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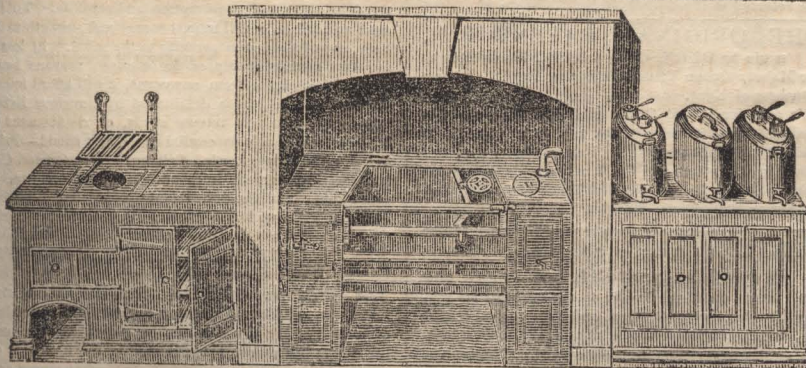
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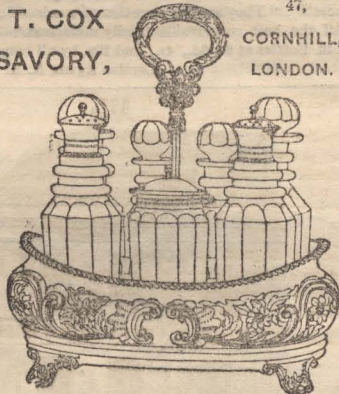
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"The traveller should not fail to take them with him."—*Brockedon's Italy*. "They answer well, without any kind of inconvenience."—*Sir B. C. Brodie, Serg. Surgeon to the Queen*. "We have seen nothing to equal them."—*Lit. Gazette*. "They are the invention of a scientific surgeon, which affords a guarantee of their excellence."—*Times*.
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Sold in Bottles at 2s. 6d., 4s., and 10s. by all respectable Chemists.
London Agent, R. E. DEAR, 89, Bishopsgate Within.



J. C. & C. PENN, BOOT and SHOE MANUFACTURERS, 143, Holborn Bars
beg to direct the attention of the Public to the immense assortment of Ladies', Gentlemen's, Youths', and Children's Boots and Shoes, now on sale at their Establishment, "The Cordwainers' Arms," as above—consisting of every possible variety—suitable to all climes and seasons, combining the very best materials and workmanship, with the lowest possible price. The following are particularly worthy of notice:—Ladies' double sole Boots from 5s. 6d.; single sole ditto from 4s. 6d.; Leather and Prunello Shoes, double soles, from 4s.; ditto ditto single soles, from 2s. 6d.; real Morocco and Kid Slippers 3s. 6d.; very superior patent enamelled Leather Slippers 5s.; Gentlemen's Wellington Boots from 14s.; Clarence Boots from 10s.; Cloth Button Boots 12s.; Blucher Boots from 6s. 6d.; Walking Shoes from 4s. 6d.; extra strong Boots and Shoes for Shooting.
An immense stock of Gentlemen's Boots and Shoes suitable for the export and wholesale trade constantly on hand at the very lowest manufacturers' prices.
* * * Country Dealers supplied direct from the Manufactory.

FRENCH WOOL MATTRESSES.

The very frequent inquiries for Mattresses made after the manner of the French, have induced F. HEALE and SON to turn their attention to the making of Mattresses on the same principle. The essential difference between French Mattresses and English consists in the materials of which they are made, and consequently a difference in the making. The French use long Fleece Wool, and therefore but little work is requisite, leaving to the wool the whole of its elasticity. English Mattresses are made of short Wool, the refuse of other manufacturings, and a great deal of work is consequently necessary to keep the material together, which makes them comparatively *Non Elastic*. The advantages F. HEALE and SON possess by being exclusively manufacturers of Bedding, enable them to offer Fine Long Wool French Mattresses, equal to the best that are made in Paris, at the same prices that are usually charged for those generally made in this country.

F. HEALE and SON, Bedding-manufacturers, 203, Tottenham-court-road.



of Oldridge's Balm in restoring his Hair. Given under my hand and seal of office, at the City of Philadelphia, Dec. 29, 1823.

Oldridge's Balm causes Whiskers and Eyebrows to grow, prevents the Hair from turning grey, and the first application makes it curl beautifully, frees it from scurf, and stops it from falling off. Abundance of Certificates from gentlemen of the first respectability in England are shown by the Proprietors, C. and A. OLDRIDGE, 1, Wellington-street, Strand, where the Balm is sold, and by all respectable Perfumers and Medicine Venders. Price 3s. 6d., 6s., and 11s. per Bottle. No other prices are genuine.

N.B. The Public are requested to be on their guard against Counterfeits. Ask for OLDRIDGE'S BALM, 1, Wellington Street, Strand.

BRITISH CONSUL'S OFFICE,

Philadelphia.—Know all Persons to whom these presents shall come, that I, Gilbert Robertson, Esq., his Britannic Majesty's Consul, do hereby certify, that R. Warton, Esq. (who attests to the efficacy of OLD-RIDGE'S BALM OF COLUMBIA, in RESTORING HAIR,) is Mayor of this City, and that M. Randall, Esq. is Prothonotary of the Court of Common Pleas, to both whose signatures full faith and credit is due. I further certify that I am personally acquainted with J. L. Inglis, Esq., another of the signers, and that he is a person of great respectability, and that I heard him express his unqualified approbation of the effects

(Signed) GILBERT ROBERTSON.



ADAMS'S IMPROVED SPECTACLES.

H. ADAMS, OPTICIAN AND SPECTACLE MANUFACTURER, begs respectfully to solicit the attention of the Nobility, Gentry, and the Public, to his stock of BRAZIL PEBBLES and GLASSES of every description, ground on the most accurate principles to suit the various defects of sight, and elegantly mounted in gold, silver, blued steel, tortoiseshell, and other frames.

To those who find their sight failing, he takes the liberty to recommend the use of his PRESERVERS, by which the eyes may be saved for years from any further decay. He also assures those Ladies and Gentlemen who may be disposed to honour him with their patronage, that they may rely upon being suited in the most correct manner, not only with Pebbles or Glasses of the proper focus and most perfect kind, but with frames peculiarly adapted to the face of the wearer, so that the centre of each glass is brought exactly opposite to the pupil of the eye, which is of great importance, although entirely neglected by many Opticians.

* * * A pair of the best Brazil Pebbles fitted to a frame for 8s.

2, Crawford Street, Portman Square, London, two doors from Baker Street.

LIST OF ARTICLES,

MANUFACTURED and Sold, Wholesale, Retail, and for Exportation, by **MECHI**, 4, Leadenhall Street, (Fourth House from Cornhill, same side as the India House,) London.

Table Cutlery and General Cutlery
Dish Covers
Tea Trays in Iron and Paper
Tea Caddies
Every Variety of Real Sheffield Plated Goods
British Plate, or German Silver, Forks, Spoons, &c., plated on Steel Goods,
Dessert Knives, &c..
Albion Plate—Tea and Coffee Pots,

Candlesticks, &c.; being a description of superior Britannia Metal Goods
Plate Leathers, Plate Powder, and Plate Brushes
Canteens for Large or Small Parties
Ladies' and Gentlemen's Wood and Leather Dressing Cases
Writing Cases, Pocket Books
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Workboxes, Writing Desks
Bagatelle Tables
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Chess and Draftsmen
Hair, Cloth, Tooth, Nail, Hat, and Shaving Brushes
Combs, Hones
Boot Jacks, Razors
Strops, Paste
Shaving Powder, Naples Soap, &c.

Any article made to Order at a Short Notice, without Additional Charge, as MECHE manufactures nearly every Article he sells, in the LEADENHALL SKIN MARKET.

INFLUENCE.

UNDER this compendious but perfectly applicable motto we submit the claims to notice and preference of an Article of long tried utility in sustaining the influence acquired by possession of the most prominent of the PERSONAL GRACES, a CLEAR and DELICATE COMPLEXION.

GOWLAND'S LOTION,

An elegant and appropriate FORMULA of the late DR. GOWLAND, first introduced in his practice as PHYSICIAN to His late Majesty George the Third when Prince of Wales, and which from its publication under his name in 1755, has been the only remedy extant, combining the SAFETY derived from a LEGITIMATE ORIGIN with decided success in the prompt removal of Cutaneous Affections and all IMPURITIES and DISCOLORATIONS of the SKIN, while, more especially, in the department of THE TOILET.

The employment of the Lotion as a refresher of the Complexion is marked by an agreeable vivacity of Tint, conclusive as to its Congenial Action in establishing equable Circulation and a healthy tone of the vessels, averting the unfavourable effects of changeable temperature, and successfully promoting those attainments which enhance and render permanent the Influences of Female Grace and Beauty.

GOWLAND'S LOTION has the Name and Address of the Proprietor, **ROBERT SHAW 33. QUEEN ST. CHEAPSIDE. LONDON** engraved on the Government Stamp, and each package is enclosed in the popular Work entitled the "THEORY OF BEAUTY." Sold as above, and by all respectable Perfumers and Medicine Venders. Price—Half-pints, 2s. 9d.; Pints, 5s. 6d.; Quarts, 8s. 6d.; and in cases adapted for Travelling, from One to Five Guineas.

SHAW'S MINDORA OIL.

This admired restorative and promoter of a luxuriant growth of the Hair, possesses, in an eminent degree, every property desirable in an Article of indispensable use at the TOILET of both Sexes, and manifest superiority over all COLOURED and factitious compounds; the exquisite purity of Mindora Oil will be found highly conducive to CLEANLINESS and preservation of the true Colour of the Hair, and its peculiar sweetness of flavour a pleasing addition to the firmness of decorative formation invariably attending its use.

Prepared for the Toilet, by the sole Proprietor, **ROBERT SHAW, 33, QUEEN STREET, CHEAPSIDE, LONDON,** (whose Signature appears on the Label and Wrapper), in Bottles, accompanied by a practical TREATISE ON THE HAIR, at 3s. and 5s. 6d., and in Stopped Bottles at 10s. 6d. Sold as above, and by Sanger, Hannay, Oxford-street; Rigge, Bond-street; Prout, Strand; Rigge, Cheapside; and most respectable Perfumers and Medicine Venders.

CROSBY-HALL WINE ESTABLISHMENT,

35, BISHOPSGATE-STREET-WITHIN.

CURRALL and SON, in tendering to their Friends and the Public their grateful acknowledgments for the liberal patronage they have enjoyed for a period of nearly 30 years, beg to announce the completion of their extensive Vaults under Crosby Hall, and to invite public notice to their stock of Old Bottled and Draught Wines. Their Crusted Ports are of superior quality and flavour, being shipped by houses of high reputation at Oporto, and bottled with sedulous attention. Their Sherries also, with every other description of White Wines, are of equal character; and in Draught Wines the same attention has been paid to quality. CURRALL and SON, being desirous to secure that patronage which articles of the first quality, at fair and remunerating profits, will maintain, respectfully submit the annexed list of cash prices:

	PER DOZ.		PER DOZ.
Port from the wood	28s. to 33s.	Rota Tent	42s.
Ditto, three years in bottle	36s.	Cape Wines	16s. to 20s.
Ditto, older, rich, and superior	42s.	Masdeu, the produce of the Masden Vineyards of Messrs. Durand and Co.	28s.
Ditto, very old, in wood and bottle	46s. to 48s.	FRENCH AND RHENISH WINES.	
Ditto, in pints	24s.	White Sparkling Champagne	60s.
Sherry, excellent dinner wine	28s.	Pink ditto ditto	72s.
Superior Sherries	36s.	Pink creaming Campagne	72s.
Sherry, very fine, pale and brown	42s.	White ditto ditto	72s.
Ditto, high-flavoured pale	46s.	Claret	60s. to 63s.
Ditto, choice old brown	46s.	Ditto, in pints	33s.
Ditto, very delicate, and extremely pale	52s.	Moselle	48s.
Ditto, old brown (rare quality)	52s.	Sauterne	48s. to 60s.
Ditto, in pints, pale and brown	21s. to 24s.	Hock	48s. to 60s.
Brown Sherry of unusual quality in quarter casks.			
Madeira	38s.	WINES PER GALLON.	
Madeira (by way of Calcutta), first quality	63s. to 66s.	Port	12s. to 14s.
Ditto, in pints	33s.	Sherry	13s. to 15s.
Bucellas (finest quality)	35s.	Cape	7s. to 8s.
Lisbon and Mountain	30s.	Marsala	11s.
Vidonia (old)	30s.	Marsala, finest imported, per quarter pipe	11l. 11s.
Marsala	24s.		

Bottles, 3s. per dozen; hampers, 1s. per dozen, to be paid for, and the full amount allowed when returned.

TO ARCHITECTS, SURVEYORS, AND ARTISTS GENERALLY.

G. ROWNEY and Co., 51, Rathbone-place, beg to announce that they are appointed Sole Agents in England by Monsieur TACHET of Paris, of his newly invented INSTRUMENTS for general purposes of the Fine Arts, and beg to invite the inspection of the profession in particular to his accurately and beautifully finished articles, consisting of Drawing Boards, particularly constructed so as not to warp; Set Squares of 45 degrees, in Ebony, Box, and Pear woods; Long ditto ditto; T Squares, in Pear wood, with or without moving heads, with a variety of other articles for Architectural and Mathematical purposes.

TO LANDED PROPRIETORS, CIVIL ENGINEERS, RAILROAD COMPANIES, POOR-LAW GUARDIANS, &c.—Surveying, Mapping (plain and ornamental), Levelling, Architectural Designs, and Modelling, executed with peculiar zeal, neatness, and accuracy, in any part of the kingdom, by H. S. MERRETT, Architect and Surveyor, 15, Regent-street, Cheltenham; or at W. and S. Jones's, Opticians, 30, Holborn, London.

COMFORT TO THE FEET.

PANNUSCORIUM OR LEATHER-CLOTH BOOTS AND SHOES, AND INDIA RUBBER WATER-PROOF GOLOSHES.

EASE and Comfort in Walking, softness and elasticity to the most sensitive parts of the feet, combined with the durability and appearance of leather, are the leading features and recommendations of this invention.

Every lady and gentleman who suffers from tender feet arising from Corns, Bunions, Chilblains, Distortion of the Toes, Gout, &c. &c., will, on trial, admit their great superiority over every other kind of Shoes.

HALL AND CO., PATENTERS, Wellington Street, Strand, London.

The Patent India Rubber Waterproof Goloshes are the lightest and most useful and economical article of the kind ever invented for keeping the feet dry.

H. & Co. submit to the Public their newly invented Waterproof Dresses for Ladies and Gentlemen, so portable that they may be carried with convenience in the pocket. Price—Ladies' Cardinals, with Hood, &c., 18s. Gentlemen's Dresses, comprising Cape, Over-alls, and Hood, 21s.

E. P. DOUDNEY & SON, City Clothing Establishment, 49, Lombard-st.

Reform your Tailors' Bills !!

NOBLEMEN and GENTLEMEN visiting the Show-Rooms and inspecting the IMMENSE STOCK OF FIRST - QUALITY GOODS,

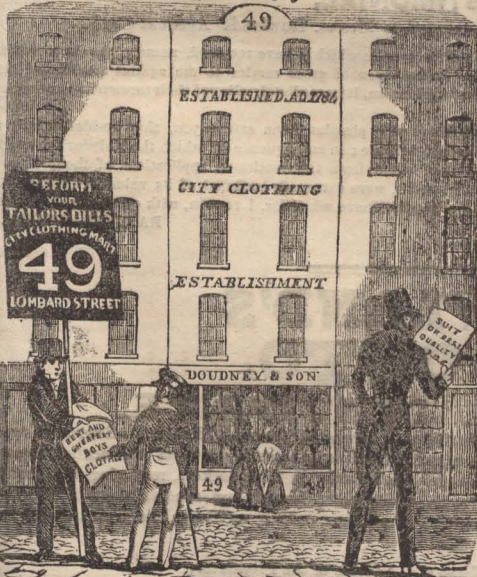
AT THE

CITY CLOTHING ESTABLISHMENT,

49, LOMBARD-STREET,

Will prove that a **GOOD Fit, GOOD Quality, and GOOD Taste,** are to be obtained at **Unparalleled Low Prices!**

Suit of best Quality, New Colors & Patterns, £3 12 6.



- Superfine Dress Coat 2 7 6
- Extra Imperial Saxony, the best that is made 2 15 0
- Superfine Frock Coat, Silk facings, 2 10 0
- Cloth or Cass. Trousers, 17s. 6d. to 1 5 0
- Beautiful patterns, Summer Trousers, 10s. 6d. per pair, or 3 pair for 1 10 0
- New Summer Waistcoats, 7s.; or 3 — 1 0 0
- Splendid Silk Valencia Dress Waistcoats, 10s. 6d. each, or 3 for 1 10 0
- Morning Coats and Dressing Gowns, 15 0
- Petersham Great Coats, bound, and Silk Velvet Collar 2 2 0
- Camlet Cloaks, lined all through, 1 1 0
- Cloth Opera Cloaks 1 15 0
- Spanish Cloaks, a complete circle of nine and a half yards 3 3 0
- Footman's Suit of Liveries, best Cloth 3 3 0
- Cloth and Tweed Fishing or Travelling Trousers, 13s. 6d. per pair.

CONTRACTS BY THE YEAR, originally introduced by E. P. D. and SON, having gained them such Unequalled Fame — their Prices being the Lowest ever offered — they still recommend it to every Gentleman to whom ECONOMY and REGULARITY are objects.

- Two Suits per year, Superfine 7 7 0
- Extra Saxony, the best that is made 8 6 0
- Three Suits per year 10 17 0
- Extra Saxony, the best that is made, 12 5 0
- Four Suits per year 14 6 0
- Extra Saxony ditto 15 18 0

BEST & CHEAPEST HOUSE FOR BOYS' CLOTHING.

Skeleton Dresses, 18s. | Tunic & Hussar Suits, 30s. | Camlet Cloaks, 8s 6d. | Cloth do., 15s. 6d.

Merchants requiring large Quantities, and Gentlemen and Officers going Abroad, will find

49

, Lombard-st. the Cheapest House in London!

Established A. D. 1784. E. P. DOUDNEY & SON, 49, Lombard-street.

ROWLAND'S KALYDOR.

THE ONLY EFFICIENT PROTECTOR AND BEAUTIFIER OF THE
SKIN AND COMPLEXION.

THIS delightful preparation is extracted from Exotics of the mildest and most balsamic nature, is **warranted perfectly innocent**, and free from mineral admixture—operating as a powerful cleanser of the skin, it speedily eradicates **Freckles, Tan, Pimples, Spots, Redness**, and every other Cutaneous defect, while its most remarkable property is, **the removal of every trace of Sallowiness from the Complexion**, which it restores to a **freshness of tint**, exciting both surprise and the most pleasurable sensations.

Perseverance in the use of the **Kalydor** preserves unimpaired, those important functions of the skin on which depend its purity, softness—not inaptly compared to velvet—and elasticity; the **Neck, Hands, and Arms** assuming and retaining the **radiant whiteness** so much admired, and so unequivocal a mark of attention to the niceties of the Toilet, and the Graces of Personal Attraction.

LADIES, who occasionally sojourn on the **SEA COAST**, or are partial to **AQUATIC EXCURSIONS**, or encountering long voyages, should invariably provide themselves with the **KALYDOR**, by the use of which, during the novelty of such recreation, and after **SEA-BATHING**, the pristine fascination of a fine skin and animated complexion are guarded from otherwise certain, and perhaps lasting injury. It also imparts a pleasing coolness.

To Gentlemen whose faces are tender after shaving, **Rowland's Kalydor** will be found excellent beyond precedent, in ameliorating and allaying the irritation and smarting pain, and rendering the skin soft and smooth.

This exotic preparation is perfectly innocuous, acting in all cases by promoting a healthy tone of the minute vessels, and is **the most elegant as well as effective preparation hitherto submitted to universal patronage.**

CAUTION.—The high repute of this invaluable production has induced unprincipled speculators to substitute imitations of a deleterious tendency; to prevent such imposition, the Name and Address of the Proprietors, as under, is engraved on the Government Stamp affixed over the Cork of each Bottle.

A. Rowland & Son, 20, Hatton Garden.

TESTIMONIAL,

Translated from the Italian, and directed to Messrs. Rowlands' Agent at Corfu.

SIR,—Returning you infinite thanks for the efficacious specific which I have received, namely, the famous **ROWLAND'S KALYDOR**, I have to request a fresh supply. It has been of great service to me against the bites of those troublesome insects that infest this town; on the first application, it immediately allayed their tormenting and venomous effects.

A Lady, who unhappily had (for years) her face afflicted with pimples, I can assure you, that besides entirely removing them, her complexion became more pleasing and delicate; in consequence of which the Kalydor has excited the greatest enthusiasm, and you have the greatest proof of this from the continued applications of the persons to whom I have recommended it, and who, after having used it, were extremely satisfied of its valuable properties.—Waiting, in expectation of your favouring me with the supply I have asked for, I remain, with esteem, your obedient servant,

RAFFAELE FIORE.

Braconiotica, near Corfu, July 10, 1836.

ROWLAND'S ODONTO.

OR PEARL DENTIFRICE.

A Vegetable White Powder, prepared from Oriental Herbs of the most delicious odour and sweetness, and free from any mineral, or pernicious ingredient. It eradicates tartar from the teeth, removes decayed spots, preserves the enamel, and fixes the teeth firmly in their sockets, rendering them beautifully white. It eradicates scurvy from the gums, strengthens, braces, and renders them of a healthy red; it removes unpleasant tastes from the mouth, after fevers, taking medicine, &c., and imparts a delightful fragrance to the breath. 2s. 9d. per Box.

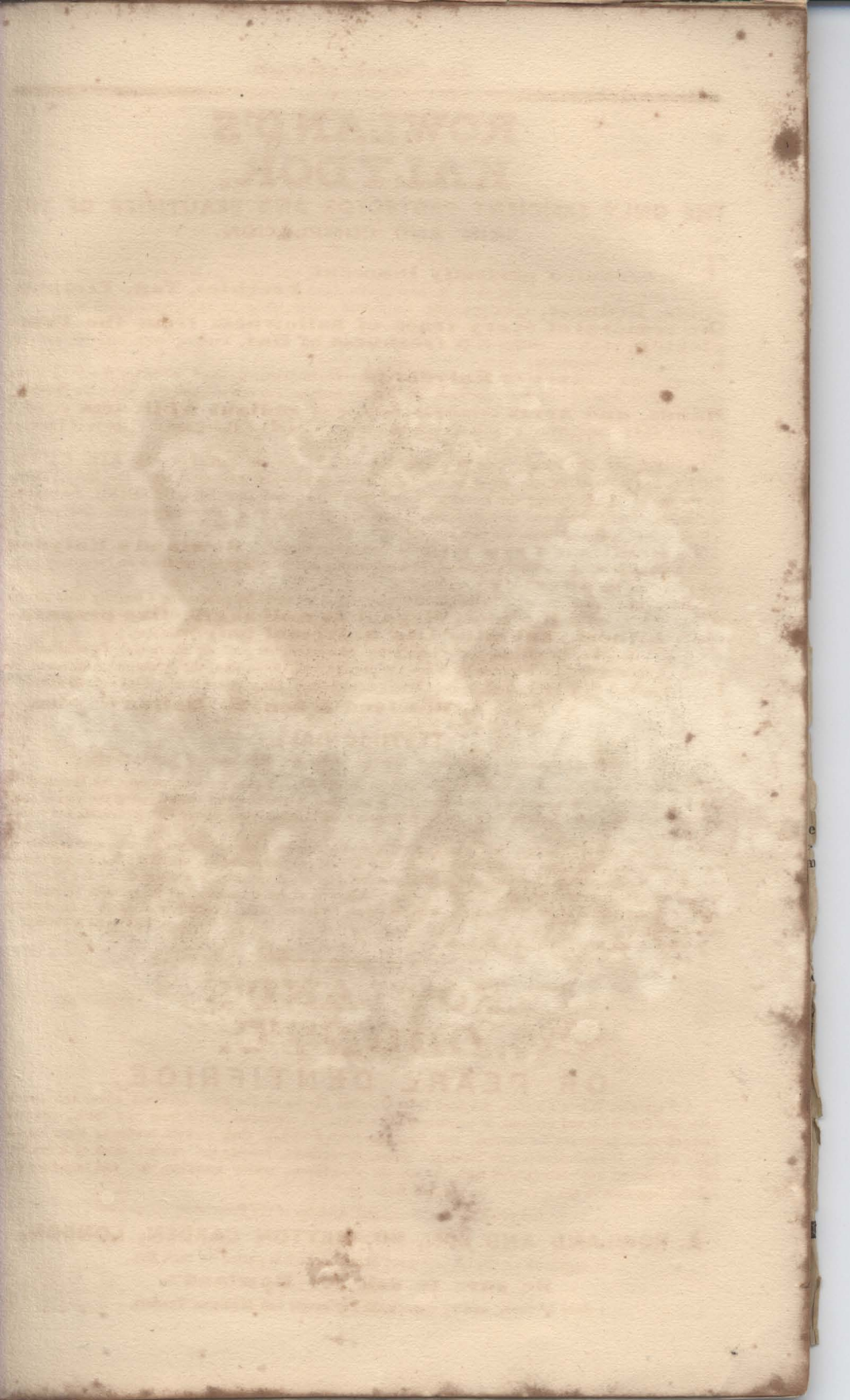
NOTICE.—The Name and Address of the Proprietor,

A. ROWLAND AND SON, 20, HATTON GARDEN, LONDON,

Is engraved on the Government Stamp, which is pasted on each Box.

Be sure to ask for Rowland's.

Sold by them, and by respectable Perfumers and Medicine Venders.









— Pütz del. —

186, STRAND,

September 29, 1837.

COMPLETION

OF

THE PICKWICK PAPERS.

THE Subscribers to this Work and the TRADE are respectfully informed that Nos. XIX. and XX.-(with Titles, Contents, &c.), will be published together on the 1st of November; and that the complete Volume, neatly bound in cloth, price One Guinea, will be ready for delivery by the 14th of that Month, and for which Country Booksellers are requested to send early orders to their respective Agents.

NEW WORK BY "BOZ."

Messrs. CHAPMAN and HALL have the pleasure of announcing that they have completed arrangements with Mr. CHARLES DICKENS, for the production of an ENTIRELY NEW WORK, (with Illustrations by PHIZ,) to be published monthly, at the same price, and in the same form, as the *Pickwick Papers*. The first Number will appear on the 31st of March, 1838.

SKETCHES BY "BOZ,"
COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME,
UNIFORM WITH THE PICKWICK PAPERS.

On November 1st will be published, to be completed in Twenty Numbers, in octavo, price One Shilling each,

SKETCHES BY "BOZ;"
ILLUSTRATIVE OF EVERY-DAY LIFE AND EVERY-DAY PEOPLE.
A New Edition,
COMPRISING BOTH THE SERIES, AND
EMBELLISHED WITH FORTY ILLUSTRATIONS
BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

This Edition will be revised by the Author, and arranged as follows:—

SEVEN SKETCHES FROM OUR PARISH.

THE BEADLE.	THE PARISH ENGINE.	THE SCHOOLMASTER.
THE CURATE.	THE OLD LADY.	THE RETIRED CAPTAIN.
THE FOUR SISTERS.	THE ELECTION FOR BEADLE.	
THE BROKER'S MAN.	THE LADIES' SOCIETIES.	
	OUR NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOURS.	

SCENES.

THE STREETS—MORNING, NOON, AND NIGHT.	
SHOPS AND THEIR TENANTS.	SCOTLAND YARD.
SEVEN DIALS.	MONMOUTH STREET.
HACKNEY-COACH STANDS.	DOCTORS' COMMONS.
LONDON RECREATIONS.	THE RIVER.
ASTLEY'S.	GREENWICH FAIR.
PRIVATE THEATRES.	VAUXHALL GARDENS BY DAY.
EARLY COACHES.	OMNIBUSES.
THE LAST CAB-DRIVER AND THE FIRST OMNIBUS-CAD.	PUBLIC DINNERS.
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.	BROKERS AND MARINE-STORE SHOPS.
THE FIRST OF MAY.	THE PAWNBROKER'S.
GIN-SHOPS.	NEWGATE.
THE CRIMINAL COURT.	

CHARACTERS.

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT SOME PEOPLE.	A CHRISTMAS FAMILY DINNER.
A NEW-YEAR'S PARTY.	MISS JEMIMA EVANS.
THE PARLOUR ORATOR.	THE HOSPITAL PATIENT.
MR. DOUNCE THE WIDOWER.	THE MISTAKEN MILLINER.
THE DANCING ACADEMY.	SHABBY-GENTEEL PEOPLE.
MAKING A NIGHT OF IT.	THE PRISONERS' VAN.

TALES.

THE BOARDING-HOUSE.	MR. MINNS AND HIS COUSIN.
SENTIMENT.	THE TUGGS AT RAMSGATE.
HORATIO SPARKINS.	THE BLACK VEIL.
THE STEAM EXCURSION.	THE GREAT WINGLEBURY DUEL.
MRS. JOSEPH PORTER.	MR. WATKINS TOTTLE.
THE BLOOMSBURY CHRISTENING.	THE DRUNKARD'S DEATH.

LONDON:
CHAPMAN AND HALL, 186, STRAND.

CHAPTER XLIX.

HOW MR. PICKWICK SPED UPON HIS MISSION, AND HOW HE WAS REINFORCED IN THE OUTSET BY A MOST UNEXPECTED AUXILIARY.

THE horses were put to, punctually at a quarter before nine next morning, and Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller having each taken his seat, the one inside and the other out, the postilion was duly directed to repair in the first instance to Mr. Bob Sawyer's house, for the purpose of taking up Mr. Benjamin Allen.

It was with feelings of no small astonishment, when the carriage drew up before the door with the red lamp, and the very legible inscription of "Sawyer, late Nockemorf," that Mr. Pickwick saw, on popping his head out of the coach-window, the boy in the grey livery very busily employed in putting up the shutters: the which being an unusual and rather un-business-like proceeding at that hour of the morning, at once suggested to his mind two inferences—the one, that some good friend and patient of Mr. Bob Sawyer's was dead; the other, that Mr. Bob Sawyer himself was bankrupt.

"What is the matter?" said Mr. Pickwick to the boy.

"Nothing's the matter, Sir," replied the boy, expanding his mouth to the whole breadth of his countenance.

"All right, all right," cried Bob Sawyer, suddenly appearing at the door, with a small leathern knapsack, limp and dirty, in one hand, and a rough coat and shawl thrown over the other arm. "I'm going, old fellow."

"You!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"Yes," replied Bob Sawyer, "and a regular expedition we'll make of it. Here, Sam—look out." Thus briefly bespeaking Mr. Weller's attention, Mr. Bob Sawyer jerked the leathern knapsack into the dickey, where it was immediately stowed away under the seat, by Sam, who regarded the proceeding with great admiration. This done, Mr. Bob Sawyer, with the assistance of the boy, forcibly worked himself into the rough coat, which was a few sizes too small for him, and then advancing to the coach window, thrust in his head, and laughed boisterously.

"What a start it is—isn't it?" said Bob, wiping the tears out of his eyes, with one of the cuffs of the rough coat.

"My dear Sir," said Mr. Pickwick, with some embarrassment, "I had no idea of your accompanying us."

"No, that's just the very thing," replied Bob, seizing Mr. Pickwick by the lappel of his coat. "That's the joke."

"Oh, that's the joke, is it?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Of course," replied Bob. "It's the whole point of the thing, you

know—that, and leaving the business to take care of itself, as it seems to have made up its mind not to take care of me.” With this explanation of the phenomenon of the shutters, Mr. Bob Sawyer pointed to the shop, and relapsed into an ecstasy of mirth.

“Bless me, you are surely not mad enough to think of leaving your patients without anybody to attend them!” remonstrated Mr. Pickwick in a very serious tone.

“Why not?” asked Bob, in reply. “I shall save by it, you know. None of them ever pay. Besides,” said Bob, lowering his voice to a confidential whisper, “they will be all the better for it, for being nearly out of drugs and not able to increase my account just now. I should have been obliged to give them calomel all round, and it would have been certain to have disagreed with some of them—so it’s all for the best.”

There was a philosophy and a strength of reasoning about this reply, which Mr. Pickwick was not prepared for. He paused a few moments, and added, less firmly than before—

“But this chaise, my young friend—this chaise will only hold two; and I am pledged to Mr. Allen.”

“Don’t think of me for a minute,” replied Bob. “I’ve arranged it all; Sam and I will share the dickey between us. Look here. This little bill is to be wafered on the shop-door: ‘Sawyer, late Nockemorf. Enquire of Mrs. Cripps over the way.’—Mrs. Cripps is my boy’s mother.—‘Mr. Sawyer’s very sorry,’ says Mrs. Cripps, ‘couldn’t help it—fetched away early this morning to a consultation of the very first surgeons in the country—couldn’t do without him—would have him at any price—tremendous operation.’ The fact is,” said Bob, in conclusion—“It’ll do me more good than otherwise, I expect. If it gets into one of the local papers, it will be the making of me. Here’s Ben—now then, jump in.”

With these hurried words, Mr. Bob Sawyer pushed the postboy on one side, jerked his friend into the vehicle, slammed the door, put up the steps, wafered the bill on the street-door, locked it, put the key in his pocket, jumped into the dickey, gave the word for starting; and did the whole with such extraordinary precipitation, that before Mr. Pickwick had well begun to consider whether Mr. Bob Sawyer ought to go or not, they were rolling away with Mr. Bob Sawyer, thoroughly established as part and parcel of the equipage.

So long as their progress was confined to the streets of Bristol, the facetious Bob kept his professional green spectacles on, and conducted himself with becoming steadiness and gravity of demeanour, merely giving utterance to divers verbal witticisms for the exclusive behoof and entertainment of Mr. Samuel Weller, but when they emerged upon the open road, he threw off his green spectacles and his gravity together, and performed a great variety of practical jokes, which were rather calculated perhaps to attract the attention of the passers-by, and to render the carriage and those it contained, objects of more than ordinary curiosity; the least conspicuous among these feats being a most vociferous imitation of a key-bugle, and the ostentatious display of a crimson silk pocket-handkerchief attached to a walking-stick, which

was occasionally waved in the air with various gestures indicative of supremacy and defiance.

"I wonder," said Mr. Pickwick, stopping in the midst of a most sedate conversation with Ben Allen, bearing reference to the numerous good qualities of Mr. Winkle and his sister—"I wonder what all the people we pass, can see in us to make them stare so."

"It's a neat turn-out," replied Ben Allen, with something of pride in his tone. "They're not used to see this sort of thing every day, I dare say."

"Possibly," replied Mr. Pickwick. "It may be so. Perhaps it is."

Mr. Pickwick might very probably have reasoned himself into the belief that it really was, had he not, just then happening to look out of the coach window, observed that the looks of the passengers betokened anything but respectful astonishment, and that various telegraphic communications appeared to be passing between them and some persons outside the vehicle, whereupon it all at once occurred to him that these demonstrations might be, in some remote degree, referable to the humorous deportment of Mr. Robert Sawyer.

"I hope," said Mr. Pickwick, "that our volatile friend is committing no absurdities in that dickey behind."

"Oh dear, no," replied Ben Allen. "Except when he's elevated, Bob's the quietest creature breathing."

Here a prolonged imitation of a key-bugle broke upon the ear, succeeded by cheers and screams, all of which evidently proceeded from the throat and lungs of the quietest creature breathing, or in plainer designation, of Mr. Bob Sawyer himself.

Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Ben Allen looked expressively at each other, and the former gentleman taking off his hat, and leaning out of the coach window till nearly the whole of his waistcoat was outside it, was at length enabled to catch a glimpse of his facetious friend.

Mr. Bob Sawyer was seated, not in the dickey, but on the roof of the chaise, with his legs as far asunder as they would conveniently go, wearing Mr. Samuel Weller's hat on one side of his head, and bearing in one hand a most enormous sandwich, while in the other he supported a goodly-sized case bottle, to both of which he applied himself with intense relish, varying the monotony of the occupation by an occasional howl, or the interchange of some lively *badinage* with any passing stranger. The crimson flag was carefully tied in an erect position to the rail of the dickey, and Mr. Samuel Weller, decorated with Bob Sawyer's hat, was seated in the centre thereof, discussing a twin sandwich with an animated countenance, the expression of which betokened his entire and perfect approval of the whole arrangement.

This was enough to irritate a gentleman with Mr. Pickwick's sense of propriety, but it was not the whole extent of the aggravation, for a stage-coach full, inside and out, was meeting them at the moment, and the astonishment of the passengers was very palpably evinced. The congratulations of an Irish family, too, who were keeping up with the chaise, and begging all the time, were of rather a boisterous description; especially those of its male head, who appeared to consider the

display as part and parcel of some political, or other procession of triumph.

"Mr. Sawyer," cried Mr. Pickwick, in a state of great excitement. "Mr. Sawyer, Sir!"

"Hallo!" responded that gentleman, looking over the side of the chaise with all the coolness in life.

"Are you mad, Sir?" demanded Mr. Pickwick.

"Not a bit of it," replied Bob, "only cheerful."

"Cheerful, Sir!" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick. "Take down that scandalous red handkerchief. I beg—I insist, Sir. Sam, take it down."

Before Sam could interpose, Mr. Bob Sawyer gracefully struck his colours, and having put them in his pocket, nodded in a courteous manner to Mr. Pickwick, wiped the mouth of the case-bottle, and applied it to his own; thereby informing him, without any unnecessary waste of words, that he devoted that draught to wishing him all manner of happiness and prosperity. Having done this, Bob replaced the cork with great care, and looking benignantly down on Mr. Pickwick, took a large bite out of the sandwich, and smiled.

"Come," said Mr. Pickwick, whose momentary anger was not quite proof against Bob's immovable self possession, "pray let us have no more of this absurdity, Sir."

"No, no," replied Bob, once more exchanging hats with Mr. Weller; "I didn't mean to do it, only I got so enlivened with the ride that I couldn't help it."

"Think of the look of the thing," expostulated Mr. Pickwick; "have some regard to appearances."

"Oh, certainly," said Bob, "it's not the sort of thing at all. All over, governor."

Satisfied with this assurance, Mr. Pickwick once more drew his head into the chaise and pulled up the glass; but he had scarcely resumed the conversation which Mr. Bob Sawyer had interrupted, when he was somewhat startled by the apparition of a small dark body, of an oblong form, on the outside of the window, which gave sundry taps against it, as if impatient of admission.

"What's this!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"It looks like a case-bottle;" remarked Ben Allen, eyeing the object in question through his spectacles with some interest; "I rather think it belongs to Bob."

The impression was perfectly accurate, for Mr. Bob Sawyer having attached the case-bottle to the end of the walking-stick, was battering the window with it, in token of his wish that his friends inside would partake of its contents, in all good fellowship and harmony.

"What's to be done?" said Mr. Pickwick, looking at the bottle. "This proceeding is more absurd than the other."

"I think it would be best to take it in," replied Mr. Ben Allen; "it would serve him right to take it in and keep it, wouldn't it?"

"It would," said Mr. Pickwick: "shall I?"

"I think it the most proper course we could possibly adopt," replied Ben.

This advice quite coinciding with his own opinion, Mr. Pickwick gently let down the window and disengaged the bottle from the stick; upon which the latter was drawn up, and Mr. Bob Sawyer was heard to laugh heartily.

"What a merry dog it is," said Mr. Pickwick, looking round at his companion with the bottle in his hand.

"He is," said Mr. Allen.

"You cannot possibly be angry with him," remarked Mr. Pickwick.

"Quite out of the question," observed Benjamin Allen.

During this short interchange of sentiments, Mr. Pickwick had, in an abstracted mood, uncorked the bottle.

"What is it?" enquired Ben Allen, carelessly.

"I don't know," replied Mr. Pickwick, with equal carelessness.

"It smells, I think, like milk punch."

"Oh, indeed!" said Ben.

"I *think* so," rejoined Mr. Pickwick, very properly guarding himself against the possibility of stating an untruth: "mind, I could not undertake to say for certain, without tasting it."

"You had better do so," said Ben; "we may as well know what it is."

"Do you think so?" replied Mr. Pickwick. "Well, if you are curious to know, of course I have no objection."

Ever willing to sacrifice his own feelings to the wishes of his friend, Mr. Pickwick at once took a pretty long taste.

"What is it?" enquired Ben Allen, interrupting him with some impatience.

"Curious," said Mr. Pickwick, smacking his lips, "I hardly know, now. Oh, yes," said Mr. Pickwick, after a second taste, "it *is* punch."

Mr. Ben Allen looked at Mr. Pickwick; Mr. Pickwick looked at Mr. Ben Allen. Mr. Ben Allen smiled; Mr. Pickwick did not.

"It would serve him right," said the last-named gentleman with some severity, "it would serve him right to drink it every drop."

"The very thing that occurred to me," said Ben Allen.

"Is it indeed!" rejoined Mr. Pickwick. "Then here's his health." With these words, that excellent person took a most energetic pull at the bottle, and handed it to Ben Allen, who was not slow to imitate his example. The smiles became mutual, and the milk-punch was gradually and cheerfully disposed of.

"After all," said Mr. Pickwick, as he drained the last drop, "his pranks are really very amusing—very entertaining indeed."

"You may say that," rejoined Mr. Ben Allen. And in proof of Bob Sawyer's being one of the funniest fellows alive, he proceeded to entertain Mr. Pickwick with a long and circumstantial account how that gentleman once drank himself into a fever and got his head shaved; the relation of which pleasant and agreeable history was only stopped by the stoppage of the chaise at the Bell at Berkeley Heath, to change horses.

"I say, we're going to dine here, aren't we?" said Bob, looking in at the window.

"Dine!" said Mr. Pickwick. "Why, we have only come nineteen miles, and have got eighty-seven and a half to go."

"Just the reason why we should take something to enable us to bear up against the fatigue," remonstrated Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"Oh, it's quite impossible to dine at half-past eleven o'clock in the day," replied Mr. Pickwick, looking at his watch.

"So it is," rejoined Bob, "lunch is the very thing. Hallo, you Sir! Lunch for three directly; and keep the horses back for a quarter of an hour. Tell them to put every thing they have got cold, on the table, and some bottled ale,—and let us taste your very best Madeira." Issuing these orders with monstrous importance and bustle, Mr. Bob Sawyer at once hurried into the house to superintend the arrangements; in less than five minutes he returned and declared them to be excellent.

The quality of the lunch fully justified the eulogium which Bob had pronounced, and very great justice was done to it, not only by that gentleman, but Mr. Ben Allen and Mr. Pickwick also. Under the auspices of the three, the bottled ale and the Madeira were promptly disposed of; and when (the horses being once more put to) they resumed their seats, with the case-bottle full of the best substitute for milk-punch that could be procured on so short a notice, the key-bugle sounded and the red flag waved without the slightest opposition on Mr. Pickwick's part.

At the Hop Pole at Tewkesbury they stopped to dine; upon which occasion there was more bottled ale, with some more Madeira, and some Port besides; and here the case-bottle was replenished for the fourth time. Under the influence of these combined stimulants, Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Ben Allen fell fast asleep for thirty miles, while Bob and Mr. Weller sang duets in the dickey.

It was quite dark when Mr. Pickwick roused himself sufficiently to look out of the window. The straggling cottages by the road-side, the dingy hue of every object visible, the murky atmosphere, the paths of cinders and brick dust, the deep red glow of furnace fires in the distance, the volumes of dense smoke issuing heavily forth from high toppling chimneys, blackening and obscuring every thing around; the glare of distant lights, the ponderous waggons which toiled along the road, laden with clashing rods of iron, or piled with heavy goods—all betokened their rapid approach to the great working town of Birmingham.

As they rattled through the narrow thoroughfares leading to the heart of the turmoil, the sights and sounds of earnest occupation struck more forcibly on the senses. The streets were thronged with working-people. The hum of labour resounded from every house; lights gleamed from the long casement windows in the attic stories, and the whirl of wheels and noise of machinery shook the trembling walls. The fires, whose lurid sullen light had been visible for miles, blazed fiercely up in the great works and factories of the town. The din of hammers, the rushing of steam, and the dead heavy clanking of the engines, was the harsh music which arose from every quarter.

The postboy was driving briskly through the open streets and past the handsome and well-lighted shops which intervene between the outskirts of the town and the old Royal Hotel, before Mr. Pickwick had begun to consider the very difficult and delicate nature of the commission which had carried him thither.

The delicate nature of this commission, and the difficulty of executing it in a satisfactory manner, were by no means lessened by the voluntary companionship of Mr. Bob Sawyer: truth to tell, Mr. Pickwick felt that his presence on the occasion, however considerate and gratifying, was by no means an honour he would willingly have sought; in fact he would cheerfully have given a reasonable sum of money to have had Mr. Bob Sawyer removed to any place of not less than fifty miles' distance without delay.

Mr. Pickwick had never held any personal communication with Mr. Winkle, Senior, although he had once or twice corresponded with him by letter, and returned satisfactory answers to his enquiries concerning the moral character and behaviour of his son; he felt nervously sensible that to wait upon him for the first time attended by Bob Sawyer and Ben Allen, both slightly fuddled, was not the most ingenious and likely means that could have been hit upon to prepossess him in his favour.

"However," said Mr. Pickwick, endeavouring to re-assure himself, "I must do the best I can: I must see him to-night, for I faithfully promised to do so; and if they persist in accompanying me, I must make the interview as brief as possible, and be content to hope that, for their own sakes, they will not expose themselves."

As he comforted himself with these reflections, the chaise stopped at the door of the Old Royal. Ben Allen having been partially awakened from a stupendous sleep, and dragged out by the collar by Mr. Samuel Weller, Mr. Pickwick was enabled to alight. They were shown to a comfortable apartment, and Mr. Pickwick at once propounded a question to the waiter concerning the whereabouts of Mr. Winkle's residence.

"Close by, Sir," said the waiter, "not above five hundred yards, Sir. Mr. Winkle is a wharfinger, Sir, at the canal, Sir. Private residence is not—oh dear no, Sir, *not* five hundred yards, Sir." Here the waiter blew a candle out and made a feint of lighting it again, in order to afford Mr. Pickwick an opportunity of asking any further questions, if he felt so disposed.

"Take anything now, Sir?" said the waiter, lighting the candle in desperation at Mr. Pickwick's silence. "Tea or coffee, Sir? dinner, Sir?"

"Nothing now."

"Very good, Sir. Like to order supper, Sir?"

"Not just now."

"*Very* good, Sir." Here he walked softly to the door, and then stopping short, turned round and said with great suavity—

"Shall I send the chambermaid, gentlemen?"

"You may if you please," replied Mr. Pickwick.

"If you please, Sir."

"And bring some soda water," said Bob Sawyer.
"Soda water, Sir? Yes, Sir." And with his mind apparently relieved from an overwhelming weight, by having at last got an order for something, the waiter imperceptibly melted away. Waiters never walk or run. They have a peculiar and mysterious power of skimming out of rooms, which other mortals possess not.

Some slight symptoms of vitality having been awakened in Mr. Ben Allen by the soda water, he suffered himself to be prevailed upon to wash his face and hands, and to submit to be brushed by Sam. Mr. Pickwick and Bob Sawyer having also repaired the disorder which the journey had made in their apparel, the three started forth, arm in arm, to Mr. Winkle's; Bob Sawyer impregnating the atmosphere with tobacco smoke as he walked along.

About a quarter of a mile off, in a quiet, substantial-looking street, stood an old red-brick house with three steps before the door, and a brass plate upon it, bearing in fat Roman capitals the words, "Mr. Winkle." The steps were very white, and the bricks were very red, and the house was very clean; and here stood Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Benjamin Allen, and Mr. Bob Sawyer, as the clock struck ten.

A smart servant girl answered the knock, and started on beholding the three strangers.

"Is Mr. Winkle at home, my dear?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"He is just going to supper, Sir," replied the girl.

"Give him that card if you please," rejoined Mr. Pickwick. "Say I am sorry to trouble him at so late an hour; but I am anxious to see him to-night, and have only just arrived."

The girl looked timidly at Mr. Bob Sawyer, who was expressing his admiration of her personal charms by a variety of wonderful grimaces, and casting an eye at the hats and great-coats which hung in the passage, called another girl to mind the door while she went up stairs. The sentinel was speedily relieved, for the girl returned immediately, and begging pardon of the gentlemen for leaving them in the street, ushered them into a floor-clothed back parlour, half office and half dressing room, in which the principal useful and ornamental articles of furniture were a desk, a wash-hand stand and shaving glass, a boot-rack and boot-jack, a high stool, four chairs, a table, and an old eight-day clock. Over the mantel-piece were the sunken doors of an iron safe, while a couple of hanging shelves for books, an almanack, and several files of dusty papers, decorated the walls.

"Very sorry to leave you standing at the door, Sir," said the girl, lighting a lamp, and addressing Mr. Pickwick with a winning smile, "but you was quite strangers to me; and we have such a many trampers that only come to see what they can lay their hands on, that really—"

"There is not the least occasion for any apology, my dear," said Mr. Pickwick good humouredly.

"Not the slightest, my love," said Bob Sawyer, playfully stretching forth his arms, and skipping from side to side, as if to prevent the young lady's leaving the room.

The young lady was not at all softened by these allurements, for she at once expressed her opinion that Mr. Bob Sawyer was an "odous creetur;" and, on his becoming rather more pressing in his attentions, imprinted her fair fingers upon his face, and bounced out of the room with many expressions of aversion and contempt.

Deprived of the young lady's society, Mr. Bob Sawyer proceeded to divert himself by peeping into the desk, looking into all the table-drawers, feigning to pick the lock of the iron safe, turning the almanack with its face to the wall, trying Mr. Winkle senior's boots on, over his own, and making several other humorous experiments upon the furniture, all of which afforded Mr. Pickwick unspeakable horror and agony, and yielded Mr. Bob Sawyer proportionate delight.

At length the door opened, and a little old gentleman in a snuff-coloured suit, with a head and face the precise counterpart of those belonging to Mr. Winkle junior, excepting that he was rather bald, trotted into the room with Mr. Pickwick's card in one hand, and a silver candlestick in the other.

"Mr. Pickwick, Sir, how do you do?" said Winkle the elder, putting down the candlestick and proffering his hand. "Hope I see you well, Sir. Glad to see you. Be seated, Mr. Pickwick, I beg Sir. This gentleman is—"

"My friend Mr. Sawyer," interposed Mr. Pickwick, "your son's friend."

"Oh," said Mr. Winkle the elder, looking rather grimly at Bob. "I hope *you* are well, Sir."

"Right as a trivet," replied Bob Sawyer.

"This other gentleman," cried Mr. Pickwick, "is, as you will see when you have read the letter with which I am entrusted, a very near relative, or I should rather say a very particular friend of your son's. His name is Allen."

"*That* gentleman?" enquired Mr. Winkle, pointing with the card towards Ben Allen, who had fallen asleep in an attitude which left nothing of him visible but his spine and his coat collar.

Mr. Pickwick was on the point of replying to the question, and reciting Mr. Benjamin Allen's name and honourable distinctions at full length, when the sprightly Mr. Bob Sawyer, with the view of rousing his friend to a sense of his situation, inflicted a startling pinch upon the fleshy part of his arm, which caused him to jump up with a loud shriek. Suddenly aware that he was in the presence of a stranger, Mr. Ben Allen advanced and, shaking Mr. Winkle most affectionately by both hands for about five minutes, murmured in some half-intelligible fragments of sentences the great delight he felt in seeing him, and a hospitable enquiry, whether he felt disposed to take anything after his walk, or would prefer waiting "till dinner-time;" which done, he sat down and gazed about him with a petrified stare as if he had not the remotest idea where he was, which indeed he had not.

All this was most embarrassing to Mr. Pickwick, the more especially as Mr. Winkle, senior, evinced palpable astonishment at the eccentric—not to say extraordinary—behaviour of his two companions. To

bring the matter to an issue at once, he drew a letter from his pocket, and presenting it to Mr. Winkle, senior, said—

“ This letter, Sir, is from your son. You will see by its contents that on your favourable and fatherly consideration of it, depend his future happiness and welfare. Will you oblige me by giving it the calmest and coolest perusal, and by discussing the subject afterwards, with me, in the tone and spirit in which alone it ought to be discussed? You may judge of the importance your decision is of, to your son, and his intense anxiety upon the subject, by my waiting upon you without any previous warning at so late an hour; and,” added Mr. Pickwick, glancing slightly at his two companions, “ and under such unfavourable circumstances.”

With this prelude, Mr. Pickwick placed four closely written sides of extra superfine wire-wove penitence in the hands of the astounded Mr. Winkle, senior; and reseating himself in his chair, watched his looks and manner, anxiously it is true, but with the open front of a gentleman who feels he has taken no part which he need excuse or palliate.

The old wharfinger turned the letter over; looked at the front, back, and sides; made a microscopic examination of the fat little boy on the seal; raised his eyes to Mr. Pickwick's face; and then, seating himself on the high stool and drawing the lamp closer to him, broke the wax, unfolded the epistle, and lifting it to the light, prepared to read.

Just at this moment, Mr. Bob Sawyer, whose wit had lain dormant for some minutes, placed his hands upon his knees and made a face after the portraits of the late Mr. Grimaldi, as clown. It so happened that Mr. Winkle, senior, instead of being deeply engaged in reading the letter, as Mr. Bob Sawyer thought, chanced to be looking over the top of it at no less a person than Mr. Bob Sawyer himself; and rightly conjecturing that the face aforesaid was made in ridicule and derision of his own person, he fixed his eyes on Bob with such expressive sternness, that the late Mr. Grimaldi's lineaments gradually resolved themselves into a very fine expression of humility and confusion.

“ Did you speak, Sir?” enquired Mr. Winkle, senior, after an awful silence.

“ No, Sir,” replied Bob, with no remains of the clown about him, save and except the extreme redness of his cheeks.

“ You are sure you did not, Sir?” said Mr. Winkle, senior.

“ Oh dear! yes, Sir, quite,” replied Bob.

“ I thought you did, Sir,” rejoined the old gentleman, with indignant emphasis. “ Perhaps you *looked* at me, Sir?”

“ Oh, no! Sir, not at all,” replied Bob, with extreme civility.

“ I am very glad to hear it, Sir,” said Mr. Winkle, senior. Having frowned upon the abashed Bob with great magnificence, the old gentleman again brought the letter to the light, and began to read it seriously.

Mr. Pickwick eyed him intently as he turned from the bottom line of the first page to the top line of the second, and from the bottom of the second to the top of the third, and from the bottom of the third to the top of the fourth; but not the slightest alteration of countenance

afforded a clue to the feelings with which he received the announcement of his son's marriage, which Mr. Pickwick knew was in the very first half-dozen lines.

He read the letter to the last word, folded it again with all the carefulness and precision of a man of business; and, just when Mr. Pickwick expected some great outbreak of feeling, dipped a pen in the inkstand, and said as quietly as if he were speaking on the most ordinary counting-house topic—

“What is Nathaniel's address, Mr. Pickwick?”

“The George and Vulture, at present,” replied that gentleman.

“George and Vulture. Where is that?”

“Sun Court, Cornhill.”

“In the City?”

“Yes.”

The old gentleman methodically indorsed the address on the back of the letter; and then placing it in the desk, which he locked, said as he got off the stool and put the bunch of keys in his pocket—

“I suppose there is nothing else which need detain us, Mr. Pickwick?”

“Nothing else, my dear Sir!” observed that warm-hearted person in indignant amazement. “Nothing else! Have you no opinion to express on this momentous event in our young friend's life; no assurance to convey to him, through me, of the continuance of your affection and protection; nothing to say which will cheer and sustain him, and the anxious girl who looks to him for comfort and support? My dear Sir, consider.”

“I will consider,” replied the old gentleman. “I have nothing to say just now. I am a man of business, Mr. Pickwick; I never commit myself hastily in any affair, and from what I see of this, I by no means like the appearance of it. A thousand pounds is not much, Mr. Pickwick.”

“You're very right, Sir,” interposed Ben Allen, just awake enough to know that he had spent *his* thousand pounds without the smallest difficulty. “You're an intelligent man; Bob, he's a very knowing fellow this.”

“I am very happy to find that *you* do me the justice to make the admission, Sir,” said Mr. Winkle, senior, looking contemptuously at Ben Allen, who was shaking his head profoundly. “The fact is, Mr. Pickwick, that when I gave my son a roving license for a year or so to see something of men and manners (which he has done under your auspices), so that he might not enter into life a mere boarding-school milk-sop to be gulled by every body, I never bargained for this. He knows that very well, so if I withdraw my countenance from him on this account, he has no call to be surprised. He shall hear from me, Mr. Pickwick. Good night, Sir. Margaret, open the door.”

All this time Bob Sawyer had been nudging Mr. Ben Allen to say something on the right side; and Ben accordingly now burst out, without the slightest preliminary notice, into a brief but impassioned piece of eloquence.

“ Sir,” said Mr. Ben Allen, staring at the old gentleman, through a pair of very dim and languid eyes, and working his right arm vehemently up and down, “ you—you ought to be ashamed of yourself.”

“ As the lady’s brother, of course you are an excellent judge of the question,” retorted Mr. Winkle, senior. “ There; that’s enough. Pray say no more, Mr. Pickwick. Good night, gentlemen.”

With these words the old gentleman took up the candlestick, and opening the room door, politely motioned towards the passage.

“ You will regret this, Sir,” said Mr. Pickwick, setting his teeth close together to keep down his choler; for he felt how important the effort might prove to his young friend.

“ I am at present of a different opinion,” calmly replied Mr. Winkle, senior. “ Once again, gentlemen, I wish you a good night.”

Mr. Pickwick walked with angry strides into the street. Mr. Bob Sawyer, completely quelled by the decision of the old gentleman’s manner, took the same course; Mr. Ben Allen’s hat rolled down the steps immediately afterwards, and Mr. Ben Allen’s body followed it directly. The whole party went silent and supperless to bed; and Mr. Pickwick thought, just before he fell asleep, that if he had known Mr. Winkle, senior, had been quite so much of a man of business, it was extremely probable he might never have waited upon him, on such an errand.

CHAPTER L.

IN WHICH MR. PICKWICK ENCOUNTERS AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE, TO WHICH FORTUNATE CIRCUMSTANCE THE READER IS MAINLY INDEBTED FOR MATTER OF THRILLING INTEREST HEREIN SET DOWN, CONCERNING TWO GREAT PUBLIC MEN OF MIGHT AND POWER.

THE morning which broke upon Mr. Pickwick’s sight at eight o’clock was not at all calculated to elevate his spirits, or to lessen the depression which the unlooked-for result of his embassy inspired. The sky was dark and gloomy, the air damp and raw, the streets wet and sloppy. The smoke hung sluggishly above the chimney-tops as if it lacked the courage to rise, and the rain came slowly and doggedly down as if it had not even the spirit to pour. A game-cock in the stable-yard, deprived of every spark of his accustomed animation, balanced himself dismally on one leg in a corner: and a donkey, moping with drooping head under the narrow roof of an outhouse, appeared from his meditative and miserable countenance to be contemplating suicide. In the street, umbrellas were the only things to be seen, and the clicking of pattens and splashing of rain-drops, the only sounds to be heard.

The breakfast was interrupted by very little conversation; even Mr. Bob Sawyer felt the influence of the weather, and the previous day’s excitement. In his own most expressive language, he was “flooded.” So was Mr. Ben Allen. So was Mr. Pickwick.

In protracted expectation of the weather clearing up, the last evening paper from London was read and re-read with an intensity of interest only known in cases of extreme destitution; every inch of the carpet was walked over with similar perseverance, the windows were looked out of often enough to justify the imposition of an additional duty upon them, all kinds of topics of conversation were started, and failed; and at length Mr. Pickwick when noon had arrived without a change for the better, rang the bell resolutely and ordered out the chaise.

Although the roads were miry, and the drizzling rain came down harder than it had done yet, and although the mud and wet splashed in at the open windows of the carriage to such an extent that the discomfort was almost as great to the pair of insides as to the pair of outsides, still there was something in the very motion, and the sense of being up and doing, which was so infinitely superior to being pent in a dull room, looking at the dull rain dripping into a dull street, that they all agreed, on starting, that the change was a great improvement, and wondered how they could possibly have delayed making it as long as they had done.

When they stopped to change at Coventry, the steam ascended from the horses in such clouds as wholly to obscure the hostler, whose voice was however heard to declare from the mist, that he expected the first Gold Medal from the Humane Society on their next distribution of rewards, for taking the postboy's hat off; the water descending from the brim of which, the invisible gentleman declared must inevitably have drowned him (the postboy), but for his great presence of mind in tearing it promptly from his head, and drying the gasping man's countenance with a wisp of straw.

"This is pleasant," said Bob Sawyer, turning up his coat collar, and pulling the shawl over his mouth to concentrate the fumes of a glass of brandy just swallowed.

"Wery," replied Sam, composedly.

"You don't seem to mind it," observed Bob.

"Vy, I don't exactly see no good my mindin' on it 'ud do, Sir," replied Sam.

"That's an answerable reason, anyhow," said Bob.

"Yes, Sir," rejoined Mr. Weller. "Votever is, is right, as the young nobleman sweetly remarked ven they put him down in the pension list 'cos his mother's uncle's wife's grandfather vunce lit the king's pipe with a portable tinder box."

"Not a bad notion that, Sam," said Mr. Bob Sawyer approvingly.

"Just wot the young nobleman said ev'ry quarter-day arterwards for the rest of his life," replied Mr. Weller.

"Vos you ever called in," enquired Sam, glancing at the driver, after a short silence, and lowering his voice to a mysterious whisper, "wos you ever called in, ven you wos 'prentice to a sawbones, to visit a postboy?"

"I don't remember that I ever was," replied Bob Sawyer.

"You never see a postboy in that 'ere hospital as you *walked* (as they says o' the ghosts), did you?" demanded Sam.

"No," replied Bob Sawyer. "I don't think I ever did."

"Never know'd a churchyard vere there was a postboy's tombstone, or see a dead postboy, did you?" enquired Sam, pursuing his catechism.

"No," rejoined Bob, "I never did."

"No," rejoined Sam, triumphantly. "Nor never vill; and there's another thing that no man never see, and that's a dead donkey—no man never see a dead donkey, 'cept the gen'l'm'n in the black silk smalls as know'd the young 'ooman as kept a goat; and that was a French donkey, so verry likely he warn't vun o' the reg'lar breed."

"Well, what has that got to do with the postboys?" asked Bob Sawyer.

"This here," replied Sam. "Vithout goin' so far as to as-sert, as some verry sensible people do, that postboys and donkeys is both immortal, wot I say is this; that venever they feels theirselves gettin stiff and past their work, they just rides off together, vun postboy to a pair, in the usual vay; wot becomes on 'em nobody knows, but it's verry probable as they starts away to take their pleasure in some other world, for there ain't a man alive as ever see either a donkey or a postboy a takin' his pleasure in this!"

Expatriating upon this learned and remarkable theory, and citing many curious statistical and other facts in its support, Sam Weller beguiled the time until they reached Dunchurch, where a dry post-boy and fresh horses were procured; the next stage was Daventry, and the next Towcester; and at the end of each stage it rained harder than it had done at the beginning.

"I say," remonstrated Bob Sawyer, looking in at the coach window, as they pulled up before the door of the Saracen's Head, Towcester, "this won't do you know."

"Bless me!" said Mr. Pickwick, just awakening from a nap, "I'm afraid you are wet."

"Oh you are, are you?" returned Bob. "Yes, I am, a little that way—uncomfortably damp, perhaps."

Bob did look dampish, inasmuch as the rain was streaming from his neck, elbows, cuffs, skirts, and knees; and his whole apparel shone so with the wet, that it might have been mistaken for a full suit of prepared oilskin.

"I *am* rather wet," said Bob, giving himself a shake, and casting a little hydraulic shower around in so doing, like a Newfoundland dog just emerged from the water.

"I think it's quite impossible to go on to-night," interposed Ben.

"Out of the question, Sir," remarked Sam Weller, coming to assist in the conference; "it's cruelty to animals, Sir, to ask 'em to do it. There's beds here, Sir," said Sam, addressing his master, "everything clean and comfortable. Wery good little dinner, Sir, they can get ready in half an hour—pair of fowls, Sir, and a weal cutlet; French beans, 'taturs, tart, and tidiness. You'd better stop vere you are, Sir, if I might recommend. Take advice, Sir, as the doctor said."

The host of the Saracen's Head opportunely appeared at this moment, to confirm Mr. Weller's statement relative to the accommodations of

the establishment, and to back his entreaties with a variety of dismal conjectures regarding the state of the roads, the doubt of fresh horses being to be had at the next stage, the dead certainty of its raining all night, the equally mortal certainty of its clearing up in the morning, and other topics of inducement familiar to innkeepers.

"Well," said Mr. Pickwick, "but I must send a letter to London by some conveyance, so that it may be delivered the very first thing in the morning, or I must go forward at all hazards."

The landlord smiled his delight. Nothing could be easier than for the gentleman to inclose a letter in a sheet of brown paper and send it on either by the mail or the night coach from Birmingham. If the gentleman was particularly anxious to have it left as soon as possible, he might write outside, "To be delivered immediately," which was sure to be attended to; or "pay the bearer half-a-crown extra for instant delivery," which was surer still.

"Very well," said Mr. Pickwick, "then we will stop here."

"Lights in the Sun, John; make up the fire—the gentlemen are wet," cried the landlord. "This way, gentlemen; don't trouble yourself about the postboy now, Sir; I'll send him to you when you ring for him, Sir. Now John, the candles."

The candles were brought, the fire was stirred up, and a fresh log of wood thrown on. In ten minutes' time a waiter was laying the cloth for dinner, the curtains were drawn, the fire was blazing brightly, and every thing looked (as every thing always does in all decent English inns) as if the travellers had been expected and their comforts prepared, for days beforehand.

Mr. Pickwick sat down at a side table and hastily indited a note to Mr. Winkle, merely informing him that he was detained by stress of weather, but would certainly be in London next day; until when he deferred any further account of his proceedings. This note was hastily made up into a parcel and despatched to the bar per Mr. Samuel Weller.

Sam left it with the landlady, and was returning to pull his master's boots off, after drying himself by the kitchen fire, when, glancing casually through a half-opened door, he was arrested by the sight of a gentleman with a sandy head who had a large bundle of newspapers lying on the table before him, and was perusing the leading article of one with a settled sneer which curled up his nose and all his other features into a majestic expression of haughty contempt.

"Hallo!" said Sam, "I ought to know that 'ere head and them features; the eye-glass, too, and the broad-brimmed tile! Eatansvill to vit, or I'm a Roman."

Sam was taken with a troublesome cough at once, for the purpose of attracting the gentleman's attention: and the gentleman starting at the sound, raised his head and his eye-glass, and disclosed to view the profound and thoughtful features of Mr. Pott, of the Eatanswill Gazette.

"Beggin' your pardon, Sir," said Sam, advancing with a bow, "my master's here, Mr. Pott."

"Hush, hush!" cried Pott, drawing Sam into the room, and closing the door, with a countenance of mysterious dread and apprehension.

"Wot's the matter, Sir?" enquired Sam, looking vacantly about him.

"Not a whisper of my name," replied Pott—"this is a buff neighbourhood. If the excited and irritable populace knew I was here, I should be torn to pieces."

"No; would you, Sir?" enquired Sam.

"I should be the victim of their fury," replied Pott. "Now, young man, what of your master?"

"He's a stoppin' here to-night on his way to town, with a couple of friends," replied Sam.

"Is Mr. Winkle one of them?" enquired Pott, with a slight frown.

"No, Sir; Mr. Vinkle stops at home now," rejoined Sam. "He's married."

"Married!" exclaimed Pott, with frightful vehemence. He stopped, smiled darkly, and added, in a low, vindictive tone, "It serves him right!"

Having given vent to this cruel ebullition of deadly malice and cold-blooded triumph over a fallen enemy, Mr. Pott enquired whether Mr. Pickwick's friends were "blue;" receiving a most satisfactory answer in the affirmative from Sam, who knew as much about the matter as Pott himself, he consented to accompany him to Mr. Pickwick's room, where a hearty welcome awaited him, and an agreement to club their dinners together was at once made and ratified.

"And how are matters going on in Eatanswill?" inquired Mr. Pickwick, when Pott had taken a seat near the fire, and the whole party had got their wet boots off, and dry slippers on. "Is the Independent still in being?"

"The Independent, Sir," replied Pott, "is still dragging on a wretched and lingering career, abhorred and despised by even the few who are cognizant of its miserable and disgraceful existence; stifled by the very filth it so profusely scatters: rendered deaf and blind by the exhalations of its own slime, the obscene journal, happily unconscious of its degraded state, is rapidly sinking beneath that treacherous mud which, while it seems to give it a firm standing with the low and debased classes of society, is, nevertheless, rising above its detested head, and will speedily engulf it for ever."

Having delivered this manifesto (which formed a portion of his last week's leader) with vehement articulation, the editor paused to take breath, and looked majestically at Bob Sawyer.

"You are a young man, Sir," said Pott.

Mr. Bob Sawyer nodded.

"So are you, Sir," said Pott, addressing Mr. Ben Allen.

Ben admitted the soft impeachment.

"And are both deeply imbued with those blue principles, which so long as I live, I have pledged myself to the people of these kingdoms to support and to maintain?" suggested Pott.

"Why, I don't exactly know about that," replied Bob Sawyer, "I am—"

"Not buff, Mr. Pickwick," interrupted Pott, drawing back his chair, "your friend is not buff, Sir?"

"No, no," rejoined Bob, "I'm a kind of plaid at present; a compound of all sorts of colours."

"A waverer," said Pott solemnly, "a waverer. I should like to show you a series of eight articles, Sir, that have appeared in the *Eatanswill Gazette*. I think I may venture to say that you would not be long in establishing your opinions on a firm and solid basis, Sir."

"I dare say I should turn very blue, long before I got to the end of them," responded Bob.

Mr. Pott looked dubiously at Bob Sawyer for some seconds, and, turning to Mr. Pickwick, said—

"You have seen the literary articles which have appeared at intervals in the *Eatanswill Gazette* in the course of the last three months, and which have excited such general—I may say such universal attention and admiration?"

"Why," replied Mr. Pickwick, slightly embarrassed by the question, "the fact is, I have been so much engaged in other ways, that I really have not had an opportunity of perusing them."

"You should do so, Sir," said Pott, with a severe countenance.

"I will," said Mr. Pickwick.

"They appeared in the form of a copious review of a work on Chinese metaphysics, Sir," said Pott.

"Oh," observed Mr. Pickwick—"from your pen I hope?"

"From the pen of my critic, Sir," rejoined Pott with dignity.

"An abstruse subject I should conceive," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Very, Sir," responded Pott, looking intensely sage. "He *crammed* for it, to use a technical but expressive term; he read up for the subject, at my desire, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Pickwick; "I was not aware that that valuable work contained any information respecting Chinese metaphysics."

"He read, Sir," rejoined Pott, laying his hand on Mr. Pickwick's knee, and looking round with a smile of intellectual superiority, "he read for metaphysics under the letter M, and for China under the letter C; and combined his information, Sir!"

Mr. Pott's features assumed so much additional grandeur at the recollection of the power and research displayed in the learned effusions in question, that some minutes elapsed before Mr. Pickwick felt emboldened to renew the conversation; at length, as the Editor's countenance gradually relapsed into its customary expression of moral supremacy, he ventured to resume the discourse by asking—

"Is it fair to enquire what great object has brought you so far from home?"

"That object which actuates and animates me in all my gigantic labours, Sir," replied Pott, with a calm smile—"my country's good."

"I supposed it was some public mission," observed Mr. Pickwick.

"Yes, Sir," resumed Pott, "it is." Here, bending towards Mr. Pickwick, he whispered in a deep hollow voice, "A buff ball, Sir, will take place in Birmingham to-morrow evening."

“ God bless me ! ” exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

“ Yes, Sir, and supper,” added Pott.

“ You don’t say so ! ” ejaculated Mr. Pickwick.

Pott nodded portentously.

Now, although Mr. Pickwick feigned to stand aghast at this disclosure, he was so little versed in local politics that he was unable to form an adequate comprehension of the importance of the dire conspiracy it referred to; observing which, Mr. Pott, drawing forth the last number of the Eatanswill Gazette, and referring to the same, delivered himself of the following paragraph:—

“ HOLE-AND-CORNER BUFFERY.

“ A reptile contemporary has recently sweltered forth his black venom in the vain and hopeless attempt of sullyng the fair name of our distinguished and excellent representative, the Honourable Mr. Slumkey—that Slumkey whom we, long before he gained his present noble and exalted position, predicted would one day be, as he now is, at once his country’s brightest honour, and her proudest boast: alike her bold defender and her honest pride—our reptile contemporary, we say, has made himself merry at the expense of a superbly embossed plated coal-scuttle, which has been presented to that glorious man by his enraptured constituents, and towards the purchase of which, the nameless wretch insinuates, the Honourable Mr. Slumkey himself contributed, through a confidential friend of his butler’s, more than three-fourths of the whole sum subscribed. Why, does not the crawling creature see that even if this be the fact, the Honourable Mr. Slumkey only appears in a still more amiable and radiant light than before, if that be possible? does not even his obtuseness perceive that this amiable and touching desire to carry out the wishes of the constituent body must for ever endear him to the hearts and souls of such of his fellow townsmen as are not worse than swine; or, in other words, who are not as debased as our contemporary himself? But such is the wretched trickery of hole-and-corner Buffery! These are not its only artifices. Treason is abroad. We boldly state, now that we are goaded to the disclosure, and we throw ourselves on the country and its constables for protection:—we boldly state that secret preparations are at this moment in progress for a Buff ball, which is to be held in a Buff town, in the very heart and centre of a Buff population; which is to be conducted by a Buff master of the ceremonies; which is to be attended by four ultra Buff members of parliament, and the admission to which is to be by Buff tickets! Does our fiendish contemporary wince? Let him writhe in impotent malice as we pen the words, **WE WILL BE THERE.**”

“ There, Sir,” said Pott, folding up the paper quite exhausted, “ that is the state of the case.”

The landlord and waiter entering at the moment with dinner, caused Mr. Pott to lay his finger on his lips in token that he considered his life in Mr. Pickwick’s hands, and depended on his secrecy. Messrs. Bob Sawyer and Benjamin Allen, who had irreverently fallen asleep during the reading of the quotation from the Eatanswill Gazette and

the discussion which followed it, were roused by the mere whispering of the talismanic word "Dinner" in their ears; and to dinner they went with good digestion waiting on appetite, and health on both, and a waiter upon all three.

In the course of the dinner and the sitting which succeeded it, Mr. Pott descending for a few moments to domestic topics, informed Mr. Pickwick that the air of Eatanswill not agreeing with his lady, she was then engaged in making a tour of different fashionable watering places with a view to the recovery of her wonted health and spirits; this was a delicate veiling of the fact that Mrs. Pott, acting upon her often repeated threat of separation, had, in virtue of an arrangement negotiated by her brother, the Lieutenant, and concluded by Mr. Pott, permanently retired with the faithful body-guard upon one moiety or half-part of the annual income and profits arising from the editorship and sale of the Eatanswill Gazette.

While the great Mr. Pott was dwelling upon this and other matters, enlivening the conversation from time to time with various extracts from his own lucubrations, a stern stranger, calling from the window of a stage-coach, outward bound, which halted at the inn to deliver packages, requested to know whether if he stopped short on his journey and remained there for the night he could be furnished with the necessary accommodation of a bed and bedstead.

"Certainly, Sir," replied the landlord.

"I can, can I?" enquired the stranger, who seemed habitually suspicious in look and manner.

"No doubt of it, Sir," replied the landlord.

"Good," said the stranger. "Coachman, I get down here. Guard, my carpet-bag."

Bidding the other passengers good night in a rather snappish manner, the stranger alighted. He was a shortish gentleman, with very stiff black hair, cut in the porcupine or blacking-brush style, and standing stiff and straight all over his head; his aspect was pompous and threatening; his manner was peremptory; his eyes sharp and restless; and his whole bearing bespoke a feeling of great confidence in himself, and a consciousness of immeasurable superiority over all other people.

This gentleman was shown into the room originally assigned to the patriotic Mr. Pott; and the waiter remarked, in dumb astonishment at the singular coincidence, that he had no sooner lighted the candles than the gentleman, diving into his hat, drew forth a newspaper, and began to read it with the very same expression of indignant scorn which upon the majestic features of Pott had paralysed his energies an hour before. The man observed too, that whereas Mr. Pott's scorn had been roused by a newspaper headed *The Eatanswill Independent*, this gentleman's withering contempt was awakened by a newspaper entitled *The Eatanswill Gazette*.

"Send the landlord," said the stranger.

"Yes, Sir," rejoined the waiter.

The landlord was sent, and came.

"Are you the landlord?" enquired the gentleman.

"I am, Sir," replied the landlord.

"Do you know me?" demanded the gentleman.

"I have not that pleasure, Sir," rejoined the landlord.

"My name is Slurk," said the gentleman.

The landlord slightly inclined his head.

"Slurk, Sir," repeated the gentleman, haughtily. "Do you know me now, man?"

The landlord scratched his head, looked at the ceiling, and at the stranger, and smiled feebly.

"Do you know me, man?" enquired the stranger, angrily.

The landlord made a strong effort, and at length replied, "Well, Sir, I do *not* know you."

"Good God!" said the stranger, dashing his clenched fist upon the table. "And this is popularity!"

The landlord took a step or two towards the door, and the stranger fixing his eyes upon him, resumed.

"This," said the stranger, "this is gratitude for years of labour and study in behalf of the masses. I alight wet and weary; no enthusiastic crowds press forward to greet their champion, the church-bells are silent; the very name elicits no responsive feeling in their torpid bosoms. It is enough," said the agitated Mr. Slurk, pacing to and fro, "to curdle the ink in one's pen, and induce one to abandon their cause for ever."

"Did you say brandy and water, Sir?" said the landlord, venturing a hint.

"Rum," said Mr. Slurk, turning fiercely upon him. "Have you got a fire anywhere?"

"We can light one directly, Sir," said the landlord.

"Which will throw out no heat till it is bed time," interrupted Mr. Slurk. "Is there anybody in the kitchen?"

Not a soul. There was a beautiful fire. Everybody had gone, and the door was closed for the night.

"I will drink my rum and water," said Mr. Slurk, "by the kitchen fire." So, gathering up his hat and newspaper, he stalked solemnly behind the landlord to that humble apartment, and throwing himself on a settle by the fireside, resumed his countenance of scorn, and began to read and drink in silent dignity.

Now some demon of discord, flying over the Saracen's Head at that moment, on casting down his eyes in mere idle curiosity, happened to behold Slurk established comfortably by the kitchen fire, and Pott slightly elevated with wine in another room; upon which the malicious demon darting down into the last-mentioned apartment with inconceivable rapidity, passed at once into the head of Mr. Bob Sawyer, and prompted him for his (the demon's) own evil purposes to speak as follows.

"I say, we've let the fire out. It's uncommonly cold after the rain, isn't it?"

"It really is," replied Mr. Pickwick, shivering.

"It wouldn't be a bad notion to have a cigar by the kitchen fire, would it?" said Bob Sawyer, still prompted by the demon aforesaid.

"It would be particularly comfortable, *I* think," replied Mr. Pickwick. "Mr. Pott, what do you say?"

Mr. Pott yielded a ready assent; and all four travellers, each with his

glass in his hand, at once betook themselves to the kitchen, with Sam Weller heading the procession to shew them the way.

The stranger was still reading; he looked up and started. Mr. Pott started.

"What's the matter?" whispered Mr. Pickwick.

"That reptile!" replied Pott.

"What reptile?" said Mr. Pickwick, looking about him for fear he should tread on some overgrown black beetle, or dropsical spider.

"That reptile," whispered Pott, catching Mr. Pickwick by the arm, and pointing towards the stranger. "That reptile—Slurk, of the Independent!"

"Perhaps we had better retire," whispered Mr. Pickwick.

"Never, Sir," rejoined Pott,—pot-valiant in a double sense—"never." With these words, Mr. Pott took up his position on an opposite settle, and selecting one from a little bundle of newspapers, began to read against his enemy.

Mr. Pott, of course, read the Independent, and Mr. Slurk, of course, read the Gazette; and each gentleman audibly expressed his contempt of the other's compositions by bitter laughs and sarcastic sniffs; whence they proceeded to more open expressions of opinion, such as "absurd,"—"wretched,"—"atrocious,"—"humbug,"—"knavery,"—"dirt,"—"filth,"—"slime,"—"ditch water," and other critical remarks of the like nature.

Both Mr. Bob Sawyer and Mr. Ben Allen had beheld these symptoms of rivalry and hatred with a degree of delight, which imparted great additional relish to the cigars at which they were puffing most vigorously. The moment they began to flag, the mischievous Mr. Bob Sawyer, addressing Slurk with great politeness, said—

"Will you allow me to look at your paper, Sir, when you have quite done with it?"

"You'll find very little to repay you for your trouble in this contemptible *thing*, Sir," replied Slurk, bestowing a Satanic frown on Pott.

"You shall have this presently," said Pott, looking up, pale with rage, and quivering in his speech from the same cause. "Ha! ha! you will be amused with this *fellow's* audacity."

Terrific emphasis was laid upon "*thing*" and "*fellow*;" and the faces of both editors began to glow with defiance.

"The ribaldry of this miserable man is despicably disgusting," said Pott, pretending to address Bob Sawyer, and scowling upon Slurk.

Here Mr. Slurk laughed very heartily, and folding the paper so as to get at a fresh column conveniently, said, that the blockhead really amused him.

"What an impudent blunderer this fellow is," said Pott, turning from pink to crimson.

"Did you ever read any of this man's foolery, Sir?" enquired Slurk, of Bob Sawyer.

"Never," replied Bob; "is it very bad?"

"Oh, shocking! shocking!" rejoined Slurk.

"Really, dear me, this is too atrocious!" exclaimed Pott, at this juncture; still feigning to be absorbed in his reading.

"If you can wade through a few sentences of malice, meanness,

falsehood, perjury, treachery, and cant," said Slurk, handing the paper to Bob, "you will, perhaps, be somewhat repaid by a laugh at the style of this ungrammatical twaddler."

"What's that you said, Sir?" inquired Pott, looking up, trembling all over with passion.

"What's that to you, Sir?" replied Slurk.

"Ungrammatical twaddler, was it, Sir?" said Pott.

"Yes, Sir, it was," replied Slurk; "and *blue bore*, Sir, if you like that better; ha! ha!"

Mr. Pott retorted not a word to this jocose insult, but deliberately folding up his copy of the Independent, flattened it carefully down, crushed it beneath his boot, spat upon it with great ceremony, and flung it into the fire.

"There, Sir," said Pott, retreating from the stove, "and that's the way I would serve the viper who produces it, if I were not, fortunately for him, restrained by the laws of my country."

"Serve him so, Sir!" cried Slurk, starting up: "those laws shall never be appealed to by him, Sir, in such a case. Serve him so, Sir!"

"Hear! hear!" said Bob Sawyer.

"Nothing can be fairer," observed Mr. Ben Allen.

"Serve him so, Sir!" reiterated Slurk, in a loud voice.

Mr. Pott darted a look of contempt, which might have withered an anchor.

"Serve him so, Sir!" reiterated Slurk, in a louder voice than before.

"I will not, Sir;" rejoined Pott.

"Oh, you won't! won't you, Sir?" said Mr. Slurk, in a taunting manner; "you hear this, gentlemen! He won't; not that he's afraid; oh, no! he *won't*. Ha! ha!"

"I consider you, Sir," said Mr. Pott, moved by this sarcasm, "I consider you a viper. I look upon, Sir, you as a man who has placed himself beyond the pale of society, by his most audacious, disgraceful, and abominable public conduct. I view you, Sir, personally or politically, in no other light but as a most unparalleled and unmitigated viper."

The indignant Independent did not wait to hear the end of this personal denunciation, for, catching up his carpet-bag, which was well stuffed with moveables, he swung it in the air as Pott turned away, and letting it fall with a circular sweep on his head just at that particular angle of the bag where a good thick hair-brush happened to be packed, caused a sharp crash to be heard throughout the kitchen, and brought him at once to the ground.

"Gentlemen," cried Mr. Pickwick, as Pott started up and seized the fire-shovel, "gentlemen, consider for Heaven's sake—help—Sam—here—pray, gentlemen—interfere, somebody."

Uttering these incoherent exclamations, Mr. Pickwick rushed between the infuriated combatants just in time to receive the carpet bag on one side of his body, and the fire-shovel on the other; whether the representatives of the public feeling of Eatanswill were blinded by animosity, or, being both acute reasoners, saw the advantage of having a third party between them to bear all the blows, certain it is

that they paid not the slightest attention to Mr. Pickwick, but defying each other with great spirit, plied the carpet bag and the fire-shovel most fearlessly. Mr. Pickwick would unquestionably have suffered severely from his humane interference, if Mr. Weller, attracted by his master's cries, had not rushed in at the moment and, snatching up a meal-sack, effectually stopped the conflict by drawing it over the head and shoulders of the mighty Pott, and clasping him tight round the elbows.

"Take away that 'ere bag from the t'other madman," said Sam to Ben Allen and Bob Sawyer, who had done nothing but dodge round the group, each with a tortoise-shell lancet in his hand, ready to bleed the first man stunned. "Give it up, you wretched little creetur, or I'll smother you in it."

Awed by these threats, and quite out of breath, the Independent suffered himself to be disarmed; and Mr. Weller, removing the extinguisher from Pott, set him free with a caution.

"You take yourselves off to bed quietly," said Sam, "or I'll put you both in it, and let you fight it out vith the mouth tied, as I vould a dozen sich, if they played these games. And you have the goodness to come this here way, Sir, if you please."

Thus addressing his master, Sam took him by the arm and led him off, while the rival editors were severally removed to their beds by the landlord, under the inspection of Mr. Bob Sawyer and Mr. Benjamin Allen; breathing, as they went away, many sanguinary threats, and making vague appointments for mortal combat next day. When they came to think it over, however, it occurred to them that they could do it much better in print, so they recommenced deadly hostilities without delay; and all Eatanswill rung with their boldness—on paper.

They had taken themselves off in separate coaches, early next morning, before the other travellers were stirring; and the weather having now cleared up, the chaise companions once more turned their faces to London.

CHAPTER LI.

INVOLVING A SERIOUS CHANGE IN THE WELLER FAMILY, AND THE UNTIMELY DOWNFALL OF THE RED-NOSED MR. STIGGINS.

CONSIDRRING it a matter of delicacy to abstain from introducing either Bob Sawyer or Ben Allen to the young couple, until they were fully prepared to expect them; and wishing to spare Arabella's feelings as much as possible, Mr. Pickwick proposed that he and Sam should alight in the neighbourhood of the George and Vulture, and that the two young men should for the present take up their quarters elsewhere; to this they very readily agreed, and the proposition was accordingly acted upon: Mr. Ben Allen and Mr. Bob Sawyer betaking themselves to a sequestered pot-shop on the remotest confines of the

Borough, behind the bar-door of which their names had in other days very often appeared, at the head of long and complex calculations worked in white chalk.

"Dear me, Mr. Weller," said the pretty housemaid, meeting Sam at the door.

"Dear *me* I wish it wos, my dear," replied Sam, dropping behind, to let his master get out of hearing. "Wot a sweet lookin' creetur you are, Mary!"

"Lor, Mr. Weller, what nonsense you do talk!" said Mary. "Oh! *don't*, Mr. Weller."

"Don't what, my dear?" said Sam.

"Why, that," replied the pretty housemaid. "Lor, do get along with you." Thus admonishing him, the pretty housemaid smilingly pushed Sam against the wall, declaring that he had tumbled her cap, and put her hair quite out of curl.

"And prevented what I was going to say, besides," added Mary. "There's a letter been waiting here for you four days; you hadn't been gone away half an hour when it came; and more than that, it's got, immediate, on the outside."

"Vere is it, my love?" enquired Sam.

"I took care of it for you, or I dare say it would have been lost long before this," replied Mary. "There, take it; it's more than you deserve."

With these words, after many pretty little coquettish doubts and fears, and wishes that she might not have lost it, Mary produced the letter from behind the nicest little muslin tucker possible, and handed it to Sam, who thereupon kissed it with much gallantry and devotion.

"My goodness me!" said Mary, adjusting the tucker, and feigning unconsciousness, "you seem to have grown very fond of it all at once."

To this Mr. Weller only replied by a wink, the intense meaning of which no description could convey the faintest idea of; and, setting himself down beside Mary on a window-seat, opened the letter and glanced at the contents.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Sam, "wot's all this?"

"Nothing the matter, I hope?" said Mary, peeping over his shoulder.

"Bless them eyes o' yourn," said Sam, looking up.

"Never mind my eyes; you had much better read your letter," said the pretty housemaid, and as she said this, she made the eyes twinkle with such slyness and beauty that they were perfectly irresistible.

Sam refreshed himself with a kiss, and read as follows:—

"*Markis Gran*

"*By dorken*

"*Wensdy.*

"My dear Sammle,

"I am verry sorry to have the plessure of bein a Bear of ill news your Mother in law cort cold consekens of imprudently settin too long on the damp grass in the rain a hearin of a shepherd who warnt able to

leave off till late at night owen to his havin vound his-self up vith brandy and vater and not being able to stop his-self till he got a little sober which took a many hours to do the doctor says that if she'd sval-lo'd varm brandy and vater arterwards insted of afore she mightn't have been no vus her veels wos immedety greased and everythink done to set her a goin as could be inwented your farther had hopes as she vould have vorked round as usual but just as she wos a turnen the corner my boy she took the wrong road and vent down hill vith a velocity you never see and notvithstandin that the drag was put on drectly by the medikel man it wort of no use at all for she paid the last pike at twenty minutes afore six o'clock yesterday evenin havin done the jouney very much under the reglar time vich praps was partly owen to her haven taken in very little luggage by the vay your father says that if you vill come and see me Sammy he vill take it as a very great favor for I am very lonely Samivel N. B he *vill* have it spelt that vay vich I say ant right and as there is sich a many things to settle he is sure your guvner wont object of course he vill not Sammy for I knows him better so he sends his dooty in vich I join and am Samivel infernally yours

“TONY WELLER.”

“Wot a incomprehensible letter,” said Sam; “who’s to know wot it means vith all this he-ing and I-ing! It ain’t my father’s writin’ ’cept this here signater in print letters; that’s his.”

“Perhaps he got somebody to write it for him, and signed it himself afterwards,” said the pretty housemaid.

“Stop a minit,” replied Sam, running over the letter again, and pausing here and there to reflect as he did so. “You’ve hit it. The gen’l m’n as wrote it, wos a tellin’ all about the misfortun’ in a proper vay, and then my father comes a lookin’ over him, and complicates the whole concern by puttin’ his oar in. That’s just the very sort o’ thing he’d do. You’re right, Mary, my dear.”

Having satisfied himself upon this point, Sam read the letter all over, once more, and, appearing to form a clear notion of its contents for the first time, ejaculated thoughtfully, as he folded it up:—

“And so the poor creature’s dead! I’m sorry for it. She warn’t a bad-disposed ’ooman if them shepherds had let her alone. I’m verry sorry for it.”

Mr. Weller uttered these words in so serious a manner, that the pretty housemaid cast down her eyes and looked verry grave.

“Hows’ever,” said Sam, putting the letter in his pocket, with a gentle sigh, “it wos to be—and wos, as the old lady said arter she’d married the footman, can’t be helped now, can it, Mary?”

Mary shook her head, and sighed too.

“I must apply to the hemperor for leave of absence,” said Sam.

Mary sighed again,—the letter was so verry affecting.

“Good bye!” said Sam.

“Good bye,” rejoined the pretty housemaid, turning her head away.

“Well, shake hands, won’t you?” said Sam.

The pretty housemaid put out a hand which, although it was a housemaid’s, was a verry small one, and rose to go.

"I shan't be very long away," said Sam.

"You're always away," said Mary, giving her head the slightest possible toss in the air. "You no sooner come, Mr. Weller, than you go again."

Mr. Weller drew the household beauty closer to him, and entered upon a whispering conversation, which had not proceeded far when she turned her face round and condescended to look at him again. When they parted it was somehow or other indispensably necessary for her to go to her room, and arrange the cap and curls before she could think of presenting herself to her mistress; which preparatory ceremony she went off to perform, bestowing many nods and smiles on Sam over the bannisters as she tripped up stairs.

"I shan't be away more than a day,—or two, Sir, at farthest," said Sam, when he had communicated to Mr. Pickwick the intelligence of his father's loss.

"As long as may be necessary, Sam," replied Mr. Pickwick. "You have my full permission to remain."

Sam bowed.

"You will tell your father, Sam, that if I can be of any assistance to him in his present situation, I shall be most willing and ready to lend him any aid in my power," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Thankee, Sir," rejoined Sam. "I'll mention it, Sir."

And with some expressions of mutual good-will and interest, master and man separated.

It was just seven o'clock when Samuel Weller, alighting from the box of a stage coach which passed through Dorking, stood within a few hundred yards of the Marquis of Granby. It was a cold dull evening; the little street looked dreary and dismal, and the mahogany countenance of the noble and gallant Marquis seemed to wear a more sad and melancholy expression than it was wont to do, as it swung to and fro, creaking mournfully in the wind. The blinds were pulled down, and the shutters partly closed; of the knot of loungers that usually collected about the door, not one was to be seen; the place was silent and desolate.

Seeing nobody of whom he could ask any preliminary questions, Sam walked softly in, and glancing round, he quickly recognised his parent in the distance.

The widower was seated at a small round table in the little room behind the bar, smoking a pipe, with his eyes intently fixed upon the fire. The funeral had evidently taken place that day, for attached to his hat which he still retained on his head, was a hat-band measuring about a yard and a half in length, which hung over the top rail of the chair and streamed negligently down. Mr. Weller was in a very abstracted and contemplative mood, for notwithstanding that Sam called him by name several times he still continued to smoke with the same fixed and quiet countenance, and was only roused ultimately by his son's placing the palm of his hand on his shoulder.

"Sammy," said Mr. Weller, "you're welcome."

"I've been a callin' to you half a dozen times," said Sam, hanging his hat on a peg, "but you didn't hear me."

"No, Sammy," replied Mr. Weller, again looking thoughtfully at the fire. "I was in a referee, Sammy."

"Wot about?" enquired Sam, drawing his chair up to the fire.

"In a referee, Sammy," replied the elder Mr. Weller, "regardin' her, Samivel." Here Mr. Weller jerked his head in the direction of Dorking churchyard, in mute explanation that his words referred to the late Mrs. Weller.

"I was a thinkin', Sammy," said Mr. Weller, eyeing his son with great earnestness, over his pipe, as if to assure him that however extraordinary and incredible the declaration might appear, it was nevertheless calmly and deliberately uttered, "I was a thinkin', Sammy, that upon the whole I was verry sorry she was gone."

"Vell, and so you ought to be," replied Sam.

Mr. Weller nodded his acquiescence in the sentiment, and again fastening his eyes on the fire, shrouded himself in a cloud, and mused deeply.

"Those was verry sensible observations as she made, Sammy?" said Mr. Weller, driving the smoke away with his hand, after a long silence.

"Wot observations?" enquired Sam.

"Them as she made arter she was took ill," replied the old gentleman.

"Wot was they?"

"Somethin' to this here effect. 'Veller,' she says, 'I'm afeard I've not done by you quite wot I ought to have done; you're a verry kind-hearted man, and I might ha' made your home more comfortable. I begin to see now,' she says, 'ven it's too late, that if a married 'ooman wishes to be religious she should begin vith dischargin' her dooties at home, and makin' them as is about her cheerful and happy, and that vile she goes to church, or chapel, or wot not, at all proper times, she should be verry careful not to con-wert this sort o' thing into an excuse for idleness or self-indulgence, or vurse. I *have* done this,' she says, 'and I've vasted time and substance on them as has done it more than me; but I hope ven I'm gone, Veller, that you'll think on me as I was afore I know'd them people, and as I raly was by natur.' 'Susan,' says I, —'I was took up verry short by this, Samivel; I von't deny it, my boy —'Susan,' I says, 'you've been a verry good vife to me, altogether, don't say nothin' at all about it, keep a good heart my dear, and you'll live to see me punch that 'ere Stiggins's head yet.' She smiled at this, Samivel," said the old gentleman, stifling a sigh with his pipe, "but she died arter all!"

"Vell," said Sam, venturing to offer a little homely consolation after the lapse of three or four minutes, consumed by the old gentleman in slowly shaking his head from side to side, and solemnly smoking; "vell, gov'ner, ve must all come to it, one day or another."

"So we must, Sammy," said Mr. Weller the elder.

"There's a Providence in it all," said Sam.

"O'course there is," replied his father with a nod of grave approval.

"Wot 'ud become of the undertakers vithout it, Sammy?"

Lost in the immense field of conjecture opened by this reflection,

the elder Mr. Weller laid his pipe on the table, and stirred the fire with a meditative visage.

While the old gentleman was thus engaged, a very buxom-looking cook, dressed in mourning, who had been bustling about in the bar, glided into the room, and bestowing many smirks of recognition upon Sam, silently stationed herself at the back of his father's chair, and announced her presence by a slight cough, the which being disregarded, was followed by a louder one.

"Hallo!" said the elder Mr. Weller, dropping the poker as he looked round, and hastily drew his chair away. "Wot's the matter now?"

"Have a cup of tea, there's a good soul," replied the buxom female, coaxingly.

"I von't," replied Mr. Weller, in a somewhat boisterous manner, "I'll see you—" Mr. Weller hastily checked himself, and added in a low tone, "further fust."

"Oh, dear, dear; how adversity does change people!" said the lady, looking upwards.

"It's the only thing 'twixt this, and the doctor as shall change *my* condition," muttered Mr. Weller.

"I really never saw a man so cross," said the buxom female.

"Never mind—it's all for my own good; vich is the reflection vith wich the penitent schoolboy comforted his feelin's ven they flogged him," rejoined the old gentleman.

The buxom female shook her head with a compassionate and sympathising air; and, appealing to Sam, enquired whether his father really ought not to make an effort to keep up, and not give way to that lowness of spirits.

"You see, Mr. Samuel," said the buxom female, "as I was telling him yesterday, he *will* feel lonely, he can't expect but what he should, Sir, but he should keep up a good heart, because, dear me, I'm sure we all pity his loss, and are ready to do anything for him; and there's no situation in life so bad, Mr. Samuel, that it can't be mended, which is what a very worthy person said to me when my husband died." Here the speaker, putting her hand before her mouth, coughed again, and looked affectionately at the elder Mr. Weller.

"As I don't rekvire any o' your conversation just now, Mum, vill you have the goodness to re-tire?" enquired Mr. Weller in a grave and steady voice.

"Well, Mr. Weller," said the buxom female, "I'm sure I only spoke to you out of kindness."

"Wery likely, Mum," replied Mr. Weller. "Samivel, show the lady out, and shut the door arter her."

This hint was not lost upon the buxom female, for she at once left the room, and slammed the door behind her, upon which Mr. Weller, senior, falling back in his chair in a violent perspiration, said—

"Sammy, if I wos to stop here alone vun veek—only vun veek, my boy—that 'ere 'ooman 'ud marry me by force and wiolence afore it was over."

"Wot, is she so wery fond on you?" enquired Sam.

"Fond!" replied his father, "I can't keep her away from me. If I was locked up in a fire-proof chest vith a patent Brahmin, she'd find means to get at me, Sammy."

"Wot a thing it is to be so sought arter!" observed Sam, smiling.

"I don't take no pride out on it, Sammy," replied Mr. Weller, poking the fire vehemently, "it's a horrid sitiuation. I'm actiually drove out o' house and home by it. The breath was scarcely out o' your poor mother-in-law's body, ven vun old 'ooman sends me a pot o' jam, and another a pot o' jelly, and another brews a blessed large jug o' camomile-tea, vich she brings in vith her own hands." Mr. Weller paused with an aspect of intense disgust, and, looking round, added in a whisper, "They wos all widders, Sammy, all on 'em, 'cept the camomile-tea vun, as wos a single young lady o' fifty-three."

Sam gave a comical look in reply, and the old gentleman having broken an obstinate lump of coal, with a countenance expressive of as much earnestness and malice as if it had been the head of one of the widows last-mentioned, said—

"In short, Sammy, I feel that I ain't safe anyveres but on the box."

"How are you safer there than anyveres else?" interrupted Sam.

"'Cos a coachman 's a privileged individual," replied Mr. Weller, looking fixedly at his son. "'Cos a coachman may do vithout suspicion wot other men may not; 'cos a coachman may be on the very amicablest terms with eighty mile o' females, and yet nobody think that he ever means to marry any vun among 'em. And wot other man can say the same, Sammy?"

"Well, there 's somethin' in that," said Sam.

"If your gov'ner had been a coachman," reasoned Mr. Weller, "do you s'pose as that 'ere jury 'ud ever ha' convicted him, s'posin' it possible as the matter could ha' gone to that ex-tremity? They dustn't ha' done it."

"Wy not?" said Sam, rather disparagingly.

"Vy not!" rejoined Mr. Weller; "'cos it 'ud ha' gone agin their consciences. A reg'lar coachman's a sort o' con-nectin' link betvixt singleness and matrimony, and every practicable man knows it."

"Wot you mean, they're gen'ral fav'rites, and nobody takes advantage on 'em, p'raps?" said Sam.

His father nodded.

"How it ever come to that 'ere pass," resumed the parent Weller, "I can't say; vy it is that long-stage coachmen possess such insiniuations, and is always looked up to—a-dored I may say—by ev'ry young 'ooman in ev'ry town he vurks through, I don't know; I only know that so it is; it's a reg'lacion of natur—a dispensary, as your poor mother-in-law used to say."

"A dispensation," said Sam, correcting the old gentleman.

"Wery good, Samivel, a dispensation if you like it better," returned Mr. Weller; "I call it a dispensary, and it's always writ up so, at the places vere they gives you physic for nothin' in your own bottles; that's all."

With these words Mr. Weller re-filled and re-lighted his pipe, and

once more summoning up a meditative expression of countenance, continued as follows :—

“ Therefore, my boy, as I do not see the advisability o’ stoppin’ here to be married vether I vant to or not, and as at the same time I do not vish to separate myself from them interestin’ members o’ society altogether, I have come to the determination o’ drivin’ the Safety, and puttin’ up vunce more at the Bell Savage, vich is my nat’ral-born element, Sammy.”

“ And wot’s to become o’ the bis’ness ?” enquired Sam.

“ The bis’ness, Samivel,” replied the old gentleman, “ good-vill, stock, and fixters, vill be sold by private con-tact; and out o’ the money, two hundred pound, agreeable to a rekvest o’ your mother-in-law’s to me, a little afore she died, vill be investet in your name in— wot do you call them things again ?”

“ Wot things ?” enquired Sam.

“ Them things as is always a goin’ up and down in the City.”

“ Omnibuses ?” suggested Sam.

“ Nonsense,” replied Mr. Weller. “ Them things as is always a fluctoatin’, and gettin’ theirselves involved somehow or another vith the national debt, and the chequers bills, and all that.”

“ Oh ! the funds,” said Sam.

“ Ah !” rejoined Mr. Weller, “ the funs ; two hundred pound o’ the money is to be investet for you, Samivel, in the funs ; four and a half per cent. reduced counsels, Sammy.”

“ Wery kind o’ the old lady to think o’ me,” said Sam, “ and I’m wery much obliget to her.”

“ The rest vill be investet in my name,” continued the elder Mr. Weller ; “ and ven I’m took off the road, it’ll come to you, so take care you don’t spend it all at vunst, my boy, and mind that no widdet gets a inklin’ o’ your fortun’, or you’re done.”

Having deliveret this warning, Mr. Weller resumed his pipe with a more serene countenance ; the disclosure of these matters appearin’ to have eased his mind considerably.

“ Somebody’s a tappin’ at the door,” said Sam.

“ Let ’em tap,” replied his father, with dignity.

Sam acted upon the direction : upon which there was another tap, and another, and then a long row of taps ; upon which Sam enquired why the tapper was not admitted.

“ Hush,” whispered Mr. Weller, with apprehensive looks, “ don’t take no notice on ’em, Sammy, it’s vun o’ the widders, p’raps.”

No notice being taken of the taps, the unseen visitor, after a short lapse, ventured to open the door and peep in. It was no female head that was thrust in at the partially opened door, but the long black locks and red face of Mr. Stiggins. Mr. Weller’s pipe fell from his hands.

The reverend gentleman gradually opened the door by almost imperceptible degrees, until the aperture was just wide enough to admit of the passage of his lank body, when he glided into the room and closed it after him with great care and gentleness. Turning towards Sam, and raising his hands and eyes in token of the unspeakable sorrow

with which he regarded the calamity that had befallen the family, he carried the high-backed chair to his old corner by the fire, and sitting himself down on the very edge of the seat, drew forth a brown pocket handkerchief, and applied the same to his optics.

While this was going forward, the elder Mr. Weller sat back in his chair with his eyes wide open, his hands planted on his knees, and his whole countenance expressive of absorbing and overwhelming astonishment. Sam sat opposite him in perfect silence, waiting with eager curiosity for the termination of the scene.

Mr. Stiggins kept the brown pocket-handkerchief before his eyes for some minutes, moaning decently meanwhile, and then, mastering his feelings by a strong effort, put it in his pocket and buttoned it up. After this he stirred the fire; after that he rubbed his hands and looked at Sam.

"Oh my young friend," said Mr. Stiggins, breaking the silence in a very low voice, "here's a sorrowful affliction."

Sam nodded very slightly.

"For the man of wrath, too!" added Mr. Stiggins; "it makes a vessel's heart bleed!"

Mr. Weller was overheard by his son to murmur something relative to making a vessel's nose bleed; but Mr. Stiggins heard him not.

"Do you know, young man," whispered Mr. Stiggins, drawing his chair closer to Sam, "whether she has left Emanuel anything?"

"Who's he?" enquired Sam.

"The chapel," replied Mr. Stiggins; "our chapel; our fold, Mr. Samuel."

"She hasn't left the fold nothin', nor the shepherd nothin', nor the animals nothin'," said Sam, decisively; "nor the dogs neither."

Mr. Stiggins looked slyly at Sam, glanced at the old gentleman, who was sitting with his eyes closed, as if asleep; and drawing his chair still nearer, said,

"Nothing for *me*, Mr. Samuel?"

Sam shook his head.

"I think there's something," said Stiggins, turning as pale as he could turn. "Consider, Mr. Samuel; no little token?"

"Not so much as the vurth o' that 'ere old umberella o' yourn," replied Sam.

"Perhaps," said Mr. Stiggins, hesitatingly, after a few moments' deep thought, "perhaps she recommended me to the care of the man of wrath, Mr. Samuel?"

"I think that's very likely, from what he said," rejoined Sam; "he was a speakin' about you, jist now."

"Was he, though?" exclaimed Stiggins, brightening up. "Ah! He's changed, I dare say. We might live very comfortably together now, Mr. Samuel, eh? I could take care of his property when you are away—good care, you see."

Heaving a long-drawn sigh, Mr. Stiggins paused for a response. Sam nodded, and Mr. Weller, the elder, gave vent to an extraordinary sound, which, being neither a groan, nor a grunt, nor a gasp, nor a growl, seemed to partake in some degree of the character of all four.

Mr. Stiggins, encouraged by this sound, which he understood to be token remorse or repentance, looked about him, rubbed his hands, wept, smiled, wept again, and then, walking softly across the room to a well-remembered shelf in one corner, took down a tumbler, and, with great deliberation, put four lumps of sugar in it. Having got thus far, he looked about him again and sighed grievously; with that he walked softly into the bar, and presently returning with the tumbler half full of pine-apple rum, advanced to the kettle which was singing gaily on the hob, mixed his grog, stirred it, sipped it, sat down, and taking a long and hearty pull at the rum and water, stopped for breath.

The elder Mr. Weller, who still continued to make various strange and uncouth attempts to appear asleep, offered not a single word during these proceedings, but when Mr. Stiggins stopped for breath, he darted upon him, and snatching the tumbler from his hand, threw the remainder of the rum and water in his face, and the glass itself into the grate. Then, seizing the reverend gentleman firmly by the collar, he suddenly fell to kicking him most furiously, accompanying every application of his top-boot to Mr. Stiggins's person with sundry violent and incoherent anathemas upon his limbs, eyes, and body.

"Sammy," said Mr. Weller, "put my hat on tight for me."

Sam dutifully adjusted the hat with the long hatband more firmly on his father's head, and the old gentleman, resuming his kicking with greater agility than before, tumbled with Mr. Stiggins through the bar, and through the passage, out at the front door, and so into the street;—the kicking continuing the whole way, and increasing in vehemence, rather than diminishing, every time the top-boot was lifted up.

It was a beautiful and exhilarating sight to see the red-nosed man writhing in Mr. Weller's grasp, and his whole frame quivering with anguish as kick followed kick in rapid succession; it was a still more exciting spectacle to behold Mr. Weller, after a powerful struggle, immersing Mr. Stiggins's head in a horse-trough full of water, and holding it there, till he was all but suffocated.

"There," said Mr. Weller, throwing all his energy into one most complicated kick, as he at length permitted Mr. Stiggins to withdraw his head from the trough, "send any vun o' them lazy shepherds here, and I'll pound him to a jelly first, and drown him arterwards. Sammy, help me in, and fill me a small glass of brandy. I'm out o' breath, my boy."

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By FREDERIC SHOBERL, Esq.

The time has now arrived when a dispassionate history may be given of the most stupendous political, moral, and domestic convulsion ever known in the world. The acts of regal and aristocratical despotism which, after long-suffering on the part of the people, brought about the fierce and sanguinary reaction of the mob and its demagogue leaders, were, until the present era, affairs of too recent an origin to be even calmly narrated, much less calmly discussed. In describing this fearful Revolution, a partisan of the *ancien régime* would represent the Republican actors in the great national tragedy as fiends destitute of any human attribute, who perpetrated the most cruel and impious atrocities for the mere wanton love of crime. Such chroniclers would refuse to admit that either Marat, or Robespierre, or Danton, could have any, even the most latent or erroneous, view of benefiting their fellow-creatures in what they did, or in what they permitted to be done, and would visit upon their heads the mad and sanguinary enormities of the *canaille*. On the other hand a Republican annalist, overlooking the vices of his party, and blindly urging impracticable theories, would dwell with exaggeration on the corrupt abuses of the French Court and the Ministry, would endeavour to justify the wickedness of the people, and exclude from commiseration the unfortunate Louis, his Queen, and all those of his adherents of whom Revenge had made victims.

It is in one or the other of these partial and inadequate modes that the ever-memorable Revolution of France has hitherto been described; but as there are now but very few survivors of that great event, and as the party feeling connected with it has died away, an impartial and authentic history has been written by the celebrated M. Thiers.

A history of so momentous an epoch, thus constructed, will surely possess an interest which no other book can emulate. Not alone must it be replete with deep instruction and awful warnings; but the startling scenes involved in it—scenes of grandeur, terror, mystery, and pathos—from pictures of desperate conflicts, in which multitudes were engaged, and in which thousands were slaughtered—of glittering and idolatrous pageants to the altar of false Liberty—of ostentatious sacrifices, without trial, of human victims—of the massacre of priests for no other reason than that they were ministers of God—and of the hideous orgies of monsters drunk with blood—to the solitary adventures, sufferings, and sometimes marvellous escapes of fugitives—the persecution of innocent women and children in the sacred precincts of home—the mute despair of the husband and father over the bodies of his murdered wife and children—and the melancholy sight of the captive in his dungeon, dreading that every moment may herald in his sanguinary fate. These cannot fail to absorb attention, and rivet curiosity in a more intense degree than could be achieved by the finest creations of Romance. Imagination, indeed, would not dare to pourtray such striking instances of rapid vicissitude in the state of a nation, such sudden alterations in the fortune of individuals, such traits of heroism, such examples of endurance, nor such representations of enormous guilt and savage cruelty as are, in almost every page, unfolded in the History of the great Revolution of France; while to peruse them must assuredly be to enlarge our knowledge in those matters which most nearly concern our public and private happiness. The warning voice ought not to sound in vain.

The impartiality and correctness of the History of M. Thiers have not been disputed; but, lest even he may inadvertently have fallen into occasional inaccuracies of detail, the Editor of the present edition has availed himself of numerous other sources of information, derived from eye-witnesses, of the scenes described, and other unquestionable authorities, including a large series of curious anecdotes, the whole of which will be embodied in Notes; so that the reader, by these various testimonies, will be enabled to form just conclusions as to the character of the events narrated.

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