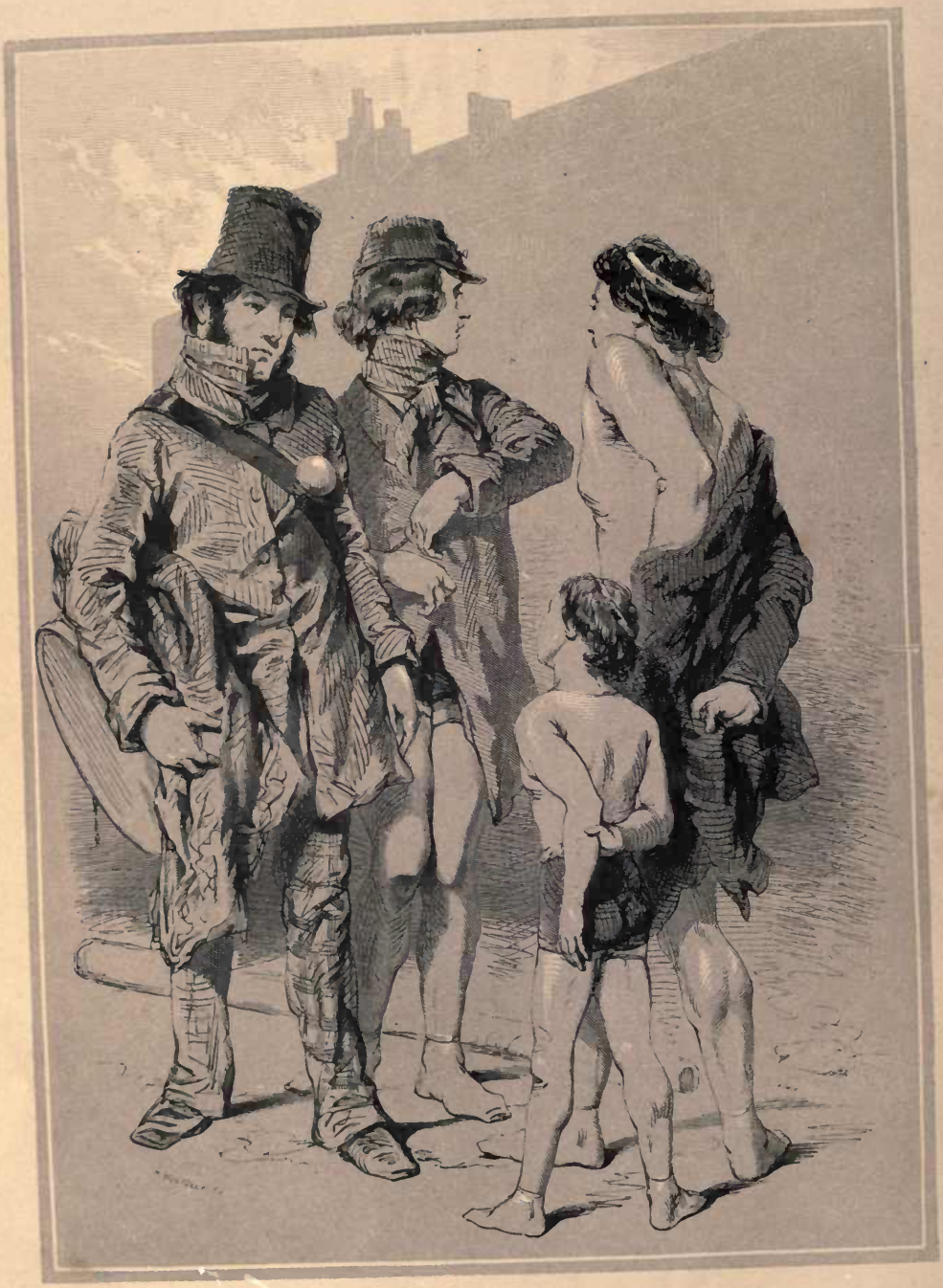

GAVARNI IN LONDON

EDITED BY ALBERT SMITH.

GAVARNI IN LONDON:

Sketches of Life and Character,

WITH

ILLUSTRATIVE ESSAYS BY POPULAR WRITERS.

EDITED BY ALBERT SMITH.

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ACROBATS.

[FRONTISPIECE.]

As you pass through one of those low, densely-populated districts of London where narrow dirty streets show the openings of noisome courts, narrower and dirtier still, and these again conduct to alleys, so dark and close, that sunlight never comes lower down the houses than the parapets of their roofs, you will be struck, above all things, by the swarms of children everywhere collected. They scuffle about, and run across your path, and disappear, like rabbits in a warren, in obscure holes. They wait on the kerb until a cab approaches, and run under the very knees of the horse. They collect round the open water plug, and spend the entire day there, all returning wet through to the skin. They form the great proportion of Mr. Punch's audience, when his scream is heard in the adjacent large thoroughfare. The barrage of the Nile is rivalled by their indefatigable attempts to obstruct the gutters with rubbish, and form basins in which to launch their walnut shells.

These children are not altogether the results of over-fecundity of the inhabitants, for the families thereabouts abiding are by no means large. You occasionally see a girl of seven or eight years staggering under the weight of a baby whose sole nurse she is; but seldom find them with brothers and sisters. They are only acquaintances. Their parents live huddled up in dirty single rooms, repelling all attempts to improve their condition—for, "The People," we regret to say, are naturally fond of dirt—and, whenever the rain is not actually pouring down in torrents, they turn their children out to find means of amusement and subsistence, at the same time, in the streets.

Of all their favourite haunts, there is not one more popular than the bit of open ground where a mass of houses have been pulled down to make room for a new street or building. If they find an old beam of timber, so much the better. They unite their pigmy forces to turn it into a see-saw, and, this accomplished, a policeman is the only power that can drive them from the spot. They build forts with brick-bats. They scuffle the mounds of rubbish perfectly smooth by running, or being dragged up and down them; they excavate caves, and make huts; and know of nothing in the world capable of affording such delight, except it be the laying down, or taking up, of some wooden pavement.

Picture such a bit of ground, on a fine afternoon, alive with children. Amongst the revellers there is a boy, who for the last five minutes has been hanging by his legs to a bit of temporary railing, with his hair sweeping the ground. Others would have had a fit long before, but this appears to be his natural position. On quitting it, without caring for the empty applause of the crowd, he goes to a retired corner of the plot, and, gravely putting his head and hands upon the ground, at a short distance from the wall, turns his heels up in the air, until he touches the house with his feet. This accomplished, he whistles a nigger melody, claps his shoeless soles together, goes through certain telegraphic evolutions with his legs, and then calmly resumes his normal position, and walks away, not caring whether anybody regards him or not.

This boy is destined to become an Acrobat—at a more advanced period of his life to perform feats of suppleness and agility in the mud of the streets, the saw-dust of the circus, or the turf of a race-course. His life will pass in a marvellous series of positions, and its ordinary level course will be unknown to him. He will look upon chairs as articles of furniture only used to support people with the crown of their heads on the top back rail, or their legs on the seats of two stretched out to the utmost extent allowed by their length. Ladders, with him, will in future only be ascended by twisting in and out the rounds like a serpent; and his fellow-tumblers will be regarded merely as component parts of the living pedestal which is to elevate him, when required, to the level of the first-floor windows.

The young Olympian gradually learns his business. He first of all runs away from home and joins a troop of these agile wanderers—these British Bedouins of the wilds and common-lands—to whom he serves an apprenticeship. It is his task, whilst sufficiently light and slender, to be tossed about on the elevated feet of a "Professor"—to form the top figure of the living column or pyramid, or to have his heels twisted round his neck, and then to be thrown about or worn as a turban by the strongest man of the party—he with the stalwart arms and wonderful external muscles of the thigh, which are set like bands of iron when he is supporting his fellows. Next, in his hobbledehoy state of transition—when he has grown too tall for the business just named, but not sufficiently matured in his limbs to undertake the leading tumbling—his office is to clear the ring with the large balls at the ends of a cord, and to solicit the contributions of the spectators whilst the others are preparing for some feat more frightful than any yet witnessed. And finally, he proves his fibres to be as firmly braced as those of his companions, and comes out in the ochred cotton tights, the rusty-spangled braces, and the fillet of blackened silver-cord, as the perfect Acrobat.

Henceforth his life is one of the severest labour—unsettled, wandering, and devil-may-care as his disposition may be, he cannot be called idle. The powers of enduring physical exertion which these people acquire, by the constant exercise of their limbs, is extraordinary. In the months of the races near London—which period forms their "season" *par excellence*—you will see them on the road to Epsom, Moulsey, Egham, or Ascot even, long before the rush begins, in the grey morning, and whilst the dew-drops still sparkle on the blades of grass at the way-side, to be turned into pellets of mud by the dust in a few hours. They are all ready attired for the course, but their finery is concealed by the ragged great-coat and second-hand tweed-wrapper of their domestic life. One carries the drum upon his back; another has, rolled up under his arm, the old piece of stair-carpet inseparable from all street-tumblers and dancers, the parallel pattern of which is never seen anywhere else, except in the second-floors of lodging-houses. Following them is a thinly-clad haggard woman, with a child at her breast, and carrying, in addition, two or three foils, or swords, which are the "properties" of one of the most daring feats, in the somersault and trempoline line. She intends likewise to ply a double line of business, for she carries some of the cards, wherewith to tempt the "noble sportsmen" of the hot noontide. *Apropos* of these race-course frequenters, it is difficult to conceive what are their means of existence at other seasons. Their being appears to be inseparably connected with booths, flags, bad cigars, betting-stands, parasols, and carriages. That they live out the winter, is evident from their re-appearances during the next summer; but where they hybernate has never been ascertained. We expect there is some secret island to which dwarfs, giants, and gipsies; jockeys, thimble-riggers, snuff-box throwers, and imperfect sailors: together with Messrs. Dorling, Lindsey, Oxley, and Wetton—"first in the lists"—all go off, and there abide together until the announcement of the First Spring Meeting recalls them to the world again.

To our Acrobats, however: whom we ran away from on the road to the races at early morning. Well, they walk this distance, which would be, in itself, a fair day's exercise for a man of average health; and at eleven o'clock begin a series of extraordinary performances, which continue until six, their intervals of repose being the time between the second bell for clearing the course and the end of the race. They never show signs of weariness: their last performance is as wonderful as their first; and as long as a solitary carriage remains at the ropes, so long do they keep up their exhibition. At night they are proudly independent of a tiled or slated roof. If it is fine and warm, they bivouac in the warren or on the heath, where the hurdles

trimmed with fern, which helped to shelter the horses or the tubs from the heat, make a very good shelter: if the night is dewy or cold—and their great exertions have made them very susceptible—the corner of some canvas hostel is always open to them. They sleep long and heavily. The sun is high up before they rise the next morning.

The Acrobats are generally seen in London after the racing season, or when the metropol s lies in their way from one course to another. Some go to the sea-side—that is to say, to Thanet Tivolis and Ranelaghs; and we have encountered a party of English tumblers at Boulogne. Others join travelling companies of equestrians, who go from town to town with a moveable circus—the followers of the mountebanks who visited the villages in our young days. But still the number of summer flip-flap throwers is not accounted for. Without doubt they lie by to practise fresh feats; but in what lodging they can perfect themselves in standing three high upon one another's heads—in what building even, except Westminster Hall—is puzzling to imagine.

When the pantomimes begin, the Acrobats find a new field for employment. In the slim spangled figures introduced in festival scenes, as "The Mexican Wonders," or "The Thomsoni Family," you would hardly recognise your old acquaintances of the race-course. They do not, however, always have the good fortune to appear as principals. The majority engage as supernumeraries: and it is not until the stage-manager at rehearsal wants some daring spirit to tumble from the sky-borders on to the stage; to go round on the sails of a windmill amidst fireworks; or to be knocked through a door, or out of a window, or down a trap, that a pale man, in an old coat that you have seen before, steps forward from the crowd at the wings, and says that he will undertake it, and that he can do any tumbling business required, for he is an Acrobat.

This is the boy who stood upon his head, on the plot of improvement ground—the youth who cleared the ring for the street performance—the man who threw his legs over his shoulders and hopped upon his hands, on the race-course. He is, perhaps, found to be a useful fellow and kept in the theatre, until he becomes a *sine quâ non* of the pantomime, and, in the decline of life, the old nobleman of a ballet. And in the constant employment of welcoming guests to village festivals, making hopeless love to the heroines, and expressing every known passion to order, upon the shortest notice, his life passes away.

ALBERT SMITH.

THE OPERA.

"Ce *sont des plaisirs vifs et charmants qu'il faut goûter et non décrire.*" Thus, if we remember aright, pleads the excellent Philarète Chasles, as an excuse for not doing with his pen what his compatriot, M. Gavarni, has so happily done with his pencil. As, with all deference to the sensibilities of M. Chasles, one usually finds it a far easier task to describe pleasures than to feel them, we hesitate to offer his ingenious plea for avoiding ground which is so well known as to be dangerous. It would perhaps be better, and certainly it would be truer, to allege that one follows this artist with about as much chance of putting the subject in a new light, as is left to the young gentleman "with" Talfourd or Thesiger, when either advocate has sat down after his speech.

Still, if one chose to be dreary, and were not troubled with a literary conscience, it would be easy to divulge several very instructive things about the Italian Opera. And we know, quite well, how we should treat the subject if we were writing for the worthy millions, and not for *la crême*. Do you think we should not remark upon the influence which music has exercised in all ages, and give a cursory biography of all the instrument-makers, from Tubal Cain to Erard? Should we not be classically enthusiastic concerning the choral strains of Greece, and reverentially inquisitive about the Hebraic anthems? And if a reader escaped without an introduction to Sappho, and an allusion to Orpheus, and a new version of the story of Arion, he would get off better than we think he ought. What is the use of all the general information which writers read up, if it is not to be reprinted upon opportunity? Dogberry was a wise man, and ought to have been made editor of a magazine in Messina for that one piece of counsel to George Seacoal, to let his reading and writing appear "when there is no occasion for such vanity." We could do so if we dared, and we know exactly where to find a chronological history of the Opera in England, with statistics of all

the managements, from Sir John Gallini to Mr. Lumley; and we could tell, at second hand (for we were not at the fire), how the old house was burned in 1789; and how the Italians went to the Haymarket and then to the Pantheon; and how Novosielski designed the new building; and all about the quarrels between Goold and Taylor; and how Mr. Chambers, the banker, began to be ruined; and how worthy Mr. Ebers dashed in to the rescue of the Opera; and how the house was officially declared unsafe in 1824, and the Lord Chamberlain refused to license the performances; and how M. Laporte succeeded, and Mr. Monck Mason did not succeed. And we could recount a quantity of anecdotes — mostly very stupid, but respectable from their antiquity and the great wear and tear they have undergone—and, in fact, we could borrow a great deal; but, as aforesaid, there is such an affair as conscience.

But one of the great beauties of this world is that there is no such thing as absolute truth. There is nothing you can look at which does not become something else if you look at it from another point of view. Now we have not enunciated this profound reflection without a reason. We bear in mind two visits, out of certain others which we have made in our time, to the Opera. It occurs to us that by describing these, and appending them to M. Gavarni's engraving, we shall enable anybody, with only the ordinary number of heads, to give a Cerberean look at the subject—to regard it three ways at once.

The first season we used to go to the Opera we had not a stall of our own. We think it fair to add, that neither have we one now. But we then considered our having been within those walls a circumstance of very great glory and fashion, and were accustomed to regard the mean little play-bill, which we sedulously preserved in evidence of the fact, with feelings akin to those with which Lord Tancred now peruses his certificate of having visited the shrine of the Sepulchre. Being unmarried, we decline offering any further particulars as to the date of this transition-state, except that it was during Laporte's management. On a certain non-subscription night (for we were not proud, but, on the contrary, glad to get an order) we had gone to the pit very early, and having found out a seat, were combining instruction and amusement by looking after the corresponding passages in the Italian and English *libretti*—a harmless recreation. The opera was the *Barbiere*, and we had just stuck at Figaro's celebrated

"Donne, donne! Eterni Dei!
Chi vi arriva a indovinar?"

The house had filled, and as the lights were suddenly turned on, it appeared to our inexperienced sense that the whole of the court and the aristocracy were watching the progress of our studies. We felt like the young cornet who was naturally anxious that his helmet should be properly put on, because, having joined yesterday only, of course the eyes of Europe were upon him. While arranging one's hair, and generally endeavouring that none of the Marchionesses who were watching us should have just cause to censure our appearance or attitude, we were beckoned into a box on the pit tier. But not by a Marchioness, exactly. The invitation came from a remarkably grim and snuffy barrister—a family friend. Never mind—a box—what glory! We were soon ensconced, and if one drop of melancholy mingled in our cup of happiness, as in Psyche's in heaven, it was the thought that nobody who knew us at Islington was there to see our grandeur. Our thanks were profuse, but the grim and snuffy barrister was not a pleasant person to talk civilities to.

"I thought you looked stupid, and as I have the box to myself, you are as well here as there."

"Stupid!" Did the Marchionesses think so? We ventured to hint that it was a "brilliant night." The grim and snuffy barrister looked positively sublime (Soulié says that the manifestation of any passion, good or bad, in excess, is sublime) with contempt.

"A what?"

"A—a—brilliant—at least," said we, getting frightened, "there seem to be some—some good people here."

The curtain rose—if we knew the name of the man who rang it up that night, at that precise moment, we would send him a very small present. It saved us from annihilation.

The opera proceeded until Almaviva had displayed his Order, the police had liberated him, and the stirring chorus of concerted confusion and prearranged astonishment which ends the first act, was over.

"Now," said the grim and snuffy barrister, "you obviously know nothing about this place; and so don't call nights 'brilliant,' and people 'good,' until you are safer. There 's nobody here. You are looking at the royal box, and very likely you think that man 's an emperor in disguise. He 's the court confectioner. In the next box—give me the glass—that 's an attorney and his family; and if justice is done, he 'll be knocked off the rolls next Friday. You are taking the over-dressed woman, with the emeralds, for somebody. So she is—her husband 's a Jew bill-discounter, and he 's gone into the stalls, where he sees a young fellow who thinks to keep out of his clutches by

keeping out of his sight. The fat man over there is the sub-editor of a paper in the interest of the house ; and the man above him, with the hook nose, black eyes, and one great diamond, is Tango, the sheriff's officer—he 's on the watch, too, for somebody, and his man 's in the lobby. That pretty woman, as you call her, I should have thought you 'd have known—it 's Miss Footlights, of the Haymarket Theatre; and the woman she calls her mother 's with her. Those people who have brought half their parish into the box, do so because they only come once in the season, and like to talk about it. Next to them is the doctor to the theatre; he invents disorders for singers who don't want to sing, and then makes out certificates that they are very bad. I don't see how you could suppose he was Lord Aberdeen, because there 's not the slightest likeness. Yes, that is somebody—it 's Sir Hafiz Vastator ; he 's come because he knows his wife can't be here to-night. I forget the name of the girl—she 's in the ballet ; you 'll see her leave his box before the opera is over. There 's old Fugue, the composer; nobody cares for him now, but Laporte gives the old creature a corner sometimes, to remind him of the days when he was the fashionable song-writer, and ruined himself by giving suppers to the Guards. If you do not know who *that* lady is, I shall certainly not be the first to tell you. Beyond her, nearer the stage, is the wife of a man who brews Indian ale ; and beyond her again is old Mother Jonadab, who keeps the masquerade shop, and I suppose gets boxes in payment for some of the dresses she lends the house. On a line with us—the fourth from here—is Barrels, who writes the novels of which Lady Laura Spike is author. They have had a row because he wants a quarter instead of an eighth of the purchase-money—authors are never content! Opposite is Straps, the lunatic asylum keeper, with two harmless patients (they are both tied to their chairs); and the last is Barabbas Yelp, the political writer, as he calls himself. He has been abusing religion lustily for a great many years, until he has saved money and bought his son a living. So much for your 'brilliant night'!"

We waited some years before we ventured upon the term again. And the next time we felt inclined to use it was last season.

We had the very great pleasure, on a Jenny Lind night (and a night when Jenny sang in a part in which those not usually her worshippers admit her perfection), of attending to the Opera-house a young lady who had never visited it before. And when the wonders of preternatural vocalists have ceased to produce an effect on the ear, and when the achievements of superhuman *danseuses* can scarcely extort a plaudit (not that we affect to be in any such state of used-up-ishness), there is always a fresh, and what

M. Chasles calls a *vif plaisir*, in watching the sensation their marvels produce in another. Of course, that is to say, when that other is an interesting person; for of all bores, the greatest is a bore in a state of surprise. And we regret to add, that there is so great a quantity of surprise going about just now, fresh from Paris and elsewhere, that it makes society very disagreeable. When the evening papers come in, you see every second man with his mouth wide open—an unseemly sight.

The "Miranda" of that evening was married to her Ferdinand, but Ferdinand promised to go to sleep in the back of the box, and leave us to expound the mysteries of the enchanted region. Miranda had prepared herself for the occasion; she knew every note of the opera, and she also knew the cast. Moreover, she had a general idea of the theatre, and did not expect (as do some) to see the Queen's box hanging from the chandelier, or (as do others) to see straw littered down in the stalls. We led her to the box with anticipations of considerable pleasure, and it may be satisfactory to state (the French novelists are always accurate on these points, so we suppose there is reason for it) that Miranda looked as a young and beautiful wife should look, that she wore amber satin with black lace thereon, and had faintly green grapes in her dark and massive hair—a costume which we prefer to that suggested for her in the "Pictorial Shakspere."

We managed that Miranda should enter her box as the curtain rose for the opening chorus. The house was filled, for Jenny Lind has shown us that it is possible—sufficient reason being given—to get the subscribers into their places at eight o'clock.

As Miranda advanced to the front, one huge volume of sound rose like a giant wave, from the orchestra, while another, leaping from the stage, rushed to meet it, and both blending, broke in a mighty tide of melody at her feet. Such, at least, is her own tale; for ourselves, we merely heard the first bars of the *Sonnambula*. Miranda stood, very quiet and very pale, for a few seconds, and then, without disturbance or appeal of any kind, as quietly subsided into her seat—and fainted.

Certainly, when one thinks of it, the eye and the ear are strangely assailed in those monster buildings. It seldom strikes the *habitué*, because he is always thinking of some specific object—looking for some acquaintance—listening to some favourite singer—watching some especial pet of the ballet—considering where he will go next—or uttering imprecations on the button of his glove for flying away. But to anybody who goes for the sake of the opera; who is not weighing the probable merits of the parties at which he has to show

himself afterwards; who, not being a member of parliament, has not to calculate how he can manage to see Carlotta Grisi's great *pas* and yet get back to the House in time to speak on the Church Extension question; who, not being a critic, has not to rush from the red opera to the green one, or from the green to the red one (as, from the colour of the *affiches*, the rival houses are now known), to compare the *finale;* who, not being in love, has not to stand behind his idol's chair, talk as brilliantly as he can, and strive to spoil the talk of his enemies—to anybody not so disqualified, the effect of either of our Opera-houses must be overwhelming.

Beautifully constructed, the magic circle floats the lightest whisper to you, and the ear is instantly at ease, finding that no effort is required to catch the flying tones of the music. Nor is the eye worse treated; let it fall where it will it is charmed, rather than dazzled, by the artistic adornments lavishly, but not carelessly, strewn around. And when those vast areas, glittering and perfumed, are enriched by the noteabilities of the age, and jewelled by that unrivalled beauty, which, be it a gift of fate, or an accident of race, is indisputably the characteristic of English aristocracy; when the stage, unveiling, presents one of those gorgeous scenic displays of Grieve or Marshall, in which true art, struggling with meretricious splendour for the mastery, not seldom triumphs; when the full glory of music, radiating from a perfect chorus and orchestra, floods, in one delicious tide, every channel and avenue of sound, the sense and the mind may be pardoned if alike they yield to the mighty enchantment, and cling with the earnestness of a first love to the localities which our artist has partially, but faithfully, depicted.

SHIRLEY BROOKS.


I am Starving

THE STREET BEGGAR.

With haggard, unshorn face—with shrunk, lean limbs, the brown skin seen through the rents in his ragged garments—the Street Beggar crouches beneath the railings of a square, grasps a morsel of chalk between his long shaky fingers, traces the words "I am starving" upon the flag-stones, and then waits patiently for the charity of the public. Hurrying pedestrians pass unheedingly by—dainty ladies trip past with a shudder—nursery-maids with children will not allow the little masters or misses to stop and gaze at the suppliant—and only a couple of shrill-whistling street urchins favour him with a few moments of their patronising company. But whether the passenger walks briskly past, or whether an unwonted copper falls with a tingling ring upon the pavement, the beggar appears to take little heed; only in the latter case he languidly stirs to deposit the coin in some mysterious corner of his rags. Idlers may gather round him, pitying or gibing words may fall upon his ear, but he gives no token that he has heard them. Either hunger has benumbed and frozen up his faculties and sensations, or he is acting a part, and acting it very well.

Which of these alternatives is the true one? We do not hesitate to say, in nineteen cases out of twenty, the latter. It is not people who come out into the streets, and who beg melodramatically, who die of starvation. Famine hides itself in nooks and chinks, in the bare garrets and straw-littered dens of low lodging-houses. The victim dies, and makes no sign. Too proud to seek relief, he is too proud to parade his need of it. It is when the week's rent is unpaid—when no footfall or motion is heard in the room of the solitary lodger—when the landlord becomes alarmed—and when the door is forced, that the catastrophe of starvation stands revealed. A coroner's inquest makes it public; the newspapers teem with the particulars. Perhaps a Sunday print lies upon the unpainted tap-table of a public-house in a low neighbourhood. A vagrant-looking man is spelling it over. He comes to the paragraph

headed "Death from Starvation." He reads the account—how the respectable jurors were horrified at the emaciated appearance of the body—how a fellow-lodger of the deceased had supplied him with a crust of bread and a morsel of cheese a week ago—how no article of sustenance had been found in the room—how the parish officers proved with officious zeal that no application for relief had been made to them—and how, after an affecting address from the coroner, the jury returned a verdict of "Died from want of the ordinary necessaries of life." All this the vagrant-looking man reads, and presently turns to his pint of porter and plate of grimy a-la-mode beef. He is the mendicant of the square—the chalker upon flag-stones. Starvation may be death to others, but it is subsistence to him.

If you want to prove this, the means are simple. The man is starving—he says so. Give him a penny. There is a baker's shop round the corner, and the steamy odour of new bread comes forth from the hot loaves. But our vagrant never thinks of proceeding in quest of the staff of life. No: there he sits with that touching expression of mute anguish, and there he will sit—it is his trade—until close of day; when, shuffling to his feet, he crosses his hands upon his breast, bends his lean body forward, and at length moves limpingly off—for his legs are cramped, and no wonder—to some place of resort frequented by others of his craft, where they can compare notes over beer and pipes, secure from the dreaded interruption of the myrmidons of the Mendicity Society.

There is no man acquainted with London streets and London beggars who will not acknowledge the art with which these gentlemen make themselves up for their several parts. To undertake the starving "dodge" with advantage a man must have physical requisites for the character. He must be lean—thin is not the word—raw-boned, and skinny; a stout, portly fellow would only be laughed at. He must also have a sombre cast of features. But other qualifications are needful as well—he must have patience to angle unweariedly for his coppers; to preserve, hour after hour, an uncomfortable attitude, in order to convey the idea of his being too weak and languid to stir his pithless limbs; and last, not least, he must be able to write. Indeed, in most cases he forms the letters of his pitiful inscription with an ease and boldness of stroke which show how familiarly they come to his hand. He has been "starving" a very long time.

Sometimes the Street Beggar varies his appeal. Occasionally you see chalked "Hunger is a sharp thorn;" but this maxim is not greatly in favour. It is hardly pithy enough, and does not strike home. "I am hungry" is far

better; better indeed, we think, upon the whole, than "I am starving." More people are likely to understand the force of the former appeal than the latter. There is something in it modest—touching—simple; only to be equalled by one other form, which consists of a single homely word, "Hunger."

The Street Beggar is in rags—they are the symbol of his trade; but, if he knows his business, he is not unprovided with raiment more utterly and comfortlessly squalid than that in which he appears when the air is warm, the shrubs in squares and gardens rich with their greenest leaves, and the summer sun hot upon the flags. It is in rainy weather that he dons his most pitiful attire. When the cold clammy fog hangs over London streets—when the north-east wind drives pelting volleys of sleety rain along the drenched and muddy pavements, then does he wander shiveringly forth, daring the weather, and weighing the chill pang which every gust shoots through him with the augmented chances of pity and coin being both evoked by his appearance. If the day be comfortless and forlorn, the night will be proportionably pleasant—the blaze of the tap-room fire in the great lowering public-house in Whitechapel, or the Almonry, or the Mint, proportionably cozy and snug; and the greater the hardship suffered through the long dreary hours of light, the greater the number of halfpence probably gained, and the greater the number of pots of frothing liquor to console him through the hours of darkness.

If the Street Beggar be naturally a plump subject, it is evident that chalk and flag-stones will not prove the raw materials of his income. He must look out for some other expedient. The ruined operative is one of the most common characters in the sad and vicious masquerade of beggary. How often, reader, have you heard that doleful twanging voice chanting, with a loud nasal drone, the woes of its possessor? It is the dim twilight; lights are upon the table, and you are munching the slice of bread laid beside your plate, in anxious anticipation of dinner. You hear the eleemosynary oration, gradually increasing in distinctness as the speaker slowly walks down the middle of your quiet street. At length you begin to catch the words. You have frequently heard them before; for somehow these distressed mechanics have a wonderfully similar story to tell. It goes in this vein:—

"My dear and Christian friends—We are truly sorry to be obliged to make this humiliating appeal to you, but it is want and hunger which drives us to it, having tasted nothing since last night, and not having hardly a rag to our backs or a shoe to our feet. My dear and Christian friends, I was a stocking-weaver in good business in Macclesfield, until the introduction of

machinery threw me and my poor family upon the world, and gradually reduced us to this truly painful and humiliating position. My dear and Christian friends, whom Heaven has blessed with affluence, spare us a small portion of your stores, and you will be rewarded hereafter."

And then, after a short pause, the appeal is repeated. Go to the window, and you will observe that the suppliants form, or pretend to form, a family party. The man carries a child in his arms. The woman, with a threadbare shawl swathed tightly round her scant form, probably bears another; and some two or three sobbing and shivering urchins cling to the skirts of both parents. Does the suppliant speak truth? We fear not, in fully as great a proportion of cases as his *confrère* lies with chalk upon the pavement. Distressed workmen there are—destitute wretches pushed by competition, or the iron arms of faster toiling, unwearying mechanism, from their stools; but these are not the men, with very, very few exceptions, who beg loudly in the public ways. If the suppliants be, as they pretend, a decent honest family deprived of bread, there are still other resources than the hard streets and the incredulous public. The Union has an ugly name. Many a man and woman, poor and not proud, have stifled a pang of hunger, and borne under scanty covering the keenness of a winter's night, rather than apply at that sombre portal. But hard and stinted as is parish fare—stern and heart-crushing as are workhouse walls, the honest manly heart will prefer them to raising the doleful cry of hunger and nakedness in the public streets.

Let us see the Street Beggar in another character. It is night. Gas-light is streaming upon the trampled pavement through costly panes of plate-glass. The unending stream of vehicles flows crashing, and rattling, and roaring by. The swarms of pedestrians hurry, and jostle, and flit to and fro. All is brisk, busy motion. All but where stands one group—a group of beggars. They neither move nor speak. They display no tatters. They exhibit their poverty, but they wish to make it appear decent, unobtrusive. They are not importunate beggars, they are mute suppliants. They crave in silence with an air which seems to say, "How meek we are in our adversity—what a sad sight is respectability in ruins."

Look at them. They are scrupulously neat and clean. Not a speck of dust lingers upon the threadbare garments of the man. They have been brushed and brushed, and fastened with buttons and pins, until the cloth shines, as if in triumph at its own seediness. The trowsers are carefully strapped down, and the morsel of linen displayed is scrupulously white. The man

bears a child in his arms; observe the artistic way in which the one scanty faded riband is attached to the infant's cap. Using his hands as well as his arms, the beggar holds beneath the child a very limp hat—the light falls full upon his unprotected head, and you can see the clean-shaven chin and the carefully-brushed, unstraggling hair. By his side stands the wife—her attire scrupulously poor, and as scrupulously clean. She holds a lucifer-match box or a few combs in one hand, and, in the other, that of a little boy, with a well-washed, shiny face, curly ringlets, and very conspicuously-arranged turn-over shirt collar. And so they stand, hour after hour: a *tableau vivant* of decent, unmerited poverty. It is one of those dramas of which the attraction lies not in the dialogue but in the getting-up. The thing is a little spectacle. You think more of the stage-manager and the property-man than of the author. The chalk writer is good in his way—the orator who can no longer weave stockings is good in *his* way; but here no one writes, no one speaks—the dumb-show beats it all. And as you think of it in a dramatic point of view, you come naturally to consider the rehearsals which must have taken place of the unspoken drama. How carefully it must have been got up. How a button would be snipped off the old coat for the insertion of that seedy substitute, a pin—how a rent would be artfully practised in order to exhibit the decent darn—how the limp straw-bonnet would be carefully tricked out with a sort of humble, make-the-best-of-it riband — how the little show bits of white linen would have been washed and ironed, and got up, and superadded to the worn, patched, clean clothing—until the whole must seem to cry aloud to all beholders, "Look how poor, how very poor we are — but how decent! Look! we are struggling after respectability. Indeed, indeed, we would if could. We are no ordinary, vulgar, blackguard beggars; we are no window-breaking vagrants; we are decent, stricken-down people. Our poverty is our misfortune, not our fault."

Trickery—trickery all; no more real than the Bowers of Bliss in a pantomime. Honest poverty is not shame-faced, but it does not parade its woes in the crowded street, nor "make up" to excite compassion. It does not batten upon the very symbols of its distress, and point them out and make them the more obvious by contrast, in order to reap the richer harvest. No: honest poverty will be seeking for work, while dishonest poverty is pocketing alms.

And thus, among many other ways, more or less ingenious, are our streets *exploité'd* by these professors. Surely some horrible indefinable charm must pervade their wandering and degraded existence. Vagabondism must have

its attractions. It braves mendicity societies, and policemen, and tread-mills. It shows itself in a hundred shapes. It grinds organs—it sings ballads—it blackens its face and plays on bones—it crouches in corners of streets, and exhibits deformities—it bawls aloud for charity in quiet places—it stands in silent supplication in great roaring thoroughfares. And beggary is seldom the resource of a temporary pinch. We have seen the same man year after year go his rounds—always collecting broken victuals, always looking hungry—always getting old clothes, always wearing tatters. The man who writes "Starving" upon the pavement to-day, you may encounter a year hence in the same plight, and chalking the same motto on the same flag-stone. Starvation seems to be his normal condition. He is always "starving," but the process is slow—very slow. Rest assured, in the ordinary course of things, hunger is not what will kill him. He knows the rascalities of the world too well for that. Rogues don't starve so often as honest men, the more 's the pity. There are many poor and many hungry amongst us; but the poorest are not those who beg, nor the hungriest those who proclaim that they are "starving."

ANGUS B. REACH.


VIZETELLY Sc

THE CASINO.

Some [illegible] we need not care about the precise year [illegible] neighbourhood of the Lowther Arcade an establishment called the Adelaide Gallery.

It was at that period the diffusion of knowledge. Clever professors were there, who [illegible] transatlantic acquirement of "knocking all creation into a cocked hat" by teaching elaborate sciences in lectures of twenty minutes' duration. Steam-engines revolved, and hissed, and quivered, as the fettered [illegible] trails grumbled sullenly in its bondage; mice led gasping [illegible] diving-bells; clock-work steamers ticked round and round a [illegible] to prove the efficacy of invisible paddles; and on all sides [illegible] which stray visitors were puzzled to class either as [illegible] roasting-jacks, or musical instruments. There were [illegible] for giving galvanic shocks to the unwary; steam-guns [illegible] against the target; and dark microscopic [illegible] by shaking the principles of teetotalers, by showing the wriggling [illegible] in a drop of the water they were supposed daily to gulp down by [illegible].

Then came a [illegible] in the existence of the Adelaide Gallery, at first stealthily [illegible]. The oxy-hydrogen light was slily applied to the comic magic-lantern, and laughing gas was made instead of carbonic acid. By degrees [illegible] came in; then wizards; and lastly talented vocal foreigners from [illegible] and the Pyrenees. Science was driven to her wit's end for a livelihood, but she still endeavoured to appear respectable. The names of the new attractions were covertly put into the bills, sneaking under the original engines and machines in smaller type. She was an exemplification of the old story of the decayed gentlewoman, who, driven to cry "Muffins" for her existence, always hoped that nobody heard her.

But, between the two stools of philosophy and fun, Science shared the

THE CASINO.

SOME time back—dates are dry things, so we need not care about the precise year—there existed in the neighbourhood of the Lowther Arcade an establishment called the Adelaide Gallery.

It was at first devoted to the diffusion of knowledge. Clever professors were there, who emulated the transatlantic acquirement of "knocking all creation into a cocked hat," by teaching elaborate sciences in lectures of twenty minutes; fearful engines revolved, and hissed, and quivered, as the fettered steam that formed their entrails grumbled sullenly in its bondage; mice led gasping subaqueous lives in diving-bells; clock-work steamers ticked round and round a basin perpetually, to prove the efficacy of invisible paddles; and on all sides were clever machines which stray visitors were puzzled to class either as coffee-mills, water-wheels, roasting-jacks, or musical instruments. There were artful snares laid for giving galvanic shocks to the unwary; steam-guns that turned bullets into bad sixpences against the target; and dark microscopic rooms for shaking the principles of teetotalers, by showing the wriggling abominations in a drop of the water they were supposed daily to gulp down by pints.

Then came a transition stage in the existence of the Adelaide Gallery, at first stealthily brought about. The oxy-hydrogen light was slily applied to the comic magic-lantern; and laughing gas was made instead of carbonic acid. By degrees music stole in; then wizards; and lastly talented vocal foreigners from Ethiopia and the Pyrenees. Science was driven to her wit's end for a livelihood, but she still endeavoured to appear respectable. The names of the new attractions were covertly put into the bills, sneaking under the original engines and machines in smaller type. She was an exemplification of the old story of the decayed gentlewoman, who, driven to cry "Muffins" for her existence, always hoped that nobody heard her.

But, between the two stools of philosophy and fun, Science shared the

usual fate attendant upon such a position—she broke down altogether. Her grave votaries were disgusted with the comic songs, and the admirers of the banjo were bored with the lectures. So neither went to see her; poor Science declined into the *Gazette;* and, vague as to money matters and accounts—her common failing—fled to America.

But during all this time a mania for dancing had been gradually coming on, and at last burst forth. Not even the propensity of St. Vitus, when, in the middle ages, a red slipper placed on the highway was sufficient to collect and set going a host of dancing maniacs in his popular *pas*, could have kept pace with the movement. New dances were called for, and new music for them. The supply was equal to the demand; the domestic "Paine's First Set," of Quadrille's childhood, was laid aside for Herz; then for Musard; and then for Jullien, Weippert, Coote, Bosisio, and a host of others. Clever people had always defined the earth to be one large ball, and there was every chance of its practically proving the truth of the statement.

Travellers also began to tell bright legends of Terpsichore's palaces in her own land—of the Chaumière, with its bosquets and Montagnes Russes; of the guinguettes beyond the barriers of Paris; of the Chateau Rouge; and lastly, of the glittering Bal Mabille, with its palm-tree lights and trellises of bronze vines—its ruling spirits, whose names became great facts in Paris—the "*grande brune*" Mogador, the graceful Frisette and Rigolette, the inimitable student Brididi—*le moulin perpetuel*, as he was called in the Quartier Latin—whom no one could approach in his wonderful gyrations; and finally, the veteran Chicard. And at last all the steam-engines and water-works were cleared away, and the Adelaide Gallery was devoted entirely to the goddess of the "twinkling feet," and called a Casino.

Imagine a very long and very high room—so high that there are two rows of museum-like galleries running round the walls, between the floor and ceiling. At one end is a capital orchestra, and beneath it a refreshment room; the entrance staircases are at the other. As you enter, a Polka is going on, and the *coup-d'œil* from the gallery is well worth the visit. At first the *salle* exhibits a scene of moving confusion similar to that which the drop of water formerly showed in the microscope. The dancers—and there may be sixty or eighty couples—are taking all directions, and in all styles, yet seldom coming into collision. Some are slowly progressing, with short creeping steps, round the outer boundary of the polka; others, more daring, drive up and down the centre with fearful rapidity; but all dance well—certainly as well as the mass of *habitués* of the Paris public ball-rooms, and without a shade of impropriety.

Should any, indeed, transgress in this respect, they are immediately expelled.

The Polka finished, refreshments are eagerly sought after, and of these the "sherry-cobbler" is the one in greatest request. It must be confessed that the peculiar vintage to which "the golden wine of Xeres" used in that beverage belongs, is difficult of detection. But nectar, whatever it was, could not have been more delicious to the gods of old, than sherry-cobbler to the polkers. It is not strong to be sure; but this is an advantage, in addition to that of the corresponding modesty of price. It is amusing to drink, involving pneumatic and hydraulic principles taught in a far more pleasing manner than was once the case with the air-pumps, and many others, on the same spot. It is the most social refreshment known, as two straws may be employed in its absorption—straws that show clearly which way the wind blows; and when eyes are so closely opposed to one another, no one knows what may result. And, to the observer, it has the agreeable property of offering an occupation, whilst his vision remains unobstructed to be employed about him.

Raise your own eyes from the floating lumps of crystal you are so intently watching, and let us point out to you the persons who pass in this droll kaleidescope of London life. That good-tempered young man leaning against the railing, and talking to a small silver-grey plush bonnet, is an Earl. He is making an engagement for the next dance, when you will see him the most active of all. By his side are two unmitigated Gents in white coats, and hats out of the perpendicular, short sticks, and flaring cravats, who think they are "doing the fast"—types of an overwhelming class. The two young men, lounging round, arm in arm, are in the Guards. They are nodding to a good-looking fellow with long spiral mustachios and jet black eyes, in the reserved seats above, next to a very florid, merry-faced gentleman, whose blood is as nearly royal as may well be, and voice the same, to judge from the specimen the public is best acquainted with. Then comes a square-built paletote'd barrister, the best *deux-temps* waltzer in the place—the "Brididdi" of the Casino—followed by two or three of less renown, who hang about him to share his popularity. Anon, a tribe of young *littérateurs*, making the visit on the strength of the "orders" of the journals with which they are connected. Next, a group of shop-boys, who would like to smoke if it was allowed; a few men-about-the-City from Mark Lane, Lothbury, and Throgmorton Street; some provincial visitors; one or two university men, out on the loose; and then a crowd of those faces

you are so familiar with, about, in the London world, but whose names or families you never know. This singular mass keeps moving round and round; and then the music begins again.

Laurent's band is the best for its mission in London. The Casino is worth a visit, if it be only to hear it, and especially with Trien on the cornet: it fairly lifts you off your legs. Weippert's is very good, but better adapted to the West-end drawing-room or the county ball, where the separate excellence of the performers comes out to greater advantage; and Jullien's requires an immense number of musicians to give proper effect to his *répertoire*. Barnard's would be perfect if the other instruments did not, at times, swamp his own admirable piano playing; and Adams's has been so lost in a connexion who incline to Lancers and Caledonians, and other painful fandangos, that we hardly know what he can do. Certainly, what he, or the master of the ceremonies, puts down in his *rococo* programmes, he plays most excellently well; but the dances themselves are atrocious.

We really believe that the Casino is a wholesome institution; and that, far from propagating Gentism, it has, in a measure, suppressed it. Individuals who are cooped up all day, on high stools or behind counters, must have some method of setting free their constrained energies. In France they despoil palaces and upset thrones, when they are out on the loose; in England, formerly they stole knockers and smashed lamps; and they also got wonderfully drunk. Now, at the conclusion of a Casino programme—after a two hours' *sudatorium*—all these rollicking propensities are so thoroughly taken out of them, that the bed, which was formerly looked upon as a "slow" refuge, to be patronised, like home, when everything else had been used up, is very calmly resorted to. We are not going to anatomize the company at the Casino too minutely. Bad ingredients there are, without doubt, in its composition—but so there are in every public assembly; and the question is, whether these objectionable particles might not be worse occupied than in listening to a capital band, sucking up most inoffensive sherry-cobblers, or flying round and round in a polka or waltz, until they have hardly got an atom of wind in their lungs, or a leg to stand upon?

ALBERT SMITH.

MUSIC IN THE DRAWING-ROOM.

MUSIC, on occupying the drawing-room, at once established a monopoly—declared itself the sole amusement. The portfolio, brilliant with the designs of six young ladies—ranging from the one eye and pair of lips out of drawing, to the highly-finished Turk, with excessively "foldy" turban—was closed never to re-open, or confined to the inspection of lucky friends, who might chance to call in the morning. The round-game table, with its chattering, its laughter, and that species of excitement which a run of ill-luck might easily warm up into a "pretty quarrel," was banished, with all its apparatus of fish and their pools. In the last case insult is added to injury, for people are not contented with the destruction of "Pope Joan," and "Speculation," but talk complacently of their own advance in civilization, because they sit vapidly listening (or pretending to listen) to some unmeaning song, whereas of old they were actually amused by the ruder recreation. With whist a sort of compromise was effected, but greatly to the disadvantage of the card side of the question. Here and there a solitary table is allowed to stand, that it may act as a sort of safety-valve, to carry off heavy old ladies and "slow" young gentlemen. The whist-table is no post of honour; it is rather an accomplishment than otherwise not to know a spade from a club, and no small dexterity in the art of recruiting is required to muster a whist party of four. Generally the attempt proves a failure, and the unopened pack and undisturbed counters stand as monuments of the unsuccessful endeavour.

The banishment of the portfolio is not to be regretted. The portfolio was a "bore." It was generally filled by purchasing a tolerably good two-shilling "study," and making some execrable copies thereof. The accomplished exhibitress shrank not from comparisons, but generally displayed at once the original and the imitation, so that you had a full opportunity of appreciating the scratchiness of her shading and the deviations of her outline.

The fair engraving smiled softly but ironically upon you by the side of the grim copy; and, when expected to praise the latter, the presence of strong facts fearfully weakened your power of flattery.

For the round game, which is now crammed into Christmas Day, together with forfeits, &c., being only recognised as a festal foolery, we indulge in a sigh. At any rate, it gave everybody something to do, and there was a chance of winning enough to cover a pair of gloves and a turnpike home: and there is always a pleasure in becoming suddenly strong in "small money."

But it is useless to draw distinctions. One common flood has overwhelmed all the old evening amusements. And this vast deluge, which has annihilated so much, goes by the modest name of "a little music."

Mind, we are not talking about "*soirées musicales*," or any festivities at which anything professional is introduced; but, by "little music," we mean that peculiar exhibition by unprofessional "accomplished" individuals, the signal for whose operations is the retirement of the tea-tray. The musical parties, properly so called, are specialties, like scientific *conversazioni*, or parties to hear somebody's five-act tragedy read, or literary oyster-suppers; and do not come within the definition of general drawing-room usages.

As a revolution usually devours its own children, so did "little music," having dethroned Pam, and cut off crayon heads, begin to annihilate musical instruments. Those who attend concerts and read historical novels may be aware that there is an instrument called a harp, very pleasant to look upon, but usually very dismal to hear. Anciently, an instrument of this description stood in drawing-room corners, and one young lady in a large family was heard occasionally to play upon it. There used also to be young gentlemen, with romantic hair and white waistcoats, who would employ the flute, either for solo or accompaniment. Nay, some would even venture into the middle of the room, and sing to a Spanish guitar. These instruments appeared in the first flush of victory, and were only members of "little music's" provisional government. Soon they were sent off to share the fate of the other exiles, as "little music" declared imperatively that the voice and the piano should be the only organs. The harp thus became a splendid Mythus; the flute was confined to the lodgings of single gentlemen, and was regarded by their neighbours as a nuisance, somewhat less than the *cornet-à-piston;* and the guitar could only be rescued by those humorists who went at the decidedly "funny," and modifying it into the banjo, used it to accompany Ethiopian melodies. This, however, is but an exceptional existence.

The voice and the piano, then, are alone regnant. "Little music" may

be divided into vocal and instrumental—the former executed by the voice *with* the piano, the latter by the piano without the voice. The unaccompanied song is an Anglo-Saxon atrocity, and is at best confined to the humorous gentleman who dares to produce the banjo, and may do anything he pleases—even tricks with cards. Once it existed under the form of the "song after supper," but it was compelled to abandon that form for the very cogent reason that supper itself (save at dances) has been demolished.

Vocal and instrumental "little music" are subject to different laws. Any one who likes may sit down unbidden at the piano, and play waltzes and polkas *ad libitum*, without being invited by a single soul. The same party may rush to the revolving stool at any interval between a couple of songs, and fill up the gap by a display of his (more probably *her*) brilliant execution. On the other hand, to sing uninvited would be a hideous breach of decorum —a sort of invasion which society would have a right to resist. The abuses to which this partial law might lead are in some measure corrected by the circumstance that no one is expected to listen to the player, while the singer has a right to hope for an audience of at least three in a large party, exclusive of the enthusiast who turns over leaves, and asks everybody how he likes Alboni.

The social *morceaux*, which belong to "little music," are peculiar. All those songs which you see in Regent Street music-shops, often adorned with very pretty sentimental lithographs, and rejoicing in such titles as "Mary Anne," "Love Always," (with a counter-song dedicated to the composer, called, "Do not Love at all,") "The Troubadour was a gallant Youth," "Hasten back from the Crusades," all these are the celebrities of "little music." They belong to no opera; they have been sung at almost no concert, save by the single vocalist whose name appears on the title-page, and who gave them a fillip by one single performance. They descend to no barrel-organ—they are whistled by no butcher's boy; they are never parodied in burlesques; the name of the composer does not strike you as remarkably familiar—he may, perchance, be a letter of the Greek alphabet. He who passed his life at public places would think that these works were buried in the deepest obscurity. Not at all. Seek them in the drawing-room, and you shall find them honourably enveloped in smart cases, and you shall even hear them declared "sweet." They are usually sung by young ladies in a voice so soft as to be almost inaudible three yards from the piano; and, on the whole, we may say that they are more popular with the performer than the listener.

"Little music" produces various effects upon the company assembled during its performance. There is the fanatic (already alluded to), who turns over the leaves, and smiles blandly on every occasion. He is himself a vocalist; has no objection to sing second, if a duet, which somebody knows, should turn up; and insinuates that he has a stall at the Opera, without stating the fact so broadly as to commit himself. Then there are the two or three young ladies who have a perfect knowledge of each other's resources, who press the unwilling, and have a perfect recollection that they have frequently heard songs in the morning from those obstinate souls, who, in the evening, protest that they have never sung in their lives. Deeply are these ladies versed in the contents of numerous portfolios, and they in fact constitute the body by which the sentence of "pretty," "ugly," "nice," "frightful," &c. is passed on the pictured compositions, which form the stock-in-trade of "little music." These parties compose the whole permanent audience of the exhibition, since nothing short of something decidedly comic, or astoundingly bacchanalian, will fix the attention of an entire company. The effect of the music on the rest is singular enough. Some persons of a taciturn disposition, and with a strong innate dislike to strangers, drop their nature at the first note of a song, and begin to talk as loud as they can about politics. Others, who would never look at a line of verse, or deign to bestow a stray glance at an engraving under any other circumstances, will, at the same signal, creep to the table strewed with annuals, and allow themselves to be absorbed by pictures and poetry. There are many folks with whom literature, politics, and the fine arts are never popular, but when they serve as means for distracting the mind from "little music." The most honest of the non-listeners is he who looks out for an easy chair in some remote corner of the room, seats himself in it, luxuriantly folds his arms, and goes to sleep like a man, neither courting nor shunning observation.

This man alone will be reproached with having no taste for music. At him mammas will look scornfully, young ladies will laugh undisguisedly, and the leaf-turning fanatic will smile compassionately, defending him with the observation that he is "one of the old school." For, mind, the whole body of non-listeners, with this one exception, all the hard talkers and students of annuals, are, to a man, loud in professing admiration for "Music in the Drawing-room," and are strong in their contempt for the ancient round game.

JOHN OXENFORD.

MUSIC IN THE STREETS.

We happen to live in a quarter of London peculiarly favourable for studying the varieties of the perambulating musicians of the thoroughfares. In this class we do not include the brass bands who take up their position in front of a gin-shop, and peal out waltzes, polkas, and operatic novelties, with all the force that cornets-à-piston and trombones can give, to large surrounding crowds. The *entreprise*, in this case, is of comparative magnitude, and the members of the band have a certain position. They may be seen, on other occasions, in the orchestra of the cheap public ball-room, on board the Richmond or Gravesend steamers, or possibly heading an election procession. Nay, we have at times detected some of the *troupe* as beef-eaters, or anomalous foreigners, in caps of sham tiger-skin, shaped like huge flower-pots, and robes of bed-curtain chintz (of the "furnished-apartment" fabric, which keeps clean, or rather conceals dirt, so long), blowing away all their energies in front of a menagerie or dancing-show at a large fair. They have evidently many resources for turning their acquirements to account, and are not specimens of the tribe we are about to notice. The real Street Musician depends solely upon the streets for his means of existence; and they must be streets of a certain kind.

We have said that the one in which we reside furnishes us with good specimens. It leads from a great thoroughfare to next to none at all, and so is tolerably quiet in itself, although close to a running stream of population. The greater part of its houses are let into lodgings on the ground, first, and second floors, and this gives it a large number of inhabitants. They are mostly quiet, stay-at-home people, either from inclination or profession—the first are guided by their means; the latter are artists. You may know where they live from their tall drawing-room window rising up to the floor of the apartment above. In fact it is a street of *artistes* altogether, in the general acceptation of the word. In summer, when the windows are open, you will

hear the rumblings of professional pianos, or the endeavours of tenors in training to reach fearful notes ; you may also listen to a single violin accompanying the tuition of a pupil in the mysteries of the polka or *deux-temps*. There are two medical men in the street. One enacts the high legitimate drama of his profession—his house is solemn and unadorned ; the other trusts to effect and scenic display, and mounts a deep red lamp like a railway danger signal. There is not much traffic ; private carriages wait at the doors, or drawl up and down in the shade, and hack cabs occasionally scuffle and clatter over the stones ; or a break makes a journey of doubtful safety from the livery-stables at the end : but this is all. Nor are the foot-passengers very numerous, except on fine afternoons, and then such swarms of pretty girls glide along the pavement on their way to the West-end from the Torrington, and Woburn, and Russell Square districts, that a susceptible looker-on, in ambush behind his wire-gauze window-blinds, may well get beside himself.

This is just the kind of neighbourhood that the Street Musicians affect, and they haunt it all day long. They glean more from lodging-houses than from private dwellings. Those who are not very well off themselves have greater sympathy with them.

The first music is heard at early morning, whilst we are dressing. It is a harsh organ, and must be played principally to the servants who are cleaning the door-steps—its invariable air, " We may be happy yet," suggesting anticipations of the evening kitchen, swept up and clean for tea: possibly a vision of a small shop in the general line ; or, may be, a thought of the policeman or the soldier. The sound vanishes, and at breakfast-time a mighty instrument drawn on wheels, reminding one of a quantity of trumpets shut up in a book-case and ground into tunes, takes up its place, with two attendants, before the window, and bursts forth into the prayer from " Moses in Egypt" with a force perfectly startling. This collects a small audience, for there is a conjuror in the top compartment of the case who keeps lifting up two small cups, displaying oranges, dice, and anon nothing at all, as he bows his head gravely and opens his mouth. There is another cup in the middle, which is never lifted up at all, but this complicates the trick, and makes it more mystic. There is a singular circumstance connected with this instrument which will be worth looking after. The one we speak of is accompanied by a black dog who really knows the houses from which former collections have been made. He sits up on his hind legs and barks at the upper windows until the expected halfpenny is thrown out ; when this is done, he puts his

head between the area railings, and generally obtains a few scraps from the servants.

As this monster accordion is drawn away, a singularly distressing noise is heard approaching from the other end of the street. If it be possible that the sounds of the Pastoral Symphony can represent certain meteorological phenomena, and that the *Lieder ohne worte* suggest their own, then may this discord depict great intestinal agony—the stomach-ache of unripe fruit, and bad *vin ordinaire*, and Italian cream. It comes on, and we now perceive a cripple—who prefers the mud in the middle of the road to the pavement—dragging his own load on, until he rests himself upon a small crutch like an augur, and tortures a clarionet in the most lamentable fashion. This man's performance is remarkable from its utter badness. He does not attempt to play any tune, but lifts up or stops down his fingers according to chance—at least so it appears—and always finishes on a note that has nothing at all to do with the key. But the noise he contrives to make is awful. If Verdi were dead, he would produce more unpleasant riot in the year than anybody else in the world.

He moves away ; and like the Dutch toys, in which certain objects—such as poultry, railway trains, boats, or soldiers—are wound round and round, popping up out of one sentry-box and ducking down into another, to the mild tinkling of certain *plectra* and tightened wires within, another object succeeds him. This is an organ again, that plays "Maid, those bright eyes," from *La Sonnambula*, unchangingly. But it has the advantage over the very first, in possessing a mechanical attraction. On its top is arranged a ball-room, of high society. To the left, the Guards' band, in full uniform, is playing to the dancers ; on the right, certain distinguished guests, in remarkable toilets, which partake of the fashions of the inmates of Noah's ark and the small-jointed men who grind the mysterious toy-mills, in chocolate coats and light green hats, are playing cards, reading the newspapers, or conversing. On a revolving "turn-table," in the centre, are the dancers. They are performing an anomalous figure. It is neither a polka nor a *deux-temps*, nor an ancient waltz ; perhaps it is that mystic measure formerly called a jig. They are mostly paired ; but one gentleman prefers dancing by himself, and his innate politeness is shown by his raising his hat every time he faces the spectators. When the quadrille is over, a party of horse-artillery enter at a pair of folding-doors, and ride across the *salle-de-danse*, which impresses us with the idea that the assembly is of a seditious and turbulent character ; but they go out again very orderly at an opposite egress, and then the ball once more commences.

They have scarcely departed, when the rumbling, as it were, of an approaching storm, breaks in upon the *fête champêtre*, and we recognise the approach of the Scotch itinerant band. Three tendon-scrapers, presumed to be blind, come on, keeping close to the area railings, and making a noise more fearful even than the man with the clarionet. Yet, through it all there is some shadow of an air—some, "Tullochgorum," or "Cockie-leekie," or "Gillie-callum," or "Lassie o' Pibroch," or whatever it means, for we must confess that Scotch terms are greatly confused in our minds, from the number of "entertainers" Mr. Wilson gave rise to. They keep doggedly on, sawing away at their instruments, and would drive their hearers distracted, did not a piano-organ follow them, as an antidote, with "Old Dan Tucker," and the "German Polka."

We have met with enthusiasts who, in their admiration of any particular *artiste*, have followed him or her about, from one capital to another, wherever their engagements led them. We have, indeed, known those who have been present at every one of Jenny Lind's *débûts* in the various cities of Europe—who, enthralled by the charming Carlotta Grisi's impassioned *Esmeralda*, have been led, in a wandering *truandaise*, over pretty nearly the same route —who have never missed one night of Van Amburgh's daring performances with the lions, or of Palmyre Anato's graceful leaps through the hoops. The performer on the piano-organ is accompanied by an amateur of similar constancy, in the shape of a boy with bones, who performs an *obligato* whenever he stops. They have never spoken to one another, nor does any token of recognition pass between them ; but the rattle always comes in at the proper place with Ethiopian accuracy, and when this pitch for catching halfpence is exhausted they move away, simultaneously, to another.

The old air, "Hark! 'tis the Indian drum!" suggests itself, as a *tum-tum* sound is next heard at the end of the thoroughfare, and a lascar appears, in company with a small dark child, who strives to sing some popular street air, whilst he beats the time on a primitive instrument, fashioned from an oyster barrel, with parchment ends, after the Ojibbeway pattern. The performance is not calculated to impress us with high notions of an Asiatic orchestra; and is only surpassed, in lack of meaning, by the efforts of a revoltingly-dirty Italian boy to grind music from a dilapidated piano-organ with only one or two wires remaining, which are struck or not as chance directs. He is, to appearance, an idiot; and the small fry of the neighbouring alleys make fun of him ; but those conversant with street impostures assure us that it is a capital assumption of imbecility to provoke the alms of the feeble-minded.

From the time of the appearance of this wretched creature, until nightfall, the invasion of distressing sounds still keeps on. Savoyards, with hurdy-gurdies; Dutch-girls, with organs and tambourines, who sing outlandish melodies; single violinists; Pandæan pipists, who accompany Punch, the fantoccini, the mountebanks, and hornpipe dancers, pass before our windows without intermission. And then—when the lamps are lighted in the streets and shops, and the ceaseless roar of wheels somewhat abates—a new class of musicians comes forth.

These have rather more pretensions to melody than those of the daytime. They are found now and then with a harp in their small band; and they perform songs with voices whose wrecks show that at one time they possessed certain taste and musical knowledge. We have encountered females playing the violin with no mean skill; and once we remember to have seen an old jangling piano wheeled about the streets, on which a poor *artiste* performed with much ability. When these little groups become known, they are admitted to the entrances of taverns, or the parlours of the lower order of public-houses, and make a considerable sum in the course of an evening; and then they leave our street altogether. For the neutral gloom of the middle of the thoroughfare does not suit them. If they cannot get opposite the flaring gas jet of a ticketed shop, or under the bright lamp of a gin-shop, their chances of remuneration are small.

The history of these wandering professionals is generally told in the same kind of story. Possibly, at first the man is in some kind of regular employment, and a simple musical amateur, playing for his own amusement after hours. Gradually he ceases to attend to his proper business, and gets a situation in the orchestra of a saloon or minor theatre, preferring to live from "hand to mouth"—a common failing with artistic idiosyncrasies in general. Here he first meets the female, who may play small singing parts; or is, perhaps, in the chorus, if the establishment is of sufficient importance to engage one. They marry, or establish some less reputable *menage;* and then the struggle for the crust begins. Several single engagements are to be obtained at the old establishments, but none that will occupy them both. A singing villager may be wanted, to express delight at the *fête* of calico roses and *papier-maché* refreshments; or a musical chambermaid is required to sing an interpolated ballad in what is called the "carpenter's scene" of the piece, when a pair of flats are pushed together, nearly close to the footlights, to allow something especial to be got ready behind: but the place of the second violin is occupied, and likely to remain so; or *vice versa*. And so,

after much privation and misery, with possibly an infant to add to their distress, they contrive to learn some duets and single ballads, and procure an engagement at a public-house twopenny concert.

From this moment they sink lower and lower in their wretchedness. The man was not a drunkard before ; but now, as soon as he has finished his dreary comic song, and, putting on his hat, returns to his place at one of the tables, half-a-dozen glasses of hard ale, " turpentiny" gin-and-water, or dark empyreumatic brandy, are offered to him by his admirers. Always something to drink—never so much even as a biscuit and cheese, or a penny ham-sandwich to eat. These mixed and impure beverages, the tobacco-clouded atmosphere of the room, and the late hours, combined with the occasional wandering from one " saloon" to another, entirely destroy his constitution. He can eat no breakfast, but he can drink—always drink—for he is always thirsty ; and the *prima donna* of the concert huddles a shawl over her worn merino dress, and goes out for some more of the hard ale. Gradually he gets asthmatic, and can no longer sing. The female goes out by herself, and earns ten or twelve shillings a-week, the greater part of which goes in drink, until her companion is prostrated by *delirium tremens*, and she is compelled to stay at home with him.

Heaven only knows how they then contrive to exist, for they can scarcely be said to live. The relieving officer might perhaps enlighten us thereon, but relieving officers see so much wretchedness, that succeeding cases make no impression on their minds sufficiently vivid to be retailed. At length, however, the man recovers ; but he is no longer of any use in the concert-room. A violin is not wanted. If he could play the piano, he might thump away upon the grimy keys of an old grand, accompanying songs and murdering polkas between them, for half-a-crown a-night ; and even this would be a chance. The woman's voice is also gone, together with every trace of whatever decent appearance she might formerly have possessed : and so there is nothing left but the streets. And the stony-hearted streets are henceforth their only hope, until the hospital or workhouse finally receives them.

If you care to make the inquiry, you will find that this is the usual story, as we have stated, of these distressed *artistes*. Not being over-addicted to the " humanity-mongery" school of writing, or putting much belief in the " great wrongs" of the tag-rag-and-bobtail of the metropolis, we have told the tale as simply as may be, without trying to work up the sympathies, which have been so falsely and so frequently called upon of late by literary philanthropists, that we will not run the chance of finding no response to our appeal.

But this we will say: that if you have a few halfpence jingling in the pocket of your paletôt, you will do well to give them to these poor people. They are not beggars: they evidently do *something* for their livelihood; and bad as their performance may be, it has required some little application and intelligence to bring it to what it really is.

Several old acquaintances who once waked the echoes of the quiet streets have gradually departed. First and foremost, we miss the ingenious professor who shook the hat of Chinese bells, beat the drum and cymbals with his knees, and played the mouth-organ all at once. He is gone, and albeit he must have left his apparatus behind him, no one has supplied his place. Then there was the wandering barytone who sang to the dulcimer, in an oil-skin cap and red whiskers; and whom, in the summer-tide, we can all so well recollect upon the sunny turf of Ascot and Egham, between the ropes and the front rank of carriages. Once, too, we had monthly visits from a foreigner, who accompanied his guitar with the Pandæan pipes; but he appears no longer. And, humblest music of all, the simple pipe and tabor, that bespoke the presence of the two Savoyard dolls upon the string, have departed. Possibly we are getting more refined in our notions, and require a higher class of entertainment than these professors offered to us. This is very likely the case. The gin-shop bands and the large organs are by no means to be despised. The gems of the opera are promulgated by them about the streets; and, should the same improvements extend in vocal as well as instrumental music, it is not improbable but that before long vagrant Daughters of the Regiment, and wandering Normas may make their shrill voices heard in our thoroughfares, as the *danseuses* of Covent Garden and the Haymarket have their humble imitators on the rickety shutter or old bit of carpet placed upon the paving.

ALBERT SMITH.

COVENT GARDEN MARKET.

THERE is no *rus in urbe* like Covent Garden Market.

The patches of struggling vegetation in square, park, or garden, whose only commerce with the sun is a sort of bowing acquaintance—a distant nod exchanged *en passant* through the chinks of a smoky cloud—have been wittily designated "Nature put in the pound for straying." But this is wit at the expense of truth. They are not Nature at all, but a vile caricature, daubed in charcoal and lampblack. The petrified trees of a coal-mine have as much claim on our sympathies. They satisfy no yearnings, but are silent and sullen as the walls that frown on them. They make no response to the inward voice that "babbles of green fields;" and, like the windows of a prison, show us a glimpse of the unencompassed world only through a black grating that reminds us of our imprisonment.

How differently are we affected by Covent Garden Market. Here Nature empties forth her teeming lap, filled with the choicest produce of her happiest generation. The loveliness of the land is there and the fatness thereof. At one glance we pass in review the prime and bloom of vegetation, and communicate directly with the riches of the earth. It is the metropolitan congress of the vegetable kingdom, where every department of the "growing" and "blowing" world has its representatives—the useful and the ornamental, the needful and the superfluous, the esculent and the medicinal. Here the Londoner fraternizes with the rustic, and acknowledges that he is not all bricks and mortar—that Nature has still some parental claims upon him which he cannot entirely away with.

It is a twofold temple, dedicated to Pomona and Flora, in which daily devotion is paid to the productive divinities. Here, as in a very temple, all classes and grades, all denominations and distinctions of men, jostle each other in the humility of a common dependence on the same appetites, the same instincts, the same organs of taste, sight, and smell:—the fashionable lady

who has left her Brougham at the entrance, in quest of the pampered nursling of the conservatory, and the wan needlewoman, bent on the purchase of a bunch of wallflowers, or a root of pale primroses to keep her paler cheeks in countenance; the artizan's wife, purveying for her husband's meal, and the comfortable housekeeper, primed with the discriminating lore of Mrs. Glass, making provisions for her winter preserves; the bloated gourmand, in search of precocious peas, and the sickly hypochondriac, eager to try the virtues of some healing herb.

The priestesses who serve the temple form two distinct classes, those of Pomona and those of Flora—the Basket-woman and the Bouquet-girl. It is to the first that our artist has dedicated the mingled grace and vigour of his pencil, and has shown her to us in the midst of her athletic avocations. Hers is no finikin type of female beauty; the taper waist and slender neck would ill befit the rude labours she is devoted to. Her portly figure is rather architectural than sculptural in its graces; and with arms upraised, in support of the basket balanced on her head, she might serve as a model for the caryatids of a new temple to the deity she serves.

He who would behold her in full activity must gratify his curiosity at some expense. He must voluntarily accomplish that which is enforced upon the vegetable visitor of the market—he must tear himself from his bed, foregoing the suavities of the morning's sleep to face the bleak air of dawning day. Unless, indeed, he repair to the scene, as we have often done, as a sort of "finish"—to use the language of antiquated fast men—after a round of evening parties, his temples throbbing with an unhallowed mixture of festive beverages, from the bland negus to the ice-bound fire of champagne punch; his senses jaded with a thousand artificial and violent delights; and, perhaps, a secret wound rankling at his heart—a wound that he has attempted to treat with light indifference, and to bury under a hecatomb of flirtations, but which now asserts itself with redoubled pangs, and mingles its reproaches to the many-voiced objurgations of conscience to sicken and disgust him with his existence. Under such circumstances is it that the most striking phase of Covent Garden—that which it presents on the morning of a market-day—will produce its fullest effect. It is under such circumstances that it has impressed itself upon our minds, and that we can speak of it most naturally.

Led by a vague instinct, an unconscious attraction—as towards some refreshing influence, some healing spring that should comfort the fevered spirit that lay sick within us—we have found ourselves mechanically following some huge cabbage-laden waggon, as it loomed and rumbled through the

deserted streets until it stopped and ranged itself with its companions round the market square. Here, with vacant attention, we have watched each process, joined each busy group, followed with our eyes the contents of each waggon in its various distribution, snuffing eagerly the mingled perfumes from the extempore parterres that were spreading before us, and inhaling with joyful and dilated lungs the countryfied atmosphere that was, as it were, being unpacked with each cart-load of rustic produce.

Gradually, as all impurities seemed cleansed away from our mind, and a more cheerful and healthy spirit awakened within us, we took a keener interest in the increasing bustle and variety of the spectacle that disclosed itself with the full dawn of morning. We watched the nature of each particular scene and the character of the actors therein, or listened to the arguments accompanying each bargain, until it was finally completed in the adjoining public-house, amidst the ceremonial libations of gin, half-and-half, or heavy wet; scrutinizing the peculiarities of buyer and seller. First, the various grades of rusticity in the vendors, from the complete bacon-fed bumpkin, who has come up with a load of turnips, and the semi-countrified market-gardener—half country half town, like a stagecoach-omnibus—to the cockney nurseryman, distinguishable only by the inseparable pedantry of his profession. The no less marked and more numerous distinctions in the purchasers: the well-to-do shopkeeper, with neatly appointed cart and sleek horse; the petty dealer, whose equipage exhibits various stages of rickets; the hawker, with truck or donkey-cart, whose stentorian voice will shortly awaken the echoes of many a tranquil quarter, with the familiar cry of "green gooseberries," "all a-growing all a-blowing," or "cherries round and sound," &c., &c.; lastly, the stall-woman and the flower-girl—she of the "two bunches a-penny"—laying out with anxious discretion the small capital borrowed for the day, and for which exorbitant interest will have to be paid to some extortionate old hag—some withered she-Rothschild of rags and tatters—who, by some infernal compact with the devil of usury and a hard heart in lieu of the philosopher's stone, contrives to reap a golden harvest from squalid misery.*

Amidst this medley of divided interests, of varied ranks and conditions, of larger or smaller insects, swarming and feeding on the plenteous growth of Nature, moves the stately form of the Basket-woman, upreared above the rest

* This is a fact. There is a class of money-lenders—generally women—who furnish capital to the lower class of hawkers, at the most outrageous profit.

by the height of her toppling burden, discharging her simple and unvarying functions, like the embodiment of invisible justice presiding over and regulating the affairs of men.

Bodily refreshed by approximation with pure and wholesome objects, gradually diverted from morbid discontent, and restored to something like equanimity, by the contemplation of persevering industry struggling through misery less fantastic than our own, we have bent our steps homeward, a wiser and a more sleepy man.

Towards the afternoon another and very different phase of the market is presented. To the range of heavy tilted carts and waggons has succeeded a line of brilliant and elegant equipages. The *utile* has given place to the *dulce*, and pleasure now shows itself almost as busy as need. Over this period of the day Flora more especially presides, and the Bouquet-girl—her priestess—is in the height of her ministry. Her delicate fingers are now busily employed in tricking out the loveliness of nature; for even her loveliest daughters must be drilled and trained ere they can make their *dêbût* in the world of artifice they are called upon to adorn. Their slender stems need a wiry support to prop the head, that else would droop in the oppressive atmosphere of the ball-room or the theatre. Art must draw fresh beauties from the contrast of each with the other; nor will the self-complacent ingenuity that paints the lily and gilds refined gold be satisfied till it has completed their toilet by investing them in a white robe of broidered paper.

The clients of the Bouquet-girl consist almost exclusively of the sighing herd of lovers. These, with the exception of an occasional wholesale order from the manager of a theatre with a view to some triumphant *dêbût*, form the staple consumers of her wares. But among the whole tribe she has no such insatiate customer as he who is struggling in the toils of a *danseuse*. "If music be the food of love," bouquets are certainly the very air upon the regular supply of which hangs its existence; and on such air does the *danseuse*, chameleon-like, seem exclusively to live. They are the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of her life—the symbols of her triumphs public and domestic—the tribute exacted by the achievements of her feet, and the conquests of her glancing eye. A collection of all the bouquets she receives, arranged and ticketed according to date and circumstance, would form a minute record of her career. Not but all passions, even of the humblest nature, are sufficiently burdensome in this particular, but let any man who as yet has only "paid attentions," as it is called, in the ordinary sphere of life, try even a flirtation with a *danseuse*, and he will see what an overgrown

and ruinous item the article bouquet will form in his yearly expenditure. If he be not a man of some substance, or prepared to face the inquisitors of Portugal Street, he had better take us at our word than adventure on the experiment.

Over what a multiplicity of love-affairs, in every stage of advancement, suspense, or retrogression, does the Bouquet-girl preside, and administer to! For the destruction of how many beleaguered citadels do her arsenals furnish ammunition—from the open siege, carried on in the eye of the world, to the secret and artful mine, unsuspected till some terrible explosion reveals it to universal scandal! How many a course of true love has she traced through all its windings. The legitimate and successful suit, whose regular supply of bouquets ends at last with the bridal wreath of orange-flowers; and the illegitimate suit, whose series of bouquets has no other climax than abrupt cessation, a gradual dying-off, or a change in the address to which they are directed.

Depository of secrets so important, upon which depend the fair name and the happiness of so many, what a *bonne fortune* would the confessions of a Bouquet-girl be to a revelation and mystery-mongering novelist. It is to be hoped, however, that she is worthy of the trust reposed in her; indeed, we firmly and fondly believe it; for ourselves in the greenness of youth have furnished our little quota of delicate confidences to the mass of perilous stuff that slumbers in the fair bosom of one in particular, whom we will not name. With a solemn adjuration to the Bouquet-girl to pursue her amiable but responsible calling with inviolable secrecy and discretion, for the sake of mercy and the peace of society in general, we will bid her farewell, and a long ascendancy of the planet Venus.

CHARLES KENNEY.

THE CROSSING-SWEEPER.

It is surprising how the street *exploiteurs* of London acquire gradually an acknowledged right of possession of any particular nook or corner wherein they exercise their calling. This enterprize is not carried to anything like the same extent in Paris. Pitches and occupation enough for Crossing-sweepers there are, every one knows, but none take advantage of them ; and if they did, they would not get much from the Monsieurs. They confine their small trade chiefly to the bridges ; clipping and shaving domestic dogs, or blacking shoes on the kerb, and selling cheap books on the parapets. The *Champs Elysées* draw the jugglers and itinerant vendors of cakes or fruit from the streets ; now and then a small stall-keeper gets permission to display his humble wares under a *porte-cochère ;* or a mendicant, such as the blind woman on the *Pont des Arts*, is allowed to beg for years at the same spot ; but these are all. It is only in London that the chance produce of the streets is cultivated, and made of such great value—we mean with respect to stray halfpence, not to the things picked up. There are no stray halfpence in France, and the *cheffoniers* are a tribe in themselves. But in London we have noticed the same persons, year after year, in the same places. The pitch becomes their property ; they inherit it from their predecessor, and they leave it, when they give up business, to a friend or a purchaser. An instance of this has occurred since we last wrote respecting Street Music. An Italian with an organ was in the habit of playing before our windows every Monday morning, and now and then got a penny, if there chanced to be one lying about—more, however, by reason of his good-tempered looking face than his music, which was dreary enough to be classical. One day, a short time since, he came without his organ, very sprucely dressed, and accompanied by a fellow-countryman. He knocked at the door, and asked to see us. Upon being introduced, he said, with many smiles and apologies, that he was going to return to Lucca, having "made his fortune :" but that he had called to thank us for long-continued patronage, and begged to introduce his friend, Guiseppe something, who had *taken his organ and his walk* of him, and who

would play as usual! Then they both smiled and made innumerable bows, and departed for another house.

The first street-occupiers who appear in the early morning are the coffee-stall keepers, with their small temporary accommodation for early breakfast; and they always take up their position in the same place, most frequently near a cab-stand. We do not exactly know what time they strike their tents and depart: we have only seen them on returning, with blinking eyes and split gloves, from an evening party, when the straight smoke rising from the bakers' chimneys in the sharp, clear, morning air was catching the first beams of the sun. Next arrive the fruit-merchants, and they appear to know the very kerb-stone of which they have established the occupancy; others have obtained leave to put up their stand between the doors and under the window of a gin-shop.

The Crossing-sweepers have not yet come out. At present the passengers are as badly off as themselves; and the hope of coin is small. The hour of their appearance, however, depends upon the quarter of town in which they exercise their calling. Thus the crossings, from the Poultry to Cornhill, the Exchange, or the Bank, must be got ready long before those in Mayfair, Belgravia, or Tyburnia. Many of them, about the squares, are, in a measure, pensioners of the families. From one house they look for their Sunday dinner—from another, a basin of broken victuals at the end of the week—and so on; whilst most of them have regular patrons upon whom they can steadily reckon for the eleemosynary copper every morning, dry or muddy as may be the thoroughfare. That some of them have literally acquired fortunes in this way is matter of history.

As day advances, the loquacious vendors of cheap toys, mouse-traps, china and glass cement, corn-curers, and minor marvels, take up their places. Some of these have been in St. Paul's Churchyard and Leicester Square for years, altering their wares as public taste was satiated or changed. Two or three novel speculations have lately been started. There is a fellow in Oxford Street who sells jumping—or, as he calls them, "electric"—frogs, made like the old toys, with the spring kept down by cobbler's wax. He exhibits many at once upon a tray slung before him; and the effect of ten or twelve of them flying about his head is exceedingly comical, whilst his volubility is perfectly wonderful. Another man, in Coventry Street, sells model coins—small pieces of money varying in size from that of a shirt-button to a spangle—shut up in a bottle. Formerly he disposed of little images of Buonaparte enclosed in like manner; then he took to song-books, and long zoological or historical alphabets; but always on the same beat, between the

corner of Cranbourne Street and the top of the Haymarket. If a remarkable event now occurs it is immediately turned to account by him, in a saucepan-lid full of penny medals. He brings out engraved cards of Jenny Lind, Hungerford Bridge, the Chinese Junk, or the Wellington Statue, the instant they come before the public. He has a song ready for any popular excitement; and is altogether a chronicle of the time in himself.

The "progress" of the day—the driving improving high-pressure go-a-head struggle for superiority which characterizes the actions of the present time—has extended to the Crossing-sweeper. Art is in the ascendant. Beer-jugs and shaving-mugs, milk-pots, paper-knives, and sugar-tongs—at prices so extraordinary, that our reverence for such hitherto humble domestic objects is increased to a wonderful degree—become things to look at rather than to use, henceforth to be classed with the bright poker of the hearth. Nothing is as it used to be. Even the art-manufacture of bulls'-eyes gets higher and higher every day; and the brandy-balls of the nursery ages are discarded for rashers of bacon, onions, legs of mutton, oyster-shells, and candle-ends, modelled from nature in sugar. The only things, in fact, that remain as they were, are the family in the Noah's arks, the Richmond and Hampton Court steam-boats, the dancing at a city ball, and the programme of entertainments at Vauxhall Gardens.

The Crossing-sweeper has caught the epidemic. We remember how poor John Reeve pourtrayed him in his inimitable *Jack Rag*—how he said that when his work was over, at his crossing, on Saturday night he shut up shop—that was to say, he swept all the dirt over it again. This very dirt is now turned to account by the sweeper of an inventive genius.

A little time ago, one Sunday, we saw a man at the Tyburn entrance to Hyde Park, who, besides a neat barrier of mud bordering his causeway, destroyed and reconstructed as every vehicle passed, had swept the dirt into all sorts of figures—hearts, diamonds, circles, and stars, until the road was an exhibition in itself. But before this, a very elaborate crossing was made, in the winter, by a man in the new street that runs from St. Giles' into Long Acre. He had established his right of way in front of a hoarding opposite the neat church that has been erected there; and this he had hedged in entirely, with sprigs of holly stuck into the ground. It looked very gay in the day-time; but at night was perfectly brilliant, with inches of candle and small tallow lamps placed along it. You were compelled to find a halfpenny, however cold and irksome the operation of unbuttoning your coat to hunt after it might be. Before long he found as many imitators as a man always does who strikes out a new line in anything; and the whole street was a

succession of swept pathways. It would have required more coppers than an able-bodied individual could have conveniently carried at the commencement of the thoroughfare to have satisfied the claimants.

There is an old story in the spelling-books, and other *répertoires* for juvenile reading, called "Eyes and no eyes; or the art of seeing;" in which two lads go out for a walk, and one, of an observant turn of mind, sees something in everything; whilst the other, like Sir Charles Coldstream in "Used Up," is bored at all that meets his view, finding nothing in it. That there is always something worth looking at in a walk, however dull it may be, is true enough; but there are certain things which never fall in the way of the most observant. We have been favoured with the apparition of strange sights. We once, in a single stroll, saw a Jack in the Green tossed over by a bull, a tipsy man upon two wooden legs, and a cabman with an umbrella. But we never saw, nor did anybody else, a policeman in spectacles, a waiter in boots, or a Crossing-sweeper with a new broom. There must be some *dépôt* at which the brooms are bought second-hand, for they are all stumps. And yet they answer their purpose very well. The only place in which we ever saw the sweepers engaged in establishing a crossing, under great difficulties, was in the new Oxford Street. Now it is being paved; but before this, in wet weather, the thoroughfare resembled a by-street in Venice, with a canal of mud instead of water flowing through it. And as often as they swept a passage the bulwarks of mud rolled slowly over it again until they met; so that at last the sweepers gave it up in despair. The two sides of the street were almost as foreign to each other, at that time, as the opposite sides of the British Channel; the inhabitants saw what their *vis-à-vis* was about, but knew no further.

The new street-sweeping machine will sadly affect the interests of the Crossing-sweepers. Thoughtful boys intended to be brought up to this line of business, are beginning to turn their brooms to account in another way, by brushing the steps of omnibusses. They foresee the arrival of a rainy day—hitherto, the time in which they collected their savings, instead of spending them—when machinery will take their labour and their rewards away from them; and they are preparing to guard against it. Indeed, what with wood, asphalte, and granite, gutta percha and Indian-rubber, with the gradual abolition of Macadamization, the Crossing-sweeper will, in time, pass away from the world of London, and be only spoken of in common with other extinct species.

ALBERT SMITH.


H. VIZETELLY, Sc.

CARMEN AND COAL-HEAVERS.

SWARTH, hard-handed Labour has more votaries in London than any other city in the whole wide-rounded compass of the world ; great, grave, weighty men, with that old solid Saxon cast of countenance which gives such an earnest and serious appearance to all their actions, and who are no more capable of capering, shouting, and dancing round trees of Liberty, like our volatile neighbours, than elephants. Even drinking and smoking, with such men as these, is one of the sober businesses of life—rest after labour ; and they look upon it to be as necessary as either eating or sleeping. A glance at their bulk, bone, and sinew, tells you that those limbs were "pastured in England." The loads some of these men carry would break an ordinary back—they might have served their apprenticeship with Atlas, and began business by first bearing heavy worlds upon their shoulders.

First amongst these stands the Carman—the Mercury of our merchants ; he brings the "gifts the gods provide us" to our very doors. To his keeping ships consign their cargoes, at his bidding the heavy railway trucks are emptied, and he bears into our streets luxuries for which the ocean has been ploughed, treasures for which the mine has been searched through its deep darkness, and comforts for which hill and valley, with all their waving corn, hanging fruit, and lowing flocks and herds, have been plundered. No marvel that with such a trust he walks erect, carries his whip somewhat jauntily, and looks with a proud eye at his horses—subjects who obey his very nod, and, unlike the human wicked world, never entertain a thought of dethroning him. Look at his boots—heavy although they are, they are neatly laced, and fit him like gloves ; he prides himself on his rounded and well-shaped leg ; and there is a kind of natural dignity in his measured march, as he paces stride for stride beside his beautiful and high-fed horses. He seems to have been distinguished for his musical taste before the time of Shakspere, for the poet tells us that Shallow, when of Clement's Inn, sung such tunes as

"the carmen whistled." In this he has not degenerated, and you may often catch a stray note while following him, though the tune, like his own pace, is solemn and slow. He is a good husband and an indulgent father, and when the weather is fine and his load light, and his journey extends to some distant suburb, you will often see his wife and children, who waited at some appointed place, accompanying him. Sometimes he lets his little son carry the long whip, and walk beside him for a short space, and his heart dilates as he pictures, in that chubby specimen of small humanity, a future Carman like himself. He seldom uses his whip, unless to crack it, for he has a brief, gruff, peculiar method of saying "Now, then," which never fails to quicken the pace of his horses when he sees them lagging. Even when his work is up-hill, and with a heavy load, he trusts more to a few encouraging words and friendly pats, at every necessary halt, than he does to the lash, for between him and his horses there is somehow a silent understanding. If there is one thing more than another about which he makes a little extra display, it is his delivery-book, which fastens with a brass clasp, and is carried in a pocket, made purposely, within the left-hand side of his jacket. This book he is rather fond of pulling out, and apparently cogitating over its contents, although all the entries he has to look after are the signatures of the receivers. The marks and figures are strange puzzles to him at times, and convey no more notion of what he has delivered, than an hieroglyphic whose meaning is buried in the bye-gone nights of Egyptian darkness. He also takes great pride in furbishing the ornaments of his harness, and is as particular about not tarnishing the lustre of the respectable "House" to which he belongs, as the confidential clerk who presides over the office. He rarely calls his employers masters, but speaks of them as "Our Firm."

A thorough London Carman is very "knowing" in localities; and if a toll can be avoided, and he is not pressed for time, he is as sure to "do the pike" as a cabman who has bargained to carry his fare home and clear the gates. He is invariably attended by a dog, which might have been trained by Ducrow, for it is capable of riding upon anything, from a cask to the end of a sugar-cane, and all it seems to delight in is balancing itself on all kinds of imaginable things, and barking at every object that passes; for which purpose it is eternally running from one end of the vehicle to the other, like some poor fellow who is endeavouring to take up a dishonoured bill by getting his own acceptance discounted—with this difference, that the dog does all the barking and growling, while the other finds it thrown in gratis. The Carman is fondly attached to his dog, and rarely takes a meal without allowing him

to share in it. He is very kind to any poor brother of the whip whom he sees tugging up-hill in vain, with a weighty load and an ill-fed team ; it needs but little persuasion to induce him to unyoke one or two of his own powerful horses and rush in to the rescue. We have seen many of these little kindnesses done in the hilly streets of the City ; and we have drawn strange conclusions from them. In a few words, my rich and aristocratical masters! we have thought that if a few of you acted to your fellow-men as the Carmen do to one another in need, the foundations of Europe would not be jarring to the very centre, as they are now. Place a helping hand upon a willing heart, my friends, and the very beating of its gratitude will so stir your sluggish souls, that you will feel as if cutting your pen-feathers and getting ready-winged for immortality. We have seen a soul in the silent shaking of the hands between two Carmen, when one has rendered the other aid as we have described, which would have put to shame all the studied return of thanks ever showered forth after the "sacking" of England in Exeter Hall, to bring up unbelieving "black babbies" for gospel sucklings, and to pave the way to heaven with gold for the strong-haired "niggers." A poor old wayfarer has but to ask the Carman for a lift, and if he is one of those whose heart is in the right place, he will pull up by the roadside, and be thought none the worse of by his employers for his kindness. For passing to and fro, as he ever is doing, along the stirring streets, or in the dusty suburbs, he sees Splendour seated in her chariot and squalid Misery crawling and bent with age and hunger upon the pavement; and although he says but little, he thinks the more, and thanks God that he is a Carman, and wishes that the poor people were as comfortable as his horses.

He is an unmerciful denouncer of idleness, and thinks that those who are able and will not work ought not to eat. His politics are taken from the *Advertiser*, and *Dispatch;* and although he is an out-and-out liberal in his notions, yet he is sensible enough to know that it is all nonsense about all men being equal. "Because as how," he says, "I knows them what if they had a thousand to-morrow would never do a hand-stir until every farthing of it was spent." Then he has no end of apt and homely illustrations—how Bill this, and Jack that, and Jem the other, had all such chances as no men had before, and although the bread was, "as the saying is, put into their mouths, howsomdever they were too lazy to eat it." He is gallant enough to say that he should not like to see his young "missus" go out to work, "because as how she 's been brought up a lady, and shows so much feeling for the horses." There are touches of delicacy about his character, such as "not" seeing the poor fellows

who drag trucks about the streets lay hold of his cart or waggon, or it may be, slackening the pace of his horses when the men come panting up behind, attempting in vain to overtake him ; nor would they ever succeed were it not for the word "gently" which only the horses hear, for he pretends not to notice the party thus assisted. We are drawing one of the most favourable of the class—one who seldom changes masters. There are others who delight in carrying off a wheel, if they can manage it nicely ; who rap out an oath loud enough to electrify a nervous man, and lay their whips on everything that comes in their way. Such as these the poet Gay describes running into the "gilded chariots, and

> "———————— Lashing on with spiteful rage,
> His ponderous spokes the painted wheels engage;
> Crushed then is pride, down falls the shrieking beau,
> The slabby pavement crystal fragments strew :
> Black floods of mire the embroidered coat disgrace,
> And mud enwraps the honours of his face."

The Coal-heaver is the next who figures upon our picturesque stage—the knight of the fan-tail and shovel—the man whose body must be like the face of the moon, full of hills and holes, caused by lumps of coal of every size, which fit to his back as if made for it. Look how he holds the quart-pot ! You can see at a glance that the half left will just be enough for one moderate draught: if he drinks first, he never takes his lips away until he sees a small portion of the bottom of the tankard, for that is a Coal-heaver's calculation of a fair share—a little of the best of it. You should see him breakfast at the front of the bar, about five o'clock of a summer's morning. A pound and a half of bread, with half that weight of meat, the fatter the better, form his common rations. He uses no plate, but with his huge clasp-knife cuts under and over, until the whole is consumed. He then draws the back of his hand across his mouth, and is silent for nearly a minute, while he takes a "pull" at the foaming pot ; a deep, long-drawn "ah !" proclaims the return of breath, which seems to come back like the rush of an express train through the Watford tunnel. He then takes off his fan-tail, and passes his jacket-sleeve across his forehead, for such eating and drinking is almost as hard work as carrying coals. He pulls his short pipe from somewhere among the hills and valleys of his dress, then his steel tobacco-box from another "deep profound," and having filled, he closes the lid with a loud snap ; he then applies a light to the fragrant weed, and with one eye closed "whiffs" at his "own sweet will" until he hears the first stroke of the six o'clock bell. It has often

puzzled him why that bell tolls, morning after morning, at the same hour; and he has asked Jem, and Jem has asked Ned, who is rather "cute," and the conclusion they have arrived at is that "it's the six-o'clock bell." You would, after his hearty meal and quiet smoke, to look at him when he first arises from his seat at the front of the public-house bar, take him for a dull, half-asleep sort-of-a man, and such he seems as he enters the gates of the capacious coal-wharf. But once see him plant his foot upon the elastic plank that stretches across to the coal-barge, and he is in a moment a new man. Unlike others, whose countenances are lighted up by the expression of the thought within, he looks more intellectual at every step he takes, as if his feet, which are so accustomed to action, had assumed the command both over the mind and the other members of the body, and that they alone looked to his steps, and took heed of his ways. As if conscious of this, he takes a particular pride in his legs, and clothes them at times in white stockings and well-fitting shoes or boots; above droops the dingy fan-tail and the dusty jacket, which seem but made as cushions for heavy burdens—for the upper part is but a mere resting-place for coal-sacks. Below all is free, and clean, and uncumbered; there lie the will and the command; it is their duty to see that the load is carried away safely and deposited in its allotted place; they are all eye, all life, all watchfulness. If they make a false step all is over with "him," for they alone have the charge of the man. It is their look-out to see that he stumbles not, or is carried away by the current to be deposited under one of the arches of the bridge, or peradventure borne onward to become a mere covering for the archway over the Thames Tunnel. No marvel he pats them at times, and that we err in supposing he is only beating out the coal-dust. He best knows how much he is beholden to them, and doubtless has his own way of expressing gratitude.

Only try to use his sharp-pointed concave shovel, and just fill a single sack, and ten to one at the very first attempt you would strike upon a large lump of coal with such a blow as would make every fibre of the arm jar again; while he, by some peculiar turn of the elbow, throws up one shovel-ful after the other as if the whole barge was laden with smooth sand, and no such obstacles as lumps were to be found in the cargo. It would twist the spine of an unpractised man only to place one of those heavy sacks either upon the weighing-machine or in the waggon; while he, with his accustomed jerk, drops his burden with as much ease and safety as a gipsy-woman slides down her little sun-tanned brat from her back. A true Coal-heaver must be "to the manner born" to excel.

The toys he buys for his children are tiny shovels and little waggons filled with coal-sacks; and sometimes he purchases for his son and heir a juvenile fan-tail, with which the embryo Coal-heaver is delighted. He is fond of folding his arms when he is not busy, and watching the craft as they pass up and down the river, or having a gossip with "our" bargeman. If anybody talks about the power of steam, he takes a long pull at his pipe, and wonders what it would be without coals. He pities the poor creatures who come prowling about the barges, at low-water mark, to pick up the pieces of coal that have fallen overboard; and no doubt, were he to make an open confession, he has occasionally let a lump or two fall on purpose, as waif and stray for these half-clad human "amphibiousnesses." He ever likes low situations. If he goes as far as Greenwich, he rarely ascends the breezy summits of the park, but loiters about beside the piers, trying to discover what "Coalliers" are coming into Pool. If he speaks about the large houses in London, his remarks are chiefly confined to the roomy cellarage, and the number of tons he and his "Butty" have shot into them during a twelve-month. He wonders how people can live at all in France, where he has heard they burn nothing but wood, and have so few gridirons. When he is clean shaved you can tell he is a Coal-heaver, dress however he may, for a crop of coal-dust still vegetates in the roots of his beard: he calls it new seed, and prides himself on taking off the edge of his barber's razor. The barber himself says that a Coal-heaver is as hard to shave as a sand-bag.

The eating-houses at the foot of those hilly streets beside the river, which are frequented by these men of the sack and shovel, display different and more substantial fare than you will find in any other quarter of London. Nowhere beside will you see briskets of beef so fat, or puddings containing such quantities of suet. Go in and call for a Coal-heaver's plate of meat, even after having fasted for a long summer-day, and then you will not be able to consume the half of it. A plate of mixed vegetables there is half an enormous cabbage, with three or four gigantic potatoes to match; while a half-quartern loaf cuts up into four "Coal-heaver's breads." If you want to find out a house where the best porter is drawn, look out for one patronized by the fraternity of fan-tails, and there you are as sure to get a superior tap as you are to find a pure spring by following in the wake of a flock of water-wag-tails.

To the Carman and the Coal-heaver we are indebted for many comforts. Amid rain, blow, and snow, they cheerfully do their allotted duties. The fire that throws such a warm and summer-like look around the apartment,

when outside "all around the wind doth blow," was placed under our very feet by their united labours. John's yellow-plush would burn like an ominous sunset, were he even trusted with the favourite horse and gig to fetch a sack of "black-diamonds" from the wharf; and Betty's face would out-redden the hue of her brightest copper coal-scuttle, if only sent to the nearest shed for a small supply. What a many bickerings and heart-burnings do these willing labourers save us from! The appearance of a laden coal-waggon gives a look of respectability to a man's house; and we have known a tax-gatherer put off his call for a month, and a landlord wait patiently until the end of the next quarter for his rent, through seeing a couple of fan-tails with their load at the door. A merry acquaintance of ours, though he can only afford to purchase a single sack at a time, always contrives to have it delivered when a full waggon is sent round. He says the look of the thing is well worth the pot of beer he gives to the men, as they have to halt a short time while they drink it, and he knows not how many of his creditors may chance to pass at the time. It is whispered that if he makes a promise to pay, and cannot keep it—it is generally when the waggon is likely to call—then he pleads as an excuse that he is "busy with the coals."

But, to see a Coal-heaver to perfection, he must be visited in his "daily walks and ancient neighbourhood"—a water-side tap-room. The very name, we are well aware, is enough to make a pretty lady gather together her white flounces for fear of contamination. We, who look at mankind either through an opera-glass, or see the moving shadows mirrored deep down in a pot of half-and-half, care not for such trifles. A heavy-heeled boot makes a less. lasting impression on a floor strewn with sand or saw-dust than on a Turkey carpet: for the one is swept away with every new morrow, while the dent on the other remains until the very spot is worn thread-bare. There you may see him superintending the gridiron. What a steak! what a couple of chops! Either the one or the other would bump down a honest pound weight. He would draw the leg of a chicken through his teeth, and clear it at a single mouthful. His eye is on the great black clock, with its three inches in length figures, for it beats time like his own measured footsteps, in its dark unadorned case; and he knows to a second where the big hand ought to point after the process of cooking, when he has dined, and when he has lighted his pipe. He would back that old clock against all the watches in Europe; for it keeps his time, and has done so for years. The great sliding-box under the table he draws out whenever he pleases, and throws the coals on the fire with as much freedom as if he were filling his own sacks

from the barges—a piled-up shovel-ful goes on the fire at every throw. He "takes his ease at his inn," like Falstaff; and woe be to the landlord who dares to propose a reformation! There his political opinions are law, and he would cuff even Cuffey himself if he dared to oppose him. He became a "special," to protect himself; and argued, "If so be's that a thief steals my governor's coals, why he gets no money for them; and if he gets no money whatsomdever, how can he pay I my wages, what is." So far he beats Louis Blanc, by hitting the nail at once on the head; for the Coal-heaver is a man who, when he finds a lump that will not go into his sack, breaks it up, and makes it to fit, whether or no.

THOMAS MILLER.


H.VIZETELLY Sc

THE ORANGE-GIRL.

I AM an old-fashioned man, born before the invention of nerves, influenza, railways, "fast" modes of doing everything, and Chartists. Sometimes I am sorry that the range of my life was fated to extend to the present time. I am amused at a great deal I see, but I am more frequently saddened. All the things I took real delight in—bright summer-day journeys on pleasant coaches, excellent representations of the reviled legitimate drama, fresh walks out of town, when an hour took you from Bloomsbury to fields, hedge-rows, and green lanes—these, and many more, that I could fill the space allowed me by enumerating, are no more.

There was not the struggle amongst the theatres that characterizes the present dramatic age, when I used to attend them regularly. Three or four were open, and were sufficient for us. We read their modest little single bills and went; and the report of a successful piece was passed about by word, from one to the other. We did not believe that a new play had been a "hit" one whit the readier for seeing it so stated in the bills, or blazoned forth upon the walls in rainbow placards, hiding one another in their fight for publicity. No; I took it all calmly, and my friends did the same. If the play was of good report we went and spread its fame; if it was not, we stopped away, and then the manager withdrew it. The managers of those days were honest men, with a position in society and a name to guard; but we should not have believed them upon their own word about the success of one of their productions. We might as soon have put faith in the assertions of the Jew merchants, who then sold pencils, sponge, and oranges, at the White-horse Cellar, that their wares were the best to be had for money.

Pleasant enough it then was to go to the theatres, but with some there were attractions in addition to the performances. When I first recollect the present Surrey it was literally in St. George's fields. You might have plucked a nosegay—we had no *bouquets* then—of shepherd's heart-purses, or cowslips

even, at the right time, within a stone's throw of the theatre, and taken it in with you. Now all this is altered, the only green patch is in front of the riding-school, and, except here, you will not see a blade of grass, not counting the dusty tufts of the larks in the cages hung out from the second-floor windows.

Sadler's Wells, too, was quite a provincial theatre. You got such a view from the heights of Islington over London that the afternoon walk was equal in itself to the performance. Few can understand now how this could have been, as they look down upon the hazy glare that seems to choke and burn up the outskirts of Clerkenwell at their feet. Yet so it was; and I used to arrive at the Wells always an hour before the time of commencement, for the express purpose of sitting in one of the arbours of the adjoining tea-gardens, in which were lilacs in the spring-time, and honeysuckles, and, afterwards, such fine hops and scarlet-runners that I have never seen equalled; watching the boys fishing in the New River, under the shade of the fine trees; and drinking my pint of wine, sent over from the theatre. I tried to find out where this garden had stood the last time I was at Sadler's Wells, about a year ago, but there was not a trace of it left. Some ungainly houses occupied its site, and these were encompassed by more houses, and so on to spots that in my time must have been perfect wilds.

The accompanying sketch of the Orange-girl called up these recollections. Living quietly as I do, I almost thought that she also had departed, followed in the wake of the "barrow-woman," whom I can just remember—only perpetuated by a rude copy of the sheet of woodcuts representing the "cries" of London, in the British Museum, which I have stuck in a scrap-book—not an album, but an honest, old-fashioned scrap-book, swollen to bursting with its contents, and crammed with all the most popular jests of the last century, cut out of some hundreds of comical corners. If I chose to make that old scrap-hook public, what a fearful check it would be against the would-be original wits of the present day; why, it contains everything they say and get circulated, with the advantage of being much better put. We old-fashioned people were not so "slow" after all.

Your M. Gavarni may consider himself fortunate in having found an Orange-girl. There are very few now. Apart from the old Irishman at the stalls, the trade in oranges is chiefly carried on by children and old women. When I regularly frequented the theatres, thirty years ago and more, they were features in the entertainment: fine buxom young women, with a sharp answer always ready for those who tried to banter them. They were of quite

a different stamp to the theatre-moulded women in the rusty black dresses, who push by your legs across the present pits, with their cottony fruit and warm ginger-beer. They appeared to consider themselves descendants of Nell Gwynne, and as such, bound to keep up their characters for smart repartee; but beyond this they were quiet enough.

They cried their wares in a tone by no means disagreeably loud; and must, therefore, have considerably softened down since the days of "rare Ben Jonson," when the Orange-women were amongst the special annoyances whom Morose, in "The Silent Woman," wore a "huge turban of night-caps on his head, buckled over his ears," to protect him from. Some of them were very pretty, too, and assumed a coquettish air that would not have been amiss in their betters. They have now no parallels. The women in the cigar-shops are too conventional in their talk and jaded in their looks; and the waitresses at the night oyster-rooms too emptily flippant. Perhaps the gingerbread girls at the fairs and races approach nearest to them in persuasive manner.

This has been a great season for oranges. I can look back for many years and never recollect them so cheap, for, a month or two ago, they were crying them under my window at four a-penny. And what a glorious fruit is the orange—how precious should we think it if its price was above coppers! Its fragrance spreads agreeably over the costly dessert of the West-end dinner. There is nothing that can compare with it for the bed-table of the invalid. Small Tom Simmons, in the sixpenny gallery, would not give a pin for the performance unless he had an orange to suck the whiles; and the "shuck" afterwards left to fling at the leader's head if he delayed the overture longer than the gods thought becoming.

It is said that Sir Walter Raleigh was the first to introduce oranges into England. Oranges and tobacco! great boons certainly—for I love my pipe—which in themselves ought to have insured a man from decapitation. I don't know whether this was the case or no, but, whoever it was, he deserves a testimonial; and I say this as one who lived before testimonials were invented, at least after the fashion of the present day.

I used to think that the Orange-women in the streets dealt for their golden fruit with the warehousemen of the river districts. My father had a situation in the Customs, and we lived in a street off Tower Hill. There were not such long rows of suburban villas in those days; the City folks abided in the City, and thought it quite good and healthy enough for them. They frequently died in the same house they had been born in. Their promenade

was the Pavement, or Finsbury Square; and they sought solitude, where only the splash of the fountain in Draper's Hill broke it. My earliest recollection of wandering loose about London pertain to when I was permitted to go alone, and wait for my father at the Custom House—to walk back with him, having bought a large crab or some dried fish in Billingsgate; and then I always started from my house half-an-hour in advance, to linger for that time in Botolph Lane, amongst the warehouses. They were to me the greatest wonder of London. I could scarcely understand the wealth of fruit that these dingy rooms gave glimpses of, as overwhelming to my young eyes as Ali Baba must have found the treasures of the forty thieves. It appeared impossible that such a quantity could ever be eaten.

When the quarter-chest of Seville oranges used to come home for wine-making, I marvelled at the number, in their thin French coffin-looking boxes, and each one wrapped in its own paper envelope; but here there was no end to the ripe and juicy spheres. There were other grand attractions, too, in Botolph Lane—nut-hunting in the gutters. From some mysterious source or another, water was always rushing down the kennel of the steep thoroughfare; and on its surface hundreds of nuts made troubled journeys until they were swept down the grating of the sewer, to come up again in the river, where we see them now, in company with the old corks and morsels of Essex-marsh rushes. It was my great amusement to catch these nuts. They never paid for the time, for they were invariably faulty; but they had a fine healthy, promising look, that every day lured me on again to chase them, as the lotteries each succeeding year bit those again who had invariably lost. Besides this, the men who worked the cranes, and loaded the waggons at the warehouses, began to know me. A small intimacy was established, and they would give me oranges that had spoiled, from being over-ripe, in coming over; and when the flaw of the condemned fruit had been taken away, how delicious was the rest! I used to be very proud, when returning with my father, to nod grandly, but very politely at the same time, to these men, as I clutched his hand, and showed him that I had acquaintances in the City whom even he did n't know.

But I am losing myself in these recollections. I was about to have said that these street-vendors buy their goods, not of these warehousemen, but in Covent Garden Market. The Orange girl is gradually departing; and in a few years our illustration will be that of the same species with Hogarth's and Tempest's.

AN OLD PLAYGOER.

A SKETCH FROM THE WEST-END.

It is very curious to speculate as to what part of England will ultimately be the West-end of London—no less than to watch the gradual progress that the apparent desire of the fashionable world to get still nearer the sunset has made in that direction for many years. Keeping within the recollection of old inhabitants still extant, we find that the anomalous neighbourhood between the Foundling Hospital and Red Lion Square, north and south; and Gray's Inn Lane and Bloomsbury, east and west, was once the patrician quarter of London. The houses, even in their decay of quality, have a respectable look. Their style of architecture is *passé*, it is true; but they evidently make a great struggle to keep up appearances. If chance leads you into them, you will find that they are all similarly appointed, even to their inhabitants. All the furniture is rubbed up to the last degree of friction polish, and the carpets are brushed cleanly threadbare. The window-curtains, blanched in the sun of thirty or forty summers, until their once crimson hue has paled to a doubtful buff: the large semicircular fireplace, with its brass-handled poker and latticed fender: the secretary and large flap-table, on which is the knife-case with its forlorn single leaf, or shell, in *marqueterie* on the cover—all remain as they were. Even the ancient landladies have given the same conservative care to their flaxen fronts and remarkable caps. They are grave and dignified in their demeanours, for they believe Great Ormond Street still to be the focus of the West-end. It is long since they have been out, to learn to the contrary: left stationary, whilst Time has flown by them, like an object in the tranquil side-water of a stream whilst similar ones are hurried past with the torrent, they still regard Russell and Bedford Squares as their *Belgravia*—for at every epoch all fashionable parts of town had an ultra-aristocratic neighbourhood. So, when the superior classes still moved on towards the west, colonizing Percy and Newman Streets and the old thoroughfares about Soho, Fitzroy and Golden Squares were in turn looked up to.

Proceeding in two parallel directions, divided by Oxford Street, Hanover Square gradually declined before that of Grosvenor, and Portman rose above Manchester. Still fashion kept marching on—the former division tending towards May Fair, and the latter to the Edgeware Road; until the first, turned aside in its course by Hyde Park, reached the site of Belgravia, and the second, heedless of the associations connected with the gallows, and the decaying foliage of the Bayswater tea-gardens, colonized Tyburnia for its territory.

And powerful indeed are the rules which fashion issues from these strongholds. She directs our tastes in amusements, and regulates our own private economy, whether we will or no. She turns night into day—sends us to bed in the fresh morning, and calls us up at noon, if indeed so early; she even sets the laws of Nature at defiance—repudiates the four seasons of the old calendars, and merges them all into one, which begins and ends whenever she pleases.

We cannot learn the ingress of the West-end London season by the almanacs. None of those mystic marks which Francis Moore so delights in—those hooks and eyes and signs from chemists' bottles—would be of the slightest use in determining its commencement, even to those who understood them. But there are certain signs by which the initiated recognise its approach, and prepare for it accordingly, as certainly as though they were anticipating a shower of rain from a low weather-glass.

The earliest indication of this is the opening of the theatre for the French plays, when, in astrological language, Mitchell enters St. James's. Before that, we do not know who is in town; but the subscription list collects the earliest harbingers of spring—long before the swallows—together. The shutters of the West-end squares open again, and the newspapers that covered the blinds disappear: the chandeliers cast their brown holland skins, and the chairs, sofas, and ottomans, that have been hybernating in the same manner, come out as gay as ever. Then, before the pantomimes have died away in the blaze of their last scene—before the clown has put his head under the curtain, and bidden a final "good night" to his friends, come the announcements of the Operas; dinner-parties collect the autumnal truants together again, and cards increase in the bowl of the drawing-room, or looking-glass frame of the chambers, until Easter passes, the days lengthen, and *the* Season, *par excellence*, commences in all its glory.

And then, indeed, the West-end generally is, towards afternoon, worth seeing—as different a world to the City in its habits, its population, and its

pursuits, as though the two parts of the metropolis were hundreds of miles apart. In what a whirl are the great thoroughfares: it puzzles one to think where so many pretty women, and fine horses, and elegant equipages, can come from. The pavement, too, is almost obliterated by the *flâneurs*, and the entrances to the shops blockaded by servants. Every shade of tint in the prism may be found in the dresses that the eye can gaze at in ten minutes; every style, or *mode*, of dress that Paris can invent will pass within the same time. And there is no repose—no cessation of motion in this turmoil. Crowds of fresh women, and horses, and equipages, succeed the others; the thunder of wheels and knockers never dies away; the last parties going home to dinner meet the first coming down to the operas or theatres. Until grey morning does this dash, and glitter, and heated dusty excitement go on; and then the West-end population goes to bed, and, for a while, leaves the stage clear for those whose exertions are required to administer to its wants or fancies.

The close of the West-end season must not be taken as the close of summer weather—very far from it. When it ends, the leaves are still deeply green upon the trees, the sun bright and warm, and the days sufficiently long for anything. New pleasures, new whirls of excitement begin for the patricians, and, following as usual in their wake, the *parvenus*. Then come the pleasant parties at country-houses, for race-balls, pic-nics, and charades; the creeping about the coast, or, perhaps, boldly crossing to Cherbourg in yachts, or sleeping in Southampton water, or glittering in the sunlight off Cowes; the attempt to reproduce Regent Street and the Parks on the cliffs of Brighton.

And now the West-end becomes a perfect desert. The thousands who leave London make no difference to the stream of life that daily flows along its business thoroughfares; but Regent Street assimilates to Pompeii in its loneliness. There are no more lines of carriages at the kerb; no concert programmes at the music-shops; nor bouquets and lap-dogs on the pavements. Men run in and out of their clubs in a shy and nervous manner, as though they were burrows; not caring to be seen, and inventing lame reasons for their continuance in London. You may wander all round Eaton Square without finding a single window lighted up, or meeting one carriage rolling along, with its lamps like two bright eyes, to a party. All have departed—the handsome girls to recruit their somewhat jaded strength, and recover from the pallor induced by late hours and the thousand fretting emotions of society; the men to shoot, and ride, and sail; the heads of the families to retain their *caste*,

because it is proper to do so; but all to get away as soon and as fast as they can, when Parliament is prorogued, and the grouse are reported to be ready for slaughter.

It is a matter of some interest to inquire where the autumnal tourists intend to go this year. Every avenue of the Continent appears to be so closed to them that Europe has become a species of enormous maze, requiring the utmost caution and ingenuity to thread its perplexities in safety. This state of things will not induce home-travelling, as the Cumberland and Llaneversomuch innkeepers fondly believe; because a man gets no attention paid him in society if he only talks about Derwentwater or Snowdon, whereas he commands an audience directly if he alludes to Zurich or Vesuvius. Some new *route* will, without doubt, be struck out, and all the world—which means the West-end and its dependencies—will follow it. Where it will be we cannot as yet state, but we may perhaps attempt to pourtray the feelings of the "travelling English" in this dilemma, in the following lyric:—

WHERE CAN WE GO THIS YEAR?

(A LAY OF THE SEASON.)

I.

The season 's drawing to a close,
And all are leaving town—
Some seek the lakes, and Wales, and some
To country-seats go down!
But I dislike home travelling,
It is so dull and dear!
And so one question worries me,—
Where can we go this year?

II.

I've walked upon the Ramsgate sands—
I've seen the Isle of Wight,
And nodded to the Gravesend bands
That play from morn till night.
And Guernsey is too far away,
And Brighton is too near,
And dreary Worthing 's like a tomb—
Where can we go this year?

III.

We cannot venture into France,
For every one's afraid
Of being upset, coach and all,
To form a barricade !
Besides, all those who value life
Must see at once "*Mourir*
Pour la patrie" is rather slow—
Where can we go this year ?

VI.

We cannot even see Mont Blanc ;
In fact I scarcely know
Whether or no Sardinia's heat
Has melted all its snow.
About the Schleswig-Holstein row
My notions are not clear,
Except that they are fighting too—
Where can we go this year ?

V.

And even Milan's handsome streets,
So tidy always kept,
By Lombardy's artillery
Are night and morning swept !
And on to Venice, all the way
We should be in the rear
Of fighting troops and bellowing guns—
Where can we go this year ?

VI.

And Spain just now is not at all
The lodging for John Bull,
And e'en the "*bella Napoli*"
Of squabbling mobs is full.

In fact, whichever way you turn,
One sentiment you hear,
Which seems to mean "*A bas le monde!*"
Where can we go this year?

VII.

America is insolent,
The Cape won't do at all,
And China's used-up since the junk
Was anchored at Blackwall.
And Chartists soon at Botany Bay
Will swarm—indeed 't is clear
That Timbuctoo's the only place
For tourists left this year.

ALBERT SMITH.


H. VIZETELLY SC.

THIEVES.

"FULLY committed. Take him away."

So speaks the grave magistrate ; and, rising from the bench of justice, passes by obsequious officials, and rolls home in his brougham to dinner. The reporter pockets his bundle of greasy notes, and hurries out of the Court ; and the "fully committed" one, a few minutes afterwards, is borne away to prison in that sombre vehicle—that hearse of the living—the van. Tell us, ye who have seen it passing through the crowded streets, is a funeral a sight half as melancholy?

Viewing with impartiality the Thief of the present day, we are disposed to consider him, on the whole, inferior to his predecessor—a good symptom for society. The species of gentleman highwayman no longer exists to frighten the traveller, and does no greater harm than put you to sleep in the pages of a novel. A gentleman can now roll through the country in his travelling-carriage without any fear of being robbed by a gallant horseman, summoning him to surrender with the air of a courtier, and pocketing his money with a quotation from Horace. The last of these heroes long ago died on that greatest of all "trees of liberty," the tree of Tyburn ; and his only representative, now-a-days, is the common foot-pad—a vulgar fellow who knocks you down and rifles you when insensible. After all, it must have been much more agreeable to be plundered like a gentleman! But the change shows that the profession is no longer worth following by men of genius ; and the inferior nature of the modern members of it makes them an easy prey of the police.

While we admit, however, that the Macheath school is completely at an end, we must recollect that late years have produced several specimens of robbers of a certain degree of cultivation. We allude to plunderers in places of trust—the absconding secretary and the fugitive clerk. A young man from the provinces gets a situation in the great house of Argent, Doubloon,

and Co., the bankers. He comes up to London after an affectionate parting, and a great deal of good advice, carrying with him a five-pound note, a Bible, a watch, and a lock of hair, perhaps, which he values more than all. His father has recommended to him the study of commerce, and told him the history of Whittington. He is assured that patience and energy will make him rich in time, and he begins his career pretty contentedly, one of a population of two millions, and in the enjoyment of £90 per annum. He takes quiet lodgings, declines a latch-key, comes home to tea when office-hours are over, and, perhaps, having a proper interest in public affairs, peruses a work on the *Organization of Labour*, and dips into the currency—a sea of speculation where the strongest man cannot swim. Next day he propounds a question on the subject to one of his fellow-clerks, who looks at him as if he questioned his sanity, and asks him the odds against Cock-a-whoop for the St. Leger. He is ashamed of his ignorance on such a vital point, goes to work and learns it, and a great deal more. His lodgings now are duller than ever; somehow or other (as he says) the evenings are longer than they used to be. He then finds out that the knowledge of books is comparatively unnecessary; one should know the world, and to see it in all its phases it must be observed occasionally at two in the morning. And then comes the dinner in the country, and the evening "on the loose;" the acquaintance of "good fellows," and the being "up to a thing or two." Our hero now begins to call his male parent "governor," to grow critical in cigars, knowing about sweeps, and inquisitive about the ballet. Debt increases, and he is fairly placed in that worst of all social positions, confirmed in expensive habits, with a limited income. At length he comes to that important crisis in a man's life, more important than his first love—we mean his first bill. Ruin begins to stare him in the face, and the countenance of Ruin is about the ugliest we know.

The tide of his life's folly has now reached its height. With a head weakened, and a heart corrupted by dissipation, he has to resist the tempter; and the tempter is never so dangerous as when the forbidden fruit he offers you is golden. He is doubly powerful in the garden of the Hesperides.

Messrs. Argent and Doubloon's office is some morning observed to be in a great state of confusion. Mr. Johnson is not there, and—curious coincidence—£1500 is missing also. In two hours a detective officer is hurrying to Liverpool. Sometimes the culprit is discovered in a ship about to sail, and not unfrequently in a private room in an hotel, drowning his terror in champagne.

There are cases in which these unfortunates, availing themselves of their stolen wealth, rid themselves of the habits which had led to the crime, and prosper in business; and years after their flight the firm is surprised to receive a remittance of the money that they had lost. But it is almost needless to say, that the thief is generally captured, and goes to Botany Bay, much about the time that his mother, from the same cause, is going to the grave.

The reader will observe in our artist's engraving, that tall figure on the right, with hat cocked knowingly, and peering small eye. He is of the swell-mob. The swell-mob man knows the world; he aims at the "gentlemanly appearance," or the "respectable look!" He is a dangerous bird of prey, but hides his talons in kid gloves. For he knows the world, and is aware that yon poor ill-clad wretch, through whose tattered garments the keen north wind bites, is an object of suspicion whom prudent men pass by with caution. But who suspects the "respectable look?" Men seem to argue in these cases as if everybody had their exact deserts in the world, as if no one was ill-dressed by misfortune, or well-dressed by swindling—a fallacy on which he of the swell-mob feeds. He is a public character, to be seen at political meetings, at exhibitions, at theatres, at Exeter Hall. He is the only man who makes anything by the Chartist movement; it gives him a chance of emptying a pocket. It is when the "stormy wave of the multitude" (as Curran calls it) runs high, that he is seen hovering about it, like the stormy petrel. A group of respectable men are standing together, observing something of interest. They are joined by a stranger of imposing mien, who bows, points out objects of attention, and kindly allows a neighbour to stand before him, that he may see better. In an instant he is gone—suddenly—irrevocably. With an Englishman's instinct, the neighbour puts his hand in his pocket. Then there is wailing and gnashing of teeth. The victim cries out with the miser, in the *Aulularia* of Plautus—

"Hei mihi!
Perii hercle! aurum rapitur."

"Who," he says, "would have suspected him? Did you see his ring?"

Dr. Johnson said of a dabbler in letters, that he was "an author generated from the corruption of a bookseller." We may say of the swell-mob man, that he is a thief generated from the corruption of a flunkey, or a billiard-marker. It is from those mysterious classes—dishonest servants turned out of place; broken-down gamblers; adventurers who, under the vague name of "agents," have failed in a hundred schemes; billiard-markers; jockeys turned

off the turf, and thimble-rig professors—that this army is recruited. Having seen a few of the upper classes at those haunts where the fools of one order are found combined with the rogues of the other, the swell-mob man has learned to ape the manners of a gentleman to a certain extent. Imperturbable impudence does the rest. With carpet-bag in hand, he walks into a hotel, dines sumptuously, sends a letter directed to some titled personage to the post, and retires. Next morning he has departed, and watches, dressing-cases, and plate, have vanished with him. We should not be surprised were we to hear that the swell-mob made a good harvest in the Drury Lane riots the other day; and so employed their "native talent" (the first that has been displayed there for some time) to a good advantage.

As every new discovery in science brings some degree of evil with its good, to mitigate the arrogance of ingenuity; as chemical discoveries assist the forger, chloroform suffocates the too curious, and gun-cotton blows up the speculator—so railways have given employment to a set of ingenious Thieves who haunt the stations at the arrival of trains, on the look-out for luggage. When a train has arrived at the station, and its passengers are seen rushing out of the carriages, like bees from a hive, then the person depicted by our artist in travelling garb is busiest of the busy on the platform. He is not there to welcome a friend from the provinces, or to receive back some prodigal son recalled to his family by repentance and the second column of the *Times*. His object is to make himself generally useful, by removing all the luggage he can get; and he dooms many a traveller to regret in the morning the anxiety to find his friends which induced him to lose his portmanteau.

The classes of Thieves, or rather (as it is the fashion now to give a fine name to everything) appropriators, below the swell-mob in rank, are the common professionals who can turn their hands (and very skilfully) to anything. They are the "general practitioners" of the faculty, who will take a watch if they can get it, but not disdain to stoop even to a cotton pocket-handkerchief. They are hardened offenders, and take imprisonment as a matter of course. When brought before the magistrate, and tried at the Old Bailey, they of course deny with much solemnity the charge; but when sentenced, go quietly away. They are old friends of the jailors and police, and even on a certain footing of familiarity—a kind of nodding acquaintance (in the dock),—with the Common Sergeant. "I think we have seen each other before?" that worthy judge will say, and the prisoner will bow and acknowledge the honour. We should'nt wonder if these fellows were to leave a card at his

house on returning from Brixton, or a P. P. C. before leaving for Van Diemen's land. These are generally stolidly incorrigible; but before we express any surprise at it, let us stop and look where they come from, how they are brought up, whence springs all this crime.

In the very heart of London—in its densest and closest parts—in long narrow lanes—in vile dark cellars—dwell, in huddled thousands, the children of the poor. Fresh air, pure water, wholesome food, come never to their dwellings. The very light of heaven struggles through filthy panes of coarse glass to reach them. The air is heavy with tainted matter. The voices of birds, the bloom of green trees, all the riches that lie in Nature's lap, exist not for them any more than for the dead; all that God has given of beautiful to the world is lost to these his children. The very sound of the church-bells suggests nothing to them but the approaching close of the gin-shop. No such state of things existed either in ancient Egypt or ancient Rome; nor does it now, even in modern Smyrna! This is "progress"—progress to the jail, the convict-hulk, and the grave; this is "liberty"— yes, what Carlyle calls "liberty to starve." A blessed privilege! Any one who goes into the haunts of the class of which we speak, will recognise what we say to be true; and of this we feel certain, any one who goes there will leave the place one of two things—a reformer, or a fiend.

Now, those who know anything of the evidence collected on the subject by the good and gallant Lord Ashley—the Bayard of Social Reform—who (as Mr. Shiel said, rather affectedly) "has made humanity one of Shaftesbury's Characteristics"—will recognise the intimate connexion between this state of things and the existence of Thieves, and perceive the propriety of our alluding to it here. If a man be, in the vigorous language of Churchill,

> "To mischief trained ev'n from his mother's womb,
> Grown old in fraud, tho' yet in manhood's bloom"—

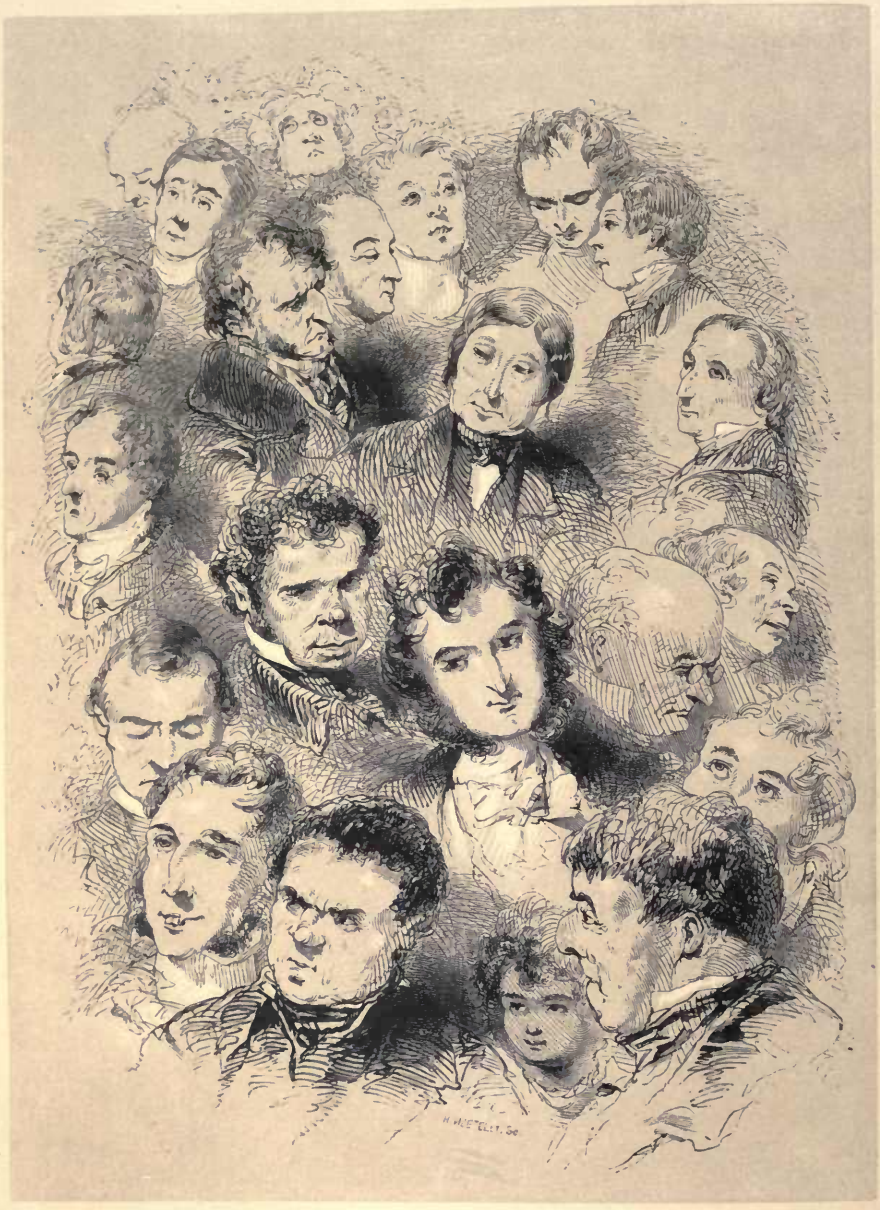
if he be born, bred, and brought up in this miserable state of starvation, degradation, and indecency, a thief he must naturally be, and will be, all magistrates, vans, jailors, common-sergeants, and hangmen to the contrary notwithstanding. Ragged schools can do good, but not much; education, independent of practical assistance, is but the seed thrown on the rocky ground. A sum in arithmetic is not half so good in such a case as a loaf of bread; and to get the last for the poor must now be the object of society—if it intends to exist—which is its own affair, of course.

The police establishments have done much to prevent the organization of

Thieves in later times, and we are inclined to believe that no adventurer is now likely to fall in with such a "ken" as that whence the anomalous dandy Pelham escaped by the help of his sword. Indeed, Sir Edward Litton (as we may remark by the way), whatever he may know of Plato, was pronounced by a great authority to be "superficial" in slang.

In fact, the Thieves of to-day, though numerous, mischievous, and dangerous, are common-place and unromantic people enough—not, as was once the case, Thieves from taste or wantonness, but from hard necessity; becoming so, in short, just as sailors become cannibals, and eat each other, when there is no food to be got. If we may be allowed the comparison, we would say, that they no more resemble their old predecessors, than the gentlemen of the Temple do the Templars of the Crusades. A modern inquirer will meet clever men among thieves, just as he will among Chartists, or any other class; but no Jonathan Wilds—still less, any Paul Cliffords. They are even more prudent and economical than of old; the utilitarian philosophy has spread among them, as elsewhere. The painful result of this, as of every other inquiry, is, that there is much to be reformed yet: and when our reader sees the van moving along with its human luggage to Newgate, let him lay this reflection to his soul, that in all human probability there are more than one criminal in it, who, had he (the reader) and others done their duty to mankind, would have been walking in freedom, honest and useful members of the community.

JAMES HANNAY.



A PLATE OF HEADS.

"First get your hare," says Mrs. Glass—"then dress it." As with the hare, so with the head. It is equally clear that you must first find your head, before you can possibly dress it. The next question, then, is—how is it to be dressed? whether *à la sauce piquante*, or *au naturel?* whether *en papillotes*, like a lazy head that comes down late to breakfast, or *aux cornichons*, like one of the stupid empty heads that buy tickets in those Heine-ous-Humbug Lotteries, and expect to receive in return a waggon-load-full of florins and a feudal castle on the banks of the Danube.

The plate is before the reader, and he has only to pick out what head he pleases. There are all sorts. The *carte* of a French *restaurateur* could not contain a more puzzling variety. There are undoubted calves' heads, and sheep's heads; heads of which game can be made in a moment; and heads of fish, so exceedingly queer, that they scarcely come under any head at all. The reader is invited to discuss them. If he be a man of real taste—and I would not doubt it for the world—he cannot fail to enjoy the rich pictorial feast that M. Gavarni has liberally laid before him.

It has been said by cooks and philosophers—Soyers and Bacons—that the first requisite for enjoying a head is the accompaniment of brains. Now, without wishing to be personal to anybody, this is very absurd; for the heads which are generally enjoyed the most in society are precisely those which have the smallest "portion" of brains. Who is it that generally sets the table in a roar?—but the Block-Head. Who is it that is welcome at every board, that gets more laughs, that provokes more wit, that causes more delight to children, grandpapas, and all?—but the great big Blunderhead who is liked by every one and feared by none, and cares no more for the jokes that are cracked upon him than a donkey does for the blows that are dealt about his head to make him lively! These are the Thick-Heads—otherwise the good-natured people; and it is the very want of brains that makes them so delightful, by reason of the peculiar dressing they never fail to get from

some kind friend or other, who enjoys a reputation, which an anchovy might be proud of, for "plenty of sauce." Take the Thickheads away, and there would be nothing left in this world but the Longheads—gentlemen probably with brains enough to supply a House of Commons, and nearly as dull as the M.P.'s who sit in it. It is only the Blockheads who make the Longheads laugh. If we all had brains, what a set of miserable creatures we should be! The world would be as sprightly as a *conversazione* of the Royal Society, or an evening party of mutes.

It is curious to watch the heads in the pit of a theatre. I do not mean the Opera-house, for emotion is not fashionable, and the heads of the aristocracy, besides, are more or less disguised with wigs, and other devices, to conceal the emigration of hair; nor do I mean the pit of a French theatre where the *Voix des Femmes* is never heard, and where, as in Mahomet's Paradise, a woman is not admitted; nor do I exactly mean the pit of Exeter Hall, where the features are painted in black and the clothes in drab, and where the predominant feeling is that we were only "born to be miserable," as Mr. Drummond so beautifully expressed it the other night—and certainly his speech could have left no other impression on his audience; but I mean the pit of an English theatre. The heads are packed as close as those in a bundle of asparagus. There is every variety of organ. A phrenologist, doubtlessly, would play a voluntary upon them as easily as Mr. Adams does on the Apollonicon, and extract a sort of cerebral "Ode on the Passions" out of the black and white keys (the latter formed by the bald heads) before him. This is a sleight of hand, however—a tremendous power of fingering—to which only a phrenologist could pretend.

How strange it is that, out of the immense number of lines, each line containing an immense number of dots, there are not two heads alike! There may be two noses of the same order of architecture—or two mouths approaching within an inch of the same width—or two eyes, or, rather four, that do not positively contradict one another in the precise shade of colour; but we do not find, pick them where we will, two faces that contain a perfect resemblance of all those beautiful features. You will find this the case in boxes, gallery, everywhere. Watch a theatre when *God save the Queen* is being sung—and it has been repeated so often lately that I wonder the instruments, from the excessive loyalty to which they have been attuned, do not play it now of their own accord. Well, there is the cry of "Hats off!"—even that poor Frenchman with the republican hat has been compelled to uncover—and every head is exposed to view. What a collection! Some as round as bullets—others so flat that they look as if they had been purposely planed—some with foreheads

that run out so far that they seem as if they were padded like an officer's breast, and a pretty fair sprinkling with temples that slant off in the style of the roof of the Tuileries, capital heads for a shower of rain. Then there are bald heads, that shine like ostrich-eggs, and are not unlike them in shape; and others, with a few hairs, like the bars of a gridiron, very "few and far between"—old heads—grey heads—young curly heads—heads with perruques and without them—there are not two that are *facsimile*. Nature's *Book of Beauty*, it appears, never contains two engravings of the same face.

The only public heads that cherish a seeming similarity are brewers and porters. The head of the beer and stout which they are constantly imbibing, may produce a family resemblance on the shoulders of the former; and the knots, with the heavy burdens on them, may have something to do in knocking into the same rough shape the heads of the latter. Covent Garden market women and coal-heavers also exhibit a sort of family likeness. These are all persons who work essentially with their heads.

It is curious to watch the uplifted heads during a display of fireworks at Vauxhall, or when Mount Ætna, or the fashionable volcano of the season, is vomiting its sky-rockets and Roman candles at the Surrey Zoological. All the noses are nearly turned upside down, and I have often thought if a jocular spirit from above, or some star that was fond of playing practical jokes, sprinkled down a small shower of snuff, what an universal sneezing there would be.

The heads at an auction, with all the eyes radiating to the Demosthenes who is flourishing his hammer in the pulpit, are well worth looking at. The extreme caution of the Jews, the brokers nodding as they are prompted by the capitalists whispering at their sides, the nervousness of the female bidders, the triumph of the hero who carries off the gridiron after a series of the most valiant advances, are little amusing scenes of physiognomy to anybody who, in studying expression, thinks pre-eminently that "the play 's the thing."

The gentlemen at the passport-offices must be sadly puzzled sometimes. There are some heads and faces so unmeaning that they give you nothing to take hold of—which must be very convenient for them if they happen to be Irishmen, or quarrelsome. There are others so unfortunately comical, or plain, that the clerk's pen must halt two or three times before it can have the courage to write the awful truth. Supposing it puts upon paper the very worst, think of the feelings of that poor fellow who has to carry about with him everywhere the written confession of an unhappy squint, and has to exhibit the cruel testimonial to every *gendarme*—to every cocked hat at a barrier, that calls upon him to produce the voucher of his unhappy identity. The pompous official looks to the paper, sees "*louche*," then looks up to the

poor fellow's eyes, and returns the paper with a most cutting "*C'est tout en règle, Monsieur.*" Why! It is fairly insulting a man to his face!

There used to be a most polite gentleman at the Poland Street Office. If he had been a portrait painter, he would have made his fortune long ago—he used to flatter everybody with such a grace. "Your profession, sir?" he would say with a most fluty voice. "Author," you answered with a half-blush. There was no staring, not the smallest decrease of the man's civility; and when you referred to the paper, you found he had generously disguised the "Author" under the title of "*Rentier!*" These are little compliments that make you think all the better of mankind.

There are often advertisements addressed to "heads of families." These heads must have great weight, for everything is submitted to them, from Infant Soojie down to patent pokers and tongs. Nothing is good unless it is patronized by them; and if the heads should belong to the Royal Family, the patronage is, of course, so much the higher. There was an absurd instance of this the other day, in a Professor laying the Ointment to his flattering soul, and advertising it as "patronized by the heads of the Royal Family." Another genius, too, has been puffing his "gutta percha elastic stockings," as "patronized by numerous heads of the nobility." I can hardly imagine a nobleman wearing a stocking round his head, unless he happened to have a cold.

Every nation has its own respective head. Meet with an Englishman where you will—under the falls of Niagara, on the top of the Pyramids, or at the bottom of an Austrian salt-mine—no matter whether he is spoilt by foreign coxcombries, or is hidden in a miner's dress suit of dirty leather, or however much he is masquerading in moustaches, Turkish caps, tobacco pouches, or Tyrolean hats—you are sure to recognise him long before he has opened his mouth. There is that individuality about him which no tailor, or barber, can possibly disguise. The same with a Frenchman. But it is easier for an English head to pass for a Frenchman's than *vice versâ*. How is this? Is it easier to caricature humanity than to embellish it? Is it that there is nothing to add in the Englishman's head, and if you garnish it with hair, and trim it with whiskers, and serve it up with moustaches, it is only a fine head spoilt? This is a curious head for an argument, and which would take a wiser head than mine to determine—for a person in endeavouring to be too national often hits a point with additional strength in order to drive it home. Thus, Prejudice hammers away at Truth, just like a tenpenny nail, and knocks it on the head!

HORACE MAYHEW.

"MARRIAGE IN HIGH LIFE."

"At St. George's Church, Hanover Square, by the Right Reverend the Bishop of London, the Right Honourable the Earl of Normandale, eldest son of the Marquis of Hallidon, K.G., to Katharine, second daughter of John, Earl of Dashmore. The lovely bride, who wore a splendid dress of entirely British manufacture, was accompanied to the altar by a numerous circle of relations, and given away by her noble father. At the conclusion of the ceremony the happy pair started in a carriage and four for Dodsworth Park, the seat of the Duke of Thanet, uncle to the bride, where they intend to pass the honeymoon.

"An elegant *déjeûner* was given by the Countess of Dashmore at her mansion in Berkeley Square, to the relatives of the newly-married couple, and to some of the *élite* of the nobility, among whom were the Duke and Duchess of ———, the Marquis of ———, the Earls of ———, and, &c., &c., &c."

Often may paragraphs similar to the above be read, chiefly towards the end of the season, in the fashionable journals of our metropolis, with, in general, many additional observations by the penny-a-liners of the day, as how the beauteous bride was overcome by her feelings, and how she was related to this and that illustrious personage; all which is greedily read and regarded as most important information by the inhabitants of the three kingdoms, while many a country Miss envies the happiness of Lady Katherine, making conjectures as to whether she be dark or fair, and whether she has plenty of jewels; and thinks how delightful it is to be a Countess.

All this is the bright side of the picture. Were there no dark side, fashionable weddings would be scenes from the garden of Eden, or *tableaux* from Paradise (not a Mahometan one). All however is not gold that glitters, and could we see through the *blonde* and silk that covers the bosom of the fair bride, and obtain a view of the heart beneath, we should probably be let into the secret of many sad sacrifices made to the Mammon of wealth and rank.

Before proceeding any further, let us examine how the marriage announced in the above paragraph has in all probability been brought about.

Lord and Lady Dashmore are gifted with a large and numerous family; their quiver indeed is full; whether or not that circumstance adds to their felicity is to be questioned. Be that as it may, few of our first fathers, although rejoicing in the usage of polygamy, could boast of such numerous progeny as your English nobleman, although limited by the laws of his country and religion to one solitary wife. Of the Dashmore family six are daughters, the eldest of whom, notwithstanding her want of fortune and beauty, has by the admirable management of Lady Dashmore been married to an Irish peer. Lady Katharine, however, is the phœnix of the family; upon her are founded the most unbounded and ambitious hopes, and at the age of eighteen she is brought out into the London marriage market, after many oft-repeated lessons of how she is to snub and avoid all younger sons as though they possessed the venom of the reptile whose name they bear, while, at the same time, no stone must be left unturned in order to remove all barriers between herself and the heart of some elder son.

The *début* of the Lady Katherine was most successful; her beauty and her grace were the theme of many club conversations, and she was acknowledged by all to be the handsomest and most *spirituelle* girl that had been presented during the season. No fault, indeed, could be found with her, excepting that she was one of eleven children; for, alas! there was no possibility of concealing that unfortunate particular, although three of her brothers were at Eton, and four of her sisters in the schoolroom at home. For the editor of *Burke's Peerage* is beyond the power of bribery and corruption; all that can be obtained of him is the omission of the ladies' ages, and the placing of their names at the bottom of the family list, leaving the reader to suppose that the eldest daughter is junior to the youngest son. The mother, however, of Lady Katherine did all in her power to counterbalance the evil, by giving dinners to which none but elder sons were invited; and parties from which younger brothers were, as much as possible, excluded. In the ball-room, Lady Dashmore never left her daughter's side, excepting on some eligible partner presenting himself; and stout must have been the heart of that "scorpion," who, undaunted at the majestic frown of the indignant mother, dared to ask the Lady Katherine to dance.

It may be imagined, that brought up in such a diplomatic school, the Lady Katherine Dashmore could not possibly be incommoded by any of those faults which emanate from the heart. Surely such a one could never be so foolish as to fall in love with anything but a title and a large estate. In her eyes, any one whose rent-roll consisted of less than five figures, ought naturally to have been regarded as quite out of the question, apart from his

personal merits; for Lady Dashmore had many a time and oft attempted to impress upon the mind of her daughter the utter impossibility of living upon less than ten thousand a-year; "and that ought only to be accepted when there appears no chance of getting more," was wont to observe the sapient matron. Still, notwithstanding all the maternal precepts that had been instilled into her mind, Lady Katherine was actually foolish enough to fall in love with a younger brother. Certes! the eye must be difficult to please which could have found fault with either the form or face of Augustus Courtenay. His manly bearing, too, few could equal; while his mind is as upright as his form, and as noble as his face. But, alas! he is the younger brother of Lord Stanmore; and as the latter cannot, of course, afford to spend the slightest portion of his forty thousand a-year upon any one but himself, Augustus Courtenay is little better than a pauper, although by birth, education, and habits, the equal of his elder brother. But such is the law of England, which sacrifices all the younger branches of a family in order to keep intact the fortune of the eldest born son. What does it signify if thousands are deprived of their natural rights, and driven forth into the world to seek for the means of existence, unfitted, too, as they are, for labour, by their habits and education? What does it matter, if a quantity of wretched "scorpions" groan beneath the weight of their poverty, so that the head of the family continues to loll in luxury and roll in wealth, while his younger brothers are treated as though they were bastards, for they have neither inheritance nor birthright.

The contraband love affair between Lady Katherine and Augustus Courtenay must, however, have been soon discovered by the eagle eyes of Lady Dashmore; and it may be perceived how successfully she has opposed its progress, on reading the paragraph containing the account of her daughter's marriage with Lord Normandale—a young nobleman noted for imbecility and ugliness, and whose mind is as narrow as his chest. Look, however, at his "happy" bride as she approaches the altar. Do not imagine that she is at all downcast, because her face wears an expression of sadness. Oh no! that cannot of course arise from her observing that Augustus Courtenay is gazing upon the ceremony from a distant corner, but from the emotion naturally caused by leaving her family; and that flood of tears into which she bursts as she enters the carriage, followed by her noble and wealthy husband, has probably the same origin, and not from any comparison between the rejected and the accepted crossing her mind. How could that be? Is not England a free country, where none can be forced to marry against their will! Lady Katherine's choice, therefore, has been unbiassed; and how could that

foolish young Courtenay imagine for a moment that he could be preferred to the eldest son of a Marquis, with fifty thousand a-year!

It is customary in England to ridicule the *mariages de convenance* of the Continent. Now, we request permission to inquire whether the same system is not carried on among the higher classes in this country? for out of fifty marriages which take place at St. George's Church, Hanover Square, on an average not more than one can be called a *mariage d'inclination*. The remainder are, for the most part, brought about by husband-hunting and intriguing mothers, who, in marrying their children, take very little, if at all, into consideration the natural affections of the heart; on the contrary, they look towards the establishment of their daughters in the possession of a large estate (all the better if it be accompanied by a title) as the chief end of matrimony. The names of every elder son that comes out, with the supposed amount of his fortune, his expectations, *et ejusdem generis omnia*, are carefully inscribed upon the tablets of the mother's mind, who makes her selections accordingly, having classed them in schedules A, B, &c. A young nobleman, or at least a large landed proprietor, is of course marked down in schedule A; and no scheme is left untried in order to induce him to propose. The mothers are not unfrequently most ably seconded by their daughters, who are not all Ladies Katharine; and should the girl be not decidedly ugly, it often happens that a high-flying bird is brought down and captured, after having been made to believe that the affections of the young lady are entirely engrossed by him, and that he is loved for himself only.

Were the vivid descriptions given by the *Morning Post*, the *Herald*, and the *Court Journal*, of the fashionable weddings that are continually taking place at this season of the year really true and unexaggerated, what a bower of true and devoted love must this metropolis be—how many truly happy couples must bless the hour they met! Surely, there is more romantic affection going on in smoky, foggy London, than one would give the place credit for; besides, were there no previous mutual affection in the case, surely that exquisite carriage-and-four is sufficient to inspire with it the hearts of the newly-married couple. Blonde lace, too, and diamonds and settlements, go far towards beautifying a husband's face, figure, mind, and soul, in the imagination of his young bride; so that we will make an effort, and be sufficiently polite to flatter ourselves that fashionable weddings in town are conducive of all possible happiness. Indeed, it would appear that, for the marriage to be a happy one, the ceremony should be celebrated in London; for frequently, although the preliminaries have taken place in the country, the parties come up to London, from the longest

distances, in order to have the connubial knot tied at St. George's Church; it would appear, too, that there is a charm in having the ceremony performed by a Bishop; or a Dean; or at least by an Honourable and Reverend, frequently the brother of the fair bride, and the incumbent of a living in the gift of his father—for the Church of England is a great refuge for destitute younger brothers, many of whom would otherwise starve.

At fashionable weddings in London, and indeed throughout the British empire generally, it is the custom, when the bridegroom is an eldest son, for innumerable presents to be showered upon him and his bride. One relation sends a new carriage fresh from Long-Acre; others give diamonds and pearls in abundance; Cashmere shawls also, and gold dressing-cases, are not wanting; indeed, on beholding the quantity of gifts that pour in from all quarters, an utter stranger might be led to suppose that the two persons about to be joined together in holy matrimony had previously been without the commonest means of existence. But, mark the difference when the bridegroom is a younger son (unless, indeed, he marries a rich heiress, then presents are sent as in the case of an elder brother)—not a gift is forthcoming—a few hollow good-wishes and compliments form the sum total of what is bestowed; for in England, more than in any other country in the world, is the maxim carried out, that "unto him that hath shall be given, and to him that hath not shall be taken away, even what he hath."

But we must conclude: the important beadle has put back the idlers from the church-steps; the long array of carriages takes up the elegant company, one after the other, and the flashing doors are banged to with a noise that reverberates all along the street, as the lashed horses clatter away over the stones, whirling the company to the next scene in the drama—the *déjeûner*. Then the mob disperses: there is another wedding, to be sure; but a glass coach and two hack cabs contain the affianced and their friends, and it is, therefore, not worth waiting to see.

And yet, after all, the noble bride might possibly gain in happiness by exchanging her own feelings for those of the fresh and pretty girl—crying, smiling, blushing, and blanching, all at once—in the comparatively ignoble *cortége* that succeeds her own!

CHARLES STUART SAVILE.

THE LOUNGER IN REGENT STREET.

It is the beginning of the evening in the City—and therefore high noon in the West. A bright summer sun is warmly white upon the terraced and stuccoed ranges of Regent Street. The flaring, dusty thoroughfare is swarming with flashing equipages, and pouring crowds of gay pedestrians. The ample wooden pavement is divided into two long lines of moving vehicles. How they sweep gaudily on—a changing, shifting panorama of glittering pannels and glancing wheels, and sleek-pacing horses, and over-powering footmen, and delicious peeps into the dim cushioned interiors, where the eye loses itself in half-seen, half-missed, visions of fair faces and rich tresses, and reclining forms dressed in cool muslins, or lost in the massive folds of costly shawls. And the broad, clean, white *pavé!* How it swarms with that continuous procession of gaily-dressed women and men. How, as you glance along it, the multitude—the shifting, rushing, rolling multitude—becomes one dazzling, puzzling, confounding chaos of faces and forms, and hats and bonnets, and paletots and visites, and moustaches and curls—all jumbled up together—all mixing—all blending—and all forming one confounding, bewildering, bewitching whole—which, as you contemplate it, makes the eye dazzle and the brain ache!

It is high noon in Regent Street. At every shop-door the big-calved, gaudy-plushed footmen cluster. By every lamp-post the dealers in poodles and terriers and spaniel pups congregate. Men with pen-knives, which seem all blades, abound. Along the kerb-stone, itinerant vendors of prints, and stain-cleaning pastes, and mosaic gold chains, and studs, display their merchandise; and round the corner, near the tavern door, the Italian boy grinds his piano-organ in dumb show. Happily, the music of the wheels drowns the noise of the instrument.

The shops are as brilliant as they may be. How richly falls the drapery of those emblazoned shawls through the fair plate-glass. How the rows of

"loves of bonnets," each upon its peg, gladden and sadden at the same moment bright female eyes. How chastely luscious in its artistic network depend the rich clusters of precious old-fashioned lace. How gorgeously shines the plate—massive lumps of chased, and carved, and graven, and frosted silver and gold; and how pleasant to look upon lie the tempting cakes, and bon-bons, and jellies, ranged round the glistening barley-sugar cages in the confectioner's window! Everything and everybody looks their best—the very pictures on the music in Jullien's shop become artistic; the unchanging prints of Moyen age fashions, and odd scraps from Daumier's pencil in Delaporte's big window, look cheerful; and the symmetrical one leg, in half of a pair of buckskin breeches and a top boot, which ornaments the shop hard by, seems positively about to hop through the window, and kick anybody who does not look happy, and flustered, and smiling, and hot!

Yes—once more we repeat, it is high noon in the West. Regent Street is at its fullest, and its brightest, and its gayest; and the Regent Street Lounger is abroad with the butterflies! Now, therefore, to plunge into his habits and characteristics.

The Regent Street Lounger must not be confounded with other loungers who occasionally lounge in Regent Street. He is not the Lounger of the Lowther Arcade—or of the steam-boat piers—or of the stage doors—or of the piazzas of Covent Garden, or the central fruity and flowery tunnel thereof. He is not even the Lounger of the Quadrant. Hard as inferior philosophers may find it to believe, the Lounger of the Quadrant is a different being from the Lounger of Regent Street. The former is a mosaic edition of the latter. He shuns the glare of the open street, and finds comfort in the subdued light of the colonnade. His smartness is often alloyed by seediness. His hat has more jauntiness in its set than nap in its texture. His linen is questionable, and his general air is mildewy. He haunts dim cigar shops, and glides furtively into fifth-rate billiard rooms. Often the Quadrant Lounger is a foreigner. Then he smokes cigarettes, and has brown fingers heavy with dim rings; and if you look to his broad feet, you are instantly transported in imagination to Boulogne-sur-Mer, Rue de l'Ecu—the shop where they are always selling bankrupt stocks of divers-coloured boots, with pearl buttons which don't button, and little toe-tips of varnished leather, at the reasonable rate of four francs a-pair.

But the Regent Street Lounger is a better style of man than his neighbour of the Quadrant. You may see him in the evening at the Opera just at the break of the stalls, with his back to the stage, sweeping the house with a

double-barrelled lorgnette. He is also to be met with at Lovegrove's when the whitebait is smallest and crispest. Anon he is pastoral in Kensington Gardens—only when the band plays though—and, eke, he is on view sundry nights in the week at such theatres as the St. James's or the Lyceum. But, 'tis very odd, we will keep wandering from the text—it is in Regent's Street we have now to do with him.

Where he lives, how he lives, and what he is when he is at home, we are not sufficiently impertinent to inquire. Never mind the *coulisse* of his existence, Regent Street is the stage. And is not the make-up good?—the hat glistening with so perfect a polish, the Joinville arranged in so faultless a tie, the coat so dustless and creasceless, the boots so faultless in their proportions, and all this carried off with such an air, or rather such a wonderful combination of airs, at once so easy, so graceful, so knowing, so indifferent, so sprightly, so lazy—in fact, and the word sums up the sentence—so exquisitely "loungy."

The Regent Street Lounger knows Town. He is of it, perhaps on it. He may not perhaps approach the inner penetralia of West-end life, but he hangs upon its outward development. If he cannot ride in the coronetted carriage, he will at least be within sound of the wheels. If he does not know the peer, he knows the peer's liveries. Try him—cross-question him. Not a carriage which rolls along the wood, or waits along the kerb, but he can tell the occupant of. He is learned in hammer-cloths, elaborate on crests, and can discern the strawberry leaf on the pannel even when the two sleek and glossy horses, with their foaming mouths and high action, being put to their mettle by the fat be-wigged coachman, seem to shoot past like a rocket.

The Regent Street Lounger cares little about the shops. The people are his study. He is not like the more easterly tribes of Loungers. He never stops to listen to a man whistling canary notes with a quill in a tin jug of water. An excavated gas-pipe has no charms for him. He can withstand the temptation of an omnibus horse which has slipped on the wooden pavement, and he pays not the most remote attention to the gentleman who disposes of favourite lyric poetry at six yards a-penny; on the contrary, he paces easily yet jauntily on from the baker's at the corner of Glasshouse Street to the music-shop which marks the confluence of Regent and Oxford Streets. These are the general frontiers of his lounging dominions. And he traverses his kingdom with a certain observant thoughtfulness. Not a lady escapes the ordeal. His eye falls listlessly, yet searchingly, on face and form, and toilet and dress—from the saucy little boot to the flutter of the parasol fringe. He

has a keen appreciation of visites, and entertains deep theories on the handling and disposing of shawls. Gentlemen fare no better. He divides them into two classes—the "good style of men" and "the bad style of men." The mere harmless, pitiful little gent does not even excite his contempt. He is philosophic, and knows that we are all mortal—little minnows and big whales.

As we have said, the Regent Street Lounger does not much affect the shops. His eye ranges calmly and superciliously along the squares of plate-glass. If he peer in, 'tis to see the customers, not the goods; 'tis where half-a-dozen carriages are drawn up at the mercer's door, or by the pastry-cook's lintels. In the latter establishment he sometimes, for a brief space, conducts his lounge. He does not look at the little bill of fare, spread on the miniature bat—why should he? He knows everything in the shop, and the price of everything, from the humble bun to the *recherché* preserve; from vapid soda-water to fragrant Maraschino. So he idly eats his ice, and then imbibes his tumbler of water, and listlessly drums with his neatly gloved fingers on the marble table, and watches in pleasant contemplation the swarms of ladies who sip, and nibble, and chatter so gaily, and who are afterwards so silent, and have such wretched appetites at dinner; after which he lounges out as he lounged in, and resumes his lounge up and down the street, just where he left it off.

On occasions of a sudden shower, the Regent Street Lounger has—putting out of view the shops—two harbours of refuge. As he happens to be respectively next the Oxford Street or the Piccadilly end of his lounge, he retreats either to the Pantheon, making for the back entrance through Marlborough Street, as he seeks for shelter in the Quadrant. In neither of these sanctuaries, however, can he be said to lounge. He seldom makes his way into the *mare magnum* of the Pantheon, contenting himself with loitering in the conservatory, idly watching the parroquets and love birds, and ready, the moment the rain has ceased to tinkle on the glass roof, to betake himself to his beloved pavement. In the same way, his demeanour under the colonnade of the Quadrant triumphantly proves him to be a mere visitor—not an *habitué*. He fidgets uneasily about the upper end, watching the sky, and casting only a contemptuous glance at the humble shops behind him, with their wares of snuff-boxes, cheroots, meerschaums, gents' paletots, artists' lay figures, toys, wigs, walking-sticks, and paint-boxes. The moment the sky clears, and adventurous folk mount the outsides of the passing omnibusses, he starts again on his pilgrimage. It is rare, very rare, to find our Lounger upon the western pavement of his favourite lounge. He calls that the "eighteen-penny side" of

Regent Street; dignifying the eastern footway by the title of the "half-crown side." Accordingly, unless he has just made a run across, to look at a new monstrosity, in the way of a flat hard German print, at the dismal high-art shop a little above Vigo Street, or unless he has a mind to sip a thimbleful of Verey's cognac, he never, unless the sun be burning indeed, shows himself in the shady, *alias* the eighteenpenny side, of Regent Street.

Of course the Regent Street Lounger has his seasons of glory. When Parliament is up, and the Operas closed, and the French Plays over, and the concerts hushed—when people are climbing the Alps, or shooting grouse on the Grampians, or talking bad French on the Boulevards, or cursing the bills of the Rhine hotels, or up to the neck in salt-water at Ramsgate, or in hot mud at Baden—when that autumnal time comes, the Lounger disappears. He fades with the waning year. When nought but hack cabs rattle along the wood, none but highlows clatter along the pavement. The coronetted panel and the glazed boot disappear together. If a solitary Lounger show, 'tis as we sometimes hear of an unseasonable woodcock. No, the wide thoroughfare is empty and dismal. The shops are in undress; remains of summer stocks are being sold off at a tremendous sacrifice; the beautiful face which graced the town-chariot ornaments the travelling landau; the poodle and spaniel pup men have gone; the penknife men have gone; the chain and stud men have gone; the pretty toilets have gone; the merry parties in the pastry-cooks have gone; the shawls and the bonnets in the windows have gone; the happy, bustling, thronging, talking, laughing, flirting, fluttering mob have gone; and, with all these, men, women, children, and things, there has gone—whether, we know not—how, we know not—when, we know not—why, we know not—but there has also gone the Lounger in Regent Street.

ANGUS B. REACH.

GREENWICH FAIR.

THERE is not a goodlier day of merry-making, for the regular traditional Monday-keepers, passed in the neighbourhood of London than at Greenwich Fair. The Pool, and the Port, of London are always objects of astonishment to a foreigner; but to see them on Whit-Monday, or at the commencement of a fine Easter week, is the most extraordinary sight he will meet with.

At a very early hour, there is a busy note of preparation sounded at the steam-boat piers along the river. The streets are thronged with decently dressed people, the greater part of whom are progressing towards the Thames. These increase as the day advances; and by three o'clock in the afternoon, the masses of Londoners waiting for their chance of passage in the Greenwich boats are so immense, that they form a sight in themselves. Nor is there a less multitude, in proportion, at the terminus of the railway. The trains can scarcely run fast enough to convey the passengers; and sturdy barriers are erected to break the pressure of the crowd, and only admit such a number at a time as can be conveniently accommodated in the carriages.

Later still, the river below London Bridge—the parapets of which are swarming with idlers, clustering like bees to the coping—presents a singularly animated scene. Nearly all the vessels in the pool hoist their flags, in compliment to the holiday—bands of music, that only appear competent to play "Love not" and "Jeannette and Jeannot," are stationed at some of the wharfs, or on board the boats; and almost every minute a steamer passes, deep in the water, by reason of her crowded freight of human beings. It is only by extreme look-out that numberless accidents are avoided; for the highway is covered with small boats as well, together with ships being towed into dock, and heavy barges always getting directly across the way, so that sometimes a perfect stoppage of several minutes is necessary. Every available corner of the decks, cabins, and paddle-boxes of the steamers is occupied; and more than two-thirds of the voyagers are obliged to be content with standing-

room during the journey—which, under these circumstances, is not made very rapidly. Indeed, we are but little under the hour going from Swan stairs to Greenwich pier; but everybody is in thorough good temper with themselves and everybody else, so that there is no grumbling at the want of accommodation. They appear only too happy to get there at all, albeit all the way the boats roll and sway until the water nearly washes in at the cabin windows.

The fair begins directly you land. From the Ship Torbay Tavern up to the park gates, the road is bordered on either side with stalls, games, and hand-waggons, containing goods or refreshments of every description. Mr. Punch, too, sets up the temple of his illegitimate drama at three or four points of the thoroughfare, at each of which (in our belief that there is but one Punch and that he is ubiquitous), he is pursuing that reckless career of vice and dissipation with which his audience are always so delighted. Snuff-boxes to throw at—refreshments of singularly untempting appearance, which nevertheless find eager purchasers—vendors of spring rattles, who ensure "the whole fun o' the fair for a penny"—speculators in heavy stocks of Waterloo crackers and detonating balls—proprietors of small percussion guns, to shoot with at targets for nuts—keep increasing, together with the visitors, as we near the park; until the diminished breadth of the street brings them all together in one struggle to get through the gates, like the grains of sand in an egg-glass.

It is a great relief to exchange the dust and jostling of the street for the greensward and wide area of the park, albeit the grass is, in some places, perfectly shuffled away by the countless feet that pass over it in the course of the day. Observatory Hill is the chief point of attraction, and here the great mass of people is collected. Nothing can be more animated or mirth-inspiring than the *coup d'œil* from the summit of this rise. The myriads of visitors all in their gayest dresses; for the humblest amongst them has mounted something new, be it only a ribbon, in compliment to the holiday—the perpetual motion of the different groups and their various occupations—the continuation of the bustle to the river, seen beyond the hospital, covered with ships and steamboats as far as the eye can reach—and above all, the clear bright light shed over the entire panorama, except where the cloudy smoke of London hangs on the horizon—altogether form a moving picture of life and festivity only to be witnessed at Greenwich Fair.

The maimed and weather-beaten forms of the old pensioners offer odd contrasts to the lively active groups on every side. But even they are

keeping holiday. Some of them, it is true, would find it a task of no small difficulty to climb up the hill, or run down it, with the alacrity or headlong velocity of the younger visitors; so they content themselves with sitting down upon the smooth turf to watch the others, or entertaining attentive listeners with their accounts of former engagements, in descriptions which depend more or less upon the fertility of their imaginations, but so ingeniously framed that they usually are contrived to end in an eleemosynary appeal to the generosity of the "noble captain" or other complimentary officer who listens to them. The other chief entertainments on the Observatory Hill consist in running down with helter-skelter rapidity, or scrambling oranges and apples amongst the boys on its declivity, which fruits are liberally showered forth by the more wealthy visitors on the summit. Frequently, an unwary damsel, crossing the slope, is entrapped by a handkerchief extended between two swift-footed swains, and compelled to finish her journey down the hill in much quicker time than she intended. And then what struggling there is—what exclamations of "Ha' done, then!" and "Be quiet, now!" until there is no breath left to give utterance to these remonstrances, and the victim is hurried to the foot of the steep between her two reckless persecutors, fortunate if she arrives at the foot without any downfall. For such accidents are of common occurrence, and roars of laughter arise from the crowds on either side when any luckless wight over-runs himself, and salutes the turf in consequence.

There is always the same concourse of people outside the upper park gates, upon Blackheath; but the style of amusement is here varied. Fortune-tellers and donkeys form the chief attraction; and the hirers of the latter continually bestridden and belaboured animals meet with as frequent falls as the runners on the hill, and apparently with as little consequences. The gipsies, also, are driving a brisk trade amongst the credulous, inviting everybody to peep into their own futurity; indeed we are so frequently addressed as "My pretty gentleman," and hear so many gratifying things for nothing, told in the hope of luring us on to cross the olive hand presented to us with a "piece of silver," that we begin to think our own lot in life is not so miserable after all. Not, however, that we ever feel particularly despondent at Greenwich Fair. We always endeavour to take the bright side of any circumstances we may be thrown amongst; and here there is so little care to be met with, and so much merriment—boisterous at times, it is true, and what very refined people would think common and vulgar, but withal, innocent and heartfelt—that we are forced to be cheerful in spite of our own feelings, had we been

otherwise disposed. There is so much, too, to entertain. Look at that fortune-telling group. A little fair man has evidently been prevailed upon by "the young woman he keeps company with" to treat her to a revelation of her future destiny. He has been listening, with a smirk of self-complacency, to the commencement of the gipsy's oration; but his countenance gradually falls as he hears something about "a tall, dark gentleman as desires to go courting her," until, in the implicit belief that the Bohémienne has not only the power of predicting but also of directing future events, he cuts short the story of the prophetess, and leads his intended away in high dudgeon. But, if you meet them afterwards, you will find that the cloud has completely passed away.

Upon One Tree Hill, which derives its name from a trunk upon the summit, whose bare branches are presumed, at some period long lost in antiquity, to have put forth occasional leaves, but which now looks more like a tree growing topsy-turvy, with its root in the air—upon this elevation the principal array of telescopes is established; and the old pensioners who own them, and adapt their focus to the eyes of the curious, find plenty of custom. Some years ago, when the late Mr. Hone visited the fair for his *Every-day Book*, the first sight always demanded was "the men in chains"—the bodies of the executed pirates formerly suspended on the river bank. But alas for the progress of civilization! These interesting objects have long since disappeared, and there is nothing equally exciting to supply their place, so that the pensioners are drawn to invent fresh wonders. But what with the sights the visitors actually do see, and what with those they do not, and those they persuade themselves they do, the end is, to all appearances, answered just the same.

The "Fair," properly so called, is a long narrow thoroughfare of stalls, booths, and shows, in a lane leading from the town to the bridge at Deptford Creek. Perhaps this is the least attractive part of the day's amusement. The crowd is so dense and disorderly as to threaten each minute the erection of barricades of "brandy-snaps," and the overthrow and deposition of the gilt gingerbread kings ranged on each side. More refreshment stalls border the way—wonderfully uninviting shell-fish, of shapes you have never before encountered—mysterious effervescing drinks, like dirty soap-suds and carbonic acid mixed together—eels in different states of cookery, pickled, stewed, and in pies—strangely indigestible lumps of pudding, studded at uncertain intervals with black lumps, presumed to be plums—masses of cold fried fish, liberally peppered with dust; and dreadful oysters as large as

soup-plates—oysters in June! But all are doing good business, and rapidly disposing of their stock.

The shows, possibly, are our greatest delight, for we love to be harmlessly imposed upon at these wandering exhibitions. The last time we were at Greenwich Fair, we saw one held in a dismantled dwelling-house, where various forms in wax-work, of the true Mrs. Jarley breed, were set up for inspection. In the recess of a window were placed two figures, evidently intended, originally, for Amy Robsart and the Earl of Leicester, but which represented, we were informed, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, enjoying the retirement of private life, apart from the pomp of royalty. Why they should have chosen to enjoy retirement in fancy dresses of the Elizabethan period, those best acquainted with the habits of those august personages can possibly inform us. All the characters of the exhibition were, however, old friends. We fancied that we once knew them in High Holborn, where the organ turned at the door, and the monkey sat on the hot gas-pipe. At all events, if they were not the identical ones, the artist had cast two in the same mould whilst he was about it. We do not think he had been happy in the likenesses. Sir Robert Peel was, unmistakeably, Mr. Buckstone grown a foot taller, and wearing a light flaxen wig. Lady Sale we once knew as Queen Adelaide ; and Oxford had transmigrated into Wix, the eyes having been manifestly wrenched violently round to form the squint of the latter miserable culprit. In one point the artist had excelled nature. He had preserved the apparent dryness and coolness of the skin, whilst the folks looking on were melting with the heat.

In another show were some learned birds. This was also held in an unfinished house. A curtain nailed to the rafters divided the rude interior into two parts ; by pushing it aside we saw a flock-bed upon the ground, a mouldering fire, and a tin saucepan : a thin unhappy dog was persuading himself that he was asleep on the bed. In front of the *penetralia* was a dirty breeding-cage, in which five or six poor little ragged canaries were sitting on a perch, huddled up together as if for better self-defence. A man came to the front and said, " Stand back, gents, and then all can see—the canaries, the performing canaries, brought from the Canary Islands for the Queen." The birds were then taken out, and had to pull carts and draw water, sit on the end of a trumpet whilst it was played, and fire cannon; the explosion of the gunpowder throwing them into a state of tumbling, chuffing, and sneezing, from which they did not recover by the conclusion of the entertainment.

As soon as it is dusk, the crowd in the Fair thickens ; and its sole object appears to be to push a way violently through everything, to the extreme end, and then to return again in the same manner. In the town every tavern and public-house is filled to overflowing with hungry, or rather thirsty, occupants ; the clouds of tobacco-smoke from the open windows proving the crowded state of the apartments. The steam-boats now cease to ply, but the trains on the railway continue until a late hour. If you return to town by the latter method of conveyance, you will meet hundreds more proceeding to Greenwich, even at very advanced periods of the evening. Where they get to when they arrive, or how they contrive to return home again when the Fair closes, is beyond conjecture. Those, however, who go simply to look on are not sorry, by this time, to get clear of the increasing riot and confusion —to which, on arriving once more in London, the bustle of Cheapside appears almost seclusion and tranquillity.

ALBERT SMITH.

THE COULISSES.

In an unpretending little work which must, one would imagine, be found very useful in promoting a partial comprehension of fashionable newspaper accounts of aristocratic festivities, we find the word *Coulisse* explained thus:—"*s. f.* Groove. Scene of a play-house. Gutter." Not one of these synonymes quite imparts the sense contained in the term, as ordinarily used, though it has a certain affinity with all three. Let us venture to add a foot-note to the favourite volume we have cited, popularly known as *Le Nouveau Dictionnaire de Poche, par* Thomas Nugent.

Some years ago, before children's books were abolished, and tiny novels and fairy tales were set aside for illustrations of the steam-engine and heterodox German twaddle, there was a very clever little story, called "Curiosity and Enquiry." It was certainly a book "with a purpose," and that was the only thing that could be said against it, for the "purpose" was utterly annihilated by the liveliness of the tale. There were two young ladies, one "curious," and the other "enquiring," and the author designed to show the difference, and to set forth the advantage which the latter possessed over her rattle-brained sister. But the author's favourite is not always the reader's, as has been shown in various excellent works, from *Paradise Lost*, in which a Royal Highness, stated by Shakspere to be also a gentleman, certainly "has the pull," to Sir Bulwer Lytton's last romance, in which that pious Æneas, Harold, is completely *ecrasè* by his more effective rival, the Achilles of Normandy. And so it was with our little story, in studying which we irreverently eschewed the improving narrative of the good Miss Enquiry, whose hair was always nicely patted down, and who asked pertinent questions, or begged grandpapa to point out a book in which she might obtain the information she desired, and we gave our heart to the bright-eyed scapegrace Curiosity, who, wishing to know how the clock in the hall was made, and why it struck, piled a mountain of footstools upon a kitchen chair, and

scrambling up the ascent, opened the glass-door, tampered with the works, set the clock striking all kinds of wild hours, got frightened, and came tumbling down, dusty and dishevelled, and bumped her head on the marble floor. All through life, we are sorry to say, we have had the same deplorable taste for the wrong side of the question; and hence, though the proper way of treating our present subject is clearly that of prosaic explanation as to what *Coulisses* are, and then adding some sensible advice against "dispelling the illusion of the stage," and so forth, we prefer to scramble into the works, like Curiosity in our story-book.

The "Pet of the Ballet" is, unquestionably, the queen of the *Coulisses*. In that strange, motley scene, exhibited behind the opera curtain, between the time grudged to Mozart and that gladly yielded to Pugni, comes the Pet's nightly coronation. There, amid that busy, chattering mob, her sovereignty is manifest. Look! there stands magnificent Grisi, flushed with the exertion of the night, and there staggers away her servant under the merciless load of the flowers which have been hurled to her. She is excited with her new triumph, and is the centre of a group of first-rate artists, in the gorgeous costumes of the opera just concluded, a mass of colours relieved by the simple black of half-a-dozen young aristocrats from the stalls, who are lavishing well-worn compliments in French of various merit. The stage is filling—fair girls, in fleecy clouds of gauze, trip on by twos and threes, striking out their well-turned limbs, and pointing their pliant feet, that no mischance amid the mysteries of dress may interfere with their flexible movements in the approaching *ballet*. Peasants, red, green, and blue, straggle in towards their proper places in the "picture" upon which the curtain is to rise. Carpenters hurry about, urged to frenzy by the officer in command, who alternately storms at a misplaced "flat," and bows to some vacant-looking lounger. The little "Vanity Fair" is at its busiest, when a lane is suddenly formed, and into the heart of the crowd glides the Pet of the Ballet. A graceful gyration or two, more a matter of habit than of business, and the little creature stands, with a gracious smile, to receive the incense every hand is bringing. See how the white (don't say whitened) arms fold gently across, a finger tip just reaching the opposite elbow! How the diamonds sparkle in the gas-light! Even the radiant Grisi nods, friendlily, to the star of another sphere. A Duke, not a young one, salutes her, with the bow which has become as proverbial as a certain other Duke's touch of the hat. *Danseuses* know the value of Dukes—nobody better; and nothing can be sweeter than the answering look. But His Grace's attentions are merely courtesies, and he

is as calm as an ice-lake. But look there. That young Marquis is in the Guards, and he is in love with her; and observe how restless his eye is. He sees a new bracelet of emerald on her arm, and he does not see his own last present; and although he is a Marquis, and a guardsman, and moreover a member of Parliament, who ought, at this moment, to be in his place, supporting the Religious Education Bill (on which he spoke very well the night before the Derby), he is about as plebeianly jealous as any shopman out for a Sunday with his little milliner. And here comes another of her admirers, a Hebrew Cræsus, with a bow not so fine as the Duke's, but with a waistcoat far finer than his—and he presents a *bouquet*, fastened into a jewelled band. And there comes the grave but courteous manager, to hope that Mademoiselle has recovered from her headache, and with him the writer of a leading journal—see how she smiles at *him*, though he brings neither a bouquet nor a fine waistcoat. And how everybody looks at her, especially all the third and fourth rate dancers, who envy her, and attribute her success not to her wonderful power and her intense industry, but to all sorts of unworthinesses; the fact being that she is as good a girl as one knows, and keeps a bronze-coloured, old, snuffy, French father, and a fat mother, and a long, sallow, scampish, billiard-playing brother, and some scrags of sisters, together with the legion of other relations who infest her (as they do all foreign artists), in noble lodgings in the Haymarket. She works terrifically hard—harder than anybody, who does not know a dancer's life, can imagine, and deserves all the honours, as every one does who labours, honourably, for them. Let us hope that she saves money, and will not marry that gambling Parisian Count, who will spend it all, and then beat her (as happens in so many cases one hears of); and that she will enjoy the dinner the Duke is going to give to a picked party, at the Castle at Richmond, on Sunday; and that she will be well cared for when her day is over—for that day will come, when, as Mrs. Norton says (in one of the most exquisite poems in the language),

"Younger slaves have skill, and those thy lords employ."

Nobody ought to be allowed to go behind the scenes of a theatre, except those who have a business connection with it. And this is a rule which is fast gaining ground; and which, to the credit of lady-managers be it recorded, they were the first to lay down, and are the most rigid in observing Without going into the cant of "abstraction," and "absorption into a character"—feats happily rendered less and less necessary, now that the nuisance of the heavy drama is abating, under the sanitary jurisdiction of

public taste—no actor *can* do his work so well when constantly diverted from the personation he is attempting, as when his mind is allowed to repose, as well as to exert itself, in the author's conception. That many artists act admirably, in spite of interruption, is no answer, because the highest order of talent can do anything ; but that scores of performers of lesser merit would play far better than they do, had they fewer distractions from their business, is a melancholy commonplace perpetually forced upon everybody who understands theatrical matters. And experience proves that the more exclusive the green-room, the more perfect is the stage.

"Behind the scenes" has been so well and so often described (and by nobody better than by our friend the Editor of this series of sketches), that we shall certainly abstain from essaying anything of the kind. But we shall tell a story as 't was told to us.

We have a friend—a man who would rather do us a good turn than an ill one, if the former gave him no more trouble than the latter, which is about equivalent to the friendship David felt for Jonathan, or Damon for Pythias —allowing for the modern depreciation of social currency. He lives, when he has done stockbroking, or whatever he calls it, in a pleasant villa at Notting Hill, where he has a phaeton and three horses, and most of Edwin Landseer's prints, and a capital cellar, and a meerchaum, silver mounted, and a wife, and many other luxuries. Something put it into this foolish stockbroker's head that he wanted to go "behind the scenes." For nearly a year he kept poking his wish at us in various forms, and over various wines and spirituous liquors. Now, although in reality "behind the scenes" is a far more harmless place than any club, from the House of Commons upwards ; or than a good many drawing-rooms where we have met doctors in divinity; and though the ladies and gentlemen of "the profession" are just as likely to encourage or allow a stranger to commit himself in any way as Alboni is likely to stop in the middle of her divine *Non piu mesta* to ask M. Costa what he means to have for supper—there is in lady-minds a prejudice against the green-room. And we had—have—a considerable respect for our friend's wife, inasmuch as she never lets him give a dinner-party without asking the present writer. So we were as deaf as a railway-clerk. But when, finally, deliberately, and with open and advised speaking, our friend, Paul Honeyball, demanded of us an introduction to the green-room of a certain theatre, very dear to us, what could be done! We ejaculated something, neither mentally nor ornamentally, obtained managerial permission, and this is Paul's report of the result :—

"Now then, as Mrs. Paul's gone, try that Burgundy, and I'll tell you all about it. I went to the stage-door, and sent in your note. Presently a man came and told me to 'come this way.' I followed him through a dark place, with many turns, and I kept knocking my hat against something soft (not my head—ha! ha! put that in your next play, my boy), and then I came upon the lady of the establishment. She had a sword and a shield, so we could not exactly shake hands; but she spoke in a ringing, merry voice, and asked how you were. Before I could answer she rushed on the stage, and defied a fellow, all over hair, to fight her. I wanted to see the fight, so I went forward, when a man, in his shirt-sleeves, told me I was in sight of the audience. 'Oh!' I said, and went somewhere else. Then another man told me I must n't stand there. 'Oh!' I said, and changed my place; when I felt something hot going down my neck; and looking back, a demon was shaking a fiery torch, full of rosin, at the lady. I ran back, when a scene was suddenly shoved up, and I was fixed against a white wall. I bawled, and the prompter looked round, and swore at me for making a noise."

"It's a sad thing, but prompters will swear."

"I wriggled out, when a scene-shifter came, begged my pardon, and said he should be glad to drink my health."

"He *was* glad to do it—so am I. Well?"

"Well, I was all over white, so I went into the green-room—d'ye see—put that in your next play! Everybody looked at me, and then took no further notice. So I asked a young lady, with pink legs, if she was fond of acting. She said she never acted; then she went away. A man came in, with a brown George and grey stockings. I recognised him, and told him he had often made me laugh. He looked very grim, and said I did him proud, and went away. Then a sort of lady's-maid came with a basin and towels, and a rouge-pot and a woman's dress in her hand, and all the men were turned out of the room—something about a 'quick change'—I did n't understand. So not knowing what to do next, I went up some steps, and looked out at the window of a castle. In a minute I heard a roar of laughter, and found I was in front of the audience; but before I could retreat, an old man in a king's dress pushed me away, told me I was mad, put his head out at the same hole, and said he was n't at home. I came down, but could not get away, for about twenty dirty soldiers, with halberts, informed me I must wait till they 'went on,' so I stood stewing there for half-an-hour, while they grinned at me. Presently they all levelled their weapons, shouted very loud, and ran upon the stage, every one trying to push me over. I had enough of

it, so I got out—thanks to a little girl who piloted me—and you don't catch me there again, I can tell you. It's all very dull, except what's very disagreeable."

Doubtless other people give other versions. For ourselves, we have had many a pleasant evening in the society of artists, who, if anything more than artists, are, from opportunity of observation and manner of narration, most delightful *raconteurs*, and sometimes very brilliant conversationists. But if the truth were told, we fancy the much-coveted *entrée* to the *Coulisses* would result, in nineteen cases out of twenty, in the same disappointment as our friend Honeyball's. We are, of course, aware that there are faultlessly dressed gentlemen, and faultily dressed Gents, who alike covet that *entrée* for other reasons than Paul's, but with the vice which they form most exaggerated hopes of discovering, we have nothing to do. We love a truism—there are bad and good people everywhere, even in the *Coulisses*—a term we trust we have now made comprehensible by the million.

SHIRLEY BROOKS.

THE BARMAID.

WHO is she that sitteth in the shrine of the temple of Bacchus?—the Priestess of that ancient worship whose mysteries are celebrated in the Halls of Evans. Her brows are crowned with mint and juniper, and her shining tresses curl like the rind of the artfully peeled orange upon her polished shoulders; in her right hand she beareth a bowl of fragrant nectar, and in her left presseth a golden lemon; gas-lights burn brilliantly around her, and the rich odours of Geneva fill the air; pleasantly she smileth upon her customers through clouds of incense wafted from patrician Principés or plebeian Pickwicks, and tempereth the ardency of Cognac with mild modicums from the New River. A legion of kind familiar *spirits* obey her behests: hers are the refreshing fountains of Soda, and hers the gently-flowing waters of Carrara! Who asks her name? Who knows not the pretty Barmaid—the modern Hebe, whose champagne is not more intoxicating than her *œillades?*

Like the moon she never shines with full lustre till night; then she comes out in all the fascinations of satin and small talk—bestowing, with perfect impartiality, a smile upon one admirer, a tender glance upon another, and a kind word or two upon a third; leaving each in the happy belief that he is himself the fortunate individual upon whom she has secretly bestowed her affections. She carries on a flirtation while concocting a sherry-cobbler, accepts a lover in the act of sweetening a glass of toddy, and even permits a gentle pressure of the hand when giving you change out of your sovereign. But all this is *selon son metier*—a mere matter of business with which the heart has nothing to do.

Thus the Barmaid seems to be a kind of moral salamander, living unharmed in the midst of the amorous furnace in which Destiny has placed her. Long habit has perhaps inured her to this state of insensibility, upon which her safety as well as her happiness depends; but we believe it is an established fact in her history that no Barmaid ever gave away her heart, or permitted it to be sponged from her fingers' ends, across the counter.

It is during her *soirée*—when her little court is filled with Gents, swells, and loungers from the theatres, that the Barmaid's triumph is at its height. Then in the plenitude of her power she flings back saucy repartees to pert addresses, and generally—for she has the sympathies of her audience with her—turns the laugh against the fool who has the temerity to hazard a skirmish of wit with her.

She has a wonderful acquaintance with all the floating topics of the day, and talks with as much confidence of Sir Robert's great speech, and Sibthorpe's last joke as a parliamentary reporter. She thinks the Guards "delightful fellows," and declares her decided partiality for moustaches; she has a settled conviction that Jullien is "a duck," and considers the two mounted Blues at the Horse Guards models of manly and equine beauty.

These, however, are but the general outlines of the portrait: the Barmaid, like the chameleon, takes her local colour from the character of her visitors, and insensibly adopts the professional manners and language of the class in society with which she associates. Thus, at Limehouse she is marine, and in Albany Street military; in the neighbourhood of the Temple, and all about Chancery Lane she talks of sittings, and after-sittings—of caveats, pleas, and demurrers, with the gravity of an old Chancery barrister. In the vicinity of Covent Garden, along the Strand, and up the Haymarket, the Barmaid discourses most eloquently upon things theatrical; she has all the scandal of the green-rooms "by express," and knows the name of every *danseuse* who gives Lord So-and-so a seat in her brougham in Hyde Park. She calls Mr. Macready "Mac," and Buckstone "little Bucky;" she has, moreover, a white satin slipper of Taglioni's, and a presentation copy of Baugniet's admirable lithographic portrait of Paul Bedford, with the great creature's autograph at foot, framed and hung up in the bar. In the Sporting Houses the Barmaid affects the Turf, and confesses, privately, that she has no objection to the *Ring*. She knows the names of the favourites for the Derby and Leger, and backs them all round for any amount of gloves, handkerchiefs, ribbons, and other small wares, knowing that if she wins, she will be paid; and, if she loses, she never insults a gentleman by mentioning it. Within the circuit of half-a-mile of the London University the Barmaid is a *blue;* and if you be not on your guard, you may chance to get floored with a quotation from Horace, or a problem from Euclid. Besides these, there is the medical student Barmaid—near the hospitals; and the musical Barmaid—near the operas; and the artist Barmaid—anywhere; and the newspaper Barmaid—everywhere; with fifty others in various professions,

who having picked up a smattering of the subjects they hear continually discussed, talk upon them as fluently, and sometimes quite as sensibly, as their instructors.

Having sketched the Barmaid at home, let us now present her to our readers as she appears abroad. True, her enjoyments beyond the narrow limits of the bar, and that mysterious little back parlour behind it, have been few ; she has lived all her life amidst the grimy bricks and tiles of London. But she has an instinctive love of Nature implanted in her heart. The geranium in the little pot on her window-sill, and the flowers that she daily places in water on a shelf in the bar, are touching evidences that her heart has not lost its freshness in the withering atmosphere in which it has been placed.

When her periodical holiday arrives—that anxiously looked-for happy

" ——— day that comes between
The Saturday and Monday"—

how joyfully does she prepare for an excursion with " the young man that keeps her company" to Greenwich, or Hampstead, or Rosherville ; but most she delights in a trip to Richmond by water. Seldom beats a happier heart than the young Barmaid's on a fine summer's morning, when, with a delicious consciousness of liberty — that only those whose patrimony is servitude can taste—she hurries, with her equally happy lover, on board " The Vivid" steamer at Hungerford-pier—trembling lest they should be late, although they are full twenty minutes before the time of starting. During the voyage up, she is in raptures with every object she sees ;—the winding banks—the beautiful villas, peeping through thick foliage—the green aits—and the graceful swans, whose snowy plumage acquires a dazzling splendour as they glide in the dark shadow of the overhanging shore. Everything, in short, is brighter and fairer than ever it appeared before. Then there is the landing, and the walk up the hill to the Park—where, seated under an umbrageous chestnut-tree, she gaily unpacks her handbasket, and produces her little feast. Were ever sandwiches so delicious! And the snowy napkin for a table-cloth ; and the salt in a wooden lemon, unscrewing at the equator—the prize of some dexterous hand at the popular game of " three throws a penny;" and the morsel of cheese in the corner of an old newspaper ; and the white roll ; and the something—in the very bottom of the basket, carefully concealed from view—which must not be seen till the fitting moment arrives—and which, after the sandwiches have been dispatched, and a good deal of coaxing and coquetting has been performed, is brought forth,

and proves to be a Lazenby's sauce bottle, full to the cork with—what do you think?—real French brandy—the very best pale we engage too. Of course this cleverly managed little incident gives occasion for fresh laughter, and the lover begins to fancy how pleasant it would be to have a wife who could feel so much solicitude for his comforts; and this thought sinks into his heart as the brandy sinks in the flask; and by the time they have got on board "The Vivid" on their return, he has almost made up his mind to pop the interesting question.

We will not follow the pair to the reserved seat they have secured in a quiet corner of the deck, for there are little mysteries even in the heart of a Barmaid which we hold inviolably sacred. All we are at liberty to divulge is, that the conversation must be deeply interesting; for, when a gruff voice shouts—"Now then! Hungerford! Who 's for Hungerford?" as the steamer slowly approaches the pier, she raises her head with the expression of one who has been disturbed from a pleasing dream; and looking around her exclaims—"Dear me! I declare we 're at Hungerford already!"

* * * * * *

"A change comes o'er the spirit of my dream."—Five years have passed away —— the girl has become a matron—the pretty Barmaid has ripened into a handsome Hostess. She now stands behind her own bar, the undisputed mistress of her little realm; waiters tremble at her nod, and enamoured Gents get intoxicated upon her smiles. Time has mellowed, but not impaired her beauty—at least not in the estimation of those who measure feminine beauty by the standard of Reubens. The roses on her cheeks have perhaps taken a deeper tint—her abundant hair, wandering no longer in ringlets over her neck, is clustered beneath a cap of the most becoming fashion—the light robe is replaced by the glossy black satin—and a massive gold chain depends from her neck, where the plain ribbon hung before; but she is still the same frank, lively, and kind creature that we always knew her. The Hostess, indeed, is but the perfected Barmaid;—to whose numerous admirers we respectfully dedicate this sketch.

J. STIRLING COYNE.

VAUXHALL.

THE earliest notions I ever had of Vauxhall were formed from an old coloured print which decorated a bed-room at home, and represented the Gardens as they were in the time of hoops and high head-dresses, bag-wigs and swords. The general outline was almost that of the present day, and the disposition of the orchestra, firework-ground, and covered walks the same. But the Royal Property was surrounded by clumps of trees and pastures: shepherds smoked their pipes where the tall chimneys of Lambeth now pour out their dense encircling clouds, to blight or blacken every attempt at vegetation in the neighbourhood: and where the rustics played cricket at the water-side, massive arches and mighty girders bear the steaming, gleaming, screaming train on its way to the new terminus.

I had a vague notion, also, of the style of entertainments there offered. In several old pocket-books and magazines, that were kept covered with mould and cobwebs in a damp spare-room closet, I used to read the ballads put down as "sung by Mrs. Wrighten at Vauxhall." They were not very extraordinary compositions. Here is one, which may be taken as a sample of all, called a

RONDEAU.

Sung by MRS. WEICHSEL. *Set by* MR. HOOK.

Maidens, let your lovers languish,
If you 'd have them constant prove;
Doubts and fears, and sighs and anguish,
Are the chains that fasten love.
Jocky woo'd, and I consented,
Soon as e'er I heard his tale,
He with conquest quite contented,
Boasting, rov'd around the vale.
Maidens, let your lovers, &c.

Now he dotes on scornful *Molly*,
Who rejects him with disdain;
Love 's a strange bewitching folly,
Never pleased without some pain.
Maidens, let your lovers, &c.

I was also told of hundreds of thousands of lamps, and an attempt was made to imitate their effect by pricking pinholes in the picture, and putting a light behind it—for the glass had disappeared at some remote period, and had never been replaced; and for years I looked forward to going to Vauxhall, as a treat too magnificent ever to take place.

The time came, though, at last—not until I was twelve years old: and then it was to celebrate my having moved head-boy from the division form into the fourth, at Merchant Tailor's School. Twenty years have gone by, this summer, since that eventful night, but the impression made upon me is as vivid as it was on the following day. I remember being shown the lights of the orchestra twinkling through the trees, from the road, and hearing the indistinct crash of the band as I waited for all our party, literally trembling with expectation at the pay place. Then there came the dark passage, which I hurried along with feelings almost of awe: and finally the bewildering *coup d'œil*, as the dazzling walk before the great supper-room, with its balloons, and flags, and crowns of light—its panels of looking-glass, and long lines of radiant stars, festoons, and arches, burst upon me and took away my breath, with almost every other faculty. I could not speak. I heard nothing that was said to me; and if anybody had afterwards assured me that I entered the Garden upon my head instead of my heels I could scarcely have contradicted them. I have never experienced anything like the intensity of that feeling but once since; and that was when I caught the first sight of London by night from a great elevation, during the balloon ascent last year which so nearly terminated in the destruction of all our party.

The entire evening was to me one scene of continuous enchantment. The Battle of Waterloo was being represented on the firework-ground, and I could not divest myself of the idea that it was a real engagement I was witnessing, as the sharpshooters fired from behind the trees, the artillery-waggon blew up, and the struggle and conflagration took place at Hougomont. When I stood years afterwards on the real battle-field I was disappointed in its effect. I thought it ought to have been a great deal more like Vauxhall.

The supper was another great feature—eating by the light of variegated lamps, with romantic views painted on the walls, and music playing all the

time, was on a level with the most brilliant entertainment described in the maddest, wildest traditions of Eastern story-tellers. And as the "rack punch"—"racking," would be a better term—was imbibed, until all the lamps formed a revolving firework of themselves, what little sense of the real and actual I had retained, departed altogether. I broke some wine-glasses, I danced with the waiter in the red coat, and finally I tumbled down, from which point my reminiscences are hazy and confused. I remember the next morning, though, being called by the kind relative who had taken me at half-past five—half-past five after going to bed upon rack punch at two!—and starting on my way to school with a headache that appeared to be pulling my brain into halves. I had to go for my books to the house of the master with whom I boarded. I got there before anybody was up, and not daring to knock or ring, I sat upon the door-step at the end of Newcastle Court, College Hill, and went to sleep. It was all cold, and grey, and dreary—a rough foretaste of the many disenchantments that pleasures have since brought in their train.

Amongst the unrevealed mysteries of London, is the hybernal existence of Vauxhall. What becomes of it in the depth of winter? People see the blackened tops of the skeleton trees rising above the palings of Kennington Lane and the chimneys of Lambeth, and therefore suppose it still to be in the same place; but no one appears ever to have gained its interior. An imaginative mind, tinged with superstition, can fancy fearful scenes going on there in dark January. It can picture the cold bright frosty moon shedding a ghastly light upon the almost rained-out Constantinople or Venice, as the case may be; and glistening on the icicles depending from the nostrils of Neptune's horses, or the hair of the Eve at the fountain. The cutting wind whistles through the airy abode of Joel il Diavolo. The snow is deep upon the ground, capping the orchestra also, and drifting into the supper boxes; whilst a few spectral leaves, on which the light of many a summer orgy whilome rested, chase one another with pattering noise along the covered promenades, or whiffle about amongst the decaying benches of the firework gallery. It is impossible to conceive anything more dreary—a wet November Sunday, in a grave family at Clapham, is nothing to it.

If there were any supernatural anniversary in England, as the first of May is upon the Hartz mountains, Vauxhall would be the trysting-place of the spirits at such a season. Wild unearthly dances of spectral girls and demon Gents would be held upon the platform. Blue corpse-candle lights would gleam from the lamps; and bands of waiting apparitions would troop

along the walks with cold phantom fowls and necromantic films of ham, through which the touch could pass as through air. Music would resound from the orchestra, played and sung by shadowy professors, such as followed Bürger's Lenora in her unearthly ride, and resembling the incantation melodies of "Der Freyschutz," "Robert le Diable," "Macbeth," and the "Mountain Sylph," all played at once. Death on the pale horse would ride ceaselessly round the arena in place of Caroline, Louise Tournaire, or Marie Macarte; and His Sable Highness himself, the true Prince of Darkness, might be found excelling "dat child" Juba in his active exercises, or outrivalling Pell on the cross-bones. There is no telling what might not be seen by the daring wight who invaded the dead wintry seclusion of Vauxhall.

If I may be permitted to quote myself, I once described Vauxhall as a perennial, whose progress was always to be watched with interest. Summer goes by and its glories fade; its fruits—which are the lamps—are gathered; and the whole place becomes a dismal waste. It is always in this off-season that the whispers alluded to are promulgated, about Vauxhall being "built upon." We look at the hapless orchestra, seen through the grimy branches, as a doomed thing; the very sight of the wooden porticos, with their scraps of placards relating to past festivals, is distressing; and the hazardous scaffolding of the daring gentleman, who, all on fire, shoots down the rope, with its winter-beaten forlorn flag which has never been removed, is regarded with a sense of ghastliness almost akin to that with which in former times one would have looked upon the gibbets that held the men in chains. Anon as Whitsuntide comes round, we find that Vauxhall springs up again, with all its coloured posting-bills, as gay as a fuchsia that has been cut down for hybernation. The lamps bud out again upon their accustomed wires; the hermit returns to life—I wonder what becomes of him at Christmas, and if he employs all the winter months in writing the fortunes he distributes in the summer ones—and the brass band once more wakes the echoes of the promenades and dark walks. The Gardens are then found to be still a great fact—not yet desecrated into dwellings for luxuriating clerks; or vinegar, chimney-tile, and composite candle manufactories. Despite its hacknied amusements, we have all pleasant associations connected with Vauxhall: I would not willingly exchange my own for dearer reminiscences of things far more important in the romance of life. It is at least pleasant, when jaded, baited, and spirit-wearied, to think that there really was a time when the lamps were regarded—not as little glass vessels with smoky wicks and common oil

within, but as terrestrial stars, lighted by fairy hands, and fitted only to shed their radiance round, as did the dazzling and tempting fruit of Aladdin's subterranean garden. It is refreshing to know there was a period, up to which the Arabian Nights Entertainments had only been pictured with a magnificence depending upon the powers of the reader's imagination; but that, after its arrival, the glories awaiting upon the careers of Noureddin, Camaralzaman, Ali Baba, the Calenders, Prince Bahman, Codadad, and all the rest of our old friends, could be readily conjured up. The night-palaces so gorgeously lighted up—the wonderful music—and the dancing slaves, formed together so many Vauxhalls, peopled with *coryphées* and brass bands, and pitched upon the twinkling banks of the Tigris instead of the Thames.

I still like to be deceived—to deceive myself even, rather than not give way sometimes to the power of illusion. So when I see it announced that on the occasion of an especial Vauxhall festival, there will be twenty thousand additional lamps, I take it for granted that there will be that exact number to a wick. If I find, on various occasions, that the Gardens will be adorned with emblematical devices, I anticipate looking at them. Cold experience tells me that if it is an Irish *fête* all the old harps and shamrocks will come out again; if a Scottish one, I shall find huge illuminated thistles, and the motto *Auld Lang Syne*, similarly glittering; and if a juvenile one, that sparkling tops, kites, and rocking-horses, will be fixed against the trees. But I do not let my mind dwell on these facts: I strive to forget them, and enjoy the devices as keenly as the most excitable of the visitors in whose especial honour they are intended. When I hear, on great anniversaries, that two hundred Highland chieftains have promised to attend in their national costumes, and dance flings, yell, and play the bag-pipes, I make myself fully expect to meet them; and if it is said, on the occasion of masquerades, that the most splendid fancy-dresses, worn at the Royal and Noble *Bals Costumés*, of the season, will be worn in the Gardens, I like to believe it, and go anticipating the effect of their appearance. True it is, that the reality will sometimes fall short of the expectation; but this is a result so purely natural, that it never annoys me. If I do not meet the Pibroch of Pibroch, or the Pladdie of Pladdie, or the Sawney of Sawney, with their retainers, but find, in their stead, two or three gentlemen in kilts, trying not to look ashamed of themselves, I invent a reason for the non-appearance of the chieftains. And if the costumes at a *Bal Masqué* do not exactly impress me with ideas of a Court ball, I feel assured that the patrician dresses would have been there but for the bad weather.

It is possible that the deities who, in the mythological days of old, took

the vegetable world under their protection, may still exist in the trees of Vauxhall. If it be true—and I have no reason for saying it is not, seeing that the statement is made in "Lempriere," which is a collection of traditions worthy of belief, and instilled by cane and imposition into youthful minds—that these graceful Hamadryads co-exist with the trees they affect, drooping with their decline, and expiring with their death, without the power of changing their abode, I fear that the days of Vauxhall are numbered—at least as Gardens. Their topmost branches have long presented nothing to the view but bare forks, which pruning and lopping does not improve. They have arrived, in their age, at a parallel to that fatal time of man's life, when tipping his hair does not keep it from falling off, or make it grow the faster. It is possible, in the make-all-you-can-of-whatever-you-have spirit of the age, that these very trees may ultimately be cut down to build the houses hereafter to be erected on the Royal Property. But this, I opine, would be a dangerous experiment. Like the Laputa cucumbers that absorbed the sunbeams, their timbers must have imbibed, in their time, so much light and revelry, that they would be giving this out constantly afterwards; and the domestic disturbances that scared the inmates of Woodstock in 1649—the candles, and noises, and horses' hoofs, and fireworks, as chronicled by Glanvil—would be nothing to the excitement created in the ill-starred mansions.

And yet, to descend to the real and practical, it is possible the time may arrive when "Vauxhall Terrace," or "Kennington Place," may occupy the site of the Italian Walk—when "Lambeth Square" may rise from the firework-ground, or "Southampton Circus" define the former position of the equestrian arena. For old gentlemen of our own time there abiding, there will still be some consolation. They will be able to recall former days, and feel young again, as, according to their situation, they point out the dining-room sideboard as the site of the bar through whose window the legendary rack punch and ham of other days was once handed; the front area and coal-cellar as the identical position of the ball-room; or the library as covering part of the area on which the Battle of Waterloo was fought, and the balloons and rockets went up for the edification of the hundreds who paid in the gallery, and the thousands who enjoyed the same treat in the road, for nothing.

ALBERT SMITH.

FANCY-BALLS.

In our present capacity, we feel that we are nothing more than a showman. We have been fortunate enough to obtain an engagement in a tolerably attractive and popular exhibition, through a certain portion of which it is our duty to conduct the public—pointing out, as we go on, the various beauties of our department, and commenting and enlarging upon the same, with as much eloquence as we are master of. We are sure of a numerous and fashionable audience; the attractions held out by the "spirited proprietor" render it impossible that it should be otherwise. But, that they will listen to our observations with that profound attention which we could wish, cannot, we are afraid, be counted on with anything like a similar degree of certainty. Indeed—however humiliating the prospect may be—we cannot shut our eyes to the possibility of our having to talk on unheeded. Still, as there may be a discerning few among the crowd who will deem us worthy of a minute's attention, we will do our best to make ourselves as agreeable as possible—feeling that, if we should happen to get mentioned as "that rather amusing young man, who showed us through such and such a department," with the addition that "one or two remarks that he made were really not so bad"—we shall be more than compensated for the indifference of thousands.

We will begin, in the style of our peripatetic brethren—Ladies and gentlemen, please to "observe the pictur." Don't be in a hurry, if you please, as there is plenty of time for you to go through the rest of the collection, and this is one that requires particular and careful examination.

The scene is an English Fancy Dress Ball. Observe, not a vulgar Gentish affair, where pasteboard-noses, clowns, and smoking are tolerated, and whereof the harmony is likely to be disturbed by some of the company getting intoxicated and fighting with empty bottles. It is an assembly for which no tills have been robbed (save indirectly, perhaps, in the way of some bills that will never be paid), and which will not give the police any trouble in dispersing.

The parties present are, in fact, ladies and gentlemen who wear their own dresses, and have arrived, and will depart, in their own private conveyances; and whose doing will be chronicled, at great length, in to-morrow's *Post*—the readers of which illustrious publication will receive a sort of "Dorling's Correct Card," setting forth the names, weights (in society), and colours of the riders of the various hobbies trotted out for the occasion.

And before we go any further with *our* picture, let us stop awhile and consider what sort of one the *Post* will draw of the subject. He will doubtless give a most glowing and bewitching view of the whole affair; and as to truthfulness in every particular of lace, feather, trinket, and ribbon, we will back him for being right to a spangle. On every point on which the valet, lady's-maid, tailor, or dress-maker may be considered an authority, his information may be relied on. If he says that the Countess of Roseville, as *Boadicea*, wore a blue satin paletot lined with puce baize, and trimmed with Honiton lace, four inches and one-eighth deep, at twenty-four pounds, six and threepence a-yard; and a stomacher of red fustian, ornamented with two pounds and an ounce of the most expensive black bugles—depend upon it he is right. Or, if he tells you that Lord Crowdy, as *Tippoo Saib*, looked magnificently, in green velvet pantaloons, tied, at each ankle, with three-quarters of a yard of gold cord; and wore a superb peacock's feather, containing four hundred and sixty-four fibres—make sure that such was the case. In fact, as regards detail, his picture will be perfect. But will the true tone and general effect of the thing be given with like accuracy? We are afraid not. We rather fear that—like a regular fashionable portrait-painter, as he is—he will make his picture like enough to be recognised, but tremendously flattered. Our knowledge of his style tells us that he will represent the scene as one of such thrilling rapture and delight, as to seem—if not quite up to the mark of Elysium—at all events so near an approach to it as to answer every purpose.

And is it not in truth a happy scene? Let us now turn to *our* picture and inquire. Let us see what the two prominent figures—the not by any means bad-looking fellow in the Highland dress, and his Cavalier friend with the eye-glass—have to say on the subject.

The answer they give us is to a very different tune. According to them, the whole affair is rather "slow" and disheartening, and they are evidently feeling, in secret, rather ashamed of themselves for being parties to it. They have discovered that their dresses, which cost them so much money and consideration, are conducive rather to discomfort and awkwardness than

enjoyment. The Cavalier is not at all sure that his sword will not play him some dreadful trick, before he has done with it; and the Highlander is cold about the legs. But what annoys them most of all, is the dreadfully humiliating feeling which they have struggled hard to stifle within their bosoms—that they have been making fools of themselves to no purpose. Still, as to confess one's-self disappointed, in such a case, would be equivalent to confessing one's-self taken in—which no one likes to do—they are striving hard to conceal their discomfiture, not by pretending to enjoy themselves—that they could not manage with anything like success, were they to try ever so—but by an appearance of apathetic languor (seasoned on the Scotchman's part with a dash of scorn) calculated to impress the spectator with an idea that they are as much pleased as two such distinguished and *blasé* individuals possibly can be.

But—we think we hear some one say—there are but two figures shown; and is not taking those two as a sample of the whole, a proceeding rather similar to that of the ancient sage, who carried a brick about with him, as a specimen of the house he wished to sell? But we say, No; rather let them be compared to a glass of wine, which gives the taster as good an idea of the quality of the pipe from which it has been drawn, as he would get by having the head of the cask stove in. Some experience that we have had in such matters tells us that the spirit and flavour of the whole assembly—aye! and of all such assemblies—may be got at by means of those two countenances. And it must be confessed that the spirit is by no means an ardent one, and that the flavour is dreadfully flat.

For we are disposed to maintain, and we will do it boldly, that all affairs of the sort must be failures. From the magnificent scene at Willis's, for the benefit of the Distressed Poles, or the Distressed Trowser-strap-button-hole-Makers, with Duchesses and Countesses for presiding spirits, down to the humble attempt made in the long room of some suburban public-house, at the very moderate figure of "Gents, three-and-six; Ladies, two-and-six," and which is for the benefit of nobody but the landlord, and especially for the benefit of nobody's morals—the same may be said of them all. There is a restraint, in a fancy dress, incompatible with true enjoyment; and, however violent our passions for a polka, or however much we may delight in the intoxicating evolutions of a *deux-temps*, when properly dressed and gloved for the occasion, there is a dispiriting and wet-blanket-like influence which always attends the wearing of fantastic costumes, such as we are not accustomed to. Nor is this influence much dispelled by the melancholy attempts

which are always, more or less, made to "keep up" the characters assumed—as if the character of Cardinal Wolsey were at all compatible with polkas; or the peculiarities of Roderick Dhu, or Haroun Alraschid, could be expressed in the movements of a quadrille. True, there may be some to whom the scene brings no disappointment; vain ones to whom the pleasure of walking about to be looked at, in a splendid dress, is ample compensation for hours of dulness. But that the thing is dull and stupid beyond compare, we are none the less convinced.

It may be said that a Fancy-Ball is a fine sight. We grant that, if "got up regardless of expense," it is. It is a very fine thing, indeed, to see a spacious and brilliantly-lighted room, thronged with people, dressed in fashions selected from almost every age and country—to say nothing of an immense quantity that never could have been prevalent in any age or country. It is is very delightful to see haughty Crusaders, so far unbending as to fraternize with Swiss Peasants and Spanish Brigands, laying aside the rugged ferocity of their dispositions, and chatting peacefully with military officers. It is very delightful, we repeat; even though some of the Brigands be rather weak in the knees, and a portion of the Crusaders are rather too short and fat quite to come up to the notion of what those hardy warriors ought to be. But we do not consider that making one in a grand tableau is in itself very great diversion. The *Poses Plastique* are a very fine sight; so, for the matter of that, is the Lord Mayor's Show. But we do not know that we should much enjoy appearing as the "Eagle-Slayer" at the one, or officiating as "Man in Armour" at the other.

We have had our brief say. We do not belong to the virtuous-indignation school of writers—it never having been made sufficiently worth our while to join it; nevertheless, we must plead guilty to having, in this instance, written with "a purpose." We are not vain about our influence; but if the observations in this unpretending paper *should* have the effect of inducing any lady of title to alter her present determination of giving a *bal costumé* during the forthcoming season, and make it instead, a good, festive, sociable party (at which we shall be most happy to make one), our purpose will be answered. And whether rewarded in the manner we have just hinted in parenthesis, or not, we shall exult in the proud conviction that we have done service to a number of our fellow-creatures.

ROBERT B. BROUGH.

THE POTATO-CAN.

"KIND or morose — urbane or surly reader! as the case may be, are you ready to accompany us in a stroll through the Strand?"

You shrug your shoulders doubtingly—

"The hour!"

"Well, it is not so late; St. Clement's clock has only chimed nine."

You thrust your face between the closely-drawn window-curtains of your luxuriously-appointed snuggery, and peeping out on a raw foggy November night, through which the gas-lamps shine with a sort of fuddled brilliancy upon the wet flagways, reply by a shake of the head, and an affectionate glance at the bright burning fire in your grate.

"Pooh! never mind the night; light your cigar, and come with us: we are going character-hunting."

"Ah! that will be interesting. I place myself in your hands."

"Thanks, good reader. Now let us begone."

"*Allons!*—But where are we to seek for your characters?"

"Have I not told you?—in the Strand. We will cast out our nets at random, and trust me we shall soon bring up a curious specimen of the *genus homo* that will reward our trouble. Hark!"

"Tatoes hot!—all hot! hot! hot!"

"There; I said we should not be long till we had caught one. Listen to that cry!"

"Tatoes hot!—penny a-piece—all hot! hot! hot!"

"The performer is not far distant. There he stands by the pillar, under the archway that leads from Pickett Street into Clement's Inn, the proprietor of the most popular Baked 'Tato-Can within the bills of mortality."

"You surely do not call this fellow a character?"

"Why not, my friend? I anticipate your objections: he may be somewhat too vulgar to figure in a legitimate comedy or a fashionable novel, but

he is nevertheless *a character;* and humble though he be, he fills an important position in the social stratum to which he belongs. You that have been accustomed to the piquant *plats* of a French *cuisine* may probably despise the simple fare that he offers; but let me tell you there are worse things in the world on a frosty night than a piping-hot baked potato; and many a costly whitebait dinner at Blackwall has been eaten with less relish than an unpretending *murphy* from a Potato-Can."

Stand forth, then, thou "Soyer for the Million," while we sketch thy portrait, and celebrate the flavour of thy Irish fruit, though the dignity of the subject might require a pen like his that made "The Groves of Blarney" immortal—

> "Oh! had I janus like that bould prater
> Lord Harry Brougham, or like Masther Dan,
> I 'd surely be thy brave *can-tator,*
> And sing the praises of thy *tator-can!*"

Here we can stand in the shadow of the spacious archway and observe him. The busy and eager throng that throughout the day filled the streets are gradually receding before new multitudes, as busy and as eager as those that have passed away. And so it is with the world: centuries sweep onward, as wave follows wave, and still the ceaseless human tide swells and rolls its living billows to the illimitable Ocean of Eternity. A new race of workers and idlers have succeeded to those that flowed through the veins and arteries of the City in the morning—artisans from close workshops; clerks from dim offices or dingy warehouses; pale children of misery to whom Night offers a friendly veil; and the numerous brood of crime and shame who live in the shadow of its ebon wings, are hurrying or loitering along. Here, a serious party, returning from a Temperance Soirée, is jostled by a group of drapers' assistants, who are making an "Early Closing Movement" in the direction of the Casino. And there, a steady citizen, hastening to the bosom of his family, is nearly overturned by a lawyer's clerk rushing to the pit of the Olympic Theatre at half-price. Then what an indescribable medley of sounds fills the air! What clattering, rolling, screaming, whistling, singing, talking, laughing, and crying on all sides, mingled and confounded into one deep roar, amidst which the quick peculiar cry of our neighbour of the Potato-Can comes at regular intervals on the ear—

"Tatoes hot!—all hot! hot! hot!"

Observe with what intense admiration the group of urchins who surround his locomotive kitchen watch the slender jet of steam that issues from its

diminutive safety-pipe, and wreathes its light drapery around the massive pillar against which he has established himself. We doubt whether "the Father of the Steam-Engine"—as some enthusiast in railways once called the ingenious Watt—ever excited so much interest by his monster offspring as the Baked 'Tatoe Man creates nightly in the minds and stomachs of the penniless investigators of the scientific principles of his simple cooking-machine.

But hold! a customer approaches—a youngster, rich in the sole proprietorship of a penny, which he has determined upon investing in "a jolly mealy 'tator, with a shave of butter, and a shake of pepper—certingly." There is not much in the external appearance of the *gamin* to command respect: his cap is a deal too small for his head, and his bluchers a deal too large for his feet; the remainder of his incongruous habiliments seem to hang rather by complaisance than necessity to his body. Yet there is a certain confidence in the manner in which he thrusts his hands into a couple of wide chasms, originally intended for pocket-holes, in the garment he calls his trowsers, and a saucy independence in the way he juts out his elbows, that forces a conviction of his wealth, and procures for him the deference always paid to its envied possessor. The circle opens to admit the young *gourmand*, who, with a knowing wink of the eye, commences a sort of preliminary skirmish with the potato-vendor before he enters upon the serious business of ordering his supper.

"Well, guv'nor, I see you're a-keeping the steam up as usual. Vot's the lowest figure now for your werry best—takin' a quantity?"

"Penny a-piece—all hot!"

"Penny a-piece for baked 'tators, and the funds a-going down like winkin! Why, I had a pine-apple myself out of Common Garden this morning for twopence. Trade's uncommon bad, guv'nor."

"Penny a-piece—all hot—hot."

"There's a hopposition can, too, started by a gentleman at the corner of the Olympic Theyatre, 'The *Halbert and Wictoria*,' it's called. Isn't it a spicy concern? and don't they give prime 'tators there—real nobby ones, with plenty of butter. Oh! not at all! And 'tis so respectable, it's a pleasure for a gentleman, coming from the hop'ra, to stop and have a bit of supper there on his road home. I des'say the proper-ietor is a-making of his fortune, and that he'll retire from business in a couple of years to his willa in the Regency Park."

This picture of his rival's prosperity irritates the owner of the original "*Victoria*" can, and he orders his tormentor to "move on, directly."

"Oh! werry likely. I'm a-standing here on Her Majesty's kerb-stone, expressing my opinions upon the pop'lur subject of 'tators, and consekvently shan't move on."

A murmur of applause runs through the juvenile circle for the spirited speaker.

"I don't want money or credit, so look sharp, old fellow—open your can, and pick me out a stunner from the lot."

The potato-baker's countenance relaxes at the sight of an ostentatiously displayed penny-piece; and while he extracts a mealy tuber from his stock, the *gamin* goes through a series of sleight-of-hand performances with the coin—such as shaking it out of his cap after having swallowed it, or thrusting it into his eye and bringing it out of his ear; assuring the spectators, all the time, that he has spent two large fortunes, which have not yet come to him, in learning these tricks. Then he turns to the potato-man, and expressing his indignation at the ridiculously thin shave of butter inserted in his potato, demands to have the deficiency made up by an extra shake of the pepper-box; and having obtained it, makes his exit in one of T. P. Cooke's favourite hornpipe steps.

The *gamin* has scarcely departed, when a pale, elderly man, in whose hollow cheeks want and misery have ploughed deep furrows, approaches timidly. His threadbare black coat is buttoned closely to his throat; he casts around him a quick, fearful glance to ascertain that he is not observed—hastily places his penny in the hand of the potato-baker, and receives in return one of the steaming esculents, with which, without speaking a word, he hurries away, to devour it in his fireless, lightless, solitary garret. That man—some fifteen years ago—was one of the "merchant princes" of London; his commerce extended to every quarter of the globe, and his credit was unimpeachable wherever his name was known. Luxury and ostentation, however, went hand and hand with affluence, and the vast wealth of L—— was only equalled by the princely magnificence of his mansion, his equipage, and his entertainments. But the fair wind of prosperity, which had so long filled his sails, at length shifted round—an extensive mining speculation, in which he had invested a large sum, proved a complete failure; this was followed by other heavy losses: but the credit of the house remained unshaken, and prudence and economy only were required to restore it to its former high position, when the railway mania burst forth and spread like a contagion throughout the land. Amongst the most reckless adventurers was L——, who hoped by a brilliant *coup* to recover all that he had latterly lost. The

sequel may be anticipated. When the monster bubble burst, L—— found himself a ruined man. It would be painful to describe his subsequent career in the downward struggles of poverty, until, abandoned by the friends of his prosperity—family he had none — he sunk to his present miserable condition, the recipient of a niggardly allowance of a few shillings a-week from a distant relative—barely sufficient to keep him from the Workhouse door. Thus slides the world! The Amphytrion whose epicurean dinners were praised by the most fastidious gastronomes, sups to-night on a baked potato purchased with his last penny at a vulgar 'Tato-Can.

But, while we have been engaged with the misfortunes of the ruined merchant, another customer appears: a girl, rather short than tall—rather smart than pretty—rather fine than neat—rather voluble than persuasive—the maid-of-all-work from a lodging-house in Surrey Street, who has been dispatched by Mr. Malachi Daly, the Irish law-student in the second floor, for a thundering big dish-full of his native fruit. Mr. Daly has invited his cousin, Tom Geoghegan of Ballydine, Counsellor Donnellan, Mat Burke of Kiltulla, and three or four more of the boys, to "a slight sketch" of a supper, consisting of a Wicklow ham (a present from his Aunt Moriarty in Dublin), backed by a tea-tray full of oysters and the aforesaid dish of baked potatoes, with an unlimited allowance of whisky-punch—for the judicious manufacture of which a regiment of Kinahan's real LL quart bottles have been paraded on the chimney-piece, and the large metal kettle from the kitchen has been ordered to be kept perpetually boiling on Mr. Daly's own fire.

But here come new figures upon the scene: a young working man, clad in a stout flannel jacket, accompanied by his pretty-looking wife, have mingled in the group, and are evidently undecided whether the few pence they have determined to spend on some little luxury shall be devoted to Baked 'Tatoes or to the Hot Mutton Pies of which a neighbouring professor is boasting the delicious quality. A secret misgiving, perhaps, relative to the feline character of the Pie-material, induces them to give the preference to the productions of the Potato-Can.

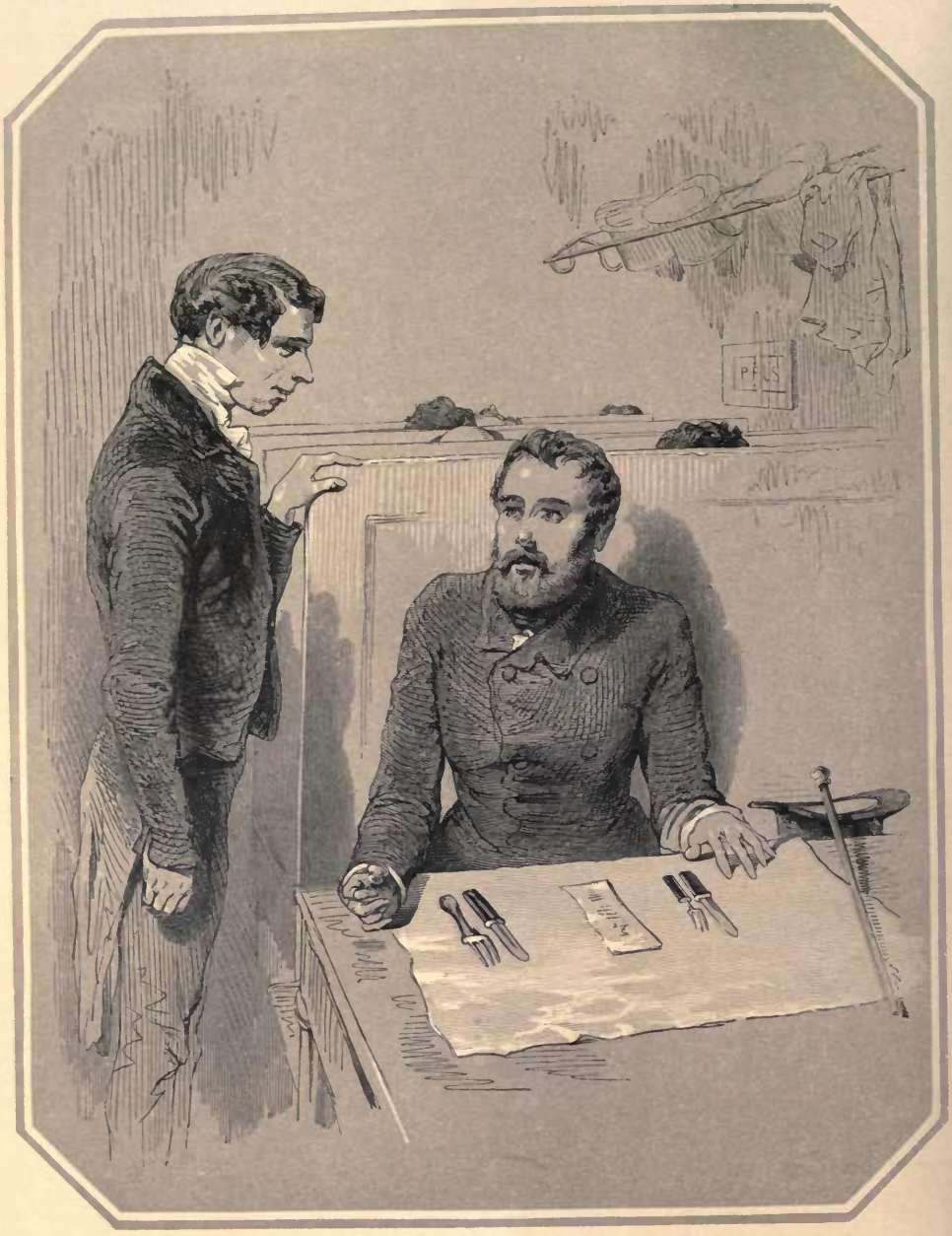
A thickly-coated, short, fat man, with fine purply-tinted features, and little grey eyes twinkling beneath a pair of light bushy eyebrows, next bustles into the circle to light his cigar at the potato-vender's lamp. That is the Chairman of a Charitable Society, who, in the true spirit of the benevolence which begins at home, has been dining with the Treasurer, Secretary, and Committee at the London Tavern, at the cost of the Institution. A rich odour of charity and roast venison diffuses itself around him, and words of

the warmest sympathy for human sufferings seem to hang upon his moist lip, till a poor shivering woman, who has been anxiously watching the countenances of the passers-by, ventures, in a subdued voice, to ask for a penny.

"Penny, be d—d! Go to the Workhouse if you're hungry," replies the benevolent Chairman, puffing the smoke of his cigar indignantly before him as he shuffles off.

A miscellaneous crowd from the theatres now surround the Baked 'Tatoe Man—customers pour in, and we leave him with his hands full of business—trusting, as sermons may be found in stones, that something good may be extracted even from a Potato-Can.

J. STIRLING COYNE.



FOREIGN GENTLEMEN IN LONDON.

ONE of these days there will be no foreigners. We have very nearly managed the preliminary arrangements, and I have great hope that several years before Lord Nelson gets his lions, Mr. Barry his Victoria Tower, or the Peninsular hero his medal, the genus Foreigner will be extinct. Time is already no more, and we have now only to abolish space—a trifling task in an age of ebullitions and abolitions like this.

The electric telegraph at present writes its own letters. I believe this is the last improvement, but I have not seen the *Mechanic's Magazine* for a week, and by this time, perhaps, the telegraph may deliver its own letters also, and ask for the postage. But, at all events, this is what we are coming to. The submarine line between Dover and Calais would have been open ere this but for the absurd curiosity of a large fish (perhaps the sea-serpent seen by Captain M'Quhæ, of H.M.S. Dædalus, the other day), which rooted up half a league of rope, with epicurean views; but the damage will soon be repaired. The Liverpool and New York submarine telegraph will be ready in time for Mr. Macready to threaten the first "legitimate" misfortune which is to fall upon next season. The Leadenhall Street and Calcutta line is slightly delayed—the East India Directors, who had solemnly promised to guarantee a dividend, having changed their minds, and being anxious to persuade the share-holders that no such promise was ever made; but Young Ganges is impetuous, and will have his rights. And, although so much expedition is hardly possible, it is hoped that the telegraph to the West Indies will be complete before the poor planters can finally resolve upon renouncing their connexion with us, and annexing themselves to some country which will ruin them a little more creditably. By the time these branches are ready to transmit intelligence, all Europe will be similarly furnished. The next step will obviously be a universal language; and that once settled, I should be glad to know what a foreigner is, or how there can be such a person? All man-

kind will be brothers; but Mr. Cobden need not exult, nor the Horse Guards look Blue, for we shall not sink the navy nor disband the army, until it be shown, contrary to present belief, that brothers cannot quarrel as energetically as anybody else.

There will be no foreigners, but we shall fight just as much as we do now, or perhaps a little more, for the better one knows a person the less chance there is of agreeing with him. The moment people grow intimate, they begin to take liberties, and to bore you; and Orlando was perfectly right, if he wished to be upon good terms with Jaques, to desire that they "might be better strangers." But all distinction of nationality must cease and die away; and if you address a dusky Gent as "Child of India," or an ebony-coloured *lionne* as "Daughter of Africa," you will be answered in the tone a still darker cosmopolite uses in the *Memoires du Diable*, "*Monsieur le baron, je vous ferai observer, qu'en m' appelant fils de l'enfer, vous dites une de ces bêtises qui ont cours dans toutes les langues connues. Je ne suis pas plus le fils de l'enfer que vous n'etes le fils de votre chambre—parce que vous l'habitez.*"

But in the mean time, and while, with all our disposition to fraternize, there still exists a difference between the gentlemen who bank respectively with Miss Coutts in London, Citizen Gouin in Paris, Count Torlonia in Rome, M. Salamanca in Madrid, and Mr. King in New York, it may be worth while to note a few of the characteristics which are about to be lost.

Here, by the way, I beg to record my personal protest against an act which seems to me one of great inhospitality—I mean the destruction of the Quadrant. Probably, by the time this paper appears, the columns will have fallen, and in each crash of their iron, London ought to hear a reproach for its treatment of the foreigner. For the Quadrant was the especial refuge, harbour, and retreat of the stranger. One might parody Cowper on his poplars:—

"The Quadrant has fallen—farewell to the shade
And the cabbage-cigars of that cool colonnade.
There lap-dogs no longer are vended by thieves,
Nor Poles wear great stars, in which no one believes.

"The Frenchmen have fled to some other retreat,
With their quaint puckered trowsers and *mal chaussès* feet,
And the scene, where their eloquence charmed us before,
Resounds with Republican *argôt* no more.

" 'Tis a sight to convince us, if anything can,
That the bump of destructiveness triumphs in man ;
Of a streetful of columns behold the *débris*,
While we can't finish *one* for the Cid of the Sea."

The Quadrant was the home of the stranger. The Parisian was there reminded (though he never would confess it) of his Palais-Royal, and its glittering *boutiques*. The Italian remembered his own brilliant skies, and (as a Roman who had retained enough of the old conquering spirit to vanquish our language, and reduce it to the slavery of jokes, declared) resorted to the Quadrant as the only way of finding out where the sun was. The German, not particular where he was, rather liked a place where he could smoke without getting wet, but still was not particular. The Pole found his account in a promenade where fair and charitable ladies walked in an afternoon, purse in hand, and where his sallow face and melodramatic expression of something between hunger and anger, often brought a disgusted footman stalking after him with a half-sovereign, which the delicacy of the sender had enveloped in paper, and with which the grateful recipient immediately proceeded to billiards. Then the Jews, though the Prince Regent's architecture does not, perhaps, recall to them any precise image, liked to show themselves (as they always do) where smart and rich people congregate, and where money is spent; and the Mosaic-Arab race was usually well represented on the Regent Street Rialto. Of the Orientals—who hypocritically sweep crossings in the day-time, but who, it is believed, are Thugs, and go about at night strangling stray young noblemen—there was also a specimen or two near the Quadrant, lurking near carriage-doors to identify the victims. In short, the Quadrant was a prolonged vestibule to the Hall of Nations. *Vale! vale! inquit Iolas.* But I should not like to be the ghost of the gentleman who prepared the Act of Parliament for destroying the place, when he meets the ghost of George the Fourth in purgatory.

Foreign Gentlemen in London have, as has been said, certain distinctive marks—although, as a general rule, gentlemen are pretty much alike everywhere. And there is one place where foreign gentlemen—it is useless and foolish to blink the fact—have an enormous advantage over English gentlemen. I mean in the drawing-room. Patriotic moralists, and writers who are not unwilling to stoop for popularity to clique prejudices, have laboured, by dint of much cant, to prove the reverse; and lady-writers especially, who like at every turn to parade the "object" of their stories, have endeavoured, by putting down the foreigner, to exalt the Englishman, and have twaddled about " showy,

theatrical manners," and "noble, manly reserve," and have imagined they were making out a case for their clients by speaking contemptuously of a man "who sought to be acceptable to every person present," and in contrasting him with the stiff-backed native, "too proud to try to please, and apart and distinct, like a superior being." This is not the place to preach, or one might say something to professed moralists about Christian humility and the like—nay, but that I do not conceive man to be a "worm" (except in his capacity of a filter of ardent spirits), one might make a severe allusion to one's fellow-worm curling himself up in a corner, instead of wriggling about like his companions. But as one prod of the bayonet is worth a dozen marchings and counter-marchings (I feel I am quoting Tristram Shandy very badly), we will take a fact. Look at the foreign gentleman in the drawing-room, and ask the ladies of the party their opinion of his desirability.

While that talented young author, Mr. Fleshbrush (whose hair resembles the useful article from which, perhaps, he took his name), is sniffing the air, and pretending to be abstracted, and imbibing inspiration from the alabaster Ariadne on the mantelpiece—while Mr. Pointercount, the composer, is reclining in a queer attitude on the couch, pestering an old dowager (who is wishing him a dowager's worst wish, and that's not a rose-water curse, I know) with eulogiums on Mendellsohn, because he is dead and unpopular, and abuse of Balfe, because he is living and triumphant—while Mr. De Vellum, really a rising lawyer, is explaining the Rule in Shelley's Case to little Kate Mortimer, who is eighteen and in her first season, and is urging her to say she is engaged when that Guardsman comes to ask her to dance, promising, *en revanche*, to tell her an anecdote which arose during one of the hearings of "Small *v.* Attwood"—while Mr. Boke, of Trinity College, Cambridge, is leaving those three pretty and talkable women, that he may go and tell Mr. Bloke, of St. John's, what he thinks of an article by Mr. Stoke, of Caius, about the second aorist—and while a whole gang of "superior beings" are stopping up the door, alternately smiling and scowling, but always at nothing, for nobody speaks to them and they speak to nobody—what is the "Foreign Gentleman" about? Making himself agreeable. What else did he come there for? One can sniff the air, and sneer at Balfe, and lay down the law, and rehearse the particles of one's belief in Greek, and lounge, and scowl, and smirk, and sulk in fifty fitter places than a drawing-room. Look at M. Alexis de Lannois, that young French gentleman. I select him as a good type of his order; and I select a French gentleman for the obvious reason that every well-regulated English mind firmly believes all foreigners to be Frenchmen, because most foreigners speak French.

Yes, look at M. De Lannois, young gentlemen of "manly reserve," too proud to behave yourselves properly. Look at him, you affected author. Sir, when you have won your race for reputation, you will regret that you started carrying so many lbs., self-imposed, while he ran his natural weight. Listen to him, dear Pointercount, for he does not know a tenth part as much about music as you do, but has imparted ten times as much information about it. De Vellum, De Vellum, he knows young ladies do not care about law, and would no more think of reading commentaries on the Code Napoleon to his partner than you will of calling your laundress in to listen to your next consultation with Sergeant Talfourd. Boke, M. De Lannois got some κυδος for a paper on the inscriptions on the Luxor Obelisk in the Place de la Revolution, and M. De Lamartine spoke of it at the *Institut;* but Alexis will not leave your pretty cousin there, in order to go and talk about it with that profound-looking Guy in spectacles. I speak to you as to clever men, which you all are, in your various ways—of course, one expects folly from fools.

M. Alexis de Lannois has danced several times, and has sung two songs; one Beranger's, the other out of *L'Ame en Peine*, the latter *apropos* of Mr. Charles Braham's *début*, of which somebody happened to speak—for Alexis does not come "primed" with certain airs, any more than with certain speeches. He has complimented Pointercount's dowager on her diamonds, and on her sister's good singing; and as the diamonds are false, and her sister is her daughter, the elderly lady is enchanted, and he dines in Berkeley Street on Tuesday—the "sister" is single, and has eleven thousand pounds. He has been introduced to Fleshbrush, and, catching the word "poet," told him how much his charming lyrics are admired in Paris: the work is an epic, but Fleshbrush is so pleased and flurried that he forgets that—nay, believes that somebody *has* read it. He has spoken to De Vellum, and as Alexis actually remembers seeing his face as he was shown through the Courts of Law, and, moreover, heard part of De Vellum's infliction on Kate Mortimer, begs, in flattering terms, to thank De Vellum for the pleasure he gave him by his brilliant speech the other day. De Vellum is mystified, but recollects having moved that the Court windows should be shut, and that Mr. Justice Maule thanked him for acting as *amicus curiæ*, and supposes that is what De Lannois means—*n'importe*, the impression is favourable. Then Alexis has scattered about him half-a-dozen *jeux de mot* of Jules Janin; has told a merry married lady a piquant story about the Duchesse de ——; has given an imitation of Rachel, frantically singing *Mourir pour la Patrie;* has promised Pointercount an introduction to Meyerbeer; has explained to De Vellum the real reason

why M. Cremieux would not let Lord Brougham become a Frenchman; and has even sent little Louisa Earnshaw, the niece of the house, to bed perfectly happy, by engaging to call and show her how they blow soap-bubbles, and fill them full of cigar smoke. Finally, he goes away sprinkling a shower of pretty things, and by the time he has turned into Park Lane, everybody is praising him, and he is caring as much about them as—come, you "superior beings," be honest—as much as *you* care about the people you met at any of your parties last season. It is of no use for you to say, "it's all very hollow" —of course it is, and so are you—but it is very pleasant, and we meet to be pleased; and, after all, the Frenchman's is the glittering hollowness of one of the soap-bubbles he promised Louisa, while yours is the sulky hollowness of an empty cask.

Circumstances—*Anglicè*, sundry English miles—prevent my having the advantage of seeing the sketch which M. Gavarni will prefix to this paper; but I shall be surprised if, with all his proper love of his country, he prove more ready to do his countrymen justice than

SHIRLEY BROOKS.


H. VIZETELLY.

THE PARKS.

THE English are not fond of out-of-door lounging, for several reasons. They have, in the first place, for the most part, comfortable homes; they have an eccentric climate; and they have no spare time—at least very little. When they have, in their restless locomotive nature, they must still keep going on. Hence they prefer taking the air on the railway or steamer to sitting still on chairs. Those which surround the Cabinets de Lecture and the Câfé de la Rotonde, in the Palais *Royal* (they may call it "National" for the nonce, if they please, but it always will be the Palais Royal), would in themselves supply all the Parks of London, from Primrose Hill to Storey's Gate—from Kensington Gardens to Bethnal Green. How different are they in Paris in this respect: unless one has witnessed it, it is impossible to conceive the fondness of the inhabitants for getting out of doors. Wet or fine—in peace or rebellion—warm or cold—winter or summer, they turn out just the same, to wander about the public promenades of their adored city, or dream away the time upon those same eternal little rush-bottomed chairs, which they hire at two sous each, reading the newspapers, or tapping the toes of their well-polished boots with their umbrellas. It is fortunate that our English words *home* and *comfort* have no synonyms in their language. If they had, the Parisians would be painfully worried to understand the meaning of them.

But, although we do not find such crowds of idlers in the Park at the present day, possibly the types encountered are more distinct. We say at the present day, because formerly the gayest of the gay thronged the walks, including royalty itself, with its attendant *suite*. Dear old Pepys has left us a mass of little *mems* thereanent. See where he says, on the 16th of March, 1662, that, while idling there in the Park, "which is now very pleasant," he "saw the King and Duke come to see their fowle play." In 1661, in April, he says, "To St. James' Park, where I saw the Duke of York playing at pall-

mall, the first time that ever I saw the sport." And later, which is quaintly interesting, he writes: "Dec. 15. To the Duke, and followed him into the Park, where, though the ice was broken, he would go slide upon his skaits, which I did not like, but he slides very well." We can imagine that Pepys was not strong upon skates. The first tumble—and nobody learns to skate without being sorely contused—would have been quite sufficient to have disgusted him with this then novel amusement. We find, however, that the love of feeding the ducks and skating in the Park has not diminished. Afterwards, he tells us how he saw the King and Queen, with Lady Castlemaine and Mrs. Stuart, *cum multis aliis*, walking about. He adds: "All the ladies walked, talking and fiddling with their hats and feathers, and changing and trying one another's heads, and laughing. But it was the finest sight to see, considering their great beauties and dress, that ever I did see in all my life."

Evelyn is a little more scandalous. He says, on March 1, 1671: "I once walked with the King through St. James' Park to the garden, where I both saw and heard a very familiar discourse between Mrs. Nellie, as they called an impudent comedian; she looking out of her garden on a terrace at the top of the wall, and —— standing on the green walk under it. I was heartily sorry at this scene. Thence the King walked to the Duchess of Cleveland" —(the Lady Castlemaine of Pepys)—"another lady of pleasure, and curse of our nation." Horace Walpole, eighty years afterwards, speaks of receiving a card from Lady Caroline Petersham to go with her to Vauxhall. And the party that sailed up the Park, "with all our colours flying," he says, consisted of the Duke of Kingston, Lady Caroline, Lord March, Mr. Whithead, "a pretty Miss Beauclerc, and a very foolish Miss Sparre." He adds, that Lady Caroline and little Ashe, or the Pollard Ashe, as they called her, had just finished their last layer of red, and looked as handsome as crimson could make them; and that they marched to their barge, with a boat of French horns attending, and little Ashe singing.

Now-a-days, the idlers in the Park remind us little of the personages in the above extracts. Poverty is far more frequently encountered there than wealth; and more, we fear, walk there to dine with "Duke Humfrey" than to get an appetite for a meal elsewhere. At early morning, when the air is clearest, you encounter few persons; nor, somewhat later, do you find the crowds assembled to read the papers and discuss the politics after breakfast, as in Paris. You may, perhaps, encounter a student reading hard at some uninviting-looking book, and stumbling over the withies bent into the shuffled-out grass, as he moves along; or, perchance, an actor, as he threatens

the lower boughs of the larger trees with his stick (most actors carry sticks), while he is rehearsing his part in some forthcoming play. And yet, lonely as the Park is at this time, and half deserted, it is seldom chosen for the purpose of tender declarations, avowals, promises, oaths, quarrels, and all the other usual accompaniments of courtship. No; in this respect, perhaps, those chiefly concerned show their wit. The world, with its broad daylight, its tumultuous noise, and its distracted eyes—is far more adapted for secrecy than the shade and the retreat; and more than this, society will always lend itself as an accomplice of things which are not sought to be concealed.

Towards noon, a movement of laughing mirth and noise commences by the arrival of the children and their nursery-maids; and in the children lies, in our opinion, the greatest attraction here offered—even beyond the ducks—the real zoological "ducks." Not that we think slightingly of feeding them. We have heard, by the way, that it was one of the great O'Connell's favourite *délassemens*, and that he enjoyed it as much as the smallest fellow capable of tossing a bit of biscuit. It is great fun to see the rush made after a morsel: how the birds flash through the water to obtain it, and how, as in every community, the strongest always gets it. But if you want to enjoy the sport to perfection, throw in one of the small round rolls you get at evening-party supper-tables, and a fearful tumult is created. The prize is much too large for them to get hold of, as it is too valuable to be relinquished: and so it is pushed and floated about, and vainly pecked at, surrounded by the whole tribe, squabbling, splashing, and fluttering—swayed, like large crowds, here and there—until it get sufficiently soft to be accessible to their bills, when its consumption is speedily achieved.

But to return to the children. We mean especially those who have not yet numbered eight years, and whose limbs have still all the smooth roundness of infancy. There is something very pleasing in their graceful movements, their fresh cheeks, and their beautiful hair, and a perfect charm in their gaiety; in the innocent joy sparkling in their eyes, and the pure and living blood colouring their cheeks, which our brightest belles would give so much to imitate. This attraction, perhaps, belongs only to those who run about: albeit it takes a great deal to beat the saucy beauty of an English baby. It is almost enough to make one a convert in favour of matrimony, even in these "fast" times. The only pity is that these little people should ever be destined to become men.

ALBERT SMITH.

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