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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI,
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PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.

VOL. 104.

January 28, 1893.

CONVERSATIONAL HINTS FOR YOUNG SHOOTERS.

THE KEEPER. (*Continued.*)

Is there no way, then, you may ask, in which the Head Keeper may be lured from his customary silence for more than a sentence or two? Yes, there is one absolutely certain method, and, so far as I know, only one. The subject to which you must lead your conversation is—no, it isn't poachers, for a good keeper takes the occasional poacher as part of his programme. He wages war against him, of course; and, if his shooting happens to be situated near a town of some importance, the war is often a very sanguinary one, only ended by the extermination (according to Assize-Court methods) of the poachers. But the keeper, as I say, takes all this as a matter of course. He recognises that poachers, after all, are men; as a sportsman, he must have a sneaking sympathy for one whose science and wood-craft often baffle his own; and, therefore, though he fights against him sturdily and conscientiously, and, as a rule, triumphs over him, he does not generally, being what I have described him, brag of these victories, nor, indeed, does he care to talk about them. "There, but for the grace of God, goes Velveteens," must be the mental exclamation of many a good keeper when he hears his enemy sentenced to a period of compulsory confinement. I do not wish to be misunderstood. There are poachers and poachers. And whereas we may have a certain sympathy for the instinct of sport that seems to compel some men to match their skill against the craft of fur or feather reared at the expense and by the labour of others, there can surely be none for the methodical rogues who band themselves together on business principles, and plunder coverts just as others crack cribs, or pick pockets. Even sentiment is wasted on these gentlemen.

But I return from this digression. The one subject, then, on which a keeper may be trusted to become eloquent, is, that of

FOXES.

Just try him. Suppose you are shooting a wood, in which you expect to find a considerable number of pheasants. The guns are posted, the beaters have begun to move at the far end of the wood. Suddenly you are aware of a commotion in the middle of the wood. Here and there pheasants rise long before the beaters have approached. There is a whirring of wings, and dozens of birds sail away, un-shot at, to right, to left, and all over the place. And then, while you are still wondering what this may mean, a fine dog-fox comes sliding out from the covert. Away he goes at

top speed across the open. The little stops view him as he passes, and far and near the air resounds with shrill "yoick!" and "tally-ho!" In the end four birds are brought to bag, where twenty at least had been expected. When the beat is over, this is the kind of conversation you will probably hear:—

First Beater (to a colleague). I seed 'un, JIM; a great, fine fox 'e were, a slinkin' off jest afore we coom up. "Go it," I says to myself; "go it, Muster BILLY FOX, you bin spoilin' sport, I'll warrant, time you was off"; and out 'e popped as sly as fifty on 'em, ah, that 'e was.

Second B. Ah! I lay 'e was that. Where did 'e slip to, TOM?

First B. I heerd 'em a hollerin' away by CHUFF'S Farm. Reckon 'e's goin' to hev 'is supper there, to-night.

Second B. And a pretty meal 'e'll make of it. Pheasant for breakfast, pheasant for dinner, pheasant for tea; I'll lay 'e don't get much thinner.

One of the Guns (to the Keeper). Nuisance about that fox, SYKES.

Keeper. Nuisance, Sir? You may say that. Why, I've seen as many as four o' them blamed varmints one after another in this 'ere blessed wood. Did you see 'im, Sir? I wish you'd a shot 'im just by mistake. Nobody wouldn't a missed 'im. But there, a-course I daren't touch 'em. Mr. CHALMERS wouldn't like it, and a-course I couldn't bring myself to do it. But I do say, we've got too many on 'em, and we never get the hounds, or if they do come, they can't kill. What am I to do? Mr. CHALMERS wants birds, and 'e wants foxes too. I tell 'im 'e can't have both. I does my best, but what's a man to do with a couple o' thousand foxes nippin' the heads off of his birds? Fairly breaks my heart, Sir. Keep 'em alive, indeed! Live and let live's my motter, but it ain't the plan o' them blamed foxes.

[*And so forth ad lib.*]

There are other animals which your true keeper holds in aversion. And chief amongst these is the domestic cat. You might as well try to keep a journalist from his writing-paper as country cats from the coverts. They are inveterate and determined poachers, and, alas, they meet with scant mercy from the keeper if he catches them. Many a fireside tabby or tortoise-shell dies a violent death in the course of every year, and is buried in a secret grave. This often gives rise to disturbance, for the cottager, to whom the deceased was as the apple of her eye, may make complaint of the keeper to his master. My friend SYKES, one of the best keepers I know, once related to me an incident of this nature. As it may help to explain the nature of keepers, and throw light on the conversational method to be adopted with them, I here set down the winged words in which SYKES addressed me.

"Trouble, Sir? I believe you. Them old women gives me a peck o' trouble, far more nor the breakin' of a retriever dog. There's old Mrs. PADSTOW, Mother PADDS we call 'er, she's a rare old teaser. Went up to Mr. CHALMERS last week and told 'im I'd shot 'er pet cat. Mr. CHALMERS, 'e spoke to me about it; said I'd better go and make it right with the old gal. So, yesterday I goes to call upon 'er. First we passed the time o' day together, and then we got to business. You see, Sir, me and the old lady had always been friendly, so I took it on the friendly line. 'Look 'ere,' I says, 'Mrs. PADSTOW, I've come about a cat.' 'Ah,' she says. 'It's just this way,' I says, 'Mr. CHALMERS tells me you said I'd shot your cat. Now,' I says, straightenin' myself up and lookin' proud, 'I couldn't scarcely believe that, and you and me such good friends, so I've just come to ask you if you did say that. She was a bit took aback at this, so I asked 'er again. 'Well,' she says, 'I didn't exactly say that.' 'What did you say then?' I asked her. 'I told Mr. CHALMERS,' she says, 'that our old cat 'ad been shot what never did no 'arm, and I thought it might be as you'd a done it, p'raps not meanin' it.' 'Ah,' I says, 'them was your words, was they?' 'Yes,' she says, 'them was my words.' 'Well, then,' I says, 'you'd better be careful what you say next time, or you don't know whose character you'll be takin' away next.' And with that I left 'er."

"But did you shoot the cat, SYKES?" I ventured to ask.

"*Did I shoot it? Ho, ho, ha, ha! What do you think! Sir?*"

And with that enigmatic answer the dialogue closed.



"Taking away his Character."

WHEN referring to a recent Lecture by a certain Noble Marquis (distinguished in the "P.R.-age" of the Realm), the ladies generally say, that they should decidedly object to be married "under the

Queensberry Rules." *Their* prize ring is quite another affair.

"DOWN AMONG THE COALS."—The most appropriate place wherein to try "the scuttle" policy would, of course, be—Newcastle.

[pg 38]

THE DESCENT INTO THE MAELSTRÖM.



(*Fragments from a Narrative somewhat in the style of E. A. Poe.*)

Even while one gazed, the current acquired a monstrous velocity.

Each moment added to its speed—to its headlong impetuosity.

The vast bed of the waters, seamed and scarred into a thousand conflicting channels, burst suddenly into frenzied convulsion—heaving, boiling, hissing,—gryrating in gigantic and innumerable vortices, and all whirling and plunging on with a rapidity which water never elsewhere assumes except in precipitous descents.

[pg 39]

Precipitous descents! Niagara's abrupt and headlong plunge is but as an eddy in a rocky trout-stream compared with what was soon to be seen *here*. In brief space there came over the scene another radical alteration. The general surface grew somewhat more smooth, and the whirlpools one by one disappeared, while prodigious streaks of foam became apparent where none had been seen before. These streaks, at length, spreading out to a great distance, and entering into combination, took unto themselves the gyratory motion of the subsided vortices, and seemed to form the germ of another more vast. Suddenly—very suddenly—this assumed a distinct and definite existence in a circle of a colossal and seemingly all-embracing diameter. The edge of the whirl was represented by a broad belt of gleaming, turbid slime—cumbered spray, foul, festering, furiously troubled, slipping, as it seemed, particle by particle, viscid gout by gout, into the mouth of the terrific funnel, whose interior, as far as the eye could fathom it, was a smooth, shining, and jet-black wall of water, inclined to the horizon at an angle of some forty-five degrees, speeding dizzily round and round, with a swaying and sweltering motion, and sending forth to the winds an appalling voice half shriek, half roar, such as not even the mighty cataract of Niagara ever lifts up in its agony to Heaven.

Then, said I, this *can* be nothing else than the "great, all-whelming whirlpool of the Maelström!"

In all violent eddies at sea *there is good fishing*, at proper opportunities, if only one has the

courage to attempt it. In fact, it is made a matter of desperate speculation—risk standing instead of labour, and courage, of a reckless, and not too scrupulous sort, answering for capital. But there are many who would lightly adventure the pestilential perils of a tropic stream, or fever-haunted water-way or canal, who would yet shrink from being caught—owing to want of care, and cautious calculation as to the exact hours of slack and safety—by the hideous, irresistible, all-engulfing, all-wrecking whirl of the terrifying Ström! Once drawn within the down-draught of that hideous vortex, a whole army might be destroyed more certainly than even by the manifold death-dealing contrivances of modern science, a whole legislature lost in a single hour of ghastly and unhonoured catastrophe!



FASHIONABLE.

"HOW DO YOU LIKE ME IN THIS, VERA? TELL ME THE TRUTH."

"WELL, DEAR, IT LOOKS AS IF YOUR PET POODLE HAD DIED, AND YOU'D HAD HIM MADE UP AS A CLOAK!"

Oh, the sickening sweep of that descent! With what sensations of awe, horror, and strange, distraught admiration, must a doomed victim, once within that whirl, gaze about him!—for he has leisure to observe. The downward draught of those swift, wide-sweeping, spirally-whirling water-walls is comparatively slow. The victim clinging to his boat, or bound to his spar or barrel, appears to be hanging, as if by magic, midway down, upon the interior surface of a funnel, vast in circumference, prodigious in depth, and whose perfectly smooth sides might be mistaken for ebony, but for the bewildering rapidity with which they spin around, and for the gleaming and ghastly radiance they shoot forth, a foul, phosphorescent iridescence, as of accumulated corruption, streaming in a flood of loathsome radiance along the black walls, and far away down into the inmost mist—veiled recesses of the abyss!

Looking about upon the wide waste of liquid ebony on which that helpless, past-struggling, beautiful, and apparently doomed figure was borne, I perceived that she, in the midst of the mighty, all-mastering misery, was not the only object in the embrace of the whirl. Both above and below were visible fragments of wreckage—significant wreckage—plumed hats, sword-sheaths, portfolios, epaulettes, decorations, insignia of honour, as if here a national Argosy, laden with Opulence, Rank Intelligence, and Honour, had gone, dismally and desperately, down to—*what?* Let those Phlegethon walls, that Tophet-like mist, make answer!

And that bound, helpless, seemingly doomed, but beautiful and piteously appealing figure on which my eyes were fixed in terror, and amaze, and profound compassion? Alas! Yet are there some objects which enter the whirl at a late period of the tide, which for some happy reason descend slowly after entering, which do not reach the bottom before the turn of the tide, which are *not completely absorbed* ere the desperate ordeal of danger is ended by utter submergence and entire wreck! These, conceivably, may be whirled up again to the level of the ocean, without undergoing the fate of those which had been drawn in more early, or absorbed more rapidly!

Here indeed the phantom of Hope seems to gleam forth rainbow-like even amidst the foul mists of the Maelström! That beautiful agonised figure seems yet but as it were at the edge of the whirl. Into its profound and pestilential depths, indeed, she *can see*. And she shudders at the sight, as must all who are interested in her fate. But the Ström will not whirl for ever, the hour of slack cannot be far off, and when the slope of the sides of the vast funnel become momentarily less and less steep, when the gyrations of the whirl grow gradually less and less violent, when the

froth and the fume disappear, and the bottom of the gulf seems slowly to uprise; when the sky clears, and the winds go down, and the full moon rises radiantly o'er the swaying but no longer tormented floods, shall she, that beautiful, bound creature be found floating upon the quieting waves, sorely buffeted, may be much scarred, bearing in her beauty ineffaceable traces of the hideous ordeal she has undergone, but living, and *Safe*?

So may it be!

CHARLEY'S OLD 'AUNT AT THE ROYALTY.



LIKE AS TWO P'S!

The Private Secretary. "Excuse me, Madam? but, d'you know, I fancy you must be a connection of mine—I see such a resemblance to our family. I am the Rev. Robert Spalding!"

Lord Fancourt Babberley. "Oh yes; and I'm Charley's Aunt, and Robert's Cousin."

The P. S. "Dear me! Fancy that!"

Charley's Aunt, by Mr. BRANDON THOMAS, is distinctly related to *The Private Secretary*; and Mr. PENLEY, as *Lord Babberley*, is second cousin to the *Rev. Mr. Spalding*, who, as the *Private Secretary*, obtained so distinguished a position in the theatrical world not so many years ago. As a play, *The Private Secretary* had a strange history, seeing that it began as a failure, had an Act cut out of it, and, surviving this severe operation, grew into an enormous success, then went "so strong" as to be able to keep on running in London, the Provinces, our Colonies, and America, for some years.

Charley's Aunt, however, has experienced no such downs and ups, being born to the rouge-pot as heiress of the great success which *The Private Secretary* had only gradually, though surely, achieved. Yet 'tis a matter for question whether the latter was not the better piece, dramatically, of the two, having, besides its own comic situations, two irresistibly diverting characters, represented by little PENLEY and mountainous HILL, both playing into one another's hands.

There are very few comparatively dull moments in *Charley's Aunt*, and these arise from faulty construction necessitating occasional explanations which come as dampers in the midst of the uproarious fun whereat the house has been shaking its sides and even weeping with laughter. And the awkwardness of these pauses in the action is still further emphasised by their being filled up with either commonplace narrative, or with a kind of cheap sentimentality quite at variance with the general tone of the piece. Were this slight blemish removed, the longevity of *Charley's Aunt* would, it is more than probable, equal that of *The Private Secretary*.

All the parts are well played. Mr. BRANDON THOMAS has not given himself much of a chance as *Colonel Chesney*, who bears a strong family resemblance to the heavy dragoon in the *Pantomime Rehearsal*. The young men, MESSRS. PERCY LYNDAL and FARMER, have plenty of "go"—it would be "little go" were they Cantabs—as the two undergraduates, young enough to be still up at College completing their education, yet old enough to propose and be accepted as eligible husbands. But in a rattling three-act farce as this is intended to be, any exaggeration is sufficiently probable as long only as it is thoroughly amusing; and, it be added, in such a piece, sentiment is as much out of place as would be plain matter-of-fact conduct or dialogue. To see Mr. PENLEY in the elderly Aunt's dress is to convulse the house without his uttering a word. To see him enjoying himself with the young ladies while threatened by their lovers, who cannot take them away without compromising themselves, is delicious. Then, when after dinner he is alone with the ladies, and having been informed by the scout—capitally impersonated by Mr. CECIL THORNBURY—in a whisper, what story it is that the gentlemen find so amusing, he goes into fits of laughter, and subsequently, when after one of the ladies has told a story which makes the girls laugh, he inquires "Is that all?" and being answered that it is, he cannot refrain from expressing, in very strong language, his opinion of the stupidity of the anecdote he has just heard, and then is seized with a perfect convulsion of laughter,—in all this he is most heartily joined by the entire audience, who laugh with him and at him. Altogether in this piece Mr. PENLEY is inimitably and irresistibly funny.

The piece has one other merit which is not the least among its attractions, that is, that it begins at nine punctually and is over by eleven, thus yielding two hours of all-but continuous merriment.

SIMPLE STORIES.

"Be always kind to animals wherever you may be!"

ELSIE AND THE MACAW.

ELSIE was growing a big girl, and though she was still in short frocks, she gave herself airs, and had ideas about dress, and sometimes was tempted to argue with her dear Mamma and give her a pert answer. She was, however in high glee just now, because she had been invited by her Aunt DABBLECHICK to a pic-nic with a lot of other little boys and girls. She made a great fuss about her dress, she studied *The Queen*, and *The Gentlewoman*, and other papers devoted to this important subject, and worried her poor Mamma with all sorts of silly suggestions. The costume, however, was at last arranged, and the little goose was cross because her Mamma would not allow her to have a blue feather in her hat. ELSIE, like a naughty child, determined that she would, by some means or other, have this feather.

How to obtain one was the difficulty. At last it struck her that the splendid Macaw, a gift from her Uncle, Admiral SANGARORUM, brought from Brazil, had some lovely feathers of about the right tint.

Taking a few lumps of sugar with her, she paid a visit to the conservatory where "Lord Macawley," as he was called, swung all day and shrieked. She felt how naughty she was, but her overweening vanity quite stifled her conscience. She scratched the bird's poll, treated him to several lumps of sugar, and, when he was not looking, suddenly jerked one of the finest feathers out of his tail.

"Lord Macawley" screamed furiously, and ELSIE was terribly frightened for fear she should be discovered. She, however, ran away with her prize, and carefully fixed it in her hat.

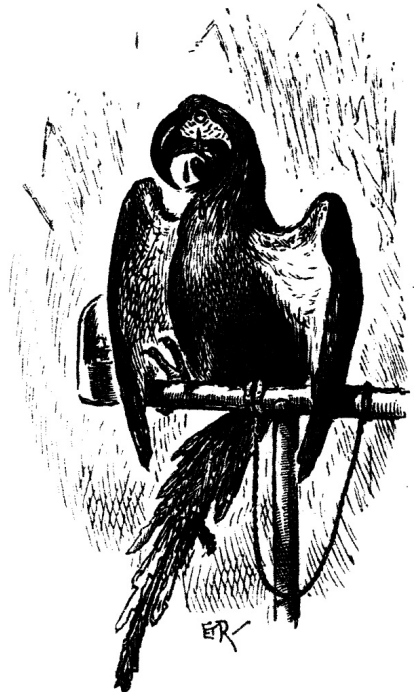
The next morning when she was ready to start, and JAMES was waiting with the pony-chaise to drive her over to her Aunt's, her Mamma, who was gathering flowers in the conservatory, sent for her to see that she looked nice before starting. Very pretty the little girl looked in her peacock blue dress, her snowy frills, her black-silk stockings, and Oxford shoes.

Her hat was trimmed with ribbon to match her dress, and her feather so artfully intertwined, that she hoped her Mamma would not notice it. It certainly would have passed without observation, but, just as ELSIE was tripping away, "Lord Macawley" saw her.

He set up a fiendish scream, and then said, "G-r-r! Gr-r-r! Who stole my feather?" over and over again.

ELSIE turned scarlet. Mamma removed and inspected the hat, and, the little girl was promptly packed off to bed, where she was left to shed many tears over her folly for the rest of the day.

Mamma keeps the blue feather, which she shows to her little girl whenever she is inclined to be disobedient or vain. The exhibition usually has a magical effect.



THE NEXT EGYPTIAN LESSON.

SCENE—*Interior of the Sanctum of the Young KHEDIVE. Present, his Highness. To him enter the British Representative.*

British Rep. I think your Highness desired to see me?

Khedive. Certainly, my dear Lord. I wish to express once again my great regret that I could have done, or said, or thought anything without taking your advice. You have quite forgiven me?

Brit. Rep. (in a tone of respectful annoyance). Thank you very much, your Highness; but as I am exceptionally busy this morning, I think, if you have nothing more to say to me, I will do myself the honour of taking my departure.

Khe. Oh no—a thousand times, no! Are you not aware that I am very European in tastes, am fond of books, and have a hobby in a small aquarium?

British Rep. So I have read, your Highness, in a London evening paper. And now, if you will permit me, I will—

Khe. Oh no—don't go, I promised you I would consult you in every important matter—and I mean to keep my word.

British Rep. I am glad to hear your Highness say so; and I can answer for Her Majesty's Government being extremely gratified at the report of this conversation. I shall make a point of communicating with the Premier forthwith. And now, with your Highness's gracious permission, I will take my leave.

Khe. What a hurry you are in! I have got a lot of important things to consult you about, and yet you won't wait a moment! I say, it's not treating a fellow fairly!



THE SNOW CURE!!

Brit. Rep. (grieved). I trust your Highness will not repeat that observation after due consideration. But to show you my anxiety to meet your Highness's wishes, I will sacrifice the examination of a promising scheme to make the Nile nine and a half times as productive as it is now, to listen to you.

Fiendish Little Boy (to Elderly Gentleman, who has come a cropper for the fourth time in a hundred yards). "ERE I SAY, GUVN'OR, YOU'RE FAIR, WALLERIN' IN IT THIS MORNIN'! H'ANYONE 'UD THINK AS YOU'D BIN HORDERED IT BY YOUR MEDICAL MAN!!!"

Khe. You are very good. Well, what do you think of my dressing-gown?

British Rep. Capital—in every way capital. But surely you didn't want to talk about that?

Khe. Oh, yes, I did! Would you advise me to have it trimmed with any more fur?

British Rep. I should imagine it was more a matter of taste than politics.

Khe. Oh, hang politics! What do you think about my dressing-gown? Would your Government recommend fur?

British Rep. I think, under the circumstances, I can act on my own responsibility without further reference to Her Majesty's Government. Yes, by all means, have fur.

Khe. I am infinitely obliged to you. Fact is, I told my tailor I thought I would have fur, but I did not like to give the order without your advice.

British Rep. I trust your Highness accepts my assurance that Her Majesty's Government are most anxious to prevent you from appearing in a false position.

Khe. It's most civil of you to say so. Then I will have fur.

British Rep. And now, if your Highness no longer requires my presence—

Khe. (interrupting). But I do. As I have already said, I've a lot of things to ask you. Now, I want to know whether it would be to the benefit of the fellaheen if I visited the theatre more frequently?

British Rep. Your Highness will use your own discretion. I think I may say, without further reference to Downing Street, that Her Majesty's Government will have not the slightest objection to your Highness indulging in any innocent recreation.

Khe. Come—that's very good of them. But don't go. Look here. There will be no great harm if I wear brown leather boots?

British Rep. I think not, if your Highness, by the exhibition of such a preference, does not wound the susceptibilities of other Powers. And now, your Highness, with your permission, I think I must withdraw.

Khe. Very well. If you won't stay any longer I suppose you won't. If I want any more advice I will send over to you.

British Rep. I am extremely obliged to your Highness.

[Bows, and exit.]

Khe. Glad he's gone! And now that I have consulted him about everything, I think I will have a little recreation on my own account. What shall I do? Oh, I know, I will dismiss the entire Ministry!

[*Does so.*]

(*Curtain.*)

"GOING STRONG."—At the Court Theatre the *Pantomime Rehearsal* in which Messrs. BROOKFIELD and WEEDON have a capital duet, is just as fresh as ever. Quite a new piece with all the old fun in it. "Equestrian Scenes in the Circle," might now be added, as they've got a performing PALFREY who does a very pretty *scherzo* or skirt-show dance. "Good entertainment for"—everybody.

VICE VERSA ON THE STAGE.—Re-appearance of Mr. and Mrs. BANCROFT at HARE'S Theatre. When Mr. HARE made his first appearance in London it was at Mr. and Mrs. BANCROFT'S Theatre. And *Diplomacy* is to be revived. This move is most diplomatic.

"HAPPINESS IN ——"—Professor ST. GEORGE MIVART will be glad to learn that a telegram from New York, dated the 19th instant, contained the following interesting item of intelligence.—"A vast quantity of ice is now at Hell Gate."

DEPRECIATION OF GOLD!—"Guinea Fowls" were sold in the Market last week at from 2s. 5d. to 3s. 6d.! and a Plover Golden, was to be had for ninepence!!

What with *The Daily Bourse* and dustmen who refuse to remove the Drury-Lane refuse, our Sir AUGUSTUS DURIOLANUS has been, of late, considerably Harris'd.

MOTTO FOR THE LADIES WHO BECOME MEMBERS OF MRS. STANNARD'S "ANTI-CRINOLINE LEAGUE."—"All hoops abandon ye who enter here."

GREAT BRITAIN is a country *per se*—so is every Island, as it is only *per sea* it can be reached.

[pg 42]



MAKING THE BEST OF IT.

"GOOD MORNING, UNCLE CHARLES! DID YOU SLEEP WELL? I'M AFRAID YOUR BED WAS RATHER HARD AND UNEVEN; BUT——"
"OH, IT WAS ALL RIGHT, THANKS! I GOT UP NOW AND THEN DURING THE NIGHT, AND RESTED A BIT, YOU KNOW!"

MISCHIEF!

["As regards Home Rule, I did not, of course, say that there were only three Home-Rulers in the world—Mr. GLADSTONE, Mr. MORLEY, and myself. I said that ... there were no stronger Home-Rulers, except myself, than Mr. GLADSTONE and Mr. MORLEY in Parliament."—*Mr. H. Labouchere, in a Letter to the "Times."*]

"Monkeys and parrots show much analogy in character and habits; they both possess extraordinary powers of imitation, which they exercise in copying man and his peculiarities. Monkeys 'take off' his gestures, and parrots his speech."—*Napier's "Book of Nature and Man."*

Oh, a merry mime was Jacko!
He could wink, and whiff tobacco,
Like a man (an artful *homo*) and a brother.
And the Parrot—ah! for patter,
And capacity for chatter
On—no matter much *what* matter,
That gave scope for clitter-clatter,
The world could hardly furnish such another.
The Parrot was a bird
That could talk great bosh with gravity;
The Ape could be absurd
With an air of solemn suavity;
And which to take most seriously, when the mimes were both on show,
There were ill-conditioned scoffers who declared they did not know.

"I am very sure," said Jacko, and he twitched his tail with glee,
"That the only serious creatures in the country are 'We Three'—
You, Polly, honest Jack (an Irish House-dog), and Myself!"
(Here he pulled poor Poll's tail-feathers hard, and capered like an elf.)
Poll held on to his perch, he'd much tenacity of claw,
But performed, involuntarily a sort of sharp see-saw,
And he snorted and looked down
With a very beaky frown,
And his round orb grew as red as any carrot.
"'We Three'? your Twelfth-Night tag
Is mere thrasonic brag.
Tschutt! You'll make my tail a rag!
Wish you wouldn't pull and drag
At my feathers in that way!" cried the Parrot.

Chuckled Jacko, "This *is* prime!
What a dickens of a time
(Like the Parrot and the Monkey in the story)
We shall have! Teach you, no doubt,
Not to leave poor Jacko out
Next time when you are ladling round the glory.
I might share with honest Jack
If of yielding I'd the knack,
Or would stoop to play the flatterer or the flunkey.
Pretty Poll! It is my pride
To assist you—from outside!
And I hope you're duly grateful," said the Monkey.

"I perceive," cried Pretty Polly,
"It's all right, and awfully jolly!
But if you think to pull me from my perch
By the tail, you are mistaken.
Simian tricks will leave unshaken
My hold, though I may seem to sway or lurch.
A bird who knows his book
Can afford to cock a snook
At a chatterer who intrigueth against *his* chief.
'We Three'? You quote the Clown;
And *you play him!* Yes, I own
Pretty Poll *may* be pulled down,
But I do not think 'twill be by Monkey 'Mischief!'"

For a Byronic Exam.

Question. What proof exists that Lord BYRON shared expenses with the Maid of Athens?

Answer. The line in which he says, "Maid of Athens, ere we 'part,'"—&c.

Q. Is there any allusion to billiards in this poem?

A. Certainly. It occurs where the Bard says to the Maid, "Take the rest."

"AGAIN WE COME TO THEE, SAVOY!" (*vide old-fashioned duet*).—It is rumoured that the separation, on account of incompatibility of temper, between a certain distinguished Composer and an eminent Librettist has come to an end. Its end is peace—that is, an Operatic piece. They have met; the two have embraced, and will, no doubt, live happily ever afterwards, on the same terms as before, with the third party present, whose good offices it is pretty generally understood (his "good offices" are "Number Something, The Savoy,"—but this is not an advertisement) have brought about this veritable "Reunion of Arts."

[pg 43]



MISCHIEF!

[pg 44]

[pg 45]

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

"*Eton of Old, or, Eighty Years Since!*" exclaimed the Baron, and, taking up the handsome volume recently published by MESSRS. GRIFFITH AND FARRAN, he was soon absorbed in its pages.

"Rather disappointing," murmured the Baron, as he closed the book, and "read no more that day." "Why, with a good memory, a lively imagination, and a pleasant style, this 'Old Colleger' might have given us something far more amusing than he has done. Of course Anybody's Anecdotes of our Grand Old School will probably be interesting up to a certain point: and they might be made 'funny, without being vulgar.' But this worthy Octogenarian, be he who he may, has produced only a very matter-of-fact book, containing historic information likely to arrest the attention of an old or young Etonian, but only now and again does the author give us anything sufficiently amusing to evoke a laugh. However, in the course of perusal, I have smiled gently, but distinctly. Had the Octogenarian already told many of these stories to his intimates, to whom their narration caused as much facile entertainment as was given to the friends of *Mr. Peter Magnus*, when he signed himself 'AFTERNOON,' in substitution for his initials, 'P.M.?' And it is related how *Mr. Pickwick* rather envied the ease with which *Mr. Magnus's* friends were entertained. If so, then is the Baron to the Octogenarian Etonian and his intimates as was *Mr. Pickwick* to "P. M." and his correspondents. There are some good tales about KEAT and HAWTREY, and of course the book, as one among an Etonian series, has its own value for all who care about Eton of the past.

"*Perdidi diem*," says the Baron, "or at least the better part of it, in reading *Zero the Slaver*, by LAWRENCE FLETCHER, who seems to me to be a promising pupil in the school of RIDER HAGGARD and LOUIS STEVENSON, but chiefly of the former. It was a beastly day, snow falling, and North-West-by-North wind howling, bitterly cold, and so," continued the Baron, "I was reduced to *Zero*. The construction of the plot is clever, as is also the description of a great fight, in the latter portion of the story; but, as a whole, the story is irritatingly ill-written, and tawdryly coloured, while italics are used to bring into prominence any description of some strongly sensational situation."

Few things so annoying to me, personally, as the romancer speaking of his chief puppets as "our friends." This LAWRENCE FLETCHER is perpetually doing. Now his heroes are not "my friends," for, when I read, I am strictly impartial, at all events, through two-thirds of the book, and, if I learn to love any one or two (or more) of them, male or female, I should still resent the author's presuming to speak of them as "our friends." To do so from the first is simply impudent presumption on the part of the author, as why, on earth, should he assume that his creations—his children—should be as dear to us as they are to him?

No—"Our friends," so used, is a mistake.

The influence of RIDER HAGGARD is over the whole book, but in two instances the author has been unable to resist close imitation, nay, almost quotation of a well-known Haggardism, and so he writes at p. 130:—

"Just then a very wonderful and awful thing happened."

And at p. 197:—

"When suddenly, and without an instant's warning, a most awful thing happened."

Both variations on a Haggardism, and both equally spoilt in the process of transferring and adapting.

One sentence, the utterance of a Zulu chief, is well worth quoting, and it is this:—

"But empty hands are evil things wherewith to face a well-armed spook."

"The well-armed spook" is a joy for ever.

"*A great black man fleeted past the rocks.*" "Hum!" quoth the Baron, "fleeted" is a new word to me. Not that I object to its invention and use on that account; in sound and appearance it expresses no more than "sped," or, if pursuit is to be implied, "fled."

Here is something that this novelist having written may well lay to heart,

"The man was as white-skinned as themselves, and judging from the purity of his English, must have been at one time a British subject."

"Now," quoth the Baron, meditatively, "if purity of English, with or without a white skin, is the unmistakable mark of a 'British subject,' then it follows that Mr. LAWRENCE FLETCHER is of some nationality other than British. At least, such is the logical conclusion arrived at by his humble but critical servant,

"THE BARON DE B. W. 'B. B.' (*British Born.*)"



A VOCATION.

The Vicar. "OH—*THAT'S* YOUR BOY, SMITHERS? AND WHAT'S HE GOING TO BE? A SHOEMAKER, LIKE YOURSELF?"

Smithers. "OH NO, SIR. HE'S UNCOMMON FOND OF ANIMALS, YOU SEE—SO WE'RE THINKING OF MAKING HIM A BUTCHER!"

A NEW TURN.—He was an eloquent, an earnest lover, but she saw through him. When he had sworn to be true, which oath of his she didn't trust for a minute, and had implored her to do likewise, she only murmured to herself, "*Had I a heart for falsehood framed—*" Whereupon he vowed that such a thing was impossible; but, supposing her to possess such a heart, what would she do with it, considering it as a frame? Then she replied, softly, "I should put your portrait in it."

"All's Well that Ends Well."

YOUNG ABBAS thought to catch Lord CROMER napping.
Perhaps he'll not again try weasel-trapping.
E'en HOMER sometimes nods. 'Tis true—of HOMER;
But ABBAS thinks 'tis not—as yet—of CROMER!

MR. LABOUCHERE is, AUTOLYCUS hears, much interested in Mr. YATES'S promotion to Magisterial honours. "I shall keep my eye on EDMUND," HENRY says. "If only I get a chance of putting him on my weekly Pillory in *Truth*, I do not deny it would give me keen satisfaction."

MRS. R. has read that the Christy Minstrels are turned into a Limited Company, but, before subscribing for shares, she wants to know if she would have to black her face? But what she objects to most is, that the principal performers (as she has been told) rattle their own bones!

[pg 46]

THE MAN FROM BLANKLEY'S.

A STORY IN SCENES.

SCENE III.—MRS. TIDMARSH'S *Drawing-room. Wall-paper of big grey peonies sprawling over a shiny pale salmon ground. Over-mantel in black and gold. Large mirrors: cut-glass gaselier, supplemented by two standard lamps with yellow shades. Furniture upholstered in yellow and brown brocade. Crimson damask hangings. Parian statuettes under glass, on walnut "What-nots"; cheap china in rosewood cabinets. Big banner-screen embroidered in beads, with the Tidmarsh armorial bearings, as recently ascertained by the Heralds' College. Time, twenty minutes to eight. Mrs. TIDMARSH is seated, flushed and expectant, near the fire, her little daughter, GWENDOLEN, aged seven, is apparently absorbed in a picture-book close by. Miss SEATON is sitting by a side-table, at some distance from them. Enter Mr. TIDMARSH, who, obeying a sign from his wife, approaches the hearth-rug, and lowers his voice to a cautious under-tone.*

Mr. Tid. It's all right, SEAKALE got in at BLANKLEY'S just as they were closing. They said they would send round and stop the person, if possible—but they couldn't say, for certain, whether he mightn't have started already.

Mrs. Tid. Then he may come, even now! May I ask what you intend to do if he does, MONTAGUE?

Mr. Tid. Well, that's what I rather wanted to ask *you*, my dear. We might tell SEAKALE to send him away.

Mrs. Tid. If you do, he'll be certain to send away the wrong person—Uncle GABRIEL, as likely as not!

Mr. Tid. Um—yes, I never thought of that—no, he must be shown up. Couldn't you explain to him, quietly, that we have made up our party and shan't require his—hem—services?

Mrs. Tid. I? Certainly *not*, MONTAGUE. *You* hired him, and you must get rid of him yourself!

Mr. Tid. (uneasily.) 'Pon my word, MARIA, it's an awkward thing to do. I almost think we'd better keep him if he comes—we shall have to *pay* for him anyhow. After all, he'll be quite inoffensive—nobody will notice he's been hired for the evening.

Mrs. Tid. He may be one of the assistants out of the shop for all we can tell. And you're going to let him stay and make us thirteen, the identical thing he was hired to avoid! Well, I shall have to let Miss SEATON dine, after all—that's what it comes to, and this creature can take her down—it will be a little change for her. GWENNIE, my pet, run down and tell SEAKALE that if he hears me ring twice after everybody has come, he's to lay two extra places before he announces dinner. (GWENNIE *departs reluctantly*; Mrs. T. *crosses to* Miss SEATON.) Oh, Miss SEATON, my husband and I have been thinking whether we couldn't manage to find a place for you at dinner to-night. Of course, it is *most* unusual, and you must not expect us to make a *precedent* of it; but—er—you seem rather out of spirits, and perhaps a little cheerful society—just for once—I don't know if it can be arranged yet, but I will let you know about that later on.

Miss Seaton (to herself). I do believe she *means* to be kind! (*Aloud.*) Of course, I shall be very pleased to dine, if you wish it.

Seakale (at door). Mr. and Mrs. GABRIEL GILWATTLE, and Miss BUGLE!

[*Enter a portly old Gentleman, with light prominent eyes and a crest of grizzled auburn hair, in the wake of an imposing Matron in ruby velvet: they are followed by an elderly Spinster in black and silver, who rattles with jet.*

Miss Bugle (after the usual greetings). I hope, dearest MARIA, you will excuse me if I am not quite in my usual spirits this evening; but my cockatoo, whom I have had for ages, has been in convulsions the whole afternoon, and though I left him calmer, done up in warm flannel on the rug in front of the fire, and the maid promised faithfully to sit up with him, and telegraph if there was the slightest change, I can't help feeling I ought never to have come.

Aunt Joanna (to her host.) Such a drive as it is here, all the way from Regent's Park, and in this fog—I told GABRIEL that if he escapes bronchitis to-morrow—

Seakale. Mr. and Mrs. DITCHWATER! Mr. TOOMER!

Mr. Ditch. Yes, dear Mrs. TIDMARSH, our opportunities for these festive meetings grow more and more limited with each advancing year. Seven dear friends, at whose board we have sat, and they at ours, within the past twelve months, carried off—all gone from us!

Mrs. Ditch. Eight, JEREMIAH, if you count Mr. JAUNDERS—though *he* only dined with us once.

Mr. Ditch. To be sure, and never left his bed again. Well, well, it should teach us, as I was remarking to my dear wife as we drove along, to set a higher value than we do on such hospitalities as we are still privileged to enjoy.

Mr. Toomer (to Mrs. Tid.) My poor wife would, I am sure, have charged me with all manner of messages, if she had not been more or less delirious all day—but I am in no anxiety about her—she is so often like that, it is almost chronic.

Seakale. Mr. and Mrs. BODFISH! Miss FLINDERS! Mr. POFFLEY!

Mr. Bodf. (after salutations.) Mrs. BODFISH and myself have just been the victims of a most extraordinary mistake! We positively walked straight into your next-door neighbour's house, and if we had not been undeceived by a mummy on the first landing, I don't know where we should have found ourselves next.

Mrs. Tid. A mummy! How *very* disagreeable; such a *peculiar* thing to have about a house? But we really know nothing about the people next door. We have never encouraged any intimacy. We thought it best.

Mrs. Bodf. I told their man-servant as we came away that I considered he had behaved disgracefully in not telling us our mistake at once; no doubt he had a motive; people *are* so unprincipled!

[pg 47]

Little Gwendolen (drawing Miss SEATON into a corner). Oh, Miss SEATON, what *do* you think? Mother's going to let you dine downstairs with them—won't *that* be nice for you? At least, she's going to, if somebody comes, and you're to go down with him. He isn't like a *regular* dinner-guest, you know. Papa hired him from BLANKLEY'S this morning, and Mother and he both hope he mayn't come, after all; but *I* hope he *will*, because I want to see what he's like. Don't *you* hope he'll come? *Don't* you, Miss SEATON, dear?

[pg 48]

Miss Seaton (to herself). Then *that* was why! And I can't even refuse! (*Aloud.*) My dear GWENNIE, you shouldn't tell me all these things—they're secrets, and I'm sure your Mother would be very angry indeed if she heard you mention them to *anybody*!

Gwen. Oh, it was only you, Miss SEATON, and you're *nobody*, you know! And I *can* keep a secret, if I choose. I never told how JANE used to—[Miss SEATON *endeavours to check these disclosures.*

Uncle Gab. (out of temper, on the hearth-rug). Seven minutes past the hour, MONTY—and, if there's a thing I'm particular about, it's not being kept waiting for my dinner. Are you expecting somebody else? or what *is* it?



"Mr. and Mrs. Ditchwater!"

Mr. Tid. (*nervously*). Well, I half thought—but we won't wait any longer for him—he is not worth it—ha! there he is—I think I heard the front door—so perhaps I may as well give him—eh?

Uncle Gab. Just as you like—my dinner's spoilt as it is. (*Catching sight of the banner-screen.*) What have you stuck this precious affair up for, eh?

Mr. Tid. To—to keep the fire off. MARIA'S idea. Uncle—she thought our—hem—crest and motto would look rather well made up like this.



WRITING THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

Uncle Gab. (*with a snort*). Made up! I should think it was! Though what you want to make yourself out one of those good-for-nothing aristocrats for is beyond me. You know *my* sentiments about 'em—I'm a thorough-going Radical, and the very sound of a title—

Seakale (*with a fine combination of awe and incredulity*). Lord STRATHSPORRAN!

[*There is a perceptible flutter in the company, as a ruddy-haired and rather plain young man enters with an apologetic and even diffident air, and pauses in evident uncertainty as to his host and hostess.*]

Uncle Gab. (*to himself*). A Lord! Bless my soul! MONTY and MARIA are getting up in the world!

Guests (*to themselves*). A Lord! No wonder they kept the dinner back!

Miss Seaton (*after a hurried glance—to herself*). Good Heavens! DOUGLAS CLAYMORE!—reduced to this! [*She lowers her head.*]

Mr. Tid. (*to himself*). They might have told me they were going to send us a Lord—I never ordered one! I wonder if he's genuine—he don't *look* it. If I could only find out, quietly!

Mrs. Tid. (*to herself*). Gracious! And I was going to send him in with the Governess! (*To her Husb. in a whisper*). MONTAGUE, what are you *about*? Go and be civil to him—do!

[*She rings the bell twice: Mr. TIDMARSH advances, purple with indignation and embarrassment, to welcome the new-comer, who shakes him warmly by the hand.*]

(*End of Scene III.*)

HER WAY OF PUTTING IT.—Mrs. R. thinks she has an excellent memory for riddles. She was delighted with that somewhat old conundrum about "What is more wonderful than JONAH in the whale?" to which the answer is, "Two men in a fly," and determined to puzzle her nephew with it the very next time she met him. "Such a capital riddle I've got for you, JOHN!" she exclaimed, "Let me see. Oh, yes—I remember—yes, that's it;" and then, having settled the form of the question, she put it thus—"What is more wonderful than two men in an omnibus?" And when she gave the answer, "JONAH in a fly," and correcting herself immediately, said, "No—I mean, 'JONAH in a whale,'" her nephew affectionately recommended his excellent relative to lie down and take a little rest.

RAILWAY RATES.—What better rate can there be than that of the Flying Dutchman to the South, and the Flying Scotchman to the North; the two hours and a-half express to Bournemouth, and the Granville two hours to Ramsgate? The word "Rates" is objectionable as being associated with taxes—and to avoid the taxes the Fishermen are going to employ smacks and boys. Poor boys! there are a lot of smacks about. As the Pantomime and Music-hall poet sang, "Tooral looral lido, whacky smacky smack!" But though they, the Fishermen, hereby avoid the Rails, yet they can't do without their network of lines.

When an actor has to make love to an actress on the stage, it is "purely a matter of business." Real "love-making" is never a matter of business; most often 'tis very much the contrary. The "matter of business" comes in with "making an uncommonly good marriage," but the love-making has little to do with this, except as it is, on the stage, "a matter of business."

THE RAILWAY SERVANT'S VADE-MECUM.

Question. What are the duties of a Pointsman?

Answer. To remember the effect of moving the switches.

Q. When is he likely to cease to remember this important detail?

A. After he has been on duty a certain or uncertain number of hours.

Q. Do these conditions also appertain to the labours of a man in the signal-box?

A. Certainly, but in a more marked degree.

Q. What would a collision consequent upon the occasion to which you have referred be called?

A. Generally, "an accident."

Q. But would there ever be an exception to this nomenclature?

A. Yes; in the case of a Coroner being over-officious, and his Jury "turning nasty."

Q. What would be the effect of this unpleasant combination of circumstances?

A. That a verdict of "Manslaughter" would be given against the occupant of the signal-box.

Q. What would happen to his superiors?

A. Nothing. However, they would be required to see the proper evidence was forthcoming at the prisoner's trial.

Q. What would be the end of the incident?

A. Six months hard labour from the Bench, and a day's sympathy from the general Public for the ex-occupant of the signal-box.

Q. What are the duties of a Station-master?

A. To be civil to season-ticket holders, and to refer the general Public to officials of smaller importance than himself.

Q. What is your impression of an ideal Station-master?

A. A gentleman in correct morning dress taking a deep interest savouring of sincere satisfaction in all the arrangements of the traffic over which he exercises a qualified control.

Q. If he is asked why such and such a train is an hour late, what should he reply?

A. He should observe cheerily that it keeps better time than it used to do.

Q. Should he ever exhibit surprise?

A. Only when a train enters the station punctually to the moment, then he may safely presume that there must have been an accident somewhere.

Q. And now in conclusion, how can an official secure in all human probability a long life?

A. By taking care never to travel on his own line?



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