



E 440

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

BRIEF DIVERSIONS

PAPERS FROM LILLIPUT

I FOR ONE

FIGURES IN MODERN LITERATURE

THE ENGLISH COMIC CHARACTERS

FOOLS AND PHILOSOPHERS

A Gallery of Comic Figures
from English Literature
Arranged by J. B. PRIESTLEY

. . . "I will confess a truth
to thee, reader. I love a *Fool*."



JOHN LANE
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P R E F A C E

THERE are so many anthologies and selections and books of extracts already in existence that the editor of a new one is almost compelled to be on the defensive. He must give a good reason why he has chosen to cast yet another burden on the groaning book-stalls. Many anthologies and volumes of extracts come into existence because they are largely composed of unfamiliar work, such as little-known Elizabethan songs or minor eighteenth-century verse and so forth, and such compilations, usually the result of years of quiet research and unflagging zeal, need no excuse. But I cannot plead that the work represented here is unfamiliar ; on the contrary, the plays and novels and essays from which these passages have been chosen are, with one or two possible exceptions, among the oldest friends of any lover of books. Practically every passage will be familiar to every well-read person, and not for a moment do I flatter myself that I am giving the reader anything new. What I have done is simply to isolate these passages, classifying them in a fashion that must not be taken too seriously, and to put them within one cover, so that the reader has here a gallery of comic figures from our literature that he is able, as it were, to

Fools and Philosophers

carry about with him. It will serve, at a pinch, as a little medicine chest of humour. That is my excuse, and if the book-stalls groan more than ever, I can only say that it is my prayer that they will not have to groan long under copies of this particular volume.

In selecting the figures to be represented here, I have been compelled to modify my choice according to the suitability of the various passages in which those figures occurred. In short, I have been forced to choose suitable passages rather than representative characters. For this reason, the reader will discover a number of what will seem startling omissions. A whole host of amusing characters, such as Thackeray's Captain Costigan and Foker, Trollope's Mrs. Proudie, Scott's Baron of Bradwardine, Dominie Sampson and Dandie Dinmont, Jane Austen's Mr. Woodhouse, Smollett's Lismahago, Goldsmith's Tony Lumpkin and Moses Primrose—to name only a few, have been kept out because there did not seem to me any single passage sufficiently revealing or sufficiently absurd in itself that I could select to represent them. The result is that many authors, who at first sight would seem to supply ideal hunting grounds, have no place here. I do not suppose for a moment that my choice of passages and figures will meet with anybody's entire approval (there is no subject on which people are less likely to agree than that of the comparative merits of humorous passages and comic characters), and I can only assure the indignant reader who finds that one or two favourites have been omitted that it is the authors from whom

Preface

I have taken nothing who have cost me nine-tenths of my time. The fact is that the ideal authors for such a selection as this are authors like Shakespeare and Dickens, in whom absurdity blossoms to perfection in single passages, who indulge their comic characters, give them *carte blanche* as it were, all over the place ; whereas some other writers (Thackeray is perhaps the best example) who have a fine sense of comedy in character, whose work is saturated in humour, are yet a shade too close to realism, are too reluctant to abandon themselves to their more absurd creations, to provide short extracts that would do them any justice. On the other hand, there is so much material in both Shakespeare and Dickens that I have deliberately omitted passages of theirs that are superior to other things by other writers included in the selection. I could not offer the reader merely a Shakespeare and Dickens selection, and, within the limits of such a volume, I had to make it as representative as possible.

A few extracts have been chosen because of their mere oddity, but for the most part I have aimed at passages in which a notable comic figure reveals himself or herself to perfection, little extracts that contain, so to speak, the essence of the character. I have called the book *Fools and Philosophers*, because some of these notable comic personages of ours are fools, some are philosophers, and many of them are both, and I have tried to catch them when they are most foolish and most philosophical, at the moments when they take us into their confidence, when they are most them-

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selves. It is not, of course, to be expected that we shall agree, in every instance, as to when that moment occurs. I can only hope that, here and there, these revealing passages, seen in isolation, will add something to the reader's appreciation and enjoyment of the characters concerned when they are encountered again at full length in the various plays and novels. Here and there, too, it may be, a reader will be moved to return to an old author with renewed appetite or will be tempted to read a *Joseph Andrews* or *Tristram Shandy* he has never yet opened. This volume was never intended to grapple with modern literature, and as there had to be a definite limit of some kind, I have deliberately excluded all authors still in copyright, and trust that the reader will not regret too bitterly the half-dozen or so figures (at the most) that have thus been omitted. I should like to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mrs. A. E. Coppard for the way in which she has transcribed and indexed the selected passages. With this laborious part of an editor's work performed so capably and off my hands, my task has been a delightful one, a kind of editor's midsummer night's dream ; and if the reader perceives even a glimmer of this moonshine of high comedy, if he has even one-tenth of the fun reading the volume that I had compiling it, all will be well.

J. B. PRIESTLEY.

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SOME MILITARY MEN

Sir John and the men in buckram

POINS. Welcome, Jack : where hast thou been ?

FALSTAFF. A plague of all cowards, I say, and a vengeance too ! marry, and amen ! Give me a cup of sack, boy. Ere I lead this life long, I'll sew nether stocks and mend them and foot them too. A plague of all cowards ! Give me a cup of sack, rogue. Is there no virtue extant ? (*He drinks.*)

PRINCE. Didst thou never see Titan kiss a dish of butter ? pitiful-hearted Titan, that melted at the sweet tale of the sun's ! if thou didst, then behold that compound.

FAL. You rogue, here's lime in this sack too : there is nothing but roguery to be found in villanous man : yet a coward is worse than a cup of sack with lime in it. A villanous coward ! Go thy ways, old Jack ; die when thou wilt, if manhood, good manhood, be not forgot upon the face of the earth, then am I a shotten herring. There live not three good men unhanged in England ; and one of them is fat, and grows old : God help the while ! a bad world, I say. I would I were a weaver ; I could sing Psalms or any thing. A plague of all cowards, I say still.

PRINCE. How now, wool-sack ! what mutter you ?

Fools and Philosophers

FAL. A king's son ! If I do not beat thee out of thy kingdom with a dagger of lath, and drive all thy subjects afore thee like a flock of wild geese, I'll never wear hair on my face more. You Prince of Wales !

PRINCE. Why, you whoreson round man, what is the matter ?

FAL. Are you not a coward ? answer me to that : and Pains there ?

POINS. 'Zounds, ye fat paunch, an ye call me coward, by the Lord, I'll stab thee.

FAL. I call thee coward ! I'll see thee damned ere I call thee coward : but I would give a thousand pound I could run as fast as thou canst. You are straight enough in the shoulders, you care not who sees your back : call you that backing of your friends ? A plague upon such backing ! give me them that will face me. Give me a cup of sack : I am a rogue, if I drunk to-day.

PRINCE. O villain ! thy lips are scarce wiped since thou drunkenest last.

FAL. All's one for that. (*He drinks.*) A plague of all cowards, still say I.

PRINCE. What's the matter ?

FAL. What's the matter ! there be four of us here have ta'en a thousand pound this day morning.

PRINCE. Where is it, Jack ? where is it ?

FAL. Where is it ! taken from us it is : a hundred upon poor four of us.

PRINCE. What, a hundred, man ?

FAL. I am a rogue, if I were not at half-sword with a dozen of them two hours together. I have 'scaped by miracle. I am eight times thrust

Some Military Men

through the doublet, four through the hose ; my buckler cut through and through ; my sword hacked like a hand-saw—*ecce signum !* I never dealt better since I was a man ; all would not do. A plague of all cowards ! Let them speak : if they speak more or less than truth, they are villains and the sons of darkness.

PRINCE. Speak, sirs ; how was it ?

GADSHILL. We four set upon some dozen——

FAL. Sixteen at least, my lord.

GADS. And bound them.

PETO. No, no, they were not bound.

FAL. You rogue, they were bound, every man of them ; or I am a Jew else, an Ebrew Jew.

GADS. As we were sharing, some six or seven fresh men set upon us——

FAL. And unbound the rest, and then come in the other.

PRINCE. What, fought you with them all ?

FAL. All ! I know not what you call all ; but if I fought not with fifty of them, I am a bunch of radish : if there were not two or three and fifty upon poor old Jack, then am I no two-legged creature.

PRINCE. Pray God you have not murdered some of them.

FAL. Nay, that's past praying for : I have peppered two of them ; two I am sure I have paid, two rogues in buckram suits. I tell thee what, Hal, if I tell thee a lie, spit in my face, call me horse. Thou knowest my old ward ; here I lay, and thus I bore my point. Four rogues in buckram let drive at me——

Fools and Philosophers

PRINCE. What, four ? thou saidst but two even now.

FAL. Four, Hal ; I told thee four.

POINS. Ay, ay, he said four.

FAL. These four came all a-front, and mainly thrust at me. I made me no more ado, but took all their seven points in my target, thus.

PRINCE. Seven ? why, there were but four even now.

FAL. In buckram ?

POINS. Ay, four, in buckram suits.

FAL. Seven, by these hilts, or I am a villain else.

PRINCE. Prithee, let him alone ; we shall have more anon.

FAL. Dost thou hear me, Hal ?

PRINCE. Ay, and mark thee too, Jack.

FAL. Do so, for it is worth the listening to. These nine in buckram that I told thee of——

PRINCE. So, two more already.

FAL. Their points being broken,——

POINS. Down fell their hose.

FAL. Began to give me ground : for I followed me close, came in foot and hand ; and with a thought seven of the eleven I paid.

PRINCE. O monstrous ! eleven buckram men grown out of two !

FAL. But, as the devil would have it, three misbegotten knaves in Kendal green came at my back and let drive at me ; for it was so dark, Hal, that thou couldst not see thy hand.

PRINCE. These lies are like their father that begets them ; gross as a mountain, open, palpable. Why, thou clay-brained guts, thou knotty-pated

Some Military Men

fool, thou whoreson, obscene, greasy tallow-catch,——

FAL. What, art thou mad? art thou mad? is not the truth the truth?

PRINCE. Why, how couldst thou know these men in Kendal green, when it was so dark thou couldst not see thy hand? come, tell us your reason: what sayest thou to this?

POINS. Come, your reason, Jack, your reason.

FAL. What, upon compulsion? 'Zounds, an I were at the strappado, or all the racks in the world, I would not tell you on compulsion. Give you a reason on compulsion! if reasons were as plentiful as blackberries, I would give no man a reason upon compulsion, I.

PRINCE. I'll be no longer guilty of this sin; this sanguine coward, this bed-presser, this horse-back-breaker, this huge hill of flesh,——

FAL. 'Sblood, you starveling, you elf-skin, you dried neat's tongue, you bull's pizzle, you stock-fish! O for breath to utter what is like thee! you tailor's-yard, you sheath, you bow-case, you vile standing-tuck,——

PRINCE. Well, breathe a while, and then to it again: and when thou hast tired thyself in base comparisons, hear me speak but this.

POINS. Mark, Jack.

PRINCE. We two saw you four set on four and bound them, and were masters of their wealth. Mark now, how a plain tale shall put you down. Then did we two set on you four; and, with a word, out-faced you from your prize, and have it; yea, and can show it you here in the house: and,

Fools and Philosophers

Falstaff, you carried your guts away as nimbly, with as quick dexterity, and roared for mercy, and still run and roared, as ever I heard bull-calf. What a slave art thou, to hack thy sword as thou hast done, and then say it was in fight ! What trick, what device, what starting-hole, canst thou now find out to hide thee from this open and apparent shame ?

POINS. Come, let's hear, Jack ; what trick hast thou now ?

FAL. By the Lord, I knew ye as well as he that made ye. Why, hear you, my masters : was it for me to kill the heir-apparent ? should I turn upon the true prince ? why, thou knowest I am as valiant as Hercules : but beware instinct ; the lion will not touch the true prince. Instinct is a great matter ; I was now a coward on instinct. I shall think the better of myself and thee during my life ; I for a valiant lion, and thou for a true prince. But, by the Lord, lads, I am glad you have the money. Hostess, clap to the doors : watch to-night, pray to-morrow. Gallants, lads, boys, hearts of gold, all the titles of good fellowship come to you ! What, shall we be merry ? shall we have a play extempore ?

II

Sir John on his company

IF I be not ashamed of my soldiers, I am a soused gurnet. I have misused the king's press damnably. I have got, in exchange of a hundred and fifty soldiers, three hundred and odd

Some Military Men

pounds. I press me none but good householders, yeomen's sons ; inquire me out contracted bachelors, such as had been asked twice on the banns ; such a commodity of warm slaves, as had as lieve hear the devil as a drum ; such as fear the report of a caliver worse than a struck fowl or a hurt wild-duck. I pressed me none but such toasts-and-butter, with hearts in their bellies no bigger than pins'-heads, and they have bought out their services ; and now my whole charge consists of ancients, corporals, lieutenants, gentlemen of companies, slaves as ragged as Lazarus in the painted cloth, where the glutton's dogs licked his sores ; and such as indeed were never soldiers, but discarded unjust serving-men, younger sons to younger brothers, revolted tapsters, and ostlers trade-fallen ; the cankers of a calm world and a long peace, ten times more dishonourable ragged than an old faced ancient : and such have I, to fill up the rooms of them that have bought out their services, that you would think that I had a hundred and fifty tattered prodigals lately come from swine-keeping, from eating draff and husks. A mad fellow met me on the way and told me I had unloaded all the gibbets and pressed the dead bodies. No eye hath seen such scarecrows. I'll not march through Coventry with them, that 's flat : nay, and the villains march wide betwixt the legs, as if they had gyves on ; for indeed I had the most of them out of prison. There 's but a shirt and a half in all my company ; and the half shirt is two napkins tacked together and thrown over the shoulders like a herald's coat without sleeves ; and the shirt, to say the truth,

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stolen from my host at Saint Alban's, or the red-nose innkeeper of Daventry. But that's all one ; they'll find linen enough on every hedge.

III

On honour

FALSTAFF. I would 'twere bed-time, Hal, and all well.

PRINCE. Why, thou owest God a death.

FAL. 'Tis not due yet ; I would be loath to pay him before his day. What need I be so forward with him that calls not on me ? Well, 'tis no matter ; honour pricks me on. Yea, but how if honour prick me off when I come on ? how then ? Can honour set to a leg ? no : or an arm ? no : or take away the grief of a wound ? no. Honour hath no skill in surgery, then ? no. What is honour ? a word. What is in that word honour ? what is that honour ? air. A trim reckoning ! Who hath it ? he that died o' Wednesday. Doth he feel it ? no. Doth he hear it ? no. 'Tis insensible then ? yea, to the dead. But will it not live with the living ? no. Why ? detraction will not suffer it. Therefore I'll none of it. Honour is a mere scutcheon : and so ends my catechism.

IV

On sherris-sack

I WOULD you had but the wit : 'twere better than your dukedom. Good faith, this same young sober-blooded boy doth not love me ; nor

Some Military Men

a man cannot make him laugh ; but that's no marvel, he drinks no wine. There's never none of these demure boys come to any proof ; for thin drink doth so over-cool their blood, and making many fish-meals, that they fall into a kind of male green-sickness ; and then, when they marry, they get wenches : they are generally fools and cowards ; which some of us should be too, but for inflammation. A good sherris-sack hath a twofold operation in it. It ascends me into the brain ; dries me there all the foolish and dull and crudy vapours which environ it ; makes it apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery and delectable shapes ; which, delivered o'er to the voice, the tongue, which is the birth, becomes excellent wit. The second property of your excellent sherris is, the warming of the blood ; which, before cold and settled, left the liver white and pale, which is the badge of pusillanimity and cowardice, but the sherris warms it and makes it course from the inwards to the parts extreme : it illumineth the face, which as a beacon gives warning to all the rest of this little kingdom, man, to arm ; and then the vital commoners and inland petty spirits muster me all to their captain, the heart, who, great and puffed up with this retinue, doth any deed of courage ; and this valour comes of sherris. So that skill in the weapon is nothing without sack, for that sets it a-work ; and learning a mere hoard of gold kept by a devil, till sack commences it and sets it in act and use. Hereof comes it that Prince Harry is valiant ; for the cold blood he did naturally inherit of his father, he hath, like lean sterile and bare land, manured, husbanded,

Fools and Philosophers

and tilled with excellent endeavour of drinking good and good store of fertile sherris, that he is become very hot and valiant. If I had a thousand sons, the first humane principle I would teach them should be, to forswear thin potations, and to addict themselves to sack.

Bobadill has a scheme

EDWARD KNO'WELL. Captain, did you ever prove yourself, upon any of our masters of defence here ?

MASTER MATTHEW. O, good sir ! yes, I hope, he has.

CAPTAIN BOBADILL. I will tell you, sir. Upon my first coming to the city, after my long travail for knowledge (in that mystery only) there came three or four of 'hem to me, at a gentleman's house, where it was my chance to be resident at that time, to intreat my presence at their schools, and withal so much importuned me, that—I protest to you, as I am a gentleman—I was ashamed of their rude demeanour, out of all measure : well, I told 'hem, that to come to a public school, they should pardon me, it was opposite (in diameter) to my humour ; but, if so be they would give their attendance at my lodging, I protested to do them what right or favour I could, as I was a gentleman, and so forth.

E. KN. So, sir, then you tried your skill ?

BOB. Alas, soon tried ! you shall hear, sir. Within two or three days after, they came ; and,

Some Military Men

by honesty, fair sir, believe me, I graced them exceedingly, showed them some two or three tricks of prevention, have purchased 'hem since, a credit to admiration ! they cannot deny this : and yet now, they hate me, and why ? because I am excellent ! and for no other vile reason on the earth.

E. KN. This is strange, and barbarous ! as ever I heard !

BOB. Nay, for a more instance of their preposterous natures, but note, sir. They have assaulted me some three, four, five, six of them together, as I have walked alone, in divers skirts i' the town, as Turnbull, Whitechapel, Shoreditch, which were then my quarters ; and since, upon the Exchange, at my lodging, and at my Ordinary : where I have driven them afore me, the whole length of a street, in the open view of all our gallants, pitying to hurt them, believe me. Yet all this lenity will not o'ercome their spleen ; they will be doing with the pismire, raising a hill, a man may spurn abroad with his foot, at pleasure. By myself, I could have slain them all, but I delight not in murder. I am loth to bear any other than this bastinado for 'hem : yet I hold it good polity not to go disarmed, for though I be skilful, I may be oppressed with multitudes.

E. KN. Ay, believe me, may you, sir : and, in my conceit, our whole nation should sustain the loss by it, if it were so.

BOB. Alas, no ! what's a peculiar man to a nation ? not seen.

E. KN. O, but your skill, sir.

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BOB. Indeed, that might be some loss ; but who respects it ? I will tell you, sir, by the way of private, and under seal ; I am a gentleman, and live here obscure, and to myself. But, were I known to her Majesty and the Lords,—observe me,—I would undertake—upon this poor head, and life—for the public benefit of the state, not only to spare the entire lives of her subjects in general, but to save the one half, nay, three parts of her yearly charge in holding war, and against what enemy soever. And how would I do it, think you ?

E. KN. Nay, I know not, nor can I conceive.

BOB. Why thus, sir. I would select nineteen more, to myself, throughout the land ; gentlemen they should be, of good spirit, strong, and able constitution ; I would choose them by an instinct, a character that I have : and I would teach these nineteen, the special rules, as your *punto*, your *reverso*, your *stoccata*, your *imbroccata*, your *passada*, your *montanto* ; till they could all play very near, or altogether as well as myself. This done, say the enemy were forty thousand strong, we twenty would come into the field, the tenth of March, or thereabouts ; and we would challenge twenty of the enemy ; they could not, in their honour, refuse us, well, we would kill them ; challenge twenty more, kill them ; twenty more, kill them ; twenty more, kill them too ; and thus, would we kill every man, his twenty a day, that 's twenty score ; twenty score, that 's two hundred ; two hundred a day, five days a thousand ; forty thousand ; forty times five, five times forty, two hundred days kills them all up, by computation.

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And this, will I venture my poor gentleman-like carcase to perform (provided there be no treason practised upon us) by fair, and discreet manhood, that is, civilly by the sword.

E. KN. Why, are you so sure of your hand, captain, at all times ?

BOB. Tut ! never miss thrust, upon my reputation with you.

VI

Ancient Pistol brings news

PISTOL. Sir John, God save you !

FALSTAFF. What wind blew you hither, Pistol ?

PIST. Not the ill wind which blows no man to good. Sweet knight, thou art now one of the greatest men in this realm.

SILENCE. By 'r lady, I think a' be, but goodman Puff of Barson.

PIST. Puff !

Puff in thy teeth, most recreant coward base !

Sir John, I am thy Pistol and thy friend,

And helter-skelter have I rode to thee,

And tidings do I bring and lucky joys

And golden times and happy news of price.

FAL. I pray thee now, deliver them like a man of this world.

PIST. A foutre for the world and worldlings base !
I speak of Africa and golden joys.

FAL. O base Assyrian knight, what is thy news ?
Let King Cophetua know the truth thereof.

SIL. And Robin Hood, Scarlet, and John.

(*Singing.*)

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PIST. Shall dunghill curs confront the Helicons ?
And shall good news be baffled ?

Then, Pistol, lay thy head in Furies' lap.

SHALLOW. Honest gentlemen, I know not your breeding.

PIST. Why then, lament therefore.

SHAL. Give me pardon, sir : if, sir, you come with news from the court, I take it there 's but two ways, either to utter them, or to conceal them. I am, sir, under the king, in some authority.

PIST. Under which king, Besonian ? speak, or die.

SHAL. Under King Harry.

PIST. Harry the fourth ? or fifth ?

SHAL. Harry the fourth.

PIST. A foutre for thine office !
Sir John, thy tender lambkin now is king ;
Harry the fifth 's the man. I speak the truth :
When Pistol lies, do this ; and fig me, like
The bragging Spaniard.

FAL. What, is the old king dead ?

PIST. As nail in door : the things I speak are just.

FAL. Away, Bardolph ! saddle my horse.
Master Robert Shallow, choose what office thou wilt in the land, 'tis thine. Pistol, I will double charge thee with dignities.

BARDOLPH. O joyful day !

I would not take a knighthood for my fortune.

PIST. What ! I do bring good news.

FAL. Carry Master Silence to bed. Master Shallow, my Lord Shallow,—be what thou wilt ; I am fortune's steward—get on thy boots : we 'll

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ride all night. O sweet Pistol ! Away, Bardolph ! Come, Pistol, utter more to me ; and withal devise something to do thyself good. Boot, boot, Master Shallow ! I know the young king is sick for me. Let us take any man's horses ; the laws of England are at my commandment. Blessed are they that have been my friends ; and woe to my lord chief justice !

PIST. Let vultures vile seize on his lungs also ! "Where is the life that late I led ?" say they : Why, here it is ; welcome these pleasant days !

VII

Corporal Trim answers the bell

DID ever man, brother Toby, cried my father, raising himself upon his elbow, and turning himself round to the opposite side of the bed, where my uncle Toby was sitting in his old fringed chair, with his chin resting upon his crutch—did ever a poor unfortunate man, brother Toby, cried my father, receive so many lashes ?—The most I ever saw given, quoth my uncle Toby (ringing the bell at the bed's head for Trim) was to a grenadier, I think in Mackay's regiment.

—Had my uncle Toby shot a bullet through my father's heart, he could not have fallen down with his nose upon the quilt more suddenly.

—Bless me ! said my uncle Toby.

—Was it Mackay's regiment, quoth my uncle Toby, where the poor grenadier was so unmercifully whipped at Bruges about the ducats ?—O Christ ! he was innocent ! cried Trim, with a

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deep sigh.—And he was whipped, may it please your honour, almost to death's door.—They had better have shot him outright, as he begged, and he had gone directly to heaven, for he was as innocent as your honour.—I thank thee, Trim, quoth my uncle Toby.—I never think of his, continued Trim, and my poor brother Tom's misfortunes, for we were all three schoolfellows, but I cry like a coward.—Tears are no proof of cowardice, Trim.—I drop them oft-times myself, cried my uncle Toby.—I know your honour does, replied Trim, and so am not ashamed of it myself.—But to think, may it please your honour, continued Trim, a tear stealing into the corner of his eye as he spoke—to think of two virtuous lads with hearts as warm in their bodies, and as honest as God could make them—the children of honest people, going forth with gallant spirits to seek their fortunes in the world—and fall into such evils !—poor Tom ! to be tortured upon a rack for nothing—but marrying a Jew's widow who sold sausages—honest Dick Johnson's soul to be scourged out of his body, for the ducats another man put into his knapsack !—O !—these are misfortunes, cried Trim,—pulling out his handkerchief—these are misfortunes, may it please your honour, worth lying down and crying over.

—My father could not help blushing.

—'Twould be a pity, Trim, quoth my uncle Toby, thou shouldst ever feel sorrow of thy own—thou feelest it so tenderly for others.—Alack-o-day, replied the Corporal, brightening up his face—your honour knows I have neither wife or child

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—I can have no sorrows in this world.—My father could not help smiling.—As few as any man, Trim, replied my uncle Toby ; nor can I see how a fellow of thy light heart can suffer, but from the distress of poverty in thy old age—when thou art passed all services, Trim—and hast outlived thy friends.—An' please your honour, never fear, replied Trim, cheerily.—But I would have thee never fear, Trim, replied my uncle Toby, and therefore, continued my uncle Toby, throwing down his crutch, and getting up upon his legs as he uttered the word “therefore”—in recompense, Trim, of thy long fidelity to me, and that goodness of thy heart I have had such proofs of—whilst thy master is worth a shilling—thou shalt never ask elsewhere, Trim, for a penny.—Trim attempted to thank my uncle Toby—but had not power—tears trickled down his cheeks faster than he could wipe them off.—He laid his hands upon his breast—made a bow to the ground, and shut the door.

—I have left Trim my bowling-green, cried my uncle Toby.—My father smiled.—I have left him moreover a pension, continued my uncle Toby.—My father looked grave.

VIII

Uncle Toby and Trim

YOUR honour, said Trim, shutting the parlour-door before he began to speak, has heard, I imagine, of this unlucky accident.—O yes, Trim, said my uncle Toby, and it gives me great concern.

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—I am heartily concerned too, but I hope your honour, replied Trim, will do me the justice to believe, that it was not in the least owing to me.—To thee—Trim?—cried my uncle Toby, looking kindly in his face—'twas Susannah's and the curate's folly betwixt them.—What business could they have together, an' please your honour, in the garden?—In the gallery, thou meanest, replied my uncle Toby.

Trim found he was upon a wrong scent, and stopped short with a low bow.—Two misfortunes, quoth the Corporal to himself, are twice as many at least as are needful to be talked over at one time;—the mischief the cow has done in breaking into the fortifications, may be told his honour hereafter.—Trim's casuistry and address, under the cover of his low bow, prevented all suspicion in my uncle Toby, so he went on with what he had to say to Trim as follows :

—For my own part, Trim, though I can see little or no difference betwixt my nephew's being called Tristram or Trismegistus—yet as the thing sits so near my brother's heart, Trim—I would freely have given a hundred pounds rather than it should have happened.—A hundred pounds, an' please your honour ! replied Trim.—I would not give a cherry-stone to boot.—Nor would I, Trim, upon my own account, quoth my uncle Toby—but my brother, whom there is no arguing with in this case—maintains that a great deal more depends, Trim, upon christian-names, than what ignorant people imagine—for he says there never was a great or heroic action performed since the

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world began by one called Tristram—nay, he will have it, Trim, that a man can neither be learned, or wise, or brave.—’Tis all fancy, an’ please your honour—I thought just as well, replied the Corporal, when the regiment called me Trim, as when they called me James Butler.—And for my own part, said my uncle Toby, though I should blush to boast of myself, Trim—yet had my name been Alexander, I could have done no more at Namur than my duty.—Bless your honour ! cried Trim, advancing three steps as he spoke, does a man think of his christian-name when he goes upon the attack ?—Or when he stands in the trench, Trim ? cried my uncle Toby, looking firm.—Or when he enters a breach ? said Trim, pushing in between two chairs.—Or forces the lines ? cried my uncle, rising up, and pushing his crutch like a pike.—Or facing a platoon ? cried Trim, presenting his stick like a firelock.—Or when he marches up the glaxis ? cried my uncle Toby, looking warm and setting his foot upon his stool.

IX

Major Sturgeon on suburban military life

ROGER (*without*). Justice Sturgeon, the fish-monger from Brentford.

SIR JACOB JOLLUP. Gad’s my life ! and Major to the Middlesex Militia. Usher him in, Roger.

Enter MAJOR STURGEON.

I could have wished you had come a little sooner, Major Sturgeon.

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MAJOR S. Why, what has been the matter, Sir Jacob ?

SIR J. There has, Major, been here an impudent pillmonger, who has dared to scandalize the whole body of the bench.

MAJOR S. Insolent companion ! had I been here, I would have mittimused the rascal at once.

SIR J. No, no ; he wanted the major more than the magistrate : a few smart strokes from your cane would have fully answered the purpose. Well, Major, our wars are done ; the rattling drum and squeaking fife now wound our ears no more.

MAJOR S. True, Sir Jacob ; our corps is disembodied ; so the French may sleep in security.

SIR J. But, Major, was it not rather late in life for you to enter upon the profession of arms ?

MAJOR S. A little awkward in the beginning, Sir Jacob : the great difficulty they had was, to get me to turn out my toes ; but use, use reconciles all them kind of things : why, after my first campaign, I no more minded the noise of the guns than a flea-bite.

SIR J. No !

MAJOR S. No. There is more made of these matters than they merit. For the general good, indeed, I am glad of the peace ; but as to my single self,—and yet we have had some desperate duty, Sir Jacob.

SIR J. No doubt.

MAJOR S. Oh ! such marchings and counter-marchings, from Brentford to Ealing, from Ealing to Acton, from Acton to Uxbridge ; the dust

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flying, sun scorching, men sweating !—Why, there was our last expedition to Hounslow ; that day's work carried off Major Molossas. Bunhill-fields never saw a braver commander ! He was an irreparable loss to the service.

SIR J. How came that about ?

MAJOR S. Why, it was partly the major's own fault ; I advised him to pull off his spurs before he went upon action ; but he was resolute, and would not be ruled.

SIR J. Spirit ; zeal for the service.

MAJOR S. Doubtless. But to proceed : in order to get our men in good spirits, we were quartered at Thistleworth, the evening before. At day-break, our regiment formed at Hounslow, town's end, as it might be about here. The major made a fine disposition : on we marched, the men all in high spirits, to attack the gibbet where Gardel is hanging ; but turning down a narrow lane to the left, as it might be about there, in order to possess a pig-sty, that we might take the gallows in flank, and, at all events, secure a retreat, who should come by but a drove of fat oxen from Smith-field. The drums beat in the front, the dogs barked in the rear, the oxen set up a gallop ; on they came thundering upon us, broke through our ranks in an instant, and threw the whole corps in confusion.

SIR J. Terrible !

MAJOR S. The major's horse took to his heels ; away he scoured over the heath. The gallant commander stuck both his spurs into his flank, and for some time, held by his mane ; but in crossing

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a ditch, the horse threw up his head, gave the major a douse in the chaps, and plumped him into a gravel-pit, just by the powder-mills.

SIR J. Dreadful !

MAJOR S. Whether from the fall or the fright, the major moved off in a month. Indeed it was an unfortunate day for us all.

SIR J. As how ?

MAJOR S. Why, as Captain Cucumber, Lieutenant Puttyman, Ensign Tripe, and myself, were returning to town in the Turnham-green stage, we were stopped near the Hammersmith turnpike, and robbed and stripped by a single footpad.

SIR J. An unfortunate day, indeed.

MAJOR S. But, in some measure, to make me amends, I got the major's commission.

SIR J. You did ?

MAJOR S. O yes. I was the only one of the corps that could ride ; otherwise we always succeeded of course ; no jumping over heads, no underhand work among us ; all men of honour ; and I must do the regiment the justice to say, there never was a set of more amiable officers.

SIR J. Quiet and peaceable.

MAJOR S. As lambs, Sir Jacob. Excepting one boxing-bout at the Three Compasses, in Acton, between Captain Sheers and the colonel, concerning a game at all-fours, I don't remember a single dispute.

SIR J. Why, that was mere mutiny ; the captain ought to have been broke.

MAJOR S. He was ; for the colonel not only took away his cockade, but his custom ; and I don't

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think poor Captain Sheers has done a stitch for him since.

SIR J. But you soon supplied the loss of Molossas !

MAJOR S. In part only : no, Sir Jacob, he had great experience ; he was trained up to arms from his youth. At sixteen, he trailed a pike in the Artillery-ground ; at eighteen, got a company in the Smithfield pioneers ; and by the time he was twenty, was made aide-de-camp to Sir Jeffrey Grubb, knight, alderman, and colonel of the yellow.

SIR J. A rapid rise !

MAJOR S. Yes, he had a genius for war ; but what I wanted in practice, I made up by doubling my diligence. Our porter at home had been a serjeant of marines ; so after shop was shut up at night, he used to teach me my exercise ; and he had not to deal with a dunce, Sir Jacob.

SIR J. Your progress was great.

MAJOR S. Amazing. In a week, I could shoulder, and rest, and poise, and turn to the right, and wheel to the left ; and in less than a month, I could fire without winking or blinking.

SIR J. A perfect Hannibal !

MAJOR S. Ah, and then I learned to form lines, and hollows, and squares, and evolutions, and revolutions. Let me tell you, Sir Jacob, it was lucky that monsieur kept his myrmidons at home, or we should have peppered his flat-bottomed boats.

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Captain Jackson plays host and wizard

HE whom I mean was a retired half-pay officer, with a wife and two grown-up daughters, whom he maintained with the port and notions of gentlewomen upon that slender professional allowance. Comely girls they were too.

And was I in danger of forgetting this man?—his cheerful suppers—the noble tone of hospitality, when first you set your foot in *the cottage*—the anxious ministerings about you, where little or nothing (God knows) was to be ministered.—Althea's horn in a poor platter—the power of self-enchancement, by which, in his magnificent wishes to entertain you, he multiplied his means to bounties.

You saw with your bodily eyes indeed what seemed a bare scrag—cold savings from the foregone meal—remnant hardly sufficient to send a mendicant from the door contented. But in the copious will—the revelling imagination of your host—the “mind, the mind, Master Shallow,” whole beeves were spread before you—hecatombs—no end appeared to the profusion.

It was the widow's cruse—the loaves and fishes; carving could not lessen nor helping diminish it—the stamina were left—the elemental bone still flourished, divested of its accidents.

“Let us live while we can,” methinks I hear the open-handed creature exclaim; “while we have, let us not want”; “here is plenty left”; “want for nothing”—with many more such hospitable

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sayings, the spurs of appetite, and old concomitants of smoking boards, and feast-oppressed charges. Then sliding a slender ratio of Single Gloucester upon his wife's plate, or the daughters', he would convey the remnant rind into his own, with a merry quirk of "the nearer the bone," etc., and declaring that he universally preferred the outside. For we had our table distinctions, you are to know, and some of us in a manner sate above the salt. None but his guest or guests dreamed of tasting flesh luxuries at night, the fragments were *verè hospitibus sacra*. But of one thing or another there was always enough, and leavings: only he would sometimes finish the remainder crust, to show that he wished no savings.

Wine we had none; nor, except on very rare occasions, spirits; but the sensation of wine was there. Some thin kind of ale I remember—"British beverage," he would say "Push about, my boys"; "Drink to your sweethearts, girls." At every meagre draught a toast must ensue, or a song. All the forms of good liquor were there, with none of the effects wanting. Shut your eyes, and you would swear a capacious bowl of punch was foaming in the centre, with beams of generous Port or Madeira radiating to it from each of the table corners. You got flustered without knowing whence; tipsy upon words; and reeled under the potency of his unperforming Bacchanalian encouragements.

We had our songs—"Why, Soldiers, Why"—and the "British Grenadiers"—in which last we were all obliged to bear chorus. Both the daughters

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sang. Their proficiency was a nightly theme—the masters he had given them—the “no-expense” which he spared to accomplish them in a science “so necessary to young women.” But then—they could not sing “without the instrument.”

Sacred, and, by me, never-to-be-violated, Secrets of Poverty ! Should I disclose your honest aims at grandeur, your makeshift efforts of magnificence ? Sleep, sleep, with all thy broken keys, if one of the bunch be extant ; thrummed by a thousand ancestral thumbs ; dear, cracked spinnet of dearer Louisa ! Without mention of mine, be dumb, thou thin accompanier of her thinner warble ! A veil be spread over the dear delighted face of the well-deluded father, who now haply listening to cherubic notes, scarce feels sincerer pleasure than when she awakened thy time-shaken chords responsive to the twitterings of that slender image of a voice.

We were not without our literary talk either. It did not extend far, but as far as it went, it was good. It was bottomed well ; had good grounds to go upon. In *the cottage* was a room, which tradition authenticated to have been the same in which Glover, in his occasional retirements, had penned the greater part of his *Leonidas*. This circumstance was nightly quoted, though none of the present inmates, that I could discover, appeared ever to have met with the poem in question. But that was no matter. Glover had written there, and the anecdote was pressed into the account of the family importance. It diffused a learned air through the apartment, the little side casement of

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which (the poet's study window), opening upon a superb view as far as the pretty spire of Harrow, over domains and patrimonial acres, not a rood nor square yard whereof our host could call his own, yet gave occasion to an immoderate expansion of—vanity shall I call it?—in his bosom, as he showed them in a glowing summer evening. It was all his, he took it all in, and communicated rich portions of it to his guests. It was a part of his largess, his hospitality; it was going over his grounds; he was lord for the time of showing them, and you the implicit lookers-up to his magnificence.

He was a juggler, who threw mists before your eyes—you had no time to detect his fallacies. He would say, “Hand me the *silver* sugar tongs”; and before you could discover that it was a single spoon, and that *plated*, he would disturb and captivate your imagination by a misnomer of “the urn” for a tea kettle; or by calling a homely bench a sofa. Rich men direct you to their furniture, poor ones divert you from it; he neither did one nor the other, but by simply assuming that everything was handsome about him, you were positively at a demur what you did, or did not see, at *the cottage*. With nothing to live on, he seemed to live on every thing. He had a stock of wealth in his mind; not that which is promptly termed *Content*, for in truth he was not to be *contained* at all, but overflowed all bounds by the force of a magnificent self-delusion.

SOME GENTLEMEN OF FASHION

Sir Andrew on his accomplishments

SIR TOBY BELCH. O knight, thou lackest a cup of canary : when did I see thee so put down ?

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK. Never in your life, I think ; unless you see canary put me down. Methinks sometimes I have no more wit than a Christian or an ordinary man has : but I am a great eater of beef, and I believe that does harm to my wit.

SIR TO. No question.

SIR AND. An I thought that, I 'ld forswear it. I 'll ride home to-morrow, Sir Toby.

SIR TO. Pourquoi, my dear knight ?

SIR AND. What is "pourquoi" ? do or not do ? I would I had bestowed that time in the tongues that I have in fencing, dancing and bear-baiting : O, had I but followed the arts !

SIR TO. Then hadst thou had an excellent head of hair.

SIR AND. Why, would that have mended my hair ?

SIR TO. Past question ; for thou seest it will not curl by nature.

SIR AND. But it becomes me well enough, does 't not ?

SIR TO. Excellent ; it hangs like flax on a distaff ; and I hope to see a housewife take thee between her legs and spin it off.

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SIR AND. Faith, I'll home to-morrow, Sir Toby : your niece will not be seen ; or if she be, it's four to one she'll none of me : the count himself here hard by woos her.

SIR TO. She'll none o' the count : she'll not match above her degree, neither in estate, years, nor wit ; I have heard her swear 't. Tut, there's a life in 't, man.

SIR AND. I'll stay a month longer. I am a fellow o' the strangest mind i' the world ; I delight in masques and revels sometimes altogether.

SIR TO. Art thou good at these kickshawses, knight ?

SIR AND. As any man in Illyria, whatsoever he be, under the degree of my betters ; and yet I will not compare with an old man.

SIR TO. What is thy excellence in a galliard, knight ?

SIR AND. Faith, I can cut a caper.

SIR TO. And I can cut the mutton to 't.

SIR AND. And I think I have the back-trick simply as strong as any man in Illyria.

SIR TO. Wherefore are these things hid ? wherefore have these gifts a curtain before 'em ? are they like to take dust, like Mistress Mall's picture ? why dost thou not go to church in a galliard and come home in a coranto ? My very walk should be a jig ; I would not so much as make water but in a sink-a-pace. What dost thou mean ? Is it a world to hide virtues in ? I did think, by the excellent constitution of thy leg, it was formed under the star of a galliard.

SIR AND. Ay, 'tis strong, and it does indifferent

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well in a flame-coloured stock. Shall we set about some revels ?

SIR TO. What shall we do else ? were we not born under Taurus ?

SIR AND. Taurus ! That 's sides and heart.

SIR TO. No, sir ; it is legs and thighs. Let me see thee caper : ha ! higher : ha, ha ! excellent !

XII

Lord Foppington explains himself

LORD FOPPINGTON. . . . Far Gad's sake, madam, haw has your ladyship been able to subsist thus long, under the fatigue of a country life ?

AMANDA. My life has been very far from that, my lord, it has been a very quiet one.

LORD FOP. Why that 's the fatigue I speak of, madam :

For 'tis impossible to be quiet, without thinking : Now thinking is to me the greatest fatigue in the world.

AMAN. Does not your lordship love reading then ?

LORD FOP. Oh, passionately, madam.—But I never think of what I read.

BERINTHIA. Why, can your lordship read without thinking ?

LORD FOP. O Lard—can your ladyship pray without devotion—madam ?

AMAN. Well, I must own I think books the best entertainment in the world.

LORD FOP. I am so much of your ladyship's mind, madam, that I have a private gallery, where I walk sometimes, is furnished with nothing but

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books and looking-glasses. Madam, I have gilded them, and rang'd 'em, so prettily, before Gad, it is the most entertaining thing in the world to walk and look upon 'em.

AMAN. Nay, I love a neat library too ; but 'tis, I think, the inside of a book shou'd recommend it most to us.

LORD FOP. That, I must confess, I am not altogether so fand of. Far to my mind, the inside of a book, is to entertain one's self with the forc'd product of another man's brain. Naw I think a man of quality and breeding may be much diverted with the natural sprouts of his own. But to say the truth, madam, let a man love reading never so well, when once he comes to know this tawn, he finds so many better ways of passing away the four-and-twenty hours, that 'twere ten thousand pities he shou'd consume his time in that. Far example, madam, my life ; my life, madam, is a perpetual stream of pleasure, that glides thro' such a variety of entertainments, I believe the wisest of our ancestors never had the least conception of any of 'em. I rise, madam, about ten o'clock. I don't rise sooner, because 'tis the worst thing in the world for the complection ; nat that I pretend to be a beau ; but a man must endeavour to look wholesome, lest he makes so nauseous a figure in the side-bax, the ladies shou'd be compell'd to turn their eyes upon the play. So at ten o'clock, I say, I rise. Naw, if I find it a good day, I resolve to take a turn in the park, and see the fine women ; so huddle on my clothes, and get dress'd by one. If it be nasty weather, I take a turn in the chocolate-house ;

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where, as you walk, madam, you have the prettiest prospect in the world ; you have looking-glasses all round you.—But I 'm afraid I tire the company.

BER. Not at all. Pray go on.

LORD FOP. Why then, ladies, from thence I go to dinner at Lacket's, and there you are so nicely and delicately serv'd, that, stap my vitals, they can compose you a dish, no bigger than a saucer, shall come to fifty shillings ; between eating my dinner, and washing my mouth, ladies, I spend my time, till I go to the play ; where, till nine o'clock, I entertain myself with looking upon the company ; and usually dispose of one hour more in leading them aut. So there's twelve of the four-and-twenty pretty well over. The other twelve, madam, are disposed of in two articles : In the first four I toast myself drunk, and in t'other eight I sleep myself sober again. Thus, ladies, you see my life is an eternal raund of delights.

XIII

Beau Tibbs in bloom

OUR pursuer soon came up, and joined us with all the familiarity of an old acquaintance. " My dear Drybone," cries he, shaking my friend's hand, " where have you been hiding this half a century ? Positively I had fancied you were gone down to cultivate matrimony and your estate in the country." During the reply I had an opportunity of surveying the appearance of our new companion : his hat was pinched up with peculiar smartness ; his looks were pale, thin, and sharp ;

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round his neck he wore a broad black ribbon, and in his bosom a buckle studded with glass : his coat was trimmed with tarnished twist ; he wore by his side a sword with a black hilt ; and his stockings of silk, though newly washed, were grown yellow by long service. I was so much engaged with the peculiarity of his dress that I attended only to the latter part of my friend's reply, in which he complimented Mr. Tibbs on the taste of his clothes, and the bloom in his countenance. " Psha, psha, Will ! " cried the figure ; " no more of that if you love me ; you know I hate flattery—on my soul I do ; and yet, to be sure, an intimacy with the great will improve one's appearance, and a course of venison will fatten ; and yet, faith, I despise the great as much as you do. But there are a great many damn'd honest fellows among them, and we must not quarrel with one half because the other wants weeding. If they were all such as my Lord Muddler, one of the most good-natured creatures that ever squeezed a lemon, I should myself be among the number of their admirers. I was yesterday to dine at the Duchess of Piccadilly's ; my lord was there. ' Ned,' says he to me, ' Ned,' says he, ' I will hold gold to silver I can tell where you were poaching last night.' ' Poaching, my lord ? ' says I ; ' faith, you have missed already, for I stayed at home and let the girls poach for me. That's my way ; I take a fine woman as some animals do their prey : stand still and swoop ; they fall into my mouth.' "

" Ah, Tibbs, thou art an happy fellow," cried my companion, with looks of infinite pity ; " I hope

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your fortune is as much improved as your understanding in such company." "Improved," replied the other; "you know—— But let it go no farther—a great secret—five hundred a year to begin with—my lord's word of honour for it. His lordship took me down in his own chariot yesterday, and we had a *tête-à-tête* dinner in the country, where we talked of nothing else." "I fancy you forgot, sir," cried I, "you told us but this moment of your dining yesterday in town." "Did I say so?" replied he coolly; "to be sure, if I said so it was so. Dined in town? Egad, now I do remember, I did dine in town; but I dined in the country too, for you must know, my boys, I eat two dinners. By-the-bye, I am grown as nice as the devil in my eating. I will tell you a pleasant affair about that: we were a select party of us to dine at Lady Grogram's, an affected piece—— But let it go no farther—a secret; well, there happened to be no *assafoetida* in the sauce to a turkey, upon which, says I, I will hold a thousand guineas and say done first that—— But, dear Drybone, you are an honest creature, lend me half a crown for a minute or two or so, just till—— But, harkee, ask me for it the next time we meet, or it may be twenty to one but I forget to pay you."

XIV

Beau Tibbs entertains

MY little beau yesterday overtook me again in one of the public walks, and slapping me on the shoulder saluted me with an air of the most

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perfect familiarity. His dress was the same as usual, except that he had more powder in his hair, wore a dirtier shirt, a pair of temple spectacles, and his hat under his arm.

As I knew him to be an harmless, amusing little thing, I could not return his smiles with any degree of severity ; so we walked forward on terms of the utmost intimacy, and in a few minutes discussed all the usual topics preliminary to particular conversation.

The oddities that marked his character, however, soon began to appear ; he bowed to several well-dressed persons, who, by their manner of returning the compliment, appeared perfect strangers. At intervals he drew out a pocket-book, seeming to take memorandums before all the company, with much importance and assiduity. In this manner he led me through the length of the whole walk, fretting at his absurdities, and fancying myself laughed at not less than him by every spectator.

When we were got to the end of our procession, " Bless me," cries he, with an air of vivacity, " I never saw the park so thin in my life before ; there 's no company at all to-day—not a single face to be seen." " No company ? " interrupted I peevishly ; " no company where there is such a crowd ? Why, man, there 's too much. What are the thousands that have been laughing at us but company ? " " Lord, my dear," returned he, with the utmost good humour, " you seem immensely chagrined ; but, blast me, when the world laughs at me, I laugh at the world, and so we are even. My Lord Trip, Bill Squash the Creolian, and I sometimes

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make a party at being ridiculous, and so we say and do a thousand things for the joke sake. But I see you are grave, and if you are for a fine, grave, sentimental companion, you shall dine with me and my wife to-day ; I must insist on 't. I will introduce you to Mrs. Tibbs, a lady of as elegant qualifications as any in nature ; she was bred—but that 's between ourselves—under the inspection of the Countess of Allnight. A charming body of voice—— But no more of that ; she will give us a song. You shall see my little girl, too, Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Tibbs, a sweet, pretty creature ; I design her for my Lord Drumstick's eldest son ; but that 's in friendship, let it go no farther ; she 's but six years old, and yet she walks a minuet, and plays on the guitar immensely already. I intend she shall be as perfect as possible in every accomplishment. In the first place, I will make her a scholar ; I 'll teach her Greek myself, and learn that language purposely to instruct her—but let that be a secret."

Thus saying, without waiting for a reply, he took me by the arm and hauled me along. We passed through many dark alleys and winding ways, for, from some motives to me unknown, he seemed to have a particular aversion to every frequented street. At last, however, we got to the door of a dismal-looking house in the outlets of the town, where, he informed me, he chose to reside for the benefit of the air.

We entered the lower door, which ever seemed to lie most hospitably open, and I began to ascend an old and creaking staircase, when, as he mounted

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to show me the way, he demanded whether I delighted in prospects ; to which answering in the affirmative, " Then," says he, " I shall show you one of the most charming in the world out of my windows ; we shall see the ships sailing and the whole country for twenty miles round, tip-top, quite high. My Lord Swamp would give ten thousand guineas for such a one, but as I sometimes pleasantly tell him, I always love to keep my prospects at home, that my friends may see me the oftener."

By this time we were arrived as high as the stairs would permit us to ascend, till we came to what he was facetiously pleased to call the first floor down the chimney, and, knocking at the door, a voice from within demanded, " Who's there ? " My conductor answered that it was he. But this not satisfying the querist, the voice again repeated the demand, to which he answered louder than before, and now the door was opened by an old woman with cautious reluctance.

When we were got in he welcomed me to his house with great ceremony, and, turning to the old woman, asked where was her lady. " Good troth," replied she in a peculiar dialect, " she's washing your two shirts at the next door, because they have taken an oath against lending out the tub any longer." " My two shirts ? " cries he in a tone that faltered with confusion, " what does the idiot mean ? " " I ken what I mean well enough," replied the other ; " she's washing your twa shirts at the next door, because——" " Fire and fury, no more of thy stupid explanations ! " cried

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he ; “ go and inform her we have got company. Were that Scotch hag to be for ever in my family, she would never learn politeness, nor forget that absurd, poisonous accent of hers, or testify the smallest specimen of breeding or high life ; and yet it is very surprising, too, as I had her from a parliament man, a friend of mine, from the Highlands, one of the politest men in the world ; but that ’s a secret.”

We waited some time for Mrs. Tibbs’ arrival, during which interval I had a full opportunity of surveying the chamber and all its furniture ; which consisted of four chairs with old wrought bottoms, that he assured me were his wife’s embroidery, a square table that had been once japanned, a cradle in one corner, a lumbering cabinet in the other ; a broken shepherdess and a mandarin without a head were stuck over the chimney, and round the walls several paltry unframed pictures, which, he observed, were all his own drawing. “ What do you think, sir, of that head in the corner done in the manner of Grisoni ? There ’s the true keeping in it ; it ’s my own face, and though there happens to be no likeness, a Countess offered me a hundred for its fellow. I refused her, for, hang it, that would be mechanical, you know ! ”

The wife at last made her appearance, at once a slattern and a coquette, much emaciated, but still carrying the remains of beauty. She made twenty apologies for being seen in such an odious dishabille, but hoped to be excused, as she had stayed out all night at the gardens with the Countess, who was excessively fond of the horns. “ And, indeed, my

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dear," added she, turning to her husband, "his lordship drank your health in a bumper." "Poor Jack!" cries he, "a dear, good-natured creature; I know he loves me. But I hope, my dear, you have given orders for dinner; you need make no great preparations, neither, there are but three of us; something elegant, and little will do—a turbot, an ortolan, or a——" "Or what do you think, my dear," interrupts the wife, "of a nice pretty bit of ox-cheek, piping hot, and dressed with a little of my own sauce?" "The very thing," replies he; "it will eat best with some smart bottled beer; but be sure to let's have the sauce his grace was so fond of. I hate your immense loads of meat—that is country all over; extreme disgusting to those who are in the least acquainted with high life."

xv

Sir Walter condemns the service

THE profession has its utility, but I should be sorry to see any friend of mine belonging

"Indeed!" was the reply, and with a look of surprise.

"Yes; it is in two points offensive to me; I have two strong grounds of objection to it. First, as being the means of bringing persons of obscure birth into undue distinction, and raising men to honours which their fathers and grandfathers never dreamt of; and, secondly, as it cuts up a man's youth and vigour most horribly; a sailor grows

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old sooner than any other man ; I have observed it all my life. A man is in greater danger in the navy of being insulted by the rise of one whose father his father might have disdained to speak to, and of becoming prematurely an object of disgust himself, than in any other line. One day last spring, in town, I was in company with two men, striking instances of what I am talking of,—Lord St. Ives, whose father we all know to have been a country curate, without bread to eat : I was to give place to Lord St. Ives, and a certain Admiral Baldwin, the most deplorable-looking personage you can imagine ; his face the colour of mahogany, rough and rugged to the last degree, all lines and wrinkles, nine grey hairs of a side, and nothing but a dab of powder at top.—‘ In the name of heaven, who is that old fellow ? ’ said I to a friend of mine who was standing near (Sir Basil Morley).—‘ Old fellow ! ’ cried Sir Basil, ‘ it is Admiral Baldwin. What do you take his age to be ? ’—‘ Sixty,’ said I, ‘ or perhaps sixty-two.’—‘ Forty,’ replied Sir Basil, ‘ forty, and no more.’ Picture to yourselves my amazement : I shall not easily forget Admiral Baldwin. I never saw quite so wretched an example of what a seafaring life can do ; but to a degree, I know it is the same with them all : they are all knocked about, and exposed to every climate, and every weather, till they are not fit to be seen. It is a pity they are not knocked on the head before they reach Admiral Baldwin’s age.”

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XVI

Mr. Chucks on names

“**M**R. SIMPLE, a boatswain is an officer, and is entitled to a sword as well as the captain, although we have been laughed out of it by a set of midshipman monkeys. I always wore my sword at that time ; but now-a-days a boatswain is counted as nobody, unless there is hard work to do, and then it’s Mr. Chucks this, and Mr. Chucks that. But I’ll explain to you how it is, Mr. Simple, that we boatswains have lost so much of consequence and dignity. The first lieutenants are made to do the boatswain’s duty now-a-days, and if they could only wind the call, they might scratch the boatswain’s name off half the ships’ books in his Majesty’s service. But to go on with my yarn. On the fourth day, I called with my handkerchief full of segars for the father, but he was at siesta, as they called it. The old serving-woman would not let me in at first ; but I shoved a dollar between her skinny old fingers, and that altered her note. She put her old head out, and looked round to see if there was anybody in the street to watch us, and then she let me in and shut the door. I walked into the room, and found myself alone with Seraphina.”

“Seraphina !—what a fine name !”

“No name can be too fine for a pretty girl, or a good frigate, Mr. Simple ; for my part, I’m very fond of these hard names. Your Bess, and Poll, and Sue, do very well for the Point, or Castle Rag ;

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but in my opinion they degrade a lady. Don't you observe, Mr. Simple, that all our gun-brigs, a sort of vessel that will certainly d——n the inventor to all eternity, have nothing but low, common names, such as Pincher, Thrasher, Boxer, Badger, and all that sort, which are quite good enough for them ; whereas all our dashing, saucy frigates have names as long as the main-top bowling, and hard enough to break your jaw—such as Melpomeny, Terpsichory, Arethusy, Bacchanty—fine flourishes, as long as their pennants which dip alongside in a calm.”

“Very true,” replied I ; “but do you think, then, it is the same with family names ?”

“Most certainly, Mr. Simple. When I was in good society, I rarely fell in with such names as Potts, or Bell, or Smith, or Hodges ; it was always Mr. Fortesque, or Mr. FitzGerald, or Mr. Fitz-Herbert—seldom bowed, sir, to anything under *three* syllables.”

“Then, I presume, Mr. Chucks, you are not fond of your own name ?”

“There you touch me, Mr. Simple ; but it is quite good enough for a boatswain,” replied Mr. Chucks with a sigh.

XVII

Mr. Mantalini in despair

“**T**HERE is quite a bloom upon your demd countenance,” said Mr. Mantalini, seating himself unbidden, and arranging his hair and

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whiskers. "You look quite juvenile and jolly, demmit!"

"We are alone," returned Ralph, tartly. "What do you want with me?"

"Good!" cried Mr. Mantalini, displaying his teeth. "What did I want! Yes. Ha, ha! Very good. *What* did I want. Ha, ha. Oh dem!"

"What *do* you want, man?" demanded Ralph, sternly.

"Demnition discount," returned Mr. Mantalini, with a grin, and shaking his head waggishly.

"Money is scarce," said Ralph.

"Demd scarce, or I shouldn't want it," interrupted Mr. Mantalini.

"The times are bad, and one scarcely knows whom to trust," continued Ralph. "I don't want to do business just now, in fact I would rather not; but as you are a friend—how many bills have you there?"

"Two," returned Mr. Mantalini.

"What is the gross amount?"

"Demd trifling. Five-and-seventy."

"And the dates?"

"Two months, and four."

"I'll do them for you—mind, for *you*; I wouldn't for many people—for five-and-twenty pounds," said Ralph, deliberately.

"Oh demmit!" cried Mr. Mantalini, whose face lengthened considerably at this handsome proposal.

"Why, that leaves you fifty," retorted Ralph. "What would you have? Let me see the names."

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"You are so demd hard, Nickleby," remonstrated Mr. Mantalini.

"Let me see the names," replied Ralph, impatiently extending his hand for the bills. "Well ! They are not sure, but they are safe enough. Do you consent to the terms, and will you take the money ? I don't want you to do so. I would rather you didn't."

"Demmit, Nickleby, can't you——" began Mr. Mantalini.

"No," replied Ralph, interrupting him. "I can't. Will you take the money—down, mind ; no delay, no going into the city and pretending to negotiate with some other party who has no existence and never had. Is it a bargain or is it not ?"

Ralph pushed some papers from him as he spoke, and carelessly rattled his cash-box, as though by mere accident. The sound was too much for Mr. Mantalini. He closed the bargain directly it reached his ears, and Ralph told the money out upon the table.

He had scarcely done so, and Mr. Mantalini had not yet gathered it all up, when a ring was heard at the bell, and immediately afterwards Newman ushered in no less a person than Madame Mantalini, at sight of whom Mr. Mantalini evinced considerable discomposure, and swept the cash into his pocket with remarkable alacrity.

"Oh, you *are* here," said Madame Mantalini, tossing her head.

"Yes, my life and soul, I am," replied her husband, dropping on his knees, and pouncing with

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kitten-like playfulness upon a stray sovereign. "I am here, my soul's delight, upon Tom Tiddler's ground, picking up the demnition gold and silver."

"I am ashamed of you," said Madame Mantalini, with much indignation.

"Ashamed? Of *me*, my joy? It knows it is talking demd charming sweetness, but naughty fibs," returned Mr. Mantalini. "It knows it is not ashamed of its own popolorum tibby."

Whatever were the circumstances which had led to such a result, it certainly appeared as though the popolorum tibby had rather miscalculated, for the nonce, the extent of his lady's affection. Madame Mantalini only looked scornful in reply, and, turning to Ralph, begged him to excuse her intrusion.

"Which is entirely attributable," said Madame, "to the gross misconduct and most improper behaviour of Mr. Mantalini."

"Of me, my essential juice of pine-apple!"

"Of you," returned his wife. "But I will not allow it. I will not submit to be ruined by the extravagance and profligacy of any man. I call Mr. Nickleby to witness the course I intend to pursue with you."

"Pray don't call me to witness anything, ma'am," said Ralph. "Settle it between yourselves, settle it between yourselves."

"No, but I must beg you as a favour," said Madame Mantalini, "to hear me give him notice of what it is my fixed intention to do—my fixed intention, sir," repeated Madame Mantalini, darting an angry look at her husband.

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"Will she call me, 'Sir !'" cried Mantalini. "Me who doat upon her with the demidest ardour ! She, who coils her fascinations round me like a pure and angelic rattlesnake ! It will be all up with my feelings ; she will throw me into a demd state."

"Don't talk of feelings, sir," rejoined Madame Mantalini, seating herself, and turning her back upon him. "You don't consider mine."

"I do not consider yours, my soul !" exclaimed Mr. Mantalini.

"No," replied his wife.

And notwithstanding various blandishments on the part of Mr. Mantalini, Madame Mantalini still said no, and said it too with such determined and resolute ill temper, that Mr. Mantalini was clearly taken aback.

"His extravagance, Mr. Nickleby," said Madame Mantalini, addressing herself to Ralph, who leant against his easy-chair with his hands behind him, and regarded the amiable couple with a smile of the supremest and most unmitigated contempt, "His extravagance is beyond all bounds."

"I should scarcely have supposed it," answered Ralph, sarcastically.

"I assure you, Mr. Nickleby, however, that it is," returned Madame Mantalini. "It makes me miserable. I am under constant apprehensions, and in constant difficulty. And even this," said Madame Mantalini, wiping her eyes, "is not the worst. He took some papers of value out of my desk this morning without asking my permission."

Mr. Mantalini groaned slightly, and buttoned his trowsers pocket.

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“I am obliged,” continued Madame Mantalini, “since our late misfortunes, to pay Miss Knag a great deal of money for having her name in the business, and I really cannot afford to encourage him in all his wastefulness. As I have no doubt that he came straight here, Mr. Nickleby, to convert the papers I have spoken of, into money, and as you have assisted us very often before, and are very much connected with us in this kind of matter, I wish you to know the determination at which his conduct has compelled me to arrive.”

Mr. Mantalini groaned once more from behind his wife’s bonnet, and fitting a sovereign into one of his eyes, winked with the other at Ralph. Having achieved this performance with great dexterity, he whipped the coin into his pocket, and groaned again with increased penitence.

“I have made up my mind,” said Madame Mantalini, as tokens of impatience manifested themselves in Ralph’s countenance, “to allowance him.”

“To do what, my joy?” inquired Mr. Mantalini, who did not seem to have caught the words.

“To put him,” said Madame Mantalini, looking at Ralph, and prudently abstaining from the slightest glance at her husband, lest his many graces should induce her to falter in her resolution, “to put him upon a fixed allowance; and I say that if he has a hundred and twenty pounds a-year for his clothes and pocket-money, he may consider himself a very fortunate man.”

Mr. Mantalini waited, with much decorum, to hear the amount of the proposed stipend, but when

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it reached his ears, he cast his hat and cane upon the floor, and drawing out his pocket-handkerchief, gave vent to his feelings in a dismal moan.

“Demnition !” cried Mr. Mantalini, suddenly skipping out of his chair, and as suddenly skipping into it again, to the great discomposure of his lady’s nerves. “But no. It is a demd horrid dream. It is not reality. No !”

Comforting himself with this assurance, Mr. Mantalini closed his eyes and waited patiently till such time as he should wake up.

“A very judicious arrangement,” observed Ralph with a sneer, “if your husband will keep within it, ma’am—as no doubt he will.”

“Demmit !” exclaimed Mr. Mantalini, opening his eyes at the sound of Ralph’s voice, “it is a horrid reality. She is sitting there before me. There is the graceful outline of her form ; it cannot be mistaken—there is nothing like it. The two countesses had no outlines at all, and the dowager’s was a demd outline. Why is she so excruciatingly beautiful that I cannot be angry with her, even now ?”

“You have brought it upon yourself, Alfred,” returned Madame Mantalini—still reproachfully, but in a softened tone.

“I am a demd villain !” cried Mr. Mantalini, smiting himself on the head. “I will fill my pockets with change for a sovereign in halfpence and drown myself in the Thames ; but I will not be angry with her, even then, for I will put a note in the twopenny-post as I go along, to tell her where the body is. She will be a lovely widow.

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I shall be a body. Some handsome women will cry ; she will laugh demnebly."

"Alfred, you cruel, cruel creature," said Madame Mantalini, sobbing at the dreadful picture.

"She calls me cruel—me—me—who for her sake will become a demd, damp, moist, unpleasant body !" exclaimed Mr. Mantalini.

"You know it almost breaks my heart, even to hear you talk of such a thing," replied Madame Mantalini.

"Can I live to be mistrusted?" cried her husband. "Have I cut my heart into a demd extraordinary number of little pieces, and given them all away, one after another, to the same little engrossing demnition captivator, and can I live to be suspected by her ! Demmit, no I can't."

"Ask Mr. Nickleby whether the sum I have mentioned is not a proper one," reasoned Madame Mantalini.

"I don't want any sum," replied her disconsolate husband ; "I shall require no demd allowance. I will be a body."

XVIII

Mr. Turveydrop and Deportment

MY eyes were yet wandering, from young Mr. Turveydrop working so hard, to old Mr. Turveydrop deporting himself so beautifully, when the latter came ambling up to me, and entered into conversation.

He asked me, first of all, whether I conferred a

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charm and a distinction on London by residing in it? I did not think it necessary to reply that I was perfectly aware I should not do that, in any case, but merely told him where I did reside.

"A lady so graceful and accomplished," he said, kissing his right glove, and afterwards extending it towards the pupils, "will look leniently on the deficiencies here. We do our best to polish—polish—polish!"

He sat down beside me; taking some pains to sit on the form, I thought, in imitation of the print of his illustrious model on the sofa. And really he did look very like it.

"To polish—polish—polish!" he repeated, taking a pinch of snuff and gently fluttering his fingers. "But we are not—if I may say so, to one formed to be graceful both by Nature and Art;" with the high-shouldered bow, which it seemed impossible for him to make without lifting up his eyebrows and shutting his eyes—"we are not what we used to be in point of Deportment."

"Are we not, sir?" said I.

"We have degenerated," he returned, shaking his head, which he could do, to a very limited extent, in his cravat. "A levelling age is not favourable to Deportment. It develops vulgarity. Perhaps I speak with some little partiality. It may not be for me to say that I have been called, for some years now, Gentleman Turveydrop; or that His Royal Highness the Prince Regent did me the honour to inquire, on my removing my hat as he drove out of the Pavilion at Brighton (that fine building), 'Who is he? Who the Devil is he? Why don't

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I know him? Why hasn't he thirty thousand a-year?' But these are little matters of anecdote—the general property, ma'am,—still repeated, occasionally, among the upper classes."

"Indeed?" said I.

He replied with the high-shouldered bow. "Where what is left among us of Deportment," he added, "still lingers. England—alas, my country!—has degenerated very much, and is degenerating every day. She has not many gentlemen left. We are few. I see nothing to succeed us, but a race of weavers."

"One might hope that the race of gentlemen would be perpetuated here," said I.

"You are very good," he smiled, with the high-shouldered bow again. "You flatter me. But, no—no! I have never been able to imbue my poor boy with that part of his art. Heaven forbid that I should disparage my dear child, but he has—no Deportment."

"He appears to be an excellent master," I observed.

"Understand me, my dear madam, he *is* an excellent master. All that can be acquired, he has acquired. All that can be imparted, he can impart. But there *are* things"—he took another pinch of snuff and made the bow again, as if to add, "this kind of thing, for instance."

I glanced towards the centre of the room, where Miss Jellyby's lover, now engaged with single pupils, was undergoing greater drudgery than ever.

"My amiable child," murmured Mr. Turveydrop, adjusting his cravat.

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"Your son is indefatigable," said I.

"It is my reward," said Mr. Turveydrop, "to hear you say so. In some respects, he treads in the footsteps of his sainted mother. She was a devoted creature. But Wooman, lovely Wooman," said Mr. Turveydrop, with very disagreeable gallantry, "what a sex you are !"

XIX

Mr. Lammle is pugnacious

"**YOU** are a very offensive fellow, sir," cried Mr. Lammle, rising. "You are a highly offensive scoundrel. What do you mean by this behaviour ?"

"I say," remonstrated Fledgeby. "Don't break out."

"You are a very offensive fellow, sir," repeated Mr. Lammle. "You are a highly offensive scoundrel !"

"I *say*, you know !" urged Fledgeby, quailing.

"Why, you coarse and vulgar vagabond !" said Mr. Lammle, looking fiercely about him, "if your servant was here to give me sixpence of your money to get my boots cleaned afterwards—for you are not worth the expenditure—I 'd kick you."

"No, you wouldn't," pleaded Fledgeby. "I am sure you 'd think better of it."

"I tell you what, Mr. Fledgeby," said Lammle, advancing on him. "Since you presume to contradict me, I 'll assert myself a little. Give me your nose !"

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Fledgeby covered it with his hand instead, and said, retreating, "I beg you won't!"

"Give me your nose, sir," repeated Lammle.

Still covering that feature and backing, Mr. Fledgeby reiterated (apparently with a severe cold in his head), "I beg, I beg, you won't."

"And this fellow," exclaimed Lammle, stopping and making the most of his chest—"this fellow presumes on my having selected him out of all the young fellows I know, for an advantageous opportunity! This fellow presumes on my having in my desk round the corner his dirty note of hand for a wretched sum payable on the occurrence of a certain event, which event can only be of my and my wife's bringing about! This fellow, Fledgeby, presumes to be impertinent to me, Lammle. Give me your nose, sir!"

"No! Stop! I beg your pardon," said Fledgeby, with humility.

"What do you say, sir?" demanded Mr. Lammle, seeming too furious to understand.

"I beg your pardon," repeated Fledgeby.

"Repeat your words louder, sir. The just indignation of a gentleman has sent the blood boiling to my head. I don't hear you."

"I say," repeated Fledgeby, with laborious explanatory politeness, "I beg your pardon."

Mr. Lammle paused. "As a man of honour," said he, throwing himself into a chair, "I am disarmed."

Mr. Fledgeby also took a chair, though less demonstratively, and by slow approaches removed his hand from his nose. Some natural diffidence

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assailed him as to blowing it, so shortly after its having assumed a personal and delicate, not to say public, character ; but he overcame his scruples by degrees, and modestly took that liberty under an implied protest.

“ Lammle,” he said sneakingly, when that was done, “ I hope we are friends again ? ”

“ Mr. Fledgeby,” returned Lammle, “ say no more.”

“ I must have gone too far in making myself disagreeable,” said Fledgeby, “ but I never intended it.”

“ Say no more, say no more ! ” Mr. Lammle repeated in a magnificent tone. “ Give me your ” —Fledgeby started—“ hand.”

SOME CONVIVIAL SOULS

*Prince Seithenyn defends a conservative
policy*

ELPHIN and Teithrin stood some time on the floor of the hall before they attracted the attention of Seithenyn, who, during the chorus, was tossing and flourishing his golden goblet. The chorus had scarcely ended when he noticed them, and immediately roared aloud, "You are welcome all four."

Elphin answered, "We thank you : we are but two."

"Two or four," said Seithenyn, "all is one. You are welcome all. When a stranger comes, the custom in other places is to begin by washing his feet. My custom is to begin by washing his throat. Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi bids you welcome."

Elphin, taking the wine-cup, answered, "Elphin ap Gwythno Garanhir thanks you."

Seithenyn started up. He endeavoured to straighten himself to perpendicularity, and to stand steadily on his legs. He accomplished half his object by stiffening all his joints but those of his ankles, and from these the rest of his body vibrated upwards with the inflexibility of a bar. After thus oscillating for a time, like an inverted pendulum, finding that the attention requisite to preserve his rigidity absorbed all he could collect of his dissipated

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energies, and that he required a portion of them for the management of his voice, which he felt a dizzy desire to wield with peculiar steadiness in the presence of the son of the king, he suddenly relaxed the muscles that perform the operation of sitting, and dropped into his chair like a plummet. He then, with a gracious gesticulation, invited Prince Elphin to take his seat on his right hand, and proceeded to compose himself into a dignified attitude, throwing his body back into the left corner of his chair, resting his left elbow on its arm and his left cheekbone on the middle of the back of his left hand, placing his left foot on a footstool, and stretching out his right leg as straight and as far as his position allowed. He had thus his right hand at liberty, for the ornament of his eloquence and the conduct of his liquor.

Elphin seated himself at the right hand of Seithenyn. Teithrin remained at the end of the hall : on which Seithenyn exclaimed, " Come on, man, come on. What, if you be not the son of a king, you are the guest of Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi. The most honourable place to the most honourable guest, and the next most honourable place to the next most honourable guest ; the least honourable guest above the most honourable inmate ; and, where there are but two guests, be the most honourable who he may, the least honourable of the two is next in honour to the most honourable of the two, because they are no more but two ; and, where there are only two, there can be nothing between. Therefore sit, and drink. GWIN O EUR : wine from gold."

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Elphin motioned Teithrin to approach, and sit next to him.

Prince Seithenyn, whose liquor was "his eating and his drinking solely," seemed to measure the gastronomy of his guests by his own; but his groom of the pantry thought the strangers might be disposed to eat, and placed before them a choice of provision, on which Teithrin ap Tathral did vigorous execution.

"I pray your excuses," said Seithenyn, "my stomach is weak, and I am subject to dizziness in the head, and my memory is not so good as it was, and my faculties of attention are somewhat impaired, and I would dilate more upon the topic, whereby you should hold me excused, but I am troubled with a feverishness and parching of the mouth, that very much injures my speech, and impedes my saying all I would say, and will say before I have done, in token of my loyalty and fealty to your highness and your highness's house. I must just moisten my lips, and I will then proceed with my observations. Cupbearer, fill."

"Prince Seithenyn," said Elphin, "I have visited you on a subject of deep moment. Reports have been brought to me that the embankment, which has been so long entrusted to your care, is in a state of dangerous decay."

"Decay," said Seithenyn, "is one thing, and danger is another. Everything that is old must decay. That the embankment is old, I am free to confess; that it is somewhat rotten in parts, I will not altogether deny; that it is any the worse for that, I do most sturdily gainsay. It does its

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business well : it works well : it keeps out the water from the land, and it lets in the wine upon the High Commission of Embankment. Cup-bearer, fill. Our ancestors were wiser than we : they built it in their wisdom ; and, if we should be so rash as to try to mend it, we should only mar it."

"The stonework," said Teithrin, "is sapped and mined : the piles are rotten, broken, and dislocated : the floodgates and sluices are leaky and creaky."

"That is the beauty of it," said Seithenyn. "Some parts of it are rotten, and some parts of it are sound."

"It is well," said Elphin, "that some parts are sound : it were better that all were so."

"So I have heard some people say before," said Seithenyn ; "perverse people, blind to venerable antiquity : that very unamiable sort of people who are in the habit of indulging their reason. But I say, the parts that are rotten give elasticity to those that are sound : they give them elasticity, elasticity, elasticity. If it were all sound, it would break by its own obstinate stiffness : the soundness is checked by the rottenness, and the stiffness is balanced by the elasticity. There is nothing so dangerous as innovation. See the waves in the equinoctial storms, dashing and clashing, roaring and pouring, spattering and battering, rattling and battling against it. I would not be so presumptuous as to say, I could build anything that would stand against them half-an-hour ; and here this immortal old work, which God forbid the finger of modern

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mason should bring into jeopardy, this immortal work has stood for centuries, and will stand for centuries more, if we let it alone. It is well : it works well : let well alone. Cupbearer, fill. It was half rotten when I was born, and that is a conclusive reason why it should be three parts rotten when I die."

The whole body of the High Commission roared approbation.

"And after all," said Seithenyn, "the worst that could happen would be the overflow of a spring-tide, for that was the worst that happened before the embankment was thought of ; and, if the high water should come in, as it did before, the low water would go out again, as it did before. We should be no deeper in it than our ancestors were, and we could mend as easily as they could make."

"The level of the sea," said Teithrin, "is materially altered."

"The level of the sea !" exclaimed Seithenyn. "Who ever heard of such a thing as altering the level of the sea ? Alter the level of that bowl of wine before you, in which, as I sit here, I see a very ugly reflection of your very good-looking face. Alter the level of that : drink up the reflection : let me see the face without the reflection, and leave the sea to level itself."

"Not to level the embankment," said Teithrin.

"Good, very good," said Seithenyn. "I love a smart saying, though it hits at me. But, whether yours is a smart saying or no, I do not very clearly see ; and, whether it hits at me or no, I do not very sensibly feel. But all is one. Cupbearer, fill.

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“I think,” pursued Seithenyn, looking as intently as he could at Teithrin ap Tathral, “I have seen something very like you before. There was a fellow here the other day very like you : he stayed here some time : he would not talk : he did nothing but drink : he used to drink till he could not stand, and then he went walking about the embankment. I suppose he thought it wanted mending ; but he did not say anything. If he had, I should have told him to embank his own throat, to keep the liquor out of that. That would have posed him : he could not have answered that : he would not have had a word to say for himself after that.”

“He must have been a miraculous person,” said Teithrin, “to walk when he could not stand.”

“All is one for that,” said Seithenyn. “Cup-bearer, fill.”

“Prince Seithenyn,” said Elphin, “if I were not aware that wine speaks in the silence of reason, I should be astonished at your strange vindication of your neglect of duty, which I take shame to myself for not having sooner known and remedied. The wise bard has well observed, ‘Nothing is done without the eye of the king.’”

“I am very sorry,” said Seithenyn, “that you see things in a wrong light : but we will not quarrel for three reasons : first, because you are the son of the king, and may do and say what you please, without any one having a right to be displeased : second, because I never quarrel with a guest, even if he grows riotous in his cups : third, because there is nothing to quarrel about ; and perhaps that is the best reason of the three ; or

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rather the first is the best, because you are the son of the king ; and the third is the second, that is, the second best, because there is nothing to quarrel about ; and the second is nothing to the purpose, because though guests will grow riotous in their cups, in spite of my good orderly example, God forbid I should say, that is the case with you. And I completely agree in the truth of your remark, that reason speaks in the silence of wine."

Seithenyn accompanied his speech with a vehement swinging of his right hand : in so doing, at this point, he dropped his cup : a sudden impulse of rash volition to pick it dexterously up before he resumed his discourse, ruined all his devices for maintaining dignity ; in stooping forward from his chair, he lost his balance, and fell prostrate on the floor.

XXI

Seithenyn denies his own death

TALIESIN, who had been very abstemious during the evening, took the golden goblet, and drank to please the inviter ; in the hope that he would become communicative, and satisfy the curiosity his appearance had raised.

The stranger sat down near him, evidently in that amiable state of semi-intoxication which inflates the head, warms the heart, lifts up the veil of the inward man, and sets the tongue flying, or rather tripping, in the double sense of nimbleness and titubancy.

The stranger repeated, taking a copious draught, " My taste is wine from gold."

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"I have heard those words," said Taliesin, "GWIN O EUR, repeated as having been the favourite saying of a person whose memory is fondly cherished by one as dear to me as a mother, though his name, with all others, is the byword of all that is disreputable."

"I cannot believe," said the stranger, "that a man whose favourite saying was GWIN O EUR, could possibly be a disreputable person, or deserve any other than that honourable remembrance, which, you say, only one person is honest enough to entertain for him."

"His name," said Taliesin, "is too unhappily notorious throughout Britain by the terrible catastrophe of which his GWIN O EUR was the cause."

"And what might that be?" said the stranger.

"The inundation of Gwaelod," said Taliesin.

"You speak then," said the stranger, taking an enormous potation, "of Seithenyn, Prince Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi, Arglwyd Gorwarcheidwad yr Argae Breninawl?"

"I seldom hear his name," said Taliesin, "with any of those sounding additions; he is usually called Seithenyn the Drunkard."

The stranger goggled about his eyes in an attempt to fix them steadily on Taliesin, screwed up the corners of his mouth, stuck out his nether lip, pursed up his chin, thrust forward his right foot, and elevated his golden goblet in his right hand; then, in a tone which he intended to be strongly becoming of his impressive aspect and imposing attitude, he muttered, "Look at me."

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Taliesin looked at him accordingly, with as much gravity as he could preserve.

After a silence, which he designed to be very dignified and solemn, the stranger spoke again :
“ I am the man.”

“ What man ? ” said Taliesin.

“ The man,” replied his entertainer, “ of whom you have spoken so disparagingly : Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi.”

“ Seithenyn,” said Taliesin, “ has slept twenty years under the waters of the western sea, as King Gwythno’s *Lamentations* have made known to all Britain.”

“ They have not made it known to me,” said Seithenyn, “ for the best of all reasons, that one can only know the truth : for, if that which we think we know is not truth, it is something which we do not know. A man cannot know his own death ; for, while he knows anything, he is alive ; at least, I never heard of a dead man who knew anything, or pretended to know anything ; if he had so pretended, I should have told him to his face he was no dead man.”

XXII

Mr. Jack Hopkins is in good form

I HOPE that ’s Jack Hopkins ! ” said Mr. Bob Sawyer. “ Hush. Yes, it is. Come up, Jack ; come up.”

A heavy footstep was heard upon the stairs, and Jack Hopkins presented himself. He wore a

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black velvet waistcoat, with thunder-and-lightning buttons ; and a blue striped shirt, with a white false collar.

"You're late, Jack?" said Mr. Benjamin Allen.

"Been detained at Bartholomew's," replied Hopkins.

"Anything new?"

"No, nothing particular. Rather a good accident brought into the casualty ward."

"What was that, sir?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Only a man fallen out of a four pair of stairs' window ;—but it's a very fair case—very fair case indeed."

"Do you mean that the patient is in a fair way to recover?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"No," replied Hopkins, carelessly. "No, I should rather say he wouldn't. There must be a splendid operation though, to-morrow—magnificent sight if Slasher does it."

"You consider Mr. Slasher a good operator?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Best alive," replied Hopkins. "Took a boy's leg out of the socket last week—boy ate five apples and a gingerbread cake—exactly two minutes after it was all over, boy said he wouldn't lie there to be made game of, and he'd tell his mother if they didn't begin."

"Dear me!" said Mr. Pickwick, astonished.

"Pooh! That's nothing, that ain't," said Jack Hopkins. "Is it, Bob?"

"Nothing at all," replied Mr. Bob Sawyer.

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"By the bye, Bob," said Hopkins, with a scarcely perceptible glance at Mr. Pickwick's attentive face, "we had a curious accident last night. A child was brought in, who had swallowed a necklace."

"Swallowed what, sir?" interrupted Mr. Pickwick.

"A necklace," replied Jack Hopkins. "Not all at once, you know, that would be too much—you couldn't swallow that, if the child did—eh, Mr. Pickwick, ha! ha!" Mr. Hopkins appeared highly gratified with his own pleasantry, and continued. "No, the way was this. Child's parents were poor people who lived in a court. Child's eldest sister bought a necklace; common necklace, made of large black wooden beads. Child, being fond of toys, cribbed the necklace, hid it, played with it, cut the string, and swallowed a bead. Child thought it capital fun, went back next day, and swallowed another bead."

"Bless my heart," said Mr. Pickwick, "what a dreadful thing! I beg your pardon, sir. Go on."

"Next day, child swallowed two beads; the day after that, he treated himself to three, and so on, till in a week's time he had got through the necklace—five-and-twenty beads in all. The sister, who was an industrious girl, and seldom treated herself to a bit of finery, cried her eyes out, at the loss of the necklace; looked high and low for it; but, I needn't say, didn't find it. A few days afterwards, the family were at dinner—baked shoulder of mutton, and potatoes under it—the child, who wasn't hungry, was playing about the room, when

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suddenly there was heard a devil of a noise, like a small hailstorm. 'Don't do that, my boy,' said the father. 'I ain't a doin' nothing,' said the child. 'Well, don't do it again,' said the father. There was a short silence, and then the noise began again, worse than ever. 'If you don't mind what I say, my boy,' said the father, 'you'll find yourself in bed, in something less than a pig's whisper.' He gave the child a shake to make him obedient, and such a rattling ensued as nobody ever heard before. 'Why, dam'me, it's *in* the child!' said the father, 'he's got the croup in the wrong place!' 'No, I haven't, father,' said the child, beginning to cry, 'it's the necklace; I swallowed it, father.'—The father caught the child up, and ran with him to the hospital: the beads in the boy's stomach rattling all the way with the jolting; and the people looking up in the air, and down in the cellars, to see where the unusual sound came from. He's in the hospital now," said Jack Hopkins, "and he makes such a devil of a noise when he walks about, that they're obliged to muffle him in a watchman's coat, for fear he should wake the patients!"

"That's the most extraordinary case I ever heard of," said Mr. Pickwick, with an emphatic blow on the table.

"Oh, that's nothing," said Jack Hopkins; "is it, Bob?"

"Certainly not," replied Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"Very singular things occur in our profession, I can assure you, sir," said Hopkins.

"So I should be disposed to imagine," replied Mr. Pickwick.

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XXIII

Sawyer, late Nockemorf

“**W**HAT, don’t you know me?” said the medical gentleman.

Mr. Winkle murmured, in reply, that he had not that pleasure.

“Why, then,” said the medical gentleman, “there are hopes for me yet ; I may attend half the old women in Bristol if I’ve decent luck. Get out, you mouldy old villain, get out !” With this adjuration, which was addressed to the large book, the medical gentleman kicked the volume with remarkable agility to the further end of the shop, and, pulling off his green spectacles, grinned the identical grin of Robert Sawyer, Esquire, formerly of Guy’s Hospital in the Borough, with a private residence in Lant Street.

“You don’t mean to say you weren’t down upon me !” said Mr. Bob Sawyer, shaking Mr. Winkle’s hand with friendly warmth.

“Upon my word I was not,” replied Mr. Winkle, returning the pressure.

“I wonder you didn’t see the name,” said Bob Sawyer, calling his friend’s attention to the outer door, on which, in the same white paint, were traced the words, “Sawyer, late Nockemorf.”

“It never caught my eye,” returned Mr. Winkle.

“Lord, if I had known who you were, I should have rushed out, and caught you in my arms,”

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said Bob Sawyer ; “ but upon my life, I thought you were the King’s-taxes.”

“ No ! ” said Mr. Winkle.

“ I did, indeed,” responded Bob Sawyer, “ and I was just going to say that I wasn’t at home, but if you ’d leave a message I ’d be sure to give it to myself ; for he don’t know me ; no more does the Lighting and Paving. I think the Church-rates guesses who I am, and I know the Waterworks does, because I drew a tooth of his when I first came down here. But come in, come in ! ” Chattering in this way, Mr. Bob Sawyer pushed Mr. Winkle into the back room, where, amusing himself by boring little circular caverns in the chimney-piece with a red-hot poker, sat no less a person than Mr. Benjamin Allen.

“ Well ! ” said Mr. Winkle. “ This is indeed a pleasure I did not expect. What a very nice place you have here ! ”

“ Pretty well, pretty well,” replied Bob Sawyer. “ I *passed*, soon after that precious party, and my friends came down with the needful for this business ; so I put on a black suit of clothes, and a pair of spectacles, and came here to look as solemn as I could.”

“ And a very snug little business you have, no doubt ? ” said Mr. Winkle, knowingly.

“ Very,” replied Bob Sawyer. “ So snug, that at the end of a few years you might put all the profits in a wine glass, and cover ’em over with a gooseberry leaf.”

“ You cannot surely mean that ? ” said Mr. Winkle. “ The stock itself——”

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"Dummies, my dear boy," said Bob Sawyer ; "half the drawers have nothing in 'em, and the other half don't open."

"Nonsense !" said Mr. Winkle.

"Fact—honour !" returned Bob Sawyer, stepping out into the shop, and demonstrating the veracity of the assertion by divers hard pulls at the little gilt knobs on the counterfeit drawers. "Hardly anything real in the shop but the leeches, and *they* are second-hand."

"I shouldn't have thought it !" exclaimed Mr. Winkle, much surprised.

"I hope not," replied Bob Sawyer, "else where 's the use of appearances, eh ? But what will you take ? Do as we do ? That 's right. Ben, my fine fellow, put your hand into the cupboard, and bring out the patent digester."

Mr. Benjamin Allen smiled his readiness, and produced from the closet at his elbow a black bottle half full of brandy.

"You don't take water, of course ?" said Bob Sawyer.

"Thank you," replied Mr. Winkle. "It 's *rather* early. I should like to qualify it, if you have no objection."

"None in the least, if you can reconcile it to your conscience," replied Bob Sawyer ; tossing off, as he spoke, a glass of the liquor with great relish. "Ben, the pipkin !"

Mr. Benjamin Allen drew forth, from the same hiding-place, a small brass pipkin, which Bob Sawyer observed he prided himself upon, particularly because it looked so business-like. The

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water in the professional pipkin having been made to boil, in course of time, by various little shovelfuls of coal, which Mr. Bob Sawyer took out of a practicable window-seat, labelled "Soda-Water," Mr. Winkle adulterated his brandy; and the conversation was becoming general, when it was interrupted by the entrance into the shop of a boy, in a sober grey livery and a gold-laced hat, with a small covered basket under his arm: whom Mr. Bob Sawyer immediately hailed with, "Tom, you vagabond, come here."

The boy presented himself accordingly.

"You've been stopping to over all the posts in Bristol, you idle young scamp!" said Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"No, sir, I haven't," replied the boy.

"You had better not!" said Mr. Bob Sawyer, with a threatening aspect. "Who do you suppose will ever employ a professional man, when they see his boy playing at marbles in the gutter, or flying the garter in the horse-road? Have you no feelings for your profession, you groveller? Did you leave all the medicine?"

"Yes, sir."

"The powders for the child, at the large house with the new family, and the pills to be taken four times a day at the ill-tempered old gentleman's with the gouty leg?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then shut the door, and mind the shop."

"Come," said Mr. Winkle, as the boy retired, "things are not quite so bad as you would have me

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believe, either. There is *some* medicine to be sent out."

Mr. Bob Sawyer peeped into the shop to see that no stranger was within hearing, and leaning forward to Mr. Winkle, said, in a low tone :

"He leaves it all at the wrong houses."

Mr. Winkle looked perplexed, and Bob Sawyer and his friend laughed.

"Don't you see?" said Bob. "He goes up to a house, rings the area bell, pokes a packet of medicine without a direction into the servant's hand, and walks off. Servant takes it into the dining-parlour; master opens it, and reads the label: 'Draught to be taken at bed-time—pills as before—lotion as usual—the powder. From Sawyer's, late Nockemorf's. Physicians' prescriptions carefully prepared,' and all the rest of it. Shows it to his wife—*she* reads the label; it goes down to the servants—*they* read the label. Next day, boy calls: 'Very sorry—his mistake—immense business—great many parcels to deliver—Mr. Sawyer's compliments—late Nockemorf.' The name gets known, and that's the thing, my boy, in the medical way. Bless your heart, old fellow, it's better than all the advertising in the world. We have got one four-ounce bottle that's been to half the houses in Bristol, and hasn't done yet."

"Dear me, I see," observed Mr. Winkle; "what an excellent plan!"

"Oh, Ben and I have hit upon a dozen such," replied Bob Sawyer, with great glee. "The lamp-lighter has eighteenpence a week to pull the night-

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bell for ten minutes every time he comes round ; and my boy always rushes into church, just before the psalms, when the people have got nothing to do but look about 'em, and calls me out, with horror and dismay depicted on his countenance. ' Bless my soul,' everybody says, ' somebody taken suddenly ill ! Sawyer, late Nockemorf, sent for. What a business that young man has ! ' ”

XXIV

Mr. Swiveller rebukes the single gentleman

“ **H**AVE you been making that horrible noise ? ” said the single gentleman.

“ I have been helping, sir,” returned Dick, keeping his eye upon him, and waving the ruler gently in his right hand, as an indication of what the single gentleman had to expect if he attempted any violence.

“ How dare you, then ? ” said the lodger. “ Eh ? ”

To this, Dick made no other reply than by inquiring whether the lodger held it to be consistent with the conduct and character of a gentleman to go to sleep for six-and-twenty hours at a stretch, and whether the peace of an amiable and virtuous family was to weigh as nothing in the balance.

“ Is my peace nothing ? ” said the single gentleman.

“ Is their peace nothing, sir ? ” returned Dick. “ I don't wish to hold out any threats, sir—indeed the law does not allow of threats, for to threaten

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is an indictable offence—but if ever you do that again, take care you 're not sat upon by the coroner and buried in a cross-road before you wake. We have been distracted with fears that you were dead, sir," said Dick, gently sliding to the ground, "and the short and the long of it is, that we cannot allow single gentlemen to come into this establishment and sleep like double gentlemen without paying extra for it."

"Indeed!" cried the lodger.

"Yes, sir, indeed," returned Dick, yielding to his destiny and saying whatever came uppermost; "an equal quantity of slumber was never got out of one bed and bedstead, and if you 're going to sleep in that way, you must pay for a double-bedded room."

XXV

Mr. Swiveller entertains the Marchioness

which object in view, Marchioness," said Mr. Swiveller, gravely, "I shall ask your ladyship's permission to put the board in my pocket, and to retire from the presence when I have finished this tankard; merely observing, Marchioness, that since life like a river is flowing, I care not how fast it rolls on, ma'am, on, while such purl on the bank still is growing, and such eyes light the waves as they run. Marchioness, your health. You will excuse my wearing my hat, but the palace is damp, and the marble floor is—if I may be allowed the expression—sloppy."

As a precaution against this latter inconvenience,

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Mr. Swiveller had been sitting for some time with his feet on the hob, in which attitude he now gave utterance to these apologetic observations, and slowly sipped the last choice drops of nectar.

"The Baron Sampsono Brasso and his fair sister are (you tell me) at the Play?" said Mr. Swiveller, leaning his left arm heavily upon the table, and raising his voice and his right leg after the manner of a theatrical bandit.

The Marchioness nodded.

"Ha!" said Mr. Swiveller, with a portentous frown. "'Tis well, Marchioness!—but no matter. Some wine there. Ho!" He illustrated these melodramatic morsels, by handing the tankard to himself with great humility, receiving it haughtily, drinking from it thirstily, and smacking his lips fiercely.

The small servant, who was not so well acquainted with theatrical conventionalities as Mr. Swiveller (having indeed never seen a play, or heard one spoken of, except by chance through chinks of doors and in other forbidden places), was rather alarmed by demonstrations so novel in their nature, and showed her concern so plainly in her looks, that Mr. Swiveller felt it necessary to discharge his brigand manner for one more suitable to private life, as he asked:

"Do they often go where glory waits 'em, and leave you here?"

"Oh, yes; I believe you they do," returned the small servant. "Miss Sally's such a one-er for that, she is."

"Such a what?" said Dick.

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“Such a one-er,” returned the Marchioness.

After a moment’s reflection, Mr. Swiveller determined to forego his responsible duty of setting her right, and to suffer her to talk on ; as it was evident that her tongue was loosened by the purl, and her opportunities for conversation were not so frequent as to render a momentary check of little consequence.

“They sometimes go to see Mr. Quilp,” said the small servant with a shrewd look ; “they go to a many places, bless you !”

“Is Mr. Brass a wunner ?” said Dick.

“Not half what Miss Sally is, he isn’t,” replied the small servant, shaking her head. “Bless you, he ’d never do anything without her.”

“Oh ! He wouldn’t, wouldn’t he ?” said Dick.

“Miss Sally keeps him in such order,” said the small servant ; “he always asks her advice, he does ; and he catches it sometimes. Bless you, you wouldn’t believe how much he catches it.”

“I suppose,” said Dick, “that they consult together a good deal, and talk about a great many people—about me for instance, sometimes, eh, Marchioness ?”

The Marchioness nodded amazingly.

“Complimentary ?” said Mr. Swiveller.

The Marchioness changed the motion of her head, which had not yet left off nodding, and suddenly began to shake it from side to side, with a vehemence which threatened to dislocate her neck.

“Humph !” Dick muttered. “Would it be

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any breach of confidence, Marchioness, to relate what they say of the humble individual who has now the honour to—— ? ”

“ Miss Sally says you ’re a funny chap,” replied his friend.

“ Well, Marchioness,” said Mr. Swiveller. “ That ’s not uncomplimentary. Merriment, Marchioness, is not a bad or a degrading quality. Old King Cole was himself a merry old soul, if we may put any faith in the pages of history.”

“ But she says,” pursued his companion, “ that you ain’t to be trusted.”

“ Why, really, Marchioness,” said Mr. Swiveller, thoughtfully ; “ several ladies and gentlemen—not exactly professional persons, but tradespeople, ma’am, tradespeople—have made the same remark. The obscure citizen who keeps the hotel over the way, inclined strongly to that opinion to-night when I ordered him to prepare the banquet. It’s a popular prejudice, Marchioness ; and yet I am sure I don’t know why, for I have been trusted in my time to a considerable amount, and I can safely say that I never forsook my trust until it deserted me—never. Mr. Brass is of the same opinion, I suppose ? ”

His friend nodded again, with a cunning look which seemed to hint that Mr. Brass held stronger opinions on the subject than his sister ; and seeming to recollect herself, added imploringly, “ But don’t you ever tell upon me, or I shall be beat to death.”

“ Marchioness,” said Mr. Swiveller, rising, “ the word of a gentleman is as good as his bond—sometimes better, as in the present case, where his bond

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might prove but a doubtful sort of security. I am your friend, and I hope we shall play many more rubbers together in this same saloon. But, Marchioness," added Richard, stopping in his way to the door, and wheeling slowly round upon the small servant, who was following with the candle ; "it occurs to me that you must be in the constant habit of airing your eye at keyholes, to know all this."

"I only wanted," replied the trembling Marchioness, "to know where the key of the safe was hid ; that was all ; and I wouldn't have taken much, if I had found it—only enough to squench my hunger."

"You didn't find it then ?" said Dick. "But of course you didn't, or you'd be plumper. Good night, Marchioness. Fare thee well, and if for ever, then for ever fare thee well—and put up the chain, Marchioness, in case of accidents."

With this parting injunction, Mr. Swiveller emerged from the house ; and feeling that he had by this time taken quite as much to drink as promised to be good for his constitution (purl being a rather strong and heady compound), wisely resolved to betake himself to his lodgings, and to bed at once. Homeward he went therefore ; and his apartments (for he still retained the plural fiction) being at no great distance from the office, he was soon seated in his own bed-chamber, where, having pulled off one boot and forgotten the other, he fell into deep cogitation.

"This Marchioness," said Mr. Swiveller, folding his arms, "is a very extraordinary person—sur-

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rounded by mysteries, ignorant of the taste of beer, unacquainted with her own name (which is less remarkable), and taking a limited view of society through the keyholes of doors—can these things be her destiny, or has some unknown persons started an opposition to the decrees of fate? It is a most inscrutable and unmitigated staggerer!”

When his meditations had attained this satisfactory point, he became aware of his remaining boot, of which, with unimpaired solemnity, he proceeded to divest himself; shaking his head with exceeding gravity all the time, and sighing deeply.

“These rubbers,” said Mr. Swiveller, putting on his nightcap in exactly the same style as he wore his hat, “remind me of the matrimonial fireside. Chegg’s wife plays cribbage; all-fours likewise. She rings the changes on ’em now. From sport to sport they hurry her, to banish her regrets, and when they win a smile from her they think that she forgets—but she don’t. By this time, I should say,” added Richard, getting his left cheek into profile, and looking complacently at the reflection of a very little scrap of whisker in the looking-glass; “by this time, I should say, the iron has entered into her soul. It serves her right.”

XXVI

Mr. Jorrocks dines out

“**V**OT, you ’ve three o’ these poodered puppies, ’ave you?” observed Mr. Jorrocks, as they passed along the line; adding, “You come it strong!”

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"We can't do with less," replied the lady, the cares of dinner strong upon her.

"Humph ! Well, I doesn't know 'bout that," grunted Mr. Jorrocks, forcing his way up the room, seizing and settling himself into a chair on his hostess's right ; "well, I doesn't know 'bout that," repeated he, arranging his napkin over his legs, "women waiters agin the world, say I ! I'll back our Batsay, big and 'ippy as she is, to beat any two fellers at waitin'."

Mrs. Muleygrubs, anxious as she was for the proper arrangement of her guests, caught the purport of the foregoing, and, woman-like, darted a glance of ineffable contempt at our friend.

Our Master, seeing he was not likely to find a good listener at this interesting moment, proceeded to reconnoitre the room, and make mental observations on the unaccustomed splendour.

The room was a blaze of light. Countless compos swealed and simmered in massive gilt candelabras, while ground lamps of various forms lighted up the salmon-coloured walls, brightening the countenances of many ancestors, and exposing the dulness of the ill-cleaned plate.

The party having got shuffled into their places, the Rev. Jacob Jones said an elaborate grace, during which the company stood.

"I'll tell you a rum story about grace," observed Mr. Jorrocks to Mrs. Muleygrubs, as he settled himself into his seat, and spread his napkin over his knees. "It 'appened at Croydon. The landlord o' the Grey-'ound told a wise waiter, when a Duke axed him a question, always to say Grace.

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According the Duke o' somebody, in changin' 'osses, popped his 'ead out o' the chay, and inquired wot o'clock it was.—'For wot we're a goin' to receive the Lord make us truly thankful,' replied the waiter."

Mrs. Muleygrubs either did not understand the story, or was too intent upon other things; at all events, Mr. Jorrocks's haw! haw! haw! was all that greeted its arrival.—But to dinner.

There were two soups—at least two plated tureens, one containing pea-soup, the other mutton-broth. Mr. Jorrocks said he didn't like the latter, it always reminded him of "a cold in the 'ead." The pea-soup he thought "werry like 'oss-gruel"; that he kept to himself.

"Sherry or *My-dearer*?" inquired the stiff-necked boy, going round with a decanter in each hand, upsetting the soup-spoons, and dribbling the wine over people's hands.

While these were going round, the coachman and Mr. De Green's boy entered with two dishes of fish. On removing the large plated covers, six pieces of skate and a large haddock made their appearance. Mr. Jorrocks's countenance fell five-and-twenty per cent., as he would say. He very soon despatched one of the six pieces of skate, and was just done in time to come in for the tail of the haddock.

"The Duke 'ill come on badly for fish, I'm thinkin'," said Mr. Jorrocks, eyeing the empty dishes as they were taken off.

"Oh, Marmaduke don't eat fish," replied Mrs. M.

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"Oh, I doesn't mean your duke, but the Duke o' Rutland," rejoined Mr. Jorrocks.

Mrs. Muleygrubs didn't take.

"Nothing left for *Manners*, I mean, mum," explained Mr. Jorrocks, pointing to the empty dish.

Mrs. Muleygrubs smiled, because she thought she ought, though she did not know why.

"Sherry or My-dearer, sir?" inquired the stiff-necked boy, going his round as before.

Mr. Jorrocks asked Mrs. Muleygrubs to take wine, and having satisfied himself that the sherry was bad, he took My-dearer, which was worse.

"Bad ticket, I fear," observed Mr. Jorrocks aloud to himself, smacking his lips. "Have ye any swipes?"

"Sober-water and seltzer-water," replied the boy.

"'Ang your sober-water!" growled Mr. Jorrocks.

"Are you a hard rider, Mr. Jorrocks?" now asked his hostess, still thinking anxiously of her dinner.

"'Ardest in England, mum," replied our friend, confidently, muttering aloud to himself, "may say that, for I never goes off the 'ard road if I can 'elp it."

After a long pause, during which the conversation gradually died out, a kick was heard at the door, which the stiff-necked foot-boy having replied to by opening, the other boy appeared, bearing a tray, followed by all the other flunkeys, each carrying a silver-covered dish.

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"Come, *that's* more like the thing," said Mr. Jorrocks aloud to himself, eyeing the procession.

A large dish was placed under the host's nose, another under that of Mrs. Muleygrubs.

"Roast beef and boiled turkey," said Mr. Jorrocks to himself, half inclined to have a mental bet on the subject. "May be saddle o' mutton and chickens," continued he, pursuing the speculation.

Four T. Cox Savory side-dishes, with silver rims and handles, next took places, and two silver-covered china centre dishes completed the arrangement.

"You've lots o' plate," observed Mr. Jorrocks to Mrs. Muleygrubs, glancing down the table.

"Can't do with less," replied the lady.

Stiffneck now proceeded to uncover, followed by his comrade. He began at his master, and, giving the steam-begrimed cover a flourish in the air, favoured his master's bald head with a hot shower-bath. Under pretence of admiring the pattern, Mr. Jorrocks had taken a peep under the side-dish before him, and seeing boiled turnips had settled that there was a round of beef at the bottom of the table. Spare ribs presented themselves to view. Mrs. Muleygrubs's dish held a degenerate turkey, so lean and so lank that it looked as if it had been starved instead of fed. There was a reindeer tongue under one centre dish, and sausages under the other. Minced veal, forbidding-looking *rissoles*, stewed celery, and pigs' feet occupied the corner dishes.

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"God bless us ! what a dinner !" ejaculated Mr. Jorrocks, involuntarily.

"Game and black-puddings coming, isn't there, my dear ?" inquired Mr. Muleygrubs of his wife.

"Yes, my dear," responded his obedient half.

"Murder most foul, as in the best it is ;
But this most foul, base, and unnatural,"

muttered Mr. Jorrocks, running his fork through the breast of the unhappy turkey. "Shall I give you a little *ding-dong* ?"

"It's turkey," observed the lady.

"True !" replied Mr. Jorrocks ; "*ding-dong*'s French for turkey."

"Are yours good hounds, Mr. Jorrocks ?" now asked the lady, thinking how awkwardly he was carving.

"Best goin', mum !" replied our friend. "Best goin', mum. The Belvoir may be 'andsomer, and the Quorn patienter under pressure, but for real tear-'im and heat-'im qualities, there are none to compare wi' mine. They're the buoys for making the foxes cry Capevi !" added our friend, with a broad grin of delight on his ruddy face.

"Indeed," mused the anxious lady, to whom our friend's comparisons were all gibberish.

"Shall I give anybody any turkey ?" asked he, holding nearly half of it up on the fork preparatory to putting it on his own plate. Nobody claimed it, so our friend appropriated it.

Munch, munch, munch was then the order of the day. Conversation was very dull, and the pop and

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foam of a solitary bottle of 40s. champagne, handed round much after the manner of liqueur, did little towards promoting it. Mr. Jorrocks was not the only person who wondered "what had set him there." Mrs. Muleygrubs attempted to relieve her agonies of anxiety by asking occasional questions of her guest.

"Are yours greyhounds, Mr. Jorrocks?" asked she with the greatest simplicity.

"No; greyhounds, no; what should put that i' your 'ead?" grunted our Master with a frown of disgust, adding as he gnawed away at the stringy drumstick, "wouldn't take a greyhound in a gift."

The turkey being only very so-so, and the reindeer tongue rather worse, Mr. Jorrocks did not feel disposed to renew his acquaintance with either, and placing his knife and fork resignedly on his plate, determined to take his chance of the future. He remembered that in France the substantials sometimes did not come till late on.

Stiffneck, seeing his idleness, was presently at him with a dish of mince.

Mr. Jorrocks eyed it suspiciously, and then stirred the sliced lemon and meat about with the spoon. He thought at first of taking some, then he thought he wouldn't, then he fixed he wouldn't. "No," said he, "no," motioning it away with his hand, "no, I likes to chew my own meat."

The *rissoles* were then candidates for his custom.

"Large marbles," observed Mr. Jorrocks aloud to himself—"large marbles," repeated he, as he at

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length succeeded in penetrating the hide of one with a spoon. "Might as well eat lead," observed he aloud, sending them away too.

"I often thinks now," observed he, turning to his hostess, "that it would be a good thing, mum, if folks would 'gree to give up these stupid make-believe side-dishes, mum, for nobody ever eats them, at least if they do they 're sure to come off second best, for no cuk that ever was foaled can do justice to sich a variety of wittles."

"Oh ! but Mr. Jorrocks, how could you send up a dinner properly without them ?" exclaimed the lady with mingled horror and astonishment.

"Properly without them, mum," repeated our Master, coolly and deliberately ; "properly without them, mum—why that 's jest wot I was meanin'," continued he. "You see your cuk 'as sich a multitude o' things to do, that it's hutterly unpossible for her to send them all in properly, so 'stead o' gettin' a few things well done, ye get a great many only badly done."

"Indeed !" fumed the lady, bridling with contempt.

"The great Duke o' Wellington—no 'fence to the present one," observed Mr. Jorrocks, with a low bow to the table—"who, I 'm proud to say gets his tea o' me too,—the great Duke o' Wellington, mum, used to say, mum, that the reason why one seldom got a hegg well biled was 'cause the cuk was always a doin' summut else at the same time, and that hobobservation will apply purty well to most cooking hoperations."

"Well, then, you 'd have no plate on the table,

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I presume, Mr. Jorrocks ? ” observed the irascible lady.

“ Plate on the table, mum—plate on the table, mum,” repeated Mr. Jorrocks, with the same provoking prolixity, “ why I really doesn’t know that plate on the table ’s of any great use. I minds the time when folks thought four silver side-dishes made gen’l’men on ’em, but since these Brummagem things turned hup, they go for a bit o’ land—that ’s the ticket now,” observed our Master.

While this unpalatable conversation—unpalatable, at least, to our hostess—was going on, the first course was being removed, and a large, richly-ornamented cold game-pie made its appearance, which was placed before Mr. Muleygrubs.

“ Large tart ! ” observed Mr. Jorrocks, eyeing it, thinking if he could help himself he might yet manage to make up his lee-way : “ thought there was dark puddins comin’,” observed he to his hostess.

“ *Game and black puddings*,” replied Mrs. Muleygrubs. “ This comes between courses always.”

“ Never saw it afore,” observed Mr. Jorrocks.

Mr. Marmaduke helped the pie very sparingly, just as he had seen the butler at Ongar Castle helping a *pâté de fois gras* ; and putting as much on to a plate as would make about a mouthful and a half to each person, he sent Stiffneck round with a fork to let people help themselves. Fortunately for Mr. Jorrocks, neither Mr. nor Miss De Green, nor Miss Slowan nor Mrs. Muleygrubs took any, and the untouched plate coming to him, he very coolly seized the whole, while the foot-boy returned

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to the dismayed Mr. Muleygrubs for more. Putting a few more scraps on a plate, Mr. Muleygrubs sent off the pie, lest any one should make a second attack.

By dint of plying a good knife and fork, our friend cleared his plate just as the second course made its appearance. This consisted of a brace of partridges guarding a diminutive snipe at the top, and three links of black-pudding at the bottom—stewed celery, potato chips, puffs, and tartlets forming the side-dishes.

“Humph!” grunted our friend, eyeing each dish as it was uncovered. “Humph!” repeated he—“not much there—three shillings for the top dish, one for the bottom, and eighteen-pence, say, for the four sides—five-and-six—together—think I could do it for five. Howsomever, never mind,” continued he, drawing the dish of game towards him. “Anybody for the *gibier*, as we say in France?” asked he, driving his fork into the breast of the plumpest of the partridges. Nobody closed with the offer.

“Pr’aps if you’d help it, and let it be handed round, some one will take some,” suggested Mr. Muleygrubs.

“Well,” said Mr. Jorrocks, “I’ve no objection—none wotever—only, while these clumsy chaps o’ yours are runnin’ agin each other with it, the wittles are coolin’—that’s all,” said our Master, placing half a partridge on a plate, and delivering it up to go on its travels. Thinking it cut well, Mr. Jorrocks placed the other half on his own plate, and taking a comprehensive sweep of the crumbs

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and bread sauce, proceeded to make sure of the share by eating a mouthful of it. He need not have been alarmed, for no one came for any, and he munched and crunched his portion in peace. He then eat the snipe almost at a bite.

"What will you take next, Mr. Jorrocks?" asked his hostess, disgusted at his rapacity.

"Thank 'ee, mum, thank 'ee," replied he, munching and clearing his mouth; "thank 'ee, mum," added he, "I'll take breath if you please, mum," added he, throwing himself back in his chair.

"Have you killed many hares, Mr. Jorrocks?" now asked his persevering hostess, who was sitting on thorns as she saw an entering dish of blancmange toppling to its fall.

"No, mum, none!" responded our Master, vehemently, for he had an angry letter in his pocket from Captain Slaughter's keeper, complaining bitterly of the recent devastation of his hounds—a calamity that of course the keeper made the most of, inasmuch as friend Jorrocks, as usual, had forgotten to give him his "tip."

Our innocent hostess, however, never listened for the answer, for the blancmange having landed with the loss only of a corner tower, for it was in the castellated style of confectionery, she was now all anxiety to see what sort of a savoury omelette her drunken job-cook would furnish, to remove the black-puddings at the other end of the table.

During this interval, our Master, having thrust his hands deep in the pockets of his canary-coloured shorts, reconnoitred the table to see who would

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either ask him to take wine, or who he should honour that way : but not seeing any very prepossessing phiz, and recollecting that Mrs. J. had told him the good old-fashioned custom was "wulgar," he was about to help himself from a conveniently-placed decanter, when Stiffneck, seeing what he was at, darted at the decanter, and passing behind Mr. Jorrocks's chair, prepared to fill to his holding, when, missing his aim, he first sluiced our Master's hand, and then shot a considerable quantity of sherry down his sleeve.

"Rot ye, ye great lumberin' beggar !" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, furiously indignant ; "rot ye, do ye think I 'm like Miss Biffin, the unfortunate lady without harms or legs, that I can't 'elp myself ?" continued he, dashing the wet out of his spoon cuff. "Now, that 's the wust o' your flunkey fellers," continued he in a milder tone to Mrs. Muleygrubs, as the laughter the exclamation caused had subsided. "That 's the wust o' your flunkey fellers," repeated he, mopping his arm ; "they know they 'd never be fools enough to keep fellers to do nothin', and so they think they must be constantly meddlin'. Now, your women waiters are quite different," continued he ; "they only try for the useful, and not for the helegant. There 's no flash 'bout them. If they see a thing 's under your nose, they let you reach it, and don't bring a dish that 's steady on the table round at your back to tremble on their 'ands under your nose. Besides," added our Master, "you never see a bosky Batsay waiter, which is more than can be said of all dog un's."

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Parson Adams and useless riches

“GIVE me your hand, brother,” said Adams in a rapture, “for I suppose you are a clergyman.”—“No, truly,” answered the other (indeed, he was a priest of the Church of Rome ; but those who understand our laws will not wonder he was not over-ready to own it).—“Whatever you are,” cries Adams, “you have spoken my sentiments. I believe I have preached every syllable of your speech twenty times over ; for it hath always appeared to me easier for a cable-rope (which, by the way, is the true rendering of that word we have translated camel) to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to get into the kingdom of heaven.”—“That, sir,” said the other, “will be easily granted you by divines, and is deplorably true ; but as the prospect of our good at a distance doth not so forcibly affect us, it might be of some service to mankind to be made thoroughly sensible—which I think they might be with very little serious attention—that even the blessings of this world are not to be purchased with riches ; a doctrine, in my opinion, not only metaphysically, but, if I may say so, mathematically demonstrable ; and which I have been always so perfectly convinced of, that I have a contempt for nothing so much as for gold.” Adams now began a long discourse ;

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but as most which he said occurs among many authors who have treated this subject, I shall omit inserting it. During its continuance Joseph and Fanny retired to rest, and the host likewise left the room. When the English parson had concluded, the Romish resumed the discourse, which he continued with great bitterness and invective ; and at last ended by desiring Adams to lend him eighteen-pence to pay his reckoning ; promising, if he never paid him, he might be assured of his prayers. The good man answered that eighteen-pence would be too little to carry him any very long journey ; that he had half a guinea in his pocket, which he would divide with him. He then fell to searching his pockets, but could find no money ; for indeed the company with whom he dined had passed one jest upon him which we did not then enumerate, and had picked his pocket of all that treasure which he had so ostentatiously produced.

“ Bless me ! ” cried Adams, “ I have certainly lost it ; I can never have spent it. Sir, as I am a Christian, I had a whole half-guinea in my pocket this morning, and have not now a single halfpenny of it left. Sure the devil must have taken it from me ! ”—“ Sir,” answered the priest, smiling, “ you need make no excuses ; if you are not willing to lend me the money, I am contented.”—“ Sir,” cries Adams, “ if I had the greatest sum in the world—ay, if I had ten pounds about me—I would bestow it all to rescue any Christian from distress. I am more vexed at my loss on your account than my own. Was ever anything so unlucky ? Because I have no money in my pocket, I shall be

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suspected to be no Christian ! ” — “ I am more unlucky,” quoth the other, “ if you are as generous as you say ; for really a crown would have made me happy, and conveyed me in plenty to the place I am going, which is not above twenty miles off, and where I can arrive by to-morrow night. I assure you I am not accustomed to travel penniless. I am but just arrived in England, and we were forced by a storm in our passage to throw all we had overboard. I don’t suspect but this fellow will take my word for the trifle I owe him ; but I hate to appear so mean as to confess myself without a shilling to such people ; for these, and indeed too many others, know little difference in their estimation between a beggar and a thief.” However, he thought he should deal better with the host that evening than the next morning : he therefore resolved to set out immediately, notwithstanding the darkness ; and accordingly, as soon as the host returned, he communicated to him the situation of his affairs ; upon which the host, scratching his head, answered, “ Why, I do not know, master ; if it be so, and you have no money, I must trust, I think, though I had rather always have ready money if I could ; but marry, you look like so honest a gentleman that I don’t fear your paying me if it was twenty times as much.” The priest made no reply, but, taking leave of him and Adams as fast as he could, not without confusion, and perhaps with some distrust of Adams’ sincerity, departed.

He was no sooner gone than the host fell a shaking his head, and declared, if he had suspected the fellow

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had no money, he would not have drawn him a single drop of drink, saying he despaired of ever seeing his face again, for that he looked like a confounded rogue. "Rabbit the fellow," cries he, "I thought, by his talking so much about riches, that he had a hundred pounds at least in his pocket." Adams chid him for his suspicions, which, he said, were not becoming a Christian ; and then, without reflecting on his loss, or considering how he himself should depart in the morning, he retired to a very homely bed, as his companions had before.

XXVIII

Parson Adams and the passion of vanity

NOW I made some remarks, which probably are too obvious to be worth relating.—"Sir," said Adams, "your remarks if you please."—First, then (says he), I concluded that the general observation, that wits are most inclined to vanity, is not true. Men are equally vain of riches, strength, beauty, honours, etc. But these appear of themselves to the eyes of the beholders, whereas the poor wit is obliged to produce his performance to show you his perfection ; and on his readiness to do this that vulgar opinion I have before mentioned is grounded ; but doth not the person who expends vast sums in the furniture of his house or the ornaments of his person, who consumes much time and employs great pains in dressing himself, or who thinks himself paid for self-denial, labour, or even villainy, by a title or a riband, sacrifice as much to vanity as the poor wit who is desirous to

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read you his poem or his play ? My second remark was, that vanity is the worst of passions, and more apt to contaminate the mind than any other : for as selfishness is much more general than we please to allow it, so it is natural to hate and envy those who stand between us and the good we desire. Now, in lust and ambition these are few ; and even in avarice we find many who are no obstacles to our pursuits ; but the vain man seeks pre-eminence ; and everything which is excellent or praiseworthy in another renders him the mark of his antipathy.—Adams now began to fumble in his pockets, and soon cried out, “O, la ! I have it not about me.”—Upon this, the gentleman asking him what he was searching for, he said he searched after a sermon, which he thought his masterpiece, against vanity. “Fie upon it, fie upon it !” cries he, “why do I ever leave that sermon out of my pocket ? I wish it was within five miles ; I would willingly fetch it to read it you.”—The gentleman answered that there was no need, for he was cured of the passion. “And for that very reason,” quoth Adams, “I would read it, for I am confident you would admire it : indeed, I have never been a greater enemy to any passion than that silly one of vanity.”

XXIX

Parson Adams gives a sermon gratis

JOSEPH, addressing himself to the parson, told him the discourse which had passed between Squire Booby, his sister, and himself.

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concerning Fanny ; he then acquainted him with the dangers whence he had rescued her, and communicated some apprehensions on her account. He concluded that he should never have an easy moment till Fanny was absolutely his, and begged that he might be suffered to fetch a licence, saying he could easily borrow the money. The parson answered, that he had already given his sentiments concerning a licence, and that a very few days would make it unnecessary. "Joseph," says he, "I wish this haste doth not arise rather from your impatience than your fear ; but as it certainly springs from one of these causes, I will examine both. Of each of these, therefore, in their turn ; and first for the first of these, namely, impatience. Now, child, I must inform you that, if in your purposed marriage with this young woman you have no intention but the indulgence of carnal appetites, you are guilty of a very heinous sin. Marriage was ordained for nobler purposes, as you will learn when you hear the service provided on that occasion read to you. Nay, perhaps, if you are a good lad, I, child, shall give you a sermon *gratis*, wherein I shall demonstrate how little regard ought to be had to the flesh on such occasions. The text will be Matthew the 5th, and part of the 28th verse—*Whosoever looketh on a woman, so as to lust after her.* The latter part I shall omit, as foreign to my purpose. Indeed, all such brutal lusts and affections are to be greatly subdued, if not totally eradicated, before the vessel can be said to be consecrated to honour. To marry with a view of gratifying those inclinations is a prostitu-

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tion of that holy ceremony, and must entail a curse on all who so lightly undertake it. If, therefore, this haste arises from impatience, you are to correct, and not give way to it. Now, as to the second head which I proposed to speak to, namely, fear : it argues a diffidence, highly criminal, of that Power in which alone we should put our trust, seeing we may be well assured that He is able not only to defeat the designs of our enemies, but even to turn their hearts. Instead of taking, therefore, any unjustifiable or desperate means to rid ourselves of fear, we should resort to prayer only on these occasions ; and we may be then certain of obtaining what is best for us. When any accident threatens us, we are not to despair, nor, when it overtakes us, to grieve ; we must submit in all things to the will of Providence, and set our affections so much on nothing here that we cannot quit it without reluctance. You are a young man, and can know but little of this world ; I am older, and have seen a great deal. All passions are criminal in their excess ; and even love itself, if it is not subservient to our duty, may render us blind to it. Had Abraham so loved his son Isaac as to refuse the sacrifice required, is there any of us who would not condemn him ? Joseph, I know your many good qualities, and value you for them ; but as I am to render an account of your soul, which is committed to my care, I cannot see any fault without reminding you of it. You are too much inclined to passion, child, and have set your affection so absolutely on this young woman, that, if God required her at your hands, I fear you would

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reluctantly part with her. Now, believe me, no Christian ought so to set his heart on any person or thing in this world, but that, whenever it shall be required or taken from him in any manner by Divine Providence, he may be able peaceably, quietly, and contentedly to resign it." At which words one came hastily in, and acquainted Mr. Adams that his youngest son was drowned. He stood still a moment, and soon began to stamp about the room and deplore his loss with the bitterest agony. Joseph, who was overwhelmed with concern likewise, recovered himself sufficiently to endeavour to comfort the parson; in which attempt he used many arguments that he had at several times remembered out of his own discourses, both in private and public (for he was a great enemy to the passions, and preached nothing more than the conquest of them by reason and grace), but he was not at leisure now to hearken to his advice. "Child, child," said he, "do not go about impossibilities. Had it been any other of my children, I could have borne it with patience; but my little prattler, the darling and comfort of my old age,—the little wretch, to be snatched out of life just at his entrance into it; the sweetest, best-tempered boy, who never did a thing to offend me. It was but this morning I gave him his first lesson in *Quae Genus*. This was the very book he learnt. Poor child! it is of no further use to thee now. He would have made the best scholar, and have been an ornament to the Church: such parts and such goodness never met in one so young."—"And the handsomest lad too," says Mrs. Adams, recovering

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from a swoon in Fanny's arms.—“ My poor Jacky, shall I never see thee more ? ” cries the parson.—“ Yes, surely,” says Joseph, “ and in a better place : you will meet again, never to part more.” I believe the parson did not hear these words, for he paid little regard to them, but went on lamenting, whilst the tears trickled down into his bosom. At last he cried out, “ Where is my little darling ? ” and was sallying out, when, to his great surprise and joy, in which I hope the reader will sympathise, he met his son, in a wet condition indeed, but alive and running towards him. The person who brought the news of his misfortune had been a little too eager, as people sometimes are, from, I believe, no very good principle, to relate ill news ; and seeing him fall into the river, instead of running to his assistance, directly ran to acquaint his father of a fate which he had concluded to be inevitable, but whence the child was relieved by the same poor pedlar who had relieved his father before from a less distress. The parson's joy was now as extravagant as his grief had been before ; he kissed and embraced his son a thousand times, and danced about the room like one frantic ; but as soon as he discovered the face of his old friend the pedlar, and heard the fresh obligation he had to him, what were his sensations ? Not those which two courtiers feel in one another's embraces ; not those with which a great man receives the vile, treacherous engines of his wicked purposes ; not those with which a worthless younger brother wishes his elder joy of a son, or a man congratulates his rival on his obtaining a mistress, a place, or an honour. No,

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reader ; he felt the ebullition, the overflowings of a full, honest, open heart towards the person who had conferred a real obligation, and of which, if thou canst not conceive an idea within, I will not vainly endeavour to assist thee.

When these tumults were over, the parson, taking Joseph aside, proceeded thus : “ No, Joseph, do not give too much way to thy passions, if thou dost expect happiness.” The patience of Joseph, nor perhaps of Job, could bear no longer ; he interrupted the parson, saying it was easier to give advice than take it ; nor did he perceive he could so entirely conquer himself, when he apprehended he had lost his son, or when he found him recovered. “ Boy,” cried Adams, raising his voice, “ it doth not become green heads to advise grey hairs. Thou art ignorant of the tenderness of fatherly affection ; when thou art a father, thou wilt be capable then only of knowing what a father can feel. No man is obliged to impossibilities ; and the loss of a child is one of those great trials where our grief may be allowed to become immoderate.”—“ Well, sir,” cries Joseph, “ and if I love a mistress as well as you your child, surely her loss would grieve me equally.”—“ Yes, but such love is foolishness and wrong in itself, and ought to be conquered,” answered Adams ; “ it savours too much of the flesh.”—“ Sure, sir,” says Joseph, “ it is not sinful to love my wife, no, not even to doat on her to distraction ! ”—“ Indeed but it is,” says Adams. “ Every man ought to love his wife, no doubt ; we are commanded so to do ; but we ought to love her with moderation and discretion.”—

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“ I am afraid I shall be guilty of some sin in spite of all my endeavours,” says Joseph ; “ for I shall love without any moderation, I am sure.”—“ You talk foolishly and childishly,” cried Adams.—“ Indeed,” says Mrs. Adams, who had listened to the latter part of their conversation, “ you talk more foolishly yourself. I hope, my dear, you will never preach any such doctrines as that husbands can love their wives too well. If I knew you had such a sermon in the house, I am sure I would burn it ; and I declare, if I had not been convinced you had loved me as well as you could, I can answer for myself, I should have hated and despised you. Marry come up ! Fine doctrine indeed ! A wife hath a right to insist on her husband’s loving her as much as ever he can ; and he is a sinful villain who doth not. Doth he not promise to love her, and to comfort her, and to cherish her, and all that ? I am sure I remember it all as well as if I had repeated it over but yesterday, and shall never forget it. Besides, I am certain you do not preach as you practise ; for you have been a loving and a cherishing husband to me, that ’s the truth on ’t ; and why you should endeavour to put such wicked nonsense into this young man’s head I cannot devise. Don’t hearken to him, Mr. Joseph ; be as good a husband as you are able, and love your wife with all your body and soul too.”

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XXX

Andrew Fairservice on his gardening

“**T**HE right hand of fellowship to your honour, then,” quoth the gardener, with as much alacrity as his hard features were capable of expressing, and, as if to show that his good-will did not rest on words, he plucked forth a huge horn snuff-box, or mull, as he called it, and proffered a pinch with a most fraternal grin.

Having accepted his courtesy, I asked him if he had been long a domestic at Osbaldistone-Hall?

“I have been fighting with wild beasts at Ephesus,” said he, looking towards the building, “for the best part of these four-and-twenty years, as sure as my name’s Andrew Fairservice.”

“But, my excellent friend Andrew Fairservice, if your religion and your temperance are so much offended by Roman rituals and southern hospitality, it seems to me that you must have been putting yourself to an unnecessary penance all this while, and that you might have found a service where they eat less, and are more orthodox in their worship. I dare say it cannot be want of skill which prevented your being placed more to your satisfaction.”

“It disna become me to speak to the point of my qualifications,” said Andrew, looking round him with great complacency; “but nae doubt I should understand my trade of horticulture, seeing I was bred in the parish of Dreepdaily, where they raise

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lang-kale under glass, and force the early nettles for their spring kale. And, to speak truth, I hae been flitting every term these four-and-twenty years ; but when the time comes, there's aye something to saw that I would like to see sawn,—or something to maw that I would like to see mawn,—or something to ripe that I would like to see ripen,—and sae I e'en daiker on wi' the family frae year's end to year's end. And I wad say for certain, that I am gaun to quit at Cannlemas, only I was just as positive on it twenty years syne, and I find myself still turning up the moul's here, for a' that. Forbye that, to tell your honour the evendown truth, there's nae better place ever offered to Andrew. But if your honour wad wush me to ony place where I wad hear pure doctrine, and hae a free cow's grass, and a cot, and a yard, and mair than ten pund's of annual fee, and where there's nae leddy about the town to count the apples, I 'se hold myself muckle indebted t' ye."

"Bravo, Andrew ! I perceive you'll lose no preferment for want of asking patronage."

"I canna see what for I should," replied Andrew ; "it's no a generation to wait till ane's worth 's discovered, I trow."

"But you are no friend, I observe, to the ladies."

"Na, by my troth, I keep up the first gardener's quarrel to them. They're fasheous bargains—aye crying for apricocks, pears, plums, and apples, summer and winter, without distinction o' seasons ; but we hae nae slices o' the spare rib here, be praised

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for 't ! except auld Martha, and she 's weel eneugh pleased wi' the freedom o' the berry-bushes to her sister's weans, when they come to drink tea in a holiday in the housekeeper's room, and wi' a wheen codlings now and then for her ain private supper."

XXXI

Fairservice on bees and the Sabbath

WHILE I paced the green alleys, debating these things *pro* and *con*, I suddenly alighted upon Andrew Fairservice, perched up like a statue by a range of bee-hives, in an attitude of devout contemplation—one eye, however, watching the motions of the little irritable citizens, who were settling in their straw-thatched mansion for the evening, and the other fixed on a book of devotion, which much attrition had deprived of its corners, and worn into an oval shape ; a circumstance which, with the close print and dingy colour of the volume in question, gave it an air of most respectable antiquity.

"I was e'en taking a spell o' worthy Mess John Quackleben's Flower of a Sweet Savour sawn on the Middenstead of this World," said Andrew, closing his book at my appearance, and putting his horn spectacles, by way of mark, at the place where he had been reading.

"And the bees, I observe, were dividing your attention, Andrew, with the learned author ?"

"They are a contumacious generation," replied the gardener ; "they hae sax days in the week to

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hive on, and yet it's a common observe that they will aye swarm on the Sabbath-day, and keep folk at hame frae hearing the word—but there's nae preaching at Graneagain chapel the e'en—that's aye ae mercy."

"You might have gone to the parish church as I did, Andrew, and heard an excellent discourse."

"Clauts o' cauld parritch—clauts o' cauld parritch," replied Andrew, with a most supercilious sneer,—“gude eneuch for dogs, begging your honour's pardon—Ay! I might nae doubt hae heard the curate linking awa at it in his white sark yonder, and the musicians playing on whistles, mair like a penny-wedding than a sermon—and to the boot of that, I might hae gaen to even-song, and heard Daddie Docharty mumbling his mass—muckle the better I wad hae been o' that!”

"Docharty!" said I (this was the name of an old priest, an Irishman, I think, who sometimes officiated at Osbaldistone-Hall)—“I thought Father Vaughan had been at the Hall. He was here yesterday."

"Ay," replied Andrew; “but he left it yestreen, to gang to Greystock, or some o' thae west-country haulds. There's an unco stir among them a' e'enow. They are as busy as my bees are—God sain them! that I suld even the puir things to the like o' papists. Ye see this is the second swarm, and whiles they will swarm off in the afternoon. The first swarm set off sune in the morning.—But I am thinking they are settled in their skeps for the night; sae I wuss your honour good-night, and grace, and muckle o't."

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XXXII

Mr. Micawber on expenditure

‘Y dear young friend,” said Mr. Micawber,

“I am older than you ; a man of some experience in life, and—and of some experience, in short, in difficulties, generally speaking. At present, and until something turns up (which I am, I may say, hourly expecting), I have nothing to bestow but advice. Still my advice is so far worth taking that—in short, that I have never taken it myself, and am the”—here Mr. Micawber, who had been beaming and smiling, all over his head and face, up to the present moment, checked himself and frowned—“the miserable wretch you behold.”

“My dear Micawber !” urged his wife.

“I say,” returned Mr. Micawber, quite forgetting himself, and smiling again, “the miserable wretch you behold. My advice is, never do to-morrow what you can do to-day Procrastination is the thief of time. Collar him !”

“My poor papa’s maxim,” Mrs. Micawber observed.

“My dear,” said Mr. Micawber, “your papa was very well in his way, and Heaven forbid that I should disparage him. Take him for all in all, we ne’er shall—in short, make the acquaintance, probably, of anybody else possessing, at his time of life, the same legs for gaiters, and able to read the same description of print, without spectacles. But he applied that maxim to our marriage, my dear ;

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and that was so far prematurely entered into, in consequence, that I never recovered the expense."

Mr. Micawber looked aside at Mrs. Micawber, and added : " Not that I am sorry for it. Quite the contrary, my love." After which he was grave for a minute or so.

" My other piece of advice, Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, " you know. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen nineteen six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery. The blossom is blighted, the leaf is withered, the God of Day goes down upon the dreary scene, and—and in short you are for ever flooded. As I am ! "

To make his example the more impressive, Mr. Micawber drank a glass of punch with an air of great enjoyment and satisfaction, and whistled the College Hornpipe.

XXXIII

Mr. Micawber begins a new life

MY dear Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, rising with one of his thumbs in each of his waistcoat pockets, " the companion of my youth : if I may be allowed the expression—and my esteemed friend Traddles : if I may be permitted to call him so—will allow me, on the part of Mrs. Micawber, myself, and our offspring, to thank them in the warmest and most uncompromising terms for their good wishes. It may be expected that

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on the eve of a migration which will consign us to a perfectly new existence," Mr. Micawber spoke as if they were going five hundred thousand miles, "I should offer a few valedictory remarks to two such friends as I see before me. But all that I have to say in this way, I have said. Whatever station in society I may attain, through the medium of the learned profession of which I am about to become an unworthy member, I shall endeavour not to disgrace, and Mrs. Micawber will be safe to adorn. Under the temporary pressure of pecuniary liabilities, contracted with a view to their immediate liquidation, but remaining unliquidated—through a combination of circumstances, I have been under the necessity of assuming a garb from which my natural instincts recoil—I allude to spectacles—and possessing myself of a cognomen, to which I can establish no legitimate pretensions. All I have to say on that score is, that the cloud has passed from the dreary scene, and the God of Day is once more high upon the mountain tops. On Monday next, on the arrival of the four o'clock afternoon coach at Canterbury, my foot will be on my native heath—my name, Micawber!"

Mr. Micawber resumed his seat on the close of these remarks, and drank two glasses of punch in grave succession. He then said with much solemnity :

"One thing more I have to do, before this separation is complete, and that is to perform an act of justice. My friend Mr. Thomas Traddles has, on two several occasions, 'put his name,' if I

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may use a common expression, to bills of exchange for my accommodation. On the first occasion Mr. Thomas Traddles was left—let me say, in short, in the lurch. The fulfilment of the second has not yet arrived. The amount of the first obligation,” here Mr. Micawber carefully referred to papers, “was, I believe, twenty-three, four, nine and a half; of the second, according to my entry of that transaction, eighteen, six, two. These sums, united, make a total, if my calculation is correct, amounting to forty-one, ten, eleven and a half. My friend Copperfield will perhaps do me the favour to check that total?”

I did so and found it correct.

“To leave this metropolis,” said Mr. Micawber, “and my friend Mr. Thomas Traddles, without acquitting myself of the pecuniary part of this obligation, would weigh upon my mind to an insupportable extent. I have, therefore, prepared for my friend Mr. Thomas Traddles, and I now hold in my hand, a document, which accomplishes the desired object. I beg to hand to my friend Mr. Thomas Traddles my I.O.U. for forty-one, ten, eleven and a half, and I am happy to recover my moral dignity, and to know that I can once more walk erect before my fellow man!”

With this introduction (which greatly affected him), Mr. Micawber placed his I.O.U. in the hands of Traddles, and said he wished him well in every relation of life. I am persuaded, not only that this was quite the same to Mr. Micawber as paying the money, but that Traddles himself hardly knew the difference until he had had time to think about it.

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XXXIV

Mr. Pecksniff improves the occasion

WHEN Mr. Pecksniff and the two young ladies got into the heavy coach at the end of the lane, they found it empty, which was a great comfort; particularly as the outside was quite full and the passengers looked very frosty. For as Mr. Pecksniff justly observed—when he and his daughters had burrowed their feet deep in the straw, wrapped themselves to the chin, and pulled up both windows—it is always satisfactory to feel, in keen weather, that many other people are not as warm as you are. And this, he said, was quite natural, and a very beautiful arrangement; not confined to coaches, but extending itself into many social ramifications. “For” (he observed), “if every one were warm and well-fed, we should lose the satisfaction of admiring the fortitude with which certain conditions of men bear cold and hunger. And if we were no better off than anybody else, what would become of our sense of gratitude; which,” said Mr. Pecksniff with tears in his eyes, as he shook his fist at a beggar who wanted to get up behind, “is one of the holiest feelings of our common nature.”

His children heard with becoming reverence these moral precepts from the lips of their father, and signified their acquiescence in the same, by smiles. That he might the better feed and cherish that sacred flame of gratitude in his breast, Mr. Pecksniff remarked that he would trouble his

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eldest daughter, even in this early stage of their journey, for the brandy-bottle. And from the narrow neck of that stone vessel, he imbibed a copious refreshment.

“What are we?” said Mr. Pecksniff, “but coaches? Some of us are slow coaches——”

“Goodness, Pa!” cried Charity.

“Some of us, I say,” resumed her parent with increased emphasis, “are slow coaches; some of us are fast coaches. Our passions are the horses; and rampant animals too!”

“Really, Pa!” cried both the daughters at once. “How very unpleasant.”

“And rampant animals too!” repeated Mr. Pecksniff, with so much determination, that he may be said to have exhibited, at the moment, a sort of moral rampancy himself: “and Virtue is the drag. We start from The Mother’s Arms, and we run to The Dust Shovel.”

When he had said this, Mr. Pecksniff, being exhausted, took some further refreshment. When he had done that, he corked the bottle tight, with the air of a man who had effectually corked the subject also; and went to sleep for three stages.

XXXV

Mr. Pecksniff is both moral and convivial

MR. PECKSNIFF had followed his younger friends up-stairs, and taken a chair at the side of Mrs. Todgers. He had also spilt a cup of coffee over his legs without appearing to be aware of the

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circumstance ; nor did he seem to know that there was muffin on his knee.

“ And how have they used you down-stairs, sir ? ” asked the hostess.

“ Their conduct has been such, my dear madam,” said Mr. Pecksniff, “ as I can never think of without emotion, or remember without a tear. Oh, Mrs. Todgers ! ”

“ My goodness ! ” exclaimed that lady. “ How low you are in your spirits, sir ! ”

“ I am a man, my dear madam,” said Mr. Pecksniff, shedding tears, and speaking with an imperfect articulation, “ but I am also a father. I am also a widower. My feelings, Mrs. Todgers, will not consent to be entirely smothered, like the young children in the Tower. They are grown up, and the more I press the bolster on them, the more they look round the corner of it.”

He suddenly became conscious of the bit of muffin, and stared at it intently : shaking his head the while, in a forlorn and imbecile manner, as if he regarded it as his evil genius, and mildly reproached it.

“ She was beautiful, Mrs. Todgers,” he said, turning his glazed eye again upon her, without the least preliminary notice. “ She had a small property.”

“ So I have heard,” cried Mrs. Todgers with great sympathy.

“ Those are her daughters,” said Mr. Pecksniff, pointing out the young ladies, with increased emotion.

Mrs. Todgers had no doubt of it.

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"Mercy and Charity," said Mr. Pecksniff, "Charity and Mercy. Not unholy names, I hope?"

"Mr. Pecksniff!" cried Mrs. Todgers. "What a ghastly smile? Are you ill, sir?"

He pressed his hand upon her arm, and answered in a solemn manner, and a faint voice, "Chronic."

"Cholic?" cried the frightened Mrs. Todgers.

"Chron-ic," he repeated with some difficulty. "Chron-ic. A chronic disorder. I have been its victim from childhood. It is carrying me to my grave."

"Heaven forbid!" cried Mrs. Todgers.

"Yes, it is," said Mr. Pecksniff, reckless with despair. "I am rather glad of it, upon the whole. You are like her, Mrs. Todgers."

"Don't squeeze me so tight, pray, Mr. Pecksniff. If any of the gentlemen should notice us."

"For her sake," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Permit me. In honour of her memory. For the sake of a voice from the tomb. You are *very* like her, Mrs. Todgers! What a world this is!"

"Ah, indeed you may say that!" cried Mrs. Todgers.

"I am afraid it is a vain and thoughtless world," said Mr. Pecksniff, overflowing with despondency. "These young people about us. Oh! what sense have they of their responsibilities? None. Give me your other hand, Mrs. Todgers."

That lady hesitated, and said "she didn't like."

"Has a voice from the grave no influence?"

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said Mr. Pecksniff, with dismal tenderness. "This is irreligious ! My dear creature."

"Hush !" urged Mrs. Todgers. "Really you mustn't."

"It's not me," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Don't suppose it's me : it's the voice ; it's her voice."

Mrs. Pecksniff deceased must have had an unusually thick and husky voice for a lady, and rather a stuttering voice, and to say the truth somewhat of a drunken voice, if it had ever borne much resemblance to that in which Mr. Pecksniff spoke just then. But perhaps this was delusion on his part.

"It has been a day of enjoyment, Mrs. Todgers, but still it has been a day of torture. It has reminded me of my loneliness. What am I in the world ?"

"An excellent gentleman, Mr. Pecksniff," said Mrs. Todgers.

"There is consolation in that too," cried Mr. Pecksniff, "am I ?"

"There is no better man living," said Mrs. Todgers, "I am sure."

Mr. Pecksniff smiled through his tears, and slightly shook his head. "You are very good," he said, "thank you. It is a great happiness to me, Mrs. Todgers, to make young people happy. The happiness of my pupils is my chief object. I dote upon 'em. They dote upon me too. Sometimes."

"Always," said Mrs. Todgers.

"When they say they haven't improved, ma'am,"

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whispered Mr. Pecksniff, looking at her with profound mystery, and motioning to her to advance her ear a little closer to his mouth. "When they say they haven't improved, ma'am, and the premium was too high, they lie ! I shouldn't wish it to be mentioned ; you will understand me ; but I say to you as to an old friend, they lie."

"Base wretches they must be !" said Mrs. Todgers.

"Madam," said Mr. Pecksniff, "you are right. I respect you for that observation. A word in your ear. To Parents and Guardians. This is in confidence, Mrs. Todgers ?"

"The strictest, of course !" cried that lady.

"To Parents and Guardians," repeated Mr. Pecksniff. "An eligible opportunity now offers, which unites the advantages of the best practical architectural education with the comforts of a home, and the constant association with some, who, however humble their sphere and limited their capacity—observe!—are not unmindful of their moral responsibilities."

Mrs. Todgers looked a little puzzled to know what this might mean, as well she might ; for it was, as the reader may perchance remember, Mr. Pecksniff's usual form of advertisement when he wanted a pupil ; and seemed to have no particular reference, at present, to anything. But Mr. Pecksniff held up his finger as a caution to her not to interrupt him.

"Do you know any parent or guardian, Mrs. Todgers," said Mr. Pecksniff, "who desires to avail himself of such an opportunity for a young gentleman ? An orphan would be preferred. Do

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you know of any orphan with three or four hundred pound ? ”

Mrs. Todgers reflected, and shook her head.

“ When you hear of an orphan with three or four hundred pound,” said Mr. Pecksniff, “ let that dear orphan’s friends apply, by letter post-paid, to S. P., Post-office, Salisbury. I don’t know who he is, exactly. Don’t be alarmed, Mrs. Todgers,” said Mr. Pecksniff, falling heavily against her : “ Chronic—chronic ! Let’s have a little drop of something to drink.”

“ Bless my life, Miss Pecksniffs ! ” cried Mrs. Todgers, aloud, “ your dear pa’s took very poorly ! ”

Mr. Pecksniff straightened himself by a surprising effort, as every one turned hastily towards him ; and standing on his feet, regarded the assembly with a look of ineffable wisdom. Gradually it gave place to a smile ; a feeble, helpless, melancholy smile ; blank, almost to sickness. “ Do not repine, my friends,” said Mr. Pecksniff, tenderly. “ Do not weep for me. It is chronic.” And with these words, after making a futile attempt to pull off his shoes, he fell into the fire-place.

The youngest gentleman in company had him out in a second. Yes, before a hair upon his head was singed, he had him on the hearth-rug.—Her father !

She was almost beside herself. So was her sister. Jinkins consoled them both. They all consoled them. Everybody had something to say, except the youngest gentleman in company, who with a noble self-devotion did the heavy work, and held

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up Mr. Pecksniff's head without being taken notice of by anybody. At last they gathered round, and agreed to carry him upstairs to bed. The youngest gentleman in company was rebuked by Jinkins for tearing Mr. Pecksniff's coat ! Ha, ha ! But no matter.

They carried him upstairs, and crushed the youngest gentleman at every step. His bedroom was at the top of the house, and it was a long way ; but they got him there in course of time. He asked them frequently on the road for a little drop of something to drink. It seemed an idiosyncrasy. The youngest gentleman in company proposed a draught of water. Mr. Pecksniff called him opprobrious names for the suggestion.

Jinkins and Gander took the rest upon themselves, and made him as comfortable as they could, on the outside of his bed ; and when he seemed disposed to sleep, they left him. But before they had all gained the bottom of the staircase, a vision of Mr. Pecksniff, strangely attired, was seen to flutter on the top landing. He desired to collect their sentiments, it seemed, upon the nature of human life.

" My friends," cried Mr. Pecksniff, looking over the banisters, " let us improve our minds by mutual inquiry and discussion. Let us be moral. Let us contemplate existence. Where is Jinkins ? "

" Here," cried that gentleman. " Go to bed again ! "

" To bed ! " said Mr. Pecksniff. " Bed ! 'Tis the voice of the sluggard, I hear him complain, you have woke me too soon, I must slumber again. '

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If any young orphan will repeat the remainder of that simple piece from Dr. Watts's collection an eligible opportunity now offers."

Nobody volunteered.

"This is very soothing," said Mr. Pecksniff, after a pause. "Extremely so. Cool and refreshing; particularly to the legs! The legs of the human subject, my friends, are a beautiful production. Compare them with wooden legs, and observe the difference between the anatomy of nature and the anatomy of art. Do you know," said Mr. Pecksniff, leaning over the banisters, with an odd recollection of his familiar manner among new pupils at home, "that I should very much like to see Mrs. Todgers's notion of a wooden leg, if perfectly agreeable to herself!"

XXXVI

Mr. Chadband discourses on Terewth

"**I** HEAR a voice," says Chadband; "is it a still small voice, my friends? I fear not, though I fain would hope so——"

("Ah—h!" from Mrs. Snagsby.)

"Which says, I don't know. Then I will tell you why. I say this brother, present here among us, is devoid of parents, devoid of relations, devoid of flocks of herds, devoid of gold, of silver, and of precious stones, because he is devoid of the light that shines in upon some of us. What is that light? What is it? I ask you what is that light?"

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Mr. Chadband draws back his head and pauses, but Mr. Snagsby is not to be lured on to his destruction again. Mr. Chadband, leaning forward over the table, pierces what he has got to follow, directly into Mr. Snagsby, with the thumb-nail already mentioned.

"It is," says Chadband, "the ray of rays, the sun of suns, the moon of moons, the star of stars. It is the light of Terewth."

Mr. Chadband draws himself up again, and looks triumphantly at Mr. Snagsby, as if he would be glad to know how he feels after that.

"Of Terewth," says Mr. Chadband, hitting him again. "Say not to me that it is *not* the lamp of lamps. I say to you, it is. I say to you, a million times over, it is. It is ! I say to you that I will proclaim it to you, whether you like it or not ; nay, that the less you like it, the more I will proclaim it to you. With a speaking-trumpet ! I say to you that if you rear yourself against it, you shall fall, you shall be bruised, you shall be battered, you shall be flawed, you shall be smashed."

The present effect of this flight of oratory—much admired for its general power by Mr. Chadband's followers—being not only to make Mr. Chadband unpleasantly warm, but to represent the innocent Mr. Snagsby in the light of a determined enemy to virtue, with a forehead of brass and a heart of adamant, that unfortunate tradesman becomes yet more disconcerted ; and is in a very advanced state of low spirits and false position, when Mr. Chadband accidentally finishes him.

"My friends," he resumes, after dabbing his

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fat head for some time—and it smokes to such an extent that he seems to light his pocket-handkerchief at it, which smokes, too, after every dab—“to pursue the subject we are endeavouring with our lowly gifts to improve, let us in a spirit of love inquire what is that Terewth to which I have alluded. For, my young friends,” suddenly addressing the ’prentices and Guster, to their consternation, “if I am told by the doctor that calomel or castor-oil is good for me, I may naturally ask what is calomel, and what is castor-oil. I may wish to be informed of that, before I dose myself with either or with both. Now, my young friends, what is this Terewth, then? Firstly (in a spirit of love), what is the common sort of Terewth—the working clothes—the every-day wear, my young friends? Is it deception?”

(“Ah—h!” from Mrs. Snagsby.)

“Is it suppression?”

(A shiver in the negative from Mrs. Snagsby.)

“Is it reservation?”

(A shake of the head from Mrs. Snagsby—very long and very tight.)

“No, my friends, it is neither of these. Neither of these names belongs to it. When this young Heathen now among us—who is now, my friends, asleep, the seal of indifference and perdition being set upon his eyelids; but do not wake him, for it is right that I should have to wrestle, and to combat and to struggle, and to conquer, for his sake—when this young hardened Heathen told us a story of a Cock, and of a Bull, and of a lady, and of a sovereign, was *that* the Terewth? No. Or, if it was partly,

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was it wholly, and entirely? No, my friends, no!"

If Mr. Snagsby could withstand his little woman's look, as it enters at his eyes, the windows of his soul, and searches the whole tenement, he were other than the man he is. He cowers and droops.

"Or, my juvenile friends," says Chadband, descending to the level of their comprehension, with a very obtrusive demonstration, in his greasily meek smile, of coming a long way down-stairs for the purpose, "if the master of this house was to go forth into the city and there see an eel, and was to come back, and was to call untoe him the mistress of this house, and was to say, 'Sarah, rejoice with me, for I have seen an elephant!' would that be Terewth?"

Mrs. Snagsby in tears.

"Or put it, my juvenile friends, that he saw an elephant, and returning said, 'Lo, the city is barren, I have seen but an eel,' would *that* be Terewth?"

Mrs. Snagsby sobbing loudly.

"Or put it, my juvenile friends," said Chadband, stimulated by the sound, "that the unnatural parents of this slumbering Heathen—for parents he had, my juvenile friends, beyond a doubt—after casting him forth to the wolves and the vultures, and the wild dogs and the young gazelles, and the serpents, went back to their dwellings, and had their pipes, and their pots, and their flutings and their dancings, and their malt liquors, and their butcher's meat and poultry, would *that* be Terewth!"

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XXXVII

Mr. Pumblechook rebukes ingratitude

I WENT on with my breakfast, and Mr. Pumblechook continued to stand over me, staring fishily and breathing noisily, as he always did.

“Little more than skin and bone!” mused Mr. Pumblechook, aloud. “And yet when he went away from here (I may say with my blessing), and I spread afore him my humble store, like the Bee, he was as plump as a Peach!”

This reminded me of the wonderful difference between the servile manner in which he had offered his hand in my new prosperity, saying, “May I?” and the ostentatious clemency with which he had just now exhibited the same fat five fingers.

“Hah!” he went on, handing me the bread-and-butter. “And air you a going to Joseph?”

“In Heaven’s name,” said I, firing in spite of myself, “what does it matter to you where I am going? Leave that teapot alone.”

It was the worst course I could have taken, because it gave Pumblechook the opportunity he wanted.

“Yes, young man,” said he, releasing the handle of the article in question, retiring a step or two from my table, and speaking for the behoof of the landlord and waiter at the door, “I *will* leave that teapot alone. You are right, young man. For once, you are right. I forgit myself when I take such an interest in your breakfast, as to wish your frame,

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exhausted by the debilitating effects of prodigygality, to be stimulated by the 'olesome nourishment of your forefathers. And yet," said Pumblechook, turning to the landlord and waiter, and pointing me out at arm's length, "this is him as I ever sported with in his days of happy infancy ! Tell me not it cannot be ; I tell you this is him ! "

A low murmur from the two replied. The waiter appeared to be particularly affected.

"This is him," said Pumblechook, "as I have rode in my shay-cart. This is him as I have seen brought up by hand. This is him untoe the sister of which I was uncle by marriage, as her name was Georgiana M'ria from her own mother, let him deny it if he can ! "

The waiter seemed convinced that I could not deny it, and that it gave the case a black look.

"Young man," said Pumblechook, screwing his head at me in the old fashion, "you air a going to Joseph. What does it matter to me, you ask me, where you air a going ? I say to you, Sir, you air a going to Joseph."

The waiter coughed, as if he modestly invited me to get over that.

"Now," said Pumblechook, and all this with a most exasperating air of saying in the cause of virtue what was perfectly convincing and conclusive, "I will tell you what to say to Joseph. Here is Squires of the Boar present, known and respected in this town, and here is William, which his father's name was Potkins if I do not deceive myself."

"You do not, sir," said William.

"In their presence," pursued Pumblechook, "I

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will tell you, young man, what to say to Joseph. Says you, 'Joseph, I have this day seen my earliest benefactor and the founder of my fortun's. I will name no names, Joseph, but so they are pleased to call him up-town, and I have seen that man.' "

"I swear I don't see him here," said I.

"Say that likewise," retorted Pumblechook. "Say you said that, and even Joseph will probably betray surprise."

"There you are quite mistaken," said I. "I know better."

"Says you," Pumblechook went on, "'Joseph, I have seen that man, and that man bears you no malice and bears me no malice. He knows your character, Joseph, and is well acquainted with your pig-headedness and ignorance; and he knows my character, Joseph, and he knows my want of gratioode. Yes, Joseph,' says you," here Pumblechook shook his head and hand at me, "'he knows my total deficiency of common human gratioode. *He* knows it, Joseph, as none can. *You* do not know it, Joseph, having no call to know it, but that man do.' "

Windy donkey as he was, it really amazed me that he could have the face to talk thus to mine.

"Says you, 'Joseph, he gave me a little message, which I will now repeat. It was, that in my being brought low, he saw the finger of Providence. He knowed that finger when he saw it, Joseph, and he saw it plain. It pintoed out this writing, Joseph. *Reward of ingratitoode to earliest benefactor, and founder of fortun's.* But that man said that he did not repent of what he had done, Joseph. Not at

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all. It was right to do it, it was kind to do it, it was benevolent to do it, and he would do it again.' ”

“It’s a pity,” said I, scornfully, as I finished my interrupted breakfast, “that the man did not say what he had done and would do again.”

“Squires of the Boar!” Pumblechook was now addressing the landlord, “and William! I have no objections to your mentioning, either up-town or down-town, if such should be your wishes, that it was right to do it, kind to do it, benevolent to do it, and that I would do it again.”

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Bully Bottom at rehearsal

QUINCE. Is all our company here ?

BOTTOM. You were best to call them generally, man by man, according to the scrip.

QUIN. Here is the scroll of every man's name, which is thought fit, through all Athens, to play in our interlude before the duke and the duchess, on his wedding-day at night.

BOT. First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on ; then read the names of the actors ; and so grow to a point.

QUIN. Marry, our play is, The most lamentable comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby.

BOT. A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a merry. Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll. Masters, spread yourselves.

QUIN. Answer as I call you. Nick Bottom, the weaver.

BOT. Ready. Name what part I am for, and proceed.

QUIN. You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

BOT. What is Pyramus ? A lover, or a tyrant ?

QUIN. A lover, that kills himself most gallant for love.

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BOT. That will ask some tears in the true performing of it : if I do it, let the audience look to their eyes ; I will move storms, I will condole in some measure. To the rest : yet my chief humour is for a tyrant : I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.

The raging rocks
And shivering shocks
Shall break the locks
Of prison-gates ;
And Phibbus' car
Shall shine from far,
And make and mar
The foolish Fates.

This was lofty ! Now name the rest of the players. This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein ; a lover is more condoling.

QUIN. Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

FLUTE. Here, Peter Quince.

QUIN. Flute, you must take Thisby on you.

FLU. What is Thisby ? a wandering knight ?

QUIN. It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

FLU. Nay, faith, let not me play a woman ; I have a beard coming.

QUIN. That's all one : you shall play it in a mask, and you may speak as small as you will.

BOT. An I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too, I'll speak in a monstrous little voice, " Thisne, Thisne " ; " Ah Pyramus, my lover dear ! thy Thisby dear, and lady dear ! "

QUIN. No, no ; you must play Pyramus : and, Flute, you Thisby.

BOT. Well, proceed.

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QUIN. Robin Starveling, the tailor.

STARVELING. Here, Peter Quince.

QUIN. Robin Starveling, you must play Thisby's mother. Tom Snout, the tinker.

SNOUT. Here, Peter Quince.

QUIN. You, Pyramus' father : myself, Thisby's father ; Snug, the joiner ; you, the lion's part : and, I hope, here is a play fitted.

SNUG. Have you the lion's part written ? pray you, if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.

QUIN. You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.

BOT. Let me play the lion too : I will roar, that I will do any man's heart good to hear me ; I will roar, that I will make the duke say, " Let him roar again, let him roar again."

QUIN. An you should do it too terribly, you would fright the duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek ; and that were enough to hang us all.

ALL. That would hang us, every mother's son.

BOT. I grant you, friends, if that you should fright the ladies out of their wits, they would have no more discretion but to hang us : but I will aggravate my voice so, that I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove ; I will roar you an 'twere any nightingale.

QUIN. You can play no part but Pyramus ; for Pyramus is a sweet-faced man ; a proper man, as one shall see in a summer's day ; a most lovely, gentleman-like man : therefore you must needs play Pyramus.

BOT. Well, I will undertake it. What beard were I best to play it in ?

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QUIN. Why, what you will.

BOT. I will discharge it in either your straw colour beard, your orange-tawny beard, your purple-in-grain beard, or your French crown colour beard, your perfect yellow.

QUIN. Some of your French crowns have no hair at all, and then you will play barefaced. But, masters, here are your parts : and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you, to con them by tomorrow night ; and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moonlight ; there will we rehearse, for if we meet in the city, we shall be dogged with company, and our devices known. In the meantime I will draw a bill of properties, such as our play wants. I pray you, fail me not.

BOT. We will meet ; and there we may rehearse most obscenely and courageously. Take pains ; be perfect : adieu.

QUIN. At the duke's oak we meet.

BOT. Enough ; hold or cut bow-strings.

XXXIX

Bottom in Elfland

TITANIA. Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed,

While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head,
And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.

BOTTOM. Where 's Peaseblossom ?

PEASEBLOSSOM. Ready.

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BOT. Scratch my head, Peaseblossom. Where 's Mounsieur Cobweb ?

COBWEB. Ready.

BOT. Mounsieur Cobweb, good mounsieur, get you your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped humble-bee on the top of a thistle ; and, good mounsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, mounsieur ; and, good mounsieur, have a care the honey-bag break not ; I would be loth to have you overflown with a honey-bag, signior. Where 's Mounsieur Mustardseed ?

MUSTARDSEED. Ready.

BOT. Give me your neaf, mounsieur Mustardseed. Pray you, leave your courtesy, good mounsieur.

MUS. What 's your will ?

BOT. Nothing, good mounsieur, but to help Cavalery Cobweb to scratch. I must to the barber's, mounsieur ; for methinks I am marvellous hairy about the face ; and I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me, I must scratch.

TITA. What, wilt thou hear some music, my sweet love ?

BOT. I have a reasonable good ear in music. Let 's have the tongs and the bones.

TITA. Or say, sweet love, what thou desirest to eat.

BOT. Truly, a peck of provender : I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks I have a great desire to a bottle of hay ; good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.

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TITA. I have a venturous fairy that shall seek
The squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee new nuts.

BOT. I had rather have a handful or two of
dried peas. But, I pray you, let none of your
people stir me : I have an exposition of sleep come
upon me.

XL

Touchstone on a pastoral life

CORIN. And how like you this shepherd's life,
Master Touchstone ?

TOUCHSTONE. Truly, shepherd, in respect of
itself, it is a good life ; but in respect that it is a
shepherd's life, it is naught. In respect that it is
solitary, I like it very well ; but in respect that it is
private, it is a very vile life. Now, in respect it is
in the fields, it pleaseth me well ; but in respect it is
not in the court, it is tedious. As it is a spare life,
look you, it fits my humour well ; but as there is
no more plenty in it, it goes much against my
stomach. Hast any philosophy in thee, shepherd ?

COR. No more but that I know the more one
sickens the worse at ease he is ; and that he that
wants money, means and content is without three
good friends ; that the property of rain is to wet
and fire to burn ; that good pasture makes fat
sheep, and that a great cause of the night is lack of
the sun ; that he that hath learned no wit by nature
nor art may complain of good breeding or comes of
a very dull kindred.

TOUCH. Such a one is a natural philosopher.
Wast ever in court, shepherd ?

COR. No, truly.

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TOUCH. Then thou art damned.

COR. Nay, I hope.

TOUCH. Truly, thou art damned, like an ill-roasted egg all on one side.

COR. For not being at court ? Your reason.

TOUCH. Why, if thou never wast at court, thou never sawest good manners ; if thou never sawest good manners, then thy manners must be wicked ; and wickedness is sin, and sin is damnation. Thou art in a parlous state, shepherd.

COR. Not a whit, Touchstone : those that are good manners at the court are as ridiculous in the country as the behaviour of the country is most mockable at the court. You told me you salute not at the court, but you kiss your hands : that courtesy would be uncleanly, if courtiers were shepherds.

TOUCH. Instance, briefly ; come, instance.

COR. Why, we are still handling our ewes, and their fells, you know, are greasy.

TOUCH. Why, do not your courtier's handssweat ? and is not the grease of a mutton as wholesome as the sweat of a man ? Shallow, shallow. A better instance, I say ; come.

COR. Besides, our hands are hard.

TOUCH. Your lips will feel them the sooner. Shallow again. A more sounder instance, come.

COR. And they are often tarred over with the surgery of our sheep ; and would you have us kiss tar ? The courtier's hands are perfumed with civet.

TOUCH. Most shallow man ! thou worm's-meat, in respect of a good piece of flesh indeed !

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Learn of the wise, and perpend : civet is of a baser birth than tar, the very uncleanly flux of a cat. Mend the instance, shepherd.

COR. You have too courtly a wit for me : I'll rest.

TOUCH. Wilt thou rest damned ? God help thee, shallow man ! God make incision in thee ! thou art raw.

COR. Sir, I am a true labourer : I earn that I eat, get that I wear, owe no man hate, envy no man's happiness, glad of other men's good, content with my harm, and the greatest of my pride is to see my ewes graze and my lambs suck.

TOUCH. That is another simple sin in you, to bring the ewes and the rams together and to offer to get your living by the copulation of cattle ; to be bawd to a bell-wether, and to betray a she-lamb of a twelvemonth to a crooked-pated, old, cuckoldy ram, out of all reasonable match. If thou beest not damned for this, the devil himself will have no shepherds ; I cannot see else how thou shouldst 'scape.

XLI

Dogberry and Verges instruct the Watch

DOGBERRY. Are you good men and true ?

VERGES. Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

DOG. Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the prince's watch.

VERG. Well, give them their charge, neighbour Dogberry.

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DOG. First, who think you the most desartless man to be constable ?

FIRST WATCH. Hugh Otecake, sir, or George Seacole ; for they can write and read.

DOG. Come hither, neighbour Seacole. God hath blessed you with a good name : to be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune ; but to write and read comes by nature.

SECOND WATCH. Both which, master constable,——

DOG. You have : I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favour, sir, why, give God thanks, and make no boast of it ; and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity. You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch ; therefore bear you the lantern. This is your charge : you shall comprehend all vagrom men ; you are to bid any man stand, in the prince's name.

SEC. WATCH. How if a' will not stand ?

DOG. Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go ; and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave.

VERG. If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the prince's subjects.

DOG. True, and they are to meddle with none but the prince's subjects. You shall also make no noise in the streets ; for, for the watch to babble and to talk is most tolerable and not to be endured.

WATCH. We will rather sleep than talk : we know what belongs to a watch.

DOG. Why, you speak like an ancient and most

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quiet watchman ; for I cannot see how sleeping should offend : only, have a care that your bills be not stolen. Well, you are to call at all the ale-houses, and bid those that are drunk get them to bed.

WATCH. How if they will not ?

DOG. Why, then, let them alone till they are sober : if they make you not then the better answer, you may say they are not the men you took them for.

WATCH. Well, sir.

DOG. If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man ; and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.

WATCH. If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him ?

DOG. Truly, by your office, you may ; but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled : the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company.

VERG. You have been always called a merciful man, partner.

DOG. Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will, much more a man who hath any honesty in him.

VERG. If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse and bid her still it.

WATCH. How if the nurse be asleep and will not hear us ?

DOG. Why, then, depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying ; for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baes will never answer a calf when he bleats.

VERG. 'Tis very true.

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DOG. This is the end of the charge :—you, constable, are to present the prince's own person : if you meet the prince in the night, you may stay him.

VERG. Nay, by 'r lady, that I think a' cannot.

DOG. Five shillings to one on 't, with any man that knows the statues, he may stay him : marry, not without the prince be willing ; for, indeed, the watch ought to offend no man ; and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.

VERG. By 'r lady, I think it be so.

DOG. Ha, ah, ha ! Well, masters, good night : and there be any matter of weight chances, call up me : keep your fellows' counsels and your own ; and good night. Come, neighbour.

WATCH. Well, masters, we hear our charge : let us go sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to bed.

XLII

Two old Glostershire gentlemen on life and death

SHALLOW. Come on, come on, come on, sir ; give me your hand, sir, give me your hand, sir : an early stirrer, by the rood ! And how doth my good cousin, Silence ?

SILENCE. Good morrow, good cousin Shallow.

SHAL. And how doth my cousin, your bedfellow ? and your fairest daughter and mine, my god-daughter Ellen ?

SIL. Alas, a black ousel, cousin Shallow !

SHAL. By yea and nay, sir, I dare say my cousin

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William is become a good scholar : he is at Oxford still, is he not ?

SIL. Indeed, sir, to my cost.

SHAL. A' must, then, to the inns o' court shortly : I was once of Clement's Inn, where I think they will talk of mad Shallow yet.

SIL. You were called "lusty Shallow" then, cousin.

SHAL. By the mass, I was called any thing ; and I would have done any thing indeed too, and roundly too. There was I, and little John Doit of Staffordshire, and black George Barnes, and Francis Pickbone, and Will Squele, a Cotswold man ; you had not four such swinge-bucklers in all the inns o' court again : and I may say to you, we knew where the bona-robas were, and had the best of them all at commandment. Then was Jack Falstaff, now Sir John, a boy, and page to Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk.

SIL. This Sir John, cousin, that comes hither anon about soldiers ?

SHAL. The same Sir John, the very same. I saw him break Skogan's head at the court-gate, when a' was a crack not thus high : and the very same day did I fight with one Sampson Stockfish, a fruiterer, behind Gray's Inn. Jesu, Jesu, the mad days that I have spent ! and to see how many of my old acquaintance are dead ?

SIL. We shall all follow, cousin.

SHAL. Certain, 'tis certain ; very sure, very sure : death, as the Psalmist saith, is certain to all ; all shall die. How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford fair ?

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SIL. By my troth, I was not there.

SHAL. Death is certain. Is old Double of your town living yet ?

SIL. Dead, sir.

SHAL. Jesu, Jesu, dead ! a' drew a good bow ; and dead ! a' shot a fine shoot : John a Gaunt loved him well, and betted much money on his head. Dead ! a' would have clapped i' the clout at twelve score ; and carried you a forehand shaft a fourteen and fourteen and a half, that it would have done a man's heart good to see. How a score of ewes now ?

SIL. Thereafter as they be : a score of good ewes may be worth ten pounds.

SHAL. And is old Double dead ?

XLIII

Sir Wilfull meets his brother

SIR WILFULL WITWOUND. Right, lady ; I am Sir Wilfull Witwound, so I write myself ; no offence to anybody, I hope ; and nephew to the Lady Wishfort of this mansion.

MRS. MARWOOD. Don't you know this gentleman, sir ?

SIR WIL. Hum ! what, sure 'tis not—yea by 'r Lady, but 'tis—s'heart, I know not whether 'tis or no—yea, but 'tis, by the Wrekin. Brother Anthony ! what Tony, i' faith ! what, dost thou not know me ? By 'r Lady, nor I thee, thou art so becravated, and so beperiwigged.—S'heart, why dost not speak ? art thou overjoyed ?

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WITWOUND. Odso, brother, is it you? your servant, brother.

SIR WIL. Your servant! why yours, sir. Your servant again—s'heart, and your friend and servant to that—and a—and a—flap-dragon for your service, sir! and a hare's foot and a hare's scut for your service, sir! an you be so cold and so courtly.

WIT. No offence, I hope, brother.

SIR. WIL. S'heart, sir, but there is, and much offence! A pox, is this your inns o' court breeding, not to know your friends and your relations, your elders and your betters?

WIT. Why, brother Wilfull of Salop, you may be as short as a Shrewsbury-cake, if you please. But I tell you 'tis not modish to know relations in town: you think you're in the country, where great lubberly brothers slabber and kiss one another when they meet, like a call of serjeants—'tis not the fashion here; 'tis not indeed, dear brother.

SIR WIL. The fashion's a fool; and you're a fop, dear brother. S'heart, I've suspected this—by'r Lady, I conjectured you were a fop, since you began to change the style of your letters, and write on a scrap of paper gilt round the edges, no bigger than a *subpœna*. I might expect this, when you left off, "Honoured brother"; and "hoping you are in good health," and so forth—to begin with a "Rat me, knight, I'm so sick of a last night's debauch"—'ods heart, and then tell a familiar tale of a cock and a bull, and a whore and a bottle, and so conclude.—You could write news before you were out of your time, when you lived with honest Pimple Nose the attorney of Furnival's Inn—you could en-

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treat to be remembered then to your friends round the Wrekin. We could have gazettes, then, and Dawks's Letter, and the Weekly Bill, till of late days.

PETULANT. S'life, Witwoud, were you ever an attorney's clerk? of the family of the Furnival? Ha! ha! ha!

WIT. Ay, ay, but that was but for a while: not long, not long. Pshaw! I was not in my own power then;—an orphan, and this fellow was my guardian; ay, ay, I was glad to consent to that, man, to come to London: he had the disposal of me then. If I had not agreed to that, I might have been bound 'prentice to a felt-maker in Shrewsbury; this fellow would have bound me to a maker of fells.

SIR WIL. S'heart, and better than to be bound to a maker of fops; where, I suppose, you have served your time; and now you may set up for yourself.

XLIV

Partridge sees a play

IN the first row, then, of the first gallery did Mr. Jones, Mrs. Miller, her youngest daughter, and Partridge take their places. Partridge immediately declared it was the finest place he had ever been in. When the first music was played, he said it was a wonder how so many fiddlers could play at one time without putting one another out. While the fellow was lighting the upper candles, he cried out to Mrs. Miller, "Look, look, madam, the very picture of the man in the end of the Common Prayer Book before the gunpowder-treason service." Nor could he help observing

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with a sigh, when all the candles were lighted, that there were candles enow burnt in one night to keep an honest poor family for a whole twelvemonth.

As soon as the play, which was *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, began, Partridge was all attention, nor did he break silence till the entrance of the ghost ; upon which he asked Jones, what man that was in the strange dress, "something," said he, "like what I have seen in a picture ? Sure it is not armour, is it ?" Jones answered, "That is the ghost." To which Partridge replied with a smile, "Persuade me to that, sir, if you can. Though I can't say I ever actually saw a ghost in my life, yet I am certain I should know one if I saw him, better than that comes to. No, no, sir, ghosts don't appear in such dresses as that neither." In this mistake, which caused much laughter in the neighbourhood of Partridge, he was suffered to continue till the scene between the ghost and Hamlet, when Partridge gave that credit to Mr. Garrick which he had denied to Jones, and fell into so violent a trembling, that his knees knocked against each other. Jones asked him what was the matter, and whether he was afraid of the warrior upon the stage. "O la, sir !" said he, "I perceive now it is what you told me. I am not afraid of anything, for I know it is but a play ; and if it was really a ghost, it could do one no harm at such a distance and in so much company ; and yet, if I was frightened, I am not the only person." "Why, who," cries Jones, "dost thou take to be such a coward here besides thyself ?"—"Nay, you may call me coward if you will ; but if that little

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man there upon the stage is not frightened, I never saw any man frightened in my life. Ay, ay ; go along with you ! Ay, to be sure ! Who's fool then ? Will you ? Lud have mercy upon such foolhardiness ! Whatever happens, it is good enough for you. Follow you ? I'll follow the devil as soon. Nay, perhaps it is the devil ; for they say he can put on what likeness he pleases. Oh, here he is again ! No farther ! no, you have gone far enough already—farther than I'd have gone for all the king's dominions." Jones offered to speak, but Partridge cried, "Hush, hush, dear sir ! don't you hear him ?" And during the whole speech of the ghost he sat with his eyes fixed partly on the ghost and partly on Hamlet, and with his mouth open ; the same passions which succeeded each other in Hamlet succeeded likewise in him.

When the scene was over, Jones said, "Why, Partridge, you exceed my expectations. You enjoy the play more than I conceived possible."—"Nay, sir," answered Partridge, "if you are not afraid of the devil, I can't help it ; but to be sure it is natural to be surprised at such things, though I know there is nothing in them : not that it was the ghost that surprised me neither, for I should have known that to have been only a man in a strange dress ; but when I saw the little man so frightened himself, it was that which took hold of me."—"And dost thou imagine, then, Partridge," cries Jones, "that he was really frightened ?"—"Nay, sir," said Partridge, "did not you yourself observe afterwards, when he found it was his own father's spirit, and how he was murdered in the

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garden, how his fear forsook him by degrees, and he was struck dumb with sorrow, as it were, just as I should have been had it been my own case?—But hush! O la! What noise is that? There he is again.—Well, to be certain, though I know there is nothing at all in it, I am glad I am not down yonder where those men are.” Then turning his eyes again upon Hamlet, “Ay, you may draw your sword; what signifies a sword against the power of the devil?”

During the second act Partridge made very few remarks. He greatly admired the fineness of the dresses, nor could he help observing upon the king’s countenance. “Well,” said he, “how people may be deceived by faces! *Nulla fides fronti* is, I find, a true saying. Who would think, by looking in the king’s face, that he had ever committed a murder?” He then inquired after the ghost; but Jones, who intended he should be surprised, gave him no other satisfaction than that he might possibly see him again soon, and in a flash of fire.

Partridge sat in fearful expectation of this; and now, when the ghost made his next appearance, Partridge cried out, “There, sir, now; what say you now? Is he frightened now or no? As much frightened as you think me; and to be sure nobody can help some fears. I would not be in so bad a condition as what’s his name, Squire Hamlet, is there for all the world. Bless me, what’s become of the spirit? As I am a living soul, I thought I saw him sink into the earth.”—“Indeed you saw right,” answered Jones.—“Well,

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well," cries Partridge, "I know it is only a play ; and besides, if there was anything in all that, Madam Miller would not laugh so ; for as to you, sir, you would not be afraid, I believe, if the devil was here in person.—There, there. Ay, no wonder you are in such a passion ; shake the vile, wicked wretch to pieces. If she was my own mother, I would serve her so. To be sure all duty to a mother is forfeited by such wicked doings. Ay, go about your business, I hate the sight of you."

Our critic was now pretty silent till the play which Hamlet introduces before the king. This he did not at first understand, till Jones explained it to him ; but he no sooner entered into the spirit of it, than he began to bless himself that he had never committed murder. Then turning to Mrs. Miller, he asked her if she did not imagine the king looked as if he was touched, "though he is," said he, "a good actor, and doth all he can to hide it. Well, I would not have so much to answer for as that wicked man there hath, to sit upon a much higher chair than he sits upon. No wonder he ran away ; for your sake I 'll never trust an innocent face again."

The gravedigging scene next engaged the attention of Partridge, who expressed much surprise at the number of skulls thrown upon the stage. To which Jones answered, that it was one of the most famous burial-places about town. "No wonder, then," cries Partridge, "that the place is haunted. But I never saw in my life a worse gravedigger. I had a sexton, when I was clerk, that should have dug three graves while he is digging one. The

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fellow handles a spade as if it was the first time he had ever had one in his hand. Ay, ay, you may sing. You had rather sing than work, I believe." Upon Hamlet's taking up the skull, he cried out, "Well, it is strange to see how fearless some men are ! I never could bring myself to touch anything belonging to a dead man on any account. He seemed frightened enough too at the ghost, I thought. *Nemo omnibus horis sapit.*"

Little more worth remembering occurred during the play, at the end of which Jones asked him which of the players he had liked best. To this he answered, with some appearance of indignation at the question. "The king, without doubt."—"Indeed, Mr. Partridge," says Mrs. Miller, "you are not of the same opinion with the town ; for they are all agreed that Hamlet is acted by the best player who ever was on the stage."—"He the best player !" cries Partridge with a contemptuous sneer ; "why, I could act as well as he myself. I am sure, if I had seen a ghost, I should have looked in the very same manner, and done just as he did. And then, to be sure, in that scene, as you call it, between him and his mother, where you told me he acted so fine, why, Lord help me ! any man, that is, any good man, that had such a mother, would have done exactly the same. I know you are only joking with me ; but indeed, madam, though I was never at a play in London, yet I have seen acting before in the country ; and the king for my money : he speaks all his words distinctly, half as loud again as the other. Anybody may see he is an actor."

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XLV

Bob Acres in trouble

ACRES. By my valour ! then, Sir Lucius, forty yards is a good distance. Odds levels and aims !—I say it is a good distance.

SIR LUCIUS. Is it for muskets or small field-pieces ? Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, you must leave those things to me. Stay now—I'll show you. (*Measures paces along the stage.*) There now, that is a very pretty distance—a pretty gentleman's distance.

ACRES. Z——ds ! we might as well fight in a sentry-box ! I tell you, Sir Lucius, the farther he is off, the cooler I shall take my aim.

SIR LUC. Faith ! then I suppose you would aim at him best of all if he was out of sight !

ACRES. No, Sir Lucius, but I should think forty or eight-and-thirty yards——

SIR LUC. Pho ! pho ! nonsense ! three or four feet between the mouths of your pistols is as good as a mile.

ACRES. Odds, bullets, no !—by my valour ! there is no merit in killing him so near : no, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long shot : a long shot, Sir Lucius, if you love me !

SIR LUC. Well—the gentleman's friend and I must settle that. But tell me now, Mr. Acres, in case of an accident, is there any little will or commission I could execute for you !

ACRES. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius—but I don't understand——

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SIR LUC. Why, you may think there's no being shot at without a little risk, and if an unlucky bullet should carry a quietus with it—I say it will be no time then to be bothering you about family matters.

ACRES. A quietus !

SIR LUC. For instance, now—if that should be the case—would you choose to be pickled and sent home?—or would it be the same to you to lie here in the Abbey? I'm told there is very snug lying in the Abbey.

ACRES. Pickled!—snug lying in the Abbey! Odds tremors! Sir Lucius, don't talk so!

SIR LUC. I suppose, Mr. Acres, you never were engaged in an affair of this kind before?

ACRES. No, Sir Lucius, never before.

SIR LUC. Ah! that's a pity!—there's nothing like being used to a thing. Pray now, how would you receive the gentleman's shot?

ACRES. Odds files!—I've practised that—there, Sir Lucius—there. (*Puts himself in an attitude.*) A side-front, hey? Odds! I'll make myself small enough: I'll stand edgeways.

SIR LUC. Now—you're quite out—for if you stand so when I take my aim——

(*Levelling at him.*)

ACRES. Z——ds! Sir Lucius—are you sure it is not cocked?

SIR LUC. Never fear.

ACRES. But—but—you don't know—it may go off of its own head!

SIR LUC. Pho! be easy. Well, now if I hit you in the body, my bullet has a double chance

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for if it misses a vital part of your right side, 'twill be very hard if it don't succeed on the left !

ACRES. A vital part !

SIR LUC. But, there—fix yourself so (*placing him*)—let him see the broad-side of your full front—there—now a ball or two may pass clean through your body, and never do any harm at all.

ACRES. Clean through me !—a ball or two clean through me !

SIR LUC. Aye—may they—and it is much the genteelest attitude into the bargain.

ACRES. Look'ee ! Sir Lucius—I'd just as lieve be shot in an awkward posture as a genteel one—so, by my valour ! I will stand edgeways.

SIR LUC. (*looking at his watch*). Sure they don't mean to disappoint us. Hah !—no, faith—I think I see them coming.

ACRES. Hey !—what !—coming !—

SIR LUC. Aye—who are those yonder getting over the stile ?

ACRES. There are two of them, indeed !—well—let them come—hey, Sir Lucius !—we—we—we—we—won't run.

SIR LUC. Run !

ACRES. No—I say—we *won't* run, by my valour !

SIR LUC. What the devil's the matter with you ?

ACRES. Nothing—nothing—my dear friend—my dear Sir Lucius—but I—I—I don't feel quite so bold, somehow, as I did.

SIR LUC. Oh, fie !—consider your honour.

ACRES. Aye—true—my honour. Do, Sir

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LUCIUS, edge in a word or two every now and then about my honour.

SIR LUC. Well, here they 're coming.

(*Looking.*)

ACRES. Sir Lucius—if I wa'n't with you, I should almost think I was afraid—if my valour should leave me ! Valour will come and go.

SIR LUC. Then pray keep it fast, while you have it.

ACRES. Sir Lucius—I doubt it is going—yes—my valour is certainly going !—it is sneaking off ! I feel it oozing out as it were at the palms of my hands !

SIR LUC. Your honour—your honour. Here they are.

ACRES. Oh, mercy !—now—that I was safe at Clod Hall ! or could be shot before I was aware !

XLVI

Bailie Jarvie is on his dignity

“ **A** BONNY thing it is, and a beseeming, that I should be kept at the door half an hour, Captain Stanchells,” said he, addressing the principal jailor, who now showed himself at the door as if in attendance on the great man, “ knocking as hard to get into the tolbooth as onybody else wad to get out of it, could that avail them, poor fallen creatures !—And how 's this ?—how 's this ?—strangers in the jail after lock-up hours, and on the Sabbath evening !—I shall look after this, Stanchells, you may depend on 't.—Keep the door locked, and

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I'll speak to these gentlemen in a gliffing.—But first I maun hae a crack wi' an auld acquaintance here.—Mr. Owen, Mr. Owen, how 's a' wi' ye, man ? ”

“ Pretty well in body, I thank you, Mr. Jarvie,” drawled out poor Owen, “ but sore afflicted in spirit.”

“ Nae doubt, nae doubt—ay, ay—it 's an awfu' whummle—and for ane that held his head sae high too—human nature, human nature—Ay, ay, we 're a' subject to a downcome. Mr. Osbaldistone is a gude honest gentleman ; but I aye said he was ane o' them wad make a spune or spoil a horn, as my father the worthy deacon used to say. The deacon used to say to me, ‘ Nick—young Nick,’ (his name was Nicol as weel as mine ; sae folk ca'd us in their daffin', young Nick and auld Nick)—‘ Nick,’ said he, ‘ never put out your arm farther than ye can draw it easily back again.’ I hae said sae to Mr. Osbaldistone, and he didna seem to take it a'thegether sae kind as I wished—but it was weel meant—weel meant.”

This discourse, delivered with prodigious volubility, and a great appearance of self-complacency, as he recollected his own advice and predictions, gave little promise of assistance at the hands of Mr. Jarvie. Yet it soon appeared rather to proceed from a total want of delicacy than any deficiency of real kindness ; for when Owen expressed himself somewhat hurt that these things should be recalled to memory in his present situation, the Glaswegian took him by the hand, and bade him “ Cheer up a gliff ! D'ye think I wad hae comed

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out at twal o'clock at night, and amaist broken the Lord's-day, just to tell a fa'en man o' his back-slidings? Na, na, that's no Bailie Jarvie's gate, nor was 't his worthy father's the deacon afore him. Why, man! it's my rule never to think on warldly business on the Sabbath, and though I did a' I could to keep your note that I gat this morning out o' my head, yet I thought mair on it a' day, than on the preaching—And it's my rule to gang to my bed wi' the yellow curtains preceesely at ten o'clock—unless I were eating a haddock wi' a neighbour, or a neighbour wi' me—ask the lass-quean there, if it isna a fundamental rule in my household; and here hae I sitten up reading gude books, and gaping as if I wad swallow St. Enox Kirk, till it chappit twal, whilk was a lawfu' hour to gie a look at my ledger, just to see how things stood between us; and then, as time and tide wait for no man, I made the lass get the lantern, and came slipping my ways here to see what can be done anent your affairs. Bailie Jarvie can command entrance into the tolbooth at ony hour, day or night;—sae could my father the deacon in his time, honest man, praise to his memory."

XLVII

The old fox-hunter behaves queerly

"**T**HERE was Lord Abingdon," continued the old gentleman, telling them off on his fingers—"Duke of Bolton—Sir Charles Bunbury—Mr. Bradyll—Lord Clermont—Mr. Joliff—remember his bay horse, Foxhuntoribus by Foxhunter, well. Then there was Lord Milsintown

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—Mr. Pulteney—Mr. Panton—Duke of Queensbury—and a host whose names I forget. Ah ! those recollections make an old man of me. Well, never mind ! I've had my day, and the old 'uns must make way for the young ;” then, turning short upon Charley, who was glancing at the newspaper as it lay on the table, he said, with a jerk, “ Allow me the privilege of inquiring the name of the gentleman I have the honour of addressing.”

This was a poser, and coming after such a string of high-sounding names, poor Charles's humble one would cut but a poor figure. It so happened, however, that he was just skimming by a sort of side-long glance the monthly advertisement of the heavy triumvirate, wherein well-known “ unknowns ” make names for themselves much better than their own. There was “ Shooting, by Ranger,” and “ Racing, by Rover,” and “ Fishing, by Flogger,” and in larger letters, as if the great gun of the number, “ A TRIP TO TRUMPINGTON, BY POMONIUS EGO.”

Charles had just got so far as this, when suddenly interrogated as described, when he unconsciously slipped out the words, “ Pomponius Ego.”

“ Pomponius Ego ! ” exclaimed the little gentleman, jumping on to his short legs as though he were shot, extending his arms and staring with astonishment, “ I never was so out in my life ! ”

CHARLEY.—“ I beg pardon——”

“ No apologies, my dear sir,” interrupted our host, resuming his seat with a thump that stotted his short legs off the carpet. “ No apology ! no apology ! no apology ! We old men are apt to

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fancy things, to fancy things, to fancy things—and I candidly confess I pictured Pomponius Ego quite a different sort of man to myself.”

CHARLES.—“But if you’ll allow me to ex——”

“No explanations necessary, my dear Mr. Ego—Mr. Pomponius Ego, I mean,” jabbered the voluble little old gentleman. “Eat your muffin and sausages, and believe me you’re heartily welcome; I’ve lived long in the world—take some more coffee—there’s tea if you like it, but I never was so out before. Lord! if old Q. could see me!” continued he, clasping his hands, and casting his eyes up to the ceiling.

CHARLEY.—“Well, but perhaps, sir,——”

“There’s no *perhaps’s* in the matter, my dear sir—no perhaps in the matter; I’ll tell you candidly, I pictured Pomponius Ego a prosy old chap, who went the horse-in-the-mill round of his stories from sheer want of originality and inability to move from home in search of novelty. The only thing that ever staggered me was your constant assertion, that second horses were unknown in Leicestershire in Meynell’s time. Never was a greater fallacy, saving your presence! Always had a second horse out myself, though I only rode eight stuns ten—never took soup for fear of getting fat—a host of others had second horses—Lambton and Lockley, and Lindow and Loraine Smith, and——But never mind! don’t assert that again, you know—don’t assert that again. Now take another sausage,” pushing the dish towards Charley in a friendly, forgiving sort of way, as if to atone for the uneasiness the correction had occasioned him.

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"But I never said anything of the sort!" exclaimed Charley, reddening up, as soon as he could get a word in sideways.

"Saving your presence, a dozen times," rejoined the little mercurial old gentleman—"a dozen times at least!" repeated he, most emphatically. "The fact is, my dear sir, I dare say you write so much, you forget what you say. We readers have better memories. I noted it particularly, for it was the only thing that ever shook my conviction of Pomponius Ego being a very old man. But let that pass. Don't be discouraged. I like your writings, especially the first time over. Few stories bear constant telling; but you've a wonderful knack at dressing them up."

"My father had a jolly knack at cooking up an almanack."

"Yes, he had a jolly knack at cooking up an almanack. By the way, *you* once cooked up an almanack! and a pretty hash it was, too!" added the little old gentleman. "I'll tell you what," continued he, tucking his legs up in his chair, and grasping a knee with each hand; "I'll tell you what—I'd like to match you against the gentleman that does the cunning advertisements of Rowland's Odonto or Pearl Dentifrice; I'd lay——"

"Zounds, sir!" interrupted Charles.

"Hear me out," exclaimed the old gentleman, "hear me out!" repeated he, throwing an arm out on each side of the chair; "I'd match you to lead one further on in an old story, without discovery, than Rowland's man does with his puffs of paste, or whatever his stuff is."

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“But you are on the wrong scent altogether,” roared Charles; “I’ve nothing to do with Pomponius Ego or Pearl Dentifrice either.”

“Blastation!” screamed the little old gentleman, jumping up frantically into his chair, with a coffee-cup in one hand, and a saucer in the other; “Blastation! tell me *that*, when it’s written in every feature of your face!” So saying, he sent the cup through the window, and clapped the saucer on his head.

“Come and feed the chuck cocks—pretty chuck cocks,” said Aaron, stumping in at the sound of the crash; “come and feed the chuck cocks—pretty chuck cocks,” repeated he soothingly, taking his master down by the arm, and leading him quietly out of the room, observing to Stobbs as they went, “It’s your red coat that’s raisin’ him.”

SOME ARTISTS, DOMESTIC PHILO-
SOPHERS, AND OTHERS

Puff at the rehearsal

PUFF. The scene remains, does it ?

SCENEMAN. Yes, sir.

PUFF. You are to leave one chair, you know. But it is always awkward in a tragedy to have you fellows coming in in your playhouse liveries to remove things. I wish that could be managed better.—So now for my mysterious yeoman.

Enter a BEEFEATER.

BEEFEATER. Perdition catch my soul, but I do love thee.

SNEER. Haven't I heard that line before ?

PUFF. No, I fancy not. Where, pray ?

DANGLE. Yes, I think there is something like it in *Othello*.

PUFF. Gad ! now you put me in mind on 't, I believe there is ; but that 's of no consequence—all that can be said is, that two people happened to hit on the same thought—and Shakespeare made use of it first, that 's all.

SNEER. Very true.

PUFF. Now, sir, your soliloquy—but speak more to the pit, if you please—the soliloquy always to the pit—that 's a rule.

BEEF. Though hopeless love finds comfort in despair,

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It never can endure a rival's bliss !

But soft—I am observed. (*Exit BEEFEATER.*)

DANG. That 's a very short soliloquy.

PUFF. Yes, but it would have been a great deal longer if he had not been observed.

SNEER. A most sentimental Beefeater, that, Mr. Puff.

PUFF. Hark'ee, I would not have you be too sure that he *is* a Beefeater.

SNEER. What, a hero in disguise ?

PUFF. No matter—I only give you a hint. But now for my principal character. Here he comes—Lord Burleigh in person ! Pray, gentlemen, step this way—softly—I only hope the Lord High Treasurer is perfect—if he is but perfect !

Enter BURLEIGH, goes slowly to a chair and sits.

SNEER. Mr. Puff !

PUFF. Hush ! vastly well, sir ! vastly well ! a most interesting gravity !

DANG. What, isn't he to speak at all ?

PUFF. Egad, I thought you 'd ask me that—yes, it is a very likely thing that a minister in his situation, with the whole affairs of the nation on his head, should have time to talk !—but hush ! or you 'll put him out.

SNEER. Put him out ! how the plague can that be, if he 's not going to say anything ?

PUFF. There 's a reason ! why his part is to *think*, and how the plague do you imagine he can *think* if you keep talking ?

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DANG. That 's very true, upon my word !

BURLEIGH *comes forward, shakes his head, and exit.*

SNEER. He is very perfect, indeed. Now pray, what did he mean by that ?

PUFF. You don't take it ?

SNEER. No ; I don't, upon my soul.

PUFF. Why, by that shake of the head, he gave you to understand that even though they had more justice in their cause and wisdom in their measures, yet, if there was not a greater spirit shown on the part of the people, the country would at last fall a sacrifice to the hostile ambition of the Spanish monarchy.

SNEER. The devil !—did he mean all that by shaking his head ?

PUFF. Every word of it. If he shook his head as I taught him.

XLIX

Mr. Crummles in a vein of tender reminiscence

“ I 'VE got another novelty, Johnson,” said Mr. Crummles one morning in great glee.

“ What 's that ? ” rejoined Nicholas. “ The pony ? ”

“ No, no, we never come to the pony till everything else has failed,” said Mr. Crummles. “ I don't think we shall come to the pony at all, this season. No, no, not the pony.”

“ A boy phenomenon, perhaps ? ” suggested Nicholas.

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"There is only one phenomenon, sir," replied Mr. Crummles impressively, "and that 's a girl."

"Very true," said Nicholas. "I beg your pardon. Then I don't know what it is, I am sure."

"What should you say to a young lady from London?" inquired Mr. Crummles. "Miss So-and-so, of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane?"

"I should say she would look very well in the bills," said Nicholas.

"You're about right, there," said Mr. Crummles, "and if you had said she would look very well upon the stage too, you wouldn't have been far out. Look here; what do you think of this?"

With this inquiry Mr. Crummles unfolded a red poster, and a blue poster, and a yellow poster, at the top of each of which public notification was inscribed in enormous characters "First appearance of the unrivalled Miss Petowker of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane!"

"Dear me!" said Nicholas, "I know that lady."

"Then you are acquainted with as much talent as was ever compressed into one young person's body," retorted Mr. Crummles, rolling up the bills again; "that is, talent of a certain sort—of a certain sort. 'The Blood Drinker,'" added Mr. Crummles with a prophetic sigh, "'The Blood Drinker' will die with that girl; and she's the only sylph *I* ever saw, who could stand upon one leg, and play the tambourine on her other knee, *like* a sylph."

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"When does she come down?" asked Nicholas.

"We expect her to-day," replied Mr. Crummles. "She is an old friend of Mrs. Crummles's. Mrs. Crummles saw what she could do—always knew it from the first. She taught her, indeed, nearly all she knows. Mrs. Crummles was the original Blood Drinker."

"Was she, indeed?"

"Yes. She was obliged to give it up though."

"Did it disagree with her?" asked Nicholas.

"Not so much as with her audiences," replied Mr. Crummles. "Nobody could stand it. It was too tremendous. You don't quite know what Mrs. Crummles is, yet."

Nicholas ventured to insinuate that he thought he did.

"No, no, you don't," said Mr. Crummles; "you don't, indeed. I don't, and that's a fact. I don't think her country will, till she is dead. Some new proof of talent bursts from that astonishing woman every year of her life. Look at her, mother of six children, three of 'em alive, and all upon the stage!"

"Extraordinary!" cried Nicholas.

"Ah! extraordinary indeed," rejoined Mr. Crummles, taking a complacent pinch of snuff, and shaking his head gravely. "I pledge you my professional word I didn't even know she could dance, till her last benefit, and then she played Juliet, and Helen Macgregor, and did the skipping-rope hornpipe between the pieces. The very first

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time I saw that admirable woman, Johnson," said Mr. Crummles, drawing a little nearer, and speaking in the tone of confidential friendship, "she stood upon her head on the butt-end of a spear, surrounded with blazing fireworks."

"You astonish me," said Nicholas.

"*She* astonished *me*!" returned Mr. Crummles, with a very serious countenance. "Such grace, coupled with such dignity! I adored her from that moment!"

Mr. Crummles on last appearances

"ET me see," said Mr. Crummles, taking off his outlaw's wig, the better to arrive at a cool-headed view of the whole case. "Let me see. This is Wednesday night. We'll have posters out the first thing in the morning, announcing positively your last appearance for to-morrow."

"But perhaps it may not be my last appearance, you know," said Nicholas. "Unless I am summoned away, I should be sorry to inconvenience you by leaving before the end of the week."

"So much the better," returned Mr. Crummles. "We can have positively your last appearance, on Thursday—re-engagement for one night more, on Friday—and, yielding to the wishes of numerous influential patrons, who were disappointed in obtaining seats, on Saturday. That ought to bring three very decent houses."

"Then I am to make three last appearances, am I?" inquired Nicholas, smiling.

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"Yes," rejoined the manager, scratching his head with an air of some vexation ; "three is not enough, and it's very bungling and irregular not to have more, but if we can't help it we can't, so there's no use in talking. A novelty would be very desirable. You couldn't sing a comic song on the pony's back, could you?"

"No," replied Nicholas, "I couldn't indeed."

"It has drawn money before now," said Mr. Crummles, with a look of disappointment. "What do you think of a brilliant display of fireworks?"

"That it would be rather expensive," replied Nicholas, drily.

"Eighteenpence would do it," said Mr. Crummles. "You on the top of a pair of steps with the phenomenon in an attitude ; 'Farewell,' on a transparency behind ; and nine people at the wings with a squib in each hand—all the dozen and a half going off at once—it would be very grand—awful from the front, quite awful."

LI

Mr. Wopsle-Waldengarver-Hamlet

WE made all the haste we could down-stairs, but we were not quick enough either. Standing at the door was a Jewish man with an unnatural heavy smear of eyebrow, who caught my eyes as we advanced, and said, when we came up with him :

"Mr. Pip and friend?"

Identity of Mr. Pip and friend confessed.

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“Mr. Waldengarver,” said the man, “would be glad to have the honour.”

“Waldengarver?” I repeated—when Herbert murmured in my ear, “Probably Wopsle.”

“Oh!” said I. “Yes. Shall we follow you?”

“A few steps, please.” When we were in a side alley, he turned and asked, “How do you think he looked?—I dressed him.”

I don’t know what he had looked like, except a funeral; with the addition of a large Danish sun or star hanging round his neck by a blue ribbon, that had given him the appearance of being insured in some extraordinary Fire Office. But I said he had looked very nice.

“When he come to the grave,” said our conductor, “he showed his cloak beautiful. But, judging from the wing, it looked to me that when he see the ghost in the queen’s apartment, he might have made more of his stockings.”

I modestly assented, and we all fell through a little dirty swing door, into a sort of hot packing-case immediately behind it. Here Mr. Wopsle was divesting himself of his Danish garments, and here there was just room for us to look at him over one another’s shoulders, by keeping the packing-case door, or lid, wide open.

“Gentlemen,” said Mr. Wopsle, “I am proud to see you. I hope, Mr. Pip, you will excuse my sending round. I had the happiness to know you in former times, and the Drama has ever had a claim which has ever been acknowledged, on the noble and the affluent.”

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Meanwhile, Mr. Waldengarver, in a frightful perspiration, was trying to get himself out of his princely sables.

"Skin the stockings off, Mr. Waldengarver," said the owner of that property, "or you 'll bust 'em. Bust 'em, and you 'll bust five-and-thirty shillings. Shakspeare was never complimented with a finer pair. Keep quiet in your chair now, and leave 'em to me."

With that, he went upon his knees, and began to flay his victim ; who, on the first stocking coming off, would certainly have fallen over backward with his chair, but for there being no room to fall anyhow.

I had been afraid until then to say a word about the play. But then, Mr. Waldengarver looked up at us complacently, and said :

"Gentlemen, how did it seem to you to go, in front ?"

Herbert said from behind (at the same time poking me), "Capitally." So I said "Capitally."

"How did you like my reading of the character, gentlemen ?" said Mr. Waldengarver, almost, if not quite, with patronage.

Herbert said from behind (again poking me), "Massive and concrete." So I said boldly, as if I had originated it, and must beg to insist upon it, "Massive and concrete."

"I am glad to have your approbation, gentlemen," said Mr. Waldengarver, with an air of dignity, in spite of his being ground against the wall at the time, and holding on by the seat of the chair.

"But I'll tell you one thing, Mr. Walden-

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garver," said the man who was on his knees, "in which you're not in your reading. Now mind ! I don't care who says contrary ; I tell you so. You're out in your reading of Hamlet when you get your legs in profile. The last Hamlet as I dressed, made the same mistakes in his reading at rehearsal, till I got him to put a large red wafer on each of his shins, and then at that rehearsal (which was the last) I went in front, sir, to the back of the pit, and whenever his reading brought him into profile, I called out, 'I don't see no wafers !' And at night his reading was lovely."

Mr. Waldengarver smiled at me, as much as to say, "a faithful dependent—I overlook his folly" ; and then said aloud, "My view is a little too classic and thoughtful for them here ; but they will improve, they will improve."

Herbert and I said together, Oh, no doubt they would improve.

"Did you observe, gentlemen," said Mr. Waldengarver, "that there was a man in the gallery who endeavoured to cast derision on the service—I mean, the representation ?"

We basely replied that we rather thought we had noticed such a man. I added, "He was drunk, no doubt."

"Oh dear no, sir," said Mr. Wopsle, "not drunk. His employer would see to that, sir. His employer would not allow him to be drunk."

"You know his employer ?" said I.

Mr. Wopsle shut his eyes, and opened them again ; performing both ceremonies very slowly. "You must have observed, gentlemen," said he,

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“an ignorant and a blatant ass, with a rasping throat and a countenance expressive of low malignity; who went through—I will not say sustained—the rôle (if I may use a French expression) of Claudius King of Denmark. That is his employer, gentlemen. Such is the profession !”

LII

Mr. Shandy is an unlucky philosopher

AMONGST the many and excellent reasons, with which my father had urged my mother to accept of Dr. Slop's assistance preferably to that of the old woman,—there was one of a very singular nature ; which, when he had done arguing the matter with her as a Christian, and came to argue it over again with her as a philosopher, he had put his whole strength to, depending indeed upon it as his sheet-anchor.—It failed him ; tho' from no defect in the argument itself ; but that, do what he could, he was not able for his soul to make her comprehend the drift of it.—Cursed luck !—said he to himself, one afternoon, as he walked out of the room, after he had been stating it for an hour and a half to her, to no manner of purpose ;—cursed luck ! said he, biting his lip as he shut the door,—for a man to be master of one of the finest chains of reasoning in nature,—and have a wife at the same time with such a head-piece, that he cannot hang up a single inference within side of it, to save his soul from destruction.

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LIII

Mr. Shandy is baulked again

IT is two hours, and ten minutes—and no more —cried my father, looking at his watch, since Dr. Slop and Obadiah arrived—and I know not how it happens, brother Toby—but to my imagination it seems almost an age.

—Here—pray, Sir, take hold of my cap—nay, take the bell along with it, and my pantoufles too.

Now, Sir, they are all at your service ; and I freely make you a present of 'em, on condition you give me all your attention to this chapter.

Though my father said, “ he knew not how it happened ” ;—yet he knew very well how it happened ;—and at the instant he spoke it, was pre-determined in his mind to give my uncle Toby a clear account of the matter by a metaphysical dissertation upon the subject of duration and its simple modes, in order to show my uncle Toby by what mechanism and mensurations in the brain it came to pass, that the rapid succession of their ideas, and the eternal scampering of the discourse from one thing to another, since Dr. Slop had come into the room, had lengthened out so short a period to so inconceivable an extent.—“ I know not how it happens—cried my father,—but it seems an age.”

—’Tis owing entirely, quoth my uncle Toby, to the succession of our ideas.

My father, who had an itch, in common with all philosophers, of reasoning upon every thing which happened, and accounting for it too—pro-

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posed infinite pleasure to himself in this, of the succession of ideas, and had not the least apprehension of having it snatched out of his hands by my uncle Toby, who (honest man!) generally took every thing as it happened;—and who, of all things in the world, troubled his brain the least with abstruse thinking;—the ideas of time and space—or how we came by those ideas—or of what stuff they were made—or whether they were born with us—or we picked them up afterwards as we went along—or whether we did it in frocks—or not till we had got into breeches—with a thousand other inquiries and disputes about Infinity, Prescience, Liberty, Necessity, and so forth, upon whose desperate and unconquerable theories so many fine heads have been turned and cracked—never did my uncle Toby's the least injury at all; my father knew it—and was no less surprised than he was disappointed, with my uncle's fortuitous solution.

Do you understand the theory of that affair? replied my father.

Not I, quoth my uncle.

—But you have some ideas, said my father, of what you talk about?—

No more than my horse, replied my uncle Toby.

Gracious heaven! cried my father, looking upwards, and clasping his two hands together—there is a worth in thy honest ignorance, brother Toby—'twere almost a pity to exchange it for a knowledge.—But I'll tell thee.—

To understand what time is aright, without which we can never comprehend infinity, insomuch

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as one is a portion of the other—we ought seriously to sit down and consider what idea it is we have of duration, so as to give a satisfactory account how we came by it.—What is that to any body ? quoth my uncle Toby. For if you will turn your eyes inwards upon your mind, continued my father, and observe attentively, you will perceive, brother, that whilst you and I are talking together, and thinking, and smoking our pipes, or whilst we receive successively ideas in our minds, we know that we do exist, and so we estimate the existence, or the continuation of the existence of ourselves, or any thing else, commensurate to the succession of any ideas in our minds, the duration of ourselves, or any such other thing co-existing with our thinking—and so according to that preconceived —. You puzzle me to death, cried my uncle Toby.

—'Tis owing to this, replied my father, that in our computations of time, we are so used to minutes, hours, weeks and months—and of clocks (I wish there was not a clock in the kingdom) to measure out their several portions to us, and to those who belong to us—that 'twill be well, if in time to come, the succession of our ideas be of any use or service to us at all.

Now, whether we observe it or no, continued my father, in every sound man's head there is a regular succession of ideas of one sort or other, which follow each other in train just like—— A train of artillery ? said my uncle Toby.—A train of a fiddle-stick ! quoth my father—which follow and succeed one another in our minds at certain

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distances, just like the images in the inside of a lanthorn turned round by the heat of a candle.—I declare, quoth my uncle Toby, mine are more like a smoke-jack.—Then, brother Toby, I have nothing more to say to you upon the subject, said my father.

LIV

Mr. Shandy on child-bearing

AND how does your mistress? cried my father, taking the same step over again from the landing, and calling to Susannah, whom he saw passing by the foot of the stairs with a huge pin-cushion in her hand—how does your mistress?—As well, said Susannah, tripping by, but without looking up, as can be expected.—What a fool am I! said my father, drawing his leg back again—let things be as they will, brother Toby, 'tis ever the precise answer—And how is the child, pray? No answer.—And where is Dr. Slop? added my father, raising his voice aloud, and looking over the ballusters—Susannah was out of hearing.

Of all the riddles of a married life, said my father, crossing the landing in order to set his back against the wall, whilst he propounded it to my uncle Toby—of all the puzzling riddles, said he, in a marriage state,—of which you may trust me, brother Toby, there are more asses' loads than all Job's stock of asses could have carried—there is not one that has more intricacies in it than this—that from the very moment the mistress of the house is brought to bed, every female in it, from

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my lady's gentlewoman down to the cinder-wench, becomes an inch taller for it ; and give themselves more airs upon that single inch, than all the other inches put together.

I think rather, replied my uncle Toby, that 'tis we who sink an inch lower.—If I meet but a woman with child—I do it.—'Tis a heavy tax upon that half of our fellow-creatures, brother Shandy, said my uncle Toby—'Tis a piteous burden, upon 'em, continued he, shaking his head—Yes, yes, 'tis a painful thing—said my father, shaking his head too—but certainly since shaking of heads came into fashion, never did two heads shake together, in concert, from two such different springs.

God bless } 'em all—said my uncle Toby and
Deuce take } my father, each to himself.

LV

Mr. Easy proves himself far-sighted

IT was the fourth day after Mrs. Easy's confinement that Mr. Easy, who was sitting by her bedside in an easy chair, commenced as follows :
“ I have been thinking, my dear Mrs. Easy, about the name I shall give this child.”

“ Name, Mr. Easy ! why, what name should you give it but your own ? ”

“ Not so, my dear,” replied Mr. Easy ; “ they call all names proper names, but I think that mine is not. It is the very worst name in the calendar.”

“ Why, what 's the matter with it, Mr. Easy ? ”

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"The matter affects me as well as the boy. Nicodemus is a long name to write at full length, and Nick is vulgar. Besides, as there will be two Nicks, they will naturally call my boy young Nick, and of course I shall be styled old Nick, which will be diabolical."

"Well, Mr. Easy, at all events then let me choose the name."

"That you shall, my dear, and it was with this view that I have mentioned the subject so early."

"I think, Mr. Easy, I will call the boy after my poor father—his name shall be Robert."

"Very well, my dear, if you wish it, it shall be Robert. You shall have your own way. But I think, my dear, upon a little consideration, you will acknowledge that there is a decided objection."

"An objection, Mr. Easy?"

"Yes, my dear; Robert may be very well, but you must reflect upon the consequences; he is certain to be called Bob."

"Well, my dear, and suppose they do call him Bob?"

"I cannot bear even the supposition, my dear. You forget the county in which we are residing, the downs covered with sheep."

"Why, Mr. Easy, what can sheep have to do with a Christian name?"

"There it is; women never look to consequences. My dear, they have a great deal to do with the name of Bob. I will appeal to any farmer in the county, if ninety-nine shepherds' dogs out of one hundred are not called Bob. Now observe, your child is out of doors somewhere in the fields

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or plantations ; you want and you call him. Instead of your child, what do you find ? Why, a dozen curs at least, who come running up to you, all answering to the name of Bob, and wagging their stumps of tails. You see, Mrs. Easy, it is a dilemma not to be got over. You level your only son to the brute creation by giving him a Christian name which, from its peculiar brevity, has been monopolised by all the dogs in the county. Any other name you please, my dear, but in this one instance you must allow me to lay my positive veto."

LVI

Mr. Easy explains his system

MY dear son," replied Mr. Easy, sitting down, and crossing his legs complacently, with his two hands under his right thigh, according to his usual custom, when much pleased with himself,—“why, my dear son, that is not exactly the case, and yet you have shown some degree of perception even in your guess ; for if my invention succeeds, and I have no doubt of it, I shall have discovered the great art of rectifying the mistakes of nature, and giving an equality of organisation to the whole species, of introducing all the finer organs of humanity, and of destroying the baser. It is a splendid invention, Jack, very splendid. They may talk of Gall and Spurzheim, and all those ; but what have they done ? nothing but divided the brain into sections, classed the organs, and discovered where they reside ; but what good result has been

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gained from that? The murderer by nature remained a murderer—the benevolent man, a benevolent man—he could not alter his organisation. I have found out how to change all that.”

“Surely, sir, you would not interfere with the organ of benevolence?”

“But indeed I must, Jack. I, myself, am suffering from my organ of benevolence being too large; I must reduce it, and then I shall be capable of greater things, shall not be so terrified by difficulties, shall overlook trifles, and only carry on great schemes for universal equality and the supreme rights of man. I have put myself into that machine every morning for two hours, for these last three months, and I feel now that I am daily losing a great portion.”

“Will you do me the favour to explain an invention so extraordinary, sir,” said our hero.

“Most willingly, my boy. You observe that in the centre there is a frame to confine the human head, somewhat larger than the head itself, and that the head rests upon the iron collar beneath. When the head is thus firmly fixed, suppose I want to reduce the size of any particular organ, I take the boss corresponding to where that organ is situated in the cranium, and fix it on it. For you will observe that all the bosses inside of the top of the frame correspond to the organs as described in this plaster-cast on the table. I then screw down pretty tight, and increase the pressure daily, until the organ disappears altogether, or is reduced to the size required.”

“I comprehend that part perfectly, sir,” replied

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Jack ; “but now explain to me by what method you contrive to raise an organ which does not previously exist.”

“That,” replied Mr. Easy, “is the greatest perfection of the whole invention, for without I could do that, I could have done little. I feel convinced that this invention of mine will immortalise me. Observe all these little bell-glasses which communicate with the air-pump ; I shave my patient’s head, grease it a little, and fix on the bell-glass, which is exactly shaped to fit the organ in length and breadth. I work the air-pump, and raise the organ by an exhausted receiver. It cannot fail. There is my butler, now ; a man who escaped hanging last spring assizes on an undoubted charge of murder. I selected him on purpose ; I have flattened down murder to nothing, and I have raised benevolence till it ’s like a wen.”

LVII

Borrow’s philosophical publisher

“**A**ND now, my dear sir,” said the big man, “pray sit down, and tell me the cause of your visit. I hope you intend to remain here a day or two.”

“More than that,” said I. “I am come to take up my abode in London.”

“Glad to hear it ; and what have you been about of late ? got anything which will suit me ? Sir, I admire your style of writing, and your manner of thinking ; and I am much obliged to my good friend and correspondent for sending me some of

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your productions. I inserted them all, and wished there had been more of them—quite original, sir, quite : took with the public, especially the essay about the non-existence of anything. I don't exactly agree with you, though ; I have my own peculiar ideas about matter—as you know, of course, from the book I have published. Nevertheless, a very pretty piece of speculative philosophy—no such thing as matter—impossible that there should be—*ex nihilo*—what is the Greek ? I have forgot—very pretty, indeed ; very original.”

“I am afraid, sir, it was very wrong to write such trash, and yet more to allow it to be published.”

“Trash ! not at all ; a very pretty piece of speculative philosophy ; of course you were wrong in saying there is no world. The world must exist to have the shape of a pear ; and that the world is shaped like a pear, and not like an apple, as the fools of Oxford say, I have satisfactorily proved in my book. Now, if there were no world, what would become of my system ? But what do you propose to do in London ? ”

“Here is the letter, sir,” said I, “of our good friend which I have not yet given to you ; I believe it will explain to you the circumstances under which I come.”

He took the letter, and perused it with attention.

“Hem ! ” said he, with a somewhat altered manner, “my friend tells me that you are come up to London with the view of turning your literary talents to account, and desires me to assist you in my capacity of publisher in bringing forth two or three works which you have prepared. My good

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friend is perhaps not aware that for some time past I have given up publishing—was obliged to do so—had many severe losses—do nothing at present in that line, save sending out the Magazine once a month ; and, between ourselves, am thinking of disposing of that—wish to retire—high time at my age—so you see——”

“ I am very sorry, sir, to hear that you cannot assist me ” (and I remember that I felt very nervous) ; “ I had hoped——”

“ A losing trade, I assure you, sir ; literature is a drug. Taggart, what o’clock is it ? ”

“ Well, sir ! ” said I, rising, “ as you cannot assist me, I will now take my leave ; I thank you sincerely for your kind reception, and will trouble you no longer.”

“ Oh, don’t go. I wish to have some further conversation with you ; and perhaps I may hit upon some plan to benefit you. I honour merit, and always make a point to encourage it when I can ; but—— Taggart, go to the bank, and tell them to dishonour the bill twelve months after date for thirty pounds which becomes due to-morrow. I am dissatisfied with that fellow who wrote the fairy tales, and intend to give him all the trouble in my power. Make haste.”

LVIII

The Publisher remonstrates

OWING to the bad success of the review, the publisher became more furious than ever. My money was growing short, and I one

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day asked him to pay me for my labours in the deceased publication.

"Sir," said the publisher, "what do you want the money for?"

"Merely to live on," I replied; "it is very difficult to live in this town without money."

"How much money did you bring with you to town?" demanded the publisher.

"Some twenty or thirty pounds," I replied.

"And you have spent it already?"

"No," said I, "not entirely; but it is fast disappearing."

"Sir," said the publisher, "I believe you to be extravagant; yes, sir, extravagant!"

"On what grounds do you suppose me to be so?"

"Sir," said the publisher, "you eat meat."

"Yes," said I, "I eat meat sometimes; what should I eat?"

"Bread, sir," said the publisher; "bread and cheese."

"So I do, sir, when I am disposed to indulge; but I cannot often afford it—it is very expensive to dine on bread and cheese, especially when one is fond of cheese, as I am. My last bread and cheese dinner cost me fourteen pence. There is drink, sir; with bread and cheese one must drink porter, sir."

"Then, sir, eat bread—bread alone. As good men as yourself have eaten bread alone; they have been glad to get it, sir. If with bread and cheese you must drink porter, sir, with bread alone you can, perhaps, drink water, sir."

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LIX

Mr. Fingle tells a traveller's tale

“UP with you,” said the stranger, assisting Mr. Pickwick on to the roof with so much precipitation as to impair the gravity of that gentleman's deportment very materially.

“Any baggage, sir?” inquired the coachman.

“Who—I? Brown paper parcel here, that's all—other luggage gone by water,—packing cases, nailed up—big as houses—heavy, heavy, damned heavy,” replied the stranger, as he forced into his pocket as much as he could of the brown paper parcel, which presented most suspicious indications of containing one shirt and a handkerchief.

“Heads, heads—take care of your heads!” cried the loquacious stranger, as they came out under the low archway, which in those days formed the entrance to the coachyard. “Terrible place—dangerous work—other day—five children—mother—ta!l lady, eating sandwiches—forgot the arch—crash—knock—children look round—mother's head off—sandwich in her hand—no mouth to put it in—head of a family off—shocking, shocking! Looking at Whitehall, sir?—fine place—little window—somebody else's head off there, eh, sir?—he didn't keep a sharp look-out enough either—eh, sir, eh?”

“I am ruminating,” said Mr. Pickwick, “on the strange mutability of human affairs.”

“Ah! I see—in at the palace door one day, out at the window the next. Philosopher, sir?”

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"An observer of human nature, sir," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Ah, so am I. Most people are when they've little to do and less to get. Poet, sir?"

"My friend Mr. Snodgrass has a strong poetic turn," said Mr. Pickwick.

"So have I," said the stranger. "Epic poem,—ten thousand lines—revolution of July—composed it on the spot—Mars by day, Apollo by night,—bang the field-piece, twang the lyre."

"You were present at that glorious scene, sir?" said Mr. Snodgrass.

"Present! think I was; fired a musket,—fired with an idea,—rushed into wine shop—wrote it down—back again—whiz, bang—another idea—wine shop again—pen and ink—back again—cut and slash—noble time, sir. Sportsman, sir?" abruptly turning to Mr. Winkle.

"A little, sir," replied that gentleman.

"Fine pursuit, sir—fine pursuit.—Dogs, sir?"

"Not just now," said Mr. Winkle.

"Ah! you should keep dogs—fine animals—sagacious creatures—dog of my own once—Pointer—surprising instinct—out shooting one day—entering enclosure—whistled—dog stopped—whistled again—Ponto—no go; stock still—called him—Ponto, Ponto—wouldn't move—dog transfixed—staring at a board—looked up, saw an inscription—'Gamekeeper has orders to shoot all dogs found in this enclosure'—wouldn't pass it—wonderful dog—valuable dog that—very."

"Singular circumstance that," said Mr. Pickwick. "Will you allow me to make a note of it?"

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“Certainly, sir, certainly—hundred more anecdotes of the same animal.—Fine girl, sir” (to Mr. Tracy Tupman, who had been bestowing sundry anti-Pickwickian glances on a young lady by the roadside).

“Very!” said Mr. Tupman.

“English girls not so fine as Spanish—noble creatures—jet hair—black eyes—lovely forms—sweet creatures—beautiful.”

“You have been in Spain, sir?” said Mr. Tracy Tupman.

“Lived there—ages.”

“Many conquests, sir?” inquired Mr. Tupman.

“Conquests! Thousands. Don Bolaro Fizzig—Grandee—only daughter—Donna Christina—splendid creature—loved me to distraction—jealous father—high-souled daughter—handsome Englishman—Donna Christina in despair—prussic acid—stomach pump in my portmanteau—operation performed—old Bolaro in ecstasies—consent to our union—join hands and floods of tears—romantic story—very.”

“Is the lady in England now, sir?” inquired Mr. Tupman, on whom the description of her charms had produced a powerful impression.

“Dead, sir—dead,” said the stranger, applying to his right eye the brief remnant of a very old cambric handkerchief. “Never recovered the stomach pump—undermined constitution—fell a victim.”

“And her father?” inquired the poetic Snodgrass.

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“Remorse and misery,” replied the stranger. “Sudden disappearance—talk of the whole city—search made everywhere—without success—public fountain in the great square suddenly ceased playing—weeks elapsed—still a stoppage—workmen employed to clean it—water drawn off—father-in-law discovered sticking head first in the main pipe, with a full confession in his right boot—took him out, and the fountain played away again, as well as ever.”

“Will you allow me to note that little romance down, sir,” said Mr. Snodgrass, deeply affected.

“Certainly, sir, certainly,—fifty more if you like to hear ’em—strange life mine—rather curious history—not extraordinary, but singular.”

LX

The Wellers on oysters, pickled salmon and pike-keepers

“**J**UMP up in front, Sammy,” said Mr. Weller. “Now Villam, run ’em out. Take care o’ the archway, gen’l’m’n. ‘Heads,’ as the pieman says. That’ll do, Villam. Let ’em alone.” And away went the coach up Whitechapel, to the admiration of the whole population of that pretty-densely populated quarter.

“Not a very nice neighbourhood this, sir,” said Sam, with a touch of the hat, which always preceded his entering into conversation with his master.

“It is not indeed, Sam,” replied Mr. Pickwick, surveying the crowded and filthy street through which they were passing.

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"It's a very remarkable circumstance, sir," said Sam, "that poverty and oysters always seem to go together."

"I don't understand you, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick.

"What I mean, sir," said Sam, "is that the poorer a place is, the greater call there seems to be for oysters. Look here, sir; here's a oyster stall to every half-dozen houses. The street's lined with 'em. Blessed if I don't think that ven a man's wery poor, he rushes out of his lodgings, and eats oysters in reg'lar desperation."

"To be sure he does," said Mr. Weller senior; "and it's just the same with pickled salmon!"

"Those are two very remarkable facts, which never occurred to me before," said Mr. Pickwick. "The very first place we stop at, I'll make a note of them."

By this time they had reached the turnpike at Mile End; a profound silence prevailed until they had got two or three miles further on, when Mr. Weller senior, turning suddenly to Mr. Pickwick, said:

"Wery queer life is a pike-keeper's, sir."

"A what?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"A pike-keeper."

"What do you mean by a pike-keeper?" inquired Mr. Peter Magnus.

"The old 'un means a turnpike keeper, gen'l'm'n," observed Mr. Samuel Weller, in explanation.

"Oh," said Mr. Pickwick, "I see. Yes, very curious life. Very uncomfortable."

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"They 're all on 'em men as has met with some disappointment in life," said Mr. Weller senior.

"Ay, ay!" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Yes. Consequence of vich, they retires from the world, and shuts themselves up in pikes; partly with the view of being solitary, and partly to revenge themselves on mankind, by takin' tolls."

"Dear me," said Mr. Pickwick, "I never knew that before."

"Fact, sir," said Mr. Weller; "if they was gen'l'm'n you 'd call 'em misanthropes, but as it is, they only takes to pike-keepin'."

LXI

Old Mr. Weller is a vessel of wrath

"**W**HAT do you think them women does t'other day," continued Mr. Weller, after a short pause, during which he had significantly struck the side of his nose with his forefinger some half-dozen times. "What do you think they does, t'other day, Sammy?"

"Don't know," replied Sammy, "what?"

"Goes and gets up a grand tea drinkin' for a feller they calls their shepherd," said Mr. Weller. "I was a standing starin' in at the pictur shop down at our place, when I sees a little bill about it; 'tickets half-a-crown. All applications to be made to the committee. Secretary, Mrs. Weller'; and when I got home there was the committee a sittin' in our back parlour. Fourteen women; I wish you could ha' heard 'em, Sammy. There

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they was, a passin' resolutions, and wotin' supplies, and all sorts o' games. Well, what with your mother-in-law a worrying me to go, and what with my looking for'ard to seein' to some queer starts if I did, I put my name down for a ticket ; at six o'clock on the Friday evenin' I dresses myself out wery smart, and off I goes with old 'ooman, and up we walks into a fust floor where there was tea things for thirty, and a whole lot o' women as begins whisperin' at one another, and lookin' at me, as if they 'd never seen a rayther stout gen'l'm'n of eight and fifty afore. By-and-bye, there comes a great bustle down-stairs, and a lanky chap with a red nose and a white neckcloth rushes up, and sings out, ' Here 's the shepherd a coming to wisit his faithful flock ' ; and in comes a fat chap in black, vith a great white face, a smilin' avay like clockwork. Such goin's on, Sammy ! ' The kiss of peace,' says the shepherd ; and then he kissed the women all round, and ven he 'd done, the man vith the red nose began. I was just a thinkin' whether I hadn't better begin too—'specially as there was a wery nice lady a sittin' next me—even in comes the tea, and your mother-in-law, as had been makin' the kettle bile down-stairs. At it they went, tooth and nail. Such a precious loud hymn, Sammy, while the tea was a brewing ; such a grace, such eatin' and drinkin' ! I wish you could ha' seen the shepherd walkin' into the ham and muffins. I never see such a chap to eat and drink ; never. The red-nosed man warn't by no means the sort of person you 'd like to grub by contract, but he was nothin' to the shepherd.

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Well ; arter the tea was over, they sang another hymn, and then the shepherd began to preach : and wery well he did it, considerin' how heavy them muffins must have lied on his chest. Presently he pulls up, all of a sudden, and hollers out, ' Where is the sinner ; where is the mis'able sinner ? ' Upon which, all the women looked at me, and began to groan as if they was a dying. I thought it was rather sing'ler, but hows'ever, I says nothing. Presently he pulls up again, and lookin' wery hard at me, says, ' Where is the sinner ; where is the mis'able sinner ? ' and all the women groans again, ten times louder than before. I got rather wild at this, so I takes a step or two for'ard and says, ' My friend,' says I, ' did you apply that 'ere obseruation to me ? ' ' Stead of begging my pardon as any gen'l'm'n would ha' done, he got more abusive than ever : called me a wessel, Sammy—a wessel of wrath—and all sorts o' names. So my blood being reg'larly up, I first give him two or three for himself, and then two or three more to hand over to the man with the red nose, and walked off. I wish you could ha' heard how the women screamed, Sammy, ven they picked up the shepherd from under the table——”

LXII

Sam Weller gives evidence

SERJEANT BUZFUZ now rose with more importance than he had yet exhibited, if that were possible, and vociferated : “ Call Samuel Weller.”

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It was quite unnecessary to call Samuel Weller ; for Samuel Weller stepped briskly into the box the instant his name was pronounced ; and placing his hat on the floor, and his arms on the rail, took a bird's-eye view of the bar, and a comprehensive survey of the bench, with a remarkably cheerful and lively aspect.

“ What 's your name, sir ? ” inquired the judge.

“ Sam Weller, my lord,” replied that gentleman.

“ Do you spell it with a ‘ V ’ or a ‘ W ’ ? ” inquired the judge.

“ That depends upon the taste and fancy of the speller, my lord,” replied Sam ; “ I never had occasion to spell it more than once or twice in my life, but I spells it with a ‘ V.’ ”

Here a voice in the gallery exclaimed aloud, “ Quite right too, Samivel, quite right. Put it down a we, my lord, put it down a we.”

“ Who is that, who dares to address the court ? ” said the little judge, looking up. “ Usher.”

“ Yes, my lord.”

“ Bring that person here instantly.”

“ Yes, my lord.”

But as the usher didn't find the person, he didn't bring him ; and, after a great commotion, all the people who had got up to look for the culprit, sat down again. The little judge turned to the witness as soon as his indignation would allow him to speak, and said :

“ Do you know who that was, sir ? ”

“ I rayther suspect it was my father, my lord,” replied Sam.

“ Do you see him here now ? ” said the judge.

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"No, I don't, my lord," replied Sam, staring right up into the lantern in the roof of the court.

"If you could have pointed him out, I would have committed him instantly," said the judge.

Sam bowed his acknowledgments and turned, with unimpaired cheerfulness of countenance, towards Serjeant Buzfuz.

"Now, Mr. Weller," said Serjeant Buzfuz.

"Now, sir," replied Sam.

"I believe you are in the service of Mr. Pickwick, the defendant in this case. Speak up, if you please, Mr. Weller."

"I mean to speak up, sir," replied Sam ; "I am in the service o' that 'ere gen'l'man, and a wery good service it is."

"Little to do, and plenty to get, I suppose?" said Serjeant Buzfuz, with jocularly.

"Oh, quite enough to get, sir, as the soldier said ven they ordered him three hundred and fifty lashes," replied Sam.

"You must not tell us what the soldier, or any other man, said, sir," interposed the judge, "it's not evidence."

"Wery good, my lord," replied Sam.

"Do you recollect anything particular happening on the morning when you were first engaged by the defendant ; eh, Mr. Weller?" said Serjeant Buzfuz.

"Yes, I do, sir," replied Sam.

"Have the goodness to tell the jury what it was."

"I had a reg'lar new fit out o' clothes that mornin', gen'l'men of the jury," said Sam, "and

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that was a wery partickler and uncommon circumstance with me in those days."

Hereupon there was a general laugh ; and the little judge, looking with an angry countenance over his desk, said, " You had better be careful, sir."

" So Mr. Pickwick said at the time, my lord," replied Sam ; " and I was wery careful o' that 'ere suit o' clothes ; wery careful indeed, my lord."

The judge looked sternly at Sam for full two minutes, but Sam's features were so perfectly calm and serene that the judge said nothing, and motioned Serjeant Buzfuz to proceed.

" Do you mean to tell me, Mr. Weller," said Serjeant Buzfuz, folding his arms emphatically, and turning half-round to the jury, as if in mute assurance that he would bother the witness yet : " Do you mean to tell me, Mr. Weller, that you saw nothing of this fainting on the part of the plaintiff in the arms of the defendant, which you have heard described by the witnesses ? "

" Certainly not," replied Sam. " I was in the passage 'till they called me up, and then the old lady was not there."

" Now, attend, Mr. Weller," said Serjeant Buzfuz, dipping a large pen into the inkstand before him, for the purpose of frightening Sam with a show of taking down his answer. " You were in the passage, and yet saw nothing of what was going forward. Have you a pair of eyes, Mr. Weller ? "

" Yes, I have a pair of eyes," replied Sam, " and that's just it. If they wos a pair of

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patent double million magnifyin' gas microscopes of hextra power, p'raps I might be able to see through a flight o' stairs and a deal door ; but bein' only eyes, you see, my wision's limited."

At this answer, which was delivered without the slightest appearance of irritation, and with the most complete simplicity and equanimity of manner, the spectators tittered, the little judge smiled, and Serjeant Buzfuz looked particularly foolish. After a short consultation with Dodson and Fogg, the learned Serjeant again turned towards Sam, and said, with a painful effort to conceal his vexation, "Now, Mr. Weller, I'll ask you a question on another point, if you please."

"If you please, sir," rejoined Sam, with the utmost good-humour.

"Do you remember going up to Mrs. Bardell's house, one night in November last ?"

"Oh, yes, very well."

"Oh, you *do* remember that, Mr. Weller," said Serjeant Buzfuz, recovering his spirits ; I thought we should get at something at last."

"I rayther thought that, too, sir," replied Sam ; and at this the spectators tittered again.

"Well ; I suppose you went up to have a little talk about this trial—eh, Mr. Weller ?" said Serjeant Buzfuz, looking knowingly at the jury.

"I went up to pay the rent ; but we *did* get a talkin' about the trial," replied Sam.

"Oh, you did get a talking about the trial," said Serjeant Buzfuz, brightening up with the anticipation of some important discovery. "Now what

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passed about the trial ; will you have the goodness to tell us, Mr. Weller ? ”

“ Vith all the pleasure in life, sir,” replied Sam. “ Arter a few unimportant obseruations from the two wirtuous females as has been examined here to-day, the ladies gets into a very great state o’ admiration at the honourable conduct of Mr. Dodson and Fogg—they two gen’l’men as is settin’ near you now.” This, of course, drew general attention to Dodson and Fogg, who looked as virtuous as possible.

“ The attorneys for the plaintiff,” said Mr. Serjeant Buzfuz. “ Well ! They spoke in high praise of the honourable conduct of Messrs. Dodson and Fogg, the attorneys for the plaintiff, did they ? ”

“ Yes,” said Sam, “ they said what a wery gen’rous thing it was o’ them to have taken up the case on spec, and to charge nothing at all for costs, unless they got ’em out of Mr. Pickwick.”

At this very unexpected reply, the spectators tittered again, and Dodson and Fogg, turning very red, leant over to Serjeant Buzfuz, and in a hurried manner whispered something in his ear.

“ You are quite right,” said Serjeant Buzfuz aloud, with affected composure. “ It’s perfectly useless, my lord, attempting to get at any evidence through the impenetrable stupidity of this witness. I will not trouble the court by asking him any more questions. Stand down, sir.”

“ Would any other gen’l’men like to ask me anythin’ ? ” inquired Sam, taking up his hat, and looking round most deliberately.

Mr. Skimpole catechises a barbarian

WHEN I came back, Mr. Skimpole kissed my hand, and seemed quite touched. Not on his own account (I was again aware of that perplexing and extraordinary contradiction), but on ours ; as if personal considerations were impossible with him, and the contemplation of our happiness alone affected him. Richard, begging me, for the greater grace of the transaction, as he said, to settle with Convinses (as Mr. Skimpole now jocularly called him), I counted out the money and received the necessary acknowledgment. This, too, delighted Mr. Skimpole.

His compliments were so delicately administered, that I blushed less than I might have done ; and settled with the stranger in the white coat, without making any mistakes. He put the money in his pocket, and shortly said, "Well, then, I'll wish you a good evening, miss."

"My friend," said Mr. Skimpole, standing with his back to the fire, after giving up the sketch when it was half finished, "I should like to ask you something, without offence."

I think the reply was, "Cut away, then !"

"Did you know this morning, now, that you were coming out on this errand ?" said Mr. Skimpole.

"Know'd it yes'day aft'noon at tea-time," said Convinses.

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"It didn't affect your appetite? Didn't make you at all uneasy?"

"Not a bit," said Convinses. "I know'd if you was missed to-day, you wouldn't be missed to-morrow. A day makes no such odds."

"But when you came down here," proceeded Mr. Skimpole, "it was a fine day. The sun was shining, the wind was blowing, the lights and shadows were passing across the fields, the birds were singing."

"Nobody said they warn't, in *my* hearing," returned Convinses.

"No," observed Mr. Skimpole. "But what did you think upon the road?"

"Wot do you mean?" growled Convinses, with an appearance of strong resentment. "Think! I've got enough to do, and little enough to get for it, without thinking. Thinking!" (with profound contempt).

"Then you didn't think, at all events," proceeded Mr. Skimpole, "to this effect, 'Harold Skimpole loves to see the sun shine; loves to hear the wind blow; loves to watch the changing lights and shadows; loves to hear the birds, those choristers in Nature's great cathedral. And does it seem to me that I am about to deprive Harold Skimpole of his share in such possessions, which are his only birthright!' You thought nothing to that effect?"

"I—certainly—did—NOT," said Convinses, whose doggedness in utterly renouncing the idea was of that intense kind, that he could only give adequate expression to it by putting a long interval

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between each word, and accompanying the last with a jerk that might have dislocated his neck.

“Very odd and very curious, the mental process is, in you men of business !” said Mr. Skimpole, thoughtfully. “Thank you, my good friend. Good night.”

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Touchstone examines his mistress

TOUCHSTONE. Come apace, good Audrey : I will fetch up your goats, Audrey. And how, Audrey ? am I the man yet ? doth my simple feature content you ?

AUDREY. Your features ! Lord warrant us ! what features ?

TOUCH. I am here with thee and thy goats, as the most capricious poet, honest Ovid, was among the Goths.

JAQUES. (*Aside*) O knowledge ill-inhabited, worse than Jove in a thatched house !

TOUCH. When a man's verses cannot be understood, nor a man's good wit seconded with the forward child, understanding, it strikes a man more dead than a great reckoning in a little room. Truly, I would the gods had made thee poetical.

AUD. I do not know what "poetical" is : is it honest in deed and word ? is it a true thing ?

TOUCH. No, truly ; for the truest poetry is the most feigning ; and lovers are given to poetry, and what they swear in poetry may be said as lovers they do feign.

AUD. Do you wish then that the gods had made me poetical ?

TOUCH. I do, truly ; for thou swearest to me

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thou art honest : now, if thou wert a poet, I might have some hope thou didst feign.

AUD. Would you not have me honest ?

TOUCH. No, truly, unless thou wert hard-favoured ; for honesty coupled to beauty is to have honey a sauce to sugar.

JAQ. (*Aside*) A material fool !

AUD. Well, I am not fair ; and therefore I pray the gods make me honest.

TOUCH. Truly, and to cast away honesty upon a foul slut were to put good meat into an unclean dish.

AUD. I am not a slut, though I thank the gods I am foul.

TOUCH. Well, praised be the gods for thy foulness ! sluttishness may come hereafter. But be it as it may be, I will marry thee, and to that end I have been with Sir Oliver Martext, the vicar of the next village, who hath promised to meet me in this place of the forest and to couple us.

JAQ. (*Aside*) I would fain see this meeting.

AUD. Well, the gods give us joy !

TOUCH. Amen. A man may, if he were of a fearful heart, stagger in this attempt ; for here we have no temple but the wood, no assembly but horn-beasts. But what though ? Courage ! As horns are odious, they are necessary. It is said, " many a man knows no end of his goods " : right ; many a man has good horns, and knows no end of them. Well, that is the dowry of his wife ; 'tis none of his own getting. Horns ?—even so :—poor men alone ? No, no ; the noblest deer hath them as huge as the rascal. Is the single man

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therefore blessed ? No : as a walled town is more worthier than a village, so is the forehead of a married man more honourable than the bare brow of a bachelor ; and by how much defence is better than no skill, by so much is a horn more precious than to want.

LXV

Malvolio receives a love-letter

MALVOLIO. 'Tis but fortune ; all is fortune. Maria once told me she did affect me : and I have heard herself come thus near, that, should she fancy, it should be one of my complexion. Besides, she uses me with a more exalted respect than any one else that follows her. What should I think on 't ?

SIR TOBY. Here 's an overweening rogue !

FABIAN. O, peace ! Contemplation makes a rare turkey-cock of him : how he jets under his advanced plumes !

SIR ANDREW. 'Slight, I could so beat the rogue !

SIR TO. Peace, I say.

MAL. To be Count Malvolio !

SIR TO. Ah, rogue !

SIR AND. Pistol him, pistol him.

SIR TO. Peace, peace !

MAL. There is example for 't ; the lady of the Strachy married the yeoman of the wardrobe.

SIR AND. Fie on him, Jezebel !

FAB. O, peace ! now he 's deeply in : look how imagination blows him.

MAL. Having been three months married to her, sitting in my state,—

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SIR TO. O, for a stone-bow, to hit him in the eye !

MAL. Calling my officers about me, in my branched velvet gown ; having come from a day-bed, where I have left Olivia sleeping,——

SIR TO. Fire and brimstone !

FAB. O, peace, peace !

MAL. And then to have the humour of state ; and after a demure travel of regard, telling them I know my place as I would they should do theirs, to ask for my kinsman Toby,——

SIR TO. Bolts and shackles !

FAB. O, peace, peace, peace ! now, now.

MAL. Seven of my people, with an obedient start, make out for him : I frown the while ; and perchance wind up my watch, or play with my—some rich jewel. Toby approaches ; courtesies there to me,——

SIR TO. Shall this fellow live ?

FAB. Though our silence be drawn from us with cars, yet peace.

MAL. I extend my hand to him thus, quenching my familiar smile with an austere regard of control,——

SIR TO. And does not Toby take you a blow o' the lips then ?

MAL. Saying, “Cousin Toby, my fortunes having cast me on your niece give me this prerogative of speech,”——

SIR TO. What, what ?

MAL. “You must amend your drunkenness.”

SIR TO. Out, scab !

FAB. Nay, patience, or we break the sinews of our plot.

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MAL. "Besides, you waste the treasure of your time with a foolish knight,"——

SIR AND. That 's me, I warrant you.

MAL. "One Sir Andrew,"——

SIR AND. I knew'twas I ; for many do call me fool.

MAL. What employment have we here ?

(Taking up the letter.)

FAB. Now is the woodcock near the gin.

SIR TO. O, peace ! and the spirit of humours intimate reading aloud to him.

MAL. By my life, this is my lady's hand : these be her very C's, her U's, and her T's ; and thus makes she her great P's. It is, in contempt of question, her hand.

SIR AND. Her C's, her U's, and her T's : why that ?

MAL. *(Reads)* "To the unknown beloved, this, and my good wishes" :—her very phrases ! By your leave, wax. Soft ! and the impressure her Lucrece, with which she uses to seal : 'tis my lady. To whom should this be ?

FAB. This wins him, liver and all.

MAL. *(Reads)* "Jove knows I love :

But who ?

Lips, do not move ;

No man must know."

"No man must know." What follows ? the numbers altered ! "No man must know" : if this should be thee, Malvolio ?

SIR TO. Marry, hang thee, brock !

MAL. *(Reads)* "I may command where I adore ;

But silence, like a Lucrece knife,

With bloodless stroke my heart doth gore :

M, O, A, I, doth sway my life."

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FAB. A fustian riddle !

SIR TO. Excellent wench, say I.

MAL. "M, O, A, I, doth sway my life." Nay, but first, let me see, let me see, let me see.

FAB. What dish o' poison has she dressed him !

SIR TO. And with what wing the staniel checks at it !

MAL. "I may command where I adore." Why, she may command me : I serve her ; she is my lady. Why, this is evident to any formal capacity ; there is no obstruction in this : and the end,—what should that alphabetical position portend ? If I could make that resemble something in me,—Softly ! M, O, A, I,—

SIR TO. O, ay, make up that : he is now at a cold scent.

FAB. Sowter will cry upon 't for all this, though it be as rank as a fox.

MAL. M,—Malvolio ; M,—why, that begins my name.

FAB. Did not I say he would work it out ? the cur is excellent at faults.

MAL. M,—but then there is no consonancy in the sequel ; that suffers under probation : A should follow, but O does.

FAB. And O shall end, I hope.

SIR TO. Ay, or I 'll cudgel him, and make him cry O !

MAL. And then I comes behind.

FAB. Ay, an you had any eye behind you, you might see more detraction at your heels than fortunes before you.

MAL. M, O, A, I ; this simulation is not as the

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former : and yet, to crush this a little, it would bow to me, for every one of these letters are in my name. Soft ! here follows prose. (*Reads*) "If this fall into thy hand, revolve. In my stars I am above thee ; but be not afraid of greatness : some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon 'em. Thy Fates open their hands ; let thy blood and spirit embrace them ; and, to inure thyself to what thou art like to be, cast thy humble slough and appear fresh. Be opposite with a kinsman, surly with servants ; let thy tongue tang arguments of state ; put thyself into the trick of singularity : she thus advises thee that sighs for thee. Remember who commended thy yellow stockings, and wished to see thee ever cross-gartered : I say, remember. Go to, thou art made, if thou desirest to be so ; if not, let me see thee a steward still, the fellow of servants, and not worthy to touch Fortune's fingers. Farewell. She that would alter services with thee,

THE FORTUNATE-UNHAPPY."

Daylight and champain discovers not more : this is open. I will be proud, I will read politic authors, I will baffle Sir Toby, I will wash off gross acquaintance, I will be point-devise, the very man. I do not now fool myself, to let imagination jade me ; for every reason excites to this, that my lady loves me. She did commend my yellow stockings of late, she did praise my leg being cross-gartered ; and in this she manifests herself to my love, and with a kind of injunction drives me to these habits of her liking. I thank my stars I am happy. I will be strange, stout, in yellow stockings, and cross-

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gartered, even with the swiftness of putting on. Jove and my stars be praised ! Here is yet a post-script. (*Reads*) "Thou canst not choose but know who I am. If thou entertainest my love, let it appear in thy smiling ; thy smiles become thee well ; therefore in my presence still smile, dear my sweet, I prithee." Jove, I thank thee : I will smile ; I will do everything that thou wilt have me.

LXVI

Mr. Collins proposes

BELIEVE me, my dear Miss Elizabeth, that your modesty, so far from doing you any disservice, rather adds to your other perfections. You would have been less amiable in my eyes had there *not* been this little unwillingness ; but allow me to assure you, that I have your respected mother's permission for this address. You can hardly doubt the purport of my discourse, however your natural delicacy may lead you to dissemble ; my attentions have been too marked to be mistaken. Almost as soon as I entered the house, I singled you out as the companion of my future life. But before I am run away with by my feelings on this subject, perhaps it would be advisable for me to state my reasons for marrying—and, moreover, for coming into Hertfordshire with the design of selecting a wife, as I certainly did."

The idea of Mr. Collins, with all his solemn composure, being run away with by his feelings, made Elizabeth so near laughing, that she could

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not use the short pause he allowed in any attempt to stop him farther, and he continued :—

“My reasons for marrying are, first, that I think it a right thing for every clergyman in easy circumstances (like myself) to set the example of matrimony in his parish ; secondly, that I am convinced it will add very greatly to my happiness ; and thirdly—which perhaps I ought to have mentioned earlier, that it is the particular advice and recommendation of the very noble lady whom I have the honour of calling patroness. Twice has she condescended to give me her opinion (unasked too !) on this subject ; and it was but the very Saturday night before I left Hunsford—between our pools at quadrille, while Mrs. Jenkinson was arranging Miss de Bourgh’s footstool, that she said, ‘ Mr. Collins, you must marry. A clergyman like you must marry.—Chuse properly, chuse a gentlewoman for *my* sake ; and for your *own*. Let her be an active, useful sort of person, not brought up high, but able to make a small income go a good way. This is my advice. Find such a woman as soon as you can, bring her to Hunsford, and I will visit her.’ Allow me, by the way, to observe, my fair cousin, that I do not reckon the notice and kindness of Lady Catherine de Bourgh as among the least of the advantages in my power to offer. You will find her manners beyond anything I can describe ; and your wit and vivacity, I think, must be acceptable to her, especially when tempered with the silence and respect which her rank will inevitably excite. Thus much for my general intention in favour of matrimony ; it remains to be

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told why my views were directed to Longbourn instead of my own neighbourhood, where I assure you there are many amiable young women. But the fact is, that being, as I am, to inherit this estate after the death of your honoured father (who, however, may live many years longer), I could not satisfy myself without resolving to chuse a wife from among his daughters, that the loss to them might be as little as possible, when the melancholy event takes place—which, however, as I have already said, may not be for several years. This has been my motive, my fair cousin, and I flatter myself it will not sink me in your esteem. And now nothing remains for me but to assure you in the most animated language of the violence of my affection. To fortune I am perfectly indifferent, and shall make no demand of that nature on your father, since I am well aware that it could not be complied with ; and that one thousand pounds in the 4 per cents., which will not be yours till after your mother's decease, is all that you may ever be entitled to. On that head, therefore, I shall be uniformly silent ; and you may assure yourself that no ungenerous reproach shall ever pass my lips when we are married."

It was absolutely necessary to interrupt him now.

"You are too hasty, sir," she cried. "You forget that I have made no answer. Let me do it without further loss of time. Accept my thanks for the compliment you are paying me. I am very sensible of the honour of your proposals, but it is impossible for me to do otherwise than decline them."

"I am not now to learn," replied Mr. Collins,

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with a formal wave of the hand, "that it is usual with young ladies to reject the addresses of the man whom they secretly mean to accept, when he first applies for their favour ; and that sometimes the refusal is repeated a second or even a third time. I am therefore by no means discouraged by what you have just said, and shall hope to lead you to the altar ere long."

"Upon my word, sir," cried Elizabeth, "your hope is rather an extraordinary one after my declaration. I do assure you that I am not one of those young ladies (if such young ladies there are) who are so daring as to risk their happiness on the chance of being asked a second time. I am perfectly serious in my refusal. You could not make *me* happy, and I am convinced that I am the last woman in the world who would make *you* so. Nay, were your friend Lady Catherine to know me, I am persuaded she would find me in every respect ill qualified for the situation."

"Were it certain that Lady Catherine would think so," said Mr. Collins very gravely—"but I cannot imagine that her ladyship would at all disapprove of you. And you may be certain that when I have the honour of seeing her again, I shall speak in the highest terms of your modesty, economy, and other amiable qualifications."

"Indeed, Mr. Collins, all praise of me will be unnecessary. You must give me leave to judge for myself, and pay me the compliment of believing what I say. I wish you very happy and very rich, and by refusing your hand, do all in my power to prevent your being otherwise. In making me the

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offer, you must have satisfied the delicacy of your feelings with regard to my family, and you may take possession of Longbourn estate whenever it falls, without any self-reproach. This matter may be considered, therefore, as finally settled." And rising as she thus spoke, she would have quitted the room, had not Mr. Collins thus addressed her :

"When I do myself the honour of speaking to you next on the subject, I shall hope to receive a more favourable answer than you have now given me ; though I am far from accusing you of cruelty at present, because I know it to be the established custom of your sex to reject a man on the first application, and perhaps you have even now said as much to encourage my suit as would be consistent with the true delicacy of the female character."

"Really, Mr. Collins," cried Elizabeth with some warmth, "you puzzle me exceedingly. If what I have hitherto said can appear to you in the form of encouragement, I know not how to express my refusal in such a way as may convince you of its being one."

"You must give me leave to flatter myself, my dear cousin, that your refusal of my addresses is merely words of course. My reasons for believing it are briefly these :—It does not appear to me that my hand is unworthy your acceptance, or that the establishment I can offer would be any other than highly desirable. My situation in life, my connections with the family of De Bourgh, and my relationship to your own, are circumstances highly in my favour ; and you should take it into further consideration, that in spite of your manifold

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attractions, it is by no means certain that another offer of marriage may ever be made you. Your portion is unhappily so small that it will in all likelihood undo the effects of your loveliness and amiable qualifications. As I must therefore conclude that you are not serious in your rejection of me, I shall chuse to attribute it to your wish of increasing my love by suspense, according to the usual practice of elegant females."

"I do assure you, sir, that I have no pretensions whatever to that kind of elegance which consists in tormenting a respectable man. I would rather be paid the compliment of being believed sincere. I thank you again and again for the honour you have done me in your proposals, but to accept them is absolutely impossible. My feelings in every respect forbid it. Can I speak plainer? Do not consider me now as an elegant female, intending to plague you, but as a rational creature, speaking the truth from her heart."

"You are uniformly charming!" cried he, with an air of awkward gallantry; "and I am persuaded that when sanctioned by the express authority of both your excellent parents, my proposals will not fail of being acceptable."

LXVII

Sam Weller sends a Valentine

"VELL, Sammy," said the father.

"Vell, my Prooshan Blue," responded the son, laying down his pen. "What's the last bulletin about mother-in-law?"

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"Mrs. Veller passed a wery good night, but is uncommon perwerse, and unpleasant this mornin'. Signed upon oath, T. Veller, Esquire, Senior. That 's the last vun as was issued, Sammy," replied Mr. Weller, untying his shawl.

"No better yet?" inquired Sam.

"All the symptoms aggerawated," replied Mr. Weller, shaking his head. "But wot's that you're a doin' of? Pursuit of knowledge under difficulties, Sammy?"

"I've done now," said Sam, with slight embarrassment; "I've been a writin'."

"So I see," replied Mr. Weller. "Not to any young 'ooman, I hope, Sammy?"

"Why, it's no use a sayin' it ain't," replied Sam. "It's a valentine."

"A what!" exclaimed Mr. Weller, apparently horror-stricken by the word.

"A valentine," replied Sam.

"Samivel, Samivel," said Mr. Weller, in reproachful accents, "I didn't think you'd ha' done it. Arter the warnin' you've had o' your father's wicious propensities; arter all I've said to you upon this here wery subject; arter actiwallly seein' and bein' in the company o' your own mother-in-law, vich I should ha' thought wos a moral lesson as no man could never ha' forgotten to his dyin' day! I didn't think you'd ha' done it, Sammy, I didn't think you'd ha' done it!" These reflections were too much for the good old man. He raised Sam's tumbler to his lips and drank off its contents.

"Wot's the matter now?" said Sam.

"Nev'r mind, Sammy," replied Mr. Weller,

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"it 'll be a wery agonizin' trial to me at my time of life, but I 'm pretty tough, that 's vun consolation, as the wery old turkey remarked wen the farmer said he wos afeerd he should be obliged to kill him for the London market."

"Wot 'll be a trial ? " inquired Sam.

"To see you married, Sammy—to see you a dilluded wictim, and thinkin' in your innocence that it 's all wery capital," replied Mr. Weller. "It 's a dreadful trial to a father's feelin's, that 'ere, Sammy."

"Nonsense," said Sam. "I ain't a goin' to get married, don't you fret yourself about that ; I know you 're a judge of these things. Order in your pipe, and I 'll read you the letter. There ! "

We cannot distinctly say whether it was the prospect of the pipe, or the consolatory reflection that a fatal disposition to get married ran in the family and couldn't be helped, which calmed Mr. Weller's feelings, and caused his grief to subside. We should be rather disposed to say that the result was attained by combining the two sources of consolation, for he repeated the second in a low tone, very frequently ; ringing the bell meanwhile, to order in the first. He then divested himself of his upper coat ; and lighting his pipe and placing himself in front of the fire with his back towards it, so that he could feel its full heat, and recline against the mantelpiece at the same time, turned towards Sam, and, with a countenance greatly mollified by the softening influence of tobacco, requested him to "fire away."

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Sam dipped his pen into the ink to be ready for any corrections, and began with a very theatrical air :

“ ‘ Lovely—— ’ ”

“ Stop,” said Mr. Weller, ringing the bell. “ A double glass o’ the invariable, my dear.”

“ Very well, sir,” replied the girl ; who with great quickness appeared, vanished, returned, and disappeared.

“ They seem to know your ways here,” observed Sam.

“ Yes,” replied his father, “ I’ve been here before, in my time. Go on, Sammy.”

“ ‘ Lovely creetur,’ ” repeated Sam.

“ ‘ Tain’t in poetry, is it ? ” interposed his father.

“ No, no,” replied Sam.

“ Wery glad to hear it,” said Mr. Weller. “ Poetry’s unnat’ral ; no man ever talked poetry ’cept a beadle on boxin’ day, or Warren’s blackin’, or Rowland’s oil, or some o’ them low fellows ; never you let yourself down to talk poetry, my boy. Begin again, Sammy.”

Mr. Weller resumed his pipe with critical solemnity, and Sam once more commenced, and read as follows :

“ ‘ Lovely creetur i feel myself a dammed—— ’ ”

“ That ain’t proper,” said Mr. Weller, taking his pipe from his mouth.

“ No ; it ain’t ‘ dammed,’ ” observed Sam, holding the letter up to the light, “ it’s ‘ shamed,’ there’s a blot there—‘ I feel myself ashamed.’ ”

“ Wery good,” said Mr. Weller. “ Go on.”

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‘Feel myself ashamed, and completely circ-
I forget what this here word is,” said Sam, scratch-
ing his head with the pen, in vain attempts to
remember.

“Why don’t you look at it, then?” inquired
Mr. Weller.

“So I *am* a lookin’ at it,” replied Sam, “but
there’s another blot. Here’s a ‘c,’ and a ‘i,’ and
a ‘d.’”

“Circumwented, p’raps,” suggested Mr.
Weller.

“No, it ain’t that,” said Sam, “circumscribed;
that’s it.”

“That ain’t as good a word as circumwented,
Sammy,” said Mr. Weller, gravely.

“Think not?” said Sam.

“Nothin’ like it,” replied his father.

“But don’t you think it means more?” inquired
Sam.

“Vell, p’raps it is a more tenderer word,” said
Mr. Weller, after a few moments’ reflection. “Go
on, Sammy.”

“‘Feel myself ashamed and completely circum-
scribed in a dressin’ of you, for you *are* a nice gal
and nothin’ but it.’”

“That’s a wery pretty sentiment,” said the
elder Mr. Weller, removing his pipe to make way
for the remark.

“Yes, I think it is rayther good,” observed Sam,
highly flattered.

“Wot I like in that ’ere style of writin’,” said
the elder Mr. Weller, “is, that there ain’t no
callin’ names in it,—no Wenuses, nor nothin’ o’

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that kind. Wot's the good o' callin' a young 'ooman a Wenus or a angel, Sammy?"

"Ah! what, indeed?" replied Sam.

"You might jist as well call her a griffin, or a unicorn, or a king's arms at once, which is wery well known to be a col-lection o' fabulous animals," added Mr. Weller.

"Just as well," replied Sam.

"Drive on, Sammy," said Mr. Weller.

Sam complied with the request, and proceeded as follows; his father continuing to smoke, with a mixed expression of wisdom and complacency, which was particularly edifying.

"'Afore I see you, I thought all women was alike.'"

"So they are," observed the elder Mr. Weller, parenthetically.

"'But now,'" continued Sam, "'now I find what a reg'lar soft-headed, inkred'lous turnip I must ha' been; for there ain't nobody like you, though I like you better than nothin' at all.' I thought it best to make that rayther strong," said Sam, looking up.

Mr. Weller nodded approvingly; and Sam resumed.

"'So I take the privilege of the day, Mary, my dear—as the gen'l'm'n in difficulties did, ven he valked out of a Sunday,—to tell you that the first and only time I see you, your likeness was took on my hart in much quicker time and brighter colours than ever a likeness was took by the profeel macheen (wich p'raps you may have heerd on Mary my dear), altho it *does* finish a portrait and

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put the frame and glass on complete, with a hook at the end to hang it up by, and all in two minutes and a quarter.' "

"I am afeerd that werges on the poetical, Sammy," said Mr. Weller, dubiously.

"No, it don't," replied Sam, reading on very quickly, to avoid contesting the point :

" 'Except of me Mary my dear as your valentine and think over what I 've said.—My dear Mary I will now conclude.' That 's all," said Sam.

"That 's rather a sudden pull up, ain't it, Sammy ?" inquired Mr. Weller.

"Not a bit on it," said Sam ; "she 'll vish there vos more, and that 's the great art o' letter writin'."

"Well," said Mr. Weller, "there 's something in that ; and I wish your mother-in-law 'ud only conduct her conversation on the same gen-teel principle. Ain't you a goin' to sign it ?"

"That 's the difficulty," said Sam ; "I don't know what *to* sign it."

"Sign it, Veller," said the oldest surviving proprietor of that name.

"Won't do," said Sam. "Never sign a valentine with your own name."

"Sign it 'Pickvick,' then," said Mr. Weller ; "it 's a wery good name, and a easy one to spell."

"The wery thing," said Sam. "I *could* end with a werse ; what do you think ?"

"I don't like it, Sam," rejoined Mr. Weller. "I never know'd a respectable coachman as wrote poetry, 'cept one, as made an affectin' copy o' werse the night afore he wos hung for a highway

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robbery ; and *he* was only a Cambervell man, so even that 's no rule."

LXVIII

Mr. Toots worships from a distance

MR. TOOTS, emancipated from the Blimber thraldom, and coming into the possession of a certain portion of his worldly wealth, "which," as he had been wont, during his last half-year's probation, to communicate to Mr. Feeder every evening as a new discovery, "the executors couldn't keep him out of," had applied himself, with great diligence, to the science of Life. Fired with a noble emulation to pursue a brilliant and distinguished career, Mr. Toots had furnished a choice set of apartments ; had established among them a sporting bower, embellished with the portraits of winning horses, in which he took no particle of interest ; and a divan, which made him poorly. In this delicious abode, Mr. Toots devoted himself to the cultivation of those gentle arts which refine and humanise existence, his chief instructor in which was an interesting character called the Game Chicken, who was always to be heard of at the bar of the Black Badger, wore a shaggy white great-coat in the warmest weather, and knocked Mr. Toots about the head three times a week, for the small consideration of ten and six per visit.

The Game Chicken, who was quite the Apollo of Mr. Toots's Pantheon, had introduced to him a marker who taught billiards, a Life Guard who

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taught fencing, a job-master who taught riding, a Cornish gentleman who was up to anything in the athletic line, and two or three other friends connected no less intimately with the fine arts. Under whose auspices Mr. Toots could hardly fail to improve apace, and under whose tuition he went to work.

But however it came about, it came to pass, even while these gentlemen had the gloss of novelty upon them, that Mr. Toots felt, he didn't know how, unsettled and uneasy. There were husks in his corn, that even Game Chickens couldn't peck up; gloomy giants in his leisure, that even Game Chickens couldn't knock down. Nothing seemed to do Mr. Toots so much good as incessantly leaving cards at Mr. Dombey's door. No tax-gatherer in the British dominions—that wide-spread territory on which the sun never sets, and where the tax-gatherer never goes to bed—was more regular and persevering in his calls than Mr. Toots.

Mr. Toots never went upstairs; and always performed the same ceremonies, richly dressed for the purpose, at the hall door.

"Oh! Good morning!" would be Mr. Toots's first remark to the servant. "For Mr. Dombey," would be Mr. Toots's next remark as he handed in a card. "For Miss Dombey," would be his next, as he handed in another.

Mr. Toots would then turn round as if to go away; but the man knew him by this time, and knew he wouldn't.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," Mr. Toots would

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say, as if a thought had suddenly descended upon him. "Is the young woman at home?"

The man would rather think she was, but wouldn't quite know. Then he would ring a bell that rang upstairs, and would look up the staircase, and would say, yes she *was* at home, and was coming down. Then Miss Nipper would appear, and the man would retire.

"Oh! How de do?" Mr. Toots would say, with a chuckle and a blush.

Susan would thank him, and say she was very well.

"How's Diogenes going on?" would be Mr. Toots's second interrogation.

Very well indeed. Miss Florence was fonder and fonder of him every day. Mr. Toots was sure to hail this with a burst of chuckles, like the opening of a bottle of some effervescent beverage.

"Miss Florence is quite well, Sir," Susan would add.

"Oh, it's of no consequence, thank'ee," was the invariable reply of Mr. Toots; and when he had said so, he always went away very fast.

Now it is certain Mr. Toots had a filmy something in his mind, which led him to conclude that if he could aspire successfully, in the fulness of time, to the hand of Florence, he would be fortunate and blest. It is certain that Mr. Toots, by some remote and roundabout road, had got to that point, and that there he made a stand. His heart was wounded; he was touched; he was in love. He had made a desperate attempt, one night, and had sat up all night for the purpose, to

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write an acrostic on Florence, which affected him to tears in the conception. But he never proceeded in the execution further than the words "For when I gaze,"—the flow of imagination in which he had previously written down the initial letters of the other seven lines, deserting him at that point.

Beyond devising that very artful and politic measure of leaving a card for Mr. Dombey daily, the brain of Mr. Toots had not worked much in reference to the subject that held his feelings prisoner. But deep consideration at length assured Mr. Toots that an important step to gain, was, the conciliation of Miss Susan Nipper, preparatory to giving her some inkling of his state of mind.

A little light and playful gallantry towards this lady seemed the means to employ in that early chapter of the history, for winning her to his interests. Not being able quite to make up his mind about it, he consulted the Chicken—without taking that gentleman into his confidence ; merely informing him that a friend in Yorkshire had written to him (Mr. Toots) for his opinion on such a question. The Chicken replying that his opinion always was, "Go in and win," and further, "When your man's before you and your work cut out, go in and do it," Mr. Toots considered this a figurative way of supporting his own view of the case, and heroically resolved to kiss Miss Nipper next day.

Upon the next day, therefore, Mr. Toots, putting into requisition some of the greatest

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marvels that Burgess and Co. had ever turned out, went off to Mr. Dombey's upon this design. But his heart failed him so much as he approached the scene of action, that, although he arrived on the ground at three o'clock in the afternoon, it was six before he knocked at the door.

Everything happened as usual, down to the point where Susan had said her young mistress was well, and Mr. Toots said it was of no consequence. To her amazement, Mr. Toots, instead of going off, like a rocket, after that observation, lingered and chuckled.

"Perhaps you 'd like to walk upstairs, Sir?" said Susan.

"Well, I think I will come in!" said Mr. Toots.

But instead of walking upstairs, the bold Toots made an awkward plunge at Susan when the door was shut, and embracing that fair creature, kissed her on the cheek.

"Go along with you!" cried Susan, "or I'll tear your eyes out."

"Just another!" said Mr. Toots.

"Go along with you!" exclaimed Susan, giving him a push. "Innocents like you, too! Who'll begin next! Go along, Sir!"

IXIX

Mr. Toots makes little headway

THERE was one guest, however, albeit not resident within the house, who had been very constant in his attention to the family, and

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who still remained devoted to them. This was Mr. Toots, who, after renewing, some weeks ago, the acquaintance he had had the happiness of forming with Skettles Junior, on the night when he burst the Blimberian bonds and soared into freedom with his ring on, called regularly every other day, and left a perfect pack of cards at the hall door ; so many indeed, that the ceremony was quite a deal on the part of Mr. Toots, and a hand at whist on the part of the servant.

Mr. Toots, likewise, with the bold and happy idea of preventing the family from forgetting him (but there is reason to suppose that this expedient originated in the teeming brain of the Chicken), had established a six-oared cutter, manned by aquatic friends of the Chicken's and steered by that illustrious character in person, who wore a bright red fireman's coat for the purpose, and concealed the perpetual black eye with which he was afflicted, beneath a green shade. Previous to the institution of this equipage, Mr. Toots sounded the Chicken on a hypothetical case, as, supposing the Chicken to be enamoured of a young lady named Mary, and to have conceived the intention of starting a boat of his own, what would he call that boat ? The Chicken replied, with divers strong asseverations, that he would either christen it Poll or The Chicken's Delight. Improving on this idea, Mr. Toots, after deep study and the exercise of much invention, resolved to call his boat The Toots's Joy, as a delicate compliment to Florence, of which no man knowing the parties, could possibly miss the appreciation.

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Stretched on a crimson cushion in his gallant bark, with his shoes in the air, Mr. Toots, in the exercise of his project, had come up the river, day after day, and week after week, and had flitted to and fro, near Sir Barnet's garden, and had caused his crew to cut across and across the river at sharp angles, for his better exhibition to any lookers-out from Sir Barnet's windows, and had had such evolutions performed by *The Toots's Joy* as had filled all the neighbouring part of the water-side with astonishment. But whenever he saw any one in Sir Barnet's garden on the brink of the river, Mr. Toots always feigned to be passing there, by a combination of coincidences of the most singular and unlikely description.

"How are you, Toots?" Sir Barnet would say, waving his hand from the lawn, while the artful Chicken steered close in shore.

"How de do, Sir Barnet?" Mr. Toots would answer. "What a surprising thing that I should see *you* here!"

Mr. Toots, in his sagacity, always said this, as if instead of that being Sir Barnet's house, it were some deserted edifice on the banks of the Nile, or Ganges.

"I never was so surprised!" Mr. Toots would exclaim.—"Is Miss Dombey there?"

Whereupon Florence would appear, perhaps.

"Oh, Diogenes is quite well, Miss Dombey," Mr. Toots would cry. "I called to ask this morning."

"Thank you very much!" the pleasant voice of Florence would reply.

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"Won't you come ashore, Toots?" Sir Barnet would say then. "Come! You're in no hurry. Come and see us."

"Oh, it's of no consequence, thank you," Mr. Toots would blushingly rejoin. "I thought Miss Dombey might like to know, that's all. Good-bye!" And poor Mr. Toots, who was dying to accept the invitation, but hadn't the courage to do it, signed to the Chicken, with an aching heart, and away went the Joy, cleaving the water like an arrow.

The Joy was lying in a state of extraordinary splendour, at the garden steps, on the morning of Florence's departure. When she went downstairs to take leave, after her talk with Susan, she found Mr. Toots awaiting her in the drawing-room.

"Oh, how de do, Miss Dombey?" said the stricken Toots, always dreadfully disconcerted when the desire of his heart was gained, and he was speaking to her; "thank you, I'm very well indeed, I hope you're the same, so was Diogenes yesterday."

"You are very kind," said Florence.

"Thank you, it's of no consequence," retorted Mr. Toots. "I thought perhaps you wouldn't mind, in this fine weather, coming home by water, Miss Dombey. There's plenty of room in the boat for your maid."

"I am very much obliged to you," said Florence, hesitating. "I really am—but I would rather not."

"Oh, it's of no consequence," retorted Mr. Toots. "Good morning."

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"Won't you wait and see Lady Skettles?" asked Florence kindly.

"Oh no, thank you," returned Mr. Toots, "it's of no consequence at all."

So shy was Mr. Toots on such occasions, and so flurried! But Lady Skettles entering at the moment, Mr. Toots was suddenly seized with a passion for asking her how she did, and hoping she was very well; nor could Mr. Toots by any possibility leave off shaking hands with her, until Sir Barnet appeared: to whom he immediately clung with the tenacity of desperation.

"We are losing, to-day, Toots," said Sir Barnet, turning towards Florence, "the light of our house, I assure you."

"Oh, it's of no conseq—— I mean yes, to be sure," faltered the embarrassed Toots. "Good morning!"

Notwithstanding the emphatic nature of this farewell, Mr. Toots, instead of going away, stood leering about him, vacantly.

LXX

Mr. Guppy makes an offer

ALL this time Mr. Guppy was either planing his forehead with his handkerchief, or tightly rubbing the palm of his left hand with the palm of his right. "If you would excuse my taking another glass of wine, miss, I think it might assist me in getting on, without a continual choke that cannot fail to be mutually unpleasant."

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He did so, and came back again. I took the opportunity of moving well behind my table.

"You wouldn't allow me to offer you one, would you, miss?" said Mr. Guppy, apparently refreshed.

"Not any," said I.

"Not half a glass?" said Mr. Guppy; "quarter? No! Then, to proceed. My present salary, Miss Summerson, at Kenge and Carboy's, is two pound a-week. When I first had the happiness of looking upon you, it was one-fifteen, and had stood at that figure for a lengthened period. A rise of five has since taken place, and a further rise of five is guaranteed at the expiration of a term not exceeding twelve months from the present date. My mother has a little property, which takes the form of a small life annuity; upon which she lives in an independent though unassuming manner, in the Old Street Road. She is eminently calculated for a mother-in-law. She never interferes, is all for peace, and her disposition easy. She has her failings—as who has not? but I never knew her do it when company was present; at which time you may freely trust her with wines, spirits, or malt liquors. My own abode is lodgings at Penton Place, Pentonville. It is lowly, but airy, open at the back, and considered one of the 'ealthiest outlets. Miss Summerson! In the mildest language, I adore you. Would you be so kind as to allow me (as I may say) to file a declaration—to make an offer!"

Mr. Guppy went down on his knees. I was

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well behind my table, and not much frightened. I said, "Get up from that ridiculous position immediately, sir, or you will oblige me to break my implied promise and ring the bell!"

"Hear me out, miss!" said Mr. Guppy, folding his hands.

"I cannot consent to hear another word, sir," I returned, "unless you get up from the carpet directly, and go and sit down at the table, as you ought to do if you have any sense at all."

He looked piteously, but slowly rose and did so.

"Yet what a mockery it is, miss," he said, with his hand upon his heart, and shaking his head at me in a melancholy manner over the tray, "to be stationed behind food at such a moment. The soul recoils from food at such a moment, miss."

"I beg you to conclude," said I; "you have asked me to hear you out, and I beg you to conclude."

"I will, miss," said Mr. Guppy. "As I love and honour, so likewise I obey. Would that I could make Thee the subject of that vow, before the shrine!"

"That is quite impossible," said I, "and entirely out of the question."

"I am aware," said Mr. Guppy, leaning forward over the tray, and regarding me, as I again strangely felt, though my eyes were not directed to him, with his late intent look, "I am aware that in a worldly point of view, according to all appearances, my offer is a poor one. But, Miss Summer-son! Angel!—No, don't ring—I have been brought up in a sharp school, and am accustomed to a variety of general practice. Though a young

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man, I have ferreted out evidence, got up cases, and seen lots of life. Blest with your hand, what means might I not find of advancing your interests, and pushing your fortunes ! What might I not get to know, nearly concerning you ? I know nothing now, certainly ; but what *might* I not, if I had your confidence, and you set me on ? ”

I told him that he addressed my interest, or what he supposed to be my interest, quite as unsuccessfully as he addressed my inclination ; and he would now understand that I requested him, if he pleased, to go away immediately.

“Cruel miss,” said Mr. Guppy, “hear but another word ! I think you must have seen that I was struck with those charms, on the day when I waited at the Whytorsellor. I think you must have remarked that I could not forbear a tribute to those charms when I put up the steps of the ‘ackney-coach. It was a feeble tribute to Thee, but it was well meant. Thy image has ever since been fixed in my breast. I have walked up and down, of an evening, opposite Jellyby’s house, only to look upon the bricks that once contained Thee. This out of to-day, quite an unnecessary out so far as the attendance, which was its pretended object, went, was planned by me alone for Thee alone. If I speak of interest, it is only to recommend myself and my respectful wretchedness. Love was before it, and is before it.”

“I should be pained, Mr. Guppy,” said I, rising and putting my hand upon the bell-rope, “to do you, or any one who was sincere, the injustice of slighting any honest feeling, however

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disagreeably expressed. If you have really meant to give me a proof of your good opinion, though ill-timed and misplaced, I feel that I ought to thank you. I have very little reason to be proud, and I am not proud. I hope," I think I added, without very well knowing what I said, "that you will now go away as if you had never been so exceedingly foolish, and attend to Messrs. Kenge and Carboy's business."

"Half a minute, miss," cried Mr. Guppy, checking me as I was about to ring. "'This has been without prejudice?"

"I will never mention it," said I, "unless you should give me future occasion to do so."

"A quarter of a minute, miss! In case you should think better—at any time, however distant, *that's* no consequence, for my feelings can never alter—of anything I have said, particularly what might I not do—Mr. William Guppy, eighty-seven, Penton Place, or if removed, or dead (of blighted hopes or anything of that sort), care of Mrs. Guppy, three hundred and two, Old Street Road, will be sufficient."

SOME LADIES

Hostess Quickly remonstrates

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE. How comes this, Sir John? Fie! what man of good temper would endure this tempest of exclamation? Are you not ashamed to enforce a poor widow to so rough a course to come by her own?

FALSTAFF. What is the gross sum that I owe thee?

HOSTESS. Marry, if thou wert an honest man, thyself and the money too. Thou didst swear to me upon a parcel-gilt goblet, sitting in my Dolphin-chamber, at the round table, by a sea-coal fire, upon Wednesday in Wheeson week, when the prince broke thy head for liking his father to a singing-man of Windsor, thou didst swear to me then, as I was washing thy wound, to marry me and make me my lady thy wife. Canst thou deny it? Did not goodwife Keech, the butcher's wife, come in then and call me gossip Quickly? coming in to borrow a mess of vinegar; telling us she had a good dish of prawns; whereby thou didst desire to eat some; whereby I told thee they were ill for a green wound? And didst thou not, when she was gone down stairs, desire me to be no more so familiarity with such poor people; saying that ere long they should call me madam? And didst thou not kiss me and bid me fetch thee thirty shillings? I put thee now to thy book-oath: deny it, if thou canst.

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FAL. My lord, this is a poor mad soul ; and she says up and down the town that her eldest son is like you : she hath been in good case, and the truth is, poverty hath distracted her. But for these foolish officers, I beseech you I may have redress against them.

LXII

Lady Wishfort and decorums

LADY WISHFORT. Ay, dear Foible ; thank thee for that, dear Foible. He has put me out of all patience. I shall never recompose my features to receive Sir Rowland with any economy of face. This wretch has fretted me that I am absolutely decayed. Look, Foible.

FOIBLE. Your ladyship has frowned a little too rashly, indeed, madam. There are some cracks discernible in the white varnish.

LADY WISH. Let me see the glass—cracks, sayest thou ?—why, I am errantly flayed—I look like an old peeled wall. Thou must repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes, or I shall never keep up to my picture.

FOIB. I warrant you, madam, a little art once made your picture like you ; and now a little of the same art must make you like your picture. Your picture must sit for you, madam.

LADY WISH. But art thou sure Sir Rowland will not fail to come ? or will he not fail when he does come ? Will he be importunate, Foible, and push ? For if he should not be importunate, I shall never break decorums :—I shall die with

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confusion, if I am forced to advance.—Oh no, I can never advance !—I shall swoon if he should expect advances. No, I hope Sir Rowland is better bred than to put a lady to the necessity of breaking her forms. I won't be too coy, neither.—I won't give him despair—but a little disdain is not amiss ; a little scorn is alluring.

FOIB. A little scorn becomes your ladyship.

LADY WISH. Yes, but tenderness becomes me best—a sort of dyingness—you see that picture has a sort of a—ha, Foible ! a swimmingness in the eye—yes, I'll look so—my niece affects it ; but she wants features. Is Sir Rowland handsome ? Let my toilet be removed—I'll dress above. I'll receive Sir Rowland here. Is he handsome ? Don't answer me. I won't know : I'll be surprised, I'll be taken by surprise.

FOIB. By storm, madam, Sir Rowland's a brisk man.

LADY WISH. Is he ! O then he'll importune, if he's a brisk man. I shall save decorums if Sir Rowland importunes. I have a mortal terror at the apprehension of offending against decorums. O, I'm glad he's a brisk man. Let my things be removed, good Foible.

LXXIII

Mrs. Shandy in a curtain talk

WE should begin, said my father, turning himself half round in bed, and shifting his pillow a little towards my mother's, as he opened

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the debate—We should begin to think, Mrs. Shandy, of putting this boy into breeches.—

We should so,—said my mother.—We defer it, my dear, quoth my father, shamefully. . . .

I think we do, Mr. Shandy,—said my mother.

—Not but the child looks extremely well, said my father, in his vests and tunics. . . .

. . . He does look very well in them,—replied my mother. . . .

—And for that reason it would be almost a sin, added my father, to take him out of 'em.—

—It would so,—said my mother :—But indeed he is growing a very tall lad,—rejoined my father.

—He is very tall for his age, indeed, said my mother.—

—I can not (making two syllables of it) imagine, quoth my father, who the deuce he takes after.—

I cannot conceive, for my life,—said my mother.—

Humph !—said my father.

(The dialogue ceased for a moment.)

—I am very short myself,—continued my father gravely.

You are very short, Mr. Shandy,—said my mother.

Humph ! quoth my father to himself, a second time : in muttering which, he plucked his pillow a little further from my mother's,—and turning about again, there was an end of the debate for three minutes and a half.

—When he gets these breeches made, cried my father in a higher tone, he'll look like a beast in 'em.

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He will be very awkward in them at first, replied my mother.—

—And 'twill be lucky, if that 's the worst on 't, added my father.

It will be very lucky, answered my mother.

I suppose, replied my father,—making some pause first,—he'll be exactly like other people's children.—

Exactly, said my mother. . . .

—Though I shall be sorry for that, added my father : and so the debate stopped again.

—They should be of leather, said my father, turning him about again.

They will last him, said my mother, the longest.

But he can have no linings to 'em, replied my father. . . .

He cannot, said my mother.

'Twere better to have them of fustian, quoth my father.

Nothing can be better, quoth my mother. . . .

—Except dimity,—replied my father :—'Tis best of all,—replied my mother.

—One must not give him his death, however,—interrupted my father.

By no means, said my mother :—and so the dialogue stood still again.

I am resolved, however, quoth my father, breaking silence the fourth time, he shall have no pockets in them.—

—There is no occasion for any, said my mother. . . .

I mean in his coat and waistcoat,—cried my father.

—I mean so too,—replied my mother.

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—Though if he gets a gig or top—Poor souls ! it is a crown and a sceptre to them,—they should have where to secure it. . . .

Order it as you please, Mr. Shandy, replied my mother. . . .

—But don't you think it right ? added my father, pressing the point home to her.

Perfectly, said my mother, if it pleases you, Mr. Shandy. . . .

—There's for you ! cried my father, losing temper—Pleases me !—You never will distinguish, Mrs. Shandy, nor shall I ever teach you to do it, betwixt a point of pleasure and a point of convenience.

LXXIV

Mrs. Shandy is too complacent again

I HAVE an article of news to tell you, Mr. Shandy, quoth my mother, which will surprise you greatly.—

Now my father was then holding one of his second beds of justice, and was musing within himself about the hardships of matrimony, as my mother broke silence. . . .

“—My brother Toby, quoth she, is going to be married to Mrs. Wadman.”

—Then he will never, quoth my father, be able to lie diagonally in his bed again as long as he lives.

It was a consuming vexation to my father, that my mother never asked the meaning of a thing she did not understand.

—That she is not a woman of science, my father

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would say—is her misfortune—but she might ask a question.—

My mother never did.—In short, she went out of the world at last without knowing whether it turned round, or stood still.—My father had officiously told her above a thousand times which way it was,—but she always forgot.

For these reasons, a discourse seldom went on much further betwixt them, than a proposition,—a reply, and a rejoinder; at the end of which, it generally took breath for a few minutes (as in the affairs of the breeches), and then went on again.

If he marries, 'twill be the worse for us,—quoth my mother.

Not a cherry-stone, said my father,—he may as well batter away his means upon that, as anything else.

—To be sure, said my mother: so here ended he proposition,—the reply,—and the rejoinder, I old you of.

It will be some amusement to him, too,—said my father.

A very great one, answered my mother, if he should have children.—

—Lord have mercy upon me,—said my father to himself.—

LXXV

Miss Tabitha is annoyed

TO DR. LEWIS

DOCTOR LEWS,

GIVE me leaf to tell you, methinks you mought employ your talons better, than to encourage

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servants to pillage their masters. I find by Gwyllim, that Villiams has got my skin ; for which he is an impotent rascal. He has not only got my skin, but, moreover, my butter-milk to fatten his pigs ; and, I suppose, the next thing he gets, will be my pad to carry his daughter to church and fair : Roger gets this, and Roger gets that ; but I'd have you to know, I won't be rogered at this rate by any ragmatical fellow in the kingdom. And I am surprised, Doctor Lews, you would offer to put my affairs in composition with the refuge and skim of the hearth. I have toiled and moyled to a good purpuss, for the advantage of Matt's family, if I can't safe as much owl as will make me an under-petticoat. As for the butter-milk, ne'er a pig in the parish shall thrust his snout in it, with my good-will. There's a famous physician at the Hot-Well, that prescribes it to his patience, when the case is consumptive ; and the Scots and Irish have begun to drink it already, in such quantities, that there is not a drop left for the hogs in the whole neighbourhood of Bristol. I'll have our butter-milk barrelled up, and sent twice a week to Aberginny, where it may be sold for a halfpenny the quart ; and so Roger may carry his pigs to another market. I hope, Doctor, you will not go to put any more such phims in my brother's head, to the prejudice of my pockat ; but rather give me some raisins (which hitherto you have not done) to subscribe myself,—Your humble servant,

TAB. BRAMBLE.

Bath, May 19.

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LXXVI

Winifred breaks the great news

TO MRS. MARY JONES, at BRAMBLETONHALL

MRS. JONES,

PROVIDENCE hath bin pleased to make great halteration in the pasture of our affairs. We were yesterday three kiple chined, by the grease of God, in the holy bands of mattermoney ; and I now subscribe myself Loyd at your sarvice. All the parish allowed that young Squire Dallison and his bride was a comely pear for to see. As for Madam Lashmiheygo ; you nose her picklearities ; her head, to be sure, was fintistical ; and her spouse had rapt her with a long marokin furze clock from the land of the selvedges, thof they say it is of immense bally. The Captain himself had a hudge hassock of air, with three tails, and a tumtawdry coat, boddered with sulfur. Wan said he was a monkey-bank ; and the ould butler swore he was the born imich of Titidall. For my part, I says nothing, being as how the Captain has done the handsome thing by me. Mr. Loyd was dressed in a little frog and checket with gould binding ; and thof he don't enter in coparison with great folks of quality, yet he has got as good blood in his veins as arrow private squire in the county ; and then his pursing is far from contentible. Your humble sarvant had on a plain pea green tabby sack, with my Runnela cap, ruff toupee, and side curls. They said, I was the very

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model of Lady Rickmanstone, but not so pale ; that may well be, for her ladyship is my elder by seven good years and more. Now, Mrs. Mary, our satiety is to suppurate. Mr. Millfart goes to Bath along with the Dallisons, and the rest of us push home to Wales, to pass our Christmarsh at Brampletonhall. As our apartments is to be the yallow pepper, in the thurd story, pray carry my things thither. Present my compliments to Mrs. Gwillim, and I hope she and I will live upon dissent terms of civility. Being, by God's blessing, removed to a higher spear, you'll excuse my being familiar with the lower sarvants of the family ; but, as I trust you'll behave respectful, and keep a proper distance, you may always depend upon the good-will and purtection of,—Yours,

W. LOYD.

Nov. 20.

LXXVII

Mrs. Malaprop on education

MRS. MALAPROP. There's a little intricate hussy for you !

SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE. It is not to be wondered at, ma'am—all this is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read. Had I a thousand daughters, by Heaven ! I'd as soon have them taught the black art as their alphabet !

MRS. MAL. Nay, nay, Sir Anthony, you are an absolute misanthropy.

SIR ANTH. In my way hither, Mrs. Malaprop, I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a

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circulating library ! She had a book in each hand—they were half-bound volumes, with marble covers ! From that moment I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress !

MRS. MAL. Those are vile places, indeed !

SIR ANTH. Madam, a circulating library in a town is as an ever-green tree of diabolical knowledge ! It blossoms through the year ! And depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves, will long for the fruit at last.

MRS. MAL. Fie, fie, Sir Anthony, you surely speak laconically.

SIR ANTH. Why, Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation, now, what would you have a woman know ?

MRS. MAL. Observe me, Sir Anthony. I would by no means wish a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning ; I don't think so much learning becomes a young woman ; for instance—I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or Algebra, or Simony, or Fluxions, or Paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning—neither would it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments :—But, Sir Anthony, I would send her, at nine years old, to a boarding-school, in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice. Then, sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in accounts :—and as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries ;—but above all, Sir Anthony, she should be mistress of orthodoxy, that she might not mis-

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spell, and mispronounce words so shamefully as girls usually do ; and likewise that she might reprehend the true meaning of what she is saying. This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know ;—and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

LXXVIII

Miss Bates at a party

O very obliging of you ! No rain at all. Nothing to signify. I do not care for myself. Quite thick shoes. And Jane declares—Well ! ” (as soon as she was within the door), “ well ! This is brilliant indeed ! This is admirable ! Excellently contrived, upon my word. Nothing wanting. Could not have imagined it. So well lighted up ! Jane, Jane, look ! did you ever see anything—— ? Oh ! Mr. Weston, you must really have had Aladdin's lamp. Good Mrs. Stokes would not know her own room again. I saw her as I came in ; she was standing in the entrance. ‘ Oh ! Mrs. Stokes,’ said I—but I had not time for more.” She was now met by Mrs. Weston. “ Very well, I thank you, ma'am. I hope you are quite well. Very happy to hear it. So afraid you might have a headache ! seeing you pass by so often, and knowing how much trouble you must have. Delighted to hear it indeed !—Ah ! dear Mrs. Elton, so obliged to you for the carriage ; excellent time ; Jane and I quite ready. Did not keep the horses a moment. Most comfortable carriage. Oh ! and I am sure our thanks are due to you, Mrs. Weston, on that

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score. Mrs. Elton had most kindly sent Jane a note, or we should have been. But two such offers in one day ! Never were such neighbours. I said to my mother, ‘ Upon my word, ma’am——’ Thank you, my mother is remarkably well. Gone to Mr. Woodhouse’s. I made her take her shawl—for the evenings are not warm—her large new shawl, Mrs. Dixon’s wedding present. So kind of her to think of my mother ! Bought at Weymouth, you know ; Mr. Dixon’s choice. There were three others, Jane says, which they hesitated about some time. Colonel Campbell rather preferred an olive.—My dear Jane, are you sure you did not wet your feet ? It was but a drop or two, but I am so afraid ; but Mr. Frank Churchill was so extremely—and there was a mat to step upon. I shall never forget his extreme politeness. Oh ! Mr. Frank Churchill, I must tell you my mother’s spectacles have never been in fault since ; the rivet never came out again. My mother often talks of your good-nature ; does not she, Jane ? Do not we often talk of Mr. Frank Churchill ? Ah ! here’s Miss Woodhouse. Dear Miss Woodhouse, how do you do ? Very well, I thank you, quite well. This is meeting quite in fairy-land. Such a transformation ! Must not compliment, I know ” (eyeing Emma most complacently)—“ that would be rude ; but upon my word, Miss Woodhouse, you do look—how do you like Jane’s hair ? You are a judge. She did it all herself. Quite wonderful how she does her hair ! No hairdresser from London, I think, could—Ah ! Dr. Hughes, I

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declare—and Mrs. Hughes. Must go and speak to Dr. and Mrs. Hughes for a moment. How do you do? How do you do? Very well, I thank you. This is delightful, is it not? Where's dear Mr. Richard? Oh! there he is. Don't disturb him. Much better employed talking to the young ladies. How do you do, Mr. Richard? I saw you the other day as you rode through the town. Mrs. Otway, I protest, and good Mr. Otway, and Miss Otway, and Miss Caroline. Such a host of friends! and Mr. George and Mr. Arthur! How do you do? How do you all do? Quite well, I am much obliged to you. Never better. Don't I hear another carriage? Who can this be?—very likely the worthy Coles. Upon my word, this is charming, to be standing about among such friends! and such a noble fire! I am quite roasted. No coffee, I thank you, for me; never take coffee. A little tea, if you please, sir, by-and-by; no hurry. Oh! here it comes. Everything is so good!”

LXXIX

Miss Bates still runs on

SUPPER was announced. The move began; and Miss Bates might be heard from that moment without interruption, till her being seated at table and taking up her spoon.

“Jane, Jane, my dear Jane, where are you? Here is your tippet. Mrs. Weston begs you to put on your tippet. She says she is afraid there will be draughts in the passage, though everything

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has been done—one door nailed up—quantities of matting—my dear Jane, indeed you must. Mr. Churchill, oh ! you are too obliging. How well you put it on—so gratified ! Excellent dancing indeed. Yes, my dear, I ran home, as I said I should, to help grandmamma to bed, and got back again, and nobody missed me. I set off without saying a word, just as I told you. Grandmamma was quite well, had a charming evening with Mr. Woodhouse, a vast deal of chat, and backgammon. Tea was made downstairs, biscuits and baked apples, and wine before she came away ; amazing luck in some of her throws : and she inquired a great deal about you, how you were amused, and who were your partners. ‘ Oh ! ’ said I, ‘ I shall not forestall Jane ; I left her dancing with Mr. George Otway ; she will love to tell you all about it herself to-morrow ; her first partner was Mr. Elton ; I do not know who will ask her next, perhaps Mr. William Cox.’ My dear sir, you are too obliging. Is there nobody you would not rather ? I am not helpless. Sir, you are most kind. Upon my word, Jane on one arm, and me on the other. Stop, stop, let us stand a little back, Mrs. Elton is going ; dear Mrs. Elton, how elegant she looks—beautiful lace. Now we all follow in her train. Quite the queen of the evening ! Well, here we are at the passage. Two steps, Jane, take care of the two steps. Oh no, there is but one. Well, I was persuaded there were two. How very odd ! I was convinced there were two, and there is but one. I never saw anything equal to the comfort

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and style—candles everywhere. I was telling you of your grandmamma, Jane—there was a little disappointment. The baked apples and biscuits, excellent in their way, you know ; but there was a delicate fricassee of sweetbread and some asparagus brought in at first, and good Mr. Woodhouse, not thinking the asparagus quite boiled enough, sent it all out again. Now there is nothing grandmamma loves better than sweetbread and asparagus—so she was rather disappointed ; but we agreed we would not speak of it to anybody, for fear of its getting round to dear Miss Woodhouse, who would be so very much concerned. Well, this is brilliant ! I am all amazement !—could not have supposed anything—such elegance and profusion ! I have seen nothing like it since—Well, where shall we sit ? Where shall we sit ? Anywhere, so that Jane is not in a draught. Where *I* sit is of no consequence. Oh ! do you recommend this side ? Well, I am sure, Mr. Churchill—only it seems too good—but, just as you please. What you direct in this house cannot be wrong. Dear Jane, how shall we ever recollect half the dishes for grandmamma ? Soup too ? Bless me ! I should not be helped so soon, but it smells most excellent, and I cannot help beginning.”

LXXX

Mrs. Nickleby has an admirer

“ **A** MOST biddable creature he is to be sure,” said Mrs. Nickleby, when Smike had wished them good night and left the room. “ I

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know you 'll excuse me, Nicholas, my dear, but I don't like to do this before a third person ; indeed, before a young man it would not be quite proper, though really, after all, I don't know what harm there is in it, except that to be sure it 's not a very becoming thing, though some people say it is very much so, and really I don't know why it should not be, if it 's well got up, and the borders are small plaited ; of course, a good deal depends upon that."

With which preface, Mrs. Nickleby took her night-cap from between the leaves of a very large prayer-book where it had been folded up small, and proceeded to tie it on ; talking away, in her usual discursive manner, all the time.

"People may say what they like," observed Mrs. Nickleby, "but there 's a great deal of comfort in a night-cap, as I 'm sure you would confess, Nicholas, my dear, if you would only have strings to yours, and wear it like a Christian, instead of sticking it upon the very top of your head like a blue-coat boy. You needn't think it an unmanly or quizzical thing to be particular about your night-cap, for I have often heard your poor dear papa, and the Reverend Mr. what 's his name, who used to read prayers in that old church with the curious little steeple that the weather-cock was blown off the night week before you were born,—I have often heard them say, that the young men at college are uncommonly particular about their night-caps, and that the Oxford night-caps are quite celebrated for their strength and goodness ; so much so, indeed, that the young men

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never dream of going to bed without 'em, and I believe it's admitted on all hands that *they* know what's good, and don't coddle themselves."

Nicholas laughed, and entering no further into the subject of this lengthened harangue, reverted to the pleasant tone of the little birthday party. And as Mrs. Nickleby instantly became very curious respecting it, and made a great number of inquiries touching what they had had for dinner, and how it was put on table, and whether it was overdone or underdone, and who was there, and what "the Mr. Cheerybles" said, and what Nicholas said, and what the Mr. Cheerybles said when he said that; Nicholas described the festivities at full length, and also the occurrences of the morning.

"Late as it is," said Nicholas, "I am almost selfish enough to wish that Kate had been up; to hear all this. I was all impatience, as I came along, to tell her."

"Why, Kate," said Mrs. Nickleby, putting her feet upon the fender, and drawing her chair close to it, as if settling herself for a long talk. "Kate has been in her bed—oh! a couple of hours—and I'm very glad, Nicholas, my dear, that I prevailed upon her not to sit up, for I wished very much to have an opportunity of saying a few words to you. I am naturally anxious about it, and of course it's a very delightful and consoling thing to have a grown-up son that one can put confidence in, and advise with; indeed I don't know any use there would be in having sons at all, unless people could put confidence in them."

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Nicholas stopped in the middle of a sleepy yawn, as his mother began to speak, and looked at her with fixed attention.

"There was a lady in our neighbourhood," said Mrs. Nickleby, "speaking of sons puts me in mind of it—a lady in our neighbourhood when we lived near Dawlish, I think her name was Rogers ; indeed I am sure it was if it wasn't Murphy, which is the only doubt I have——"

"Is it about her, mother, that you wish to speak to me ?" said Nicholas quietly.

"About *her* !" cried Mrs. Nickleby. "Good gracious, Nicholas, my dear, how *can* you be so ridiculous ! But that was always the way with your poor dear papa,—just his way—always wandering, never able to fix his thoughts on any one subject for two minutes together. I think I see him now !" said Mrs. Nickleby, wiping her eyes, "looking at me while I was talking to him about his affairs, just as if his ideas were in a state of perfect conglomeration ! Anybody who had come in upon us suddenly would have supposed I was confusing and distracting him instead of making things plainer ; upon my word they would."

"I am very sorry, mother, that I should inherit this unfortunate slowness of apprehension," said Nicholas kindly ; "but I'll do my best to understand you, if you'll only go straight on."

"Your poor papa," said Mrs. Nickleby, pondering. "He never knew, till it was too late, what I would have had him do."

This was undoubtedly the case, inasmuch as

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the deceased Mr. Nickleby had not arrived at the knowledge when he died. Neither had Mrs. Nickleby herself; which is, in some sort, an explanation of the circumstance.

"However," said Mrs. Nickleby, drying her tears, "this has nothing to do, certainly, nothing whatever to do—with the gentleman in the next house."

"I should suppose that the gentleman in the next house has as little to do with us," returned Nicholas.

"There can be no doubt," said Mrs. Nickleby, "that he *is* a gentleman, and has the manners of a gentleman, and the appearance of a gentleman, although he does wear smalls and grey worsted stockings. That may be eccentricity, or he may be proud of his legs. I don't see why he shouldn't be. The Prince Regent was proud of his legs, and so was Daniel Lambert, who was also a fat man; *he* was proud of his legs. So was Miss Biffin: she was—no," added Mrs. Nickleby, correcting herself, "I think she had only toes, but the principle is the same."

Nicholas looked on, quite amazed at the introduction of this new theme. Which seemed just what Mrs. Nickleby had expected him to be.

"You may well be surprised, Nicholas, my dear," she said, "I am sure *I* was. It came upon me like a flash of fire, and almost froze my blood. The bottom of his garden joins the bottom of ours, and of course I had several times seen him sitting among the scarlet-beans in his little arbour, or working at his little hot-beds. I used to think

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he stared rather, but I didn't take any particular notice of that, as we were new-comers, and he might be curious to see what we were like, but when he began to throw his cucumbers over our wall——”

“To throw his cucumbers over our wall?” repeated Nicholas, in great astonishment.

“Yes, Nicholas, my dear,” replied Mrs. Nickleby, in a very serious tone; “his cucumbers over our wall. And vegetable-marrows likewise.”

“Confound his impudence!” said Nicholas, firing immediately. “What does he mean by that?”

“I don't think he means it impertinently at all,” replied Mrs. Nickleby.

“What!” said Nicholas. “Cucumbers and vegetable-marrows flying at the heads of the family as they walk in their own garden, and not meant impertinently! Why, mother——”

Nicholas stopped short; for there was an indescribable expression of placid triumph, mingled with a modest confusion, lingering between the borders of Mrs. Nickleby's night-cap, which arrested his attention suddenly.

“He must be a very weak, and foolish, and inconsiderate man,” said Mrs. Nickleby; “blameable, indeed—at least I suppose other people would consider him so; of course I can't be expected to express any opinion on that point, especially after always defending your poor dear papa when other people blamed him for making proposals to me; and to be sure there can be no doubt that he has taken a very singular way of showing it. Still at the same time, his attentions are—that is, as far

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as it goes, and to a certain extent of course—a flattering sort of thing. And although I should never dream of marrying again with a dear girl like Kate still unsettled in life——”

“Surely, mother, such an idea never entered your brain for an instant?” said Nicholas.

“Bless my heart, Nicholas, my dear,” returned his mother in a peevish tone, “isn’t that precisely what I am saying, if you would only let me speak? Of course, I never gave it a second thought, and I am surprised and astonished that you should suppose me capable of such a thing. All I say is, what step is the best to take, so as to reject these advances civilly and delicately, and without hurting his feelings too much, and driving him to despair, or anything of that kind? My goodness me!” exclaimed Mrs. Nickleby, with a half simper, “suppose he was to go doin’ anything rash to himself. Could I ever be happy again, Nicholas?”

Despite his vexation and concern, Nicholas could scarcely help smiling, as he rejoined, “Now, do you think, mother, that such a result would be likely to ensue from the most cruel repulse?”

“Upon my word, my dear, I don’t know,” returned Mrs. Nickleby; “really, I don’t know. I am sure there was a case in the day before yesterday’s paper, extracted from one of the French newspapers, about a journeyman shoemaker who was jealous of a young girl in an adjoining village, because she wouldn’t shut herself up in an air-tight three-pair-of-stairs and charcoal herself to death with him; and who went and hid himself

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in a wood with a sharp-pointed knife, and rushed out, as she was passing by with a few friends, and killed himself first and then all the friends, and then her—no, killed all the friends first, and then herself, and then *himself*—which it is quite frightful to think of. Somehow or other,” added Mrs. Nickleby, after a momentary pause, “they always *are* journeyman shoemakers who do these things in France, according to the papers. I don’t know how it is—something in the leather, I suppose.”

LXXXI

Mrs. Todgers is confidential

IT being the second day of their stay in London, the Miss Pecksniffs and Mrs. Todgers were by this time highly confidential, insomuch that the last-named lady had already communicated the particulars of three early disappointments of a tender nature ; and had furthermore possessed her young friends with a general summary of the life, conduct, and character of Mr. Todgers : who, it seemed, had cut his matrimonial career rather short, by unlawfully running away from his happiness, and establishing himself in foreign countries as a bachelor.

“Your pa was once a little particular in his attentions, my dears,” said Mrs. Todgers : “but to be your ma was too much happiness denied me. You’d hardly know who this was done for, perhaps ?”

She called their attention to an oval miniature, like a little blister, which was tacked up over the

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kettle-holder, and in which there was a dreamy shadowing forth of her own visage.

"It's a speaking likeness!" cried the two Miss Pecksniffs.

"It was considered so once," said Mrs. Todgers, warming herself in a gentlemanly manner at the fire: "but I hardly thought you would have known it, my loves."

They would have known it anywhere. If they could have met with it in the street, or seen it in a shop window, they would have cried: "Good gracious! Mrs. Todgers!"

"Presiding over an establishment like this, makes sad havoc with the features, my dear Miss Pecksniffs," said Mrs. Todgers. "The gravy alone, is enough to add twenty years to one's age, I do assure you."

"Lor!" cried the two Miss Pecksniffs.

"The anxiety of that one item, my dears," said Mrs. Todgers, "keeps the mind continually upon the stretch. There is no such passion in human nature, as the passion for gravy among commercial gentlemen. It's nothing to say a joint won't yield—a whole animal wouldn't yield—the amount of gravy they expect each day at dinner. And what I have undergone in consequence," cried Mrs. Todgers, raising her eyes and shaking her head, "no one would believe!"

"Just like Mr. Pinch, Merry!" said Charity. "We have always noticed it in him, you remember?"

"Yes, my dear," giggled Merry, "but we have never given it him, you know."

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"You, my dears, having to deal with your pa's pupils who can't help themselves, are able to take your own way," said Mrs. Todgers, "but in a commercial establishment, where any gentleman may say, any Saturday evening, 'Mrs. Todgers, this day week we part, in consequence of the cheese,' it is not so easy to preserve a pleasant understanding. Your pa was kind enough," added the good lady, "to invite me to take a ride with you to-day ; and I think he mentioned that you were going to call upon Miss Pinch. Any relation to the gentleman you were speaking of just now, Miss Pecksniff ?"

"For goodness sake, Mrs. Todgers," interposed the lively Merry, "don't call him a gentleman. My dear Cherry, Pinch a gentleman ! The idea !"

"What a wicked girl you are !" cried Mrs. Todgers, embracing her with great affection. "You are quite a quiz I do declare ! My dear Miss Pecksniff, what a happiness your sister's spirits must be to your pa and self !"

LXXXII

Mrs. Gamp arrives

MRS. GAMP had a large bundle with her, a pair of pattens, and a species of gig umbrella ; the latter article in colour like a faded leaf, except where a circular patch of a lively blue had been dexterously let in at the top. She was much flurried by the haste she had made, and laboured under the most erroneous views of

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cabriolets, which she appeared to confound with mail-coaches or stage-waggons, inasmuch as she was constantly endeavouring for the first half mile to force her luggage through the little front window, and clamouring to the driver to "put it in the boot." When she was disabused of this idea, her whole being resolved itself into an absorbing anxiety about her pattens, with which she played innumerable games at quoits, on Mr. Pecksniff's legs. It was not until they were close upon the house of mourning that she had enough composure to observe :

"And so the gentleman's dead, sir ! Ah ! The more's the pity." She didn't even know his name. "But it's what we must all come to. It's as certain as being born, except that we can't make our calculations as exact. Ah ! Poor dear !"

She was a fat old woman, this Mrs. Gamp, with a husky voice and a moist eye, which she had a remarkable power of turning up, and only showing the white of it. Having very little neck, it cost her some trouble to look over herself, if one may say so, at those to whom she talked. She wore a very rusty black gown, rather the worse for snuff, and a shawl and bonnet to correspond. In these dilapidated articles of dress she had, on principle, arrayed herself, time out of mind, on such occasions as the present ; for this at once expressed a decent amount of veneration for the deceased, and invited the next of kin to present her with a fresher suit of weeds : an appeal so frequently successful, that the very fetch and ghost of Mrs. Gamp, bonnet

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and all, might be seen hanging up, any hour in the day, in at least a dozen of the second-hand clothes shops about Holborn. The face of Mrs Gamp—the nose in particular—was somewhat red and swollen, and it was difficult to enjoy her society without becoming conscious of a smell of spirits. Like most persons who have attained to great eminence in their profession, she took to hers very kindly ; insomuch, that setting aside her natural predilections as a woman, she went to a lying-in or a laying-out with equal zest and relish.

“ Ah ! ” repeated Mrs. Gamp ; for it was always a safe sentiment in cases of mourning. “ Ah dear ! When Gamp was summoned to his long home, and I see him a lying in Guy’s Hospital with a penny-piece on each eye, and his wooden leg under his left arm, I thought I should have fainted away. But I bore up.”

If certain whispers current in the Kingsgate Street circles had any truth in them, she had indeed borne up surprisingly ; and had exerted such uncommon fortitude, as to dispose of Mr. Gamp’s remains for the benefit of science. But it should be added, in fairness, that this had happened twenty years before ; and that Mr. and Mrs. Gamp had long been separated, on the ground of incompatibility of temper in their drink.

“ You have become indifferent since then, I suppose ? ” said Mr. Pecksniff. “ Use is second nature, Mrs. Gamp.”

“ You may well say second nater, sir,” returned that lady. “ One’s first ways is to find sich things a trial to the feelings, and so is one’s lasting

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custom. If it wasn't for the nerve a little sip of liquor gives me (I never was able to do more than taste it), I never could go through with what I sometimes has to do. 'Mrs. Harris,' I says, at the very last case as ever I acted in, which it was but a young person, 'Mrs. Harris,' I says, 'leave the bottle on the chimley-piece, and don't ask me to take none, but let me put my lips to it when I am so disposed, and then I will do what I am engaged to do, according to the best of my ability.' 'Mrs. Gamp,' she says, in answer, 'if ever there was a sober creetur to be got at eighteen pence a day for working people, and three and six for gentlefolks—night watching,' " said Mrs. Gamp, with emphasis, "'being a extra charge—you are that inwallable person.' 'Mrs. Harris,' I says to her, 'don't name the charge, for if I could afford to lay all my feller creeturs out for nothink, I would gladly do it, sich is the love I bears 'em. But what I always says to them as has the management of matters, Mrs. Harris : ' " here she kept her eye on Mr. Pecksniff : "'be they gents or be they ladies, is, don't ask me whether I won't take none, or whether I will, but leave the bottle on the chimley-piece, and let me put my lips to it when I am so disposed.' "

LXXXIII

Mrs. Gamp pays a call

MRS. GAMP made no response to Mr. Mould, but curtsied to Mrs. Mould again, and held up her hands and eyes, as in a devout thanksgiving

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that she looked so well. She was neatly but not gaudily attired, in the weeds she had worn when Mr. Pecksniff had the pleasure of making her acquaintance ; and was perhaps the turning of a scale more snuffy.

“ There are some happy creeturs,” Mrs. Gamp observed, “ as time runs back’ards with, and you are one, Mrs. Mould ; not that he need do nothing except use you in his most owldacious way for years to come, I ’m sure ; for young you are and will be. I says to Mrs. Harris,” Mrs. Gamp continued, “ only t’other day ; the last Monday evening fortnight as ever dawned upon this Piljian’s Projiss of a mortal wale ; I says to Mrs. Harris when she says to me, ‘ Years and our trials, Mrs. Gamp, sets marks upon us all.’—‘ Say not the words, Mrs. Harris, if you and me is to be continual friends, for sech is not the case. Mrs. Mould,’ I says, making so free, I will confess, as use the name ” (she curtseyed here) “ ‘ is one of them that goes agen the observation straight ; and never, Mrs. Harris, whilst I ’ve a drop of breath to draw, will I set by, and not stand up, don’t think it.’—‘ I ast your pardon, ma’am,’ says Mrs. Harris, ‘ and I humbly grant your grace ; for if ever a woman lived as would see her feller creeturs into fits to serve her friends, well do I know that woman’s name is Sairey Gamp.’ ”

At this point she was fain to stop for breath ; and advantage may be taken of the circumstance, to state that a fearful mystery surrounded this lady of the name of Harris, whom no one in the circle of Mrs. Gamp’s acquaintance had ever seen ; neither

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did any human being know her place of residence, though Mrs. Gamp appeared on her own showing to be in constant communication with her. There were conflicting rumours on the subject ; but the prevalent opinion was that she was a phantom of Mrs. Gamp's brain—as Messrs. Doe and Roe are fictions of the law—created for the express purpose of holding visionary dialogues with her on all manner of subjects, and invariably winding up with a compliment to the excellence of her nature.

“And likewise what a pleasure,” said Mrs. Gamp, turning with a tearful smile towards the daughters, “to see them two young ladies as I know'd afore a tooth in their pretty heads was cut, and have many a day seen—ah, the sweet creeturs !—playing at berryins down in the shop, and follerin' the order-book to its long home in the iron safe ! But that's all past and over, Mr. Mould ;” as she thus got in a carefully regulated routine to that gentleman, she shook her head waggishly ; “That's all past and over now, sir, an't it ?”

“Changes, Mrs. Gamp, changes !” returned the undertaker.

“More changes too, to come, afore we've done with changes, sir,” said Mrs. Gamp, nodding yet more waggishly than before. “Young ladies with such faces thinks of something else besides berryins, don't they, sir ?”

“I am sure I don't know, Mrs. Gamp,” said Mould, with a chuckle.—“Not bad in Mrs. Gamp, my dear ?”

“Oh yes, you do know, sir !” said Mrs. Gamp,

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“and so does Mrs. Mould, your ’andsome pardner too, sir ; and so do I, although the blessing of a daughter was deniged me ; which, if we had had one, Gamp would certainly have drunk its little shoes right off its feet, as with our precious boy he did, and arterwards send the child a errand to sell his wooden leg for any money it would fetch as matches in the rough, and bring it home in liquor : which was truly done beyond his years, for ev’ry individgle penny that child lost at toss or buy for kidney ones : and come home arterwards quite bold, to break the news, and offering to drown himself if that would be a satisfaction to his parents.—Oh yes, you do know, sir,” said Mrs. Gamp, wiping her eye with her shawl, and resuming the thread of her discourse. “There’s something besides births and berryins in the newspapers, an’t there, Mr. Mould ? ”

Mr. Mould winked at Mrs. Mould, whom he had by this time taken on his knee, and said : “No doubt. A good deal more, Mrs. Gamp. Upon my life, Mrs. Gamp is very far from bad, my dear ! ”

“There’s marryings, an’t there, sir ? ” said Mrs. Gamp, while both the daughters blushed and tittered. “Bless their precious hearts, and well they knows it ! Well you know’d it too, and well did Mrs. Mould, when you was at their time of life ! But my opinion is, you’re all of one age now. For as to you and Mrs. Mould, sir, ever having grand-children——”

“Oh ! Fie, fie ! Nonsense, Mrs. Gamp,” replied the undertaker. “Devilish smart, though.

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Ca-pi-tal !” This was in a whisper. “My dear—” aloud again—“Mrs. Gamp can drink a glass of rum, I dare say. Sit down, Mrs. Gamp, sit down.”

Mrs. Gamp took the chair that was nearest the door, and casting up her eyes towards the ceiling, feigned to be wholly insensible to the fact of a glass of rum being in preparation, until it was placed in her hand by one of the young ladies, when she exhibited the greatest surprise.

“A thing,” she said, “as hardly ever, Mrs. Mould, occurs with me unless it is when I am indisposed, and find my half a pint of porter settling heavy on the chest. Mrs. Harris often and often says to me, ‘Sairey Gamp,’ she says, ‘you raly do amaze me !’ ‘Mrs. Harris,’ I says to her, ‘why so ? Give it a name, I beg.’ ‘Telling the truth then, ma’am,’ says Mrs. Harris, ‘and shaming him as shall be nameless betwixt you and me, never did I think till I know’d you, as any woman could sick-nurse and monthly likeways, on the little that you takes to drink.’ ‘Mrs. Harris,’ I says to her, ‘none on us knows what we can do till we tries ; and wunst, when me and Gamp kept ’ouse, I thought so too. But now,’ I says, ‘my half a pint of porter fully satisfies ; perwisin’, Mrs. Harris, that it is brought reg’lar, and draw’d mild. Whether I sick or monthlies, ma’am, I hope I does my duty, but I am but a poor woman, and I earns my living hard ; therefore I *do* require it, which I makes confession, to be brought reg’lar and draw’d mild.’”

The precise connexion between these observa-

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tions and a glass of rum, did not appear ; for Mrs. Gamp proposing as a toast "The best of lucks to all !" took off the dram in quite a scientific manner, without any further remarks.

LXXXIV

Mrs. Gamp and Mrs. Prig have it out

"**B**ETSEY," said Mrs. Gamp, filling her own glass, and passing the tea-pot, "I will now propoge a toast. My frequent pardner, Betsey Prig !"

"Which, altering the name to Sairah Gamp, I drink," said Mrs. Prig, "with love and tenderness."

From this moment symptoms of inflammation began to lurk in the nose of each lady ; and perhaps, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, in the temper also.

"Now, Sairah," said Mrs. Prig, "joining business with pleasure, wot is this case in which you wants me ?"

Mrs. Gamp betraying in her face some intention of returning an evasive answer, Betsey added :

"Is it Mrs. Harris ?"

"No, Betsey Prig, it ain't," was Mrs. Gamp's reply.

"Well !" said Mrs. Prig, with a short laugh. "I 'm glad of that, at any rate."

"Why should you be glad of that, Betsey ?" Mrs. Gamp returned, warmly. "She is unbeknown to you except by hearsay, why should you be glad ? If you have anythink to say contrairy to

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the character of Mrs. Harris, which well I knows behind her back, afore her face, or anywheres, is not to be impeaged, out with it, Betsey. I have know'd that sweetest and best of women," said Mrs. Gamp, shaking her head and shedding tears, "ever since afore her First, which Mr. Harris who was dreadful timid went and stopped his ears in a empty dog-kennel, and never took his hands away or come out once till he was showed the baby, wen bein' took with fits, the doctor collared him and laid him on his back upon the airy stones, and she was told to ease her mind, his owls was organs. And I have know'd her, Betsey Prig, when he has hurt her feelin' art by sayin' of his Ninth that it was one too many, if not two, while that dear innocent was cooin' in his face, which thrive it did though bandy, but I have never know'd as you had occagion to be glad, Betsey, on accounts of Mrs. Harris not requiring you. Require she never will, depend upon it, for her constant words in sickness is, and will be, 'Send for Sairey!'"

During this touching address, Mrs. Prig adroitly feigning to be the victim of that absence of mind which has its origin in excessive attention to one topic, helped herself from the tea-pot without appearing to observe it. Mrs. Gamp observed it, however, and came to a premature close in consequence.

"Well, it an't her, it seems," said Mrs. Prig, coldly : "who is it then ?"

"You have heerd me mention, Betsey," Mrs. Gamp replied, after glancing in an expressive and marked manner at the tea-pot, "a person as I took

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care on at the time as you and me was pardners off and on, in that there fever at the Bull ? ”

“ Old Snuffey,” Mrs. Prig observed.

Sarah Gamp looked at her with an eye of fire, for she saw in this mistake of Mrs. Prig, another wilful and malignant stab at that same weakness or custom of hers, an ungenerous allusion to which, on the part of Betsey, had first disturbed their harmony that evening. And she saw it still more clearly, when, politely but firmly correcting that lady by the distinct enunciation of the word “ Chuffey,” Mrs. Prig received the correction with a diabolical laugh.

The best among us have their failings, and it must be conceded of Mrs. Prig, that if there were a blemish in the goodness of her disposition, it was a habit she had of not bestowing all its sharp and acid properties upon her patients (as a thoroughly amiable woman would have done), but of keeping a considerable remainder for the service of her friends. Highly pickled salmon, and lettuces chopped up in vinegar, may, as viands possessing some acidity of their own, have encouraged and increased this failing in Mrs. Prig ; and every application to the tea-pot, certainly did ; for it was often remarked of her by her friends, that she was most contradictory when most elevated. It is certain that her countenance became about this time derisive and defiant, and that she sat with her arms folded, and one eye shut up, in a somewhat offensive, because obtrusively intelligent, manner.

Mrs. Gamp observing this, felt it the more necessary that Mrs. Prig should know her place,

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and be made sensible of her exact station in society, as well as of her obligations to herself. She therefore assumed an air of greater patronage and importance, as she went on to answer Mrs. Prig a little more in detail.

“Mr. Chuffey, Betsey,” said Mrs. Gamp, “is weak in his mind. Excuse me if I makes remark, that he may neither be so weak as people thinks, nor people may not think he is so weak as they pretends, and what I knows, I knows ; and what you don’t, you don’t ; so do not ask me, Betsey. But Mr. Chuffey’s friends has made propojals for his bein’ took care on, and has said to me, ‘Mrs. Gamp, *will* you undertake it? We couldn’t think,’ they says, ‘of trusting him to nobody but you, for, Sairey, you are gold as has passed the furnage. Will you undertake it, at your own price, day and night, and by your own self?’ ‘No,’ I says, ‘I will not. Do not reckon on it. There is,’ I says, ‘but one creetur in the world as I would undertake on sech terms, and her name is Harris. But,’ I says, ‘I am acquainted with a friend, whose name is Betsey Prig, that I can recommend, and will assist me. Betsey,’ I says, ‘is always to be trusted, under me, and will be guided as I could desire.’”

Here Mrs. Prig, without any abatement of her offensive manner, again counterfeited abstraction of mind, and stretched out her hand to the tea-pot. It was more than Mrs. Gamp could bear. She stopped the hand of Mrs. Prig with her own, and said, with great feeling :

“No, Betsey ! Drink fair, wotever you do !”

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Mrs. Prig, thus baffled, threw herself back in her chair, and closing the same eye more emphatically, and folding her arms tighter, suffered her head to roll slowly from side to side, while she surveyed her friend with a contemptuous smile.

Mrs. Gamp resumed :

“ Mrs. Harris, Betsey——”

“ Bother Mrs. Harris ! ” said Betsey Prig.

Mrs. Gamp looked at her with amazement, incredulity, and indignation ; when Mrs. Prig, shutting her eye still closer, and folding her arms still tighter, uttered these memorable and tremendous words :

“ I don’t believe there ’s no sich a person ! ”

After the utterance of which expressions, she leaned forward, and snapped her fingers once, twice, thrice ; each time nearer to the face of Mrs. Gamp, and then rose to put on her bonnet, as one who felt that there was now a gulf between them, which nothing could ever bridge across.

The shock of this blow was so violent and sudden, that Mrs. Gamp sat staring at nothing with uplifted eyes, and her mouth open as if she were gasping for breath, until Betsey Prig had put on her bonnet and her shawl, and was gathering the latter about her throat. Then Mrs. Gamp rose—morally and physically rose—and denounced her.

“ What ! ” said Mrs. Gamp, “ you bage creetur, have I know’d Mrs. Harris five and thirty year, to be told at last that there ain’t no sech a person livin’ ! Have I stood her friend in all her troubles, great and small, for it to come at last to sech a end

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as this, which her own sweet picter hanging up afore you all the time, to shame your Bragian words ! But well you mayn't believe there's no sech a creetur, for she wouldn't demean herself to look at you, and often has she said, when I have made mention of your name, which, to my sinful sorrow, I have done, 'What, Sairey Gamp ! debage yourself to *her* !' Go along with you !"

"I'm a goin', ma'am, ain't I ?" said Mrs. Prig, stopping as she said it.

"You had better, ma'am," said Mrs. Gamp.

"Do you know who you're talking to, ma'am ?" inquired her visitor.

"Aperiently," said Mrs. Gamp, surveying her with scorn from head to foot, "to Betsey Prig. Aperiently so. *I* know her. No one better. Go along with you !"

LXXXV

Mrs. Micawber on the Medway coal trade

"**I** THOUGHT you were at Plymouth, ma'am," I said to Mrs. Micawber, as he went out.

"My dear Master Copperfield," she replied, "we went to Plymouth."

"To be on the spot," I hinted.

"Just so," said Mrs. Micawber. "To be on the spot. But, the truth is, talent is not wanted in the Custom House. The local influence of my family was quite unavailing to obtain any employment in that department, for a man of Mr. Micawber's abilities. They would rather *not* have a man of

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Mr. Micawber's abilities. He would only show the deficiency of the others. Apart from which," said Mrs. Micawber, "I will not disguise from you, my dear Master Copperfield, that when that branch of my family which is settled in Plymouth became aware that Mr. Micawber was accompanied by myself, and by little Wilkins and his sister, and by the twins, they did not receive him with that ardour which he might have expected, being so newly released from captivity. In fact," said Mrs. Micawber, lowering her voice,—“this is between ourselves—our reception was cool.”

“Dear me !” I said.

“Yes,” said Mrs. Micawber. “It is truly painful to contemplate mankind in such an aspect, Master Copperfield, but our reception was, decidedly, cool. There is no doubt about it. In fact, that branch of my family which is settled in Plymouth became quite personal to Mr. Micawber, before we had been there a week.”

I said, and thought, that they ought to be ashamed of themselves.

“Still, so it was,” continued Mrs. Micawber. “Under such circumstances, what could a man of Mr. Micawber's spirit do? But one obvious course was left. To borrow of that branch of my family the money to return to London, and to return at any sacrifice.”

“Then you all came back again, ma'am?” I said.

“We all came back again,” replied Mrs. Micawber. “Since then I have consulted other branches of my family on the course which it is

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most expedient for Mr. Micawber to take—for I maintain that he must take some course, Master Copperfield,” said Mrs. Micawber, argumentatively. “It is clear that a family of six, not including a domestic, cannot live upon air.”

“Certainly, ma’am,” said I.

“The opinion of those other branches of my family,” pursued Mrs. Micawber, “is, that Mr. Micawber should immediately turn his attention to coals.”

“To what, ma’am ? ”

“To coals,” said Mrs. Micawber. “To the coal trade. Mr. Micawber was induced to think, on inquiry, that there might be an opening for a man of his talent in the Medway Coal Trade. Then, as Mr. Micawber very properly said, the first step to be taken clearly was, to come and *see* the Medway. Which we came and saw. I say ‘we,’ Master Copperfield ; for I never will,” said Mrs. Micawber with emotion, “I never will desert Mr. Micawber.”

I murmured my admiration and approbation.

“We came,” repeated Mrs. Micawber, “and saw the Medway. My opinion of the coal trade on that river is, that it may require talent, but that it certainly requires capital. Talent, Mr. Micawber has ; capital, Mr. Micawber has not. We saw, I think, the greater part of the Medway ; and that is my individual conclusion. Being so near here, Mr. Micawber was of opinion that it would be rash not to come on, and see the Cathedral. Firstly, on account of its being so well worth seeing, and our never having seen it ; and secondly, on

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account of the great probability of something turning up in a cathedral town. We have been here," said Mrs. Micawber, "three days. Nothing has, as yet, turned up ; and it may not surprise you, my dear Master Copperfield, so much as it would a stranger, to know that we are at present waiting for a remittance from London, to discharge our pecuniary obligations at this hotel. Until the arrival of that remittance," said Mrs. Micawber with much feeling, "I am cut off from my home (I allude to lodgings in Pentonville), from my boy and girl, and from my twins."

LXXXVI

Mrs. Micawber reviews the whole situation

"**B**UT punch, my dear Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, tasting it, "like time and tide, waits for no man. Ah ! it is at the present moment in high flavour. My love, will you give me your opinion ?"

Mrs. Micawber pronounced it excellent.

"Then I will drink," said Mr. Micawber, "if my friend Copperfield will permit me to take that social liberty, to the days when my friend Copperfield and myself were younger, and fought our way in the world side by side. I may say, of myself and Copperfield, in words we have sung together before now, that

'We twa hae run about the braes
And pu'd the gowans fine'

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—in a figurative point of view—on several occasions. I am not exactly aware,” said Mr. Micawber, with the old roll in his voice, and the old indescribable air of saying something genteel, “what gowans may be, but I have no doubt that Copperfield and myself would frequently have taken a pull at them, if it had been feasible.”

Mr. Micawber, at the then present moment, took a pull at his punch. So we all did : Traddles evidently lost in wondering at what distant time Mr. Micawber and I could have been comrades in the battle of the world.

“Ahem !” said Mr. Micawber, clearing his throat, and warming with the punch and the fire. “My dear, another glass ?”

Mrs. Micawber said it must be very little ; but we couldn’t allow that, so it was a glassful.

“As we are quite confidential here, Mr. Copperfield,” said Mrs. Micawber, sipping her punch, “Mr. Traddles being a part of our domesticity, I should much like to have your opinion on Mr. Micawber’s prospects. For corn,” said Mrs. Micawber argumentatively, “as I have repeatedly said to Mr. Micawber, may be gentlemanly, but it is not remunerative. Commission to the extent of two and ninepence in a fortnight cannot, however limited our ideas, be considered remunerative.”

We were all agreed upon that.

“Then,” said Mrs. Micawber, who prided herself upon taking a clear view of things, and keeping Mr. Micawber straight by her woman’s wisdom, when he might otherwise go a little crooked, “then I ask myself this question. If

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corn is not to be relied upon, what is ? Are coals to be relied upon ? Not at all. We have turned our attention to that experiment, on the suggestion of my family, and we find it fallacious."

Mr. Micawber, leaning back in his chair with his hands in his pockets, eyed us aside, and nodded his head, as much as to say that the case was very clearly put.

"The articles of corn and coals," said Mrs. Micawber, still more argumentatively, "being equally out of the question, Mr. Copperfield, I naturally look round the world, and say, 'What is there in which a person of Mr. Micawber's talent is likely to succeed ?' And I exclude the doing anything on commission, because commission is not a certainty. What is best suited to a person of Mr. Micawber's peculiar temperament, is, I am convinced, a certainty."

Traddles and I both expressed, by a feeling murmur, that this great discovery was no doubt true of Mr. Micawber, and that it did him much credit.

"I will not conceal from you, my dear Mr. Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, "that *I* have long felt the Brewing business to be particularly adapted to Mr. Micawber. Look at Barclay and Perkins ! Look at Truman, Hanbury, and Buxton ! It is on that extensive footing that Mr. Micawber, I know from my own knowledge of him, is calculated to shine ; and the profits, I am told, are e-NOR—mous ! But if Mr. Micawber cannot get into those firms—which decline to answer his letters, when he offers his services even

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in an inferior capacity—what is the use of dwelling upon that idea? None. I may have a conviction that Mr. Micawber's manners——”

“Hem! Really, my dear,” interposed Mr. Micawber.

“My love, be silent,” said Mrs. Micawber, laying her brown glove on his hand. “I may have a conviction, Mr. Copperfield, that Mr. Micawber's manners peculiarly qualify him for the Banking business. I may argue within myself, that if *I* had a deposit at a banking-house, the manners of Mr. Micawber, as representing that banking-house, would inspire confidence, and must extend the connexion. But if the various banking-houses refuse to avail themselves of Mr. Micawber's abilities, or receive the offer of them with contumely, what is the use of dwelling upon *that* idea? None. As to originating a banking-business, I may know that there are members of my family who, if they chose to place their money in Mr. Micawber's hands, might found an establishment of that description. But if they do *not* choose to place their money in Mr. Micawber's hands—which they don't—what is the use of that? Again I contend that we are no farther advanced than we were before.”

I shook my head, and said, “Not a bit.” Traddles also shook his head, and said, “Not a bit.”

“What do I deduce from this?” Mrs. Micawber went on to say, still with the same air of putting a case lucidly. “What is the conclusion, my dear Mr. Copperfield, to which I am irresistibly

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brought ? Am I wrong in saying, it is clear that we must live ? ”

I answered “Not at all !” and Traddles answered “Not at all !” and I found myself afterwards sagely adding, alone, that a person must either live or die.

“Just so,” returned Mrs. Micawber. “It is precisely that. And the fact is, my dear Mr. Copperfield, that we can *not* live without something widely different from existing circumstances shortly turning up. Now I am convinced, myself, and this I have pointed out to Mr. Micawber several times of late, that things cannot be expected to turn up of themselves. We must, in a measure, assist to turn them up. I may be wrong, but I have formed that opinion.”

Both Traddles and I applauded it highly.

“Very well,” said Mrs. Micawber. “Then what do I recommend ? Here is Mr. Micawber with a variety of qualifications—with great talent——”

“Really, my love,” said Mr. Micawber.

“Pray, my dear, allow me to conclude. Here is Mr. Micawber, with a variety of qualifications, with great talent—I should say, with genius, but that may be the partiality of a wife——”

Traddles and I both murmured “No.”

“And here is Mr. Micawber without any suitable position or employment. Where does that responsibility rest ? Clearly on society. Then I would make a fact so disgraceful known, and boldly challenge society to set it right. It appears to me, my dear Mr. Copperfield,” said Mrs.

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Micawber, forcibly, "that what Mr. Micawber has to do, is to throw down the gauntlet to society, and say, in effect, 'Show me who will take that up. Let the party immediately step forward.'"

I ventured to ask Mrs. Micawber how this was to be done.

"By advertising," said Mrs. Micawber—"in all the papers. It appears to me, that what Mr. Micawber has to do, in justice to himself, in justice to his family, and I will even go so far as to say in justice to society, by which he has been hitherto overlooked, is to advertise in all the papers; to describe himself plainly as so-and-so, with such-and-such qualifications, and to put it thus: 'Now employ me, on remunerative terms, and address, post-paid, to *W. M.*, Post Office, Camden Town.'"

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Mrs. Micawber points the way

the voyage, I shall endeavour," said Mr. Micawber, "occasionally to spin them a yarn; and the melody of my son Wilkins will, I trust, be acceptable at the galley-fire. When Mrs. Micawber has her sea-legs on—an expression in which I hope there is no conventional impropriety—she will give them, I dare say, Little Taffin. Porpoises and dolphins, I believe, will be frequently observed athwart our Bows, and, either on the Starboard or the Larboard Quarter, objects of interest will be continually descried. In short," said Mr. Micawber, with the old genteel

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air, "the probability is, all will be found so exciting, alow and aloft, that when the look-out, stationed in the main-top, cries Land-ho ! we shall be very considerably astonished !"

With that he flourished off the contents of his little tin pot, as if he had made the voyage, and had passed a first-class examination before the highest naval authorities.

"What *I* chiefly hope, my dear Mr. Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, "is, that in some branches of our family we may live again in the old country. Do not frown, Micawber ! I do not now refer to my own family, but to our children's children. However vigorous the sapling," said Mrs. Micawber, shaking her head, "I cannot forget the parent-tree ; and when our race attains to eminence and fortune, I own I should wish that fortune to flow into the coffers of Britannia."

"My dear," said Mr. Micawber, "Britannia must take her chance. I am bound to say that she has never done much for me, and that I have no particular wish upon the subject."

"Micawber," returned Mrs. Micawber, "there you are wrong. You are going out, Micawber, to this distant clime, to strengthen, not to weaken, the connexion between yourself and Albion."

"The connexion in question, my love," rejoined Mr. Micawber, "has not laid me, I repeat, under that load of personal obligation, that I am at all sensitive as to the formation of another connexion."

"Micawber," returned Mrs. Micawber, "there, I again say, you are wrong. You do not know

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your power, Micawber. It is that which will strengthen, even in this step you are about to take, the connexion between yourself and Albion."

Mr. Micawber sat in his elbow-chair, with his eyebrows raised, half receiving and half repudiating Mrs. Micawber's views as they were stated, but very sensible of their foresight.

"My dear Mr. Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, "I wish Mr. Micawber to feel his position. It appears to me highly important that Mr. Micawber should, from the hour of his embarkation, feel his position. Your old knowledge of me, my dear Mr. Copperfield, will have told you that I have not the sanguine disposition of Mr. Micawber. My disposition is, if I may say so, eminently practical. I know that this is a long voyage. I know that it will involve many privations and inconveniences. I cannot shut my eyes to those facts. But, I also know what Mr. Micawber is. I know the latent power of Mr. Micawber. And therefore I consider it vitally important that Mr. Micawber should feel his position."

"My love," he observed, "perhaps you will allow me to remark that it is barely possible that I *do* feel my position at the present moment."

"I think not, Micawber," she rejoined. "Not fully. My dear Mr. Copperfield, Mr. Micawber's is not a common case. Mr. Micawber is going to a distant country expressly in order that he may be fully understood and appreciated for the first time. I wish Mr. Micawber to take his stand upon that vessel's prow, and firmly say, 'This

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country I am come to conquer ! Have you honours ? Have you riches ? Have you posts of profitable pecuniary emolument ? Let them be brought forward. They are mine ! ’ ’

Mr. Micawber, glancing at us all, seemed to think there was a good deal in this idea.

“ I wish Mr. Micawber, if I make myself understood,” said Mrs. Micawber, in her argumentative tone, “ to be the Cæsar of his own fortunes. That, my dear Mr. Copperfield, appears to me to be his true position. From the first moment of this voyage, I wish Mr. Micawber to stand upon that vessel’s prow and say, ‘ Enough of delay : enough of disappointment : enough of limited means. That was in the old country. This is the new. Produce your reparation. Bring it forward ! ’ ”

Mr. Micawber folded his arms in a resolute manner, as if he were then stationed on the figure-head.

“ And doing that,” said Mrs. Micawber, “ —feeling his position—am I not right in saying that Mr. Micawber will strengthen, and not weaken, his connexion with Britain ? An important public character arising in that hemisphere, shall I be told that its influence will not be felt at home ? Can I be so weak as to imagine that Mr. Micawber, wielding the rod of talent and of power in Australia, will be nothing in England ? I am but a woman ; but I should be unworthy of myself, and of my papa, if I were guilty of such absurd weakness.”

Mrs. Micawber’s conviction that her arguments were unanswerable, gave a moral elevation

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to her tone which I think I had never heard in it before.

“And therefore it is,” said Mrs. Micawber, “that I the more wish, that, at a future period, we may live again on the parent soil. Mr. Micawber may be—I cannot disguise from myself that the probability is, Mr. Micawber will be—a page of History ; and he ought then to be represented in the country which gave him birth, and did *not* give him employment !”

“My love,” observed Mr. Micawber, “it is impossible for me not to be touched by your affection. I am always willing to defer to your good sense. What will be—will be. Heaven forbid that I should grudge my native country any portion of the wealth that may be accumulated by our descendants !”

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