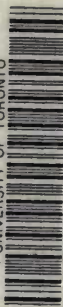
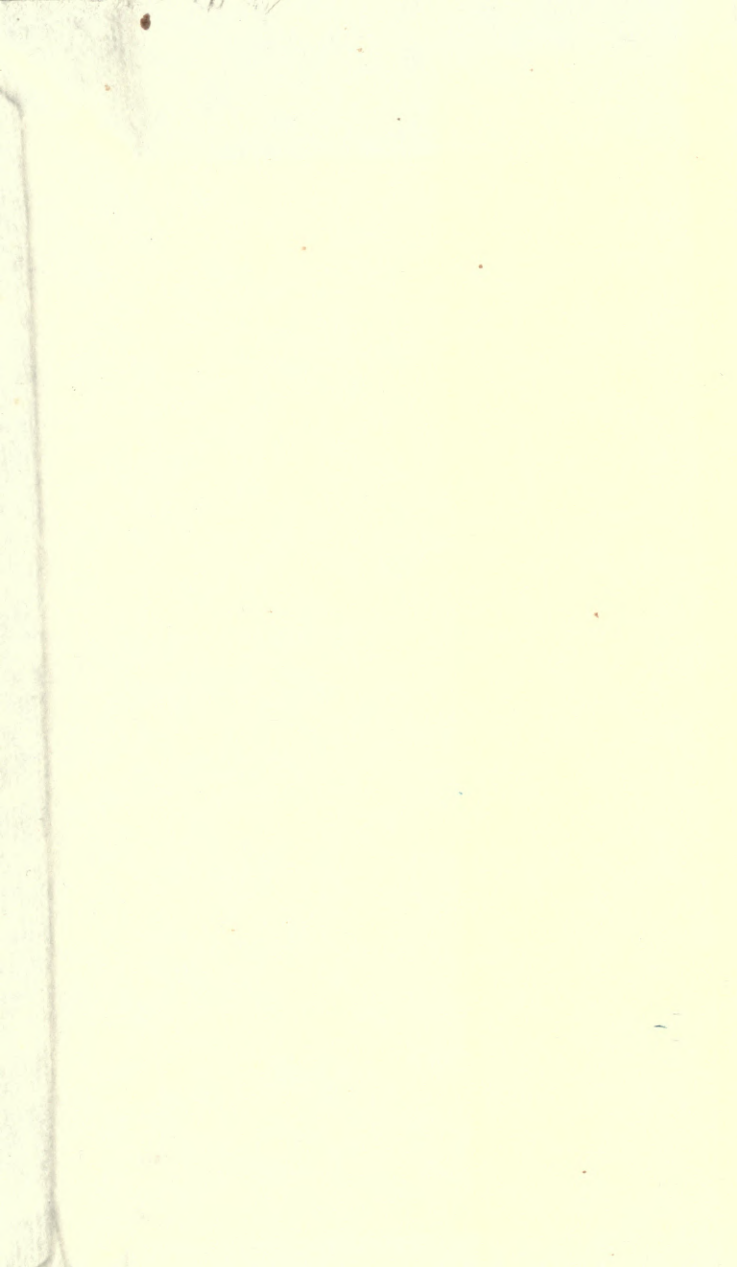



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W. H. Johnstone
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LONDON CHARACTERS

AND THE

HUMOROUS SIDE OF LONDON LIFE.



THE VARIETIES OF "COUNSEL."—P. 156.

W. H. Jones

LONDON CHARACTERS

AND THE

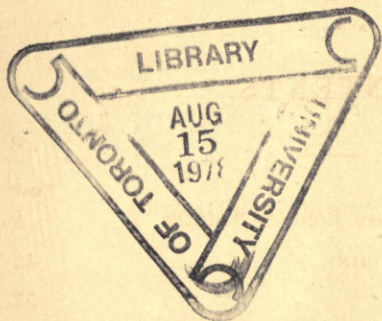
HUMOROUS SIDE OF LONDON LIFE.

WITH UPWARDS OF SEVENTY ILLUSTRATIONS.



THE INTERESTING WITNESS.

LONDON:
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LONDON CHARACTERS

AND THE

HUMOROUS SIDE OF LONDON LIFE.

THUMBNAIL STUDIES IN THE LONDON STREETS.



WHO are these people who pass to and fro? What lives are theirs? What are their stories? Who are their friends? What is their business? Each has a story of his own—each has a cluster of friends of his own—each is the centre of a domestic circle of greater or less extent—each is an object of paramount interest to somebody; there are few, very

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few, who are so unhappy, so isolated, as not to be the absolute centre around which some one's thoughts re-

volve. Of these men and women who pass and repass me in the crowded street, one is an only son, on whose progress in life his bereaved mother has staked her happiness; another is the ne'er-do-weel husband of a spirit-broken, but still loving wife; a third is a husband that is to be; a fourth is the father of a big hungry family—every one, from peer to beggar, is the living centre of some social scheme. They are all so much alike, and yet so widely different; their stories are so wonderfully similar in their broad outlines, and yet so strangely unlike in their minute particulars. Just as one man's face is like another's, so is the story of his life: no two faces are exactly alike, yet all have many points in common.

A large crowd of people always presents many curious subjects of speculation. The bare fact of their being there is marvellous in itself, when we come to think of it, without thinking too deeply. As a rule, it is better to think, but not to think too deeply. If we don't think at all, our mind is but a blank; if we just glance below the surface, we may without difficulty conjure up a host of pleasant paradoxes, the contemplation of which is enough to keep the mind amused, and to give play to a healthy and fanciful reflection. But if we think too deeply, we come to the reason of things—we destroy our visionary castles—we brush away our quaint theories, and we reduce everything to the absolute dead-level from which we started. Apply these remarks to a large crowd of people—say a monster Reform gathering in Hyde Park. Here are thirty thousand people vindicating their claim

to the franchise, some by talking windily to a mob who can't hear them, others by an interchange of gentle chaff, others by going to sleep on their backs on the grass. The man who don't trouble himself to think about them accepts their presence as a fact which is merely attributable to a popular demagogue and a few thousand handbills. He who just dips below the surface, finds a train of thoughts of this nature prepared for him: "How utterly baseless is the doctrine of chances! Take any two of these people at random: one is (say) a bricklayer, born in Gloucestershire; another is a tailor, who hails from Canterbury: well, what would have been the betting, thirty years ago, that the Gloucestershire bricklayer would not be lolling on the grass in Hyde Park, listening to the inflated nonsense of the Kentish tailor, at eight o'clock on a given evening in August, eighteen hundred and sixty-seven? Why, the odds would have been incalculably great against such a concurrence. But here are not only the Gloucestershire bricklayer and the Kentish tailor, but also twenty-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight others, the odds against any one of whom meeting any other in the same place, at the same time, and on the same day, would have been equally incalculable; and yet, here they all are!" Here is a vast field of speculation opened out for the consideration of him who only dips below the surface. It is enough, in itself, to keep his mind in a condition of pleasant, easy-going activity for months at a time. But the miserable man who sees a fallacy in this chain of reasoning, and, so to speak, hauls up his intellectual cable to

see where the fault lies, discovers that it exists in the fact that no one, thirty years ago, prophesied anything of the kind concerning either the Gloucester bricklayer or the Kentish tailor, or any other twain of the multitude before him—that the odds against any one having prophesied such a concurrence would be infinitely greater than the odds anybody would have staked against such a prophecy being verified; that he has been troubling himself about a mass of utter nonsense; and that, in the absence of any prophecy to that effect, there is nothing more remarkable in the fact of the Gloucestershire bricklayer meeting the Kentish tailor and the twenty-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight other noodles who go to make up the crowd, than is to be found in the fact that thirty thousand people can be brought together, out of one city, who think that the cause of Reform is susceptible of any material advancement by such a means.

The London streets always afford pleasant fund of reflection to a superficial thinker. Hardly a man passes by who has not some more or less strongly marked characteristic which may serve to distinguish him from his fellows, and give a clue to his previous history. Of course the clue may be an erroneous one; but if it should prove to be so, that is the fault of the sagacious soul who follows it up too closely. Here is an instance taken at random. The easy-going speculator who is content with such deductions as the light of nature may enable him to make, sets him down as a thriving bill-discounter. He is an old gentleman who has, at various epochs in his chequered career, been a wine-merchant, a

cigar-dealer, a Boulogne billiard player, a trafficker in army commissions, a picture-dealer, a horse-dealer, a



theatrical manager, and a bill discounter. Each of these occupations has left its mark, more or less emphasized, upon his personal appearance. He finds bill-discounting by far the most profitable of his employments, and he sticks to it. He has a large army connection, and can tell off the encumbrances on most of the large landed estates of Great Britain and Ireland. He has a fine cellar of old wines, and several warehouses of cigars and old masters—commodities which enter largely into all his discounting transactions. He has a large house, and gives liberal parties, and it is astonishing (considering his antecedents) how many young men of family find it worth their while to “show up” at them.

Here we have Mr. Sam Travers of the metropolitan theatres. Mr. Sam Travers is a stock low comedian at a favourite minor establishment, and Mr. Sam Travers’s

pre-occupied demeanour and unreasonable galvanic smiles suggest that his next new part is the most prominent subject-matter of his reflections. Mr. Travers was a music-hall singer and country clown until his developing



figure interfered with the latter line of business, and he has now subsided into the "comic countryman" of the establishment to which he is attached. His notions of "make up" are for the most part limited to a red wig and a nose to match; but he is a "safe" actor, and on his appearance on the stage the gallery hail him by name as one man. He can't pass a man with a red head and red nose without exclaiming, "By Jove! there's a bit of character, eh!" and he falls into the mistake, too common among his class, of supposing that a man who looks, in the streets, as if he had been "made up" for the stage, is on that account characteristic and to be carefully imitated.

A wicked old character is represented in the initial to this paper. He is a gay old bachelor, of disgraceful habits and pursuits—a coarse old villain without a trace of gentlemanly, or even manly, feeling about him. He stands at his club-window by day, leering at every respectable woman who passes him, in a manner that would insure him a hearty kicking were he not the enfeebled, palsied old thing he is. At dinner he drinks himself into a condition of drivelling imbecility, from which he only arouses himself in time to stagger round to the nearest stage-door. His income is probably derived from the contributions of disgusted connections who pay him to keep out of their sight, and when he dies, he will die, unattended, in a Duke Street lodging-house, whose proprietor will resent the liberty as openly as he dares.

Here is an amusing fellow—an artistic charlatan. He



is by profession an artist; his "get up" is astoundingly professional, and his talk is studio slang. He never paints anything, but haunts studios, and bothers hard-working craftsmen by the hour together. He has been all over the world, and knows every picture in every gallery in Europe. To hear him talk, you would think he was the acknowledged head of his profession. Certainly, as far as his exterior goes, there never was so artistic an artist (out of a comedy) as he.



Bound, I should say, for rehearsal. Much more quiet and ladylike than people who only know her from the stalls, as a popular burlesque prince, would expect her to be. A good quiet girl enough, with a bedridden mother and three or four clean but seedy little children dependent upon her weekly salary (eked out, perhaps, by dancing and music lessons) for their daily bread. Very

little does she know about Ascot drags and Richmond dinners: her life is a quiet round of regular unexciting duties, only relieved at distant intervals by the flash and flutter of a new part. She will marry, perhaps, the leader of the band, or the stage-manager, or the low comedian, grow fat, and eventually train pupils for the stage.



Ah! his story, past and to come, is easily told. Bank clerk by day—casino reveller by night, eventually a defaulter; three years' penal servitude, ticket of leave, then a billiard marker and betting man, and if successful, perhaps a small cigar-shop keeper. Or, if he has relations, his passage may be paid out to Australia, where he will begin as an attorney's clerk and perhaps end as a judge. Most of us have some great original whom we set up as a type of what a man should be,

and that selected by our friend is the "great Vance." He frames his costume from the outsides of comic songs, and his air and conversation are of the slap-bang order of architecture. His clothes and those of his friends are always new—offensively new—a phenomenon which is not easily accounted for when the limited nature of their finances is taken into consideration. I have a theory that they are clothed gratuitously by West-end tailors who want to get up a fashionable reaction in the matter of gentlemen's dress, and who think that this end may be most readily attained by clothing such men as these in exaggerations of existing fashions. But this is just one of those speculations to which I have alluded at some length, and which on closer investigation I feel I should be tempted to reject. So I decline to pursue the subject.

A London crowd is an awful thing, when you reflect upon the number of infamous characters of which it is necessarily composed. I don't care what crowd it is—whether it is an assemblage of "raff" at a suburban fair, a body of Volunteers, Rotten Row in the season, or an Exeter Hall May meeting. Some ingenious statistician has calculated that one in every forty adults in London is a professional thief; that is to say, a gentleman who adopts, almost publicly, the profession of burglar, pickpocket, or area sneak; who lives by dishonesty alone, and who, were dishonest courses to fail him, would have no means whatever of gaining a livelihood. But of the really disreputable people in London, I suppose that acknowledged thieves do not form one twentieth portion. Think of the number of men now living and doing well,

as respectable members of society, who are destined either to be hanged for murder or to be reprieved, according to the form which the humanitarianism of the Home Secretary for the time being may take. Murderers are not recruited, as a rule, from the criminal classes. It is true that now and then a man or woman is murdered for his or her wealth by a professed thief, but it is the exception, and not the rule. Murder is often the crime of one who has never brought himself under the notice of the police before. It is the crime of the young girl with an illegitimate baby: of the jealous husband, lover, or wife; of a man exposed suddenly to a temptation which he cannot resist—the temptation of a good watch or a well-filled purse, which, not being a professional thief, he does not know how to get at by any means short of murder. Well, all the scoundrels who are going to commit these crimes, and to be hung or reprieved for them accordingly, are now walking about among us, and in every big crowd there must be at least one or two of them. Then the forgers; they are not ordinarily professional thieves; they are usually people holding situations of greater or less responsibility, from bank managers down to office boys: well, all the forgers who are to be tried at all the sessions and assizes for the next twenty years, are walking about among us as freely as you or I. Then the embezzlers—these are always people who stand well with their employers and their friends. I remember hearing a judge say, in the course of the trial of a savings-bank clerk for embezzlement, when the prisoner's counsel offered to call witnesses to character

of the highest respectability, that he attached little or no value to the witnesses called to speak to their knowledge of the prisoner's character in an embezzlement case, as a man must necessarily be of good repute among his fellows before he could be placed in a position in which embezzlement was possible to him. Then the committers of assaults of all kinds. These are seldom drawn from the purely criminal classes, though, of course, there are cases in which professional thieves resort to violence when they cannot obtain their booty by other means. All these people—all the murderers, forgers, embezzlers, and assaulters, who are to be tried for their crimes during the next (say) twenty years, and moreover, all the murderers, forgers, embezzlers, and assaulters whose crimes escape detection altogether (here is a vast field for speculation open to the ingenious statisticians—of whom I am certainly one—who begin with conclusions, and “try back” to find premisses!)—all are elbowing us about in the streets of this and other towns every day of our lives. How many of these go to make up a London crowd of, say, thirty thousand people? Add to this unsavoury category all the fraudulent bankrupts, past and to come, all the army of swindlers, all the betting thieves, all the unconscientious liars, all the men who ill-treat their wives, all the wives who ill-treat their husbands, all the profligates of both sexes, all the scoundrels of every shape and dye whose crimes do not come under the ken of the British policeman, but who, for all that, are infinitely more harmful to the structure of London society than the poor prig who gets six months for a “wipe,” and

then reflect upon the nature of your associates whenever you venture into a crowd of any magnitude!

Struck by these considerations (I am not a deep thinker, as I hinted in a former page—if I thought more deeply about them I might find reasons which would induce me to throw these considerations to the winds), I beg that it will be understood that all the remarks that I may make in favour of the people who form the subject of this chapter, are subject to many mental reservations as to their probable infamy and possible detection.

Here is a gentleman who, as far as I know, is a thoroughly good fellow. He is a soldier, and a suffi-



ciently fortunate one, and stands well up among the captains and lieutenant-colonels of his regiment of Guards. He has seen service in the Crimea, as his three undress

medals testify. He is, I suppose, on his way to the orderly-room at the Horse Guards, for, at this *morte saison*, his seniors are away, and he is in command. Unlike most Guardsmen, he knows his work thoroughly, for he was the adjutant of his battalion for the six or seven years of his captaincy. He is a strict soldier; rather feared by his subalterns when he is in command, but very much liked notwithstanding. He has married a wealthy wife, has a good house in Berkeley Square, and a place in Inverness-shire, with grouse-moors, deer-forests, and salmon-streams of the right sort. He is thinking of standing for the county, at his wife's suggestion, but beyond a genial interest in conservative successes, he does not trouble himself much about politics. Everybody likes him, but he may—I say, he *may*—be an awful scoundrel at bottom.

Here are two young gentlemen (on your right), who appear to be annoying a quiet-looking and rather plain young milliner. I am sorry to say that this is a group which presents itself much too often to the Thumbnail Sketcher. I do not mean to say that the two young men are always disgraceful bullies of unprotected young women, or that the unprotected young women are always the timid, shrinking girls that they are commonly represented to be in dramas of domestic interest, and in indignant letters to the "Times" newspaper. I am afraid that it only too often happens that the shrinking milliner is quite as glad of the society of the young men who accost her as the young men are of hers, although I am bound to admit that in the present case the girl seems a

decent girl, and her annoyers two "jolly dogs," of the most objectionable type. One of them is so obliging as to offer her his arm, while the other condescends to the extent of offering to carry her handbox, an employment with which he is probably not altogether unfamiliar in the ordinary routine of his avocations. She will bear with them for a few minutes, in the hope that her continued silence will induce them to cease their annoyance, and when she finds that their admiration is rather increased than abated by her modest demeanour, she will stop still and request them to go on without her. As this is quite out of the



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question, she will cross the road, and they will follow her. At length their behaviour will perhaps be noticed by a plucky but injudicious passer-by, who will twist one

of them on to his back by the collar, and be knocked down himself by the other. Upon this a fight will ensue, the young milliner will escape, and the whole thing will end unromantically enough in the station-house.

Here is an unfortunate soldier, a fit and proper contrast to the comfortable and contented Guardsman (page 13). He is one of the Indian army of martyrs, who has given up all hope of anything like promotion, and,



after a life of battles, has subsided into that refuge for destitute officers, a volunteer adjutantcy. He is a thoroughly disappointed man, but he is much too well bred to trouble you with his disappointments, unless you pump him on the subject, and then you will find that the amalgamation of the British and Indian forces has resulted in complications that you cannot understand, and

that one of these complications is at the bottom of his retirement from active service. He has strong views upon, and a certain interest in, the Banda and Kirwee prize money, and he looks forward to buying an annuity for his mother (who lets lodgings) with his share, if he should ever get it. He is poor—that is to say, his income is small; but he always manages to dress well, and looks gentlemanly from a gentleman's—although, perhaps, not from a tailor's—point of view.

This rather heavy and very melancholy-looking gentleman with the thick black beard is a purveyor of touch-



and-go farces to the principal metropolitan theatres. He also does amusing gossip for the provincial journals, light frothy magazine articles, dramatic criticisms for a weekly paper, and an occasional novel of an airy, not to say ex-

tremely trivial nature. His name is well known to the readers of light literature, and also to enthusiastic playgoers who go early and come away late. He is supposed by them to pass a butterfly existence, flitting gaily from screaming farce to rollicking "comic copy," and back again from rollicking comic copy to screaming farce. But this is not exactly true of his professional existence. He is but a moody buffoon in private life, much addicted to the smoking of long clay pipes and the contemplation of bad boots. He is, at bottom, a good-natured fellow, and a sufficiently industrious one. He is much chaffed for his moody nature now, but he will die some day, and then many solemn bumpers will be emptied by his club fellows to the memory of the good heart that underlaid that thin veneer of cynicism.



Here is a sketch from the window at White's. He is also a member of the Senior and the Carlton, but he is

seldom seen at either. He prefers the view from White's, and he prefers the men he meets there, and he likes the chattiness of that famous club. He knows everybody, does the old major, and has, in his time, been everywhere. He has served in a dozen different capacities, and in almost as many services; indeed, his range of military experience extends from a captaincy of Bashi Bazouks to a majority of Yeomanry Cavalry. He has been rather a sad dog in his time, but he is much quieter now, and is extremely popular among dowagers at fashionable watering-places.

This young gentleman is a Foreign Office clerk, and



he is just now on his way to discharge his arduous duties in that official paradise. He is a rather weak-headed young gentleman, of very good family and very poor

fortune, and in course of time he will churn up into a very sound, serviceable ambassador. At present he does not "go out" with the Government, though that distinction may be in reserve for him if he perseveres in his present judicious course of gentlemanly sleepiness. He is, in common with most of his Foreign Office fraternity, a great deal too well dressed. It is really astonishing that young men of birth and breeding, as most of these Foreign Office clerks are, should be so blind to the fact that there is nothing in this world so utterly offensive to men of cultivated taste as a suit of bran new clothes. His views, at present, are limited to his office, the "Times," his club, and any shootings or fishings that may be offered to him by friendly proprietors.

The streets are strange levellers. They form a common ground upon which all ranks meet on equal terms—where no one, however lofty his station (so that it fall short of royalty), or however distinguished his career, has any right of precedence to the disadvantage of humbler members of the community. The First Lord of the Treasury, in whose presence small statesmen tremble, will, if he happens to run against a costermonger, be asked, with no ceremony whatever, where he is shoving to; and the Lord High Chancellor of England when he walks abroad is nothing better than a "bloke" in the eyes of him who keeps a potato-can. It is in the streets that the private soldier stops the Commander-in-Chief to ask him for a light, and over-dressed shopmen sneer at seedy dukes. There the flunkey ogles the lady into whose service he may be about to enter, and there the indis-

criminating 'busman invites countesses into his conveyance. In the streets the penniless Fenian finds his "Fool's Paradise" half realized—rank is abolished, and an equal distribution of property is all that remains for him to accomplish.

The Thumbnail Sketcher will often find an amusing if not a profitable occupation in attentively noticing the peculiarities of almost any one person who happens to be walking in his direction. It is astonishing how much of a total stranger's tastes and habits may be learnt by simply following him through half a mile of crowded thoroughfare. You will find, perhaps, that he stops at all print-shops; if so, he has a taste, good or bad, for art in certain of its branches, and you can form an idea as to the quality of that taste by taking note of the pictures that principally arrest his attention. Is that the "Phryne Découverte" that he is admiring? Ah! I fear his taste for art is not so immaculate as it should be. He is stopping now at a fashionable perfumer's, and he is reading an account of the marvellous deceptive powers of the "Indistinguishable scalp,"—a fact that directs my attention to so much of his hair as I can see below his hat-brim, and I notice that it stands out unnaturally from the nape of his neck. His next pause is at the shop of an eminent Italian warehouseman, and as his eyes glisten over pots of caviare, Lyons sausages, and *pâtés de foie gras*, I conclude that he is a *bon vivant*. A pretty woman passes him, and he makes a half-turn in her direction—a sad dog, I'm afraid. Another and a prettier woman overtakes him, and he hurries his pace that he may keep up

with her—a very sad dog, I'm sure. He passes the shop of a flashy tailor, and gazes admiringly at a pair of trousers that seem to scream aloud—so he must be a bit of a “cad.” Opticians' shops have no charms for him, so his tastes do not take a scientific form; and as he passes a window full of Aldines and Elzevirs, I suppose he is not a ripe scholar. A glass case of grinning teeth pulls him up, so I conclude that his powers of mastication are giving way, and as he takes off his hat to a gentleman who only touches his own in reply, I see that his social position is not eminent. Playbills seem to possess an extraordinary fascination for him, and he dawdles for half an hour at a time over photographic Menkens and Abingdons—he is evidently a patron of the drama in its more objectionable forms. He crosses crowded thoroughfares without hesitation, so he is a Londoner, and I see from the fact that he stops to buy a “Bradshaw,” that he is going out of town. Another provision shop arrests his attention, and I feel confirmed in the conclusion I have arrived at that he is an epicure, practical or theoretical; and as I eventually lose him in a cheap eating-house, I conclude that circumstances over which he has no control render the latter alternative the more probable of the two. Altogether I have seen enough of him to justify me in determining that a personal acquaintance with him is not an advantage which I would go through fire and water to obtain.

It frequently happens, however, that a pretty accurate notion of a man's habits and character may be arrived at without taking all this trouble. A glance is often

sufficient to enable an observant Thumbnail Sketcher to satisfy himself, at all events, on these points; and so that he himself is satisfied, it matters little whether he is right or wrong in his deductions. Here is a gentleman about whom there can be no mistake. He is a Promoter



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of Public Companies. He will, at ten days' notice, get you up an association for any legitimate purpose you may think fit, and a good many illegitimate ones into the bargain. He is a specious, showy, flashily-dressed, knowing-looking gentleman, with a general knowledge of most things, and an especial and particular acquaintance with the manners and customs of fools in general. He has served an apprenticeship in a good many excellent schools. He was an attorney once, but he was young then, and blundered, so they struck him off the rolls.

He afterwards jobbed on the Stock Exchange, but (being still young) he misappropriated funds, and although he was not prosecuted, he found it convenient to steer clear of that commercial Tattersall's for the future. He then became clerk to a general agent, and afterwards touted for a respectable discounteer. He made a little money at this, and determined to give legitimate commerce a turn, so he opened a mock auction, and sold massive silver tea-services and chronometers of extraordinary value, all day long, to two faded females and three dissipated Jewish lads of seedy aspect but unlimited resources. The district magistrates, however, took it upon themselves to post policemen at his door to warn would-be customers away, so he turned his hand to betting, and succeeded so well that he soon found himself in a position to take a higher stand. He got up a Company, with six other influential Betters, for the supply of street-lamps to Central Africa, showing, in his prospectus, that where street lamps were to be found, houses would soon be gathered together, and houses, if gathered together in sufficient numbers, formed important cities, a large proportion of the revenues of which would, of course, flow into the pockets of the public-spirited shareholders. The "Central Africa Street Lamp Company (Limited)" flourished for a short time only, but it enabled him to form a connection by which he lives and flourishes. He is very disinterested in all his undertakings: he never cares to share in the profits of his Promotions—he is good enough to leave them all to his shareholders. All he wants is a sum down or a good bill at three months,

and the Company, once set a-going, will never be troubled with him again. His varied experience has taught him many useful lessons—and this among others, that only fools take to illegitimate swindling.

Who is this dull and bilious man? He is a high-class journalist and essayist, whose pride and boast it is that he has never written for a penny paper. Being a



heavy and a lifeless writer, he entertains a withering contempt for amusing literature of every description. He takes the historical plays of Shakspeare under his wing, and extends his pompous patronage to Sheridan Knowles and all other deceased dramatists who wrote in five acts, only he never goes to see their productions played. Upon modern dramas of all kinds he is extremely severe, and he lashes burlesque writers (when

he condescends to notice them) without mercy. He has never been known to amuse anybody in the whole course of his literary career, and would no more make a joke than he would throw a summersault. In the earlier stages of his career he made a comfortable income by writing sermons for idle clergymen, and his facility for arguing in circles, combined with a natural aptitude for grouping his remarks under three heads and a "Lastly," made him popular with his more orthodox customers, so he always had plenty to do. He used to sell his sermons to London clergymen as modern dramatic authors sell their plays to London managers—reserving the "country right" and farming them through the provinces, with important pecuniary results. He is generally to be found in the bar-parlours of solemn taverns, where he presides as Sir Oracle over a group of heavy-headed but believing tradesmen. He is a contributor to all religious magazines of every denomination, and is usually regarded by his intimate friends as a ripe, but wholly incomprehensible scholar.

Our next is an artist's model. He is a shocking old scamp with a highly virtuous beard, and a general air of the patriarch Moses gone to the bad. He was once a trooper in a regiment of Life Guards, but he drank to such an extent that he was requested to resign. In the course of a period of enforced leisure he grew his beard, and as it happened to grow Mosaically, he became popular with artists of the high art school, and he found it worth his while to let himself out for hire at per hour. Artists are men of liberal souls, who don't care how much their

models may drink so that they don't come drunk into the studio; but they are extremely particular upon this latter point, and the patriarch does not always respect



their prejudices. So it often happens that his time is at his disposal, and when this happens he engages himself as a theatre supernumerary. He has been convicted of dishonesty on two or three occasions, and was once sent for trial and sentenced to penal servitude for three years. He has a way of advertising himself by taking off his hat and showing his forehead and hair (which are really good) whenever he sees a gentleman in a velvet coat and eccentric beard.

Then comes a gentleman whose source of income is a standing wonder to all his friends. Nobody can tell how he gets his living. Sometimes he is very flush of ready

money and sometimes he is hard up for half-a-crown. His mode of life is altogether contradictory and inconsistent. He lives in a small house in a fifth-rate square, and his household consists of himself, a depressed wife, five untidy children, and two maidservants. But, on the other hand, he drives magnificent horses in irreproachable



phaetons, gives elaborate dinners, with all sorts of out-of-season delicacies, has his stall at the Opera, and drives to all races in a four-in-hand of his own hiring. Times have been when the showy phaeton was returned to the livery-stable keeper, and when Mr. Charles had orders to send him no more salmon—when he and his family have been known to feed on chops and rice pudding—when his hall has entertained a succession of dunning tradesmen from nine in the morning till nine at night—and

when he himself had been seen outside omnibuses. But these occasional periods of monetary depression have passed away, and he has come out of them with renewed splendour. A phaeton and pair (only not the same) await his orders as before, and salmon at a guinea a pound forms the least extravagant feature of his daily meal. Now and then he disappears from his neighbourhood for six months at a time, and his tradesmen are left to tell the stories of their wrongs to the maidservant over the area railings. But he turns up again, in course of time, pays them off, and so gets fresh credit. Altogether he is a social mystery. The only hypothesis that appears to account for these phenomena is that he keeps a gaming house.



Here is poor young Aldershot. He is very young and very foolish, but he will grow older and wiser, and

his faults may be pardoned. On the strength of his commission, and a singularly slender allowance, he is able to get credit for almost any amount, and what wonder that he avails himself of the opportunity? The great mistake of his life is that he does harmless things to excess. He over eats, he over drinks, he over rides, he over dances, he over smokes, and he over dresses. He has no distinctive points beyond these—his other qualifications are mostly negative. He is at present simply a smoky donkey with a developing taste for mild vice, a devoted faith in his autocratic tailor, and a confirmed objection to the wedding tie. He will grow out of all this, if he has the good luck to spend ten or fifteen years in India, and he will return a big, burly, bronzed captain with hair on his hands, and a breast like a watch-maker's shop. The nonsense will have been knocked out of him by that time, and his views on the subject of matrimony will change.

The following gentleman has seen better days. He was once a prizefighter and kept a public house upon which he promised to thrive, but the police and the licensing magistrates interfered, and one fine morning he found his occupation gone. In point of fact his public house (which was in Lant Street, Borough) became known as a rendezvous for thieves of the worst class, and his licence was consequently suspended. His figure developed too rapidly to allow of his following his other calling with credit, so he had nothing for it but to turn his hand to card-sharping and patter-business on race-courses and at street corners. He is gifted with a

loud voice, an *ad captandum* manner, and a fluent delivery, and in the assumed character of a gentleman who has undertaken to dispose of a certain number of purses



with sovereigns in them for one shilling, in accordance with the terms of a bet of ten thousand guineas made between two sporting noblemen of acknowledged celebrity, he manages to net a very decent livelihood.

The Thumbnail Sketcher's partiality for the London streets may be attributed, in a great measure, to the fact that, being a person of no consideration whatever elsewhere, he becomes, as soon as he places his foot upon the pavement, an autocrat invested with powers and privileges of the most despotic description. It is then in his power to inconvenience his fellow-man to an extent

unknown in any other sphere of action, excepting perhaps a theatre. A man who goes forth in the morning with the determination of annoying as many people as possible during the day, without bringing himself within the pale of the law, has an exciting, and at the same time perfectly safe, career before him. It is then open to him to annoy hurried people by asking them the way to obscure or impossible addresses. He can call at and inspect all the apartments to be let upon his road; he may buy oranges (if that luscious fruit is in season) and scatter the peel broadcast on the pavement; he may, by quietly munching a strong onion, drive a crowd from a print-seller's window; and he can, at any time, reassemble one by disputing with a cabman on the matter of his fare. He may delay a street-full of busy people by stopping his Hansom in (say) Threadneedle Street; and he may, in half a dozen words, carefully selected, put the whole mechanism of the London police into operation. He may delay an omnibus-full of people by pretending to have dropped a sovereign in the straw, and, if it is a wet day, he can spoil any lady's dress with his muddy boots or his wet umbrella. He can at any time, on a narrow pavement, drive well-dressed ladies into the roadway, a pastime popular enough with the politest nation in the world, but which has hardly yet acquired a recognised footing among coarse and brutal Englishmen. In short, he has it in his power to make himself an unmitigated nuisance with perfect impunity; and it is a creditable feature in his character that he does not often take advantage of his privilege. He is satisfied with the power

vested in him, without caring to set its machinery in motion without due provocation.

The prerogative which I have here claimed for the Thumb-nail Sketcher is not his alone ; it is shared in a greater or less degree by all. Indeed the humbler and more filthy the passenger, the more marked are his privileges. The organ-grinder has it in his power to poison the atmosphere with his hideous and distracting music whenever he pleases ; the costermonger and dustman may make morn hideous with their professional yells ; German bands may bray wherever they choose, and Punch-and-Judy-men crow and chuckle in every street ; while the wealthy and comparatively inoffensive bone-crusher, soap-boiler, knacker, or tanner is liable at any moment to be indicted as a nuisance if he happens to be in evil odour with his neighbours. This state of things is altogether an anomaly, but the humbler classes in whose favour it operates might surely be disposed to take the many benefits they derive from it as a set-off to the manhood suffrage which is not yet accorded to them. It may be taken indeed as a moral certainty that hardly a man walks into a London street without causing an inconvenience of greater or less magnitude to some of his fellow-passengers. But it is not the fashion to estimate moral certainties as physical certainties are estimated, and therefore people are allowed to walk abroad whenever they please without regard to the fearful annoyance that may be caused to a refined and sensitive organization by an outrageous hat, a taste for bad cigars, or a passion for peppermint drops. It is instructive, by the

way, to contrast the utter irresponsibility of a moral certainty with the absolute responsibility of a physical certainty. A certainty is a certainty, whether it be moral or physical; it is a moral certainty that in the course of the erection of (say) the new Law Courts at least a dozen people will be accidentally killed, yet nobody would dream of stopping the works on that account. But if it were possible to enter into an exceptional arrangement with Fate, by which the deliberate slaughter of one man before the first stone was laid would secure absolute immunity for the hundreds of others whose lives would otherwise be in daily peril during the eight or ten years which must elapse before the works are completed, society would protest with one voice against the inhuman compact, and the contractor who entered into it would be branded as a cold-blooded murderer. But from a politico-economical point of view he would be a conspicuous benefactor to his species.

The Thumbnail Sketcher, having now let off his superfluous steam, proposes once more to take the reader by the arm and direct his attention to half a dozen more of the involuntary models who unwittingly provide him with amusement and instruction whenever he takes his walks abroad.

Here is an amusing example of that bland, gentlemanly, useful humbug the fourth-rate family doctor. Although undoubtedly a humbug, he is not a quack. His professional acquirements are quite up to the average mark, although they seldom go beyond it. He has satisfied the College of Surgeons and he has passed the Hall with decency; he

has even, perhaps, graduated as M.B. at London, and is consequently styled Doctor by courtesy. But he is a humbug for all that. He is not satisfied with the average professional status to which his average professional acquirements and average professional brain would, if honestly worked, confine him; he soars high above this, on the strength of a bland, impressive manner, an im-



posing presence, and a certain quiet audacity in prescribing eccentric but harmless remedies for fanciful complaints. He is much too sensible a fellow to go beyond his depth, but his depth is a tolerably deep one, and his plan of elevating himself on moral tiptoes makes it appear con-

siderably deeper than it really is. As I said before, with all his humbug and pretence he can, if he likes, be really useful, and his waiting-room is daily thronged with real or fanciful sufferers, who are quite justified in placing a modest belief in him. Their mistake consists in believing in him absolutely, on the mere strength of a bland, impressive presence.

Who is this red-faced, white-haired, pompous old gentleman who is holding forth in a window of the "Senior?" He is an old officer who retired on half-pay forty years



ago, a humble, blundering captain, and who, by dint of long standing, has worked his way up into the dignified list of generals. When in active service he knew abso-

lutely nothing of his duty ; he was the stock regimental by-word whenever the subject of military incompetence was broached. He was the scapegoat upon whose shoulders the responsibility of all regimental blunders was laid, and subalterns, six weeks old, would pose him with impossible questions and record his oracular replies. Now, however, that he has been cut off for forty years or so from anything in the shape of practical experience in military matters, and so has attained the rank of major-general, he is looked upon as an important authority on the organization of armies, and advanced strategy. He is a county magistrate and a member for an important borough, and his orations on Horse-Guards mismanagement and military innovations, though little regarded in the House, are looked upon by the outside public with a respect which is born rather of his military rank than of his military knowledge.

On next page stands an anomalous gentleman, one of a group of four seedy but flashy individuals who are loafing about the doors of a theatrical public-house in Bow Street. He is an ex-equestrian, and the proprietor of a travelling circus. A few years ago he was known as that daring and graceful rider Annibale Corinski, whose "Courier of the Dardanelles" on fourteen horses was justly celebrated as the most thrilling performance ever witnessed in this or any other country. But Annibale grew too fat for the business, so he married the widow of his late employer and set up as a circus proprietor on his own account. His present position, as master of the ring, is one of qualified dignity. It is true that, by virtue of his office, he is

entitled to appear in a braided military frock, jack-boots, and a gold-lace cap; but he has, on the other hand, to submit to nightly affronts from ill-conditioned jesters,



whose mildest insults take the form of riddles with offensive answers, calculated to cover him publicly with confusion.

Here comes a tall, soldierly man in civilian clothes. He is soldierly in his carriage, only he has no moustache, and his little black eyes are quick and restless. He is awake to most things, and his only delusion is that, being a policeman in plain clothes, he looks like a prosperous shopkeeper, a confidential clerk, a nobleman of easy manners, or a country yokel in town for a "spree," according

to the characters which the peculiarities of his several cases require him to assume. But the disguises are a failure.



The more he disguises himself the more he looks like a policeman in plain clothes, and as long as he continues in the force his official identity will assert itself.

Now appears a curious old bachelor of eccentric habits. Nobody knows much about him, except a confidential man-servant who effectually defeats any attempt to pump him on the subject of his master's eccentricities. All that is known of him is that he lives in a lodging-house in Duke-street, St. James's. His valet is the only person who is ever allowed to enter his room ; his meals, carefully but not expensively organised, are served with ex-

traordinary punctuality ; he has a horror of children and tobacco, and a nervous dread of Hansom cabs ; he takes a walk, between two and three every afternoon, round St. James's Square, along Pall Mall, up St. James's Street, and so home, stopping regularly at Sams's to look



at the profile pictures of distinguished sporting and other noblemen, and finishing up with a Bath bun and a glass of cherry-brandy at the corner of Bond-street. He is supposed by some to be a fraudulent banker, by others a disgraced clergyman, by others an escaped convict of desperate character, and by the more rational portion of his observers as a harmless monomaniac. He never gives his name, and his lodgings are taken for him by his valet. There is a rumour afloat that he is a royal descendant of

Hannah Lightfoot, and that he is only waiting for an opportunity to declare his rights and step at once into the throne of England; but I believe that this theory is confined to an imaginative and romantic few.

Here is one of those miserable ghosts that start up from time to time in the London streets, to sicken the rich man of his wealth and to disgust the happy man with his happiness. If the wretched object before us could put his thoughts into intelligible English, what a story of misery, want, filth, sickness, and crime he could unfold! He is



of course a thief; who in his situation would not be? He is a liar; but his lies are told for bread. He is a blasphemer; God help him, what has he to be thankful for? He is filthy in his person; but filth means warmth in

his vocabulary. He pushes his way insolently among well-dressed women, who shrink from his infected rags; why should he respect those whose only regard for him is a feeling of undisguised aversion? He can tell you of open-air places where there is snug lying; places where you can sleep with tolerable comfort for nothing; he can tell you all about the different houses of detention, criminal gaols, police-cells, and tramp-wards in the neighbourhood of the metropolis; and he can compare their various merits and demerits, and strike a balance in favour of this or that. He has been a thief since he could walk, and he will be a thief till he dies—it is the only trade that has ever been opened to him, and in his case it has proved a poor one. Truly he is one of the saddest sights in the London streets.

GETTING UP A PANTOMIME.

“HARLEQUIN, Columbine, Pantaloon, and Clown!” There is an agreeable magic in these words, although they carry us back to the most miserable period of our existence—early childhood. They stand out in our recollection vividly and distinctly, for they are associated with one of the very few real enjoyments permitted to us at that grim stage of our development. It is a poetic fashion to look back with sentimental regret upon the days of early childhood, and to contrast the advantages of immaturity with the disadvantages of complete mental and

physical efflorescence; but like many other fashions—especially many poetic fashions—it lacks a common substratum of common sense. The happiness of infancy lies in its total irresponsibility, its incapacity to distinguish between right and wrong, its general helplessness, its inability to argue rationally, and its having nothing whatever upon its half-born little mind,—privileges which are equally the property of an idiot in a lunatic asylum. In point of fact, a new-born baby is an absolute idiot; and as it reaches maturity by successive stages, so, by successive stages does its intelligence increase, until (somewhere about forty or fifty years after birth) it shakes off the attributes of the idiot altogether. It is really much more poetical, as well as much more accurate, to believe that we advance in happiness as our intellectual powers expand. It is true that maturity brings with it troubles to which infancy is a stranger; but, on the other hand, infancy has pains of its own which are probably as hard to bear as the ordinary disappointments of responsible men.

“Harlequin, Columbine, Clown, and Pantaloon!” Yes, they awaken, in *my* mind at all events, the only recollection of unmixed pleasure associated with early childhood. Those night expeditions to a mystic building, where incomprehensible beings of all descriptions held astounding revels, under circumstances which I never endeavoured to account for, were to my infant mind absolutely realizations of a fairy mythology which I had almost incorporated with my religious faith. I had no idea, at that early age, of a Harlequin who spent the day hours in a

pair of trousers and a bad hat; I had not attempted to realize a Clown with an ordinary complexion, and walking inoffensively down Bow Street in a cheap suit. I had not tried to grasp the possibility of a Pantaloon being actually a mild but slangy youth of two-and-twenty; nor had I a notion that a Columbine must pay her rent like an ordinary lodger, or take the matter-of-fact consequences of pecuniary unpunctuality. I believed in their existence, as I did in that of the Enchanter Humgruffin, Prince Poppet, King Hurly Burly, and Princess Prettitoes, and I looked upon the final metempsychosis of these individuals as a proper and legitimate reward for their several virtues and vices. To be a Harlequin or Columbine was the summit of earthly happiness to which a worthy man or woman could aspire; while the condition of Clown or Pantaloon was a fitting purgatory in which to expiate the guilty deeds of a life misspent. But as I grew older, I am afraid that I came to look upon the relative merits of these mystic personages in a different light. I came to regard the Clown as a good fellow, whom it would be an honour to claim as an intimate companion; while the Harlequin degenerated into a rather tiresome muff, who delayed the fun while he danced in a meaningless way with a plain, stoutish person of mature age. As Christmases rolled by, I came to know some Clowns personally, and it interfered with my belief in them to find that they were not the inaccessible personages I had formerly supposed them to be. I was disgusted to find that they were, as a body, a humble and deferential class of men, who

called me "sir," and accepted eleemosynary brandy and water with civil thanks: and when, at length, I was taken to a rehearsal of some "Comic Scenes," and found out how it was all done, my dim belief in the mystic nature of Pantomimists vanished altogether, and the recollection of what they had once been to me was the only agreeable association that I retained in connection with their professional existence.

But although familiarity with the inner life of a pantomime may breed a certain contempt for the organized orgies of the "Comic Scenes," it cannot have the effect of rendering one indifferent to the curious people to whose combined exertion the institution owes its existence. They are, in many ways, a remarkable class of men and women, utterly distinct from the outside public in appearance, ways of thought, and habits of life. A fourth- or fifth-rate actor's conversation is perhaps more purely "shoppy" than that of any other professional man; his manner is more artificial, his dialogue more inflated, his metaphors more professional, and his appearance more eccentric. At the same time he is not necessarily more immoral or more improvident than his neighbours: and in acts of genuine, unaffected charity, he often sets an example that a bishop might imitate. There are good and bad people in every condition of life; and, if you are in a position to strike an average, you will probably find that the theatrical profession has its due share of both classes. Now for our Thumbnail Sketches.

The two poor old gentlemen who appear on the next page are "supers" of the legitimate school. They are

not of the class of "butterfly-supers," who take to the business at pantomime time, as a species of remunerative relaxation ; they are at it, and they have been at it all the year round since their early boyhood. Their race is dying out now, for the degenerate taste of modern audiences insists on epicine crowds, and armies with back-hair and ear-rings. There was a goodly show of fine



old regulation "supers" at Astley's while "Mazeppa" was being played some time ago ; and I confess that the sight of the curious old banner-bearers in that extraordinary drama had more interest for me than the developed charms of the "beauteous Menken." The deportment of a legitimate "super," under circumstances of thrilling excitement, is a rich, and, I am sorry to add, a rare study. Nothing moves him : his bosom is insensate alike to the dying throes of a miscreant and the agonized appeal of oppressed virtue ; and he accepts the rather startling circumstance of a gentleman being bound for life to a maddened steed, as an ordinary incident of

every-day occurrence—which, in point of fact, it is to him. He is a man of few—very few—words, and he gives unhesitating adherence to the most desperately perilous schemes with a simple “We will!”—taking upon himself to answer for his companions, probably in consequence of a long familiarity with their acquiescent disposition. He is, in his way, an artist; he knows that an actor, however insignificant, should be close-shaved, and he has a poor opinion of any leading professional who sports an impertinent moustache. Mr. Macready was for years the god of his idolatry; and now that he is gone, Mr. Phelps reigns in his stead.



These two young ladies are to embody the hero and heroine of the piece. The taller one is Prince Poppet; the shorter, Princess Prettitoes. The Prince will be redundant in back-hair, and exuberant in figure (for a prince); but he will realize many important advantages on his transformation to Harlequin, and a modification in the matters of figure and back-hair may count among the most important. “Prince Poppet” is a bright

intelligent girl, and is always sure of a decent income. She sings a little, and dances a great deal, and can give a pun with proper point. Her manner is perhaps just a trifle slangy, and her costume just a trifle showy, but her character is irreproachable. She is a good-humoured, hard-working, half educated, lively girl, who gives trouble to no one. She is always "perfect" in her words and "business," and being fond of her profession, she is not above "acting at rehearsal," a peculiarity which makes her an immense favourite with authors and stage-managers. The young lady, "Princess Prettitoes," who is talking to her, is simply a showy fool, intensely self-satisfied, extremely impertinent, and utterly incompetent. However, as a set-off to these drawbacks, she must be an admirable domestic economist, for she contrives to drive her brougham, and live *en princesse*, in a showy little cottage *ornée*, on three pounds a week. These young ladies are the curse of the stage. Their presence on it does not much matter, so long as they confine their theatrical talents to pantomime princesses; but they don't always stop there. They have a way of ingratiating themselves with managers and influential authors, and so it happens that they are not unfrequently to be found in prominent "business" at leading theatres. They are the people who bring the actress's profession into contempt; who are quoted by virtuous but unwary outsiders as fair specimens of the ladies who people the stage. If these virtuous, but unwary outsiders, knew the bitter feeling of contempt with which these flaunting butterflies are regarded by the quiet, respectable girls who are forced

into association with them, they would learn how little these people had in common with the average run of London actresses.

These two poor dismal, shivering women are "extra ladies"—girls who are tagged on to the stock ballet of



the theatre during the run of a "heavy" piece. It is their duty while on the stage to keep themselves as much out of sight as they conveniently can, and generally to attract as little notice as possible until the "transformation," when they will hang from the "flies" in wires, or rise from the "mazarin" through the stage, or be pushed on from the wings, in such a flood of lime-light that their physical deficiencies will pass unheeded in the general blaze. I believe it has never been satisfactorily determined how these poor girls earn their living during the nine months of non-pantomime. Some of them, of

course, get engagements in the ballets of country theatres, but the large majority of them appear to have no connection with the stage except at pantomime time. An immense crowd of these poor women spring up about a month or six weeks before Christmas, and besiege the managers of pantomime theatres with engagements that will, at best, provide them with ten or twelve shillings a week for two or three months; and out of this slender pay they have to find a variety of expensive stage necessities. Many of them do needlework in the day-time, and during the "waits" at night; but they can follow no other regular occupation, for their days are often required for morning performances. They are, as a body, a heavy, dull, civil, dirty set of girls, with plenty of good feeling for each other, and an overwhelming respect for the ballet-master.

The smart, confident, but discontented-looking man on next page, with the air of a successful music-hall singer, is no less a personage than the Clown. His position is not altogether an enviable one, as pantomimes go, now-a-days. It is true that he has the "comic scenes" under his entire control; but comic scenes are no longer the important element in the evening's entertainment that they once were; and he is snubbed by the manager, ignored by the author, and inconsiderately pooh-poohed by the stage-manager. His scenes are pushed into a corner, and he and they are regarded as annoying and unremunerative impertinences, to be cut off altogether as soon as the "business" wanes. He undergoes the nightly annoyance of seeing the stalls rise and go out long before he

has got through his first scene. The attraction of a pantomime ends with the "transformation," and the scenes that follow are merely apologies for those that go before. The modern Clown is a dull and uninventive person : his attempts at innovation and improvement are limited to the introduction of dancing dogs, or a musical



solo on an unlikely instrument. As far as the business proper of a Clown is concerned, he treads feebly in the footsteps of his predecessors ; and he fondly believes that the old, old tricks, and the old, old catchwords, have a perennial vitality of their own that can never fail. He is a dancer, a violinist, a stilt-walker, a posturist, a happy family exhibitor—anything but the rough-and-tumble Clown he ought to be. There are one or two exceptions

to this rule—Mr. Boleuo is one— but, as a rule, Clown is but a talking Harlequin.

This eccentric person on the chair is the Harlequin and ballet-master. He is superintending the developing powers of his ballet, addressing them individually, as they go wrong, with a curious combination of flowers of speech,



collecting terms of endearment and expressions of abuse into an oratorical bouquet, which is quite unique in its kind. He has the short, stubby moustache which seems to be almost peculiar to harlequins, and his cheeks have the hollowness of unhealthy exertion. He wears a practising dress, in order that he may be in a position to illustrate his instructions with greater precision, and also because he has been rehearsing the “trips,” leaps, and

tricks which he has to execute in the comic scenes. His life is not an easy one, for all the carpenters in the establishment are united in a conspiracy to let him break his neck in his leaps if he does not fee them liberally. He earns his living during the off-season by arranging ballets, teaching stage dancing, and, perhaps, by taking a music-hall engagement.

We now introduce the Manager, who probably looks upon the pantomime he is about to produce as



the only source of important profit that the year will bring him. Its duty is to recoup him for the losses attendant upon two or three trashy sensation plays, a feeble comedy, and a heavy Shakspearian revival; and if he only spends money enough upon its production, and particularly upon advertising it, he will probably find it

will do all this, and leave him with a comfortable balance in hand on its withdrawal. He is a stern critic in his way, and his criticisms are based upon a strictly practical foundation—the question whether or not an actor or actress draws. He has a belief that champagne is the only wine that a gentleman may drink, and he drinks it all day long. He smokes very excellent cigars, wears heavy jewellery, drives a phaeton and pair, and is extremely popular with all the ladies on his establishment. He generally “goes through the court” once a year, and the approach of this event is generally shadowed forth by an increased indulgence on his part in more than usually expensive brands of his favourite wine. He has no difficulty in getting credit; and he is surrounded by a troop of affable swells whom he generally addresses as dear old boys.



The preceding sketch represents the "property man"—an ingenious person whose duty it is to imitate everything in nature with a roll of canvas, a bundle of osiers, and half a dozen paint-pots. It is a peculiarity of most property men that they themselves look more like ingenious "properties" than actual human beings; they are a silent, contemplative, pasty race, with so artificial an air about them that you would be hardly surprised to find that they admitted of being readily decapitated or bisected without suffering any material injury. A property man whose soul is in his business looks upon everything he comes across from his professional point of view; his only idea is—how it can best be imitated. He is an artist in his way; and if he has any genuine imitative talent about him he has plenty of opportunities of making it known.

Now comes the Author. I have kept him until the last, as he is by far the most unimportant of all his *collaborateurs*. He writes simply to order, and his dialogue is framed upon the principle of telling as much as possible in the very fewest words. He is ready to bring in a "front scene" wherever it may be wanted, and to find an excuse at the last moment for the introduction of any novelty in the shape of an "effect" which any ingenious person may think fit to submit to the notice of the manager. From a literary point of view his work is hardly worth criticism, but he ought, nevertheless, to possess many important qualifications if it is to be properly done. It is not at all necessary that he should be familiar with the guiding rules of prosody or rhyme; nor

is it required of him that he shall be a punster, or even a neat hand at a parody; but he must be quick at weaving a tale that shall involve a great many "breeches parts." He must be intimately acquainted with the details of stage mechanism, and of the general resources of the theatre for which he is writing. He must know



all the catchy songs of the day, and he must exercise a judicious discrimination in selecting them. He must set aside anything in the shape of parental pride in his work, and he must be prepared to see it cut up and hacked about by the stage-manager without caring to expostulate. He must "write up" this part and cut down that part at a moment's notice; and if one song won't do, he must be able to extemporize another at the

prompter's table ; in short, he must be prepared to give himself up, body and soul, for the time being, to manager, orchestra leader, ballet-master, stage-manager, scenic artist, machinist, costumier, and property-master—to do everything that he is told to do by all or any of these functionaries, and, finally, to be prepared to find his story characterized in the leading journals as of the usual incomprehensible description, and his dialogue as even inferior to the ordinary run of such productions.

SITTING AT A PLAY.

AMONG the multifarious duties which fall to the lot of the Thumbnail Sketcher (who may be said to have sold himself for life to a printer's devil) that of visiting theatres on first nights for the purpose of supplying disinterested notices of new pieces for a certain critical journal, is, perhaps, the least remunerative. He does not confine the practice of speaking his mind, such as it is, to the readers of these Thumbnail Studies: he is always in the habit of indulging in that luxury whenever he is called upon to express a printed opinion on matters of public interest. But the consequences of recording an unbiassed opinion on any theatrical question are of a peculiarly unpleasant description, if that unbiassed opinion happens to be of an unfavourable nature, for they subject the audacious critic to the undisguised sneers of ponderous tragedians, dismal comic men, and self-satisfied

managers—in addition to the necessity of paying for his stall whenever he has occasion to visit a theatre for critical purposes. The sneers amuse him, but he is free to confess that he is annoyed at having to pay for his admission ; and the consequence is that whenever he takes his place in a theatre he does go under a sense of injury which might possibly have the effect of unintentionally warping his critical faculties, such as they are, were it not that to speak the bare truth of a theatrical performance, is to avenge one's six shillings to the uttermost farthing. But although the Thumbnail Sketcher feels that he meets a manager on even terms, he can with difficulty compose himself to regard an audience with feelings of anything like equanimity. Their behaviour during the progress of the representation of a new piece, on its first night, irritates him beyond endurance. In the first place, there is almost always a party who hiss, without any reference to the merits or demerits of the piece. It is a somewhat curious fact that in England hisses are seldom heard save on "first nights;" and of the fifty or sixty new pieces that have been recently produced at West-end London theatres, hardly a dozen have altogether escaped hissing on the occasion of their first performance. "Caste" was not hissed, neither was the "Doge of Venice," nor the Haymarket "Romeo and Juliet," nor "A Wife Well Won;" but these pieces form the principal exceptions to the rule. But it is not so much of indiscriminate hissing, as of indiscriminate applause, that the Thumbnail Sketcher complains. A clap-trap sentiment, a burlesque "break-down," a music-

hall parody, a comic man coming down a chimney, an indelicate joke, a black eye, a red nose, a pair of trousers with a patch behind, a live baby, a real cab, a smash of crockery, a pun in a "comedy," an allusion, however clumsy, to any topic of the day, a piece of costermonger's slang, or any strongly-marked tailoring eccentricity, is quite sure of a rapturous reception whenever it is presented to an audience. Then I take objection to people who crack nuts—to people who eat oranges and peppermint drops—to people who go out between all the acts, without reference to the inconvenience they occasion to their neighbours. I take objection to people who know the plot, and tell it, aloud, to their friends—to people who don't know the plot but guess at the *dénouement*—to people who borrow playbills and opera-glasses—to donkeys who talk of actresses by their Christian names—and, above all, to those unmitigated nuisances who explain all the jokes to friends of slow understanding. The Thumbnail Sketcher, being about to treat of people he meets in theatres, thinks it is only fair to admit this prepossession against them, in order that it may be distinctly understood that as he cannot pledge himself to look at them in an unprejudiced light, everything that he may have to say of them may be taken *cum grano*.

There was a time when to go to a theatre was, in the Thumbnail Sketcher's mind, the very highest enjoyment to which a mortal could legitimately aspire in this world. There was nothing in any way comparable to it, and all other forms of amusement resolved themselves into mere

vexatious vanities when placed in juxtaposition with the exquisite embodiment of human happiness. At that period he was accustomed to regard the signs of weariness exhibited during the last farce, by relations who had him in charge, as a piece of affectation of the most transparent description, assumed for the purpose of demonstrating that their matured tastes could have nothing in common with those of a little boy of six or seven years of age, and further to overwhelm him with a sense of the martyrdom which they were undergoing on his account. But a long course of enforced theatre-going has modified his views on this point; and it is some years since he awoke to the fact that the last farce is often a trying thing to sit out—to say nothing of the five-act legitimate comedy, or the three-act domestic drama that frequently precedes it. He has learned that human happiness is finite, and that even farces pall after the fifteenth time of seeing them.

The Mephistophelian gentleman on next page is a disappointed dramatist, and an appointed critic to a very small, but very thundering local journal published somewhere in the wilds of South London. He has a very poor opinion of the modern drama, and is very severe indeed upon every piece that is produced generally, for no better reason than that the author is still alive. He has formed certain canons of dramatic faith, derived from a careful study of his own rejected dramas, and he is in the habit of applying them to all new productions, and if they stand the test (which they usually do not) they are qualified to take their place as a portion of the dramatic literature of the country. He has a withering contempt

for all adapters, and particularly for Mr. Tom Taylor, who is, and has been for years, the butt of obscure and illiterate critics. He is in the habit of alluding to himself in the third person as "the Press;" and when you



hear him say that "the Press don't like this," or "the Press won't stand that," and that you have only to wait and see what "the Press" have to say about it to-morrow, you are to understand that he is referring simply to his own opinion, which, no doubt, from a characteristic modesty and a laudable desire to avoid anything like an appearance of egotism, he veils under that convenient generality.

The lady who follows is intended as a representative of that extensive element in most dress-circles which finds its way into theatres by the means of free admissions. It is a curious feature in theatrical management

—and a feature which doesn't seem to exist in any other form of commercial enterprise—that if you can't get people to pay for admission, you must admit them for nothing. Nobody ever heard of a butcher scattering steaks broadcast among the multitude because his customers fall off, neither is there any instance on record of



a banker volunteering to oblige penniless strangers with an agreeable balance. Railway companies do not send free passes for general distribution to eel-pie shops, nor does a baker place his friends on his free-list. But it is a standing rule at most theatres that their managers must get people to pay to come in, if possible, but at all events they must get people to come in. A poorly-filled house acts not only as a discouragement to the actors,

but it depresses the audience, and sends them away with evil accounts of the unpopularity of the entertainment. The people who find their way into a theatre under the "admit two to dress-circle" system, hail, usually, from the suburbs, but not unfrequently from the lodging-letting districts about Russell Square. They usually walk to the theatres, and, consequently, represent an important source of income to the stout shabby ladies who preside over the bonnet and cloak departments. They may often be recognized by the persistency with which they devour acidulated drops during the performance.

This heavy gentleman with the tawny beard is one of that numerous class of profitable playgoers who do not



venture to exercise any critical faculties of their own, but go about endorsing popular opinions because they *are*

popular, without any reference to their abstract title to popularity. A gentleman of this class will yawn through "King John," and come away delighted: he will sleep through "Mazeppa," and come away enraptured. Nothing pleases him more than a burlesque "break-down," except, perhaps, the "Hunchback," and if there is one thing that he prefers to the "Iron Chest" it is a ballet. He is delighted in a sleepy general way with everything that is applauded. Applause is his test of excellence, and if a piece doesn't go well, it is "awful bosh!" He is enraptured with the Parisian stage (although his knowledge of the language is fractional), because in Paris all pieces go well; and the sight of a compact mass of enthusiasts in the centre of a Parisian pit is sufficient to justify him in any amount of solemn eulogy. His presence is much courted by managers, for if he never applauds, he never hisses, and always pays.

The highly-respectable old gentleman on the right is an unwavering patron of the old school of dramatic literature. A five-act piece, even by a modern author, will always attract him, and every Shakespearian revival is sure of his countenance and support. He reads his Shakespeare as he reads his Bible—with a solemn reverential belief in its infallibility. He won't hear of "new readings," and even looks upon any departure from the traditional "business" as a dangerous innovation, smacking of dramatic heresy and literary schism. The "Honeymoon" commands him—so do the works of the elder and younger Morton; so does "She Stoops to Conquer." Sheridan is always sure of him, and Lord Lytton

may generally reckon on his support. His taste in dramatic matters is irreproachable, as far as it goes, but it is based upon tradition, and he pays little attention



o pieces that are not old enough to have become traditional.

The young gentleman on the next page is one of those intolerable nuisances, who, having a reputation for wagery within a select circle of admirers, find, in the production of every piece in which pathetic interest is an important feature, an opportunity for displaying a knowledge of the hollowness of the whole thing, and the general absurdity of allowing oneself to be led away by mere stage clap-trap. He will remind you, as Juliet is

weeping over her dead Romeo, that a petition for a divorce, filed by the Romeo against the Juliet, and in which the comfortable Friar is included as co-respondent, is high up in the Judge Ordinary's list. He will sometimes affect to be bathed in tears, when there is no excuse for any demonstration of the kind, and he will interrupt a scene of deep pathos with a "Ha! ha!" audible all



over the house. He is very angry at anything in the shape of a vigorous denunciation, or a pathetic appeal of any kind; and he indulges in a musing exclamational commentary of "Oh! I say, you know!" "Come, come." "So ho! gently there!" "St-st-st," and "Really, I say—by Jove!" which meets with much

admiration from his believing friends, and general indignation from others in his immediate neighbourhood who have not the advantage of his acquaintance.



FROM THE FRONT ROW OF THE PIT.

THE THUMBNAIL SKETCHER IN A CAB.

IT has often occurred to the Thumbnail Sketcher to inquire how it happens that a man first comes to drive a cab; but as he has consulted no one but himself on the matter, he has not yet met with a satisfactory reply. He presumes that a lad is seldom educated with a view to his being a cab-driver—certainly a neophyte has no apprenticeship to serve—yet the calling demands the exercise of considerable practical talent if it is to be conscientiously followed. A wholly inexperienced man cannot jump on the box of a Hansom and drive an irritable fare at a reasonable pace down Cheapside at three o'clock in the afternoon. Before he can do this with any degree of safety he must have enjoyed a considerable practical experience of his art. A cab-driver, moreover, must possess some scientific acquaintance with the inner structure of his horse, in order that he may know the exact number of kicks in the stomach that that noble animal can endure without suffering a lasting injury. He must know the precise number of miles that his horse can travel before it sinks exhausted, and he must know to a grain the smallest amount of sustenance upon which the animal can accomplish them. He must be a tolerably expert physiognomist, and he must be able to tell at a glance whether a fare is to be bullied or wheedled into an over-payment. When he attempts to overcharge an elderly lady, he must be able to determine at a moment's

notice the truth or falsehood of the remark, "There is a gentleman in the house who will settle with you," without bringing the question to a practical issue. He must be furnished with original readings of the more obscure sections of the Cab Act, and he must be prepared to defend his views before competent tribunals without the assistance of counsel. He must learn to comport himself with dignity under the trying circumstances of a summons for abuse, extortion, and assault; and he must be always prepared with plausible reasons for evading undesirable fares. He must be able to determine who will submit to extortion and who will resent it; and he must be intimately acquainted with the nearest cut to the obscurest streets; and he must be prepared to look with an eye of suspicion on all fares who require to be set down at the Burlington Arcade, the Albany, Swan and Edgar's, Waterloo House, and all other edifices which a person may enter from one street and leave by another; and he must know exactly how long he is to wait at such addresses before he is justified in coming to the conclusion that his fare has bolted by the other exit. Altogether his profession demands the exercise of various mental accomplishments, and the Thumbnail Sketcher cannot help thinking that a thoroughly expert London cabman deserves a far higher intellectual position than that which his envious fellowmen usually award him. These considerations, which are the usual and only result of the Thumbnail Sketcher's investigations as to the means whereby a man becomes a cabman, tend rather to surround the question with fresh difficulties, and to make

the problem more difficult of solution than ever. Under these circumstances he has no alternative but to leave the question where he found it.

The Thumbnail Sketcher would like to have an opportunity of noticing the demeanour of a cabman during his first day on a cab, and of contrasting it with his behaviour after six months' experience. The day upon which a man first launches into his adopted calling is always a trying occasion to himself and an interesting one to his friends and acquaintances ; but this must be particularly the case with a cabman who has not usually enjoyed that preliminary technical familiarization with the details of his craft with which most beginners are furnished. The barrister who takes his first brief into court has had, or is supposed to have had, the benefit of some years' theoretical experience in the art of conducting a simple case ; the surgeon who undertakes an operation for the first time on his own account has probably undertaken a good many on other people's account during his state of pupillage ; a young soldier is not placed in a position of responsibility until he knows something of his work ; and a curate has crammed himself with religious platitudes before he attempts his first sermon. So with the followers of humbler callings, who have usually served a seven years' apprenticeship before they are allowed to exercise them on their own account. But a cabman is launched into the London streets with no better Mentor than his own intelligence can afford him, and if this fails him he will probably go headlong to destruction. His cab will be smashed in no time ; or he will run over little children

and be tried for manslaughter ; or he will be summoned for loitering, or for overcharge, or for furious driving ; and, moreover, he will allow himself to be swindled in all directions. And all this goes to prove the Thumbnail Sketcher's proposition that an expert London cabman deserves a higher intellectual position than that with which he is usually credited.

This old gentleman is a specimen of a class who look out principally for old ladies with little children. He



is very careful with old ladies—he helps them in and out with much devotion ; while to little children he is fatherly—not to say motherly—in his attentions. The fact that his pace never exceeds four miles an hour is a special recommendation to the class of customers for which he caters. He has two or three regular customers,

who know where to find him ; and as he is a quiet, civil old gentleman enough in his way, he never gets into much trouble. He gets drunk perhaps twice a year, but as he always does it at home, his professional reputation does not suffer. His customers belong to a class which most cabman avoid—old ladies without any luggage ; and he customarily declines, as far as he is able, the very fares which younger and more enterprising cabmen are too glad to get. The busy City gentleman who is in a hurry to catch a train, the lawyer dashing down to Westminster, the “swell” keeping a dinner appointment at his club, these are not for him. Neither is he to be found in the streets after the theatres are closed. He neglects the opportunities that bring the best harvest to the cabmen’s garner, but he has a snug little practice of his own, that brings him in a decent living in the course of the year.

The preservation of a cheerful exterior under other people’s misfortunes is the special attribute and distinguishing characteristic of the light-comedy cabman. His mission in life is probably to cheer the desponding, to enliven the depressed, to reassure the hopeless, and generally to persuade mankind to look at misfortune from a humorous point of view. The breaking down of a brougham, full of ladies, in Seven Dials, affords him an opportunity of showing how exceedingly amusing such an accident always is, if the people principally interested can only be brought to look at it in the right light. If the accident is at night, and if the ladies are in evening dress, the fun of the thing is materially

increased, and if it happens to be raining, his sense of humour is gratified to the full. A gentleman who has had his hat blown off, or a lady whose dress has been ruined by a mud-splash, enables him to indulge his



cheerful disposition to make the best of things; and his behaviour at a house on fire vindicates his power of rising superior to (other people's) misfortune in a surprising degree. He is a master of the art of traditional chaff, but he is not great at original remarks. His power of rising superior to misfortune breaks down only when it is applied to his own case.

The Thumbnail Sketcher's experience among cabmen goes to show, that if they are not universally civil and respectful in demeanour, and moderate in their demands

(and they certainly are *not*), the old conventional foul-mouthed blackguard is far less frequently met with than he was ten or twelve years ago. People are more ready to take out summonses than they were ten years since, and perhaps complainants meet with more consideration in police-courts than they did formerly. The filthy, foul-mouthed, howling vagabonds who used to be the



terror of old ladies, seem almost to have died out: perhaps they have retired into private life on their ill-gotten savings. You meet with them now and then, waiting outside suburban houses where evening parties are; but they generally prowl at night, and respectable ladies are seldom exposed to their mercies. Cabmen of

this class always make their horses suffer for any shortcomings on the part of their fares ; indeed, it may be taken as a general rule that if a cabman drives furiously away after having been discharged, he does not consider that he has been liberally dealt with by his customer.

The smartest class of cabman is the man who has passed his previous existence as a helper in a livery-stable, and who, being of a nomadic turn of mind, prefers the free-and-easy condition of a Hansom cabman to the more dependent, though perhaps more remunerative condition of a domestic groom. He drives a smart cab, and



his horse is always up to the mark. He is particular with his brass-work, and, in short, he is a good specimen of what a cabman should be, but seldom is. He does some-

thing with races, and contrives, perhaps, to make a little money, which he eventually invests in a small "livery concern."

The next is the civil-spoken man, who "leaves it to you, sir." He has an airy way with him, and an agreeable method of implying that he doesn't drive you so much for remuneration as for the sake of establishing



friendly social relations with you. He is almost hurt when you ask him how much he claims; and he turns the matter over in his mind, as if it had never occurred to him to look at it from a pecuniary point of view before. He ends by giving up the solution of the difficulty as a bad job, and throws himself upon your consideration—

“leaves it to you, sir.” This is an appeal to your liberality which you are not always able to withstand, and on the whole his confidence is not ill rewarded.

The character in the cape is an unfortunate man, who doesn't get on in his profession, and is an apt illustration of the evils which a want of some preliminary experience in cab-driving is likely to bring upon an unintelligent



practitioner. He is always in trouble. He never knows the way anywhere. The police are always down upon him. He suffers from rheumatism. His fares are convinced that “this is a man who should be made an example of.” The magistrates quite agree with the fares. He parades his abusive language under the ears

of the policeman on duty, and he always selects determined men of independent fortune and a taste for petty law as the intended victims of his powers of extortion. His license is constantly suspended, and he has become proverbial among his fellows as a man who never has got on, and never, by any chance, will.

SCENES IN COURT

CHAPTER I.

I HAVE always had an affection for Westminster Hall. My earliest recollections are bound up with it, and I cannot bring my memory to tell me of a time when it was not to me an object of reverence and love.

I think of it as an old friend, and love it so much that I glory in the knowledge that it is almost certain to survive me. The carved angels who adorn the supports to the roof are all my intimates. They have been my *participes curarum* "even from boyish days." They knew when I was in trouble with my "construe," entangled in Greek roots, or posed in Euclid. They smiled on me when my spirit failed me because of bullies. They were my confidants when I, aged 13, was so deeply enamoured of the pretty daughter, aged 25, of the porter of our school. I used to discuss to them, with a confidence unbounded, the propriety of declaring my affection, and the probabilities of my lady's acceptance of me. They never told me the plain rude things I have been told and have myself told since. My weekly shilling, with its threepence mortgage for eaten tarts, was not pointed at as insufficient for the maintenance of

us both. They knew—and why therefore tell them?—that Bessie —— had nothing to bring, save a good appetite, towards our mutual support. I told them I should work all day for her: I should write books, invent engines, paint pictures, make great discoveries in chemistry, and fifty other things which were quite easy to be done. There would be no doubt about a living. They never sneered nor said unkind things, but always smiled and beamed with kindness as I poured forth to them the whole secrets of my heart. This begat a close friendship which has not waned by increasing. I still hold them as fast friends. When I became old enough to understand what they said, they told me long stories of the things they had seen in their time. They interested me with accounts of trials at which they had been witnesses, and filled me with admiration by their descriptions of my historical favourites.

They bore testimony to the correctness of Vandyke's portrait of the unfortunate Earl of Strafford, and brought the favour of the man so vividly to my mind, that I fancied I could see the clear-cut face and dark complexion of him, and hear his ringing, bell-like voice appealing to the peers for mercy on his fault, on account of the innocent "pledges which a saint, now in heaven, had left him."

They seemed not to have known of the earl's execution; for they said the trial broke down, and they concluded the prisoner was acquitted. When I told them of the Bill of Attainder, and of the king's consent to his friend's death, they wept whole heaps of dust and

cobweb, and gave solemn ratification to Strafford's endorsement of the Psalmist's warning about putting one's trust in princes.

This did not prevent them from speaking sorrowfully about the trial of the king, and of his octogenarian archbishop.

They had seen the man who is portrayed in undying colours, in the noble picture now in Middle Temple Hall, enter the place as a prisoner; and they had listened throughout the trial with mingled awe and indignation, almost laughing outright, however, when they heard Lady Fairfax say aloud, in answer to the call for her husband, that he knew better than to be present, since his wife was. They heard the whole thing, including the sentence; and somehow or other they were already acquainted with the fact of the execution.

Then they had stories to tell of the Seven Bishops, and Warren Hastings; they had overheard Burke's *bon mot* about "the (vo)luminous pages of Gibbon." They had seen and heard much more than *I* can remember or write down; and they pleased me immensely by the ready confidence they gave me. We passed many happy hours together, and then came an interval of separation, during which I listened to the stories of other roof-supporting cherubim, and gathered scraps of information from many an ancient place. Time, however, brought me back again to my old friends, if it did not to my first love. The latter made an excellent wife to the baker who was patronized by the school; but the former remained as before, unchanged—unless, perhaps, a trifle

dirtier. They had often inquired of me what went on inside those doors which faced one half of them on the floor beneath; and when I came back again after the separation before named, it became my business to instruct myself so that I might answer their questions.

On the right of the Great Hall, as you enter it, is a flight of stone steps, on the top of which a vestibule—guarded by a she Cerberus, who has acquired a prescriptive right to war upon the digestion of her Majesty's lieges, by means of strangely-compounded edibles which she sells to them—leads to the two courts where the judges of the Queen's Bench dispense justice. More of both of these presently. Running between the two, or rather at the back of one and by the side of the other, is a darksome passage, dimly lighted, conducting, as a stranger might legitimately think, to the dungeons and torture chambers whither are consigned the delinquents condemned by the Court to purge their offences, but leading, in fact, to chambers destined to far other uses. The genial light of day is excluded from this passage, and the insufficient lamps which are supposed to illumine it, serve but to cast a grim shade upon the assembled clerks and clients who haunt the hard seats along its sides as though they found in them a nature akin to their own. Out of it a side door opens into the great Court of Queen's Bench; and through the door come and go counsellors and senators, gowns, silk and stuff—the *élite* of the law, with the rank and file thereof. There is not any inscription over the door, as there is over the door in another place, bidding those who enter leave hope behind them;—yet there is

something in the ordinary, unprofessional creature's breast which makes him read in the faces of those he finds in this grim abode, a certain indication that hope has small place there. But the passage, whither does it lead? To subterranean regions certainly—perhaps to the very cellar in which Guido Fawkes laid the train which was to have carried King James and his Parliament, express, to heaven or to hell. But a visit to the first chamber at the end of the stone staircase, on which wigged and robed men ascend and descend, as unlike as possible to the angels whom the Patriarch Jacob saw from his stony pillow, reveals no more formidable a person than Mr. —, the robing-master, and no more suspicious-looking a being than the ancient man who is his servitor. The room, however, in which they live, and move, and get their fees, is more open to cavil than are its tenants. I incline to the opinion that it is Guy's original cellar; and so firmly, that I decline to listen to any statement which shall try to convince me to the contrary, by showing that it is many yards away from where the old Parliament House stood. Small, gloomy, with no daylight, really underground, and damp and misty as cellars are wont—the eyes require time to get accustomed to the gloom which the garish gaslights create but are powerless to dispel. Rows of hooks round a stout framework on one side of the room suggest the neighbourhood of Sackbages, racks, bilboes, and other “hateful and grim things” to which they must be appurtenant; the framework itself, with many mysterious joints and holes in it, looks in the semi-darkness not unlike some foul instrument of torture;

and at first it is difficult to divest one's self of the notion that he has got into a veritable chamber of horrors, of which the prepossessing-looking Mr. — is perhaps the attendant surgeon, and of which his curiously-featured assistant is the sworn tormentor. Instinctively one looks about for the barrels of gunpowder, the coals which conceal them, and a figure like that the boys drag about on the 5th of November ; and I am far from being convinced they are not actually there, though I have not been able to discover them. That small mirror in the wall, surely it must be used for ascertaining whether breath is left in a tortured victim ; the wavy character of its surface precludes the idea of its being employed as a means to personal adornment, and the former use would be in keeping with the character of the room. Those ominous-looking boxes of wood and tin, in shape not unlike the human head, and labelled with names—what is their office ? Is this the hangman's morgue, and is he allowed to keep the heads of decapitated felons to scare the living from crime, or to allow of phrenologists studying their science on the original busts ? Or is this a sort of parliamentary terror akin to that which Domitian contrived for the Roman senators when he showed them into a dimly-lighted funereal chamber, wherein they found their coffins, "ready for immediate use,"—as the advertisements have it—and inscribed with their own names ? Are wordy and hated members brought into this hall of English Vehmgericht and frightened into agreements to vote differently, and to shorten their speeches, by the sight of their own head cases, labelled with their names—

and of Greenacreish sort of bags yawning to receive their skulless trunks? I scrutinize the names on the cases, sniffing the while—for I am not without a presentiment that the Calcraft museum theory is the right one,—and I look curiously for the names of certain hon. members who would be sure to be represented if the second supposition were correct. My eyes do not deceive me when I actually read the names of some of these. I saw them alive and well but a few days since;—have all their glories shrunk to this little space, so soon? “Alas, poor ——!” I exclaim, and turn away from the cases, convinced that the British public cannot be aware of the secrets of these secret places, and resolved that I will lose no time in making it acquainted with the discoveries I have made. Even judges under Charles I. refused to say that Felton might lawfully be tortured; and shall my Lord Westbury be suffered to tweak the noses of his opponents with red-hot pincers, like another Dunstan, and to consign their “proud tops” to these infernal preserved meat canisters? No. The smart young men connected with an “Independent Press” shall hear of it; and the decree of the second Lateran Council of Pompeii shall assuredly be quoted against it.

I find I have been wrong. Though the question as to the powder and coal and Guy Fawkes remains an open one, there is, I fear, no ground for the anxiety which I had intended to exhibit through the medium of the press. Further inquiries have satisfied me that Mr. —— is not the surgeon I had imagined him; though it required the exhibition on his part of his power as a “leech,” to

bleed me to the extent of £1 5s. before I could be convinced. His assistant—a silent and sad man—evidently affected by long acquaintance with the place—is no sworn tormentor. Mr. — is “master of the robes,” committed to his care; and the silent man helps him to put them on the backs of counsellors who patronize him. The tin canisters, in shape not unlike the human head, are wig-boxes, labelled with the names of those who own them; the butcher-like hooks, of which mention was made, support the gowns which are fellows with the wigs; and the Greenacreish bags are the vehicles in which the gowns travel when going from one court to another. The mirror is really meant to help in adorning the person, and the framework alluded to is intended to hold the property of those who frequent the room. In point of fact, this is no other than a robing-room. The plain deal table is not used for dissecting purposes, but as a place for hats. This knowledge came only with the lapse of time. The first occasion on which I entered the room, I almost held my breath till I had got out of it again, and felt, as I ascended the stone steps to the Court above, something of the feeling which Dante had, when he left the last circle of the *Inferno*, and came where he could see the stars again.

On this same first occasion I distinctly remember how shame and confusion were made to cover my face in this passage, of which I spoke just now, though the “gloom-
ing,” or “gloaming,” which prevailed within it hid the fact from the sight of all beholders. I had noticed two men whispering together, looking towards me the while,

as if they were speaking of me, and a cold shudder ran through me as the thought flashed across my mind that they might be there in the interests of Messrs. C—— and D——, whose forbearance, in respect of sundry “small claims,” had been taxed somewhat fully; and the horrible idea occurred to me, that these men had been sent to beard me in the very precincts of the Court, in the hope of driving me to that which was next to impossible—a settlement. I was questioning to myself how far the privilege of counsel attending the Courts of Justice would cover me, and was doubting anxiously whether that privilege was enjoyed only by those who actually had business to transact, or whether it extended over the whole class generally. I was doubting how far it would be wise to allow of this plea, which savoured of adding insult to injury, being debated, and then roused myself at the thought, what an occasion this would be for showing the world the astonishing powers of speech and reasoning which I took it for granted reposed within me, and almost hoped myself right in the surmise which conscience, rather than judgment, had thrown out as to the character of the men, when one of them advanced towards me, holding a brief in his hand, and inquired in a tone which relieved me greatly, notwithstanding my recent wishes for a contest, whether I were not Mr. Jones.

I readily acknowledged that ancient name to be mine, and then bubbled up in my mind the thought that my good genius had been playing me a good turn, and had sent this man to give me my first Court brief. How kind of D——, my attorney friend, who had promised

me so often, while yet I was but a student, how great things he would do for me. There could be no doubt I had done D—— much wrong when I had mistrusted the lavish promises he showered upon me. Yes; my name was Jones!

“Consultation at nine to-morrow morning, sir, in the robing-room. Mr. D—— will feel much obliged if you will attend particularly to this case, as Mr. —— (the leader and Q.C.) will be very much engaged, and *may* not read his brief.”

Mr. D——! I did not know him. Had never heard his name before. My friend’s London agent, no doubt.

“Very well,” I answered, looking at the brief, whereon were inscribed those cabalistic signs which so much gladden the hearts of all counsel, whether leader or junior, and which informed all whom it might concern that Mr. Jones was concerned for the plaintiff, in an action against the Great Western Railway, and that Mr. Jones was to have ten guineas for his advocacy therein.

Holding the brief in my hand as though it were a marshal’s baton, I entered the Court of Queen’s Bench with the idea of making an impression upon my brethren who should see me enter there, though for the first time, with a brief in my hand. Upon L—— and B—— especially I desired to let fall the full weight of my importance, because they had so many times hinted at the absurdity of my ever expecting to hold a brief, unless, as they were pleased to add, it might be one in my own behalf as defendant in an action upon sundry accounts delivered. I walked in and sideway’d to a place in the

middle of the second row, where I saw L—— sitting behind his morning paper, his wig pushed back and disclosing a quantity of his brown curly hair, his gown just clinging to his shoulders, and a look of nothing particular to do showing itself upon his face.

“Hullo! Jones, got a brief! Your own, old chap? Deuced glad of it; special jury of course. Want reporting?” for D—— is reporter-in-chief of cases tried before her Majesty’s judges at Westminster and Guildhall, to the “Law Reformer’s Gazette.”

“Good firm, that!” said L——, looking at the name of my clients. “How did you get taken in tow? I thought your namesake on the Southern Circuit did their junior work. Want new blood, I suppose; but like to keep the old name.”

A cold shudder passed through me as L—— uttered these words, for they conveyed to my mind the idea of there having possibly been a mistake. I strove to cast it off, but could not; the suspicion was enough to unsteady my eyesight as I endeavoured to run cursorily through the brief. The interesting nature of the action, and the many points for argument which it opened up, gradually absorbed me so much, that I did not notice the entrance of the attorney’s clerk who had given me the brief, and who was now signalling to me by many signs and gestures.

“There’s another brief for you, Jones,” said L——, nudging me so as to draw my attention to the man, who, unable to reach me, evidently desired to have speech with me, and who seemed to be in a very excited state of mind.

Sidling out as I had come in, earning the curses which all win who tread on tender feet, I arrived at the spot where the man stood, and then—the horrid truth which L——’s words had caused me to suspect, dawned in its fulness upon my mind, and desolation swept across me.

The man had made a mistake. He had confounded my name—confound him!—with that of my learned friend of the same name on the Southern Circuit, the very man of whom L—— had spoken. Not knowing the gentleman he was told to instruct, he had asked a colleague if each fresh comer from the robing hall bore the style, in which I rejoice, and unluckily for me it happened that I came up before my namesake, and the colleague who made it his business to acquaint himself with the name and abode of each member of the bar, old or young, had told the wretch that my name was Jones. Acting upon this meagre information, Messrs. D——’s clerk put the brief into my hands—and now, the real Simon Pure having been discovered, it behoved me to surrender my supposed gain—all the apologies of my misleader, humble though they were even to abjectness, not serving to compensate me for the loss of ten guineas, the dignity of the thing, and the prospect which had been before me of seeing my name in the newspapers in connection with one of the most important cases that was tried that term. After such an event I could not go back to the Queen’s Bench, but turned a sadder and a poorer man into the adjoining Court of Exchequer.

An old judge—I might say a very old judge—was sitting on the bench, looking like the impersonation of law,

and of all that was dignified and venerable in man. He was one who had been easily chief as a student at college, and no less easily chief as a junior counsel at the bar. His name was associated with many a famous case, of which the memory even of the bills of costs had perished; he had survived the clients of his early days, and, while yet a young man, had "gone lightly o'er low steps" in the road to advancement; now his name was considered to be a synonym for justice, and those who sometimes questioned the manner in which he laid down the law, did not venture to question his law itself; and they readily pardoned the privileges which old age assumed, for sake of the time when these were not needed; and because of the comprehensive grasp of the old man's mind, which enabled him to apprehend a thing in its entirety, without bestowing upon it his whole attention.

A special jury case was on, and the jurymen's names were being called over by the associate of the court. The name of a most intimate friend, from whom I had parted only that morning, was called out from the box, and though surprised, for he had not told me of his having been summoned, I quite expected to see him step forward and answer. Imagine my dismay when a shabbily-dressed man who had been standing near the "well" of the Court, made the melancholy announcement that my friend had been dead three months. A momentary regret passed through my midriff as I thought of R——'s amiable wife and three young children; but it was momentary only, for I knew quite well that R—— was alive this very morning, and had left me not two hours

ago for his office in Jute Street. There was some mistake, but in the interests of R——, who I knew hated jury summonses, I did not think it incumbent on me to right it. Several names were called to which no answers were given, and there seemed to be but a poor chance of making up the jury. Nine were in the box—three more were wanted, and of two of those who remained to be called over, the shabbily-dressed man announced the same doleful tidings that he had announced about my friend. Who was this that took such an interest in special jurors that he knew to a nicety the dates of their decease, and came there to volunteer the information which he had himself acquired? For he spoke evidently as *amicus curiæ*—he was not an official person, yet because perhaps that his statements were made voluntarily, no one questioned the correctness of his speech. The judge made some remarks about the carelessness of the sheriffs in keeping dead men's names upon the panel, the counsel for the plaintiff prayed a "tales," and the jury was completed by common jurors. The case went on, but the shabby man interested me. He was evidently a frequenter of the Courts, and appeared to be known to the ushers and people in attendance; and I thought he was perhaps some retired attorney or barrister who made it his hobby to get up the histories of jurors, and was believed therefore, as a matter of course. It was not until afterwards I learned from R——, to whom I announced his own death, that he paid this man so much a year to kill him when inconvenient summonses came, on which occasions he sent them to the shabbily-dressed

man, who instantly committed such homicide as would be sufficient to excuse the victim from attendance at Westminster.

The case was one for a special jury—a compensation case for damages done through negligence of a servant—and a great fight for the verdict was expected. The counsel engaged for the defence were an eminent Queen's Counsel and a junior—*atatis suæ* 45—who was reckoned one of the best of stuff gownsmen. Their battery was a strong one, and they wore upon their faces an expression of quiet satisfaction which betokened the comfortable assurance they felt of being able to silence whatever artillery might be brought against them.

“Who are for the plaintiffs?” I inquired of the man next me.

“Serjeant —— and P——, a new junior, I believe.”

“P—— of the Home Circuit?”

“Yes.”

“He'll have hard work against little S——,” I remarked, “unless the serjeant helps him more than he is wont to do. Is the serjeant here?”

“I have not seen him,” answered my friend, “and some one said just now he would not come.”

“Poor fellow!” I exclaimed, for I knew P—— to be the very quintessence of nervousness. “Surely he is given over into the hands of the Philistines:” and so indeed it seemed. P——'s leader was not in Court, P—— could not learn anything about him, and it seemed to be pretty certain that if the case went on, P—— would have to conduct it himself.

Poor P——! there he sat, looking unusually pale, and suffering evidently from the suppressed excitement which was born of the strange position in which he found himself. He sat there in his place behind the leader's bench, with books and papers before him, in formidable array: his brief, which he bound and loosed from its tape bonds at least ten times in as many minutes, was in his left hand, and the fingers of his right hand unconsciously played the devil's tattoo with a quill pen on the red baize desk: his eyes looked wistfully at the side door, as he watched for the coming of him who came not. Little S——, his opponent, whispered words of soothing into his leader's ear. The pair smiled benignly on each other, and looked across at my poor nervous friend, who was unknown to them as well as to fame, with a glance in which pity mingled with some professional scorn.

The jury were sworn, and had settled themselves to their duty with that expression of resigned unwillingness on their faces which jurymen of all sorts are wont to wear. The counsel for the defence untied their briefs and opened them out leisurely on the slope. The Court was all attention, reposing its chin on its hands; there remained nothing to be done but to open the case for the plaintiff.

I looked across at P——, no longer watching the side door, but gazing curiously at the judge, who stared down at him. The nervous, restless look was intensified to the utmost, but to my surprise and relief there was no appearance of confusion. I knew P—— to have a strong will and a stronger sense of duty, and rejoiced as I saw,

or fancied I saw, these two coming to his assistance against his own nervous system and the two skilled verdict-getters who now threatened him.

A dead silence for about a minute was broken by the judge uttering with some significance, as he still looked hard at P——, the monosyllables, "Well, sir!"

P—— rose and said in a voice tremulous as that of him who hears his own notes alone, for the first time in a public place——

"I hope your lordship will forgive me for keeping the Court waiting. My leader is absent in the other Court, and will be here directly. I have sent for him."

"Oh, sir," said the judge—grinning a grim grin as he said it—"your leader intends to give you an opportunity of distinguishing yourself. You'd better begin."

The jury laughed, the "learned friends" on the other side laughed, and all the "learned men" in Court chuckled at the facetious judge, who was unable to resist the temptation of saying a smart thing even to a man so evidently nervous as poor P——. I trembled for P——, but he was no way dismayed. On the contrary, the judge's joke stood him in excellent stead; it lent him that slight touch of indignation, gave him that sufficient wounding of his *amour propre* which enabled him to send his adversaries to the right about, and not only so, but to his own and his friend's surprise, to take part in the amusement of which he himself was the occasion.

"Your lordship is aware that there are two ways of distinguishing one's self," said P——, anxious now to gain time, and glad to use the means the Court had un-

expectedly provided for him. "And I cannot but feel that I shall be as distinguished as poor Denmark beside the allies, if I am to be deprived of the assistance of my learned leader."

"My brother will no doubt be here," said the leader on the other side, "meantime you can go on." And then followed some "chaff," as mild as that which had gone before, about the absent "brother" being the learned counsel's big brother (Serjeant —— was a very little one), and the probable consequences to him of pushing on the case in the absence of the same, a disclaimer on the part of the "other side" against being taken for the representatives of those "distinguished foreigners," the allies against Denmark, *cum multis aliis*, which wasted a good ten minutes, allowing Serjeant —— time to come up, and would have lasted ten minutes more had not Mr. Baron —— somewhat testily remarked that Mr. P—— could at all events open the pleadings, which Mr. P—— said "of course, he could do," and proceeded to do, with a boldness which was the inspiration of the moment.

It is the duty of the junior counsel to begin under any circumstances, so that there was as yet nothing falling to the share of P—— which would not have fallen had Serjeant —— been there. P—— told "my lord and the jury" how that John Styles was the plaintiff and John Giles was the defendant, and that the plaintiff sued the defendant "for that;" and then he read the interesting document known as the declaration, from which it appeared that John Giles was an exceedingly bad man, who hired servants known by him to be incompetent, and

also to be very skilful in breaking other folk's legs ; that he was habitually negligent as to the way in which he conducted his business ; and so far as the matter now before the Court was concerned, had "so negligently, carelessly, and improperly conducted himself in that behalf," that by his approvedly unskilful servant he had "broken, wounded, crushed, bruised, and maimed" the leg of John Styles, who being a carman, earning a pound a-week, valued his injured limb at £1,000.

A thousand pounds seemed a moderate sum to ask for injuries which required so many adjectives to describe them ; but John Giles said on the pleadings, that he was "not guilty," and privately that Mr. Styles might go to a warmer climate for the money he sought to recover. "Upon this plea," said P——, "issue has been joined, and that is the case for trial before you."

As a matter of fact, I believe the plaintiff was a carter, who had gone with his master's cart to take some marble slabs from defendant's yard. The defendant was fifty miles away at the time, but his foreman and helpers went to load the cart, and the plaintiff, though he did not fetch the slabs out of the yard, nevertheless helped to make them fast in the van, which he was bound to protect. While they were making one of the slabs fast, the foreman jumped out of the van and shook it, a slab fell over and broke the carter's leg. The action was against the master for the negligence of his servant.

The point was a fine one, for if Styles could be made out to have been acting as defendant's servant, or as a voluntary helper, he must be nonsuited. Only if he

could be shown to have been independent of defendant's orders, and to have been engaged upon the slabs in the capacity of his own master's servant, had he a cause of action. It was sailing rather close to the wind, as his leader himself told him in consultation; and indeed, but for P——'s showing him the principal case on which he had relied, and which the learned serjeant, who had not read his brief, had not, therefore, had occasion to look up, that gentleman had declared there was no case.

Just as P—— was finishing his opening statement to the jury, a slight commotion was heard at the entrance to the Court, and to the manifest joy and delight of P——, Serjeant —— came in like a frigate in full sail. Nodding good-humouredly to all around, the serjeant seized the brief which his clerk held before him, and without slipping the tape off, rose, as P—— sat down, and proceeded to address the jury as though he had long been master of the case, and had not—as in truth he had—been put in possession of the facts only two hours before in consultation.

You would have thought, to hear the serjeant, that he had been engaged in loading slabs in vans all his life long; that until this particular moment he had never done aught else, and had now come into Court for the sole purpose of telling the jury how his work was done. Then he laboured to show that the defendant had admitted the plaintiff's case; said he should call witnesses to prove it, as well as to depose to the serious nature of the injuries done to the plaintiff, as set forth in such harrowing terms in the declaration. This done, he sat down, and

P—— proceeded to call the first witness for the plaintiff—the plaintiff himself.

A slight pause, after which the usher cried with a loud voice—pitched as though he had a personal quarrel with the witness—for John Styles to appear. A movement at the end of the Court, and then a man as impotent-looking as he who could not crawl into the Pool of Bethesda, was brought forward by two supporters and lifted into the witness-box. A chair was provided for him, and, bound and becrutched, he showed like a victim to all the woes contained in Pandora's box.

P—— elicited the details of the case, vainly trying to make the witness declare himself other than he was evidently desirous of representing himself to be, viz., a willing helper to the men engaged in loading the van; for P—— felt the danger of the man proving himself a volunteer, in the sense of an unremunerated and free helper. "The other side" smiled as the examination went on, and positively glowed with pleasure when his lordship interrupted P—— by remarking that, as far as he had heard, he could not understand what case there was.

Up sprang the serjeant, snatching the book which P—— had shown him only a few hours before, from P——'s hand, and with the air of a man who is suffering intolerably from some sudden wrong, entreated his lordship to refrain from any expression of opinion until the case had been fully gone into, adding, however, with special reference to the remark about there being "no case," that he held in his hand a judgment on which he

very much relied, and to which he must beg his lordship's attention.

"My learned friend knows something of the case, I believe," said the serjeant, as he handed the book to the usher, and nodded good-humouredly at Mr. Q. C., who had shown cause in this very case, and who now muttered something about the two cases being distinguishable.

The judge took the book from the hand of the associate, who had received it from his lordship's clerk, who had received it from the usher, who had received it from the serjeant; and after scanning the outside of it, and looking at the fly-leaf to see the owner's name, proceeded to read the judgment to which his attention had been drawn. Whilst his lordship read there was much signalling and undertone talk between the members of the bar and the attendants in Court. The words "non-suit"—"point reserved"—"new trial," came from the "other side," accompanied by much shaking of heads, which meant great things, doubtless, to the initiated in such signs, for they shook their heads in return, and both sides seemed perfectly satisfied.

"Do you think, sir, the judge is with us?" said a man sitting behind me, and who I gathered from the use of the pronoun "us," was interested in the case.

"I don't know," I answered; "he seems to be in a good humour."

"Has humour anything to do with his being for or against us, sir?" inquired the man. "I should not have thought so."

“Perhaps not,” I replied; “but judges are only men, and all men are subject to bouts of indigestion.” The man seemed to be lost in wonder on finding that even judges were not impassible; and was even more astonished at the familiarity which existed between the opposed “counsel” than Mr. Pickwick was when his leader shook hands with the counsel for Mrs. Bardell. The judge finished his earnest perusal of the volume, and laying the book down on its face, said, “This is a very important case; it is nearly your case,” looking towards P——.

“It is our case, my lord,” rejoined P——.

“Well,” observed the judge, “I do not see how the matter can rest here with a verdict. It must go into the full Court, and possibly to the Court above. Is it not a case for a settlement?”

P—— beamed with satisfaction. He had raked out the case] in question, and mainly on [the strength of it he had advised the action being brought. He had withstood his own leader with it in consultation, and now it came in the face of the judge’s expressed opinion. “The other side” looked a little disconcerted, but was glad “his lordship had thrown out this expression of opinion.” Then came a laying of heads together by the counsel engaged, assisted by the attorneys on either side, who leaned over the back of the “well” in which they were confined, and deferred to the wisdom of those whom they had entrusted with the case. His lordship read the newspaper, the jury stood up and stretched their legs in the jury-box, and Mr. C. D., the eminent (in that he was six feet high) junior counsel, who drew portraits many,

though pleadings few, sketched the scene before him, as a whole and in parts, upsetting the gravity which resides under the wig, and moving every one to laughter by the absurdity and justness of his caricature likenesses.

The conference was of no avail. Counsel could not agree. The case must go on; so P—— finished his examination of the plaintiff, and Mr. Q. C. rose to cross-examine.

Little was elicited by this means, beyond the fact that the plaintiff had undoubtedly helped, but whether as a volunteer, or as his own master's servant, was the somewhat fine question which was left for the jury. And now a man, whose personal appearance had already attracted considerable attention, was called. He had been sitting by the side of the solicitor in charge of the case, and was evidently much interested in the issue of the trial. He had been present at an interview between plaintiff and defendant, and was to bear witness to what had passed. He was a fine-looking man, apparently a foreigner, with an animated expression of countenance, and a costume which, the place and occasion considered, was truly wonderful. Whether it was the way in which he found expression for the respect which his nature felt for the tribunals of the kingdom, or whether it was the custom in his country so to appear before the courts, did not come out: but this gentleman was attired in full evening dress, with an elaborately worked shirt, diamond studs, and a coat which Mr. Poole's eye might have pronounced faultless. No distinction had been made between him and the other witnesses in the cause, as I cannot help

thinking there should have been. It was scarcely right in the usher to allow so magnificently clad a man to herd with the "seedy" crew who filled as of right that abyss in the halls of justice known as "the well;" unless, and perhaps he was correct after all, the usher thought of him as Lafeu thought of Parolles, in "All's Well that Ends Well," that "the scarfs and bannerets about him did manifoldly dissuade him from believing him a vessel of too great burden." Anyhow, there he sat in the "well" till his name was called out by the usher, in as indignant a voice as that in which the first witness had been desired to stand forth. Then he started to his feet as if the ground under them had suddenly grown red hot, and made his way over blue bags, papers, and the legs of attorneys' clerks, to the witness-box. Serjeant — introduced him to the judge as Count Dieudon, a Frenchman, while the associate explained, as much by signs as by words, that the gentleman must remove the white kid glove from his right hand, in order to hold the sacred book on which he was to swear to tell the whole truth and nothing but that. There being some difficulty in explaining this, his lordship thought the delay was caused by the witness objecting to take the oath, and thinking further, perhaps, that Count Dieudon, who was as good a Christian as is to be found throughout all Leicester Square, might possibly, from his general appearance, be of the Hebrew faith, rather testily told the associate to ask the witness if he were a Jew. The bare suggestion caused a current of eloquence to flow from the Frenchman, so strong and continuous, that it

bid fair to supersede, in the attention of the Court, the case which was actually before it. His lordship at length succeeded in conveying to the speaker an assurance of his want of intention to insult him; M. Dieudon succeeded in getting the white kid glove off his right hand; and the associate succeeded in swearing him in the words of the oath.

“Did I understand you to say that the gentleman was a count?” inquired the judge.

“He is so, my lord,” answered P——.

“Of the Roman Empire or the French?” asked his lordship, with a smile.

“One of the indebitatus counts, I believe, my lord,” said Mr. Q. C., at which remark his lordship smiled again, and Count Dieudon, who did not understand the allusion, and thought they were but settling the exact degree of his rank, smiled also.

Count Dieudon had evidently made the English language his study, and was, moreover, evidently well satisfied with the progress he had made in it. He had also given to the world three large volumes on the Science of Agriculture, which he had with him in the witness-box, in case, I suppose, any question should arise upon that subject in the course of the trial of a complaint for broken limbs. As this was far from likely, it seemed rather unnecessary for him thus to burden himself; but these three volumes were on the ledge before him, and served, at all events, to show the judge how he should spell the witness's and author's name, which was given to him by the learned serjeant as Dewdong, and by the more learned (in French

at least) friend on "the other side," as Döodone. The name and address of M. Dieudon having been written on the judge's notes, and a further note having been made as the only means of stopping iteration of the fact, that M. Dieudon was author of the great work in question, Serjeant —— got the range, and began to fire into the witness's stock of information.

M. Dieudon gesticulated a good deal, poured forth volumes of Franco-English in copious answer to the questions put to him, and gave to many English words a pronunciation which reminded one of French spoken by Dan Chaucer's prioress, who spoke French "full fayre and fetisly after the schole of Statford-atte-Bow." So with M. Dieudon and his English. He spoke "full fayre and fetisly," but not after the school of Westminster Hall. He might with propriety have gone home and told his countrymen what the Irishman told his friends of the French, that they were a very stupid people, who did not even understand their own language; for it was undoubtedly true that practice and use were both essential to a right understanding of what M. Dieudon had to say. Serjeant —— came to that part of his examination where it behoved the witness to relate what had passed between plaintiff and defendant during the interview at which he had been present: and as M. Dieudon was both tenacious of being thought able to speak the counsel's own tongue, and also very voluble in his talk, the serjeant deemed it advisable to beg the witness to relate the conversation, instead of getting at it by means of questions. M. Dieudon readily complied, and with the air of a Jullien and the

voice of a Berryer, he told his simple tale ; but when he came to the key of the whole conversation--the important part, where it was supposed the defendant had promised, as alleged in a second count, to pay the plaintiff a sum of money—he failed altogether to convey an accurate notion of what had taken place.

“ Miszer Steel he come to défendant, an say, ‘ Your man break my leg, and make me evil (me fit mal). You récompense me. I live in hospital four, five month. Get not work ; lose my living. What you give me?’ Défendant, he say nussing. Miszer Steel he press for answer, but défendant shake his head. He stay a long time to make answer, and zen he say nussing.”

This evidence, which, more than all the arguments based upon ethnological grounds, convinced me of the affinity between French and Irish Celts, served also to upset the gravity of the Court, which fairly laughed out, and with every wish to do no uncivil thing, could not refrain from seizing this particular opportunity for mirth. The count was not further interrogated, and with, I fear, but hurt feelings, departed from the box with the great work in three volumes, which was evidently the pride and joy of his soul.

Michael Sullivan, the man who had done the mischief, and upon whom his master had already thrown the blame of the entire action, was next called, and, impressed by the duty which lay upon him to observe reticence upon the subject to be investigated, was more evasive in his answers even than his countrymen are wont to be.

“ Did you see the accident ?”

“ I did not, sir.”

“ Were you present at the time it occurred ?”

“ I was, sir.”

“ Did you see a slab fall over in the van ?”

“ I did, sir.”

“ Did it fall on plaintiff’s leg ?”

“ I can’t say.”

“ Do you believe it did ?”

“ I think it did, sir.”

“ Then you saw the accident ?”

“ I did not, sir.”

“ But you saw the slab fall, and think it went on to plaintiff’s leg ?”

“ I did, sir.”

“ Then you think you may say you saw the accident, may you not ?”

“ I do not, sir.”

And after much further bandying of words, it was found out that the witness had seen everything except the actual snapping of the bone in the leg. He had seen the slab fall, he had seen the leg after it had been crushed, he was certain the slab fell upon the leg, and yet, for the reason above given, he declined to assert what nevertheless the jury believed, that he had witnessed the accident.

“ Now, sir !” said Serjeant ——, twitching his gown, and pushing his wig the least bit back on his head, and looking a little fiercely at Michael, “ did you not jump out of the van before the slabs were secured within it ?”

“ I did, sir.”

“ Did that shake the van ? ”

“ It did, sir.”

“ Did not the slab fall over immediately afterwards ? ”

“ It did, sir.”

“ Did not the slab fall over because you shook the van ? ”

“ I can't say, sir.”

“ What was there besides to make the slab fall over ? ”

“ I can't say, sir.”

“ Did not you say, referring to the accident, that is a bad piece of work I have done ; I was a fool to jump out like that ? ”

“ I was not a fool ! ” retorted the witness, sharply ; “ and I'll thank ye not to say so again.”

“ Answer my question, sir,” replied the serjeant. “ Did you say so or not ? ”

“ They're vary impertinent qhuestions ye'll be askin', ” said Michael.

“ Will you be kind enough to answer them ? ” said the serjeant.

“ I don't rhemember.”

“ Try and recollect, now. You *must* know if you said so or not.”

“ I don't rhemember.”

“ Will you swear you did not say so ? ”

“ I will not.”

“ Did you say so ? ”

“ I don't rhemember.”

“ Will you swear that ? ”

“ I will ; I’ll swear I don’t remember, and I’ll swear if I do remember, I forget.”

“ Very well,” said the serjeant, joining in the laugh, which was general at this utter discomfiture of his hopes. “ Now, try to remember very distinctly this : Had you not been drinking that morning before the accident occurred ? ”

“ Ah, no ! ” said Michael, with the earnestness of a man tented on some point of special pride to himself.

“ Are you sure of that ? ”

“ Quite ? ” said Michael.

“ Would you forget, if you did remember this, too ? ” inquired the serjeant.

“ I can’t tell,” said Michael.

“ Now, do you mean to tell me you had not been drinking on this particular morning ? ”

“ I had some tay,” answered Michael.

“ No, no ! ” retorted the serjeant ; “ I do not mean ‘ tay.’ Had you not been into a public-house that day ? ”

“ I had not.”

“ Not to have a friendly glass with any one ? You know there is nothing to blame you for if you had done so.”

“ I had not,” was the answer.

“ Then you were not drunk on that morning, you will swear ? ” asked the serjeant.

Michael did not answer directly, but looked somewhat archly into the well of the court, as if to seek inspiration from his master and the attorney, who were sitting there.

The instructions in the serjeant's brief were that the man had been drinking, and there was other testimony to show that he was "all by the head" before he began loading.

"I don't think I was drunk," answered Michael, after an interval.

"You don't *think* you were drunk," repeated the questioner, somewhat curiously. "What do you mean? You told us just now you had not been drinking."

"I had a sup the night afore," added Michael, with the air of a man who has absolved his conscience.

"Oh, indeed!" said the serjeant, brightening up, for even he, astute as he was, could not divine how a man could get drunk on any given occasion without imbibing anything stronger than "tay." "Now, do you think you had sufficiently recovered from the effects of the sup the night afore to be able to load the van properly on this particular morning?"

"I think it'd been better if I hadn't taken it," replied Michael, now fairly unmasked.

"Oh! you were not drunk, but you think it would have been better you had not taken this sup the night afore. Very well, I have nothing more to ask you." And the witness stood down.

Application was now made to the judge that ladies might be requested to leave the Court, it being proposed to call the medical evidence to prove the nature of some injuries which were included in the "otherwise seriously damaged and hurt" of the declaration. The request was at once acceded to, and the Court, by the usher, its

mouthpiece, proclaimed aloud that all ladies were to leave the Court. A flutter ensued among the petticoats, and many went their way, with an expression of mingled surprise and indignation upon the faces of the wearers of them, as though they resented the notion of raising and then disappointing their curiosity. I say many went their way, but not all; some there were who put a bold—their expelled sisters called it a brazen—face upon the matter, and stuck to their seats like women whose desire for knowledge is greater than their sense of shame. His lordship looked round upon these law-loving dames, and remarked, in a significant tone, that he had directed all ladies to quit the Court. It was at this particular moment that the usher became immortal, not knowing, however, the greatness of the fame which he was laying up for himself. Whether he really did not see the bonnets, whose unshamefaced owners kept them obstinately in the halls of justice, or whether it was in the profundity of his scorn that he spake it, this deponent showeth not, but in answer to the remark thrown out by the learned judge, came from the usher the pride-killing words, “All the ladies *have* left the Court, my lord.”

A smile, and then a titter, which waxed speedily till it became a laugh, was observable on the faces of judge, jurors, and counsel. Even a blush flitted across the countenances of the unshamefaced ones, and the usher stood a satirist confessed in the middle of the Court. His lordship adopted the meaning which all hearers attached to the words of the censor, himself as much astonished at his speech as the most amused one there, and, looking

towards Serjeant ——, said that he might now proceed, since the modest women had left the Court.

The trial proceeded, the terrible nature of the injuries received by the plaintiff was explained to the jury, and medical testimony was heard in support of the case.

Now his lordship had a way of notifying counsel of his having written down upon his notes the answers of the witnesses, which many of those addressed disliked, almost to resistance point. He did not raise his head and nod, as judges are wont, but kept his face still fixed in the direction of his paper, uttering in a sort of under-growl, as a sign for counsel to proceed, the monosyllables "Go on!" It was not so much the use of these two good words that vexed the hearts of the learned, it was the manner of the user. Many had been the complaints made in robing-room and in hall, of the bearish (so they termed it) method which his lordship adopted, and among the complainants was none so bitter as Mr. Q. C., who was for the defence in this action. He had fretted and fumed visibly during the whole of the time he was cross-examining, and all who knew him were well aware that ere long an explosion must take place.

His lordship had taken down the evidence which Mr. Q. C. elicited from the witness, and, being no respecter of persons, had notified the fact in his usual way to the great man before him. Mr. Q. C. could not endure it longer; he made no fresh attempt to question the witness, but stood stock still as in respectful attention, waiting his lordship's leisure to continue.

"Go on!" repeated his lordship, but silence still

reigned; Mr. Q. C.'s head became a little more erect, his eyes dilated a trifle more, and the starch in the large neckerchief which enwound his throat seemed "to bear him stiffly up," as Hamlet desired his sinews might bear him.

"I said, 'Go on!'" observed his lordship, somewhat testily, raising his eyes rather than his head, to look at the counsel.

The moment had arrived for the expected explosion; his lordship himself had fired the train. As men who watch some curious and new experiment, the bar stood agaze, while Mr. Q. C., with an expression of deep astonishment and concern, stirred himself from his pointer-like attitude of attention, and exclaimed with loud and seemingly contrite voice:—"I *beg* your lordship's pardon, I thought you were speaking to the usher."

Respect for the Bench kept down open mirth, and Mr. Q. C., with the tact of a general who knows how to follow up a victory, without crushing the enemy it is his interest to keep in the field, proceeded with his examination as if nothing unusual had happened. His lordship endured in silence, and bided his time for an answer.

P——, to my surprise and delight, did gloriously, not being disconcerted even when the judge, not knowing his name, and wishing to call him by it, desired the intermediates before mentioned as sitting between judge and counsel, to acquire this information for him. The stage whisper in which the inquiries were made one of the other, telling all whom it might concern that P—— was

unknown to the frequenters of this Court, did not cover him with confusion; I fancied I detected even a sort of satisfied look upon his face as, in answer to the last inquirer, he showed his name on his brief, whereon was marked a sum equal to that which potentially had been mine in the case of the Great Western Railway.

When Mr. Q. C. rose to cross-examine, some question as to the admissibility of the evidence he thought to elicit occurred to that learned gentleman's mind. He wished to remove it; and also, perhaps, by taking his lordship into his confidence, to mollify through an appeal to his *amour-propre*, the evil prejudice which the late rasping had occasioned. It was, therefore, in a peculiarly insinuating way that he announced his intention of adverting the questionable evidence, and in a still more insinuating way, that he asked his lordship whether he thought it would be admissible.

Now it was strangely forgetful, in a man so astute as Mr. Q. C. undoubtedly was, so to act. He might have put forward the evidence and waited for his appeal to the judge until such time as the opposing counsel objected formally; or he might have announced his intention to put it forward, and proceeded to execution without inviting, as he did, the interference of a man he had offended. As it was, he gave himself over into the hands of Samson, and suffered accordingly.

His lordship failed to notice Mr. Q. C.'s first inquiry, maintaining the firm demeanour he had worn since the learned gentleman's tongue had lashed his indignation into a desire to find vent; but when Mr. Q. C.

once more asked, as eager to be instructed, whether his lordship thought this would be evidence, Baron —— raised his head, looked straight into the lantern above him, and said to the lantern, as though he were delivering himself of an abstract proposition for the special edification of the lantern:—"Her Majesty and the House of Lords are the only persons entitled to ask me any legal questions." This, uttered in a monotone, without passion, but with entire deliberateness, fell as falls a killing frost upon the tender plant. Not that Mr. Q. C. resembled a tender plant though, for he was among his brethren as the oak in a forest—yet, no less did he feel keenly the chilling blast of his lordship's oracular breath. He feigned not to notice what everybody else noticed; he stammered out something; he looked confused, and at last said he should not press the evidence if his lordship did not think it worth while.

His lordship expressed no opinion whatever, but being wearied with the long day's sitting, and being desirous, perhaps, not to risk losing the vantage ground he had manifestly gained, once more proposed to his brother, Serjeant ——, to consider whether the case was not one for a compromise. Serjeant —— having freely admitted that he thought the justice of the case required some such solution, his lordship announced that he would adjourn the Court to enable counsel to come to some arrangement. His lordship had risen to go, and had stamped his way over half the length of the platform, when a very junior counsel, in a state of terrible trepidation, rose to make a motion to the Court. Blue bags and red bags, books and

papers, the owners of these, and the clerks of the owners, were bundling out of the Court ; the registrar had already stretched himself a weary stretch in token of the ending of the day's work ; the usher, henceforth immortal, had girded up his loins to go—when the faint echo of the very junior counsel's voice resounded through the Court. His lordship stood in half attention for a second, looked hard at the speaker, and then, resuming his walk towards the door curtain, was understood to say "To-morrow ! To-morrow !" and so went out. The very junior counsel could not get a hearing, and before the solicitor who had instructed him had finished the tale of his reproaches, I fled forth into Westminster Hall, and told this tale to my friends, the cherubim in the roof.

"Tell it not, save to the printer," said they, as I left them to their darkness and the gloom in which they have thriven so long.

"I will not," answered I ; and I have kept my word.

CHAPTER II.

“AND yet he semed besier than he was,” wrote Dan Chaucer five centuries ago, when describing the Man of Laws in the “*Canterbury Tales* ;” and such was the reflection which crossed my mind as I saw P——, of whom we know somewhat already, rush in great haste from his lodgings in the High Street to the court-house at Brisk, one fine summer morning, a few circuits back. He was armed for the fight—a fight more in the fashion of Ulysses than of Ajax—and bore, besides the brief with which he had been trusted, two massy books of authority to back up his intended statements. He passed on, and I finished my pipe ; for, though the advice of the great Q. C. who had instructed me many times in the way wherein I should walk, had been that, business or no business, it behoved me to show in Court regularly at nine o’clock every morning, when the Court sat—and this advice was, beyond question, wholesome—yet had I found it to be, like many other wholesome things, very unpalatable. I gave the “no business” side of the advice a fair trial, and small was the apparent advantage derived from it ; the “business” side would have met with equal justice, had it thought fit ever to present itself. Six circuits were enough for the proof of half the advice ; and as, at the tail of the seventh, “business” did not surrender to take its trial, I thought it small harm to do as I liked in the matter ; hence it was that, on this particular morning, I stayed to finish my pipe

instead of rushing eagerly, as P—— was doing, to the dispensary for justice. I took my own time about bringing into subjection to the brush the hair which stood out after my morning's dip in the river "like quills upon the fretful porcupine;" I donned my robes and wig at my own pace; and, as I thought of P—— with his brief, and his books, and his haste (on my honour there was no hint of envy, though P—— was but on his second circuit), the words of old Chaucer occurred to me as apposite, and—for I liked P—— greatly—by the time my toilette was over, I had got as far as heartily to wish that Chaucer's preceding line might be equally applicable,

"No wher so besy a man as he there n'as."

And then I, too, walked over to the court-house, down the narrow street and down the hill.

A heap of folk were about the doorway—attorneys' clerks, barristers' clerks, witnesses, and lookers-on. I passed through; and, all the world being my way, it made no difference whether I went into the Crown Court or the Civil Court, so I turned into the former, and made my way to a place.

The dock was rather thickly tenanted; and, as I entered the court, a miserable-looking lad was standing in front of this pen, awaiting the beginning of the prosecution, which charged him with "feloniously and unlawfully stealing," &c. He had, in truth, been guilty of neglect rather than crime; but had, unfortunately, been brought before some stern moralists of magistrates, who took the uglier view of his case and sent him for trial; he was undefended by counsel, and was called upon to

say if he was guilty or not guilty to the charges made against him.

“Not guilty!” said the boy in a low voice; and the counsel for the prosecution began.

In cases where the prisoner is undefended, it is not usual for the prosecution to make any speech, properly so called. The case is stated to the jury; the witnesses are called and examined from the depositions; and then the whole is summed up and laid before the jury, the prisoner being allowed to make his own defence after the case for the prosecution is closed. But on this occasion the counsel for the prosecution was about as new to his work as the prisoner was to crime; and, without intending to injure the poor lad against whom he appeared, but in pure ignorance of what was right, he commenced an oration which was evidently not the inspiration of the moment, but a studied speech, which had had more than one rehearsal.

“The magnitude of the crime with which the prisoner stands charged is such as to demand the promptest attention, and the most summary repression. Our homes, our property—I might add, our lives—are ——”

“Really, sir, this course is very unusual,” said the judge, interrupting the flow of the advocate’s words.

The prosecutor did not see in what way the course was unusual, and, in complete innocence, harked back upon the initial words of the speech—“The magnitude of the crime——”

“Really, sir, I *must* interrupt you,” said his lordship; “you would do better to proceed with a simple state-

ment of facts." And, with much show of unwillingness—for the learned counsel, who was from "the green isle," was, like most of his countrymen, a really "good fist" at a speech, and disliked missing an opportunity of making one—the prosecutor continued on his way, stating the facts simply and calling the witness.

The first witness was a labourer, who had seen the prisoner with the "feloniously stolen" article in his possession (the lad had been told to take a spade to A——, but had carried it only to his father's house, where he had mislaid and forgotten it).

"Were you on the road leading to A—— on the morning of the 3rd July?"

"Yes."

"Did you meet anyone?"

"Yes; the prisoner."

"Had he anything with him?"

"A spade."

"Was it this spade?" (producing one).

"It was?"

"Did you know whose spade it was?"

"I knew it belonged to Master Turner, up to Wurnley?"

"Did you say anything to the prisoner about the spade?"

"I said, 'You young rascal, you've stolen that spade!'"

"What made you say that?"

"I *knew* he *must* ha' stolen it."

"No other reason?"

"No."

“ Then if you *knew* he *must* ha’ stolen it, why did you not tell a policeman ?”

“ Don’t know.”

“ Did you not see any policeman ?”

“ Yes.”

“ Why did you not tell him ?”

“ Don’t know.”

But the counsel pressed the witness on this point, and at length succeeded in getting an answer.

“ Why did you not tell him, sir? Answer the question.”

“ Well,” said the man, “ I certainly *did* see a policeman, but he was only a b—— big fool of an Irishman, and I knew it was no use to tell *him*.”

Poor J—— looked a little discomfited at this reply; and in answer to his lordship’s inquiry, said he had no further questions to put to the witness, who was ordered to stand down, and the case went on to an acquittal of the prisoner.

Then came the trial of a man for forgery, a conviction, and the sentence. The man was an old offender in the same direction; and his lordship thought fit to pass upon him “ a substantial sentence,” as he called it, out of regard to the peculiar hatefulness of the crime, and to the fact that the prisoner had been tried before. I mention this case not merely because it followed that of which I have just written, but because of the peculiarly sad effect which the sentence had upon one quite other than the prisoner.

A nervous movement of the hands and a slight twitching of the mouth, alone had betrayed the keen interest the prisoner took in the proceedings which so intimately

concerned him. When the clerk of arraigns asked the jury if they were agreed upon their verdict, a wistful look, which seemed to indicate a desire to anticipate the sentence, was turned upon them; and when the clerk further asked them if they found the prisoner "guilty" or "not guilty," a painful anxiety showed in the forger's face, and communicated itself to the bystanders: and when the word "Guilty" dropped from the foreman's lips, a sense of relief came upon all who heard it.

His lordship—than whom was no judge more ready to make allowance for the infirmities of poor human nature—considered of the sentence he should pronounce, and felt it his duty to give, as he said, a substantial one. Addressing a few remarks to the better feelings of the prisoner, he told him how grieved he was to see him continue in his former evil way; that as he had, however, chosen to do so, it behoved the law to protect people from his knavery; and the sentence of the Court was that he be kept in penal servitude for four years.

As soon as the words "penal servitude for four years" closed the sentence which the judge pronounced, a shriek was uttered in the far-end of the court, which pierced the ears of everyone. A woman had fainted; some poor creature to whom even the wretched man in the dock was dear, and upon whom the sentence, double-edged, fell with the sharper side upon her. The man was removed by the "dungeon villains" (two eminently mild and kindly-looking men, by the way), and the friends of the poor soul, whose sobs seemed to strain her very heart-strings, gathered her up and bore her out.

Now, it may be womanish, but bother me if "a scene in court" like this is at all to my liking. I hate to be agitated whether I like it or not; to find the apple in my throat swell and get inconvenient, as though it were the "prime" apple which caused our first mother to err; to feel warm and glowing about the eyes, and, will I nill I, to be obliged to smother my emotion by blowing tunelessly on my nose. And these things had to be endured on this occasion, in spite of the philosophy of a youthful attorney who stood by, and said, with a desire to be overheard, "that such things must happen, and the police ought to see that these *women* were kept out of court." To be sure I knew nothing of the people; and, for aught I *did* know, they might be the wickedest and least deserving of sympathy in the whole world. So far as the trial itself went, there was nothing particular to set the feelings in play: had the mere facts of the crime been proved as stated, the prisoner found guilty, and sentenced in the ordinary way, I do not suppose for an instant that anyone would have been unusually struck by the sentence. But the little something not usual—the extraordinary addition of a woman's cry of sorrow; that woman having nothing visibly to connect her with the case before the Court; and the sign which that cry gave of links and sympathies outraged, of which the Court could take no cognizance—these were the springs of an emotion which none but the assize-hardened do not feel—"the one touch of nature which makes the whole world kin."

Professing the stoic philosophy, I dislike occasions which make me show my feelings as a man. The "one

touch of nature" I admire in the abstract, and in Shakespeare, from whom the expression is stolen, but do not desire to be the subject of it in my own person. Lest nature should touch me again, I left the Crown Court, and walked over to the Civil side, where Justice —— was trying the special jury cases, and where, amidst the lookers-on, I saw my landlord, with eyes in which pity mingled with contempt as he looked on me, robed, but sans brief. A moment's reflection told me that he would charge me no less for the numerous "extras" which were certain to appear in my bill, pitiful though his glance might now be; so I placed my eye-glass (not that I am shortsighted, you know, reader) firmly into my eye-socket, assumed a haughty air, which was intended to hurl back the landlord's pity with scorn, and addressed myself to attending to the speeches that were being made.

It was evident from the experience just narrated, that, though I might have the bad digestion, I did not possess "the hard heart" which is said to be as necessary for a good lawyer, as a gold latch-key has been held to be to an officer in the Horse Guards. I may improve, however, as time goes on.

P——, of whom mention was made just now, was about to open the pleadings in a case that had been called on, when O——, breathless and anxious, rushed in from the Crown Court, where he was engaged in a case requiring fullest attention, having heard that this cause, in which he was also retained for the defendant, had been called. His object was to get the case postponed till he could attend to it; and had he been other

than he was, or had he not placed temptation right in his lordship's way, he might have got what he wanted. But he was a great drawer of the longbow ; one who was known to all the profession for the entirety in which he adopted M. Talleyrand's saying, that speech was given to man to conceal his thoughts : he was this ; and, being this, he tempted the Court beyond its power to bear.

Hurrying up to the counsel's table, he motioned to P—— to refrain from opening, and begged his lordship to put off the case, “ for,” said he, “ I am at *this* moment speaking in the Crown Court.”

His lordship's eye twinkled ; the bar noticed the mess poor O—— was in ; and O—— himself was aware of his mistake as soon as he had made it. Time was not given him to amend, for his lordship repeating the words, “ this moment speaking in the Crown Court,” added with an arch smile, which was well understood by all who saw it, “ No, no, Mr. O——, I can't believe *that*.”

O—— knew what fame was his, and the bar knew, and the judge knew ; and if the public who looked on knew not, I take this opportunity of hinting at it, for the express purpose of showing them that if their vulgar and calumnious riddle about lawyers being such restless people, because they first lie on this side and then on that, and lie even in their graves—a riddle feloniously stolen, by the way, from a *bon mot* of Sir Christopher Hatton's, when he was Lord Chancellor—be founded on fact, the professional brethren of these restless men take good care they shall not forget their characteristics. For the riddle I ever thought the properest answer was, that

lawyers are restless because they never lie at all ; but even if I could make my meaning clear upon this head, as an able writer in a magazine some time ago did his, in an article called "The Morality of Advocacy," there would be no end of people to join issue with me ; so I give up the attempt to alter the riddle and its answer, deeming the game not worth the candle.

O——'s application was granted, as P—— and his learned friends did not object, and O—— went back in peace to his defence of "bigamus." The next cause was called, and at the name of it, a young man of temperament the most nervous in the world, a quality which made the bar an almost insuperable bar to him, rose to his feet, and announced that he appeared for the defendant. Counsel for the plaintiff opened, called his witnesses, and closed his case, which seemed to be a winning one. Counsel for the defendant rose, blushed to the very roots—I had almost written tops—of his wig, looked like the incarnation of confusion, and thus delivered:—

"My lord, and gentlemen of the jury ; my client in this case—my client, gentlemen—my client, my lord—my client ;" and at this stage the poor man seemed perfectly overcome by the natural enemy with which he was combating. His mouth was as if paralysis had striken it ; his lips were parched, his glance wandered about the court, his tongue stammered, and then wagged no more. The Court waited ; some men pitied the poor creature tuck in the slough of words, unable to get free ; others enjoyed the joke and grinned unkindly grins. The occasion was too much also for his lordship, who leaned for-

ward a little, and said, in a tone of voice which with other words might have been taken for encouraging, "Pray, sir, proceed; thus far the Court is with you."

The nervous man was stung to the quick, and like a stag pursued to a corner, turned round and stood fiercely at bay. He floundered on in spite of himself, and was getting fairly under way, to the relief of everyone who heard him, when in an unfortunate moment he allowed his eloquence to hurry him into a false quantity, and then he was in the toils again. There is a writ called of "quare impedit" the e whereof in "impedit," is short. By pure misfortune—for the nervous man "was a scholar, and a ripe and good one"—by pure misfortune, and the hurry he was in, he gave this word as though the e were long, and called the writ one of "quare impēdit."

The sharp ear of the judge detected the false concord, and before the speaker could correct for himself, was down upon him like a Nasmyth's hammer. "Pray shorten your speech, sir. Remember we have a good deal to get through." The blow was a fair one, though it fell heavily upon Mr. T——, who continued to speak like one grown desperate, reminding one of the bull in a Spanish arena when the red flags and the darts have been plied some time. He plunged on here and there through the case, butting, but not bellowing at his antagonist, who did for him the service of a matador, and gave him the *coup de grâce*, to the poor fellow's utter discomfiture.

The said antagonist rose to reply, and as a boa constrictor licks and fondles his prey before he devours it, so the antagonist bespattered Mr. T—— with praise, and

complimented him upon "his thrilling and powerful appeal." "The Lord hath delivered him into my hands," was the profane aside, however, with which the advocate forecast, to those nearest him, the issue of the fight. The speaker went on and proceeded to dissect the speech of his opponent, and, metaphorically speaking, the speaker himself. He exposed the fallacies, turned the facts so as to show the reverse side of them, and drew a deduction from his learned friend's own premises, so diametrically opposite to that which had been drawn by him, that Mr. T——, though he did not interrupt by speaking, could not refrain from showing his dissent by violent shaking of the head.

"My learned friend on the other side shakes his head," said the speaker, raising his voice, and emphasizing the word "head." "I don't know that there's much in *that*;" and at this neither pity nor decorum could keep the bystanders within bounds; a laugh, general and hearty, was raised at the expense of poor Mr. T——, who, painfully alive to the wound which had been inflicted, gesticulated in vain endeavour to get a hearing for something which *might* have hurled his enemy to the ground; but the possibility got thrown away; Mr. T—— remained crushed, though exceedingly angry.

Now it happens that the court-house at the assize town of Brisk is inconveniently near to the market, which is the resort of farmers for miles round. Thither come cattle, sheep, and beasts of burden; and thither are taken grain, and hay, and all kinds of agricultural produce. The place is so near to the courts of law, that the sounds

of marketing, the grunts of pigs, and the noise of blatant beasts, have many times been known to pierce the sanctum of justice, and to interfere with the delivery of grave human utterances. On this occasion, when Mr. T—— came so grievously to grief, high market was going on in the street and place outside. Animals of various kinds had given audible proof of their presence, and just as the vanquisher of Mr. T—— resumed his speech, a jackass, desirous of showing his sense of the learned gentleman's sharp wit, set up a bray sufficiently loud to be heard right through the court.

It was his lordship's turn now, and he, thinking perhaps that so keen a tonguesman as he who was speaking could look well enough to himself, to be able to bear a rub down, said, with a good-humoured smile, which was the salve to his blow, "One at a time, brother; one at a time."

The serjeant reddened slightly, and merely nodded assent to his lordship's proposition. The laugh was against the serjeant, but "nothing he reck'd," or seemed to do, and went on to the close of his speech:

His lordship began to sum up the case to the jury, sifting the facts, and laying down the law. He had not proceeded very far, when the animal aforesaid, instigated, no doubt, by a feeling of kindness for the serjeant, took advantage of a slight pause in the summing up, to testify once more to its appreciation of English jurisprudence. The loud hee-haw! resounded through the court, attracting the attention, if not the fears, of the judge: Respect for the bench precluded any such notice by the

bar, as the bench had taken of the former bray; but his lordship had flung down his glove to the serjeant, and the serjeant was not the man to refuse the gage. He followed his own plan in taking it up. When the judge continued his address to the jury, the impression created by the jackass being yet fresh upon the audience, Serjeant — turned him around to the leader who sat next him, and said in a stage whisper, heard distinctly by every one, “I never noticed till now the remarkable echo in this court.”

“Not even with your long ears,” said a junior in a whisper as audible as the last remark, whereby the laugh which began to rise at his lordship’s expense was shifted back again to the serjeant, who strove between his dignity—which would not let him notice the junior so immeasurably beneath him—and his anger, which made his fingers itch to punch the junior’s head. The serjeant was a wrathful man, and had the reputation of even “swearing his prayers.” Forth from his mouth flowed a string of muttered curses, like lava from a volcano that cannot burst in open fury; and to judge from appearances a breach of the peace seemed not unlikely to occur at a later hour in the day; though, as far as I know, none actually took place, the serjeant, a thoroughly good fellow, having been observed to select his youthful adversary for special attention at the mess on that very same day; and even after speaking highly of him as a foeman worthy of his own steel. He recognised an equal, as Lord Thurlow did when the usher of the court gave back his lordship’s “— damn you,” after enduring meekly and in patience

for the space of five minutes a long string of invectives, hurled at him because the Lord Chancellor's inkstand was not filled.

P——'s case came on in due course, and P—— fleshed his maiden sword right valiantly. He bore up against the excessive respect of his own witness, who insisted on calling him "my lord," drawing upon him a flood of congratulations from his brethren, and a remark from his lordship that "the witness was only anticipating." O—— strove and did mightily; and the jury gave right between them—at least I trust so, for I cannot speak out of my own knowledge. The heat of the weather and the stuffiness of the court combined, with the want of special interest in any one of the causes, to make the assize court of Brisk, in the county of ——, intolerable by four o'clock in the afternoon. The only piece of paper I had touched for the day in the way of business, was the messman's dinner-list, whereon I had inscribed my name. It was useless to wait, I thought, so nudging R——, my fellow in lodgings, and mine own peculiar friend, I left the court for more refreshing haunts. I strode away, and in company with R——, who "rowed in the same boat" with myself, sought upon the waters of the Cray an appetite for the dinner we were to eat at half-past six.

“IN THE WITNESS-BOX.”



THE RESPECTABLE MARRIED WITNESS.

I HAVE a theory that a man's fate lies in his natural disposition; not the disposition which he has control over, but a certain secret and unsuspected bent of his mind, which leads him right or wrong, against his will and against his knowledge. Thus, I believe that the man who never gets on in the world has within him a certain bias towards the wrong side of the road of life. He is like one of those balls used in playing bowls. He is, to all appearance, perfectly round and equally balanced;

but roll him as straight as you will, he invariably inclines to one side. When we see men equal in all other respects—in talent, education, physical strength, and personal appearance—it is, I suspect, this secret bias which makes the difference in their fortunes. One goes straight along the high road of life to the goal; while the other struggles onward for a while, inclining little by little towards the side, until at last he rolls into the ditch. This bias is placed variously, and disposes the ball to every variety of accident. Thus one becomes rich, another poor; one catches all the diseases that flesh is heir to, another escapes them; one is drowned, another is hanged. I have long entertained the belief that it is a certain and particular kind of person who catches the small-pox and becomes pitted by it; that it is a particular kind of person who is destined to a wooden leg; that it is a very exceptionable and distinct kind of person who is destined to be murdered: I further believe that, if we could only make a diagnosis of the predisposition of these persons, and ascertain the nature of the bias and its general indications, we should be able to look in a man's face and tell him for a certainty that he will one day have a wooden leg, or that he will be murdered, or that he will be smashed in a railway accident. There are certain things that I am not afraid of, because I feel that they will never happen to me. I feel that I have the bias which will, under certain circumstances, always keep me right side up. There are other things, again, that I am afraid of, because I am not sure how my bias lies with regard to them.

In pursuing this theory, I am disposed to believe that there is a certain kind of men and women whose bias is always rolling them into the witness-box; whose bias first of all rolls them into situations where they see and hear things bearing upon matters which will become the subject of litigation or criminal process. Look at the people whom Mr. Brunton has so happily sketched in illustration of these remarks. There they are, born witnesses; types which we see in the box repeated over and over again, with all the fatuity which leads them into the position of witnesses, and all the attributes which so peculiarly fit them for the operations of counsel plainly stamped upon their features. They cannot help being witnesses any more than Dr. Watts' bears and lions could help growling and fighting. It is their nature to. Mark the dull witness. Have you not seen him times out



THE DULL WITNESS.

of number? At the police-court in a case of assault and battery—he happened to be in the way at the time, of course: at the inquest—he was passing just at the moment the deceased threw himself from the first-floor window: in the Court of Queen's Bench, in a case of collision, where the defendant is sued for damages on the score of having taken the wrong side of the road. Of course he gets into the dock instead of the witness-box; of course he stumbles up the steps, and equally of course stumbles down them again. He takes the book in the wrong hand, and when he is told to take it in the other, that hand is sure to be gloved; the court is kept waiting while he divests himself of this article of apparel; and the consciousness of the witness that all eyes are upon him, concentrated in a focal glare of reproof and impatience, only tends to increase and intensify his stupidity. He drops the book; he kisses his thumb—not evasively, for he is incapable of any design whatever; he looks at the judge when he ought to be looking at the counsel, and at the counsel when he ought to be looking at the judge. There is such an utter want of method in the stupidity of this witness that counsel can make nothing of him. He perjures himself a dozen times, and with regard to that collision case, gets into such a fog about the rule of the road, that at last he doesn't know his right hand from his left. It is useless for counsel to point with triumph to the inconsistencies of this witness's evidence; for it is obvious to everybody that he is quite incapable of throwing any light on the subject whatever, and that what he says one way or another is of no

importance. The examining counsel is only too glad to get rid of such a witness, and very soon tells him to stand down—a command which he obeys by tumbling down and staggering into the body of the court, with a dumb-founded expression quite pitiful to behold.

Now the confident witness steps into the box. He is, in his own idea, prepared for everything. He is prepared for the slips; he is ready at all points for the



THE CONFIDENT WITNESS.

greasy New Testament. He looks the counsel steadily in the face, as much as to say—"You will not shake my evidence, I can tell you." The counsel meets this look with a glance of anticipated triumph. There is a defined position here whose assumption of strength is its greatest weakness. The confident witness has resolved to answer yes and no, and not to be tempted into any amplifica-

tions which will give the cross-examining counsel an opportunity of badgering him. The counsel can make nothing of him for a while; but at last he goads him into an expression of anger; when, seeing that he is losing his temper, he smiles a galling smile, and says—"No doubt, sir, you think yourself a very clever fellow: don't you, now? Answer me, sir." The confident witness falling into this trap, and thinking "answer me, sir," has reference to the question about his cleverness, snaps the counsel up with a retort about being as clever as he is; and immediately the badgering commences.

"How dare you interrupt me, sir? Prevarication won't do here, sir. Remember you are on your oath, sir!" And the indignation of the witness being thus aroused—by, it must be confessed, a most unwarrantable and ungentlemanly course of proceeding—away goes the main-sheet of his confidence, and he is left floundering about without rudder or compass in the raging sea of his anger. It is now the worthy object of the learned counsel to make him contradict himself, and to exhibit him in the eyes of the jury as a person utterly unworthy of belief.

There is a nervous variety of this witness, who is occasionally frightened into doubting his own handwriting. He is positive at first; has no doubt on the point whatever. It is, or it is not. Then he is asked if he made a point of putting a dot over the *i* in "Jenkins." He always made a point of that.

"Do you ever omit the dot?"

"Never."

“Then be good enough to look at this signature” (counsel gives him a letter, folded up so as to conceal everything but the signature). “You perceive there is no dot over the *i* there. Is that your signature?”

“I should say not.”

“You should say not—why? Because there is no dot over the *i*?”

“Yes; because there is no dot over the *i*.”

“Now, sir, look at the whole of that letter. Did you write such a letter?”



THE WITNESS WHO IS FRIGHTENED INTO DOUBTING HIS OWN HANDWRITING.

“Certainly; I did write such a letter.”

“Did you write *that* letter?”

“I—I—”

“Remember, sir, you are on your oath. Is it like your handwriting?”

“It is.”

“Is it like your signature?”

“It is.”

“Is it your signature?”

“It might be.”

“Gentlemen of the jury; after most positively denying that this was his signature, the witness at length admits that it might be. What reliance then can be placed upon the doubts which he expresses with regard to the document upon which this action is based?”

This witness has really no doubts about his handwriting at all, until he is artfully induced to commit himself with regard to the dotting of i's and the crossing of t's.

The deaf witness is not a hopeful subject for counsel to deal with; and when, on entering the box, he settles himself into a leaning posture, with his hand to his ear, the gentlemen in the horsehair wigs will be seen to exchange glances which imply mutual pity for each other. Those glances say plainly enough, “Here is a deaf old post, who will pretend to be much more deaf than he really is, and will be sure to have the sympathies of the public if we bully him.” The deaf witness, when the counsel begins to ask awkward questions, says “eh?” to everything; and if he be a knowing witness at the same time, pretends not to understand, which justifies him in giving stupid and irrelevant answers. As a rule, both sides are not sorry to get rid of a deaf witness; and he

is told to stand down in tones of mingled pity and contempt.



THE DEAF WITNESS.

The knowing witness, who is not deaf, is a too-clever-by-half gentleman, who soon falls a prey to his overweening opinion of his own sharpness. They are not going to frighten him by asking him to kiss the book. He kisses it with a smack of the lips and a wag of the head, by which he seems to indicate that he is prepared to eat the book if required. Then, after a question or two, when he thinks he is getting the best of it with the lawyers, he winks at the general audience, and so fondly believes he is taking everybody into his confidence, against his cross-examiner. This is the gentleman who

is credited with those sharp retorts upon lawyers which we find in jest-books and collections of wit and humour ; but I fear he has little real claim to distinction as a dealer in repartee. Those smart things are “made up” for him, as they are made for the wag, and generally for



THE KNOWING WITNESS.

Joseph Miller. The retorts of the knowing witness are usually on the simplest principle of *tu quoque*, and as their pith chiefly consists in their rudeness—only counsel are allowed to be rude in court—they are certain to be checked by the court. The court does not tolerate jokes that are not made by itself.

The witness who introduces foreign matter into her evidence is generally of the female gender, and is a person whose appearance and manner warrant counsel in addressing her as “my good woman.” She will declare that she is “*not* a good woman,” and secure for that

standard witticism the laugh which it never fails to raise, whether spoken innocently or with intent. She deals very much in "he said," and "she said;" and of course the counsel doesn't want to know what he said or she said, but what the good woman saw with her own eyes and heard with her own ears. But nothing on earth will



THE WITNESS WHO INTRODUCES FOREIGN MATTER INTO HER EVIDENCE.

induce her to stick to the point; and though she is pulled up again and again, she still persists in giving all collateral circumstances in minute detail. I should say that when this witness goes to the play, she provides herself with a small bottle of rum and an egg-cup.

The interesting witness is also of the feminine gender—slim, prim, modest, and demure. She is a young lady of "prepossessing appearance," and notably interesting. The moment she steps into the box and puts up her veil to

kiss the book, the gentlemen in the horse-hair wigs fix their eye-glasses and scrutinize her narrowly; and, as the gentlemen of the long robe are proverbially polite, they will be seen, while staring the interesting young lady out of countenance, to nudge each other and pass round pleasant jokes. The interesting young-lady witness is rarely to be met with in the Queen's Bench, the Common Pleas, or the Exchequer. The place to look for



THE INTERESTING WITNESS.

her is the Court of Divorce and Matrimonial Causes, where it is generally the object of the cross-examining counsel to prove that the interesting witness, who has prepossessed every one by her modest demeanour, is no better than she should be. There is possibly no warranty for this course of proceeding; but then the noble practice of the law requires that a barrister should do the best he

can for his client, and that he must not scruple to blacken the character of the innocent, in order to protect from the consequences of his crime one whom he well knows to be guilty.

The interesting female witness is of two kinds. One is what she seems ; the other is *not* what she seems. The mock-modest lady usually gives her cross-examiner a good deal of trouble. She is wary ; brief in her answers, decisive in her replies ; and her habit of dropping her eyes enables her to conceal her emotions. This witness holds out to the last. The other, who is really the interesting, modest, demure, timid creature that she appears, soon betrays herself under a severe cross-examination. Her only weapon of defence rises unbidden from the depths of her wounded feelings, in the shape of a flood of tears.

MORE "WITNESSES."



THE WITNESS WHO CAUSED "CONSIDERABLE AMUSEMENT" IN COURT.

IN discoursing concerning witnesses only a few days back, I took the opportunity of broaching the theory that the givers of evidence in the courts of justice were so far like true poets in that they are born, not made. *Testis nascitur, non fit.*

The first person who steps into the box on the present occasion is a remarkable example in point. He is "the witness who causes considerable amusement in court."

Some persons may be disposed to find fault with the reporter for his uniform adherence to the use of the word "considerable." Why not "much," or "great?" No; the reporter is right. Other persons might cause "much," or "great," or "little" amusement; but "considerable" is the exact measure of this person's power of exciting risibility combined with perplexity and wonder. He does not do it intentionally; he does not know that he is doing it, and his fun is of a very dubious kind. Therefore the amazement which it causes is "considerable." Some laugh at him, others think him a fool; and the counsel who is cross-examining him is probably a little out of temper. This witness is not a complete success one way or another. He is neither a triumph to his own party, nor a defeat to the opposite side. All that he does in a definite way is to "cause considerable amusement in court."

The odd, unique, and almost paradoxical thing about this witness is that he never causes amusement in any degree, considerable or otherwise, anywhere else. At home he is simply lumpy and stupid; abroad in the world, he is a heavy impediment in everybody's way. He is a very unlikely flint indeed, and no one thinks of attempting to strike fire out of him. He is about as likely a medium for that purpose as a slice of Dutch cheese. It is only when you pen him in a witness-box, and strike him stupid with your legal eye, in presence of judge and jury, that you can make him yield anything that is at all calculated to afford either amusement or instruction.

He produces his considerable amusement (not with any design on his part, however,) by means well known to the two end men in a band of nigger serenaders.

Counsel screwing his glass in his eye, and putting on his most searching expression, says :—

"Now, sir ; on your oath, did you not know that the deceased had made a will ?" The witness hesitates and looks idiotic.

"Answer me, sir," roars the counsel, "and remember you are on your oath. Did you not know that the deceased had made a will ?"

The witness answers at last, "Well, sir, I was ;" which "causes considerable amusement in court," and greatly provokes the examining counsel.

"Now, sir, since I have been able to screw so much out of you, perhaps you will answer me this question : "What did the deceased die of ?"

The witness does not appear to understand.

"What did the deceased die of ?" the counsel repeats.

"He died of a Tuesday, sir," says the witness with the utmost gravity. And of course the audience go into convulsions and the crier has to restore order in court.

This witness is never of the slightest service in elucidating a case, and counsel are generally glad to get rid of him, except when the proceedings are getting flat, and want enlivening. Some counsel like a butt of this kind to shoot the arrows of their wit at ; just as wanton street-boys like to tease and make sport of an idiot.

The next witness who steps into the box is a charge-sheet in himself, so expressive is he in every feature, and

in his whole style, of a tipsy row in the Haymarket, with beating of the police, and attempts to rescue from custody. It is quite unnecessary for the active and intelligent officer to enter into details. We see the case at a glance. Mr. Slapbang has been making free. He has visited a music hall or two, where he has joined in the chorus; he has danced at a casino; he has partaken of devilled kidneys at a night supper-room; and visiting all these places



THE YOUNG GENTLEMAN DESCRIBED IN THE CHARGE SHEET AS A
 "MEDICAL STUDENT," WHO PAID THE FINE, AND IMMEDIATELY
 LEFT THE COURT WITH HIS FRIENDS.

in a jovial and reckless humour, he has disregarded that wholesome convivial maxim which says that you should never mix your liquors. Mr. Slapbang *has* mixed his liquors, the consequence being a disposition to beat his

stick against lamp-posts, to wake the midnight echoes with "lul-li-e-ty," and to show his independence by resisting the authority of the police, and perhaps offering them that most unpardonable of all insults, known to the force—"voilence."

When Mr. Slapbang appears in the dock he makes a great effort, conscious of the presence of his *friends*, to keep his "pecker" up. The gloss and glory of his attire have been somewhat dimmed by a night's durance in the cells; but what he has lost in this respect he endeavours to make up for by a jaunty devil-may-care manner. He says he was "fresh," or "sprung," and "didn't know what he was doing," with quite a grand air, as if it were a high privilege of his order to get drunk and resist the police. His manner almost implies that it is quite a condescension on his part to come there and allow the magistrate to have anything to say in the matter. There is not such a very great difference between the conduct of this gentlemanly offender and that of the hardened criminal who throws his shoe at the judge, or declares, when sentence is pronounced, that he "could do that little lot on his head." Mr. Slapbang throws insolent glances at the bench, and when he is fined, instantly brings out a handful of money with an air that says plainly—"Fine away; make it double if you like: it's nothing to me." When Mr. Slapbang "leaves the court with his friends," he is the centre of a sort of triumphal procession: you would not think that he had been subjugated to the authority of the law, but rather that he had triumphed over it. His "friends" are very like

himself. In most cases they are the companions of his revelry, who have been more fortunate than Mr. Slapbang in eluding the clutches of the police. When Mr. Slapbang leaves the court with his friends, he usually proceeds direct to the first public-house, where the company sarcastically drink to the jolly good health of the "beak."



THE WITNESS WHO SWEARS THAT BLACK IS WHITE!

The witness who insists that black is white is one of those self-conceited persons, who, when they once say a thing, stick to it at all hazards. He has no intention of being dishonest, or of saying that which is not true, but he has a great idea of his own infallibility, and a nervous dread of being thought the weak-minded person that he really is. He is the sort of person who likes to be an authority in a public-house parlour; who cannot bear to

be contradicted, and who will not allow any authority to overweigh his own. I have heard him in the pride of his knowledge—for he pretends to know everything—and in the fulness of his conceit, make a bet that "between you and I" is correct, and refuse to be convinced of his error, even when the decision has been given against him by a referee of his own choosing.

"Sir," he said, rising and addressing the chairman one evening when a new comer in the parlour ventured to disagree with his view of a certain matter—"Sir, I have used this room now for five-and-twenty years. Is that so, sir?"

The chairman admitted that it was so—with much respect for the fact.

"And in all that time, have you ever heard me contradicted before?"

"No," says the chairman, "never."

"Very well, then," says our friend. And with that sits down, satisfied that the bare mention of the fact will be sufficient to deter any one from a repetition of the offence which has just roused his indignation.

This witness always enters the box with the fond idea that he will prove "too much" for the counsel, but in the end it generally happens that counsel prove too much for him. Conceit is like pride—liable to have a fall; but, unlike pride, it does not always feel the smart. It has a thick skin.

The witness who expresses astonishment and indignation at the doubts which counsel throw upon his accuracy and veracity is a variety of the same type. He is

also conceited, but he has, at the same time, an inordinate idea of his own importance. He is a man who studies appearances, and "makes up" for the character which he delights to enact through life. He loves to be grumpy and testy, and in his own sphere he is a sort of Scotch



THE ASTONISHED AND INDIGNANT WITNESS.

thistle who allows no one to meddle with him with impunity. Naturally when an audacious hand, gloved with the protection of the law, rudely seizes hold of him, and blunts the point of his bristles, he doesn't like it. He is an easy prey to counsel, as every witness is who stands upon his dignity or importance, and gets upset from that high pedestal.

The young lady whose affections the defendant has trifled with and blighted is generally of the order of female known as "interesting." And when she is interesting she always gains the day. A judge recently

stated—almost complained—that there is no getting juries to find a young and interesting female guilty of anything—even when guilt is brought home to her without the possibility of a doubt. Counsel know this



THE YOUNG LADY WHOSE AFFECTIONS HAVE BEEN TRIFLED WITH.

well, and, I am told, always instruct a young and interesting female how to comport herself so as to make an impression upon the jury.

The stage directions, I believe, are something like this. "Enter the box (or the dock, as the case may be) with your veil down. This gives me occasion to tell you to raise your veil, and show your face to the jury. When you do this burst into tears and use your white cambric pocket handkerchief. Then let the jury see your pretty eyes red with weeping, and your damask cheek blanched with anguish and coursed with bitter tears. When you are hard pressed by the opposing counsel, begin to sob,

and grasp the rail as if for support. You will then be accommodated with a scent-bottle and a chair; and the jury will think the cross-examining counsel a brute, and you an injured angel."

Observance of these directions by a young and interesting female never fails. She will get clear off, even if she has murdered her grandmother.

In a simple case of blighted affection, there is no need to take so much trouble. Only let the lady be well dressed, and look pretty, and it is obvious at once (to the



THE GENTLEMAN WHO TRIFLED WITH THE YOUNG LADY'S AFFECTIONS.

jury) that the defendant is not only heartless and cruel in the last degree, but utterly insensible to the charms of youth and innocence. Yet in nine cases out of ten this interesting female who weeps and sobs, and uses her

smelling bottle, is an artful schemer. Look at the gentleman who trifled with her affections. Is that the sort of person to kindle in any female breast the devouring flame of love? Is he the sort of person to love any one but himself, or to cherish anything but his whiskers? He is a trifier, it is true, but he has not trifled with that interesting and artful female's heart, because she has no heart to trifle with. She might sue him for wasting her time, but not for breaking her heart.

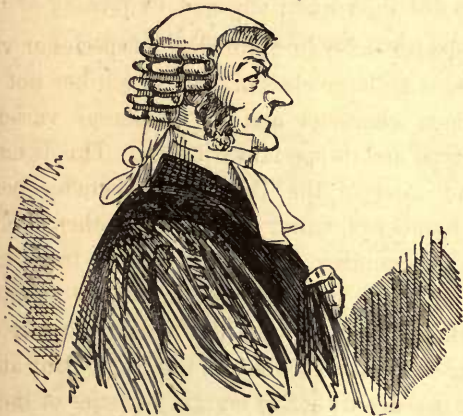
SKETCHES IN COURT.

THE VARIETIES OF COUNSEL.

EVERY class or order in nature has its species or varieties, and there is no large class of men which has not at once its common character and its numerous varieties—its general type and its special variations. This is eminently so of the order of the Bar, which includes perhaps a greater number of varieties than any other. Every individual of eminence has distinguishing traits and characteristics, which would require individual portraiture—and perhaps we may some day essay a series of such portraitures of eminent men at the Bar. But at present our idea is a description of certain varieties of the class—the individuals of which may not be of sufficient importance to require a more particular portraiture. In this attempt we have been aided by the pencil as well as by the pen.

The first is a rather rare and very obscure variety—very little seen or known, as the individuals who belong to it lurk in chambers, and seldom show in court. When they do come down—perhaps, like old Preston, to argue a nice point of real property law, or revel in the technical subtleties of conveyancing—they have the aspect of

pundits, and evince an unbounded contempt for the court, whose ignorance they condescend to enlighten. They will consume a whole day in a dull, dry, dreary argument, stuffed full of citations from "Coke upon Littleton," and "Fearne on Contingent Remainders," and "Saunders on Uses," all of which they read out in a calm unceasing drawl, without once changing their



THE CONSULTING COUNSEL.

tone, or ever being betrayed into a spark of energy or show of earnestness. They generally send one or two of the judges to sleep, and inflict upon the others the cruel torture of trying for hours to keep awake. When they have done, the judges thank Heaven that they have ended, and depart with beclouded minds but grateful hearts; knowing, perhaps, rather less of the matter than they did before, but feeling like men who have been sorely

misused. The whole air of this manner of men while arguing is that of a professor or tutor reading a lecture to a "class" of pupils or students. They believe themselves the keepers of the species of recondite knowledge they profess, and which without them would be lost to mankind. They are a kind of legal Brahmins, who despise all the other orders of their brethren, and think that all law is wrapped up in conveyancing and titles. They are never happier than when engaged in picking holes in a title, except when they have found one.



THE ECCLESIASTICAL COUNSEL.

This, also, is a rare and almost extinct variety. They flourished in the Ecclesiastical Courts under the old system; but when the Probate Court and Divorcē Court were established and their "doctors" were made counsel of, they fell under the lash of Cresswell, who nearly extinguished them as a class. The brethren used to crowd

into the Probate Court to hear Sir Cresswell scoff and joke at "the doctors." They were a dull, scholastic class, crammed full of recondite learning, gleaned from the books of the jurists of the middle ages, and the dark records of Doctors' Commons. When called out into the general practice of the new system, they were like owls brought suddenly into open day. They were so bedevilled by Sir Cresswell, that some of them fell into despair. And the worst of it was, it was all done so politely that they could not complain. He flouted them so calmly, and with such a refined sarcasm, that often they did not perceive it; and while all around were smiling, they thought they were doing it well. By degrees it dawned upon them that they were just a little too slow; some of them brightened up and did better, others simply died out: they disappeared. A new race arose by degrees fitted for the new system; but still the old variety lingers, and can sometimes be seen. The rare specimen we may now and then see will straggle into a court of common law to argue on a church-rate question, or a matter of a tithe "modus," or a "faculty to have a pew, or to build upon a graveyard," and the like. And then they revel in "Gibson's Codex," and "Burn's Ecclesiastical Law," and the like, and read whole pages of Latin with infinite relish. They are exceedingly clerical in look and style, are pedantic, and sometimes priggish.

There is a species of barrister whose forte is argument, and whose style is the plausible. They "put things" so cleverly, as to put the case quite in the right light—for their clients. They are calm and dispassionate in their

manner, and are great in banco—before the judges. They profess a contempt for juries, except, perhaps, in heavy and important special jury cases, when sometimes they condescend to convince them. They are often chancery men, and so in the habit of addressing judges, that,



THE ARGUMENTATIVE COUNSEL.

though they may be sophistical, they are never rhetorical. They would be ashamed of it, even if they could do it—which most of them could not. They are eminently argumentative, or affect to be so, which is the same thing as to style.

This is a species of the class of which there are several varieties; but they have all common characteristics. There is the *Nisi Prius* variety, and the Criminal Court variety; and these, again, are sub-divided; there is the special jury variety and the common jury variety; and

then, again, there is the Old Bailey variety, and the Sessions variety; and the Assize Court variety; and these



THE JURY COUNSEL.

differ greatly in style, as may be conceived. Still they all have a common character which abundantly distinguishes them from the preceding classes. They have all this in common, that they are in the habit of addressing twelve men at least to say nothing of the audience, of which several varieties always think more than of the jury. The twelve men may be small traders or farmers, or they may be gentlemen-merchants, hawkers, and the like; but still they are twelve men, and twelve laymen who know nothing of law, and have seldom much logical acumen, or very severe taste. Hence the style of the Jury Counsel is always more or less popular and *ad cap-*

tandum. The main distinction between the different varieties is in the amount of noise they make. The common jury variety are always more noisy than the special jury; and the sessions variety more so still. The criminal counsel, who has so often to defend men who have had the misfortune to get into mischief, as the facts are generally against him, has of course to appeal a good deal to the feelings. He denounces policemen in tones of thunder, and tries to make out that the real rogue is the prosecutor. All this requires exertion, and the less he is in earnest the more anxious is he to appear to be. Hence he is always noisy, and sometimes stentorian. One of the class was lately complimented at sessions, by one of



THE COXCOMBICAL COUNSEL.

his facetious brethren, upon his having reduced most of the magistrates to entire deafness. He is pathetic at

times, and then generally quotes some lines from Shakspeare (which he has carefully got up); but his usual characteristic is noise. The specimen delineated on the preceding page appears to belong to this variety; he is evidently "going to the jury."

This species—not generally much encumbered with business—affect the gentlemanly, and are, above all, anxious to look the character. They are usually handsome, are carefully well dressed, and their whiskers are almost always luxurious, cultivated and curled. The wig is always in fine order; it is never put on in a hurry; the linen collar, "choker," and "bands" are always pure and spotless, and without a crumple: they are always put on carefully and slowly. In short, everything about the man is nice; his whole air, aspect, and appearance are studiously proper and becoming. And there is the quiet consciousness of this, which completes the character. There is the complacent smirk of self-satisfied success in appearance. It is confined to appearance, for he is never—or hardly ever—heard; and when he is, he usually makes an ass of himself—for there is nothing in him; and he has so long been in the habit of devoting unlimited leisure to his outward guise and appearance, that his mind is poor. Nevertheless, it often happens that he has good "connections" and a patron; and thus there is a chance that he will get a place; a post in some department, or perhaps even a seat upon the bench at a police-court, where he will make an ass of himself in public, unless he has sense enough to be as silent as possible, and let his chief clerk do the

work, and direct him (in a whisper) what to say. Perhaps he gets an appointment in the colonies; or perhaps he succeeds to an estate, and disappears; or perhaps, upon the faith of his being at the bar, and the credit of his gentlemanly appearance, he marries a wealthy widow, and then also disappears.

This variety betrays and portrays itself. To use a legal phrase, "It is bad on the face of it." You



THE JOVIAL COUNSEL.

observe the eyeglass—an unfailing trait of the class—which is noted for its great powers of observation, exercised continually upon everything and every one in court; but with a constant eye to the facetious. Anything—in judge or jury, witness or audience, but above all in a brother barrister—on which a joke can be hung, is sure to be noted by that acute ear, and that unfailing eye. He is always a man without business: and his

great delight is to be sarcastic on his brethren who have it. He comes into court very late, and he goes very early, for he sits up at nights—not studying, but playing; and the probability is that he had much more wine than was good for him; for which reason he has a craving for soda water and other cooling drinks; and has no mind for work, or for anything but fun. He is generally very full of spirits, and when men have nothing to do he helps to beguile the tedium of the day; but when they are busy, he is a bore. He has no mind but for the comical side of things; and if there is a comical side to a case, he is sure to see it. He has often a taste for drawing, and if so, it always tends to caricature; and his ample leisure is spent chiefly in noting and portraying the little peculiarities of his brethren. He is a contributor sometimes to the lighter order of literature; and one of the species has obliged us with the foregoing sketches of “the brethren.”

DOWN AT WESTMINSTER.



PEOPLE talk about the World of London. London has a dozen worlds at least. For all that some of these know or care of others they might as well be shining in different planets. But there is one world with which most other worlds cannot avoid making occasional acquaintance—that is the world of Westminster Hall. Apart from the legislative chambers, in whose proceedings everybody is concerned, it must be strange indeed for any member of the general community not to be in-

terested, directly or indirectly, at one time or another, in a transaction connected with a Parliamentary Committee or a Court of Law. Certain it is that you will meet on most days down at Westminster—and more especially in the height of the season and the session, during the last two terms before the long vacation—representative men and women of all classes, drawn together by business or curiosity as the case may be.

The way down to Westminster—that is to say, the way of those who go from the Temple—has been made more easy than it was by the Thames Embankment, which will be a right royal road some of these days when it has intelligible approaches, and the trees have grown, and the small boys have been driven away, and carriages can be driven along it—when, in fact, it has dropped its present dissipated character of a show and a playground, and has settled down into a respectable thoroughfare. At present the swiftest mode of making the journey is by a penny steamer. But penny steamers are of course available only if you do not happen to be proud. The penny public whom you see on board are not pretty to look at, and seem principally possessed by a keen sense of economy, extended not only to travelling expenses, but to the article of soap. Some philosophic barristers patronise the boats; indeed there is a plentiful sprinkling of these early in the morning; but being residents in chambers they are principally juniors, and do not include the great dignitaries of the profession. The latter are represented, however, by their clerks—barristers' clerks are wonderfully partial to penny steamers—who may be

seen at all hours of the day going backwards and forwards with briefs and bags ; and among them, with Melancholy marking him for her own and remaining in undisputed possession, you may surely note the clerk of some unhappy Mr. Briefless, who "brings his master's grey wig down in sorrow to the court," with a constancy worthy of a more successful cause. They are horrible means of progression—those penny steamers—but there is no reason why they should be so. With a supply of boats such as should be employed, the river might be as crowded as the streets, for the mode of travelling might be made far pleasanter than the mode of travelling by land, and in point of speed a steamer has an advantage over any carriage except a railway carriage. There are thousands upon thousands of the public who would be glad to make use of a better class of boats, say such as the Saloon Steamers that now ply above bridge, only of suitable size. With conveyances of this kind the journey between London and Westminster might be made a festive progress, and passengers would cheerfully pay, say, the prices charged on the Metropolitan Railway, first, second, and third class. I throw out the hint to speculators, who, I am certain, would never repent a little enterprise in this direction.

The way down to Westminster by road is broad and pleasant enough after you get out of the Strand ; and scarcely have you passed Charing Cross than you come upon Westminster Hall, as represented by the people about you. It is, say, between eleven and twelve o'clock in the day. A few barristers, solicitors, and witnesses

are still going down to the courts; also "parties" in actions, their witnesses, and their friends. But a great many more of all these classes are bound for the committees, which sit for the most part at twelve. Head-long Hansoms are dashing along, conveying gentlemen with that kind of cheerfulness in their faces which comes of being engaged, under profitable conditions, upon other people's business rather than their own. A large number of the same class are on foot, walking three or four abreast, and engaged in pleasant discussion. The happiest of all are the witnesses, for they have not the same cares upon them as the parliamentary agents and solicitors. All they have to do is to stay in London and wait day after day until they are wanted, receive their liberal diurnal allowances for their trouble, and in the end permit the counsel on their own side to extract from them such information as they may have to supply, and prevent, if possible, the counsel on the other side from demolishing their assertions. There are some members of Parliament among the crowd, riding, driving, or walking, as the case may be. They are the members of the committees, and, if the day be a Wednesday, their number is increased by those going down to attend the morning sitting, or rather the afternoon sitting of the House.

As you get lower down, into Parliament Street proper, Westminster is still more largely represented; for here, on the left, is the Whitehall Club, a handsome stone building of a few years' standing, which accommodates a large number of persons whose avocations call them to

the neighbourhood. The members include M.P.s, parliamentary agents, barristers, solicitors, engineers, contractors, and business men of many kinds; and the institution, I believe, is found to be a useful success. For the public generally the popular resort appears to be a restaurant, still lower down, where even now, to judge by appearances as you pass the window, lunch seems to be going on. The lunches, however, at this hour, are not very numerous, and are confined, it may be presumed, to people who have risen late and gone out in a hurry, and have not had time to breakfast. A couple of hours hence, besides the occupants of the tables, you will see a luncher on every high stool before the counter, forming together a serried line of determined refreshers, escaped for a brief but pleasant period from their serious duties on the other side of Palace Yard.

Palace Yard, which you now approach, has become a noble expanse, and it will be nobler when certain old houses are removed. But turning your back upon these, there is no such fine spectacle in London as that presented by the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Hall, with the adjacent objects, including the handsomest bridge in the metropolis. If you are not a person of importance, which you probably are, you will at least fancy you are; for the policeman at the crossing, struck, no doubt, by your imposing presence, rushes forward and behaves with despotic tyranny towards a waggon, a light cart, and a four-wheeled "grinder," which he compels to draw up in order not to interfere with your progress. He would certainly exercise the same arbitrary authority

towards a Hansom which is also amongst the vehicles emerging from the bridge ; but the Hansom cabby is too much for the minion of the law, and nearly drives over you while you are availing yourself of the facility afforded by judicious regulations.

Inside the Hall of Rufus there are a great number of the same kind of persons as those who have accompanied you down Parliament Street, with the difference that the barristers, pacing up and down, or staying to talk in groups, are all wigged and gowned, and produce the inevitable impression which Mr. Dickens has made immortal, having reference to "that variety of nose and whisker for which the bar of England is so justly celebrated." There are a great many idlers among these—idlers in spite of themselves—and some of them seem to find it difficult to keep up an appearance of pre-occupation. It would be a very valuable addition to a legal education if its recipient could manage to throw into his face an expression which should inevitably convey the idea to the public mind that he would be particularly wanted in court in a quarter of an hour. But I have never known perfect success attend an attempt of the kind : and the impression usually conveyed by a more or less unknown junior wandering about Westminster Hall is, that it does not particularly matter where he may be. To-day one of this unhappy class has the temerity to take two ladies about, with an evident mission to show them the lions of the locality. You can see at once that they are not "parties" or witnesses. Parties and witnesses may be as young, as blooming, and as fashionably

dressed; but they would never be so smiling and so easy, wear that pretty fluttering manner, and talk with such charmingly volatile rapidity as the fair creatures in question. I should mention by the way, for the sake of the proprieties, that, besides the barrister, they are accompanied by a young gentleman who is evidently their brother, from the entire contempt with which he regards them and their proceedings. He gives them entirely up to their friend in the wig, who may be heard to say in the course of conversation—

“I think we might hear some fun in the House of Lords. They are engaged with appeals, and I think Miss —— is still addressing the court. This is her tenth day.”

The idea of hearing a lady conducting her own case finds immediate favour, and the party soon make their way to the bar of the House. As we also are idling and looking about us, we may as well follow them.

They are very inhospitable to strangers in the House of Lords, that is to say, when the House is sitting in its legal capacity. The court occupies a very small part of the legislative chamber, and the impression produced is that the members huddle together in order that they may not have to speak too loud. There is no accommodation even for counsel who are not engaged in the proceedings, and very little allowance is made for curiosity on the part of any class of persons; but you are free to push in at the bar and see and hear what you can.

Upon the present occasion there are only two lords besides the Lord Chancellor, and only one of these—an

ex-Lord Chancellor himself—appears to take any interest in the proceedings. The central object is the suitor. This, as we have already heard, is a lady. She is addressing the Court when we enter, seems to have been addressing it for some time past, and evidently intends to address it for some time in the future. As she stands behind a table, upon which her papers are placed, she is in advance of us, and we can catch a glimpse of her face only at intervals, when she turns aside to place her hand upon a document which she wishes to consult. But we can observe at first glance that she is a little lady rather than otherwise, that she has a neat, slender figure, carefully and compactly clad in black, and that upon her head she wears a little hat, “of the period” as to size, and to some extent in the manner in which it is worn, but by no means exaggerated in any respect. Upon further observation you see that she has what is called a clever face, with an expression indicative of culture and refinement; and the latter conclusion is justified by the voice, which is clear and ringing, and remarkable for its nice intonation. The lady, too, enjoys the advantage of an easy flow of language, which never halts for a point or an expression, and she has apparently a thorough mastery of her case. If the Lord Chancellor ventures to question a statement or criticise a conclusion, the fair pleader at once puts her little black-gloved hand upon the document containing her authority, and the great legal functionary is at once confuted. The next time he ventures an objection the same process is repeated, until his lordship at last seems to arrive at the belief that it is safest

not to open his mouth. The other lords, when equally rash, meet with a similar fate; so, by degrees, the lady has everything her own way, and continues her address unmolested. The composure with which she goes over her ground is something wonderful. There is no flurry, no undue excitement, and only a certain serious emphasis which her arguments receive distinguish her manner from that of an ordinary advocate, and indicate that she is pleading her own cause and has a strong interest in the case. She has near her a legal adviser in the person of a Queen's Counsel, but she seldom consults him, and seems indeed to know her own business remarkably well. This is the tenth day of her address, and it threatens to last for many days more: it would be rash indeed to calculate when it is likely to conclude. The case, it may be here mentioned, is a very complicated one, involving a question of legitimacy; the documents connected with it are of a voluminous character, and the lady has a great tendency to read these at length, to refresh herself, through their agency, in the intervals of original argument. How the case will end I will not venture to surmise, but the reflection certainly strikes one that if ladies get called to the bar and advocate other people's cases with the persistency that they do their own, the proceedings of the courts will be considerably lengthened, and far greater demands than under present conditions will be made upon the endurance of the judges.

Happily we are doing no more than amuse ourselves; so, after half an hour's acquaintance with the great legitimacy case, we are content to follow the example—set a

quarter of an hour before—of the young barrister and his interesting friends, and betake ourselves elsewhere.

There are several committees sitting up-stairs, and seeing a throng of persons proceeding thither we follow them, as in curiosity bound. The Commons' gallery is crowded with counsel, solicitors, agents, witnesses, and all the rest of the people of whom we have seen so many specimens in Parliament Street; for one of the rooms has just been cleared for the deliberation of the committee. Some are walking up and down; others are standing about in groups; everybody is talking; there is general excitement and some little hilarity on the part of those belonging to the apparently winning side. The witnesses are, as usual, more lively than anybody else. It is all holiday with them, far away as they are from their provincial homes; and their feet *not* being upon their native heaths, their names are all the more Macgregor. They begin already to take refreshment at the adjacent buffet, to compare notes as to who stayed latest, or did something most remarkable somewhere last night, and to make arrangements for dining together this evening and going to some entertainment afterwards—the words “Gaiety” and “Alhambra” being not unfrequently heard in such discussions. Mingled with this kind of talk you hear a great deal about corporations, town councils, water supplies, preambles, clauses, traffic, trade, shipping, curves, gradients, and engineering in general to any extent. An Irish Bill which is under investigation in one of the rooms is a frequent subject of conversation. It is connected with the supply of water to a large city, and a certain corporation

is more anxious, somehow, to confer the boon than the ratepayers are to receive it. We enter the room in expectation of some amusement, and are not disappointed.

It is a spacious and imposing apartment, conceived when the architect was in a massive mood, but with compensating tendencies towards lightness. The oak panelling and the window-frames are in antique style, but designed with a modern eye to business. The fashion is bold, with no gratuitous ornament. It is mediævalism made easy; mediævalism made light and cheerful, and receiving a modern character from green baize, blotting-paper, and wafers. At the upper end of the room, within the bar which excludes the profane public, is a table of horse-shoe shape, at the upper end of which, on the convex side, sit the committee. On the right—looking from the lower end of the room—is an exclusive table occupied by the clerk of the committee, who makes minutes of the proceedings. In the centre of the horseshoe is another exclusive table, occupied by a shorthand writer, engaged, I suppose, by the promoters, whose business it is to take a full note—that is to say, take every word—of what passes. There are reporters for the press also, at another table, in a corner; but their office can scarcely be an arduous one, judging from the little you ever see in the newspapers of proceedings before Parliamentary Committees. At a long table in front are the counsel, agents, attorneys, &c.

One of the counsel—a silk gown—is addressing the committee; but the members thereof do not seem to be listening with much attention. Their attitude is one of

keen and appreciative indifference ; and but for an occasional question in reference to a doubtful point you would think that they were not listening at all. The fact is that they are following the statement with much attention—with more, indeed, than they would bestow upon the speeches of counsel in general ; for the committee are for the most part men of business—in a parliamentary way, but still men of business—and regard counsel *primâ facie* as impostors. But the counsel in question is a great man. He is one of the leaders of the parliamentary bar. He is allied to noble families, and makes fabulous sums of money. So the committee pay him some kind of deference when they make any sign at all ; and when they speak to him it is always with social respect. They address him by his full name—a double surname—and always with a certain graciousness, even upon a point of difference. It is always—“ Excuse me, Mr. Verbose Jawkins, but I do not quite understand ;” or, “ I think, Mr. Verbose Jawkins, that the committee have some difficulty ”—and so forth. Mr. Verbose Jawkins, in the meantime—(he is a big, bland, handsome man, with a grand society manner)—is gliding through his brief in the pleasantest possible style, patronizing his facts, and setting forth his conclusions as if they were so many friends of his, who must make their way upon his introduction. He has to refer a great deal to his papers, and is occasionally coached by the keen gentleman at his elbow. But he talks all the time that he is reading ; and when he pauses for verbal suggestions, always does so with the air of being unnecessarily interrupted, and, after re-

ceiving enlightenment in this manner, corrects previous statements of his own with a severe air, as if they had been made by somebody else. In this manner he goes on for forty minutes; and then, after a peroration which shows that *he* at least is quite convinced, runs away and leaves the rest of the business to his juniors. He has during the forty minutes been opening the case for the promoters, and his fee for this little attention is five hundred guineas, to say nothing for refreshers and consultations.

Mr. Verbose Jawkins being wanted in another committee, the examination of witnesses is proceeded with under the conduct of juniors, as I have intimated. But all goes well. Never were witnesses more willing; never were counsel more alive to the importance of their communications. One of the witnesses is an elderly gentleman, and the counsel who examines him is a very young gentleman. The former, in fact, is the father of the latter; but the coincidence of names is apparently not noticed, and the examination goes on as glibly as may be.

The counsel looks as if he had never seen the witness before. Referring to his brief, apparently for information, he says—

“Your name, I think, sir, is Mulligan?”

“It is, replies Mr. Mulligan, with an evident desire for frankness and fair play.

“You are an alderman, I think, of the city of ——,” rejoins the counsel, determined, in the interests of his clients, that their witnesses shall speak with the authority of the offices they hold.

“I am,” says the witness, taking upon himself, with Roman fortitude, the responsibility involved.

“Then, Mr. Mulligan,” pursues the counsel, “I shall be obliged if you will tell the honourable committee”—and so forth. Junior counsel, I notice, are generally particular in referring to the committee as the *honourable* committee, which is a deferential concession not strictly enjoined by etiquette. I suppose they think that it looks parliamentary; and perhaps it does.

While the examination of the witness is being thus agreeably conducted, lunch-time arrives. There is no adjournment for this refreshment, and, indeed, the committee alone seemed to be influenced by the event. At about two o'clock stealthy waiters creep in and bring to the members small plates of sandwiches and little cruets of what appears to be sherry, the latter being imbibed from tumblers with the addition of water. As a general rule, members take in their lunch with an air of reserve, as if it were statistics which might be outbid, or arguments to be subsequently refuted. But one of the number I notice receives his with relish, as if he believed in it, and intended to give an opinion in its favour. Counsel are evidently not supposed to require extraneous support in common with the other assistants at the proceedings. Some, I suppose, are too busy; others too idle. Among the latter the clerk, I think, must be held to bear the palm. He is a young man—always a young man—scrupulously dressed, with an eye to dignity rather than display; and like all officials with too much leisure, he seems to hold work in supreme contempt. He does a

great deal in the fresh disposition, from time to time, of his papers, but has little employment for his pen. I suspect that he considers the actors in the scene as so many harmless lunatics, who have a *raison d'être* for his especial benefit, which benefit is rather a bore than otherwise. The most occupied person is one who has no formal recognition. He is the shorthand writer at the centre table, close by which is the chair assigned for the accommodation of the witnesses. His pen never ceases so long as anything is being said. He gets a little holiday if the counsel read something already on record, have to wait a minute or two for a document, or pause while refreshing themselves with facts; but these are but brief oases in the desert of his labours. He has one advantage, however, which those otherwise engaged do not enjoy. I suspect that he knows nothing of what is passing, and, while pursuing an almost mechanical task, is able to think about anything he pleases. He certainly never seems to take the smallest interest in the proceedings. The reporters for the press, who are digesting them into narrative form, evince something like an opinion, as you may hear in remarks from time to time, or see in the expression of their faces. But the official stenographer is unmoved as the Sphynx, and takes no account of the meaning of the words—his business is only with the words themselves. He does not even feel bound to see; and I believe that if the chairman were to take his seat with his head under his arm, this imperturbable functionary would not consider himself called upon to record the fact. I have heard of a gentleman of this class, on the staff of

a daily journal, being sent at Easter or Christmas time, when critics are in great request, to write a review of a theatrical performance. He attended with note-book and pencils as soon as the doors opened, was a little puzzled at the overture, but brightened up when the play began, and then proceeded cheerfully to take a full note of "Romeo and Juliet" from beginning to end. He was rather surprised, on arriving afterwards at the office, to find that he would not be required to "write out" the result of his labours. Upon another occasion, it is added, he was deputed to furnish an account of an eclipse of the sun which was exciting unusual attention. He attended with characteristic punctuality, note-book in hand, and waited with great patience during the progress of the event. But as nobody connected with the business in hand was heard to make any remark, he conceived that he had nothing to do, so contented himself with sending in a report that "the proceedings were devoid of interest." Such men as these are fortunate if they have much to do with parliamentary committees; for they escape from a great deal that is boring to other people.

There is nothing remarkable in the cross-examination of the witnesses, as far as the opposing counsel are concerned. But there is a gentleman representing a particular body of ratepayers, whose interests are affected by the Bill in a particular manner, who is not a barrister, but an attorney, and he imports into the proceedings any amount of liveliness that may be missed by his brethren of the law. He is a North-of-Ireland man, and does not care who knows it. His accent, indeed, proclaims the

fact in unmistakeable tones. The question involved has nothing to do with politics; but the importation of the Orange element seems inevitable in his case. Before he begins to speak, you can see "No surrender" visibly depicted on his countenance; and were he to volunteer to sing "Boyne Water," in illustration of his case, you would consider the song as a matter of course. He bullies the witnesses with forty-barrister power, and in the intervals of his questions persists, in defiance of all rule, upon addressing the committee in a similar strain. He is told that he must not do anything of the kind, so he does it more and more; and when he has abused everybody else he takes to abusing the committee itself. Like the gentleman of debating tendencies, who applied for the situation at the Bank, and was asked to state his qualifications, he "combines the most powerful invective with the wildest humour," and he treats his audience to an unlimited supply of both. The committee at first do not exactly know how to meet this kind of attack. They are protected in the House by the Sergeant-at-Arms, but here there is no functionary responsible for the preservation of order. A judge in court can invest an usher with terrible powers upon an occasion of the kind; but the committee have no usher, nor any analogous official. So, after enduring this belligerent advocate considerably beyond the limits of endurance, they order him to sit down and be silent. As well might they order a hurricane to take a calm view of affairs. The belligerent advocate only goes harder to work, and in connection, somehow, with a water supply and the rights of rate-

payers, we have again a furious tirade, in which the siege of Derry figures in a prominent manner, and "Boyne Water" becomes imminent. So in this dilemma the committee speak to somebody. I believe the somebody is the clerk, who has a great deal in common with the stenographer, and is sitting patiently during the scene, considering it no business of his, as he cannot see his way to including it in the minutes of the proceedings. That functionary seems, however, aroused at last to the consciousness that something is the matter; and I fancy that it is through his agency that a messenger is found, and a policeman appears upon the scene. But one policeman is nothing to a belligerent advocate, with his head full of 'prentice-boys at Derry. No surrender, the victory of the Boyne, the glorious, pious, and immortal memory of King William, and the rights of wronged ratepayers, all at the same time; and he makes a sturdy resistance to authority. So more policemen are called; and when four of those functionaries have arrived it is found that constitutional rights are controllable, and that even resistance to the water supply may be kept within proper bounds. By this I mean that it is possible to eject the belligerent advocate—not merely push him out by the neck and shoulders, but carry him out by the arms and legs—which extreme process is duly performed, despite protests which, I am sorry to say, besides the action of the tongue, are intimately associated with the hands and feet. The belligerent advocate, in fact, fights like a kangaroo, which is said to stand upon its tail, and use its four extremities at

once as aggressive agents. The efforts of the police, however, are in the end successful, and the belligerent advocate is carried to the gallery outside, where he is left to finish his speech as he best may to a crowd of clerks and idlers. The business of the committee is then resumed.

The consideration of the Bill is likely to occupy a great many days. Meanwhile let us look into another committee-room. Here the scene is very similar to that presented in the adjacent apartment. At first sight you would say that there were the same walls and windows, the same horseshoe table, the same committee, the same clerk, and the same shorthand writer. I cannot say the same counsel, for there are no counsel at all. The subject of investigation is connected with the registration of voters, and the witnesses are examined by the members of the committee themselves. Glancing again at the latter, you observe that they consist of prominent political men, including several Cabinet Ministers, the latter of whom are remarkably reticent, and seem bent upon acquiring information for their own purposes, as they doubtless are. The proceedings are very dull, and do not repay the uninterested listener, who is unlikely to make a long stay. In another room a railway Bill is undergoing investigation. It is an auxiliary to the Metropolitan line, and a great map of the route is affixed to the wall. We come next to an apartment where several little bottles of water are engaging the attention of the committee, and several scientific gentlemen are explaining the results of their investigation into the

quality of the more or less pure liquid. But there is nothing very interesting in all this, and a proposal to descend once more into Westminster Hall will probably meet with approbation.

All the Courts are sitting, and the proceedings in each must concern a great number of persons. But there is one court—the one whose entrance is the farthest from Palace Yard, and the nearest, therefore, to the steps we are now descending—which seems to have a peculiar interest for the public. There is a large crowd outside, the members of which are evidently incredulous of the policeman's assurance that there is no room for them within. But they can scarcely fail to concede the fact when they see the concourse which pours forth when the doors are presently opened; for it is now the middle of the day, and the Court has adjourned for refreshment.

In either body the idlers are predominant. Scores upon scores of these seem to spend their days down at Westminster, with no apparent object but to obtain gratuitous entertainment of a dramatic character. In this object, however, they must be frequently disappointed; for, although many cases in court may be "as good as a play," a great deal depends upon what play they are as good as. They may be a great deal better than some plays, and yet not be amusing. But I suspect that many of these mysterious people, who patiently sit out the long hours when everybody else wishes to get away, have a stronger inducement than mere amusement. Some are so mouldy in appearance, and so abject in their man-

ners, that they must surely come for shelter and something like society. It is a distraction, I suppose, for these unhappy men to concern themselves about other people's business rather than their own. I say men, but there are some women among them, and their case is still more anomalous. They come in couples, never alone, as the men always do, and instead of being abject in their manners, take up a tone of smart cynicism when commenting upon the proceedings to one another. To judge from their remarks, which I have overheard from time to time, I suspect these ladies to be under the fixed and unchangeable belief that her Majesty's judges are a set of old villains who have themselves been guilty of most of the delinquencies upon which they sit in judgment, and that the counsel—less wicked than the judges only because they are younger—are all habitual liars, and hate truth as another person, to whom their fair critics frequently compare them, is said to hate holy water. Further, I believe the said fair critics to entertain the impression that no poor man or woman can possibly obtain justice in a court of law.

This class of persons—men and women—form, as I have said, the majority of those who emerge from the court, which court, it may be here mentioned, is no other than the Court for the trial of Matrimonial Causes, otherwise known as the Divorce Court. But many of those concerned in the proceedings also come forth, and either go off to lunch or distribute themselves in groups about the Hall. A case of unusual interest is to be taken presently, and the parties appear to be all present. That

well-built gentleman with the objectionably curled whiskers and the somewhat simpering smile, who is dressed with such scrupulous care and regard for conventional authenticity, I take at once to be the co-respondent. What nonsense it is to judge people by appearances. The only co-respondent present (and he belongs to another case), I afterwards find to be that ugly, brutal-looking man with a black beard, whose countenance, sufficient to convict him elsewhere, ought to be his best defence in the Divorce Court—and would be, probably, were the Court a less experienced tribunal. The gentleman with the curled whiskers walks off with a lady, and promenades with her up and down the Hall. The fact I find to be that he is the lady's solicitor, who is giving her some parting words of advice previous to her appearance in the box; for the lady, it seems, is the petitioner, not the respondent, and will be the first witness called. She is a charming creature, the petitioner: gushing to a fault; with fair, fluffy, and fashionable hair, and no bonnet to speak of, as regards its size, though the accessory is calculated in every other respect to inspire admiring remark. Her costume—well, it is one of those complete dresses which are especially called “costumes” by milliners. Altogether her array is admirably calculated to encourage her natural gifts and graces; and it would be difficult to conceive a more perfect object of sympathy—except that she shows no sign of having been ill-treated. Her husband, I am informed, is not to be seen in the Hall. He is probably in court. But some of his witnesses are there; for the monster, it seems, intends to

defend the case. The witnesses pointed out to me are a couple of women—one said to be a cook, while the face of the other says “charwoman” as plainly as countenance can speak. These two worthies are sitting together upon the steps of the court discussing some sandwiches which they had brought with them in a basket, and enlivening their collation by frequent appeals to a flat bottle containing a white liquid which, other things being equal, might be mistaken for water. The naked eye, indeed, might make the mistake, but the naked nose never; besides, they take it in measured doses from a wine-glass, which is a mark of attention that people seldom pay to liquid in its virgin condition. The fair creatures seem to be greatly entertained by their conversation, which has partly reference to the particulars of the case just concluded, and partly to their expectations of the case about to commence. They are not long in anxiety concerning the latter; for the judge is now found to have taken his seat, and there is a general rush into the court. We get foremost places—never mind how—and are able both to hear and see.

The petitioner’s counsel, like her solicitor, is a “ladies’ lawyer”—a Q.C., and a highly successful man in his profession. He tempers firmness with the utmost suavity, and his appearance generally is greatly in his favour. He is none of your slovenly barristers who wear slatternly robes, crumpled bands, and wigs that have not been dressed for years. His appointments are all neat and compact, like himself generally, and he even carries his regard for the Graces so far as to wear gloves, unlike

most men at the bar, who fancy, I suppose, that clients and attorneys think them unbusiness-like. He states the petitioner's case with all the eloquence of which he is master; and such a course of insult and injury as he narrates one could scarcely suppose to be exercised towards so fair a victim except by a monster in human form. Not, however, that such is the appearance of the respondent, who is now pointed out to us, sitting at the solicitor's table. He looks a mere boy; a little dissipated, perhaps, in appearance, but more foolish than anything else. I believe his mental condition to be induced, not by insanity, as some of his friends have tried to make out, but a strong determination of blackguardism to the head. Looking at the petitioner, one cannot help hoping that he will prove the M. in H. F. which he is represented to be.

The petitioner is called upon in due course for her evidence. There are some ladylike delays, as there always are in such cases. First, the usher tells her that she must remove her right glove, as preliminary to holding "the book." What a pity that she was not apprised of this necessity a quarter of an hour before! Gloves that fit like gloves are not got off in a hurry; so there is a little delay, not made less by the confusion of the wearer, who is evidently conscious that the eyes of Europe are upon her. Then the judge tells her that she must lift her veil. He has a notion that the short spotted piece of net which the lady wears stretched across her face can be thrown over her head on the shortest

notice. Nothing of the kind. She has to unpin it, and take it bodily off. "So very provoking," as she afterwards remarks; "before the whole Court, too!" I am bound to say that she looks far more injured without her veil than with it; for a pretty little spotted thing which throws up the delicacy of the complexion is not so well calculated to inspire pity as it ought to be. The good impression which she has already created is confirmed by the manner in which she gives her evidence—somewhat reluctantly, and with the sympathizing assistance of the junior counsel, but consistently and to the purpose. She is not unagitated, as you may suppose, and at one point in her statement drops the glove which has been withdrawn. This is picked up at once by the taxing-master of the court, who retains it during the remainder of her examination, and then hands it back with a chivalrous air, such as would not have been expected from so prosaic an official.

At last, after having been thoroughly stared out of countenance by everybody in court for twenty minutes or so, and made the subject of *sotto voce* commentary of an improving kind on every side, the petitioner resumes her place in front of her counsel, her first care being to re-attach the spotted veil, which she does with the aid of a young person of most exemplary appearance, looking like a governess with a grievance, by whom she is accompanied. The glove she resumes at her leisure.

Some evidence follows in support of her case, which seems as strong a one as could well be. But the re-

spondent has a case also, and his, too, is not without support. The cook and the charwoman, inspired by their lunch, compromise themselves so completely that they are told one after the other to stand down; but the evidence of a gentleman who follows them is decidedly damaging to the petitioner. He makes some unexpected statements, indeed, which the other side shows no signs of meeting. When the time comes, however, when he is open to cross-examination, the junior counsel for the petitioner, who has never held a brief before, makes, from the freshness of his inexperience, a suggestion to his senior, to which the senior, after some hesitation, accedes. The witness, it should be here stated, bears a name not unknown as a novelist, but the fact has not yet appeared before the Court.

Ignoring loftily the allegations made by the witness, the junior proceeds in this fashion with his cross-examination:

Counsel. "I believe, sir, that among your other avocations you are a writer for the press?"

Witness. "I am."

C. "You are a writer of fiction, I believe?"

W. "Yes, I write novels."

C. "You write from your imagination, I think; you invent what you put into your books?"

W. "I certainly do not take my writings from other people."

C. "And what you write is not true?"

W. "I do not pretend it to be so."

C. "Oh! you do not pretend it to be so. So every-

thing you write is simply lies ; there is not a word of truth in any of your works ?”

W. “ They are written from the imagination.”

C. “ Do not prevaricate, sir ; remember, you are upon your oath. Have you been writing truth, or have you been writing lies ?”

W. “ Well, lies, since you will have it so.”

C. “ Very well, sir. And for how long have you been writing nothing but lies ?”

W. “ I must really appeal to his lordship, whether I am to be subjected——”

Judge. “ You had better answer the counsel, sir.”

C. “ I repeat, for how many years have you been writing nothing but lies ?”

W. “ Well, since you will have it so—about twelve years.”

C. “ Very well, sir ; it would have been much better to have told us so candidly at first. And you have a mother, I think, who also writes lies ?”

W. “ I have a mother who used to write novels.”

C. “ This is very sad—that I cannot induce you to be definite in your terms. For how many years did your mother write lies ?”

W. “ She wrote for about twenty years.”

C. “ And during that time never wrote a word of truth ?”

W. “ I suppose not, in the sense you mean.”

C. “ That will do, sir. You have been writing nothing but lies for the last twelve years, and your mother wrote nothing but lies for twenty years before. I need not

question you as to your statements concerning my clients, as the court and the jury must have formed their own opinion upon *that* subject. You may now stand down, sir."

The witness's testimony is thus triumphantly shaken—a fact of which the leader does not fail to make use in his reply. The judge tells the jury that they need not trouble themselves about the facts elicited in cross-examination; but the jury are evidently impressed with the lying propensities of the witness, and return a verdict for the petitioner without leaving the box.

A friend tells me that my memory is misleading me, and that the case to which I refer was not tried in the Divorce Court. It may be so; but it is nevertheless true that, even in such a well-conducted tribunal as that of Lord Penzance, a pretty petitioner excites more interest than an ugly one, and a bold line of cross-examination will sometimes materially assist a case.

We turn next into another court, where nothing less interesting than a breach of promise of marriage case is being tried.

The experience of most persons, I fancy, would tend to the conclusion that the offences which lead to actions of this nature are continually being committed in all classes of society, and that the occasional cases which we hear of in the courts are but a small proportion of the number. It is seldom, indeed, that we find an instance in which both of the parties belong to the upper ranks; for it is only under very exceptional circumstances that persons of high social status would voluntarily submit to the expo-

sure involved. As a general rule, the plaintiff or the defendant, or, it may be, both the one and the other, are of eccentric character, whose courtship has been removed from the ordinary conditions which precede matrimony. There are usually discrepancies as to age, or station, or money, or good sense, or good looks; and the revelations to which the proceedings lead frequently bring before us the strangest pictures of life. Here, for instance, is one as developed in evidence to-day. The plaintiff and defendant stand in the same relation to one another as the plaintiff and defendant in the case of "*Bardell v. Pickwick*"—that is to say, Mrs. Brown let lodgings, and Mr. Jones lived in them—otherwise there is not much resemblance between the two cases. Mrs. Brown was a widow with two children. She enjoyed a combination of personal characteristics which, as her counsel reminded the court, might, upon Royal authority, be considered attractions; that is to say, she was "fair, fat, and forty," though it seems that she did not, in the opinion of those who saw her in court, look anything like the age which was considered so charming by his late Majesty George the Fourth. Mr. Jones, described by the plaintiff's counsel to be about fifty-five, but "guessed" by one of the witnesses to be nearly twenty years older, is evidently, from his appearance an aged man, is paralysed besides, and has been so for some years, though one of the witnesses says that "he sometimes got better." He is, however, capable of enjoying life in his own way, which way seems to be by no means disassociated with amusements out of doors. Thus it appears that he has been in the habit of

accompanying Mrs. Jones, her two children, and his particular friend Mr. Robinson, a retired builder, to music-halls and similar places of recreation; and not only Mr. Robinson, but the cabman who drove them about, is stated to have been aware of the understanding between him and the fair—not to say fat and forty—widow. Mr. Robinson's view of the matter was that Mr. Brown, by proposing such an alliance, was "going to make an old fool of himself;" but it is to be feared that Mr. Robinson's opinion was not quite disinterested, for he admitted that he lived not only with, but "upon" the defendant, in whose premises he must have been rather at home than otherwise; for, according to his own comprehensive account, he slept there, he breakfasted there, he dined there, he supped there, and he "grogged" there. The force of living with a man, one would think, could no farther go. In return for this slight accommodation he was in the habit of giving defendant such little assistance as his infirmities might require; and the idea of being displaced by such an intrusion as a wife, seems to have been peculiarly listasteful to him. For the defendant, it should be observed, was a rich man for his station in life, and did not care who knew it," for he had cards announcing that he was "a widower and gentleman," and was so 'described in the books of the Bank of England," and further, that he had an office where he lent money. He told his friends that he had nearly five thousand pounds in the Bank, and that he would settle four thousand of it upon the plaintiff. The cabman, who, in consequence of being regularly employed to drive the party about on their plea-

tures, seems to have been quite on intimate terms, deposed that the defendant spoke about the lady "in a jocular way," the jocularity consisting, as he explained, somewhat to the surprise of the judge, in saying that she was a very nice woman, and that he intended to marry her. The cabman, too, was able to tell that he had driven Mr. Jones to Doctors' Commons, and saw him get a marriage-licence, and present it to Mrs. Brown. Nay, more, he certified that the defendant had given a material guarantee of his honourable intentions in a manner, I fancy, hitherto unknown to courtship, having ordered a brass plate with his own name to be placed upon her door, and adorned the portal with a touching mark of his affection in the form of a new knocker. It might be said that "he who adored her had left but the name," and that, notwithstanding the knocker, he did not care a rap about her. But such things are difficult to conceive; and the evidence discloses every appearance of the fact, that if ever man meant seriously towards a lady, that man was Mr. Jones.

But he failed in his troth after all. We are proverbially told that one power proposes, and another disposes; but Mr. Jones did both. He had proposed to Mrs. Brown, and then he felt disposed not to have her. Hence the present action. The defence, as frequently happens in breach-of-promise cases, is that the defendant was not worth having; and he certainly presents a helpless and generally abject appearance in court. But appearances of the kind are not always implicitly relied upon by judges and experienced juries. A wealthy

farmer, under similar circumstances, has been known to present himself before the tribunal in the guise of a farm labourer, in a smockfrock, with haybands round his legs, a pitchfork in his hand, and presenting generally, in his language and deportment, a picture of Cymon before he fell in love with Iphigenia. Such stooping to conquer is usually appreciated by spectators, and there is evidently a suspicion in the present case that Mr. Jones's miserable make-up has been overdone. Both Mr. Robinson and the cabman distinctly state that he was a very different person during his courtship—looked well fed, was well dressed, wore jewellery, and took care of himself generally. So his counsel's appeal cannot, evidently, be sustained upon the grounds urged; and the judge directing that the question is simply one of damages, the jury assess them at a good round sum—evidently beyond the expectations of the lady's counsel, who, in the absence of any allegation of damaged affections, had not anticipated that a business-like view of her loss of position would have produced so much. But the element of hazard enters considerably into the finding of juries, as we all know.

The next case is of a commonplace character, and there is nothing to note except a couple of stories then and there told to me, of a similar number of counsel present. One is a tall man, who looks principally keen, but has a great turn for humour, and will make any case in which he is engaged amusing. He has a large practice now, but a very few years ago he had none at all, and was glad to hold any brief with which his more fortunate

friends might entrust him. One of these was a very eminent member of the bar, who happened one day to have a particularly bad case, which, scandal has it, he felt particularly inclined to shirk. It was a bill case of a very disgraceful kind, and his client was on the wrong side ; so, under the plea of business elsewhere, he handed over his brief to the faithful junior, and sought refuge in another court. Half an hour afterwards he was in Westminster Hall, taking his ease in legal meditation fancy free, when the faithful junior was seen rushing out of court with his gown torn nearly off his shoulders, his hands rather more behind than before, and his wig scarcely asserting a connection with the wearer's head.

"Well, how have you got on?" asked the great man, smiling, and declining to notice the other's confusion.

"Got on!" was the agitated answer; "the bill is impounded, the witnesses are ordered not to leave the court, the attorney is to be struck off the rolls, and I—I have with difficulty escaped!"

What a charming thing it is to be a great man at the bar—so that you can leave embarrassing cases of the kind to faithful juniors!

The other member of the bar to whom I have alluded is a very severe-looking person, who enjoys a great deal of what is said to have been Lord Thurlow's privilege—that of looking a great deal wiser than any man ever was. Did I say that I heard only one story connected with him? I should have said two. One is to this effect. When a young man—he has learned a great deal since then, I have no doubt—he held the office of

judge in a small colony. He was the sole occupant of the bench, so he carried everything his own way. One day a member of the local bar disputed his ruling upon a certain point, and appealed to printed authority in support of his position. The judge's account of the incident, as given by himself, is said to be this: "Would you believe it—one of my own bar had the impertinence to tell me that he was right and that I was wrong, and he appealed to a law book to support him—his own book, and the only one in the colony."

"And what did *you* do?" was the natural question.

"What did I do?" was the indignant answer; "there was only one thing to do; I borrowed the book from him, and *lost it*, so that we shall hear no more scandal of that kind."

A prisoner brought before him on a charge of theft pleaded "guilty." The judge explained to him that he was not obliged to take this course, but might have the benefit of a trial; so the prisoner pleaded "not guilty." The jury acquitted him; upon which the judge, addressing the accused, said, in his most severe manner—

"Prisoner at the bar, you have confessed yourself a thief, and the jury have found you a liar—begone from my sight."

We are now in another court, where an unusual scene is presented to a stranger. He has surely come into a convent! There are nuns on all sides of him, varied by a few priests! At a second glance, however, he is assured of the fact. He has not come into a convent, but a convent has come into court. There is a nun in

the witness-box—a mother or a sister, which is it? Some of the mothers are as young as some of the sisters. She is certainly younger than most of the nuns present, has a comely face and figure, and the clearest of complexions. She gives her evidence—which has reference to a late member of the community who has been expelled, and the legality of whose expulsion is being tried by the court—with an artless innocence which interests all present. She is the best witness that the defendants have had on their behalf—for some members of the order were not more engaging in appearance than nuns need be, and cannot be considered to have given their evidence without a strong feeling against the plaintiff. This same plaintiff, who sits in front of the counsel, with her face towards the bench, has been the main object of public attention for a fortnight past, and her case promises to engage the court for days still to come. She is closely veiled, and the curious public have not been able to see her face since she gave her evidence in the box. She talks sometimes to an old gentleman and a young lady who sit on either side of her—the latter understood to be her sister—but otherwise shows little signs of animation. The sister, by the way, is of the period, peridy, and her elaborate coiffure, bonnet, and robes, contrast strangely with the muffled figure, in deep black, of the ex-nun. The latter made out a strong case in the beginning, but it has been weakened considerably by the character of the defence; and the revelations of convent life, made on the one side or the other, have at least not been so alarming as they were expected to be by the public. Still the impression upon the minds

of those who have watched the proceedings is that the girl has been harshly treated, and it is generally expected that she will get a verdict, with tolerably substantial damages. And here it may be mentioned—as I am not adhering to unity as to time, and have not confined myself to any one day “down at Westminster,” that the end justified the anticipations, as far as the court was concerned. How far the case can be considered concluded remains to be seen.

At four o'clock the committees close their proceedings, the Speaker of the House of Commons being announced in the different rooms as “at prayers;” and the Hall is once more full of the moving life from upstairs. Some of the courts, too, have risen, and are pouring forth their quota to the crowd. There is a large assembly of the public, moreover, in the Hall, waiting to see the members go into the House; and there is a great deal of cheering and counter-demonstration as certain statesmen are recognised. For a great question, of a constitutional character, is before the legislature, and popular feeling runs strongly on both sides. In a short time the last court will have closed, and all engaged therein will have disappeared, except those of the lawyers who are members of the House. These have a laborious time of it, and must perhaps attend in their places for two or three hours before they can get away to dine, either in the House or elsewhere. So those of the public who choose to remain must transfer their interest to a new direction.

THE OLD BAILEY.



THE JUDGE.

THE Old Bailey! Ugly words—associated (in a Londoner's mind, at all events) with greasy squalor, crime of every description, a cold, bleak-looking prison, with an awful little iron door, three feet or so from the ground, trial by jury, black caps, bullying counsel, a “visibly affected” judge, prevaricating witnesses, and a miserable, trembling, damp prisoner in a dock. The Old Bailey—

or rather the Central Criminal Court, held at the Old Bailey—is, *par excellence*, the criminal court of the country. In it all the excellences and all the disadvantages of our criminal procedure are developed to an extraordinary degree. The Old Bailey juries are at once more clearsighted and more pig-headed than any country jury. The local judges—that is to say, the Recorder and the Common-Serjeant—are more logical, and more inflexible, and better lawyers than the corresponding dignitaries in any of our session towns. The counsel are keener in their conduct of defences than are the majority of circuit and sessions counsel; and at the same time the tone of their cross-examinations is not so gentlemanly, and altogether they are less scrupulous in their method of conducting the cases entrusted to them. The witnesses are more intelligent and less trustworthy than country witnesses. The officers of the court keep silence more efficiently, and at the same time are more offensive in their general deportment than the officers of any other court in the kingdom. And lastly, the degree of the prisoners' guilt seems to take a wider scope than it does in cases tried on circuit. More innocent men are charged with crime and more guilty men escape at the Old Bailey than at any other court in the kingdom; because the juries, being Londoners, are more accustomed to look upon niceties of evidence from a legal point of view, and in many cases come into the jury-box with exaggerated views of what constitutes a "reasonable doubt," and so are disposed to give a verdict for the prisoner, when a country jury would convict.

The Old Bailey, although extremely inconvenient, is beautifully compact. You can be detained there between the time of your committal and your trial—you can be tried there, sentenced there, condemned-celled there, and comfortably hanged and buried there, without having to leave the building, except for the purpose of going on to the scaffold. Indeed, recent legislation has removed even this exception, and now there is no occasion to go outside the four walls of the building at all—the thing is done in the paved yard that separates the court-house from the pri-



THE ALDERMAN ON THE BENCH.

son. It is as though you were tried in the drawing-room, confined in the scullery, and hanged in the back garden.

The court-house contains, besides ample accommodation for the judges, aldermen, common-councilmen, sheriffs, and under-sheriffs, two large courts, called the Old Court and New Court, and two or three secondary courts, which are only used when the pressure of business is rather heavy. The gravest offences are usually tried in the Old Court on the Wednesday or Thursday after the commencement of the session, on which days one or two of the judges from Westminster sit at the Old Bailey. The arrangement of the Old Court may be taken as a tolerably fair sample of a criminal court. The bench occupies one side of the court, and the dock faces it. On the right of the bench are the jury-box and witness-box; on the left are the seats for privileged witnesses and visitors, and also for the reporters and jurymen in waiting. The space bounded by the bench on one side, the dock on another, the jury-box on a third, and the reporters' box on the fourth, is occupied by counsel and attorneys, the larger half being assigned to the counsel. Over the dock is the public gallery, to which admission was formerly obtained by payment of a fee to the warder. It is now free to about thirty of the public at large at one time, who can see nothing of the prisoner except his scalp, and hear very little of what is going on.

The form in which a criminal trial is conducted is briefly as follows: The case is submitted to the grand jury, and if, on examination of one or more of the witnesses for the prosecution, they find a *primâ facie* case against the prisoner, a "true bill" is found, and handed to the clerk of arraigns in open court. The prisoner is

hen called upon to plead: and, in the event of his pleading "guilty," the facts of the case are briefly stated by counsel, together with a statement of a previous conviction, if the prisoner is an old offender, and the judge passes sentence. If the prisoner pleads "not guilty," the trial proceeds in the following form. The indictment and plea are both read over to the jury by the clerk of arraigns, and they are charged by him to try whether the prisoner is "guilty" or "not guilty." The counsel for the prosecution then opens the case briefly or at length, as its nature may suggest, and then proceeds to call witnesses for the prosecution. At the close of the "examination in chief" of each witness, the counsel for the defence (or, in the absence of counsel for the defence, the prisoner himself), cross-examines. At the conclusion of the examination and cross-examination of the witnesses for the prosecution, the counsel for the prosecution has the privilege of summing up the arguments that support his case. If witnesses are called for the defence, the defending counsel has, also, a right to sum up; and in that case the counsel for the prosecution has a right of reply. The matter is then left in the hands of the judge, who "sums up," placing the facts of the case clearly and impartially before the jury, pointing out discrepancies in the evidence, clearing the case of all superfluous matter, and directing them in all the points of law that arise in the case. The jury then consider their verdict, and, when they are agreed, give it in open court, and the prisoner at the bar is asked whether he has anything to say why the sentence of law shall not be passed upon him

This question is little more than a matter of form, and the judge rarely waits for an answer, but proceeds immediately to pass sentence on the prisoner.

A visitor at the Old Bailey, to whom the courts of Westminster or Guildhall are familiar, will probably be very much struck with the difference between the manner in which the *Nisi Prius* and the criminal barristers are treated by the officials of their respective Courts. At Westminster the ushers, who are most unpleasant in their demeanour towards the public at large, are as deferential in their tone to the bar as so many club servants. Like Kathleen's cow, though vicious to others, they are gentle to them. Indeed, at Westminster the bar are treated by all the officials as gentlemen of position have a right to expect to be. But at the Old Bailey it is otherwise. They appear to be on familiar terms with criers, ushers, thieves' attorneys, clerks, and police serjeants. Attorneys' clerks, of Israelitish aspect, buttonhole them; bumptious criers elbow them right and left, and the policeman on duty at the bar-entrance chaffs them with haughty condescension. Of course there are many gentlemen at the criminal bar whose professional position overawes even this overbearing functionary; but it unfortunately happens that there are a great many needy and unscrupulous practitioners at the Old Bailey, who find it to their advantage to adopt a conciliatory policy towards everybody in office; for it is an unfortunate fact, that almost everybody in office has it in his power, directly or indirectly, to do an Old Bailey barrister a good turn. "Dockers," or briefs handed directly from

the prisoner in the dock to counsel, without the expensive intervention of an attorney, are distributed pretty well at the discretion of the warder in the dock, or of the gaoler to whose custody the prisoner has been entrusted since his committal ; and there are a few needy barristers who are not ashamed to allow their clerks to tout among prisoners' friends for briefs at half fees. It is only fair to state, that the counsel who resort to these ungentlemanly dodges form but a small proportion of the barristers who practise at the Old Bailey ; but still they are sufficiently numerous to affect most seriously the tone that is adopted by Old Bailey officials towards the bar as a body.

The conventional Old Bailey barrister, however, is a type that is gradually dying out. The rising men at the criminal bar are certainly far from being all that could be desired ; but their tone, in cross-examination, is more gentlemanly than that commonly in vogue among Old Bailey barristers of twenty years since. There are a few among them who occasionally attempt to bully, not only the witnesses, but even the judge and jury ; but they always get the worst of it. As a rule, cross-examinations are conducted more fairly than they were, and a determination to convict at any price is rarer on the part of a prosecuting counsel than of yore. If some means could be adopted to clear the court of the touting counsel, or, at all events, to render their discreditable tactics inoperative, a great change for the better would be effected in the tone adopted towards the bar by the officials about the court. As it is, it is almost impossible for a young

counsel to retain his self-respect in the face of the annoying familiarities of the underlings with whom he is brought into contact. On the occasion of our last visit to the Old Bailey, during the trial of Jeffrey for the murder of his son, we happened to witness a dispute between an insolent policeman, stationed at the bar-entrance, and a young



THE CRIER.

barrister in robes, who was evidently not an *habitué* of that court. The barrister had a friend with him, and he wanted to get a place for his friend, either in the bar seats, or in the seats set aside for the friends of the bench and bar. The policeman in question placed his

arm across the door, and absolutely refused to allow either the barrister or his friend to enter, on the ground that the court was quite full. The barrister sent his card to the under-sheriff, who immediately gave directions that both were to be admitted to the bar-seats, which were occupied by about a fourth of the number which they would conveniently accommodate, about half the people occupying them being friends of counsel who, we suppose, were on more intimate terms with the discourteous functionary than was the barrister in question. On another occasion it came to our knowledge that a barrister, who did not habitually practise at the Old Bailey, was refused admission at the bar entrance to the court-house by the police-sergeant stationed there. He showed his card, but without avail, and eventually he expressed his intention of forcing his way past the policeman, and told that official that if he stopped him he would do so at his peril. The policeman allowed him to pass, but actually told another constable to follow him to the robing-room, to see whether he had any right there or not. The barrister, naturally annoyed at being thus conveyed in custody through the building, complained to one of the under-sheriffs for the time being, but without obtaining the slightest redress. Of course this system of impertinence has the effect of confining Old Bailey practice to a thick-skinned few; but it does not tend to elevate the tone of the bar (of which the Old Bailey barrister is unfortunately generally taken as a type); and those who are jealous for the honour of the profession should take steps to do away with it.

To a stranger, a criminal trial is always an interesting sight. If the prisoner happens to be charged with a crime of magnitude, he has become quite a public character by the time he enters the dock to take his trial; and it is always interesting to see how far a public character corresponds with the ideal which we have formed



THE OLD BAILEY BARRISTER.

of him. Then his demeanour in the dock, influenced, as it often is, by the fluctuating character of the evidence for and against him, possesses a grim interest for the unaccustomed spectator. He is witnessing a real sensation drama, and as the case draws to a close, if the

evidence has been very conflicting, he feels an interest in the issue akin to that with which a sporting man would take in the running of a great race. Then the deliberations of the jury on their verdict, the sharp, anxious look which the prisoner casts ever and anon towards them, the deep breath that he draws as the jury resume their



THE OLD BAILEY ATTORNEY.

places, the trembling anxiety, or, more affecting still, the preternaturally compressed lips and contracted brow, with which he awaits the publication of their verdict, and his great, deep sigh of relief when he knows the worst, must possess a painful interest for all but those whom familia-

riety with such scenes has hardened. Then comes the sentence, followed, perhaps, by a woman's shriek from the gallery, and all is over, as far as the spectator is concerned. The next case is called on, and new facts and new faces soon obliterate any painful effect which the trial may have had upon his mind.

Probably the first impression on the mind of a man who visits the Old Bailey for the first time is that he never saw so many ugly people collected in any one place before. The judges are not handsome men, as a rule, the aldermen on the bench never are; barristers, especially Old Bailey barristers, are the ugliest of professional men, excepting always solicitors; the jury have a bull-headed look about them that suggests that they have been designedly selected from the most stupid of their class; the reporters are usually dirty, and of evil savour; the understrappers have a bloated, overfed, Bumble-like look about them, which is always a particularly annoying thing to a sensitive mind; and the prisoner, of course, looks (whether guilty or innocent) the most ruffianly of mankind, for he stands in the dock. We remember seeing a man tried for burglary some time since, and we came to the conclusion that he had the most villanous face with which a man could be cursed. The case against him rested on the testimony of as nice-looking and ingenuous a lad as ever stepped into a witness-box. But, unfortunately for the ingenuous lad, a clear *alibi* was established, the prisoner was immediately acquitted, and the nice boy, his accuser, was trotted into the dock on a charge of perjury. The principal witness against him

was the former prisoner, and we were perfectly astounded at the false estimate we had formed of their respective physiognomies. The former prisoner's face was, we found, homely enough; but it absolutely beamed with honest enthusiasm in the cause of justice, while the nice lad's countenance turned out to be the very type of sly,



THE PRISONER AT THE BAR.

insidious rascality. It is astonishing how the atmosphere of the dock inverts the countenance of any one who may happen to be in it. And this leads us to the consideration how surpassingly beautiful must that ballet-girl have been, who, even in the dock, exercised so extraordinary a fascination over a learned deputy-judge at the Middlesex sessions not long ago. We remember once to have

heard a well-known counsel, who was defending a singular ill-favoured prisoner, say to the jury, "Gentlemen, you must not allow yourselves to be carried away by any effect which the prisoner's appearance may have upon you. Remember, he is in the dock; and I will undertake to say, that if my lord were to be taken from the bench upon which he is sitting, and placed where the prisoner is now standing, you, who are unaccustomed to criminal trials, would find, even in his lordship's face, indications of crime which you would look for in vain in any other situation!" In fairness we withhold the learned judge's name.

Perhaps the most ill-favoured among this ill-favoured gathering are to be found among the thieves' attorneys. There are some Old Bailey attorneys who are respectable men, and it often happens that a highly-respectable solicitor has occasion to pay an exceptional visit to this establishment, just as queen's counsel of standing at Nisi Prius are often employed in cases of grave importance; but these solicitors of standing are the exception, and the dirty, cunning-looking, hook-nosed, unsavoury little Jews, with thick gold rings on their stubby fingers, and crisp black hair curling down their backs, the rule. They are the embodiment of meat, drink, washing, and professional reputation to the needy barristers whom they employ, and, as such, their intimacy is, of course, much courted and in great request. Of course many Old Bailey barristers are utterly independent of this ill-favoured race; but there are, unfortunately, too many men to be found whose only road to professional success

lies in the good-will of these gentry. There are, among the thieves' lawyers, men of acute intelligence and honourable repute, and who do their work extremely well; but the majority of them are sneaking, underhand, grovelling practitioners, who are utterly unrecognised by men of good standing.

OUTSIDERS OF SOCIETY AND THEIR HOMES IN LONDON.

WHENEVER I looked up from my newspaper I met the eye of a middle-aged gentleman who was sitting in the same box—a box, I should mention, in the coffee-room of an old-fashioned hotel in London, which is partitioned off in primitive style. I say gentleman advisedly, for the stranger had every apparent claim to be so called. For the rest there was little to distinguish him from the crowd of well-dressed and well-mannered persons whom one meets about in public places. He might be a clergyman, or a lawyer, or a doctor, though I should doubt his being an active member of either profession. He gave you the idea of a man retired from any pursuit in which he might have been engaged, and to be occupied rather in killing time than in inviting time to kill him. He had a healthy, happy-looking face, bearing no traces of hard work or deep thought, and his hair was only partially grey. He had a mild eye, and a mild voice, and a mild manner—I noticed the two latter qualities through his intercourse with the waiter—and was so suave in his ways as to be polite even to the port that he was drinking after an early

dinner. He handled his decanter in a caressing manner such as he might adopt towards a favourite niece, and took up his wine-glass as gently as if it were a child.

Whenever I met his eye, I noticed that it gave me a kind of recognising look, which, however, was not sustained; for, before he had thoroughly attracted my attention he always returned to the illustrated journal before him, as if suddenly determined to master some abstruse subject with a great deal of solution in the way of woodcuts. His communicative appearance made me think that I had met him before, but it did not occur to me where, so I took no further notice. Presently he spoke, but he only said—

“I beg your pardon, sir.”

There was nothing to beg my pardon about, so I begged his, not to be outdone in gratuitous courtesy. Then he begged mine again, adding—

“I thought you made a remark—I did not quite hear.”

No, I said, I had not made any remark. Then we both bowed and smiled, and resumed our reading—the stranger with some little confusion, I thought.

After a time he made a remark himself.

“I should not have intruded,” said he, “but I thought I had met you before.”

I am not one of those persons who think that every stranger who addresses them in a public room means to pick their pockets, but I have a proper prejudice against being bored, and in any case I had no resource but to

answer as I did, to the effect that I could not recall the when and the where.

“Were you ever in Vancouver’s Island?” the stranger asked.

In the cause of truth, I was obliged to declare a negative.

“Then it could not have been there,” said he, musingly; ‘but,’ he added, “you might have known Colonel Jacko—a relation of mine—who was governor of the Island. You remind me of him—that is why I ask.”

I did not quite see the connection between knowing a man and bearing a personal resemblance to him, but in disavowing any acquaintance with Colonel Jacko, I did so with all courtesy.

“You have been probably in New Zealand?” pursued the stranger, warming apparently into considerable interest in the question involved; if so, you must have known Major-General Mango, who commanded there in 18—.”

I was obliged to confess my ignorance of the unfortunate colony in question, and of the distinguished officer alluded to.

“I merely asked,” continued the stranger with a desponding air, “as he was a relation of mine.”

I had nothing to do with his relatives any more than himself, but his manner was so gentle that I could not think it intentionally obtrusive, so I acknowledged the receipt of the information as pleasantly as possible.

“If you had been in India,” he pursued, taking it for granted apparently that I was no traveller, “you would

probably have met one of my sons. One is in the civil, the other in the military, service. Both fine fellows. The elder was political agent at Tulwarpatam at the time when the Rajah was so aggressive, and it was through his influence that his highness was induced to remit the Abkaree duties, and give up his claim to the contested Jaghires. The other was through the mutinies, and was wounded both at Delhi and Lucknow—curious coincidence, was it not?”

I admitted that his sons seemed to have done the State some service, and remarked upon the coincidence as one of those mysterious dispensations of Providence for which it is impossible to account. And that was all I could do towards the conversation, which dropped at this point.

Presently the stranger took his hat, with an undecided ultimately effectual movement. Then he called the waiter, and had a little conversation with that functionary about the port, which he said was not quite the same that he used to have in the year 1835. (I strongly suspect, by the way, that he was right in this supposition; as the wine he had been drinking belonged probably to the celebrated vintage of 1869.) At last he made a movement to depart, and ultimately did depart, but only after a great deal of delay; and even when in actual motion across the room, he looked back more than once, as if expecting somebody to ask him to remain.

When the waiter came to clear away the abandoned decanter and glass, I asked him if he knew the gentleman who had just gone out.

“Yes, sir,” was the reply; “we have known the

gentleman for some years, though he does not come very often. He lives by himself somewhere in town, and has no relations except some who are abroad. He says he has no friends, too, as he has lost a great deal of money, and cannot keep the society he did. He doesn't seem to know anybody who comes here, though he talks to some now and then, as he has to you."

I was sorry not to have heard this before, that I might have treated the stranger with a little more attention. For this glimpse I had of him, and the few hints given me by the waiter, were sufficient to assure me that he belonged to a class who are more perhaps to be pitied than the merely poor; that he is in the world but is not of it, and has a residence but is without a home; that he is, in fact—an Outsider of Society.

People engaged in active pursuits—whether in spending or making money—are not likely to be troubled by deprivations of the kind referred to. They live among their peers, with whom they have interests in common. They are as important to others as others are important to them. They are in the stream of pleasure or business as the case may be. There is no danger that they will be forgotten. Their doors are besieged by visitors, drawn by diverse attractions; so that it is necessary to make a vigorous classification of the latter, not only of the usual social character, but distinguishing those who come to oblige the master of the house from those who come to oblige themselves. Their tables are covered with cards and letters, prospectuses, tradesmen's circulars, begging petitions, newspapers they have never ordered, and books

that it is thought they may possibly want. Their vote and interest is always being requested for deserving individuals, and their subscriptions for equally deserving institutions. Chance of being forgotten indeed ! So long as they can be made useful there is as much chance of the Bank of England being forgotten. Such men may be alone, sometimes, in one sense of the term. That is to say, their relations may be scattered or dead. But that is of very little practical moment in their case. They can always find people prepared to be second fathers or brothers to them, and even second mothers and sisters, it may be. They can always marry, too, and then a home establishes itself as a matter of course.

But there are—who shall say how many?—people living in London who live almost alone ; who have no society except of a casual, and what may be called an anonymous kind ; and whose homes are merely places where they may obtain shelter and rest. I am not here alluding to the class who are social and domestic outlaws because they are positively poor. There is no anomaly in this condition of life ; it is a natural consequence of having no money. The people I mean have mostly money enough for themselves, but not sufficient to make them important to others, and obtain for them consideration in the world. Sometimes their positions have changed ; sometimes things have changed around them and left their positions as they were, the result being much the same. It may be that they are seeking to make a little more money by such employments as agencies, secretaryships, and so forth—employments the most

difficult of all to get, as any man of moderate education and abilities can do the duties—but most frequently they are content to vegetate upon what they have, and to concentrate themselves upon the attainment of companionship and home. When one of the active men whom I have mentioned goes away from home, the Post Office establishment is ruthlessly disturbed by mandates for the re-addressing and forwarding of letters. The migration of one of our passive friends makes no difference to anybody. Except it be an occasional communication from a relation in a distant colony, sent to the care of an agent, he has no letters to trouble him, and if he did not occasionally make a show of existence by asserting himself in pen and ink, he might perish out of the memory of man. To such people the advertising columns of the newspapers must possess peculiar interest; for a large number of the announcements seem expressly intended to meet their requirements, while, on the other hand, an equal number of the specified “Wants” seem to come from their class.

Homes for special purposes appear to be plentiful enough. You cannot take up a newspaper without having your attention called to a dozen or two. Apart from the “Home for Lost and Starving Dogs,”—which is an establishment not applying, except by sympathy, to any class of my readers—we have such charities as the “Convalescent Home,” established by the wife of the Premier. In the next column we are sure to be reminded of the “Home for Little Boys,” in addition to which has just been appropriately projected a “Home for Little Girls,”—not the least desirable object of the

two. An individual speculator has also established what he rather invidiously calls an "Epileptic Home for the Sons of Gentlemen,"—there being, it is to be presumed, genteel as well as vulgar forms of the malady in question. "Educational Homes" for youth of both sexes abound in newspaper announcements. They may afford very good opportunities for the intended purpose, but I should prefer placing my trust in establishments which are candidly called schools. Not long since I saw an advertisement in a morning paper which ran, as nearly as I can remember, in these terms:—

"A clergyman in a popular parish by the sea-side, offers an Educational Home to a few little boys of good principles, the sons of gentlemen. Apply," &c.

Now, without desiring to be harsh to the advertiser, I must take leave to say that the above contains several important errors in taste. It would have been just as well, and a great deal better perhaps, had the clergyman refrained from mentioning the popularity of his parish, however much the description might be deserved. His specification of little boys "of good principles" suggests a slur upon little boys in general which does not come well from an educator of youth; and one would think that he would be more usefully engaged in taking in hand little boys of bad principles, if any such exist. But the inference next suggested is even less creditable to the reverend advertiser. It is of no use, it seems, for little boys to have good principles, as far as he is concerned, unless they be the sons of gentlemen. This is sad.

But the mention of homes of a special character—of

which there are many more in London than have been enumerated—is only incidental to my present purpose. I especially allude to lonely people who seek society, and to which society, in a certain limited degree, seems continually offering to sell itself. And among lonely people, as far as homes are concerned, must be included “persons engaged in the City,” or “engaged during the day,” who are frequently appealed to by advertisers. The number of persons—idle or occupied—who want homes seem to be equalled only by the number of persons who are prepared to offer them, with very small pecuniary temptation. I have always thought that a great deal of self-sacrifice must be necessary in the case of the family of a dancing-master who for years past has been advertising his lessons with the addition that “the Misses X—— will officiate as partners.” The Misses X—— must surely be tired by this time of dancing with people who drop them directly they are able to dance. But it must be still more sad to take into your family any chance stranger who may seem sufficiently respectable, board him, and lodge him, and promise to be “cheerful” and “musical” for his amusement. But offers of this kind are plentiful enough, and they would not be made were there not a fair supply of people to embrace them.

Looking back at only one daily paper for only a week or ten days may be found a host of advertisements of both classes; and I will first allude to a few of these among the “Wants.”

Here is a specimen :—

“Home wanted by a respectable elderly lady—rather

invalid, not helpless—in a sociable family; meals with it understood. Children objectionable. Large bedroom (not top) facing east or south indispensable. Aspect important. Forty guineas. Must be west of Holborn: other localities useless. Letters," &c.

It would be difficult to determine the exact state of this respectable elderly lady's health from the above description, there being a rather long range between the affirmative and the suggestions offered by the negative statement; but even though she be in a high state of agility the conditions are surely rather complex: and there must be families in which forty guineas a year go a great way if she has any chance of gratifying her wishes.

Another elderly lady is more explicit, if not quite grammatical. She describes herself as "an invalid from rheumatism," and her desire is "to board with a genteel, cheerful family." Here again there must be "no children." She prefers "the neighbourhood of St. John's Wood, near the Park, or an equal distance from the West-End." Letters must be prepaid.

The following looks like a case in which society is an object:—

"Board and residence wanted, by a widow lady and a young lady, and partial board for a young gentleman, within three miles north of London, near a station. Children objected to. [Poor children!] Three bedrooms indispensable. Preference given to a musical family, where there is a daughter who would be companionable." Terms, it is added, "must be moderate."

The following has not a pleasant sound:—

“Wanted, a comfortable home for a female aged seventy years, where there are no children [children again!]. She must be treated with great firmness. Twelve shillings will be paid weekly for board, lodging, and washing. Surrey side preferred,” &c.

It is evident that the above offer has not been made by the person for whom the accommodation is sought. But such requirements, including even the “great firmness,” doubtless get supplied. One of the numerous advertisers who provide homes for invalid ladies offers, I observe, to give “reference to the relatives of a lady lately deceased,” who lived in the house for seven years.

Here is a “home” of remarkable character; it is described as situated in a favourite suburb on the Metropolitan Railway, replete with every beauty and convenience, the details being specially enumerated; and besides the railway, omnibuses pass the door to all parts of town. “The advertiser,” it is added, “would prefer one or two City gentlemen of convivial disposition, and to such, liberal terms would be offered.”

The advertiser has evidently an abstract love for City gentlemen of convivial disposition, since he is prepared to share his home with any one or two of them. And if a City gentleman of convivial disposition could make a vast wilderness dear—which it is very possible he could do—one can fancy what a paradise he would make of this Cashmere at Shepherd’s Bush. It is not quite clear, indeed, that the advertiser is not prepared to pay instead of being paid by the charming society he seeks, since he

says that "to such liberal terms will be offered." It must be a very delightful thing to be a City gentleman of convivial disposition, with the feeling of having unknown friends, which has been said to resemble our ideas of the existence of angels.

Another proffered "home" is described as having, in addition to all domestic comforts, "two pianos, with young and musical society." This may be very pleasant; but I should feel some misgivings at the prospect of making one of a "young and musical society" let loose upon two pianos at the same time. There are different opinions, too, even about the best music, under different conditions. The Irish soldier who was singing the "Last Rose of Summer," perhaps from the bottom of his heart, but certainly at the top of his voice, was told by his English comrade to hold his noise. "And he calls Moore's Melodies a noise," said the musical enthusiast, disgusted at the want of taste exhibited by the cold-blooded Saxon.

A cheerful state of existence is suggested by another advertisement of a "home":—

"Partial board is offered to a gentleman by a cheerful, musical, private family. Early breakfast; meat tea. Dinner on Sundays. Gas, piano, croquet. Terms £1 1s. per week. Write," &c.

The board must be partial indeed if that melancholy meal known as a "meat tea" enters into the arrangement. A "meat tea" would in any case mean that you were expected to go without your dinner, since, if you had dined you would not want meat with your bohea.

But there is no disguise about the matter here, for you are frankly told that there will be dinner, as distinguished from a meat tea, on Sundays. It is a monstrous, unnatural idea, and the family must be very cheerful, very musical, and very private, I should think, to reconcile most men to such a state of things. Perhaps the piano and the croquet are intended as a set-off, by suggesting female society of an accomplished kind; and of course there are some girls for whom some men will submit to meat teas; but I have my own opinion as to the chances of either one or the other.

Here is an advertisement of a "home" couched in popular terms. It would be a pity to interfere with the writer's style, so I give it in full, with the omission, of course, of the address:—

"A lady having a larger house than she requires, is desirous of increasing her circle by receiving a few gentlemen (who are engaged during the day) as boarders. The society is cheerful and musical. To foreigners anxious to acquire elegant English, this is a good opportunity."

As for the lady having a larger house than she requires, one can fancy that to be the case if she has room for several gentlemen, but how is it that so many persons get into larger houses than they require, and are thereby impelled to offer similar accommodation? It must be confessed, too, that the opportunity for foreigners to acquire elegant English is not very apparent. Are the candidates for residence examined in elegant English before they are admitted into the family? As for the

cheerfulness and the music, those are of course matters of taste.

Among other "homes" which we find offered in the same paper is one with a curious recommendation attached. It has "just been vacated," we are told, "by a young gentleman who has successfully passed his examination." If the same advantage can be secured to the incoming tenant the accommodation would be decidedly cheap, for the modest sum of thirteen shillings a-week, which is all that is asked. But we are not told what is the nature of the examination—for the army, the Civil Service, a degree, or what? Perhaps it is only in the "elegant English" intended to qualify the tenant for the higher social sphere of the lady with the partially superfluous house.

Invalid or "mentally afflicted" persons are always in great request among advertisers. Several applications are before me now. One of these comes from "A medical man, residing in a large and well-furnished house in one of the healthiest and most convenient out-districts of London," who "wishes to receive any patient mentally or otherwise afflicted, as a resident; boarding or separate arrangement as desired; a married couple, or two sisters, or friends, not objected to." The contingency of companions in misfortune is a good idea; our medical friend is evidently a far-sighted man. Then we find the wife of a medical man, who is willing to take charge of "an afflicted (not insane) lady, gentleman, or child, to whom she offers a comfortable home with experienced care." A similar offer is made by the occupants of a

farmhouse, but these do not draw the line at insanity, but declare that they have had the care of an insane patient for many years, and can be highly recommended in consequence. Some people, indeed, are so fond of taking care of insane patients that they would not have a sane one if you made them a present of him. An illustration of this curious taste came under my notice not long since. A very deserving man called to see a patron of his who had procured him a post of the kind, which he had held for several months. "I am very glad to see you, John," was the greeting, "and hope you are getting on in your employment." "Ah, that indeed I am, sir," was the answer: "thanks to you, I am most comfortably provided for—in fact, I was never so happy in my life. How did I get these two black eyes, sir? Oh, *he* gave them to me yesterday morning. Oh, yes, I shall always be grateful—I never was so happy in my life."

It must be admitted that the majority of the "homes" which people offer one another through the medium of the papers are not exposed to contingencies of this kind; but the said people must surely run the risk of finding themselves ill-assorted in no ordinary degree.

It is not to be supposed indeed that utter strangers would go and live together without some strong inducements; and these inducements are generally money on the one side and society on the other. The people who want the money—through having "larger houses than they require," or other causes, of which any number may be found with great facility—are less to be pitied

than the people who want the society, for the latter must be dismally reduced in this respect before they can be brought to take it on chance. In a "cheerful family, musically inclined," part of the compact of course is that the incomer shall be cheerful, if not musical and companionable, at any rate. The requisition sounds awful, but it is one to which hundreds of harmless persons in this metropolis submit rather than be left alone. Many, of course, are induced by considerations of economy; and of those still more unfortunate than the ordinary class, are those of the more helpless, who do not accept a "home," upon independent terms, but obtain it either gratuitously or for some very small payment upon condition of being useful or helping to make things pleasant. Of these there are large numbers, to judge by the advertisements; and I suspect that they are rather worse off than those who "go out" regularly as governesses and companions, for the latter have at least a chance of lighting upon rich and generous patrons. And here I may mention that a great deal of nonsense is written about governesses—more perhaps than about most other things. Their trade is a bad one, no doubt, because the market is overstocked. But that is no fault of the employers, who cannot be expected to fill their houses with young ladies of varying tastes and tempers, on account of their presumably "superior" education and intelligence. Nor is it to be taken for granted that every governess is of the "superior" kind, and all the people who engage their services, vulgar wretches who delight in inflicting mortification upon their betters.

Who has not heard of families of the best breeding and refinement being tortured beyond all endurance by governesses of conspicuous inability to teach, who have let their pupils run wild, and concentrated their attention upon the men of the house, and whose insolent and overbearing ways have made the work of getting rid of them one of no common difficulty? Our novelists have not given us many illustrations of this side of the picture; but you may depend upon it that Becky Sharpes are at least as plentiful as Jane Eyres in real life.

A favourite resort of the homeless are boarding-houses. Of these establishments there are hundreds in London—from those devoted to the entertainment of minor City clerks, rigorously “engaged during the day,” to those which—one is almost led to suppose—nobody under the rank of a baronet is received, and even then not without a reference as to respectability on the part of a peer. But most of these houses have one or two features in common. There is always a large admixture of people who go there for the sake of society; and of this number a considerable proportion is sure to consist of widows or spinsters of extremely marriageable tendencies. The result is that, unless the residents be very numerous, individual freedom is lost, and, instead of living an independent life as at an hotel, the members of a “circle” find themselves surrounded by such amenities as may be supposed to belong to a rather large and singularly disunited family.

A great many marriages, however, are made in these establishments, and it is not on record that they turn out otherwise than well. It must be admitted, too, that men

go there to find wives as well as women to find husbands, so that the arrangement thus far is fair on both sides. But I have been informed by men who are not among the latter number, that it is found difficult sometimes to get the fact generally understood. The consequent mistakes of course lead to confusion, and the result is the occasional retirement of determined bachelors into more private life.

There are "homes" in London where there is not much mention of marriage, except as a reminiscence, and few of their members have the chance even of this melancholy enjoyment. I allude to houses in which, through the exertions principally of benevolent ladies, other ladies, who would probably be equally benevolent were they not less fortunate, have a residence assigned to them upon advantageous terms. That is to say, they live in an establishment where all their wants are supplied upon the payment, by themselves or their friends, of a small contribution towards the necessary outlay, the remainder being covered by subscriptions of a strictly private character. The recipients of this assistance are all gentlemen—as is necessary to the state of social equality in which they live—and their admittance is obtained by favour of the benevolent ladies in question. These ladies are influenced, I suppose, by the introductions brought by the candidates, and considerations of their previous position—which has in every case been a great deal superior to their present position, as may be supposed. The said "homes" are very few in number; so far as I know, they have no connection with one another, and

they are entirely private in their arrangements. The neighbours may happen to know that a certain house in which they find so many ladies living together is not a boarding house in the ordinary acceptation of the term ; but there is nothing to proclaim the fact, and the inmates live in an apparent state of independence equal to that of anybody about them. And they live as contented, I believe, as can be in the case of persons who are not of such social importance as they were, and who have plenty of leisure to talk over the fact. They are all gentlewomen, as I have said, and upon terms of social equality ; but it may be supposed that there are differences between them, as there are between people generally in society. You may depend upon it, that the lady who is related to an earl is of opinion that she is a preferable object of consideration to the lady who is related only to a baronet, while the claims of the other ladies to their several degrees of precedence are not unadjusted for want of accurate investigation. A few very likely "give themselves airs" upon this score, while some pride themselves upon their beauty when young—(none of the ladies are *quite* young now)—and others establish a superiority upon account of their mental gifts. All this imparts a pleasant variety to the conversation which would otherwise be in danger of falling into monotony. Such at least, I suppose, to be the case, for I am dealing in generalities, and cannot claim to a knowledge of any one in particular of these ladies' homes. For the rest, the occupants are said to pass an easy, agreeable life, more especially those who are not without friends whom they can

go to visit—in which case they are free to have as much amusement as if they lived in houses of their own.

I said something about boarding-houses just now. A great many of the homeless who have not tried these establishments—or having tried them are unwilling to renew the experiment—live in furnished lodgings. On the Continent they would probably put up at hotels: but hotels in this country are not adapted for modest requirements, and furnished lodgings take a place which they have not yet learned to occupy. The mode of life is anomalous. It is neither public nor private. You may be independent in an hotel; you may be independent in your own house; in lodgings you can be independent by no possibility. If you spend rather more money than you would either in an hotel or your own house, you obtain comfort and attention; but the object of most persons who take lodgings is to be rather economical than otherwise, so that the reservation is of very little avail. Lodgings are of two classes—those that profess to be so, and those that solemnly declare they are not. The former are decidedly preferable, apart from the immorality of encouraging a sham. In the former case, if you occupy—say as a bachelor—only a couple of rooms in town, and the rest of the house is let to other people, you will obtain but precarious attendance from the solitary servant, and the chances are that you will never be able to get a decently-cooked meal. The food that they waste in such places by their barbarous mode of dealing with it is sad to think upon. Your only resource is to live out of doors as much as possible, and consider your

rooms only as a refuge—the logical consequence of which is that it is best to abandon them altogether.

But you are better placed even under these conditions than if you go to a house in one of the suburbs—a pretty villa-looking place—knowing nothing about it beyond the information offered by the bill in the window. A not very clean servant opens the door, and does not impress you favourably at first glance. You are hesitating, under some discouragement, when the mistress of the house—presenting in her decorated exterior a considerable contrast to the servant—appears upon the scene and reproves the domestic sternly for her neglected appearance, sends her away to restore it, and meantime proceeds to transact business upon her own account. You ask her if she lets apartments. She gives a reproving look, and says “No,” ignoring the announcement made by the bill. You mention that you knocked in consequence of seeing that intimation in the window; upon which the lady says—

“Oh, is it up? I was not aware. The fact is, I wish to receive a gentleman to occupy part of the house, as it is too large for us”—the old story—“and my husband being a great deal out, I find it rather lonely. But my husband is very proud and objects to having strange company.”

You remark that you need not have applied in that case, and will go elsewhere. This brings the lady to the point.

“Oh, I did not mean to say that you could not have any apartments here. I intend to have my own way in that matter”—this is said in a playful, fluttery manner,

with a running laugh. "If you will step in I will show you the accommodation we have. All I meant to say was, that we are not accustomed to let lodgings."

Rather amused than annoyed, you submit to be shown the rooms. They are pretty rooms—light and cheerful, and ornamental to a fault—and the garden at the back is alone a relief from the pent-up place you have been occupying in town. So, after a few preliminary negotiations—conducted on the lady's side in the same playful manner—you agree to take the place, say for three months. The lady is evidently pleased at your decision, and avails herself of the opportunity for renewing her assurance that the house is not a lodging-house, and that you may expect all the comforts of a domestic life.

"There are no other lodgers," she added; then, as if suddenly recollecting, she corrects herself: "That is to say, there is a commercial gentleman who is a great deal away, sleeping here for a night or two—a friend of my husband's—and yes, let me see, a medical gentleman to whom we have allowed the partial use of a bedroom to oblige a neighbour just for the present, but I do not count either of them as lodgers."

A commercial gentleman sleeping for a night or two, while he is a great deal away, does not seem an ordinary lodger at any rate; and from the distinction drawn in the case of the medical gentleman who is only allowed the partial use of a bedroom, you are inclined to think that he is permitted to lie down but not to go to sleep. However, you make no objection to these anomalies, and take possession of your new abode.

There never was such an imposture, as you find out only next day. The bagman and the medical student—as those gentlemen must be described, if the naked truth be respected—turn out to be regular lodgers, and as thorough nuisances as a couple of noisy men addicted to late hours and exaggerated conviviality can well be. And the woman never mentioned a discharged policeman—her father, I believe—to whom she affords a temporary asylum in the kitchen, in return for intermittent attentions in the way of blacking boots and cleaning knives—when he happens to be sober. For the rest, there is nobody in the house who can cook even such a simple matter as a mutton chop without spoiling it; and there seems to be everybody in the house who is determined that your private stores shall not be allowed to spoil for want of eating and drinking. Nothing is safe from the enemy, who combine their forces against you, and they take care that you shall have no protection, for not a lock which can give shelter to any portable article will act after you have been two days in the house. As for your personal effects, they are in equal danger. The average amount of loss in wearing apparel is one shirt and two handkerchiefs a week; and miscellaneous articles are sure to go if they are in the least degree pretty or curious. And the coolest part of the proceeding is, that the mildest complaint on your part brings down a storm upon your devoted head, such as you could not have expected from the playful and fluttering person who had given you such pleasant assurances when you took the rooms. She claims to be a Cæsar's wife in point of immunity from

suspicion, and asserts the same privilege for everybody in the house. "No gentleman was ever robbed there," she says; and she plainly hints that no gentleman would say he was, even though he said the fact.

This is no exaggerated picture of many suburban lodgings to which outsiders of society are led to resort for want of better accommodation; and a large number of persons who are not outsiders in the sense in which I have employed the term, but who are simply not settled in the metropolis, are exposed to a similar fate. For those who are prepared for an ordeal of another nature, the "cheerful family, musically inclined," offers, one would think, a far preferable alternative. But it is not everybody who is prepared to have society thrust upon him, either in this quiet domestic way or in a large boarding-house, and there ought to be better provision than there is for the floating mass of casual residents in London. In Paris not only are there hotels suited to the requirements of all classes of persons, but the *maisons meublées* are places where they may live almost as independently as in their own houses. In London, the only realization of the luxury short of an entire house is in what we call "chambers;" and a man's chambers are most certainly his castle, whatever his house may be. That the want is being appreciated, is evident from the rapid extension of the "chambers" system, in the way of the independent suites of rooms known as "flats." But the flats, as now provided in Victoria Street, and elsewhere, cost as much as entire houses, while the latest additions, the Belgrave and Grosvenor mansions, are even more costly,

and beyond the reach of the classes to whom I have been referring. The latter would be deeply grateful for accommodation of the kind on a more moderate scale, and the investment of capital in such an object could not fail to be profitable. Besides the desolate people into whose sorrows I have entered, there are in London, it must be remembered, many hundreds of outsiders of society of a different kind, who are outsiders only from that conventional society in which it takes so much money to "move," and who ought to command greater comfort than they do while they are working their way in professional pursuits. For those actually in want of companionship, I suppose they will always incline to the hotel, or the boarding-house, or the "cheerful family, musically inclined."

OPPOSITE A CABSTAND.

FOR some little time I have been confined to the house. Instead of going abroad after breakfast, I stay in the dining-room, and I generally manage to limp to the dining-room windows. Now just opposite these windows is a cabstand. I used to think that cabstand a nuisance, but the truth now dawns upon me that there is a compensation in most things. It is only some weeks ago that I was awoke from a slumber, tranquil, but perhaps too deep, through a late supper and potations, with a burning pain in the ball of my great toe, and considerable constitutional disturbance. It so happened that the worthy and rubicund vicar called on me that next morning, accompanied by his churchwarden, hardly less worthy, and a shade more rubicund, on the subject of the parish charities. When I mentioned to them my dolorous state by various gestures and lively expression, they testified their sympathy and even their gratification. The reverend and the approximately-reverend gentlemen explained to me that I was indubitably suffering from my first attack of gout. They had suffered from it themselves, and welcomed me warmly into their honourable

fraternity. The spectacle of an additional sufferer seemed to afford them a deep-seated satisfaction. The family doctor confirmed their unwelcome augury. He knocked off hot suppers and hotter potations, and put me on a light beverage of lithia water and cognac. He also ordered me to take abundant rest, which I do on the arm-chair, unless I hobble to the window. I am not, I candidly confess, a man of intellectual resources. I rarely look into any books beyond my business book, and, a very little, into a betting-book. The "Daily Telegraph" kindly manufactures all my opinions for me, and a game of cards is my best enjoyment of an evening. But the D. T. exhausts itself, and I can't very well play at cards in the daylight. So I fall back upon my resources, which frequently resolve themselves into the cabstand.

When I go and look at them after breakfast, it appears to me that the cabman's lot in life is not an unhappy one. His work is not hard; he lives out in the open air; and though he says he has hardly enough to eat, I am quite sure that he gets a little more than is quite good for him to drink. He can go to sleep comfortably on his box, and if it rains he can get inside the carriage. Sometimes the floor of the cab is extemporized into an *al fresco* dining-table. There is a great deal of horse-play among these fellows. I observe one old man who is in the habit of going contentedly asleep on his box. It is a favourite device for some one to lift up the body of the cab from the ground, shake it, and let it dash upon the earth. One's first notion is that the somnolent driver will have his neck dislocated, or get concussion of the brain, but

somehow he seems to hold on. Now this is not at all an uncommon type of cabman—a man of extreme animal nature, whose only notion of enjoyment is to drink and sleep in the sunshine. But there are some sharp fellows among them. There is one man who has often a book with him, who has a very sharp pair of spectacles and a distinctive nose of his own, and an expression of countenance which shows him to be as acute and cynical as any of his betters. I have no doubt but that man has formed opinions of his own on most subjects of human interest, and could maintain them well in an argument. As a rule, the cabmen are content with their newspaper—many of them, indeed, cannot, or do not care to read—and very rarely you see any of them with a book. On the shady side of the street they often seem to enjoy themselves very much, engaging in chaff or talk, reading the newspaper, and every now and then disappearing into a public, to get a penny glass of the vile stuff which they know as London beer. Still business is business, and however grateful may be the charm of leisure, the cabman has a certain sum of money to make up, and he has a quick, alert eye to detect a possible fare in the least roving glance or indecisive movement of a pedestrian.

Standing much, as podagra permits, at my window, I know some of these cabmen very well by sight. Some of them I know personally. If I want a message sent, or a cab for any inmate of the house, I merely beckon or tap at the window, and there is a brisk competition. If you want to send a telegraphic message, you had better

use a cab, as it is much quicker and no dearer than a messenger. I always take first cab, unless the horse is bad or the cab dirty. In an astonishing number of instances the horses *are* bad and the cabs dirty. Every now and then we have paragraphs, and even leaders, in the papers, and I have even seen some prospectuses of limited companies. But the cab mind is slow to move. Only now and then do I see a really superior carriage on the stand. I prefer the carriages that don't ply on Sunday, and I do so because I prefer the man who practically says, "I myself am something better than my trade; I don't mean to be used up as if I were an animal, but claim rest for mind and body, even though I have to make a sacrifice for it." That is a sort of manliness to be encouraged. They change the cab-horse very often, but not the cabman. Without doubt there is in the world a prevalent feeling in favour of the muscles and bones of horses which does not extend to the muscles and bones of human beings. Now, among these cabmen there are some exceedingly pleasant and civil fellows, and a few who are very much the reverse. There is never any close inquiry into the character of these men, and the result undoubtedly is that they number a greater amount of blackguards than any business in London. I remember having to convey a very pretty girl, at a time when my frame was lighter and my heart more susceptible than at present, across one of the parks, and a mile or two in the suburbs. I asked him the fare, which was a weak-minded thing, as I ought to have known it and have had the money in hand. "The *fare* is six shillings," he answered, with

intense emphasis on the word fare, as indicating a wide margin of personal dues and expectations. I am ashamed to say that at that verdant time I gave him the six shillings and something over for himself, whereas eighteen pence would have covered his legitimate demand. One of these fellows in the last Exhibition year, while making an overcharge, caught a Tartar. The fare announced himself as Sir Richard Mayne, and requested to be driven to Scotland Yard. There is one fellow on this stand whom I never employ. When I took him to the Great Western Station he made a great overcharge, and then maintained stoutly, until he was nearly black in the face, that I had expressly stipulated with him to drive fast. Such a stipulation would have been abhorrent to all my habits, for I pride myself on always being a quarter of an hour before the time. I acquired this useful habit through a remark of the late Viscount Nelson, who said that being a quarter of an hour beforehand had given all the success which he had obtained in life. I thought this a very easy way of obtaining success in life, and have always made the rule of being a quarter of an hour beforehand, in the remote hope that somehow or other the practice would conduce towards making me a viscount. Up to the present point, however, the desired result has not accrued. With regard to this particular evilly disposed cabman, I have a theory that he is a ticket-of-leave man. If not so already, he is sure eventually to descend into that order of society.

Cabmen bully ladies dreadfully. A large part of their undue gains is made out of timid women, especially

women who have children with them. A lady I know gave a cabman his fare and an extra sixpence. "Well, mum," said the ungracious cabman, "I'll take the money, but I don't thank you for it." "You have not got it yet," said my friend, alertly withdrawing the money. Impransus Jones did a neat thing the other day. He got into a cab, when, after a bit, he recollected that he had no money, or chance of borrowing any. He suddenly checked the driver in a great hurry, and said he had dropped a sovereign in the straw. He told the cabman that he would go to a friend's a few doors off and get a light. As he was pretending to do so, the cabman, as Jones had expected, drove rapidly off. Thus the biter is sometimes bit. According to the old Latin saying, not always is the traveller killed by the robber, but sometimes the robber is killed by the traveller. When Jones arrived at Waterloo Bridge the other day, he immediately hailed a cab, albeit in a chronic state of impecuniosity. The cabman munificently paid the toll, and then Jones drove about for many hours to try and borrow a sovereign, the major part of which, when obtained, was transferred to the cabman. There is a clergyman in London who tells a story of a cabman driving him home, and to whom he was about to pay two shillings. He took the coins out of his waistcoat pocket, and then suddenly recollecting the peculiar glitter, he called out, "Stop, cabman, I've given you two sovereigns by mistake." "Then your honour's seen the last of them," said the cabman, flogging into his horse as fast as he could. Then my friend felt again, and found that he had given to the

cabman two bright new farthings which he had that day received, and was keeping as a curiosity for his children. There is something very irresistible in a cabman's cajolery. "What's your fare?" I asked a cabman one day. "Anything your honour pleases," he answered. "You rascal; that means, I suppose, your legal fare, and anything over that you can get." "No, your honour, I just leave it to you." "Very well, then; there's a sixpence for you." "Ah, but your honour's a gentleman," pleaded Paddy, and carried off double his proper fare.

A certain amount of adventure and incident happens to cabmen, some glimpses of which I witness from my window, on the stand. Occasionally a cabman is exposed to a good deal of temptation, and the cabman who hesitates is lost. For instance, if a cabman is hired in the small hours of the morning by disreputable roughs, and told to be in waiting for a time, and these men subsequently make their appearance again, with a heavy sack which obviously contains something valuable, and which might be plate, I think that cabman ought to give information in the proper quarter unless he wishes to make himself an accomplice. There is a distinct branch of the thieving business which is known as lifting portmanteaus from the roofs of cabs and carriages, sometimes certainly not without a measure of suspicion against the drivers. A cabman, however, has frequently strict ideas of professional honour, and would as soon think of betraying his hirer, who in dubious cases of course hires at a very handsome rate, as a priest of betraying the security of the confessional or the doctor of the sick chamber. Even

cabmen must have severe shocks to their nerves at times. For instance, that cabman who found that he had a carriage full of murdered children ; or suppose two gentlemanly-looking men having taken a cab, and the driver finds that one is gone and that the other is plundered and stupified with chloroform. Very puzzled, too, is the cabman when he stops at an address and finds that his fare, perhaps the impecunious Jones, has bolted *in transitu*, or, if he goes into a city court, has declined to emerge by the way of his original entrance. "A queer thing happened this afternoon to me sir," said a cabman. "A gentleman told me to follow him along the High Street, Marylebone, and to stop when he stopped. Presently I heard a scream : he had seized hold of a lovely young creature, and was calling out, 'So I have found you at last, madam. Come away with me.' She went down on her knees to him, and said, 'Have mercy on me, Robert. I can't go home to you.' 'Stuff and nonsense,' he says, and lifts her up in his arms, as if she had been a baby, and bundles her into the cab. 'And what d'ye want with the young woman, I makes bold to ask?' says I. 'What's that to you?' he said. 'I'm her husband, drive sharp.' I took 'em to a big house in a square, when he gives me half a sovereign, and slams the door in my face." "I suppose, cabman," I said, "you sometimes get queer jobs, following people, and things of that kind?" "Sometimes, sir, and I know men who have seen much queerer things than I have ever seen, though I've seen a few. When a man's following some one, perhaps a young fellow following a pretty girl,

and he doesn't like to be seen. I don't mind the lads being after the girls, that's natural enough, but there are worse doings than that in the way of dodgings." He told me several things that might have figured in a volume of detective experiences. There were some gentlemen, he said, turning to lighter matters, who could make themselves very comfortable for the night in a four-wheeler. There was a gent that was locked out of his own house in the race week, and found several hotels closed, who took his cab for a night, and made himself as comfortable as if he were in his own bed (which I rather doubted), from two in the morning till seven. He charged him two shillings an hour all the same. One night he took a gentleman and lady to a dinner-party in Russell Square. They forgot to pay him. He waited till they came out at twelve o'clock, and charged them ten shillings. He could carry a powerful lot of luggage on his cab. Had it full inside, and so much luggage that it might have toppled over. Asked him what was the largest number of people he ever carried. He said he had carried seventeen at a go once. He was the last cab at Cremorne once, but the fellow really did it for a lark. He had five or six inside, and a lot of them on the roof, one or two on the box, and one or two on the horse. He might have lost his license, but he made nearly thirty shillings by it. The longest journey he ever took was when he drove a gentleman down to Brighton in a hansom. He had repeatedly taken them to Epsom and also to Windsor. He did the distance to Brighton in six hours, changing the horse half-way. There was a little bit of romance

belonging to the stand, I found out. Did I see the handsome girl who came every now and then to the stand to the good-looking old fellow in the white hat. He was the proprietor of four cabs, and was always driving one. She stayed at home and took the orders. I found afterwards that she was a very good girl, with a well-known character for her quick tongue and her pretty face. I was assured by an officer that the fair cabbess was at a Masonic ball, and a certain young duke picked her out as the nicest girl in the room, and insisted on dancing with her, to the great disgust of his people who were with him. I heard another story of the cabstand which was serio-comic enough, and indicated some curious vagaries of human nature. There was one cabman who had a handsome daughter who had gone wrong, or, at all events, got the credit of it. She used continually to come down to the stand, and give her old father a job. He used to drive her about, dressed as splendidly as he was shabbily, and he would take her money as from any other fare, and expect his tip over and above.

If cabmen were satisfied with their legal fares many people would take cabs who do not now care to be imposed on or annoyed. I generally give twopence or threepence on the shilling additional, which I think is fairly their due, but I sometimes get mutterings for not making it more. The cab trade is more and more getting into the hands of a few large proprietors, some of whom have seventy or eighty cabs. The tendency of this must be to improve the cabs. When the cabs make their average profit of ten or twelve shillings a day, this

must be a lucrative business. The driver does well who makes a profit of thirty shillings a week or a little over. All the responsibility is with the cab proprietor, and he generally keeps a sharp look-out after the men, and will give them uncommonly scanty credit. As a rule, though the rule is often relaxed, they must pay down a stated sum before they are allowed to take out the cab. The sum varies with the season, as also does the number of cabs. There are some hundred cabs less in November than in the height of the season. The hansom business of course forms the aristocracy of the trade. With a good horse, a clean carriage, and a sharp, civil driver, there is nothing more pleasant than bowling along on a good road, with a pleasant breeze coursing around. The night-trade is the worst in horses, carriages, men, and remuneration to those concerned. Some of these cab horses were once famous horses in their day, which had their pictures or photographs taken, and won cups at races. There are also decayed drivers, who harmonize sadly and truly with the decayed animals. They say there are one or two men of title in the ranks, and several who have run through good fortunes—men who have come to utter smash in the army or the universities, the number of whom is probably larger than is generally supposed, and come to cab-driving as their ultimate resource, and only more congenial than quill-driving. There is a good deal of interest felt in cabmen by many religious and philanthropic people. Their experience and strong mother wit, their habits of keen observation and consequently of marvellous acuteness, make them

great favourites with those who study the humours of the street. Archbishop Tait, when he was in London, used at times, we believe, to collect as many as he could in some stables at Islington and preach to them. It is easier, however, to get at cabby than to make a durable impression on him. It would help, however, to humanize him if some of us were more humane and considerate towards his "order."

AFTERNOONS IN "THE PARK."



THERE is a passage in old Pepys's Diary, written two centuries and odd ago, which, thanks to the permanence

of our English institutions, would do very well for the present day : " Walked into St. James's Park and there found great and very noble alterations . . . 1662, July 27, I went to walk in the Park, which is now every day more and more pleasant by the new works upon it." Such eulogistic language is justly due to Mr. Layard and his immediate predecessor at the Board of Works. Suppose that I live at Bayswater, and my business takes me down to Westminster every day, it is certainly best for me that, instead of taking 'bus, or cab, or underground railway, I should, like honest Pepys, saunter in the Park and admire the many " noble alterations." I venture to call poor Pepys honest because he is so truthful ; but never thinking that his cipher would be discovered he has mentioned in his Diary so many unprintable things, that I am afraid we must use that qualifying phrase " indifferently honest." Several gentlemen who live at Bayswater and practise at Westminster may find that the phrase suits well, and a man's moral being may be all the better, as through lawns and alleys and copses, where each separate step almost brings out a separate vignette of beauty, he traverses in a north-westerly direction the whole length of our Parks. He turns aside into St. James's Park, and then goes through the Green Park and crosses Piccadilly to lounge through Hyde Park, and so home through Kensington Gardens. The alterations this season in Hyde Park are very noticeable. All the Park spaces recently laid out have been planned in a style of beauty in harmony with what previously existed ; a beauty, I think, unapproachable by the many gardens

of Paris, or the Prado of Madrid, the Corso of Rome, the Strada di Toledo of Naples, the Glacis of Vienna. The most striking alterations are those of the Park side near the Brompton road, where the low, bare, uneven ground, as if by the magic touch of a transformation, is become exquisite garden spaces with soft undulations, set with starry gems of the most exquisite flowers, bordered by freshest turf. The palings which the mob threw down have been all nobly replaced, and more and more restoration is promised by a Government eager to be populated with all classes. Most of all, the mimic ocean of the Serpentine is to be renewed; and when its bottom is levelled, its depth diminished, and the purity of the water secured, we shall arrive at an almost ideal perfection.

As we take our lounge in the afternoon it is necessary to put on quite a different mental mood as we pass from one Park to another. We pass at once from turmoil into comparative repose as we enter the guarded enclosure encircled on all sides by a wilderness of brick and mortar. You feel quite at ease in that vast palatial garden of St. James. Your office coat may serve in St. James's, but you adorn yourself with all adornments for Hyde Park. You go leisurely along, having adjusted your watch by the Horse Guards, looking at the soldiers, and the nurses, and the children, glancing at the island, and looking at the ducks—the dainty, overfed ducks—suggesting all sorts of ornithological lore, not to mention low materialistic associations of green peas or sage and onions. Those dissipated London ducks lay their heads

under their wings and go to roost at quite fashionable hours, that would astonish their primitive country brethren. I hope you like to feed ducks, my friends. All great, good-natured people have a "sneaking kindness" for feeding ducks. There is a most learned and sagacious bishop who won't often show himself to human bipeds, but he may be observed by them in his grounds feeding ducks while philosophising on things in general, and the University Tests in particular. Then what crowded reminiscences we might have of St. James's Park and of the Mall—of sovereigns and ministers, courtiers and fops, lords and ladies, philosophers and thinkers! By this sheet of water, or rather by the pond that then was a favourite resort for intending suicides, Charles II. would play with his dogs or dawdle with his mistresses; feeding the ducks here one memorable morning when the stupendous revelation of a Popish plot was made to his incredulous ears; or looking grimly towards the Banqueting Hall where his father perished, when the debate on the Exclusion Bill was running fiercely high. But the reminiscences are endless which belong to St. James's Park. Only a few years ago there was the private entrance which Judge Jeffreys used to have by special licence into the Park, but now it has been done away. There were all kinds of superstitions floating about in the uninformed Westminster mind about Judge Jeffreys. What Sydney Smith said in joke to the poaching lad, "that he had a private gallows," was believed by the Westmonasterians to be real earnest about Jeffreys—that he used after dinner to seize hold of any individual

to whom he might take a fancy and hang him up in front of his house for his own personal delectation. I am now reconciled to the bridge that is thrown midway across, although it certainly limits the expanse of the ornamental water. But standing on the ornamental bridge, and looking both westward and eastward, I know of hardly anything comparable to that view. That green neat lawn and noble timber, and beyond the dense foliage the grey towers of the Abbey, and the gold of those Houses of Parliament, which, despite captious criticism, will always be regarded as the most splendid examples of the architecture of the great Victorian era, and close at hand the paths and the parterres, cause the majesty and greatness of England to blend with this beautiful oasis islanded between the deserts of Westminster and Pimlico. Looking westward, too, towards Buckingham Palace—the palace, despite exaggerated hostile criticism, is at least exquisitely proportioned; but then one is sorry to hear about the Palace that the soldiers are so ill stowed away there; and the Queen does not like it; and the Hanoverian animal peculiarly abounds. We recollect that once when her Majesty was ill, a servant ran out of the palace to charter a cab and go for the doctor, because those responsible for the household had not made better arrangements. In enumerating the Parks of London, we ought not to forget the Queen's private garden of Buckingham Palace, hardly less than the Green Park in extent, and so belonging to the system of the lungs of London.

But we now enter the great Hyde Park itself, assuredly

the most brilliant spectacle of the kind which the world can show. It is a scene which may well tax all your powers of reasoning and of philosophy. And you must know the Park very well, this large open drawing-room which in the season London daily holds, before you can sufficiently temper your senses to be critical and analytical—before you can eliminate the lower world, the would-be fashionable element, from the most affluent and highest kind of metropolitan life—before you can judge of the splendid mounts and the splendid comparisons, between fine carriages and fine horses—fine carriages where perhaps the cattle are lean and poor, or fine horses where the carriages are old and worn; the carriages and horses absolutely gorgeous, but with too great a display; and, again, where the perfection is absolute, but with as much quietude as possible, the style that chiefly invites admiration by the apparent desire to elude it. In St. James's Park you may lounge and be listless if you like; but in Hyde Park, though you may lounge, you must still be alert. Very pleasant is the lounge to the outer man, but in the inner mind you must be observant, prepared to enjoy either the solitude of the crowd, or to catch the quick glance, the silvery music of momentary merriment, then have a few seconds of rapid, acute dialogue, or perhaps be beckoned into a carriage by a friend with space to spare. As you lean over the railings you perhaps catch a sight of a most exquisite face—a face that is photographed on the memory for its features and expression. If you have really noticed such a face the day is a whiter day to you; somehow or other you have

made an advance. But it is mortifying, when you contemplate this beautiful image, to see some gilded youth advance, soulless, brainless, to touch the fingers dear to yourself and look into eyes which he cannot fathom or comprehend. Still more annoying to think that a game is going on in the matrimonial money market. I sometimes think that the Ladies' Mile is a veritable female Tattersall's, where feminine charms are on view and the price may be appraised—the infinite gambols and curvettings of high-spirited maidenhood. But I declare on my conscience that I believe the Girl of the Period has a heart, and that the Girl of the Period is not so much to blame as her mamma or her chaperone.

But, speaking of alterations, I cannot say that all the alterations are exactly to my mind. It is not at all pleasing that the habit of smoking has crept into Rotten Row. The excuse is that the Prince smokes. But because one person of an exceptional and unique position, doubtless under exceptional circumstances, smokes, that is no reason why the mass should follow the example. Things have indeed changed within the last few years; the race is degenerating into politeness. In the best of his stories, "My Novel," Lord Lytton makes Harley, his hero, jeer at English liberty; and he says: "I no more dare smoke this cigar in the Park at half-past six, when all the world is abroad, than I dare pick my Lord Chancellor's pocket, or hit the Archbishop of Canterbury a thump on the nose." Lord Hatherley's pocket is still safe, and we are not yet come to days, though we seem to be nearing them, when a man in a crowd may send a

blow into a prelate's face. We have had such days before, and we may have them again. But smoking is now common enough, and ought to be abated as a nuisance. Some ladies like it, and really like it; and that is all very well, but other ladies are exceedingly annoyed. A lady takes her chair to watch the moving panorama, intending perhaps to make a call presently, and men are smoking within a few paces to her infinite annoyance and the spoiling of her pleasure. Her dress is really spoiled, and there is the trouble of another toilet. Talking of toilets, I heard a calculation the other day of how many the Princess of Wales had made in a single day. She had gone to the laying of the foundation stone of Earlswood asylum, and then to the great State breakfast at Buckingham Palace, and then a dinner and a ball, and one or two other things. The Princess truly works very hard, harder indeed than people really know. I went the other day to a concert, where many a one was asked to go, and the Princess was there, in her desire to oblige worthy people, and sat it all through to the very last with the pleasantest smiles and the most intelligent attention. Let me also, since I am criticizing, say that the new restaurant in the Park is a decided innovation, and that to complete the new ride, to carry Rotten Row all round the Park, is certainly to interfere with the enjoyment of pedestrians. It is, however, to be said, in justice, that the pedestrians have the other parks pretty much to themselves. There is, however, a worse error still, in the rapid increase of the *demi-monde* in the Park. A man hardly feels easy in conducting a lady into the

Park and answering all the questions that may be put to him respecting the inmates of gorgeous carriages that sweep by. These demireps make peremptory conditions that they shall have broughams for the Park and tickets for the Horticultural, and even for the fêtes at the Botanical Gardens. This is a nuisance that requires to be abated as much as any in Regent Street or the Haymarket. The police ought to have peremptory orders to exclude such carriages and their occupants. Twenty years ago there was a dead set made in Cheshire, against the aspirants of Liverpool and Manchester, by the gentry of that county most famous for the pedigrees of the gentry, who wished to maintain the splendour of family pride. For instance, the steward of a county ball went up to a manufacturer who was making his eighty thousand a year, and told him that no tradesman was admitted. That was of course absurd; but still, if that was actually done, an inspector should step up to the most fashionable Mabel or Lais, and turn her horses' heads, if obstreperous, in the direction of Bridewell or Bow Street. Anonyma has ruled the Park too much. The favourite drive used to be round the Serpentine; but when the prettiest equipage in London drew all gazers to the Ladies' Mile, the Serpentine became comparatively unused, and the Ladies' Mile, ground infinitely inferior, became the favourite until the renovated Serpentine or change of whim shall mould anew the fickle, volatile shape of fashionable vagary.

At this present time Mr. Alfred Austin's clever satire "The Season"—a third edition of which is published—

occurs to me. The poem is a very clever one, and it is even better appreciated on the other side of the Channel than on this, as is evidenced by M. Forques' article on the subject in the "Revue des Deux Mondes." We will group together a few passages from Mr. Austin's vigorous poem, belonging to the Parks.

"I sing the Season, Muse! whose sway extends
 Where Hyde begins, beyond where Tyburn ends;
 Gone the broad glare, save where with borrowed bays
 Some female Phaeton sets the drive ablaze.
 Dear pretty fledglings! come from country nest,
 To nibble, chirp, and flutter in the west;
 Whose clear, fresh faces, with their fickle frown
 And favour, start like Spring upon the town;
 Less dear, for damaged damsels, doomed to wait;
 Whose third—fourth? season makes half desperate,
 Waking with warmth, less potent hour by hour
 (As magnets heated lose attractive power).
 Or you, nor dear nor damsels, tough and tart,
 Unmarketable maidens of the mart,
 Who, plumpness gone, fine delicacy feint,
 And hide your sins in piety and paint.

"Incongruous group, they come; the judge's hack,
 With knees as broken as its rider's back:
 The counsel's courser, stumbling through the throng,
 With wind e'en shorter than its lord's is long:
 The foreign marquis's accomplished colt
 Sharing its owner's tendency to bolt.

"Come let us back, and whilst the Park's alive,
 Lean o'er the railings, and inspect the Drive.
 Still sweeps the long procession, whose array
 Gives to the lounge's gaze, as wanes the day,
 Its rich reclining and reposeful forms,
 Still as bright sunsets after mists or storms;

Who sit and smile (their morning wranglings o'er,
 Or dragged and dawdled through one dull day more),
 As though the life of widow, wife and girl,
 Were one long lapsing and voluptuous whirl.
 O, poor pretence! what eyes so blind but see
 The sad, however elegant ennui?
 Think you that blazoned panel, prancing pair,
 Befool our vision to the weight they bear?
 The softest ribbon, pink-lined parasol,
 Screen not the woman, though they deck the doll.
 The padded corsage and the well-matched hair,
 Judicious jupon spreading out the spare,
 Sleeves well designed false plumpness to impart,
 Leave vacant still the hollows of the heart.
 Is not our Lesbia lovely? In her soul
 Lesbia is troubled: Lesbia hath a mole;
 And all the splendours of that matchless neck
 Console not Lesbia for its single speck.
 Kate comes from Paris, and a wardrobe brings,
 To which poor Edith's are "such common things;"
 Her pet lace shawl has grown not fit to wear,
 And ruined Edith dresses in despair."

Mr. Austin is sufficiently severe upon the ladies, especially those whose afternoons in the Park have some correspondence with their "afternoon of life." I think that the elderly men who affect youthful airs are every whit as numerous and as open to sarcasm. Your ancient buck is always a fair butt. And who does not know these would-be juveniles, their thin, wasp-like waists, their elongated necks and suspensory eye-glasses, their elaborate and manufactured hair? They like the dissipation of youth so well that they can conceive of nothing more glorious, entirely ignoring that autumnal fruit is, after all, better than the blossom or foliage of spring or early

autumn. All they know indeed of autumn is the variegation and motley of colour. The antiquated juvenile is certainly one of the veriest subjects for satire; and antiquated juveniles do abound of an afternoon in Rotten Row. Nothing we can say about a woman's padding can be worse than the padding which is theirs. All their idiotic grinning cannot hide the hated crows'-feet about their goggle, idiotic eyes. They try, indeed, the power of dress to the utmost; but in a day when all classes are alike extravagant in dress, even the falsity of the first impression will not save them from minute criticism. Talk to them and they will draw largely on the reminiscences of their youth, perhaps still more largely on their faculty of invention. What a happy dispensation it is in the case of men intensely wicked and worldly, that in youth, when they might do infinite evil, they have not the necessary knowledge of the world and of human nature to enable them to do so; and when they have a store of wicked experience, the powers have fled which would have enabled them to turn it to full account! At this moment I remember a hoary old villain talking ribaldry with his middle-aged son, both of them dressed to an inch of their lives, and believing that the fashion of this world necessarily endures for ever. Granting the tyranny and perpetuity of fashion—for in the worst times of the French revolution fashion still maintained its sway, and the operas and theatres were never closed—still each individual tyrant of fashion has only his day, and often the day is a very brief one. Nothing is more becoming than gray hairs worn gallantly and well, and when accom-

panied with sense and worth they have often borne away a lovely bride, rich and accomplished, too, from some silly, gilded youth. I have known marriages between January and May, where May has been really very fond of January. After all, the aged Adonis generally pairs off with some antiquated Venus; the juvenilities on each side are eliminated as being common to both and of no real import, and the settlement is arranged by the lawyers and by family friends on a sound commercial basis.

It is very easy for those who devote themselves to the study of satirical composition, and cultivate a sneer for things in general, to be witty on the frivolities of the Park. And this is the worst of satire, that it is bound to be pungent, and cannot pause to be discriminating and just. Even the most sombre religionist begins to understand that he may use the world, without trying to drain its sparkling cup to the dregs. Hyde Park is certainly not abandoned to *idlesse*. The most practical men recognise its importance and utility to them. There are good wives who go down to the clubs or the Houses in their carriages to insist that their lords shall take a drive before they dine and go back to the House. And when you see saddle-horses led up and down in Palace Yard, the rider will most probably take a gallop before he comes back to be squeezed and heated by the House of Commons, or be blown away by the over-ventilation of the House of Lords. A man begins to understand that it is part of his regular vocation in life to move about in the Park. And all men do so, especially when the sun's

beams are tempered and when the cooling evening breeze is springing up. The merchant from the City, the lawyer from his office, the clergyman from his parish, the governess in her spare hours, the artist in his love of nature and human nature, all feel that the fresh air and the fresh faces will do them good. There was a literary man who took a Brompton apartment with the back windows fronting the Park. Hither he used to resort, giving way to the fascination which led him, hour after hour, to study the appearances presented to him. The subject is, indeed, very interesting and attractive, including especially the very popular study of flirtation in all its forms and branches. If you really want to see the Row you must go very early in the afternoon. Early in the afternoon the equestrians ride for exercise; later they ride much in the same way as they promenade. The Prince, for a long time, used to ride early in the afternoon, if only to save himself the trouble of that incessant salutation which must be a serious drawback on H. R. H.'s enjoyment of his leisure. Or, again, late in the evening, it is interesting to note the gradual thinning of the Park and its new occupants come upon the scene. The *habitué* of Rotten Row is able, with nice gradations, to point out how the cold winds and rains of the early summer have, night after night, emptied the Park at an earlier hour, or how a fête at the Horticultural, or a gala at the Crystal Palace, has sensibly thinned the attendance. As the affluent go home to dress and dine, the sons and daughters of penury who have shunned the broad sunlight creep out into the vacant spaces. The last carriages of those

who are going home from the promenade meet the first carriages of those who are going out to dine. Only two nights ago I met the carriage of Mr. Disraeli and his wife. I promise you the Viscountess Beaconsfield looked magnificent. Curiously enough, they were dining at the same house where, not many years ago, Mr. Disraeli dined with poor George Hudson. When Mr. Hudson had a dinner given to him lately, it is said that he was much affected, and told his hosts that its cost would have kept him and his for a month.

The overwhelming importance of the Parks in London is well brought out by that shrewd observer, Crabb Robinson, in his Diary. Under February 15, 1818, he writes: "At two I took a ride into the Regent's Park, which I had never seen before. When the trees are grown this will be really an ornament to the capital; and not a mere ornament, but a healthful appendage. The Highgate and Hampstead Hill is a beautiful object; and within the Park the artificial water, the circular belt or coppice, the few scattered bridges, &c., are objects of taste. I really think this enclosure, with the new street leading to it from Carlton House [Regent Street] will give a sort of glory to the Regent's government, greater than the victories of Trafalgar and Waterloo, glorious as these are." Here again, almost at haphazard, is a quotation from an American writer: "So vast is the extent of these successive ranges, and so much of England can one find, as it were, in the midst of London. Oh, wise and prudent John Bull, to ennoble thy metropolis with such spacious country walks, and to sweeten it

so much with country air! Truly these lungs of London are vital to such a Babylon, and there is no beauty to be compared to them in any city I have ever seen. I do not think the English are half proud enough of their capital, conceited as they are about so many things besides. Here you see the best of horse-flesh, laden with the "porcelain clay" of human flesh. Ah! how daintily the ladies go by, and how ambitiously their favoured companions display their good fortune in attending them. Here a gay creature rides independently enough with her footman at a respectful distance. She is an heiress, and the young gallants she scarce deigns to notice are dying for love of her and her guineas."

But, after all, is there anything more enjoyable in its way than Kensington Gardens? You are not so *négligé* as in St. James's, but it is comparative undress compared with Hyde Park. Truly there are days—and even in the height of the season too—when you may lie down on the grass and gaze into the depth of sky, listening to the murmurous breeze, and that far-off hum which might be a sound of distant waves, and fancy yourself in Ravenna's immemorial wood. Ah, what thrilling scenes have come off beneath these horse-chestnuts with their thick leaves and pyramidal blossoms! And if only those whispers were audible, if only those tell-tale leaves might murmur their confessions, what narratives might these supply of the idyllic side of London life, sufficient to content a legion of romancists! It is a fine thing for Orlando to have a gallop by the side of his pretty ladylove down the Row, but Orlando knows very well that if he could only

AFTERNOONS IN "THE PARK."

draw her arm through his and lead her down some vista in those gardens, it would be well for him. Oh, yielding hands and eyes! oh, mantling blushes and eloquent tears! oh, soft glances and all fine tremor of speech, in those gardens more than in Armina's own are ye abounding. There is an intense human interest about Kensington Gardens which grows more and more, as one takes one's walks abroad and the scene becomes intelligible. See that slim maid demurely reading beneath yonder trees, those old trees which artists love in the morning to come and sketch. She glances more than once at her watch, and then suddenly with surprise she greets a loungee. I thought at the very first that her surprise was an affectation; and as I see how she disappears with him through that overarching leafy arcade my surmise becomes conviction. As for the nursery maids who let their little charges loiter or riot about, or even sedate governesses with their more serious aims, who will let gentlemanly little boys and girls grow very conversational, while they are very conversational themselves with tall whiskered cousins or casual acquaintance, why, I can only say, that for the sake of the most maternal hearts beating in this great metropolis, I am truly rejoiced to think that there are no carriage roads through the Gardens, and the little ones can hardly come to any very serious mischief.

Are you now inclined, my friends, for a little—and I promise you it shall really be a little—discourse concerning those Parks, that shall have a slight dash of literature and history about it? First of all, let me tell you

that in a park you ought always to feel loyal, since for our Parks we are indebted to our kings. The very definition of a park is—I assure you I am quoting the great Blackstone himself—"an enclosed chase, extending only over a man's own grounds," and the Parks have been the grounds of the sovereign's own self. It is true of more than one British Cæsar:—

“Moreover he hath left you all his walks,
His private arbours and new-planted orchards,
On this side Tibur; he hath left them you
And to your heirs for ever; common pleasures
To walk abroad and recreate yourselves.”

Once in the far distant time they were genuine parks with beasts of chase. We are told that the City corporation hunted the hare at the head of the conduit, where Conduit Street now stands, and killed the fox at the end of St. Giles's. St. James's Park was especially the courtier's park, a very drawing-room of parks. How splendidly over the gorgeous scene floats the royal banner of England, at the foot of Constitution Hill, which has been truly called the most chastely-gorgeous banner in the world! If you look at the dramatists of the Restoration you find frequent notices of the Park, which are totally wanting in the Elizabethan dramatists, when it was only a nursery for deer. Cromwell had shut up Spring Gardens, but Charles II. gave us St. James's Park. In the next century the Duke of Buckingham, describing his house, says: "The avenues to this house are along St. James's Park, through rows of goodly elms on one hand and flourishing limes on the other; that for coaches, this for

walking, with the Mall lying between them." It was in the Park that the grave Evelyn saw and heard his gracious sovereign "hold a very familiar discourse with Mrs. Nellie, as they called an impudent comedian, she looking out of her garden on a terrace at the top of the wall." Here Pepys saw "above all Mrs. Stuart in this dress, with her hat cocked and a red plume, with her sweet eye, little Roman nose, and excellent *taille*, the greatest beauty I ever saw, I think, in my life." Or take a play from Etheridge:—

"*Entrer* SIR FOPLING FLUTTER and his equipage.

"*Sir Fop.* Hey! bid the coachman send home four of his horses and bring the coach to Whitehall; I'll walk over the Park. Madam, the honour of kissing your fair hands is a happiness I missed this afternoon at my lady Townly's.

"*Leo.* You were very obliging, Sir Fopling, the last time I saw you there.

"*Sir Fop.* The preference was due to your wit and beauty. Madam, your servant. There never was so sweet an evening.

"*Bellinda.* It has drawn all the rabble of the town hither.

"*Sir Fop.* 'Tis pity there is not an order made that none but the *beau monde* should walk here." —

In Swift's "Journal to Stella" we have much mention of the Park: "to bring himself down," he says, that being the Banting system of that day, he used to start on his walk about sunset. Horace Walpole says: "My lady Coventry and niece Waldegrave have been mobbed

in the Park. I am sorry the people of England take all their liberty out in insulting pretty women." He elsewhere tells us with what state he and the ladies went. "We sailed up the Mall with all our colours flying." We do not hear much of the Green Park. It was for a long time most likely a village green, where the citizens would enjoy rough games, and in the early morning duellists would resort hither to heal their wounded honour.

Originally, Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park were all one. Addison speaks of it in the "Spectator," and it is only since the time of George II. that a severance has been made. Hyde Park has its own place in literature and in history. There was a certain first of May when both Pepys and Evelyn were interested in Hyde Park. Pepys says: "I went to Hide Park to take the air, where was his Majesty and an innumerable appearance of gallants and rich coaches, being now a time of universal festivity and joy." It was always a great place for reviews. They are held there still, and the Volunteers have often given great liveliness to the Park on Saturday. Here Cromwell used to review his terrible Ironsides. It was Queen Caroline who threw a set of ponds into one sheet of water, and as the water-line was not a direct one, it was called the Serpentine. The fosse and low wall was then a new invention; "an attempt deemed so astonishing that the common people called them ha-has to express their surprise at finding a sudden and unperceived check to their walk." It is said that a nobleman who had a house abutting on the Park engraved the words—

"'Tis my delight to be
In the town and the countree."

Antiquaries may find out countless points of interest, and may be able to identify special localities. Once there were chalybeate springs in a sweet glen, now spoilt by the canker of ugly barracks. It was on the cards that the Park might have been adorned with a rotunda instead. Most of the literary associations cluster around Kensington Gardens, concerning which Leigh Hunt has written much pleasant gossip in his "Old Court Suburb." A considerable amount of history and an infinite amount of gossip belong to Kensington Palace, now assigned to the Duchess of Inverness, the morganatic wife of the Duke of Sussex; gossip about George II. and his wife, about Lord Hervey, the queen and her maids of honour, the bad beautiful Duchess of Kingston, the charming Sarah Lennox, Selwyn, March, Bubb Doddington, and that crew, whom Mr. Thackeray delighted to reproduce. There is at least one pure scene dear to memory serene, that the Princess Victoria was born and bred here, and at five o'clock one morning was aroused from her slumbers, to come down with dishevelled hair to hear from great nobles that she was now the Queen of the broad empire on which the morning and the evening star ever shines.

I am very fond of lounging through the Park at an hour when it is well-nigh all deserted. I am not, indeed, altogether solitary in my ways and modes. There are certain carriages which roll into the Park almost at the time when all other carriages have left or are leaving. In my solitariness I feel a sympathy with those who

desire the coolness and freshness when they are most perfect. I have an interest, too, in the very roughs that lounge about the parks. I think them far superior to the roughs that lounge about the streets. Here is an athletic scamp. I admire his easy litheness and excellent proportion of limb. He is a scamp and a tramp, but then he is such, on an intelligible æsthetical principle. He has flung himself down, in the pure physical enjoyment of life, just as a Neapolitan will bask in the sunshine, to enjoy the turf and the atmosphere. In his splendid animal life he will sleep for hours, unfearing draught or miasma, untroubled with ache or pain, obtaining something of a compensation for his negative troubles and privations. If you come to talk to the vagrant sons and daughters of poverty loitering till the Park is cleared, or even sleeping here the livelong night, you would obtain a clear view of that night side which is never far from the bright side of London. I am not sure that I might not commend such a beat as this to some philanthropist for his special attention. The handsome, wilful boy who has run away from home or school; the thoughtless clerk or shopman out of work; the poor usher, whose little store has been spent in illness; the servant-girl who has been so long without a place, and is now hovering on the borders of penury and the extreme limit of temptation; they are by no means rare, with their easily-yielded secrets, doubtless with some amount of imposture, and always, when the truth comes to be known, with large blame attachable to their faults or weakness, but still with a very large percentage where some sym-

pathy or substantial help will be of the greatest possible assistance. As one knocks about London, one accumulates *souvenirs* of all kinds—some, perhaps, that will not very well bear much inspection ; and it may be a pleasing reflection that you went to some little expenditure of time or coin to save some lad from the hulks or some girl from ruin.

LIFE IN LONDON.

A MAN'S first residence in London is a revolution in his life and feelings. He loses at once no small part of his individuality. He was a man before, now he is a "party." No longer known as Mr. Brown, but as (say) No. XXI., he feels as one of many cogs in one of the many wheels of an incessantly wearing, tearing, grinding, system of machinery. His country notions must be modified, and all his life-long ways and takings-for-granted prove crude and questionable. He is hourly reminded "This is not the way in London; that this wont work here," or, "people always expect," and "you'll soon find the difference." Custom rules everything, and custom never before seemed to him half as strange, strong, or inexorable. The butcher always cuts one way and the greengrocer serves him with equal rigour. His orders never before seemed of so little importance. The independence and the take-it-or-leave-it indifference of the tradesmen contrast strongly with the obsequiousness of the country shop. However great a customer before he feels a small customer now. The tradesman is shorter and more saving of his words. He

serves, takes your money, and turns away to some one else, whereas in the country they indulge you with a little talk into the bargain.

Competition in London is very rife. The cheap five-shilling hatter was soon surprised by a four-and-nine-penny shop opposite. Few London men could live but by a degree of energy which the country dealer little knows. The wear and tear of nerve-power and the discharge of brain-power in London are enormous. The London man lives fast. In London, man rubs out, elsewhere he rusts out. No doubt the mental stimulus of London staves off much disease, for idle men eat themselves to death and worry themselves to death; but in city life neither gluttony nor worry has a chance, but men give bail for their good behaviour from ten o'clock to five, and are kept out of much mischief's way by force of circumstances.

Many other things contribute to make our new Londoner feel smaller in his own eyes. The living stream flows by him in the streets; he never saw so many utter strangers to him and to each other before; their very pace and destination are different; there is a walk and business determination distinctly London. In other towns men saunter they know not whither, but nearly every passer-by in London has his point, and is making so resolutely towards it that it seems not more his way than his destination as he is carried on with the current; and of street currents there are two, to the City and from the City, so distinct and persistent, that our friend can't get out of one without being jostled by the other. This

street stream he may analyze, and, according to the hour of the day or the season of the year, the number, trades, and characters obey an average. In the country Dr. Jones drives in one day, Mr. and Mrs. Robinson and family walk in the next. Sometimes fifty people may be counted, sometimes ten, but in London there is an ebb and flow in the Strand as regular and uniform as in the Thames. The City noise begins gradually about six with the sweeps and the milk-pails amongst the earliest calls, though ponderous market-carts and night cabs are late and early both. This fitful rumble deepens to a steady roar about nine, and there is no approach to silence till night, and after a very short night of repose the same roar awakes again; so City people live as in a mill, till constant wearing sound becomes to them the normal state of nature.

There is a deal of education in all this. The mind is ever on the stretch with rapid succession of new images, new people, and new sensations. All business is done with an increased pace. The buying and the selling, the counting and the weighing, and even the talk over the counter, is all done with a degree of rapidity and sharp practice which brightens up the wits of this country cousin more than any books or schooling he ever enjoyed. All this tends greatly to habits of abstraction and to the bump of concentrativeness. The slow and prosy soon find they have not a chance; but after a while, like a dull horse in a fast coach, they develop a pace unknown before.

Self-dependence is another habit peculiarly of London growth. Men soon discover they have no longer the

friend, the relative or the neighbour of their own small town to fall back upon. To sink or swim is their own affair, and they had better make up their minds to depend wholly upon themselves; for London is like a wilderness, not as elsewhere because there are no people at all, but because there are so many people, that one is equally far from helping another save on rare occasions. This inexorable self-dependence, which is essential to the life of a colonist in Australia, stamps to a great extent the character of the Londoner. Thousands of young doctors, lawyers, and apprentices find themselves there for the first time without a home or family fireside, not only with no one to check them, but none to interfere. They begin to wish they had; for it is quite a new sensation to feel for the first time that nobody knows and nobody cares; only there is the dread of destitution as a master, and whether they shall be penniless the next month, the next week, or perhaps even the very next day, depends on their own self-denial and self-control alone. Yes, necessity is the one great master that ties for twelve or fourteen hours a day the driver to his lofty box and the cad to his narrow footboard. Indeed the thousands of young men, and young women too, who, far from the parental home, find the way to take care of themselves better than fond fathers and mothers ever dreamed of, says much for the sense and conscience of the present generation.

Family people find London life as peculiar as single people. An omnibus man said no one trod this earth so little; in bed by night, high in air all day, and with

only a few steps from one to the other. The wife of a clerk said that from November to February she never saw her husband by daylight but on Sundays. It was barely light when he left and it was quite dark when he came home; and the husband replied he as rarely saw his children except they were in bed. The same man complained that after exhaustion for six days in a close office a service of two hours in a close church was ill suited to his day of rest. "My wife finds," he continued, "there is no ill-nature in London life. From envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, so rife in a small neighbourhood, she finds herself delightfully free, and I enjoy liberty and independence unknown before, simply because people know too little of each other to interfere; but, on the other side, old friendship and neighbourly interests are wanting too." No doubt there are warm friendships and intimacies in London as well as in the country, but few and far between. People associate more at arm's length, and give their hand more readily than their heart, and hug themselves within their own domestic circles. You know too little of people to be deeply interested either in them or their fortunes, so you expect nothing and are surprised at nothing. An acquaintance may depart London life, and even this life, or be sold up and disappear, without the same surprise or making the same gap as in a village circle.

The natural incidents of London life render changes far more frequent; very different from places where the same family is born, bred, and dies in the same house. No one calls on new-comers, and not only is society slowly

formed, but after two or three years the old set have disappeared, and you find yourself alone in your own street ; and as to other acquaintances, the distances are too great to keep them up.

Year after year, men who have planted themselves out of town find that town follows them. The old people of Hammersmith are wellnigh overtaken and made one with London, and so are those of Hampstead ; and the Swiss Cottage, like the Thatched Tavern, are simple records of holiday retreats, now so lost in the mazes of new streets that another generation will be at a loss to guess the origin of so rural a sign. To command the City from parts so distant, the railway, like the omnibus, has now become quite a part of a man's rent, reckoned thus : "rent, rail, and taxes, £60 a year ;" and builders and tenants both must calculate alike, while a town as big as Bath is added every fourteen months.

The rapid extension of London suburbs affects the rich and pleasure-seeking too. The carriage-people cannot now even drive into the country. Seven miles in every direction the road-side is cut up ; half-finished rows spoil the view, and "To let for building," or "No admittance but on business," "Goding's Entire," and omnibuses, all tend to mar the rural vision and to disenchant the lover of the picturesque. The carriage-people are therefore reduced to the Parks ; the streets are so crowded in the season that many ladies find them too great a trial of the nerves ; and, when in the Park, to see and to be seen, and the interest we take in our fellow-creatures, gradually draws even the most philosophical to join the throng in the fashionable Row.

This makes London life more peculiar still. We live and move in masses ; retirement is nowhere ; life is all public : the streets are in winter so wet, in summer so hot, and always so noisy, so crowded, and so dirty, that the wear and tear of nerves and clothes are indeed a serious consideration. New residents find they must live better or at least more expensively. Wine to many becomes no longer a luxury but a necessity. They miss the fresh air and quiet of the country and crave a stimulus to make amends. The non-carriage people therefore seek houses near the Parks, and rents run up enormously. Still, do what you will, the roar of London is ever in your ears, and the fret and irritation for ever tries your system ; so much so that the season, that is, the only part of London life supposed enjoyable, no sooner begins than people begin to lay their plans for its end and out-of-towning. In August you go because others go, because all the world seems breaking up and off for the holidays, and you feel in disgrace and punishment if you don't go too. To say the truth, the houses get hotter and hotter, till the very walls feel warmed through ; the blaze of sunshine makes the walls look more dingy, the chimneys smell, the papered grates and tinselled shavings look shabby, and everybody feels tired of everybody else and everything about them. If any one stays behind it is so well known to be no matter of preference when all London is painting, white-washing, and doing up, that it seems positively against your respectability ; so much so, that some who find it convenient to go rather late or to return rather early are weak enough to keep their front

blinds down or shutters shut, and live and look out on the mews' side! In short, out-of-towning is a point in which you are hardly a free agent. Your servants look for your going out of town, and some bargain for it at hiring, part because Tea-kettle Thomas and Susan want the change, and others for the range and riot of your house when you are gone. A friend in — Gardens, where there is a fine common garden behind the house, says that all August and September there is a perfect saturnalia of cooks and charwomen and their friends aping their mistresses—rather a loud imitation—playing croquet, giving tea and gin parties, dancing, screaming, shouting, laughing, and making summer life hideous. Very hard! Harder lines than ever, because you pay so much for this garden, boast of this garden as an oasis in the London desert, and after all your leafy retreat proves (and oftentimes and that not at this season alone) a bear-garden and a nuisance.

This imperative out-of-towning at one and the same prescribed season is a heavy tax on London life. Taking your year's holiday perhaps when you don't want one, you cannot afford the time or money when you do want one. Worse still, you must take your year's holiday all at once. Though seven or eight weeks or more, away from your friends, your books, pursuits, and all the little pivots on which the morning turns, is too long for one change—your establishment is disorganized and your home affairs want a stitch-in-time—still, London life is London life—once in the groove you had better conform, or you will find the exception on the balance more

troublesome than the rule ; and so much a year for this enforced ruralising, like railway fares to the suburbans, is a regular charge on London life.

London visiting is as little a matter of free choice as our ruralising. The season for parties is most unseasonable. We have melted at dinner-parties when all the efforts of Gunter or of Bridgeman were well exchanged for a little cool air, and when the wines and even the peaches were at summer heat ; and we have seen ladies leave at eleven for balls at twelve, with more stewing and suffocation to follow—some, perhaps, having left cool groves, and flowers and fruits to scent and blush unseen in the country, for indoor and (what should be) wintry hospitalities in town.

Such hospitalities are much more expensive than in the country—partly because London attracts chiefly the richer families. London business is more lucrative, at least to those who stand their ground. It is also well understood that the social advantages of London life are for those only who can live at a certain rate. Entertainments are in proportion to income ; and since you have none of the garden fêtes and tea and fruit on the lawn—nothing, in short, to offer your guests but the dinner or the ball alone, and since there is no little cost of dress and time in meeting, the meal is, all in all, quite a serious and formidable matter ; and the rivalry in dishes and courses enough to sicken us, as also in plate and table decorations, is rife indeed.

No doubt with young people these things pass disregarded. The young can breathe any atmosphere, and,

till a certain age, "comfort" is a term but little known. No. The very adventure and roughing it has its charm—provided the craving for excitement, so easily excited and so hard to allay, is only gratified; and to the young the London season is exciting enough. The style and equipages of the Parks amidst more beautiful garden scenery than you can elsewhere behold, with all the gorgeous pageantry that meets the eye and the giddy whirl that turns the brain—this, while all is fresh and new and the spirits equal to the zest for so intense a strain—this is hallucinating indeed, almost like the first pantomime to a child. So we freely sympathise with the young, and say, "My dears, be happy while you can. This will serve for once or twice; have your turn and then make way for others as fresh and keen as you were when you first began." 'Tis well all this is called "the season." For a few weeks the delusion may last, and just before the charm is wholly broken, before the tinsel drops off, and the broad day-light of common life brings down the kings and queens of society more nearly to the level of their admiring fellow-creatures, the morning stream, with cabs and drags and loaded carriages heaped up with boxes, baths, and luggage various, sets in steadily to the railway stations, and little but the dust upon the faded flowers by Rotten Row, and piles of chairs, remain to show where the ebbing tide of fashion has so freely flowed.

So much for the society fashionable for the season visitors; but as to the society of residents in London it is indeed peculiar. London is for the most part a city of

business ; at least, nearly all the houses occupied all the year round are those of busy men. Such men pass the day in City offices and live in the suburbs ; so much so that on Sundays the City churches are found so out of place that some are pulled down and their sites and materials sold to build others ; so, the City churches seem to follow the worshippers out of town, where the worshippers alone are found. The consequence is, that scarcely any man worth visiting is found at home save on Sundays. Sunday is the day not only for devotion but for friendship and home affections. The poulterer and the fishmonger say they send out more on Sunday than on other mornings. Would that this always represented only friendly hospitalities ! for business dinners are another thing, and virtually carry on the money-making into the Sunday. Men eat and drink in the West to make things pleasant in the East. Such hospitalities to oil the wheels of business are supposed to pay themselves by your "connection : " but good men grieve over such a profanation of the rites of hospitality. But as regards friendly society, the City man has the Sunday alone. Let us hope it is thankfully and healthily employed. As to the intellectual society, the possible advantages of London are somewhat qualified in practice. Men of talent are too busy : you can rarely meet one till he is half tired by his day's work, at a seven o'clock dinner, and rather the animal than the intellectual predominates then. We heard a country doctor complain that when he came to London his witty friend the Coroner was always sitting upon bodies, and other men of mark he

found so engrossed with the affairs of the nation in general, that on himself in particular they had not a minute to bestow.

And this leads to the reflection that London life tends to improve rather the head than the heart. Every man is kept at his wits' ends; for London life is rather a hardening life: certainly there is much to civilize and to discipline and to control, but the affections and charities of our nature are rather out of their proper sphere. Competition is so keen, there is a hard struggle for life. Prudence, forethought, and the industrial part of the character are forced into growth; but there is too much of the reflex feeling: the City man has too little to balance those feelings or to draw out others beyond the sphere of self. The City man from ten to four, and the same man at Bayswater from seven to ten, are two different characters. The man who has haggled at his office for three-and-sixpence will regale you at his house as if money were a jest. But still in the City or at the West there is a vigilance, a reserve, and a self-defence—a certain guarded habit unknown in rural circles. Every man for himself seems the law.

In the country much contributes to draw forth the more genial qualities. The hospital or infirmary committee, the board of guardians or other society for the good of the neighbourhood, as well as local charities and the claims of the many John Hobsons and Susan Smalls that have grown with our growth, and formed part of the little world and common family around us—all these objects of kindly interest tend to keep our feelings in

exercise and remind us of the wants and duties of our common nature.

But in London we soon learn not to give in the streets, and do not so soon learn to follow the needy to his garret. The result is that the rich and charitable feel positively the want of objects; and what heart-exercise is there in dropping shillings into a Sunday plate or in entering your name in cold blood for one pound one? No doubt the lady in Belgrave Square duly caudles her coachman's wife, in the Mews behind her mansion; but what is that compared to the daily bounties with the country lady's own hand, when she goes her round to relieve the sick, to school the children, and to comfort the aged about her own estate?

Nowhere as in large cities like London, as in Jerusalem of old, do we find Dives and Lazarus, profusion and poverty, luxury and starvation so near together, and yet with so deep a gulf between. Who would imagine, said a traveller in Madrid, that some gay street was simply the fair front and disguise of an unsuspected gaol-wall, with groans inaudible and misery untold at a few yards' distance on the other side? Who would imagine that Hyde Park Gardens at six hundred a year reared high its imposing and columned front to conceal the worn-out sempstress' garret at half-a-crown a week, a stone's throw behind? So true is it that a man may be lost in a crowd as in a desert, and starve near Leadenhall-market as well as in the wilds of Arabia, unless he can pay his way, or some one happens to see the poor impotent folk and lend a helping hand.

To revert to the intellectual opportunities of London, let not our clever country cousins be envious without a cause. We doubt if London life favours the greater efforts of genius. There is too much excitement and too little repose, and the mind is perplexed, as Southey felt in the Reading Room of the British Museum, by the very affluence of its resources and the distraction of its supplies. Sydney Smith's friends complained that he should be doomed to waste his talents in the wilds of Yorkshire, with only an occasional visit to London. Why, this was the very making of such a mind as Sydney Smith's. Its powers would else have been frittered away in dinner-table talk, fruitless of his shrewd suggestions and of that hard common-sense which, circulating through the "Edinburgh Review," in due time found expression in the amended laws of the land.

It is remarked that London society is less aristocratic than in the days of the Regency. Without insisting that the friends of the Regent might not look very aristocratic now, we would observe that the aristocracy, though not inferior in refinement and bearing, are no longer distinguished from cotton lords in wealth. That is true of society which is true of the bar—we have few leaders because we have so many leaders—so many who would well have compared with those whom it is traditional to admire. Add to this, the aristocracy proper, now quite small in number, keep very much to themselves. You cannot mob and stare at dukes and duchesses by a five-shilling admittance to the Horticultural or the Botanical Gardens. For the aristocracy know the snobocracy

too well, and receive a private view of fruits and flowers, and as to the company, them they leave to look at each other.

But man, after all, seems rural by nature, and city only perforce: so, even in London, we see the rural element break forth in sundry forms. True the old Duke of Queensberry, at his club through August, argued that, after all, town was a deal fuller than the country; and Shakspearian Collier, at his pretty cottage at Maidenhead, said how he longed for a cabstand to add interest to his view—yet both these men loved Nature still, though they were too active-minded to “babble of green fields” alone. All Londoners feel the same. Who has not seen flower culture under difficulties, and geraniums planted even in crockery the most ridiculous as the train passes level with the garrets of Limehouse or Blackfriars? Happily our squares are planted with fine trees, ay, and where shall we see such gardens? Country people would be surprised to hear that, in London, foliage is seen almost everywhere. It has been remarked that there is hardly a street in the City that cannot refresh the eye with green leaves in the summer. Even in St. Paul’s churchyard, and from the back windows of the Cheapside offices, it is hard to find a house which cannot afford a sight of green leaves. Who knows not, that what with Hyde Park and Regent’s Park, Battersea, Victoria, and Alexandra Parks, with the Gardens, Botanical, Horticultural, Kew, Richmond, and Hampton Court, Windsor and Virginia Water, you must actually come from the country to London and its vicinity to see flowers, parks, and gardens in perfection! How

pleasant to see—not the fops ogling the women in Rotten Row, that is not rural, but—the thousands who rent the penny chairs by the Serpentine or Kensington Gardens, and the mechanics with their wives and children, who perhaps pay a twopenny omnibus to enjoy their share of those groves and lawns to which all alike contribute!

The river and its boats are another rural outlet, whether up to Kew, Richmond, and Hampton Court, or down to Greenwich, Gravesend, and “Rosherville, the place to spend a happy day.” Happy shall we be when the Thames is pure enough to suit the finny tribes. The cockney is a fishing animal. How refreshing to the eyes—like an oasis in the desert—is Farlow’s tackle, baits, and pictured trout and salmon in the Strand, and other fishing-tackle shops in the busiest courts from Fetter Lane to London Bridge, even a glance at which transports us in imagination to the trolling or punt-fishing of the Thames, to the sea-fishing of the South Coast, or sets us wading in the salmon rivers of Scotland.

A friend who lodged by Holborn Turnstile said, no one could believe the numbers of men with fishing-rods, bottles, and baskets (insuring *bites* at least) that passed every fine Sunday morning, whether for the sticklebacks at Highgate, or the gudgeons of the New River—lovers of the country all. The success of the Volunteering depends partly on the same country-loving instinct. Messrs. Shoolbred alone could turn out a small corps, regimental band and all complete, to defend their silks and calicoes; and these, and many another firm, have their days for a rural outing, for Hampton vans are now quite a Cockney

institution. There are, every year, treats for Ragged and other schools, for deaf mutes from asylums, and aged paupers from the unions; besides van clubs, which, like goose clubs and plum-pudding clubs at Christmas, take sixpences all the year for a jollification and a spree occasional. You may count forty vans in one stream on a fine May morning.

Who has not read, "Nine hours by the sea for two and sixpence," advertised as freely as "nine mackerel for a shilling?" and as to the Crystal Palace, it enters into the very customs if not the contracts of all London service. Even the maid-of-all-work toils for so much a-year expressed, and sundry days to the Crystal Palace understood. The famous Easter Hunt is, perhaps, a thing of the past—Epping now being known less for dogs than for dairies, though some thirty years ago, in Old Matthew's "At Home," every one entered into the joke of the Cockney, in the hackney-coach, calling out for a one-and-sixpenny fare after the stag. The Derby, and of late the Oxford and Cambridge boat-race, are great London days; and, as to Lord's and the Oval, with the Middlesex Cricket Grounds, they serve as out-of-door summer clubs, and many a man would hardly endure the heat and dust of a London season without those providential retreats for fresh air and country sports.

All this testifies to that yearning for green fields and rural sports which a life amidst bricks, pavements and pitching-stones, with difficulty holds under high pressure, and which is ever yearning to find expression in its own congenial sphere.

HOUSEKEEPING IN BELGRAVIA.

ABOUT six or seven years ago, a gentleman of considerable fortune, a merchant of Liverpool, paid a visit to London after an absence of many years. He took an open carriage one fine afternoon, and drove with a friend to those quarters which he remembered once fields or gardens, and where magnificent streets and princely squares and terraces are now standing. After exploring the apparently interminable region about Bayswater, they drove to the more fashionable and still newer quarter called South Kensington. Here this gentleman's astonishment was excited, not only by the vast changes in this locality, but by the style and importance of the dwellings, which proclaimed them to be prepared for the wealthy only.

"The rents of these houses, you tell me," said he, turning to his friend, "range from three to seven hundred a year. Now in the north we reckon that a man's rent should not exceed the tenth of his income. If you Londoners are guided by the same rule, what a vast number of people there must be amongst you with good comfortable incomes of from three to five thousand a year!"

His friend smiled, and half shook his head, was about to speak, when his companion resumed—

"People with ten thousand a year are, after all, not numerous: one might almost count them. But where do all the occupiers of these houses come from? Tyburnia alone could swallow up the West End that I

remember twenty years ago. But how is this quarter peopled ? ”

“ Perhaps,” rejoined his friend, “ from your part of the world—from Liverpool and Manchester. But don’t run away with false ideas of our London wealth. House-rent here is no criterion of a man’s means. With you it is comparatively moderate, with us inordinately dear. And people of small or moderate incomes would get no home in London at all if they limited their rent to a tenth of their income. And yet,” continued the Londoner, with something of a sigh, as the rent and cost of his own expensive abode in Tyburnia presented themselves to his thoughts, “ there is no item of our expenditure that we ought to study more, or more determinately keep down than this very one of house-rent, for one’s expenses in this luxurious capital are very much regulated by the style of home and quarter one lives in. For instance, the class of servants that present themselves to you are more exorbitant in their demands, more luxurious in their habits, if you live in a fashionable neighbourhood, than if you occupy an equally large house elsewhere. Rather than lose a footman who had been with me some years I was obliged to turn him into an under-butler the other day, as he told me “ the *society* he was in rendered it impossible for him to remain any longer in livery.”

This anecdote brought the conversation to the subject of household expenditure in London as compared with that of the great northern towns ; and the picture drawn by the Londoner of the habits and customs of the great and wealthy in the metropolis caused his friend to exclaim,

with thankfulness, "It was well for him that he had to fight the battle of life elsewhere."

"Perhaps so," rejoined his friend; "but you, too, have your weak points. Whilst you are content with *waitresses*, you spend double on your table. I have seen an alderman's feast prepared for a party of eight, and a lady's request for a few oranges answered by a whole case arriving, &c., &c. And then, again, your wives and daughters are more costly in their dress than——"

"True! True! But we would rather spend our money upon them than upon flunkies."

Six or seven years have done little to alter the habits of living amongst the upper classes: something, certainly, towards increasing their expense, and a great deal towards improving and embellishing their abodes in town. The ugly, plain brick house, ill-lighted by windows few and small, yet, nevertheless, well-built, and with much substantial comfort about it, is now superseded by a bright, cheerful-looking dwelling, where, if there is less space, there is more light and air; where, though the area it covers be smaller, there is more accommodation; where, if the walls are made thinner and neighbours ignored, the convenience and comfort of all the inmates are more cared for; where, if the rent is higher, the rates are less—where, in short, the attractions and advantages are so obvious that those who are able to consider and follow their inclinations (that class of people usually so prejudiced against the *very new*) have thrown aside this feeling, forsown old associations, and adopted the new quarters of the town as their own.

Shade of King James! arise and view the scene

realized that filled thy acute and far-seeing eye with dismay. Acres and acres of brick and plaster compass us around; the pleasant country homes of England are despised; their occupants, great and small, brought by our iron roads into contact with the outer world, have had new impressions given, new desires inspired; the calm and quiet, the leisure of country life becomes unendurable, they exclaim, "Let us away! it is not good for man to live alone"—content to resign their prominence, even their individuality, if they may, though but as a drop to the ocean, swell the ranks of the world not inaptly named after their chief resort, *Belgravia*. Oh railroads! much have ye to answer for. Twenty years hence we may look in vain for the social, kindly, hospitable country life now only to be met with in remote counties, in Cornwall, in Scotland. Already have you made the "Great Houses" independent of their neighbours. Their fish and their friends come down from town together. And the squire, the small proprietor despairing of husbands for his girls or his rubber for himself, where the doors around are closed nine months in the year, leaves his acres to the care of his bailiff and takes refuge in the nearest watering-place, or yields to his wife's solicitations, and launches also into the cares and troubles of

HOUSEKEEPING IN BELGRAVIA.

How much these three words combine! And yet, have we anything to say about the homes and habits of Belgravia or the upper classes of London society, that people fancy they do not know already? We will leave

our reader to settle that question by-and-by, when he has visited their abodes and inspected their *ménage* in our company.

Formerly, when one spoke of oneself as living in the West End, one gave by that single word a general idea of one's locality. In the present day it is necessary to specify the particular quarter—whether Westbournia, Tyburnia, Belgravia, &c., for people now doubt whether the Regent's Park district may be classed under that general head; and the inhabitants of the regions round about Cavendish and Portman Squares speak modestly of themselves as inhabiting an "old-fashioned part of the town." We therefore discard a term which we do not care to define, or run the risk of offending by so doing, and adopt one now generally understood to apply to all who move in a certain sphere of society, whether living on one side of Oxford Street or the other, and derived from that quarter that contains fewer of the workers of life, and offers, perhaps, more gradations of fortune, rank, or fashion than any other. There may be found the wealthy titled, and the wealthy untitled family; the fashionable without fortune, and the fashionable because of fortune; those who give a prestige to the quarter they live in, and those who derive a prestige from living there. And yet little more than thirty-five years ago Belgrave Square was not. It owes its existence to a builder's speculation, who perceived the want of well-built first-class houses, and probably foresaw the increased demand that would arise from the centralizing influence of railroads. His speculation answered, in spite of the unhealthy reputation of the ground, and a new suburb rapidly arose, pro-

voking the emulation of other builders, who have now nearly succeeded in their intentions of enclosing Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens in a labyrinth of streets and terraces. Small as Paris comparatively is, every one knows that she has distinct quarters, and that each quarter had a character and society of its own. The barriers that divide them are fast being infringed in this imperial reign. And we, who twenty or thirty years ago had less cliqueism than any other capital, are gradually merging into it, simply because the vast growth of the town has scattered one's friends so far and wide, that for sociable and friendly visiting people are thrown upon those nearest to them, and take their tone naturally from that which they are in most frequent communication. Already there is a sort of *esprit de locale* (if we may so express it) amongst the inhabitants of the new quarters that the old West Ender never dreamed of. He lived in *London*. He never thought of fighting a battle over the respective merits of Portman or Berkeley Square. Grosvenor Square, in his eyes, was *ne plus ultra*. And if he did not live there himself, it was because he could not afford it; so he took the best house nearest the Park that he could get for his money, and visited around, from a judge in Russell Square to a peer in Piccadilly. "How do you like your house?" was a question often addressed. "How do you like this part of the town?" was needless to him. In the present day it is the prelude to warm discussions; and so sensitive are people now to remarks upon their district, so bitter in their objections upon other parts, that it has been proposed more than once that Tyburnia and Belgravia should settle the vexed

question of superiority by an appeal to arms—or, in common language, “Meet and have it out in Hyde Park.” If this feeling increases, in ten years’ time each of these vast suburbs will become, as it were, distinct towns, with a character and society of their own.

Those who remain faithful to the dingy-looking streets around Portman and Cavendish Squares, pique themselves on their central position, which enables them to enjoy the advantages of every, without identifying themselves with any, neighbourhood; and it is in these quarters still that some of the best resident London society may be found—society that lays its claims to this position upon higher grounds than mere rank or fortune, yet not deficient in either, the elements that form it being varied, and brought together from all points. The remark made by a lady lately dining in Princes Gate would never have been uttered there, or in Mayfair. After listening to the conversation that was pretty general for some time, she said to her neighbour—

“I could fancy I was dining in the country, you are so very local in your conversation. I hear of nothing but the state of the roads, of meetings about them, who has taken this house, and who has bought that.”

“Well,” replied her neighbour, “I suppose we are. I myself hardly visit any one not living in this immediate neighbourhood.”

The question arises, In what does the superiority of one district over another consist? Without entering into the reasons that induce people to prefer one to the other, we may briefly describe them as follows:—Grosvenor Square and its immediate environs as the most

aristocratic, Belgravia the most fashionable, Tyburnia the most healthy, Regent's Park the quietest, Marylebone and Mayfair the most central, and Bayswater and Eccleston Square quarters as the most moderate. People's views and means may be guided, in a general manner, by these leading features. The man of small income finds he must locate himself in a region verging upon what in former years one would have called Shepherd's Bush, or in a quarter uncomfortably near Vauxhall and the river; if a family man, solicitous for the health of his children, he decides in favour of the former, where he finds a choice of houses, from £60 a year and upwards to £200, and the rates moderate.

But, if either he or his wife are linked by ever so small a chain to the world of fashion, he chooses the latter, where, for much the same rent and rates and taxes, he finds an abode with all the modern improvements; extra story, light offices, plate glass windows, portico, white-papered drawing-rooms, &c., and deludes himself into the notion of his being in Belgravia. The man of an ample, though not large fortune, has a wider range: he may choose from all parts, for there are houses to suit his purse and his style of living in every quarter; but when his home is London—when he leaves the metropolis only, perhaps, for a three-months' tour abroad, or some sea air at Brighton—he carefully eschews the “out of the way” quarters, as he terms them; he will go no farther west than Connaught Place, scarcely to Hyde Park Square, and no farther south than Grosvenor Place, and so settles finally in Mayfair or Marylebone, choosing the latter for health, the former for fashion, and finding

everything else too far from his club "and the busy haunts of men." In Great Cumberland Street, one of the pleasantest and most central streets, a good small house may be had for £200 a year, a larger one from £300 to £400; in Connaught Place, where the advantages of light, air, and an open space in front (Hyde Park), are combined with a central situation, and quiet at the back, from their being no thoroughfare, the smallest house, including rates and taxes, will cost the owner £500 a year, and the larger considerably more. These houses may perhaps be considered dear, for those near the corner of the Edgware Road suffer from the noise and dust of that great line of traffic, and many of the others are ill built. In Seymour, Wimpole, Harley, and Lower Berkeley Street, the average rent of a good-sized well-built house, with stabling, is £200 a year. In the Regent's Park, in the terraces that so delight the foreigner, there is a choice of charming moderate-sized abodes at rents from £150 to £300 a year. These houses, however, in spite of the advantages they offer of greater light and cleanliness, and the attractions of gardens to look upon, and cheat oneself in summer time into the idea of being in the country, must be considered expensive, as the accommodation they afford is limited, and the terms from which they are held from the Crown involve more frequent painting and restoration than is elsewhere insisted upon.

Within the last few years a new suburb has arisen, enclosing the once countrified Primrose Hill, and throwing out arms that almost touch Hampstead and Highgate. We will not attempt to decide whether it constitutes part

of the West End; it holds much the same position, in that respect as St. John's Wood; but as the class of people living there hardly come under the head Belgravia as we define that term, we shall make a long step to the more fashionable neighbourhoods of Mayfair and Park Lane, where a greater choice of houses in respect to rent and size is to be met with than in any other part of London, and where a man of good, although not large fortune, may locate himself very desirably; he must, of course, confine himself to the streets, the squares in the older parts of the West End, like Hyde Park Gardens, and the larger houses in Park Lane, Rutland or Princes Gate, facing the Park, being attainable to the wealthy only, ranging from £500 to £1,000 a year. There are, it is true, a few smaller and less expensive houses in Berkeley Square; but, as a rule, if a house in a square is desired, and the rent not to exceed £300 per annum, it must be looked for in Hyde Park or Gloucester Squares, and the region *beyond Portman and Belgrave Squares*. Grosvenor Square and one side of Eaton Square contain first-class houses, family mansions, seldom in the market, and then chiefly for purchase, not hire. There are no two more agreeable or convenient streets in London than Upper Brook and Grosvenor Streets; and although there has been an invasion into them of brass plates, supposed to be fatal to the fashion of a street, the character of the neighbourhood is not likely to fall but rather to rise again; for the improvements projected and being carried out by the Marquis of Westminster will place Grosvenor Square so far beyond its modern rivals, that the streets in its

vicinity will add to their present advantages the prestige of appertaining to it. Not only are extra stories and handsome frontages being added to these princely dwellings, but as the leases fall in, the noble owner sacrifices some of the houses in Lower Grosvenor and Lower Brook Street, to build stabling for the houses in the square. It cannot be doubted, therefore, than when a nobleman can lodge his servants and his horses as well in Grosvenor as in Belgrave Square, he will not hesitate between the two.

A great proportion of London residents, however, do not hire but buy their houses, or rather the leases, paying a ground-rent, which varies, of course, according to situation; and as land becomes more valuable every day, is higher in the new than in the old quarters of London, except of course in business quarters, and in such cases as, for instance, the Portland estate, where many leases having lately fallen in, the duke has doubled, and in some instances trebled, the ground-rent on renewing or granting a new lease, so that a small house on his property was paying £60 a year ground-rent, and one of the same dimensions in Upper Grosvenor Street only £20. Generally speaking, the ground-rents of Tyburnia are higher than those of Belgravia; whilst the new houses in South Kensington are higher still. Houses looking into Hyde Park, whether north, south, east or west, are in much the same ratio, from £70 to £150 yearly; those on a large scale even higher: one, for instance, in Princes Gate was lately to be sold at a ground-rent of £200 per annum; and fast as squares and terraces and gardens spring up

(for street is now an old-fashioned word) in this magnificent quarter they are inhabited, furnished, and fitted up handsomely and luxuriously, proving that the owners who have the money to buy, have also the money to live in them ; and causing even the old London resident, a being who is never astonished at anything, to inquire with a Lord Dundreary air of surprise, " Where all these rich fellahs come from ? " More than one-half are supplied by the legal profession and the mercantile community. There has been quite a flight of judges and well-to-do barristers to South Kensington—long-sighted men, who saw that it would be a rising neighbourhood, and bought their houses before Fashion had given the approving nod, which instantly ran up the rents to a premium. To this class of men the drawbacks to this neighbourhood are unimportant, the distance from those parts of the town that we may term the heart of West End life, the clubs, the lounges, the libraries, the shops, &c., signify nothing to those engaged in chambers or the counting-house all day. The denizen of South Kensington has no other wish, when his day's work is over, than to get *home*, and to stay there. The light, the cleanliness, the airiness, and modern comforts of his house are doubly grateful to him when contrasted with his close business quarters : once in his cab or his carriage, what is a mile more or less to him ? He has not the smallest intention of going to his club in the evening ; and the theatre he forswore years ago. The ladies of his family find no fault with the situation ; but, on the contrary, will not allow a quarter so near Hyde Park, and the fashionable morning walk by

Rotten Row, to be termed out of the way. As they drive out every afternoon, they do not care to be in the way of visitors; and as the female mind is not strong upon the matter of distance, they are not troubled by the reflection of how many miles their unfortunate horses are daily doomed to perform. But then, perhaps, their horses are jobbed, and the best plan too; they are therefore often changed and rested. No single pair of horses could stand the amount of work required by a fashionable lady, living in one of the new outlying quarters of the town.

The Belgravian, of course, keeps a carriage of some kind: if rich, more than one, a close one for winter and an open one for summer, and a brougham, perhaps, for dinners and night work. If moderately well off, he is content with a brougham only; or allows his wife horses to her barouche in the season; and, although he rides his own horses, he almost always jobs his carriage horses; if a little more expensive, that plan is so much more convenient, as a man is then never without the use of his carriage, that even those who have time and inclination to look after their own stables generally adopt it; and where the head of the house is too much occupied to look after horses, it is unquestionably the best plan. For ladies living alone, the best course is to job the whole concern, horses, carriage, and coachman: there are liverymen who undertake this, and provide a handsome carriage, of the colour desired, with the crest and arms of the hirer, with the proper livery for the coachman, for about £300 a year. The horses stand at livery; and a lady is thus sure that they are well cared for, that she will have a sober and

civil driver, without any of the trouble and anxiety of looking after him herself.

The usual plan with regard to the carriage in London is to have it built for you, for a term of years, generally five, at a certain annual sum ; for which it is kept in repair, furnished with new wheels, relined, varnished, &c. At the end of the term the carriage remains to the builder, unless it is in such a condition as to be done up and used again, when of course a fresh arrangement is entered upon. It is scarcely possible to keep a handsome well-appointed carriage and pair under £300 a year. Before the introduction of broughams, therefore, many people, in easy circumstances even, did not attempt to do so, but contented themselves with hiring one occasionally. Now, the one-horse carriage predominates ; so much less costly, so light and convenient are the broughams, that not only those who hesitated to have a carriage have adopted them, but many who had already a chariot or coach were glad to drop one horse, and come down to a brougham, when they found it was a reduction that they could effect without loss of that prestige in society so dear to the heart of the Belgravian. And, as these horses are not generally jobbed, the reduction could be effected by those who understood looking after a horse at rather less than half the cost of the pair, the job-master having had, of course, his profit to make. Another advantage of the brougham is that a groom can drive it. It does not necessarily entail that important personage—a middle-aged, sedate-looking coachman—whose dignity would never condescend to drive one horse, and who

requires twice the help in the stable for his carriage horses, that the lighter, younger, more active groom does for his master's riding horse and the brougham horse also. Truly the introduction of the brougham has been a blessing to many whose means forbade a carriage otherwise, and whose habits of life and ideas made them consider one a necessary, not a luxury. The sacrifices some people make to enable them to "keep their carriage," savour sometimes of the ridiculous to those who are in the secret of their *ménage*. Plain, substantial Mrs. Blunt, of Devonshire Street, Portland Place, was surprised when Lady Mary Fauxanfier called on her for the character of Jane Bell, her under-housemaid, the girl having informed her she was going to be her "la'ship's" own maid.

"I assure you, Lady Mary," she exclaimed, as she looked at the elegant dress of the earl's daughter, and observed the smart, well-appointed brougham that brought her to the house, "I assure you the girl is not fit for a maid; she has never even dressed me; as to hair-dressing, I should think her incapable of even brushing mine."

Lady Mary smiled, and said, "The girl is teachable, I suppose, and, you say, honest and respectable; such important points the latter, I think I shall take her. We are only in town three months of the year, and then—well, good morning."

And so Jane Bell went to Lady Mary, who had a furnished house for the season in a small street not a hundred miles from Belgrave Square, where her hus-

band's father, Lord Belmontine, had a splendid mansion, and her own papa another; and Mrs. Blunt often wondered, when she saw Lady Mary's name at the great parties of the season, how poor Jane Bell managed to attire her elegant form, arrange her ladyship's head, and so forth. She was not surprised when the said Jane made her appearance one day in August, and said she was looking for a place again.

Ah, Jane! I thought it would be so; I thought you could not play lady's-maid very long. How could you take a place for which you were so unfitted?"

"Unfitted, indeed, ma'am; but not as you suppose. Why, I was nothing but a general servant. I and the groom—and he was out all day with the horse and carriage—were the only servants they kept. I did all the work of the house, except what an old charwoman did for an hour or two in the morning. I fastened her la'ship's *gownds*, to be sure; in short, ma'm, I was maid, and housemaid, and cook, too, sometimes."

"I was just going to ask," said Mrs. Blunt, "what they did for a cook."

"Well, ma'am, they seldom or ever dined at home; always going to some grand place or t'other, and if by chance they had no dinner party, master, he went down to his club, and I cooked a chop for her la'ship with her tea."

Such was the town establishment and town life of this well-born pair, who lived the rest of the nine months of the year with their relations and their friends, spending more than half their income on the small furnished

house, at ten or fifteen guineas a week, and on their brougham; sacrificing for the three months' London season the independence of the rest of their year, being in the position of always receiving and never giving. Few of their London acquaintance suspected that the neat-looking girl who opened the door when the MAN was out, was Lady Mary's sole female attendant; and those who did know it, doubtless thought it strange that, with the limited means such an arrangement bespoke, they could contrive to keep up the appearance they did. For our part, we are not sure, if the choice lay between spending one's money upon half a dozen servants, or upon one's self, we should not prefer the latter too; but then it must not be at the sacrifice of one's independence. There are certain people to whom a carriage in London is as much a matter of necessity as their dinner. The younger children, perhaps, of wealthy or noble families, they have been accustomed to the use of one all their lives; and, whilst it would be no hardship to dine upon one course only, and that of the plainest, it would be so to have to pay their visits or do their shopping on foot. These people are really not so inconsistent as they would seem; still, it must be allowed, that it is a mistake to adopt any habit of life that implies means above the actual state of the case. You lay yourself open by so doing to have things expected from you that you have no means of meeting; and often, therefore, incur the charge of being mean and stingy, when unable to comply with such claims. You place yourself also in a false position to your own servants, who, naturally associating certain

luxuries with the idea of wealth, misunderstand the economy of the other household arrangements, think ill—and very likely speak ill—of you; for, if servants and masters are to go on well together, there should be a certain degree of confidence between both parties. If a servant is worth having and keeping, he should not be treated as a mere paid machine, but should have a general idea at least of his master's position, when he will feel an interest in, and in time will associate himself with the family he serves, and work with his heart as well as with his head.

But to return to our Belgravians. There are those struggling to keep up an appearance to which birth, &c., entitles them; and those struggling to attain an appearance to which nothing entitles them, if the adequate means are not theirs. With some of these the possession of a carriage is the great thing; with others a man servant is the acme of respectability, and (indeed they are to be pardoned for this last idea; for many highly estimable, worthy, substantial, good sort of people, do not deem you respectable, if you do not keep a man servant) others limit their views to a page, or "buttons;" few have the moral courage to keep to the good, clean, useful, waiting-maid, who waits without noise, and does not break a tumbler a day, as most "buttons" must do, since no family who keeps one ever has tumblers enough, although their number is constantly made up.

Some of these strugglers live nine months of the year in London, by letting their house well for the other three. Ten and fifteen guineas a week are easily got for

small but well-furnished houses in the immediate neighbourhood of Belgrave Square.

House letting has of late years become so common, the peer even condescending to receive his thousand or twelve hundred guineas for the season, that people now don't take the trouble that the Honourable Mrs. A. B. always does of telling you, in answer to your inquiries about her movements, when she leaves town, &c.

“Oh, soon, I hope; I am longing to be off. I always do, you know, the moment the sun begins to shine. I can't stay in London in hot weather.”

The truth being that she remains on until the house is let for the season; when she takes her six children off to some cheap sea-side lodgings, whilst the Honourable A. B., her husband, wanders about from one friend to another, preferring anything to the early dinner and cooking of the lodging-house. His exemplary wife does not murmur at this; she is rather relieved at his absence, and better endures the three months' discomfort without him than with him. She is glad, in spite of the hot weather, however, to return to London at the end of August; but it is quite unnecessary to tell everybody, as she does, that “she always prefers London at this season, when everybody is away.” This assertion is needless: because every one knows that her house is empty again, and that that is the reason London sees her again.

Numbers of families, like the A.B.'s, cover their rent by letting in the season. Many reduce their rent, when they have a country house also, by letting the London house through the winter. Houses that let from three

to five hundred guineas for the season, may be had during the winter at from eight to twelve guineas a week.

Many families coming up to London for the season hire not only their house, but their whole establishment, horses, carriages, coachman and all. Many, even among the residents, take an additional servant for the season. Some so contrive it that they manage always to quarrel with their footman, and discharge him at the end of the season—a shabby plan, which brings its own punishment, as these people never have a good servant, and, when their practice becomes known, have no chance of ever procuring one. “Alas!” exclaims our reader perhaps, “a good servant! where is such a thing to be found in the present day by any one?”

“Ah, indeed!” rejoins Mrs. Oldview; “railroads and penny posts have ruined one’s servants. In my young days, if Betty behaved ill, I told her my mind, and she took a good cry, and mended her ways. She knew well enough then, if the Squire discharged her, she might sing for a place: but now Miss Betty writes to her mother or sister, who tell her not to mind; that there are plenty of places in town, and off she goes, as pert as may be.”

Mrs. Oldview is right; this easy communication, passive or active, has the effect of unsettling many a household. You have a treasure of a cook, perhaps, and, enchanted, fill your house at Christmas, easy about your *entrees*, humbly proud of your sweets. Well; your intimate friend’s lady’s-maid tells her “her talents are wasted on the desert hair,” and mentions a situation that is exactly suited to her, in the metropolis, and she leaves you with-

out a pang, by the parliamentary train. But we are now about to bewail the housekeeping troubles of Belgravia out of town; they are in most respects greater than in London; but as far as men servants are concerned people are better off in the country than in London. The men there, as a class, are far more respectable and better behaved. If steadily disposed, too, they have more chance of remaining so, as they are not exposed to the great temptations that beset the man servant in town. The clubs, the betting men, the bad example, sometimes, of their young masters, the bad society and temptations to drink they are constantly exposed to, when waiting by the hour for their mistress at some fashionable party; all these evil influences surround the young man, without perhaps a single good one to counteract them—without a friend or mother near, to warn, at a time of life when the passions are strongest, and principles weakest, and when from every necessary creature comfort being provided, means are given for indulgences, and habits are acquired, which the same man in any other position, toiling for daily bread, would not dream of.

We do not know how it is that even the best masters and mistresses, those who *do* take an individual interest in their servants, seem to maintain a strict reserve towards their footmen: the very servant that most needs a special surveillance and interest has none of it. They know the family history, perhaps, of every maid in the house. They can talk to the butler, and be interested in *his* private affairs; but the unfortunate footmen may come and go, and as long as they are honest and clean, and do

their work well, no questions are asked, no information is wanted; and John or William leaves at the end of his two years (and we think really he is right to do so), and no one is surprised: he was not expected to become attached to the family, and the family have not become attached to him. He signs a receipt for his wages, and says good-bye, without a shade of feeling being aroused upstairs, whatever there may be below. The departure of a kitchen-maid would cause more excitement, whilst that of a nurse or lady's-maid creates a disturbance, and makes a blank in the family almost as great as the absence of a relative.

And, indeed, good servants in these capacities are often as much and deservedly cherished as if really part of the family; and there are many good ones to be met with, in spite of the outcry of the day. If a lady is worth anything as a mistress at all, she does not change her nurse or maid often. These two servants will stay for years in a place where the cooks and housemaids are perpetually being changed, proving how great is the personal influence, the constant communication with a superior educated mind. The nurse, perhaps, may be retained by the tie of strong affection to the children, but the maid will not stay unless the mistress she serves has those qualities that make her respected and loved. When we see a lady perpetually changing her *own* maid, we are convinced the fault is *all* her own. With her other servants, other influences work; with her personal attendants, her own is paramount. Women-servants in London—if we except the cooks, of whom we are afraid we cannot speak so

highly—are as respectable and hard-working a class of people as can be met with. For every worthless, ungrateful one, we feel satisfied we could produce two capable of acts of devotion to their employers that their superiors in station would not dream of. Early isolated from their own families, the loving heart of woman often finds a vent for those affections which her own kindred should claim, in the family of her master and mistress. Their sorrows become her sorrows; their prosperity or adversity is hers also. She will excuse when the world condemns, and oftentimes becomes the best comforter in the hour of trial, and she will rejoice, without a shade of envy or jealousy, when fortune smiles on those whom *she* might deem already blessed enough. We have known the hard-earned savings of a female servant tendered, without thought of self, to her master's young son in his first trouble, or to her perhaps ill-treated mistress. Then what shall we say of the nurse? Who can contemplate the unselfish devotion of these women to their duties; their renunciation of all liberty and pleasure for themselves; their watchfulness, their self-denial, that their shillings and sixpences may buy a toy for this one, a ribbon for the other, and not be struck with admiration.

We have in our mind one, whose dying hours were embittered by the dread that the loved children might not be well cared for when she was gone. Her mistress, thinking she might like to see their young faces once more, offered to bring them. "Oh! no," she exclaimed; "I could not part again. Let me not see them. Let me

not hear their voices." Oh! deep, pure love! How can we, how ought we, to run down, as a body, those amongst whom such characters are found? No, we will not. The material is good, and, as far as women-servants in London are concerned, we are certain a good mistress will make a good servant. The cooks we have excepted. We are sorry to say that their habits are bad after a certain age. Most of them drink, and few stand the temptation of making out of their place. They have much in their power—much they can legitimately dispose of. If they would but stop there, how delightful it would be! Their wages are high, too; so they have no excuse; but the fact is, that servants' code of morals, with regard to what they think they may honestly do, wants a complete revision, or, rather, a remaking. They have chosen to lay down for themselves rules for the disposal of certain portions of their master's property, without ever consulting the lawful owner, and choose to consider any departure from those rules as a breach of privilege. "There," said a gentleman one day to his father's butler—"there is a pair of boots for you."

"Thank you, sir," replied the man; "but *they* belong to the footman."

"Do they?" returned the gentleman. "I thought they belonged to me. Put them down again." And neither footman nor butler ever got boots from that gentleman again.

People of late years have very properly made a stand against the cook's "perquisites." Ladies have determined to dispose of their left-off clothes as they pleased,

and gentlemen to pay their own bills ; and servants will be better and happier when they consider as gifts what they have before looked upon as "rights." The scale of wages in the present day is high enough to place them above these considerations, in Belgravia at any rate.

To begin with female servants. Kitchenmaids and under-housemaids begin at £10 a year, and get on to £12 and £14. Upper housemaids have £16 a year, and in great houses are found, as the expression is, in tea and sugar, besides beer and washing, which are given to all servants. A plain cook in a small family, who does some housework, gets from £18 to £25 a year ; whilst a cook and housekeeper, or cook, with one or two kitchenmaids under her, receives from £30 to £40 yearly. This high rate of payment places what is called a good cook out of many people's reach ; consequently those who can only afford what is called a plain cook, and think the dinner they eat themselves every day, not good enough to invite their friends to, resort to the expedient of having one sent in by a Gunter or a Bridgeman, if they can manage it, or an inferior purveyor if not. The present fashion of a dinner "à la Russe" has been a great relief to some other housekeepers. Their peace of mind is not disturbed if the jelly does fall, because it will not appear on the table ; and if the capon is not well larded, who, they think, will detect the failure in the delicate slice doled out to them. They regret, it is true, the corner-dishes and épergne it cost so much to obtain, ill replaced by a few cut-glass dishes and pots of flowers ; but then the saving of being able to employ their own cook is a consolation to *them*, although often none to their friends.

The wages of ladies' maids and nurses are much the same, from £18 to £25 a year; whilst a young lady's attendant has £16 a year, and nursemaids from £8 to £14.

The page, or "buttons," begins with a wage of £8 and his clothes; a footman from £20 to £28, with two suits, and sometimes three suits of livery in the year, and so many hats, and so many pairs of white silk hose in "my lord's" house, and so many pairs of black in Sir John's, and so much for powder, and so much for gloves, and everything else, these high, important, and now difficult to-be-got servants, can bargain for. The 19th century considers livery a badge of servitude, or "Punch," with his "Jeames of Buckley Square," has made it ridiculous, or—but it matters little for what reasons—certain it is a man for livery is scarcer than he was, and one of height and figure may command his price, and be almost as impertinent as he pleases.

"Pray, sir," inquired one of these individuals when he was being hired—"pray, who is to carry coals up to the drawing-room?"

"Well," replied the gentleman, "I hardly know; but I don't think I do it myself."

These servants hardly ever stay more than two years in their places. It seems to be an understood thing amongst them that they are to go at the end of the time, even if they cannot get the same advantages elsewhere; and many people are so accustomed to this biennial movement of their footmen, that they look with suspicion on the man that prolongs his stay, and imagine

there must be some, not good, but bad reason for his not going.

In what are called single-handed places it is still more difficult to get the man to wear livery, and many families are obliged to put up with a short, ill-looking man when, from having a carriage, it becomes necessary that the man should be in livery. A man's height is not a mere matter of fancy. It is an inconvenience if the man cannot hasp the windows without a stool, and if his arms are too short to carry the tray, or put it properly on the sideboard; but, as the strong, well-made men are now off to the railroads, there is no help for it. The single-handed man likes to be out of livery, and to consider himself on the level of a butler; but he is, generally speaking, a much more humble-minded and useful individual than he whom he aspires to compete with. We can easily believe the lady of rank who declared to a friend one day that she had been better served when she had only one man and a boy than she was then, with five men in the house. She knocked at her own door one Sunday morning, unexpectedly, when they all thought she was gone to church, and had to wait more than half an hour before she was finally let in by the under housemaid! The butler was at home, but far too grand to open the door. John, who was also at home, left it to James, who was out, and so on. So, out of the five, not one was at hand. The strictness practised in some great houses, where the establishment is large, seems justified by such instances as this. No order could probably be kept if any fault was passed over.

A lady, hiring a housemaid, asked her why she left her last place. "I was discharged," she replied, "because the fire went out." This was found to be true. She had lighted the fire, but not attended to it well; it went out. The lady complained, and the housekeeper gave her warning, as it had happened once before. No doubt the lesson was not lost on the other housemaids.

If the footman leaves his place every two years, the butler's aim, when once comfortably installed, is to stay. The longer he remains in a family, the more important he becomes, or fancies he becomes, and the less, generally speaking, he contrives to do. How often have we seen this high and mighty functionary at a dinner-party limiting his duties to the handing round the champagne, or putting the claret on the table! Dickens has drawn an amusing picture of the man overawed by his awful butler; and really it is astonishing how these individuals impose upon themselves, if they do not upon others, the idea of their vast importance, and of what, as they consider, is due to themselves.

A gentleman who was in want of a butler stopped to speak to one who came after the place on his way out to his carriage. "Sir," said the man, with an air of great dignity, after a few questions had been asked, "save yourself needless discussion; your situation will not suit *me*, for I am not accustomed to be *spoke* to in the 'all.'" The London butler endeavours to impress upon his master that it is inconsistent with the position of a butler to ask leave to go out. Their morning walk and their evening visit to a friend, or the club, are sources of

quarrel between many a master and man. Few masters would deny a man reasonable air and exercise, but all who study their own comfort should fight against any special hour being appropriated by the servant for his outing. His time belongs to his master, and ought to be subservient to his, to say nothing of the danger of a butler, who has so much in his charge, making a practice of being absent at a stated time, and thus giving the opportunity, so soon taken, for many a serious plate robbery.

A very well-known nobleman, it is said, was told the other day by a servant who was leaving him, that the reason was, "His lordship's hours did not suit with his; they were so very uncertain that he found he could not get any regular time to himself!"

Butlers' wages are inordinately high, and their habits self-indulgent. The rich parvenus, the cotton lords, and great contractors, who do not mind what they pay to secure a man whom they think will, by his *savoir faire*, make their table outvie my lord's, have to answer for the preposterous demands of some of these men.

A gentleman (and we think he ought to be ashamed of himself), who gave his butler £100 a year, was rather astonished when a man he had decided to engage stepped back and said there was one question he had forgotten to ask, which was, "What wine, besides port and snerry, he allowed."

In quiet and regular families, where a butler and footmen are kept for instance, we need not say that no wine of any description is allowed; but in the homes of many

noblemen, where the upper servants are very responsible, and have many under them, they have the habits and indulgences of their masters. In a certain earl's house, who died a few years ago, and was one of England's wealthiest noblemen, the table of the upper servants—the house-steward, housekeeper, butler, countess's maid, &c., was as luxurious as their master's. Four corner dishes and four sweets were put down every day before these fortunate individuals, whilst they were waited upon by a man out of livery.

In many a nobleman's home, it is true that there is greater simplicity and economy in the household arrangements than in many a commoner's; but still the habits and dress of great people's servants, on the whole, are very much out of keeping with their position, and unfortunate for themselves, as they acquire extravagant ideas, that prevent many saving for the rainy day. We must also deprecate the system of two tables; servants are but servants; and this separation at meals does not promote good fellowship, and makes them troublesome visitors, where there is but one.

When the Cornish squire, with a pedigree four times as old as his noble guest, was asked by the latter, "What his valet *could do*, as he found that the squire had no second table for his servants?" he replied, "He really did not know, unless his lordship preferred that the man should dine with them," an alternative which settled the question.

The days are gone by when servants were looked upon as paid machines, and their food and lodging indifferently

cared for; but from one extreme we are running into another; and when the enthusiastic nursemaid described her master and mistress, a wealthy stockbroker at Blackheath, as the "best people she had ever known," she founded that opinion on the fact "that their servants' comfort was their constant care." She, like many others of her class, did not stop to consider anything else, or whether Mr. and Mrs. Scrip were wise or kind to provide a table and mode of living for servants which they could not find in many other places. No; if she had been questioned, she would tell you she never meant to take a place where she could not have what she had at the Scrips'. *She* wouldn't go to mean people like the Hon. Mrs. Bragg, who only allowed her servants a pudding on Sundays, "not for all the gold of the Ingies," &c., &c. In this way a class of servants soon spring up of extravagant pretensions; and a class of people like the Scrips, who, with more money than wit, pique themselves on the peculiar advantages *their* servants enjoy, foster in them habits of self-indulgence and idleness, to which those in whom the intellect is little cultivated are ever prone. Servants are, after all, very like children: over-indulgence spoils them; and if we would make them good and useful members of our household, we must train them with all kindness, but in wholesome fear. We want them to think of *us*, to study *our* comfort; and not as we now perpetually see, to become in reality the first people in the house: their hours so important, their work so defined, that a master or mistress dare not venture to disarrange one of their meals, or to ask any servant to do

anything not precisely stipulated for, without encountering black looks, or, "If you please ma'am, to suit yourself this day month."

But, as we have said before, the *matériel* is good, as far as women servants are concerned, and therefore the remedy is in the hands of the masters. Men servants are, doubtless, more difficult to manage; but we think here something may be done too. People are too apt to expect from their "men" what is impossible in the nineteenth century—the life of a hermit in the midst of society. He is to have no friends, no family, no failings of any kind; music is discouraged, conversation in the kitchen strictly forbidden, his newspaper is half objected to, and his bird, or his two or three plants outside the pantry window, sometimes considered a liberty. No; plate-cleaning should be his relaxation, folding his napkins his sole delight. Can one wonder that the devilled kidney for breakfast is a treat, and the buttered toast at tea a consolation to these forlorn creatures, who naturally become selfish and self-indulgent from having nobody to think about but themselves?

Why should people object so much to their men-servants being married? Most of them are; and half of them go into their places with a lie on their lips, vowing they are single. They can't help themselves; they might starve, if they spoke the truth, and those dear to them also.

Mrs. L. S. D. is so glad her son is going to be married, because marriage always steadies a man, and "dear Augustus has perhaps been just a little wild;" but she won't have a married man-servant on any account,

“because, then, you know, I should have his family living out of this house too.”

Not if the man is honest, dear Mrs. L. S. D. ; and if he is not honest he will pilfer or purloin all the same, whether he has a wife or no ; for if he has not, perhaps there is something worse, for men-servants, dear lady, are no better than their betters in *les affaires de cœur*. If dear Augustus is steadier and better for being married, so I assure you is honest John, and more content to stay at home and save his money, and do his duty, if he is a man at all, for having ties and claims upon him that he is not ashamed to own, than when he was a single man tempted out to the servants' club at the public-house round the corner, where he lost his money at cards, and made a book for the Derby, and sometimes got himself into such straits for money that he just borrowed a few spoons and forks for a time, only a very short time, to help him on until he could get clear again,—which time sometimes never came at all, but ended in ruin to himself and serious loss to his master. Let masters and mistresses weigh well this truth, that their servants have the same passions, affections, and feelings as themselves ; let them keep them well in their places, strict to their duties, and endeavour to influence them by the same motives they would employ for the guidance of their own flesh and blood, and they may then perhaps find the key to many a domestic difficulty.

Next to the troubles with one's servants come the troubles of one's tradespeople ; but these are more easily overcome, for London is so large, so well supplied, and

competition so great, that if discontented with A. you have only to go to B., and from B. to C., until you are satisfied. All this, provided you are master of your own house: if your cook or housekeeper reigns, you may find that, spite of all you say and do, you return to A., or that difficulties insurmountable prevent your dealing with M. if your servant has settled to employ N. The fact is, your custom is large, and the tradesman makes it worth the while of your cook to have him retained. Of course in the end, it is you who pay the Christmas gratuity, or the odd pence which the butler, who pays your bills, always gets, and which amount to a pretty handsome sum at the end of the year. It is only the credit, or first-class tradesmen, as they call themselves, who can afford these retaining fees, and they do it by putting a higher price on their goods, which are often not so good as those of the man who sells cheaper next door, and who, having a ready-money custom and quick sale, has seldom a stale or depreciated article on hand.

All this, however, is well understood by Belgravians; and those who care to study economy pay their own bills, and choose their own tradespeople. It is no longer received as an axiom, that the dearer you pay the better you are served.

The best fishmonger in the neighbourhood of Belgrave and Eaton Squares was Charles, who has made a fortune, left the business to his son, and become a landed proprietor, by selling good fish at moderate prices. To many families he supplied fish every day, or two or three times a week, at sixpence a head; a family of eight,

therefore, had an ample dish of fish for 4s., whilst two people were supplied for one shilling. At the close of the day his surplus stock was sold off at reduced prices to anybody who chose to fetch it away. His customers, therefore, were sure of always having fresh fish. We wish the greengrocers would adopt a similar plan, and sell off their stale greens, &c., at the end of the day. Still, how much less have we to complain of here than in former years: railroads and steam bring to this mighty mart of men all that is fit for food, and "good and pleasant to the eyes" also. Our grapes and plums come to us with the bloom on, spring vegetables arrive steeped in the morning dew, countries vie with each other in sending us their best products; in short, let a man travel where he will—to the east for his ease, or the south for his pleasure—if he have but Fortunatus' purse he will find there is no place in the wide world where he can make life more truly comfortable and enjoyable than when he is keeping house in Belgravia.

BILLINGSGATE AT FIVE IN THE MORNING.



SUMMER or winter, light or dark, rain or shine, it matters not; as the clock strikes five, the bell rings and the market opens. The Clerk of the Market, the representative of the Corporation, is there, to act the part of major-domo;

the vessels are there, hauled up in tiers in the river, laden with their silvery cargoes; the porters are there, running to and fro between the ships and the market; the railway vans and carts are there, with fish brought from the several railway stations; the salesmen are there at their stands or benches; and the buyers are there, ready to buy and pay. As yet all is tolerably clean. There is, of course, that "fish-like smell" which Trinculo speaks of; but Billingsgate dirt and Billingsgate vilification have not yet commenced. The street dealers, the costermongers or "costers," have not yet made their appearance; they wait till their "betters," the regular fishmongers, have paid good prices for choice fish, and then they rush in to purchase everything that is left. It is a wonderful scene, even at this early hour. How Thames Street can contain all the railway vans that throng it is a marvel. From Paddington, from Camden, from King's Cross, from Shoreditch, from Fenchurch Street, from the depôts over the water, these vehicles arrive in numbers perfectly bewildering. Every one wants to get the prime of the market; every salesman tells his clients that good prices depend almost as much on early arrival as on fine quality; and thus every cargo of fish is pushed on to market with as little delay as need be. Pickford objurgates Chaplin and Horne, Macnamara is wrathful at Parker, every van is in every other van's way. Fish Street Hill and Thames Street, Pudding Lane and Botolph Lane, Love Lane and Darkhouse Lane, all are one jam and muddle, horses entangled in shafts, and shafts in wheels. A civilian, a non-fishman, has no business there at such a time;

woe to his black coat or black hat, if he stands in the path of the porters; he will have a finny sprinkling before he can well look about him; or perhaps the tail of a big fish will flap in his face, or lobsters' claws will threaten to grapple him.

It was always thus at Billingsgate, even before the days of railways, and before Mr. Bunning built the present market—a structure not without elegance on the river front; but the street arrangements are becoming more crowded and difficult to manage every year. In the old days, when trains and locomotives were unthought of, nearly all the fish reached Billingsgate by water. The broad-wheeled waggons were too slow to bring up the perishable commodity in good time; while the mail and passenger coaches, even if the passengers had been willing (which they would not) to submit to the odour, could not have brought up any large amount of fish. At an intermediate period, say about 1830 or 1835, certain bold traders, at some of our seaport towns, put on four-horse fast vans, which brought up cargoes of fish during the night, and deposited them at Billingsgate before five in the morning; but this was a costly mode of conveyance, which could not safely be incurred except for the best and high-priced fish. When it became an established fact that railways could bring up fish in any quantity, and in a few hours, from almost any port in England, the effect was striking; the supply at Billingsgate became regular instead of intermitting; and the midland towns, such as Birmingham and Wolverhampton, were placed within reach of supplies that were literally unattainable under

the old system. It used to be a very exciting scene at the river-side at Billingsgate. As the West-end fishmongers are always willing to pay well for the earliest and choicest fish, the owners of the smacks and other boats had a strong incentive to arrive early at "the Gate;" those who came first were absolutely certain of obtaining the best prices for their fish; the laggards had to content themselves with what they could get. If there happened to be a very heavy haul of any one kind of fish on any one day, the disproportion of price was still more marked; for as there were no electric telegraphs to transmit the news, the salesmen had no certain means of knowing that a large supply was forthcoming; they sold, and the crack fishmongers bought, the first cargo at good prices; and when the bulk of the supply arrived, there was no adequate demand at the market. In such a state of things there is no such process as holding back, no warehousing till next day; the fish must all be sold—if not for pounds, for shillings; if not for shillings, for pence. Any delay in this matter would lead to the production of such attacks upon the olfactory nerves as would speedily call for the interference of the officers of health. In what way a glut in the market is disposed of we shall explain presently.

It is really wonderful to see by how many routes, and from what varied sources, fish now reach Billingsgate. The smack owners, sharpening their wits at the rivalry of railways, do not "let the grass grow under their feet;" they call steam to their aid, and get the fish up to market with a celerity which their forefathers would not

have dreamed of. Take the Yarmouth region, for instance. The fishermen along the Norfolk and Suffolk coast congregate towards the fishing-banks in the North Sea in such number that their vessels form quite a fleet. They remain out two, three, four, or even so much as six weeks, never once coming to land in the interval. A fast-sailing cutter or a steamer visits the bank or station every day, carrying out provisions and stores to the fishermen, and bringing back the fish that have been caught. Thus laden, the cutter or steamer puts on all her speed, and brings the fish to land, to Yarmouth, to Harwich, or even right up to Billingsgate, according as distance, wind and tide, may show to be best. If to Yarmouth or Harwich, a "fish train" is made up every night, which brings the catch to Shoreditch station, whence vans carry it to Billingsgate. There used, in the olden days, to be fish vans from those eastern parts, which, on account of the peculiar nature of the service, were specially exempted from post-horse duty. As matters now are, the fishermen, when the richness of the shoal is diminished, return to shore after several weeks, to mend their nets, repair their vessels, and refresh themselves after their arduous labours. At all the fishing towns round the coast, the telegraphic wire has furnished a wonderful aid to the dealers; for it announces to the salesmen at Billingsgate the quantity and description of fish *en route*, and thereby enables them to decide whether to sell it all at Billingsgate, or to send some of it at once to an inland town. This celerity in railway conveyance and in telegraphic communication gives rise to many

curious features in the fish-trade. Tourists and pleasure-seekers at Brighton, Hastings, and other coast towns, are often puzzled to understand the fact that fish, although caught and landed near at hand, is not cheaper there than in London: nay, it sometimes happens that good fish is not obtainable either at a high price or low. The explanation is to be sought in the fact that a market is certain at Billingsgate, uncertain elsewhere. A good catch of mackerel off Hastings might be too large to command a sale on the spot; whereas, if sent up to the great centre the salesmen would soon find purchasers for it. It is, in a similar way, a subject of vexation in the salmon districts that the best salmon are so uniformly sent to London as to leave only the secondary specimens for local consumption. The dealers *will* go to the best market that is open to them; and it is of no avail to be angry thereat. It is said that few families are more insufficiently supplied with vegetables than those living near market-gardens; the cause being similar to that here under notice. Perhaps the most remarkable fact, however, in connection with this subject is, that the fish often make a double journey, say from Brighton to Billingsgate and back again. The Brighton fishermen and the Brighton fishmonger do not deal one with another so much as might be supposed; the one sends to Billingsgate to sell, the other to buy; and each is willing to incur a little expense for carriage to insure a certain market.

Of course the marketing peculiarities depend in some degree on the different kinds of fish, obtainable as they

are in different parts of the sea, and under very varying circumstances. Yarmouth sends up chiefly herrings—caught by the drift-net in deep water, or the seine-net in shallow—sometimes a hundred tons in a night. The north of England, and a large part of Scotland, consign more largely salmon to the Billingsgate market. These salmon mostly come packed in ice, in boxes, of which the London and North-Western and the Great Northern Railway Companies are intrusted with large numbers; or else in welled steamers. The South-Western is more extensively the line for the mackerel trade; while pilchards find their way upon the Great Western. But this classification is growing less and less definite every year; most of the kinds of fish are now landed at many different ports which have railway communication with the metropolis; and the railway companies compete with each other too keenly to allow much diversity in carriage charges. The up-river fish, such as plaice, roach, dace, &c., come down to Billingsgate by boat, and are, it is said, bought more largely by the Jews than by other classes of the community. The rare, the epicurean white-bait, so much prized by cabinet ministers, aldermen, and others, who know the mysteries of the taverns at Blackwall and Greenwich, are certainly a piscatorial puzzle; for they are caught in the dirty part of the Thames between Blackwall and Woolwich, in the night-time, at certain seasons of the year, and are yet so delicate although the water is so dirty.

With regard to the oyster trade, suffice it here to say that the smacks and other vessels, when they arrive, are

moored in front of the wharf, to form what is called "Oyster Street." The 4th of August is still "oyster day," as it used to be, and is still a wonderful day of bustle and excitement at Billingsgate; but oysters now manage to reach London in other ways before that date, and the traditional formality is not quite so decided as it once was. Lobsters come in vast numbers even from so distant a locality as the shores of Norway, the fiords or firths of which are very rich in that kind of fish. They are brought by swift vessels across the North Sea to Grimsby, and thence by the Great Northern Railway to London. Other portions of the supply are obtained from the Orkney and Shetland coasts, and others from the Channel Islands. It has been known, on rare occasions, that *thirty thousand* lobsters have reached Billingsgate in one day; but, however large the number may be, all find a market, the three million mouths in the metropolis, and the many additional millions in the provinces, having capacity enough to devour them all. There are some queer-looking places in Darkhouse Lane and Love Lane, near Billingsgate, where the lobsters and crabs undergo that boiling process which changes their colour from black to red. A basketful of lobsters is plunged into a boiling cauldron and kept there twenty minutes. As to the poor crabs, they are first killed by a prick with a needle, for else they would dash off their claws in the convulsive agony occasioned by the hot water! Sprats "come in," as it is called, about the 9th of November; and there is an ineradicable belief that the chief magistrate of the City of London always has a dish of sprats on

the table at Guildhall banquet on Lord Mayor's Day. The shoals of this fish being very uncertain, and the fish being largely bought by the working classes of London, the sprat excitement at Billingsgate, when there has been a good haul, is something marvellous. Soles are brought mostly by trawling-boats belonging to Barking, which fish in the North Sea, and which are owned by several companies; or rather, the trawlers catch the fish, and then smart, fast-sailing cutters bring the fish up to Billingsgate. Eels, of the larger and coarser kind, patronized by eel-pie makers and cheap soup-makers, mostly come in heavy Dutch boats, where they writhe and dabble about in wells or tanks full of water; but the more delicate eels are caught nearer home. Cod are literally "knocked on the head" just before being sent to Billingsgate. A "dainty live cod" is of course not seen in the London fishmongers' shops, and still less in the barrow of the costermonger; but, nevertheless, there is an attempt made to approach as near to this liveliness as may be practicable. The fish, brought alive in welled vessels, are dexterously killed by a blow on the head, and sent up directly to Billingsgate by rail, when the high-class fishmongers buy them at once, before attending to other fish. We may be sure that there is some adequate reason for this, known to and admitted by the initiated. The fish caught by the trawl-net, such as turbot, brill, soles, plaice, haddock, skate, halibut, and dabs, are very largely caught in the sandbanks which lie off Holland and Denmark. The trawl net is in the form of a large bag open at one end; this is suspended from the stern of the fishing-

lugger, which drags it at a slow pace over the fishing-banks. Two or three hundred vessels are out at once on this trade, remaining sometimes three or four months, and sending their produce to market in the rapid vessels already mentioned. The best kinds of trawl-fish, such as turbot, brill, and soles, are kept apart, separate from the plaice, haddock, skate, &c., which are regarded as inferior. The "costers" buy the haddock largely, and clean and cure them; they (or other persons) also buy the plaice, clean them, cut them up, fry them in oil, and sell them for poor people's suppers. The best trawl-fish are gutted before being packed, or the fishmongers will have nothing to do with them. Concerning mackerel, a curious change has taken place within a year or two. Fine large mackerel are now sent all the way from Norway, packed in ice in boxes, like salmon, landed at Grimsby or some other eastern port, and then sent onward by rail. The mackerel on our own coast seem to have become smaller than of yore, and thus this new Norwegian supply is very welcome.

All these varieties of fish alike, then, and others not here named, are forwarded to the mighty metropolitan market for sale. And here the reader must bear in mind that the real seller does not come into personal communication with the real buyer. As at Mark Lane, where the cornfactor comes between the farmer and the miller; as at the Coal Exchange, where the coalfactor acts as an intermedium between the pit-owner and the coal-merchant; as at the Cattle Market, where the Smithfield (so called) salesman conducts the sales, from the

grazier to the butcher—so at Billingsgate does the fish-salesman make the best bargain he can for the fisherman, and takes the money from the fishmonger. More than two thousand years ago, according to the Rev. Mr. Badham, there were middlemen of this class, and men, too, of no little account in their own estimation and in the estimation of the world. The Billingsgate salesman *must* be at business by five in the morning, and his work is ended by eleven or twelve o'clock. They all assemble, many scores of them, in time for the ringing of the market-bell at five o'clock. Each has his stand, for which a rental is paid to the Corporation; and as there are always more applicants for stands than stands to give them, the privilege is a valued one. Some of these salesmen have shops in Thames Street, or in the neighbouring lanes and alleys; but the majority have only stands in Billingsgate. Some deal mostly in one kind of fish only, some take all indiscriminately. In most cases (as we have said) each, when he comes to business in the morning, has the means of knowing what kind and quantity of fish will be consigned to him for sale. The electric telegraph does all this work, while we laggards are fast asleep. Of the seven hundred regular fishmongers in the metropolis, how many attend Billingsgate we do not know; but it is probable most of them do so, as by no other means can proper purchases be made. At any rate, the number of fishmongers' carts within a furlong or so of the market is something enormous. The crack fishmongers go to the stalls of the salesmen who habitually receive consignments of the best fish; and as there is not much haggling about price, a

vast amount of trade is conducted within the first hour or two. Porters bring in the hampers and boxes of fine fish, the fishmongers examine them rapidly, and the thing is soon done. Of course, anything like a regular price for fish is out of the question; the supply varies greatly, and the price varies with the supply. The salesman does the best he can for his client, and the fishmonger does the best he can for himself.

But the liveliest scene at Billingsgate, the fun of the affair, is when the costermongers come. This may be at seven o'clock or so, after the "dons" have taken off the fish that command a high price. How many there are of these costermongers it would be impossible to say, because the same men (and women) deal in fruit and vegetables from Covent Garden, or in fish from Billingsgate, according to the abundance or scarcity of different commodities. Somehow or other, by some kind of freemasonry among themselves, they contrive to learn, in a wonderfully short space of time, whether there is a good supply of herrings, sprats, mackerel, &c., at the "Gate," and they will flock down thither literally by thousands. The men and boys all wear caps—leather, hairy, felt, cloth, anything will do; but a cap it must be, a hat would not be orthodox. The intensity displayed by these dealers is very marked and characteristic; they have only a few shillings each with which to speculate, and they must so manage these shillings as to get a day's profit out of their transactions. They do not buy of the principal salesmen. There is a class called by the extraordinary name of *bommarcees* or *bummarcees* (for what

reason even the "oldest inhabitant" could not tell), who buy largely from the leaders in the trade, and then sell again to the peripatetics—the street dealers. They are not fishmongers; they buy and sell again during the same day, and in the market itself. The bommaree, perched on his rostrum (which may be a salmon-box or a herring-barrel), summons a group of costermongers around him, and puts up lot after lot for sale. There is a peculiar lingo adopted, only in part intelligible to the outer world—a shouting and vociferating that seems to be part of the system. The owners of the hairy caps are eagerly grouped into a mass, inspecting the fish; and every man or boy makes a wonderfully rapid calculation of the probable price that it would be worth his while to go to. The salesman, or bommaree, has no auctioneer's hammer; he brings the right palm down with a clap upon the left to denote that a lot has been sold; and the fishy money goes from the costermonger's fishy hand into the bommaree's fishy hand with the utmost promptness. Most of the dried-fish salesmen congregate under the arcade in front of the market; most of the dealers in periwinkles, cockles, and mussels (which are bought chiefly by women), in the basement story, where there are tubs of these shell-fish almost as large as brewers' vats; but the other kinds of fish are sold in the great market—a quadrangular area covered with a roof supported by pillars, and lighted by skylights. The world knows no such fishy pillars elsewhere as these; for every pillar is a leaning-post for salesmen, bommarees, porters, costermongers, baskets, hampers, and fish-boxes.

And now the reader may fairly ask, what is the quantity of fish which in a day, or in a year, or any other definite period, is thus sold at Billingsgate? Echo answers the question; but the Clerk of the Market does not, will not, cannot. We are assured by the experienced and observant Mr. Deering, who has filled this post for many years, that all statements on this particular subject must necessarily be mere guesses. No person whatever is in possession of the data. There are many reasons for this. In the first place, there are no duties on fish, no customs on the imported fish, nor excise on that caught on our own coasts; and therefore there are no official books of quantities and numbers. In the second place, there is no regularity in the supply; no fisherman or fishmonger, salesman or bommaree, can tell whether tomorrow night's catch will be a rich or a poor one. In the third place, the Corporation of the City of London do not charge market-dues according to the quantity of fish sold or brought in for sale; so much per van or waggon, so much per smack or cutter, so much per stand in the market—these are the items charged for. In the fourth place, each salesman, knowing his own amount of business, is not at all likely to mention that amount to other folks. Out of (say) a hundred of them, each may form a guess of the extent of business transacted by the other ninety-nine; but we should have to compare a hundred different guesses, to test the validity of each. Nor could the carriers assist us much; for if every railway company, and every boat or steamer owner, were even so communicative as to tell how many loads of fish had been conveyed

to Billingsgate in a year, we should still be far from knowing the quantities of each kind that made up the aggregate. On these various grounds it is believed that the annual trade of Billingsgate cannot be accurately stated. Some years ago Mr. Henry Mayhew, in a series of remarkable articles in the "Morning Chronicle," gave a tabulated statement of the probable amount of this trade; and about five or six years later, Dr. Wynter, in the "Quarterly Review," quoted the opinion of some Billingsgate authority, that the statement was probably not in excess of the truth. We will therefore give the figures, the reader being quite at liberty to marvel at them as much as he likes:—

Salmon . . .	29,000 boxes, 7 in a box.
Cod, live . .	400,000, averaging 10 lb. each.
,, barrell'd	15,000 barrels, 50 to a barrel.
,, salt . . .	1,600,000, averaging 5lb. each.
Haddocks . .	2,470,000, at 2lb. each.
Do., smoked .	65,000 barrels, 300 to a barrel.
Soles . . .	97,520,000, at $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. each.
Mackerel . .	23,620,000, at 1lb. each.
Herrings . .	250,000 barrels, at 150 each.
Do., red . . .	100,000 barrels, at 500 each.
Do. bloaters .	265,000 baskets, at 150 each.
Eels	9,000,000, at 6 to 1 lb.
Whiting . . .	17,920,000, at 6 oz. each.
Plaice	36,600,000, at 1 lb. each.
Turbot	800,000, at 7 lb. each.
Brill	} 1,220,000, at 3 lb. each.
Mullet	
Oysters . . .	500,000,000, at 400 to a peck.
Crabs	600,000,
Lobsters . . .	1,200,000.
Prawns	12 tons, at 120 to 1 lb.
Shrimps . . .	192,295 gallons, at 320 to a pint.

These figures nearly take one's breath away. What on earth becomes of the shells of the five hundred million oysters, and the hard red coats of the eighteen hundred thousand lobsters and crabs, besides the shells of the mussels, cockles, and winkles, which are not here enumerated? Another learned authority, Mr. Braithwaite Poole, when he was goods manager of the London and North-Western Railway Company, brought the shell-fish as well as the other fish into his calculations, and startled us with such quantities as fifty million mussels, seventy million cockles, three hundred million periwinkles, five hundred million shrimps, and twelve hundred million herrings. In short, putting this and that together, he told us that about four thousand million fish, weighing a quarter of a million tons, and bringing two million sterling, were sold annually at Billingsgate! Generally speaking, Mr. Poole's figures make a tolerably near approach to those of Mr. Mayhew; and therefore it *may* possibly be that we Londoners—men and women, boys, girls, and babies—after supplying country folks—eat about two fish each every average day, taking our fair share between turbot, salmon, and cod at one end of the series, and sprats, periwinkles and shrimps at the other. Not a little curious is this ichthyophagous estimate. If Mr. Frank Buckland, Mr. Francis, and the other useful men who are endeavouring to improve and increase the artificial rearing of fish, should succeed in their endeavours, we shall, as a matter of course, make an advance as a fish-eating people.



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