuine* Tea company," most likely in consequence of some recent criminal trials in which the wholesale manufacture of imitation tea out of dried sloe leaves, coloured with copperas, and largely sold in packets at the west-end of London, had been exposed, sending something like a thrill through the tea-drinking community. The new company owned several establishments, and at the principal one had built a grand saloon, which Gye was desirous of having decorated in a unique style. My father, who was a great friend of his, introduced both Stanfield and David Roberts to him, and they were forthwith engaged to paint the walls of the apartment with Chinese views and other appropriate subjects. Their task accomplished, the saloon was luxuriously furnished in the Eastern style, and altogether a resplendent result was secured, which was not without its influence on provincial

grocers, who were here received and cajoled into giving large orders.

Gye was at that period a wealthy man. He had been brought up as a printer, and was then head of a firm in the city, which had secured the government contract for printing the State lottery tickets, and did moreover a large business in the printing of lottery posters and puffs, principally for the famous Tom Bish. As Theodore Hook pattered at the time in the "John Bull"—

> "Bish used to print paragraphs artfully penned—
> We saw not his aim till we read to the end—
> 'Great news from abroad!'—'A suspicion of treason!'
> 'A mermaid exhibiting just in the season!'
> Through foreign news, mermaid, or radical plotter, he
> Always contrived to get round to the lottery."

It was not, however, out of printing, profitable as he had found it, that Gye had made his fortune: a singular piece of good luck had befallen him. On the eve of the drawing of one of the great lotteries Bish found himself with a *whole* ticket on his hands—lottery tickets used considerately to be sold in fractions as small as sixteenths for the convenience of the humbler class of gamblers. Almost at the last moment Bish prevailed on Gye to relieve him of the ticket in question, and luckily for the purchaser the number gained one of the great prizes of £30,000. Exceptionally novel or clever ideas for lottery posting bills were then greatly in request, and my father having furnished Gye with a considerable number which had taken Bish's fancy and led to extensive orders for printing, Gye, who was a very liberal man, acknowledged the obligation by a present amounting to several hundred pounds.

To catch the topers as well as the tea-drinkers Gye had also established a wine company, which for a time was very successful. But as old wines were unprocurable from the growers, and tawny crusted port was then the fashionable

tipple, the company found itself under the necessity of laying down large stocks and waiting for their subsequent development. Partly, possibly, with this object in view, but more probably in a spirit of speculation, Gye foolishly bought up in advance a considerable proportion of a particular port vintage. The investment proved a bad one; the wine turned out of very inferior quality, and a heavy loss, from which the concern never recovered, was the result.

So far back as 1821 Gye had taken a Mr. Hughes, a gentleman with strong musical tastes, into partnership, and one of the first operations of the new firm was the purchase of Vauxhall-gardens from the Tyers family for £28,000. Gye's friend Bish joined them in their venture, but after a season or two retired from it. Owing to the attraction of Ramo Samee, the sword swallower, a clever shadow pantomime, and Madame Vestris's dulcet warbling of "Cherry Ripe"—a song over which the town grew positively mad—the first few years were successful enough. Afterwards varying fortunes and wet seasons set in, brightened, however, I well remember, by Paganini's single string performances, Green's ascents in the great Nassau balloon, and the classical *poses plastiques.* Nevertheless, Vauxhall-gardens proved on the whole a steady pecuniary drain: the tea company had to be sold, and the proceeds were sunk in them; the wine company, too, after going from bad to worse, was obliged to be given up. At last the crash came, and the Gardens passed into the hands of other speculators, equally sanguine of highly profitable results, as the late unfortunate proprietors had originally been, and equally doomed to disappointment.

Gye, in his palmy days, by means of a big bribe promising continuous employment to the woollen operatives of Chippenham, succeeded in getting elected to Parliament for that borough, and continued to represent it until its

disenfranchisement under the Reform bill. His sons were educated at foreign universities, and afterwards went the orthodox continental tour; and it was commonly asserted that each of his two daughters would receive £30,000 on her wedding day. The young ladies, however, set their minds upon coronets, which they failed to secure, and on the collapse of Gye's various enterprises, they found themselves doomed to spinsterhood, and on exceedingly meagre pittances. Gye's eldest son, who had been brought up as heir-expectant to a large fortune, resented his father's commercial downfall by declining to speak to him again, and, moreover, adhered to his resolution. Years subsequently, when the former M.P. for Chippenham was a broken down old man, with a still surviving passion for the luxuries of life, and his son had become lessee of Covent-garden theatre,[1] Gye senior used to call periodically upon me—I was then editing a newspaper of large circulation—and get me to procure him free admissions to the opera, for which he well knew he would have asked his son in vain.

The State lotteries had come to an end many years before Gye's course of ill-luck set in, the last one having been drawn in 1826. Looking back to those days, one is surprised to find the annual revenue derived by the State from lotteries set down in budget after budget at no more than £250,000; yet it needed years to discover that this paltry sum was as nothing compared to the evil consequences which State-encouraged gambling brought in its train. When the abolition of these lotteries was at last resolved on, either the mania for this particular form of gambling was on the wane, or else the habitual speculators were at a very low ebb, for the lottery-office keepers had to make extraordinary efforts to get rid of the

[1] Nearly twenty years subsequent to the time I am referring to, Mr. Frederick Gye, junior, while out with a shooting party at Viscount Dillon's, was accidentally shot, and died from his wounds.

tickets remaining on their hands, although the bait offered included no less than six prizes of £30,000. The usual flaming posters, the artful pictorial puffs, the songs foisted into farces and shouted in the streets, proved of little avail. Itinerant vocalists piped to no purpose—

> "O dear! what can the matter be?
> To tell, who can be at a loss?
> The people are running by hundreds to Bish's,
> To make out their dreams, and fulfil all their wishes,
> To try and come in for the loaves and the fishes,
> At Cornhill number 4, and 9 Charing-cross."

In this juncture the principal lottery agents resolved upon trying the effect of a brilliant cavalcade, with trumpeters and banner-bearers in resplendent frippery, and a huge lottery wheel drawn by prancing horses, as well as other eccentric devices, to arouse the public from their apathy. Fleet-street and the Strand and all the leading thoroughfares were paraded, I remember, for weeks, and bellmen proclaimed to gaping crowds that now was positively their last chance of gaining a fortune for an insignificant outlay; yet, with all this, the sale of tickets still flagged, and the day officially appointed for drawing the six £30,000 prizes had to be postponed for several months.

At this period, a far more interesting procession than the above used to pass through the principal London streets regularly every spring. This was the St. George's day procession of mail coaches, with the handsome horses in spick-and-span new harness, and their heads bedecked with ribbons and rosettes, while the drivers and guards, tricked out in new scarlet liveries, proudly flaunted the biggest of bouquets. At the head of the stream of coaches, caracoled the general postmen (deliverers of the letters from the provinces and abroad), while the rear was brought up by the "flying" postboys, in their new scarlet toggery,

cracking their whips and sounding lively fanfares on their horns.

The state of my father's health obliging him to reside in the immediate neighbourhood of his business, we removed into town, and for several years occupied the upper part of a house on the north side of Fleet-street, which at that period had undergone no particular transformation since the days of Dr. Johnson. The heads of the rebels, it is true, no longer gazed vacantly down from Temple Bar; but old St. Dunstan's church, with its projecting clock and the two wild men who struck the quarters with their clubs, was still existent, as were several picturesque old houses which have since been swept away. The house in which Dr. Johnson lived in Johnson's-court had grown somewhat shabby-looking, but was otherwise unchanged. The Bolt-court house in which he died had been pulled down, but the house in Gough-square—in the garret of which the famous dictionary was compiled—and the doctor's chambers in Inner Temple-lane remained intact, and so continued for many years to come. And though the old Devil tavern had been demolished, Johnson's favourite box at the Mitre survived unaltered.

The Fleet-street of those days, unappropriated as it then was by newspaper and betting men, although still the same cheerful scene which Boswell had formerly found it, was almost a quiet thoroughfare compared with Fleet-street as it is now. I remember its stylish silk mercers' shops, and Alderman Waithman's handsome shawl warehouse at the corner of New Bridge-street, and have seen ladies, on their shopping expeditions, promenading the pavement accompanied by their lap-dogs. To-day, ladies with lap-dogs in Fleet-street would create quite as much surprise as burly Dr. Johnson himself, swinging his huge frame from side to side of the footpath according to his wont.

Frequently, on Monday mornings, Ludgate-hill was for

hours well-nigh impassable, owing to the crowd assembled to witness the Old Bailey executions, which sometimes numbered as many as half-a-dozen on the same day. The bodies were left dangling opposite the old debtors' door of Newgate for an hour or so afterwards, by way of warning it was understood to the evil-disposed. When passing up Ludgate-hill one Monday morning, I recollect being startled at seeing as many as four poor wretches—one of them, I think, a woman—hanging in a row. The criminal code was barbarously severe at this time, more than a dozen different offences being capital; still it must be remembered that only some five per cent. of the death sentences were really carried out,[1] partly perhaps owing to the well-known repugnance of George IV.—commonly credited with being so callous-hearted—to sign death warrants. Included in the then category of capital crimes were such offences as highway robbery, arson, horse and sheep stealing, coining, forgery, burglary, letter stealing by post-office servants, returning from transportation before the expiration of the sentence, and larceny in a dwelling house to the value of £5—a few years previously shop-lifting to the value of 5s. was also punishable by death.

The establishment of Peel's new police force (1829) came as an unpleasant check to the criminal classes, yet the public generally regarded their new protectors with considerable suspicion. Advocates for Reform saw in them almost a purely political force, and one or two popular newspapers assailed them virulently for years. Magistrates habituated to the old police officers, watchmen, parish constables, and beadles, were lukewarm in their appreciation of the change; while the vestries complained of the inefficiency of the new force, and persistently

[1] Of 1066 persons sentenced to death at the Old Bailey in 1824, only 43 were hanged; of 1036 sentenced in 1825, 50 went to the gallows; in 1826 out of 1200 who had been sentenced, 57 underwent the death penalty; and of 1529 persons convicted of capital crimes in 1827, no more than 73 were executed.

grumbled at its expense. All the ancient guardians of the peace were naturally irate at the innovation. The famous scarlet-vested Bow-street runners—nick-named "Robin Redbreasts" by some poetical metaphorist of the time—and heretofore the chief thief-takers, looked on these raw recruits, who were destined to supplant them, with much the same misplaced contempt as a few years afterwards the old stage coachmen regarded railways and the "steam-pot," as they derogatively termed the locomotive, which was soon to supersede their famous "highflyers."

Some of the new lictors were ludicrously arbitrary in their proceedings—one recently enlisted constable haled, I remember, a small boy before the magistrate for trundling his hoop across Camberwell-green, and another zealous officer brought a respectable maid-servant before the Marlborough-street functionary on the ludicrous charge of carrying a *silk* umbrella in Piccadilly. Black sheep, moreover, were not altogether absent from the new protective flock. One peeler, ambitious of rapid promotion, privately put a bullet through his own hat, and then swore he had been attacked by armed thieves. Two other constables, accused first of robbing a person on his way home late at night, and then taking him into custody because he resisted being despoiled, were found to have the stolen money concealed in their boots. A fourth presumed thief-taker was caught stealing a leg of mutton, a circumstance promptly laid hold of by the street boy of the period, with whom "Who stole the mutton?" became at once a favourite cry.

During the latter part of George IV.'s reign London underwent considerable alteration and improvement, chiefly at the initiative of Nash and Wyatteville's much-abused patron, who in giving us Regent-street—the first reasonably wide thoroughfare London could boast of—started that rebuilding of the metropolis, which has been going on uninterruptedly ever since. Citywards a new London-

bridge was in course of construction, necessitating the demolition or divergence of several tortuous old streets, and the formation of more direct new ones, and involving the sweeping away of the famous Boar's Head tavern and other notable buildings. Brunel's tunnel, too, underneath the Thames, and at that time almost regarded as the eighth wonder of the world though now no one would cross the road to look at it, was steadily progressing, until stopped by a serious inundation.[1] In the west the Charing-cross end of the Strand had been entirely relaid out, and streets of stucco houses were rising on the site. A score or more of mansions, too, reared their stuccoed fronts in the once secluded gardens of Carlton House, and one or two handsome club houses, recently erected in Pall-mall, formed the nucleus of that street of palaces which this historic thoroughfare was afterwards to become. Although Carlton House had been demolished, the new Buckingham Palace was making only slow progress; for the "jaded voluptuary," as the whilom first gentleman in Europe is now commonly styled, abandoning his favourite Pavilion at Brighton—the great and little domes of which suggested to Lord Alvanley that St. Paul's had been down to Brighton and pupped—was secluding himself in "the cottage" at Windsor, in the society of the fat and fair Marchioness of Conyngham.

[1] In the "John Bull" of that day Theodore Hook ridiculed the many engineering schemes afloat after the following fashion. It will be seen from the last few lines that Sir Edward Watkin's Channel tunnel project is only another instance of history repeating itself—

"When Greenwich coaches go by steam on roads of iron railing, sir,
How pleasant it will be to see a dozen in a line:
And ships of heavy burden over hills and valleys sailing, sir,
Shall cross from Bristol's channel to the rivers Tweed or Tyne.
And Dame Speculation, if she ever fully hath her ends,
Will give us docks at Bermondsey, St. Saviour's and St. Catherine's;
While side-long bridges over mud shall fill the folks with wonder, sir,
And lamp-lit tunnels all day long convey the cockneys under, sir.

"A tunnel underneath the sea, from Calais straight to Dover, sir,
That qualmish folks may cross by land from one to t' other shore,
With sluices made to drown the French, if e'er they would come over, sir,
Has long been talked of, till at length 'tis thought a monstrous *bore*."

There he hoped to escape the shafts of ridicule freely levelled at his no longer graceful figure, spite of all the gold frogs and embroidery his tailor had bedizened him with.

The stucco buildings with which the Prince Regent's favourite architect overran the west end of London aroused contemporary satire, although most of the houses built in the preceding generation were, as Canova described them, nothing more than brick walls pierced with holes at stated distances. One epigram ran—

> "Augustus at Rome was for building renowned,
> And of marble he left what of brick he had found.
> But is not our Nash, too, a very great master?—
> He finds us all brick and he leaves us all plaster!"

So much of what is now Trafalgar-square, as the court-yard of the royal mews with its dingy boundary wall did not encroach upon, was in George IV.'s reign a mere waste piece of ground, enlivened by a hackney coach stand, and overlooked by the historic lion that surmounted old Northumberland House. Until 1827 the king's mews occupied the site of the present National Gallery, the few score of pictures of which the collection then consisted being located at Mr. Angerstein's house in Pall-mall—since absorbed by the present War office. When as a boy I was taken there to see them many of the pictures (possibly those given by Sir George Beaumont) were, I remember, lying against the walls of the rooms unhung. In the neighbouring Haymarket ruddy-faced farmers still chaffered over the price of hay, while lumbering waggons blocked up the thoroughfare. The church of St. Martin's, too, had not yet been shorn of its churchyard, and builders were busy over King William-street and the Lowther-arcade. The old Exeter-change—where Cross had his famous menagerie, and Chunee, the mad elephant, had been recently shot by a detachment of foot guards—still protruded over the Strand footway, though its demolition was soon to be effected.

Perhaps the greatest change of all, however, from the London of George IV.'s days to the London of the present, is apparent in the street traffic. Although there were occasional long stoppages where the traffic was most congested, there was none of that legion of omnibuses and swift and crawling cabs, or that continuous stream of light carts, heavy waggons, and ponderous railway and other vans which now blocks all the business thoroughfares of the metropolis, and needs police interference to regulate it. Then there were a comparatively moderate number of carts and waggons, a sprinkling of hackney coaches and cabs, some occasional four-horse stages starting from or arriving at the great coaching inns, and a few gigs and brewers' drays. The old hackney coaches were mainly discarded carriages of the upper classes, shabby-looking on the outside, spite of the ancient emblazonments on their panels, and uncommonly fusty within, while the drunken jarvies who drove them wore both in summer and winter heavy drab greatcoats furnished with innumerable capes as a protection against the rain. The cab of those days resembled the ordinary cabriolet except for a little box perched at the side, from which the driver was often shot into the road whenever his horse stumbled or was suddenly checked.

Omnibuses were only introduced the year before George IV. died. When these then novel vehicles first commenced running with their three horses abreast, but with neither knifeboard nor garden seats at the top, they were regarded quite as much as objects of curiosity as conveniences to be profited by. They very soon, however, became immensely popular, and gradually swept all the suburban stage coaches off the road. The adroit conductor, or cad, as he was originally called, early developed the accomplishment, described by Dickens in one of his sketches, of "chucking old gen'l'men into his 'bus, shutting them in and rattling off before they know where it's a-going."

Every possible outlet from the small area within which, towards the close of the Georgian era, the metropolis was confined had its turnpike, or toll gate, as it was indifferently called, and in the suburbs themselves these gates were frequently not more than a mile apart. It will be understood from this how heavily the impost must have pressed on owners of all kinds of vehicles passing in or out of London. Pike-keepers, we know, were in Mr Weller senior's opinion men who had been disappointed in life and revenged themselves on their fellow-creatures by taking tolls. The nature of the torments to which their victims were exposed is graphically set forth in a contemporary lamentation.

"An individual driving himself starts, say from Bishopgate-street to Kilburn. The day is cold and rainy, his fingers are benumbed, his gloves soaked with wet, his two coats buttoned up, and his money is in the pocket of his tight pantaloons,[1] while he himself is late for dinner. He has to pull up in the middle of the street in Shoreditch and pay a toll: as he means to return he takes a ticket, letter A. On reaching Shoreditch church he turns into the Curtain-road, pulls up again, drags off his wet glove with his teeth—his other hand being fully occupied with the reins and whip—pays again, gets another ticket, No. 482, drags on his glove, buttons up his coats, and rattles away into Old-street-road. Here he is stopped at another gate; more pulling and poking, unbuttoning and squeezing; eventually he pays and takes another ticket, letter L. The operation of getting all to rights has to be gone through, and is not repeated until the driver reaches Goswell-street-road; here he performs all the ceremonies already described a fourth time, and gets a fourth ticket, No. 732, which is to clear him through the gates in the New-road as far as the bottom of Pentonville-hill. Arrived there he performs the same

[1] The convenient little outer pocket for tickets and small change had not then been thought of by some inventive tailor.

evolutions and procures a fifth ticket, letter X, which is to clear him to the Paddington-road. . . . On reaching Paddington gate he pays afresh and obtains a ticket, No. 691, with which he proceeds swimmingly until stopped again at Kilburn to pay a toll which would clear him all the way to Stanmore if he were not going to dine at a house three doors beyond this very turnpike, where he pays for the seventh time and obtains a ticket, letter G."[1]

Thames watermen and wherries were an institution in the "twenties," when above bridge there were no steamers beyond a few running to Richmond. Occasionally, however, some stately barges, belonging to the city companies, gay with flags and gilding, and with watermen in brave liveries, enlivened this portion of the stream, which, unexploited as it then was by speculative builders, presented, beyond Chelsea and the cockney tea-gardens, a succession of pleasant pastoral spots—where

> "Lazy cows wrench many a scented flower,
> Robbing the golden markets of the bees,"

—which one seeks for to-day in vain.

Down stream, the steamers all started from St. Katherine's-wharf, for none dared attempt to shoot the narrow arches, and encounter the dangerous rapids of old London-bridge. On journeying down the river, one used, as a boy, to gaze with curiosity and awe at the grim gibbets, with their rusty swinging chains, which rose up among the lonesome Blackwall marshes, and on which, not many years before, the bodies of condemned pirates and mutineers might have been seen hanging by way of warning to the crews of outward-bound ships :—

[1] Barham's Life of Theodore Hook, 1. 61. The acts of parliament authorising these tolls were often very loosely drawn. A person from whom a sixpenny toll had been exacted for a child's wicker carriage appealed against the impost to the quarter sessions, and had his appeal dismissed on the ground that the act authorized a toll of sixpence to be levied on any vehicle drawn or propelled otherwise than by horses !

"We are all blanched and soddened of the rain,
  And eke dried up and blackened of the sun;
Corbies and pyets have our eyes out-ta'en,
  And plucked our beard and hair out, one by one.
Whether by night or day, rest have we none:
  Now here, now there, as the wind shifts its stead,
We swing and creak and rattle overhead,
  No thimble dinted like our bird-pecked face."

At this time, however, no rotting, weather-beaten corpses hung in the creaking chains—"tossing with every breeze that blows, dancing where fires of dawning play"—the barbarous custom having been abandoned for some years. Yet the gibbets themselves, with their rusty chains, were suffered to remain well into the reign of William IV. Another tristful object scanned with interest was the dismal old prison ship anchored off Deptford, on board of which, at night time, the convicts working in the neighbouring dockyard were confined.

On June 26, 1830, following upon frequent bulletins preparing the public for the event, the booming of the great bell of St. Paul's gave notice that George IV. had ceased to live. Nobody seemed in the least to regret the dead king. On the contrary, people felt a sort of relief at his exit, and looked forward hopefully to the new and happier era, which they believed was now about to open out. Unfavourable as popular opinion of the late king was, it fell short of that entertained of him by those who knew him well. The clerk of his privy council thought him "a contemptible, selfish, unfeeling dog; a spoiled, selfish, odious beast," and believed "there was nothing false and base he would not have been guilty of if he had dared, only he was such a coward, and in such perfect awe of the Duke of Cumberland!"

It was very different when the Duke of York died a few years before, though in many respects there was scarcely a pin to choose between the two brothers. Both were the

incarnation of selfishness, but the duke's amiability and good temper told immensely in his favour. The duke, too, certainly lived with his admirable wife, although he constantly left her at Oatlands in great pecuniary straits, without money to pay the trades-people and with the house almost in ruins, as no builder would trust him for repairs. All this while he was gambling away every sovereign he could get hold of; and this too, when, as custodian of his lunatic father, he was in receipt of an extra allowance of £10,000 a year. When the duchess died, the duke treated his mistress in much the same fashion, leaving her to defray the expenses of their joint establishment by the sale of army commissions, to which he pretended to shut his eyes.

And yet when he died, in spite of all this and his great unpopularity in political matters, there was something like general sorrow among all classes, for the reason, I suppose, that towards the close of his career he had come to be somewhat affectionately regarded as the soldier's friend. At his death a few newspapers censured his extravagance and his connection with Mrs. Clark, but they soon veered round and he was universally panegyrised. Ude, the famous French cook, had his own ideas respecting his royal patron. "He shall miss me wherever he has gone to," he naïvely said when lamenting the duke's death. The newspapers were less indulgent towards George IV. than they had been to his brother, for the breath was scarcely out of his body before, as Greville puts it, "they burst out in full cry, and raked up all his vices, follies, and misdeeds."

As, however, the whirligig of time is said to bring round its revenges, it is not at all improbable that in the coming years some master of sophistry will seek to rehabilitate this much reviled First Gentleman in Europe.

II.

(1830-35.)

SCHOOL DAYS.

After a year's probation at a school near Clapham-common, kept by a superior sort of Wackford Squeers, who taught his pupils caligraphy by pounding away at their knuckles with an ebony ruler, I was sent to one of those "classical and commercial academies," to the usually incompetent principals of which the intellectual development of boys belonging to the middle-classes was at this period confided. The Clapham pedagogue was a great stickler for corporal punishment in the case of small boys, and to the administration of this the shell suits then worn lent themselves admirably. Little boys in these days were dressed up to look the greatest of guys. They had no natty knickerbocker, Balmoral, reefer, or other nice suits to set them off. From petticoats they were shifted into trowsers, fastening to jackets with many buttons, while a huge white frill encircled the neck; and this, which was a supreme moment in a boy's existence, was called being breeched.

My new school was situated at Chislehurst, then undiscovered by the madding crowd of holiday excursionists and undreamt of by the speculative builder, and remarkable for its sequestered rural and sylvan beauty. At the time I am speaking of (1831), the place was as secluded as though it were a hundred miles away from the metropolis. Gates's coach—rattling across the breezy commons, or scudding

along the shady lanes, forcing the droning waggoner to pull his creeping team aside—passed daily through the quiet village on its way from Orpington to London. Its passengers, with rare exceptions, comprised simply dwellers in the locality, and most of them descended where the coach put up at one of the old galleried Borough inns, pictured so pleasantly in "Pickwick."

The great charm of Chislehurst in these days was its sequestered woods, its picturesque commons bordered by noble trees, and the many beautiful parks attached to the residences of the nobility and gentry in the immediate neighbourhood, which anybody might then freely roam over.

The school I was sent to was kept by a Mr. Wyburn, a tall and military-looking personage, who had shouldered a musket as one of the old volunteers at the time of the threatened French invasion, and flourished a sabre in the ranks of the Kent yeomanry. Though rather elderly, he was remarkably erect, and with his well-powdered hair, capacious white cravat, and singularly prim attire, presented a most dignified appearance. Associated with him was his son-in-law, and the pair were assisted by a couple of ushers, one of whom was constantly being changed, his place being usually supplied from the crowded ranks of those who had failed in other pursuits. Thus, I remember, we had at one time a brewer's accountant, who was superseded by a methodistical individual, reported to have once been an itinerant preacher. He quickly gave place to an amiable, irresolute young fellow in reduced circumstances, who, having been brought up to no calling whatever, had only the scholastic profession—that refuge for the destitute—open to him.

It is, however, of the principal usher that I have to speak, a rather old and remarkably podgy individual. His rounded paunch, rubicund countenance, leering eye, and

scanty white locks were strongly suggestive of Falstaff, though for some reason or other he had obtained the nickname of the "Jack of Clubs." His real name was Feldon, and in happier times he had been one of the masters of the Philological School, a circumstance of which he was continually boasting. His years and his unwieldly figure rendered him totally unfit to cope with the unruly lads committed out of school hours almost exclusively to his charge, so that he was constantly complaining to the head-master of his authority being defied, and of the personal insults heaped upon him.

He had a habit of brooding over his wrongs, and of seizing on an auspicious moment, when perfect silence prevailed in the school-room, to abruptly advance from his own desk in a remote corner to the centre of the floor, facing the pulpit desk of the head-master, who recognised at once what was about to follow. All eyes being turned towards the obese old gentleman, the latter would deliver himself of a set harangue, accompanying it by that conventional action of the arms which little boys employed when declaiming, "My name is Norval," the stock juvenile oration of the period. Having made his complaint, he would proceed to boast of the position he had formerly filled, and wind up by proclaiming, that sooner than suffer the indignities he was at present exposed to, "he would beg his bread to London first."

No matter how his speech began, or what the subject of it, it always ended in the same fashion. The boys, having regard to the old gentleman's twenty-stone weight, which constrained him to waddle very slowly along, invariably grinned among themselves at this pet peroration; Wyburn growled out some threats of what would happen to the culprits if only they could be pointed out to him, and Feldon, satisfied with having unburthened himself of his wrongs, and with Wyburn's stereotyped assurance,

retired to his accustomed corner, leaving lessons to follow their routine course.

The school was a capital one in all respects save the scantiness of the instruction imparted to the pupils, and the lack of anything like discipline. But the boys, of course, never complained of these shortcomings. The food being excellent and plentiful, the daily tasks light, and the liberty allowed excessive, the pupils at Chislehurst Academy were as contented as schoolboys are ever likely to be. With the majority it was a matter of principle to learn as little as possible, while the few who were studiously inclined were generally chaffed or bullied into neglecting their tasks. Our great difficulty was to scramble through the class examinations on subjects of which we had not so much as a smattering of knowledge; but in case of failure there was always a chance of punishment being meted out where it was undeserved, as in the typical case of the boy who, knowing the rule in syntax, but not the reason for it, got a flogging for his presumed ignorance, owing to the loose way in which the master had propounded the question. Written exercises were, of course, got through easily enough by the duller boys bribing the sharper ones to do their work for them.

Besides a couple of day scholars, sons of farmers in the neighbourhood, a young lady of fifteen came to the school to take daily lessons. She was the niece of an imperious dame who lived at the manor-house, which, according to the common talk of the village, the lady's late husband—a nefarious old London solicitor—had acquired by forgery or fraud. The niece sat apart from the boys generally, and being very pretty, was not only the cynosure of neighbouring eyes, but the object of desperate devotion on the part of the more manly amongst her admirers, who seemed ready then and there to slay each other with their pocket-knives to secure the favour of the fair one's smiles.

At Chislehurst a boy's status in the school was not determined by his position in his class, but solely by his pugilistic performances. New boys were, of course, put through the customary examination as to where they lived, what their fathers were, how much the latter were worth: whether they had any pretty sisters, and the damsels' ages —these last enquiries proceeding from the youthful Don Juans of the school. This inquisition over, the new-comers were speedily matched against boys of their own size, and had rank assigned them according to the way they acquitted themselves in these encounters. Though school conflicts of this character were not openly tolerated, they were usually winked at by the boys' mentors, who never seemed at all curious as to the origin of the many discoloured eyes and swollen noses which it was impossible to prevent from coming under their observation.

It was not surprising that this state of things obtained at private establishments, when at public schools set pugilistic contests between the boys took place. Not long before, there had been an organised stand-up fight in the Eton playing-fields, between a son of Lord Shaftesbury's and a nephew of the Marquis of Londonderry's. The two lads fought stripped to the waist in strict professional fashion, and had their bottle-holders and backers to sustain and encourage them. After fighting *sixty* rounds, occupying a couple of hours, the earl's son, the younger of the two combatants, who during the contest had been freely plied with neat brandy, was withdrawn by his backers, only to die, however, a few hours afterwards.

An inquest was held, and the marquis's nephew was put upon his trial for manslaughter, when a lord, a baronet, an M.P., two colonels, and other gentlemen accompanied him into the dock. As, however, no counsel appeared for the prosecution, and none of the witnesses who had been subpœnaed answered to their names, a ver-

dict of "not guilty" was returned. No doubt the legal farce was supplemented by the judge gravely observing in conventional fashion that the aristocratic young bruiser "left the court without the slightest stain upon his character."

On half-holidays great license was allowed to the elder boys of our school. They could always obtain leave of absence, on asking for it, until 8 o'clock, but commonly deferred their return until an hour or more later. They used to set out after dinner in small gangs, the bigger boys—aping the farmers and gamekeepers of the neighbourhood—swaggering in leather leggings. During autumn they would go on nutting excursions through the woods, but more frequently on marauding expeditions to orchards, sufficiently remote to be pillaged wholesale without attracting suspicion towards the actual delinquents. In the spring bird-nesting was the rule, for Chislehurst, besides being embowered in woods, abounded in sequestered umbrageous spots, and most of the boys could climb the tallest trees like squirrels.

In summer time, if cricket proved an insufficient attraction, horses grazing in the meadows would be secured, and galloped round the field till Nemesis suddenly appeared in the shape of some choleric individual in cords and gaiters, armed with a far-reaching driving whip, to interrupt the exciting sport and warn these ardent equestrians to make rapid tracks. One boy who had the ill-luck to get caught, was held across a rail while a heavy riding whip was applied to his tightened nether garments with so much energy that his bellowings and plaintive appeals for mercy penetrated our ears a quarter of a mile off, and gave wings to our already nimble feet. For a month afterwards he must have wished himself a cherubim, so painful did he find a sitting posture.

When autumn winds—

"With scourge of fury were lashing down
The delicate rankèd golden corn
That never more shall rear its crown
And curtsey to the morn,"

orchards, as I have said, were commonly raided, and later on the boys took to cutting furze and underwood and stacking them round the tall fir-pole raised on the common opposite our school, for the huge bonfire on the night of November 5th. On one of these furze cutting expeditions my elder brother had his foot half-severed by an ill-directed bill stroke, and remained for months under a surgeon's care.

Chislehurst village was divided into what was termed "up-town" and "down-town," the common separating the two. There was always a bitter struggle between up-town and down-town as to which should have the largest bonfire on Guy Fawkes night; and our school being down-town, the boys rendered the latter all the assistance they could. Stacking the furze and faggots for these huge bonfires began about the middle of October, and each party anxiously watched the other's progress. On one occasion, shortly before the 5th, having noticed that the up-town bonfire was likely to be considerably larger than any the down-townsmen would succeed in stacking, we resolved to kindle it surreptitiously before the proper time. To accomplish this, three of us were lowered out of our bedroom windows, on a cold November morning, shortly before daybreak, when, after possessing ourselves of some tar and turpentine, purchased the day before from the village house-painter, and a heap of hay bands, with tinder-box, matches, and lantern--which we had prevailed on the stableman to lend us—we scaled the high school-gateway, and boldly sallied forth.

Keeping the lantern light concealed, we hurried across the common to the old village cockpit, in which the materials for the up-town bonfire were stacked. First

posting one of our party to give an alarm in case of surprise on the part of anyone on the alert, we next deposited the hay bands among the furze and faggots, and after thoroughly saturating them with tar and turpentine, set them alight. We then scampered off at full speed, for the bonfire instantly blazed up, and the faggots loudly crackling aroused some young fellows who had been deputed to keep watch, and three of whom immediately gave us chase. We, however, tore rapidly along, and had succeeded in scaling the school-gates, and getting ourselves drawn up to our bedrooms again by some boys on the look-out for our return, before in the early morning obscurity our pursuers could realise what had become of us. Vigorous efforts were made to extinguish the bonfire, but to no purpose. It burned itself completely out, and down-town there were the wildest rejoicings over our successful enterprise.

Another fire kindled on the common in the ensuing summer was likely to have led to unpleasant consequences. The season was an exceedingly hot one, and as we were returning home from our accustomed bath in a pond of clear water, situated in a sequestered corner of the common, one of the boys, experimenting with some phosphoric or lucifer matches—then recently introduced—foolishly tried the effect of a lighted one on the furze, which was instantly in a blaze. The fire spread with fearful rapidity, attracting a crowd of villagers to the spot, and also a couple of Lord Sydney's keepers. The flames were only extinguished after much damage had been done, and the beauty of the common seriously impaired. The neighbouring gentry were a good deal irritated, and the matter having come to the ears of Lord Sydney, who was the recognised king of the place, he angrily ordered the village constable to make enquiries and report to him.

The culprit was soon discovered, and there was a talk

of issuing a warrant, which sent Wyburn off post haste to Lord Sydney at Frognal, where he made a pathetic appeal to the irate peer, not by any means on the boy's account, but solely to avert the disgrace that would inevitably fall on the school, promising his lordship that the offending lad should receive the severest castigation that he had ever administered since he had wielded birch and ferule. Now, the one thing beyond all others on which Wyburn prided himself was being strictly a man of his word, and, unfortunately, an unforeseen circumstance prevented him from keeping it in this particular instance. The guilty one, alarmed at the sight of the constable, and having visions of Maidstone jail and the treadmill before his eyes, at once turned his six-bladed pocket-knife, his lop-eared rabbits, and his cricket bat into ready cash, and watching his opportunity, surreptitiously trotted off to Tottenham on the other side of London, where his people lived; whilst Wyburn was endeavouring to calm the ruffled lord of the manor, and expatiating on the sound lacing which the young rascal should inevitably receive at his hands.

The school stableman of whom I have spoken was a stalwart, black-whiskered, handsome-looking scoundrel, greatly in favour with all the girls of the village, and on intimate terms with some notable poachers. He, moreover, did a little poaching on his own account, setting wires for hares and rabbits in unfrequented parts of Woodheath, a preserve of Lord Sydney's which skirted a meadow in the rear of our playground. He confided the secret of the position of these wires to one or two of the bigger boys, who during play hours would visit the spots where they were set, and report to Master William if a hare or rabbit had been snared. They were rather proud of participating in the risk of being caught by the gamekeepers, which involved being thrashed within an inch

of their lives, although they had not the remotest chance of sharing in the poaching profits. Most of the hares caught in this fashion were sold to the boys, who, after labelling them in the stable, stealthily forwarded them by Gates's coach as presents to their fathers in town in full expectation, of course, of receiving a handsome tip in return.

It should be remembered that at this time the game laws were excessively stringent. Only owners of land of the annual value of £100—that is, fifty times the qualification needed to vote for a member of parliament—or clergymen holding livings of not less than £150 a year, were then privileged to kill game. Others could only legally participate in the sport by pretending to engage themselves as gamekeepers to the friends whose preserves they shot over. The sale of game was altogether prohibited, excepting by landholders on whose estates it had been killed, though the prohibition was to a certain extent evaded by dealers pretending to sell it on commission. The penalty for dealing in game was a heavy one, but its partial remission was readily secured by the simple process of privately informing against some other offender in the same line.

Ineffectual attempts had more than once been made to pass a bill rendering the sale of game legal. It was absurd, said Lord Wharncliffe, to tell an alderman that he might purchase a turkey but not a partridge. In England the setting of man-traps and spring guns to warn poachers off particular preserves was a misdemeanour only, whereas the Scotch judges held in the case of a man killed by a spring gun that the gamekeeper who had set it was guilty of murder. In those game-law ridden days anyone might have his house searched on mere suspicion, and if either game, gun, or snare was found therein, could be sent to prison, and after being well flogged, be set to hard labour.

Before I left school, unpleasant rumours were afloat

with reference to our stableman. Several gigs had been stopped late at night at the rise of some of the steeper hills in the neighbouring secluded roads, and their occupants compelled to pay tribute. Suspiciou pointed strongly to Master William, and some amiable excuse had to be found for relieving him of any further service at the school, for he was held in too much dread by his employers to be openly dismissed.

He very soon turned his back upon Chislehurst, to the great grief of his female admirers, and nothing was heard of him for nearly a twelvemonth, when the toll-keeper on some lonely road in Kent, hearing the rumbling of a gig in the middle of the night, saw, on going out to unlock the gate, that the vehicle, which he recognised as belonging to a neighbouring country brewer, was without a driver. A search along the road led to the discovery that a brutal murder had been committed, the victim's skull having been battered in with a hedge-stake. A considerable sum of money, which, it was afterwards ascertained, the murdered man had collected, had disappeared. Our late stableman and a couple of his companions were arrested, and tried at Maidstone assizes for the murder and highway robbery, but although circumstances told dead against them, there was a deficiency of legal proof, and they escaped conviction. From this time Master William was a marked man, and before many months had gone by he was again put upon his trial for some less heinous offence, and found guilty. Transportation followed, and henceforward his old Chislehurst acquaintances knew him no more.

When I first went to Chislehurst the burking scare, following on the murder of the Italian boy by Bishop and Williams in 1831, and the disposal of the dead body to the hospital doctors, was at its height. Some years before, Burke and Hare had been convicted of similar crimes in Edinburgh, but the scene of their atrocities was too remote

in those pre-railway days to excite any particular apprehension in the minds of people living in London and its neighbourhood. When, however, Londoners realised that a regular trade in murder was being carried on at their own doors, simply for the sake of the few pounds the corpse would bring, that dead bodies were transported hither and thither in hackney coaches, and carried by hired market porters in hampers or sacks from hospital to hospital until a satisfactory sale could be effected, and that well-known dentists, asking no questions, were ready purchasers of the victims' teeth, people grew dreadfully alarmed, and scarcely dared stir out in unfrequented neighbourhoods at night-time.

Rumours were current, and not without foundation, of murders committed in lonesome places by miscreants who laid in wait for solitary passers-by, over whose mouths they suddenly placed pitch plasters, stifling their cries and stopping their breathing at the same moment. The terror inspired by these rumours had penetrated even to Chislehurst, and whenever the ladies of the school went out to dances or card parties, and their usual protectors were debarred from accompanying them, some of the bigger boys (provided with lighted lanterns and stout sticks, and feeling intensely proud of the duty confided to them) would be commissioned to escort the fair ones home, across the lonely commons or along the dark country lanes at midnight or later; real or pretended dread of burkers being invariably assumed by the younger damsels whenever any particularly lonely spot was passed.

The supply of corpses to the London hospitals through the medium of recognized resurrection men had for long been complained of as insufficient. People, after burying their kinsfolk with all the undertaker's expensive pomp, were naturally averse to the graves being rifled a few days afterwards, and the bodies of those near and dear to them

being hacked about in the interests of science. The churchyards were therefore watched at night-time by men with loaded firearms, and any resurrectionist who had not come to a previous understanding with the sexton, stood a good chance of getting an ounce or two of lead into his carcass. As a rule the body-snatchers preferred going for workhouse "subjects," the coffins of these being packed close together and only a couple of feet or so below the ground, thus enabling several subjects to be secured in a short space of time. One "professional" told a committee of the House of Commons that he had once "snatched" as many as twenty-three bodies in a single night. Rich people, he pathetically complained, were very difficult to get, owing to their corpses being buried so tremendously deep.

There were certain dismal associations clinging to Chislehurst and the neighbourhood at the time I refer to, and more especially to Camden House, where Camden the antiquary, and a century and a half after him Lord Chancellor Camden, lived, and where in later years, when the house had been transformed or rebuilt, Napoleon III. died in exile. Early in the century the gloomy old mansion had been the scene of a horrible crime, its then owner, a wealthy Russian merchant, named Bonar, and his wife having been found one morning murdered in their bed. The affair was a most mysterious one: no noise had been heard during the night, and no property was missing. For a time it was supposed that the house must have been entered by thieves, who, disturbed in their proceedings, had murdered Mr Bonar and his wife in order to escape detection. But the Bow-street runners soon found reasons for suspecting a man-servant, named Nicholson, who eventually confessed having committed the crime on the impulse of the moment, and with no kind of motive. Subsequently he contrived to cut his own throat, but Mr., afterwards Sir, Astley Cooper, the famous surgeon, succeeded in healing the wound suffi-

ciently for the Kentish hangman to adjust the noose, and the murderer was duly hanged on Penenden-heath.

On some palings of the park facing Chislehurst-common a rude deep cross had been cut, which the old people of the village, who remembered all the circumstances of the murder, said marked the spot where the footman had buried his bloody linen under some laurel bushes. These old villagers used also to point out to the boys the windows of the bedroom to which the footman, dressed up like a ghost, they said, stole softly after midnight and butchered the old couple in their sleep; and would tell of the crowds of people whom the discovery of the crime attracted to the spot from the neighbouring country side, and the many hundreds who flocked from miles around to see the victims buried. In a prominent part of Chislehurst churchyard a monument was erected to the murdered couple, the touching inscription on which, from being constantly pored over, was known by heart to most of the boys in the school.

North Cray Place was the scene of another dismal occurrence; and one of our favourite walks on half-holidays was to the neighbourhood of the deserted mansion. After crossing Scadbury-park, with its ancient oaks of huge girth and the remnant of the old Tudor manor-house, where Lord Keeper Bacon, father of the great Sir Francis, and Secretary Walsingham were born, we passed through the village of Foots Cray, from which North Cray Place was a mile or so distant. It was here that some ten years before (1822) the handsome, amiable, but intensely unpopular Marquis of Londonderry, or as Byron cruelly christened him, "carotid artery cutting Castlereagh," put an end to his existence. All the circumstances of the suicide, and the purchase of the cheap penknife with which it was accomplished,[1] were still

[1] The Rev. J. Richardson, long a member of "the Times" staff, and whom I knew very well, in his "Recollections of the last half-century" (vol. i., p. 304), mentions having seen Lord Londonderry purchase this penknife from one of the hawkers of cheap cutlery who used to hang about the coaches starting from the White Horse cellar, and try the blade of the knife on his thumb-nail as if to test its sharpness.

in the recollection of persons living in the neighbourhood; while the more superstitious among them firmly believed that the house was haunted, maintaining that the ghost of the dead statesman regularly roamed through the rooms after nightfall. The housekeeper did not contradict these rumours, but she was evidently not in the least alarmed by them, as for a satisfactory fee she was only too happy to gratify the curiosity of strangers by shewing them the little room where the suicide had taken place, and the bloodstains on the floor, which, she pretended, neither soap nor scrubbing brush was able to obliterate.

To-day it is commonly believed that the marquis was driven to do

"What Cato did and Addison approved"

through the persistent exactions of a gang of extortioners who, having made certain discoveries seriously affecting the marquis's moral character, allowed him no peace. He seems, indeed, to have lived in perpetual dread of some painful exposure. At the inquest that was held, after it had been falsely given out that the marquis had died of gout in the stomach, his physician said that when he entered his bedroom on the morning of the fatal occurrence the marquis abruptly enquired "whether he had anything unpleasant to tell him," and on his replying "no," said "he had reason to be in some degree suspicious."

Friends whom Lord Londonderry had previously consulted had advised him to appeal to the law, and to give his persecutors into custody, but he lacked the courage to face the exposure that would have inevitably ensued; and no wonder, for the popular hatred and contempt in which he was held were already intense enough. Even his unhappy end failed to awaken the smallest pity, as was evident from the loud shout of execration which burst from the assembled crowd when the corpse of the noble suicide was being re-

moved from the hearse to its resting-place in Westminster Abbey.

From our school a view was obtained of a large mansion perched on a hill near Eltham, and pointed out by the villagers as having been the home of another noble suicide —Earl Rivers, who one frosty morning in 1831 was found mysteriously drowned in the Serpentine, when the family sought to have it believed that his death was due to an accident. It was well known, however, that the earl was an inveterate gambler, and in the habit of playing for very high stakes at the Union Club, of which he was an habitué, and where he had been seen at times to sit down to play with as much as £100,000 in bank notes before him. A night of persistent ill-luck had, it was said, utterly ruined him, and drove him to commit suicide. Temporary insanity might well have been alleged in his case, for this irrepressible gambler had somewhat inconsequential ideas. On one occasion, on leaving the club in broad daylight after a night of heavy losses, he encountered a city clerk, who, on his way to business, had stopped to fasten his shoe-string on the club steps. Sorely needing something on which to vent his vexation, the moody earl sent the astonished clerk flying with a well-directed kick, exclaiming as he did so, although he had never set eyes on his victim before, "Drat you! you're *always* tying that confounded shoe of yours."

In these days all the clubs were more or less gambling hells, and, recognising this, Crockford, the little Temple Bar fishmonger, cut in with a club of his own, established under none of the flimsy false pretences current, but ostensibly for the purpose of play. He enticed players to his faro bank by gratuitous suppers of a most *recherché* character, having, if I remember right, secured the services of the famous Ude as cook after the Duke of York's death. These suppers, and the plucking of the plump pigeons attracted by them, called forth a clever

witticism from Hook, who applied to Crockford the well-known Scripture quotation: "He filleth the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away."

More interesting, however, to the boys of our school than these two dead lords, Castlereagh and Rivers, were the various live lords resident in the neighbourhood of Chislehurst, three of whom attended the Sunday morning service at church pretty regularly. These were young Lord Sydney, the lord of the manor, who soon afterwards married the handsome daughter of the rakish Marquis of Anglesea; Lord Bexley, who drove over from Sidcup or Foots Cray, I believe; and Lord Wynford, a gouty, old law lord, living at Leesons, who used generally to be wheeled in a bath-chair up the church aisle to his comfortably cushioned pew, where he commonly paid the parson the compliment of dozing throughout the sermon.

Chislehurst church had not then been restored and decorated out of all recognition on the part of those who had grown familiar with it in its more primitive state. The interior still possessed all the quaint picturesqueness which antiquity usually confers, but which the restorer generally does his best to obliterate. I have a dim recollection of a fine monument to one of the Walsinghams—Queen Elizabeth's famous secretary, who, as I have already mentioned, was born at Scadbury, close by; but the monument we boys took most interest in was one, I think, to Sir Philip Warwick, secretary to Charles I., by reason of the rusty helmet and sword, and the moth-eaten gauntlets dangling above it, which we, in our crass ignorance, associated with those remoter chivalrous times we had read about in Sir Walter Scott's and G. P. R. James's historical novels.

When the service was over, the three lords used to meet just outside the church porch and exchange compliments, talk scandal, crack jokes, and discuss Reform—to which, of

course, they were all opposed—the spreading rick burnings, which sorely perplexed and troubled them, quarter sessions business, and the abundance or scarcity of game; while the more ill-mannered boys of the school, posting themselves as close as they dared, gazed timorously at their high-mightinesses—for lords were then much more mysterious and powerful personages than they are thought to be in these democratic days—trying hard to catch all they were talking about. I remember being somewhat puzzled at finding that peers of the realm presented nothing different in their appearance to ordinary country gentlemen; that they wore not the slightest distinguishing emblem—such as a ribbon or a star—betokening their exalted rank. Other boys, similarly perplexed, inquisitively asked why it was these noble lords did not come to church in their coronets and robes, as the "Penny Magazine" engraving, after Copley's picture of the death of the Earl of Chatham in the House of Lords, depicted peers wearing.

Lord Sydney, who was far more intimately connected with Chislehurst than either of his two associates, was a descendant of the Tommy Townsend commemorated in Goldsmith's "Retaliation," and the subject of Lord North's neat repartee. Townsend, while inveighing against the prime minister, had angrily exclaimed, "Nothing will satisfy me but the noble lord's head," to which North quietly rejoined, "The honourable gentleman demands my head; however, I bear him no malice, and assure him that on no account would I have his in return."

Lord Bexley, whose forte was finance, had taken to presiding over the Bible Society, and belonged to the band of pious peers of the "No Popery" type. "We are told," exclaimed he, "that the bigots are growing old, and fast wearing out; if it be so, why not let us die in peace!" Lord Wynford, an arbitrary, ill-tempered old sinner, known to be addicted to hard drinking and

loud swearing—qualities that made him in favour with the Carlton House set, to which in his younger days he had belonged—was an orange tory of the good old stamp, and brought an absurd bill into the House of Lords for promoting a better observance of the Sabbath, though he really did not care a straw about the matter. Lord Brougham attacked the bill in a scathing speech, with the result that, although it had the support of the bench of bishops, and passed the house by a small majority, nothing further was heard of it. During the later discussions in the House of Lords on the Reform bill, I frequently saw old Lord Wynford posting past our school on his way to Westminster, to take a prominent part in the exciting debates and divisions which preceded the passing of the measure. Lord Sydney confined his opposition to voting against the bill, but so strong was the Reform feeling, that his action led to the resignation of all those members of the yeomanry corps, of which he was colonel, who, not being his tenants, could afford to display their independence.

In these far-off Chislehurst days, Kent ranked as the leading cricketing county, and had just commenced to play single-handed against all-England again. These annual matches came off on the common near a picturesque old mill, the return matches being played at Lord's cricket ground. Everybody in Chislehurst made holiday on the two days when the West Kent eleven tried its strength against the gentlemen and players got together by the Marylebone Club from all the crack cricketing counties. The gentry drove and rode in from miles around, pedestrians came from all the outlying villages, and freshly-painted waggons, decorated with green boughs, rumbled along the dusty country lanes, bringing florid-looking, well-to-do farmers, with their buxom wives and pretty blushing daughters, to participate in the victory

which the county was sure to gain, and get all the enjoyment they could from the pleasant summer outing.

Two of the best cricketers in the West Kent eleven were Chislehurst men. One was Mr. Herbert Jenner, son of Sir Herbert Jenner, and subsequently a proctor practising in the Arches' Court, over which his father presided. He was, perhaps, the best and neatest wicket-keeper that ever stood behind the stumps. He was far superior to his contemporary, Box, and, though in keeping wicket he had to encounter Alfred Mynn's terrific bowling, he never flinched, never lost a chance, and disdained to wear gloves or any other protection. After a day's play his hands were dreadfully bruised and swollen, and he was said to get them into condition again by the application of some lotion, the secret of which he had learnt from the gypsies, who always came to Chislehurst in force during the cricket matches and at fair time. Herbert Jenner, besides being supreme as a wicket-keeper, was more than an average batsman, and always safe for a fair number of runs.

The other cricketer on whom Chislehurst prided itself was Mr Charles Harenc, member of an old Kentish family, and certainly the "demon bowler" of his epoch. His style has since found many imitators. He delivered the ball overhand with great velocity, but with perfect fairness—no throwing was tolerated in those days—and as it left his hand he gave it a certain spin by some peculiar action of the arm and wrist, which caused it, after pitching close to the batsman's left foot—rendering it exceedingly difficult to play—to bound swiftly into the wicket. Young Harenc was in the habit of practising very frequently on the common at a set of stumps, with a large net spread behind them to stop the ball, which his groom used to throw back to him. He always placed a small white feather on the spot where, if a batsman were play-

ing at the wicket his left foot would rest; and, after the ball pitched there, it was surprising to see how neatly it would turn aside, displacing the stumps, and sending the bails flying into the air.

The second bowler on the Kentish side was Mr. Alfred Mynn, who, on his then recent discovery at Town Malling, had been forthwith admitted to the West Kent eleven. Mr. Mynn was of herculean build, and his bowling, over-hand, was remarkable for its terrific swiftness. At this time neither gloves, pads, nor any kind of protection were in use in the cricket field. Those engaged in the game too, usually wore top hats—beaver was then almost your only wear, though for a season or two light hats made of horse hair were in fashion with the gentlemen players. Another Kent cricketer of whom I have a distinct recollection was Hillyer, a splendid short slip, who never allowed the chance of a catch to escape him, though the ball, when played off Mynn's bowling, often had almost the velocity of a cannon shot.

Of the all-England side I can remember two celebrated professionals, little Lillywhite, the famous bowler, and big Fuller Pilch, the equally famous batsman, who some years subsequently changed sides and was enrolled in the Kent eleven. Another batsman whose play was generally watched with interest was Mr. Wm. Ward, who, in his younger days, in a match between Norfolk and the Marylebone Club, had made the greatest score that had been then recorded, namely 238, after being missed in an easy catch before he had scored 30. Mr. Ward's phenomenal score was capped more than half-a-century afterwards at Canterbury, when Mr. W. G. Grace made no less than 344 runs, and more recently by Shrewsbury with a score of 267.[1]

Mr. Ward, at the time I remember him, was past middle age, and carried far too much flesh for a first-rate cricketer.

[1] Even larger scores have, I believe, been made since the above was written.

He was an important city man, a great Russia merchant, a director of the Bank of England, and tory M.P. for the city of London. He was also father of Mr. W. G. Ward, the friend of Pusey and Newman, and one of the early leaders of the Tractarian movement, who, on being deprived of his degree at Oxford by reason of certain passages in his "Ideal of a Christian Church," soon afterwards went over to Rome.

An occasional member of the all-England eleven, with whom as a boy I picked up an acquaintance which was renewed whenever he visited Chislehurst in the cricketing season, was Sir St. Vincent Cotton. He tested both my batting and bowling capabilities, and invariably had a smile and a kind word for me whenever he met me. I used to think him one of the most light-hearted and pleasantest of men; and felt genuinely sorry when, in after years, I learnt that he had long since run through his fortune, and was profiting by his skill, as one of the best whips of his day, to drive the fastest team running on the Brighton road for the sake of the "tips" given by the passengers.

In the early summer-time a genuine rustic fair used to be held on Chislehurst-common. This did not depend for its attractions on any vulgar human or animal monstrosities, or circuses, menageries, peep shows, roundabouts, or any nonsense of that kind. Such old English sports as single-stick, wrestling and jingling—all in the ancient cockpit near the church—with climbing the greasy pole, walking the bowsprit across the deepest pond on the common, jumping in sacks, racing blindfold with wheel barrows, and races by women for hem-stitched and gaily beribboned smocks, formed the regular programme. For the prizes given at single-stick, wrestling, and races by women the gypsies attending the fair, mostly all of fine physical development, were the chief competitors. They scorned to make themselves laughing-stocks by taking part in the

greasy pole, the bowsprit, the jumping in sacks, and the blind barrow-wheeling contests, disdainfully leaving all these to be competed for by the yokels of the neighbourhood. The dark-eyed women of the tribe were constantly on the watch to draw the village girls aside to some retired spot and there beguile them of their small savings while fooling them with flattering portraits of their promised husbands, and they not infrequently prevailed on the well-born damsels of the place to lend a willing ear to their wily predictions.

Forty years after I had left school I paid a flying visit one Sunday to Chislehurst, in order to see how the old place then looked. I soon discovered that the railway had completely transformed the neighbourhood. Adjoining the station were rows of pleasant villas, and new roads intersected the once solitary woods. The old mill near the cricket ground had disappeared, and houses occupied its site. The school had been converted into a gentleman's residence, and around the common many new houses had been built. The interior of the church had been more or less Romanized and changed beyond recognition, and in the trim kept churchyard the newer graves were scarcely visible under their chaplets and clusters of flowers. The quaint little manor-house had been enlarged and restored, the thoroughfare through Scadbury-park had been closed, and the public could no longer enjoy the old charming walk to Sidcup. Much of the beautiful undulating ground of Bonar's-park was covered with fine mansions, and sequestered Woodheath had been recently lotted out by surveyors for building purposes. A bran new ornamental gateway gave access to the grounds of Camden House, which I saw had either been rebuilt or greatly enlarged and modernized.

As I stood pondering over the many changes which the past forty years had brought about, the exiled Emperor

and Empress of the French, and the young Prince Louis, attended by some few members of their suite, passed on foot through the gilded gateway[1] on to the common, where a small crowd of well-dressed sycophants were assembled to receive them with that blind obsequious homage which our tuft-hunting British race invariably accords to rank. I had only just arrived from Paris after its capture, first by the Germans and next from the Commune; and had recently seen its western suburbs laid waste by the bombardment of the Versailles troops, and witnessed the destruction of several of its historic *hôtels* by shells fired by the Communards from Montmartre. I had beheld, too, the desperate fighting in the streets, seen cannon sweeping the city's handsomest boulevard, and the bodies of slaughtered National guards lying unburied for days together in the principal thoroughfares; had seen, moreover, the summary execution of scores of Communards, the blazing palaces and public buildings, the captured *pétroleuses* and other viragoes to which that unhappy time gave birth; and I could not but feel that most of the grave disasters which had befallen France had their origin in that imperial rule so much belauded by English people, and I preferred to stand aside and not to seem to render respect where I felt that respect was certainly not due.

[1] "Camden-place is doomed. A great notice board stares you in the face at the broad gates through which the body of the dead emperor was borne to its last resting-place, and informs you that this eligible, &c., property is to be let for building purposes; and already the ground is being cut up into plots for the erection of 'modern mansions.'"—*The Referee*, Nov. 16, 1890.

III.

(1830-32.)

THE REFORM FRENZY AND THE RICK BURNINGS—RICHARD CARLILE—SIR F. BURDETT—DANIEL O'CONNELL.

DURING my schooldays, until our family went to live at Brixton, my holidays were for the most part spent in London. I came up to town, too, on other occasions, and remember the great political excitement subsisting at this period (1830), the Reform frenzy being then at its height. The death of George IV. had inspired the partisans of Reform with hope, and the subsequent revolution in France had rendered them daring. The mob orators and the more reckless scribes of the party, in denouncing the tory government, excitedly pointed out that the Parisians had shewn what could be accomplished by pikes and barricades, and how troops might be worsted in street fights, and they covertly suggested to the distressed and discontented masses that they should profit by the example lately set them.

The new king was immensely popular, though no one knew exactly why. It was scarcely because of his bluff sailor-like manners, for, as Greville insists, he had much of the blackguard and more of the buffoon about him. Still, there is no doubt that the idea of a sailor-king had a strong fascination for the populace, with whom recent stage presentments had exalted the British tar into a favourite hero, and the new sovereign was frantically cheered whenever he stirred abroad. This popularity was

taken advantage of to arrange a State visit to the city on the ensuing lord mayor's day; and I obtained permission from home to come up and see the royal procession, which was expected to be a very grand one, pass along Fleet-street, where we then lived. Great preparations had been made for the king's reception, and the multitude of flags, evergreens, devices, and transparencies gave the dingy houses along the line of route quite a gay look in the gloomy November weather.

There was bitter disappointment when, almost at the eleventh hour, it became known that the tory ministry had persuaded the king to put off his visit, and I well remember the consternation prevailing at the time of my arrival. Excited crowds blocked all the principal streets, traffic was completely interrupted, and the wildest rumours were in circulation. It was first of all pretended that a formidable conspiracy had been discovered to isolate the city while the customary feasting and toasting were in full swing at the Guildhall, by barricading the bridges, blocking up particular thoroughfares, and closing the gates of Temple Bar. The gas was then to be suddenly cut off, and a general pillage was to follow. Eventually it oozed out that the royal visit had been abandoned at the instigation of the lord mayor-elect, who had alarmed the government with some cock-and-bull story of a contemplated murderous attack upon the Duke of Wellington, the then prime minister, as he passed through the city.

These rumours, for which there was little or no foundation, caused such a panic that consols fell three per cent.; while many city shopkeepers, fearing the suggested raid, either routed out such old arms as they had by them or purchased sword-sticks and pistols. At the same time, some of our more terrified neighbours closed their shops, and one or two of them securely barricaded their doors.

Even the government shared in the panic. On the previous day, Sunday, a civic deputation had three interviews with the Duke of Wellington, and were plainly told by him that unless the royal visit was abandoned the city would have to be garrisoned by a strong military force. He knew what street fighting was, he significantly said, and should make his own preparations; which meant crowding the metropolitan barracks with troops, ordered up by forced marches from Brighton, Windsor, and elsewhere, and issuing instructions for sailors and marines to be instantly dispatched to London from the nearest ports.

The alarm was intensified when strong reinforcements for the guards on duty at the Bank and the Mint passed through the city, and additional artillerymen arrived from Woolwich at the Tower, the gates of which were closed, whilst the moat was filled with water. Meantime, fussy aldermen and common-councilmen assembled in full conclave and discussed the situation. One alderman was evidently inclined to take a jocular view of the state of funk in which some of his fellow-citizens appeared to be, as in enumerating the forces available for the maintenance of order within the city he sarcastically included the Lumber-troop, describing it as that respectable smoking club famed for the quantity of tobacco it consumed and the many gallons of porter it swilled at its meetings.

In the afternoon, regardless of all injunctions, I stole out and mixed with the crowd, among whom handbills were being stealthily circulated urging the discontented to come armed the next day and have it out with "Peel's bloody gang," who, they were told by way of encouragement, had been furnished with some thousands of cutlasses from the Tower. The police were at this time especial objects of popular wrath; still the crowd remained quiet enough until evening, when a mob coming from an excited meeting at the Rotunda, on the other side

of Blackfriars-bridge rushed along Fleet-street on its way to the Houses of Parliament, shouting, "Down with Wellington and Peel! Down with the new police!" and emphasising their denunciations with yells and groans. The peelers of 1830 were not the same stalwart, helmetted men as the peelers of to-day, besides which they were badly drilled, and in their top-hats and swallow-tails had anything but a martial look. Their blood was up, however, and they retaliated by cracking a few skulls, and this, with the sight of mounted troops at the Horse Guards drawn up in readiness to act, damped the ardour of the more daring rioters, and the night passed off quietly enough.

The city was in a state of turmoil all the next day (November 9). Crowds of sight-seers came in early from round about to discover that they were not to be gratified by the usual show, and that there were to be no illuminations. The mere sight of the new lord mayor, Sir John Key, in his private carriage on his way to be sworn in at Westminster, was but a poor compensation for a full view of the gilt gingerbread state coach, and the portly men in armour comically striving to sit their steeds securely; and as it was generally known that Sir John was the cause of the royal visit being abandoned, he was received with jeers and hisses along the entire line of route, even the inhabitants of his own ward indicating their disfavour—a circumstance on which he was twitted in a squib of the time—

"Now pale is the tip of each alderman's nose,
And sad must the souls of the citizens be,
Since summit is wrong, as the locksmiths suppose,
When the *ward* is no longer on terms with the *Key*.
Poor Galloway growls, Charley Pearson he pouts,
And Figgins and Wiggins and Scroggins are queer;
For November to them without free guzzling bouts
Might as well be wiped out from the months of the year."

The mob, tickled by a piece of street wit, assailed the new civic potentate with cries of "Don-Key!" and for weeks afterwards, under the guise of this much-suffering quadruped, he was contemptuously caricatured in every imaginable way. But Sir John good-humouredly laughed at all these efforts to turn him into ridicule, and when his own ward-beadle, swollen with importance, brought some unfortunate fellow before him for hawking these caricatures about the streets, he at once discharged the man, amiably expressing a hope that he had found the trade profitable. Next day a newspaper came out with the following:—

> "They call thee Don-Key for thy silly trick,
> Th' effect of which each civic gourmand feels;
> But as it seems thou 'rt not inclined to kick,
> 'Tis plain thy head 's in fault, and not thy heels."

Our family had made preparations to entertain a party of friends when the royal procession passed along Fleet-street, and had afterwards apprised them of the king's visit being abandoned. Some few, nevertheless, put in an appearance, including a well-known Regent-street jeweller named Macphail, the patentee of the then familiar mosaic gold, a tolerably good imitation of the precious metal. The jeweller, who was a slave to his stomach, never refused an invitation that gave promise of good cheer, and after he had feasted himself, told us, I remember, an amusing story by way of proving how difficult it was to distinguish between his counterfeit mosaic, which he never lost an opportunity of puffing, and the genuine article.

"One afternoon," said he, "a carriage, which I recognised as that of Lord C——, drove up to my shop. Soon afterwards a footman entered with a small case covered with green baize, and placing it on the counter said Lord C—— was coming to speak to me, after which intimation he withdrew. In a few seconds his lordship made his appearance, and expressed a wish to have a few

words with me in private respecting the contents of the case his servant had just left. I thereupon invited him into my sanctum on the floor above, and followed him with the case in question.

"Lord C—— at once proceeded to business. 'This case,' said he, 'contains the jewels worn by Lady C—— on high days and holidays. At present her ladyship is in the country, where, owing to the state of her health, she is likely to remain for several months, so that she will have no occasion for these particular jewels until the next season begins. Now, what I want you to do is to make me an imitation set precisely similar to the originals, only in your mosaic gold, and, of course, with false stones. You will have plenty of time for this. Lady C—— is no judge of these things, and will never discover the difference. You can retain the originals and dispose of them among your customers, allowing me the difference in value between the two sets. But I must ask you to let me have the larger part of the amount at once, as I have a pressing necessity for money just now.'"

Macphail slipped off the green baize cover, the peer produced the key and unlocked the case, at the contents of which the jeweller curiously glanced, and then remarked, "My lord, it is the simplest thing in the world to match these jewels in the way you suggest, but I should inform your lordship that the value between the two sets would not be a penny piece. The present jewels are counterfeit. I purchased the originals from Lady C—— more than two years ago and made her these imitations, which are such excellent ones, that I am not at all surprised they should have deceived so good a judge of jewels as your lordship is known to be."

Macphail said the peer was thunderstruck at this disclosure, and beat a hasty retreat.

To return, however, to the events of November 9, 1830.

Towards evening the crowds assembled in the city, disappointed at there being no illuminations, became disagreeably demonstrative. I noticed a noisy mob with a tricolor flag—an emblem which was as irritating to the peeler of those days as a red rag is to an infuriated bull,[1] —parading Fleet-street in the direction of Temple Bar. The police, caring no more then than they do now for any pretended right of procession (on which, by the way, the most radical journals in those days never thought of insisting), at once pounced upon the demonstrators, disbanding them and capturing their flag, when such of the discomfited patriots as could manage it joined the rabble already gathered in the neighbourhood of the Bar.

Later on I made for the skirts of the crowd, composed chiefly of east-end roughs armed with bludgeons, and half-famished Spitalfields weavers, provided with slender strips of wood, a blow from which would not have even dinted a peeler's hat. By this time the uproar was so great that the Templars prudently closed their gates. Regardless of the scarlet-coated city marshal, who, mounted on horseback, was endeavouring to struggle through and control the mob, the leaders stopped all vehicles entering the city, and before permitting them to pass, compelled drivers and occupants alike to shout for Reform and the extermination of Peel's new police.

Suddenly there was a great swaying of the crowd, and a desperate rush was made through the Bar, when, from the clatter of bludgeons and batons, and the shrieks and yells which followed, I surmised that the mob had come to close quarters with the police posted in the Strand. The retreat of the rabble, with the constables at their heels, was as rapid as their advance had been, and no sooner were they driven back into the city, than

[1] On one occasion the police actually summoned several shopkeepers for displaying placards, the only objection to which, they admitted, was their tricolor borders.

the Strand police took upon themselves to close the Bar gates, which swung heavily on their rusty hinges. At this the city marshal fired up, and ordered the gates to be re-opened amidst the cheers of the mob, to whose great delight city and metropolitan police commenced batoning each other. For some time the crowd swayed backwards and forwards, driven by the truncheons of the constables, now eastward and then westward, in regular shuttlecock fashion, head after head being audibly cracked with the same precision that obtains at an Irish faction fight. During the *mêlée* stones were showered about, and the city marshal, who, on horseback and in scarlet uniform, furnished a conspicuous target, received a blow which necessitated his removal from the field of battle.

All this time I kept on the outskirts of the crowd, and was therefore beyond any particular danger; still the position was sufficiently unpleasant that I was glad to escape at the first opportunity. Next morning we learnt from the papers that the contest had lasted till past midnight, the rabble having been reinforced by a new contingent, preceded by the defiant tricolor flag. Bellowing "Reform!" and execrating the police, the new-comers dashed through the Bar and swept along the Strand, until they neared Exeter Hall, when some constables, posted in the side streets, rushing suddenly upon them, severely belaboured all who came within reach of their truncheons, and hauled off a score or more to Bow-street police station.

The net result of all this rioting, which the terrified authorities and the more timid citizens had fancied would lead to great loss of life, was the capture of several batches of street ruffians and innocent onlookers, a score or two of injuries, more or less severe, to the police, and a goodly number of broken heads from blows impartially distributed by them among the crowd, leading to a continuous

run on the neighbouring chemists' shops for the needful strapping and sticking-plaster. On some few of the captured rioters crowbars were found, while others had pistols secreted about them; but the richest discovery was made upon a stripling of a clerk, who, to an inflated address to the People of England, had annexed his own duly signed will, wherein he gravely bequeathed "his physical strength to the cause of liberty, and his body as a barricade against the advance of the military in the event of his falling in the coming fray."

These street disturbances continued throughout the winter, although a whig ministry had come into power, pledged to bring in a sweeping measure of Reform. But what agitated people's minds just then far more than any question of reforming the parliamentary representation were the mysterious rick-burnings, which began in Kent during the autumn, and after speedily spreading to the neighbouring counties, finally extended as far as Wiltshire, Huntingdonshire, Lincolnshire, and Norfolk. The first of these incendiary fires occurred at Orpington and Brasted, and were thought to be simply acts of vengeance against a couple of gentlemen farmers, who had been unusually officious in repressing poaching and more especially spirit smuggling, which at this period was largely carried on in country districts many miles away from the coast. It was soon evident, however, that want of work and the low wages paid to the agricultural labourers, who attributed most of their distress to the employment of thrashing and other machines, were the real causes of these conflagrations. Poor famished Hodge no longer took delight in his favourite century-old songs, but chanted the new refrain—

"May God above send down His love
With swords as sharp as sickles,
To cut the throats of gentlefolks
Who grudge poor men their victuals."

Threatening letters condemning the use of machinery —mostly badly written and spelt, and signed "Swing"—were sent to farmers not on the best of terms with their men, and were promptly followed up by the burning of their stack-yards. A joker of the period sent one of these missives to the head-master of Eton, warning him that unless he laid aside his thrashing machine he would hear further from Captain Swing. The latter ill-omened word, the reason for adopting which no one knew, was chalked on palings and dead walls throughout the southern agricultural districts, where, as the winter advanced, scarcely a night passed without half-a-dozen of these mysterious conflagrations, the frequency and secrecy of which led to the belief that this destruction of the people's food, at a time of great distress[1] and scarcity, was instigated by some powerful occult organization.

The alarm increased when it became evident that neither the incessant patrolling of the villages and country roads by the military, nor the offer of a large reward by the government had contributed in the least to the detection of the incendiaries.[2] Farmers were in continual dread and constantly on the watch, but although the rick-burnings were as numerous as ever, it was impossible to discover how they originated. In those days there were no lucifer matches, and the common mode of obtaining a light was by means of a flint and steel, the striking together of which would certainly have been heard and have aroused suspicion. Some imaginative persons pretended that they saw a light running along the edge of a stack and then

[1] According to the government's own statement, unemployed farm-labourers, whose ordinary daily wage was only 1s. 8d., were then working on the parish roads for as little as 3d. and 4d. a day.

[2] Three years afterwards an incendiary, who had been in the habit of setting fire to agricultural property, in order to obtain the gratuity of 6s. 6d. bestowed on any one giving information of a fire at the nearest fire-engine station, was hanged at Cambridge. It was computed that he had destroyed property to the value of £60,000 for the sake of a few pounds paid to him in rewards.

down its sides, and that a moment afterwards the stack was ablaze. The wiseacres, on the other hand, insisted that the fires were caused by the discharge of some inflammable substance from an air-gun; still the incendiaries remained undetected, and people were more perplexed than ever. Simultaneously with these rick-burnings, the destruction of thrashing-machines on an extensive scale was carried on; but offenders of this class were more readily discovered, and were promptly brought to justice, or, I should rather say, to unrelenting punishment, so cruelly was the law administered in their cases.

The panic in the disturbed districts was such that persons were arrested on the most absurd suspicions. The Mansfield magistrates, moreover, committed for trial the head-master of the grammar school there—a clergyman of the Church of England—on the supposition that he was the writer of some "Swing" letters received by farmers in the neighbourhood. A well-known gentleman, too, who was travelling post, and had been driven out of his way late at night by a drunken postboy, was haled by a constable before the magistrates on suspicion of being Captain Swing. Although, on giving satisfactory explanations, he was at once released, other less fortunate suspected persons were promptly sent for trial; when juries, under the influence of the prevailing panic, found most of the accused guilty, and judges, with rare exceptions, sentenced them to be hanged or transported for life.

These severe sentences were sought to be excused in a callous epigram, which, if I remember rightly, ran thus—

> "As Swing's wild justice is to burn,
> We 've only to reverse the thing,
> And tell the culprit in his turn—
> 'Burn's Justice rules that he shall swing.'"

At every assize the loud weeping and wailing of women and children penetrated the walls of the court-room imme-

diately after the sentences were passed. Lads of eighteen were sent to the gallows, and died protesting their innocence, while several of those who admitted their guilt declared they had been induced to commit the crime by the very individuals who had informed against them to secure the government reward. One set of prisoners had a lucky escape. A magistrate, when reading the Riot Act, had omitted the customary formula of "God save the King!" The prisoners' counsel availed himself of this lapse to raise an objection, which the judges held to be fatal, and the accused, who were looking forward to a long sojourn in Norfolk island, were, to their great amazement, promptly set at liberty.

Richard Carlile, the notorious deistical bookseller, published some cheap pamphlet relating to this "Swing" business, professing to make startling revelations and to be partly written by Captain Swing himself. The house we occupied in Fleet-street overlooked Carlile's shop, which was then at the corner of Water-lane, now Whitefriars-street. In the window a statue of Thomas Paine was exhibited, and the outside of the shop was placarded over with notices which, in accordance with the conventional language of the attorney-generals of those days, were "highly inflammatory." Among them were several announcements of this "Swing" pamphlet, which was just then creating some little stir, as Carlile had been prosecuted for selling it only a day or two before at the Old Bailey. Curiosity with regard to a work which had procured its publisher a sentence of two years' imprisonment in the City comptor made me eager to obtain a copy, and I paid a stealthy visit to Carlile's dingy and somewhat repellent-looking shop. Inside, the arrangements were peculiar. Barham in his Life of Theodore Hook mentions that no shopman was visible there, and that an intending purchaser had to indicate on a dial the particular publica-

tion he required, and to hand the price of it through a sliding panel, when the work he wanted was shot down to him through a wooden spout from a room above.

The dial arrangement had existed, I believe, some years before, but I saw no trace of it at the time of my visit (1831). With the exception of a few boldly written placards announcing various works on sale, the shop presented a singularly bare appearance, the shelves being for the most part empty. As I advanced towards the counter I noticed that there was no one to serve me, and I knocked rather loudly, when a voice proceeding from a small aperture overhead enquired what I wanted. I called out the title of the "Swing" pamphlet, whereupon a small basket guided by a cord descended in front of me, and the same voice directed me to place the price—a few pence—in it. This having been done, the basket was drawn up, to be again lowered with the publication I had asked for, but which to my very great disgust I afterwards found contained no revelations whatever, but simply some accounts of recent fires taken from newspapers, accompanied by rather a mild justification of the rick-burners' proceedings.

I frequently met Carlile in Fleet-street on his way to a second shop he had in the Strand. He was a corpulent individual, somewhat beyond the middle height and with a snub nose. For such a decided democrat as he professed to be he was singularly foppish in his dress, and wore, I remember, the then fashionable tall shirt collar of the modern Gladstonian type; but in lieu of the customary buckled stiff stock, with which people voluntarily half-throttled themselves in those days, he encircled his neck with a silk band fastening with a clasp in front. Carlile's career was certainly a strange one. He is said to have been originally a tinker, and to have persuaded himself that he had a call to propagate certain writings of a political and theological character which the law forbade the

circulation of. For publishing and selling particular works that are now to be found in most second-hand booksellers' catalogues, such as Paine's "Age of Reason"—the mere possession of which by a private individual was then a penal offence—or that have passed into oblivion, like Palmer's "Principles of Nature," he spent ten years of the best part of his life in prison, and was fined several thousand pounds. It is true that he never paid a penny of this amount, although certain wealthy sympathisers in one or two instances furnished him with the necessary means. It was a principle of his to keep the money and to wipe off his fines by undergoing additional terms of imprisonment.

Carlile commenced his avocation as a publisher of political and free-thinking literature, then branded as seditious and atheistical, by reprinting Southey's "Wat Tyler," after which he issued Paine's political writings, and followed these up with his theological works. For selling Hone's notable "Parodies" he underwent eighteen weeks' imprisonment, and was only set at liberty on Hone's triumphant acquittal. A couple of years afterwards (1819) the government prosecuted Carlile for publishing Paine's works, when, following Hone's example, he conducted his own defence, speaking daily for some hours during several days. Though he had all Hone's energy, he was very far from possessing Hone's intelligence, and was much laughed at for his ludicrous mispronunciation of words slightly out of the common. He had, too, a disagreeable lisp, so that his long oratorical display was anything but effective. On this, or some similar occasion, he adopted the ingenious plan of reading the whole of the incriminated work in the course of his address to the jury, in order that he might include it in a report of the trial that he intended publishing and thereby legalize its sale. Unlike Hone, Carlile was convicted and sentenced to three

years' imprisonment and to pay a fine of £1500! He was at once handcuffed, and in the middle of the night was carried off by a couple of armed officers to Dorchester jail. The sheriff duly levied for the fine, and seized all he could lay hands on, which was little enough, consequently Carlile's imprisonment was prolonged for another three years by way of liquidating the balance of the amercement.

Subsequently Carlile's wife, and then his sister, were sent to join him in Dorchester jail for selling the same or similar works to those that led to his own conviction. These proceedings failed, however, to stop the sale of the incriminated books, and numbers of Carlile's shopmen were next sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. Eight of them were prosecuted at the Old Bailey in a batch, and in addition to being imprisoned, were required to enter into recognizances to keep the peace for their natural lives! Whereupon Theodore Hook jeeringly rhymed in the tory "John Bull"—

> "Unblessed was their lot,
> When Murray and Sharpe with the constables came,
> And for want of good bail
> They were sent off to jail,
> Their mittimus signed with an alderman's name."

On their liberation several of them roundly abused Carlile in print for not only failing to compensate them for the imprisonment they had undergone, but for leaving them to pay the legal expenses they had been put to. One of them even started a publication called "The Bull-dog" for the express purpose of savagely attacking Carlile and several well-known reformers who were supposed to sympathize with him. It had, however, only a very brief existence.

Naturally enough, Carlile objected to church rates, and I remember that on one occasion, after his goods had been distrained upon for their non-payment, he re-

moved the two first-floor windows from his house in Fleet-street to exhibit life-size figures of a bishop and a bailiff. Eventually, to the great scandal of the neighbourhood, he substituted for the bailiff an effigy of old Nick furnished with the traditional hoofs, horns, tail and toasting fork. The exhibition attracted such crowds that Carlile was indicted for a nuisance and again consigned to the City comptor.

The ferment excited by the "Swing" conflagrations led to the whig government prosecuting Carlile for a seditious libel, contained in the pamphlet of which I have already spoken, and which, up to this time had had but little circulation and could have exercised no kind of influence. How the sale of the pamphlet was proved I do not remember, but most likely it had been openly vended in Carlile's shop previous to these proceedings being taken. The specific offence charged was "bringing the crown into disrepute, and addressing inflammatory language to the labouring classes." The jury after many hours' deliberation could not see their way to convicting Carlile of the first offence, but on learning that they would be locked up all night without food, fire, or candle—and it was then the depth of winter—if they did not come to a speedy decision, they compromised matters by finding him guilty of the second. Carlile was thereupon again fined and imprisoned and ordered to find sureties for ten years! While undergoing this new sentence he addressed a most respectful and temperate letter to our old friend Dr. Blomfield, Bishop of London, suggesting some reform in the Church; and he afterwards wrote a long and equally temperate letter to Sir Robert Peel upon the same subject, dating it from Giltspur-street comptor in the tenth year of his imprisonment! It would appear from this as though Carlile, like Hone, became devout in his later days.

Cobbett, who was tried a few months after Carlile for a

similar offence, was more fortunate, as in his case the jury disagreed. The whigs who canted so much about the liberty of the press, were in office when both Carlile and Cobbett were indicted, and Cobbett in his address to the jury thus scathingly assailed them :—"I have lived," said he, "twenty-one years under a tory administration and under six tory attorney-generals, but have never been prosecuted, although, if the present is a libel I have written plenty of a similar description. The country had been ruled with rods by the tories but the whigs scourged them with scorpions. . . . This whig government has carried on more state prosecutions during the seven months they have been in office than their tory predecessors in seven years. Lank and merciless as a hungry wolf, they are filling their pockets with the public money, and I must be crushed, and crushed I shall certainly be if you do not stand between them and me." Luckily for Cobbett certain recalcitrant jurymen sat up all night rather than return a verdict of guilty, and so saved the sturdy pamphleteer from the dreaded calamity.

The affair was not without its amusing side, for Cobbett had subpœnaed the principal members of the government to give evidence, and actually examined one or two of them. While they were detained in Court they were compelled to listen to the defendant's tirade and the crowd's approval of his denunciation of the whig ministry and its crooked ways.

Owing to the strong prejudice that existed against Carlile whenever he, or any one connected with him, was put upon his trial, conviction inevitably followed. For publishing *deistical* writings Carlile was branded as an *atheist*, and we all know what this meant sixty years ago, and how differently the atheist was then regarded to what, under his modern designation of agnostic, he is in the present day. The mere selling of Hone's "Parodies"

was sufficient to ensure Carlile's imprisonment; whereas Hone, who not merely sold them, but wrote them and had them printed, secured a jubilant acquittal. In the same way, Carlile was sent to prison for a couple of years for espousing the cause of the distressed agricultural labourers, whilst Cobbett, for doing precisely the same thing, came off scot-free.

These various prosecutions and imprisonments, if not exactly courted by Carlile, seem to have been accepted by him willingly enough. The truth is, they paid him very well. As Uriah Heap liked to be despised, so Carlile was not averse to being prosecuted. In a controversy between him and Hetherington, the publisher of the unstamped "Poor Man's Guardian," the latter twitted Carlile with having received, according to his own admission, as much as £4000 from sympathising friends; besides which the prosecutions had led to such an increased demand for his publications that his wife acknowledged taking over the counter in one particular week no less a sum than £500. Hetherington too speaks of the comforts enjoyed by Carlile in prison, including not merely good food, firing, and plenty of books, but a piano on which his daughter used to play to him, to while away the flagging hours or solace him in his desponding moments.

Carlile at one time leased the Rotunda in the Blackfriars-road, and devoted it to democratic meetings and lectures by freethinkers. One of his lecturers was a young woman of very advanced views, who went under the cognomen of "Isis," and with her Carlile contracted what he called a moral marriage, leading to his turning his legal wife, a somewhat violent-tempered woman, out of doors with her grown-up sons. She started in business on her own account in Shoe-lane, and one of her first publications was the re-issue of a large engraving of "the Manchester Massacre," by the versatile George Cruikshank.

Between the Carlile and Cobbett trials, ministers had brought in their Reform bill (March 1831), and Lord John Russell had epigrammatically summed up the three most notorious rotten boroughs (euphemistically styled "close" by the tory party) as "a ruined mound, three inches of stone wall, and a park without the vestige of a dwelling, each returning its two members to the imperial parliament." Shiel, too, had suggested that as a Turkish sultana on her marriage had a province given her for her necklace, another for her bracelets, and a third for her girdle, an English lady of fashion might in the same way have Gatton [1] given her for dowry, and Old Sarum for pin money. Still the last thing the owners of these pocket boroughs would have consented to was to alienate them. They preferred packing the Lower House with their nominees—

> "'Pray what are his qualifications?' 'One:
> He's the Earl of Fitz-flummery's eldest son.'"

With the object of overawing the opponents of the Reform bill, the Birmingham Political Union indulged in some very tall talk, threatening, among other things, to send up to London in support of ministers a couple of armies "as good as the one which fought at Waterloo" —a threat which Colonel de Lacy Evans somewhat ludicrously supplemented, by promising a contingent of 10,000 Sussex yokels. The strange thing was that many sensible middle-class people who, although earnest reformers, had not the faintest desire to see the needful political change compassed by acts of violence, as well as the ignorant multitude, actually believed in this swagger; and I remember how, for several days, the mail coach from Birmingham used to be surrounded on its arrival at St. Martin's-le-grand, and the guard beset with inquiries,

[1] A relative of Sir John Shelley (father of the poet) sat for Gatton at this time.

one of which was whether the promised armies had started on their march.

Yet the Commons threw out the bill on the second reading, and there was a dissolution, and, in celebration thereof, a general illumination, which, as I had never witnessed such a sight before, I was allowed to come home to see. There were abundant devices and transparencies symbolic of the blessings that were to flow from Reform, but the grand sight of all was the shipping in the pool, with its masts and yards defined by myriads of lights, which repeated themselves in countless reflections in the dark waters below. In the city, owing to the illuminations being general, the crowd were good-humoured enough, but at the west-end the windows of the more prominent opponents of Reform were duly smashed, Apsley House being an especial object of attack. When the mob recognized that it was in utter darkness, they aroused the inmates by a shower of stones, to which the duke's servants replied by firing a volley of blank cartridges over the heads of the crowd. This, however, failed to intimidate the malcontents, and every square of glass that could be pelted with stones from the roadway or the park was demolished.

With the dissolution came the famous popular outcry, "The bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill." The phrase "caught on," as the expression goes. It was the single pledge exacted from candidates, it figured at the head of election addresses, was inscribed on banners, placarded in shop windows, and chalked on walls and palings everywhere. Popular feeling was so roused that many opponents of the bill dared not show themselves on the hustings, and the elections went in favour of the government. But, although the bill passed the Commons, the Lords rejected it, and excited public meetings and demonstrative processions were organized all over the metropolis.

We had a kind of lord mayor's show a month before the usual anniversary, on the occasion of the state presentation of some civic address to the "patriot" king. A procession of thirty or forty carriages conveying the "flower of the corporation" passed along Fleet-street, the lumbering old state coach, with the lord mayor and the rosy-gilled old sword-bearer, and the rest of the paraphernalia forming part of the pageant of course. The mob cheered the military-looking city marshals in their plumed cocked-hats and scarlet toggery, and even treated the ward-beadles, much bedizened with gold lace, and marching gravely with their gilt-nobbed staffs, with becoming deference. Later in the afternoon the obnoxious Duke of Cumberland was pulled off his horse in the park, and the Marquis of Londonderry was pelted with stones, rousing his Celtic blood to that high pitch that, presenting a pistol, he threatened to blow out the brains of the next man who assailed him; whereupon one of the Reform journals spitefully suggested that the marquis, having managed to do without brains of his own for so long, thought other people might very well dispense with theirs.

From the circumstance that I was then absorbed in the perusal of the Waverley novels, having just secured the opportunity of reading the whole of them for the first time, I remember quite well, how, in the midst of all this wild excitement about Reform, Sir Walter Scott, worn out with over-work, sailed to Italy in the hope of recruiting his shattered health. Although the news came like a shock to many thousand homes, it was curtly given in the newspapers without a word of regretful comment, so absorbed was public feeling in the single subject of Reform. Unhappily the hand of death was already upon the illustrious romancist, who returned home within the year, to be soon afterwards laid to his last rest in Dryburgh abbey.

It must have been shortly after this time (1832) that my father pointed out to me the small attenuated figure of another great writer walking slowly along near the corner of Chancery-lane—his gait a trifle uncertain, and he himself, spite of the restless movement of his eyes, apparently oblivious of all that was passing around. This was Charles Lamb, whose "Essays," but recently collected and published, was already a well-thumbed book in our household. For this reason I had a good look at him, and distinctly remember being struck by something of a jewish look in his face, although his dress, an old-fashioned suit of black—swallow-tail, small clothes, and gaiters—gave him very much the appearance of a decayed old-fashioned pedagogue. Once afterwards I had a brief and final glimpse of him in Holborn. Carus Wilson, the extraordinarily tall lawyer, who might have obtained more money by exhibiting himself than ever he made by his profession, was often to be seen in Fleet-street at this time, the top of his hat almost on a level with the street lamps, which, of an evening, he was said to open without raising himself from the ground, when he wanted a light for his cigar.

The turmoil which followed upon the rejection of the Reform bill by the Lords swiftly spread from London to the provinces, and from Derby, Nottingham, and elsewhere news kept arriving of outbreaks more or less serious. When at length the alarming tidings came of the rioting and loss of life at Bristol, and the firing of the city by a drunken mob, the consternation and inquietude were general. The newspapers, the ordinary numbers of which, although costing sevenpence, were no larger than the half-penny papers of to-day, rose to a premium, and there was an eager rush on the newsvendors' shops. Moreover, as the news only arrived in dribblets, the most exaggerated rumours were blazed about, and increased the prevailing excitement.

The papers had previously announced that some

dragoons from Gloucester were to act as a bodyguard to ultra-tory Sir Charles Wetherell, the Bristol recorder, when he opened the assizes; and one journal had jokingly suggested, in allusion to a well-known pecularity of Sir Charles's, that the only bodyguard he needed was a pair of braces to close the wide aperture between his vest and nether garments. Intensely unpopular though Sir Charles Wetherell was known to be, it was scarcely anticipated that any outbreak would occur with which the authorities would be unable to cope. But when the serious turn that matters had taken became known, everyone was indignant with Sir Charles for his "pig-headed obstinacy" in insisting on a public entry into Bristol. The mayor, too, was roundly abused for his cowardice, and the commander of the troops for his stupidity—expiated by his suicide a few days before four of the rioters were hanged and several score more were imprisoned or transported.

So frightened was the easy-going home secretary at this Bristol business, that when the London political unionists talked of holding meetings of all the political unions in the kingdom on a given day, after blandly warning them of the illegality of their proceedings, he gave the commander-in-chief *carte blanche* to act, with the result that such an overwhelming display of military force was made in London as had the effect of cowing the agitators completely.

After the Reform bill had been passed a second time by the Commons, and had been again thrown out by the Lords, not only was the cry long and loud for the creation of new peers to swamp the tory lords' majority, but the multitude were enjoined to cease paying taxes—this was the favourite tune to which in seasons of difficulty mob orators generally piped—and to get up a run on the Bank of England, though the speakers knew very well that the "sovereign people" lacked the necessary notes. Petitions,

too, kept pouring into the House of Commons praying it to stop the supplies, when there was not the slightest chance of any such step being taken.

The ferment was now greater than ever. The cholera, which had already made its appearance in the north of England, burst out in London when the Reform excitement was at its zenith, causing almost as much alarm as though the city was about to be decimated by a second plague. Howling mobs paraded the streets, and conflicts with the police were incessant. I remember the gates of Temple Bar being repeatedly shut to keep Westminster and Covent-garden roughs from joining forces with the noisy rabble swarming in Fleet-street. All over the country there were indignant meetings; and it was at one of these that Sydney Smith, in alluding to the futility of the lords' efforts to stay Reform, tickled his hearers with the well-known anecdote of the indefatigable Mrs Partington, mop in hand and perched on her pattens, striving to push back the stormy Atlantic Ocean.

At the great meeting held at the "Crown and Anchor" in the Strand—then a notable place for liberal political gatherings—I recollect seeing the popular Westminster radical, Sir Francis Burdett, and the famous Irish agitator, Daniel O'Connell, for the first time. There was a story, I remember, then current about Sir Francis and a drunken Irish crossing-sweeper—a radical reformer of the extreme type—with whom the affable baronet occasionally exchanged a few words on the politics of the day. "Mike," inquired Sir Francis during some crisis, "what do you suggest in the present alarming state of things?" "Well, yer honour," rejoined Mike, "there 's only one cure; and it 's certain there 'll niver be peace till we have a fair sharing all round—rich and poor all taking alike." "That 's all very fine, Mike," said Sir Francis, laughingly, "but a drunken fellow like you would soon

run through his share, and what would you do then?" Sir Francis imagined this would have been a poser, but Mike was equal to the occasion. "Do then, yer honour?" exclaimed he in seeming surprise; "why, of course, share and share again."

I can distinctly call to mind the slim and aristocratic-looking Sir Francis Burdett, in his customary buckskins and top boots, as he appeared at the Crown and Anchor meeting. He was evidently very ill, and had his doctor with him to take care of him. The burly Liberator, on the other hand, seemed the picture of robust health, and glanced around him with a peculiar waggish look, just as if he were some low comedian taking stock of his audience.

Sir Francis was voted into the chair, and made an exciting speech, but O'Connell was the favourite of the afternoon. I recollect his being called upon to mount the reporters' table so that the densely packed meeting might obtain a better view of him. Once seen, it was impossible to forget his broad, good-humoured, clean-shaven face, his curly locks (reported to be artificial), and the merry twinkle in his eyes, which emphasized, as it were, the racy, winning brogue that gave such piquancy to his most ordinary phrases. Scarcely had he opened his mouth, when a loud voice from a distant corner of the room called upon him to "spake up for the honour of ould Oireland!" whereupon O'Connell retorted—"Be still, will ye, Pat? Shure, *you*'re no honour to ould Oireland." His speech was a mixture of hearty abuse of the lords, whom he described in his customary vituperative strain as simpletons and maniacs, and demagogic clap-trap of the "give me liberty or give me death" order, dwelling upon his hearers' enslavement, and expressing his confidence in their dying to a man to enforce their rights; yet with all this O'Connell, by dint of his oratorical arts and wheedling manner,

succeeded in rousing his audience to outbursts of the wildest enthusiasm.

Since this occasion, I often heard the great tribune speak, but it never occurred to me that his opponents could pay him the compliment which a sturdy tory rendered to Fox, when he admitted that Fox had often convinced his reason, though he was proud to say he had never influenced his vote. Dickens has recorded that once, in the gallery of the House, he was so moved by O'Connell's pathos that he was forced to lay down his pencil, unable to proceed with his notes. Still, the Liberator's forte was denunciation and abuse, varied with an admixture of irresistible broad humour.

When O'Connell called the Duke of Wellington "a stunted corporal," the duke allowed the invective to pass unnoticed; but when he described Lord Alvanley in the House of Commons as "a creature, half-idiot, half-maniac," and "a bloated buffoon," the prince regent's old friend,[1] bursting with rage, demanded satisfaction. He lacked the *sang froid* of Paul Louis Courier, who, when similarly assailed by a French professor, quietly remarked, "I fancy he must be vexed. He calls me jacobin, rebel, plagiarist, thief, poisoner, forger, leper, madman, impostor, calumniator, libeller, a horrible, filthy, grimacing rag-picker. I gather what he wants to say; he means that he and I are not of the same opinion, and this is only his way of putting it." As O'Connell had already killed his man in a duel, and registered a vow never to fight another, the irate peer was constrained to go out with the Liberator's son, with-

[1] Greville describes Lord Alvanley as delightful—gay, natural, irresistibly comical, and diffusing universal cheerfulness around him. His wit and drollery made him the delight of society. Although he made no scruple of violating every sort of pecuniary engagement or obligation, such was his irresistible attraction that his friends invariably forgave him. Alvanley was the most distinguished of the *roué* set that flourished during the Regency; and while all the rest were ruined and dispersed, he, from being a peer, was invulnerable to arrest, and in the enjoyment of a fortune which his uncle had left to trustees for his benefit.

out, however, any harm befalling either combatant, although as many as three shots were exchanged on either side. Alvanley thought he had a narrow escape, for, on discharging the hackney coachman who had driven him to and from the place of meeting, he gave him a sovereign, saying, "Understand, I don't give you this for taking me there, but for bringing me back again."

Sir Charles Wetherell, in satirically styling O'Connell the "member for Ireland," paid him an unintentional compliment. The same, however, cannot be said in reference to the epithet of the "Big Beggarman," bestowed on him when he was levying tribute from the "finest pisantry in the world" to gull about getting the Union repealed. "I am with you heart and soul in detestation of injustice done to Ireland, but when you come to the perilous nonsense of Repeal," said sagacious Sydney Smith, "I'll take my leave. Pray, what, dear Daniel, is the object of all government? Why, roast mutton, potatoes, claret, a stout constable, an honest justice, a clear highway, a free chapel. What trash to be bawling in the streets about the 'green isle of the ocean,' the bold anthem of 'Erin-go-Braugh.' A far better anthem would be 'Erin-go-bread-and-cheese,' 'Erin-go-cabins-that-will-keep-out-the-rain,' and 'Erin-go-pantaloons-without-holes-in-them.'"

During the whole of the Reform bill excitement the mob never missed an opportunity of hooting at and pelting the Duke of Wellington. On the anniversary of Waterloo, a few days after the lords had shot Niagara—to quote Lord Sherbrooke's famous phrase apropos of a subsequent reform measure—and had passed the bill, the duke was attacked in the city, and nearly unhorsed. A yelling mob pursued him to the gate of Apsley House, where, on taking leave of Lord St. Germans, who had acted as his escort, he quietly remarked, "An odd day this to choose!" I remember, on the occasion of some inspec-

tion of troops in Hyde-park, seeing the duke most foully assailed as he rode, unattended, through Decimus Burton's archway, up the open gates of which some London ruffians had climbed. Yelled at and spat upon by these blackguards, and pelted with mud and more offensive refuse by their companions, the duke rode calmly on at a walking pace—making no effort to avoid the filth flying around him—until the police, fighting their way through the crowd, came to the old soldier's rescue.

Within a few weeks after the passing of the Reform bill the fickle multitude veered round, and whenever the duke showed himself in public, he was received with general respect, if not with enthusiasm. He might constantly be met, in his buttoned-up blue frockcoat and white duck-trousers, walking along Piccadilly at his usual slow pace, and saluting in military fashion all who bowed to him. Spite, however, of this change in the popular demeanour, the bullet-proof iron shutters which the duke had had put up at Apsley House, when the demonstrations against him were the most hostile, remained unopened for very nearly twenty years.

IV.

(1832-36.)

THE FLOOD OF PENNY LITERATURE—THE UNSTAMPED PRESS—POPULAR PREACHERS AND ACTORS.

In the midst of all the excitement that preceded parliamentary Reform, two agencies were silently at work, the immense future influence of which was then unforeseen. These were the spread of cheap literature, and the introduction of railways. Shortly after the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, bent upon teaching the working-classes something of everything, if not everything of something, started on its educational crusade, with its science made easy, philosophy popularized, biography boiled down, history in a nutshell, and the like, Mr Henry Brougham, its president, made haste to proclaim that the schoolmaster was abroad.

A few years later the society, in order to capture a humbler and more youthful class of readers, issued its "Penny Magazine," the immense success of which was due, it was thought, largely to the taking adjective "penny" in the title. In this instance, however, the word was not applied to a popular periodical for the first time, a "Penny Medley" having been published nearly a hundred years before. The success which the "Penny Magazine" secured, induced the Christian Knowledge Society speedily to follow suit with a "Saturday Magazine." Both publications were started on much the same lines as "the Mirror," a twopenny weekly, which

had already been in existence sixteen years, and the contents of which comprised occasionally long, and by no means lively, articles on topographical and other topics, varied by an abundance of "facts and scraps, original and select."

Limbird, who kept a stationer's shop in the Strand, was the publisher and proprietor of "the Mirror," and John Timbs—in subsequent years sub-editor of the "Illustrated London News"—from being shopman, first of all to Sir Richard Phillips, and afterwards to Limbird, had been promoted to be its editor. Limbird's next-door neighbour was Mr. W. H. Smith, father of the late first lord of the treasury, and founder of the famous firm of W. H. Smith & Son, and, at the time I speak of, a rapidly rising London newsagent. Limbird was a dull-brained individual, with a swinish cast of countenance, giving the idea that he was of a gluttonous turn; while the tinted tip of Timbs's nose suggested that "the Mirror" editor was not averse to what is called the cheerful glass, and yet he developed into a singularly sour and cantankerous individual.

In after-life he seemed to take especial delight in repeating all the spiteful tales he could pick up, preferentially respecting his more intimate friends, next about casual acquaintances, and finally about strangers. I never knew him to betray himself into praising anybody or anything. He was, in fact, the general skeleton at all banquets. When people were inclined to be jubilant over the warbling of Jenny Lind, or the splendid success of the Great Exhibition of 1851, Timbs was prompt to "hint a fault and hesitate dislike." Everything indeed which everybody in those days agreed to admire was certain to be the object of his animadversion, whether it was Dickens's "Carol," or his "David Copperfield"; Macaulay's "History," or his "Ballads";

Thackeray's "Snob Papers," or his "Vanity Fair"; John Leech's "Mr Briggs," or his cleverest political caricatures; Carlyle's "Cromwell," or Cruikshank's "Bottle"; Jerrold's "Caudle Lectures," or his latest witticism—one and all were equally sneered at by this modern Thersites, who, moreover, took an especial delight in depreciating youthful talent, and frowning down anything like youthful enthusiasm. Singularly enough, although he always had a sneer for the productions of so-called comic writers, who were his especial aversion, he was uncommonly proud of having printed Albert Smith's earliest literary effort —"The Confessions of a Dissecting-room Porter"—in "the Mirror," whilst this was under his editorship.

Not only did Timbs disapprove of everything, but he had an offensive habit of contradicting almost everything which anybody happened to say. As Sydney Smith observed of Croker, the chances were that "in the next world he would even dispute the dates of his own peccadilloes with the recording angel." Timbs spent the best part of a busy life, scissors in hand, making "snippets." Such of these as could not be used up in "the Mirror" were carefully stored, and when later on he became subeditor of the "Illustrated London News" and editor of the "Year-Book of Facts," he profited by his opportunities to add largely to his collection. By-and-by he classified his materials, and discovered that, by the aid of a paste brush and a few strokes of the pen, he could instruct a lazy public respecting "Things not generally known," explain "Popular Errors," and provide "Something for Everybody," and that he had, moreover, amassed a perfect store of "Curiosities" of science, history, and other subjects of general interest, wherein people partial to snippets might positively revel. The result was half a score of volumes, of which several secured a truly phenomenal success.

With the Penny and Saturday magazines the pictures

formed a great attraction, for engravings of a common class were comparatively rare until these illustrated periodicals made their appearance. Yet they were but sorry affairs on the whole, for good draughtsmen and wood-engravers were few in those days, and good woodcut printers rarer still. Now and then the "Penny Magazine" came out with a poor but pretentious copy of some priceless work of art, and of this a good deal was thought at the time, for no kind of attempt had then been made to educate the popular taste in matters artistical.

The shop-windows of the London printsellers were the people's real picture galleries at this period, and always had their gaping crowds before them. The caricatures of the day, representations of famous prize fights, and Cruikshank's and Seymour's comic sketches were most to the taste of the *cognoscenti* of the pavement; still the fine line engravings after Wilkie's popular pictures found many admirers; while the stupendous proportions and theatrical effects of John Martin's architectural phantasies, with their myriads of seething figures and their suggestions of illimitable space, were gazed at with something like wonderment. Most of the book illustrations were copperplates—the annuals were then in their hey-day—and odd collections of these used to be hawked in the principal thoroughfares, arranged in umbrellas spread open on the ground, and were the only cheap prints people then had an opportunity of purchasing.

"Chambers's Edinburgh Journal," which originally came out in folio form almost contemporaneously with the "Penny Magazine," speedily made its way on this side of the border, spite of its then local character, its somewhat feeble essays, and its dreary Scotticisms. Hone's "Every-day, Table and Year Books," with Samuel Williams's clever sketchy illustrations, were among the popular publications of an earlier date, having originally appeared in weekly

numbers some years before. Other cheap weeklies, which the illustrations, with their Rembrandt-like effects, of the same skilful artist, long kept alive, were "the Olio" and "the Parterre," both mainly devoted to romantic fiction.

Tegg, the publisher—whom Hood is understood to have satirized in his "Tylney Hall," as Mr. Twigg, a vulgar, ignorant, retired dealer in hardware, who always speaks of himself as "a man of my property"—was at this period the principal reprinter and publisher of cheap editions of so-called standard works—those books which, as Charles Lamb has it, no gentleman's library should be without. When he first embarked in the pursuit, Tegg was accustomed, I have heard, to work off these reprints to the public by means of book auctions in London and the provinces, at which he acted as his own auctioneer. He was not at all particular about the accuracy of his texts. All he cared for, in those days of heavily-taxed paper and dear press-work and binding, was that a volume of a given number of pages should not cost more than a certain sum. Whenever it happened that one of these British classics—say Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," Johnson's "Lives of the Poets," or Selden's "Table Talk"—was a trifle too bulky to be brought into the regulation number of pages (without having recourse to small type, which would, of course, have involved extra expense) it was Tegg's practice to tear out as many leaves at the end of the original work as would reduce the volume to the proper dimensions, quite regardless of its breaking off in the middle of a sentence, as this difficulty was got over by instructing the printer to let the reprint volume end at the last full stop! Wordsworth, in an angry mood, wrote of Tegg: "The wretch says his 'line is to watch expiring copyrights'; and would be, no doubt, if he dared, to murder the authors for the sake of getting sooner at his prey."

The great success of the "Penny Magazine" led to a

run on the word "penny," and to an avalanche of penny publications, including the "Penny paper for the People," the "Penny Story-teller," the "Penny Comic Magazine," the "Penny Trumpet," the "Penny Athenæum," and the "Penny Evangelical Magazine." There were also penny dreadfuls, like the "Terrific Penny Magazine," and after a while such scurrilous journals as the "Penny Satirist." As may be supposed, the majority of these publications were only short-lived, several of them being unable to struggle even beyond their first number.

Among the mass of penny periodicals the one that made the most stir was unquestionably the "Poor Man's Guardian," the publication of which had preceded the "Penny Magazine" by several months. In those days of intense political excitement the working-classes hungered for political news, and this was the kind of intelligence the paper chiefly gave. It boldly announced in each number that it was "established contrary to law . . . and published despite the laws, or the will and pleasure of any tyrant or bodies of tyrants." It attacked king, lords, and commons all round, protested against the new civil list and the proposed extra grant to the Duchess of Kent and her daughter, and denounced the Reform bill as an accursed measure promoted in the interests of the middle-classes.

Still, on the whole, the language of the "Guardian" was far less violent than that employed by several of its unstamped contemporaries, such as "the Republican," which talked of "the diabolical machinations of the villains in power," and "the Prompter," which proclaimed "down with kings, priests, and lords, whose system is a system of murder, plunder, and spoliation." The most reprehensible article published in the "Poor Man's Guardian" was one which professed to be a review of a book by the aide-de-camp of the King of Naples, and gave what it called

" Defensive instructions for the people," the illustrative engravings to which shewed how civilians armed with long lances might rout cavalry successfully, and parry bayonet charges.

Before, however, many numbers of " the Guardian " had appeared, Hetherington, its publisher and proprietor, was summoned on the charge of publishing a newspaper without a stamp—every copy of a newspaper was then required to be impressed with a fourpenny stamp.[1] Instead of obeying the Bow-street mandate, Hetherington sent a note to the magistrates informing them that he could not have the pleasure of the proposed interview, as he was going out of town ; and he at once set off on a provincial tour to push the sale of his publication. In a second summons that was issued Hetherington was apprized that if he failed to attend, the court would proceed *ex parte*. To this he responded by a chaffing note asking the magistrates the meaning of the phrase, and why the English language, which he could understand, was not made use of.

This was too much for the Bow-street justices, and runners were started on Hetherington's track. They soon discovered from the public meetings he had been holding that he was at Manchester, but owing to their having invoked the assistance of a couple of local constables to assist in his capture, Hetherington was forewarned, and as the officers made their entrance at the door of his lodgings, he sprang out of the window and made his way to Macclesfield. His mother being seriously ill, he returned secretly to London ; but spies were on the watch, and he was seized the very moment he laid his hand on the door knocker, and lodged in the police station. By the Bow-street magistrates he was ordered to be imprisoned for six months

[1] In addition to this fourpenny stamp newspapers then paid a tax of three shillings and sixpence on every advertisement inserted ; there was also a duty of threepence per lb. on the paper on which they were printed. These three items constituted what afterwards came to be known as " the taxes upon knowledge."

in Clerkenwell jail; and soon after the expiration of his sentence he was again consigned to the same prison for a like term. Still the "Poor Man's Guardian" continued to be published, and every week newsagents and street hawkers were sent to jail for selling a paper which it was contended ought to bear a fourpenny stamp.

But these repressive measures were of no avail; people suffered imprisonment again and again, and yet still went on selling "the Guardian." Nor was this remarkable pertinacity confined to the humbler vendors of the publication. Cleave, a fairly well-to-do radical newsagent in Shoe-lane, whom I knew very well in after years, and from whom I gathered many of these particulars of the dangers and difficulties which beset the vendors of the unstamped press in the days I am speaking of, was more than once incarcerated. So was Guest, the largest newsagent in Birmingham, and so, I believe, was Mrs Mann of Leeds. Abel Heywood of Manchester, a man of considerable substance, who subsequently had the honour of being chosen chief magistrate of the city, after suffering alike in person and in pocket, resolutely refused to discontinue the sale of "the Guardian."

Many of the more humble distributors of the paper sought to argue both the law and the justice of the case with the magistrates, and on being promptly silenced, hurled defiance at the bench, although they knew that by so doing they were increasing their sentences fourfold. One sapient city alderman sent a little boy, who had sold a copy of the paper, to prison for three months, on the pretence that a severe sentence was necessary, otherwise children would be made use of wholesale to set at nought the supreme majesty of the law.

All manner of ruses were adopted to evade the vigilance of the stamp-office officials, who were ever lying in wait to seize the "Poor Man's Guardian" in the hands of

the London retailers, or on its way to provincial newsagents. Dummy parcels used to be made up and sent out of the office by apparent stealth, the bearers glancing furtively around before proceeding on their way. They had received instructions to throw themselves, as if unconsciously, into the officers' arms, and then to argue and dispute with them with reference to the contents of the parcels they were carrying, so as to detain the officers as long as possible, while the genuine parcels for country customers were being smuggled out the back way. The authorities, finding themselves foiled in this fashion, took to seizing parcels of "the Guardian" at the carriers' receiving offices, and from vans and stage coaches; but in order to baulk them in these proceedings the papers were packed, by arrangement, in cases containing shoes, chests of tea ordered by country grocers, and bales destined for provincial haberdashers, and were claimed by the newsagents on reaching their destination.

Bundles of the "Poor Man's Guardian" were also conveyed privately at night time from the printing office to empty houses and other "safe places" in various quarters of the metropolis, where neighbouring retailers were enabled to obtain their supplies. These they wrapped round their bodies beneath their waistcoats, or stowed away in capacious pockets, and concealed in tall top hats, for so vigilant had the authorities become, that people were stopped in the streets, and compelled to open any parcels suspected to contain unstamped publications. Hetherington announced that he lent the paper out to read at the charge of a penny, being able, he said, by this means, to evade the stamp act, which only related to papers "published for, and exposed to sale."[1] After his painful prison experiences—he having had to endure all

[1] It was then illegal to let out *stamped* papers on hire, but the lending of unstamped papers involved no penalty.

the hardships to which a common criminal was subjected —Hetherington took every possible precaution to avoid being re-arrested. He lived out of town, and entered his place of business in the Strand by a roundabout way through the Savoy, and generally in the disguise of a drab-coated quaker.

His time, however, came at last; but instead of being again dealt with by police magistrates, he was tried in a superior court before Lord chief baron Lyndhurst and a special jury. He made a clever and sensible defence, urged the jury not to accept a mere lawyer's definition of a newspaper, whether given by the solicitor-general, or even by the lord chief baron himself, insisting that his opinion as to what formed a newspaper was quite as good as theirs. Lyndhurst laughed heartily, and in the end left the matter entirely to the jury—the prosecution being instigated by the whig Reform government, the tory chief baron, likely enough, was not particularly anxious for it to succeed. To Hetherington's surprise the jury acquitted him, and he jubilantly announced in all future numbers of the "Poor Man's Guardian," that the paper, "after sustaining a government prosecution of three and a half years, during which five hundred persons had been unjustly imprisoned for vending it, had at a trial in the Court of Exchequer, before Lord chief baron Lyndhurst and a special jury, been declared a legal publication." Henceforth Hetherington gave no quarter to his whig prosecutors, "those knaves," he said, "who used to split the ears of the groundlings with talk about the palladium of our liberties, and of a free press being like the air we breathe; which, if we have not, we die."

Little more than a year afterwards (Sept. 1836) the government were constrained formally to admit that neither fines nor imprisonment enabled them to cope any

longer with the unstamped press. Thereupon the newspaper stamp was reduced from fourpence to a penny, the advertisement duty from three shillings and sixpence to eighteen pence, and the paper duty from threepence to three half-pence per lb. Tory Lord Lyndhurst not only offered no opposition to the measure, but contemptuously asked the government why the paltry penny stamp was to be retained.

I have gone somewhat fully into the particulars of this struggle between the Reform administration and the unstamped press, partly from the interest I have always taken in the subject, and partly from the circumstance that twenty years afterwards it was my lot to be proceeded against by the commissioners of stamps for penalties amounting to £12,000, for publishing an unstamped newspaper. Of the incident that led to this I shall have occasion to speak by-and-by.

Hetherington, not content with the victory he had gained, still carried on his conflict with the authorities, and a few years later was sent to prison for four months for selling a now forgotten pamphlet, Haslam's "Letters to the Clergy." He retaliated by prosecuting Moxon, the poets' publisher, and Charles Lamb's "young friend," for issuing Shelley's "Queen Mab," and as the jury fell in with Lord Denman's dictum that they were bound to take the law as they found it, a verdict of guilty followed as a matter of course.

It was when the contest between the government and the vendors of unstamped newspapers was fiercest, that a couple of labourers, who had been instructed to burn an accumulation of wooden tallies in the stoves of the House of Lords, seem to have set to work to disprove the truth of the old adage, "the more haste the less speed," for in their desperate hurry to get through with their task, they not merely made a rapid bonfire of all the

tallies, but of the two Houses of Parliament as well. The fire was an astounding one, and I and a couple of companions, anxious to obtain a near view of it, made great efforts to reach Palace-yard, but as all London was moving in crowds in the same direction our attempts were futile. We thereupon bethought ourselves of the river, and eventually succeeded in bargaining with a waterman to row us close to the scene. Shoals of barges and wherries were hurrying in the same direction, and as soon as we had passed through Westminster-bridge we found the river choked with craft, while the view of the fire was something stupendous.

When I was a youth I frequently heard Irving, Rowland Hill, W. J. Fox, and other noted London preachers, for my father held very broad views, and was never averse to my attending other Sunday morning services besides those of St. Bride's, where we had our family pew. Irving, the high priest of the mysterious unknown tongue, was then a good deal talked about, and I had a great curiosity to see and hear him. Such recollection as I have retained of him is due entirely to his striking personality, differing so utterly as it did from the ordinary clergyman, rather than to the subject-matter of any of his sermons, which were, I remember, inordinately long and delivered with a strong northern accent, as well as far too abstruse for my youthful comprehension. What, however, chiefly attracted me to the chapel in Newman-street was the expectation, generally realised, of the spirit moving some hysterical shrieking sister or frantic Boanerges brother (posted in the raised recess behind Irving's pulpit) to suddenly burst forth with one of those wild rapid utterances, which, spite of their unintelligibility, sent a strange thrill through all who heard them for the first time.

The popularity which Irving originally enjoyed had long been on the wane. So far as his aristocratic following was concerned the spell was broken. Women of rank no

longer courted him, and signified their willingness to share his name and participate in his destinies. No lines of carriages blocked up the street as when the intellectual and fashionable world of London flocked to the shabby little chapel in Hatton-garden to listen to the preacher's weird, prophetic eloquence. Obviously, Irving did not take the same view of the preacher's office as Archbishop Manners Sutton, who recommended Bishop Heber to simply preach the Gospel and subdue all enthusiasm. At the time I saw Irving he had grown grey and haggard-looking, and this, with his long, straggling hair and restless look, emphasized by the cast in his eye, gave him a singularly wild and picturesque appearance. His voice too was piercingly loud, and his gestures were as vehement as those of any street ranter of the day.

I heard Rowland Hill preach several times at the Surrey chapel, but he was then a hale old man verging on eighty, with reddish face, long white hair, and wandering eyes that seemed to be searching out every member of his congregation by turn. One went to hear him more from the amusement derived from his ludicrous remarks and oddities of manner than for anything profitable he was likely to give utterance to. He was so egotistical in his sermons that it was commonly remarked he talked far too much about himself for his observations to be of any particular benefit to other people.

W. J. Fox was in the habit of delivering Sunday morning discourses, which were anything but sermons, at his chapel in South-place, Finsbury. He usually took his subject from some leading topic of the day. At one time he would discourse on the queen's coronation, at another time on duelling, then perhaps on the aristocracy or church rates, and even on such well-worn subjects as the liberty of the press. Indeed, most of his lectures might, in a less expanded form, have served as leading articles in the radical

"True Sun" newspaper, of which Fox was at that time the editor. He was a short, thick-set man, with dark hair and eyes, and as sanctimonious-looking as any primitive methodist. He always spoke extempore, combining with a fine choice of language great clearness and closeness of reasoning, and what his admirers used to term the perfection of elocution. He not only numbered many of the philosophical radicals of the time among his hearers, but men of the most opposite opinions came to listen to him. Besides being editor of the "True Sun," Fox conducted the "Monthly Repository," which had Hazlitt, Crabbe Robinson, Harriett Martineau, and Robert Browning among its contributors. At the time of the anti-corn law agitation the leaders found in Fox one of their most powerful auxiliaries, although his subsequent career in parliament, where logic counts for little, and such eloquence as his was at a discount, proved anything but successful.

There was another preacher to whom I went once or twice by stealth to listen, having to disburse a few coppers by way of entrance money for the privilege of doing so. This was the Rev. Robert Taylor, who used to hold forth at the Rotunda in the Blackfriars-road, and had attained to considerable notoriety through having been prosecuted for denying the divinity of Christ, then held to be flat blasphemy. He was a vain, conceited fop, who had originally been an apothecary, but had exchanged the pestle and mortar for a clergyman's gown, in which he made his first appearance at "the Areopagus" in Cannon-street. After undergoing a year's imprisonment in Oakham jail, he betook himself to the Rotunda, when Carlile was its lessee. There he assumed bishop's robes and white kid gloves; posed with an eye-glass in his eye, and his hair in curls over his forehead, according to the latest fashion; and while he preached, made a point of flourishing a scented cambric

handkerchief, trimmed with a deep lace border, at every pause in his discourse.

The transition from the Rev. Robert Taylor in the Rotunda pulpit, with his theatrical get-up, his stagey manner, and his ranting delivery, to actors of a legitimate type is simple and natural enough. Of the illustrious Malibran, who was equally great as an actress and a singer, I have retained a vivid recollection, and remember her particularly in her pathetic part of Amina, in Bellini's "La Sonnambula," when Bunn was paying her, before she stepped upon the stage, the then unheard-of salary of £125 per night; a mere bagatelle, however, compared with the £800 which Patti, in my judgment an altogether inferior artiste, exacts at the present time. From the simple circumstance that on one or two occasions Malibran sustained herself by partaking of a glass of stout in the course of a trying part, the legend has grown up, and is likely to endure, that the great singer was in the nightly habit of swilling a pint of porter at the wings. Of notable actors, I remember having seen Charles Kemble—during his Covent-garden management, and when he was long past middle age—"stroll into Angers with infinite grace" as Falconbridge, the part of all others in which he excelled; and I more than once saw his gifted daughter Fanny in the character of Juliet, almost twenty years prior to her return to the stage as Mrs. Butler. Sixty years ago most old playgoers swore by the Kembles, and spoke with becoming reverence of the great Sarah Siddons and her brother John, whom all agreed to be unapproachable in Corialanus.

Macready was the pet tragedian at this period, but I confess that I failed to appreciate his jerky elocution and stilted mannerisms. Perhaps I was prejudiced against him through constantly hearing the unhappy Elton and other minor actors rail against his tyrannical treatment of them on the stage. Later on, Macready's friends, Serjeant

Talfourd, Bulwer Lytton, "Examiner" Forster, and even Dickens, in a less degree, so bepraised him to his face, and to one another, that Jerrold, Kenny Meadows, and other independent members of the then newly-formed Shakspeare Club, used to be constantly complaining of the way in which they nurtured his intolerable self-conceit.

I can just remember seeing the elder Matthews on one occasion in his famous "At Home"; and Liston too I saw only once, but then it was in his superlative part of "Paul Pry," for some one's benefit. Years afterwards I used continually to meet a grave-mannered old gentleman, snub-nosed, with hanging jowl and large vacant-looking eyes, mooning about Knightsbridge, in the comical cut of whose features one had no difficulty in recognising the former famous comedian, who then lived at St. George's-row, in a little house facing the park. Here the omnibus drivers used to point him out sitting at the first floor window, watch in hand, timing them as they drove by. It is said that when any of them were late Liston would either lament or grumble, according to the humour he was in. This timing of the omnibuses became a sort of monomania with him, and he sank at last into a state of profound melancholy, never smiling, and speaking but rarely. I remember fascinating Madame Vestris in Planché's "Olympic Revels," and all through those palmy Olympic days, before age had withered her infinite variety; also charming Mrs. Honey, the lovely, laughing, frolic Nisbet, and pert Mrs. Waylett, with her famous "Buy a broom!" song, and all the rest of the stage beauties who turned the heads of the play-going young simpletons of the time.

As a youngster I, of course, thought T. P. Cooke uncommonly fine, alike as Long Tom Coffin, the Flying Dutchman, and William in Jerrold's "Black-eyed Susan"; but later on, when I used to pay for my own seat at the play, I invariably chose the Adelphi pit, where I could

roar with laughter at brandy-and-water primed Jack Reeve's seemingly unconscious humour, or be scared half out of my wits by the demoniacal flights of O. Smith in Fitzball's "Bottle Imp" and "Black Vulture," with their red and blue fire accessories. The then popular melodramatist's partiality for red and blue fire was such that his friends jokingly accused him of always burning one or the other in his parlour grate at home. When the American comedian, T. D. Rice, came to England to turn the town crazy with his "Jump Jim Crow," I saw him both at the Surrey and the Adelphi, where the performance, from its sheer absurdity, at once made a hit; and soon every barrel organ in London was grinding the tune, and every street boy piping the words and striking the regulation attitude. And yet what arrant rubbish the words were which secured the singer fame and fortune—

> "How are you, massa gemmen,
> An' de ladies in a row?
> All for to tell you whar I'm from,
> I 'se going for to go!
> For I wheel about an' turn about, an' do just so,
> An' ebery time I turn about I jump Jim Crow!'

V.

(1834-36.)

SONGS AND SLANG PHRASES—CRUIKSHANK AND THE "COMIC ALMANACK"—DEBTORS' PRISONS AND DEAR LAW—SALARIES AND SINECURES—SIXTY YEARS AGO.

At the period of what was in reality the first invasion of the nigger minstrel, sentimental songs were the rage in London drawing-rooms, and very likely "Jump Jim Crow" was found an agreeable relief from the namby-pamby lyrics then in fashion. One of the tribe of "Annual" poets, a contributor, moreover, to the "John Bull," and a literary lion of his day, Thomas Haynes Bayly—commonly known as Butterfly Bayly from a stupid song called "I'd be a butterfly," that made the fortune of some lucky music publisher—had for several years flooded the town with mawkish inanities, in which the romantic young ladies of the day used positively to revel. One season every drawing-room would ring with "I never was a favourite," or "Oh! no, we never mention her, her name is never heard"—in allusion to some fair one by whom the author had been jilted. Next season, "She wore a wreath of roses," or "I'm saddest when I sing," would be in vogue, and these in their turn would give place to the dismal ditty of

> "We met, 'twas in a crowd, and I thought he would shun me.
> He came, I could not breathe, for his eye was upon me.
> . . . .
> He called me by my name as the bride of another.
> Oh, thou hast been the cause of this anguish, my mother!"

Strange to say, so keen a satirist as Thackeray, in one of his amiable moods, professed to discover in Haynes Bayly's twaddling rhymes "numberless good-natured, simple appeals to the affections."

The craving for songs of this class was such that another Bayley soon joined in supplying the demand. The new poet was known both as Alphabet Bayley, from the string of initials he prefixed to his name, and as Omnibus Bayley, from a periodical he edited, and in which he published, puffed, and advertised his own trashy lyrics. For distinction's sake the small wits of the day christened the pair of sentimental songsters "Old Bayly" and "New Bayley." The latter failed to catch completely the dismal spirit which pervaded the lays of the poet he simulated, and which seems to have been their principal charm, consequently he never attained to the same degree of popularity. Still, his "I heard a voice, its tones were sweet," "Over the distant hills she gazed," "I stood among the glittering throng," and "He never said he loved," had their full complement of imbecile admirers.

While these were the class of songs that found universal favour in the drawing-room, and in due time got echoed in the street, no end of unmeaning slang phrases, chiefly remarkable for their stupidity and vulgarity—and originating one scarcely knew how or where, for no music-halls then existed to coin these inanities—were in circulation among the multitude and the "faster" section of society. One's ears were incessantly assailed with such cries as "What a shocking bad hat!" "There he goes with his eye out!" "How are you off for soap?" "Flare up! and join the union," "Does your mother know you're out?" or "It's all very fine, Mr. Fergusson, but you don't lodge here."

It was at this period (1834) that the stamp duty upon almanacks was repealed; and as a necessary consequence,

the country became flooded with these useful publications in every imaginable form. There were elegant bijou almanacks for the drawing-room table, Sunday almanacks for the prayer-book, miniature almanacks for the waistcoat pocket, circular almanacks for the crown of the hat, and almanacks even printed upon pocket handkerchiefs. The latter were, no doubt, suggested by those "moral wipes" which the missionary societies were then so fond of sending out to "Afric's burning sands" for the benefit of negroes troubled with a cold in the head, and which the reverend Mr. Stiggins approvingly described as "combining instruction with amusement, and blending select tales with woodcuts." In the rush to cater for the public taste, my father, taking his idea, no doubt, from Hood's popular "Comic Annual," proposed to Mr. Charles Tilt, the publisher, the joint production of a comic almanack, to be illustrated by George Cruikshank. Tilt approved of the scheme, and the work was undertaken in partnership.

My father, who had contributed all sorts of articles to the magazines in his younger days,[1] edited the almanack

[1] I turned up the other day among some old papers a letter to my father from Campbell, the poet, when the latter was editing the "New Monthly Magazine." I reprint it simply as an example of the attention which even anonymous contributors met with in those days from editors of the first position. Campbell, it should be remembered, was then at the height of his fame. To-day, providing he had enclosed the required stamps, an anonymous contributor's application respecting his lost MS. would be acknowledged by a postcard, even if it met with any notice at all:—

"Sir,—I am exceedingly distressed that you have had so much trouble about your article, and that my reply should now reach you so late. I assure you no slight was intended on my part. But from the multitude of papers which accumulated some weeks ago, at a time when I was in bad health, it was impossible for me to peruse your paper on the Inequality of Intellects earlier than last month. When I was in the country, to which I was obliged to retire in May in a very weakly state, I remember distinctly reading your Essay, and recollect parts of it, particularly the account of the boy whose knowledge of classical learning was conspicuous at ten years old. I recollect also enclosing your paper in a cover with a note address'd to you apologizing for my not being able to insert it, as the rage for fashionable reading at present calls for light articles. I can give my *word of honour*, which I believe no man who knows me will doubt, that to the best of my recollection I came to town and left the article on Mr Colbourne's table—delivering it with others to himself. But, most unhappily, Mr Colbourne cannot find the paper, and thinks that I must have made a mistake in returning it under a cover address'd to some one else. Mr Colbourne's belief and my own are here at variance. That I have made no mistake, I certainly can-

under the pseudonym of Rigdum Funnidos until his death a few years afterwards, and wrote the larger portion of the earlier issues of the publication, including nearly the whole of the first number for the year 1835, which Thackeray, in his "Essay on George Cruikshank," flatteringly remarks showed "a great deal of comic power." He, moreover, suggested the subjects for Cruikshank's etchings for that year, and penned the verses that accompany them. The general letterpress, of course, dealt with such topics of the day as Chancellor Brougham's oscillations, the great comet, St. John Long, the fashionable rubbing doctor, Morison's pills, &c., while the season's signs and weather prophecies were satirical skits on the ridiculous predictions to which Francis Moore's almanack, published by the Stationers' company, was principally indebted for its success. George Cruikshank at this time had given up political caricature, and could not be prevailed on to put my father's suggestion of Brougham's downfall between two stools (peers and people) on the wood-block, although its subsequent great success, owing to the prediction being speedily fulfilled, induced him to contribute a caricature apropos of municipal reform the following year.

The plate for March in the first number of the "Comic Almanack" gives a view of Tilt's shop, 86 Fleet-street, and just inside the open door Tilt and Cruikshank are seen engaged in conversation. George Cruikshank was in constant communication with my father at this time, and I used to see a good deal of him at 76 Fleet-street. One

not swear; but I have given you my sincere declaration that I have read your paper, and to the best of my knowledge have return'd it to the place where you ought to have found it. It affects me that you should lose your MS. by this accident. Mr Colhourne says positively he has it not. All that I can do is to wait the issue of the correspondent returning it to whom it is alleged that it may have possibly been sent by mistake. If it is not restored, it must remain my unqualified conviction that not myself, but Mr Colbourne, has mislaid it; for I remember its being among the papers which I inspected and brought to town.—I am, Sir, with respect, your obedt. Servt.,

"LONDON, *4th June* 1822. "T. CAMPBELL."

was not long in discovering how conceited the clever artist was in regard to his personal appearance, for he stealthily eyed himself in the glass on every available opportunity. He had been in the habit of picturing himself as a buck in his youth, and was still a bit of a fop, kept his hair well oiled and his whiskers punctiliously brushed, and was natty in his dress. A notable weakness of his was priding himself upon being one of the last men in London to give up wearing hessian boots. It was this same weak vanity about his personal appearance that led him in after-life to bring a long lock of his scanty hair forward to try and conceal his baldness, and secure it in its place with an elastic band, which he foolishly hoped would be invisible to the most searching glances.

Like Thackeray, George Cruikshank was fond of introducing his own portrait into his designs, but, unlike Thackeray, he never depicted himself under a ridiculous aspect. On the other hand, he presented the public with a series of flattering self-likenesses, from which one would scarcely be led to believe that the original was a little man, with an unmistakeable jewish cast of countenance—a hooked nose and keen, not to say fierce-looking eyes—which in his old age developed something of the expression that he has given to his own Fagin, in whom quite unconsciously he reproduced a kind of semblance of himself, excepting that the jew lacks old Time's forelock, of the possession of which Cruikshank was seemingly so proud. I question if at any period of his life was George Cruikshank the Adonis and the dandy he was so fond of picturing himself.

Apropos of the famous etching of Fagin in the condemned cell, the artist used to say that he got the happy idea of depicting the old reprobate biting his finger nails in his remorse and vexation, from catching sight of himself in a looking-glass engaged in a similar occupation, while

he was sitting up in bed bothering his brains as to the most tragic way of treating the subject.

In the same way that Liston regarded tragedy as his forte, George Cruikshank frequently fretted at being compelled to employ his pencil upon ludicrous subjects, his ambition being to picture at least the epic and the historical, if not the sublime. Many of his later etchings, like those for Ainsworth's "Tower of London," certainly show that the artist had not over-estimated his powers. Outside his artistic genius and his marvellous industry—he never seems to have refused any commission offered to him, excepting that after he made his mark as a book illustrator, he declined anything in the shape of political caricature—the circumstance of his temperance triumph following upon long years of convivial indulgence is one of the most remarkable features in his career. In those repented-of convivial days "Genial George," or "Good old George," as he used to be familiarly styled by his more youthful associates, was certainly capital company, not more egotistical than most men, and excellent at telling a story, and vivifying his narrative with appropriate action.

Somewhere in the "forties," before the publication of his famous "Bottle," drink had so far got the mastery over him, that he was pretty constantly in police custody during the small hours of the morning; having either been found in the street in an insensible condition, full length on the pavement like his own famous "spirit level," or been taken in charge for his personal protection until his friend, Mr. Bogue, the publisher, was roused up to bail him out, as, at one time, he was periodically called upon to do. Dickens described George Cruikshank at this unhappy period of his career as turning up at his friends' houses at unseasonable hours in the morning, unkempt and unwashed and smelling of tobacco, beer, and sawdust. As Blanchard Jerrold truly remarked, he "must have passed many

painful morrow mornings before the epoch of his reformation."

George Cruikshank, as we all know, expiated his peccadilloes in this direction a hundredfold, and temperance never had a more enthusiastic advocate than he proved himself to be. As to his general merits Thackeray honestly set them forth when he said, "he has told a thousand truths in as many strange and fascinating ways; he has given a thousand new and pleasant thoughts to millions of people; he has never used his wit dishonestly; he has never in all the exuberance of his frolicsome humour caused a single painful or guilty blush."

The first publisher of the "Comic Almanack" had a genius for making money. He toiled and moiled at this one pursuit with the regularity of clockwork for a stated number of years, and retired from business at middle age with a considerable fortune. Not only were Tilt's publishing ventures successes, but when lithography was a novelty, and picture scrap-books were very general, and engravings with which to fill them rather rare, he imported from France large sheets crowded with designs, chiefly figure subjects, by Victor Adam and others. For years Tilt had this trade almost entirely in his own hands, utilising the long side window of his shop to display the immense variety of his collection, and frequently turning over, I have heard him say, several hundred pounds per week, more than half of which was profit, from the sale of these lithographs alone.

When Tilt made up his mind to retire from business, instead of looking outside his own establishment for a purchaser, he carefully considered which of his assistants was most suited to succeed him, and to secure him the largest amount he could hope to obtain for his stock and copyrights. One of these assistants he knew had money, but he was not equally certain with regard to his brains.

Another had expectations and rich relatives, and the ambition to figure as a publisher of importance; while a third had plenty of practical knowledge, coupled with more than average taste. The fourth, and youngest, of these assistants, had nothing beyond his general shrewdness and steady application to business to recommend him, and Tilt, passing all the others by, fixed upon him as his successor. One afternoon he quietly mentioned that he wished him to remain after the shop was closed and help in checking some accounts; and the other assistants, little dreaming of what was passing in Tilt's head, were one and all delighted that this extra duty had not devolved on themselves.

As soon as the shop was closed Tilt produced a statement of the last stock-taking, and went carefully through it with his assistant, occasionally reducing the valuations whenever, after discussion, this was considered advisable. He then informed his companion that he had decided to retire from business, and staggered him by asking whether he would like to take over the stock at the valuation they had just arrived at. In this case, he said, he contemplated taking him at once into partnership for a limited term, at the expiration of which he proposed handing everything over to him, including the book debts and sufficient capital to carry on the business on its accustomed lines. Ample time, Tilt said, would be allowed him to pay the amount of the valuation, and to repay any capital advanced—the two forming a total estimated, if I remember right, at some forty to fifty thousand pounds.

This proposal came like a thunder-clap to the assistant, who, with neither resources of his own, nor expectations from his friends, had until that moment seen nothing before him but steady drudgery for the rest of his life. In his agitation he thanked Tilt as he best could for the confidence he was prepared to place in him, and, of course,

promised to do his utmost to justify the good opinion he had formed.

Next day Tilt called his other assistants together and told them that he had taken Mr. Bogue into partnership. The deed and the agreement for the conveyance of the business were duly executed, and at the appointed time Tilt bade adieu to publishing. He however still went on amassing and investing money, but always taking care to have a hundred thousand pounds or more within reach to profit by any eventuality that might arise. He had not long to wait, as during the railway mania (1845) the proprietors of a celebrated publication had speculated deeply in the shares of new and dubious undertakings, and were in need of temporary assistance. Bankers then would no more lend money upon copyrights than they would on railway scrip. Tilt, however, had no such objection, and came promptly forward with £50,000, drawing up himself within the limits of half a sheet of notepaper the assignment of the copyright, which was to serve as security for this large advance.

Five-and-fifty years ago literature was either a more precarious pursuit than it is at present, or else literary men were more improvident. I can recall a string of names—half of them still remembered by the public, the other half forgotten—of journalists and magazine writers who were accustomed to spend a fair portion of their lives within the high walls of the Fleet or King's Bench prisons. When my father was requiring some assistance on the "Comic Almanack" the two writers whom he thought best adapted to the purpose chanced to be in limbo, and I remember being entrusted with letters and proofs for delivery to them at their quarters in the Fleet and the Bench.

To me the kaleidoscopic scene inside these places was as good as any play. The stupendous get-up and general gaiety of the many seedy swells puzzled me, and

the dissipated, devil-may-care looks of most of the encaged ones, and the dismal demeanour of some few of the others surprised me. Among the prisoners there were, I remember, one or two notorious jew gaming-house keepers, who having been ordered to pay fines of £5000 and to give securities for £20,000 more, had made up their minds, if petitioning the Crown failed them, to spend the rest of their lives in *duresse.* It was, however, the racket-playing in "Spike park," as Mr. Jingle styled it, and the enthusiasm shown by the players that took my fancy, and on subsequent occasions I spent hours together in witnessing some of the more exciting matches.

Besides those incarcerated within the lofty prison walls there were well-to-do debtors, who, preferring to live on their means rather than satisfy the demands of creditors, availed themselves of the privilege of living within a circumscribed distance of the Bench and the Fleet—in what were known as the "rules." For this liberty a substantial fee was exacted, and no doubt security had also to be given, besides which rents within the rules were exorbitantly high for very indifferent accommodation. A debtor who had secured this privilege was forbidden to stir beyond the prescribed limits unless he had previously provided himself for a stated fee with a day rule, permitting him to absent himself for a certain number of hours, and thus enabling him to go to the Derby, a prize fight, or other equally exciting amusement. When I was a lad I knew a quiet, courteous, aristocratic-looking old gentleman, an ancient fop who affected the fashions of a past generation, and wore false hair and rouged his cheeks, but was unable to straighten his bent frame. This was Sir Lumley Skeffington, said to be descended from one of the Irish kings, and some quarter of a century previously one of the bloods of the regency. He had written several comedies, which secured him a couplet in Byron's "English Bards"—

> "And sure great Skeffington must claim our praise
> For skirtless coats and skeletons of plays."

He was passionately fond of theatrical society, had been an habitué of the green-rooms of the principal theatres, and penned complimentary verses to popular actresses in the newspapers. At the time I knew him he was living within the rules of the Bench, near to the Surrey theatre, and, so far as was practicable under such dismal conditions, in rather a luxurious style.

As, in the circumstances in which he was placed, he was unable to secure the society of the higher professionals, he was glad to entertain certain members of the Surrey company at his apartments. The old gentleman, who had a fund of anecdote about members of his own set —all belonging to a world equally strange and fascinating to the generality of his hearers—used to boast that his secret for long life consisted in never stirring out of doors during the cold damp winter months, and in living in a suite of rooms which admitted of his constantly shifting from one apartment to another, and so securing the necessary fresh air. He was of course referring to the time when he was a prisoner within the rules, from which, after years of *duresse*, he by some happy accident got freed, and attained the good old age of eighty.

These were golden days for knavish attorneys and extortionate bum-bailiffs, when as many as six thousand debtors passed yearly through his majesty's prisons of the Fleet, the King's Bench, and the Marshalsea; nearly half of them, too, for debts under £20. To recover a debt of less than £5 in the Court of King's Bench then cost as much as £15, even when no defence was made. If a debtor owned a copyhold estate, it was sacred against the law's assaults; but in the case of a freehold, the creditors could secure half the rents. They could not, however,

attach funded property, neither could they seize bank notes or coin belonging to a debtor. Absurdly enough, if when making a levy the sheriff's officer happened to find a pile of money upon a table, he dared not touch it, although he was privileged to seize the table itself.

Debtors could weary out their creditors by putting them to exorbitant expense, should the latter invoke the law's assistance to recover their just claims. On being arrested and held to bail, a debtor, after being served with a declaration, could put in a special plea; or, if he should still be in custody, his attorney could plead in person at a cost of a guinea, and thereby run the creditor to £30 expense. The proceedings that followed were altogether of the most absurd character. In the first place, the plaintiff, on obtaining judgment, was obliged to send his debtor a paper book, which the latter was entitled to return to the plaintiff's attorney with a fee of 7s. 6d. Thereupon his own attorney, after searching the final judgment office, could give the attorney on the other side notice to be present when the costs were taxed, and could then serve him with a writ of error, thereby putting his client to great expense, which he would have to pay or go entirely over the ground again.

The cost to the defendant of this writ of error was £4, 4s., but for another guinea the writ could be made returnable in Parliament at an expense to the plaintiff of not less than £100. If in spite of this the plaintiff still determined to proceed, the defendant could file a bill in Chancery or the Exchequer, and on the plaintiff failing to answer it, an injunction might be obtained against him, when an attachment would issue, and a committal to prison follow for contempt of court. The costs incurred by the plaintiff and defendant respectively, through these proceedings, would be as follows:—

Plaintiff.				*Defendant.*			
Answer to special plea	£30	0	0	Special Plea	£1	1	0
„ Writ of Error	100	0	0	Paper book	0	7	6
„ Bill in Chancery	100	0	0	Writ of Error . . .	4	4	0
„ Bill in Exchequer	84	0	0	If returnable in Parliament	1	1	0
				Bill in Chancery . .	12	0	0
				Bill in Exchequer . .	6	6	0
	£314	0	0		£24	19	6

In these days, not only the nefarious Palace Court, but all the other law courts, were deserving of being apostrophized in the indignant language of Policeman X.—

"Good sport it is to you
To grind the honest pore,
To pay their just or unjust debts
With 800 per cent. for Lor;

. . . .

"Come down from that tribewn,
Thou shameless and Unjust;
Thou Swindle, picking pockets in
The name of Truth august:
Come down, thou hoary Blasphemy,
For die thou shalt and must.

. . . .

"Rise up, Sir John Jervis,
And shut me up that den;
That sty for fattening lawyers in,
On the bones of honest men."

As may be supposed, there were some swingeing salaries and sinecures for the benefit of official drones in these scandalous days. A subordinate official like the clerk of the rules of the King's Bench prison then received upwards of £5000 a year, or more than fell to the lot of a cabinet minister, and nearly as much as a judge of the court was paid. Lord Ellenborough possessed the

snug berth of clerk to this same Court of King's Bench, with the comfortable emolument of £9625 per annum, at the same time that he was drawing a salary of £5060 as president of the board of commissioners for the affairs of India. The Duke of Grafton, descended from one of Charles II.'s illegitimate brood, performed the arduous duties of sealer in the Court of Common Pleas by deputy, for the paltry sum of £3888 yearly, or considerably less than half of what Lord Ellenborough was paid for his clerkship. The salary of the House of Commons door-keeper then topped the salaries of both the Royal Astronomer and the Principal Librarian of the British Museum, as, while he received £874, they were paid only £800 each.

With regard to sinecures, one of the most notorious cases was that of Lord William Bentinck, who, while exercising the high functions of Governor of Bengal, retained the menial office of clerk of the pipe, one of whose duties was to assist the man who held up Lord Chancellor Brougham's train! The Beresfords positively revelled in sinecures in the sister isle, being at once wine-tasters, storekeepers, packers, and craners. The fair sex, moreover, was not forgotten. A well-to-do baroness held the derogatory post of sweeper of the mall in St. James's-park, and another lady of title was chief usher in the Court of Exchequer. The Honourable Louisa Browning and Lady Martin were *custodes brevium*, of course without duties, but not without emoluments. No end of noble lords and ladies, and right honourable and honourable gentlemen, and their children also, filled the sinecure offices of prothonotaries, clerks, tide-waiters, harbour masters, searchers, gaugers, packers, craners, and wharfingers, the aggregate value of which was about £180,000 per annum. Of this amount, one-third was in respect to sinecures in the law courts.

If these were the days of great abuses, they were also the days of simple habits and simpler tastes. Average middle-class people had not then a tithe of the luxuries or a quarter of the recreation they now enjoy. They had to eat their grandest dinners without iced champagne, and on ordinary occasions wine of any kind was a comparative rarity. There were no railways to encourage us to be perpetually on the rush after excitement and change. Travelling then was a serious business, expensive, and attended with no end of discomforts, spite of excellent inns and splendidly-horsed coaches. Instead of club trains to whisk us to Paris and dine us *en route*, eight hours' coaching was needed to reach Dover, then several hours' misery had to be endured in crossing the channel, and twenty-two additional hours of intense torment before one got to Paris. In London omnibuses were still rare, and no fares were below a shilling: people going from one part of town to another mostly trudged on foot, unless they could afford to pay a shilling and more a mile for a cab. For a couple of years, when I was qualifying for a wood-engraver, I walked regularly from Brixton to Judd-street, rising every morning before six, and never once missing arriving at my destination by eight o'clock. At eight P.M.—for the eight hours' working day was then undreamt of—I started on my return home again.

No penny post then inundated us with letters, and obliged us to be constantly writing replies whether we wished to do so or no. No telegrams then worried us from daybreak to midnight; no penny and half-penny newspapers, with their fresh editions almost every half-hour, pestered us with their latest, or outbid each other with apocryphal intelligence. Half a score of theatres then sufficed for the amusement of London and the suburbs, and we managed to jog on without a single music hall. Then we found the Pickwickian harlequinade, as

some superfine people now derogatively call it, sufficiently funny for us not to trouble ourselves about any prospective new style of humour. We, moreover, managed to do without society papers and interviewers, and all those blessings which are supposed to flow from the "new journalism." There were plenty of handsome women, but no troops of professional beauties like we have to-day; and when middle-class people married their daughters, it was altogether a private affair, and paterfamilias escaped being bled for pictures of the bride and her *trousseau* in the fashion papers. A considerate legislature had not provided us with bank holidays, and of course there were no cheap excursion trains. After the advent of railways, when for economy's sake we travelled third-class, we had to take our stand—for seats there were none—in what was nothing less than an open cattle-truck; with no shilling shockers, penny and halfpenny comics, and "tit-bits" and "short cuts" to amuse and confuse us during our uncomfortable journey.

These were the halcyon days, when Perkins's destructive steam-gun was to have revolutionized warfare, and rendered it so deadly as to be no longer persisted in, but which, after subsiding into a popular exhibition, eventually ended in smoke; when our brave defenders, as we never tired of calling them, by sea and land, were mercilessly flogged for the most trivial offences; when ladies wore bonnets of such preposterous dimensions that the doorways of closed carriages would scarcely admit them; with big balloon-sleeves, which at dinner tables almost effaced their neighbours, and surprisingly short gowns, that seemed specially adapted to the display of sandelled ankles; when the postage of a letter to Brighton was eightpence, and to Italy (prepaid) three shillings and twopence; when a single steel pen cost nearly as much as a hundred nibs do now; when Dando, the ravenous oyster eater, was inces-

santly swallowing his ten or twelve dozen bivalves, without a thought of paying for them, until at last death in prison, through semi-starvation, gave the quietus to his unnatural appetite; when St. John Long, the fashionable quack doctor, every now and then rubbed some too confiding lady patient to death; when Joseph Ady was periodically haled before the magistrates for pestering people with unpaid letters, promising to tell them something to their advantage in return for a sovereign; when Ikey Solomons, the notorious jew "fence," still carried on his nefarious practices; and when Sir Andrew Agnew was striving his hardest to make people religious by act of parliament—his proposed Agony bill, as it was called, according to the jokers of the period, forbade—

> "Even Epsom salts to work on Sundays!
>
> . . . . .
>
> Besides, sir, here 's a poser—
> At least to me it seems a closer,
> And shews a shocking lack of legislative skill—
>   If nothing, sir, 's to work from Saturday to Monday,
> Pray how 's your Bill
>   To work on Sunday?"

VI.

(1835-37.)

EARLY PENCIL AND GRAVER WORK—THE FRASER FRACAS—A PHENOMENAL SNOWSTORM—IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT AND AT STONEHENGE.

WHEN, in 1835, the time arrived for me to leave school, a certain aptitude I had shown for drawing led my father to think of educating me for an artist. But after I had spent a few months in copying from the flat and the round, and had attended some occasional Royal Academy lectures, wood-engraving was deemed a preferable profession for me to follow, owing to my father's position as a publisher. I was thereupon apprenticed to a friend of the family, Mr. G. W. Bonner, a second-rate wood-engraver, who intensified in his woodcuts the conventional mannerisms of the bold water-colour drawings which he was somewhat an adept at producing. Bonner had recently turned out two remarkably clever pupils, one of whom, named Powis, died early, while the other, Mr. W. J. Linton—the future friend of Mazzini and other advanced liberals, at a time when to know them even was regarded as a crime—is still living, and may be said to have ranked in his palmy days—John Thompson only excepted—as the first wood-engraver of his epoch. This was prior to the craze in favour of the American style of wood-engraving—all tone and no texture, and, above all, a microscopic minuteness of execution which has more the character of mechanism than of art.

Bonner employed several assistants, and had one other apprentice, who, like myself, lived with the family at Newington. Advocates of the "eight hours" craze will, no doubt, think the seventy-two hours of steady work which I got through regularly every week something excessive, whereas I simply regarded it as a matter of course. Ten hours' work a day was our allotted portion, but I voluntarily devoted another couple of hours daily to drawing from plaster casts. Summer and winter I was up by half-past five, and during the latter season lighted my own fire and trimmed my own lamp with hands terribly swollen with chilblains. Nothing, however, seemed a hardship in those lightsome laborious days. In the course of the first few months I slaughtered with a graver a certain number of my own drawings on the wood, after which I was entrusted with the engraving of a series of rustic figures, which, to my great satisfaction, were duly published in some spelling-book of the period.

The year or two I spent at Bonner's passed monotonously enough. Such winter evenings after working hours as were not devoted to drawing, were, in a self-educational fit, given to the reading of Bacon's "Essays" and Locke "On the Understanding" in Chambers's cheap reprints, but to one's no great after benefit, I am sorry to say, and to mastering Dr. Combe's "Principles of Physiology," and his brother George's "Constitution of Man." A score or two of educated men had not then perplexed the rising generation with their divergent opinions respecting the best hundred books to read, so that one had to content one's self by supplementing this somewhat dry if instructive reading with the monthly number of "Pickwick," and occasionally one of Captain Marryat's novels. I had already read all the "Waverley novels," and most of G. P. R. James's romances, and during a serious illness at school I had devoured with the utmost zest every page of

the dozen volumes of "Clarissa Harlowe," which Mrs. Wyburn had lent me to read. More recently I had read by stealth "Tom Jones," and Smollett's novels, surreptitiously abstracted from the top shelf of my father's bookcase; had pored with delight over the "Sentimental Journey," and dipped into "Tristam Shandy"; and had read with boyish zest Swift's "Gulliver," and the incomparable "Tale of a Tub." Pope's translation of the "Iliad" had also fascinated me, and I knew its more striking passages by heart.

The most democratic opinions were current in the workroom at Bonner's; and forbidden books, furtively obtained, were eagerly read by us out of working hours and freely discussed while work was going on. Among them were Paine's "Rights of Man" and "Age of Reason," both now regarded as harmless publications; Southey's "Wat Tyler," and Byron's "Vision of Judgment"; and a well-thumbed verbatim report of a trial for sedition, which recalled the old Star chamber days. It was that of Muir, a liberal-minded young Scotch advocate, and a victim to the political bigotry of the time. After the lord justice-clerk had brow-beaten the accused in Judge Jeffrey's fashion, and had wheedled the jury to return a verdict of guilty, the unhappy young fellow was transported for life, although his only crime had been the lending of a political work of Paine's to some working-man.

The book that, of all others, had the greatest fascination for us was Shelley's "Queen Mab," in which ardent liberals found the expression of their aspirations, and which, a few years afterwards came to be known as the "chartists' bible." At that time we did not read Shelley as he is now read, for his poetic imagery and mellifluous diction, but because this ostracised poem of his teemed with agnostic and republican ideas boldly expressed in impassioned language.

At this period, during the long summer evenings, I

managed to get an occasional hour at cricket on the neighbouring common, or I walked over London-bridge to meet a young friend, whose city hours were even longer than my own, on his way home towards Clapham. London-bridge was, in these days, a favourite hunting ground with youthful pickpockets—"fogle-fakers" is, I believe, the orthodox term—accomplished pupils of old Fagin, with whom Dickens was soon to make us acquainted; and I often amused myself by following in their wake, and watching their proceedings. It was then almost impossible for anyone to pass over London-bridge of an evening with a silk handkerchief in the pocket of his coat tails without losing it. Instead of comparatively worthless lawn handkerchiefs, genuine Bandannas costing five or six shillings each were the usual wear, and if your pocket chanced to get picked of one, to recover it you had to walk as far as Field-lane—at the back of which the open foul Fleet ditch then ran—and you would see hundreds of stolen silk handkerchiefs hanging on long poles projecting from the windows of almost every house. A couple of shillings or half-a-crown would secure the lost article, which was only recognizable by its pattern, all marks having been picked out the moment the "wipe" came into the "fence's" possession.

It was near Field-lane, and in a measure for the accommodation of its inhabitants, that the first London gin palace was built. The polished mahogany counters, the garish bar fittings, the smartly-painted vats, inscribed "Old Tom" and "Cream of the Valley," the rows of showy bottles of noyau and other cordials, and above all, the immense blaze of gas-light within and without these buildings as soon as dusk set in, were all so many novelties and came as a vision of splendour to the besotted denizens of the neighbouring slums. I remember that one of these so-called palaces had a second and lower counter for the

accommodation of the children and juvenile thieves whom it counted among its patrons.

"Pickwick" was then appearing in its green monthly covers, and no sooner was a new number published than needy admirers flattened their noses against the booksellers' windows, eager to secure a good look at the etchings, and peruse every line of the letterpress that might be exposed to view, frequently reading it aloud to applauding bystanders. Everyone who could afford a shilling a month devoured the number the moment it appeared; but enthusiasts, less well-to-do, paid their twopences to the libraries for the loan of it, and impatiently awaited their turn. So great was the craze, that "Pickwick" secured far more attention than was given to the ordinary politics of the day; each new number of it being much more eagerly watched for than House of Commons divisions on English Church Reform, or Irish Corporation, or Tithe bills. For something like a couple of years previously I had been on the look out for the funny stories and sketches signed "Boz," appearing periodically in the old "Monthly Magazine," and pronounced by the few who knew of them to be inimitable; so that it was scarcely a matter for great surprise when, by and by, this "unknown young man modestly came and took his place," as Mr. Thackeray flatteringly puts it, "at the head of English literature."

Some trivial illness of Bonner's having developed into an attack of brain fever, Dr. Uwins was called in to attend him; but as there was no amelioration in the patient's condition under his treatment, further advice was considered desirable. The family doctor, however, thought differently, simply because, as he said, Uwins would have to be consulted, and would be certain to recommend Dr. Clutterbuck, who would as certainly order the patient to be cupped, in which case he would inevitably die. The family doctor's warning was unheeded, however, and everything turned out as he

had predicted. Within a few hours after Bonner had been bled, the physicians, seemingly undismayed at the result of their drastic treatment, calmly proceeded to prescribe frequent small doses of brandy, with a view, as they said, of sustaining exhausted nature, but all to no purpose, for within eight and forty hours their patient was a corpse. The circumstance made a deep impression on my mind, which has never been effaced.

In the summer of 1836 I accompanied my father into Kent, where I spent several weeks roaming about sketching. While we were away we learned from the daily papers the particulars of Grantley Berkeley's brutal attack on Fraser, the publisher, with whom my father had a business acquaintance, and whom I had also seen on various occasions. The story, although a well-known one, will bear telling again. In the August number of "Fraser's Magazine," at that time a somewhat unscrupulous publication, an abusive review of Grantley Berkeley's novel, "Berkeley Castle," had appeared, in which, after reviving the old story of the illegitimacy of the then head of the Berkeley family, the writer asked, "Why, then, bore us with long panegyrics upon the purity, antiquity, and nobility of the Berkeley blood? Why torment us with a book vilely written? . . . We take the goods the donkey provides us. . . . As for the book, it is trash. Grantley Berkeley has no knowledge, literary or antiquarian. . . . This work puts an end to his puppy appearance any longer in literature." The tirade wound up with a suggestion that Lord Euston, to whose wife the novel was dedicated, should borrow a horsewhip, which he was assured he might use with perfect impunity.

On a sultry afternoon a day or two after the magazine was published, two of the Berkeleys, Grantley and his brother Craven, both tall, powerful men, entered Fraser's shop in Regent-street when the publisher was quite alone,

his assistants being then away at dinner. Grantley Berkeley, introducing himself, demanded the name of the writer of the abusive article, and the publisher, according to his own account, reasonably enough requested time to consider before giving a reply. But no time was allowed him, for he was instantly knocked down and struck some score of times over the face and hands with a heavy riding-whip. Being a little man, and no match for his powerful antagonist, he shouted out for help, and his cries brought the passers-by to the shop-door, but Craven Berkeley, posted there on guard, prevented anyone from entering.

Grantley Berkeley mentions in his memoirs that before he went to Fraser's shop he sent the "shrewd" hall-porter at Crockford's there on a fictitious errand to discover if Fraser was present—and possibly also to find out if the coast was entirely clear. He says he thought the publisher looked a conceited swell, and as he positively declined to give up the name asked for, he at once knocked him down with his fist—Grantley prided himself on having learnt boxing from Jackson, Byron's tutor in the pugilistic art—and then seized him by the collar and hurled him into the middle of the shop, where he "gave him a severe flogging, which was concluded in the gutter of the street," up which, he says, his victim fled calling loudly for help.

Dr. Maginn, who had written the article, put himself in communication with Grantley Berkeley, and a duel was fought in a field off the Harrow-road, when, it was said, Maginn's third bullet grazed his adversary's coat collar, and Berkeley's bullet struck the ground close to Maginn's foot. Grantley Berkeley not only gave a different version of the affair, but even pretended that Maginn came to the ground padded, and urged on by Fraser to kill his man, under the threat of being arrested for debt should he fail in doing so.

The matter, however, did not end here. Maginn

entered upon a justification of himself in "Fraser," whereupon another of the brothers Berkeley assailed him in choice Billingsgate, styling him "a blackguardly hireling of the most profligate part of the press, a stipendiary assassin of character, and a mean and malignant liar." Maginn, ignoring the offensive personalties which he had himself indulged in, rejoined that "it would be indeed strange if vague and commonplace abuse constituted a claim to the privilege of a gentleman; that he had no notion of fighting a second time in one quarrel, and that he would not recognise the principle of being bound to offer a succession of hostile meetings to all the members of the Berkeley family."

Fraser brought an action for assault, laying his damages at £6000, but a tuft-hunting British jury only awarded him £100, the estimated amount of his doctor's bill. He obtained leave for a new trial, but in the meantime proceedings had been commenced against the magazine for libel, which led to a compromise. By the terms of this the new trial was to be abandoned and the libel suit settled for 40s. damages, without costs.

Grantley Berkeley declared that before his duel with Maginn, Miss Landon (L.E.L.) had appealed to him for protection against the doctor's persistent persecution, asserting that, although a married man, he had made much too ardent love to her, and not meeting with the encouragement he expected, had then endeavoured to extort money from her. It is quite certain that she spoke of Grantley Berkeley as the "Bayard of the age"—although this possibly might have referred to his efforts to secure the admission of ladies to hear the parliamentary debates—and that after the Fraser-Maginn affair she wrote to him in the most friendly fashion.

I am ignorant of what L.E.L.'s pretensions to beauty may have been in the days when she captivated the too

amorous Maginn after the susceptible Jerdan had been enamoured of her; but when I saw her on one occasion no very long time afterwards, prior to her ill-fated marriage, she was certainly most unattractive, and I failed to recognize any resemblance to the flattering portrait that formed the frontispiece to one of her books. The recollection I have preserved is of a pale-faced, plain-looking little woman, with lustreless eyes, and somewhat dowdily dressed, whom no amount of enthusiasm could have idealized into a sentimental poetess.

Debt and drink brought Maginn down very low at last, though it may be doubted whether he ever descended, as Grantley Berkeley asserts, to appealing to his old enemy to let bygones be bygones, and proffering a favourable review of the next Berkeley novel in return for a few pounds.

Alaric Watts thus pictured the erratic Irishman—

> "Although he writes the 'LL.D.'
> After his name, he'll never be
> A whit the graver than he is—
> Less fond of drunken develries,
> Less ready for a vulgar hoax,
> Addicted less to pot-house jokes.
> Give him a glass or two of whiskey,
> And in a trice he grows so frisky,
> So full of frolic, fun, and satire,
> So ready dirt around to scatter,
> And so impartial in his blows,
> They fall alike on friends and foes;
> Nay, rather than his humour baulk,
> His mother's son he'd tomahawk!"

Maginn, as we all know, enjoyed the friendship of Lockhart, and also of Thackeray, in whose Captain Shandon his portrait is to be recognised. Thackeray is said, on no very reliable authority, however, to have lent (which is equivalent to having given) Maginn £500 when he was a prisoner for debt in the Fleet. There used to be

a good many romantic stories current as to the way in which Thackeray got rid of the modest fortune he had inherited. Some accounts asserted that he had been swindled out of it while studying as an artist at Rome; others maintained that he had lost it at the Frascati gaming-tables in Paris; while others again credited him with disbursing it with a too generous hand among his brethren of the pen and pencil. It is scarcely likely that Maginn participated in it, as Macready, when recording in his diary that he had met Thackeray in 1836, mentions as a matter of common rumour that he had then "lost all his fortune," whereas Thackeray's acquaintance with Maginn could only have commenced the year before, when he first began writing for "Fraser's Magazine." Thackeray was reticent himself on the subject of his lost patrimony, whenever any faint allusion happened to be made to it in his presence; but from certain passages in "Lovel the Widower" it would seem that a portion of his property at any rate was swallowed up in the literary ventures in which he is known to have engaged.[1]

"An old college acquaintance," he says, "whom I was idiot enough to imagine a respectable man, . . . and a queer wine merchant and bill discounter, Sherrick by name, had somehow got possession of that neat little literary paper, 'The Museum' [? 'The National Standard'[2]], which perhaps you remember; and this eligible literary property my friend Honeyman, with his wheedling tongue, induced me to purchase. . . . I gave myself airs as editor of that confounded 'Museum,' and proposed to educate the public taste, to diffuse morality and sound literature throughout the nation, and to pocket a liberal salary in return for my services. I daresay I printed my own sonnets, my own tragedy, my own verses. . . . I daresay I wrote satirical articles, in which I piqued myself on the fineness of my wit, and criticisms got up for the nonce out of encyclopedias and biographical dictionaries."

[1] A recent correspondent of "The World," who appears to be well informed on the subject, asserts that Thackeray's fortune was lost by his step-father, Major Carmichael Smyth, who invested both his own and Thackeray's money in an Indian bank, which afterwards failed. According to this correspondent the story of the Bundlecund bank in "The Newcomes" is really a chapter in Thackeray's own family history.

[2] See *post*, p. 211.

The snow that is falling while I am now writing, and the dreary white waste on which one's eye rests everywhere around, reminds me of the great snowstorm during the winter of this year (1836). On Christmas day tardy visitors on their way to pleasant parties turned back, dinnerless, rather than face the heavy snowfall and the howling tempest further. The mail guards were unanimous in reporting Christmas night to have been the severest they had ever experienced. Without a moment's intermission the snow continued to descend for five days and nights. The mails which ought to have arrived in London at six o'clock on the morning of Boxing day, in most cases stuck fast in the snow. Some few succeeded in making their way safely to St. Martin's-le-Grand, but the earliest did not arrive until eight o'clock at night. The guard of the Holyhead mail rode in an exhausted condition on one of his leaders to the general-post-office, and reported that the Manchester, Holyhead, and Chester mails were all embedded in snowdrifts at Hockley-hill, near Dunstable.

The snowfall extended over every part of the kingdom. At Lewes it drifted in an avalanche, and buried seven cottages and their inmates. In some of the worst places the drifts were as much as fifty feet deep, and several coachmen averred that the banks of snow, through which armies of labourers had to cut a way for their vehicles, towered high above their heads as they sat on the box. The guard of the mail which left Exeter on the evening of the 26th stated that before the vehicle reached London, on the night of the 29th, it was buried five times in different drifts, and had to be dug out on each occasion. The town of St. Albans was crowded with mail and other coaches, which could pass neither up nor down the road; and on the morning of the 27th, as the snow kept falling heavier than ever, fourteen of these vehicles had to be abandoned, after

the bags had been removed and the horses extricated, until the storm abated.

On the previous evening the driver of the Dover mail started defiantly from Gracechurch-street at the usual time, with the guard for his solitary companion. Before many hours had elapsed the two officials returned, reporting that with infinite difficulty they had got to the top of Shooter's-hill, beyond which point they had found the road absolutely impassable. Between Canterbury and Dover the letters were conveyed on sledges drawn by three or four horses, tandem fashion, and such few passengers as these could accommodate had to pay two pounds per head. Indeed the interruption of postal communication was so complete that for a time coasting vessels were employed to convey letters between one part of the coast and another.

The following summer I saw the unfortunate landscape painter Cocking ascend from Vauxhall Gardens in a parachute of his own invention, suspended from Green's balloon ; and in the hope of disposing of it to the "Weekly Chronicle" newspaper, I made a sketch of the amateur aeronaut in his parachute car. Next day, after the fatal termination of his unscientific experiment, I had the bad taste, I am sorry to say, to sketch the poor man's lifeless body, then being made a sixpenny show of, at the Tiger's Head at Lee. The over-confident aeronaut, after some experiments with a toy parachute in his back-garden, jumped to the conclusion that he had made a discovery in aerostatics. He thereupon had a parachute constructed after his own design, not unlike an open monster umbrella, turned upside down, and although he was upwards of sixty years of age, ascended with it attached to the car of Green's balloon.

When an altitude of considerably more than a mile was reached, Cocking detached the parachute—Green having all along judiciously declined to take any such responsibility upon himself—whereupon the tin tubes forming the frame-

work of the machine, being unable to resist the pressure of the atmosphere, collapsed with a sound resembling thunder, sending, as one of the witnesses at the inquest said, all the sheep in the neighbouring fields scampering in terror. Cocking fell with such force to the ground that his sternum was fractured, and nearly all his ribs were broken.

Mr. Frederick Marriott of the "Weekly Chronicle" gladly purchased the Cocking sketches from me. This recently started newspaper made a feature of publishing coarsely executed woodcuts of subjects of passing interest, and had lately leaped into a vulgar notoriety through its portraits of Greenacre, Sarah Gale, and Hannah Brown, and its views of the localities where the latter was murdered and her dismembered remains were found. Greenacre, when under remand, was actually allowed to write to the "Weekly Chronicle" to correct certain statements that had gone forth unfavourable to himself, giving as his reason for selecting that paper that it was largely read by his acquaintances. Marriott was prompt to profit by such a dubious testimonial, and the next number of the "Weekly Chronicle" came out with a facsimile of Greenacre's letter.

The money I obtained from the Cocking sketches was the first I had ever earned, and with it and some accumulated savings I joined a couple of young friends in a pedestrian excursion through the Isle of Wight and the New Forest. There was no railway either to Portsmouth or Southampton at that time, and as the mail coach fares were far beyond our means, we set forth with our knapsacks on our backs and travelled outside a night luggage van which took a few passengers to Portsmouth. The Isle of Wight, although a favourite place of resort, was not already overrun by the ubiquitous holiday tripper. Sandown, at the time I am speaking of, had not a single house

beyond its one hotel and its coastguard station. There was, I remember, a grand and solitary look in the sweep of its spacious bay, then unhemmed in with bricks and mortar as it is now. At Shanklin there were a few fishermen's huts and only two or three lodging-houses, with a picturesque-looking rustic hotel for the accommodation of tourists. At Ventnor, I remember an hotel and a row of half-a-dozen cottages, but there was not a house of any kind where the large town has since sprung up, and there were none of the countless villas that at present crowd every coign of vantage in this favourite seaside resort. Freshwater, too, was a comparative solitude. Here, stretched on the grass in the fierce sunshine, we watched the summer clouds lazily

> "Flit across the downs, and leap
> Sheer off the cliff upon the sea,
> And sail and sail far out of sight."

The state of our finances compelled us to travel very economically, so that we had to content ourselves with a good breakfast and plain bread and cheese for the rest of the day. I remember how we used to chafe at having to pay the customary hotel charge of a couple of shillings for the momentary use in the coffee-room of a pair of wax candles; which the waiter always persisted in lighting, so that they might duly figure in the bill, while he went to inform the chambermaid that three beds were wanted. From the Isle of Wight we crossed to Lymington and roamed through the New Forest, after which my friends returned to London, while I trudged on to Salisbury to see the cathedral and Stonehenge. After going over the former, I walked to Amesbury, where, at the village inn, I was charged the modest sum of sixpence for my bed. Breakfasting early, I set off for the druidical circle, and just as I reached Stonehenge was overtaken by a violent storm, which obliged

me and an old shepherd to seek such shelter as the huge stones afforded.

Here, while watching anxiously for signs of finer weather, I listened to my companion's recital of the monotonous incidents of a life spent amidst these solitary surroundings. He told me he was born in the poorhouse, and had had care of sheep on the plain ever since he was sent out to get his own living, when he was little more than a child. He had heard speak of London, but did not know where it was, and of Salisbury, but had never been there, although it was only six or seven miles away. He had no idea what year it was, and had long lost count of his own age. He thought King George was still the reigning sovereign, but whether he was called George I. or George IV. he could not say. Some years before he had been told that Captain Swing went about the country setting the stackyards on fire to make the farmers give their men more to eat; but though they had had several blazes round about, he had never once known what it was to have his belly full. Although Old Sarum was in the immediate neighbourhood, I gathered from the old shepherd that he had never so much as heard speak of Reform.

After a time he left me to look after his flock, and I remained patiently waiting for a break in the dark clouds, but none shewed itself. I was, however, glad to see a gig, which had come from some considerable distance, drive up with a couple of gentlemen and a goodly laden hamper, their contribution to an intended picnic at Stonehenge on that day. The weather, however, had evidently interfered with their friends' turning up, and I was bidden to the feast, which was not only welcome, but, as the rain gave over in the nick of time, and my companions were jolly fellows, proved a very pleasant one.

VII.

(1837-38.)

SOME STRUGGLING ARTISTS—DOUGLAS JERROLD—ANNUALS AND OTHER GIFT-BOOKS—DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

SOON after my Isle of Wight excursion I became a pupil of Orrin Smith, the engraver, who was not only a great enthusiast in his profession, but had the knack of inspiring those associated with him with much of his own zeal. It was at this time that I got to know Kenny Meadows, who was a near neighbour of Smith's, and had for some time past been drawing a series of characteristic heads for "Bell's Life in London," wherein he had shewn himself equally felicitous in depicting graceless blackguards as he was known to be in drawing graceful cupids and other subjects which admitted of his giving scope to a somewhat exuberant fancy.

Another artist I became acquainted with was Edward Chatfield, who, in his days of innocence, while he was a pupil of Haydon's with the Landseers and others, had inconsiderately obliged the unthrifty painter of colossal canvasses by putting his name to a bill, and been thereby mulcted of a considerable slice of his modest fortune. Chatfield was looked upon as a promising artist, a rather clever magazine writer, and a passionate student of Shakspeare. He had his painting room and lived at Smith's house in Judd-street, and here he also died, while I was still a pupil, leaving behind him an unfinished picture, on which he had put forth his best powers, representing the wives of soldiers

ordered abroad drawing lots to settle which of them should enjoy the coveted privilege of embarking with their husbands.

John Leech, in his young days, also came to live in Smith's house, and I used to meet both him and Chatfield daily at the family dinner-table, at which, moreover, Douglas Jerrold and Laman Blanchard were at this time rather frequent guests. Deaf old Thomas Landseer, who was a draughtsman on wood—chiefly known for his illustrations to the "Devil's Walk"—as well as the engraver of many of his talented younger brother's famous pictures, was another of the artistic fraternity whom I became acquainted with at this period Having carefully studied the quadrumana species in the adjacent Zoological-gardens, Thomas Landseer fancied it the perfection of humour to depict mankind as monkeys, as he was constantly doing in some boldly executed etchings. He was so deaf that every word one desired to say to him had to be shouted into his ear through a long tin trumpet, unless his pretty and garrulous wife chanced to be present to transact his business for him. This loquacious lady enjoyed the credit of having suggested to Charles Dickens his immortal Mrs Nickleby.

John Leech's father had made an unfortunate speculation. He had started *table d'hôte* dinners—heretofore unknown in England—at Anderton's hotel, Fleet-street, at the trifling charge of eighteenpence per head for four or five courses, but the public not having responded kindly to the invitation, the enterprising caterer was driven into the gazette. His son, after leaving the Charter House, where, as is well-known, he had been a schoolfellow of Thackeray's, had gone the regular hospital round in company with Albert Smith and Percival Leigh, in the rowdy medical student days when probationary "sawbones" made night hideous in quiet neighbourhoods with their inebriate shouts of "lul-ler-li-ety," the cant exclamation of the epoch.

Young Leech, however, possibly owing to the state of his father's affairs, had thrown aside the lancet for the pencil and taken to caricature, slavishly imitating Seymour in his early amateurish efforts. Through Orrin Smith's influence he was fortunate enough to get some of his sketches accepted for "Bell's Life Gallery of Comicalities," the popularity of which was such that when the engravings were collected in a sheet some half million copies used to be sold.

Luckily for Leech in the spring of 1838, while Kenny Meadows was supplying "Bell's Life" with a weekly head from either "Pickwick" or "Oliver Twist," he made a trip to Paris, most likely in company with his friend Albert Smith, and brought back with him a number of characteristic sketches of Parisian types, which were so good as to be at once accepted for publication by the "Bell's Life" editor. I engraved several of these "Paris Originals," which shewed such a marked improvement on anything Leech had heretofore produced, that his reputation as a humorous draughtsman was at once established. Among them were, of course, the student and the grisette, the café garçon and the dame de comptoir, the exquisite and the chevalier d'industrie, the soldier and the bonne, and similar marked Parisian types. Leech was somewhat of an adept in this line, and it will be remembered that it was with a group of Leicester-square foreign loafers that he made his début in "Punch" shortly after the publication started.

Leech was a good-looking young fellow, though somewhat of the Dundreary type—tall and slim, with glossy brown hair negligently arranged in the then prevailing fashion, and the luxuriant whiskers of half-a-century ago. He had about him that interesting air of melancholy which romantic young ladies, still under the influence of "Lara" and the "Corsair," used to find so captivating. At the time I knew him, and all through his life I believe, he was

of a reserved disposition. Conservative in politics, and with aristocratic sympathies, he held the early chartists in abhorrence, but never seemed to care about obtruding his opinions. Altogether his quiet, well-bred manners were in striking contrast to the boisterous, bumptious vulgarity of his intimate friend, Albert Smith. At the Judd-street dinner-table, whether the conversation was lively and witty, or grave and disputatious, Leech rarely spoke unless personally appealed to, and speedily retired into his shell again. He had a good bass voice, and at convivial evening meetings, in the private room of some tavern to which Orrin Smith had introduced him, he would now and then allow himself to be coaxed into trolling out in lugubrious tones, while his eyes roamed searchingly over the ceiling, Barry Cornwall's "King Death is a rare old fellow!"

Later in life Leech became exceedingly nervous, and had a morbid aversion to barrel organs, railway whistles, and church bells. He used to say he dreaded that, in a moment of desperation, he might be tempted to take the life of some itinerant organ-grinder, and he professed to wonder whether, considering the provocation, any British jury would really find him guilty of murder. It is a well-known story that while he was living at Phillimore-gardens, Kensington, and complaining a good deal of these annoyances, a friend invited him to seek a fortnight's quiet in the country. Leech, charmed at the thought, readily accepted the invitation; but the harsh grating of the garden roller, as it was being trundled in the early morning over his friend's gravelled walks immediately beneath the artist's bedroom window, combined with the matutinal chirping of a band of feathered choristers, at once drove the visitor, whose overstrung nerves made his life miserable, back again to town, spite of all the discordant sounds that so harassed him there.

There were very few illustrated publications five and fifty years ago, and struggling artists of a facetious fancy, but sublimely indifferent to accuracy of drawing, strove their hardest to secure a footing on any paper which published humorous sketches. I remember being sent to one of the fraternity for a drawing for the forthcoming number of "Bell's Life," and knocking and ringing at the house to no purpose. At last I caught sight of a female face above the parlour blind, scanning me curiously, and a minute or two afterwards the first-floor window was thrown up, and a voice exclaimed: "You've come, I suppose, for the 'Bell's Life' drawing; can you catch?" On my replying in the affirmative, the drawing on wood was chucked neatly into my hands, and the window drawn down again. The artist's street door, I afterwards learnt, was kept scrupulously closed, out of dread of prowling bailiffs.

The first time I saw Douglas Jerrold was at Orrin Smith's, when he was a youngish man of three or four and thirty. There was a peculiarity about his personal appearance certain to strike even the most casual observer. His small, and even then, slightly stooping figure, his head, with its long, light, falling hair, which, in moments of great excitement, he tossed about as a lion does its mane, and his prominent, searching blue eyes, that seemed to penetrate everywhere, invariably attracted the attention of strangers. He was a great gain to any company, for he always enlivened the dullest of conversations with his irrepressible wit. The many good things he said were evidently unpremeditated. They escaped from his lips on the spur of the moment, instead of being ingeniously led up to after the usual fashion of professional wits. Even his puns were singularly felicitous, and far beyond mere feats of verbal cleverness.

It is a moot point whether Jerrold was really that

amiable jester which some of his sycophantic friends pretended him to have been. He certainly said many cutting things with the full intention that they should wound, and succeeded completely in his purpose; although, in other instances, his sarcasms were simply due to a temptation too strong to be resisted. Such was the reply he made when Heraud asked him if he had seen his "Descent into Hell" (an epic poem he had lately written), and Jerrold responded, as any one who saw the evident opening for a smart rejoinder might have done, "No, but I should dearly like to." It was at Heraud's expense, though not to his face, that Jerrold made another biting jest. Some one having wondered how it was the careless poet always had such dirty hands, the wit suggested that it arose from his habit of constantly putting them up to his face. When Mrs. Jerrold was no longer young, and Jerrold laughingly told her that he wished wives were like bank notes, so that one of forty could be changed into two of twenty; and, when in answer to an inquiry as to who it was that was dancing with his wife (whose dancing days might be considered to be over), he replied, "some member of the Humane society," nobody believed for a moment that he intended anything beyond a jest. As some one discriminatingly said of him, "when the jest came to the tip of his tongue it had to explode, though the heavens themselves should crack."

That Jerrold, on occasions, could "wound with a touch that's scarcely felt or seen," was shewn in his reply to the incipient young poet, one of whose most ambitious efforts he had charitably promised to read in manuscript. Shortly afterwards, on the bard mildly inquiring of his critic if he thought the poem good, Jerrold neatly replied, "*Good!* my dear boy, is not the word."

Jerrold, before his election to the Reform Club, had a

positive mania for establishing tavern clubs, mostly with epigrammatic titles, at which an inordinate consumption of strong drinks was the rule. He started the Mulberries—so named after Shakspeare's mulberry tree—which used to meet at the Wrekin in Vinegar-yard, Catherine-street, and eventually developed into the more punctilious Shakspeare Club, of which Dickens, Macready, Talfourd, Maclise, and others were members. The Museum Club, too, and Hooks and Eyes, and Our Club were among Jerrold's failures or successes; besides which the much-chaffed Whittington Club for clerks and shopmen was brought into being, mainly through his co-operation.

When I first knew Douglas Jerrold, he was at the height of his dramatic reputation. "Punch" had not yet been started, and Jerrold was known to the public simply as the author of many plays and certain sketches, called "Men of Character," which had recently appeared in "Blackwood," and been issued in a collected form with some execrable illustrations by Thackeray. With Jerrold's friends it was an open secret that he was also the contributor of some biting comments on the justice's justice of the day, and kindred topics, to the columns of the grandmotherly "Morning Herald." As everyone knows, Jerrold had been a midshipman on board the Namur guardship when Clarkson Stanfield was a common seaman on the same vessel. After serving his majesty for a year or two, he abandoned the profession of the sea, and took to setting up type, with Laman Blanchard for fellow-apprentice. Eventually he secured employment as a compositor in the office of the "Monitor," a London weekly newspaper, and while so engaged was delighted at having a theatrical criticism, which he had himself written, and secretly dropped into the editor's box, handed to him to put up in type.

Thus encouraged, Jerrold abandoned the composing stick as readily as he had doffed his middy's uniform, and

eventually blossomed into a dramatic author, on hire at a few pounds per week at the Coburg theatre, then under Davidge's management. After he had spent a year or two in penning pieces to order, and licking the crude attempts of amateur playwrights into shape, Davidge, in an evil moment for himself, thought proper to quarrel with his well-worked dramatic hack. The latter thereupon betook himself to the opposition shop—

"'Twas called the Circus once, but now the Surrey"—

of which the sanguine, gay, and unscrupulous Elliston, after being turned out of Drury-lane, had become lessee. A bargain was soon struck. Jerrold was to receive five pounds per week, and the famous nautical drama, "Black-eyed Susan" was the first fruits of his new engagement.

Everyone knows that the play succeeded as no play had ever succeeded before, that it set the lucky manager on his financial legs again, netting him many thousand pounds. As commonly happens under similar circumstances, the author got nothing beyond his stipulated salary, excepting some gratuitous advice. After the play had run three hundred nights, Elliston had the coolness to say to him: "Jerrold, I have a capital idea for you. Prompt some one to suggest to your friends to get up a testimonial to you. You can put my name down as treasurer, and the thing will be safe to go."

In these days Elliston was invariably fresh drunk every night, and stale drunk every morning. A caller having complained to Jerrold of never being able to get an interview with the bibulous manager, whatever hour he came, morning or afternoon, Jerrold slyly suggested, "Call in the evening, and then he'll see you twice, for after six he always sees double." When "Black-eyed Susan" was making Elliston's fortune at the Surrey, the lessee of Covent-garden bargained with the lucky manager for the

play, and night after night a cab carried T. P. Cooke in his blue jacket and loose white ducks from the Blackfriars-road to Bow-street, where sentimental west-end damsels gave him the tribute of their tears.

Many years after his "Black-eyed Susan" success, Jerrold himself courted public approval as an actor in company with the rest of Dickens's amateur troupe, comprising chiefly literary men and artists. Jerrold's personal appearance was so peculiar that it seemed scarcely possible he could make up well for the stage and thoroughly lose his own identity, yet he did so most effectively in the part he undertook in "Every man in his humour." With the exception of the acting of Dickens, whom everyone found admirable as Captain Bobadil, and Mark Lemon's clever presentation of Brainworm, I thought Jerrold's studied rendering of Master Stephen alone displayed real histrionic power. Forster, of course, was just as stilted on the stage as Kitely, as he commonly was in ordinary society, and most of the other performers were decidedly amateurish. Of course friendly newspaper critics extolled the performance generally, and the audience, who cared even less for Ben Jonson than an audience of the present day might possibly do, pretended to be pleased with it. Still, the majority were really of old Lord Melbourne's opinion, although they were not equally candid in expressing it. Melbourne, it will be remembered, was overheard talking to himself between the acts. "I knew well enough the play would be dull," said he, in a self-satisfied fashion, "but never thought it would be so damnably dull as this."

Another rather frequent visitor at Orrin Smith's was Laman Blanchard—not Blanchard the pantomime writer, who only assumed the prefix several years after the death of the real Simon Pure—but the editor of "the Courier" newspaper, a clever political writer who served the whigs

well during a rather critical period, and reaped the usual reward—contemptuous neglect. Laman Blanchard was a general favourite in all circles. He was genial in disposition, amiable in manner, and lively in conversation, with a perpetual smile playing over his dark, handsome, jewish features. He was both a witty and graceful writer, and in addition to his daily routine newspaper work, contributed regularly to the magazines and annuals of the time.

On one occasion he called at Orrin Smith's, accompanied, I remember, by Harrison Ainsworth, whose "Jack Sheppard" was then running through "Bentley's Miscellany." Its young and good-looking author, who had made his first mark in fiction with his spirited Turpin's ride in "Rookwood," was at this moment the literary lion of the day. He was somewhat of a fop in his dress, but that was the way with good-looking men in those days, and made an unnecessary display of the many rings he wore, but his manners were singularly pleasant, and there was not a particle of conceit at the astounding success his Newgate novel had met with. A few grave censors shook their heads and lamented the demoralising influence of this exalting of vulgar scoundrels into sentimental heroes, but most people went with the tide, and read each new instalment of the novel with avidity. For a time Dickens's star paled, and when "Jack Sheppard" was dramatized, and Mrs. Keeley fascinated the town in the title rôle, and burly Paul Bedford nightly brought down the gallery with "Nix my dolly, pals fake away!" Ainsworth's popularity took a wider range, and the "stone jug" lyric was chanted by street boys from morning till night.

The rapid development of the class of gift-books known as "Annuals," of which I have just spoken, with their highly finished steel engravings, had been something phenomenal. Ackermann, who kept a shop at the corner of Beaufort-buildings, in the Strand, taking the idea from

Germany, started the first annual, called the "Forget me not." Its success produced crowds of imitators, many of which speedily outstripped the original in the quality of their literary and more especially their pictorial contents. In their palmy days the "Keepsakes," "Books of Beauty," and the like sold in their tens of thousands at high prices, and yielded royal revenues. Portraits of society beauties were as much sought after when they were only to be obtained in guinea volumes as they are now, when scattered broadcast by sixpenny and penny journals.

For these annuals the services of the ablest artists and engravers were eagerly sought, and a hundred pounds or more were paid for a steel engraving merely a few inches in size. Although "Annual" editors relied mainly on writers with titled names, great efforts were occasionally made to secure contributions from authors of the highest standing. Moore used to boast of having rejected an offer from Charles Heath, the engraver, of six hundred guineas for a short poem for "the Keepsake"; whereat Lockhart contemptuously remarked that it was doubtful which was the greater fool of the two, Heath who made the offer or Moore who refused it.

At length the time came when the crowd of annuals, with their delicately finished steel and copperplate engravings, were superseded by works less fugitive in character, and illustrated by high-class engravings on wood, the lead in publishing which was taken by one or two Paris houses, and notably that of Léon Curmer. Orrin Smith engraved many of the designs for that publisher's handsome edition of "Paul and Virginia and the Indian Cottage." Wood-engraving at that time had not revived in France to the extent it had in England under Bewick and his contemporaries and their successors, and most of the drawings for the above work were sent over from Paris to be engraved by the most experienced English wood-engravers. Meis-

sonier, then a young and unknown artist, made the principal drawings for the "Indian Cottage," and I remember how much we were struck by the beauty and extreme minuteness of his silverpoint pencilling.

The final drawing of Meissonier's that Smith received was about three and a-half by two and a-half inches in size, and within this small compass the artist had depicted some dozen or more full length figures seated at a table, every one of them a perfect study both as regards attitude and expression. The drawing was passed round and carefully examined by the aid of a powerful magnifying glass, and we all agreed that it was impossible for any engraver to do justice to its matchless excellence and delicacy. The publisher had written that owing to the book being on the eve of completion only ten days could be allowed for the engraving of this subject, and that if these were insufficient he would abandon it. The time being altogether inadequate, the drawing was laid aside, and Orrin Smith decided to reduce the thickness of the boxwood and to frame the design as a curiosity. If it is still in existence, and the whitened surface of the block has not become chemically discoloured, this piece of boxwood would now be worth twenty times its weight in gold.

Thirty or forty years later I remember Bingham—well known for his photographic reproductions of Meissonier's pictures—showing me in Paris the figure of a halberdier, which during certain waiting moments the great painter had, almost unconsciously as it were, sketched on one of the panels of the partition that shut off the photographer's operating-room from his outer office. The figure, which was nearly two feet high, had been touched in with black and red chalk, as one or the other chanced to be within the artist's reach. Bingham told me that whenever Meissonier called he invariably worked for a few minutes on the sketch, yet

neither one nor the other had ever made the slightest remark in reference to it; and that when Meissonier had given over touching upon the subject, it was his intention to have the panel removed and framed. I suggested that he should leave some oil-colours and brushes lying about near the sketch, on the chance that Meissonier might make use of them, and so produce a far more valuable work. Bingham, I heard, adopted my suggestion, but with what result I never learned.

While I was pecking away at boxwood blocks for Lane's "Arabian Nights," and Dr. Wordsworth's "Greece," the members of my father's firm got to loggerheads, the working partners holding one view as to the conduct of the business, and the sleeping partner another. The result was a recourse to the law, when Lewis & Lewis acted as my father's solicitors. During the progress of the case, Mr. George Lewis, uncle of the George Lewis of to-day, used frequently to come to our house and consult with my father, whose ill-health confined him within doors. I remember on one of these occasions hearing Lewis tell a professional story of some wholesale perjury, unhesitatingly resorted to, to defeat an unjust claim, which almost made one's hair stand on end.

It seems that one day a London tradesman, to his great astonishment, was served with a writ for a considerable sum of money, pretended to have been lent to him by the plaintiff, whom he had never before heard of, and, so far as he knew, had never seen. He hurried off to his lawyer, and explained to him his ignorance of the whole affair, which the lawyer readily believed, as soon as he had glanced at the attorneys' names endorsed on the writ. "It 's no use, however," said he, "denying the claim; Quirk, Gammon & Snap will prove beyond a doubt that you have had the money, and you will lose the case, unless we, too, can prove beyond a doubt that you have paid the money back again."

The client hereupon began to protest, but the lawyer interposed, "Now, don't be impatient, but hear me out. Our only plan is to meet roguery by roguery, and we must be prepared with half-a-dozen good men and true, who will swear that they saw you repay the amount. To account for so many people being present on the occasion, we had better arrange for the repayment to have been made after a dinner you had been giving at your own house to celebrate your birthday, or any other event that can be made to fit in with the particular date. Of course none of our witnesses will know the plaintiff, but as he is a notorious sharper who attends all the races and prize fights, and is to be met with of an evening at the sporting public-houses, there will be no difficulty in pointing him out to such witnesses as we arrange to call; so that, if required, they may be able to describe him, and, if need be, swear to his identity.

"Now you go and talk the matter over with any intimate friends whom you can implicitly trust; candidly tell them everything, and appeal to them to help us to play this game of diamond cut diamond that has been forced upon us, and what is more, to win it. If you cannot persuade them, bribe them to come up and swear they saw you repay the money with their own eyes. When everything is settled, give them a dinner on an early day, getting some one to act the part of the plaintiff for this occasion only, and then and there repay him the amount said to have been borrowed, in bank notes and gold, in presence of the rest. They will then all be able to tell one story, not merely about the return of the money, but anything else, trivial or otherwise, that may occur during the dinner, for they will certainly be severely cross-questioned on the subject.

"Of course it will be necessary to put back the date of the dinner to within a month or so of the time when

the plaintiff says the money was lent, which we shall get from his declaration. By the way, while I think of it, it will be as well for one or two of the witnesses—not more mind—to make an entry in their pocket-books, such as "Dined at Mr. Johnson's, Brown, Jones, and Robinson there"—on the date remember when the dinner is *supposed* to have come off. Be particular about this. It will account for their being able to fix the precise day on which the spread took place."

The dinner was given as planned; on the cloth being removed, and the guests lighting their cigars, the sham plaintiff had his notes and gold temporarily handed to him, and chaffingly pretended to minutely examine the former, to satisfy himself that none of them were forged; one or two gentlemen then favoured the company with a song, and as several of the guests had business to attend to, the party broke up early. The trial, too, came off in its turn. Witnesses were duly called, who swore to the sum claimed having been lent in their presence, and to the defendant having promised to return it in a few weeks' time. They admitted neither I.O.U. nor other document passed, but did not think this strange, as they knew the plaintiff and defendant were frequently in the habit of obliging each other with temporary loans, without taking written acknowledgments of them. Everything seemed plain as the day, and the jury thought there was an end of the case.

When the counsel for the defendant blandly admitted that he had not the smallest intention of disputing that his client had had the money, and proceeded to unfold the nature of his defence, the countenance of Mr. Snap, the plaintiff's attorney, fell. He discerned at once that they were nonplussed, and nervously awaited the catastrophe. None of the defendant's witnesses broke down in their severe cross-examination. They all agreed as to the chaff about the genuineness of the bank notes, the subjects

talked about during dinner, and the songs sung afterwards. Some slight discrepancy in their evidence on trivial points was thought by the judge to tell rather in their favour, and without throwing the smallest doubt on the truthfulness of the evidence adduced in support of the plaintiff's claim, he summed up dead against the latter. Thereupon the jury gave a verdict for the defendant without leaving the box, and the victory was celebrated by another dinner, at which the guests complimented each other on the able way in which they had withstood the searching cross-examination of the plaintiff's counsel.

Edward Draper, the doyen of the Savage Club, which he has known through the varied phases of its seedy Bohemian days to the grand white-bosomed display of a few years ago, when the heir to the throne was entertained as a member—Edward Draper, who for many years wrote a clever weekly résumé of "Law and Crime" in a popular newspaper I edited, used to tell of a similar action brought in support of a fictitious claim, not a whit less impudent than that which formed the subject of Lewis's story.

It seemed that a well-to-do old gentleman, named Bollow, indulged in the harmless weakness of a large and very bright brass-plate on the gate of his suburban villa. One day when this plate had been polished more brightly than ever, its splendour unfortunately attracted the attention of a party of legal scamps on their return from Hampton races; and fancying there might be money in it, a few days afterwards one of the gang, in a semi-intoxicated state, rang a smart peal on the bell of the Wandsworth villa, and wanted to see Mr. Bollow. The latter, who at the time chanced to be peeping over the parlour blind, politely declined the interview, whereupon the disappointed caller shouted to the servant that Mr. B. was keeping out of the way to avoid process. This promptly brought that gentleman on the scene, when the copy of

a writ was thrust into his hands, and the legal party quietly staggered off.

All that Mr. Bollow could make out from the document he had been favoured with was that a writ had been issued at the suit of Jonathan Grim by a solicitor named Meggs. Never having so much as heard the name of Grim before, Mr. Bollow proceeded to Meggs's office to explain that a mistake had certainly been made, but, as usually happens under similar conditions, the clerk who attended to that particular matter was never within. This being the case on two or three occasions, Mr. Bollow thought it prudent to consult his own solicitors, to whom he explained the particulars of the affair, and asked them whether, under such circumstances, an action could be maintained. They oracularly answered that one could certainly be brought, and on seeing Meggs's name upon the writ, warned their astonished client that he would most likely have plenty of hard swearing to contend against: at present all they could do was to enter an appearance, and see what Meggs's declaration disclosed.

This set forth that Bollow owned a gig, and on a particular day at a certain spot wantonly and unskilfully drove the said vehicle, whereby he knocked down and maimed the plaintiff, who, after languishing for six weeks, was crippled for life, and claimed £10,000 damages.

As Mr. Bollow happened to be at Boulogne with his family on the day Grim was said to have been knocked down and maimed, and as, moreover, he had never driven a gig or had a driving whip in his hands in his life, he felt a trifle cocksure about the case, and thought if his solicitors only saw the plaintiff they could set the matter right in a few minutes. But they explained to him that professional etiquette debarred them from taking this step, though he might call on the plaintiff himself if he felt inclined. The address being obtained, he paid a visit to

Mr. Grim, whom he found helplessly intoxicated, and only able to hiccup out that he referred him to his "sliss'er."

Notice of trial at the ensuing Guildford assizes was given, and counsel for the defence were duly briefed. There the defendant and his witnesses danced attendance for several days, but when the cause was at last reached, Mr. Bollow learnt to his great astonishment that plaintiff's attorney had withdrawn the record, so that there was no trial after all. This scandalous attempt at extortion had cost the plaintiff merely a trifle over half-a-sovereign, namely, 5s. for the writ, 5s. for the return fare to Guildford, and a few pence for paper, parchment, and postage; but, on the other hand, the taxed costs of the defendant totalled up to about eighty pounds. Mr. Grim, of course, wiped off this debt in the Insolvent Court, swearing at his examination that he had brought the action on the advice of his solicitor, and forthwith obtained his discharge. Mr. Bollow was naturally far from pleased; still he congratulated himself that he was safe against future imposition, in which, however, he was greatly mistaken. A well-known precedent had established the fact that Grim's imprisonment and discharge under the Insolvent debtors' act was a satisfaction of Bollow's claim, while from his action against Bollow being personal, his right of maintaining it had not passed to the official assignee; consequently Grim gave new notice of trial at Kingston assizes.

Poor Bollow was in despair, and to escape a repetition of what had gone before gladly agreed to pay Grim fifty pounds in full settlement of his claim. To this amount had to be added something for Meggs, and his own solicitors' charges; so that the luxury of a large, bright, brass plate on the gate of his suburban villa cost him on the whole about £150. This was due to the admirable state of the law only some five and thirty years ago.

VIII.

(1838-40.)

"HEADS OF THE PEOPLE" AND "ILLUSTRATED SHAKSPERE"—THE QUEEN'S CORONATION—"ORION" HORNE—SOME PRIVATE THEATRICALS—CLARKSON STANFIELD AND CAPTAIN MARRYAT.

Before the lawsuit between the partners in my father's firm was decided, my father, who had suffered from ill-health for years, died, and my eldest brother, although not yet of age, established himself with the assistance of some of our friends as a printer at Peterborough-court, Fleet-street, where the "Daily Telegraph" offices now are, while I still remained with Orrin Smith. Kenny Meadows was at this time in great straits, with nothing to depend upon beyond the few drawings he made on wood and some occasional water colours for steel engravers of "Byron Beauties" and "Shakspeare Heroines," and pot boilers—verging at times on the naughty—disposed of to dealers. His typical heads in "Bell's Life" had considerable point and character, and he lamented the want of opportunity to carry out the idea on a more extensive scale. The difficulty was to find the speculative publisher willing to take up the scheme.

Eventually Kenny Meadows's "Heads of the People," a work of some little note in its day, which numbered Jerrold, Thackeray, Captain Marryat, Nimrod, and many others among its contributors, was produced at the joint risk of Orrin Smith, my brother, and Tyas, the publisher. The success it met with led to the production of a far more important work, depending exclusively on Kenny Meadows's

designs. This was the "Illustrated Shakspere," and as Meadows was a slow and not very regular worker, he found it necessary to obtain outside assistance, and more particularly on the landscape and architectural portions of the illustrations. Charles Jacque, the French artist, since celebrated for his masterly etchings of landscape and cattle subjects, who had come to England in search of employment, was first selected, and made one or two drawings for the early plays, which Meadows promptly rejected. Mr. W. B. Scott, then a young man of five or six and twenty, with a strong northern accent, who had come up to London from Edinburgh a few years before, was next tried, and proved more successful, Meadows finding him very useful in putting portions of his designs upon the wood and working up his feeble attempts at landscape composition. This was long before Scott essayed and failed in higher artistic flights. At the time I speak of he appeared to have a very moderate estimate of his own abilities, and by no means disdained journeyman's work. We knew he wrote verse, which he wisely kept to himself, for when, in after years, he took to publishing it, the public gave it only a cold reception. Although later in life Scott attempted various ambitious works of art, and became master of the Newcastle School of Design, he remained to the last an indifferent draughtsman.

Kenny Meadows was remarkable for the epigrammatic character of many of his less pretentious designs. His drawing was always faulty, but he was gifted with a graceful and witty fancy. His happy idea of typifying the blessings of peace by a butterfly fluttering at the mouth of a cannon, which was published in "Punch" if I remember rightly, preceded Sir Edwin Landseer's famous picture, and was thought by many to have suggested it. Meadows had a quaint way of viewing most things. I remember on one occasion encountering him on the stair-

case leading to the workroom on the fourth floor of a well-known engraver, who was a very bad paymaster; when he remarked as he rested to take breath, "I never go up this staircase unless I want money very badly, and then always with the certainty of not getting it."

Meadows had a weak, puny frame, and was constantly writhing with rheumatism. With all that he was quite as fond of carousing far into the morning as any of his clever associates, and yet he managed to outlive them all—Jerrold, Forster, Macready, Dickens, Lemon, the Mayhews, and the rest. He illustrated Shakspeare to good purpose, as it secured him, through the influence of Lord Palmerston, who, by the way, cared little about Shakspeare and even less about art, a government pension; and many years ago he retired into the country, and, to the surprise of every one who knew the kind of life he had formerly led, lived to a patriarchal old age.

When preparations were on foot for the queen's coronation in 1838, I had to make the preliminary sketches for a series of engravings to be published in "the Observer" and "Bell's Life in London" newspapers. "The Observer" had been in the habit of now and then giving illustrations of events of primary importance, and was altogether conducted with considerable spirit. When newspapers were interdicted under a penalty of £500 from publishing reports of unfinished cases in the law courts, "the Observer," at the trial of Thistlewood and the Cato-street conspirators boldly set the prohibition at naught and made a great hit by so doing. As fortune usually favours the brave, so it did in this particular instance, for the authorities never enforced the penalty to which the proprietor of the offending journal had rendered himself liable.

Mr. Vincent Dowling, the editor of "Bell's Life," gave me my instructions. He had been initiated into journalism by his father while the latter was on the staff of "the

Times;" and his brother had attained the position of a colonial judge. I have heard Dowling tell that when he was a young man he chanced to be in the lobby of the House of Commons on the memorable evening when Spencer Perceval was shot, and that he assisted in arresting Bellingham, from whose pockets he took a loaded pistol. To the editor of "Bell's Life" London was indebted for the scheme of the new police force, which was formulated in that paper in the fullest detail a couple of years before Sir Robert Peel introduced his valuable measure. All this, however, is forgotten now, and Dowling, who was held in something like reverence by the pugilistic fraternity of his day, has only the chance of being remembered as the author of "Fistiana, the oracle of the Ring."

Gavarni, when over here after the Paris revolution of 1848, was exceedingly anxious to witness a prize fight, and Dowling consented to take him under his wing to see the match between George Crockett and Hazeltine on Woking-common—which Crockett won after seventy-four rounds lasting a couple of hours had been fought—for stakes of merely £50 a-side. Real hard hitting with the naked fists and small stakes were the rule in those days. Dowling's instructions to Gavarni, and one or two English friends who accompanied him, were to leave all watches and jewellery at home, and tie up any gold they thought it necessary to take with them in their neckerchiefs. The crowd at the special train, according to habit, drew back respectfully to make way for the editor of the great sporting paper, to whose gold repeater and snuff-box, purse and scarf-pin, the light-fingered gentry who always mustered in force on these occasions accorded the customary immunity. Once upon a time some novice, to whom Dowling's familiar figure was unknown, succeeded in relieving him of his watch, but the older hands no sooner heard of this piece of sacrilege than

they took immediate steps to secure the return of the massive gold ticker, which was duly delivered next day with many apologies into Dowling's hands.

The necessary authorisation to sketch inside Westminster Abbey and at the royal stables, and elsewhere, having been obtained for me, Dowling next wrote to the Duke of Wellington, asking permission for a sketch to be taken from the roof of Apsley House, of the royal procession winding its way from Constitution-hill along Piccadilly. The duke, who was continually being pestered with all sorts of applications, kept by him a series of lithographic forms which, with dates filled in, served for replies to the majority of these correspondents. Dowling's letter, howevever, required a special answer, and one was penned by the duke in his familiar Roman hand and customary curt style. It ran as follows :—

"F. M. the Duke of Wellington has received a letter signed Vincent Dowling.

"The Duke has no knowledge of the writer of the letter, neither is he interested in any way in 'the Observer' newspaper. Apsley House is not a public building but the Duke's private residence, and he declines to allow any stranger to go upon the roof.

"Apsley House,
"June 21, 1838."

Sketches were made of the preparations inside the abbey and of the western entrance where the queen was to alight. I also sketched the royal state coach and the trappings of the eight cream-coloured horses at the stables of Buckingham Palace, and the uniforms of the royal watermen, huntsmen, yeomen-prickers and foresters, the heralds and trumpeters, the beefeaters and the gentlemen-at-arms, at different official departments, for as no engravings existed from which these could be copied, it was necessary to go to the fountain-head for one's authorities in those days. Most of the ambassadors sorely grudged

the expense the coronation ceremony would put them to, and were chary of any extra outlay, so that it was only necessary to sketch a few especially handsome equipages at their respective stables. The engravings being restricted to a couple of pages of "the Observer," and nothing approaching the present rapid mode of reproducing drawings being practicable at that time, many sketches had to be thrown aside. These, however, I afterwards utilised for a panoramic drawing in colours, a dozen or more feet in length, which was published by Tyas, who paid me for it, I remember, at the rate of so much per foot!

Provided with a pass from the chief commissioner of police, authorising me to pass through the lines of policemen occupying all the streets leading to the abbey, and to move freely in its immediate proximity, I was astir early on the day of the coronation, before the great crowds of people commenced streaming towards Westminster. It was a warm, bright summer morning, although a drizzling shower or two fell later on. Near the abbey I encountered many ladies and gentlemen in court and full dress—the ladies with nodding plumes on their heads and dainty white satin shoes on their feet, and with their embarrassing long trains gathered up in their arms—who, foreseeing a possible difficulty of reaching the abbey in their carriages, were calmly proceeding there on foot, laughing among themselves at the curiosity they excited in the crowd.

Being more anxious to catch a glimpse of old Marshal Soult than to see any other of the notabilities who were to be present at the ceremony, I posted myself at the entrance, where I had been told the ambassadors would arrive. Of all the vehicles in the procession, with the exception of the queen's state coach, the marshal's was the most richly decorated. It had been the state carriage of the last Prince de Condé, whose mistress, suspected of complicity in his mysterious death, had secured a large slice of his vast

fortune by means of a doubtful will. The approach of the Duke of Wellington's ancient adversary was signalled while he was yet a long way off by the loud cheers with which he was greeted. The white-haired veteran was evidently affected at the cordial reception he met with, and recalled the circumstance with gratification years afterwards in the course of a speech which he made in the French Chamber in favour of the English alliance. Equal honour was shown to the old soldier inside the abbey, for when, with his breast covered with military orders, he trudged slowly along, preceded by heralds and ushers, a murmur of applause greeted him throughout his passage.

One other ambassador was likewise the observed of all observers. This was Prince Esterhazy, who, in the striking costume of a Hungarian magnate, sparkled with the traditional family diamonds, from the aigrette of his plume down to the spurs in his boots. The moment when the actual crowning of the young Victoria took place, was signalled by loud shouts of "God save the queen!" reverberating inside the abbey, and heard distinctly outside the edifice, where they were taken up enthusiastically by the vast assembled crowd.

About this time my brother and myself were engaged in producing a life of Napoleon by R. H. Horne, illustrated with Raffet and Horace Vernet's designs. Horne, who had attracted some attention with his "New Spirit of the Age," modelled on Hazlitt's well-known work, is now best remembered, perhaps, as the author of the epic poem, "Orion," the rare first edition of which, printed at our office a few years afterwards, he ingeniously brought into notoriety by announcing it as published at one farthing. This proved a splendid advertisement, and although the publisher refused to sell more than a single copy to any one individual, the edition was speedily exhausted. The work has since been reprinted several times, and published at a greatly enhanced

priee; and I notiee that at the present moment the last edition of "Orion" figures in the publishers' catalogue at seven shillings.

Horne never made the mark in literature which flattering friends prophesied he would. He ascribed this in the usual way to unfair treatment on the part of prejudiced critics. I remember that, like scores of other writers, he had a grievance against Dilke the first, of the "Athenæum," of whom he used to say that if ever he invited a literary man to breakfast or dine with him he took especial care that his next book should be well cut up in "the Athenæum," so that there might be no kind of suspicion of his rigid impartiality. The author of "Orion" got through a large amount of literary work, from tragedies and epies down to articles in the very lightest of veins for the popular magazines, yet he temporarily abandoned authorship in his middle age and emigrated to Australia, where for half-a-dozen years he filled the post of chief of the mounted police in one of the colonies. This was a strange duty to be undertaken by an epic poet, and especially one who had such a mortal dread of wet feet that he always carried about with him a pair of reserve socks, wherewith to replace his damp ones when the streets happened to be slushy. I have known him on several occasions make the change quite unconcernedly in our counting-house while he was waiting for proofs.

The illustrated life of Napoleon was to have been followed by a new life of Nelson, with designs by Clarkson Stanfield, then at the zenith of his fame. I remember calling upon him on the subjeet at the same house in Mornington-creseent where George Cruikshank afterwards resided. David Roberts—just returned from his travels in the Holy Land, whither he had been on a sketching expedition for the large work subsequently published by Adlerman Moon—ehaneed to be with Stanfield at the time.

Stanfield was a tall and somewhat slim individual, with none of the hardy sailor look about him suggestive of the fore-mast-man of "the Namur," while Roberts was rather short and stout, with a clear rosy complexion, which seemed to belie his having lately sojourned a considerable time in the broiling East. Both of them remembered my father well, and also the circumstance of the Chinese saloon of the London genuine tea company, and reminded each other of certain amusing experiences when the feet of both rested on the lower rungs of the ladder of fame.

Subsequently I saw a good deal of Clarkson Stanfield, who commenced the designs for the projected work, but, like many other painters, found the difficulty of drawing on the boxwood block with the necessary neatness and precision almost insurmountable. Soon afterwards Captain Marryat claimed from him the fulfilment of a promise made some time before to execute a series of drawings for a naval work that had been a long while in contemplation. This was "Poor Jack," and the Nelson drawings had to be laid aside in order that the new designs might be proceeded with. About half of the latter were subsequently entrusted to me to engrave.

At the time I was with Orrin Smith he had, I remember, a couple of stage-struck pupils—one an ambitious writer of five act tragedies, who, later in life, found broad farce more in his line; and the other a self-satisfied imitator of Macready's worst mannerisms. The latter was the son of William Carpenter, the radical, who had formerly done battle for the unstamped press, and paid the penalty of a few months' imprisonment. He was author of a clever, though some people called it a scurrilous, "Peerage for the People," wherein were shewn how the peers, as a later writer has pointedly put it, "in the first epoch of their career robbed the People; in the second the Church; in the third the Crown; while in the fourth they have always been the

steady foes of every beneficial reform." Carpenter was, moreover, the first editor of "the Era" newspaper, when it started in the beery interest, with capital supplied by Sir Henry Meux. What is now the office of "the Echo," in Catherine-street, Strand, was then a private theatre, hired by amateur actors ambitious of strutting and fretting their little hour upon the stage, under the kindly-critical eyes of admiring friends. Young Carpenter and some fellow-amateurs had engaged the house for a particular night, and a party was formed at Orrin Smith's to take one of the stage boxes for the occasion.

"Othello" was the play that had been selected, and Carpenter junior was announced to appear for the first time, in the title rôle. It was decided by his fellow-pupils at Smith's to accord him an unexampled reception, and for this purpose a wooden hoop was procured, round which we bound a choice selection of all the vegetables in season—small carrots and turnips and heads of broccoli, interspersed with plenty of green stuff, so as to present a good pictorial effect. It was winter time, and long bravo-like cloaks being then the common wear, I succeeded in smuggling the wreath into the theatre, secreted beneath one of these capacious garments, without awakening the slightest suspicion.

Throughout the performance the party in our box kept up an audible running commentary on Othello's choicest declamatory passages, varying this with such uproarious applause as completely drowned the actor's voice. At first some of the audience mildly protested, then they grew slightly angry, and at last somewhat threatening. We rejoined by chaffing them good-humouredly, hoping thereby to mollify them, but unsuccessfully. Our object was to get all the fun we could out of the performance, while the rest of the audience were burning with indignation at Iago's treachery, and looking forward to lamenting over Desdemona's unhappy fate.

The climax was reached when, at the conclusion of the play, Othello re-appeared on the stage, in response to our repeated calls, to bow his acknowledgments. At this moment the huge vegetable wreath, deftly flung upon the stage, plumped down at the amateur tragedian's feet. Then arose a succession of yells, and the more enraged portion of the audience made for our box. Some attacked it in front, and were easily disposed of by a few rapid blows struck clean from the shoulder, for in those days every young fool about town did not carry a crutch stick. But while the front attack was being successfully repulsed, the side door of the box was suddenly burst open, and to escape the blows directed at us from a score of fists and half-a-dozen umbrellas, we beat a retreat through the opposite door of the box communicating with the stage.

This, however, was only getting out of the frying-pan into the fire, for here we found a hostile band of actors and scene-shifters prepared to receive us. It was a case of *sauve qui peut;* so after diving rapidly across the stage, hitting out right and left as I did so, and turning a corner or two, I caught sight of a flight of narrow steps, up which I scrambled, with a yelling crowd at my heels, one or two of whom kept peremptorily shouting out, "Come down!" Paying no regard to them, I quickened my pace, and soon found myself in a kind of loft, with a lath and plaster flooring, which gave way under my feet at every step I took. My pursuers being close upon me, I struggled hard to break completely through the lath and plaster, thinking that I should drop merely a few feet, into perhaps some dressing-room below, and so effect my escape.

While I was thus struggling to force my body through, and my legs were dangling in mid-air, I heard loud shouts and screams beneath me, and suddenly I was seized hold of by the collar and dragged backwards, and forced to descend the steps up which I had clambered. I afterwards learnt

that I had made my way between the outer roof of the building and the false bell-shaped roof of the theatre itself, and that if I had succeeded in my attempt to force my body through the lath and plaster, I should have fallen some sixty feet or so into the pit beneath. The shouts and screams I had heard proceeded from that portion of the audience which had not taken its departure, and had caught sight of my legs dangling beside the chandelier overhead.

Others of my friends had been captured on the stage, and it was seriously proposed, either to place us under the pump or duck us in the capacious cistern belonging to the establishment. Neither of these suggestions sounded at all inviting with the thermometer below zero, and eventually we bargained for and purchased our liberty for a fixed sum—to recoup the proprietor, as he in a business-way suggested, for the large amount of damage we had done.

Young Carpenter soon afterwards abandoned both wood-engraving and the stage. "The pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war" seem to have unfolded their fascinations to him, and he enlisted as a private in the service of John Company. He had not been in India long before the astounding news reached home that he was under sentence of death for firing at his superior officer. A petition suggesting that he had a touch of insanity about him, and praying for a commutation of the sentence, was immediately promoted in this country, and sent to the proper authorities, but whether it had the effect of saving the unhappy youth's life I never heard.

About this time the payment of a liberal sum to Mr. Orrin Smith obtained my release from the engagement I was under to him, and I joined my brother in business. For several years our struggle was a hard one, for we had a mother to support, and a couple of younger brothers and a sister to educate and provide for. Among the earliest

work that I managed to secure was the engraving of the Stanfield drawings for "Poor Jack," of which I have already spoken. While engaged on these I was brought into frequent intercourse with both author and illustrator, and dined with them on one occasion at Stanfield's house. Stanfield was a man of simple, quiet habits, and seemingly absorbed in his art. With him, however, the leading idea did not appear to be so much a faithful transcript of nature as the grouping together of a multiplicity of picturesque details. The picturesque, at any price, was evidently what he hungered after.

I saw Stanfield on many occasions in his painting-room, and had frequent opportunities of observing the nature of the liberties he took when transferring sketches, which he had made on the spot, to canvas. Clumps of trees were set to grow where none had grown before; flat, uninteresting masses were broken up with diversified details; and carefully studied, picturesque foregrounds teemed with animate or inanimate objects where in the original sketch all was barren. He never seemed to aspire to the grand, and studiously avoided the sombre, striving consistently after the picturesque regardless of the sacrifice to truth which this involved. In the colouring, too, of some of his pictures, the conventional artifice of the scene painter is not unfrequently apparent. David Roberts seemed still more indifferent than even Stanfield in regard to truthful transcripts from nature. Clever and characteristic as his Spanish sketches were the whole of the architecture was so exaggerated, while the figures were of singularly diminutive proportions, that a most misleading idea was given of the places they were intended to represent.

Stanfield belonged to a sketching club which assembled weekly to draw and sup at the different members' houses in turn. The host of the evening used to give out the subject for a design, commonly furnished by a short poetical

quotation, and at the end of a couple of hours or so the drawings were collected, compared, and criticized, after which they remained the host's property. Stanfield generally showed me the sketches which had fallen to his share, and it was curious to note the varying ways in which the marine, the landscape, the figure, and the animal painter, and the imaginative and matter-of-fact artist had treated the same subject.

Captain Marryat was tall, like Stanfield, but broad shouldered and thick set. There was nothing of the jovial "salt" about him; none of that flow of animal spirits which his writings might have led one to expect, nor aught that could be termed genial even. On the contrary, his manners were grave, and he had rather a peremptory way of speaking, which his friends, though never in his hearing, for that would have been dangerous, were in the habit of terming his "quarter-deck style." Marryat's autocratic proceedings at the time he owned the "Metropolitan Magazine," led to its former editor, Campbell the poet, suggesting that he evidently had plenty of the family's old planter's blood in his veins, and that he would dearly like to flog his contributors for their shortcomings.

On the occasion of the dinner I have mentioned, Captain Marryat told one or two good West Indian stories, interspersing them with anecdotes of his naval experience, and generally had the talk nearly all to himself. In scarcely any of his stories, however, was there more than a glimpse of that rollicking fun which abounds in his novels, and all through the evening he preserved a good deal of the gravity of the traditional judge. Among his stories, I remember, was a well-known one of the Irish emigrant, who, on landing in Jamaica, was hailed by some niggers, imitating the brogue, with "Good luck to yer, Pat, how are yer?" The new-comer, taking them for fellow-countrymen, looked at them with astonishment, and exclaimed, "Be Jases!

what, you've turned black already, have yer?" Stanfield, throughout the evening, was content to be almost a silent listener, according to his wont; and I only ventured to interpose an occasional remark when my land-lubberly intelligence failed to grasp the proper meaning of the captain's occasionally too technical phraseology.

Many suggestions were mooted at Orrin Smith's in conversations between him and his friends for starting new publications which might bring grist to the mills of authors and artists involuntarily under the necessity of working half-time. Among other schemes propounded was one of a satirical journal on the lines of Phillipon's Paris "Charivari," excepting that the proposed new venture was to be a weekly instead of a daily publication. As the philanthropic capitalist with funds for all manner of journalistic enterprises, and a sneaking desire to acquire social standing through a connection with the press, had not yet declared himself, it was determined to start the "London Charivari" on the co-operative principle. The prospect was hardly an encouraging one, for all the satirical papers of the past decade had died off one after the other. The strongest of them all, "Figaro in London," had succumbed after half-a-dozen years of existence, and "the Ass," "the Wasp," "the Wag," and "the Scorpion," with "Punch in London," and "the Penny Trumpet," had sparkled, blazed, and expired.

After considerable negotiation, the following list of proprietors of the proposed new satirical journal was decided upon: Authors—Jerrold, Thackeray, Laman Blanchard, and Percival Leigh (who had lately come into note through his Comic Latin and English Grammars); Poole, the author of "Paul Pry" and "Little Pedlington," was to have been one of the paid contributors: artists—Kenny Meadows, Leech, and, I think, Alfred Crowquill: engraver—Orrin Smith: printers — Jobbins, lithographic; J. Vizetelly,

letterpress: publisher—R. Tyas. It was intended that with each number of the new periodical a separate lithographic caricature should be issued, after the plan of the "Charivari," and Leech actually made several of these drawings on the stone. Specimen pages of the text were also put into type, but the scheme unexpectedly collapsed through a singular misconception. By some means or other Thackeray got hold of the idea that each co-partner in the proposed publication would not only be liable for its debts, but also for the private debts of his co-partners; and as none of the latter possessed sufficient legal knowledge to point out the fallacy of this assumption, and some were suspicious of the soundness of the position of one or two of their proposed colleagues, the contemplated "London Charivari" was forthwith abandoned.

Some years afterwards the idea cropped up again on the initiative of Henry Mayhew, who at the time it was first broached was courting Jerrold's daughter, and had heard from Jerrold all the details of the scheme. The result was "Punch, or the *London Charivari*," started on the same co-operative principle under which the somewhat more ambitious project was to have been launched. Henry Mayhew was its first editor, but was soon deposed from his position, as, although an exceedingly clever man, brimming over with ideas, he was never up to time with anything he undertook; and Mark Lemon, fresh from serving beer and brandy and water at his Wych-street "public," was installed editor in Mayhew's place.

IX.

(1839-43.)

RIBALD NEWSPAPERS AND THEIR EDITORS—PENNY POSTAGE —THE EGLINTON TOURNAMENT—A SHERIDAN ROLAND FOR THE SHUCKBOROUGH OLIVER.

WHILE the scheme of the "London Charivari" was under consideration, "the Town," a weekly journal as notorious for its grossness as its vulgarity, and of which burly Renton Nicholson, a broken-down pawnbroker, was editor and proprietor, was having a large and increasing sale. It published on its first page either a sketch of some familiar London type, or the portrait of a noted west-end demirep from the pencil of Archibald Henning, son of a well-known sculptor, and brother-in-law of Kenny Meadows, and subsequently Punch's original cartoonist. Henning had precisely the qualification that Nicholson needed, being somewhat of a loose fish and a frequenter of sporting "publics" and other low haunts of that epoch. As for the letterpress of "the Town," this dealt with the shadiest subjects, including some which no publication of to-day would even hint at.

After a time Nicholson got into collision with Barnard Gregory of "Satirist" notoriety, and the pair fell to abusing each other in their respective organs. As Nicholson managed to fling the most mud, Barnard Gregory, by some roundabout manœuvre, set the law in motion against "the Town," and Nicholson was sent for trial. Thereupon, the latter, posing before his readers as the champion of moral purity and the meritorious exposer of the blackmailing fraternity to which his opponent notoriously belonged, appealed for support in aid of his defence. Several hun-

dred pounds were subscribed, and the case was removed to the Court of Queen's Bench; but on its being called on, no prosecutor appeared in support of it, and Nicholson was acquitted. It seems that at this time Barnard Gregory was himself undergoing three months' imprisonment for libelling and attempting to extort money from a lady.

Shortly after the Barnard Gregory squabble "the Town" languished, and ere long came to an end, not, however, until it had had its crop of imitators in "Paul Pry," "Peter Spy," and the like—publications which flourished on anonymous scandal respecting the private lives of people of the lower middle class. Nicholson now started his notorious Judge and Jury society, which assembled nightly at the Garrick's Head in Bow-street, facing Covent-garden theatre. Passers-by were sought to be attracted to the nauseous entertainment by a large picture exhibited in the window, in which the artist, Archibald Henning, had depicted, as present at one of these gatherings, many of the celebrities of the day, from the Duke of Wellington and Count d'Orsay down to Paul Bedford of "jolly nose" renown, and Owen Swift, the pugilist, who years before had killed his man—Brighton Bill—in a fair stand-up fight. Men about town, city clerks of all kinds, betting men, and provincials ambitious of initiation into the shady side of London life, formed the principal part of Nicholson's audience. An inebriated young provincial, lost in the mazes of Covent-garden, once enquired of Douglas Jerrold the way to the "Judge and Jury." "Keep on, young man, in the way you are now going, and you 'll be with them before long," was the witty moralist's reply.

A shilling was charged for admission to the room at the Garrick's Head, and a glass of grog and a bad cigar were presented to the visitor by way of a whet in return. Nicholson, a burly, coarse-looking individual, with a red face and a leering eye, styled himself "chief-baron," and

Lord Abinger submitted to the indignity without protest. Wearing a judge's wig and robes, the Garrick's Head chief-baron sat at a raised desk, railed off, together with the table for the counsel and the jury box, from the part where the audience grinned and guzzled. Recent divorce cases, with variations and additions, or mock trials of a similar nature, liberally interspersed with indelicate innuendoes or *double entendres* of exceptional grossness formed the stock proceedings. The sham counsel who figured therein made themselves up to resemble the more noted advocates of the day, and gave exaggerated imitations of their peculiarities of manner and oratorical flights.

Other haunts of men about town at this period were the Cyder Cellar, the Strand Coal Hole, the Piccadilly Saloon, Mother H.'s and "the Finish," the latter an all-night coffee house in James-street, Covent-garden, the resort of early market people, fast men, pugilists, and the profligate of both sexes, where, while dancing and sparring went on on the first floor, market-gardeners' carters and Irish porters tippled and wrangled below. "The Finish" used to be patronized by the impulsive Marquis of Waterford and his set, prior to their breakfasting (after the fatigues of the night) with the knockers, bell-handles, and other trophies of their nocturnal escapade forming the table ornaments. After the mettlesome marquis's visit to Norway, and the blow he received from a Norwegian watchman's "morning star,"[1] he sobered down, indulging no more in drunken street frolics, or such mad freaks as smashing monumental clocks on club mantelpieces with a blow of his naked fist, as told by his friend, Grantley Berkeley; and never again struggling against the police to bring a high-mettled horse bodily into court to disprove a charge of furious driving, but working off any exuberant animal spirits in fox-hunting over his Irish estates.

[1] A formidable club with which the night guardians of the peace in Norway are provided.

A more reputable place of resort than "the Finish" was the Maiden-lane "Cave of Harmony," as Thackeray in "Pendennis," christened the well-known "Cyder Cellar." Sham cyder casks, ranged against the walls, gave the place its name, and at the tables, filling the centre of the room, some good glee singers carolled, whilst the guests supped off devilled kidneys and welsh rabbits, accompanied by beakers of unsophisticated stout, with endless "goes" of something hot and strong to follow. On one particular day of the week there was an ordinary. It was at the Cyder Cellar that the little Jew Sloman ran his idiotic improvisations off the reel,[1] that lanky Herr von Joel warbled "an't were any nightingale," and Ross sang his lugubrious and immensely popular "Sam Hall." By the time, however, that the small hours of the morning were reached, and guests and singers had imbibed more than was good for them, the songs became decidedly equivocal in character.

The Cyder Cellar had an ancient renown, having been a favourite resort of Porson, the tippling Greek professor, whose portrait at one time graced its walls, and later on of Maginn, Thackeray, and others of the "Fraser" set. That Thackeray continued to be a frequenter of the place until as late as 1848 is evident from a letter of Albert Smith's, in which Smith says: "Last night I met Thackeray at the Cyder Cellars, and we stayed there until three in the morning. He is a very jolly fellow, and no High Art about him," an obliging admission which, I fancy, however, Thackeray would not have reciprocated. Eventually Evans, the then proprietor, transferred the Cyder Cellar entertainment to the Piazza, Covent-garden, to what was long known as Evans's supper rooms, of which Thackeray was an habitué almost up to the time of his death.

[1] Thackeray, in some verses on Braham in the "National Standard," written in his youthful days, has the line: "Sloman repeats the strains his father sang," to which he appends a satirical note, signed W. Wordsworth, saying, "It is needless to speak of this eminent vocalist and improvisatore. He nightly delights a numerous and respectable audience at the Cyder Cellar."

There were two notorious newspapers at this date which flourished on a wholesale system of blackmailing, and the attacks of which on private character led Chief-justice Denman to remark that everyone within range of their influence was living under the greatest of tyrannies ever known. These were "the Age" and "the Satirist," the one a tory, the other a radical journal. Articles in slip, based on private information, furnished by false friends of those assailed, were forwarded to the latter with an intimation that silence might be secured for a specified sum, which at times went even into thousands of pounds. For instance, the notorious Charles Molloy Westmacott, who had started "the Age" in 1828, was openly accused of, and never denied, extorting £5000 to suppress the particulars of some long since forgotten intrigue in which certain members of the Court and a general officer were said to have been mixed up.

Westmacott was reported to be the son of a sweep named Molloy, living in some street off the Strand, whereas he himself maintained that his father was Westmacott, the sculptor, although this was indignantly denied by the artist's family. How or where he obtained his education no one seems to have known. A year or two before "the Age" was started, he gathered together all the scurrilous gossip current respecting the notabilities of the day, and published it with coloured plates etched by the indefatigable George Cruikshank, under the title of "the English Spy," by Bernard Blackmantle—a *nom-de-plume* which he for the nonce assumed, and under which he moreover published a romance in two volumes, based on the Berkeley peerage scandal. Some time previously he had penned a savage onslaught on Jerdan of the "Literary Gazette," then a power in the world of letters, satirizing him as the Blowfly in a work called "Cockney Critics." Jerdan, who many years before, had conducted a scurrilous publication

of his own, of course fumed at being subjected to the same measure which he had himself meted out to other people, but that was all.

In spite of Westmacott's shady reputation he was accorded a place in the Fraser portrait-gallery among illustrious literary characters, accompanied by a by no means ill-natured notice from the pen of Maginn. Maclise depicted him with his foot firmly planted on Bulwer's last volumes, which he had recently cut up in "the Age." A dog whip, curled round the inside of his hat, might be taken as indicative not only of the symbolic flagellations he used to administer, but of the kind of retaliation he had himself to put up with from many of those he assailed. A Captain Phillipson, against whom Westmacott had sought protection at Bow-street, twitted him in open court with having been horsewhipped more than twenty times, and Westmacott gave no denial to the soft impeachment, but contented himself with asserting that he had never once been horsewhipped without attempting to defend himself. One of the persons who had soundly castigated him was Thomas Slingsby Duncombe, the well-known radical M.P.

Some short time before Westmacott applied at Bow-street for protection, during a pause in the performance at Covent-garden theatre, Charles Kemble had knocked him down with a stout stick in the front of the house for having, as he said, traduced his daughter, Miss Fanny Kemble, in "the Age." This Westmacott energetically denied, but the singular part of the affair was that a superintendent of police, who was by when the assault was committed, refused to interfere, and that the Bow-street proceedings were subsequently dropped. Westmacott is the newspaper scribe who used to have in waiting at the office of his paper a stalwart Irishman, armed with a stout shillelagh, whose duty it was to receive irascible visitors, who demanded to see

the editor and indiscreetly blustered about administering personal chastisement to him.

Barnard Gregory's newspaper, "the Satirist," was started several years after "the Age," and so far as politics were concerned, attacked only the tory party. Most of the earlier numbers contained political caricatures, in which Queen Adelaide and the Duke of Cumberland commonly figured under the most disparaging aspects. Five-and-twenty years before there had been a monthly publication with the same title, which Jerdan, afterwards of the "Literary Gazette," carried on until forced to give it up, owing to the law-suits, duels, and assaults he was incessantly threatened with.

Barnard Gregory, like others of the same shady fraternity, had a fund of anecdote, and passed with those who knew him for an extremely amusing and clever fellow. He was noted for giving good dinners, and spite of the disgraceful rôle he filled, had no difficulty in assembling plenty of talented, but by no means squeamish, people round his table. He was known to be a good amateur actor of Shakspearian characters, and it was his great ambition to achieve distinction in public; but whenever he made the attempt he was invariably hissed and hooted down by an indignant audience. I was present at Drury-lane, sometime in 1843, on the memorable occasion when he essayed to perform the part of Hamlet. The house was anything but crowded—ordinary playgoers evidently foreseeing a row—while the audience appeared to be almost exclusively composed of partisans and opponents of the actor, the opponents being evidently in the majority.

The moment the words, "A little more than kin and less than kind," escaped from Barnard Gregory's lips a terrific hullaballoo arose. The actor was assailed with loud, continuous whistling, catcalls, and derisive shouting, so that not another syllable he uttered could be heard.

The notorious Duke of Brunswick, who had long been subjected to most abominable attacks in "the Satirist," had engaged the O. P. box for himself and friends, and by signals with a whistle appeared to direct the disturbances, which speedily put an end to the performance. Subsequently Gregory brought an action against the duke and others for a conspiracy, and called as witnesses manager Bunn, a former secretary of Edmund Kean's, Lords Gardner and Belfast, and several gentlemen to prove that he possessed great merits as an actor, and that he would certainly have succeeded had he been given a fair chance. Two witnesses, moreover, deposed to having been paid to hoot Gregory; nevertheless, in such detestation was the editor of "the Satirist" held, that the duke won the verdict in a canter.

A few months afterwards the duke and his solicitor, Vallance, indicted Barnard Gregory for libels published in "the Satirist." Gregory was convicted, but as he did not appear to receive sentence, Vallance, as the duke's solicitor, offered a reward for information that would lead to his arrest; and at the same time put forward the following uncomplimentary description to aid the identification of the individual "wanted." His height was stated to be no more than five feet two inches, and his age about fifty-five. He was said to be the son of a Mrs. Gregory who kept a greengrocer's shop in Goswell-street, and to have been a schoolmaster, an itinerant preacher, then a druggist, auctioneer, brewer, and banker, and finally a bankrupt. He was unflatteringly described as high-shouldered, and slightly knock-kneed; as dressing shabbily in black, and having an embarrassed and uncertain kind of walk. His forehead was represented as projecting, his nose short and ill-shapen, his natural hair grey and scanty; but this, it seems, he had the vanity to disguise with wigs of different colours. He was without whiskers, had a sneering,

lowering expression, a pompous and vulgar manner, and a fawning style of speech. This elaborate description, combined with the offered reward, led to Barnard Gregory's capture in a locked-up cupboard, wherein he had sought refuge in a house at Southend, on learning that the officers were at his heels. Sentences of four and eight months imprisonment were passed upon him, and during his incarceration in Newgate he was subjected to the same treatment as a common felon.

The "John Bull" in its early days was a thoroughly scurrilous publication, assailing the private as well as the public characters of those whom it singled out for attack, though it disdained to have recourse to blackmailing. The paper was started with the avowed intention of abusing Queen Caroline and the more prominent members of her party. Theodore Hook's original idea was to bring out a monthly magazine with this object, but Miller, the well-known publisher—the same who had given Charles James Fox £4,500 for his "History of the reign of James II."—to whom Hook applied, refused to entertain the suggestion. Shackell, the printer, was then consulted, and he advised the starting of a newspaper, offering to find the necessary funds, and to give Hook a half-share in the paper free from all pecuniary risk. Shackell's proposal was accepted, and the first number of the new journal duly made its appearance. Through its combined audacity and ability it speedily worked its way to success, and by the time it had been in existence six weeks its sale exceeded ten thousand copies, and Hook's editorial salary was fixed at £2000 a-year.

Hook was not wanting in cupidity; still he had a certain sense of shame, and at first was extremely anxious to keep his connection with the "John Bull" a profound secret. In order to throw the public off the true scent, a paragraph was inserted in an early number expressing surprise on

the part of the editor that anything which had appeared in the paper should have been mistaken for Mr. Hook's, and intimating that a person in Mr. Hook's position would no doubt consider himself disgraced by any connection with "John Bull." Before many years had elapsed, Hook's expensive habits obliged him to dispose of his share in the paper to his co-proprietor, but he still continued editor of it. Proprietary rights in a publication of this kind had their attendant drawbacks, swingeing profits being invariably tempered by frequent fines and continual imprisonment for libel, and of course both fell to Shackell's lot. Imprisonment, however, had no ill-effect upon his physical condition, for in figure Shackell was not only a typical John Bull, but he was an exceedingly corpulent one. His ample paunch told of years of civic gormandising, and late in life he became so unwieldy that he could only move about with considerable difficulty, and cab drivers and omnibus conductors always looked askance whenever he hailed them.

Shackell was rather fond of talking of the time when Hook would be spending the autumn on a round of country visits to his aristocratic friends, and he had to go and meet him regularly every week, posting across country to some beggarly little inn near the grand house where Hook was installed. Glad enough at having been able to secure even these humble quarters, he waited patiently until Hook could steal away from his gay companions to read through the proofs Shackell had brought with him, and discuss and decide upon the contents of the forthcoming number of "John Bull." Shackell used to say that on these expeditions he invariably provided himself with a roll of bank notes which Hook was certain to be in need of to settle some recently contracted gambling debt which he was bound to discharge within the next four and twenty hours.

Hook is known to have been exceedingly superstitious.

He used positively to affirm that when the ship which brought him home a prisoner, after his arrest in the Mauritius for deficiencies in the treasury chest, was off the Cape they encountered the spectral Flying Dutchman; and he, moreover, had great faith in certain cabalistic numbers winning prizes in the foreign lotteries, in which he steadily speculated so long as he had the means, in the vain hope of repairing his broken fortunes.

Shackell once told me that, when towards the close of his career, Hook was a completely ruined man, and was deeply in his debt, he appealed earnestly to him to advance the money to purchase a ticket for a particular number in some German lottery. Hook's story ran that while he was seated at his fireside late the night before, looking steadily into the grate while pondering over his own unfortunate affairs, and the chance of bettering them by gaining some big lottery prize, he had seen the number to which he referred distinctly indicated in the live embers of the fire, and felt confident it was a good omen. Shackell humoured Hook's whim, purchased the ticket, and to his no very great surprise it drew a blank. Next year Hook repeated the request, and in regard to the very same number, asserting that he had again seen the figures more than once and more distinctly than ever, and that he was convinced luck would this time be in his favour. Shackell, however, refused to be persuaded, and afterwards learnt from Hook that he had found a clue to the mystery. It seems that the fire grate had certain raised figures at its back, forming the manufacturer's number, and that when the fire had burnt itself low and the back of the grate was still red hot, these figures were readily discernible through the embers; hence Hook's superstitious fancy that he had alighted upon a winning number in the Hamburg lottery.[1]

[1] There is a different version of this circumstance in Barham's "Life of Hook," but I had the story as I have here told it from Shackell direct.

I once saw Hook for a short time at Shackell's private house at Hammersmith. He boasted of having been able to walk over from Fulham, through the green lanes intersecting the market gardens lying between the two places. His errand, as Shackell afterwards mentioned to me, was the usual one—to borrow money. Hook was then a wreck of his former self—"done up," as he expressed it, "in purse, in mind, and in body, too, at last." There was no more merry jingling of the cap and bells, and none of the old bumptious manner of the days when the spoilt wit was hand and glove with a string of lords. Hook's bloated face and shrunken form and generally dissipated look, his uncertain gait, his alternately abstracted and restless manner, his occasional feeble attempts to sustain his old reputation for facetiousness, and the craving which he was unable to conceal for brandy and water in the early part of the day, painfully struck me, and I was not surprised to hear, some months afterwards, of his death.

At the time of the agitation on behalf of Rowland Hill's penny postage scheme, so general was the feeling in favour of cheap postage that the petition to the House of Commons of the London wood-engravers, then less than two hundred in number, was signed by every known member of the profession, assistants and apprentices included. Those who do not remember the old condition of things, when the postage of a letter for a distance of fifteen miles cost fourpence, and for fifty miles sevenpence, can scarcely realise the vastness of the change which the universal penny rate brought about. The year before the reduction (1839) eighty-two and a half millions of letters, equivalent to three per head of the population, passed through the post, and of these nearly seven per cent. were franked—in other words, the talismanic signature of some peer or M.P. allowed them to go free.

Now the number of letters annually transmitted by

post is seventeen hundred millions, averaging forty-four letters per head! To the above should be added two hundred and seventeen million post-cards, four hundred and forty-four million packets and circulars, and one hundred and sixty million newspapers. Between 1820 and 1835 there was a positive diminution of the postal revenue, although the population had increased twenty-five per cent. during the fifteen years. This was in a great measure due to the illicit conveyance of letters under post-office rates on an extensive scale. The official postage of a single letter to Edinburgh was then one shilling and three halfpence, although it transpired before a parliamentary committee that the conveyance of a thousand letters to the Scotch capital cost less than a shilling.

The system of franks was greatly abused. Peers and members of the House of Commons were not only privileged to frank their own letters, but those of friends and others without limit, the consequence being that members of Parliament franked letters for their constituents wholesale. It resulted from this, that a class of people who could well afford to pay postage had their letters conveyed at the cost of those who could least afford to bear the burden.

Sydney Smith, who, no doubt, managed to secure franks for all his own correspondence, was one of the croakers over "a million of revenue being given up to the nonsensical penny postage scheme," as he phrased it, "which indicated sad and unworthy weakness on part of the government calculated to fill reasonable men with alarm." Mulready, as everybody knows, was entrusted to design the new postal envelope, which, it was erroneously thought at the time, the public would largely make use of. Absurdly enough the design was engraved on brass, in relief—a laborious and difficult process productive of a result greatly inferior to high-class wood engraving. This employment

of brass would have been all very well if it had been intended to print the envelopes from the original metal, which would have given off several million copies, but instead of this they were printed from soft metal stereotypes. The new envelope speedily became a butt for the satirists of the day. Leech and a host of others caricatured it, and Barham in the "Ingoldsby Legends" had his fling at

> "Those queer-looking envelope things,
> Where Britannia (who seems to be crucified) flings
> To her right, to her left, funny people with wings
> Among elephants, Quakers, and Catabaw kings."

Parliament passed Serjeant Talfourd's new copyright bill during the same session that it sanctioned Rowland Hill's penny postage scheme. The year before the measure had secured a small majority in the Commons mainly through a telling speech which Disraeli made in its favour. Everybody will remember Dickens's touching dedication of "Pickwick" to Talfourd, in which, referring to his friend's recent copyright bill, he says:—"Many a fevered head and palsied hand will gather new vigour in the hour of sickness and distress; many a widowed mother and orphan child who would have reaped nothing from departed genius but its too frequent legacy of poverty and suffering, will bear higher testimony to the value of your labours than the most lavish enconium of which lip and pen are capable." To-day, I fancy, most people are of the opinion that such a condition of things as Dickens eloquently pictured has scarcely resulted from the extended term of copyright, of which such immoderate expectations were formed at the time.

Within a few weeks after the new postal scheme had been sanctioned by the legislature public attention turned to Eglinton Castle, on the Ayrshire coast, where the jousts and junkettings of mediæval times were about to be repro-

duced on a scale of great magnificence. The newspapers told of a galaxy of banners floating from the castle walls, and bagpipes resounding through the castle precincts; of warders at the gates repelling the entrance of the anxious, and of squires and grooms in the stables accustoming their mettlesome steeds to the housings and trappings of the knights who were to figure at the approaching tourney. The castle, we were told, was crowded with fair women and brave men, guests of the Lord of the Tournament, and a small army of cooks was busy in the kitchens preparing the grand banquets that were to regale them.

Although the month of August had been chosen for the pageant, this failed to secure the hoped-for fine weather, and on the day the tournament was held the newspaper correspondents trooped in from the neighbouring little village in a dripping and despondent state; while the procession from the castle to the lists set forth in a heavy downpour of rain, which drenched the silken banners, and damped alike the fine feathers and the ardour of most of the participators in the ceremony. The sprightly tunes of the musicians and the lively blasts of the trumpeters failed to revive the drooping spirits of the guests. The Queen of Beauty (Lady Seymour), one of Thomas Sheridan's lovely daughters, instead of riding on horseback in state, surrounded by her esquires and pages, was glad to shelter herself in a carriage, and her lady attendants judiciously followed her example. Lord Londonderry, the King of the Tournament, resorted to the undignified protection of an umbrella, but the pelting rain ran down the polished armour of the score or so of knightly combatants like the water off the traditional duck's back.

After a fanfare and proclamation from the heralds in their richly embroidered tabards, the lists were declared open and a couple of knights riding at a moderate pace poked at each other with their lances and nearly always

missed their mark. Whenever there chanced to be a hit the lance, made apparently of some exceedingly fragile wood, usually snapped in two. Sawdust had been lavishly laid down in the lists to receive unhorsed combatants, but throughout the jousts not a single knight was thrown or even made to reel in his saddle. Between the various encounters M'Ian, the actor-artist, who figured as jester, and was rigged out in parti-coloured frippery, tried his hardest to be funny, but signally failed, and was generally voted an intolerable bore. To add to the ludicrousness of his appearance he was mounted upon a donkey which led to Jerrold's characterising him as an ass-centaur, adding that it was impossible to discover where the one animal began and the other ended.

In the final encounter between the Lord of the Tournament and the Knight of the Dragon (the rowdy Marquis of Waterford), the lance of the former forcibly struck his adversary's shield when the pair were riding at full tilt, but the Dragon remained firm in his saddle as the traditional rock. At a second charge the Earl of Eglinton shivered his lance against the marquis's helmet, for which feat, although he failed to unhorse his opponent, he was with becoming partiality declared the victor. Thereupon the Lord of the Tournament, attended by his squires and pages, rode to where the Queen of Beauty was seated beneath a rich canopy, and made her a humble obeisance; while she, on her part, smiled her sweetest smiles and in queenly fashion commended the victor's knightly valour. By this time no doubt the drenched and dejected actors in the solemn farce were glad enough the tourney was over.

This bedraggled pageant with such a pitiful result cost the Lord of the Tournament a large slice of his fortune, which years of after economy only imperfectly repaired. It, however, effectually quelled his jousting aspirations, and

henceforward the heralds' fanfares were no longer heard resounding along the Ayrshire coast.

Louis Napoleon, who, a couple of years before, had failed in his Strasburg attempt to overthrow Louis Philippe, was present among the guests at Eglinton Castle, although not as one of the knights taking part in the jousts. He donned, however, a steel cuirass and visored helmet and engaged in a foot combat with Mr. Charles Lamb. At the ball the prince exchanged his armour for a velvet tunic and satin hose and danced with one of the beauties of the fête, the Lady Saville.

Towards the end of the ensuing year the Queen of Beauty wittily acquitted herself in a correspondence she had got into on such a commonplace subject as a servant's character, with a very dignified personage of her own sex, rejoicing in the whimsical name of Shuckborough. The letters that passed were published in the newspapers of the time and caused general amusement. Lady Seymour, it seems, had among other things ventured to enquire of Lady Shuckborough whether Mary Stedman could cook plain dishes well. This was too much for the great Shuckborough who tartly informed the Queen of Beauty that she kept a professed cook as well as a housekeeper, and was generally indignant at its being supposed that she could trouble herself about the characters of under servants, "this being always done by the housekeeper, Mrs. Couch, and this was well known to the young woman; therefore, Lady Shuckborough is surprised at her referring any lady to her for a character. . . . Lady Shuckborough cannot imagine Mary Stedman to be capable of cooking for any but the servant's hall."

Lady Seymour rejoined, begging Lady Shuckborough to "order her housekeeper, Mrs. Pouch, to send the girl's character; otherwise another young woman will be sought for elsewhere, as Lady Seymour's children cannot remain

without their dinners because Lady Shuckborough, keeping a 'professed cook and housekeeper,' thinks a knowledge of the details of her establishment beneath her notice. Lady Seymour understood from Stedman that in addition to her other talents, she was actually capable of dressing food fit for the little Shuckboroughs to partake of when hungry."

To the above note was appended a clever pen-and-ink vignette by the Queen of Beauty, representing the three little Shuckboroughs, with large turnip-looking heads and cauliflower wigs, seated at a round table, eating voraciously, scrambling for mutton chops dressed by Mary Stedman, who is looking on with supreme satisfaction, while Lady Shuckborough appears in the distance in evident dismay. This was too much for the great Shuckborough, who kept "a professed cook as well as a housekeeper," and the latter was thereupon put forward to reply with biting sarcasm:

"Madam,—Lady Shuckborough has directed me to acquaint you that she declines answering your note, the vulgarity of which is beneath contempt; and although it may be the characteristic of the Sheridans to be vulgar and witty, it is not that of a 'lady,' unless she happens to have been born in a garret and bred in the kitchen. Mary Stedman informs me that you only require a girl who can cook a mutton chop; if so, I apprehend that Mary Stedman or any other scullion will be found fully equal to cook for, or manage the establishment of, the Queen of Beauty.

I am, your ladyship's, etc.,

Elizabeth Couch (not Pouch)."

X.

(1839-41.)

A DERBYSHIRE EXCURSION — SMUGGLING SIXTY YEARS AGO—ILLUSTRATED BOOKS—BYRON'S JOHN MURRAY AND THE LONGMANS.

A SKETCHING tour through Derbyshire in the autumn of the following year (1840), with Horace Harral, one of the cleverest of Orrin Smith's pupils whom I had become rather intimate with, furnished a pleasant variation to months of monotonous graver work. My companion was a great friend of Ebenezer Jones, author of "Studies of Sensation and Event," and one of those unrecognised poets whom admirers are apt to go into raptures over, while the world at large regards them with cold indifference. Jones was a clerk, toiling long hours in a Mincing-lane house, and a demonstrative pessimist, who attuned his lyre in this aggressive strain :—

> "I hurl detecting scorn
> At life's old harlot zone;
> I crush her masks for centuries worn;
> I strip her on her throne."

As I was bent on a preliminary visit to Norfolk, for the purpose of obtaining sketches of Nelson's birth place and the church his father had been rector of, for the life which Clarkson Stanfield was to have illustrated, I started off alone, after arranging with my friend to meet him at Chesterfield on a given day. I took the steamer to Yarmouth and walked across the Norfolk flats to Burnham Thorpe, where I discovered that the house in which Nelson

had been born was no longer standing, although the church remained in much the same condition as when he worshipped there as a boy. I sketched the latter and copied an old view of Nelson's birth place which I met with at the parish clerk's house.

From Burnham Thorpe I trudged on to Lynn, and took the night coach to Derby, skirting the Wash where King John lost his crown and treasure before he indulged in that unlucky refection of fruit and sour cider at Swineshead Abbey, which cost him his life. We started off at a merry pace, and once the outskirts of the town were reached, whirled rapidly along the level road into the murky darkness, guided solely by the bright flashes from our own lamps. I occupied the box seat, and so tired out was I that I slept through the night, subject to continual digs in the ribs from the butt end of the coachman's whip, accompanied by warnings to keep awake unless I wished to be pitched off. When morning broke I remember how surprised I was at the sudden apparition of Belvoir Castle, with its towers and terraces, its woods and hills rising vaguely in the distance, and the scene of sylvan beauty, which, when the sun had fairly risen, subsequently developed itself. The chartist excitement was then at its height, and on our arrival at Nottingham we found the streets filled with an angry crowd—genuine Nottingham lambs—who stopped the coach, and required no end of coaxing, on the part of the driver and guard, before allowing the vehicle to proceed.

My companion and I met at Chesterfield at the very hour we had appointed, and made our way to Matlock Bath, where the rippling Derwent courses along between the rocky ridge (of which the High Tor forms the loftiest point) and the grassy slopes known as the Heights of Abraham. Somehow or other the mad freak of scaling the ridge, in the immediate proximity of the Tor, occurred to

us, but when three fourths of the ascent had been accomplished, my friend, who was leading the way, shouted out that a huge projection in the rock barred all further progress. Descent was even more impracticable, so that the situation was a most embarrassing one. If my companion slipped, he would topple me over in his fall, and the Derwent lay more than two hundred feet beneath us. Fortunately, however, he managed to work round the projecting rock, and we succeeded in scrambling to the summit, where we flung ourselves full length upon the ground, panting with exertion and excitement over the danger we had escaped.

Later on we halted at the little inn in Matlock village, and found a party of loafers eagerly discussing the recent doings of the chartists, who had responded to the royal proclamation recently levelled against them by a so-called national petition, with more than a million signatures. Pikes had been clandestinely manufactured wholesale; secret drillings went on in particular districts; and rioting in the north had led to the arrest of many of the ringleaders. As this last proceeding produced a temporary calm, the government was congratulating itself on having dealt an effective blow to the movement when the uprising of the Newport colliers under Frost, Jones and Williams came upon the authorities like a thunder-clap. We know the upshot of the affair; how numbers of the chartists were shot down, and the rest fled helter-skelter, and the brave mayor of Newport was compensated for the wounds he received by being knighted and made much of by the queen at the Windsor dinner, to which he was afterwards invited.

Several of the Matlock village politicians were mad about the five points of the Charter, and most energetic in their defence of the Welsh colliers and rioters nearer home. One sturdy dissentient, however, sought to silence their

sympathy with the imprisoned men by every now and then growling out, "Hang 'em up for scarecrows!" This was his single sharp remedy for political disaffection, which, he maintained, brought about the ruin of the working man from the disastrous effect it had upon trade. And, yet, at the time of the outbreak, the stocking weavers in the neighbouring county of Leicestershire were only receiving a weekly wage of four shillings and sixpence,[1] while the hands at Arkwright's great spinning mill at Cromford, within a mile or two of Matlock, were not a very great deal better off.

Old Arkwright, whose wealth was estimated at eight millions sterling, enjoyed the reputation of being by far the richest man in England at a time when railway, silver, diamond, mineral oil, and nitrate kings were unknown. The founder of the family, as everyone is aware, had been a barber who accumulated a vast fortune by means of patents for inventions, said to have been filched by him from other people. His son having married a woman of whom he disapproved, was turned adrift with, however, a mill to depend upon. By the time old Arkwright was appointed sheriff, the son had grown as rich as the father, which had the effect of bringing about a reconciliation; and most of the old man's great wealth passed at his death to the son, whom he had formerly discarded and vowed he would disinherit.

From Matlock, I and my companion went the regular tourist round, visiting, of course, Chatsworth, where the huge conservatories, which afterwards suggested the Exhibition Palace of 1851, were still among the wonders of the Peak. Thence we proceeded to Castleton and explored the cavern with the customary torches and bengal lights, while the reverberating echoes were awakened by the discharge of some ricketty old pistol. It chanced to be the

[1] Life of Thomas Cooper, written by himself.

annual wake or holiday at Castleton, and as visitors to the Peak were comparatively few half a century ago, and anybody from London was an object of almost reverential curiosity, we found ourselves pressed to stay with one or another person in the village for the fortnight the wake lasted. We however, compromised matters by accepting invitations to one or two carouses, whereat the guests trolled out genuine Derbyshire songs, one of the liveliest of which dealt with the delights of the fair at some neighbouring High Peak village, something after this fashion :—

"After an hour they tripped to a bower
To play for ale and cakes,
And kisses too; and till these came due
The maidens held the stakes.
But the lasses quickly began
To quarrel with the men,
And bade 'em take their kisses back
And giv' 'em their own again."

Here ensued by way of chorus quite a chirruping of kisses on the part of some of the less bashful couples present, and then the song proceeded :—

"'Dolly,' says I, 'now homeward hie,
And I 'll go wi' thee a mile;'
And Dolly she twinkled her eyes wi' a sigh
As I helped her over the stile;
Then I cuddled and kissed her face,
D'ye think I was much to blame?
If you 'd only been in my place
I guess you 'd ha' done the same!"

To a second song, the hero of which was a fuddled Tideswell butcher, the men drank and danced an accompaniment :—

"Down leapt the butcher from his horse,
Full fain I wot was he;
And he drank till the summer sun had set
In that jolly company.

He drank till the summer sun went down,
And the stars began to shine;
And his greasy noddle was dazed and addle
With the nut-brown barley wine.

"Then four mad fellows up arose,
And joining hand in hand,
They danced around the hostel floor
And sung though they scarce could stand:
'We 've aye been drunk on yester-night
And drunk the night before;
And we 'll get drunk again to-night
If we never get drunk any more.'"

Kinder Scout, the highest point in the Peak, being only ten or twelve miles distant from Castleton, we decided to visit it ere we turned our steps southwards. On our way we passed through Edale, a village lying in a hollow on the other side of the Mam Tor or shivering mountain, which rises some thirteen hundred feet above the level of the valley. At this time Edale was almost secluded from the outside world. Letters only reached it once a week, and during winter the inhabitants often found themselves snowed in for weeks together. Imagining we should have no difficulty in spotting Kinder Scout towering above the neighbouring peaks, we foolishly disregarded the advice given us to take a guide, and set forth alone on our voyage of discovery. By and by we found ourselves in a hilly region and ascended the steep sides, "crowned with black edges and cliffs of grit," of a brown and sombre moor, intersected by deep ravines and countless watercourses which we crossed with difficulty whilst making our way, as we thought, to the particular grey peak we were in search of. No sooner, however, was one high point ascended than some loftier one came in sight, and we pursued our wild goose chase in quest of Kinder Scout, wandering over the inhospitable moorland under the gathering darkness,

until a drizzling rain set in, to be speedily followed by almost complete obscurity.

Our position was now one of some anxiety. We had lost all idea of the direction in which our return road lay, and were only able to stir at the risk of being precipitated to the bottom of some neighbouring ravine. Our choice seemed to lie between this and remaining where we were all night, numbed with cold and drenched to the skin. Finally we made an effort to grope our way out from the moor, crawling cautiously on our hands and knees. Every now and then the moon broke out from the clouds, and its rays glistening on the neighbouring pools served for a time to guide us. Eventually we joyfully discerned the lights of a neighbouring cottage in the gloom, and knew by this that we must be upon the borders of the moor. The occupants on being aroused soon put us in the right road for Hayfield, where we were thankful to obtain shelter for the night, and next day we started on our return journey to London.

A singular application was made to me soon after my arrival home. A Frenchman named Fillineau, acting as agent for several Paris publishers, who were in the habit of sending drawings on wood to London to be engraved, asked me if I knew any master of a coasting vessel who, for a handsome consideration, would undertake to run in at any part of the French coast, where the vigilance of the *douaniers* might be most easily eluded, a small cargo of bookbinders' cloth, on which a prohibitive import duty then existed. Having often heard the owner of a couple of oyster smacks, with whom I had struck up an acquaintance at Whitstable, tell some exciting yarns of hand-to-hand fights with preventive men on the Kentish coast, when he and his mates had attempted to run a few score tubs of spirits ashore under cover of a pitch dark night, I recommended him to Fillineau as being precisely the man for his purpose.

I had several times stayed with him at Whitstable, and remember being roused one fearfully stormy night and asked if I would like to accompany him and his son on some expedition to the Goodwins. I willingly agreed, and as soon as we had encased ourselves in tarpaulin and sou'-westers the yawl was launched. The gale was a fierce one, and it was some time before we came upon the wrecks. I then soon discovered that my friendly skipper was less intent on rendering assistance to the various vessels in distress and saving human life, than on the quiet plundering of the cargoes and the more valuable fittings of such ships as chanced to be beyond salvation, and I remember how elated the old fellow was at securing a rather valuable ship's chronometer, which he carefully hid away at the bottom of our boat.

Whitstable was at this time only a small village, inhabited chiefly by oyster dredgers and their families. Everything there was of primitive fashion, for seaside sojourners and holiday trippers had not yet found the place out. It boasted several rather well-to-do inhabitants, who had amassed some of their wealth from the well-known oyster beds, but much more by smuggling and wrecking in days gone by, when a section of the Kentish knockers[1] used to obtain their supplies of brandy and hollands from cargoes run ashore at Whitstable. These prosperous individuals had a fair sprinkling of pretty daughters, who had received boarding-school educations, and whose aspirations in matters matrimonial consequently ranged higher than the sheepish, ungainly Whitstable fisher lads, especially as the majority of these damsels had portions of £3000 or so. When the South-Eastern line to Canterbury was being surveyed, several of the young fellows engaged on the task strayed over to Whitstable, and paid their court to these attractive belles, whom they carried off and

[1] See *post*, p. 197.

married as soon as they learned they were so well-dowered; much to the indignation and digust of the equally mercenary Whitstable swains, who regretted the loss of these young ladies' portions far more than the loss of the damsels themselves.

My smack-owning friend was willing enough to undertake the bookbinders' cloth job, as he knew, he said, a quiet cove on the Normandy coast just suited to the purpose. The sum to be paid him was agreed upon, but a difficulty arose in the event of his getting captured and his craft being condemned. He was prepared to run the risk of a more or less long sojourn in a French prison, but if his boat was seized, he required to be indemnified to the extent of its value. This the French publishers would not consent to, and they consequently had to wait several years for their binding cloth—until indeed some enterprising fellow-countryman established a factory in France for its manufacture.

A few years prior to the time I am alluding to, conflicts between smugglers and preventive men at the Kent and Sussex watering places were far from uncommon. I remember my father, on his return from a holiday spent at St. Leonards, describing how one bright, sunny morning when he was strolling on the esplanade with other promenaders, and while bathing was in full swing, an old fishing-boat with a cargo of hollands was deliberately run ashore under the windows of the marine library, where visitors were reading the newly-arrived London evening papers. A crowd of fishermen and others armed with bludgeons quickly assembled, when a few of the more agile ones boarded and unloaded the ricketty craft, and their comrades made off with the tubs in all directions. On the preventive man on duty discharging his pistol to summon assistance, he was at once knocked down and would have been killed, my father used to say, had not some plucky

young fellows among the visitors interfered to save him. As for the boat's contraband cargo, this was all stowed away in safe places before assistance arrived.

A similar affair occurred next year at Hastings, where, during a dead calm a boat put off from a sloop anchored in the offing, and made for the beach, where several groups of fishermen seemed busy with their nets, and visitors were idly gossiping. Nearly a hundred kegs of spirits were landed like a shot, and the fishermen tucking them under their arms scuttled off with them. The coastguard, who were on the alert, fired and wounded several, but other fishermen coming up rushed on the few officers, and so belaboured them with their staves that they made a rapid retreat.

Again, in the following year, at Worthing, another favourite Sussex watering-place, a boat was sighted, by the preventive man on the look-out, making rapidly for the shore. Suspecting its object, he at once signalled for assistance, which promptly arrived, but by this time the boat had been beached, and nearly a couple of hundred men had commenced relieving it of its cargo. While some carried off the kegs, others attacked the officers and drove them inland, when a hand-to-hand fight, with cutlasses on the one side and cudgels on the other, took place, ending in one of the smuggling party being killed, and the serious wounding of three others, while several of the coastguard were more or less maimed. Their commander fared the worst, for he had his head broken, his ear slit, and his arm fractured in two places.

In these not very remote days smuggling was carried on wholesale, even in the waters of the Thames. So late as the year 1838, a gentleman complained to a police magistrate of his river yacht having been fired at no less than eighteen times, by a revenue cutter stationed near the mouth of the Thames; all this ammunition being, no

doubt, expended to oblige the yacht to lie to, that it might be overhauled. The strange part of the matter was that there should have been such a large expenditure of ammunition and no damage done. Overhauling ordinary craft was then a necessary proceeding, for not long before, a pleasure yacht sailing leisurely up stream, having excited the suspicion of some wary custom-house officers, they chased it for twenty miles, and on boarding it, were rewarded by discovering no fewer than sixty tin cases, filled with foreign silks and ribbons, stowed away under the timbers of the deck.

These were the days when prohibitory duties tempted large west-end silk-mercers to enter into intimate relations with importers of contraband goods. I have heard a member of a well-known firm describe how he and his partners managed to evade the heavy duty on a large consignment of French kid gloves, by the ingenious stratagem of importing some thousand dozens, everyone of which was right-handed. On the firm refusing to pay the duty demanded, the gloves were confiscated, and sold by auction in the usual way, and being all odd ones, were bought by the agents of the importing firm for a mere song. No sooner was possession of them secured, than orders were sent for the left-hand gloves to be shipped, and on this being done, the same farce was again gone through. When at last right and left-handed gloves were re-united, the enterprising firm who had performed the successful trick, commenced underselling their rivals to an extent that the latter, after having paid full duty on all the kid gloves they had imported, could never understand.[1]

It was Nollekens, the sculptor, I think, who made a considerable fortune by smuggling in the days when George

[1] During a debate in the House of Commons, in 1842, Sir Robert Peel read a letter, from a smuggler, offering to supply, by "the indirect channel," French gloves, laces, and silks, at an increase of from eight to thirteen per cent. on their foreign value, which, as he put it, was "a great deal under English custom-house duties."

III. was king. His plan was to import life-size plaster casts of celebrated statues and busts in foreign museums, with their hollow insides crammed with expensive lace, and then solidly plastered at the base. On the arrival of the carefully-packed cases containing these priceless works of art (as represented by Nollekens), the anxious sculptor used to hurry down to the Custom House to superintend their being opened. His plan was always to impress upon the officers both the great value and the extreme fragility of their contents, and to urge the utmost possible care being taken in handling them; for he knew full well, that had a head or an arm got accidentally knocked off, his secret would at once have been discovered, and have led to a disgraceful exposure as well as a heavy fine, and most likely a long term of imprisonment.

I remember, when I was at school, being told by Wyburn's son-in-law, that gangs of smugglers, well armed, so as to be able to repel force by force, and known as Kentish knockers, used formerly to ride periodically through the county of Kent with kegs of brandy and hollands slung across the saddle-bows of their strong, hardy horses. They called upon the farmers and the smaller gentry, all of whom obtained their supplies of spirits from this source. The more daring of these Kentish knockers occasionally extended their journey to the metropolis, riding over one of the bridges unmolested, and after ridding themselves of their kegs of contraband spirits, quietly turning their horses' heads home again.

Foreign silks and ribbons being no longer liable to duty, the yachting smuggler of to-day exercises his ingenuity in defrauding her majesty's customs in regard to other articles which it pays him well to land. Not very long ago, a steam yacht—say "the Flipper"—was in the habit of anchoring off a quiet village in the Isle of Wight, where there is nothing whatever to induce a fashionable

yacht to repair, either on business or pleasure. Her owner was said to be ill and not on board, but in his absence the yacht was cruising about to keep her crew handy. The authorities received a hint, and as there was no coastguard station at the little port at which the yacht was so fond of putting in, a detective was dispatched there, and a day or two after his arrival "the Flipper" anchored in the bay. The crew landed on the pretence that they had come for fresh vegetables, and after spending an hour in the village, returned to the yacht laden with a few cabbages and a large number of vegetable marrows. By-and-by, the boat again put off from the yacht, when it was noticed that the crew were bringing back the marrows with them. This set the detective thinking, and when the first man came up the pier-steps, with a net full of marrows on his back he stopped him. "What's up, mate? ain't they good enough for you?" asked he, in his assumed character of a sea-side lounger. "No," answered the other; "the beastly things are rotten, and we are going to change them for onions." In the twinkling of an eye the detective snatched one of the marrows out of the net, and found that it had been scooped hollow and was filled with small bottles of French scents and essences, the duty on which is 16s. 6d. per gallon. There were a good many gallons in that lot of marrows, and the dodge had been carried on for a considerable time before the day of retribution arrived.

On coming of age, about a year after I left Mr. Orrin Smith's, I went into partnership with my brother; having acquired the freedom, then necessary for carrying on business within the sacred civic precincts, by so-called servitude. On the death of Mr. Bonner I had been formally apprenticed to my father at Stationers' Hall in what I think was the council-room, hung round with engravings of Hogarth's Industrious and Idle Apprentices, and in the grave presence of the Master of the Stationers' Company.

After the indenture had been duly signed and sealed, this dignitary expatiated to me upon the honourable results certain to be secured by good conduct; and summoned up visions of my representing in the coming years the ward of Farringdon-without in the Court of Common Council, then of my election to the Court of Aldermen and serving the honourable office of sheriff, and finally attaining the rank, coveted by all good citizens, of chief magistrate of an ancient and illustrious corporation. I remember that he said nothing about the quantity of turtle needed to be swallowed and the amount of good liquor that had to be imbibed to secure that becoming portliness and those rubicund gills then regarded as essential in all occupants of the civic chair. His discourse took altogether a higher flight, and at its conclusion he courteously shook me by the hand and presented me with a Bible, having on it in gold letters "The gift of the Stationers' Company"—a memento which I often take credit to myself for having carefully preserved.

When I and my brother were plodding along as printers and engravers at Peterborough-court, Fleet-street, and occasionally engaging in some publishing enterprise, the great establishment over the way which my father had helped to found suddenly collapsed. Whitehead, unaided by his former partners' practical knowledge and intelligence, hurried steadily along the road to ruin until at last the crash came. One result of it was the transfer of the printing of a new edition of Lockhart's "Spanish Ballads," with illustrations and coloured borders and initials, to our modest establishment. Mr. John Murray, junior, son of John Murray the second—Byron's famous "My Murray"—and the late respected head of the Albemarle-street house, made the arrangements, and put my brother and myself into communication with Mr. Owen Jones, to whom the decorative portion of the volume

had been entrusted. For some years I continued in friendly intercourse with this acknowledged master in well-nigh all styles of ornament, whose singularly amiable disposition caused him to be esteemed by all who knew him.

Owen Jones was educated as an architect, and a chance visit to the East awoke within him that passion for Arabic ornament which for a time completely absorbed him. It was this craze which took him to Granada where he quietly sat himself down before that architectural marvel, the Alhambra palace, and laboured there diligently with pencil and brush for years. On returning home with a grand collection of drawings, gorgeous in colours and gilding, none of the skilful chromo-lithographers he applied to would undertake their reproduction, owing to the enormous difficulties of the task. Nothing daunted, Owen Jones took a suite of rooms in the Adelphi, engaged the best ornamental draughtsmen and printers he could secure, and set up printing presses, and after years of anxious toil, subject to constant and disheartening disappointments, he issued his unique and magnificent work upon the Alhambra, the production of which cost him a small fortune.

The volume was a commercial failure, and Owen Jones bitterly complained that the government, instead of assisting him, as foreign governments helped their subjects by subscribing for copies of similar works, actually taxed him to the extent of two or three hundred pounds—exacting in strict accordance with the law, five expensive india paper copies of the work, published at some fifty pounds each, for the benefit of certain public libraries. No more iniquitous tax than the foregoing exists, and why publishers have not long since combined to free themselves from an exaction to which no other trade is subject, and which secures neither monopoly nor other benefits, passes ordinary comprehension. They certainly manage these matters better in France. I remember at the time of

Owen Jones's complaint, being told by the Paris publisher of Botta's large and expensive work on Nineveh, that before he embarked on his enterprise the French government engaged to take three hundred copies of the book for the public libraries of France, and thereby contributed largely towards the great expense of its production, which the ordinary sales could not possibly have met.

While the printing of the "Spanish Ballads" was in progress, I remember being called down from my engraving-room one morning, and finding a cheery florid-complexioned old gentleman seated in our counting-house, whom I soon discovered to be no other than Byron's John Murray, the recognised prince of London publishers and one of the kindest, most considerate and liberal of men. Youngsters as we were, my brother and I were several times invited to his famous dinner parties, at which I remember meeting Dean Milman, John Gibson Lockhart, Richard Ford, Horace Twiss, John Blackwood of Edinburgh, and the terrible John Wilson Croker. While my relations with the Albemarle-street house lasted I was brought into frequent connection with Lockhart, whose translations of "Spanish Ballads" in their elaborately illustrated form went rapidly into a second edition; Dean Milman, who edited the works of Horace, which Scharf illustrated with copies of antique gems, and Owen Jones with tasteful adaptations of classical ornament; and Sir Francis Head, the old Waterloo soldier, of "Bubbles from the Brunnens of Nassau" fame, who had only recently been supplanted in his Canada government for dealing with the rebellion in that colony in a conciliatory fashion which failed to commend itself to the imperious authorities at home.

Sir Francis Head at the time I knew him used, in common with several other individuals who resembled the Duke of Wellington in figure, to copy the duke's style of dress somewhat closely, affecting the well-known buttoned-

up blue surtout, the white ducks, and the stove-pipe hat with extremely narrow brim. Sir Francis's get-up, however, was far from the slavish copy which the Royal Academy keeper's was. Indeed, Jones R.A. dressed himself up so exactly after the ducal pattern, including the familiar short military cloak which the duke used to wear in cold weather, that he was constantly being mistaken for his distinguished model. As the story goes, when this was told to the duke as something remarkable, he grumpishly rejoined that if the fact was as stated he thought it still more surprising he should never once have been mistaken for Mr. Jones.

The example set by the French publishers of *éditions de luxe* upwards of half a century ago, led to several of their English *confrères* occupying themselves with the production of books, largely illustrated with wood-engravings of a superior class. The success achieved by Mr. Murray with Lockhart's "Spanish Ballads" induced Mr. Thomas Longman to try his hand in the getting up of various illustrated works, one of the earliest of which was an edition of Thomson's "Seasons," with designs by members of the Etching Club. Mr. Frederick Tayler having pronounced my engravings from his designs to be "cut with much feeling and expression," I was invited to the dinner which Mr. Thomas Longman gave to the principal artists employed upon the work. From my knowledge of these gentlemen, I thought the party likely to be a somewhat prosy one, but when I learnt that Jerdan of the "Literary Gazette" and several authors belonging to the Longman set were to be present, I anticipated that the conversation would be rather brilliant, instead of which it was, I remember, distressingly dull.

Jerdan was the recognised wit of the evening. He had recently made a hit with his well-known joke apropos of changing the title of the new magazine, edited by

Dickens, from "The Wits" to "Bentley's Miscellany," asking the publisher, with an assumed air of innocence, when told of the alteration, " What need was there to have gone to the opposite extreme?" The artists proving as I had foreseen rather prosy talkers, something smart from Jerdan seemed to be constantly anticipated, and he certainly tried his hardest to justify the expectations formed of him, with, however, but a sorry result. His jokes were all laboured, and such laughter as they evoked was equally forced. I could not help contrasting Jerdan's feeble efforts with the brilliancy of Douglas Jerrold's witticisms on kindred occasions.

Jerdan was one of the half score of people who claimed to have laid hands on Bellingham after he had shot Spencer Percival in the lobby of the House of Commons. He had acquired some little opprobrium a few years before the Longman dinner by slashing into ribbons a portrait of old Sir John Soane which Maclise had painted and presented to the Literary Fund, simply because Sir John in his excessive vanity did not consider the likeness sufficiently flattering. In the latter years of Jerdan's life, when his well-known convivial habits had left their mark on him, Nathaniel Hawthorne found him " timeworn, but not venerable;" which sums up very accurately Jerdan's appearance in his languishing old age.

I recollect on one occasion Mr. Thomas Longman introducing me in Paternoster-row to his father, Thomas Norton Longman, a somewhat enfeebled old gentleman who was supposed to stand a good deal on his own dignity. He condescendingly murmured a few words to me as he sat bolt upright in his armchair, gravely munching an apple. He was treated by his sons, Thomas and William, with all the old-fashioned filial respect which parents exacted from their children in the last century. Although the eldest of the brothers was then within a few years of forty, they

both addressed the old gentleman as "sir," and always remained standing in his presence until he told them to sit down. The apprentices of the firm who were in the habit of being invited in turn to Thomas Norton Longman's house at Hampstead on Sundays, used to tell of the awe they were in of the old gentleman on these occasions, and how seriously this interfered with the proper indulgence of their appetites at his well-spread dinner-table.

One day in 1844, on calling in Paternoster-row to see Mr. Thomas Longman, who had then become the head of the firm, I found Mr. Charles Dickens, whom I readily recognised from Maclise's portrait, seated in the waiting-room. The customary remarks about the weather had scarcely been exchanged between us, when Mr. Dickens was summoned into the Longman sanctum. The interview was not a very lengthy one, and a month or two afterwards, when I learned that Dickens had quarrelled with Chapman & Hall over the "Carol" and "Chuzzlewit" profits, and that Bradbury & Evans were to be his future publishers, I could not help connecting this visit of his to Longman & Co. with the change which was then in contemplation; and I marvelled how it could possibly have happened that the great Paternoster-row house had failed to come to terms with the popular novelist who was then at the zenith of his fame.

I went abroad for the first time in the autumn of 1841 and scampered in the usual style through the famous old Belgian cities, their art galleries and their grand gothic town halls and churches, long before the era of cheap excursions and personally conducted tours. I then went up the inevitable "castled Rhine," finding, of course, everything so new and strange, so delightful as well as inexpensive, that when the time came to resume work at the mill again I returned to the smoke and bustle of Fleet-street with feelings of real regret.

XI.

(1841-43.)

ALFRED BUNN AND ALFRED CROWQUILL—F. W. N. BAYLEY AND GILBERT A'BECKETT.

My earliest recollection of Vauxhall-gardens extends back nearly twenty years prior to their decadency,—to the time when the high price charged for admission kept the company frequenting them select; when on certain grand occasions Braham and Pasta sang, and Taglioni danced there, and Paganini made his violin speak and sing by turns in the crowded little theatre; when Madame Saqui disported on the tight rope in a shower of fireworks, and later on when Fitzball's inane song of "My pretty Jane, my dearest Jane, ah! never look so shy" used to be rapturously encored nightly. How cosy the suppers in the little boxes round about the orchestra then seemed, and how nectar-like even the hot punch tasted on those sultry July nights five and fifty years ago!

I remember one dismal evening at Vauxhall when some venturesome acrobat—a part of whose programme was to simulate hanging himself—remained suspended high up in the air perfectly motionless for several minutes, until loud shouts arose among the alarmed spectators of "Cut him down!" A couple of long ladders were raised and the poor posture-master was laid in his silks and spangles on the gravelled space, while a surgeon's lancet was applied to his jugular vein. Only a drop or two of blood oozed out, however, for the unhappy mountebank had hanged

himself effectually. I also remember witnessing the ascent of Green's great balloon from the gardens in the gloomy month of November, 1836, when the aeronaut and his two companions—Messrs. Holland and Monck Mason—started to cross the channel, and after an eighteen hours' voyage, dropped down in the grand duchy of Nassau, to the sore perplexity of the country people, who, for the moment, regarded the aeronauts as visitants from the moon.

After the wreck of Gye's affairs one vigorous attempt was made to restore the fallen fortunes of Vauxhall, which had been a favourite place of public resort for nearly a couple of centuries, and been patronised by the beaux and beauties of half a dozen reigns; by George II.'s undutiful son Fred and the Prince Regent and the young bloods of his set. A triumvirate, composed of Alfred Bunn, recently deposed from Drury-lane, and Messrs. Andrews and Mitchell, the well-known Bond-street librarians, entered with confidence upon the enterprise of reviving the ancient popularity of the place; Bunn being, of course, installed manager, and his partners engaging to provide the necessary funds. This was in 1841, and to attract attention to the entertainments provided, a little leaflet called "Vauxhall Papers," with Bunn as editor and Alfred Crowquill (Forrester) as illustrator, was freely circulated.

"Vauxhall Papers" were made up of antiquarian notes, going back to the time when the Gardens were known indifferently as the New Spring-gardens and Fox-hall, and people of quality proceeded there by water; of feeble jests about the place generally, and some still feebler illustrations from Forrester's scarcely humorous, although occasionally grotesque, pencil. Strangely enough, Bunn ventured to reproduce the well-worn jokes against Vauxhall suppers, telling of the ham which was shaved into such tissue-paper like slices that a newspaper might be read through them on a moonlight evening; and of all the

carvers at the Gardens undergoing a preliminary test which involved the covering of an acre of ground with the slices of a single ham. Crowquill, moreover, illustrated these old facetiæ with a humorous sketch.

It having been decided that "Vauxhall Papers" should be printed at our office, Alfred Forrester and myself were invited to dine with Bunn and talk over details with him. Forrester was notable for his jovial appearance and manners. He had a cheery laugh at command for his own small jokes, and had schooled himself to bear the ordinary annoyances of life in a pleasant philosophical way. While uncommonly mindful of his own interests he was always ready to make the best of whatever ran counter to them, and passed through life with a smiling countenance. The best productions of his pen were perhaps the articles he wrote to accompany the collected edition of Seymour's "Humourous Sketches," many of which by the way were originally published in their separate form by Carlile, the deistical Fleet-street bookseller. Of the thousands of book-illustrations which proceeded from Crowquill's prolific pencil, very few, in my judgment, can lay claim to any particular merit.

At the time I am referring to, Bunn was residing in a house attached to Vauxhall-gardens, and on our arrival we learned that he was laid up with some internal complaint which periodically confined him to his bed. The footman ushered us into his room where we found him writhing and shouting with pain, while he jocosely lamented his unfortunate condition, and apologised for the necessity he was under of asking us to dine by ourselves. We protested against any such arrangement, and eventually the servant was ordered to serve the dinner in Bunn's bedroom. From the *potage à la bisque*, and the sercial madeira to the château la tour claret, and the early strawberries, everything was perfection. Bunn was propped up

with pillows, and between the pauses in the feast, rattled off some amusing anecdote or told some capital story with a tinge of cynicism, yet with all that *verve* for which he was noted. Every now and then his knife and fork would fall from his hands, and some pleasantry would be interrupted by a suppressed yell or a few low moans, as a more than ordinary sharp, internal twinge seized hold of him. When this occurred the footman would rush downstairs and return with several hot bricks encased in flannel, the application of which afforded Bunn temporary relief; and on he would rattle again as though determined that no amount of physical pain should swamp his natural gaiety.

Bunn was a shady personage at the best. His commercial failures never seemed to diminish his private means, and it was notorious that he had transferred his wife to Colonel Berkeley in consideration of a handsome annuity to himself. Macready, influenced seemingly by nothing in particular beyond his own irascible temper, had blackened Bunn's eyes and otherwise maltreated him when acting under his management at Drury-lane. Bunn complained piteously of the irate tragedian having abruptly assaulted him in his private room at the theatre when he was immersed in his managerial accounts. A blow from the tragedian's fist had completely closed up one of his eyes, he said, and then he had been felled to the ground, whereby his ankle was severely sprained and the table upset, causing him to be saturated with blood, ink, and lamp oil. All Serjeant Talfourd's eloquent pleading in defence of an assault, when according to the biassed advocate "talent, right, and strength gained the day," failed to save his pugnacious client from the consequences of his hasty act, and the choleric tragedian had to pay £150 damages, and costs, for his few minutes' athletic exercise.

In one of Thackeray's early literary speculations called

the "National Standard," which had F. W. N. Bayley for its original editor, and was purchased by Thackeray with a view to conducting it himself, we come across a characteristic portrait of Manager Bunn, evidently from Thackeray's pencil, as the doggrel rhymes that accompany it are certainly from his pen. The last two of these stanzas run thus:—

"Dressed out as gorgeous as a lord,
Stuck to his side a shining sword,
A-murmuring loyal speeches,
The gentleman who 's coming on
Is Mr. Manager A. Bunn,
All in his velvet breeches.

"He moves our gracious queen to greet
And guide her to her proper seat,
(A bag-wigged cicerone).
O Adelaide! you will not see,
'Mong all the German com-pa-ny,
A figure half so droll as he,
Or half so worth your money."

In spite of the great efforts made the Vauxhall venture did not prove a successful one. There were masquerades which principally attracted the usual doubtful characters; and on ordinary evenings parties of young fellows, emulous of the Marquis of Waterford's mad doings, indulged in such pranks as tripping up hurrying waiters, seizing and devouring dishes of cold chicken and ham in transit, bonneting unwary lookers-on, and pinching the calves of poor old Simpson till the ancient master of the ceremonies danced again with pain.

These Vauxhall disturbances generally led to the ringleaders spending a night in the station-house, and to magisterial fines next morning; still the rowdyism went on, the result being that quiet people kept away, and during the Gardens' few remaining years of existence their popularity steadily declined.

Bunn's quarrel with "Punch" and his "Word" with his cynical adversary are well known. When A'Beckett edited "Figaro in London," Bunn had been a favourite butt of his, and after "Punch" was started the ancient attacks were revived in its pages. The "Poet Bunn" figured therein as Apollo, and when the controversy arose as to whether Cromwell should have a statue in the new Houses of Parliament, "Punch" mooted the inquiry, Shall the Poet Bunn have one? Eventually, like the traditional worm, the victim turned, and Bunn's quotations from Mark Lemon's librettos of "Fridolin" and the Rhineboat "Lady of the Lake" proved beyond question that at least one contributor to "Punch" was capable of writing far greater rubbish than any that had proceeded from the much-abused manager's pen. Bunn merely twitted A'Beckett with the number and variety of his literary schemes, as set forth in his schedule on the files of the Insolvent Court, and all of which, said he, "had turned out failures spite of the catch-penny character of their titles." Against Jerrold he had little to say. He rather complimented him on his ready wit when, inquiring of him in St. James's-street if he was engaged in picking up character, Jerrold had replied, "There's plenty of it lost hereabouts." The clever illustrations to a "Word with Punch" were drawn by George Augusta Sala, then a mere lad picking up a knowledge of art under difficulties in the scene-painting room of the Princess's theatre. Altogether the brochure scored a great success, and "Punch" from this time forward prudently left the Poet Bunn alone.

Phillipon, of Paris "Charivari" renown, who set the Parisians laughing at the resemblance he discovered between the head of Louis Philippe and a pear, published in 1842 in one of his periodicals a series of humourous illustrations to "Bluebeard" designed by Cham, and followed these up with other illustrations to Perrault's

popular "Contes," treated in a similar grotesque fashion. My brother and I purchased the *clichés* of these engravings from Phillipon, and used them to illustrate a series of small volumes of irregular verse which were published under the general title of "Comic Nursery Tales." The success of F. W. N. Bayley's "New Tale of a Tub," penned in the same style of rollicking rhyme, led to his being engaged to write the commencing volumes of the series.

At this period the "National Omnibus," the most famous of Bayley's literary bantlings, had long since come to an end, and two other papers—the "National Standard" and the "Literary Times"—with which he had been subsequently associated had also expired. When Bayley was deposed from the editorship of the "National Standard" to make room for Thackeray, the notice which the latter gave of the change was characteristic: "Under the heading of this 'National Standard' of ours," observed W. M. T., "there originally appeared the following: 'Edited by F. W. N. Bayley, assisted by the most eminent men of the day.' Now we have *changé tout cela*—no, not exactly *tout cela*, for we still retain the assistance of a host of literary talent, but Frederick William Naylor Bayley has gone. We have got free of the Old[1] Bailey, and changed the Governor." Thackeray, in becoming "National Standard" bearer, was scarcely aware on how forlorn a hope he was embarking; neither his caricature portraits, his verses, his letters from Paris, nor the temporary transformation of the paper into a purely literary organ achieved success for it, and after being carried on by its new editor for some months, with a slight change in its title and an addition to its price, it succumbed early in its second year of existence.

In the "National Omnibus" Bayley not only puffed himself persistently, but also the publishers, who speculated

[1] The "New" would have been more accurate. See *ante*, p. 103.

in the words of his lachrymose songs or supported him with their advertisements, at the very time when he was joining in the onslaughts—originally initiated by Dilke of the "Athenæum"—on the system of puffery practised by Colbourn, the publisher. Much so-called literary criticism was bought and sold in those days. Cyrus Redding mentions that Colbourn used to say a hundred pounds laid out discreetly in advertising would make any book go down with the public, as the expenditure of this amount materially influenced the criticisms. Colbourn, however, had other and less expensive strings to his bow in the shape of half-a-dozen journals, of which he was either sole or principal proprietor, and in which he was able to secure puffs. These were the "Literary Gazette," the "New Monthly Magazine," the "Court Journal," the "Literary Gleaner," and the "United Service Journal." At one time, too, he even had a finger in the "Athenæum" itself, and Bayley, in a parody of a well-known Irish melody, insinuated that the "Courier" and the "Morning Post" were also under the enterprising publisher's influence:—

"The Puff, that once through Colbourn's halls
The soul of humbug shed,
Now lies as mute 'neath Colbourn's walls
As if that soul were fled.
So sleeps the praise of many books,
Whose sale, alas! is o'er,
And men who once were gulled thereby
Will now be gulled no more.

"No more to chiefs and ladies bright
The Puff of Colbourn swells,
For those who con 'Court Journal' now
Heed not the tale it tells;
And people who read paragraphs
In 'Courier' and in 'Post,'
Think no more of them than old maids
Of tea and buttered toast."

Colbourn, soon after taking his printer, Richard Bentley, into partnership, retired with a fortune, binding himself not to set up as a publisher within twenty miles of London, under a penalty of some thousands of pounds. Having been accustomed to judge books not by their literary merits but solely with reference to the amount of profit made out of them, he found his leisure sit uneasily upon him, as any retired cheesemonger under similar circumstances might have done, and soon afterwards he started in business again, at Windsor, which was beyond the twenty-miles limit. Desirable authors, however, were indisposed to journey two or three hours by coach to exchange a few words with even a bibliopole of Colbourn's importance, so the latter paid the forfeit and established himself in Great Marlborough-street, where he engaged in a spirited contest with his former partner for the works of writers then in fashion.

To return, however, to F. W. N. Bayley. Since he had had to resign his editorial functions his career had been a curious one. Having managed to get introduced to Barnes of "the Times" he prevailed on him to publish occasional columns of verse based upon the popular pictures of the day, such as Landseer's "Bolton Abbey in the olden time," and the like. Then when Barnes thought "the Times'" readers had had enough of Bayley's florid verses, other editors of daily newspapers were found willing to accept his rhymes on the strength of their having formerly found favour with "the Thunderer." Eventually all the popular pictures were exhausted, and Bayley talked the editor of the "Morning Post" into engaging him as a kind of fashionable reporter, to record, in his habitual highflowing style, the doings of duchesses and other *grandes dames* during the London season. In pursuit of this vocation he used to attend the Duchess of Sutherland's, Lady Palmerston's and other aristocratic

parties in the capacity of something between a flunkey and a visitor; and he also had his stall at the opera, to enable him to observe and comment on the aristocratic element amongst the audience, and indirectly on the singers and dancers as well. This soon led to his admission behind the scenes and to his being introduced to the stars, whose more striking impersonations he from time to time commemorated in poems in the "Post."

I remember Bayley having a *fête al fresco* at his Chelsea villa during these palmy days, when Edginton generously supplied the marquees, Waterer the tropical plants, Gunter the refreshments, and Weippert the music. Grisi, too, graced the entertainment with her presence, and what is more, condescended to sing. These glorious days were, however, over when Bayley undertook to write "Bluebeard" for the "Comic Nursery Tales." He had an unfortunate habit of "outrunning the constable," as we used to call it then, and this, moreover at a topmost rate of speed, which naturally led to his finding himself on the wrong side of the iron bars of spunging houses and the high walls of her majesty's Bench. The brokers, too, had cleared out the contents of his Chelsea villa, and he had been cashiered by the "Morning Post." Edginton, Waterer, and Gunter had consequently transferred their favours elsewhere, and Grisi no longer smiled on the newspaper bard who had sung her praises so lavishly. With Bayley, if money was not precisely like the air you breathe, which having not you die, the want of it was certainly, in his opinion, the root of all evil.

At the time I am speaking of there were so many *ca'sas* out against the reckless journalist that for the security of his person he was constantly changing both his name and his lodgings, and he never ventured abroad excepting in a cab with the blinds drawn carefully down. In spite of all these precautions, however, Solomon Levy,

one of Sloman the sheriff-officer's most active assistants, made the discovery that he occasionally visited a certain dingy printing office in his capacity of editor of some struggling weekly journal, and thither Levy went in the hope of renewing an acquaintance which had been upon the whole rather profitable to him. Entering the dark, dirty room that formed the printer's warehouse, on the chance of effecting a surprise, he was disappointed at finding there only a smutty-faced little printer's devil who had been left in charge.

"Ma poy," said Levy, "isn't Mr. Bayley here?"

"Don't know," replied the unsuspecting youth, "I'll go an' see."

With this he whipped through a door in the darkest corner of the warehouse, followed on tiptoes by the cunning Levy, who heard him announce to some one in an inner office, "A gent wants to see you, sir." Levy instantly darted forward, but was amazed to find no one in the room in question beyond the little imp who had just preceded him, and who informed him, quite unnecessarily by the way, that Bayley was not there. When, however, his sharp eyes discerned a hat upon the table, a walking-stick he was familiar with standing in a corner, and he heard the click of a key turning in a door opposite, he realised that he had been baulked of his quarry.

Retracing his steps he was soon in the street again, and noticed for the first time a four-wheel cab standing a few doors off. A ray of hope lighted up his Israelitish eyes as he inquired of the driver if he was waiting for the gent at the printer's. On learning that he was, Levy informed him that his fare would be out presently, and that he was going westward with him, and would meanwhile get inside. This he accordingly did, and the cabman closed the door after him. Before five minutes had elapsed the young printer's devil made his appearance, whistling his loudest,

and after glancing up and down the street retired inside the office again. Then Bayley cautiously emerged, peeped round the door-post to the right and to the left, and finding the coast clear brought his burly form fairly outside the printer's premises. Hurrying up to the cab he was saying to the driver, as the latter opened the door, "Drive to—" when a voice inside completed the sentence by shouting, "Sloman & Sons, Chancery-lane!" and quick as lightning Bayley found himself tapped on the shoulder, while a piece of parchment commencing "Middlesex to wit" was thrust under his astonished eyes.

"Wot, the spunging house?" gasped cabby, indignant at the shabby trick that had been played him, which he saw would deprive him for some time to come of a valuable daily fare, and the fare himself of his liberty.

At the time when I first became acquainted with Bayley years of high feeding had imparted a certain portliness to his figure, and his Hibernian partiality for punch and other strong drinks had given a somewhat bloated look to his otherwise handsome countenance. His hair, which was raven black, hung in long, snake-like ringlets over the greasy, velvet collar of his seedy, blue dress-coat, which he prided himself had been made by Stultz,

> "—— that doctor of our modern shapes,
> The all-wise Stultz who maketh even apes
> Look fashionable gentlemen."

Bayley's wardrobe was evidently limited at this period. Summer and winter alike he was always rigged out in the same threadbare, yet irreproachably cut, black kerseymere trousers, the same richly embroidered though soiled satin waistcoat, and the same velvet-collared, blue dress-coat with gilt buttons, in which he had been accustomed to flaunt at aristocratic parties, and exhibit himself in the stalls of the opera. Bayley had grown much stouter since the garments were made for him, and every moment you

expected to hear the seams of his coat cracking at the back; while as for his nether garments he must have followed Count d'Artois' well-known example, and been hoisted in the air and dropped neatly into them. An important part of Bayley's costume was his shabby beaver, which he wore jauntily on one side, and when chaffed about its dilapidated condition, he found consolation in the reflection that it was at any rate a Jupp.

Bayley wrote "Bluebeard" on the plan that I have heard Bulwer Lytton pursued with regard to his novels. He sent in a scrap of "copy," which being set up in type a proof was forwarded to him. This he returned corrected, with a piece more "copy" tacked on to it, and duly received a new proof of the whole. With the new proof he sent back additional "copy," and so the book grew—a few lines of "copy" arriving one day, and new proofs being returned the next, until the end of the story was reached. Even at this lapse of time Bayley's opening stanza comes jingling in my ears as I write:—

> "In former times,
> In the warmest of climes,
> A gentleman gloried in several crimes:
> Some terrible deeds he was known to have done,
> And 'twas hinted that murder was certainly one,
> For six of his wives
> Had been rid of their lives
> In the darkest of manners under the sun."

"Bluebeard" met with remarkable success, and "Little Red Riding Hood," which was designed to follow it, was written after the såme fashion. For the versified moral, however, which was to form an epilogue as it were to each tale, the book was kept waiting for months; during which time Bayley was continually obtaining small advances, and being dined and generally pampered on repeated promises—which his consummate blarney always induced one to put faith in—that the lacking moral should be forth-

coming on the morrow. After months had been wasted, and Bayley had been paid for the volume twice over to induce him to point the moral to Little Red Riding Hood's dolorous story, all hope was abandoned, and Mr. Gilbert A'Beckett eventually supplied what was necessary.

The "Comic Nursery Tales" dispensed with any further assistance from Bayley. The remaining stories were written by A'Beckett, Albert Smith, and Percival Leigh; and were illustrated by Cham, Crowquill, and Leech.

With Mr. Gilbert A'Beckett I subsequently had closer relations; at the time he formed one of the staff of the "Pictorial Times." He was the quietest and most diffident of men, singularly retiring in manner, yet always ready to undertake any amount of work. He had gone through a long journalistic experience, and although humour was his especial forte, he wrote cleverly on almost any topic. Editors favoured him, for, no matter what herculean task he undertook, his "copy" was always to time. In the early part of his career he had been, I heard, in a kind of literary partnership with one of the clever Mayhew family, who, on account of his inability to meet a bill, given to stave off the demands of some dunning printer, had put an end to his own existence.

A'Beckett was connected for a time with Hetherington's "Poor Man's Guardian,"[1] but it was as editor-proprietor of "Figaro in London" that he was best known. This penny satirical journal was started during the Reform agitation, and originated those periodical comments on magisterial decisions which subsequently became general in the newspapers, under the title of "Justices' Justice." "Figaro" was carried on by A'Beckett, with some slight outside literary aid, with much spirit. It proved so successful that a rival sprang up to compete with it, in the shape of "Punch in London," which, although it had

[1] See *ante*, p. 90 *et seq.*

Douglas Jerrold for editor, enjoyed but a brief existence. Like other editors of unsuccessful publications, Jerrold stoutly maintained that the death of the bantling was solely due to want of sufficient capital.

Seymour, the creator, pictorially, of the immortal Mr. Pickwick, was the "Figaro" caricaturist for several years, until, in fact, financial disagreements arose between him and A'Beckett, who had got into difficulties through losses at the unlucky Fitzroy theatre, of which he was lessee, and which subsequently became so prosperous as the Prince of Wales's, under the Bancrofts. The payments to Seymour for his "Figaro" drawings becoming irregular, the artist struck work, whereupon A'Beckett announced that arrangements had been made for the future illustration of the journal by the illustrious Cruikshank—suppressing the fact that it was Robert, and not George, the recognised Cruikshank at that date, who had been engaged.

A'Beckett, moreover, spitefully attacked his late caricaturist in "Answers to 'Figaro' Correspondents," observing at one time, with the old, well-worn, feeble effort at wit, "It is not true that Seymour has gone out of his mind, for he never had any mind to go out of;" and at another time, coarsely remarking: "A correspondent wants to know how it is that Seymour can't write his own name. We reply, 'Ignorance, gross and beastly ignorance.' We are told a subscription was raised to teach Seymour to spell, but his hard and obstinate bit of brain rebounded from the process, and he never got beyond words of one syllable. It is well-known that all the ideas for the 'Figaro' caricatures were supplied by the editor, Seymour being a perfect dolt, except in the mechanical use of his pencil."

This was adding insult to injury with a vengeance and Seymour retaliated with a clever caricature travestying the murder of Thomas A'Beckett. In this he depicted himself as Reginald Fitz-Urse slashing away at the pro-

strate figure of the "Figaro" editor, clad in archiepiscopal robes, and appealingly exclaiming, "For the sake of common justice don't give me any more *cuts!* [*i.e.*, woodcuts]. I have had too many already, which I 've never paid for."

Robert Cruikshank's "Figaro" caricatures were very inferior to Seymour's, and when A'Beckett retired from the publication shortly afterwards and Henry Mayhew became editor, Seymour was re-instated in his former position, and occupied it until his unhappy suicide, in 1836.

A'Beckett's literary schemes, with "catch-penny" titles, which Bunn twitted him upon in his "Word with Punch," furnish ample evidence of their author's activity, if not of his good taste. Their variety is, at anyrate, charming. Besides "Figaro in London," there were "the Wag," "the Evangelical Penny Magazine," "the Thief," "the Penny Trumpet," "the Ghost," "the Terrific Penny Magazine," "Poor Richard's Journal," "the Lover," and "the Gallery of Terrors." The lives of the majority were uncommonly short, and as their deaths arose from deficient circulation, their existences can scarcely have been merry ones. In the course of his laborious literary career, A'Beckett wrote between fifty and sixty plays, edited George Cruikshank's "Table Book" and "Omnibus," was a regular contributor to "Punch" from its commencement, and as everybody knows, was author of "the Comic Blackstone" and "the Comic Histories of England and Rome." Being a member of the bar he managed to secure the post of assistant poor-law commissioner to inquire into the scandals of the Andover union, and his report thereon led to his engagement as a "Times" leader-writer, and subsequently to his appointment as a London police magistrate, a position which he held up to the time of his death. He was exceptionally fortunate, for it is a rare circumstance, in any country, for a professional jester to attain to the dignity of even the magisterial bench.

XII.

(1842.)

THE ORIGIN OF THE "ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS"—RECOLLECTIONS OF INGRAM, MARRIOTT, AND BAYLEY.

Early in 1841 I received a letter from Ingram & Cooke, news-agents of Nottingham, enclosing a fancy portrait of Old Parr from Wilson's "Wonderful Characters," and requesting that a wood-cut might be made from it, with the words "From a picture by Sir Peter Paul Rubens" underneath. I wrote back that the portrait was a purely imaginary one, concocted more than a hundred and fifty years after both Parr and Rubens were dead, and was surprised to receive a reply saying, "No matter. Put Rubens's name all the same, as it is a well-known one." Subsequently an engraving of Old Parr's gravestone in Westminster Abbey was ordered, and then instructions were received for designs to be made of Old Parr gathering medicinal herbs, his introduction to King Charles, and other incidents in the old Shropshire peasant's apocryphal long life. This latter commission was sent on to Mr, now Sir John Gilbert, and the illustrations afterwards figured in a more or less fictitious memoir of Old Parr, of which many million copies have since been printed. In the course of a few months the Nottingham firm removed to London, and carried on a roaring trade in Parr's pretended specific for attaining a stupendous old age, at Crane-court, Fleet-street, where piles of cases four feet long filled with many thousand small boxes of pills ordinarily blocked up the passage.

It was at this time that Marriott of the "Weekly Chronicle," with whom I had kept up a casual acquaintance, sought my assistance in procuring a supply of drawings for some new illustrated publication which a friend of his contemplated bringing out. Marriott, it should be mentioned, was an inveterate and over sanguine schemer, always planning new ventures, spite of his having already lost in the "Weekly Chronicle" and other undertakings, as much of his wife's fortune as he could prevail on her trustees to let him have the control of. At this very moment he was hungering after a speculative capitalist—one who like himself believed that a colossal fortune was to be made out of paper and print,—and he fancied that he had discovered the individual he was seeking in the friend of whom he had spoken to me.

While still preserving a mysterious reticence respecting the nature of the proposed publication, Marriott offered me on the part of his friend a moderate fixed salary to assist him with hints and suggestions in regard to it, and undertook to bring his friend on the morrow to confirm the arrangement, when to my very great surprise he came accompanied by Mr. Herbert Ingram, whom I already knew perfectly well.

Ingram was at this time just over thirty. He was short, thick-set and round-shouldered, with a head a good deal too big for his body, and large coarse features. He was careless too, not to say slovenly, in his dress, and had a slouching gait which served to render him still more ungainly looking. When one came to know him, however, all this was over-looked by reason of his frank and simple manners. The published portraits of Ingram, I may mention, grossly flatter him. In his ungainly appearance, Marriott discerned so close a resemblance to Phiz's delineation of Quilp, as to illnaturedly bestow this nickname on his friend. A few years afterwards, when Ingram had estab-

lished his position, he was a trifle more particular in his dress, and I remember occasions when he affected the get-up of a fox-hunting farmer—cut-away coat with steel buttons, white cords, fluffy light beaver hat and a blue bird's eye neckerchief. In this bucolic trim he was proud to show himself at Epsom, Ascot, and other public gatherings.

Ingram had been brought up as a printer, and served his time with, or else afterwards worked for, Mr. Noble of Boston, whence he came up to London where he worked, I believe, for a year or two. He then removed to Nottingham and went into partnership with his brother-in-law, Mr. Nathaniel Cooke; when the pair started as printers, stationers, and news-agents, and afterwards became agents for the sale of Morrison's then famous vegetable pills. Some money disagreement having arisen with Morrison, an end was abruptly put to a rather profitable agency, and Ingram & Cooke were in sore straits for a pill in lieu of the one, the supply of which had ceased.

Knowing how ignorant and gullible the Nottingham lace weavers were, Ingram bethought himself of utilising the famous Old Parr legend, and soon got some medical man to settle the ingredients of a harmless aperient bolus. Under the taking title of "Parr's Life Pills," the new nostrum speedily secured local fame, and its popularity gradually extended throughout the manufacturing districts. The lucky inventor of this profitable patent medicine told me that as soon as he had cleared a thousand pounds by it, he decided that his future field should be London, and in accordance with this resolution he soon afterwards turned his back upon Nottingham, and established himself in Crane-court, Fleet-street. Here he enlisted into Old Parr's service, a notable personage enjoying an immense reputation among the ignorant and superstitious, namely, Old Moore—the Francis Moore, physician, of the Stationers'

Company—famous for his predictions, and whose almanack issued gratis by Ingram in its hundreds of thousands helped materially to puff the new pill into popularity.

After some general conversation at the interview mentioned Marriott suggested an adjournment to the old Cock tavern—

> "The celebrated Cock, near Temple-bar;
> Whose porter best of all bespeaks its praise—
> Porter that 's worthy of the poet's lays."

Here "point" steaks and porter were followed by a bottle of old crusted port,

> "Whose father grape grew fat on Lusitanian summers,"

produced with due solemnity from some special bin by the same "plump head waiter," whom Tennyson commemorates in his "Will Waterproof's Lyrical Monologue."[1] The generous wine proved an incentive to business. Ingram unfolded his scheme, which proved to be simply an illustrated criminal record on the lines of the Greenacre numbers of the "Weekly Chronicle," some hundred and thirty thousand copies of which had been circulated, and vast quantities sold by Ingram in his news-agent's shop at Nottingham. He admitted that a good murder was not to be hoped for every week or even every month, still there were police cases, and Old Bailey, and assize trials, as well as factory riots, rick-burnings, coining, sacrilege, horse-stealing, and the like, the engravings of some of which subjects, he maintained, could easily enough be prepared in advance. This was the original sorry conception of the now world-famous "Illustrated London News."

[1] "The old Cock is swept away now—with a bank on its site—and the enthusiast who is anxious to get a notion of its appearance must content himself with the pictures of its staircase and dining-room, which hang in a room in a new tavern under the old name, opposite the Fleet-street end of Chancery-lane. The 'old grill-room,' as it is called, is refitted with the boxes 'larded with the steam of thirty thousand dinners,' with their brass rods and rusty curtains. The fine old oak fireplace has been moved there bodily; the floor is still sanded, and the crockery is of the willow pattern." —Tennyson: A Study of His Life and Work. By Arthur Waugh.

With his imagination quickened by the wine Ingram gave us his ideas of how the coining, rick-burning, horse-stealing, and sacrilege subjects might be treated, growing quite enthusiastic, I remember, with regard to the latter. He pictured a fine old country church nestling among the trees, and a rough-looking man emerging from one of the handsome gothic windows with the communion plate stowed under his arm, while the moon shone brightly on ewer and chalice. Ingram was so wedded to this subject, that although he subsequently allowed himself to be persuaded to abandon his other suggestions, he adhered to this particular one firmly, and it was the very first engraving put in hand for the new illustrated paper, although, as it happened, it was never published.

The suggestion of a newspaper with every number of it more or less filled with engravings, came as a sort of revelation to me, and I at once realised the vast field it opened up. I strongly combated the notion of giving a general criminal tone to the illustrations, but although Ingram wavered a little, I failed to bring him to my way of thinking. He argued that it was only the Greenacre, Hocker and similar numbers of the "Weekly Chronicle" that had had any large sale, and that when engravings of the new Houses of Parliament, the Guildhall banquet, the Bedouin Arabs, and the Queen taking an airing, were published, merely a few extra copies of the paper were sold. Eventually it was settled that I should draught a prospectus embodying my own views, and as Ingram was impatient I promised to have it ready by noon the next day, which I remember happened to be a Sunday.

I was then living in apartments in Salisbury-square, Fleet-street, where Ingram and Marriott arrived at the appointed time. I read out my prospectus, wherein I made a great point of the Afghan and Chinese wars in which we were then engaged, and of the many "telling" subjects

these would furnish to the engraver. I referred too to the scenes of state ceremonial, the important political gatherings—the agitation against the corn laws was then at its height—and the crowd of general public events, including every class of popular amusement, which were equally susceptible of illustration; and pointed out the facilities which the recent discovery of daguerreotype gave for the publication of portraits of political and other celebrities. After the prospectus was set up in type and the proof corrected, Ingram wrote on it in his sprawling hand, "Print one million." The title of the paper, "Illustrated London News," had been already settled, Ingram having fixed upon it from the circumstance that the Nottingham people used to come into his shop in Chapel Bar, indifferent as to any particular paper, and simply saying they wanted the London news.

Before the prospectuses were printed, however, Ingram funked at the pecuniary risk he was incurring. His mother prophesied he would ruin himself, and other female relatives croaked words of ill-omen. The engravings he had ordered were all abandoned for a time. Marriott, who hoped to be rewarded with a share in the new paper free from all risk, was in a dreadful state of mind and could hit on no better expedient than another meeting at the Cock. He nervously urged me not to neglect being present, and to make sure of me, came round himself to fetch me after he had safely deposited Ingram in one of the gloomy boxes of the Fleet-street tavern.

Our joint arguments and the potent influence of the old port inspired Ingram with new courage, and he vowed that he would not be dictated to by his relations; his money was his own, he said, and he could do as he liked with it. The scene was an amusing one. Marriott became quite enthusiastic and refilled Ingram's glass, patted him encouragingly on the back, and extolled his determination

not to submit to petticoat dictation. The same kind of wavering, however, on Ingram's part, alternating with renewed resolutions to proceed with the scheme, went on for some little time longer; but eventually the prospectuses and posters were printed, the circulars to the trade directed, the title heading to the paper engraved, and Ingram so far committed to the undertaking that any idea of drawing back was now quite out of the question.

Only one thing troubled him, and that was the appointment of an editor. He knew no one connected with literature or journalism, and had come to be somewhat suspicious of Marriott, whose advice he regarded as interested. At this time F. W. N. Bayley was in a desperately hard-up condition, and out of pure charity my brother and I recommended him to Ingram, and I promised he should be at Peterborough-court the following day in order to be introduced, Ingram suggesting an early dinner afterwards at the Cock.

Bayley was in waiting when Ingram accompanied by Marriott arrived, and the introduction took place as arranged. Proprietor and prospective editor eyed each other inquisitively. In the short, negligently dressed and ungainly-looking individual with a big head, Bayley failed to recognise the capitalist of his imagination, and Ingram, on his part, seemed staggered by the first sight of his expectant editor, whose shabby-genteel appearance rendered Ingram somewhat suspicious of him. Bayley was attired as usual in his seedy dress suit, but he was well brushed up and clean shaven, and his snake-like ringlets glistened with Rowland's "incomparable oil macassar." His easy nonchalance, coupled with the ready jest and the neat little story he had judiciously come prepared with, speedily prepossessed Ingram in his favour. It chanced that some business affair prevented me from dining with them and Bayley, Ingram and Marriott sallied forth, not, however,

as it afterwards transpired, to feed at the neighbouring Cock, but to feast further afield and in far less primitive fashion. From Marriott I learned how the rest of the day was spent.

Just before the trio reached the end of Peterborough-court Bayley begged Marriott to go in advance and note whether any queer-looking customer was loitering about. None being observed Bayley suggested that they should cross the road, and without waiting for a reply darted between the cabs and omnibuses, and diving down Crown-court, hurried on through Whitefriars and the Temple, with Ingram and Marriott, perplexed as to what he was after, following at his heels.

The fact was Bayley was in great danger of arrest, and observed every possible precaution against such a catastrophe. When proceeding from one part of London to another he used the river steamers as far as practicable, under the idea—whether correct or the reverse I know not—that only one officer was empowered to arrest people for debt upon the river, and as, according to Bayley, he had to wear a small silver oar in his buttonhole, he was of course readily recognisable. Bayley, not daring to risk marching up Fleet-street to the Cock, had made his way towards the river as quickly as possible, excusing himself to Ingram, when he paused to take breath, by pretending that he was dying for a blow upon the water—it was in fact a balmy spring day—and adding that he would take him to a nice, quiet riverside place where they could have a much more comfortable dinner than in the stuffy room, odorous of tobacco and sawdust, at the Fleet-street Cock.

By this time they had arrived at a steamboat pier, and as the first boat that called there chanced to be a Richmond one they stepped on board it, and Bayley, freed from all anxiety about arrest, was soon in high spirits again. It was not long, however, before he discovered that the river

breeze required to be tempered with occasional glasses of warm brandy and water in search of which he dived below, taking Ingram with him to discharge the score. When the steamer reached Richmond-bridge Bayley had formed his plans, and at once proceeded to march his submissive companions up the hill to the Star and Garter, which, with the knowledge that he had a capitalist in tow, he entered as though he were a lord, utterly regardless of his seedy habiliments.

After informing the orthodox "sneering waiter with newly curled hair," who advanced to receive the party, that he required dinner in a private room—"one with the view, mind,"—which said view Thackeray found had its hair curled like the swaggering waiter, Bayley proceeded to interrogate the latter as to the contents of the larder, Ingram and Marriott standing by dumbfounded. Eventually he decided upon the *menu* which, as he was partial to high feeding, comprised among other things, turtle soup, eels with sauce *tartare*, ducklings with early peas, and *pâté de foie gras*. Being only a poor judge of wine, and not caring particularly for it, he simply ordered some sherry and a bottle of 1834 port with the cheese. The dinner prolonged itself till dusk, for Bayley from time to time fired off most of his best jokes and told all his old stories, which were of course novelties to his present listeners, who were quite charmed with his humour and vivacity. Meanwhile neither of them gave so much as a thought to the famous view which people pretend they go to the Star and Garter to see. By and by lights and cigars were called for, and a bowl of hot punch was ordered to be brewed; and under its potent influence Bayley rattled off some more capital stories, and altogether the trio conceived that they were passing a very jolly evening.

At length the waiter hinted something about closing, whereupon the bill was demanded, and then the customary

mauvais quart d'heure ensued. Ingram in fact, as he often afterwards mentioned, was on tenter-hooks; he had no experience of the cost of Star and Garter dinners, but he surmised correctly enough that whatever it was he would be called upon to pay the piper, and he was in terrible doubt as to whether he had sufficient money about him. He knew from experience that no help could be counted on from Marriott, whose wife never entrusted him with more than a few shillings of pocket money at a time, and Bayley's general seedy appearance sufficiently indicated that there was no chance of his being able to make good any deficiency.

The bill was brought. It was for a handsome sum, though less than it would have been in these days of absurdly expensive dinners, which neither the *menus* nor the wines justify. By dint of rummaging in all his pockets Ingram at last got together the amount, and then, at Bayley's instigation, he made a further search for something for the swaggering waiter. The latter came off far from as well as he had hoped, and was by no means mollified by Bayley's assurances that he would be remembered on some future occasion. This, however, did not distress the party overmuch as they sallied forth into the moonlight in the highest of spirits. The air was fresh and pleasant, and they all agreed that it was just the evening for a walk, although scarcely for one of ten or a dozen miles.

And yet there was no other way of getting home. Marriott's means were limited to a fourpenny piece, Bayley had not a copper, and Ingram, by dint of further diving into his pockets, could only succeed in fishing up a final half-crown. As they neared the bridge they encountered a jolly young waterman, just turned out of a neighbouring public house, humming "the Lass of Richmond-hill," and tried to strike a bargain with him to row them as far as

Vauxhall, Chelsea, or Putney even. But he of course spurned the notion of a mere paltry half-crown, though "the tide being favourable he wouldn't mind undertaking the job if they liked to add another sovereign. Even then," he impertinently added, as he surveyed Bayley's portly figure, "it will be under ninepence a stone."

There was no alternative but to trudge up to town, and as Bayley was somewhat of a gouty subject, they soon found this to be slow and weary work. While marching moodily along just before reaching Barnes, the rumbling sound of a returning fly interrupted their meditations. The vehicle proved to be empty, and Bayley ascertained from the driver that his home was somewhere Newington way. Now it chanced that Bayley resided in that direction, whereas Ingram and Marriott both lived at Paddington, exactly the opposite side of London. An earnest discussion ensued, which ended by Bayley cajoling Ingram out of the half-crown, and persuading the flyman to drive him home in exchange for it. This settled, he was in the fly like a shot, waiving his adieux to the pair of pedestrians, who trudged grumpishly on across Hammersmith-bridge, and, after constantly taking the wrong road and going over twice as much ground as they need have done, arrived at Paddington weary and footsore just as the early housemaids were sweeping their doorsteps, and exchanging confidences respecting the unflattering things which their respective mistresses had been saying of each other.

The preparations for the first number of the "Illustrated London News" now went steadily on. It had been announced that a grand fancy dress ball was to take place at Buckingham Palace, and the women were all in a flutter of excitement about it. This ball was a piece of great good luck for the new paper, and it was settled to publish the first number at the end of the week that the ball took place. I arranged with Mr. John Gilbert, who had put

several of Stanfield's drawings for "Poor Jack" upon the wood for me in a masterly manner, to make a couple of pages of designs, and designs they were in the strictest sense of the term, for the only authorities he had to guide him were such scanty scraps of information respecting the guests and their costumes as appeared from time to time in "the Times" and "Morning Post." I remember that at the last moment it was announced Prince Albert would wear a coronal of pearls, which was foolishly interpreted to be a string of these gems (instead of a tiara, as was intended), and it so figured in the newspaper engraving.

When the hour arrives the necessary man is said to be always forthcoming, and this was unquestionably true in the instance of the "Illustrated London News." In 1842 it would have been well-nigh impossible to have kept an illustrated paper, containing from twenty to thirty engravings weekly, going had not Mr. John Gilbert's facile and imaginative pencil been available for the purpose. I use the word "imaginative" advisedly, for the system pursued with regard to the majority of engravings of current events —foreign, provincial, and even metropolitan when these transpired unexpectedly—was to scan the morning papers carefully, cut out such paragraphs as furnished good subjects for illustration, and send them with the necessary boxwood blocks to the draughtsmen employed. Of these Mr. Gilbert was a good deal more than a head and shoulders above all the rest, and, as time went on, every week, and occasionally every day, newspaper paragraphs and boxwood blocks used to be sent by hand to him at Blackheath, whereupon he would tell the bearer to take a turn on the heath and come back in an hour or so; when he would invariably find the drawing ready for him to hurry up to London with.

In the case of important metropolitan and provincial events, of which announcements had been made before-

hand—such as a royal journey, a great anti-corn law meeting, a grand official banquet, or the laying of the foundation-stone of some notable public building, an artist was sent to sketch the locality and also the actual incident if he could succeed in obtaining the necessary facilities, which were, however, only occasionally accorded him, and usually after a good many rebuffs, for the illustrated newspaper—not then the social power it has since become—met with but scant favour in official quarters.

Any kind of views of such localities as were then the seat of war in China and Afghanistan were only to be procured with the greatest difficulty. Obtaining them from the fountain-head was at this period quite out of the question, and publishers being exceedingly jealous of the illustrated newspaper—which Mr. John Murray the elder prophesied would seriously interfere with the sale of books—were indisposed to grant permission for subjects to be copied from any of the illustrated works issued by them.

A few days before the first number of the new paper made its appearance, a considerable portion of the city of Hamburg, comprising some two thousand houses and public buildings, was destroyed by fire, the loss of property amounting to more than seven millions sterling. This event furnished a telling subject for the first page of the paper, but Mr. C. N. Williamson errs in stating in his "Illustrated Journalism in England," that an old woodcut of Hamburg was routed out and had flames and rolling clouds of smoke engraved in the sky. Any wood-engraver will recognise the impossibility of producing dark clouds of smoke by the means suggested, to say nothing of the crowd of boats and people that fill the river and occupy the foreground of the subject. The view of the city was engraved by one of my assistants and was copied, I remember, from a print in the British Museum, the artist, in drawing the subject upon the wood, having added the necessary flames and volumes

of smoke, as well as the crowd of people, in boats and on the river bank, supposed to have been attracted by the conflagration.[1]

*** The substance of the foregoing narrative of the origin of the "Illustrated London News" was published in the Jubilee number of that paper, and shortly afterwards Lady Watkin (Herbert Ingram's widow) disputed my statement respecting Ingram's original intention being to produce a kind of illustrated police gazette. Her words are :—

"Although I do not pretend to deny that worldly success had some share in his (Ingram's) calculations, I can yet well remember that with it was mingled a very large measure of social and moral aspiration. He always talked of his coming newspaper as a great educational force, as an organ which would have its strongest ally in the clergy of the country; and never once did he breathe a suggestion that vulgar sensationalism was to have any place in his projects. Is it likely that with his mind once set upon illustration of crime, he would have been so entirely turned from his purpose as to admit only one single illustration of a murderer? . . . Throughout the early volumes there is absolute consistency—state functions and social festivities, every phase of life, indeed, except crime."

My reply to Lady Watkin is simply this :—

First, that the narrative she throws doubt upon is true in every particular.

Secondly, that it is at least singular Lady Watkin should have allowed the story to pass current for many years without attempting to contradict it. On the same page of the "Illustrated London News," in which her letter appears, the editor admits that "in the several books which treat of this phase of journalistic history, it is stated that Ingram's original idea was to found a record of crime. It is accepted, without question, in the 'Dictionary of National Biography' (1892), and in the 'Pictorial Press' (1884), by Mr. Mason Jackson" (then as now art-editor of the "Illustrated London

[1] Mr. Spielmann's statement ("Illustrated London News" Summer number, 1892, p. xii.) that the heading of the paper was engraved in Paris, and that all else in the first number came from Landells and Sly, is singularly incorrect. The river view of London was engraved in Sly's establishment, and the somewhat clumsy looking lettering above it in mine. It was a long time afterwards when the London view was reproduced on copper by a French firm. As for Landells, he engraved nothing whatever for the new paper until it had been several months in existence.

News.") Here I may remark that neither the writer of the memoir in the "Dictionary of National Biography," nor Mr. Mason Jackson, received a particle of information of any kind from me, so that they must have derived their knowledge from a perfectly independent source.

Thirdly, I desire to ask Lady Watkin why it is that the contradiction of this oft repeated story has been delayed until all of those familiar with the facts of the case, excepting myself, are dead. I allude to Ingram's partner and brother-in-law, Nathaniel Cooke; to his friend Marriott; and to Bayley, Monahan, Palmer, and Clayton, the original editor, sub-editor, printer and publisher of the "Illustrated London News."

As for Ingram's "social and moral aspirations," these are, I think, disposed of by recalling the circumstance, that the very money which enabled him to start the "Illustrated London News," had been made by him by a vulgar fraud on an ignorant public—by his falsely pretending in the life of Old Parr, and elsewhere, that the pills he palmed off on his credulous dupes were compounded from a secret recipe of Old Parr's, of which he had become possessed; and which he hoaxed them into believing had been the means of the Shropshire peasant attaining a patriarchal old age. I knew Ingram well up to the time of his death, and was intimately associated with him in more than one important undertaking, and I certainly never heard him suggest that "social and moral aspirations" had aught to do with his many enterprises. He was a bold speculator, and usually dealt liberally with those whose assistance was essential to him, but he always seemed to have only two objects in view—making money, and consolidating by means of its expenditure the position in society which he had secured for himself. Ingram's great and commendable ambition was to sit in Parliament for his native city, and this led to his disbursing considerable sums towards the construction of the Boston and Sleaford railway and supplying Boston with gas and water, and in acquiring the presentation to the living of St. Botolph. Most people will recognise considerable political foresight and plenty of worldly shrewdness, but certainly no moral aspirations, in all this.

It will scarcely be pretended that Ingram's moral aspirations led him to intimately connect himself with the notorious John Sadleir, and engage with him in "a scheme to deceive Mr. Vincent

Scully." These are Lord Campbell's exact words, giving his interpretation of the finding of the jury who tried the action which Scully subsequently brought against Ingram. This suit, in which heavy damages were claimed on the part of the plaintiff, is a matter of history, as well as the verdict of the jury awarding Scully £300 after Ingram had been subjected to a severe cross-examination by Edwin James. Ingram's counsel moved for and obtained a new trial, but before this came off, Ingram, quite unsolicited, proffered a loan to Edwin James, who was well known to be up to his eyes in debt, and actually lent (?) him £1250. As a consequence, he escaped the second severe cross-examination which he so dreaded. The man who lends a large sum of money to the impecunious counsel of his opponent, while a suit is still pending, certainly cannot lay claim to any high moral principles, and is scarcely less deserving of reprobation than the embarrassed Q.C., who, after being tempted, stooped to accept the loan.

To return, however, to the matter with which I am more immediately concerned. Almost convincing proof of the accuracy of my narrative is furnished by the "Illustrated London News" itself. In the Jubilee number the editor states that "Mr. Herbert Ingram always acknowledged that it was the Greenacre murder, a ghastly crime which startled the country in 1837, which finally determined him to the enterprise [of an illustrated newspaper]. . . . Ingram made his first attempt at illustrated journalism by the production of a broadsheet entitled 'The Life, Death, and Horrible Crimes of Thomas Greenacre, the Camberwell murderer.'" What faith, I may ask, is to be placed in the fable of Ingram being actuated by social and moral aspirations after this?

The fact of the "Illustrated London News" having published only one portrait of a murderer proves really nothing with regard to the original intentions of its projector. Before the first number appeared, and prior to the visit which Sir John Gilbert received from Ingram, when, as he says, no allusion was made to the illustration of crime, Ingram had been almost completely weaned from his pet original idea—Bayley, who had strong conservative instincts, and who firmly believed in the great advantages of family and clerical support, having done all he could to induce him to abandon it. That he had not entirely given it up seems apparent from a passage in the opening address, where, in allusion to subjects for future illustration, "when the pencil must at least

be oracular with the spirit of truth," it is said: "You can have broadly before you all the pith and marrow of the administration of justice, with points of force, of ridicule, of character, or of crime."

On May 14, 1842, the first number of the new paper, which was printed, by the way, in Crane-court within a door or two of the Parr's Life Pills' depôt, duly made its appearance. The news-agents had provided themselves with a good supply, and on the afternoon of publication troops of city men on their way home westward were to be seen with copies of the paper, eagerly scanning its engravings as they walked along. Bayley's opening address was little else than an amplification of the prospectus, couched in the writer's customary high flown style, only he sought to hoodwink the public by saying that, "should the pen ever be led into fallacious argument the pencil must at least be oracular with the spirit of truth." And this, too, with not even a single engraving in the opening number derived from an authentic source!

The principal feature of the second number of the "Illustrated London News" was the famous Strawberry Hill sale which was illustrated with views and portraits—including a characteristic one of the grandiloquent George Robins by Crowquill—and representations of some of the objects sold. Views were also given of the overland mail route to India, and Mr Williamson, in his "Illustrated Journalism," points out that Ingram was evidently still hankering after his ideal police gazette, "there being," he observes, "a strong taint of criminal horror about the paper—a portrait of Daniel Good, the murderer, appearing in one of the pages—and reports of police cases being not only copious but frequently accompanied by sketches by Alfred Crowquill who had been specially engaged for the purpose." Good had just been executed for the Roehampton murder, and the genuineness of the portrait

published in the "Illustrated London News" was certified by a memorandum from the murderer's solicitor, reproduced in fac-simile.

The third number dealt mainly with the Derby day, and the fourth contained a sketch of Oxford's attempt to shoot the queen, and a ludicrous representation of his examination before the privy council. This vulgar-looking subject forms a striking contrast to Gilbert's equally fanciful but graceful design of the queen holding a levee. Some wretched portraits of Muntz, Ferrand, Cobden, and other political celebrities of the time were given in subsequent numbers of the paper.

Draughtsmen on wood were far from numerous in the early days of the "Illustrated London News," and the more talented among them, like William Harvey, were not only unaccustomed to a bold and rapid style of drawing, but they looked with something like disdain upon the interloper. So few were the designers employed on the new paper during the first few months of its existence that they might almost have been told off on the fingers of one hand. Prominent among them was Henry Anelay, a *protégé* of Sly's, who may certainly be credited with having produced in the earlier numbers some of the worst figure subjects the paper ever published.

The "Illustrated London News" was a success from the very beginning, although the contrary has been often asserted, and quite recently by Mr. Joseph Hatton, professedly on the authority of Mark Lemon who, as he was engaged at his Wych-street "pub" at the time, could have known nothing whatever about the matter. According to this dubious testimony, the Ingram family, after the new illustrated paper was started, were in the habit of sitting round the table on Saturday nights indulging in a good cry over the week's losses, a statement as unfounded as it is absurd.

The weekly sale of the "Illustrated London News" was stated in the seventh number to have reached twenty thousand copies, a great rise having been secured by what was regarded in those over cautious days as a somewhat venturesome piece of expenditure. Eight or ten thousand copies of a particular number, with engravings of the installation of a new Archbishop of Canterbury, were sent to all the Church of England parsons in the kingdom, a bold step, which was attended by immediate and satisfactory results.

The preface to volume I., penned by Bayley in his favourite high falutin' style, was a singularly hazy production, and shows the sort of rubbish which, when he was obfuscated with brandy and water, he occasionally rattled off. It claimed that the paper was "conducted with a view to the promotion of national intelligence, and the more ennobling principles of moral philosophy (?), presenting a new, beautiful, and hitherto untilled field to the novelist and historian, dedicated to justice (?) and the good of society, and above all, clasping literature and art together in the firm embrace of mind!"

Bayley brought an impecunious fellow-countryman of his, named Monahan, on to the paper in the capacity of sub-editor. The pair were always endeavouring to fly kites together, but rarely succeeded in their attempt. In Ingram they fancied they had discovered a plump pigeon waiting to be plucked. To effect their object Bayley drew a bill upon Monahan for fifty pounds and, availing himself of an opportunity when no injudicious adviser was hovering at Ingram's elbow, proffered the bill for discount. Ingram first scanned the face of the document and then the endorsement, after which, to Bayley's great amazement, he threw the acceptance into the fire. Bayley of course protested and pretended to be extremely angry, while Ingram quietly taking a five pound note from his pocket handed it to him, saying, "Here, you can make

lots of 'em with this." Bayley's indignation was speedily mollified by the fiver, and he never tried to palm off worthless paper on Ingram again.

Before even the first number of the "Illustrated London News" was published Marriott and Ingram quarrelled and parted; and Marriott was again on the lookout for some fresh capitalist whom he might assist to ruin over one of the many wild schemes germinating in his fertile brain. After taking up, about a year later, with Henson's aerial steam carriage, which was to have been steered through space, but in spite of numerous puffs in the illustrated and other journals speedily collapsed and was heard of no more, Marriott succeeded in hoodwinking the solicitor to the Eastern counties railway, I think it was, from whom he extracted the requisite funds to start, first of all, "the Death Warrant," a lugubrious journal with a skull and crossbones for heading and a deep mourning border round every page, and then "the Railway Bell." Mr. H. Ward, radical M.P. for Sheffield, one of the few liberal members who denounced the set made against Sir James Graham for opening Mazzini's letters, and who subsequently became commissioner for the Ionian Islands, was another of Marriott's pecuniary victims. Having purchased the "Weekly Chronicle" he was cajoled by Marriott into issuing a series of expensively engraved steel portraits, as supplements to it, at a loss of many thousand pounds.

Marriott's final journalistic venture in this country was "Chat," concerning which Mr. George Augustus Sala, who was at once its editor, artist, and publisher, can tell many a good story. When the publication collapsed Marriott thought it prudent to disappear, leaving the office fixtures to satisfy the demands of contributors and others, whose salaries were in arrear. A meeting was promptly held for the division of the spoil, when one

creditor satisfied his claim by appropriating the shaky office table, a second contented himself with the counter, and a third had to put up with two or three ricketty chairs. The office partition, the shelving, and the gas fittings were in turn speedily laid claim to, and nothing whatever seemed left for one timid individual who had certainly been most backward in pressing his claims. Suddenly a thought seized him and stooping down he scraped the dirty flooring with his pocket knife. "Lead, by jingo!" shouted he. "I collar this;" and he was delighted to discover, when the broker was called in to value the lot and clear the place, that this find of his, when taken up, proved to be worth nearly as much as all the rest of the office sticks together.

Marriott made his way to California, where, as he had "nary a cent" of his own, he naturally opened a bank, and I remember, on the occasion of a flying visit which he subsequently paid to this country, his proudly exhibiting to me some of his handsome twenty-dollar notes, which flimsy securities he managed to exchange with the Californian gold-diggers for their solid auriferous nuggets. Eventually Marriott abandoned banking and reverted to newspaper schemes, founding the "San Francisco News Letter," which he conducted up to the time of his death, a year or two ago. To the last he clung to his aerial navigation fad, to advance which he had floated a company in the far West, but with his death Aero-Plane scrip, of not much account before, passed beyond the realms of stock exchange quotation.

XIII.

(1843.)

THE PICTORIAL TIMES—HER MAJESTY'S PRINTER—SOME MEMBERS OF MY STAFF—JOHN BRIGHT—CHAM, THE CARICATURIST.

INGRAM was one of those men who are swayed by the last person who secures their ear, and as it was not worth my while to be constantly dancing attendance upon him, I severed my connection with the "Illustrated London News," on receipt of a certain sum in lieu of notice, and early the following year (1843) I started an opposition paper in conjunction with Mr. Andrew Spottiswoode, the queen's printer.

Mr. Spottiswoode was a tory of the deepest orange hue, who had married a daughter of Thomas Norton Longman, the great Paternoster-row publisher. He was a tall aristocratic-looking individual, with finely chiselled features, slightly bald, and whiskered after the Duke of Cumberland pattern. He was reticent of speech, and a trifle imperious in manner, and exacted almost obsequious respect from every one in his employ. He had sat in Parliament for Colchester until compelled to resign his seat as the holder of her majesty's patent. This *contretemps* was brought about through his having accepted the office of either president or treasurer to a political association, which had been formed for furnishing funds to protestant Irish candidates, and contesting the validity of the elections of those catholic M.P.s, who formed O'Connell's famous tail, by petitioning wholesale against

their return. The aggrieved Irish members and their radical allies denounced the association as the "Spottiswoode gang," and Smith O'Brien, the subsequent hero of the Widow Cormack's cabbage garden, made a motion in the House, which Lytton Bulwer seconded, for the appointment of a select committee on the subject. Sir Francis Burdett was one of the subscribers to the funds of the arraigned association, and while admitting what he termed the follies of his youth, he spoke boldly in the association's defence, which brought O'Connell—his former chum at Crown and Anchor Reform meetings, but whom he now stigmatised as the "paid patriot of Ireland"—thundering down upon him, complaining of having been vilified and traduced by an "old renegade."

H. Disraeli made his memorable maiden speech on this occasion. Having an old score to clear off with O'Connell, he rose the instant the latter sat down, and in a rambling style taunted him upon the many Irish subjects he had introduced into his "oratorical rhetoric." The liberal benches responded with laughter and jeers which were continued till Disraeli saw it was useless to persevere any longer. The newspapers charitably thought that the rebuff the speaker met with was mainly due to his absurd, theatrical get-up, in a bottle green frock-coat and loud fancy-pattern pantaloons, an open white waistcoat hung over with glittering chains, and a black stock hiding every particle of shirt collar. Strange to say, Sir Robert Peel, who was at all times exceedingly chary of his applause in the House, turned round to face the debutant, and frequently cheered him in stentorian tones. Disraeli, thus encouraged, persevered for some time but finally gave way and, as we all know, resumed his seat with the memorable expression, since become historical: "Though I sit down now the time will come when you will hear me."

Lord Houghton used to relate that he was sitting

beside Disraeli on this occasion, and as he had to go through the ordeal of making his own maiden speech—he was then Mr. Monckton Milnes, and M.P. for Pontefract—he sought to cheer the discomfitted orator by responding in an undertone: "So it will, old fellow."

The new illustrated paper was named the "Pictorial Times," and its literary team comprised the following notable writers—Douglas Jerrold, leader writer on social topics only, party politics being altogether ignored; Thackeray, art critic and literary reviewer; Mark Lemon (then editor of "Punch"), theatrical critic; Gilbert A'Beckett, contributor of humorous column; Peter Cunningham, anecdotic commentator on living literary celebrities; and Knight Hunt (afterwards author of "the Fourth Estate" and editor of the "Daily News"), sub-editor.

While the earlier volumes of "Comic Nursery Tales" were in progress, a pale-looking, nervous young fellow called several times at Peterborough-court, to inquire after F. W. N. Bayley. The latter on being informed of the circumstance seemed by no means anxious for an interview, and by and by, after the patience of our somewhat frequent visitor was completely tired out, he explained who he was, and his object in wishing to see Bayley. It transpired, from what he told me at the time and subsequently, that his name was Frederick Knight Hunt, and that after acting as clerk to a barrister, and doing a little chance newspaper night work, he had studied medicine with the view of following it as a profession. While waiting for patients he started the "Medical Times," in opposition to Wakley's "Lancet," and on a particular occasion made a daring attack upon Liston, the eminent surgeon, who he maintained had recklessly killed one of the patients at University College hospital by probing an aneurism with his scalpel, while professing to demonstrate to the assembled students that the man was suffering from some totally

different disease. The article was headed "a Field-day in Gower-street," and excited, I believe, considerable sensation in medical circles at the time.

Either owing to actions for libel brought against the paper, or pecuniary difficulties of another kind, Hunt was compelled to give up the "Medical Times," on the strength of which he had married, and to seek his fortune in the wilds of Norfolk, where he obtained the appointment of medical officer to some poor law union, which allowed him the liberal salary of from forty to fifty pounds a-year, out of which he had to keep a horse and gig, and provide drugs and other medicaments for the pauper patients committed to his charge. A brief experience satisfied him of the impossibility of his continuing to hold the post on such starving conditions, and he returned to London and boldly threw himself into literature.

Knowing no one who could assist him with introductions to either editors or publishers, his prospects were gloomy enough. He chanced, however, to get acquainted with Bayley, who, seeing that the young fellow was clever and had plenty of smart ideas, talked to him, in his accustomed big way, of the great influence he possessed with editors and publishers; and eventually bargained with Hunt to plant anything the latter might write, on condition that he was to be remunerated for his trouble with half of the proceeds. In accordance with this arrangement, Hunt had handed Bayley some half-dozen articles which had been published in a magazine belonging to Colnaghi and Puckle, and duly paid for; yet Hunt had never received a sixpence on account of them. He could, moreover, obtain no reply to letters sent to the various addresses which Bayley—who was then hiding from bailiffs, and withheld his actual place of residence from everyone—had furnished him with.

I knew Bayley's slippery ways, and what little chance

there was of bringing him to book, still, I promised Hunt that I would endeavour to make some satisfactory arrangement for him, and he left me his address, at the offices of the Anti-corn-law League in the Strand, where, he told me, he was then filling an upper clerk's post, at a salary of fifty shillings a-week.[1] It is scarcely necessary to say I was unable to do anything with Bayley, but I had glanced through the articles in the Colnaghi magazine, which were all upon current topics, and decided to offer Hunt a post upon the new paper.

With this object I went to the Anti-corn-law League offices, at the corner of Duncannon-street, nearly opposite to where the Charing-cross railway station now is, and was referred to the upper floor of the building, where I found a score or so of desks, at which twice as many pens were vigorously scratching over sheets of foolscap paper. Hunt came forward in response to my inquiries, and after a few minutes' conversation, in one of the window recesses, I engaged him as my sub-editor, at a weekly salary of three guineas, with the opportunity of earning a couple of guineas more by writing up to cuts, and supplying occasional notices of new books. Hunt was delighted with the engagement, and arranged to be at his new post at the stipulated time.

As I had foreseen, he made an excellent sub-editor, and when I subsequently parted with my share in the "Pictorial Times," he secured the editorship of the paper, and held it for a couple of years. A further change in the proprietorship then taking place (1846), he had to give up his appointment, and I remember his calling on me, at Peterborough-court, to inform me of the circumstance, reminding me at the same time that I had done him a good

[1] In a memoir of Knight Hunt, published in "the Athenæum," just after his death, and reprinted in "John Francis, and the Athenæum," it is stated that Hunt was secretary to the London Anti-corn-law League and sub-editor of the "Illustrated London News." Both assertions are incorrect.

turn three years before, and expressing a hope that, now he was adrift, I might again be able to assist him.

It chanced that we were just then printing a little book called the "Family Joe Miller," for Mr. W. H. Wills, who had been brought up as a wood-engraver in my father's office, and had since drifted into literature, under the wing of Mrs. Cornwall Baron Wilson, a magazine poetess of the period, whose patronage he ill-requited in a fashion that imperilled his liberty, and something like a cloud hung over him for several years afterwards. Wills next came into notice from having written a successful play or two, one of which, on the well-known incident of Dr. Dodds' conviction for forgery, gave the author, I remember, the opportunity of introducing a score or so of notable personages of the time, including George III., the Earl of Chesterfield, Dr. Johnson, with Boswell dogging his footsteps, note-book in hand, Burke, Goldsmith, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and even Jonathan Wild and Blueskin. I don't think Jack Sheppard figured in Wills's *dramatis personæ*, the author having considerately drawn the line at Blueskin. The piece was played at the Surrey, and Vale, I remember, was great in the principal comic part.

Subsequently, Wills contributed to "Punch" from its commencing number, for a year or two; and he next obtained the editorship of "Chambers's Journal," and married the sister of its proprietors. A day or two prior to Hunt's visit, Wills had confided to me that a new daily newspaper was on the eve of being started, with Mr. Charles Dickens as editor, and that he had been appointed Mr. Dickens's secretary. I told Hunt all this, and gave him a strong letter of recommendation to Wills, which secured him the post of provincial editor on the new paper. Wills, as is well known, subsequently became Dickens's sub-editor on "Household Words" and "All the Year Round," and Lady Burdett-Coutts' almoner.

Hunt gradually worked his way upward on the "Daily News." When Dickens resigned the editorship and Forster succeeded him, and Dilke assumed the management and reduced the price from fivepence to twopence halfpenny, thereby increasing the circulation sixfold, Hunt had become the principal sub-editor. Sometime after Dilke's retirement, and when the paper on which nearly £200,000 had been lost was in sore financial straits, Hunt proposed to the solicitor, who, I believe, was also one of the partners in the concern, to put the "Daily News," then ignominiously nicknamed the "Daily Snooze," on a paying footing upon certain conditions. These, which involved the getting rid of some half-a-dozen drones in the enjoyment of berths to the tune of some thousands a year, were agreed to. In consideration of the extra work thrown upon the shoulders of the real working members of the staff, their salaries were slightly raised, Hunt was appointed editor—this was in 1851—and the "Daily News" through these judicious changes secured a new lease of life.

For years previously Hunt's health had been delicate. The strong nervous energy which he had always exhibited lacked the requisite physical stamina to sustain it, and this, coupled with the vitiated atmosphere of a newspaper office, and late hours at London clubs, rendered him an easy prey to disease. When, therefore, fever attacked him, he speedily succumbed, and died before he was forty, after having occupied his editorial post little more than three years.

As soon as I had arranged with Knight Hunt to sub-edit the new illustrated paper, I put myself in communication with Douglas Jerrold, with a view to his writing the leading articles, which, as already mentioned, were to be confined exclusively to social topics. Jerrold at once accepted my offer, and suggested my engaging Mark Lemon for the theatres, a step in which I acquiesced.

I then arranged to introduce Jerrold to Mr. Spottiswoode, and the meeting between the two was rather a curious one. Jerrold was an aggressive radical with a professed contempt for titled folks, and no kind of sympathy with the opinions which her majesty's printer was known to hold. He was ever on the look out to attack something or somebody, and had recently been described by an American tourist as fumbling his thunderbolts in Fleet-street, watching for an object at which to level them. Mr. Spottiswoode on the other hand was an uncompromising tory, a stickler for church and state, a contemner of the democracy, and of course a confirmed protectionist; and if he could have had his own way, would certainly have transported every chartist in the kingdom, and not unlikely every anti-corn-law leaguer as well.

The interview, however, passed off beautifully. As soon as the formalities of introduction were over, the radical satirist and the tory place-holder vied with each other in displaying their urbanity. Jerrold, who was at once deferential and genial, soon saw an opening for an inoffensive jest, and duly availed himself of it. Spottiswoode's habitual austerity at once relaxed; he laughed appreciatively, and the conversation drifted into a pleasant channel; all points of dissidence being scrupulously avoided, and the interview ending with cordial leave-takings on either side.

I next saw Mr. Thackeray, an introduction to whom I procured from Mr. Nickesson, successor to Fraser the publisher, whose early death was said to have been due to Grantley Berkeley's brutality some six or seven years before. On calling at the address given me—a shop in Jermyn-street, eight or ten doors from Regent-street, and within a few doors of the present Museum of Geology—and knocking at the private entrance, a young lodging-house slavey in answer to my inquiries bade me follow her

upstairs. I did so, to the very top of the house, and after my card had been handed in, I was asked to enter the front apartment, where a tall slim individual between thirty and thirty-five years of age, with a pleasant smiling countenance and a bridgeless nose, and clad in a dressing gown of decided Parisian cut, rose from a small table standing close to the near window to receive me. When he stood up, the low pitch of the room caused him to look even taller than he really was, and his actual height was well over six feet. This then was Michael Angelo Titmarsh, author of the "Yellowplush Papers," "the Great Hoggarty Diamond," "the Fitzboodle Confessions," and the "Paris and Irish Sketch Books," the last named of which had only recently been published. This work, Mr. Thackeray afterwards told me, was to have come out under the Titmarshian title of "The Cockney in Ireland," but the publisher preferring the delightful ambiguity of "Sketch Book," so ticketted the volume.

The apartment was an exceedingly plainly furnished bedroom, with common rush seated chairs and painted French bedstead, and with neither looking-glass nor prints on the bare, cold, cheerless-looking walls. On the table from which Mr. Thackeray had risen, a white cloth was spread, on which was a frugal breakfast tray—a cup of chocolate and some dry toast—and huddled together at the other end were writing materials, two or three numbers of "Fraser's Magazine," and a few slips of manuscript. I presented Mr. Nickesson's letter and explained the object of my visit, when Mr. Thackeray at once undertook to write upon art, to review such books as he might fancy, and to contribute an occasional article on the opera, more with reference to its frequenters, he remarked, than from a critical point of view. So satisfied was he with the three guineas offered him for a couple of columns weekly, that he jocularly expressed himself willing to sign an engage-

ment for life upon these terms. I can only suppose from the eager way in which he closed with my proposal that the prospect of an additional £160 to his income, was at that moment anything but a matter of indifference. The humble quarters in which he was installed seemed at any rate to indicate that for some reason or other strict economy was just then the order of the day with him.

Thackeray's contributions to the "Pictorial Times" comprised some letters on Art unions, signed Michael Angelo Titmarsh, notices of the Academy and the Water-colour exhibitions; and reviews of Macaulay's newly collected "Essays," and Disraeli's "Coningsby." He was very anxious to review Macaulay at length, and to illustrate his notice with a number of portraits, views, &c., drawn by himself, but his suggestion not being adopted, the review he furnished was both brief and singularly commonplace, and I question if a single sentence of it came from his pen. It was altogether different with the "Coningsby" notice, in every line of which the writer may be recognized. As I believe this latter article has failed to find a place in any collection of Thackeray's miscellaneous writings I venture, at the risk of being described as a literary ghoul, to quote the principal part of it, more as a literary curiosity than for any other reason :—

"If this book do not become popular, what other novel has a chance? 'Coningsby' possesses all the happy elements of popularity. It is personal, it is witty, it is sentimental, it is outrageously fashionable, charmingly malicious, exquisitely novel, seemingly very deep, but in reality very easy of comprehension, and admirably absurd; for you do not only laugh at the personages whom the author holds up to ridicule, but you laugh at the author too, whose coxcombries are incessantly amusing. They are quite unlike the vapid cool coxcombries of an English dandy, they are picturesque, wild, and outrageous; and as the bodily D'Israeli used to be seen some years ago about town arrayed in green velvet inexpressibles, with a gold stripe down the seams, an ivory cane, and for what we know a peacock's feather in his hat, D'Israeli, the writer, in like manner assumes a magnificence never thought of by our rigid

northern dandies; and astonishes by a luxury of conceit which is quite oriental. He paints his own portrait in this book in the most splendid fashion; it is the queerest in the whole queer gallery of likenesses; he appears as the greatest philosopher, the greatest poet, the greatest horseman, the greatest statesman, and the greatest *roué* in the world; with all the qualities of Pitt, and Byron, and Burke, and the great Mr. Widdicombe of Batty's Amphitheatre. Perhaps one is reminded of the last named famous individual more than of any other.

"The book has kept the town in talk for a whole week past. The circulating libraries are dunned for copies; the volumes are snatched off the tables at the club reading-rooms, and everybody recognises everybody's portrait. The chief character of the book after the author's own is that of the late Marquis of Hertford, here figuring under the title of the Marquis of Monmouth; his friend, Lord Eskdale, is no other than Lord Lonsdale; Lord John Manners appears as Lord Sydney, and the house of the Duke of Rutland at Belvoir, is recognised by everybody in the novel under its title of Beaumanior; above all there is the great character of Rigby, in which the Right Honourable John Wilson Joker is shewn up in such a way as must make him happy in his retirement to find that all the world is so amused by him.

"The way in which all the newspapers have extracted the passages relative to Mr. Wilson Joker is quite curious. 'The Chronicle' began on Monday; on Wednesday, 'The Times' charitably followed; on Thursday, 'The Post' gave the self-same extracts; so that by this time every newspaper reader in the British Empire has perused the history of Mr. Rigby, and knows how he writes slashing articles against women for preference, and how convenient a friend he is to a great man. A better portrait of a parasite has never been written since Juvenal's days, and we can fancy that even ages hence people will read this book as a singular picture of manners and society in our times. . . .

"What person is there, in town or country, from the squire down to the lady's maid who will not be anxious to peruse a work in which the secrets of high life are so exposed? In all the fashionable novels ever published, there is nothing so piquant or so magnificently genteel. Every politician too will read it with avidity—the details are so personal. Whigs and Conservatives are abused with such equal bitterness and truth, that in consideration of the manner in which his neighbour is attacked, a man of either party will pardon the onslaught made on his own friends. . . ."

A few weeks after writing this notice Mr. Thackeray set out on his tour to Egypt, and his contributions to the

"Pictorial Times" ceased. It will be remembered that he subsequently selected "Coningsby" as a subject for parody under the title of "Codlingsby," which Mr. Anthony Trollope thought by far the best of the sketches comprised in "Punch's Prize Novelists."

The stuccoed front of the house in Fleet-street, where the "Pictorial Times" established itself, was emblazoned from roof to pavement in gold and colours by Mr. Owen Jones, and the ornamental heading to the paper was also designed by him. The principal artist whom I secured for the news illustrations was Mr. John Gilbert, who during many months after the paper started, furnished considerably more drawings to it than he did to the "Illustrated London News." One of the early numbers contained some clever subjects by him of her majesty's drawing-room. Through Mr. Spottiswoode's influence tickets for St. James's Palace had been secured, enabling one to obtain a view of what may be termed the fringe of the ceremony: Mr. Gilbert's imagination, aided by descriptive notes, skilfully supplied the rest. I very well remember the crush that the *débutantes* were exposed to on the staircase, up which the old Duke of Wellington, jostled by anxious dowagers, slowly tottered; how stately Lord Lyndhurst was kept waiting by his purse-bearer, or some other official who should have attended him almost into the royal presence; and how poor Sir Felix Booth, the wealthy gin-spinner, who had spent £20,000 in fitting out an Arctic expedition, and was at the time I am speaking of under a social cloud, had a wide berth given him by friends and foes alike.

A young artist named Charles Martin contributed a series of full-length portraits of literary notabilities to the new paper, something in the style of the Maclise portraits in "Fraser," but always drawn at sittings given for the purpose. Among others who sat were Dickens, Harrison

Ainsworth, Disraeli, Talfourd, Lady Blessington, &c. Thackeray was at this time not sufficiently known to the general public for his portrait to figure in a popular gallery. Besides, he was a contributor to the paper, and as the benevolent Yankee institution of log-rolling was then unknown, publishing his portrait would have been regarded as puffing him, in spite of the great "Fraser" example to have kept one in countenance.

Peter Cunningham, young Martin's brother-in-law, then a clerk in the Audit office, and busily occupied with outside literary work, much of which was done in the customary fashion in the public time, wrote the short sketchy articles that accompanied the portraits.

Charles Martin was the son of John Martin, the once celebrated painter of sombre religious pictures, in which the architecture was invariably of titanic proportions, and the landscapes weirdly unreal. No flight was too lofty for his ambitious fancy. He revelled in such tremendous subjects as made ordinary artists pause—like the Last Judgment, the Deluge, the ominous Handwriting on the Wall, Satan enthroned, and Adam and Eve driven from Paradise; and so highly was he thought of outside the walls of the Academy that Sir Edward Bulwer extolled him as a more original genius than Michael Angelo. Some years before he distinguished himself, his lunatic brother Jonathan had secured a painful notoriety by setting fire to York Minster. The painter Martin, it should be remembered, was the first to suggest the embankment of the Thames, and it was a part of his scheme that the river front should be lined along its entire length by a range of noble public buildings, offering a magnificent *coup d'œil* unmatched in any city in the world. A grand idea such as this might probably have had a chance of realisation in France, but in England it of course fell on the deafest of long ears.

John Martin was fond of getting clever people of very opposite tastes at his weekly evening receptions in St. Martin's-lane, and it was at one of these that an unknown young scientist surprised and amused the company by causing a doll to dance on a grand piano, independent of mechanical aid. On being eagerly questioned as to how the feat was accomplished, his reply that it was performed by lightning was received with a shout of derisive laughter. This young man subsequently achieved fame as the inventor of the electric telegraph, and became celebrated as Sir Charles Wheatstone.

Charles Martin was a young fellow about town who at all times got himself up in the very pink of fashion. He belonged to that tribe of fortunate, lavender-kidded young men, who saunter successfully and pleasantly through life till confronted by the spectre of grim middle age, when their carefully nurtured hair begins to grizzle and "thin at the top," and their waists need lacing in; and who judiciously taking the hint turn their attention in the direction of so-called domestic felicity. One striking characteristic of Martin *fils* was his pertinacity in pushing his way into upper-class society, then far more difficult of accomplishment than in the present less exclusive days.

Young Martin used to tell an amusing story of his efforts to extract some money due to him from an insolvent young nobleman—heir to an impoverished dukedom, and engaged to be married to the eldest daughter of a wealthy earl,—for whom he had designed a couple of fancy costumes to be worn by him and his *fiancée* at a *bal costumé* at Buckingham Palace. The moderate sum of three guineas charged for the two designs was applied for unsuccessfully nearly a score of times, and then the artist gave up the matter as a bad job. A few months later, however, seeing from the "Morning Post" that his impecunious patron was about "to lead to the hymeneal

altar the beautiful and accomplished Lady Vaseline, eldest daughter of the wealthy Earl of Shuttlecock," he determined on making a new effort to obtain payment of his little account.

He called as usual at the paternal residence, and was surprised to find four tall, powdered footmen in magnificent liveries stationed in the usually deserted hall. Fully expecting to be rebuffed for his impertinence, he timidly intimated to the foremost flunkey the object of his visit, and to his great gratification was immediately ushered into a small ante-room where a mild-looking gentleman in black was deeply immersed in papers and accounts. On learning Martin's name and business he referred to a list at once and handed him the amount of his claim.

When our artist on retiring ran the gauntlet of the four tall, powdered footmen, one of them, noting the gratified expression of his countenance, advanced towards him and familiarly observed: "Well, you didn't have much trouble over your little affair."

"Trouble!" rejoined Martin, "I don't know about that; it 's the twentieth time I have had to call."

"Ah! but you 've got it at last," insinuated flunkey No. 2.

"Yes, I have," responded Martin.

"Then what are you going to stand?" promptly enquired flunkey No. 3.

This was a poser. Such magnificent looking fellows as these the artist thought would scorn anything but gold, and half a sovereign apiece would be more than half of what he had received. Even a sovereign between them would be a serious tax, and yet he fancied they might consider this rather shabby; so he apologetically observed, "Stand! what can a fellow stand out of three guineas?"

The four tall footmen looked at Martin in turn, and

then at each other; and presently flunkey No. 4 mildly suggested, "Well, I suppose you can manage a 'bob' between the four of us!"

I soon afterwards completely lost sight of young Martin, but with Martin's brother-in-law, Peter Cunningham, I kept up an acquaintance till within a year or two of his death. Peter's career had a melancholy ending. At the time I first knew him he was a hard-working young enthusiast, hunting after facts not merely for his London handbook but his contemplated "Story of Nell Gwynn," for lives of the poets and the doings of Horace Walpole and his friends. He was much given to poring over musty parish registers, and was delighted beyond measure when he unearthed some trivial truth of a historical, literary, or antiquarian character, even though it corrected merely an unimportant date, or set right the number of a house in some street where an undistinguished individual was supposed to have once lived. It is on his industry in this direction that Cunningham's literary reputation mainly rests. His researches and extensive desultory reading had only one object in view, the garnering of facts, too often of no very great significance. Although a most wretched versifyer himself, and possessing little or no poetic taste, the slightest circumstance about any one of the poets figuring in Johnson's Lives was to Cunningham a matter of the profoundest interest. Every new discovery he made was laudably noted with its authority in a commonplace book, and transferred thence to a ledger under its proper head, only to be written off after it had been used up in print. I recollect Peter telling me that on his explaining his system to John Wilson Croker, this somewhat inaccurate editor candidly admitted that if he had only adopted a similar plan he would have saved himself any amount of useless labour and avoided shoals of unpardonable blunders.

Cunningham resided at Kensington, and regarded it as one of the pleasures of life to be so situated as to have Piccadilly on the one hand and Richmond on the other. In those days he was often to be met at Christie's, on the look-out for some bargain in the shape of a miniature or other portrait of Nell Gwynn, Pepys, the "fantastical and original-brained Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle," and similar out-of-the-way personages. Occasionally, on early summer mornings, I came across him in company with young Mr. John Murray at Searle's, the Sandgate boat builder's, and with a friend raced the pair up to Don Saltero's where, after resting and refreshing, we rowed back again in good time for the business of the day.

There was a certain *bonhomie* about Peter, which his pleasant open countenance and portly figure helped to emphasize, and which, coupled with the store of anecdotes he had at command, secured him a ready entrance to society, and gained him many friends among the literary men and wits of the time; but unfortunately with the damaging result that the fascinations of good fellowship turned him aside from his favourite pursuits; and, as Mr. Forster euphemistically phrases it, "all the deeper purposes of his life were sacrificed to the present temptations of a festive hour." Regardless where his steps were tending Peter "gaed his ain gait," and eventually this ardent enthusiast in literary and antiquarian research, this painstaking garnerer of multifarious minute facts, and pleasant gossiper of cultivated taste, sank so low that his nights were commonly spent in disreputable "pubs," and low coffee houses, where he snatched a few hours unquiet sleep.

Finally Peter retired to St. Albans, and with two congenial spirits, Frederick Dickens and Wiltshire Austin, made the acquaintance of Charles Dickens's famous hermit, whom they used periodically to visit at his cinder-bestrewn den, mainly to tipple fiery sherry and bitters, of which the

nineteenth century recluse seemed to possess a never-failing supply. Finding the hermit so generous with his liquor they thought he might be equally liberal with his cash—it was known that he had a banking account, and that the publican who sent him his periodic supplies cashed his cheques—so one day they tried to obtain a loan from him on the strength of their joint note of hand. Strange to say, although our anchorite friend had been almost isolated from mankind for many years, he had still sufficient worldly wisdom to disapprove of the proffered security, and the artfulness to assure his impecunious acquaintances that it was solely shortness of the "ready" which prevented him from placing his banking balance at their service.

Those were merry times had it not been for certain gloomy days when, racked with sharp twinges of gout, these three unhappy mortals were accustomed to hobble with the aid of stout walking sticks from one St. Albans "public" to another, each bitterly complaining of his individual ailments at every step he took, but invariably meeting with no kind of sympathy from his similarly afflicted fellows. It is not surprising that these poor victims of convivial indulgence found the bracing air of Hertfordshire too keen for their broken constitutions, and that this trio of clever men dropped off one after the other, sincerely pitied and regretted by shoals of friends, who had known them in happier days and cordially liked them for their genial natures.

In the summer of 1843 Mr. John Bright, who had risen rapidly into celebrity through his eloquent speeches at anti-corn-law meetings, was first elected to Parliament, as member for the city of Durham. On my applying to him for his portrait, for publication in the "Pictorial Times," he agreed to pay a visit to M. Claudet, and a small full-length daguerreotype portrait was the result. A proof of the engraving was sent to Mr. Bright before publication,

and the same evening, as I was about to leave the office, the new member for Durham presented himself in quaker garb, and producing the proof, proceeded to explain to me that there was something about the expression of the mouth which he did not quite like, and much wished to have altered before the engraving was printed off.

It chanced that the illustrated side of the newspaper sheet went to machine that evening, and it was, consequently, necessary to make the alteration at once. Sending, therefore, for the woodcut and a few engraving tools, I proceeded to alter the mouth in accordance with Mr. Bright's suggestions, while the popular tribune stood erect before me, and gave to his lips that pliant expression which he thought most becoming. Although the face in the woodcut was no bigger than one's finger-nail, I had to make repeated attempts before I succeeded in satisfying the new M.P., whose childish vanity amused me immensely. Fifteen years afterwards, when the agitation against the paper duty was in full swing, I used to see a good deal of John Bright. I recognised the same old vanity about him, though his admirers I daresay will demur to this assertion; and a complacent assumption of the wisdom of the serpent on almost all subjects, regardless of his occasional imperfect acquaintance with them. I was struck, moreover, by a certain pomposity of manner, which I thought somewhat strange in a quaker. At this date, it should be remembered John Bright's former fierce opponents had all taken to belauding him, and thereby confirmed him in the high estimate which he had evidently formed of his own sagacity.

M. de Noé, the French caricaturist Cham, was in London, for a short time, during the autumn of 1843, when I became temporarily intimate with him. The queen and Prince Albert had been recently visiting the French royal family at Eu, and the incident formed the subject of some humorous verse in a forthcoming volume of the

"Comic Album." This Cham illustrated with some designs that were more than usually grotesque. The volume was subsequently reviewed in the "Pictorial Times," when several of Cham's illustrations were thoughtlessly selected to accompany the notice. As they exhibited the queen and the prince in the reverse of a favourable light, considerable indignation was evoked in official quarters, and, I am sorry to say, got her majesty's printer, whose connection with the paper was well known, into temporary serious trouble. It was on the occasion of this Eu visit that the lord chamberlain rigidly struck out the name of every artist from the list of proposed *invités*, on the ground that birth and rank, as well as mere talent, were necessary qualifications to render their possessor a fit subject for presentation to the British queen.

Cham was great at improvised caricature, and one day, when he was dining with us, a remarkably tall young Russian, who was of the party, challenged him to a display of his powers. Cham at once dashed off a sketch of a Russian bear perched on the top of a very tall pole, and succeeded in imparting to Bruin's countenance a speaking likeness to the Tartar features of our Russian friend. Cham was anxious to familiarize himself with London scenes, and among other places that we took him to, were several Fleet-street chop houses, the monotonous *menus* at which suggested to him several amusing caricatures.

He was an exceedingly rapid draughtsman, and evidently did not care two straws about depicting either minute, or even broad, shades of character. He had a few stock types which, with him, served every purpose. On one occasion, I remember Mark Lemon sent him a large parcel of boxwood for some drawings he was to make for "Punch," and was amazed to receive it back the following morning, with every block completely covered, and a memorandum from the artist asking for "more woods."

XIV.

(1843-46.)

THE CHEVALIER WIKOFF AND HIS CAPTURE OF AN HEIRESS —THE TAHITAN DILEMMA—TOM THUMB AND HAYDON THE PAINTER — JERROLD'S SUCCESS WITH THE DEMOCRACY— MY CHANCERY EXPERIENCE—FORGERIES OF ROUBLE NOTES.

A TALL, over-dressed American, whose voice had a more unpleasant nasal twang than the ordinary yankee drawl, called upon me one day (in 1843) at the "Pictorial Times" office, with a letter of introduction. His name was Wikoff, and he had acquired, I remembered, some little notoriety by acting as escort to Fanny Ellsler, a *protégée* of his friend Mrs. Grote, when she visited the United States some few years before. Subsequently, he gave his own version in "Fraser's Magazine" of his ambiguous relations with the celebrated *danseuse*, whose money he considerately took care of, but was compelled eventually, by legal process, to refund. Mrs. Grote was wife of the banker M.P., noted at the time for his annual motion in favour of the ballot, and afterwards as the historian of Greece. Wikoff had picked up a travelling acquaintance with the lady, which his unbounded assurance succeeded in converting into a kind of friendship. His business with me related to an illustrated paper which he proposed starting in the United States, and he was anxious to be furnished with any practical information that might be useful to him.

This I cheerfully gave him, and as he wished to secure an able draughtsman and a wood-engraver to take charge

of the establishment he contemplated forming in New York, I recommended to him Mr. George Thomas, a clever young artist, and elder brother of Mr. W. L. Thomas, now manager of "the Graphic," and Mr. Harrison, a competent wood-engraver. Wikoff engaged them, and the paper was started, but not continued long enough to give it a fair chance of success. After Wikoff had left England, I was rather amused to hear, from the friend who had sent him to me, that he had been profuse in his thanks, for he had got all he wanted he said, and, in fact, had "sucked my brains as clean as an orange."

Wikoff paid subsequent visits to England, and by sheer impudence, aided by the countenance of Mrs. Grote, he forced his way into tolerably good society. This was rather surprising, as he was the reverse of a judicious braggart, for he talked in the very tallest yankee style, and pretended to be on familiar terms with every politician of note in his own country, and to know half the statesmen of Europe intimately. He spoke, too, of coming forward as a candidate at the next presidential election, not only as though it was a settled affair, but as if he were certain of success. Some business transactions subsequently took place between us which induced me to ask him for a commercial reference, whereupon he gave the house of Baring brothers. The firm testified, without hesitation, to his financial means, but when the day for payment arrived Wikoff returned the draft without a word of explanation.

At that time a person about to leave this country was liable to prompt arrest for any debts he owed, and the defaulting Wikoff was nabbed at Long's hotel as, with all his luggage packed up, he was preparing to start for Liverpool. He obtained his release on putting in bail, but an unscrupulous solicitor whom he employed delayed the settlement of the claim until considerable time had elapsed

and a heavy bill of costs had been incurred, which was, however, finally recovered from Wikoff by the same summary style of process, on the occasion of a subsequent visit which he paid to this country.

From the foregoing circumstances I had formed no very favourable opinion of the Chevalier Wikoff as he dubbed himself on his visiting cards, and I was not at all surprised, several years later (1848), to hear that, by means of introductions obtained by chicanery and bounce, he had secured an interview with Lord Palmerston, then secretary for foreign affairs, and had so far imposed upon him as to receive an invitation to spend a week at Broadlands during the parliamentary recess. Wikoff chimed in so completely with Palmerston's views as to the necessity of maintaining peace between England, France, and the United States; and talked so glibly of his intimacy with Girardin and other notable French journalists, and of the influence he was in a position to exercise over the New York press that Palmerston was taken in, and engaged him on his own terms (£500 a-year) to go to Paris with the view of moderating the violent language which the French newspapers constantly employed with regard to *perfide Albion*.

After a few months' trial Palmerston found out how insignificant the performances of the chevalier were in comparison with his big promises, and intimated to him, through the phlegmatic under-secretary at the foreign office, that his services would not be required after the conclusion of his year's engagement. Wikoff, however, managed to secure a clear twelvemonth's notice, and at the expiration of this time endeavoured, but unsuccessfully, to obtain a handsome gratuity on the plea of the great pecuniary sacrifices the Paris mission had entailed on him.

Wikoff on returning to London chanced to hear of the

recent death of the uncle and aunt of a lady named Gamble, with whom he had had some kind of travelling acquaintance many years before; and what was of far more interest to him, he discovered, through one of the partners in Baring's house, that she had succeeded to a large fortune. He thereupon renewed the acquaintance, and obtained permission to visit the wealthy damsel at Bournemouth. There, after a few days' intercourse, he pretended to be greatly smitten by her innocent ways and virgin charms—Miss Gamble was then a middle-aged spinster turned forty—and made proposals of marriage to her, which were, however promptly rejected.

Nothing daunted, Wikoff followed the cruel fair one about Europe, pestering her with his attentions, and pressing his suit, until at last his perseverance was so far rewarded that the lady promised to consult her friends in respect to the marriage which he was always pressing her to consent to. The friends who were appealed to, Mr. Bates of Barings' among the number, came to the conclusion that any such marriage was altogether unadvisable, and that the Chevalier Wikoff was certainly not a proper match for the demoiselle Gamble. Their decision was communicated to this persistent suitor, but he was not to be shaken off, and forced himself into the lady's presence, when, as she herself said at a trial to which I shall presently refer, "it was the old song over again—undying love and a speedy marriage."

Subsequently, Wikoff chased Miss Gamble to Turin, and on her refusing him an interview, he followed her to Genoa, where, by the written promise of a bribe of £500, he secured her courier, one Vannoud, as an ally. Wikoff then hired rooms in a house where the Russian consul had his office, and engaged a man-servant recommended by Vannoud. Everything being now in readiness he instructed Vannoud to inform Miss Gamble that her

passport was lost, and that it was necessary for her to accompany him to the intendant of police to obtain a new one. This the courier did, but instead of going with Miss Gamble to the police office, he took her and her lady-companion to the house where Wikoff was installed. Here the servant, acting on previous instructions, showed Miss Gamble into a saloon, while the courier, by means of some specious excuse, induced the companion to return to their hotel. All this happened on November 15, 1851.

Wikoff now entered the saloon, and at the sight of him Miss Gamble instantly screamed out, whereupon he placed his hand over her mouth and commenced to threaten her, telling her that he was surrounded by persons in his pay, and had had her brought where she was to force her to marry him; his intention being, he said, to keep her there all night and get a clergyman to perform the ceremony in the morning. He threatened if she made any resistance to have her carried by force on board a ship, and conveyed to the Archipelago. In the meantime he insisted on her writing out and signing a promise to marry him, or to forfeit half of her fortune should she fail to do so.

This little piece of business having been transacted to the chevalier's satisfaction, he sent the servant out for a dinner which the domestic considered could be most conveniently fetched in Miss Gamble's carriage. On its being served, the imprisoned damsel was with difficulty prevailed upon to swallow a few spoonsful of soup and a mouthful of bread. The servant stated at the trial that during the repast he was offered a thousand francs by Miss Gamble if he would convey her back to her hotel, but Wikoff outbid this offer and promised him two thousand as soon as the marriage was over.

A message was next sent to Miss Gamble's companion to the effect that the lady intended sleeping out, and wished her night things to be brought to her. Her maid

accordingly hastened with them, and Miss Gamble hearing her voice in an adjoining room, rushed out to join her. On mistress and maid demanding to be allowed to go, a violent scene ensued. Wikoff gallantly threatened his intended bride with a pistol, whereupon she seized the fire shovel and dashed it through the window into the street below. Then writing on a card an offer of a thousand francs to any one who would inform the police of her detention, she threw this after the shovel, and subsequently tried to set fire to the window-curtains, hoping by this means to raise an alarm which might lead to her rescue.

When calm was restored, Wikoff pretended that some mysterious personage on the premises would not permit him to let Miss Gamble and her maid leave; but eventually, at three o'clock in the morning he conducted them to an hotel close by, where they remained for a few hours—until, in fact, they could return to their own hotel without exciting unpleasant remarks.

The Genoese police having heard of Wikoff's rascally proceedings, at once arrested him and his accomplices; and in due course the culprits were put upon their trial before the High Court of Genoa, when the foregoing facts came out in evidence. The servant further stated that he had been asked by Vannoud to have a clergyman in readiness, because, as he told him, according to the English law, any lady who remained in company with a gentleman during a single night was obliged to marry him next morning!

Towards the close of the proceedings, after Wikoff had made several of his many false statements, Miss Gamble laid her hand upon the Testament, and exclaimed that she swore before God he was "a liar, a calumniator, and a coward." Nothing that Wikoff's counsel could urge regarding the pretended high position in society which his client occupied, exercised any influence on the judgment of the court. The document which Miss Gamble had been com-

pelled to sign was pronounced to be of no effect; Wikoff and the courier were both sentenced to fifteen months' imprisonment and to the costs of the proceedings; while the servant, owing to the insignificant part he had played, got off scot free.

The affair was noised all over Europe at the time, an account of the trial appearing in all the newspapers; nevertheless, when Wikoff obtained his liberty early in 1853, he hastened to Paris, and, in spite of the wide publicity given to the outrage he had committed, and the punishment he had met with, he intrigued, though unsuccessfully, to secure a reception at the Tuileries. His character, however, was altogether too shady even for the shady set at the new imperial court. Disappointed at his failure he proceeded to London, and set male and female emissaries at work to make him appear less black than the world had chosen to paint him, and above all, to try and induce the wealthy spinster to compensate him for the loss of her hand and fortune! Wikoff, moreover, sought to put himself right with his old acquaintances by publishing a garbled narrative of his intercourse with the lady and his abduction of her, under the title of "My courtship and its consequences," and he had the assurance to call on me while I was editing a London newspaper of large circulation, to ask me to review his book, and place his dastardly conduct in a favourable light before the English public.

In the spring of 1844 I married and went to reside at Kensington. The occasional leisure days which I managed to secure from my newspaper and other duties were spent in roaming about Kent, always keeping, however, within a few miles of the Thames. The result of these rambles was a small illustrated volume; and subsequently I commenced collecting materials for a similar work relating to some of the picturesque old houses abounding in this beautiful

county, visiting by invitation the Earl of Romney at Mote Park, and finding him especially gracious in taking no end of pains to identify the more interesting historical portraits in his possession; also Sir Edmund Filmer at East Sutton Place, and Mr. C. Wykeham Martin at Leeds Castle. I had the advantage of examining many interesting documents preserved in the muniment rooms at these places, and roamed at my leisure through their charming parks, the silent woods, the luxuriant hop-gardens, and the sweet-smelling country lanes, where—

> "Straight trees in every place
> Their thick tops interlace,
> And pendant branches trail their foliage fine."

Much of the contemplated work was written; nevertheless more pressing avocations interfered with its completion, and the volume was finally relegated to that long list of carefully planned books which are destined never to be perfected.

I remember during these Kentish rambles that when I was returning to Maidstone along the banks of the river Medway, about ten o'clock on a moonlight night, a couple of bargees darted out in advance of me from a small plantation on some rising ground on my left, intending to knock me down, and then no doubt to rob me, and pitch me into the swollen river. A blow aimed with a hedge-stake missed me, but in avoiding it I stumbled and fell. I was, however, instantly on my legs again, and scuttling along at my topmost speed. The different properties skirting the river were divided at this part, and pedestrians along the bank had to pass through a succession of swing-gates several hundred yards apart. The instant I had passed through one, I heard it swinging behind me for a few seconds in the dead stillness of the night, and then the sound ceased, soon however to commence again, accompanied by loud oaths and the heavy tread of the bargees

following at my heels. I ran, I should think, nearly a couple of miles, catching sound at intervals of the clattering gates and the tramp of my pursuers, before the noise ceased and I was satisfied that the bargees had given up the chase. After this experience I provided myself with a pair of pocket pistols—it was before the era of revolvers—which I always carried with me when my excursions were likely to extend after nightfall, but although on several occasions I was out very late in the loneliest parts, and met gangs of noisy navvies, and evil-looking tramps, I never found myself in the same dangerous position again.

Shortly after the above-mentioned incident, one evening towards the close of the autumn, I chanced to be belated at Down, an isolated Kentish village — since rendered famous by Charles Darwin making it his home—and secured quarters at its little inn for the night. It was on a Saturday, I remember, and shortly after dusk the neighbouring farm labourers began to assemble there, and to my great surprise trolled out, not the "British bayoneteers," or "It's my delight on a shiny night," or other songs in praise of poaching, such as were current among the Kentish hinds at that epoch, but genuine old ballads about doughty knights and ladies fair, (including one telling of Patient Griselda's tribulations), which had most likely been sung by their forefathers with but little variation for a couple of centuries.

In the spring of 1844 there was great excitement over the news of Consul Pritchard's expulsion from Tahiti, an event which nearly brought about a war between England and France. A few days after "the Times" had published a long letter from Tahiti on the subject, signed "a British naval officer," (who, I believe, was none other than Pritchard himself), my Whitstable friend—the same who had volunteered to land bookbinders' cloth in France—called on me one morning to tell me that he had met at

the docks the day before the master of a whaler recently returned from the south seas, which had made a remarkably quick passage and brought fourteen days' later news from Tahiti than any that had reached this country. As I was connected with newspapers, he thought I might like to know of this, and he volunteered to take me to see the whaling skipper if I cared to hear what he had to say. I at once accepted his offer, and we hurried in a cab to the docks, where I learned from the master of the "Favourite," the name of the whaler in question, that there had been a skirmish between the French and the Tahitans a few days before he sailed, and that other matters of less importance had occurred on the island.

I made a note of all I could extract from him, and promptly saw Mr. W. F. Delane, manager of "the Times," who at first smiled incredulously when I told him that I was in possession of fourteen days' later intelligence from Tahiti than any that the paper had published, but eventually he arranged with me that I should supply my information exclusively to "the Times" within the next hour or two, and call the following day.

Having despatched the article as promised, I went home to Kensington, and on arriving in town next morning was surprised to hear that some one from "the Times" had knocked up the people at my office during the night, and on being admitted to my room had rummaged among the papers on my table, and minutely examined the contents of the waste paper basket. The article printed in leaded type on one of the opening pages of "the Times" made about a-third of a column, and almost side by side with it was an announcement of the queen having that morning given birth to another prince (Alfred) at Windsor.

When I called on Mr. Delane he told me they had had a good deal of trouble about the article. "You didn't mention," said he, "what day the whaler reached this

country, but simply said 'lately arrived.' You also stated that she brought despatches for the government, and as we couldn't find any fuller information on these points in your rough notes which we sent after, we had to knock some one up at the Admiralty and make inquiries." I explained that the whaler had already been two or three days in the docks before I heard of its arrival, and that in an affair which seemed likely to lead to a war between England and France, it would never have done to publish the fact of the ship having been here several days in possession of important news without "the Times" knowing anything about it. Mr. Delane readily admitted this, and then suggested writing me a cheque for fifteen guineas, saying that, if this did not satisfy me, he would make it twenty. I thought myself, however, sufficiently well paid with the sum he originally offered me, which was at the rate of some five or six shillings a line.

This year (1844) a party of Ojibbeway Indians came to England to be made a show of, and Mr. Rankin, their *entrepreneur* invited me to a private supper with half-a-dozen of the "braves." They were magnificently got up for the occasion in all their war paint, and under the influence of the fire-water which they imbibed in considerable quantities, and which, in no form, seemed to come amiss to them, they grew unpleasantly excitable and flourished the table knives like any Indian juggler, causing one to fancy that in some absent-minded moment they might take it into their heads to tomahawk and scalp the "pale faces" present, and dance a war dance over their bleeding corpses. Happily, however, overpowered by the iced champagne and more potent fluids they dropped off one after another into a stertorous sleep.

A couple of years later, when I was occupied one morning sketching several of the state rooms at St. James's Palace, for some engravings of a forthcoming levee,

Showman Barnum and General Tom Thumb, who were being taken over the state apartments, entered the room where I was engaged. At that time there had been no exhibition in this country of the conceited little dwarf, about whom, however, any number of newspaper paragraphs calculated to excite general curiosity had appeared. Barnum was judiciously waiting for a summons from royalty before introducing his prodigy to the public, and was showing him a few special London sights in the meantime.

Tom Thumb's arrival in England having been so well trumpeted about, as soon as it became known that he was within the palace precincts, several ancient dames occupying apartments there hurried to obtain a view of him, when their surprise and admiration of course knew no bounds. One of these ladies, I remember, was so enraptured with the young cub that she took him up in her arms, and seating herself on an adjacent couch commenced dandling him on her knee, as though he were a baby to be fondled. This was more than the pigmy in undress general's uniform thought it prudent to stand, and he showed himself highly indignant, kicking and struggling violently to free himself. Although Tom Thumb was then only a mere child, it was Barnum's game to pretend that he was very much older, and the young monkey was carefully taught to resent any approach to that feminine fondling which interesting children are ordinarily pestered with.

Shortly before the above incident I became acquainted with Haydon, the painter, through a criticism in the "Pictorial Times" on his cartoon "The Curse." Writing to me on the subject, Haydon said: "After the abuse and sneers and contempt, which were so unjustly heaped upon the cartoon last season, you may tell the writer of the notice that 'it drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,' when the bitterest abuse could not have moved them." The decora-

tion of the parliament palace with frescoes was then under consideration, and Haydon, who as far back as 1812, had propounded a scheme in regard to the old houses, felt deeply hurt at the way his claims were being ignored by those in authority. "There exists," he wrote, "a secret determination to lower me before the decoration is decided upon, that I may then be passed over without surprise. When a man gets a principle acknowledged, he is expected to die and make room for others to carry it out. To live and see it acted upon by those who are altogether strange to it, is to him insufferable; while the idea of entrusting him with the execution of his own conception is too shocking to be entertained for one moment."

Haydon furnished a notable example of the truth of the saying, that actors are not the only artists who are eaten up with vanity. No one had a greater contempt, both for the painter and his works than Macaulay, and the savage onslaught he penned on Haydon, after reading his Life and Journal was not entirely undeserved.

> "Haydon," remarked he, "had all the morbid peculiarities, which are supposed by fools to belong to intellectual superiority—eccentricity, jealousy, caprice, infinite disdain for other men, and yet he was as poor commonplace a creature as any in the world. . . . Whether you struck him or stroked him, starved him or fed him, he snapped at your hand in just the same way. He would beg you in piteous accents to buy an acre and a half of canvas that he had spoiled. Some good natured lord asks the price, Haydon demands a hundred guineas. His lordship gives the money out of mere charity, and is rewarded by some such entry as this in Haydon's journal: 'A hundred guineas and for such a work! I expected that for very shame he would have made it a thousand. But he is a mean, sordid wretch.' In the meantime the purchaser is looking out for the most retired spot in his house to hide the huge daub he has bought out of mere compassion."

Haydon opened an exhibition of some few of his more important works—including the banishment of Aristides, and Nero playing on his lyre while Rome was burning—at the Egyptian Hall, the same building where Tom Thumb,

then become a London celebrity, was installed. In his diary, Haydon alludes to the half dozen solitary visitors, of whom I chanced to be one, who looked in upon him on his opening day. We all know how bitterly the disappointed painter complained of the public passing his exhibition scornfully by while rushing by thousands to see Tom Thumb. "They push, they fight, they scream, they faint, they cry 'help,' and 'murder.' They see my bills, my boards, my caravans, and don't read them. Their eyes are open but their sense is shut. It is an insanity, a rabies, a madness, a furor, a dream." A few days afterwards he records that "Tom Thumb had twelve thousand people last week, Benjamin Robert Haydon, one hundred and thirty-two and a half—the half a little girl." Two months later (June, 1846) the dead body of this unfortunate apostle of high art, this enthusiast of great aims and sorry performances, was found lying in a pool of blood in his painting-room, in front of a large unfinished picture of Alfred the Great and the first British jury.

George Cruikshank seized on the incident of the ill-fated artist and the fortunate dwarf for the forthcoming "Comic Almanack," and in an etching entitled "Born a genius," he depicted a garret with a starving artist crouching despairingly before his unfinished work. In a second etching inscribed "Born a dwarf," the scene is a magnificent drawing-room with an over-dressed pigmy reclining on a luxurious couch and lazily toying with a jewel, while bags of money lie at his feet and all the elements of prosperity and plenty surround him.

Singularly enough a year or two afterwards Cruikshank himself had to put up with much the same neglect from a capricious public as fell to poor Haydon's lot. When, as Thackeray puts it, "he armed himself to do battle with the demon of drunkenness," and after long preparation produced his laborious work, "the Triumph of Bacchus,"

it was his fate to linger solitarily in his exhibition room day after day, as Haydon had done, watching for the admiring crowds who came not, and sick at heart with disappointed hope.

This watching and waiting for anticipated visitors reminds me of an anecdote I heard from a well-known artist, who on one occasion found himself the only occupant of the long rows of seats at some dioramic exhibition, at the hour announced for the lecture to commence. Presently the drop curtain was pulled a little aside and a survey made of "the front of the house" where the artist was sitting in solitary state. This proceeding was again and again repeated, but the audience being still limited to one, and it appearing useless to wait any longer the curtain was eventually raised, disclosing the lecturer and the opening scene of the entertainment. During the pause that ensued the artist speculated what formula the lecturer would employ when commencing his address. The conventional "ladies and gentlemen" was out of the question, and simple "sir" would sound somewhat strange. The lecturer evidently felt the awkwardness of the situation as the pair gazed steadily at each other, but after a moment or two he plunged boldly into his subject and was soon in the clouds. Presently he seemed to hesitate, and addressed his audience almost apologetically, as if surmising that the impassive individual before him might possibly know more of the subject than he knew himself and enter into discussion with him. At last, to the artist's great relief, a couple of ladies with some children made their appearance, and while they were hesitating over the perplexing choice of seats he picked up his hat and slunk quietly away.

When Douglas Jerrold was doing some of his best work for "Punch," and his influence was very generally recognised—prior to the time when Thackeray took the lead of him with his "Snobs of England"—the proprietors

were nervously anxious to secure his exclusive services, and on the stoppage in 1844 of the "Illuminated Magazine" of which Jerrold had been editor, they induced him to give up his engagement on the "Pictorial Times" in return for an equivalent increase of salary upon "Punch." This led to the termination of my connection with Jerrold, in the course of which I had seen a good deal of him and had constantly corresponded with him, still not a single one of his epigrammatic notes seems to have been preserved. His letters to every one were invariably very short, and I remember he used jocularly to justify their brevity on the score that epistolary "copy" was never paid for.

After the French revolution of 1848 Jerrold, who was no longer the power upon "Punch," that he had formerly been—having made a succession of failures following upon his famous "Caudle Lectures"—started a newspaper of his own with the assistance of a few friends, in which he commented wittily, if loquaciously, on subjects of the day in "the barber's chair." The paper sold well at the outset through the force of Jerrold's name, but the circulation gradually dwindled and the editor's contributions deteriorated, till at last it was thought advisable to give the publication up. At this time Lloyd was running a cheap weekly newspaper, after having made some money by publishing certain trumpery imitations of Dickens's works—such as the "Penny Pickwick" and "Oliver Twiss," by Bos, and numerous penny "shockers" like "Ada, the betrayed," "the Horrors of Zindorf castle," "the Wreck of the Heart" and "the Grave of the Forsaken."

At first the paper was illustrated and called "Lloyd's Illustrated London News," but finding the engravings expensive, and possibly dreading an injunction, the proprietor changed the title to "Lloyd's Weekly London Newspaper," and when Jerrold was obliged to stop his own paper he offered him the editorship at a salary of £20

per week. Forty years ago this was more than sufficient temptation to a writer of Jerrold's reputation to ally himself to a publication of such poor standing as Lloyd's paper then enjoyed. Someone epigrammatically remarked that Jerrold found it, as it were, in the gutter, and annexed it to literature. The increase in the sale under his editorship was something remarkable, and for years afterwards the circulation became larger and larger, with the result that the former obscure publisher of "Oliver Twiss," by Bos, "the Maniac Father," and "Gertrude of the Rock," who had long since ignored the methods by which he struggled to success, died the other day leaving behind him a personality sworn under £563,022! Success, we all know, goes for much, but Sir Edmund Arnold need not have claimed for Lloyd that "he swayed the pens that break the sceptres"[1]—an assertion at which Lloyd himself would certainly have smiled.

Lloyd was at one time glad to get the few literary men connected with his paper to tuck their legs under his dinner-table at his country house in Essex, where he primed them with fiery wines, and especially with some abominable port. On one occasion, finding that the decanter was not circulating as freely as he wished, for in his way he was a most generous host, in order to inspire his guests with confidence he remarked that the wine was Hedges & Butler's. "More of the hedges than the butler's," drily suggested Jerrold, to the guests' amusement and their host's discomfiture.

Some time during "the forties" I acquired an involuntary and far from satisfactory experience of the unreformed Court of Chancery, so scathingly satirised in Dickens's "Bleak House." While the "Illustrated Shakspere" was in progress, the management of the work had devolved on my brother and myself, when some trifling disagreement

[1] Beneath memorial window in St Margaret's, Westminster.

having arisen between the partners, one of them sought to adjust it by commencing a suit in Chancery. This dragged slowly along until an order was obtained for the total amount we had received—about £1100—to be paid into court. No sooner was this done than the suit progressed by leaps and bounds. On one day a string of interrogatories had to be answered; on another further accounts had to be furnished; on a third an inspection of our books was ordered, and more interrogatories followed; and so the game was kept merrily up. When the matter was ripe for hearing, it suddenly occurred to the solicitors on both sides that a compromise was desirable, especially as owing to the smallness of the amount in dispute this would decidedly be the opinion of the Court. Eventually terms were settled, but what they were I do not remember, and it is not of the slightest consequence, for as soon as an order for the payment of the money out of court was obtained, the lawyers on both sides were ready with their bills, and promptly gobbled up the toothsome £1100 oyster, leaving their astonished clients to regale themselves on the horny shells.

The legal firm who were supposed to concern themselves with our interests in this matter, but who really looked so excellently after their own, were solicitors to the Russian embassy, and in this capacity had periodically to prosecute forgers of Russian rouble notes in this country. After John or Daniel Forrester had captured the culprits and obtained possession of the engraved forged plates, the solicitors used to send the latter on to us for proofs to be taken for production at the trial. On one occasion they subpœnaed me to explain some technical point connected with the seized engravings, and from the conversation I then had with Forrester, the Mansion House police officer, I divined what was going on behind the scenes. All these forgeries were it seems "put up" affairs; the

perpetrators, invariably Polish jews, had been entrapped by an immediate advance of cash for plates and printing presses, and by promises of a future swingeing bonus; their employer being always a foreign jew of apparently ample means, and without doubt in the pay of the Russian embassy over here. Directly the plates were engraved and the forged notes were in course of being printed, the embassy used to swoop down on the poor ensnared Poles and have them arrested, red-handed as it were. The evidence was invariably so overwhelming that they were certain to be convicted, and the Czar was by this means relieved of a few more of his troublesome Polish subjects, who were credited with always hatching revolutions in the countries where they found an asylum.

When the trial was over the solicitors gave a dinner at the London tavern to the police officers and the witnesses engaged in the proceedings, and I was amazed at the number of seemingly well-to-do foreign jews who were present, and to whose not over clean hands some of the Czar's gold, provided for manufacturing these sort of cases, had no doubt stuck.

The solicitors I have been speaking of had numerous shipping firms among their clients, and at their offices there was quite a little museum of models of Indiamen, barques, brigs, schooners and the like, all completely rigged. So thoroughly did the firm go into any important salvage or colliding case that the witnesses whom it was proposed to call invariably underwent a preliminary examination by their standing counsel, to whom, by the aid of these models, everything that had happened was made clear, as well as the precise nature of the evidence the witnesses were able to give; thus securing to the advocate a complete mastery over his case before he went to fight it out with adversaries, less well coached than himself, in the Admiralty Court.

XV.

(1844-48.)

MY RECOLLECTIONS OF W. M. THACKERAY—A RISE AND FALL DURING THE RAILWAY MANIA—A NOTABLE CHARLATAN.

At the end of the year 1844 I sold my share in the "Pictorial Times" to Mr. Spottiswoode, to enable me to give greater attention to the largely increasing business which my brother and I were then carrying on, for at this time we were printing illustrated books for all the principal London publishers. Before I left the paper, I remember I had the satisfaction of printing in it Hood's famous poem, "the Bridge of Sighs," before it was published elsewhere. This arose from Mr. Spottiswoode, who had a mania for speculation, becoming financially interested in "Hood's Magazine," which, through the shortcomings of its editor, usually made its monthly appearance about a week after the proper time. One day an early proof of Hood's poem was handed to me, and I printed it in the forthcoming number of the "Pictorial Times," which under ordinary circumstances would have been published simultaneously with "Hood's Magazine." But as usual the magazine came out very late, and the paper consequently had a day or two's start of it. Hood, I may here mention, had been an old friend of my father's, and introduced him by name in some rambling rhymes in one of the early Comic Annuals.

On Mr. Thackeray's return from his Egyptian tour, Chapman & Hall purchased the MS. of the "Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo," and sent us the volume to print.

Through some oversight Thackeray had not been paid for his "Coningsby" review in the "Pictorial Times" before he left England, and when he was home again he reminded me of the circumstance in the following note:

"Why doesn't the P. T. pay up? Rate Keys[1] for not sending on my cheque. I had more than half a mind to post the holder of Queen Vic.'s patent as a defaulter at the top of Cheops' Pyramid for the information of future gadders about. The vigilant old centuries, which look down so inquisitively, would have blinked their weary eyes at the exposure."

Thackeray's "Cornhill to Cairo" has been reprinted half a score of times by different firms, yet one passage in it having reference to the printer of the first edition has been allowed to remain unchanged, and will possibly puzzle future commentators. It occurs near the beginning of Chapter X., and is as follows:

"There should have been a poet in our company to describe that charming little bay of Glaucus, into which we entered on the 26th of September in the first steamboat that ever disturbed its beautiful waters. You can't put down in prose that delicious episode of natural poetry; it ought to be done in a symphony full of sweet melodies and swelling harmonies; or sung in a strain of clear crystal iambics, such as Milnes knows how to write.[2] A mere map drawn in words gives the mind no notion of that exquisite nature. What do mountains become in type, or rivers in Mr. Vizetelly's best brevier?"

The immaculate Carlyle was irate with Thackeray over this African tour, owing to his having accepted a free passage from the P. and O. company. Mr. Charles Gavan Duffy mentions that Carlyle "compared the transaction to the practice of a blind fiddler going to and fro on a penny ferry-boat in Scotland, and playing tunes to the passengers for halfpence." Duffy says, "Charles Buller told Thackeray

[1] The publisher.

[2] Thackeray rarely missed an opportunity of extolling Monckton Milnes, between whose wit and his own there was much in common. When Lady Waldegrave sought to compliment Milnes by telling him that he had a large heart, he cynically replied, "That may be, but it is not nearly so useful as a narrow mind."

of this, and when he complained thought it necessary to inform him frankly it was undoubtedly his opinion that, out of respect for himself and his profession, a man like him ought not to have gone fiddling for halfpence or otherwise in any steamboat under the sky." Considering that Thackeray had in nowise puffed the P. and O. all this virtuous indignation seems a trifle superfluous.

Mr. Thackeray was at this period painfully cognisant of his lack of technical skill as an etcher, and he asked me to find him some one who would etch the frontispiece to the Cairo volume from his water-colour sketch. I gave the job to a young fellow in our employment named Thwaites, who subsequently put a number of Thackeray's sketches for "Mrs. Perkins's Ball" on the wood, and touched up the hands and other matters in those subjects drawn on the blocks by Thackeray himself. The annexed note evidently refers to some of the drawings made by Thwaites.

"Dear Sir,—I return the drawings after making a few alterations in them. Present Mr. Titmarsh's compliments to your talented young man, and say M. A. T. would take it as a favour if he would kindly confine his improvements to the Mulligans' and Mrs. Perkins's other guests' extremities. In your young gentleman's otherwise praiseworthy corrections of my vile drawing, a certain *je ne sais quoi*, which I flatter myself exists in the original sketches, seems to have given him the slip, and I have tried in vain to recapture it. Somehow I prefer my own Nuremberg dolls to Mr. Thwaits's superfine wax models.—Yours,

"W. M. T.

"Sept. 13."

From the little services in this way which I had been able to render Mr. Thackeray, I had become rather intimate with him, and while the drawings for "Perkins's Ball," and others of his Christmas books printed by us, were in progress, I saw a good deal of him, for he was almost as fastidious, as I afterwards found Mr. Ruskin to be, in regard to the manner in which his sketches were transferred to the wood. One afternoon, when he called in Peterborough-

court, he had a small brown paper parcel with him, and opened it to show me his two careful drawings for the page plates to the first number of "Vanity Fair." Tied up with them was the manuscript of the earlier portion of the work, of which he had several times spoken to me, referring especially to the quaint character that Chiswick Mall—within a stone's throw of which I was then living—still retained. His present intention, he told me, was to see Bradbury & Evans, and offer the work to them. Although Thackeray never showed himself eager after praise—Serjeant Ballantine's assertion to the contrary notwithstanding—he was always depressed by disparaging remarks, and I felt glad at being able to praise his two drawings, respecting the merits of which he professed to be in considerable doubt, and to congratulate him on the capital title he had chosen for the work, which he then mentioned to me for the first time.

In little more than half-an-hour Mr. Thackeray again made his appearance, and with a beaming face gleefully informed me that he had settled the business. "B. & E.," said he, "accepted so readily, that I am deuced sorry I didn't ask them another tenner. I am certain they would have given it." He then explained to me that he had named fifty guineas per part, including the two sheets of letterpress, a couple of etchings, and the initials at the commencement of the chapters. He reckoned the text, I remember, at no more than five-and-twenty shillings a page, the two etchings at six guineas each, while, as for the few initials at the beginning of the chapters, he threw these in. Such was Mr. Thackeray's own estimate of his commercial value as an author and illustrator, A.D. 1846.

The fable of "Vanity Fair" having gone the round of the publishing trade before a purchaser could be found, has appeared in print scores of times, and will, no doubt, continue to be repeated, as a striking example of the dull-

wittedness of London bibliopoles of a past generation. And yet, there is not a particle of truth in the story. If the records of the principal publishing firms at that date were searched, I am confident they would be found to contain nothing whatever relative to the MS. of "Vanity Fair" having been submitted for consideration. It is not unlikely that Mr. Thackeray may have mentioned the work to Chapman & Hall, his then publishers, and that they may not have received the suggestion encouragingly, for Hall, who was the moving spirit in the firm, had no great literary taste. I feel certain, however, that not so much as a hint about "Vanity Fair" was conveyed to any other publisher, or Mr. Thackeray would have mentioned it in the course of the many conversations I had with him regarding the work.

The hawking about of "Vanity Fair" in the way pretended, of course pre-supposes that the MS. was complete, and was submitted in this state to the half-score fatuous fools who declined it with thanks, but I am positive that, when arrangements were made with Messrs. Bradbury & Evans for the publication of the work, with no further knowledge on their part of its nature than could be gleaned from Mr. Thackeray during a brief interview, nothing beyond Number I. was written.

I have no doubt whatever that the publishers of "Vanity Fair" bought it—like most works by known authors are purchased—solely on its writer's then reputation, which his "Snobs of England," in "Punch," had greatly extended. I know perfectly well that, after the publication commenced, much of the remainder of the work was written under pressure from the printer, and not unfrequently the final instalment of "copy," needed to fill the customary thirty-two pages, was penned while the printer's boy was waiting in the hall at Young-street. This was a common occurrence with much of Mr. Thackeray's monthly work, and the

strange thing is that, produced under such disadvantageous conditions as these, it should have been so uniformly and thoroughly good.

I think it was while "Vanity Fair" was in progress that our friend Cham (M. de Noé), paid another visit to England, when Thackeray, who had made his acquaintance in Paris, gave him, I remember, a breakfast in Young-street, to which my brother and myself were invited. Thackeray had previously mentioned to me that De Noé was in England and had expressed his intention of looking him up. Here is the letter which he afterwards sent me :—

"Young Street, Thursday.

"Dear H. V.—I have discovered Cham in Salisbury Square—in what I fancy was Pamela-Richardson's old house, and he is to breakfast in Young Street on Sunday. Please be of the party, as there are only you and your brother whom de Noé knows over here that I can ask to meet him. The hour, eleven, will admit of the devout attending early matins. I have asked Higgins,[1] T. T. [Tom Taylor], Dickey[2] D. [Doyle], and Leech, but neither Mark [Lemon] nor Jerrold. Young Douglas, if asked, would most likely not come, but if he did, he'd take especial care that his own effulgence should obscure all lesser lights, Cham's included.—Yours, W. M. THACKERAY."

The breakfast, which to me was a memorable one, was given in the small dining-room to the left of the entrance hall of Thackeray's modest house in Young-street. After the hot dishes had been handed round by the young footman—for Thackeray now sported a lackey out of livery on the strength of the success of "Vanity Fair"—the latter was dismissed and the entertainment was soon in full swing. One guest after another retailed the latest piece of gossip he had picked up the night before, while

[1] "His name is Jacob Homnium, Exquire ;
And if I'd committed crimes,
Good Lord ! I wouldn't have that mann
Attack me in 'the Times.'"—*Ballads of Policeman X.*

[2] Here a small bird was sketched in the original in accordance with a common practice of Thackeray's.

Cham, on his part, commented somewhat humorously on our insular manners and customs, ridiculing among other things what he termed our guillotine windows, which, if the cord snapped while they were up, might decapitate any too curious person who had thrust out his head the moment before. Then a few short stories, which the narrators privately prayed might prove new to the present company, were related, and occasional jokes were fired off, after which Cham took up the running and told a capital story of intrigue apropos of a recent *bal masqué* in Paris.

The story was so amusing that everyone called out for a fresh one, and De Noé, who understood English thoroughly, and only made use of French words to point his moral and adorn his tale the more, rattled off one excellent story after another to the delight of his listeners, every one of whom felt that their own best stories would pale by comparison. An soon as one witty tale was finished Cham was entreated to commence another, and owing to his ready compliance and relays of claret and cigars, the breakfast prolonged itself until nearly four o'clock. An adjournment for another hour or so then took place to the drawing-room, where Thackeray produced a number of his best sketches, not merely humorous figure subjects, but serious views sketched in the course of his various rambles over Europe.

The reason why Cham achieved such a complete success was not far to seek. He told only the very best of the many good stories he had picked up in Paris during past years, all of which were quite new to his English hearers: added to this, he was a first-rate *raconteur*. After Cham had made his great hit no one else dared venture to tell even his smartest stories, as these were all more or less known to friends present. Higgins had already trotted out a couple of new and fairly good ones, and Tom Taylor, who could never conceal the absurdly

high estimation in which he held himself, some particularly feeble ones. Leech and Doyle were both very silent. Thackeray, according to his wont, was in the same dilemma as the needy knife-grinder, "Story! God bless you, sir, I've none to tell;" and he contented himself by encouraging anyone who was disposed to contribute to the general entertainment.

I read with some surprise Dean Hole's statement that Thackeray, when he chose to talk, said so many good things that they trod down and suffocated each other. Certainly this was not my own experience or that of many others who were in terms of intimacy with Mr. Thackeray, and were a good deal in his society. During the seven or eight years that I saw much of Mr. Thackeray, and knew him tolerably intimately, he never appeared to me to shine in conversation, and he most certainly made no kind of effort to do so—never in fact talked for effect, and indeed never usurped any large share of the conversation. Ordinarily he would interpose occasional quaint humorous comments, and would show himself far more tolerant than men of his capacity usually are of bores. Whenever the talk grew dull and wearying, he would content himself by filliping it up with some witty or shrewd satirical remark, and turn it into a new channel. None of the little aside sermons which he preached in his books by any chance fell from his lips. At this period of his career his placid temper and pleasant courtesy, in spite of the mild sarcasms in which he indulged, charmed all who came in contact with him.

On thinking over the many occasions on which I saw Mr. Thackeray in his unreserved moments, I cannot call to mind a single instance of his showing himself at all ruffled when anything disagreeable had happened; and yet that he was unusually sensitive, there cannot be the smallest doubt, for more than a glimpse of this is had in his Round-

about paper, "Thorns in the cushion." To me he seemed to look at life in a light philosophic way, and to get all the harmless enjoyment he could out of it. And certainly at this time there was no trace of that reserve, or that austerity of manner, which in subsequent years, when "Time had his flowing locks to silver turned," came to be attributed to him.

When I went to reside at Kensington again, I frequently had to see Mr. Thackeray about the illustrations to his Christmas books, or the etchings to his novels, on which I still obtained him occasional assistance, finding him some new hand, perhaps, to do the mechanical biting in. At one period I generally called upon him on two mornings in the week. At these times, as he was a late riser, he was accustomed to have me shown up into his bedroom, when he would give me a cigar and chat whilst dressing in the most unreserved fashion on all manner of topics, talking to me in his habitual familiar way as though I was his equal. From his conversation I gathered that he was envious, but not ill-naturedly so, of the great influence which Dickens had acquired over his women readers, whom the misfortunes of his juvenile heroes and heroines were, he said, always moving to tears.

In spite of Thackeray's remark that he had never read the Nelly part of the "Old Curiosity Shop" more than once, whereas he had Dick Swiveller aud the Marchioness by heart, there is no doubt of his having been genuinely impressed by Dickens's pathos. Mark Lemon used to tell of his flinging down before him the "Dombey" number, containing the death of little Paul, and excitedly exclaiming, "There 's no writing against this; one hasn't an atom of chance. It 's stupendous!" "Vanity Fair," it should be remembered, was then in course of publication. To-day a very different opinion prevails with regard to the merits of this famous death-bed scene, which Thackeray pronounced

to be stupendous, and of which Edinburgh Review Jeffrey exaggeratedly wrote, "there has been nothing in literature like the actual dying of that sweet Paul." Most people are now inclined to agree with Mr. Andrew Lang who discerns in Dickens's much belauded description, "the kind of thing that appears in Sunday-school books about the virtuous little boy who died." Thackeray was on all occasions loud in his praise of Dickens as a writer, and yet no one could have been more conscious than he of the exaggerated amiability of those characters which evoked at the time such a prodigious amount of feminine sympathy.

We all remember Thackeray's observation, "When I say I know women I mean that I know I don't know them." One thing is certain, however; he hungered after their admiration, for he openly confessed this on several occasions in my hearing, and he was, moreover, childishly vain when he succeeded in securing it. It may be bad taste to mention the circumstance, but more than once I received from him drawings on wood for his Christmas books, wrapped up in notes from his feminine correspondents, who at times allowed their admiration to wander somewhat indiscreetly beyond the range of his books. These communications could scarcely have been so numerous, I fancy, as to have been brought under my notice by mere accident on Mr. Thackeray's part. He rather wished, I think, to publish abroad that he was overburthened with this sort of idolatry.

To-day, with Douglas Jerrold's waning reputation, it seems strange to recall to mind that he was the one literary man, of whom Thackeray, when in his prime, seemed to be seriously jealous. I was several times present when the early number of "Punch" reached Young-street, and well remember how, as Thackeray nervously tore off the wrapper, he would exclaim, "Now let's see what young Douglas has to say this week." For some little while he would remain

absorbed in the chapter of the "Caudle lectures," or of "Miss Robinson Crusoe," or whatever Jerrold's contribution may then chance to have been ; and would afterwards proceed to scan and comment on the miscellaneous contents of the number with an invariable pean of praise for the sketches of Leech and Doyle, which he thought the public cared far more about, than for the smartest writing "Punch" had ever published.

On Thackeray's expressing the same opinion in the "Quarterly Review," Jerrold indignantly resented the suggestion, and the "Punch" writers generally professed to feel hurt at it. Thackeray admitted the blunder he had made in a letter to his old friend Percival Leigh—one of the oldest contributors to "Punch," and familiarly known as the professor—to whom he wrote :

> "Of all the slips of my fatal pen, there 's none I regret more than the unlucky half line which has given pain to such a kind and valued old friend as you have been, and I trust will be still to me. I ought never to have said that 'Punch' might as well be left unwritten but for Leech—it was more than my meaning, which is certainly that the drawing is a hundred times more popular than the writing, but I had no business to write any such thing ; and forgot it so much that I was quite surprised when I first heard that I had been accused of sneering at 'Punch.' I knew when I came back from Paris and read the line in the Q. R., which I had forgotten as utterly as many another speech, which I had made and didn't ought. Jerrold has had his fire into me, and do you know, I feel rather comforted."

Thackeray's suggestion that in Leech's drawings the public had the pith of "Punch," was only a roundabout way of extolling Leech, and not to be taken seriously. In his modest way of speaking about his own writings, he was given at times to self-depreciation—real and not affected. Still, it is idle to suppose he was not conscious that the reputation enjoyed by "Punch" was due quite as much to his own "Snob papers," and to Jerrold's "Caudle lectures," as to the best of Leech's, Doyle's, and Tenniel's caricatures.

It will be remembered that Jerrold sought to continue the success which Mrs. Caudle had secured in "Punch" by a similar series of sketches called "Mrs. Bib's baby." Unluckily for him, however, Thackeray commenced his Snob papers shortly afterwards, and Bib's baby speedily gave up the ghost. After this calamity, Jerrold's hand was missed from "Punch" for some considerable time, causing it to be surmised that he and "Punch" had parted company. Jerrold publicly gave vent to his indignation at the rumour, and in a week or two afterwards the opening chapters of "Miss Robinson Crusoe" made their appearance. When about a dozen chapters had been published, no more was heard of Miss Crusoe, whereas the Snob papers pursued their triumphant course for the full period of twelve months.

Thackeray was reticent in expressing his opinions upon people whom he did not like, and very rarely said ill-natured things about anyone. He took no pains, however, to disguise his contempt for Jerrold's democratic professions. I remember him mentioning to me his having noticed at the Earl of Carlisle's a presentation copy of one of Jerrold's books, the inscription in which ran: "To the Right Honourable the Earl of Carlisle, K.G., K.C.B., &c., &c." "Ah!" said Thackeray, "this is the sort of style in which your rigid, uncompromising radical always toadies the great." "There is," he remarked in one of his books, "an odour in the English aristocracy that always intoxicates plebeians." Unquestionably there was an utter want of sympathy between the two men. Jerrold on his part thought Thackeray full of crotchets, and found him somewhat of a mystery to the last. "I have known Thackeray eighteen years," he used to say, "and I don't know him yet." On the other hand, when Thackeray heard of the great rise in the sale of "Lloyd's newspaper" under Jerrold's editorship, he expressed himself glad, and

characteristically remarked, "I am quite pleased with myself at finding myself pleased at men getting on in the world."

Lord Carlisle, who was uncommonly like Liston, and whose face would have been equally a fortune to him on the stage, posed at this time as the patrician friend to literature, and I remember Thackeray's mentioning his having once invited a dozen literary men, including four or five of the "Punch" set, to dinner, when to his lordship's evident chagrin the repast turned out a singularly dull affair. "Of course," said Thackeray, "we all knew each others' pet stories, and all the dear old jokes, and this acted as a wet blanket upon us. No one would have thought of trotting out a good new story simply for one of his *confrères* to crib for his next magazine article. If Lord Carlisle had asked half-a-dozen literary men and half-a-dozen lords, we should in this case have fit audience found, and been able to amuse the quality at the trifling inconvenience of boring ourselves."

Occasionally when I made one of my early morning calls upon Mr. Thackeray, he would propose walking up to town with me, and, after the slightest of breakfasts and a glance at "the Times" over a cigar, he would be ready to sally forth. We always parted company at the corner of St. James's-street, where he turned off to the Reform Club. On one of these journeys, soon after Lady Blessington gave up Gore House to reside in Paris, I remember his taking me with him to look over the little crib, adjacent to the big mansion, where Count D'Orsay, Lady Blessington's recognised lover, was understood to have resided with the view of saving appearances. For years past the ringletted and white-kidded count, although his tailor and other obliging tradespeople dressed him for nothing, or rather in consideration of the advertisement that his equivocal patronage procured for them, had been a self-constituted

prisoner through dread of arrest for debt. It was only on Sundays that he ventured outside the Gore House grounds, and for his protection on other days the greatest possible precaution was exercised when it was necessary for any of Lady Blessington's many visitors to be admitted. D'Orsay's friend, Thomas Slingsby Duncombe, who was mixed up with him in numerous bill transactions, used to say that the count's debts amounted to £120,000, and that before he retired to the safe asylum of Gore House, he was literally mobbed by duns.

On going over the inconvenient little crib where the count was supposed to have kept up a miniature establishment, I noticed that there was not the faintest attempt at decoration in any of the rooms, and that the wall papers were commonplace and much the worse for wear. There was in fact nothing in the place to excite the smallest surprise or awaken the faintest interest, and yet Thackeray carefully examined every room from basement to garret, peered into every nook and cranny, and learnt the place so to speak thoroughly by heart. In spite, however, of its remarkably pleasant situation, he could hardly have thought of taking up his quarters there, for it was a mere doll's house compared to his Young-street abode. Possibly his intention at the time was to utilise all he saw in some essay, touching upon the humble surroundings with which misfortune makes the discarded leader of fashion acquainted. Thackeray's visit to Gore House after Lady Blessington's exodus (when her servant professed to have noticed tears in his eyes on his leaving, and thought him the only one of the countess's old friends who was really affected at her departure) must have preceded this inspection of the D'Orsay *maisonette* by only a few days.

Lady Blessington's literary reputation had long been on the wane before she migrated to Paris. For a time she was a novelty in the London publishing world, but

when the worthlessness of her writings became evident, her pen was no longer in the same request, and her name as editor had no kind of weight. The prince-president gave his old friend D'Orsay an appointment, but he was unable to do anything for the countess. It is said that he overtook her one day when she was driving in the Champs Elysées, and after a few courteous observations asked her if she was staying in Paris for any time. Cut to the quick by his question she sarcastically replied with another: "And yourself, prince; do you expect to remain here long?"

Thackeray was especially good to young men, and personally I always met with the greatest kindness from him. He seemed to take especial pleasure in having young fellows at his house, in encouraging them, and putting them completely at their ease while drawing them out. I remember when several smart young writers—whose success had emboldened them to turn their backs on Bohemia and most of its free and easy ways, but who were still somewhat regardless of their personal appearance—were frequent guests at Thackeray's dinner-table where every courtesy was shown them by their distinguished host. After one of these entertainments I heard him remark, in the hope, no doubt, that the hint would be conveyed to those for whom it was intended, "They are all capital fellows, but wouldn't be a whit the worse for cleaner shirts." Before his daughters grew up, and while "Vanity Fair" was in progress Thackeray had no home society, and he seemed thoroughly to enjoy these evenings, spent away from the club and Evans's late supper rooms of which he was at one time a rather constant frequenter.

Those who remember the railway mania of 1845 when everybody gambled in scrip, will readily recall Thackeray's pair of ragged capitalists in "Punch"—"those dismal beggars who spoke of nothing but railroad shares," and afterwards supped on "taters smoking hot . . . in the

lonely Haymarket." They recall to one's mind a well-known newspaper man of the time, whose identity may be partially disguised under the epithet of "Raggedy" commonly prefixed to his name, and who, when the railway mania was at its height was in a desperately forlorn condition, living with his family literally in a two-stall stable and coach-house at Croom's-hill, Greenwich. He was ready enough to "bless railroads everywhere . . . bless every railroad share," and to believe that "never a beggar need now despair." Acting on this conviction he invested most of his week's scanty earnings in some deep mourning-bordered letter-paper, a stick of black sealing-wax and a score of postage stamps, and forthwith sent out applications for shares right and left, sealing his letters, dated simply from Croom's-hill, with an old seal crowded with as many quarterings as a *wohl-geboren* Teuton's escutcheon.

His intention was to convey the impression that he was a person of good family who had just succeeded to a fortune through the death of some near relative, and in accordance with the example set by the shrewdest of Thackeray's ragged capitalists he always wrote for a good number of shares. In those days it was unnecessary to send any deposit with an application, and the new companies not only dispensed with bankers' references, but rarely troubled themselves to make the slightest inquiries respecting the financial position of applicants for scrip.

Things were in a precarious state at Croom's-hill, when an agent arrived there from some over-cautious company to which the customary application for shares had been addressed. Meeting a little girl hurrying along with a foaming pot of porter, he asked her to show him where the writer of the letter—whose name he mentioned—lived, and was surprised to learn that the youthful Hebe was going there herself. Arrived at the stable of which

I have spoken, a tap at the door caused this to be opened, when the agent found himself confronted by a perspiring and dilapidated-looking individual in his shirt sleeves, engaged in frying a rumpsteak and onions (which the pot of foaming porter was presently to assist him in washing down) over a blazing fire.

The agent had already seen sufficient for his purpose, still he courteously asked a question or two before retiring. Our newspaper friend at once realised that there was no hope of shares from that quarter, yet he was by no means cast down. "Thank goodness!" he cheerfully remarked to a sympathising "stag" of his acquaintance, "other companies are not so deucedly particular;" and so propitious were the turns of Fortune's wheel, that before many weeks had elapsed he managed to exchange the two-stall stable for a handsomely furnished suburban villa, and to start a railway newspaper. Its proprietor was the first of the great race of corruptible financial tipsters, and made it his business to prophecy exorbitant dividends from the rottenest railway schemes in return for paid-up shares and columns of high priced advertisements. Having an eye to appearances he set up a cabriolet *à la D'Orsay*, with a diminutive tiger slung behind; which was one of the sights of Fleet-street, and the great admiration of the printers' boys whenever he visited the office of his newspaper. At his dinners too champagne flowed more freely than ever porter had done in the brave days of old.

It was a merry time while it lasted, but unluckily it did not last long. "The Times" thundered against the new companies; railway scrip fell, until, as the saying goes, no one would touch much of it with tongs even; and a general crash ensued, in which our *nouveau riche* and his newspaper, his furnished villa, cabriolet, and diminutive tiger were all involved in one common ruin. More than once he attempted, Phœnix-like, to rise anew, but never suc-

ceeded in again attaining his former pinnacle. He devised no end of journalistic enterprises on the comforting theory that with five pounds in hand for petty cash a newspaper could be started without further capital. Years ago he submitted to a hard-headed friend a carefully prepared scheme embodying their joint acquisition of the Brighton pavilion, and its conversion into a place of public amusement. His friend thought the idea an excellent one, but enquired where the capital was to come from? "Ah! that's just like you," was the reply, "you throw cold water on the grandest schemes by your narrow-minded scruples about money."

Before the crash which I have been speaking of came, and the last day arrived for the required parliamentary notice of all new railway projects to be given, it was found necessary to enlarge the current number of the "London Gazette" to close upon 600 pages! While the mania was at fever heat, and "plunging" was general, even the soberest individuals dabbled in railway scrip, and I can remember staid London publishers, calling on business at our office, having a little transaction in shares together before they left. Not even the most infatuated believed in the possibility of these multifarious schemes being carried out, yet every one hoped to make his own pile before the day of doom arrived.

At the time of the mania there was no end of amateur surveyors engaged in planning out new lines of railway by the simple process of ruling on an ordinary map a series of zigzag lines connecting as large a number of important towns as possible—say between John O'Groats and the Land's End—and always taking especial care to call their devious routes "direct." The map was then sent to some lithographer overburthened with similar work, and all of whose hands had been working night and day for weeks, to draw out for the prospectus, and he naturally took

advantage of the situation, and charged I know not how many guineas an inch for his labour. In drafting the prospectus any statistics that could be twisted to the promoter's purpose were set forth in a grossly exaggerated form, and friends were then applied to—city men by preference and those with imposing addresses—to join the provisional committee—baits of large allotments of shares and corresponding pecuniary benefits being held out by way of inducement.

Impecunious sons of peers and seedy baronets were eagerly snapped up by these promoters of bogus schemes, and the one who had the highest sounding title generally secured the post of chairman. A list of one of these committees frequently filled an entire column of "the Times" newspaper. Solicitors without business were only too ready to place their offices at the new company's service, and engineers without experience were glad to have their names advertised in connection with such a spirited undertaking. Bankers were scarcely so complaisant, still the commission they were to get tempted them to lend their names and receive applications for shares.

Everything being ready, the company was launched in the advertising columns of "the Times," and as no deposit had to accompany applications for shares, no end of these flowed in. Knight Hunt, my sub-editor on the "Pictorial Times," and an inveterate schemer, planned several of these so-called "direct" lines of railway, and even managed to get one or two of them floated. His ingenious theory was, that to make money while the infatuation lasted it was desirable to have your own railway project, and not to be dependent on other people's.

Among the half dozen noted charlatans whom I have known at one time or other, Alexis Soyer, whose acquaintance I made when he was *chef* of the Reform Club, should not be omitted. He was born in France, and his wife, an

indifferent painter of *genre* subjects had died young, when Soyer erected a bizarre monument of his own design to her memory at Kensal-green. So vain was he of this production that he published views of it right and left, and let it figure as a frontispiece to one of his many cookery books. He was always endeavouring to attract attention to himself, and had his clothes cut in an extravagant fashion, with the two lappels of his coat as unlike each other as they well could be. With all his weaknesses, he was of a very generous nature, though in one particular instance he indulged his hospitable inclinations at other people's expense, and to his own great disadvantage.

As a matter of course, Soyer posed as the gastronomic authority *par excellence* of his day, and the Reform Club greatly plumed itself on having secured his services. In his independent way, however, Soyer was in the habit of giving at the club's expense periodical luncheons of his own cooking to various newspaper friends, in his private rooms at Pall-mall. The Rev. John Richardson, a rosy-gilled *bon vivant* on the staff of "the Times,"—a position which he utilised to guttle and guzzle in good company at every possible opportunity—was a constant attendant at these little spreads. The reader will perhaps remember that this is the same reverend gentleman who many years before had witnessed Lord Londonderry's purchase of the cheap penknife[1] with which a day or two afterwards the persecuted peer cut his throat. To these Reform Club luncheons of Soyer's the club butler was invariably invited, in order that every one of the *chef's* own *recherché* dishes might be accompanied by its appropriate wine, selected from the choicest vintages in the club cellars. Thackeray, to whom I mentioned these Lucullus-like luncheons, used often to joke about them, and regret that his position as a member of the Reform precluded him

[1] See *ante*, p. 46.

from participating in them. Eventually certain discontented dinner-givers grumbled to the club committee that they were neglected while Soyer was feasting and carousing with his friends, and the *chef* was obliged to send in his resignation.

Subsequently, when London was mad over its great exhibition of 1851, Soyer rented Gore House, Lady Blessington's old place, after she had vacated it to renew her acquaintance with Prince Louis Napoleon on his election to the presidency of the French republic. Soyer proceeded to turn the mansion into what he called a Symposium, and George Augustus Sala, fresh from the scene-painting room of the Princess's theatre, and with all the necessary technique at his fingers' ends, decorated the staircase for him, painting, he tells us, what he thought to be "a highly comic panorama of the celebrities of the epoch." In spite, however, of the great notoriety into which Soyer had persistently puffed himself and his undoubted culinary accomplishments, as well as the proximity of Paxton's Crystal Palace, visitors were few, and the scheme proved a failure. A few years afterwards, with a loud flourishing of trumpets in all the newspapers, the famous *chef* hurried to the Crimea to teach our half-starved soldiers before Sebastopol how to cook *filet Châteaubriand* and *cotelettes à la jardinière*. Subsequently, at the height of the Irish famine, he opened a soup kitchen at Dublin with a new fanfare, and this was I believe the last great opportunity for self-advertisement that Soyer was able to profit by.

XVI.

(1845-48.)

DISRAELI'S FRIENDLY OVERTURES TO "PUNCH"—SAMUEL CARTER HALL AND JENNY LIND—TWO WORKING-MEN POETS—HIGH JINKS AT CAMBRIDGE—ALBERT SMITH.

In the summer of 1845, Mr. Disraeli took the chair at the annual dinner of the "Printers' Pension Society," when the stewards, of whom I was one, received him in the drawing-room of the Albion, in Aldersgate-street. Immediately after his entrance he posted himself in a nonchalant fashion with his back to the mantelpiece, and his thumbs in his waistcoat pockets, an attitude Thackeray was fond of assuming, and began to chat familiarly with those near him. In a minute or two he asked if Mr. Leech were present (Leech was one of the stewards), as if he were he would like to make his acquaintance. The famous "Punch" caricaturist thereupon stepped forward and was duly introduced. Disraeli showed himself particularly gracious and warmly complimented the artist, whose pencil had lately been employed in satirizing him in a disparaging fashion, depicting him as a nice young man for a small party—*i.e.*, the Young England party, as a jew dealer in cast-off notions, and as young Gulliver before the Brobdingnag minister (Sir R. Peel). Disraeli tried his hardest to ingratiate himself with the distinguished caricaturist, but Leech, proof against the wiles of the charmer, rejoined some months afterwards with the famous cartoon, wherein

Disraeli, who had lately proclaimed, that although the cause was lost there should be retribution for those who had betrayed it, figured as a spiteful ringletted viper and Peel as a smiling unconcerned old file.

During the dinner the chairman did his best to make himself pleasant, and hobbed and nobbed unreservedly with his immediate neighbours. A tall jewish footman in livery with the prominent proboscis of his race and powdered hair, waited upon him; and while the speeches were being delivered, stood stock still as a statue behind his master's chair, without so much as moving a muscle of his face, when everyone else was roaring with laughter at some witty sally which the chairman had made.

When the toasts had been drunk and the secretary had read out the list of subscriptions, and the quiet family-men had hurried off to catch the last suburban omnibus, Mr. Disraeli showed no disposition to vacate the chair. Seeing this, the remaining guests drew up to his end of the table, and a lively discourse ensued, in which a casual allusion to "Punch" was made. Disraeli profited by this to rise to his feet, and in a clever and amusing speech proposed the health of Mr. Punch, towards whom, he protested, he felt no kind of malice on account of any strictures, pictorial or verbal, which that individual might have passed upon him. Everybody entered into the spirit of the joke, and after the toast had been drunk calls were made indifferently upon Lemon and A'Beckett, both of whom were present, to respond. Mark, however, rose, and in a brief and witty speech returned thanks for the honour that had been done, as he neatly put it, to an absent friend.

Disraeli's amiable advances availed him nothing. For a long time afterwards "Punch" gave no quarter to the "Red Indian of debate," who as Sir James Graham pithily phrased it, "cut his way to power with the tomahawk." The time, however, came when Disraeli could show his

magnanimity. Leech who had satirized him almost weekly, and so familiarised everyone with his face and figure, that an aristocratic little damsel, on being presented to him, exclaimed, "I know you! I've seen you in 'Punch'!"—Leech had had a pension given to him by the liberals, and when he died, the pension would have died with him, had not Disraeli, who had at last risen to power, interposed and secured it for his family. It will be remembered that he acted equally generously towards Carlyle, who had called him a mountebank, and otherwise abused him. In return he offered Carlyle the grand cross of the Bath and a corresponding life income, but the Chelsea Diogenes would have neither the honour nor the pelf.

Disraeli had at one time a young Scotchman named David Bryce for private secretary, to whom, on quitting his service, he confided the publication of his novels, till Bryce went financially astray with other speculations, and the novels had to be withdrawn from him. The former secretary was full of stories of Mrs. Disraeli's excessive adulation of her husband; of the extreme care with which she managed her life interest in her property, in order that the savings effected might be heaped up for Disraeli's benefit; of the exuberance of her affection, when the rising statesman returned home during the day-time, kissing and fondling him before the embarrassed secretary, and waiting upon him in an almost slavish way, bringing a bowl of warm water, and washing and drying her idol's hands, and then curling and smoothing his ringletted raven locks.

I made the acquaintance of Samuel Carter Hall—the original of Dickens's Pecksniff—and his more celebrated wife, at the time the former was editing an illustrated "Book of British Ballads," which was printed at our office. Hall, like many another man given to persistent affectation, expanded in his palmy days into a complete caricature of himself. Although devoid of the slightest critical

faculty, and possessing only commonplace taste in matters of art, without even the power of expressing himself logically, Carter Hall had, with Hibernian self-confidence, set himself up as the artistic oracle of the day—Ruskin, it should be noted, had not then arisen. Having been editor of one of the crowd of illustrated annuals so much in fashion a few years before, he regarded this as sufficient qualification, and promulgated his dicta in the "Art Union"—nicknamed by "Punch" the "Pecksniffery"—as the "Art Journal" was then called. Pushing young artists and ambitious art-manufacturers competed for words of praise from his pen. Those who made offerings of little studies in oil or water colour, or choice examples of ceramic ware, were pretty certain to be belauded. And yet, with all this perfectly well known and openly talked about, Carter Hall had the coolness to expatiate upon the serious obligation entailed by his position in this impudent and Pecksniffian fashion:—

"Without at all inclining to exaggerate our responsibilities, we know them to be great. We know there are many individuals (and it cannot be presumptuous to allude to a fact we have borne constantly in mind as one that ought to make us exceedingly cautious as well as rigidly upright) who take our opinions as guides to their own—who give to our integrity and judgment that confidence which they have not in their own knowledge and experience, and who consequently look to us for determining the course they are to pursue in reference to purchases."

Hall talked even far more priggishly and foolishly than he wrote, and I have more than once felt surprised at hearing him launch out at his own dinner-table without any attempt being made to check him by his sensible wife. True, he assumed an intellectual superiority over her, and she blandly accepted the false position, but no one was taken in by this.

At one of Mrs. Hall's receptions, at that little doll's-house, the Old Brompton Rosery, I remember Jenny Lind

being present. She was then residing next door to the Halls, and a certain intimacy existed between the novelist and the singer. Jenny Lind had only been a short time in England, and the crush to hear her at Her Majesty's was still formidable; so that to see her in private, and with a chance, too, of speaking with her, was an irresistible attraction to the shoal of people Mrs. Hall had invited. It was one of those assemblages at which the guests commonly spend an hour or two on the staircase and the landing and then retire disgusted. Getting in and out of the suite of little rooms at the Rosery was scarcely to be accomplished by any amount of struggling, and I long remained hemmed in near the lady whom everyone was so eager to see and pass their opinion upon. The women were naturally disappointed at finding her so simply dressed, and talked of the want of style in the unsophisticated Swedish young lady; but what they could not at all understand was her being so quiet and unassuming when the furore about her was so great—a circumstance she must certainly have been conscious of. They readily paid her the safe though rather indefinite compliment of terming her pleasant-looking, but would not admit she had any pretensions to be considered pretty.

I had heard Jenny Lind on several occasions at Her Majesty's, whose fortunes had been steadily falling ever since the secession of Costa, Grisi, Mario, and others of the troupe, spite of the dithyrambic bounds of the goddesses of the ballet—those white muslin parasols with duplex handles as an American critic irreverently characterised them. Jenny Lind's nightingale notes, however, speedily set matters right and replenished Mr. Lumley's empty coffers. To hear the new diva from either pit or gallery it was necessary to fight one's way to a place. At this time the capacious pit had not been absorbed by stalls, and formidable barriers to prevent crushing were put up in

the passages leading to it, but failed to serve their intended purpose; for I remember seeing ladies whirled along half fainting and almost half disrobed, while the young swell of that day had to struggle violently through at the risk of being shorn of his claw-hammer coat tails.

Two other Irishmen whom I occasionally met, of a very different stamp to Samuel Carter Hall, were Sheridan Knowles and Samuel Lover. A singular peculiarity about Sheridan Knowles was his remarkable absent-mindedness. On one occasion he posted a considerable sum of money in banknotes to his wife, and to his horror discovered, a week afterwards, that the letter had never reached her. In a towering rage he wrote to the postmaster-general, and learnt in reply that the missing notes were quite safe in the dead-letter office, whither they had been sent as Knowles had not only neglected to address the envelope but had omitted to sign his name and append his address to the letter.

Knowles was constantly blundering over the identity of two well-known fellow playwrights, Mark Lemon and Lemon Rede, and confounding not only their names but their persons also. One day on meeting the pair arm in arm he was more perplexed than ever. "Well now, I'm bothered intirely!" he exclaimed in his choicest brogue, "come, one of you tell me, which of you two is the other?"

Once, when Knowles was contemplating a journey in the dear postage times, he asked a friend if he could take any letters for him. "You're very kind," said the latter, "but where are you going?" "Well, now," replied Knowles, "that is inquisitive—I haven't yet quite made up my mind."

Good-natured, dapper, little Samuel Lover, my other Irish friend, seemed to be always as brisk and lively as the proverbial lark. He was almost as clever with his brush

as with his pen, and was quite as proud of his artistic and musical, as of his literary attainments. When he sat down to the piano to accompany himself and warble one of his own sentimental songs to the admiring damsels who gathered round him, he recalled to one's recollection similar oft-described scenes in which his fellow-countryman, the author of the "Irish Melodies," conspicuously figured. Later in life Lover essayed the rôle of public entertainer, but in spite of his vocal abilities, secured only an indifferent success. He then tried the stage, but again failed to make a hit.

A publishing speculation, "the Boy's own Library"—in which Messrs. Chapman & Hall were likewise concerned—brought me into relationship about this time with Thomas Miller, the basket-maker poet, who some years before had been a lion for the nonce at Gore House. He was the son of a Lincolnshire agricultural labourer, and had written in his youth a number of poems, and what is more, had succeeded in getting a volume of them printed, and noticed in the literary journals of the time. This induced him to turn his back upon basket-making and make his way to London where Lady Blessington took the uncouth bard under her patronage and, rigging him out in a slop suit, showed him off admiringly at her receptions.

Jerdan of the "Literary Gazette" was induced to find Miller occasional employment on his paper, and Samuel Rogers, after inviting him to his breakfasts, generously set him up in business; not, however, as a basket-maker or some kindred craft, at which he might have prospered, but as a bookseller and publisher—of all callings in the world—requiring special training and knowledge, such as a labouring man from the Lincolnshire wolds would certainly not possess. The result was of course failure, and Miller took to his pen again, and wrote numerous books dealing principally with rural life. His experiences in this direc-

tion, however, eventually became exhausted, and his books being no longer in demand, he had a hard struggle to live, which would have been all the more severe had not Sir Robert Peel periodically befriended him, and the Literary Fund made him frequent timely gifts.

It always struck me that Miller had mistaken his vocation, and that he was really cut out for an itinerant preacher—a calling in which he would certainly have achieved success. He had studied his Bible carefully, and knew by heart all the grand poetical passages which, whenever an opportunity offered, he was in the habit of declaiming, in a tremulous yet sonorous voice, and with half-closed eyes, and altogether in a manner that was most impressive.

Miller wrote the "Boy's Country Year Book," for the new library, and it was decided to make an important feature of its many illustrations. Edward Duncan, the water-colour artist, had already made a few rather uninteresting drawings for the work, when one day a young fellow called upon me with a large round of box-wood, which he had covered with cleverly pencilled sketches of rural subjects, as a specimen of his abilities. I saw at a glance he was the very individual we were in want of, and after purchasing his specimen drawings there and then, promised him immediate and constant employment. The young fellow I speak of was Birket Foster, whose charming and truthful pictures of English rural scenes have long since been universally admired.

After a while Miller sent to me an old Lincolnshire friend of his who had been, I believe, originally a stocking-weaver, till hard times had made him a chartist agitator, and who had subsequently drifted from advocating chartism into literature. He was then painfully anxious to secure employment, and after we had talked the matter over I entrusted one or two volumes of the new Boy's

Library to him to write. Miller's friend was Thomas Cooper, author of "the Purgatory of Suicides," who had been prosecuted for his political opinions by the whig government—that professed liberal, Serjeant Talfourd, holding the brief against him—and sentenced to two years' imprisonment in Stafford jail, from which he had recently been discharged. The story he used to tell of his incarceration was a pitiful one. Treatment of the harshest kind was then the usual lot of political prisoners. Cooper's food was both coarse and insufficient, while his bedstead consisted of an iron slab resting on two large stones; a bag of straw and a couple of blankets serving by way of bedding.

Through some of the debtors confined in the prison, Cooper secretly obtained pen, ink, and paper, and wrote a petition to the House of Commons, asking that he might have proper food, be privileged to correspond with his wife, and be allowed the use of books and writing materials. This petition was handed to the governor to be given to the visiting justices, by whom it was studiously suppressed. Cooper, however, found means to transmit a letter to Thomas Slingsby Duncombe, the spendthrift radical member for Finsbury, and the recognised friend of all political convicts, apprising him of what he had done. This led to the petition reaching its destination, when the Speaker of the House gravely notified that it was neither right nor constitutional for a petition from a political prisoner to be kept back. The result was that Cooper obtained all he had asked for, and was able to employ his weary prison hours in writing his well-known "Purgatory of Suicides." On his release Serjeant Talfourd, as though ashamed of the part he had played in securing his conviction, made him a handsome present by way of solatium.

It is a far cry from Stafford jail, with its chartist prisoners taking their broken rest on iron slabs, to Cambridge University and its high jinks over Prince Albert's

installation as chancellor in the summer of 1847, which come next in order in these desultory reminiscences. A few days before the event I went down to Cambridge to make some preliminary sketches for the "Illustrated London News," and availed myself of the opportunity to interview the vice-chancellor, who at once flatly refused to afford me any facilities in regard to the forthcoming ceremony; basing his refusal on the circumstance that a few years before, when the queen had visited Cambridge, the paper had published some execrable engravings of the incident. Eventually I succeeded in talking the great man over, and he promised to post me the necessary admissions, but neglected to do so; and when I arrived in Cambridge on the morning of the installation I found Catherine Hall so beset with caps and gowns that there was no chance of obtaining an interview with him.

In this unlooked-for dilemma I determined to apply to Dr. Whewell, the master of Trinity, whose position in the university was scarcely inferior to the vice-chancellor's. Dr. Whewell, of whom it was wittily said that science was his forte and omniscience his foible, was notorious for his bearish ways, and it was only my utter helplessness that induced me to appeal to him. To my very great surprise and delight he proved the pink of courtesy, and, although he was busy with his preparations for receiving the queen and the prince, who, on their arrival, were to alight at Trinity College, he listened to all I had to say, and gave me cards of admission signed by himself to both the college hall and the Senate House. He told me, too, I might have the run of the great hall of his official residence, where all the more distinguished guests would assemble prior to the presentation of the university address to the queen.

What added largely to Dr. Whewell's importance on this occasion was the conspicuous part he had taken in securing Prince Albert's election in teeth of the opposition

of the church party, who pitted Earl Powis against the prince, and canvassed and circularised resident and non-resident university men to an extent that left them no peace. The contest was an exceedingly bitter one, and, though the prince secured a majority, it was not thought sufficiently large for him to accept the proffered dignity offhand. In this dilemma Peel came to the rescue with half-a-dozen specious reasons which satisfied the queen and the prince, and the installation was determined on.

As I had an hour or two before me previous to the queen's arrival, I occupied myself with sketching a few characteristic groups in the college quadrangle—notably the old Duke of Wellington in academical rig tottering along, preceded by the university bedells with shouldered maces, whilst learned professors, masters of arts, and doctors of laws and divinity cheered him vociferously like so many schoolboys; also Sir Robert Peel in his capacious buff waistcoat, the picture of a portly beau, bowing to the Duke of Saxe-Weimar with a grace which the distinguished Turveydrop himself might have envied, but at which Peel's companion, the Bishop of Oxford, only superciliously sneered. Shortly afterwards in the hall of Dr. Whewell's house I amused myself with watching the adulation heaped upon the Duke of Wellington, till evidently wearied with it, he marched slowly up to and leisurely contemplated a replica of Lord Bacon's monument in St. Michael's church, St. Alban's, gazing at it so long and attentively as led one to imagine that he had never seen or heard of the famous sitting statue of the author of the "Novum Organum" before.

After hurrying to the railway station to sketch the arrival of the queen and prince, I returned to Trinity College intent on securing a good place in the great hall where the new chancellor was to read the university address to her majesty. Here I encountered church

dignitaries and university dons struggling perspiringly with meaner mortals to obtain early admission and front places; but on their reaching the last of the barriers, which had been erected to keep off the distinguished crowd, even the blandishments of bishops proved unavailing, and all were ruthlessly turned back. Dr. Whewell's talismanic ticket, however, procured me instant ingress, when I noticed that the large hall was completely vacant, excepting that a couple of college bedells sat motionless as statues opposite to each other at the angles of the recess, where a state chair had been placed on the dais for the queen's use.

I stationed myself near one of these individuals, and soon afterwards some official with a long wand entered from behind the dais, made a hasty inspection, and retired. A few ladies were next introduced by Sir George Grey, and took up the position assigned them. Presently the queen, accompanied by the Duchess of Sutherland and another lady, made her appearance, and then an amusing little scene ensued. The duchess, after glancing inquietly at me (as though wondering what business an individual in ordinary morning dress could possibly have at a swell function of this description) advanced a few paces in front of the queen, and carefully scrutinised her toilette. Then, stepping up to her, she proceeded to smooth back a lock of hair that had strayed from the bandeaux on the royal forehead; next she readjusted the queen's bonnet and its delicate marabout feather, which she fancied had got displaced; and then studiously arranged the royal robe and lace pelerine to her seeming satisfaction, expressing this by approving nods and smiles, while her majesty, apparently pleased with all this concern about her personal appearance, smiled appreciatively in return.

These toilette mysteries over the duchess disappeared, evidently to inform the gentlemen of the suite that they would now be admitted to the dais; the gallery at the

further end of the hall speedily became filled, and the hall doors being thrown open, the new chancellor, with his train-bearers and the Duke of Wellington, a bishop or two, the vice-chancellor and other university officials as his supporters, advanced slowly up to the dais, bowing to the queen at every third or fourth step he took. As the prince drew nearer and the queen and he caught each other's eyes they commenced to smile and soon were unable to resist laughing outright. Likely enough the scene had been already rehearsed between them, but at any rate the ludicrousness of these frequent, if essential genuflexions, was too much for their gravity, in spite of the dignified onlookers and the stateliness of the occasion. After reading the address the prince retired, stepping backwards all the way and making the same profound obeisances as had marked his advance. This gave rise to renewed merriment on the part of the two principal actors in the amusing scene.

Later in the afternoon there was a rush to the Senate House where Mr. Crick, the public orator, delivered an address—obsequiously complimentary of the new chancellor and brimming over with praises of his predecessor—which Thackeray humorously satirised in the ensuing number of "Punch":—

> "About his venerated dust
> Our teardrops tumble thick:
> He was our champion kind and just,
> In him was all our hope and trust—
> (Says Reverend Mr. Crick).
>
> "But, weep and blubber tho' we must
> For this of Dukes the pick,
> We must not cry until we bust;
> Such conduct would inspire disgust—
> (Says Reverend Mr. Crick)."

I saw a good deal of Albert Smith during the ten years between 1842 and 1852, and failed to form the same

favourable opinion of him which his friend, Mr. Edmund Yates, entertained. I first knew him through his contributing various articles to the "Comic Album," a commonplace illustrated annual which my brother and I had started, and in which several "Bon Gaultier ballads" by Theodore Martin originally appeared. Albert Smith was then supposed to practise as a dentist at the dingy-looking house he rented in Percy-street, off Tottenham Court-road, and where, in addition to a skeleton exposed in the hall, no end of trumpery bizarre nick-nacks, picked up by him chiefly during his excursions abroad, were displayed. One of the most striking of these was a small working model of a guillotine, which had the place of honour assigned to it on the mantelpiece of the stuffy back room where Albert in his French *ouvrier's* blouse usually wrote his copy. In these careless days Smith's great delight was to caper at some masked ball in the guise of a Gavarni *débardeur*, or a booted and bewigged French postilion, dancing energetically till daylight with some fourth rate actress of whom he had become temporarily enamoured.

After the "Adventures of Mr. Ledbury," it was his three or four little volumes of social types that brought Albert Smith prominently into notice. And yet anyone who now-a-days glances at "the Gent" will be amazed at the phenomenal success which this and other *brochures* of the "Social Zoologies" series met with on their first publication. The sketch is without a particle of wit, and its sole merit seems to have consisted in opportunely satirising, in commonplace fashion, a current popular nuisance. Some portions of "the Gent" had originally appeared in "Punch" and "Bentley's Miscellany," and these with many corrections and additions were handed to me by Mr. Bogue to get set up in type. Crowquill commenced illustrating the book, but the few drawings he made possessed even less point than the text which they

were intended to enliven, and a more humorous pencil had to be sought for.

This was extremely awkward, as no suitable artist appeared to be available. Leech's engagement on "Punch" precluded him from illustrating the book. Phiz declined the task, and George Cruikshank considered it beneath his notice. The subject was not in Kenny Meadow's line, and Archibald Henning, whose pencil had been running riot in Baron Nicholson's "Town," was thought altogether too vulgar. Things were therefore at a dead lock. Bogue, who had long since paid Albert Smith for the "copy," offered to sacrifice the amount to be relieved of the book. Smith was unwilling to incur any risk, and "the Gent" was then offered to my brother and me on condition of our foregoing payment of the preliminary printing bill. As we foolishly declined it, the illustrations were given to Henning to complete, and then, as often happens, the unexpected came about. "The Gent" as soon as published leapt into a stupendous success, to the great surprise of everyone connected with it.

The ten thousand copies which had been printed were speedily disposed of, and edition followed edition with a similar result. Nearly a thousand pounds must have been made out of this trumpery *brochure*, the sale of which was so great as to justify first editions of—I dare not trust myself to say how many thousand copies of the more popular succeeding volumes of the series. Each of them comprised something like a hundred pages of a size that could almost be squeezed into the waistcoat pocket, and the price was a shilling! To-day publishers give double this quantity of paper and print for a quarter of the money. Quite a small fortune must have been made out of these wretched little books. While their publication was in progress, at Mr. Bogue's request I applied to Mr. Thackeray (with whom I was then in close intercourse,

and a single chapter of whose "Snob papers" contained more wit than any half-dozen of Albert Smith's and Angus Reach's "Physiologies,") to write as many volumes as he chose to undertake at the price of one hundred guineas each. This being double the amount Thackeray was then receiving for a monthly part of "Vanity Fair" (including the etching of a couple of plates), he frankly admitted that the offer was a tempting one, but he eventually declined it, by reason of his strong disinclination to ally himself with anything that Albert Smith was connected with.

Thackeray, who had an abhorrence of things vulgar, found Smith's *mauvais goût* more than he could stand. When brought into contact with him he treated him with contemptuous toleration, showing him outward civility, but the occasional sarcastic observations which he permitted to escape him, disclosed his true sentiments respecting Albert's mountebank ways. Subsequently, when I offered Thackeray, on the part of Messrs. Smith & Elder, a thousand pounds to write a novel for them, he at once accepted the commission, and the result was "Esmond,"[1]

[1] After the publishers had been informed that their offer was accepted, Mr. George Smith seems to have called on Mr. Thackeray to conclude the transaction, for it is evidently to "Esmond" that Mrs. Ritchie refers in the following extract :—

"My father was hard at work finishing a book which some people still say is the best of all his books. People read it then, when it came out, and read it still, and re-read it. He used to write in his study with the vine shading the two windows, and we used to do our lessons, or sit sewing and reading in the front room with the bow-window to the street; and one day, as we were there with our governess, my father came in, in great excitement. 'There 's a young fellow just come,' said he; 'he has brought a thousand pounds in his pocket; he has made me an offer for my book, it 's the most spirited, handsome offer, I scarcely like to take him at his word; he 's hardly more than a boy, his name is George Smith; he is waiting there now, and I must go back;' and then, after walking once up and down the room, my father went away."

The foregoing suggests a single observation. Although Mr. Thackeray was undoubtedly a generous-minded man, he was not in the habit, after the success he had achieved with "Vanity Fair," of setting less than a publisher's value upon his literary labours. And certainly when I proposed to him the by no means exorbitant sum of a thousand pounds, he never for one moment suggested that the amount was excessive.

not published, I think, till two or three years afterwards. The publishers, who had expected that the work would relate to modern times, were in the first instance disappointed; but I subsequently learned from Mr. Smith Williams, their literary adviser, that the immediate success of "Esmond" had so far exceeded their expectations, that a cheque for two hundred and fifty pounds beyond the sum agreed upon had been handed to Mr. Thackeray; and yet Anthony Trollope records in his "Memoir," that Thackeray complained to him that people didn't read the book.

Until the unforeseen success of the three or four little volumes which comprised his contribution to the series of "Social Zoologies," Albert Smith had always been in the habit of proclaiming that he "didn't believe in his own, but in other people's;" meaning by this that he preferred others and not himself should be at the expense of wafting him upwards on the wings of fame. He had already managed to get his name well before the public by incessantly fighting against the system of anonymity, and by carefully republishing every available scrap of his contributions to "Punch" and other periodicals under his own name. He stipulated, too, that in all advertisements and posters relating to his theatrical or other productions, the words "Albert Smith" should form a prominent line. Rule, whose oyster shop in Maiden-lane was patronised by many popular literary men of the time, amusingly summed up the difference which, according to his lights, existed between Charles Dickens and Albert Smith. "You see," Rule used to say in an authoritative fashion, "with Charles Dickens it 's all talent and very little tac' [tact], but with Albert it 's just the opposite—all tac' and very little talent."

What largely conduced to the ill favour with which Smith was regarded by many literary men of the time,

were the imbecile canons of taste in literature and art which he so persistently enunciated, and though the idolaters of culture pretended to smile at his ignorance, they were none the less irritated at his huge self-conceit. It was a pet dogma of his that Shakspeare was ludicrously overrated, and that high art was all "rot," and he thought to set the world right on both these points by persistent though feeble efforts at ridicule. Indeed, until he had made his great success as a showman, he never ceased harping on the one over-strained string.

Few of Smith's associates could stand his noisy self-assertion and boisterous behaviour. After his "entertainments" had made him a celebrity, and he had the opportunity of consorting with swells, he certainly acquired a varnish of politeness, but prior to this he retained for the most part his old medical student manners, which were not rendered any the more bearable by his unpleasant falsetto voice. When addressing Leech he was in the habit of always calling him "Jack," until one day Douglas Jerrold quietly observed, "How long is it necessary to know you, Leech, before one is privileged to call you Jack?" Pigmy as Jerrold physically was Albert Smith quailed before him, and Jerrold's stinging repartee—when Albert, smarting under one of his remarks, coaxingly reminded him that they both rowed in the same boat—*i.e.*, "Punch"—"Yes, but not with the same sculls," is a matter of ancient history. Jerrold indulged in another spiteful jest at Albert Smith's expense when, observing the initials A.S. at the foot of one of his magazine articles, he remarked that the signature conveyed only two-thirds of the truth.

On one occasion when an application had been made to Jerrold to contribute to a publication called "Gavarni in London," of which Smith was editor, he declined in such offensive language that Smith's friends were sorely perplexed as to the way it could best be resented. Albert on

his part, pretending that it would be downright cruelty to inflict personal chastisement on a feeble mite of a man like Jerrold, purchased a penny toy-whip which he carried about with him and exhibited everywhere, boasting that he intended whipping little Master Jerrold at the first opportunity. The joke was but a ghastly one, for everyone had noticed how cowed Smith always was in Jerrold's presence, and knew, moreover, that he lacked the courage to carry out his harmless threat; whereas Jerrold openly braved him and never let an opportunity slip of jesting spitefully at his expense. After Albert Smith's unquestionable success with his entertainments, Jerrold and he became reconciled—in the common fashion of literary men who had once striven their best to say the bitterest things of each other—and henceforth Smith enjoyed immunity from Jerrold's spiteful tongue.

Albert Smith made his *début* as a lecturer with the "Overland Mail," and this proved sufficiently successful for him to decide upon following it up with the "Ascent of Mont Blanc;" which had, however, to be first of all ascended. Hodder records in his "Memories of my time," "that when Smith told him he was off the next morning to Chamouni, and meant to make the ascent of Mont Blanc in a day or two," he observed that it was "a bold thing for a man to do who had not been in training," and that Smith rejoined, "Pluck will serve me instead of training." Pluck, however, did no such thing, for according to the gossip current at Chamouni at the time, Smith was so dead-beat towards the end of the ascent, that he was unable to proceed any further. As it was essential, however, that he should be able to proclaim that he had reached the summit, the only course was to carry him up there, and this, his stalwart guides somehow or other managed to accomplish between them. Ill-natured people did not scruple to say that the adventurous author was carried up to the

summit of the mountain in one of the big provision baskets.

Credence was given to the story from Smith's continually flourishing in the eyes of his friends a certificate of his having made the ascent, which his guides had supplied him with. Experienced mountaineers maintained that the feat was far from so formidable as to need such a document to authenticate the achievement; and it was suggested that the guides had been "tipped" to give it, to enable Smith to silence any unpleasant rumours that might get abroad respecting the precise method in which the crowning stage of the ascent had been accomplished.

When Albert had decided upon announcing the Mont Blanc lecture, he sketched out a rude idea for a showcard of the entertainment, and brought it to me to get it redrawn for him in more artistic fashion. In this sketch his own name figured twice as large as the words "Mont Blanc," but as the latter had long been dubbed "the monarch of mountains," I suggested to the artist the propriety of reducing the dimensions of Smith's name and increasing those of the line, "Mont Blanc." The suggestion was acted upon, and an effective "nocturne," as Mr. Whistler would phrase it, in blue and silver, was produced, but evidently not to Smith's taste, for he angrily expressed his dissatisfaction. As I very innocently failed to see what he could possibly have to complain of, the annoyance he felt was all the greater when it became necessary for him to explain, that he considered his own name of far greater importance than the subject-matter of his lecture.

Albert Smith was unquestionably an admirable *raconteur*, and, in spite of his cracked voice, had the rare art of rendering even the poorest stuff amusing. For the smarter passages in his lecture, he was understood to be indebted to Sala, Robert Brough, and other young fellows who were then glad to pick up a few sovereigns for a peck of

jokes. The public flocked to the Egyptian Hall, and Smith began coining money fast. Before long some of the lucky lecturer's less fortunate literary associates at painfully hard-up moments—there were real bohemians among the fraternity in those days, altogether different to the sham race which prates so glibly of its gypsy doings in these more comfortable times—sought to borrow small sums of money from him. Albert, however, was equal to the occasion, and had a lithographic circular prepared, embodying the trite remark that

> "—— loan oft loses both itself and friend,"

and sent this in reply to his importuning correspondents, who realized the truth of the old adage that blood was not to be extracted from a stone.

Smith played off a grim jest on some of his more intimate friends, to whom in moments of confidence he imparted that he had not forgotten them in his will. He, moreover, dropped hints to the same effect with regard to other friends, very well knowing these would certainly be conveyed to them. By this means he managed to gather about him a knot of sycophants who trumpeted his praises from the house-tops. At his death, however, all these expectant legatees were doomed to disappointment, for to none of them did he bequeath so much as a penny-piece.

XVII.

(1848.)

"PASQUIN" AND THE "PUPPET SHOW"—JENKINS OF THE "POST"—JAMES HANNAY—THE CHARTISTS AND THE SPECIAL CONSTABLE CRAZE—HARE-BRAINED WILLIAM NORTH—GAVARNI—A MASTER-STROKE IN WORTHLESS PAPER.

THE great success which "Punch" had attained to in 1847-8 produced a crop of imitators, among which were "the Man in the Moon," "Puck," "Pasquin," "the Spark," "Diogenes," etc., and early in 1848 my brother and I started the "Puppet Show," which, as the first number chanced to make its appearance just after the French revolution of February, leapt at once into temporary success. Humorous authors of an original turn were exceedingly rare in those days, and we thought ourselves lucky in securing the co-operation of two smart young writers just out of their teens, James Hannay and Sutherland Edwards, who between them had written the eight or ten numbers of "Pasquin," a clever and exceedingly pungent satirical journal, which after a transitory existence, had either frightened by its brutal boldness, or tired out with its weekly losses, the timid capitalist who financed the speculation.

Hannay was then a shock-headed young fellow of twenty, who, after a brief spell in her majesty's navy, had retired from the service, written a clever little book called "Biscuits and Grog," and been for a while on the staff of the "Morning Chronicle" newspaper. He had parted

with the proprietors of that moribund "daily" on the reverse of friendly terms, and attacked the paper ruthlessly in "Pasquin" as long as this smartly-written publication lasted.

Another favourite butt for Hannay's savage satire was Rumsey Forster—the Jenkins of the "Morning," or, as Hannay dubbed it, the "Fawning Post"—who had supplanted the *ci-devant* midshipman in the affections of some pretty barmaid at a London tavern which they both frequented. Forster was most energetic in his particular calling, and is said on one occasion to have obtained admission, in the interests of the "Morning Post," to a Waterloo banquet at Apsley House, by getting himself up as one of the extra servants out of livery, called in to assist on these occasions. He was highly indignant with Thackeray for the way in which he persistently ridiculed him in "Punch" under the cognomen of Jenkins; and I remember, after the author of "Vanity Fair" had become a celebrity, and began to be invited by other wearers of purple and fine linen, besides Lord Carlisle, to their aristocratic *soirées*, being highly amused by Forster telling me how he had taken his revenge.

"You should know, sir," he said solemnly, "that at Stafford House, Lady Palmerston's, and the other swell places, a little table is set for me just outside the drawing-room doors, where I take down the names of the company as these are announced by the attendant footmen. Well, Mr. Thackeray was at the Marquis of Lansdowne's the other evening, and his name was called out as customary; nevertheless, I took very good care that it should not appear in the list of the company at Lansdowne House, given in the 'Post.' A night or two afterwards I was at Lord John Russell's, and Mr. Thackeray's name was again announced, and again I designedly neglected to write it down; whereupon the author of 'the Snobs of England,'

of all persons in the world"—[it must be candidly confessed Thackeray was himself a bit of a tuft-hunter]—"bowed, and bending over me, said: 'Mr. Thackeray;' to which I replied: 'Yes, sir, I am quite aware;' nevertheless the great Mr. Thackeray's name did not appear in the 'Post' the following morning."

Another anecdote of Rumsey Forster may here be noted. On the occasion of one of my trips to Paris I was invited to dine with a small party, of which Forster formed one, at the Trois Frères. It was our host's first visit to the French capital, where he had come to spend a week with a hundred pounds in his pocket, and required some assistance in getting rid of the amount. While the dinner was being served one of the waiters persistently left the room door open, to the evident annoyance of Forster, who was sitting near to it. The latter knew only a few words of French, but fancied he knew sufficient for the occasion. So, waving his hand in rather an imperious manner, and unintentionally transposing a phrase he had often heard used, and thought he had pat upon his tongue, he said to the offending waiter, "Garçon, *portez la ferme!* s'il vous plait." The garçon, of course, stared amazed, and we diners, I am sorry to say, were all rude enough to roar with laughter.

One unlucky incident in Forster's career formed the subject of some savage satirical lines in an early number of "Pasquin." When the prince consort contemplated purchasing Osborne House he crossed over to the Isle of Wight one day in the royal yacht, accompanied by a few gentlemen of his suite. On the return journey the prince noticed on deck a gentleman standing some little distance from him whom he failed to recognise, and he asked one of the suite who it was. The latter had to admit his ignorance, but at once stepped up to the stranger and inquired his name, whereupon Forster produced his card, on which

his calling, "fashionable reporter of the 'Morning Post,'" was duly inscribed. The gentleman returned to the prince, and an earnest colloquy ensued, after which he came a second time to Forster, and gravely lectured him on the very great liberty he had taken in obtruding himself on the prince's privacy. It was impossible, he observed, that he could be allowed to remain, and he was therefore requested to at once take his place in the small boat which the yacht was towing at its stern.

Having been tumbled into this by some of the crew on the pretence of rendering him assistance, Forster, owing to the swell that chanced to be on, speedily found himself completely drenched. It was low water when the yacht neared Portsmouth, and a couple of sailors were ordered to cast the boat off and put its occupant ashore, a commission which they executed by landing him in the soft mud, through which, to the great amusement of those on board the yacht, he had to wade up to his knees for half a mile or more before he reached firm ground. In "Pasquin" Hannay, after a preliminary onslaught on his luckless rival, touched upon the Osborne incident in his usual biting style :—

"Some lingering traces of ancestral evil
Fired his ambition to turn printer's devil ;[1]
In this succeeding, see his views extend—
How fast weeds sprout !—he 's next the flunkey's friend,
At every pot-house where the menials meet
Exchanging all the scandal of the street ;
A dirty barter fitted to degrade
Where falsehood forms the staple of the trade,
Where lies are currency, and no men fear
To vend their baseness for a pot of beer.
Our Mudlark, like the owl at night, would fly
With long-stretched ears to catch the passing lie,
Would greet the butler with a friendly hand
(The coryphœus of the servile band),

[1] Forster had been an apprentice in my father's printing office.

Nod to the footman, with the groom beguile
The passing hour, and on the shoeblack smile.
The freshest scandal culled, away he 'd steal
To shoot the rubbish and secure his meal.

* * * * * *

"Once on a time when England's gentle queen
Wearied with councils, sought a calmer scene,
The royal yacht stole softly through the water
As erst fair Cleopatra's, beauty's daughter.

* * * * * *

"Prince Albert smoked his meerschaum as they flew,
And many a jest regaled the merry crew;
But what is this that taints the ambient air?
Lurks there corruption in a scene so fair?

* * * * * *

"So here the caitiff stealthily had fled
(Liners[1] rush in where premiers fear to tread).
As cobwebs clustering in some favourite room
Fly at the touch of active housemaid's broom,
As weeds are rooted out from each fair spot
And left on dunghill lingeringly to rot,
Just so the wretch was hurled into the flood,
And left to wallow in congenial mud;
Smeared o'er with filth he struggled to the shore,
And gained his safe obscurity once more.
Such the adventure whence he drew his fame,
And gained a ducking and a Mudlark's name."

In this juvenile production there are ample evidences of that trenchant style which characterised all Hannay's subsequent writings, whether these took the shape of satirical effusions, literary or political essays, commentaries on the classics, or naval stories and sketches. Hannay was, moreover, an exceedingly ready and effective speaker, although somewhat inclined to ponderosity, and I remember with what delight we used to pit him against the youthful legal luminaries who, in landlord Dolamore's days, were among the evening frequenters of the Old Cheshire Cheese smoking-room. Spouting was a positive

[1] Penny-a-liners.

passion with Hannay, and at this period nothing delighted him better than airing his budding oratory at the neighbouring Cogers' Hall.

Prominent among the Cheshire Cheese smoking-room *habitués* was the elder brother of Sir Henry James, the distinguished advocate who was at that time content to plead for a two-guinea fee in the Lord Mayor's Court, while his more fortunate brother enjoyed the snug berth of a county court treasurer, or registrar, at something like a thousand a-year. The latter's weakness was a too great partiality for Dolamore's magnums of old port, and when he had primed himself with this potent liquor he became exceedingly disputatious and dogmatical, and pompously expounded his views on questions of the day in such a cock-sure fashion as would have caused Macaulay himself to blink. He was the Cheshire Cheese Sir Oracle, and when he oped his mouth few dogs dared bark.

Hannay was, however, a match for him. The ex-middy's reading was extensive, and after a few vigorous satirical observations, usually unpleasantly personal, Hannay would ridicule the views enunciated by his opponent, and by the aid of his singularly retentive memory would roll off some diatribe, more or less germain to the subject, cribbed from his favourite authors—Junius, Johnson, Swift, Churchill, or Carlyle—and so perplex the county court treasurer as to cause him to retire from the discussion querulous and crestfallen.

Hannay had one amiable weakness. He had all that love of genealogy which characterised the Scot in the past, and was for ever fond of expatiating on the depths of the roots and the stalwartness of the trunk of the family genealogical tree, thereby boring his bohemian brethren immensely. They readily enough recognised his power of invective and his ability to quote from Junius by the hour, but, like Tennyson's grand old gardener, they smiled

at his claims to long descent. "Blood and culture" was Hannay's motto, and the trading and lower classes—the "plebs," as he always disdainfully termed them—were objects of his supreme contempt. Political agitators of every description he abhorred, sardonically maintaining that Carlyle's whiff of grape-shot was your true panacea for disaffection.

It will be gathered from this that, besides being an ardent worshipper of Carlyle from a literary point of view, Hannay found the latter's autocratic ideas in matters political much to his own taste. He was not only well read in Carlyle's works, but had carefully studied his style and was fond of parodying it in the comic papers at every available opportunity. In course of time the sage and his disciple got to know one another, and Hannay made frequent pilgrimages to Chelsea to drink in Carlyle's perennial flow of talk. On one of these occasions he took me with him to gratify my curiosity with a sight of the Craigenputtock Diogenes. Mrs. Carlyle was away in Scotland, and Carlyle was in one of his unamiable moods. He, however, consented to see us, although he gave us only a cold welcome. He was slovenly dressed in a shabby old dressing-gown, and one was struck by his general unkempt appearance and wearied look, and especially by the little inclination he showed to talk. All Hannay's attempts to "draw" him temporarily failed, but after a while Carlyle invited us to smoke, and under the soothing influence of tobacco from a long "churchwarden," and flattery cautiously administered, his tongue loosened and an oracular outburst ensued.

Presently the conversation turned on Thackeray having recently taken to lecturing, and Carlyle inveighed in his habitual loud way against the growing habit of literary men making a public show of themselves. Years ago he said, referring to the amateur performances of Dickens and

others, they strutted as stage buffoons, and now they went about exhibiting themselves to a lot of inquisitive people who were too lazy to read what they paid their shillings to listen to. He railed against bringing in the comic actor element—the mimicking the voice and gesture of the characters to heighten the effect of the humorous passages; all such stage trickeries, he angrily said, were beneath the dignity of the literary calling. He tempered his denunciations with only a single gleam of indirect approval when he remarked that Thackeray's histrionic deficiencies told somewhat in his favour; still he insisted that these shilling shows should be left to stage players, or such born mountebanks as Albert Smith.

A short time before the starting of the "Puppet Show" Gavarni, the clever pictorial satirist of Parisian life, came to England to escape incarceration in the debtor's prison at Clichy; and he designed for us a figure of the showman with his company of puppets for the first number of the new publication which had been announced in rather a novel style of prospectus:—

> "Puppet Show: a pungent penny pictorial periodical, polishes popular politicians politely, punishes peevish prattling persons preaching pattern progress principles, pooh-poohs pompous presuming purse proud parvenus, puts-down paltry prolix publications, patronises playhouses pulling pointless performances to pieces, and publishes piquant pictures, playful puns, priceless poems, pleasing prose, popular parodies and political pasquinades. Princes, peers and policemen, poets, players and paupers, patriots, philanthropists, and puffed-up pretenders purchase the Puppet Show."[1]

Besides Hannay and Sutherland Edwards, the "Puppet Show" staff at one time or another included John Bridgeman who acted as editor; Shirley Brooks, then a young lawyer who found the penning of jocular prose and verse more pleasant and profitable than poring over Black-

[1] The publishing office in Wellington-street was the same that Dickens fixed on a few years afterwards for "All the Year Round."

stone and Coke upon Littleton, and afterwards editor of "Punch;" Angus Reach, a gallery reporter for the "Morning Chronicle," and contributor to every publication where he could possibly plant "copy," and who very speedily killed himself by positive overwork; Dr. Mackay, who contributed poems of "the good time coming" order, with which he had made his mark on the "Daily News" during Dickens's editorship; Robert Brough, then a dyspeptic beardless youth freshly arrived from Liverpool; E. Blanchard, subsequently known by his half-hundred pantomimes; William North, who regarded himself as a sort of coming Messiah, but was equally ready to jeer as to preach; and several others. I contributed, I recollect, among other things, some half-a-dozen Tennysonian parodies, including one of "Godiva" as represented by Madame Wharton in silken tights, in a popular *tableau vivant* at a place called "the Walhalla."

Nearly all the "Puppet Show" writers were very young men, and several of them were even under age. Still they had unbounded confidence in their own opinions, and distributed their attacks with charming impartiality all round, though "Punch's" "eminent writers," as they used to be fulsomely styled, received rather more than their fair share of abuse. In a so-called "Literary Derby," for instance, the probable starters were said to be "Mark Lemon's Dulness, by Himself out of His own Head; Douglas Jerrold's Bitterness, by Bad Temper out of Respectability; Albert Smith's Catchpenny, by Tact out of Commonplace; Sterling Coyne's Old Joke, by Scizzors out of Joe Miller; and Horace Mayhew's Bad Pun, by Appropriation out of Anybody." Again, when it became known that the discontinuance of Jerrold's "Shilling Magazine" was imminent, the opening stanzas of Burger's "Leonora" were thus parodied for the occasion:—

"The Douglas at the blush of day
From his tenth tumbler started—
'My magazine, 'tis said, don't pay,
Success from it has parted.
I've puffed it long with all my might,
And yet it's in an awful plight;
It cometh out unheeded,
And each month less is needed.'

* * * * *

"And up and down amid the crew
Who with him had been drinking
The heated Douglas madly flew,
And on his journal thinking,
He sought relief, but found none there;
And then he tore his turnip hair,
To earth his carcass flinging,
The bell in fury ringing."

In 1848, the same as forty years afterwards, the right of a mob to assemble in Trafalgar-square, was energetically contested by the authorities of the day. This will, perhaps, be news to Mr. John Burns and Mr. Cunninghame-Graham, who seem to have conceived that they were contesting for a liberty formerly enjoyed by the London roughs, whereas the "Puppet Show" tells us that—

"When a mob is convened in Trafalgar Square
It soon is dispersed when the Peelers appear;
Like the sprigs of a birch broom they quickly, quickly
Sweep all the place and the thoroughfares clear.
Letters and numbers their necks disclose,
But on their staves they count more than those;
Press them—distress them—with bruises, their use is
To answer and fell you beneath their blows."

There are plenty of people who remember the panic prevailing at this period; how the government in a state of funk at the proposed great chartist meeting on Kennington-common, went through the farce of having between one and two hundred thousand special constables sworn in; how troops and artillery were stealthily marched at dead of

night to the neighbourhood of the various bridges, and hidden away in inn yards and other enclosed places; and how the Bank of England and all the public offices were fortified and strongly garrisoned, and the clerks had lethal weapons distributed to them. Shopkeepers in the main thoroughfares, taking alarm at rumours of these military preparations, closed their shops and nervously awaited the course of events. Many timid people remained indoors in the full belief that grape shot would be sweeping the streets before the day was over, and that there would be a general conflagration at night time; and all this because some twenty thousand men were demonstrating in theatrical fashion with triumphal cars and seditious banners, and trundling a monster petition about, on a suburban common.

The chartists had certainly indulged in a good deal of tall talk about marching in a body with their petition and its pretended six millions of signatures—the larger portion of which, by the way, were fraudulent—to the House of Commons; but stalwart carrotty-haired Feargus O'Connor, who claimed descent from the wild kings of Connaught, but whom O'Connell contemptuously nicknamed "Burly Balderdash," seems to have thought better of it when he learnt that the chief police commissioner was in attendance at the neighbouring Horns tavern. The presence of this functionary in his unpretending blue uniform was quite sufficient to overawe the malcontents, without recourse being had to a hundred thousand special constables and a large military force; and the chartist leader, after communications had passed between him and this dreaded official, prudently decided upon conveying the many rolls of the so-called national petition to the House in and outside a four-wheel cab, unaccompanied by the smallest escort.

When the vehicle rolled into Palace-yard without so much as a pikehead poking out of the windows, the

members of the government breathed freely again, and the troops of specials and their anxious wives and mothers all rejoiced at the good tidings which travelled apace. It was amusing to note how the very people who had been almost prostrated with terror in the morning plucked up courage and laughed at what they described as their neighbours' fears; pretending that they themselves had never for a moment believed there was reason for apprehending the faintest danger. The fact was, as in other instances of great popular excitement, the timid, well-to-do classes, greatly magnified the peril of the situation, and as a consequence the existing generation fancies it to have been far more serious than it really was.

To counteract the disturbing influence of the various continental revolutions the government hurriedly passed an act, making the open advocacy of republican opinions felony. Political meetings, however, continued to be held and plenty of strong language was used, at which sensible people only smiled, though the authorities certainly lost their heads over it. The result was that Ernest Jones and other chartists were put upon their trial, and Jones was sentenced to a couple of years' imprisonment, of which a portion was ordered to be solitary confinement.

"For the first nineteen months," ran Jones's subsequent piteous complaint, "I was without books, pen, ink, or paper, besides being locked up for a fortnight in a dark cell on bread and water, during the height of the cholera in 1849. I was allowed to exchange a letter with my wife only four times a year, and to see her only four times during this period in presence of a turnkey. When I once wrote to Sir George Grey, I was not allowed to write to my wife; when I once saw several members of Parliament I was not allowed to see my wife that quarter. . . . My day cell had unglazed windows all the winter through; my night cell had a grating a foot and a half square, opening

at once on the air. I wrote by stealth, 'The New World' and a number of minor pieces, and having no ink I chiefly wrote," poor Jones melodramatically adds, "with my blood."

What, one may here ask, have those Irish M.P.s who were constantly bullying Mr. Secretary Matthews, whenever one of the accomplices of the despicable Phœnix-park assassins happened to catch cold, to say to this?

The much-abused Ernest Jones was simply a political enthusiast in advance of his time, whose sincerity can scarcely be questioned. He made important pecuniary and social sacrifices for the cause he had espoused. His father was a major in the army, and equerry to the unpopular Duke of Cumberland, after whom Ernest Jones was named. When a youth Jones ran away from home to join the Poles, but was overtaken and brought back again to be well lectured by the duke's equerry, who considered his position compromised by this radical escapade. For a time Jones's liberal tendencies were controlled by his aristocratic surroundings, he having been presented to the queen by the Duke of Beaufort a few years before he joined the chartist movement.

Ernest Jones's prison lot was certainly a hard one, but the punishment meted out to his ignorant associates was still more severe. Learning from the newspapers that national workshops were in full swing in Paris, they foolishly hoped that plenty of frothy talk would have the effect of securing them double pay for half the usual quantity of labour, their notions of political economy being based on the belief, as some one amusingly put it, that entire communities might manage to exist by the simple process of taking in each other's washing.

I well remember the nervous inquietude of the well-to-do middle-classes at the time when the half-witted Cuffey and his accomplices were put upon their trial on

the portentous charge of conspiring "to levy war against our sovereign lady the queen, her crown, and dignity." Most of those who had succeeded in obtaining admission to the court looked half-scared. None dared express an opinion favourable to the accused, for the mistrust seemed to be general. There were three judges to try the prisoners, and Parry, Ballantine, Huddlestone, and other famous criminal counsel, including Kenealy, who obtained such notoriety in the Tichborne affair, conducted the defence. The judges' bearing, spite of an affected impartiality, was studiously unfavourable to the accused. On the jury entering the box, counsel pertinaceously but futilely claimed the right to question them with a view to challenging them if their answers were unsatisfactory, and crazy Cuffey clamoured to be tried by his peers, according to the principles of Magna Charta. Then the attorney-general, Sir John Jervis, droned through his opening speech, and the informer gave his evidence.

Nervous jurymen, calling up visions of the sacking of their shops, and swayed by observations from the bench, found all the prisoners guilty, when the Court, after glibly expatiating in conventional style on the blessings of the constitution under which we had the happiness to live, and severely upbraiding Cuffey and the rest for plotting the destruction of a peaceful city, the slaughter of innocent citizens, and the taking possession of the government by force and bloodshed, passed sentence of transportation for life on all the prisoners, in no one instance—not even that of Dowling, the young Irish portrait painter—tempering justice with mercy.

To the few who sympathised with the accused, the proceedings seemed almost a burlesque of that pure administration of justice of which we contentedly boast, and to lookers-on, who had not taken leave of their senses, the exhibition was a somewhat melancholy one.

All that was proved against the accused was that they had indulged in a ridiculous travesty of a conspiracy against the State. They had been captured by the police at a well-known public-house, to which, egged on by the customary government spies who swarmed at all these political gatherings, some few had come wearing tin breast-plates under their fustian waistcoats, and armed with rusty pistols that would not go off, stage daggers that would scarcely have pierced a batter pudding, unmounted pike-heads, and other useless warlike implements. The whole affair was in fact a carefully prepared trap, into which the shallow-pated Cuffey and his fatuous fellow-conspirators complacently fell.

To return, however, to the "Puppet Show." Among its later contributors was one whom most of his *confrères* looked upon as more fitted for Bedlam than to be left to roam at large down Fleet-street and the Strand. This was William North, who in addition to joking on topics of the day, indulged in savage diatribes against the existing condition of society. Being possessed of some private means, he had these jeremiads put into print at his own expense, but they speedily found their way to the omnivorous butterman or trunkmaker.

North entertained certain mystical opinions respecting the coming regeneration of mankind, in which he was to be an important factor; but in spite of his great self-conceit, he eventually realised that his preaching only fell upon deaf ears. Disgusted with the indifference of the old world, he buoyed himself up with the insane belief that a favourable reception would be accorded to his ideas in the new, and he thereupon packed up his portmanteau and crossed the Atlantic.

Arrived at New York, he at once proclaimed the age of "believe and live," as he termed it, to be past, and that to "comprehend and know" was the business of the future.

"The Voice of the Young World," wrote he, "must be announced in thunder . . . thousands of light infantry in the shape of prospectuses and pamphlets must traverse the civilised globe, telling of the inauguration of a new system which invites universal correspondence, shrinks before no peril, and must and will and shall prevail." The young world, however, instead of thundering forth as invited, remained mute, and as the New Yorkers only laughed at the lunatic seer, the poor fellow in his despair put a bullet into his skull when perambulating Broadway one evening; and his bleeding corpse lay stretched upon the pavement, scaring passers-by, until borne away by the police.

Two or three months before the Paris revolution of 1848 Gavarni, as already mentioned, came to England. He brought with him a letter of introduction from the Duc de Montpensier to Prince Albert, who received him at Windsor with his accustomed courtesy, and thereby ensured him an entrance into the best English society. Gavarni, however, did not care to profit by the opportunities offered him, partly by reason of his impecunious position, but chiefly because he sensibly enough understood that English aristocratic patronage was hardly likely to be extended to an artist who had depicted the inner life of the Parisian *lorette*, and whose forte was social satire. The "Punch" set I believe invited him to a dinner, and Thackeray I know called upon him and tried to enter into cordial relations with him, but all to no purpose; Gavarni received these and other advances with studied coldness.

The cynical delineator of the shady side of Parisian life was glad enough, however, to accept temporary employment upon the "Illustrated London News," and to undertake a work which my brother, who was a great friend of his, schemed out, and prevailed upon Bogue, the publisher, to embark in, called "Gavarni in London." The publication

met with indifferent success. Gavarni's drawings had too much of a French character about them, besides which Thackeray and others, who had originally promised to contribute to the work, drew back, not so much because they were piqued at Gavarni's morose behaviour, but from the strong objections they had to writing for any publication edited by Albert Smith. Of the various London types, which every pains were taken to make Gavarni acquainted with, the artist regarded the coal heaver as by far the most interesting and picturesque; and he spent days in riverside "publics," off which the coal barges then lay, studying the manners and customs of their grimy frequenters.

In the early months of his sojourn over here Gavarni lodged, like Cham had done, in Salisbury-square, Fleet-street, and day after day the whilom *blasé habitué* of Véry's, Véfour's, and the Trois Frères Provençaux, unregretful of their choice *cuisine* and *grandes caves*, would betake himself to the one o'clock ordinary at the humble Barley Mow, there to feed off English roast leg of mutton, and swill English porter out of the homely pewter. He had lived an exceedingly fast life in Paris, not only recklessly spending the large sums of money he received from the "Charivari" and other publications, and from aristocratic patrons for drawings commissioned by them, but getting deeply and hopelessly into debt.

A story used to be told of one of Gavarni's largest creditors who had long had an unsatisfied judgment against him, inviting him to a supper at a swell Parisian restaurant, and keeping the entertainment going till early morn, so that the artist might be legally arrested after sunrise by a couple of bailiffs whom the creditor had lying in wait the night through. The result was that Gavarni had to undergo a long term of enforced seclusion in the debtor's prison at Clichy.

Late in life the reformed rake married, and spent much

of his time in dreaming over certain plans that had long been revolving in his active brain for propelling balloons through the air, for, besides being a great artist, Gavarni was a clever civil engineer, having been originally educated for that profession; and in devising a new mathematical system which he fondly believed would supplant algebra. In this way the once petted artist, the former *habitué* of *coulisses* and the caustic satirist of the quartier Bréda mainly spent his later years. Finally he became a perfect misanthrope, shutting himself up in a house he had bought at Auteuil, and wasted a lot of money upon, and refusing to see either friends or strangers who sought to penetrate his austere solitude.

Fillineau, the French commission agent, of whom I have formerly spoken,[1] turned up again in London a little while before the French presidential election, deputed by the Cavaignac party to get as many articles abusive of Louis Napoleon inserted in the London newspapers as bribery could secure. To his great disgust he found the London press far less venal than the Parisian had proved, and he fared even worse with regard to another mission he had been entrusted with, namely, the buying up of a batch of the prince's overdue acceptances. Fillineau complained that, although he had called on all the more notorious jew money-lenders at the west-end, and had offered ten shillings in the pound for the prince's almost worthless paper, he had been unable to secure a single acceptance.

The fact is, some sharper individual had been before Fillineau, and bought up all the promises to pay bearing Louis Napoleon's cramped little signature that were in the hands of London usurers, hoping the speculation might prove a good one—a piece of faith which, though ridiculed at the time, was amply justified by subsequent events.

[1] See *ante*, p. 192.

This individual was none other than M. Achille Fould, the well-known banker, who was afterwards rewarded for his foresight with the post of minister of finance. There is no doubt as to the service he rendered the prince in buying up these acceptances before the Cavaignac party could get hold of them, as their intention was to obtain a judgment, and shut the prince up in the debtor's prison at Clichy, for at this time his impecunious followers could never have scraped sufficient together to pay the amount.

Louis Napoleon had procured the funds for his descent on Boulogne eight years before from a man named Rapallo, who had got hold of some of the exchequer bills which Beaumont Smith forged on so magnificent a scale—approaching half a million sterling—and having succeeded in putting them into circulation, he undertook the financing of the prince's abortive expedition. When Louis Napoleon escaped from Ham he speedily sought the assistance of London money-lenders, but the best of them had for a time lost faith in his star, and this drove him into the arms of some bills of exchange thieves, one of whom he prosecuted for stealing from him a couple of acceptances for £1000 each.

In connection with the French presidential election, I remember, many years afterwards, when Rouher was enthroned vice-emperor of France, hearing Jules Simon tell an amusing story. Like other aspiring politicians anxious as to which direction the wind would blow, Rouher had failed to realize the vitality of the Napoleonic legend, and voted without hesitation for General Cavaignac. When the result of the election became known he was horrified, and complained to Jules Simon that he was a lost man. "And so am I," rejoined Simon, good-humouredly. "Oh, no," said Rouher, "you'll still retain your professor's chair at the Sorbonne, but as for me, I am simply ruined." "In that case, hasten and make your peace with the conqueror," urged Simon.

"Ah, it's easy to say so, but he'd receive me like a dog," suggested Rouher. "Perhaps so on the first occasion," Simon replied, "but at the next interview you'll kiss his hand, and at the third you'll be appointed minister." Unlike other predictions made in jest, this one, as we all know, was actually fulfilled.

The famous year of revolutions gave rise to an abortive attempt to establish a cheap London daily newspaper, published several hours after the other daily papers had made their appearance, in order to crib all their news, and more especially their many expensive telegrams from abroad. The title was "the London Telegraph," and the originator of this brilliant scheme for getting up a daily paper economically was Herbert Ingram, of the "Illustrated London News." It had one novel feature, a feuilleton, after the fashion of continental journals, consisting of a continuous story, "the Pottleton legacy," by Albert Smith. The leading articles, which, in the then disturbed state of Europe, were chiefly on continental politics, were mainly written by the editor, a discarded member of the "Daily News" staff. He had an insane weakness for foreign words, and was especially fond of introducing the word "bureaucracy" into his leaders, much to Ingram's disgust. Indeed, the latter always attributed the failure of the new paper to this fatal editorial habit, plaintively urging that in a single number of "the Telegraph" he had counted the detestable word occurring in leading articles more than twenty times, "which," he bitterly said, "was quite enough to damn any paper, however promising its prospects might have been."

XVIII.

(1849-52).

A FICTITIOUS GOLDFINDER'S DIARY — MULREADY, R.A.— MYSTIFICATION OF A MANAGER—IN THE PRINTING AND PUBLISHING MILL—A MILITARY NIGHT SEARCH— MY CONNECTION WITH "UNCLE TOM'S CABIN."

FOLLOWING upon the chartist scare, and Louis Napoleon's jack-in-the-box-like elevation to power, came the news of the gold discovery in California. It chanced that I had recently been reading Colonel Fremont's narrative of his expedition across the hitherto unexplored far western continent, and the idea occurred to me of writing a fictitious narrative, giving the experiences of a party of immigrants to the new Tom Tiddler's ground, prefaced by a pretended circumstantial account of the first discovery of the precious metal. I broached the matter to Mr. David Bogue, who at once offered to publish the book on the usual half-profit terms, and it was settled that the greatest secrecy was to be observed in regard to the deception about to be practised on a confiding public.

I engaged to have the manuscript complete in a fortnight's time, and determined that it should take the form of a diary, penned by a young M.D., calling himself J. Tyrwhitt Brooks, which I thought looked quite the kind of name likely to disarm suspicion. As I was fully occupied with my regular duties during the daytime, I had to write the work after my arrival home in the evening, and remember that I found the task a much tougher one than I had anticipated.

As the manuscript was written it was taken by me chapter by chapter to different law stationers to be copied out, so that my handwriting might not betray the authorship, and when everything was complete the diary was duly despatched from some place in the country, to which it had been forwarded for transmission to Mr. Bogue, who, after pretending to examine it carefully, sent to ask me to call upon him. Then, in presence of his assistants, he went through the farce of discussing the number of pages the manuscript would run to, how many copies of the volume he would be warranted in printing, and the approximate cost. These points settled, the manuscript was gravely handed over to me, with instructions for it to be printed off as rapidly as possible. In about ten days' time the volume was ready, and the trade gave it an interested welcome, while the reviewers in a body received the impudent imposter, I am grieved to say, with open arms.

In a notice very nearly three columns in length "the Times," which then wielded a power—such as can be hardly realised in these days—of securing the success of any work it reviewed, thus introduced the volume to its readers :—[1]

"Here is a gentleman who knows all about it!—a live Englishman who has set foot in the diggings, has had his hand in the washings, has scratched for the dust till his back ached, has picked up lumps as big as your fist without any labour at all, has made his fortune like a 'stag,'[2] and lost it like a donkey, and in fact gone through a regular Californian experience in less than no time at all. We are by no means sorry to take J. Tyrwhitt Brooks, M.D., by the button for ten minutes, and to hear from his own lips a veritable account of the mystery. Indeed, we need a little of his cooling medicine before the next packet arrives to recover from the excitement occasioned by the extraordinary accounts brought by the last.

"Our medical friend's experience is a perfect febrifuge. We strongly recommend it to all the agitated curates, lawyers' clerks, and bankers'

[1] "The Times," April 11, 1849.

[2] An impecunious speculator in railway scrip.

ditto, who are firmly resolved to throw up civilisation and their hundred a-year next quarter-day, to buy with their poor savings a spade and a cradle, and to set up in another hemisphere upon their own account as dealers in bullion wholesale and for exportation. The close is not a severe one. A very few pages tell the whole business. The doctor was not long, as the title of his volume indicates, in California, but quite long enough to be sickened. He leaves El Dorado as poor as he went thither, and comes away by no means elated by his adventures. He is just the man for us at the present crisis. He shall tell his own tale."

After giving a summary of the contents of the volume, interspersed with extracts, the reviewer proceeded to deduce the moral which this purely imaginary narrative was conceived to supply:—

"Great lawlessness prevailed as newcomers arrived. The party got robbed, and the state of things was such that, as the doctor wrote, 'No man known to be in the possession of much gold dare say when he lays his head down at night that he will ever rise from his pillow.'

"There are sermons in stones, there is a moral in gold, and in this instance there needs little digging and scratching to bring it out. Dr Brooks was on the spot when the glorious tidings of a newly-discovered world came to his ears. Within a few miles of him there was gold enough on the earth's bosom to buy an empire. He stretched forth his hands, and burned his fingers. Reader, why should you journey over sea and mountain, through difficulty, danger, heat, vexation, and trouble to achieve the same foolish and unprofitable purpose?"

Thus moralised "the Times" and the astute "Quarterly Review," in an article on Sunday postal labour, pressed my imaginary narrative into its service in support of the views it was bent on enforcing. It remarked:—

"In a little volume, entitled 'Four Months among the Goldfinders of Alta California,' the author, after describing very graphically the manner in which lawless adventurers from all parts of the world were recklessly, and in many instances murderously engaged in the attainment of gold, says: 'Don Luis was the only one who, on the score of its being Sunday, would not go to the diggings. He had no objection to amuse himself on Sunday, but he would not work. . . . I worked hard, as indeed all the others did, the whole morning.'

"It does not appear," continued the reviewer, "that Dr. Brooks or his

associates felt the slightest remorse at desecrating the Sabbath for the sake of gold, yet in the brief space of three weeks he makes the following remarkable entry in his journal:—

"'*June 25, Sunday.*—We have all of us given over working on Sundays, as we found the toil on six successive days quite hard enough.'

"Thus," chuckled the reviewer, "even in picking up gold, an occupation that had burst the bands of almost all human compacts, one day's rest out of seven was found to be practically necessary. 'The fact is,' preaches J. Tyrwhitt Brooks, M.D., as soon as he became dead tired, 'the human frame will not stand, and was never intended to stand a course of incessant toil; indeed, I believe that in civilized communities the Sabbath bringing round as it does a stated remission from labour is an institution physically necessary.'"

"The Athenæum"[1] placed Dr. J. Tyrwhitt Brooks's pretended diary at the head of a string of publications pertaining to the newly discovered gold fields, and devoted no less than six columns to comments on and extracts from the work, accepting every line of it as veracious. It quoted at length the fictitious narrative of the original discovery of the gold which I had put into the mouth of Captain Sutter, who was, however, a real enough personage himself, prefacing it with an exclamation likely to whet the appetite of the curious. "And now for the story of stories!" Further on, alluding to that portion of the work where I had described the selfishness and distrust which I assumed the possession of large quantities of gold to have developed among the diggers, the reviewer remarked:—

"In brief but terrible touches, Dr. Brooks indicates how the demon greed in its progress hardened the human heart. Though he himself was under its spell, he writes as if unconscious of the cruel and suspicious spirit which it had evidently engendered in his own breast."

I have referred only to the notices of the book in "the Times," "Quarterly Review," and "the Athenæum," as these were the recognised literary authorities of the time.

[1] Feb. 17, 1849.

All the other newspapers and reviews, however, piped to the same tune, and almost a volume might be filled with extracts from these notices. The work I should mention was instantly reprinted in a cheap form on the other side of the Atlantic, where it met with a large sale, and was translated into several foreign languages with the result that for years it held the position of chief authority on the subject. Even Haydn's "Dictionary of Dates" epitomized my account of the gold discovery, and told how this first got noised abroad through the instrumentality of an imaginary wily Kentuckian workman.

To give a certain individuality to Captain Sutter, of whom I knew nothing beyond his name, and his Swiss extraction, and that it was reported he had formerly been an officer of Charles X.'s Swiss guard, I described him as being marked with a scar on the cheek due to a sabre cut given him by one of the Polytechnic youths during the "three glorious days" of July, 1830. Several years afterwards I was greatly amused in reading an account of a visit paid to Captain Sutter by some New Yorker who had accepted my recital as gospel, and had expressed his surprise to the captain at the complete disappearance of the famous scar of which all Europe and the States had heard. This led to an explanation, and to Captain Sutter indignantly repudiating the authenticity of my narrative.

During 1849 I had engraved some designs made by Mulready to illustrate the poems of an early friend of his, and, from this circumstance, was brought into relation with the artist, who was then living in almost melancholy seclusion in his desolate home at Linden-grove, Bayswater. Here he always seemed to be completely absorbed in the pictures he was engaged upon, and the carefully finished chalk studies he was so fond of making from the nude. There was about him none of the Irish sprightliness of the old days when he stood up with the gloves against Gentle-

man Jackson, Byron's pugilistic preceptor, and when Mendoza, the jew bruiser, was his intimate friend. In proof of Mulready's former physical prowess, a story used to be told of his having once captured an armed footpad, who ignorant of his man, accosted him one night, as he was trudging along the then lonely Bayswater road, and called upon him to "stand and deliver!" but who to his great surprise found himself clutched in an iron grasp, and speedily thrust inside the nearest watch-house.

Mulready's early marriage had turned out unhappy, and he certainly gave one the idea of a disappointed man, whose life had been partially wrecked. His conversation was never in the least degree cheerful, and I cannot remember having once seen him smile. I had not known him long before he gave me to understand that he felt his position in regard to his fellow academicians to be far below what he thought it should have been. One day he dejectedly remarked, "Many years ago I was a drawing master, and this is why I am looked down upon to-day by the men of most influence in the Academy." He mentioned, I remember, as though he were a trifle proud of the fact, that Miss Milbanke, afterwards Lady Byron, had been one of his pupils.

I was surprised at Mulready imagining that the circumstance of his having formerly taught drawing, operated to his prejudice in the eyes of his fellow academicians, as J. J. Chalon—who as well as his brother Alfred, the fashionable painter of doll-like portraits for the Books of Beauty of the day, was regarded by Mulready as an influential member of the inner Academy ring—turned drawing master himself, when an attack of paralysis compelled him to lay aside his palette and brushes, while later on the once extolled Alfred, outliving his reputation, mooned about town the ghost of the admired Amphitryon and dandy of old. Mulready used to say that the clique hung together

by constantly feasting each other with good dinners, and thus kept the management of the Academy very much in their own hands. If such was the fact one can quite understand their not caring to admit their lonesome and morose *confrère* into their gay and convivial circle.

Of late years attempts have been made by amiable enthusiasts to magnify the merits of Mulready's early designs for the many children's books he appears to have illustrated, but from the be-praised "Butterfly's ball and Grasshopper's feast" to the illustrations to Lamb's "Tales from Shakspeare," they are all exceedingly poor and commonplace. In the scores of designs where animals are depicted with certain human attributes about them one recognises none of that wonderful character which the French artist, Grandville, imparted to even his slightest productions, nor the faintest suggestion of that quaint humour which Ernest Griset so abundantly displays. In spite of the strong inclination which Mulready as a boy exhibited towards an artistic career, it is quite certain that he only became a great painter by dint of sheer hard work. The son of a breeches-maker in a small Irish town, he had a desperately hard time of it in early life, and did not improve it by marrying, when only eighteen, the sister of Varley, the water-colour artist, to separate permanently from her when there were four hungry little mouths to provide for.

Mulready used to tell an amusing anecdote of his meeting Mendoza, whose portrait he had painted in the days when they were chums together, after both had arrived at middle age, and the artist was privileged to append A.R.A. to his name. Mendoza having asked his old friend how he was getting on, and what he was then doing, Mulready replied, "painting pictures," whereupon the distinguished bruiser consolingly and compassionately observed: "Ah! well, old fellow, we must all do something for a living."

The "Illustrated London News," being desirous of publishing a careful engraving of the Royal Academy banquet of 1849, showing all the principal guests in their particular places, the Academy officials were applied to, but refused to afford any facilities whatever. The report in "the Times" and Mr. John Gilbert's ready pencil were therefore all there was to depend upon. Knowing that Mr. Thackeray had been present at the dinner, I sent him a sketch which had been drawn out from "the Times'" description, and asked him to be good enough to inform me whether it was correct. This brought the following reply:—

"Your arrangement of the company at the Academy dinner is all wrong, Jupiter ['the Times'] notwithstanding. The plan I have roughly sketched out will show you where most of the big and little stars twinkled. It was a very cold and formal affair—almost as dull as my Lord Carlisle's late patronising spread [1] given to certain well-known gents from Grub-street. W. M. T."

Somewhere about this time I met at a friend's house at Kensington George Henry Lewes, editor of "the Leader" and author of "the Life of Goethe." This was long prior to his separation from his handsome and erring wife, and his strange escapade in flinging up all his literary engagements and retiring to the continent with the personally unattractive Miss Evans (George Eliot), about whom nothing was then known, excepting that she had translated Strauss's "Life of Jesus." Lewes was the pink of self-conceit, and shortly before he had mystified Webster, then lessee of the Haymarket, the fortunes of which happened not to be at their highest, in a rather amusing manner. He wrote to Webster, and inquired what terms he was prepared to offer to an author of the highest repute and of recognised histrionic powers who contemplated seeking before the footlights that public applause which had already been accorded to his writings.

[1] See *ante*, p. 293.

Webster was somewhat puzzled, and wondered who on earth this great literary genius could be. Possibly Dickens, whose amateur performances had been lately very highly commended; or could it be Sir Edward Bulwer, "the man who wears the stays, and shakes a mane *en papillotes*." Say what they might, he certainly had a handsome presence, which would tell greatly in his favour on the boards. As for Thackeray, his unfortunate nose put him completely out of the running; still, there was Alfred Tennyson, with a noble face and figure, and certain, everybody said, to be the future laureate. In his perplexity Webster replied to Lewes that he cordially entertained his suggestion, but wished to be informed (of course in strict confidence) who the distinguished author was on whose behalf he had written. To Webster's amazement Lewes rejoined that it was himself. This was quite enough for the disappointed manager, whose hopes had been so unduly raised, and he indignantly closed the correspondence.

Lewes, although he had written his "Biographical History of Philosophy," a shoal of anonymous critical articles, one or two indifferent novels, and a by no means successful play, had not then penned his well-known "Life of Goethe," and was almost unknown to the general public. Even by the few who were familiar with his writings he was certainly not regarded as a distinguished author. He had had some little stage experience, having essayed the part of Shylock, played once or twice with Dickens's amateur company, and acted in his own piece, "the Noble Heart," in the provinces, but in none of the characters he had assumed had he scored even a moderate success. He must unquestionably have cut a strange figure on the stage, being a mean-looking little man of a decided jewish type, pock-marked, and, according to Jerrold, "the ugliest man in London." Yet, with all this, he was a ludicrous coxcomb, whose airs and graces, combined with his long curly

tresses, had led to his being derogatively compared to a performing French poodle strutting about on its hind legs.

Birket Foster, after completing the illustrations to Miller's "Boy's Country Year-Book," had made many miscellaneous drawings for me, exhibiting so much freshness, truth, variety, and grace that it was obvious the clever young artist, whom I had so fortunately met with, was capable of something far beyond the shepherds and milkmaids, the reapers and threshers, and the haymaking and harvest-home scenes which so picturesquely illustrated Miller's descriptions of English rural life, and I suggested his making some designs for an illustrated edition of Longfellow's "Evangeline"—a poem then scarcely known in this country—which I contemplated producing. I showed Foster's preliminary sketches to Bogue, the publisher, who readily embarked in the enterprise, and the success of the volume was such as led to the production of corresponding editions of the rest of Longfellow's poetical works, as well as of his well-known romance, "Hyperion." So profitable did this series of volumes prove, and so fair-dealing and generous a man was David Bogue, that one day he quietly told me he had credited my account with the considerable sum of £1200, to which he thought me entitled for having planned out this series of works, and given him the opportunity of engaging in their publication. A kinder-hearted man than Bogue never breathed, or one more tolerant towards the failings of certain authors whose books he published, or more ready at all times to help friends who had been less worldly fortunate than himself. To my knowledge he blotted out from his ledger very considerable amounts, advanced by him to struggling writers, which he knew they could ill afford to repay.

The "Evangeline," for which John Gilbert and a grave and enthusiastic young lady, Miss Jane Benham, made a few of the designs, unquestionably owed its great success

to Birket Foster's graceful and versatile pencil. Some of his illustrations were strikingly beautiful, and have never been surpassed by the artist even in his most mature efforts. Mr. Marcus Huish, in his "Life and Work of Birket Foster," tells how the volume was received by "the Athenæum," the chief literary and artistic authority of those days :—

"On Foster's coming," says he, "one morning into Vizetelly's office he was greeted with the exclamation, 'Here 's "the Athenæum"! By Jove, they have given it to you!' Foster's heart may be said to have sunk into his boots at this announcement, but when the notice was handed to him and he read it, he hardly knew whether he stood on his head or his heels, for this is what it said: 'A more lovely book than this has rarely been given to the public; Mr. Foster's designs, in particular, have a picturesque grace and elegance which recall the pleasure we experienced on our first examination of Mr. Roger's "Italy" when it came before us illustrated by persons of no less refinement and invention than Stothard and Turner. Any one disposed to carp at our praise as overstrained is invited to consider the "Boat on the Mississippi," which, to our thinking, is a jewel of the first water.'"

An illustrated edition of Longfellow's minor poems followed upon "Evangeline," and Miss Benham made numerous drawings for it. This clever young lady had two particularly intimate friends, one the daughter of William and Mary Howitt—an artist like herself—and the other Miss Jessie Meriton White, afterwards Madame Mario, whose devotion to Garibaldi is well known. All Miss Benham's ideas were centred in the pursuit of her art, whereas those of this enterprising friend of hers spread themselves over the entire field of political disaffection. This energetic young lady subsequently became governess to Garibaldi's young son, and an active member of the conspiracy formed to accelerate the movements of the Italian patriots. Prior to this, however, and after Miss Benham had married and settled in Paris, I met Miss Jessie Meriton White on several occasions at her house, when the young lady's earnest conversation impressed me with the idea that,

mere girl though she was, she intended over-riding all conventionalities, and playing her part on the political stage at the earliest opportunity that presented itself.

While Miss Benham was still in her teens, she and her other friend, Miss Mary Howitt, swayed by their admiration of the works of Kaulbach, betook themselves to Munich, and asked the great painter to be allowed to study under him. Kaulbach was so struck with the courage and enthusiasm of the two young English girls that he at once admitted them to his studio, and gave them the benefit of his advice and instruction for as long as they cared to profit by them. The result was that they prolonged their stay in Munich for several years.

Most of my time between 1850 and 1854 was given up to the production of illustrated books, and Longfellow's other works were soon supplemented by an edition of his recently published "Golden Legend," with Birket Foster's and Miss Benham's designs. A year or two before I had edited and printed a volume called "Christmas with the Poets," to which Foster contributed numerous charming tinted illustrations, with the result that the work went rapidly through several editions, and at the time of the exhibition of 1851 had the honour of being selected by the trustees of the British Museum to be shown to distinguished foreign visitors as an example of contemporary book-illustration and printing. I also commenced the publication of a series of "Readable Books," the initial volume of which comprised Poe's "Tales and Poems," which until then had never been printed in this country. The sale of these books was very large, the first editions of the six or eight volumes that I produced, before I parted with the series, invariably consisting of twenty thousand copies. I had also printed the now much sought-after first edition of Mr. Ruskin's "King of the Golden River," with Richard Doyle's designs, for Messrs. Smith & Elder, and had

engraved two or three of Mr. Ruskin's own sketches for some of the minor illustrations to "the Stones of Venice;" but I regret to say not to the great art critic's entire satisfaction.

Forty years ago there was a book in much repute among a particular class of readers: this was Tupper's "Proverbial Philosophy," which had had a large steady sale for fifteen years past. When books abounding with highly-finished woodcuts and printed on toned paper were the fashion, the publishers of Tupper's work decided to issue an illustrated edition of it, and the printing being entrusted to me, I saw a good deal of the author while the volume was in progress. The phenomenal sale of "Proverbial Philosophy" had inflated Tupper, an amiable and good-hearted little man, with astounding vanity. This, with his admirers' peans of praise, rendered him callous to the derisive banter of his censors, and caused him to smile complacently at the constant girdings of the comic papers, which he set down to envy, hatred, and malice, or some other form of uncharitableness. Nothing seemed to flutter Tupper's self-conceit. When, after being asked to lecture at the university of St. Andrews, he found himself face to face with empty benches, he was not at all disconcerted; a circumstance which suggested to the principal of St. Andrews, who had invited him there, the comforting reflection that when the wind was not tempered to the lamb, the lamb was usually provided with a tolerably thick fleece of self-esteem to oppose to the inclement blast.

Tupper frequently called upon me accompanied by a friend of his who had made some rather unsatisfactory designs for his book. This was Joseph Severn, memorable to-day as the devoted friend of Keats—"a friend that sticketh closer than a brother"—still, at the time I speak of, his former intimate association with the dying poet

inspired scarcely any interest. The Keats cult was not then what it is to-day, and poor Severn, I remember, had to submit not only to being snubbed by the publisher, but also by the publisher's young man, who was charged with seeing the new illustrated volume through the press.

A year or two previously I had engraved Mr. Thackeray's drawings for "the Kickleburys on the Rhine," and had printed the work, and remember Mr. Thackeray calling upon me, accompanied by his *fidus Achates*, M. J. Higgins (Jacob Omnium), of colossal stature like himself but of far more stalwart build, and handing me the memorable preface for the second edition, "An Essay on Thunder and Small Beer," in reply to the recent "Times" criticism on the book. Thackeray was in high glee over the circumstance of a second edition of the work being called for at the very moment "the Times" was launching its little thunderbolt; and in his excitement he read several sentences of the preface aloud, in which he thought he had made his keenest thrusts. Mr. Sala has somewhere stated that Thackeray always suspected "the Times" review to have been written by Charles Lamb Kenney. This, however, does not accord with my own recollection of the subject, for Thackeray frequently spoke in my hearing of the obnoxious criticism having been written by Samuel Phillips, author of the forgotten "Caleb Stukely." Moreover, the language of the review is not at all in Kenney's style. The whole was apparently a mere friendly passage-of-arms, as not long after the publication of Thackeray's amusing retort, his May-day Ode on the opening of the 1851 exhibition came out in "the Times."

About this time Mr. Herbert Ingram, who was a restless speculator, conceived the idea of embarking in the publication of books upon a large scale, and my eldest brother and I suggested to him the production of a cheap "National Illustrated Library" for his opening venture.

He adopted the idea, and the series, which extended to some half hundred volumes, met with remarkable success, and many of the works are to-day even in regular demand. All the earlier volumes were printed by my brother or myself, and a handsome royalty was, moreover, secured to us on the sales. At this period, after the whilom special constable during the ridiculous chartist scare had swept the peaceful Paris boulevards with grapeshot, Victor Hugo's famous "Napoleon le Petit" was making a great sensation, and my brother published an English version of the work, which, as well as the original Belgian edition, was strictly interdicted in France. In spite, however, of all the precautions taken, the Belgian volume in a miniature form was extensively smuggled into France, and the authorities were sorely perplexed how, in face of their incessant watchfulness, this could possibly be accomplished.

One night early in 1852 I crossed over to Calais, *en route* to Paris, on some very harmless business, when, after the police commissary had minutely scrutinised my passport, I was told to pass out by a different door to that which the other passengers had left by. On doing so, I found myself face to face with a couple of soldiers, who, crossing their muskets in front of me, ordered me to at once empty my pockets. This I, of course, did, and they then felt outside my clothes, to satisfy themselves that I had nothing concealed about me. Next they directed me to take off my boots, which they minutely examined, and afterwards passed their hands round the outside of my socks. I thought the proceeding a strange one, and was glad to be told that I might go, and there the matter ended. I afterwards learned that a diminutive edition of "Napoleon le Petit" had been printed in Brussels, and that travellers were in the habit of smuggling copies of it into France tucked into their boots, and it was suggested to me that this was the reason for the mysterious military

search to which on landing at Calais I had been subjected. Possibly the incident may not have ended here, and during my short sojourn in Paris I may have been shadowed in all my movements by the French police.

It must have been soon after this affair that I brought out, in conjunction with Salisbury the printer, who used to machine "Readable Books" for me, and Clarke, who bound the volumes, the first edition published in England of Mrs. Beecher Stowe's world-famous romance, "Uncle Tom's Cabin." A year or two ago I found it necessary to tell the history of this reprint in a letter to the "Literary World," the principal passages of which may here be quoted:

"I fail to see that any particular honour or merit is due to the person who first introduced 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' to the English public: still, it may be as well to correct the mis-statements contained in the letter you have published, signed Charles M. Clarke, who, if born at the time the incidents occurred, of which he speaks so positively from his own *personal* knowledge, could only have been a baby in long clothes, or, at most, a little boy in knickerbockers.

"The true circumstances connected with the issue of the English reprint of the book are these:—In the first place no *advance* copy of the work was submitted to any London publisher, but Mr. Bogue received an ordinary copy of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' from a young man in Putnam's New York house, accompanied by a letter stating that the book was selling rapidly in the States, and suggesting that Mr. Bogue should reprint it, and send him a trifle for his pains. Mr. Bogue, however, not caring to embark in cheap reprints of American authors, offered me the work for my series of 'Readable Books.'

"The American edition of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' being in two stout volumes, I hesitated to run the risk of issuing the work at a shilling, and while I was considering what to

do with it, I received a visit from Messrs. Salisbury and Clarke, who, being well aware of the great success of the 'Readable Books' series, were constantly bothering me to suggest some further literary venture, which would provide work for their establishments, and might be undertaken in partnership. To get rid of their importunities, I offered them to join with me in reprinting 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' and it was agreed to produce an edition of the book in shares, each of us being responsible for a third of the cost."

Mrs. Stowe's second title, "Life among the Lowly," was changed by me to "Negro life in the Slave States of America," and a writer, then little known, but who is now widely appreciated, both as journalist and essayist, wrote a preface to the work for the modest sum of two guineas. The book was printed crown 8vo size, and the price was half-a-crown.

"Although well advertised, the volume — of which 2500 copies had been printed—proved a failure, but a rather singular circumstance contributed to its eventual success. In the 'Readable Books' series I had reprinted Curtis's 'Nile Notes,' much to the annoyance of Mr. Richard Bentley, who had a half-guinea edition of the work. 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' being advertised with both my own and Clarke's imprint, Mr. Bentley, by way of retaliation against me, I imagine, announced a shilling edition of the book. With the view of checkmating him, I had a cover printed with 'Price one shilling' on it, and got Clarke to do up a copy of our edition in paper boards, trimming it as near to a foolscap 8vo as could be managed. I then sent the volume to Mr. Bentley with my compliments, and a notification that the accompanying shilling edition of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' was on the eve of publication. This induced Mr. Bentley to hold his hand, and as there was scarcely any sale for the book at half-a-crown in

cloth, it was determined to work off the remaining sheets in paper boards at a shilling.

"Shortly after this had been decided upon I went abroad with Mr. Birket Foster, and was absent for two or three months. On my return I found that 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' had been and still was the book which everybody was reading and talking about. After a reasonable delay I applied to Clarke for an account of the sales, when he referred me to Salisbury and Mr. S. O. Beeton, who, in the interim had joined Clarke and Salisbury in partnership. These gentlemen laughed at the idea of my asking for an account, told me that during my absence abroad they had paid my clerk for the work I had done in connection with the volume, and had also repaid to him the five pounds which had been forwarded to Putnam's young man, and that they declined to recognise me any further in the matter.

"I made short work of this impudent repudiation, told them I would give them a few hours to decide what they would do, but that if I did not receive a satisfactory proposal by noon, next day, I would at once file a bill in Chancery for an account. At 11 o'clock the following morning, Mr. S. O. Beeton called upon me, and offered me first £200 and then £300, provided I would waive an account. I replied that the extremest sum I had ever hoped to make out of my share of the 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' reprint was £500, and that after the dishonourable way in which I had been treated, I was determined not to accept a penny less. Before the day expired I received the acceptances of Clarke, Salisbury, and Beeton for the sum in question, and my connection with 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' thereupon ceased."

Beeton, greatly dreading that the firm in which he had become partner might be forestalled by some enterprising London publisher with respect to Mrs. Stowe's next book,

hastened to America and offered that lady electrotypes from the engravings of an English illustrated edition of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which he and his partners had produced, for republication in the United States, hoping by this economical sop to secure the early sheets of her new volume. The lady and her husband, however, laughed at him in a polite way, and hinted that a money payment on account of the large profits which had been made out of the English reprint of "Uncle Tom" would be better appreciated. Finally, Beeton gave Mrs. Stowe the bills of the firm for a few hundred pounds, and secured in return the promise of the early sheets of the "Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin." With a daring confidence, that staggered most sober-minded people, the deluded trio, Clarke, Beeton, and Salisbury, printed a first edition of fifty thousand copies, I think it was, the bulk of which eventually went to the trunk makers, while the mushroom firm was obliged to go into speedy liquidation.

XIX.

(1852-53.)

A THEFT FROM NAPOLEON'S PRIVY PURSE—A BLASÉ SYBARITE —IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF A POET—PASSPORTS WANTED.

A FEW months after my Calais experience, business again took me to Paris when the prince president made his imposing entry into the capital on returning from his Strasburg tour—an event which furnished a pretext, that the prince's accomplices carefully profited by, to prepare the Parisians for the advent of the future empire. On the grand triumphal arches and other out-door decorations, of which there were a liberal supply, the ominous words "Vive l'Empereur! Vive l'Empire!" were prominently displayed. Lionel Lawson, of "Daily Telegraph" notoriety, who was then living in Paris, had engaged an *entresol* at some swell café on the boulevards, commanding a capital view of the brilliant presidential cortège as it passed by; and here throughout the day he entertained in his habitual liberal style a party of guests of whom I was one.

As far as the eye could reach, soldiers in close double line were to be seen posted along both sides of the boulevards, whilst among the crowd, relegated well to the rear, De Maupas had distributed some hundreds of Corsican and other mouchards, all attired in irreproachable black, and carrying stout walking sticks with which they might almost have felled an ox. Plots against the president's life had recently been discovered, and the spy system

prevailed in all sections of Paris society. Indeed, I have little doubt that even among Lawson's guests, comprising Plon the publisher, and the superintendent of the national printing office, there was at least one spy, whose calling was of course unknown to our host. All traces of the sanguinary 2nd of December were not entirely obliterated from the boulevards, for I remember that Sallandrouze's carpet warehouse, which had been knocked to pieces by artillery, still remained in ruins.

When I next visited Paris, the empire was an accomplished fact. Louis Napoleon's adversaries had either been deported wholesale to Lambessa and Cayenne, or put under lock and key in the prisons of the State, while his shady adherents were eagerly battening on the spoil. Not content, however, with dipping their hands into the public purse, they scarcely scrupled, when opportunity offered, to plunder each other, and even the emperor himself was not allowed to enjoy immunity.

On this last occasion I remember Lawson—who through his friend Plon, the emperor's private printer and publisher, picked up a good deal of the current gossip about people in high places—telling me the story of the recent mysterious death of General Cornemuse, who had been killed by Marshal St. Arnaud in a duel—fought, some people said, at night-time in a garden, whilst others declared that a room at the Tuileries was the scene of the fatal encounter. The affair gave rise to the wildest rumours at the time, still there was no kind of doubt that the duel had its origin in the positive theft of 100,000 francs in bank notes from the new emperor's private cabinet, not by some dishonest lackey, but by one of Napoleon's trusted adherents having free access to the apartment in question. It seems that the emperor had temporarily quitted the room, leaving a pocket-book containing the sum mentioned on the table, and that on his return he found the money gone. Equally

amazed and irritated, he made immediate enquiries, and then summoned M. Pietri, who had succeeded Senator De Maupas as prefect of police.

Pietri naturally enough inquired if any one had been in the room during the emperor's absencc. "Yes," replied Napoleon, "General Cornemuse." "General Cornemuse!" repeated the prefect, "then it may possibly have been he, though I must confess my surprise, for the general bears a very high reputation. Is your majesty quite sure, however, that he was the only person who entered the room whilst you were away?" "*Ma foi, non,*" the emperor replied, "I have learnt that King Jerôme also came here in search of me." "King Jerôme!" exclaimed the prefect with the satisfied air of a man who finds himself relieved of a perplexing difficulty, "then we need not trouble ourselves any further about General Cornemuse. King Jerôme is by far the more likely culprit." "But there is still some one else," interrupted the emperor, "I am told that Marshal St. Arnaud also entered the room to fetch some papers." "Oh! if the marshal has been here," said the prefect, smiling significantly, "we need not look in any other direction. Your majesty may be certain that the money was taken by him."

The upshot was that St. Arnaud was formally charged with the theft, which he denied, however, with a great show of indignation, protesting that others besides himself, notably General Cornemuse, had been in the emperor's cabinet. Eventually he and Cornemuse were confronted, and an angry altercation ensued between them. St. Arnaud, in reiterating his innocence, appealed to his sword, challenged his comrade, and promptly killed him. In the old days of ordeal by battle, this would no doubt have been accepted as conclusive proof of Cornemuse's guilt, but the sceptical Parisians, well acquainted with St. Arnaud's shady antecedents and pecuniary difficulties, shared M. Pietri's

opinion that the money had really been taken by the spendthrift marshal to relieve his more pressing necessities.

Lawson eventually came to reside in England, and I remember, when breakfasting with him one morning in his plainly-furnished rooms in Brook-street, his saying to me, by way of proof of how little he cared for display since he had become a millionaire, that if he were offered permission to knock a way through into the adjacent house, and annex to his own a splendid suite of rooms, he would not give ten shillings a month for the privilege. Not a single picture graced the walls of his sitting-room, which was bare indeed of a single work of art, or nick-nack of any kind, and I never remember to have seen even a stray book lying about. Beyond its comfortable commonplace furniture the only noticeable objects in this apartment were the piles of cigar-boxes, containing the very finest brands, on which Lawson greatly prided himself, and as his friends knew with excellent reason.

On one occasion he spoke to me of his recent rejection at certain London clubs, and consoled himself with boastfully remarking that not one of his concealed enemies could do as he could—have the first gentleman in the land to breakfast in his rooms, whenever he asked him. During the last two or three years of his life Lawson had become thoroughly *blasé*—to adopt the well-worn phrase, he had drained the cup of pleasure to the dregs—and scarcely found enjoyment in anything. As his wealth increased he had developed a languid interest in high-class horse flesh, and prided himself on the perfect action of the steed driven in his brougham, although he usually availed himself far more of hansom cabs than of his own private carriage.

When Mr. Bogue had issued all of Longfellow's poetical works, then published, in an illustrated form, I suggested pro-

ducing an edition of "Hyperion," with engravings of the different scenes in which the hero of the romance figures, from sketches to be taken by Mr. Birket Foster on the spot. Mr. Bogue readily acquiesced, and in the summer of 1852 Foster and I started on our expedition, accompanied by a somewhat eccentric individual named Fry, who, knowing our deficiencies in the German language, had suggested that his knowledge of it would be of immense use, and that his familiarity with the continent especially qualified him to personally conduct the party. We were by no means of the same opinion, still we consented to his coming with us.

On the Rhine we fell victims to the usual sharper, in the guise of a long-haired spectacled student, who succeeded in extracting three English sovereigns from us on the plea that he was hastening to the bedside of a dying mother, and had in some unaccountable way lost his purse. Having chanced to mention that we were on our way to Heidelberg, our student friend offered us a draft on some pretended relative of his, a Herr professor there, who, he assured us, would duly honour it on presentation. While speaking of his dying mother he feigned to brush aside some tears, and his voice was apparently so broken with emotion that we were completely taken in. Strange to say, the professor on whom the draft was given really did exist, which was more than we expected after calmly reflecting over the circumstances; but the savant smiled blandly, if not exactly childlike, when the document was handed to him, remarking that it was far from the first which the swindler, who impudently claimed relationship with him, had palmed off on our unsuspecting fellow-countrymen.

Before turning aside to Heidelberg we went on to Mannheim, where, at a beer garden into which we strolled, we found, I remember, an odd regulation in force. There

the rule was for the kellner to replenish all empty bocks without waiting for orders to do so. These, it seems, were only given when it was desired that the supply should cease, an arrangement which generally led to an habitual frequenter of the garden imbibing from a dozen to twenty bocks of beer before the kellner was enjoined to stay his replenishing hand.

In the environs of Heidelberg a little inn was pointed out to us where the students' duels were accustomed to take place, and wounded juvenile honour was sought to be avenged. A notice hanging up in the room intimated that dogs were not permitted to be present during these encounters, and the story ran that the reason for this interdiction was because on one occasion when a student dexterously snipped off the tip of his opponent's nose with his *schlager* a hungry cur hastily snapped up and bolted the dainty morsel; thus rendering it impossible for the attendant surgeon to fix the important little piece of gristle in its place again, and thereby restore to the dismembered nasal organ its proper degree of prominence.

Our travelling companion Fry proved to be somewhat of a hypochondriac. He was always fancying himself ailing and in need of the best medical advice, which, when he had secured it, he rarely followed. It was a confirmed opinion of his that no man who valued his bodily health should venture to travel without being accompanied by his private physician. Whenever we arrived at a town of any size his first inquiry invariably was, "Who is the most distinguished doctor in the place?" Different people held different opinions on this point, so that the replies he received were often exceedingly perplexing, and hindered him from seeking the advice he fancied he so sorely needed until we were on the eve of leaving the town. Having secured a prescription at the very last moment, on arriving at the next halting-place he would rush off to the chemist's,

and, while having it made up, would extract from Herr Bolus the name of the local practitioner who in his opinion occupied the highest rank. Then he would hasten to him, and in his very best German describe his imaginary symptoms, tell him all about the last doctor he had consulted, show him the prescription he had received; and would usually be gravely informed that it was a most fortunate circumstance he had taken none of the medicine, otherwise the consequences might have been—well, certainly something alarming, and most likely even fatal.

So long as the money Fry had provided himself with lasted he frittered it away in this ridiculous fashion alike in Germany, Switzerland, and the Tyrol. Occasionally he would return to the hotel after visiting some physician only a few minutes before the time the train was appointed to leave. This was while we were in Germany, for in Switzerland at this date the railway only went to Berne and Basle, and the engineering feats of scaling the Swiss mountain peaks were then undreamt of. Fry, in his trepidation, would hastily strap up his valise, stuff his night shirt and slippers into his coat pockets, and then rush wildly off to the railway station with his hair and tooth brushes and other toilet requisites in his hands, and leap distractedly into the carriage to the bewilderment of our phlegmatic fellow-passengers.

When Mr. Longfellow heard from Mr. Bogue of the contemplated tour in the track he had himself followed fifteen or sixteen years before, he begged that he might be kept informed of our progress, and the letters which I wrote to Mr. Bogue from our various halting-stations were all sent on to the poet in the States. Subsequently he wrote to me, and at his suggestion I penned a few notes of the tour, which were printed as an appendix to the volume.

When traversing the Odenwald we entered the woodland dell, which Longfellow lauds as the "enchanted valley

of Birkenau," and were perplexed, I remember, in our search for the mill referred to by the poet, owing to there being three mills in the valley, and all within the space of a mile. We discovered, however, that only one served the double purpose of a mill and inn, and as it was evidently here that the poet had stayed, we visited it with the intention of passing the night there. The old miller recollected nothing of the distinguished guest he had entertained some fifteen or sixteen years before—his wife with the shrill voice was dead, and his son, he told us, was undergoing imprisonment for some part he had taken in the Baden revolution of 1848.

At first the old man said we could not have rooms for the night, but after we had ordered several bottles of wine, and spent our florins freely, two unoccupied sleeping apartments were offered us, but as a third chamber was not to be had, we eventually returned to Weinheim to sleep. I fancy we were indebted for the offer of the rooms to an idea which had penetrated the old miller's head, that the eccentric friend who accompanied us, was a person of consequence, as after watching him attentively for a considerable time, he suddenly leant over the table, and asked me in a gruff whisper, "Is he a baron?" Had I been able to answer—yes, no doubt an appeal to my friend would have followed, entreating his good offices on behalf of the old man's "quodded" son.

At Interlachen we had, I remember, a long search for the apartment in the convent, which Longfellow had formerly tenanted. An old crone having charge of a portion of the building, was the first person we inquired of, but questioning her with almost judicial strictness only led to a barren result. Commiserating our disappointment she handed us over to an old soldier who occupied some rooms above, and he, after hearing what we had to say, transferred us to a venerable old gentleman who, with his

two pretty, fair-haired, limpid-eyed daughters, sympathetically listened to our re-statement of the case, and endeavoured, though fruitlessly, to help us out of our difficulty.

Next morning we turned our attention to a different quarter. Since Longfellow's visit in 1836, the portion of the old convent beyond the cloisters, had been transformed into a police office, and we pursued our search through the rambling building, civilly assisted by the clerks of the prefect, who, while regarding the investigation as a somewhat ludicrous one, enjoyed it quite as much as though the unravelling of some criminal mystery depended on the result. Numerous alterations, consequent upon the new purposes to which the building was then applied, had changed the entire aspect of the interior. But bearing in mind Longfellow's description, that the room was on the lower floor, that it had three lofty and narrow windows, and that it was wainscotted with oak, and looked into a flower-garden, we were at length convinced that it could be no other than the apartment which at the time of our visit served as the prefect's audience chamber.

I remember that during our sojourn at Interlachen, we made the ascent of one of the lesser mountains of the Bernese Oberland—the Wengern alp, I think it was—and that while resting at a chalet near the summit we had a splendid view of an avalanche careering down into the valley with the roar of thunder. After Mr. Foster had made all the sketches he required in the valley of Lauterbrunnen, and other places around Interlachen, we took the steamer along the Lake of Brienz and landed near the famous Geissbach cascade. At the neighbouring hotel we were waited upon by two charming Swiss maidens, bewitchingly and coquettishly attired in the picturesque costume of the canton, from whom we were very loth indeed to part. It was, however, necessary that we should

push forward, so with sighs and sentimental adieux we mounted the horses we had engaged, and accompanied by a guide set forth for Andermatt.

This was in the evening, and we afterwards discovered that we had made a great mistake in starting towards the close of the day instead of in the early morning, as we were obliged to put up for the night at places where we should simply have dined, and where the sleeping accommodation was something abominable. One of these rude chalets was infested with an objectionable species of live stock of such persistence and ferocity that, as Curran once remarked on a similar occasion, had the creatures only been unanimous they might easily have dragged us out of our beds. Sleep was of course entirely out of the question, and when day broke every garment had to be shaken violently out of the window before one dared venture to put it on.

We passed, I remember, through the cherry orchards of Meyringen, the picturesque Swiss village of wood-carvers, recently almost entirely destroyed by fire, then by the Hasli thal to the foaming falls of the Aar at Hendeck, and afterwards skirted the glacier of the Rhone. We rode past the huge icy mass frozen, I remember, on the one side, and roasted by a broiling sun on the other, till we finally reached the Grimsel hospice, where we rested for the night. The horse which carried me was a powerful punchy animal, with a singular fondness for straggling to the very brink of the more fearful Alpine precipices. For a time I made strenuous efforts to guide him into safer courses, but soon had to give up the task in despair, and henceforward, with slackened reins, I allowed him to pursue the even tenour of his way.

On emerging from the Grimsel pass, and descending into the valley through which the torrent of the Rhone dashes over monster boulders, I noticed that the stream was crossed by a frail wooden bridge, two planks wide, and with

a rail at one side. I was riding at the head of our party and wondered whether the proper course was to cross the torrent by the narrow bridge and run the risk of the horse toppling over with me into the surging waters, to be carried by them in due course to the Lake of Geneva, or to ford the torrent which was evidently of no great depth. In my perplexity I thought the best course was to leave the matter to the discretion of my horse, who had no doubt passed this way many times before, and evidently had a will of his own; so with the reins slackened more than ever, I allowed him to make his choice.

He decided to take the torrent, which he ploughed vigorously through, while I, over my knees in water, kept his head well to the stream to prevent our being swept against the wooden piles of the bridge. Eventually our progress was interrupted by some huge boulders, and the horse raising himself on his haunches essayed to plant his forefeet on the slippery rock, but all his efforts failed to secure him a firm footing and he stumbled backwards. Luckily he managed to keep his legs and I my seat. I was startled, however, at hearing some sharp little screams, and looking up saw a party of tourists, among whom were several ladies, on the opposite bank, anxiously watching my horse's movements.

Swift as thought, in this moment of imminent danger, these little screams recalled to my mind the loud terrified cries in the Catherine-street theatre some dozen years before, when, with half my body forced through the flimsy false roof, my legs were dangling above the grand chandelier, and the people below were momentarily expecting to see me fall some fifty feet into the pit. Luckily for me the intelligent animal I was astride of, nothing daunted, raised himself on his hind-legs again and made a fresh attempt to scale the boulder, and this time fortunately succeeded, with the result that in the course of a few minutes we were

both safely landed on dry ground. My companions passed over the bridge with the guide leading their horses, which, I discovered too late, was the orthodox way for equestrians to cross the torrent of the Rhone.

I think we afterwards pushed forward through the Furca pass. I remember, however, our having a race across the Devil's bridge, and subsequently obtaining my first and last glimpse of Italy, which I had long wished to visit. Later on, when Foster had made a sketch of the bridge, we turned our horses' heads round to the hotel at Andermatt, where we parted with both guide and horses, which, after a slight rest, started on their return journey to the Geissbach falls. We managed to secure another guide, but as only a single horse was available this was laden with our baggage, and we all tramped along on foot. Instead of going in the orthodox round-about way to Innsbruck, our point of destination, we determined to make a straight cut to Coire, or Chur, across a district at that time never by any chance frequented by tourists. To-day, however, all is changed, the route is intersected by fine macadamised roads, along which diligences run at stated times, and there are good inns where one can dine well, and sleep comfortably. Forty years ago one had to follow an obscure mountain track where a guide even occasionally lost himself.

I recollect on the first or second day our skirting a large salt water lake and coming in the evening to a straggling little village, the inhabitants of which chiefly cultivated flax, and spoke no other language but Romansch, a bastard dialect, many of the words composing which are a sort of vulgarised Latin. Our guide could not speak it, but we made ourselves understood by means of a few simple Latin words, which procured us a plentiful supply of rye bread and milk—no other food was obtainable—for which, and the rough sleeping accommodation cheerfully provided us, the poor undemoralised villagers scorned to

accept payment. After putting up with this frugal fare for several days, we were delighted at hearing from the guide that we were approaching a large village, where there was a comfortable inn at which he prophesied we should find excellent cheer. This was Ilanz, where it had been arranged he was to leave us. Shortly before we entered the village we overtook a French-speaking Swiss who, to our great gratification, offered to act as our interpreter, as Romansch was still the lingo of the locality.

We learned from our new acquaintance that we should have no difficulty in procuring a vehicle at Ilanz to take us on to Reichenau, some fifteen miles distant, that evening. At Ilanz the villagers all came to their doors to catch a sight of the new, and to them strange looking, arrivals, for we wore neither tourists' suits nor wideawakes, but the same top hats and black frock coats in which we were accustomed to perambulate the streets of London.

On entering the inn, the men of the village assembled there rose up and remained respectfully standing, until a table was prepared for us to seat ourselves at. We were ravenously hungry, not having taken kindly to the simple fare we had had to put up with during the last few days, and were sadly disappointed when we were told that the greatest delicacies the innkeeper could offer us were wheaten bread and goat's milk. After considerable cross-questioning through the medium of the interpreter, we learned with delight that there was some dried beef in the house, and at once ordered it to be brought. I remember the viand well, even at this distance of time. The slices lay temptingly in the dish, but our forks were powerless to penetrate them—of itself an ominous sign. On endeavouring to divide the meat with our knives we soon discovered the task was a hopeless one. In despair we seized it with our fingers and attempted to bite it, but found this was more than our sharpest molars could accomplish. The meat was

in fact of the consistency of a well-hammered piece of leather for the sole of a shoe.

Finding we could procure nothing else to eat, we asked our interpreter to arrange at once with the villager who he had said would drive us to Reichenau. The man, who soon made his appearance, spoke German and, in reply to Fry's inquiries as to what kind of road it was, assured us that it was a "*sare gute weg.*" As, however, the sun had already gone down and there were no signs of a moon, though we were assured that it would be a fine moonlight night, we decided to defer our journey until the morning, and shortly afterwards went as good as supperless to bed.

We climbed to our capacious bedroom, I remember, up a long step ladder, and were greatly surprised to find that it contained not only several comfortable beds and ancient carved chests and wardrobes, but that its walls were covered with a gorgeous flock and gold paper, which the landlord had no doubt brought back with him to that out of the way little village, on the occasion of some journey he had made to Berne or Zurich. In the morning we were pleased at finding that eggs and cow's instead of the strong-flavoured goat's milk, had been provided for our breakfast, and as soon as this was over we prepared to start off in the light pair-horse waggon which was already waiting for us before the inn door. To our intense surprise the entire village had turned out to witness the departure of the three strangers in black surtouts and top hats. There were first of all the priest, and the sacristan, and then the schoolmaster at the head of his troop of chubby-faced urchins, the burger-meister or whatever he may have styled himself, the white haired gaffers and gammers, and many of the youths and maidens of the place. In face of such an assembly we of course put on our very best London manners, and courteously saluted the company, who saluted us in return. Then the priest made a

short speech, possibly conveying his blessing to us, but not understanding what he said we thought it safest to raise our hats and bow politely.

The driver, who had grown impatient, now cracked his whip and off we sped. In a few minutes the "*sare gute weg*," of which he had boasted the night before came suddenly to an end, and we found ourselves spinning along, over green turf strewn thickly with huge boulders, and unpleasantly near the edge of the precipitous rocks forming the gorge of the Rhine. Our driver went merrily on, leaving his horses to thread their way as best they could among the masses of rock. This they did apparently to their own satisfaction, but not entirely to ours, for one of the wheels of the vehicle came in violent contact with a boulder which shattered it, overturned the waggon, completely wrecking it and sending one of our travelling bags flying over the brink of the precipice into the Rhine, which was rushing along several hundred feet below. Fortunately we foresaw the impending collision and jumped off before it occurred, otherwise we should most likely have accompanied the lost travelling bag in its gymnastical descent. The bag of course was gone past recovery, and as it was impossible to proceed any further with the vehicle, our only plan was to tramp forward, carrying the rest of our luggage between us, until we met with some peasant who for a liberal *trinkgeld* would relieve us of our load.

The walk was a weary one; the fierce sun shone down perpendicularly upon us, and we overtook no needy wayfarer willing, for the bribe of a florin, to act as our beast of burthen. We halted so frequently to rest, and remained resting so long, that it was night by the time we reached Reichenau, where we stopped at an inn which had formerly been a convent, and was then kept by an Italian, who was a first-rate cook and ministered compassionately to our ravenous appetites. In the morning we paid a visit to the

neighbouring old château, where, after it had been turned into a school during the revolutionary epoch, Louis Philippe, then Duc de Chartres, and in hiding from the *sans-culottes*, filled the post of usher for a time; teaching the young idea of the neighbourhood how to shoot, so far as history, mathematics, and the French language were concerned.

From Reichenau we walked over to Coire, the frontier Alpine town, with its great mouldering gateways and venerable walls and ramparts, constructed ages ago, not merely to keep outside enemies at bay, but to protect its protestant and catholic inhabitants against each other. Here we found ourselves once more in the civilised world. Here were no longer mountain tracks difficult to discover, but good macadamized roads running to Liechtenstein and Feldkirch, Kloster, and Davosplatz; with shops and fountains, and paved streets along which diligences and other vehicles rumbled.

We secured a carriage at Coire, and on our way to Liechtenstein passed through a village where we endeavoured to obtain quarters for the night. The peasants, however, misunderstanding some question Fry addressed to them, thought he intended an insult to their wives, and retorted in menacing language. Then, after communing together, they drew long knives from their sashes, and rushed towards us. Observing their movement, the driver whipped up his horses, and the band gave us chase, flourishing their knives and gesticulating frantically. One or two of the fleetest among them caught us up, but we kept them at bay with our alpenstocks, while the driver lashed his horses into a gallop, and Fry, who was in a mortal funk, and perspiring nervously, prodded the animals with the sharp spike which, while we were on our Alpine journey, he had had fixed into an ordinary walking-stick. In spite of our perilous position, Foster and I could not

resist shouting with laughter at the energy Fry was displaying, and at the anxious way in which he every now and then glanced round to see whether our irate pursuers were gaining upon us. After an uncommonly exciting quarter of an hour, the speed of our horses told; the angry villagers treated us to a volley of oaths and a parting flourish of their lethal weapons, and gave up the chace, leaving us to congratulate ourselves on having escaped a serious danger.

Next day, after our baggage had been minutely overhauled at the frontier in the interest of his highness's customs, we passed through the Prince of Liechtenstein's tiny territory in the space of about an hour, having the satisfaction of witnessing *en route* a military inspection of the Liechtenstein army, comprising less than a hundred men. Eventually we reached Feldkirch, whence we took the diligence to Innsbruck. After a day or two spent here,—of which I recollect nothing, excepting our visit to the famous tomb of Maximilian, one of those impressive monuments which once seen are rarely forgotten—we engaged a carriage to take us to Salzburg, occupying, I think, a three days' journey, and then full of Austrian soldiers. Italy at that time being in a state of great ferment, large bodies of troops were massed in the neighbourhood of the frontier. Even the isolated little village of St. Gilgen, which was our ultimate destination, harboured, I remember, almost half as many soldiers as it had able-bodied male inhabitants.

I imagine that in the course of our journey we must have crossed and recrossed the Austrian frontier at some particular point, for I remember our being stopped at an isolated post, with no houses in sight for miles, and being ordered to alight. First of all, our modest baggage was minutely overhauled, and then our vehicle was subjected to a searching examination, all the cushions being taken out, the seats searched under, the driver's box ransacked,

and the roof and floor of the carriage prodded, to make quite certain that we were smuggling neither contraband articles, nor arms and ammunition into Austrian territory. After the officials had acted as custom-house officers, they transformed themselves into police agents, and scrutinized our passports, when, finding mine was an Italian name, they cross-examined us with all the severity and pertinacity of a French *juge d'instruction.* We were asked our ages and callings, whether we were married or single, what our object was in coming to Austria, whither we were then going, and how long we intended staying there, and—this evidently sorely perplexed the head official—how it was we could afford to travel in a private carriage, and yet possessed so very little luggage. It will be remembered that early in our journey we had left the great bulk of this behind, on finding its transport inconvenient.

The questions were, of course, put to us in German, and Fry answered them to the best of his ability linguistically and otherwise. But when he was asked our object in visiting Austria, he thought it necessary to consult Foster and myself, as he knew it would never be credited if he said we were simply following in the steps of an American poet, for the purpose of obtaining sketches of the localities he had traversed. This consultation, which was, of course, in English, led to the concoction of some cock and bull story which it was thought more likely to be swallowed, the stolid official appearing not to understand a single word of our conversation. At length the examination came to an end: our luggage was packed up again, the carriage cushions were replaced, and our passports were handed to us by our inquisitorial questioner, who politely wished us a pleasant journey in the most perfect English; by way, I suppose, of a hint that he had understood all we had been saying, and, in spite of our fibs, had come to the conclusion that

we were not engaged in any of the manifold conspiracies then rife against the Austrian government.

At the village of Waidring in the Tyrol, close to the magnificent mountain pass of which Longfellow speaks in "Hyperion," an odd misunderstanding introduced us to the parish priest, and led to our spending a pleasant evening with him. Fry, who was a very fussy individual, had suddenly taken it into his head that he would be unable to sleep that night unless he was shaved before going to bed, and he asked excitedly of everybody at the inn to fetch him a barber. How it happened I cannot conceive, but under the idea that Fry wanted to confess himself someone went for the priest of the place, and shortly afterwards the latter made his appearance. Luckily he understood English perfectly, and, after laughing good-humouredly at the explanation given, accepted our invitation to discuss a bottle or two of the host's best wine. He proved to be a most entertaining companion—read "Pickwick" with delight in the original, quoted and chuckled over Old Weller's exasperation with the Reverend Stiggins, and then, changing the subject, expressed himself an intense admirer of Uhland's poems. He translated the "Black Knight" and the "Castle by the Sea" for us in a literal form to prove to us how admirably Longfellow had rendered them into English verse. I had shown him the volume of "Hyperion" I carried about with me, and interested him so much in the romance that I doubt not the work was soon added to the priest's little library of English books.

Fry's presentiment—no shave, no sleep—proved to be correct, and not only did he lie awake himself but he did his best to disturb the rest of others. In the dead stillness of the night fancying that he heard someone stealing softly into his room, and calling to mind the many stories current of cut-throat innkeepers in lonely places dispatching their

guests, he jumped out of bed, flung open the window, and frantically shouted, "Murder! murder!" much to the perplexity of the slumbering inhabitants of the little Tyrolean village whom he aroused with his terrified cries. Next morning the good-natured innkeeper asked us if our friend was right in his upper storey, while as for Fry he simply chuckled over the whole affair as though it were an excellent joke.

On arriving at Salzburg we found the passport regulations in force there uncommonly strict; obliging us to pose before the civil authorities while a minute description of all our graces and defects, such as our foreign office passport naturally failed to furnish, was leisurely noted down by scrutinising officials in the police books—huge indexed volumes that could only be moved from their shelves with difficulty—before we were permitted to enter the city. Our passports were, I remember, taken away, and in place of them a simple permit of residence was given to us, which had to be produced at the police office every time we desired to pass beyond the city boundaries even for an hour or two. If I recollect rightly, when we went on to St. Gilgen, where we intended to remain for several days, our passports were still withheld from us, and we only obtained them on returning to Salzburg prior to our taking the diligence from that city to Munich.

We found Longfellow's descriptions of St. Gilgen—"the little white village reposing like a swan on its reedy nest"—and the places adjacent minutely exact. Before the inn still stood the broad-armed tree shading the benches and tables beneath. The painting of the bear hunt across the front of the house had perceptibly faded, and the sun dial was becoming obliterated. The smart servant girl had given place to another equally smart, who also wore the distinguishing silver spoon in her girdle, and was much given to flirtation with the male guests. At

the village school-house opposite the school girls and bare-footed urchins were still spelling out their lessons on a bench at the door, while at the next house more than one poor woman was knitting in the shade. The fountain still discharged its stream of clear water into the rough wooden trough; the travelling carriage without horses stood at the inn door where the postilion lounged; and only the blacksmith was wanting to complete the picture which Longfellow had painted so minutely some fifteen years before.

The landlord and his wife were verging on a green old age. Having pointed out to the former his name in the copy of "Hyperion" which I carried about with me, the old man read it through his spectacles with undisguised delight; and pressing his finger against his breast said proudly, "Franz Schöndorfer! that's me! that's me!"

We made the excursion to St. Wolfgang in a boat rowed by a couple of peasant women, passing beneath the "mighty precipice of Falkenstein," when to the evident trepidation of our boatwomen we ventured to shout out one or two of the least objectionable phrases described in "Hyperion," as having been made use of by Berkley, and which the echo repeated with that "awful distinctness" which Longfellow speaks of. Soon after arriving at St. Wolfgang something like a storm seeming to be gathering —due, the superstitious boatwomen insisted, to our profane behaviour when putting the Falkenstein echo to the test— our rowers, praying fervently with every stroke of their oars, spirited us back to St. Gilgen with all possible despatch. On landing, after I had paid them the money agreed upon for the trip, they with sundry curtseys and smiles chattered away with perplexing volubility. Catching, however, the sound of the word "*trinkgeld*," I gave them each an extra zwanzigger, and "I thank you! I kiss your hand! I thank you!" came from both their lips;

then quick as lightning, each seized a hand and smothered it with kisses before I could comprehend the meaning of the strange proceeding, which was merely putting into practice a custom (almost fallen into desuetude) of kissing the hand of the donor of a gift. The use of the phrase was common enough, but one had never before found it put into practice.

On our way homewards we picked up a travelling acquaintance at Munich with Mr. Acton Smee Ayrton, subsequently M.P. for the Tower Hamlets, and an excellent, though unpopular chief commissioner of Works simply because he kept a tight hold on the purse strings of his department. We visited with him Schwanthaler's big statue of Bavaria at the Ruhmeshalle in the outskirts of Munich, and of course mounted up into the head, some sixty or seventy feet from the ground, for the sake of the view to be obtained through its gigantic eyes. A few years afterwards I came across Ayrton again on board the Great Eastern steamship, and subsequently got to know him more intimately when the agitation for the repeal of the paper duty, in which he took rather an active part, was in full swing. His long sojourn in India, accumulating money there by practising as a solicitor, had told upon his liver and given a deep jaundiced hue to his complexion.

Some time after my return to England I had a visit from Captain Mayne Reid, whom I knew very well from having engraved many of the illustrations to the series of boys' books which he wrote for Mr. David Bogue. In his young days, when he was a journalist in New York, Reid had flung aside his pen to take part in the war against Mexico, and while still burning with military ardour he had come to Europe to place his sword, as the expression goes, at the service of the Hungarians. But before the expedition which he was endeavouring to get together in London was organised, news came of the Temesvar disaster

and Kossuth's flight into Turkey, and with this the captain's dream of repeating his Mexican exploits on Hungarian soil was at once dispelled.

The object of Mayne Reid's visit to me was to obtain the passport with which I and Mr. Birket Foster had lately been travelling, now that, as he said, we could have no further use for it. He admitted he wanted it to enable him to carry out a mad scheme he had devised of going to Milan in company of Kossuth—the pair of them being of course duly disguised—to assist in a rising against the Austrians which had just then taken place. Knowing that travelling in their own names would lead to their arrest as soon as they crossed the Swiss frontier Reid was anxious to slip past the authorities with a false passport. He was good enough to say that if I had any scruples about handing over the document direct to him I might easily contrive to lose it; and he suggested that at a given time on a particular day I should accidentally draw it out of my pocket with my handkerchief and let it drop on the ground at a certain spot in Lincoln's-inn-fields where a trusty person would be on the look-out to pick it up.

As may be supposed I scouted the suggestion, and told the fire-eating captain that with every disposition to oblige him neither I nor Mr. Birket Foster would care to become marked individuals in the eyes of the police authorities all over Europe.

XX.

(1853-56.)

MACAULAY'S SPEECHES—TALKS AND WALKS WITH MR. COBDEN—THE "ILLUSTRATED TIMES"—GUSTAVE DORÉ —COUNT D'ORSAY'S WELLINGTON BUST—AT THE PALACE OF ST. CLOUD—SOME LONDON PRISONS.

THIS year (1853) I was drawn into an epistolary controversy with Mr. Macaulay in reference to an edition of his speeches which I had collected and published. Subsequently the distinguished essayist and historian rated me so soundly in print for my share in this transaction that I was induced to take counsel's opinion as to whether an action for libel would lie. The reply was in the affirmative, but I was warned at the same time that it was doubtful whether any of the judges would venture to sum up against the great man, consequently all idea of seeking legal redress had to be abandoned. Mr. Macaulay's parliamentary speeches, I should mention, had been taken from "Hansard's Debates," and Mr. Hansard had been paid his own demand for the privilege. At my interview with Mr. Hansard I learnt from him that before any speech was published in "the Debates" a proof was invariably sent to the M.P. who had delivered it, and who returned the proof if any correction were necessary within a certain number of weeks; otherwise it was assumed, in accordance with an understanding of which all the members were cognisant, that the speech might be put to press as it stood. I mention this because Mr. Macaulay based his indignation against me on a misrepresentation of his own

to the effect that I had charged myself with editing his orations, whereas, so far as the parliamentary speeches were concerned, I had simply undertaken to reprint them verbatim from "Hansard," which in those days was commonly accepted in the House of Commons as an unimpeachable authority.

In an edition which Mr. Macaulay himself subsequently prepared of his speeches, which he professed to have merely revised while materially altering them to suit his more recent opinions, he took special exception to the report published in "Hansard" of a speech he had delivered on the Dissenters' Chapel bill, and put forward an amended version of his own ; justifying this mode of dealing with speeches, the accuracy of which for twenty or thirty years had passed unchallenged, by the following ingenious piece of special pleading :—

"I do not pretend to give with accuracy the diction of these speeches which I did not myself correct within a week after they were delivered. Many expressions, and a few paragraphs linger in my memory. But the rest, including much that had been carefully premeditated, is irrevocably lost. . . . My delivery is, I believe, too rapid.[1] Able shorthand writers have complained that they could not follow me, and . . . as I am unable to recall the precise words which I used, I have done my best to put my memory into words which I might have used."

This was Mr. Macaulay's complacent justification for changing the language of the speeches included in the collection made by himself, but he was silent as to his reason for omitting his famous oration in favour of the ballot, and his three speeches reflecting upon Sir James Graham for the opening of Mazzini's letters at the Post Office. The reason is, however, not far to seek. The whigs, when in office scouted the idea of the ballot, and as

[1] I am unaware whether Mr. Macaulay spoke as rapidly in private—where, as is well-known, he commonly monopolised all the conversation—as he here represents himself as doing in Parliament, but I remember that Lord Brougham, who was sufficiently loquacious himself, spitefully compared Macaulay's incessant flow of talk to the chatter of ten parrots and a chime of bells.

for Sir James Graham, he had veered round to whiggery since Thomas Slingsby Duncombe assailed him for tampering in the interest of Austria with Mazzini's correspondence.

While the war in the Crimea was dragging its slow length along, and the repeal of the newspaper stamp was being fitfully agitated, I drew up a petition to the House of Commons, in the course of which I quoted statistics to prove that the cheap, and what Lord John Russell stigmatised as a ribald press, had furnished far fewer occasions for setting the law in motion than its high-priced contemporaries had done. I forwarded this petition to Mr. Cobden with a note asking him to be good enough to present it, and next day received an invitation to call upon him; when, after mentioning that the petition furnished many excellent arguments for getting rid of the obnoxious stamp, he promised to recommend the parliamentary committee on petitions to have it printed and circulated with the votes, which was eventually done.

This incident led to a brief acquaintance with Mr. Cobden, on whom I often called while the agitation against the newspaper stamp was going on. On these occasions he generally invited me to walk with him from Grosvenor-place to the Free Trade Club, then located in the Adelphi, when I remember his heavy and uncertain tread made it exceedingly difficult for me to keep step with him. Cobden was most anxious about the repeal of the newspaper stamp, which he regarded as something iniquitous, and said he wished Dickens and other popular writers would take the matter up, and help to rid us of it as they had of other obnoxious abuses. He constantly exclaimed against the overwhelming, and as he maintained, the pernicious influence of "the Times," and wished to counteract it by calling into existence a cheap daily press in all the large provincial towns, where an independent public opinion might be created to hold the influence exercised by the metropolis

in proper check. At this time Cobden was in the habit of highly praising Mr. Gladstone, whom he thought the only man of any note among the governing set, whig or tory, who was influenced by argument, and had the courage of his convictions. Gladstone, although then a member of a conservative administration, was, in Cobden's view, the hope of the liberal party; the great free trade leader seeming to have divined at this early date, the services which Mr. Gladstone was eventually to render to the popular cause. Cobden could scarcely be said to have shined in conversation, and one soon discovered that it was useless attempting to converse with him on general topics; he cared nothing for desultory talk, and whatever subject might be started, he quickly brought it round to a political or economic one, when he always showed himself particularly anxious to acquire information outside his own great store of knowledge.

When the repeal of the newspaper stamp had become imminent, Bogue, the publisher, influenced by the circumstance of the Crimean war being then in progress, proposed to me the starting of a cheap illustrated paper, and I agreed to join him in the enterprise. We decided to call the new paper the "Illustrated Times," settled it should be a trifle smaller in size than the "Illustrated London News," and fixed the price of it at twopence. I at once dispatched young Julian Portch, who had been a pupil of my own, to the Crimea to make sketches in the British camp; and arranged with Captain, afterwards Major-General, Crealock, who was with the troops, to send sketches of any interesting incidents that came under his notice.

For the ordinary illustrations of the paper I secured the services of Edward Morin, a spirited French artist, then located in London; Hablot Browne (Phiz); Birket Foster; Kenny Meadows; Ansdell, the royal academician; Gustave Doré, then a young artist whom Phillipon, late of "the

Charivari," had just introduced to the Parisian public; C. H. Bennett, who, although but a poor draughtsman, possessed a highly original humorous fancy ; Charles Doyle, brother of the celebrated Richard, and now the able director of the Dublin national gallery; G. H. Andrews, a clever marine artist; William M'Connell, a somewhat vulgarized imitator of John Leech, and Gustave Janet, a versatile and graceful French draughtsman. Subsequently, George Cruikshank and Harrison Weir made a few drawings for me, and two very smart young ladies, Adelaide and Florence Claxton, who had been round the world in their teens, cleverly satirized the social follies of both hemispheres. Later on, young Matt Morgan, afterwards the crack cartoonist of the scurrilous "Tomahawk," and then just home from Algiers, contributed some picturesque sketches, and clever Charles Keene, during several years, supplied the paper with a considerable number of capital designs.

Phiz made many drawings for the paper, comprising humorous social scenes, characteristic types of military recruits, hunting incidents, Christmas festivities, pantomime audiences, and the like; and for so long as we succeeded in getting the "copy" in sufficient time, he designed the illustrations to Sala's clever but painfully discursive novel, "The Baddington Peerage," which ran its erratic course through the "Illustrated Times." I remember complaining to the author that in one long chapter the only advance made in the story was the hero's ordering a cup of tea, and that the sole incident in the following chapter was the bringing of it. Like Leech, Phiz was of a retiring disposition. He lived at Duppa's-hill, Croydon, then an open down, and during the hunting season found most of his enjoyment in following the Surrey hounds. He came, it was commonly said, of an old French stock, the Lebruns, whom the revocation of the edict of

Nantes had driven to England, where they eventually anglicised their name to Browne.

Gustave Doré—Théophile Gautier's *gamin de génie*—when he commenced to draw for me was little more than a youth, who had quite recently made his mark in Phillipon's "Musée Français-Anglais," to which he contributed some striking imaginative designs, based on certain dramatic incidents in the Crimean War. His rapidity with his pencil was extraordinary, and though he eventually became overburthened with work he under no circumstances refused it. Like other Frenchmen he was fond of buying house property, to be paid for by monthly instalments, and while he was a young man he laboured for years like a giant to meet the heavy engagements he thus contracted. At this time his price for drawings of a newspaper page size was only £6, so that even with all his marvellous rapidity his biographer's estimate that between 1850 and 1870 he made no less than £14,000 a-year,[1] or nearly £270 a-week is simply preposterous.

Doré, in his transcripts of Spanish and other scenes, trusted far more to his remarkable keenness of observation than to the jotting down of details in his note-book, having, as he jocosely expressed it, an abundance of collodion in his head. A younger brother of mine, Frank Vizetelly, was a great friend of Doré's, who painted a full length portrait of him on the walls of his spacious studio in the Rue St. Dominique. The portrait was life-size, and so life-like that every one visiting the studio for the first time took it for the moment for a real individual. I recollect the gay evenings there used to be at this period at Doré's *atelier*. Frequently troops of artist-friends would look in, and there would be music and singing, fencing and boxing and *la savate*, gymnastics and circus feats, with amateur clowns posing on their heads and trotting about on their hands with their legs flourishing in the air.

[1] Life and Reminiscences of Gustave Doré, by Blanche Roosevelt.

Gustave Doré was the gayest and wildest of the mad party, and, indeed, until he was thirty he always seemed to be exuberantly happy. Five years later he was a saddened man, and on attaining fifty was in a state of chronic wretchedness, solely because French art critics refused to recognise in him a great painter. They made it their business, he used to say, to confine an artist to some particular groove from which he must not presume to stray. In his case they sought to restrain him to drawing in black and white, and positively contested his right to paint; whereas Doré himself regarded the tall pale Christs and gigantic apostles that filled his colossal canvasses as his grandest works, and used often to say, "If I had to begin my life again I wouldn't make a single drawing. If it were not for my drawings more justice would be rendered to my paintings." So convinced was he of this that in his later years he disliked to hear his drawings spoken about, and chance acquaintances, who thought to please him by complimenting him on their marvellous power and originality, speedily discovered their mistake.

By far the best things drawn by C. H. Bennett for the "Illustrated Times" were his clever series, "the Origin of Species," in which certain familiar human types were depicted in gradual stages of Darwinesque development from kindred animals, such as the pig, the bull, the parrot, the ass, the owl, the bull-dog, and the like. Bennett usually failed in his attempts at characteristic portraiture, although he prided himself a good deal on his efforts in this direction from having been selected by Mark Lemon to make sketches of minor notabilities in the House of Commons for the use of the "Punch" cartoonists.

T. H. Nicholson, who was another "Illustrated Times" artist, confined himself chiefly to equestrian subjects. He was a crack draughtsman of horses, delineating them with considerable spirit, but in a rather conventional style.

He modelled well in plaster, and no secret was made of Count D'Orsay's obligations to him in regard to his famous equestrian statuettes and miniature busts, the faces of which were modelled by Behnes before he became celebrated as a sculptor. The statuette of the Duke of Wellington on horseback was undoubtedly Nicholson's, and that famous bust of the iron duke which was to make the fortune of the lucky manufacturer who reproduced it in porcelain, is said to have been his and Behnes's joint work.

Sir Henry Cole—Old King Cole of the Brompton boilers, and Felix Flummery of the art-manufacture craze —used to tell an amusing story of the high estimate, artistic and pecuniary, which D'Orsay set upon this production. The count had written to ask him to call at Gore House, and on his proceeding there, after handing his card through the wicket, he was cautiously admitted to the grounds and safely piloted between two enormous mastiffs to the door of the house. He was then conducted to the count, whom he found pacing up and down Lady Blessington's drawing-room in a gorgeous dressing-gown.

D'Orsay, Cole used to say, at once broke out with—"You are a friend of Mr. Minton's! I can make his fortune for him!" Then turning to the servant, "François," said he, "go to my studio and in the corner you will find a bust. Cover it over with your handkerchief and bring it carefully here." François soon returned carrying his burthen as tenderly as though it were a baby, and when he had deposited it on the table, the count removed the handkerchief and posing before the bust with looks of enrapt admiration, he promptly asked Cole, "What do you think of that?" "It's a close likeness," Cole cautiously replied. "Likeness! indeed it *is* a likeness!" shouted the count, "why, Douro when he saw it exclaimed, 'D'Orsay, you quite appal me with the likeness to my father!'" The count then confided to Cole that the duke had given him

four sittings, after refusing, said he, a single sitting to "that fellow Landseer."

The duke it seems came to inspect the bust after it was completed. In D'Orsay's biassed eyes he was as great in art as he was in war, and always went, the count maintained, straight up to the finest thing in the room to look at it. Naturally, therefore, he at once marched up to the bust, paused, and shouted, "By G—— D'Orsay you have done what those d——d busters never could do." The puff preliminary over, the count next proceeded to business. "The old duke will not live for ever," he sagely remarked; he must die one of these days. Now, what I want you to do is to advise your friend Minton to make ten thousand copies of that bust, to pack them up in his warehouse and on the day of the duke's death to flood the country with them, and heigh presto! his fortune is made."

The count hinted that he expected a trifle of £10,000 for his copyright, but Cole's friend, Minton, did not quite see this, and proposed a royalty upon every copy sold. D'Orsay, who was painfully hard up for ready cash, indignantly spurned the offer, and Minton missed the fortune which the count protested was within his grasp.

The literary staff of the "Illustrated Times" included James Hannay,[1] who had at this time worked his way to the position of a quarterly reviewer; Robert Brough, whose chronic melancholia never seemed to interfere with the sportive and sarcastic wit that flowed freely from his pen; Edmund Yates, who came to the paper at its fourth number with the suggestion of his popular "Lounger at the Clubs,"—undoubtedly the earliest essay in the direction of society journalism—in which later on clever and sagacious J. C. Parkinson, and House of Commons doorkeeper White collaborated; George Augustus Sala, who transferred his picturesque pen to the "Illustrated Times,"

[1] See *ante*, p. 323.

after a tiff with Charles Dickens while contributing to "Household Words," and who had not yet commenced "roaring gently as any sucking dove" among the other young lions of the "Daily Telegraph" menagerie; Sutherland Edwards, whose musical notes were then as lively and learned as they have continued to be for five-and-thirty years afterwards; Frederick Greenwood, who subsequently founded the "Pall Mall Gazette" and speedily placed it in the very first rank among London newspapers; Augustus Mayhew the *gros bon enfant*, who after pretending to study art in Paris took to writing funny books and funnier farces, and whom everybody liked and laughed with; Edward Draper, whose weekly commentary on "Law and Crime" was a notable feature of the paper to the very last; White, formerly a bookseller of Bedford, for whom the whig duke obtained the post of House of Commons doorkeeper, owing to his radical opinions being too pronounced for the calm atmosphere of a quiet country town; and who graphically chronicled the Inner Life of our so-called great legislative assembly in the "Illustrated Times" for eight or ten consecutive sessions. To the above may be added half-a-score of other writers, who joined the staff at different times, including practical John Hollingshead, scholarly W. B. Rands, clever John Lang, Tom Hood, Tom Robertson, Thomas Archer, Blanchard Jerrold, and his brother-in-law Edmund Blanchard.

The paper was announced to appear on June 9, 1855, by which date it was calculated the bill for the abolition of the newspaper stamp would have passed the House of Lords and received the queen's assent. Every scheme that could be devised was employed to give publicity to the new journal. Not only was it extensively advertised in the newspapers and on the walls of every town in the kingdom, but the pavements round the provincial exchanges were indelibly stencilled during the night time with the

announcement. The result was that before the day of publication, orders for nearly 100,000 copies— an unheard of quantity in those days—were received from newsmen for the first number.

Meanwhile an unforeseen difficulty had arisen; the progress of the bill through the House of Lords had been delayed and it was evident the measure would not pass for several weeks. This caused considerable consternation among those who like ourselves had spent large sums in announcing the publication of new unstamped journals on Saturday the 9th of June, and I remember Mr. Charles Knight, Mr. John Cassell, and others calling upon me to inquire what we proposed doing under the changed condition of things. Mr. Bogue and I had already come to a decision. We had spent between one and two thousand pounds in advertisements which appeared to promise an excellent result, and were disinclined to sacrifice the advantages we had gained. If we published without a stamp the government could only sue us for penalties, which in our simplicity we thought might amount to a fine of a thousand pounds or so, and we believed that from the publicity which would be given to the circumstance this would be money well spent.

The "Illustrated Times" was accordingly published without a stamp on the day announced and secured at once a circulation of 200,000 copies, but none of the other contemplated newspapers ventured to make their appearance. We issued several numbers before the newspaper stamp abolition bill came into force, and in my capacity of registered proprietor I was sued by the commissioners of inland revenue for penalties amounting to £12,000. I at once sought Mr. Cobden's advice and he told me not to be alarmed, that the government would not dare do anything so unpopular as to press the proceedings to their legitimate issue, and his surmise proved to be correct. Messrs. Lewis

& Lewis appeared for me to the writ and the suit proceeded no further.

The success of the "Illustrated Times" was something marvellous. Five or six sets of both engravings and type had to be electrotyped and stereotyped to enable as many sets of the paper to be put to machine simultaneously, still with all this it was found impossible to supply the full early demand on the Friday afternoon. On one occasion when the doors of the publishing office had been locked, to keep out the crowd of irate newsagents who were in the habit of demolishing the counters and partitions whenever they were kept waiting an inordinate time, the lock was blown open with gunpowder and a free fight ensued between the inrushing newsagents and the publisher's assistants, who had to be reinforced by the editorial staff before their assailants could be chased off the premises. One writer, who now wields a potent pen in the reviews and journals of the time, greatly distinguished himself with his fists, I remember, on this tumultuous occasion.

When a month or two after this incident the queen and Prince Albert were about to pay a visit to the Emperor and Empress of the French, I sent my younger brother, Frederick, to Paris beforehand, to secure official facilities for sketches being made of all the more interesting incidents. He saw the emperor's chamberlain, Count Bacciocchi, time after time, and was politely led to believe that his request would be complied with, but he failed to make more satisfactory progress. When the time for the visit drew nigh, I hastened to Paris myself and obtained an interview with the imperial grand chamberlain, who had married a lady of the emperor's family—a lucky accident for him, as in addition to his handsome salary he managed to pocket under the empire a quarter of a million sterling of public money.

As it happened, however, he did not profit long by his

ill-gotten gains, for I remember he was soon afterwards attacked by a singular malady. Some occult influence which he was unable to resist impelled him to keep constantly on the move, obliging him to walk for hours and hours, until indeed he dropped from sheer exhaustion. He then slept for a short time, but no sooner was he awake than he felt compelled to start off again and continue his interminable peregrination like the mythical Wandering Jew. He existed in this state for several months, his once burly figure wasting gradually away, till he shrunk to a mere shadow of his former self and eventually died.

I recognised that nothing more than fair words were likely to be obtained from Count Bacciocchi, and, therefore betook myself to Lord Cowley, whom the Parisians used to twit so much about his smokeless kitchen chimneys. He told me that he had an appointment with the emperor that afternoon, and promised, when speaking to him about the English newspapers generally, to make particular mention of the paper I represented. Later on, I learnt from the ambassador that he had done as he promised, and that I was to call on General Rollin at the Tuileries at one o'clock the following day.

On doing so, I found the general out, and when he returned in a highly flurried state, he begged me to accompany him to his dressing-room, where he proceeded to encase his portly person in full-dress uniform, for a reception the emperor was to hold at two o'clock, and while he puffed and blowed as he struggled excitedly into his tight-fitting red pantaloons, he informed me that everything was settled, and that an imperial order had been drawn up in my favour which I could obtain from the registrar at St. Cloud as early as I pleased the next day.

I went to St. Cloud with my brother and a French artist, who was to make the necessary sketches, and after

securing the order—which bore the emperor's signature and that of General Rollin, as adjutant-general of the imperial household, and authorised me to be present at all the state receptions and entertainments given in honour of the Queen of England—we boldly presented ourselves at the principal entrance to the palace. While we were waiting in the hall for a servant to conduct us to the apartments destined for the queen, a carriage drew up from which the emperor and General Rollin alighted. On seeing three strange, and possibly somewhat suspicious-looking individuals standing at the foot of the palace staircase, the emperor started back as if alarmed, but on General Rollin advancing and shaking hands with me he was evidently reassured.

We were now shown to the queen's apartments, and the artist at once proceeded with his sketches. By-and-by the hour for *déjeuner* arrived, whereupon the Frenchman coolly rang the bell and inquired of the magnificent individual in the imperial green and gold livery who answered it, if we could have *déjeuner* served to us—just as though the palace were an hotel. The flunkey gravely shook his powdered head and was then requested to bring some plates, knives and forks, and the like; while my brother proceeded to the Hôtel de la Tête Noire to secure a cold fowl and a couple of bottles of Pontet Canet for our luncheon.

The footman having brought us plates of precious Sèvres porcelain, and wine glasses engraved all over with imperial bees and the Napoleonic cypher, we sat down to our hastily improvised repast. At its conclusion, our artistic friend nonchalantly lighted up his cigar and smoked in the royal bed-chamber for the rest of the day, and also on the day following, until within a few hours of her majesty's arrival at St. Cloud. For the time being we had the run of the wing of the palace where the queen,

Prince Albert and the Prince of Wales and their suites were shortly to be installed; and on several occasions we encountered the emperor, invariably with a cigarette between his lips, and always ready to courteously acknowledge our salute. Once he addressed me quite unexpectedly to my very great embarrassment, although it was only to remark in English that he hoped we were progressing satisfactorily with our labours.

On the day the queen was to arrive, as we were entering the chateau on the garden side, the empress descended the steps and passed quite close to us. She was about to take a private drive in the park, and a carriage was waiting into which I remember Colonel Fleury, who, according to the gossips of the boulevards, was too openly her admirer, handed her with a display of rapturous regard. On the carriage driving off we made for the queen's apartments and the artist had scarcely started on his work, when a discussion arose, between the queen's confidential bed-chamber woman and a French workman, which afforded us much amusement. The former had evidently been accustomed to have her orders promptly obeyed, and she stared amazed when the workman showed signs of hesitation. He was unwilling, it appeared, to saw several inches off the legs of a valuable marqueterie table, formerly belonging to Marie Antoinette, which the bed-chamber woman had placed beside a small couch at the foot of the queen's bedstead. "At this table," said the abigail, consequentially, "her majesty will read every evening for half-an-hour or so before she goes to bed, and as she will require to rest her arms upon it, it is imperative that it should be a very low one." The workman was reluctant to carry out the instructions given him and argued the point while the bed-chamber woman was biting her lips with vexation; but eventually he gave in and sawed off a few inches of the offending legs, thereby, of course, damaging beyond repair this historic piece of furniture.

A bribe of a couple of francs secured us the four small bits of marqueterie, as a memento of the amusing incident.

We had left the palace to dine at the Hôtel de la Tête Noire on the evening the queen was to arrive, and on our return at dark found the courtyard full of troops—picked men of the imperial guard—and the band of the Guides playing triumphal airs. Orders had been given to allow no one to pass, but the document I produced at once secured me an interview with the officer in command. It authorised, however, only the passage of a single individual, and the difficulty was to prevail on the commandant to permit three people to pass with it. I forget all the arguments that we used—though years afterwards, at the time of the siege of Paris, I learned it was possible to accomplish a good deal in this way by judiciously flattering the *grande nation.* At any rate the arguments proved efficacious, and we soon found ourselves in the palace vestibule among a crowd of imperial footmen, and the Anaks of the Cent-gardes in their burnished breast-plates and gorgeous uniforms.

A little scene now ensued suggestive of a full-dress theatrical rehearsal. Marshal Vaillant, minister of war, made his appearance and disposed the Cent-gardes in a variety of positions, but evidently not in any instance to his own satisfaction. Eventually the idea occurred to him to station them, one on either side, up every step of the palace staircase, and the effect was a singularly striking one. Then the empress's ladies of honour were summoned and took their places at the top of the staircase among the marshals and generals there congregated, the radiant robes and brilliant uniforms, with the blaze of jewelry and military decorations, presenting a magnificent *coup d'œil* against a background of luxuriant tropical foliage.

Suddenly a distant salvo of artillery was heard, whereupon, under the idea that the queen had arrived, the em-

press's ladies, the marshals and the generals descended the grand staircase and arranged themselves in the centre of the vestibule, the ladies forming a semi-circle and the marshals and others being posted behind them. Then a tall lady with a sweet but saddened expression of countenance, in whom one instantly recognised the empress, glided silently in by a side door, followed by the Princess Mathilde, and took her place in advance of the assembled group. Presently it was discovered that the alarm was a false one, and that the queen was not likely to arrive yet awhile. The empress, who was then in an interesting condition, showed signs of fatigue and sought for a seat, running round the vestibule in search of one with her ladies of honour at her heels, and the corpulent marshals and generals of the second empire waddling at a respectful distance after them. It was the game of follow-my-leader under a new aspect. It chanced that there was only a single settee in the vestibule and on this our party were seated. We instantly rose up and moved aside so as to place the seat at the empress's service, but she gracefully bowing declined it. Eventually a bath chair was wheeled by a servant into a neighbouring corridor and in this the empress seated herself, until the band of the Guides striking up "God save the queen," and the sound of carriage wheels grating on the gravel gave notice that the expected guests had at last arrived.

My brother and myself with M. Gustave Janet and another French artist, who had been commissioned by the emperor to paint a picture of the incident, were the only persons present on the queen's arrival at the palace of St. Cloud, beyond those officially connected with the reception. The two French artists had plenty of scandalous stories to tell regarding people in high places, and I was amused by their speculations as to whether the chaste Queen of England would condescend to kiss the Princess Mathilde.

The one found the idea altogether "too shocking," whereas Gustave Janet thought that royal and imperial etiquette would outweigh any personal antipathy, and a wager between the two was the result.

The emperor having assisted the queen to alight, a smile of evident satisfaction brightened his cold impassive countenance as he led her up to the empress, and a chirruping of kisses ensued. It was undoubtedly a proud moment for the parvenu potentate when he realised that he had at last secured the Queen of England as a guest beneath his roof. Princess Mathilde on being introduced to the queen was kissed by her without the slightest hesitation, and Janet consequently won his wager. Prince Albert blandly smiling engaged in lively talk with the empress, to whom he presently offered his arm, and immediately afterwards the Princess Mathilde appropriated that of the young Prince of Wales. The emperor now led the queen towards the staircase, which rose to the right of the vestibule and was only visible when the corner was turned. One noticed that her majesty started suddenly back on being unexpectedly confronted with the giants of the Cent-gardes, in their gleaming breastplates and with drawn sabres, standing like statues on every stair, while the emperor almost chuckled on observing her evident alarm.

Next day was Sunday and a day of repose, but on the Monday I was present at the queen's reception of the Corps diplomatique at the Elysée. I presented my authority to the concierge of the palace who, after closely scrutinising it, consulted the officer of the guard. There was, however, no gainsaying the imperial signature, and I was ceremoniously conducted, although in ordinary morning dress, to the apartment where the foreign ambassadors bedizened with countless orders were assembled, waiting for the queen's arrival. I found myself the only individual in every-day attire among this galaxy of brilliant costumes,

just as I was the sole person present who was unaccredited to the Court of the Tuileries; and I was glad to escape the observation directed towards me, by taking up a position behind the door. By-and-by the queen, attended by Lords Clarendon and Cowley, entered the apartment and spoke a few polite words to each of the foreign representatives who had posted themselves erect against the walls of the room like so many puppets, and bowed mechanically to her majesty as she walked leisurely round.

Before leaving Paris I handed over the emperor's signed order to my brother who, on exhibiting it to Napoleon III.'s tailor, obtained the loan of a court suit, and in this blue and gold frippery he figured at the night fête at the palace of Versailles, and the state performances in the little theatre of St. Cloud, and, "whilst the music maddened the whirling skirts of the ball," danced till daybreak at the Hôtel de Ville. I often laughed over his audacity and his boastful stories of the grand acquaintances he had made, and the intrigues he had taken part in under his court disguise. Some years afterwards, when on a voyage to the Cape, the poor fellow had the ill-fortune to fall overboard, on the ship's lurching during a heavy gale. As the accident happened at night-time, although my brother was a first-rate swimmer and life buoys were at once flung overboard and boats lowered, the efforts made to save him proved unsuccessful.

A few months after the queen's trip to Paris Sebastopol fell, and the "Illustrated Times" was so fortunate as to receive the first sketches that reached this country of an event that had been long wearily waited for. These depicted among other incidents the conflagration that preceded the retreat of the Russian troops, and the aspect of the principal streets of the city on the entry of the allies. There was of course great excitement over the news of the downfall of the Russian stronghold, and it was

officially intimated to the publisher of the paper that the queen desired to see the original sketches received from the Crimea. These were accordingly forwarded to Windsor for her majesty's inspection.

Another illustrated paper called the "Illustrated News of the World" made its appearance soon after this time, the principal feature of which was its steel-engraved portraits of political and other celebrities. Mr. John Tallis, who was the speculative capitalist, had recently retired from some canvassing publishing company with what forty or fifty years ago was regarded as a large fortune. His fingers were, however, soon itching to be at work again, and in this contingency chance threw him into contact with Herbert Ingram, of whom he offered to purchase the "Illustrated London News" for £100,000 it was said. Ingram, after accepting the offer, drew back at the last moment which greatly irritated hot-headed Tallis who vowed bitter vengeance, but unluckily for him this took the form of the newspaper I have spoken of.

Having, by the payment of some preposterous sum, secured publishing offices within a door or two of the "Illustrated London News," he entered on his doubtful campaign with insane confidence. The paper, a commonplace affair, without a spark of talent either in its engravings or its articles, proved a ludicrous failure. The sale was small and the advertisements few, while the outlay was exceptionally heavy owing to the cost of the steel-engraved portraits and the expense of printing them. In the course of a year or two, Tallis had lost nearly all he possessed without doing the "Illustrated London News" the smallest damage, whereupon his newspaper venture came to an end, and he was reduced to wooing fortune again in other fields of enterprise.

Several years after Henry Mayhew had completed his letters on "London Labour and the London Poor," under-

taken for the "Morning Chronicle" when it was under the management of Douglas Cook, the subsequent founder of "the Saturday Review," he engaged in a work on the London prisons, and I accompanied him on many of his visits to the various metropolitan jails. At this period the silent system was I remember rigidly enforced at Pentonville, then known as the model prison, and the prisoners wore not only parti-coloured clothes but a particular kind of mask which rendered it impossible for them to recognise one another. At chapel, where they were allowed to remove their strange looking visors, they were shut up in separate boxes, which admitted of their having a view of the clergyman and one or two of the warders, but prevented them from obtaining the smallest glimpse of each other. Yet this, we were told, was the time chosen for communications to pass between themselves. Half a dozen different ways of coughing expressed as many different things, shuffling the feet and cracking the finger joints had their special signification, and sniffing and sneezing their respective meanings.

At the female prison at Brixton, when we were shown over the nursery I remember noticing a number of benevolent-looking old ladies in charge of the little children born inside the prison, and whose mothers were still undergoing their sentences. On inquiring if these ancient dames were superannuated female warders entrusted with the care of these unfortunate little ones, I was surprised to learn that the majority had been convicted of poisoning their husbands or other relatives, or attempting in some way to murder them, and that it was solely owing to their great age that they had had their sentences commuted to penal servitude for life. It had formerly been the practice, we were told, for all children born inside the prison to remain immured there until their mothers' sentences expired, but owing to a young child, whom one of the female warders had taken

out by way of a treat, having delightedly exclaimed on seeing a horse for the first time: "Oh my! what a big cat!" it was decided that the little ones should in future have the opportunity of acquiring outside the prison walls some little knowledge of the distinction existing between the equine and feline species of domestic animals.

Henry Mayhew used to tell an amusing anecdote which he professed to have heard from the police officer who figures in it. This official, while leisurely driving a prison van was jocosely hailed by a fast young gentleman with the enquiry, "Got any room?" "Yes," was the prompt reply, "I 've kep' a place for you, jump in quick!" "Oh, but what's the fare?" cautiously asked the other. "Same as before," coaxingly responded the driver; "nice dry bread and water, and if you 're good taters and skilly on Sundays."

Henry Mayhew was one of those who thought the tinkering of the constitution might fairly wait until something had been done towards lessening poverty and endeavouring to reform the criminal population, a labour of which he appeared to take a far too hopeful view. One cause he especially espoused was that of the sorely complaining ticket-of-leave men, and several meetings were got up by him, at which, unintimidated by police presence, they could give expression to their grievances. A few years before, he had convened some meetings of male juvenile thieves at one of which on his announcing, by way of putting his audience at their ease, that with the exception of the visitors on the platform all those present were thieves, the comforting statement was greeted with three rounds of applause. Subsequently when a youth of nineteen was introduced to the meeting as having already been in prison twenty-nine times, the audience rose *en masse* to look at him, and signified their admiration of his career by a perfect delirium of cheers, clapping of hands and catcalls.

To secure a good attendance at the meetings it was found

necessary to bribe the men with the promise of a supper, or its equivalent. The speakers, who employed very few slang words, naturally inveighed against their assumed persecutors, the police, whom then as now they accused of taking delight in doing all they could to prevent them from getting an honest living. I was scarcely surprised at hearing one speaker describe ticket-of-leave men as "vilified innocent lambs;" but when another of the fraternity gravely maintained that half of the robberies and garrottings, which threw London into fits of terror, were committed by soldiers and militiamen, I was a trifle incredulous, in spite of the applause which greeted this astounding assertion. The speaker, thus encouraged, confidentially informed the meeting that "only last week one of your beautiful militiamen garrotted a man, and all the while a blooming p'liceman looked quietly on, watching how neatly the trick was done." This statement was greeted with roars of laughter, in the midst of which the orator, proud of the point he had made, judiciously retired from the platform.

At a meeting which was presided over by Lord Carnarvon we were much amused, I remember, by a bullet-headed, middle-aged individual suddenly starting up and warning his fellow ticket-of-leave men against Mayhew's philanthropic pretensions. "I am a bold man and come here to speak the truth," said he, as though this were a novelty with him. "Who, I should like to know, is Mr. Henry Mayhew? I want to caution you against speaking of your lives in public for his benefit. His object in calling us together is to sell his books. He 's a nice man, ain't he, to come here and get you to tell your confessions? He stated the other day in a Sunday paper that while a ticket-of-leave man could make £5 a-week and keep a pony trap by his old practices, it was useless to expect him to become a clerk, or a porter, for fifteen bob every

Saturday. That 's what your kind friend sitting there thinks of you!" The bold man having had his fling at the promoter of the meeting—in which it must be admitted, there was a certain amount of truth—then sat down, evidently well satisfied with himself, and a well-dressed mason next described in bitter terms the light in which ticket-of-leave men were commonly regarded.

"There are great numbers of people," said he, "who think we 're perfect wild beasts, and I have myself heard ladies say when they came to see us, 'Lord bless me! how very quiet they are!'"—here the audience could not resist shouting with laughter—"I am sure," resumed the speaker, "they must have thought we were chained demons."

Henry Mayhew was altogether a remarkable man, a singular combination of the humorist and the sciologist. He made his mark while a youth with the farce of "the Wandering Minstrel," and was afterwards the moving spirit in the starting of "Punch." Later on, he became a contributor to Jerrold's "Shilling magazine," for which he wrote some striking essays, notably one entitled, "What is the Cause of Wonderment?" and eventually he embarked upon his encyclopædia-like, "London Labour and the London Poor." Mayhew was a man of multifarious schemes and singularly original ideas, but of torpid energy; nimble of speech, but nerveless in action; a great adept at planning novel enterprises, but a feeble worker when the opportunity presented itself for developing them. The half-score of humorous books professed to be written by the Brothers Mayhew were indebted to him for their conception and most of their ideas, but were mainly penned by Augustus, who also collected much of the materials relating to the London poor.

XXI.

(1856-57.)

THE PALMER TRIAL—A FICTITIOUS LIFE OF THE POISONER—THE COST OF AN EXTINGUISHED CIGAR—A BOSTON ELECTION HIT—WITH THE SIAMESE AMBASSADOR IN THE THRONE ROOM AT WINDSOR AND IN A HAYMARKET NIGHT-HOUSE.

WHEN the investigations following upon the mysterious death of Cook, the young Lutterworth solicitor and betting man, in November of 1855, led to his friend Palmer, the sporting surgeon of Rugeley, being charged with having poisoned him, the "Illustrated Times" came out with a Rugeley number filled with portraits and views sketched on the spot, and a narrative of this and other crimes of a similar nature of which Palmer was supposed to be guilty; together with the private family history of the accused, and all the incriminating gossip concerning him that could be picked up in the place. The latter had been taken down by Augustus Mayhew, special correspondent of the paper, from the lips of persons intended to be called as witnesses at the forthcoming trial, and who had already given evidence before the coroner, whom, strange to say, Palmer had sought to bribe with a basket of game and a £5 note. To-day one cannot but express one's amazement that a quarter of a million copies of this number of the paper were allowed to be sold without the courts being appealed to on behalf of the accused, and special correspondent, editor, printer, publisher, and proprietor

being all promptly packed off to gaol for so outrageous a contempt of court.

The paper published column after column of statements made by the landlord, housekeeper, boots and postboy of the hotel where Cook died shouting "Murder!" in his agony, by the landlords, boots, and postboys of other hotels in the town, by Dr. Waddell, who had cautioned the insurance offices in which Palmer had sought to insure his brother's life for £82,000, and by Bate, the broken-down farmer earning twenty shillings a week, whose life Palmer tried hard to insure for no less than £25,000, evidently intending that he should be his next victim.

Parenthetically I may mention that Augustus Mayhew was one of the most jocose and lighthearted of special correspondents, and the lugubrious details he was sent to pick up at Rugeley were not by any means in his line. He was far more at home when describing, some few months before, the revival, after the lapse of a hundred years, of the well-known Dunmow custom of bestowing a flitch of fat bacon on any two married simpletons who chose to declare in presence of a gaping crowd that they had enjoyed a twelvemonth and a day of connubial felicity, and had never once wished themselves unwed.

A party of us went down to Dunmow to witness the so-called ceremony, which attracted shoals of people from London and the neighbourhood of the old Essex town. The streets were crowded with carriages, carts, vans, and waggons, and with jovial-looking farmers on horseback and grinning yokels on foot, while Harrison Ainsworth, the still popular novelist, thought it not beneath his dignity to pose as president over the select assemblage, crammed into the little pill-box called a town-hall.

Robert Bell, editor of the "British Poets," and Dudley Costello, a well-known magazine writer, vied with each other as to which should make the biggest fool of himself

in the respective rôles of counsel for and against the claimants to the coveted flitch. The bachelors forming half the jury had all got themselves up in their Sunday best, and pomaded their hair with great liberality, not to say ostentation; while the virgins—selected from the prettiest Drury-lane ballet girls, and "clothed all in modesty," like Tennyson's Godiva—looked becomingly bashful for the occasion. I remember, before the proceedings at the town-hall opened, hunting about for Mayhew, who had mysteriously disappeared, and discovering him, surrounded by these young ladies, in a garden arbour of the hotel, engaged in deftly pitching strawberries into their open mouths, while vowing the latter to be so unprecedentedly diminutive that only the minutest mincemeat could ever have been intended to pass between their cherry lips. Augustus Mayhew was essentially a ladies' man, and used gallantly to maintain that the pleasantest sound in nature was the merry laughter of a pretty girl.

A year or more afterwards, Mayhew, like the rest of his brothers, came in for a slice of Mayhew *père's* fortune, and for a while life to him, according to a favourite slang expression, was pretty much all "beer and skittles," only the proportion of the former to the latter was as Falstaff's "intolerable deal of sack" to his scurvy "ha'porth of bread."

During the twelve days the Palmer trial lasted I was present on every one of them at the Central Criminal Court, and took notes of the principal incidents. Admission was only to be obtained by tickets issued by the sheriffs, and, on the first day, when many thought to secure entrance to the court by means of liberal tips to the doorkeepers, the crush was tremendous. Of course these Old Bailey janitors indulged in the stereotype inquiry as to "the good of pushing," with the usual unsatisfactory result. Once inside the court, on glancing round,

I saw a few early aldermen in their great gold chains already installed on the bench, and looking as if they had been deprived of half their accustomed sleep, chatting languidly with the portly, rosy-gilled ordinary of Newgate (recognisable by his clerical band and gown), though it was fully a week before he was likely to be called upon to intone "Amen!" to the sentence pronounced by the lord chief justice after donning the ominous black cap.

Earl Grey limped into the court, and at once hid himself behind an open sheet of "The Times" newspaper, and Lord Derby, attracted I suppose by the sporting elements in the case, soon afterwards joined him. Both these peers were pretty regular attendants throughout the trial, and occasionally other magnates, such as the Dukes of Cambridge and Wellington—not the great Arthur, but his son,—the Earl of Albemarle and General Peel, kept them company. One of the under-sheriffs, a dapper little man in lace frills and ruffles, strutted about with his sword at his side, nervously awaiting the arrival of the judges; and, among the barristers crowding the well of the court, one had no difficulty in picking out the cleanly cut, intellectual features of her majesty's attorney-general, and the portly figure of the somewhat dissipated-looking Edwin James. Palmer's solicitor, John Smith of Birmingham, a provincial buck, with hair in ringlets, and gilt buttons to his waistcoat, was deep in consultation with the prisoner's leading counsel, snuffy, slovenly-looking Serjeant Shee, and Grove, Q.C., of scientific renown. Suddenly everyone rose to his feet as the judges sailed in like three staid dowagers, each adorned with a handsome bouquet, as though the affair were some fête. Lord Campbell at once installed himself in the centre seat, while Creswell dropped into the seat on his right hand and Alderson into that on his left.

The moment the three judges had taken their places,

the usher shouted "Silence!" and the case of William Palmer being called on, the governor of Newgate was seen to pop up from the stairs communicating between the cells and the dock, followed by a fair-complexioned, sandy-haired, good-natured looking individual, of medium height and stoutish build, clad in a glossy black surtout, light grey trousers, and carefully fitting gloves, and with nothing particularly striking about him, save a somewhat thickish neck. This gentlemanly personage was the Rugeley apothecary, accused of poisoning and plundering his intimate friend.

Cockburn's opening statement occupied, if I remember rightly, five hours or more. During all this time he never once tripped in his minute and lucid narrative, never once hesitated for the right word, or recalled a wrong one, as dramatically, though by no means theatrically, he unfolded in proper sequence all the details of this remarkable case. Although these were generally known, every individual in the crowded court listened with sustained attention from the commencement to the close of the attorney-general's clear, precise and impressive speech.

It has been stated that on Lord Campbell being appealed to he instantly gave permission for a chair to be placed in the dock for Palmer's accommodation, and that from this ready compliance of his the usher of the court inferred that the lord chief justice had already made up his mind to hang the prisoner.[1] The story is, however, a pure invention, for Palmer during the whole time the trial lasted stood leaning over the ledge of the dock, and one could see from the gallery above that no kind of seat had been provided for him. Still it is nevertheless certain that Campbell was bent upon hanging the prisoner, for no more damaging summing up ever proceeded from a judge's lips. He was minutely careful over the evidence, persist-

[1] Serjeant Ballantine's "Experiences of a Barrister's Life."

ing in taking every word of it down, and while so engaged constantly pulled up the witnesses with his impatient "Stop now! stop, stop!"

In the "Illustrated Times'" report of the trial, of which several hundred thousand copies were sold, every little incident that occurred in court, as well as the personal appearance of the various witnesses and their behaviour in the box, was minutely chronicled. Lord Derby's merriment, when allusion was made to Palmer's anxiety as to whether one of the earl's horses would run at Shrewsbury, was also duly noted, as was the circumstance of all the opera glasses in court being focussed on the prisoner at the exciting moment when inspector Crisp produced the memorandum book found at Palmer's house containing the damaging words, "strychnine kills by causing a tetanic fixing of the respiratory organs," in Palmer's handwriting. The report moreover alluded to several of the witnesses in far from flattering terms. One for instance was described as a seedy-looking country apothecary, another was twitted with his long black hair being matted with grease, a third was said to resemble a pantaloon in private life, while the distinguished Sir Benjamin Brodie's scanty locks were described as hanging in skeins over his wrinkled forehead.

Palmer listened to the evidence given by Professor Taylor with ill-concealed anxiety, craning over the dock to catch every word the famous toxicologist uttered. The reason was that Taylor had written a letter to "the Lancet" wherein he said: "The mode in which the suspected Rugeley poisonings will affect the person accused is of minor importance compared with their probable influence on society. I have no hesitation in saying that *the future security of life in this country will mainly depend on the judge, the jury, and the counsel who may have to dispose of the charges of murder which have arisen out of these investigations.*" It was, I remember, commonly believed at

the time that this note of warning sounded by Professor Taylor induced Lord Campbell to try Palmer's case himself.

Previous to the trial Henry Mayhew had interviewed Dr. Taylor with reference to the poison he had detected in the exhumed body of Palmer's wife, and the many cases of secret poisoning that had come under his notice in his capacity of government analyst, and the information thus obtained had been published in the "Illustrated Times." This, and the professor's letter to "the Lancet," led to his sharp cross-examination by Shee, and his seeking to escape from the inferences drawn by accusing Mayhew of having violated private confidence. The latter was anxious to set the attorney-general right upon this point, and when the court adjourned for luncheon I accompanied him in search of Cockburn whom we found washing his hands in one of the upstairs' lavatories. He listened to the explanation which appeared to perfectly satisfy him, and laughingly remarked that the badgering Taylor had met with in the witness box had driven him to make a mountain out of what was in reality a molehill.

I should mention that Mayhew besides interviewing Dr. Taylor had conducted an inquiry for the paper at the principal life assurance offices with somewhat startling results. First, he had ascertained that the practice of tampering with life in order to secure the insurance money was far more general than the public had any idea of. Secondly, that although in England there were many cases of suspicious poisoning as well as of people intentionally done to death by unlimited supplies of drink, the worst cases of the latter class were in connection with Irish policies, the lives of confirmed whisky drinkers being heavily insured by strangers who took good care to provide these bibulous dependents with a plentiful supply of their favourite liquor. Thirdly, that the dishonourable portion of the

medical profession was largely mixed up with these frauds, and that most offices made it a rule never to insure the life of a medical man's wife.

Poor old Sergeant Shee's rambling speech for the defence lasted eight weary hours and was in striking contrast to Cockburn's masterly opening statement and his equally masterly reply. Palmer after he was found guilty had good reason for saying, "It's the riding has done it,"[1] meaning thereby that to Cockburn's able conduct of the case the verdict was due. It was rumoured at the time that the brief for Palmer's defence had been offered to Sir Fitzroy Kelly who, not caring for the job—doubtless he remembered his failure to save another poisoner, Tawell the quaker, from the gallows—demanded a prohibitory fee of a thousand guineas. Sergeant Wilkins was then retained, but owing to his state of health he had to give up the case, which was eventually entrusted to Sergeant Shee. Possibly no more inefficient opponent to the attorney-general could have been found among all the big wigs who figured on occasion at the Central Criminal Court. The task Shee had undertaken was no doubt an exceedingly difficult one, still none the less his speech for the defence was a signal failure.

The befogged advocate blundered from the very outset over the names of people and places, and commonly misstated dates. Once, when referring to Dr. Taylor and tetanus, he transposed the words, and spoke of Dr. Tetanus and taylor; and I well remember that in a lengthy argument, intended to demonstrate that Palmer had no motive for taking Cook's life, he misplaced the names of culprit and victim throughout, and only discovered his blunder while deducing his conclusions at the close.

The unprofessional step taken by Shee in giving expression to his personal conviction in Palmer's innocence was

[1] Sergeant Ballantine's "Experiences," &c.

far from favourably regarded by the jury, and his bombastic declamations, accompanied by heavy thumps on his desk, and his general forced melodramatic action, betokened rather the vulgar ranter than the calm, sagacious advocate. Every now and then he paused to wipe his perspiring forehead, with the result that he invariably lost the thread of his argument, and rarely succeeded in recovering it. His efforts, too, to be pathetic in his allusions to the trembling anxiety of Palmer's aged mother, to his sister sinking under the most dreadful suspense, and to the brave and gallant brother striving against all obstacles to save his unhappy relative from an awful doom, fell completely flat on listeners in the last stage of weariness.

Had Grove, Q.C., been entrusted with the speech for the defence, his logical mind would have certainly suggested grave reasons for doubt with reference to many of the assumed facts, although, in face of the mass of damnifying evidence, he could hardly have hoped to secure a verdict of acquittal.

Several of the medical witnesses for the defence, who came forward mainly to advertise themselves, strenuously maintained that Cook did not die from poison; and the now notable Dr. B. W. Richardson, at that time an unknown young man with, I remember, lank black hair and a wildish look about his eyes, even suggested that Cook's death was due to a spasmodic disease called "angina pectoris." This statement came as a thunderclap. Cockburn was evidently perplexed, for only the medical portion of the audience so much as knew the name of the disease spoken of. When, however, the attorney-general rose to reply, the young man with lank black hair was not forgotten. "The gentleman," said Cockburn, "who talked of 'angina pectoris' would not have escaped so easily if I had had certain books under my hand at the time, and been able to expose, as I would

have done, the ignorance or presumption of the assertion he dared to make—I say ignorance or presumption, or, what is worse, an intention to deceive. I assert it in the face of the whole medical profession, and I am satisfied I shall have a verdict in my favour."

Palmer, who had all along expressed himself certain of being acquitted, lost some of his assumed confidence when Lord Campbell—the impersonation of a sharp Scotch terrier guarding a rat-hole—in the course of his summing up demolished one after another the various theories advanced by the defence. From time to time Palmer covered his face with his hands as if to conceal the emotion he was unable to control. When, however, the verdict of "guilty" was given, and sentence of death was afterwards being passed, he appeared perfectly unmoved, though at one moment he drew himself up as if about to interpose some observation. At the conclusion of the sentence he turned quickly round and disappeared down the steps leading to the cells, without waiting for the warder's customary bidding.

There was such tremendous excitement over the Palmer affair, and the public showed themselves so eager for information respecting the prisoner's past career, that I was induced to get together a so-called life of the sporting doctor, including all the trivial gossip retailed about him at Rugeley and current among betting men, with the traditions that had survived of his medical student days, the tales of his doings at west end hells and other disreputable haunts, and such information as could be extracted from the insurance offices which had been favoured with Palmer's colossal proposals for insuring the lives of his nearest and dearest relatives and friends.

As time was an important element in the affair, half-a-dozen hungry young literary ghouls were set to work to rake up any kind of information respecting the early life

of the condemned man within the forthcoming eight-and-forty hours, and the result was a strange medley of materials, in which I have not the slightest doubt fiction played a far more important part than fact. These after being hastily hashed together were sorted into chapters, and within a week a shilling life of the great poisoner of the nineteenth century was in all the booksellers' shops, and on all the railway bookstalls. The life was illustrated with no end of "appropriate" woodcuts, gathered from all manner of sources, for nearly the whole of them had done duty in books and periodicals more than once before; and I remember to this day how much my ingenuity was taxed to assimilate the text with the puzzling pictures which were supposed to illustrate it.

The book went like wild-fire. Night and day for a fortnight printing machines rolled off their thousands upon thousands of copies without the orders that had come in being overtaken. A small fortune was made out of the affair, but although I was a half proprietor in it, only a trifling sum fell to my share owing to an unlucky accident.

At this period I was an inveterate smoker, having contracted a diseased habit of puffing away at a cigar every moment I was not eating or sleeping. As I only smoked the very best brands, I spent in those careless days more for cigars than it now costs me to live upon. Well, one afternoon a day or two before "Palmer's Life" was published, I had been to a prize cattle show at Chelmsford, and then to a dinner with the Royal Agricultural society; and on arriving in town by the last train, as I was walking homewards my cigar unfortunately went out, and much to my annoyance I discovered I had no fusees about me. The streets, too, were deserted, so that there was nobody from whom a light could be obtained.

On descending Ludgate-hill I noticed that the glass of

the gas lamp, perched high up against the wall just within Belle Sauvage-yard, was broken. There being a slanting ledge at the lower part of this wall I placed my foot on it, and springing up succeeded in lighting a paper spill which I had improvised, but in my rapid descent one of my feet unluckily caught the edge of the curb and I dislocated my ankle and broke the small bone of my leg. Quick as thought I wrenched the ankle into its place again, but it was not so easy to unite two pieces of fractured bone, so I hopped to a neighbouring post and there awaited the protecting peeler's periodic round.

He came at last and charitably put me into a cab, and accompanied me to the neighbouring "Illustrated Times" office, which fortunately chanced to be open all night for packing the papers to go by the early morning trains. I was carried upstairs and laid on the floor of my room, and a surgeon being sent for, the broken limb was set. Then I was put to bed and told I should have to remain there a month or more, and it was while I was fretting under this involuntary confinement that my partner in "Palmer's Life" paid me a sympathetic visit and bought me out of the speculation for a mere song, without of course saying a word to me of the phenomenal success our joint venture had already met with. Owing to this circumstance I have always reckoned that my cigar going out as it did cost me about £1500, which actuaries tell me would, with compound interest added, have amounted to some £6000 at this date—a sum sufficient, I fancy, to buy up all the "partagas imperiales superfinos" in the world. After such a result any sensible man would have given up smoking, but I am sorry to say I lacked the resolution to do so. The Anti-tobacco society is welcome to utilize this little incident to its own advantage in the next tract condemnatory of the pernicious habit that it issues.

A story was told at the time of the Palmer affair about

Lord Palmerston, which like many another good story probably lacks the merit of truth. It was said that a deputation from Rugeley waited upon him to obtain official sanction to change the name of their town, to which Palmer's crimes had given an unpleasant notoriety. They were, however, in a state of perplexity respecting the new name to be given to it. "Why not call it Palmer's town?" observed the jaunty minister, "the name will not only be appropriate, but at the same time you'll be paying a rather dubious compliment to me."

A young Devonshire farmer whom I chanced to meet at this period was highly elated over an interview he had recently had with Lord Palmerston. Having come up to London to see its sights, he was desirous of witnessing a debate in the House of Commons, and enjoying the offhand way in which the member for Tiverton, of which borough he was an elector, was accustomed to floor troublesome political opponents. Not knowing how else to obtain an admission to the strangers' gallery, he made application for one at Cambridge House, Palmerston's private residence. Having explained to a tall footman the object of his visit, he asked him to procure an order from his lordship's private secretary, while he waited. John Thomas, however, demurred and told the applicant he must write, but a silver coin removed the flunkey's scruples, and off he went to deliver the message. Shortly afterwards he returned and, to the young farmer's astonishment, informed him that his lordship would like to speak with him.

Our Devonshire friend was presently shewn into a room littered with papers, where a grey-whiskered gentleman, who appeared to be all alone, was standing at a desk in front of one of the windows, and he recognised Lord Palmerston at a glance. The premier, in a cheery way, at once asked his visitor how he had left all their good

Tiverton friends, naming one well-known local man after another, and not forgetting the Tiverton butcher who always had his fling at Palmerston on the hustings, and whom the latter used jauntily to put to the rout with his ready, good-humoured wit. The young farmer was afterwards questioned about the opinion of Tiverton people upon the political questions of the day, and was duly pumped as to the feeling at the local club, the talk that went on in the railway train when he journeyed to Exeter on market days, and what the farmers said on the corn exchange and at their dinner after market business was over.

Palmerston, who was then tory chief of a liberal ministry, having extracted in an easy-going, jocular fashion all the information he cared for, wrote out the order for the strangers' gallery, summoned a servant, to whom he gave some instructions in an undertone, and then, shaking his visitor warmly by the hand, with a cheery smile wished him good-morning. The flunkey now conducted the young farmer to the butler's room, where a capital cold luncheon was speedily set before him. After he had fed well, a bottle of fine old port was broached and he and the butler having finished this between them, he quitted Cambridge House in a rather blissful frame of mind.

On returning to Tiverton he no doubt trumpeted Palmerston's affable behaviour and the butler's entertainment of him, all over the place, greatly to the advantage of the premier's local popularity. Still it was not altogether without its drawbacks, as, when any Tiverton elector went up to London, he, in all probability, made a point of presenting himself at Cambridge House, and if he failed in obtaining an interview with his distinguished parliamentary representative, he would at least have expected to be hospitably entertained by the premier's butler.

A month or two before the Palmer trial, Timbs, of "Things not generally known" celebrity, and sub-editor of the "Illustrated London News," called upon Bogue, the publisher, to whom he confided the profound secret—which, by the way, he was bursting to divulge to someone—that Ingram was about to seek the suffrages of the electors of Boston, his native town, and that his election address would appear next morning in all the London papers. Bogue shortly afterwards imparted the profound secret to me, and I felt more interested in the news than I should otherwise have done, for the following reason.

Our cheap illustrated paper was at this time running the "Illustrated London News" rather close. It had more than double the circulation of the older paper, which, on the abolition of the stamp, had lowered its price and enlarged its size, hoping thereby to increase its sale, but found its cheap rival a serious impediment. Its prestige, too, had suffered through its being behindhand with its illustrations of certain important events, such as the fall of Sebastopol, for instance.

Anxious to crush a troublesome competitor, Ingram adopted the bold course of starting a couple of cheap illustrated papers, called respectively the "Picture" and "People's Times," a perfectly fair enough proceeding, so long as it kept within the bounds of honest rivalry, which, as will be seen, it did not long continue to do.

The large circulation of the "Illustrated Times" rendered it necessary for its engravings to be ready very early in the week, and by some mysterious means one or the other of Ingram's cheap papers constantly contained an engraving on its front page similar to the one occupying precisely the same position in the "Illustrated Times." Evidently an early sheet from the "cut form" of our paper reached the hands of Ingram's editors the moment the form was put to machine, thus enabling them to reproduce

with a few trivial alterations its most prominent illustration in sufficient time to be published in a paper circulating merely a few thousand copies—the object of course being to create confusion in the minds of the public and the trade as to the identity of the respective journals.

On hearing of Ingram's proposed candidature I saw an opportunity for retaliating, and thought it would be a good joke to disturb the harmony of his contemplated triumph —to assist and celebrate which quite a tribe of literary notabilities, including Douglas Jerrold, Mark Lemon, Dr. Mackay, and others were about to betake themselves to Boston, there to be royally entertained at Ingram's expense. I accordingly drew up a short advertisement, and, when the newspaper publishing offices had closed for the day, sent copies of it (in accordance with the then prevailing practice) to the composing-rooms of the principal morning papers, with the exception of the "Daily News" towards the capital of which Ingram had subscribed, my object being to ensure the advertisement escaping the scrutinizing eyes of the publishing staff. Knowing how Ingram hated publicity being given to his connection with Parr's Life Pills since the "Illustrated London News" had hoisted him into a position of some importance, I spitefully worded the advertisement as follows:—

> "OLD PARR FOR BOSTON. Electors, reserve your votes! Old Parr, supposed to be dead, but whose life has been miraculously preserved by repeated doses of his famous pills, will appear on the hustings on the day of nomination." [1]

All the papers to which the advertisement was sent, with the exception of "the Morning Post," where Ingram had a friend in the printing office, inserted it, though "the Times" withdrew it after a portion of its edition had been printed off. One or two of the papers even printed it immediately under Ingram's own electoral address.

[1] London morning papers, Feb. 26, 1856.

When the new candidate for parliamentary distinction, and the sycophants who battened on him, set their astonished eyes upon it, they divined that something disagreeable was in the wind, and Ingram instantly concluded that I was at the bottom of it. I, on my part, was not in the least surprised at receiving an early visit from his brother-in-law, Mr. W. Little, who was curious to know "what it was I wanted," and at a couple of anxious telegrams,—sent by Ingram himself,—arriving shortly afterwards from Boston, holding out the olive branch and entreating that bygones might be bygones. The upshot was that I went down to the sleepy capital of the fen country, where, at an interview with Ingram and Dr. Mackay, I expounded my little grievance. Ingram excused himself as best he could, but admitted that it was our mutual friend, Lionel Lawson, then a printing ink manufacturer, who obtained the early sheet of the "Illustrated Times" for him. In such a dire state of funk was he after I had recited him some verses with the burden of "Pilly Parr oh!"[1] which I suggested it was intended to have bawled about Boston on the day of the election, that he signalled to Mackay to retire. He then offered to suppress his two cheap illustrated papers; and, in proof of his earnestness, wrote out and handed to me directions to their respective printers to follow whatever instructions regarding them I might think proper to give.

Ingram now grew confidential, and confessed that the "Illustrated Times" was a great thorn in his side. Not only, said he, had it seriously injured his own paper from a financial point of view, but he was so incessantly chaffed about it that he would be glad to get rid of the annoyance at any cost. Then he suggested buying the paper, if we cared to sell it, for £12,000, or to purchase any share in it that we chose to sell at a proportionate rate; and to show

[1] "Billy Barlow" was the popular music hall song at this time.

his *bonâ fides*, he put the proposal into writing. I subsequently submitted this to Mr. Bogue, who declined the offer; but a few weeks after his election for Boston, Ingram became the holder of a third share in the paper for a trifle under £5000, without, however, any power of interfering in its management.

Mr. Edmund Yates in his "Recollections"[1] gives an amusing account of the ingenious way in which Mark Lemon with an exuberant display of affected *bonhomie* worked him out of Ingram's private room at the Brighton hotel, when it was desired to dispense with his company after he had been invited there to breakfast by Ingram himself. In this little anecdote we have the cool impertinence of "Punch's" famous editor limned to the life. With a broad, beaming face, on which a crafty smile played at command, Lemon was certainly one of the most accomplished humbugs of his time, rude or obsequious by turns as suited his own interest. The influence which by his superior will he exercised over Ingram, whose private secretary he then was, perfectly astonished casual lookers on.

When Ingram had resolved to acquire a share in the "Illustrated Times," he evidently dreaded Lemon's interference and cautioned me never to write to him at the "Illustrated London News" office, as Mark would be certain, he said, to open the letters. He even rented a private room at Dick's coffee-house,[2] where all the details of our arrangement were discussed and decided upon, unknown to anyone but ourselves. This purchase of a

[1] Edition 1885, p. 221.

[2] Mr Thomas Archer, in his "Highway of Letters," tells an apocryphal story respecting Ingram and Augustus Mayhew at some imaginary meeting of a so-called Wits Club, which assembled it is said at the old Cheshire Cheese chop-house. At the period to which Mr Archer's story refers, Ingram had never set foot within the place, for I remember his remarking, at a dinner given in the upstairs private room of the Cheshire Cheese, several years after the death of Mr Brough senior, that that was the first time he had ever been inside the house. Originally the Cock tavern was Ingram's habitual resort, but subsequently he frequented Dick's and Peele's coffee-houses.

Mr Archer is further in error in including Dr Johnson among the *habitués* of the old Cheshire Cheese. Neither in Boswell's Life nor in the memoirs and letters of the time

share in the "Illustrated Times" secured me at once a handsome salary as editor, and a participation in all future profits—a piece of good fortune to be marred ere long by the sudden death of my excellent wife, whose health had been a source of great anxiety to me for several years past.

In the autumn of 1857 the dual Kings of Siam took it into their heads to despatch several Siamese dignitaries, eager to spend a holiday at this end of the world, with an abundance of presents to Queen Victoria, to whom they were charged to address no end of high flown oriental compliments. As the Siamese kings invariably travelled through their own dominions at the expense of the districts they honoured with their presence, they appeared to be not unwilling for their ambassadors to follow the same economical practice many thousand miles away. The British government understanding this, housed the embassy at Claridge's and paid the hotel bill of its members as long as they thought proper to honour us with their company.

I succeeded in getting a glimpse of the ambassadors' reception by the queen in the throne room of Windsor Castle, and remember that Prince Frederick William of Prussia, a grave-looking manly young fellow, who was then courting our princess royal, was present on the occasion. The chief ambassador, charged with letters from the twin kings of Siam, advanced towards the queen bending as low as he could without losing his equilibrium, while bearing the letters before him on a large gold salver;

is any mention made of Dr Johnson in connection with the place. Moreover in the days when I knew the Cheshire Cheese well (1840 to 1860) there was not even a tradition relating to any such circumstance. In a corner of the large front room was a conspicuous mark where the paint of the grained-oak panelling had been worn away by the constant friction of the head and shoulders of some bibulous guest, who found the corner more than ordinarily comfortable for an afternoon or evening snooze. This mark used to be jocularly pointed out by Albert Smith to strangers as having been caused by the burly frame of the great lexicographer, and it was explained to them that such was the reverence of successive landlords for so distinguished a guest that not one of them would permit the worn place in the graining to be renovated.

but the other ambassadors and the members of the suite wriggled themselves—from the further end of the apartment to within a few feet of the throne—on their hands, knees, and stomachs, while their lips almost licked the ground, suggesting the idea of a procession of corpulent reptiles, and provoking smiles from the grave officials and audible titters from the Court ladies, which even the presence of royalty failed to restrain. After the ceremony was over, Captain Clavering, the officer in charge of the mission, introduced me to the Siamese grand interpreter, a most important personage in his own country, related as he was by marriage to both the kings, and I was honoured with an invitation to a dinner given by their copper-coloured excellencies at Claridge's hotel a few days afterwards.

On the arrival of the guests their visiting cards were conveyed to the interpreter by Siamese servants, who prone on their stomachs wriggled dexterously along the carpet, much as the second and third ambassadors had done at their audience of the queen, to the further end of the apartment where their excellencies and the principal members of their suite were seated in state, and where our respective presentations afterwards took place. Unlike other orientals the Siamese make no pretence of eschewing fermented liquors, and at dinner our hosts tippled off their sherry and champagne as though to the manner born. One of them, however, seemed to have a sly preference for something considerably stronger, for I recollect that Captain Clavering, who sat next to the principal ambassador at the dinner, after filling his glass from a special decanter that had been placed for his excellency's own particular use, set it down again the instant it had touched his lips, ejaculating as he did so—"Brandy! by g——!"

At this time the neighbourhood of the Haymarket swarmed with night-houses in the unhealthy atmosphere

of which *fleurs du mal* freely blossomed, and where in company of graceless scoundrels, men about town, officers of both services, professional men of more or less note, prosperous provincials, and beardless young squires with more money than brains, and a sprinkling of our Lower House legislators, were wont to wind up the evening and waste the succeeding small hours. At the principal of these establishments only *habitués*, or new comers introduced by them, were admitted after undergoing a searching inspection through the eyelet holes with which the double set of doors, giving admission to the retreat, was provided. A short flight of stairs conducted to a large apartment, where suppers and drinks were served. At one end was an American bar where "gum-ticklers," "eye-openers," and "corpse-revivers" were dispensed; and at the other a velvet-canopied throne on which portly Mistress Katherine, the sultana of the establishment, supported by the handsomest and most stylishly attired of her hand-maidens, sat in semi-state.

This was the swell night-house of the period, and although no dancing went on there it filled the place of the old Piccadilly saloon and was the favourite resort of the young and middle-aged monied fools of the day. It was free from the disgraceful rowdyism of the now forgotten "Pic," the waiters at which used to be chosen for their pugilistic prowess, while the proprietor smothered his fingers with diamond rings with which by well-directed blows he could slit the noses and cheeks of his more turbulent drunken guests before ordering them to be chucked into the street.

The police never troubled themselves to visit the "Pic," but they made a pretended regular inspection of the better-known night-houses of a later date. At Kate's the instant their arrival had been notified by a signal from below, tables were cleared of tell-tale tumblers, and cham-

pagne bottles were hastily bundled under the seats. Then a police sergeant and constable, both looking becomingly stern, marched in and paraded round the room, affecting to direct their eagle eyes into every hole and corner, to spy out, I suppose, whether excisable liquors were being retailed, and not appearing the least surprised at seeing scores of people seated at tables with nothing but lucifer match pots before them. The fact is a heavy police blackmail was levied on the proprietors of these establishments, and the farce of putting the glasses and bottles temporarily out of sight was merely gone through to save appearances.

When the party at Claridge's broke up, some one contemplating a visit to Kate's, casually spoke of it to the Siamese grand interpreter, and he in his turn mentioned it to the principal ambassador, a portly gentleman who, fuddled though he was with brandy, found his curiosity whetted, and autocratically determined to gratify it. A carriage was at once ordered, and presently the frequenters of this notorious nocturnal resort were amazed at seeing the grave Siamese ambassador and grand interpreter, in all the splendour of their native official costume, enter in company with two or three of their English guests. Had his excellency come, they asked themselves, to secure a few European recruits for the Siamese kings' famous bodyguard of amazons, or to pick out one or two of the least faded beauties for his own well stocked harem?

Phya Mantri Suriywanse's first proceeding conduced to his instant popularity. Prompted by his introducers he at once ordered unlimited champagne for the droughty Portland and Argyll Rooms houris, who gathered round and promptly showed their appreciation of his considerate benevolence by exhausting the supply of the establishment. All these frail fair ones of course sought to render themselves especially engaging to this oriental dignitary, arrayed in gold tissue and richly jewelled belt; but owing

to the potency of the liquor he had freely imbibed, he merely smiled at them in a vacuous way, so that no jealous feelings were aroused in their susceptible breasts. His excellency only retired as day was about breaking, when, owing to his helpless condition, he had to be carried in an undignified fashion to the seedy night cab in which he and the interpreter were driven back to Claridge's hotel.

The ambassadors, I remember, pretended to be exceedingly anxious about introducing some of the marvels of European civilization into their own country; but they eventually contented themselves with purchasing a microscope and a few similar things, and an out-of-date second-hand edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," price £13, 10s., for the royal library. The chief ambassador, however, treated himself to a magnificently jewelled sword, for which a well-known Bond-street firm charged him a thousand pounds. This struck me as very like the ha'p'orth of bread to the intolerable quantity of sack over again.

END OF VOLUME I.

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