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Author: Harry Furniss

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AN ARTISTIC JOKE.
A London Slum. My Parody of the Venetian School.
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THE CONFESSIONS OF A CARICATURIST

BY

HARRY FURNISS

ILLUSTRATED

VOLUME II

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"*In the year 1887 he startled the town and made a Society sensation by means of an exceedingly original enterprise which any man of less audacious and prodigious power of work would have shrunk from in its very inception. For years this Titanic task was in hand. This was his celebrated 'artistic joke,' the name given by the 'Times' to a bold parody on a large scale of an average Royal Academy Exhibition. This great show was held at the Gainsborough Gallery, New Bond Street,*

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and consisted of some eighty-seven pictures of considerable size, executed in monochrome, and presenting to a marvelling public travesties—some excruciatingly humorous and daringly satirical, others really exquisite in their rendering of physical traits and landscape features—of the styles, techniques, and peculiar choice of subjects of a number of the leading artists, R.A.'s and others, who annually exhibit at Burlington House. It was a surprise, even to his intimate friends, who, with one or two exceptions, knew nothing about it until the announcement that Mr. Furniss had his own private Royal Academy appeared in the 'Times.' He worked in secret at intervals, under a heavy strain, to get the Exhibition ready, particularly as he had to manage the whole of the business part; for the show at the Gainsborough Gallery was entirely his own speculation. Granted that the experiment was daring, yet the audacity of the artist fascinated people. Nor did the Academicians, whom some thought would have been annoyed at the fun, as a body resent it. They were not so silly, though a minority muttered. Most of them saw that Mr. Furniss was not animated by any desire to hold them up to contempt, but his parodies were perfectly good-natured, that he had served all alike, and that he had only sought the advancement of English art. During the whole season the gallery was crushed to overflowing, the coldest critics were dazzled, the public charmed, and literally all London laughed. It furnished the journalistic critics of the country with material for reams of descriptive articles and showers of personal paragraphs, and whether relished or disrelished by particular members of the artistic profession, at least proved to them, as to the world at large, the varied powers (in some phases hitherto unsuspected) and exuberant energies of the Harry Furniss whose name was now on the tongue and whose bold signature was familiar to the eyes of that not easily impressed entity, the General Public.

"In fact, London had never seen anything so original as Harry Furniss's Royal Academy. The work of one man, and that man one of the busiest professional men in town. Indeed it might be thought that at the age of thirty, with all the foremost magazines and journals waiting on his leisure, with a handsome income and an enviable social position assured, ambition could hardly live in the bosom of an artist in black and white. Unlike Alexander, our hero did not sit down and weep that no kingdom remained to conquer, but set quietly to work to create a new realm all his own. His Royal Academy, although presented by himself to the public as an 'artistic joke,' showed that he could not only use the brush on a large scale, but that he could compose to perfection, and after the exuberant humour of the show, nothing delighted and surprised the public more than the artistic quality and finished technique in much of the work, a finish far and away above the work of any caricaturist of our time."

[Pg 3]

THE idea first occurred to me at a friend's house, when my host after dinner took me into the picture gallery to show me a portrait of his wife just completed by Mr. Slapdash, R.A. It stood at the end of the gallery, the massive frame draped with artistic care, while attendants stood obsequiously round, holding lights so as to display the *chef d'œuvre* to the utmost advantage. As I beheld the picture for the first time I was simply struck dumb by the excessively bad work which it contained. The dictates of courtesy of course required that I should say all the civil things I could about it, but I could hardly repress a smile when I heard someone else pronounce the portrait to be charming. However, as my host seemed to think that perhaps I was too near, and that the work might gain in enchantment if I gave it a little distance, we moved towards the other end of the gallery and, at his suggestion, looked into an antiquated mirror, where I got in the half light what seemed a reflection of it. The improvement was obvious, and I told my friend so. I told him that the effect was now so lifelike that the figure seemed to be moving; but when he in turn gazed into the glass he explained somewhat testily that I was not looking at his wife's portrait at all, but at the white parrot in the cage hard by. The moral of this incident is that if patrons of art in their pursuit of eccentricities will pay large sums to an artist for placing a poor portrait in a massive frame with drapery hanging round it in the most approved modern style, and be satisfied with such a result, they must not be surprised if a parrot should be mistaken for a framed type of beauty. I was, however, not satisfied until I had examined the picture in question closely and honestly in the full light of day, when I saw that Mr. Slapdash, R.A., had sold his autograph and a soiled canvas in lieu of a portrait to my rich but too easily pleased friend.

[Pg 4]

As I walked back into the drawing-room, one of the musical humorists of the day was cleverly taking off the weak points of his brother musicians, and bringing out into strong light their peculiarities and faults of style. The entertainment, however, did not tend to raise my drooping spirits, for I was sad to think how low our modern art had sunk, and with a heavy heart and a sigh for the profession I pursue, I went sadly home. Of course my pent-up feelings had to find relief, so my poor wife had to listen to an extempore lecture which I then and there delivered to her on portraiture past and present—a lecture which I fear would hardly commend itself to the Association for the Advancement of British Art. Further, I asked myself why should I not take a leaf out of the musical humorist's book and like him expose the tricks and eccentricities of British art in the present day?

The following morning, being a man of action as well as of word, I started my "Artistic Joke." I was determined to keep the matter secret, so I worked with my studio doors closed, and as each picture was finished it was placed behind some heavy curtains, secure from observation, and I kept my secret for three years, until the work was complete.

I soon found that I had set myself a task of no little magnitude. Before I could really make a start I had to examine each artist's work thoroughly. I studied specimens of the work of each at various periods of his or her career. I had to discover their mannerisms, their idiosyncrasies and ideas, if they had any, their tricks of brushwork, and all the technicalities of their art. Then I designed a picture myself in imitation of each artist. In a very few instances only did I parody an actual work. This fact was generally lost sight of by those who visited the Exhibition. The public imagined that I simply took a certain picture of a particular artist and burlesqued it. I did this certainly in the case of Millais' "Cinderella" and one or two others; but in the vast majority of the works exhibited, even in Marcus Stone's "Rejected Addresses," which appeared to so many as if it must have been a direct copy of some picture of his, the idea was entirely evolved out of my own [Pg 5] imagination. In thinking out the various pictures I devoted the greatest care to accuracy of detail. I was particular as to the shape of each, and even went so far as to obtain frames in keeping with those used by the different artists. Of course it was out of the question for me to do the pictures in colour, which would have required a lifetime, and probably tempted me to break faith with my idea; not to mention the fact that I should in that case most likely have sent the collection to the Academy, of which obtuse body, if there is any justice in it, I must then naturally have been elected a full-blown member.

THROWING MYSELF INTO IT.

In order to get the Exhibition finished in time, I often had to work far into the night, and on one occasion when I was thus secretly engaged in my studio upon these large pictures until the small hours, I remember a catastrophe very nearly happened which would have put a finishing touch of a very different kind to that which I intended, not only to the picture, but to the artist himself. It happened thus. About three o'clock in the morning, long after the household had retired to rest, I became conscious of a smell of burning. I made a minute search round the studio, but could not discover the slightest indication of an incipient conflagration. Then a dreadful thought occurred to me. Beneath the studio is a vault, access to which is gained by a trap-door in the floor. Could it be that the secret of my "Artistic Joke" had become common property in the artistic world, and that some vindictive Academician, bent upon preventing the impending caricature of his *chef d'œuvre*, was even now, like another Guy Fawkes, concealed below, and in the dead of night was already commencing his diabolical attempt to roast me alive in the midst of my caricatures? Up went the trap-door, and with candle in hand I explored the vault. The result was to calm my [Pg 6] apprehensions upon this score, for there was no one there. Still mystified as to where the smell of fire, now distinctly perceptible, came from, I next walked round the outside of my studio, exciting evident suspicion in the mind of the policeman on his beat. No, there was not a spark to be seen; no keg of gunpowder, no black leather bag, no dynamite, no infernal machine. I returned into the

house and went upstairs, roused all my family and servants, who, after a close examination, returned to their beds, assuring me that all was safe there, and half wondering whether the persistent pursuit of caricaturing does not produce an enfeebling effect upon the mind. Consoled by their assurances, I returned once more to my studio, where the burning smell grew worse and worse. However, concluding that it was due to some fire in the neighbourhood, I settled down to work once more; but hardly had I taken my brush in hand when showers of sparks and particles of smouldering wood began to descend upon my head and shoulders, and cover the work I was engaged on. I started up, and looking up at my big sunlight, saw to my horror that I had wound up my easel, which is twelve feet high, and more nearly resembles a guillotine than anything else, so far that the top of it was in immediate contact with the gas, and actually alight!

FIRE!

The *Times* took the unusual course of giving, a month in advance of its opening on April 23rd, 1887, a preliminary notice of this Exhibition.

It said: "A novel Exhibition, for which we venture to prophesy no little [Pg 7] success, is being prepared by Harry Furniss of *Punch* celebrity. As everyone knows, Mr. Furniss has long adorned the columns of our contemporary with pictorial parodies of the chief pictures of the Royal Academy, the Grosvenor, and other shows, and it has now occurred to him to develop this idea and to have a humorous Royal Academy of his own. He has taken the Gainsborough Gallery in Old Bond Street, which he will fill some time before the opening of Burlington House with a display of elaborate travesties of the works of all the best known artists of the day. There will be seventy pictures in black and white, many of them large size, turning into good-natured ridicule the works of every painter, good and bad, whose pictures are familiar to the public," etc., etc. This gives a very fair idea of the nature and objects of my "Royal Academy." My aim was to burlesque not so much individual works as general style, not so much specific performances as habitual manner. As an example I take the work of that clever decorative painter and etcher, Mr. R. W. Macbeth, A.R.A. By his permission I here reproduce reductions in black and white of three of his well-known pictures, and side by side I show my parody of his style and composition—not, as you will observe, a caricature of any *one* picture, but a boiling down of *all* into an original picture of my own in which I emphasise his mannerisms. Furthermore, in my catalogue I parodied the same artist's mannerism in drawing in black and white, and with one or two exceptions this applies to all the works I exhibited. I hit upon a new idea for the illustrated catalogue. The illustrations, with few exceptions, did not convey any idea of the composition of the pictures, and in many cases they were designed to further the idea and object of the Exhibition by reference to pictures not included therein. My joke was that the Exhibition could not be understood by anyone without a catalogue, and the catalogue could not be understood by anyone without seeing the Exhibition. Therefore everyone visiting the Exhibition had to buy a catalogue, and everyone seeing the catalogue had to visit the Exhibition. *Q.E.D.!* The idea, the catalogue, and everything connected with this "Artistic Joke" were my own, [Pg 8] with the exception of the title, which was so happily supplied by Mr. Humphry Ward as the heading to the preliminary notice he wrote for the *Times*. *At the last moment* I called in my fellow-worker on *Punch*, Mr. E. J. Milliken, to assist me with some of the letterpress of the catalogue and write the verses for it. I had all but a small portion of the catalogue written before he so kindly gave this assistance, but at the suggestion of a mutual friend I gave him half the profits of the catalogue, which amounted to several hundred pounds. I am obliged to make this point clear, as to my astonishment it was reported that the whole Exhibition was a joint affair, no doubt originated by Mr. Punch in a few lines: "When two of Mr. Punch's young men put their heads together to produce so excellent a literary and artistic a joke as that now on view at the Gainsborough Gallery——" This was accepted as a matter of fact by many, not knowing that this "joke," my work of years, was a secret in the *Punch* circle as outside it. The false impression which Mr. Punch had originated he corrected in his Happy Thought way: "*The Artistic Jubilee Jocademy in Bond Street.*—The fire insurances on the building will be uncommonly heavy because there is to be a show of Furniss's constantly going on inside. Why not call it 'Furniss Abbey Thoughts?'"

POTATO GANG IN THE FENS.

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TWITCH-BURNING IN THE FENS.

A FLOOD IN THE FENS.

THE PICTURES BY R. MACBETH.

Reproduced by permission of the Artist.

MACBETH IN THE FENS.

My parody in "An Artistic Joke" of Mr. Macbeth's composition and style of work, showing that in my "Academy" I did not parody one subject, but designed a picture embodying all the characteristics of the Artist.

The following brief correspondence passed between the President of the Royal Academy and myself:—

"Mr. Harry Furniss presents his compliments to Sir Frederick Leighton and trusts he will forgive being bothered with the following little matter.

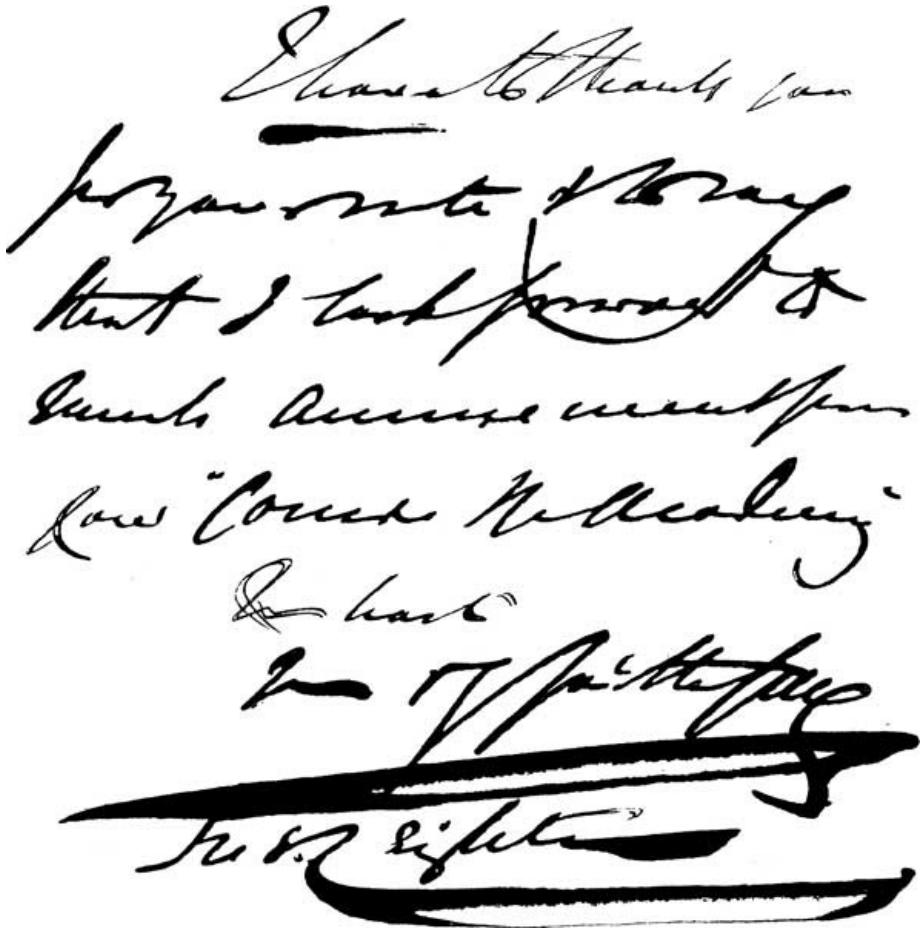
"Sir Frederick is no doubt aware of Mr. Furniss's intention to have a little Exhibition in Bond Street this spring,—a good-natured parody on the Royal Academy. The title settled upon—the only one that explains its object—is

"HARRY FURNISS'S
"ROYAL ACADEMY,
"'AN ARTISTIC JOKE.'"

"In this particular case the authorities (Mr. Furniss is informed) see no objection to the use of the word *Royal* pure and simple, but as a matter of etiquette he thinks it right to ask the question of Sir Frederick Leighton also.

"*March 11th, 1887.*"

[Pg 11]



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

A word or two may not be out of place here on the practical difficulties which beset an artist who opens an Exhibition on his own account, and is forced by circumstances to become his own "exploiteur." Men may have worked with a more ambitious object, but certainly no man can ever have worked harder than I did at this period. Outside work was pouring in, my current *Punch* work seemed to be increasing, but I never allowed "Furniss's Folly" (as some good-natured friend called my Exhibition at the moment) to interfere with it. I had only arranged with a "business man" to take the actual "running" of the show off my hands, and he was to have half the profits if there should happen to be any. At the critical moment, when I was working night and day at my [Pg 12] easel, when in fact the "murther was out" and the date actually settled for the "cracking" of my joke—in short, when I fondly imagined that all the arrangements were made, I received a letter from my "business" friend backing out of the affair, "as he doubted its success." Half-an-hour after the receipt of this staggerer (I have never had time to reply to it) I was dashing into Bond Street, where I quickly made all arrangements for the hire of a gallery and the necessary printing, engaged an advertising agent and staff, and myself saw after the thousand and one things indispensable to an undertaking of this kind. And all this extraneous worry continued to

hamper my studio work until the Exhibition was actually opened. Of course I had to make hurried engagements at any price, and consequently bad ones for me. Every householder is aware that should he change his abode he is surrounded in his new home by a swarm of local tradespeople and others anxious to get something out of him. Well, my experience upon entering the world of "business," hitherto strange to me, was precisely the same. All sorts of parasites try to fasten themselves on to you. Business houses regard you as an amateur, and consequently you pay dearly for your experience. You are not up to the tricks of the trade, and although you may not generally be written down an ass, you must in your new vocation pay your footing. It is therefore incumbent upon anyone entering the world of trade for the first time to keep his wits very much about him.

The local habitation for my Exhibition, which upon the spur of the moment I was fortunate enough to find in Bond Street, was called for some inexplicable reason the Gainsborough Gallery, and thereby hangs a tale. One afternoon there arrived a venerable dowager in a gorgeous canary-coloured chariot, attended by her two colossal footmen. She sailed into the gallery, which, fortunately for the old and scant of breath, was on the ground floor, and slightly raising the pince-nez on her aristocratic nose, looked about her with an air of bewilderment. Then going up to my secretary she said, "Surely! these are not by Gainsborough?" [Pg 13]

"No, madam," was the reply. "This is the Gainsborough Gallery, but the pictures are by Harry Furniss."

Almost fainting on the spot, the old lady called for her salts, her stick, and her attendants three, and was rapidly driven away from the scene of her lamentable mistake.

The public attendance at the "The Artistic Joke" was prodigious from the first. Even upon the private view day, when I introduced a novelty, and instead of inviting everybody who is somebody to pay a gratuitous visit to the show, raised the entrance fee to half-a-crown, the fashionable crowd besieged the doors from an early hour, and made a very considerable addition to my treasury. Those of my readers, however, who did not pay a visit to the Gainsborough will be better able to realise the amount of patronage we received, notwithstanding the numerous attractions of the "Jubilee" London season, if I relate an incident which occurred on the Saturday after we opened. It was the "private view" of the Grosvenor Gallery, and the crowd was immense. Indeed, many ladies and gentlemen were returning to their carriages without going through the rooms, not, like my patron the dowager, because they were disappointed at not finding the work of the old masters, but because the visitors were too numerous and the atmosphere too oppressive. As I passed through the people I heard a lady who was stepping into her carriage say to a friend, "I have just come from 'The Artistic Joke,' and the crowd is even worse there. They have had to close the doors because the supply of catalogues was exhausted." This soon caused me to quicken my pace, and hastening down the street to my own Exhibition, I found the police standing at the doors and the people being turned away. The simple explanation of this was that so great had been the public demand that the stock of catalogues furnished by the printers was exhausted early in the afternoon, and as it was quite impossible to understand the caricatures without a catalogue, there was no alternative but to close the doors until some more were forthcoming.

Finding the telephone was no use, I was soon in a hansom bound for the City, intending by hook or by crook to bring back with me the much-needed catalogues, or the body of the printer dead or alive. Upon arriving in the City, however, to my chagrin I found his place of business closed, [Pg 14] though the caretaker, with a touch of fiendish malignity, showed me through a window whole piles of my non-delivered catalogues. Not to be beaten, I hastened back to the West End and despatched a very long and explicit telegram to the printer at his private house (of course he would not be back in the City until Monday), requiring him, under pain of various severe penalties, to yield up my catalogues instanter. As I stood in the post office of Burlington House anxiously penning this message, and harassed into a state of almost feverish excitement, the sounds of martial music and the tramp of armed men in the adjacent courtyard fell upon my distracted ear. With a sickly and sardonic smile upon my face I laid down the pen and peeped through the door.

"Yes! I see it all now," I muttered. "The whole thing is a plant. The printer was bribed, and, *coûte que coûte*, the Academy has decided to take my body! Hence the presence of the military; and see, those cooks—what are they doing here in their white caps? My body! Ha! then nothing short of cannibalism is intended!"

This frightful thought almost precipitated me into the very ranks of the soldiery, when I discovered that the corps was none other than that of the Artist Volunteers, which contains several of my friends. Seizing one of those whom I chanced to recognise, I hurriedly whispered in his ear the thoughts of impending butchery which were passing in my terrified mind. But he only laughed. "You will disturb their digestions, my dear Furniss, some other way," he said, "than by providing them with a *pièce de résistance*. Make your mind easy, for we are only here to do honour to the guests. This is the banqueting night of the Royal Academy."

From what I heard, some amusing incidents occurred in the house at my "Royal Academy."

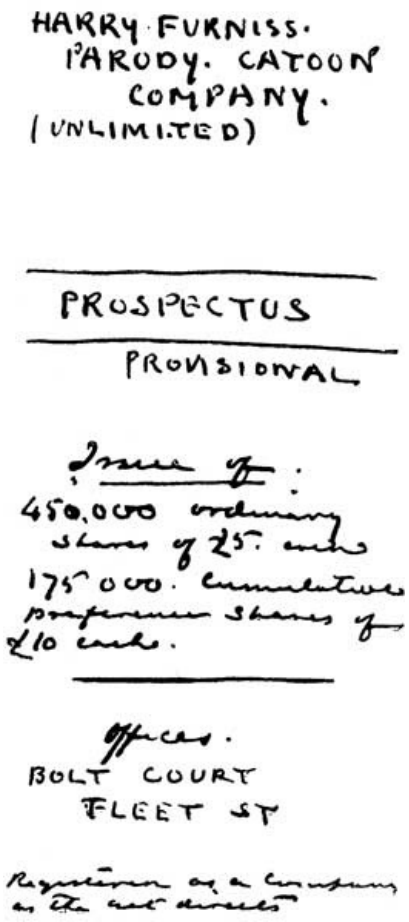
[Pg 15]
[Pg 16]

"AN ARTISTIC JOKE."

A portion of my parody of the work of Sir Alma Tadema, R.A.

It was no uncommon sight to see the friends and relatives, even the sons and daughters, of certain well-known Academicians standing opposite the parody of a particular picture, and hugely enjoying it at the expense of the parent or friend who had painted the original. Other R.A.'s, who went about pooh-poohing the whole affair, and saying that they intended to ignore it [Pg 17] altogether, turned up nevertheless in due time at the Gainsborough, where, it is true, they did not generally remain very long. They had not come to see the Exhibition, but only their own pictures. One glance was usually enough, and then they vanished. The critics (and their friends) of course remained longer. Even Mr. Sala went in one day and seemed to be immensely tickled by what he saw. Strange to relate, however, when he had passed through about one-third of the show, he was observed to stop abruptly, turn himself round, and flee away incontinently, never to be seen there again. I was much puzzled to discover a reason for this remarkable manœuvre, the more so as at that time I had not wounded his *amour propre* by indulging in an "Artistic Joke" of much more diminutive proportions at his expense, or, as it subsequently turned out, at my own. Since, however, the world-famous trial of *Sala* v. *Furniss* I have looked carefully over all the pictures in my Royal Academy, with a view to throwing some light upon the critic's abrupt departure. I remain, nevertheless, in the dark, for the most rigid scrutiny has failed to reveal to me one single feature in the show, not even a Grecian nose, or a foot with six toes, which could have jarred upon the refined taste of the most sensitive of journalists. I shall return to Mr. Sala in another portion of these confessions, but am more concerned now with the parasites, the artistic failures, the common showmen, the traffickers in various wares, and other specimens of more or less impecunious humanity, who applied to me to let them participate in the profits of a success which I had toiled so hard to achieve. In imitation of Barnum, I might have had, if I had been so inclined, a series of side shows, ranging in kind from the big diamond which a well-known firm in Bond Street asked me to let them exhibit, to the "Queen's Bears" and a curious waxwork of a bald old man which by means of electricity showed the gradual alterations of tint produced by the growth of intemperance. One of these applications I was for a moment inclined to entertain. It has more than once been proposed that to enable the British public to take its annual bolus at Burlington House with less nausea, the Royal Academy should introduce a band of some sort, so that under the influence of its inspiriting strains the masterpieces might be robbed of a little of [Pg 18] their tameness, the portrait of My Lord Knoshoo might seem less out of place in a public Exhibition, and the insanities of certain demented colourists might be made less obtrusive monopolists of one's attention. Therefore, when "a musical lady and her daughters" applied to me for permission to give "Soirées Musicales" at the Gainsborough, it struck me for a moment that it would be effective to forestall the action of the Academy; but on second thoughts I reflected that as the Burlington House band would probably be of the same quality as the pictures, it would be adhering more closely to the spirit of my "Artistic Joke" if I gave my patrons a barrel organ or a

hurdy-gurdy which should play the "Old Hundredth" by steam. Although one would have thought that a single visit of a few hours' duration would have sufficed to go through a humorous Exhibition of this kind, I found that several people became *habitués* of the place, and paid many visits; but it is of course possible to have too much of a good thing, and a joke loses its point when you have too much of it. No better illustration of this can be afforded than in the case of my own secretary at the time, who had sat in the Exhibition for many months. One day, when the plates were being prepared for an album which I published as a souvenir of the show, the engraver arrived with a proof.



MR. SAMBOURNE'S PROSPECTUS.

"But there is some mistake here," said my secretary. "We have no such picture as that on the premises."

The engraver was puzzled, and as he seemed rather sceptical upon the point, he was allowed to look round, and speedily found the picture he had copied. It had actually been close at my secretary's elbow since the "Artistic Joke" was opened to the public, but as the pictures were all under glass, I suppose he had only seen his own reflection when gazing at them. It was this perhaps which caused another gentleman whom I have before mentioned to beat so hasty a retreat. Both of them may have been frightened by what they saw. [Pg 19]

The suggestion that I should be run as a public company emanated from the fertile brain of my friend Mr. Linley Sambourne. This is his rough idea of the prospectus:

> This Company has been formed to acquire the sole exclusive concession of the marvellous and rapid power of production of the above-mentioned Managing Director, and to take over the same as a going concern.
>
> These productions have been in continual flow for many years past, and are too well known to need any assurance of the possibility of a failure of supply. It is therefore with the utmost confidence that this sure and certain investment is now offered to the public with an absolute guarantee of a percentage for Fifteen Years of Forty-five per cent.
>
> Mr. Furniss can be seen at work with the regularity of a threshing machine and the variety of a kaleidoscope any day from 8 o'c. a.m. to 8 o'c. p.m. on presentation of visiting card.
>
> **BANKERS,**
> **Close, Gatherum & Co., Lombard Street.**
>
> **SOLICITORS,**
> **Black, White & Co., Tube Court.**

Secretary, *pro tem.*
Earl M——,
Arrystone Grange.

The Subscription List will close on or before Monday, April 1st, 1887.

Messrs. C. White & Greyon Grey invite subscriptions for the undermentioned Share Capital and Debentures of the

HARRY FURNISS PARODY CARTOON COMPANY
(Unlimited).

Incorporated under the Joint Stock Companies Acts,
1862 and 1883.

Share capital	£4,000,000
Divided as follows:	
450,000 Ordinary Shares of £5 each	£2,250,000
175,000 7 p.c. Cumulative Preference Shares of £10 each	1,750,000

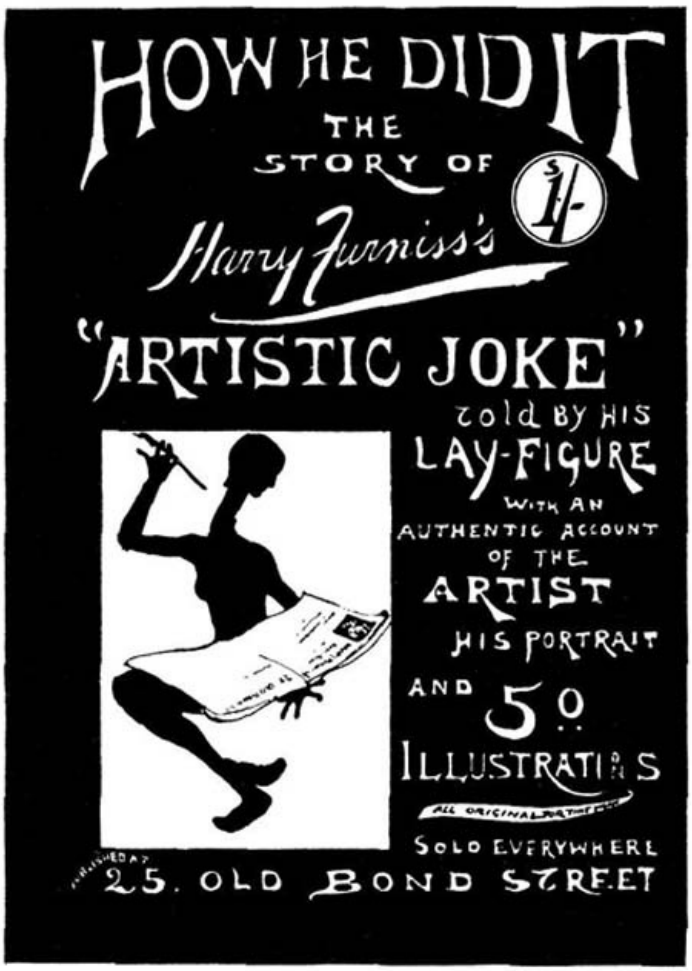
Directors.

Chairman: H. V—— W——, Esq., Regent Street, photographer.
Sir John S—— V——, Kt., Pine Court, Kent.
H—— F——, Esq., Draughtsman and Designer, 45, Drury Lane.

HARRY FURNISS, Esq., R.R.A., R.R.I., &c.,
will join the Board as Managing Director on allotment.

[Pg 20]

A JOKE WITHIN A JOKE.



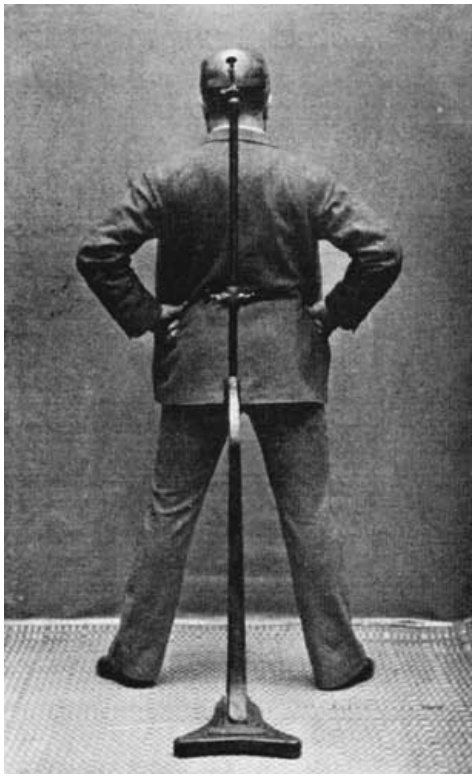
A showman, particularly with some attraction of the passing hour, must "boom his

show for all it's worth," as the Americans say; so I "boomed" my "Artistic Joke" with an advertising joke, and at the same time parodied another branch of art—the art of advertising the artists, by a special number of a magazine devoted to the work of an Academician. The special numbers, generally published at Christmas, are familiar and interesting to us all. Still, from any point of view they are fair game. They are of course merely non-critical, eulogistic accounts of the artist and his work. So

"*How he Did It—The Story of my 'Artistic Joke,*" duly appeared, written by my Lay-figure.

"PREFACE.

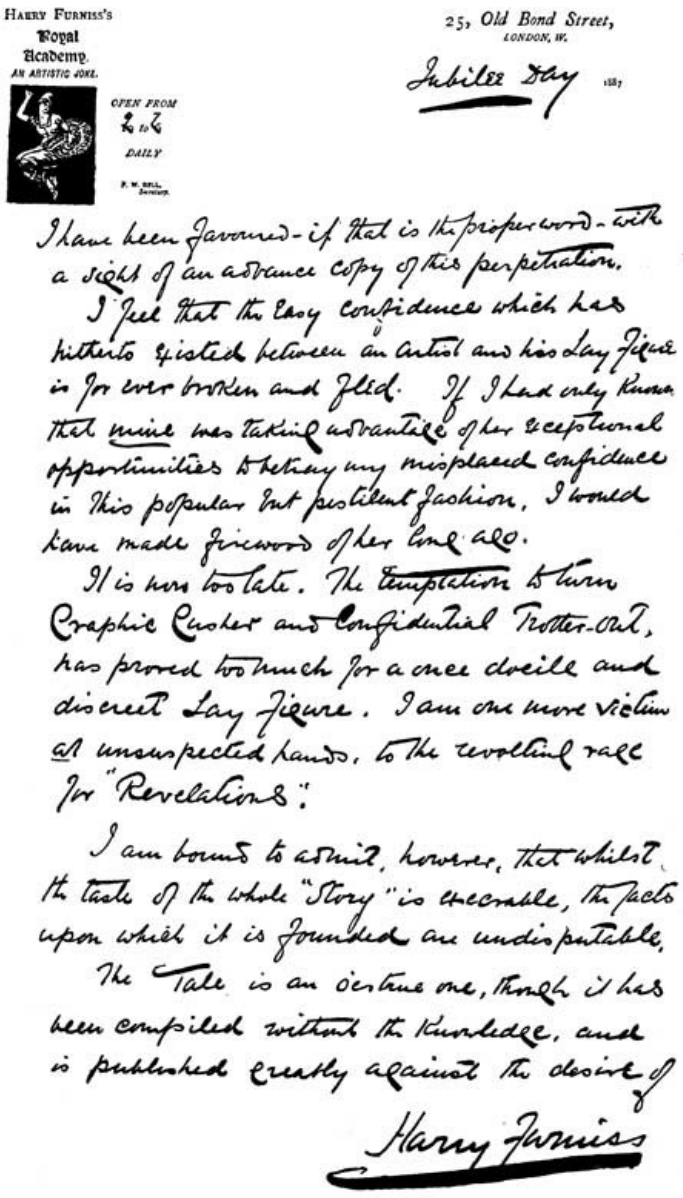
HE fact of my being only an artist's lay-figure will account for any stiffness or angularity in my literary style. Whilst conscious of my deficiencies in this respect, I am comforted by the consideration that a lay-figure attempting literature cannot by any possibility perpetrate greater absurdities than are committed by many a ready writer who indulges in those glowing and gushing descriptions of artists and their work which it is now the fashion to publish, in some such shape as the present, for the delectation (and delusion) of a gossip-loving public."



MY PORTRAIT. FRONTISPIECE FOR 'HOW HE DID IT.'

This, the origin of "The Artistic Joke," is a fair specimen of the absurdity I published as an advertisement, though many bought it and read it as a "true and authentic account" of the confessions of a caricaturist's lay-figure: [Pg 21]

"As many would be interested in knowing how this extraordinary idea of an Academy *pour rire* first occurred to this artist, I hasten to gratify their natural curiosity. It was before little Harry reached the age of seven, and while watching with fellow-feeling the house-painters at work in his father's house. One day, at lunchtime, when the men had left their ladders and paraphernalia near the picture-gallery (a long room containing choice works of all the great masters), he seized his opportunity: with herculean strength and Buffalo-Billish agility, our hero dragged all the ladders, paints and brushes into the gallery, and soon was at work 'touching up' the pictures, to gratify his boyish love of mischief. Truth to tell, his performance was but on a par, artistically, with that usually shown when mischievous boys get hold of brushes and paint and a picture to restore."



[Pg 22]

25, Old Bond Street,
LONDON, W.
Jubilee Day 1887

I have been favoured—if that is the proper word—with a sight of an advance copy of this perpetration.

I feel that the Easy confidence which has hitherto existed between an artist and his Lay Figure is for ever broken and fled. If I had only known that wine was taking advantage of her exceptional opportunities to betray my misplaced confidence in this popular but pestilent fashion, I would have made firewood of her long ago.

It is now too late. The temptation is turn Graphic Gusher and confidential Trotter-out, has proved too much for a wee docile and discreet Lay Figure. I am one more victim at unsuspected hands, to the revolting rage for "Revelations."

I am bound to admit, however, that whilst the taste of the whole "Story" is execrable, the facts upon which it is founded are undisputable.

The Tale is an o'er true one, though it has been compiled without the knowledge, and is published exactly against the desire of

Harry Furniss

[Pg 23]

"Before Harry had finished touching-up the valuable family portraits, his father came in, glanced round, and fell onto a couch in roars of laughter. 'It's the best Artistic Joke I've ever seen, my boy, and here's a shilling for you!' A happy thought struck Harry at the moment. He kept it to himself for over twenty-five years; and now, standing high upon an allegorical ladder, he repeats the Joke daily, from nine

to seven, admission one shilling."

This book of sixty pages sold extremely well, and, strange to say, I made more money out of this joking advertisement—the work of a few days—than I did out of my elaborate album of seventy photogravure plates which occupied two years to produce and cost me £2,000.

The following lines from *Fun* give the origin of my Joke's peculiar and ingenious turn:

"The fact is the Forty were sad in their mind
(Unfortunate *Aca*demicians!)
Associates also were troubled in kind,
With jeers at their works and positions,
Till one who was younger and bolder than all
Declared 'doleful dumps' to be folly,
'Come—away to the club, and for supper let's call,
And try to be decently jolly.'

"So they fed with good will on the viands prepared
(Pork chops were the principal portion),
Then retiring to bed, with their dreams they were scared,
And spent half the night in contortion;
Then rose in their sleep and came down to this room,
And, instead of a purposeless pawing,
They painted these pictures, then fled in the gloom,
And Furniss has touched up the drawing!"

Having parodied the artists' work, the R.A. catalogue, and the publishers' R.A. special numbers, I went one step further. I parodied "Art Patrons." At that time there was a great stir in art circles in consequence of the authorities of the National Gallery dallying with Mr. Tate's offer of his pictures to the nation; so to emulate him, and Mr. Alexander, and Mr. Watts, and other public benefactors in the world of art, I sent the following letter to the Directors of the National Gallery:

"Mr. Harry Furniss presents his compliments to the Trustees of the National Gallery and begs to congratulate them upon the munificent gifts lately made to them, particularly Mr. Henry Tate's, which provides the nation with an excellent sample of current art. At the same time Mr. Harry Furniss feels that having it in his power to provide a more complete collection of our modern English school, he is inspired by the generous offers of others to humbly imitate this good example, and will therefore willingly give his 'Royal Academy' (parodies on modern painters), better known as 'The Artistic Joke,' which caused such a sensation in 1887, to the National Gallery if the Trustees will honour him by accepting the collection."

[Pg 24]

Yet it was not believed, at least not in Aberdeen, for the leading paper of the Granite City published the following:

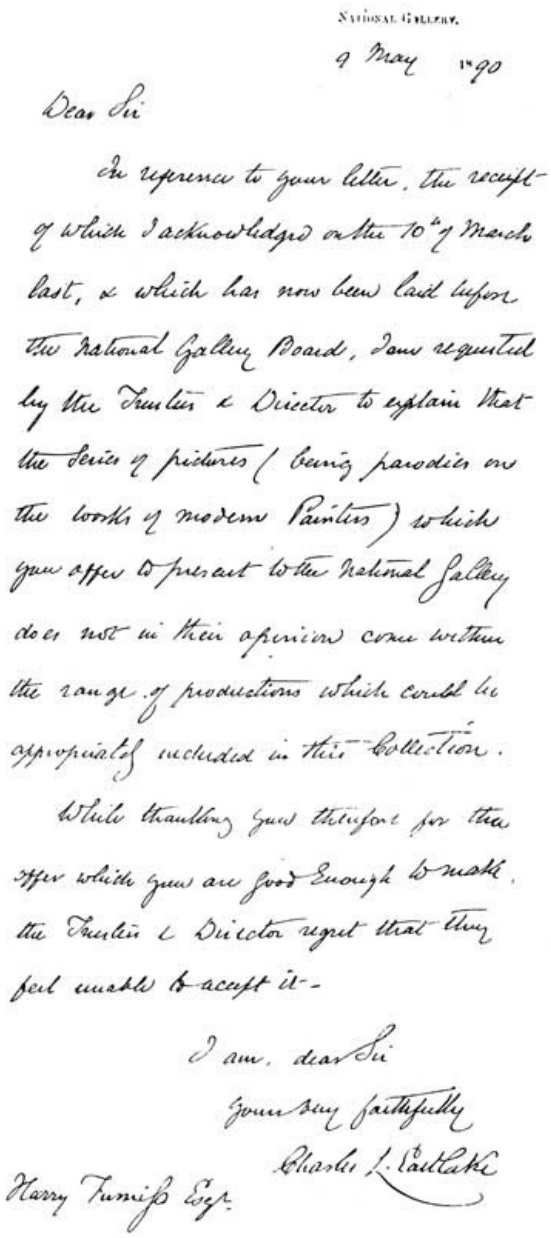
"Someone has played a joke on Mr. Harry Furniss. An announcement appears this morning to the effect that 'animated by the generosity of Mr. Henry Tate and other benefactors of the National Gallery, Mr. Harry Furniss has offered to the Trustees his collection of illustrations of the work of modern artists recently on view in Bond Street,' and that he 'has received a communication to the effect that his offer is under consideration.' I believe no one was more surprised by this communication than Mr. Furniss. He never made the offer except possibly in jest to some Member of Parliament, and naturally he was much surprised to learn that his offer was 'under consideration.' The illustrations in question could scarcely be dispensed with by Mr. Furniss, as they are to him a sort of stock-in-trade."

Not only in Aberdeen but I found generally my seriousness was doubted, so I reproduce on the opposite page in facsimile the graceful reply of the authorities of our National Gallery:

The "Artistic Joke" was never intended as an attack on the Royal Academy at all, as a clear-headed critic wrote:

"It would be more just to regard it as an attempt on Mr. Furniss's part to show the Academicians the possibilities of real beauty, and wonder, and pleasure that lie hidden in their work.... On the whole, the Royal Academicians have never appeared under more favourable conditions than in this pleasant gallery. Mr. Furniss has shown that the one thing lacking in them is sense of humour, and that, if they would not take themselves so seriously, they might produce work that would be a joy, and not a weariness to the world. Whether or not they will profit by the lessons it is difficult to say, for dulness has become the basis of respectability, and seriousness the only refuge of the shallow."

[Pg 25]



National Gallery.

9 May 1890

Dear Sir

In reference to your letter, the receipt of which I acknowledged on the 10th of March last, & which has now been laid upon the National Gallery Board, I am requested by the Trustees & Director to explain that the series of pictures (being parodies on the works of modern Painters) which you offer to present to the National Gallery does not in their opinion come within the range of productions which could be appropriately included in their Collection.

While thanking you therefore for the offer which you are good enough to make, the Trustees & Director regret that they feel unable to accept it.

I am, dear Sir
Your very faithfully
Charles L. Eastlake

Harry Furniss Esq.

The Artistic Joke.
View larger image

[Pg 26]

CHAPTER IX.

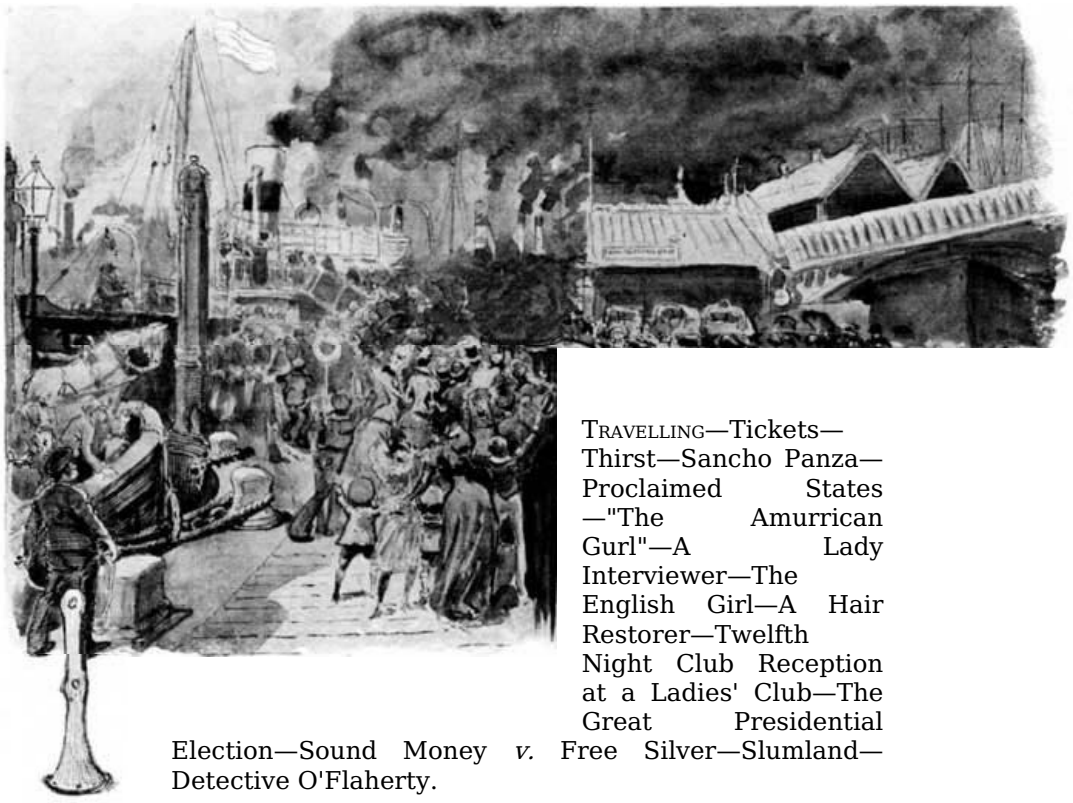
CONFESSIONS OF A COLUMBUS.

The Cause of my Cruise—No Work—The Atlantic Greyhound—Irish Ship—Irish Doctor—Irish Visitors—Queenstown—A Surprise—Fiddles—Edward Lloyd—Lib—Chess—The Syren—The American Pilot—Real and Ideal—Red Tape—Bribery—Liberty—The Floating Flower Show—The Bouquet—A Bath and a Bishop—"Beastly Healthy"—Entertainment for Shipwrecked Sailors—Passengers—Superstition.

America in a Hurry—Harry Columbus Furniss—The Inky Inquisition—First Impressions—Trilby—Tempting Offers—Kidnapped—Major Pond—Sarony—Ice—James B. Brown—Fire!—An Explanation.

WASHINGTON—Mr. French of Nowhere—Sold—Interviewed—The Sporting Editor—Hot Stuff—The Capitol—Congress—House of Representatives—The Page Boys—The Agent—Filibuster—The "Reccard"—A Pandemonium—Interviewing the President.

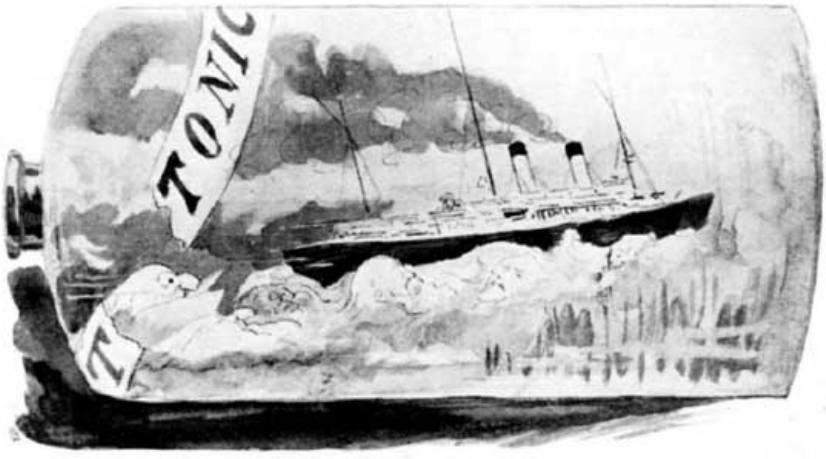
CHICAGO—The Windy City—Blowers—Niagara—Water and Wood—Darkness to Light—My Vis-à-Vis—Mr. Punch—My Driver—It Grows upon Me—Inspiration—Harnessing Niagara—The Three Sisters—Incline Railway—Captain Webb.



TRAVELLING—Tickets—Thirst—Sancho Panza—Proclaimed States—"The Amurrican Gurl"—A Lady Interviewer—The English Girl—A Hair Restorer—Twelfth Night Club Reception at a Ladies' Club—The Great Presidential Election—Sound Money *v.* Free Silver—Slumland—Detective O'Flaherty.

NEVER felt better in my life, but my friends all assured me that I looked ill. If I wasn't ill, I ought to be. I must be overworked and break down. I had "burnt the candle at both ends and in the middle as well," and it was a duty I owed to humanity to collapse. For years I had done the work of three men with the constitution of one, so one day it came to pass that I was forced by my friends into the consulting-room of a celebrated physician, labelled "Ill. To be returned to Dead Letter Office, or to be sent by foreign mail to some distant land, or to be cremated on the spot," anything but to leave me free to return to my mad disease, the worst mania of all—the mania for work. [Pg 27]

My good physician stripped me, pommelled me, stethoscoped me, made me say "99" when he had squeezed all the breath out of me (why "99"? Why not "98" or "4"?—he was testing internal rebellion), flashed a reflector under my eyes, seized a drumstick and hammered me under my knee-joints, sat upon me literally and figuratively, and told me to give up all food, drink, pleasure, and work for two months, which I did. My balance at the bankers' and my balance on the scales were both reduced considerably. I lost a good many pounds in weight and money.



My friends all assured me that I looked well, but I never felt so ill in all my life. If I was not ill, I ought to be. I tried to work, but broke down. I was idle in the mornings, in the evenings, and in the middle of the day as well, and it was a duty I owed to my doctor to collapse. So one day I forced myself into his consulting-room before a hundred patients waiting their turn, labelled "Well again." I pushed him into his chair, pommelled him 99 times, flashed my cane under his eyes, seized the poker and hammered him under his knee-joints, and told him I would get him six months' hard labour if he did not pronounce me sound,—he did.

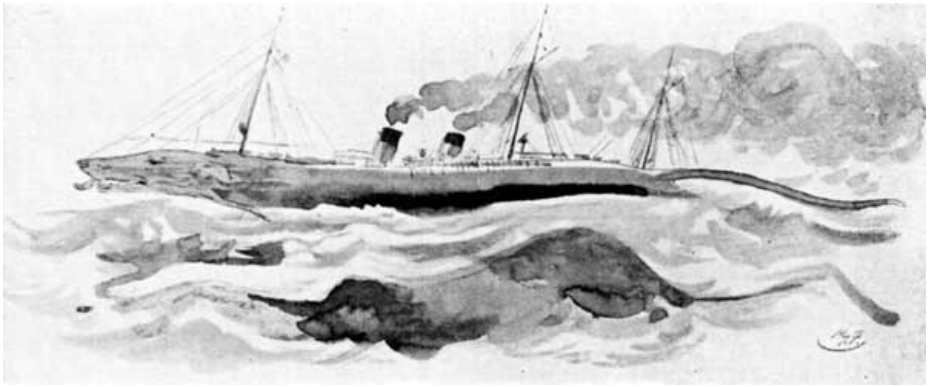
"You only want a tonic now, my dear fellow—a sea-trip!" [Pg 28]

"A *Teutonic*," I replied *Majestic*ally. "The very thing—sails to-morrow—a new berth —I'll be born again under a White Star—*au revoir*!"

"Your prescription!" he called after me. "Take it, and if you value your life act up to it to the letter."

It contained two words and no hieroglyphics. Those two words were—"No Work!"

How I acted up to it the following pages will show.



AN ATLANTIC "GREYHOUND."

In strong contrast to the crowd and bustle at leaving in the afternoon is the quietude late in the evening. Many promenade up and down the beautiful deck under the electrically-lighted roof, and gaze upon the lights of many craft flitting to and fro in the gentle breeze like will-o'-the-wisps, postponing retiring, as they are not yet accustomed to the vibration of the Atlantic greyhound, which trembles underneath them as if, like the real greyhound in full cry after a hare, it is literally straining every muscle to beat the record from the Old World to the New.

What a difference has taken place since those "good old days" of those good old wooden ships, with their good old slow passages and their good old uncomfortable berths! Now the state cabin is an apartment perfectly ventilated, gorgeously [Pg 29] furnished, equipped with every modern improvement, and electrically lighted; the switches close to the bed (not berth) enable one to turn the light on or off at will. The ever-watchful attendant comes in, wishes me good-night, after folding my clothes, and departs. Leaving the incandescent light burning over my head, I open the book dealing with the wonders of America which I have taken from the well-stocked library, and read of great Americans, from Washington to the man who has brought this very light to such perfection, turning over page after page of well-nigh incredible description of the country which has raised the system of "booming" to a high art, till my brain reels with an Arabian Nightish flavour of exaggeration, and turning off the electric current, I am gradually lulled to sleep by

the rhythmical vibrations of the steamer, the sole reminder that I am in reality sleeping upon a ship and about to enjoy a thorough week's rest.

I awoke from the dreams in which I had pictured myself a veritable Columbus, and drawing aside the blind of my porthole, I looked out into the morning light, and was, perhaps, for a second surprised to see land. "Sandy Hook already! Can it be?" Well, hardly, just at present. Though who can tell but that in another fifty years it may be possible in the time? It is in reality the "Ould Counthry," and we are nearing Queenstown.

There is a good muster at breakfast, and everyone is smiling, having had at least one good night's rest on the voyage. The waters skirting the Irish coast sometimes outdo the fury of the broad Atlantic, and are generally just as troubled and combatant as the fiery political elements on the little island; but so far we have had a perfect passage, and the beautiful bay of Queenstown looks more charming than ever as the engines stop for a short period before their five days' incessant activity to follow.

Not only the ship, but the doctor, comes from the Emerald Isle. Who crossing the Atlantic does not know the witty Dr.——? "Ah, shure, me darlin', and isn't it himself that's a broth av a bhoy?" And so he is, simply bubbling over with humour and good-nature. Presiding at one end of the long table, I have to pass him as I leave the saloon. Having sketched Irish scenery and Irish character in my youth, I am not tempted to open my forbidden sketch-book; but somehow or other I find myself making a rapid sketch of the Doctor as he rises from his seat at the end of the table to wish the "top of the mornin'" to a lady who sits on his right. My excuse is to send it to his friend, my doctor in London. Then, without thinking, I sketch in a few other passengers, and instinctively make a note of the surroundings. I confess I am already guilty of breaking my pledge! And, therefore, make my escape on deck.

[Pg 30]

The huge steamer seems to act as a sort of magnet on the small fry of the harbour, for they rush out to her from the land in all their sorts and sizes, in a desperate race for supremacy. Prominent among this fleet is a long, ungainly rowing-boat propelled by a tough Hibernian, and seated in the stern are his women folk, surrounded by baskets, who, in strong Milesian vernacular, urge the rower on in his endeavours to reach the ship first. Looked down upon them from your floating tower, they strongly resemble a swarm of centipedes. Harder and harder pull the "bhoys," and louder and louder comes the haranguing of the females as they approach us. I have my eye on the lady in the stern of the first boat. She is fair, fat, and forty, possessed of really massive proportions, most powerful lungs, and a true Irish physiognomy—a cast of countenance in which it always strikes me that Nature had originally forgotten the nasal organ, and then returning to complete the work had taken between finger and thumb a piece of flesh and pinched it, thus forming the nose rather high up on the face, while the waste of material below goes to make the upper lip.

[Pg 31]

THE SALOON OF THE *TEUTONIC*. THE FIRST MORNING AT BREAKFAST.

The puller of the stroke oar is probably her husband, two others are wielded evidently by her two sons, and the bow is taken by her strapping daughter. One of her arms encircles the merchandise she intends to dispose of on board our vessel, [Pg 32] while the other vigorously helps to propel the oar held by her brawny husband. All the while she is urging on her crew in her native language, with what may be commands, exhortations, or even blessings, but sounding to the unaccustomed Saxon ear very much like curses, which chase one another out of her capacious mouth with a rapidity unequalled by even an irritated monkey at the Zoo.

[Pg 33] Their lumbering craft is the first to touch the side of the *Teutonic*. Standing up in the boat, the good old lady exerts her vocal powers on the crew on the lower deck, with the result that a rope fully fifty feet long is thrown in her direction, having a loop on the end of it, by which she is lassoed. With an agility only acquired after years of practice, she adjusts the loop rapidly round her, and calls on the crew to hoist away. The boat heels over to one side as she vigorously pushes herself away from it, and souse the old dame goes up to her waist in the water; the good-natured sailors give an extra jerk, and up she comes, with baskets tied round her waist, and her feet acting as fenders against the side of the ship. Fortunately the *Teutonic* is bulky enough to resist heeling over under this extra weight on the starboard side. She is shipped like a bale of goods, and is immediately [Pg 34] engaged in discharging some more of her loquacity in directing the acrobatic performances of her daughter, who is the next to ascend.

AT QUEENSTOWN—A REMINISCENCE.

This scene caused much laughter, and I was induced to make a sketch of the lady's acrobatic performance.

The other maritime vendors are hauled up in similar unceremonious fashion, and they take possession of both decks. The pretty daughter of Erin lays out with no little artistic taste her bog-oak ornaments, and 'Arry (for the *genus* cad is to be encountered even on board such aristocratic ships as these) attempts to be rampantly facetious at her expense. But the damsel with the unkempt auburn locks flowing about her comely face, lit up by a pair of blue Irish eyes under their dark lashes, takes the cad's vulgarity together with his money, like the pill with the jam, giving in return the valueless pieces of carved wood, until her little stock is exhausted and a good morning's work is done.

On the lower deck trade is brisker. The emigrants (principally by this line Scandinavians, in their picturesque peasant dress, the Germans of course preferring to go by their own line, the North German Lloyd) are fitting on Tam o' Shanters of the crudest colours, scarves of hues that would cause the steamer's danger signals to turn pale, and eatables of all descriptions—I ought to say of all the worst descriptions. Unhealthy-looking cakes in which the currants are as scarce as Loyalists in the part of the country in which they are made, tinned meats and fruits that look suspiciously like condemned provisions or unsavoury salvage; in fact the only really genuine article of diet was that contained in the milk-pails. I [Pg 35] may here remark that these alien steerage passengers don't really care for wholesome food. Nothing could be better than the excellent food prepared by the ship's steward, but these emigrants prefer to bring with them provisions that beggar description.

BOG-OAK SOUVENIRS.

All the time the Irish purveyors are emptying their baskets and filling their pockets, and rowing back to the shore enriched and delighted; their brothers and sisters are flowing up the gangway in a continual stream, with weeping eyes and breaking hearts at the thought of leaving their country perhaps for ever; and as soon as they are all on board, together with the mails, which have come overland to Queenstown, we up anchor, steam past Fastnet Rock, and soon the Old World is out of sight behind us.

But all this is a thing of the past. Ladies are not now pulled up on to the deck, nor is the promenade turned into a miniature Irish fair. When last the boat stopped as usual in Queenstown bay I sadly missed the familiar scene, and having nothing better to do I went on shore. As a number of us strolled off the tender on which the mails were to return I noticed two men in ordinary dress standing some distance off, looking on at the scene. They were both fine specimens of humanity, each of them about six feet high. "Detectives," I whispered to one of my friends. And as we approached these gentlemen, I said to one of them, "Looking for anyone this morning?"

"Not for you, Mr. Furniss."

Considering I had never been in Queenstown in my life, that I had never been in the grip of these "sleuth-hounds" of the police, I must admit that the British detective is not so stupid as we generally imagine, for no doubt these men knew by telegraph the name of everybody on board and amused themselves by placing us as I had amused myself by placing them.

The Captain generally has some voyager under his special care, and my vis-à-vis, his protégée upon this trip, was a most charming and delightful young lady on her way to rejoin her family in the Far West. The skipper's seat is vacant at breakfast time, and should the weather be rough, at the other meals also. If the elements are very boisterous, the "fiddles" are screwed on to the tables, and on them a lively tune is played by the jingling glasses and rattling cutlery to the erratic beating of the Atlantic wave. The Captain's right and left hand neighbours are exempt from the use of these appliances, and the small area caused by this is the only space in the yards and yards of table unencumbered by the "fiddles." The Captain scorns the aid of such mechanical contrivances, and chatters away unconcerned, gracefully balancing his soup-plate in his hands the while. I followed his example as one to the manner born, but had I not been a bit of an amateur conjuror I am afraid that I should not have been so successful. The Captain challenged me, however, to make a sketch with the same ease as I ate my dinner—and again I was forced to break my pledge!

[Pg 36]

THE CAPTAIN'S TABLE.

It was amusing to listen to the petty jealousies and the little grumblings of those not satisfied with their lot at table. One lady stated as an excuse for having her meals in her cabin that her neighbour, a bagman—or "drummer," as Americans would call him—made a noise with his mouth while eating; and another lady elected to dine in her stateroom in solitude because in the saloon she had her back to a Bishop instead of her face! [Pg 37]

It was my good fortune to meet on board that most genial and gifted of men, "England's greatest tenor," Mr. Edward Lloyd, who under the management of that equally genial and energetic impresario, Mr. Vert, was on his way to charm the ears of our cousins on the other side. Then we had one of the greatest favourites in the sporting world, who was popping over, as he had been continually doing from his earliest youth, to look after his estates in his native country. From the Captain down to the under stokers he had been with all a familiar figure for many years, and he had a pleasant word and a shake of the hands for everybody. He could give you the straight tip for the Derby, was a fund of information anent the latest weights for the big handicaps, and on our arrival in the States it was with general satisfaction that we learnt that one of his horses had won a race while its owner was crossing the "Herring Pond."

We had yet another celebrity on board in the person of the bright little Italian whose clever caricatures, especially those of Newmarket and Newmarket celebrities, so delight us in the pages of *Vanity Fair* over the *nom de crayon* "Lib." I think he caused us as much amusement as his sketches, caricaturing everybody on board, not even excepting himself, whom he most truthfully depicted as a common or barn owl. Or was it I who drew him as the owl? I forget. But I do know that he looked uncommonly like one as a rule, for he used to lie wrapped in his Inverness upon a deck chair, his face only visible, with pallid cheeks and distended eyes, and I did more than one caricature of him for his fair admirers. That was on the rough days, for like a great many foreigners, and English people too for the matter of that, he was a bad sailor. Fortunately for me, I am a hardened sailor, and as such cannot feel the amount of consideration I should otherwise do for those less lucky than myself.

When the weather was calm I used to notice my Italian friend seated, surrounded by the ladies, with an air of triumph and a smile upon his intelligent visage. He was having his revenge! When he was not sketching, he was playing chess with the Captain. [Pg 38]

Now this commander was a captain from the top of his head to the soles of his feet. A stern disciplinarian, erect, handsome, uncommunicative, not a better officer ever stood on the bridge of an Atlantic or any other liner. He had a contempt for the "Herring Pond," and manipulated one of these floating hotels with as much ease as one would handle a toy boat. "When a navigator's duty's to be done," he was *par excellence* a modern Cæsar, but despite his sternness he had a sense of humour, and his unbending moments struck one with an emphasised surprise.

He could not bear a bore. Those fussy landlubbers who are always tapping the barometers, asking questions of every member of the crew, testing, sounding, and finding fault with the weather chart, had better steer clear of the worthy Captain, as with hands thrust deep in his pockets he

strides from one end of the deck to the other during the course of his constitutional. It is on record that one of these fussy individuals, edging up to a well-known Captain as he was going on to the bridge when a mist was gathering, and the siren was about to blow as customary when entering on an Atlantic fog, remarked:

NOT UP IN A BALLOON.

"Captain, Captain, can't you see that it is quite clear overhead?"

The Captain turned on his heel to ascend to the bridge, and scornfully rejoined:

"Yes, sir, yes, sir; but can't you see that I am not navigating a balloon?"

[Pg 39]

On one occasion the Captain had been through a terribly stormy afternoon and night, and had not quitted his post on the bridge for one minute, the weather being awful. Fogs, icebergs, and the elements all combined to make it a most anxious time for the one man in charge of the valuable vessel and her cargo of 1,700 souls, and during the whole period the unflinching skipper had not tasted a mouthful of food. The Captain's boy, feeling for his master, had from time to time endeavoured with some succulent morsel to make him break his long fast; but the firm face of the Captain was set, his eyes were fixed straight ahead, and his ears were deaf to the lad's appeal. It was breakfast time when the boy once more ventured to ask the Captain if he could bring him something to eat. This time he got an answer.

"Yes," growled the Captain, "bring me two larks' livers on toast!"

These Atlantic Captains of the older school were a hardened and humorous lot of navigators, and many a story of their eccentricity survives them: one in particular of an old Captain seeing the terror of the junior officer during that nervous ordeal of treading the bridge for the first time with him. This particular old salt, after a painful silence, turned on the young man and said, "I like you. I'm very much impressed by you. I've heard a lot about you—in fact, my dear sir, I should like to have your photograph. You skip down and get it."

The nervous and delighted youth rushed off to his cabin, and informed his brother officers of the compliment the old man had just paid him. He was in luck's way, and running gaily up on to the bridge, presented his photograph, blushing modestly, to the old salt.

"'Umph! Got a pin with you?"

"Ye—es, sir."

"Ah, see! I pin you up on the canvas here. I can look at you there and admire you. You can go, sir; your photograph is just as valuable as you appear to be on the bridge. Good morning."

[Pg 40]

The Captain of the ship I was on had his chessmen pegged, and holes in the board into which to place them, so that despite any oscillations of the ship they would remain in their places; but the unfortunate part of the business was that although he could provide sea-legs for his chessmen it was more than he could do for his opponent, and it was as good as a play to see Signor "Lib" hiding from the Captain when the weather was not all it might be, and he in consequence felt anything but well. One mate after another would be despatched with the strictest orders from the Captain to search for the cheerless chessite; but after a time the Captain's patience would be exhausted, his strident voice could be heard calling upon the caricaturist to come forth and show himself, and eventually he might be seen *en route* to his cabin with the box of chessmen under one arm and his opponent under the other.

CHESS.

I was cruel enough on more than one occasion to follow them and witness the sequel. [Pg 41]

"Your move, now—your move!"

"Ah, Captain! I do veel zo ill! Ze ship it do go up and down, up and down, until I do not know vich is ze bishop and vich is ze queen!"

"Nonsense, sir, nonsense! Your move—look sharp, and I'll soon have you mated!"

The poor artist *did* move, and quickly too, but it was to the outside of the cabin!

The Captain was triumphant at table, telling us of his victory, but his poor opponent could only point to his untouched plate and to the waves dashing against the portholes, and with that shrug of the shoulders, so suggestive to witness but so difficult to describe, would thus in dumb show explain the cause of his defeat.

I remember well on one beautiful afternoon, the sky bright and the sea calm, just before the pilot came on board when we were nearing the States, Signor Prosperi (for that was his name) came up to me, his face the very embodiment of triumph:

"Ah, I have beaten ze Captain at last—*but ze sea is smooth*!"

On the outward voyage, as I said before, we had a host in Mr. Edward Lloyd, but he was under contract not to warble until a certain day which had been fixed in New York, and no doubt his presence had a deterrent effect upon the amateur talent, with the exception of one lady, who came up to Mr. Lloyd and said:

"You really *must* sing;—you really *must*!"

"I am very sorry, madam, but I really can't—I am not my own master in this matter."

"Oh, but you must," she rejoined. "I have promised that if you will sing, *I* will!"

An American who had "made his pile," as the Yankees say, remarked to the hard-worked vocalist:

"I think, sir, that as you are endowed with such a beautiful voice you ought by it to benefit such a deserving entertainment as this." [Pg 42]

"Certainly," replied the world-famed tenor. "My fee for singing is fifty guineas, and I will be pleased to oblige the company if you will pay a cheque for that amount into the sailors' fund."

And, in my opinion, a right good answer too. These middle-men and their wives and daughters are always pestering professional men to give their services to charities for nothing, but in cases like the one I have just cited they take very good care that they do not unloosen their own purse-strings to help the cause along and equalise the obligation.

MR. LLOYD AND THE LADY. "IF YOU WILL SING, *I* WILL!"

However the concert took place, and I, unable to resist the flattering request to "do something," and not being prohibited from taking part—as Mr. Lloyd was—made several sketches, just to keep my hand in, and they were raffled for.

All goes well and smoothly on the voyage until one night you are awakened by a harsh, grating, shrieking sound. You start from your slumbers, and for a moment imagine that in reality you are in the interior of some fearsome ocean monster, who is bellowing either in rage or fear, for the sound is unique in its wild hideousness, half a screech and half a wail, aggressive and yet mournful. Your ears have just recovered from the first shock when they are assaulted by another, and yet another, at intervals of about a minute. It is the voice of the siren. Was ever a more inappropriate name bestowed upon the steam whistle of an Atlantic liner? It conveys to me the news that we are passing through an Atlantic fog, and I defy anyone, be they in the most perfect ship, under the safest of commanders, to feel comfortable in such circumstances. The siren still wails, and like Ulysses and his companions I feel very much inclined to stuff my ears with wax. Indeed, peering out of my porthole through the mist, I almost seem to see the figures of the mythological voyager and his companions carved in ice, no doubt beguiled by the treacherous music of the siren. These are in reality our main terrors, the icebergs.

[Pg 43]

THE AMERICAN PILOT—IDEAL.

THE AMERICAN PILOT—REAL.

It is a relief when we have left them behind and evaded the clutches of the demon fog, and the fresh breeze and the glorious sun lend a new beauty to the sparkling water, showing us in the distance white specks skimming over the waves like gulls, the first sign that we are approaching land—the white gleaming wings of the pilot yachts.

Signals are exchanged, and one of these boats comes nearer and nearer to us, tacking to perfection. Through our glasses we already seem to see the stalwart

figure of the pilot standing in the stern. On his brow he wears a storm-defying cap, the badge of the warrior of the waves; the loose shirt, the top boots, and the weather-beaten jacket all combine to make up a picturesque figure, and I sketched what seemed to me to be the figure of the man who was coming on board to guide us to the Hook of Sandy. As the little vessel approaches us the intervening sail [Pg 44] hides from my view the figure of the one man I want to see. A boat is lowered from the side of the pilot boat, into which two sailors descend. Who on earth is this who steps in after them and takes the rudder lines? He sports a top hat, kid gloves, and patent shoes. Is he a commercial traveller? He looks it. He is rowed to the side of the steamer, and then the fun begins. A rope ladder is lowered from the deck, which is immediately clutched by one of the oarsmen in the boat, and this commonplace commercial scrambles towards it. Just then a wave breaks over him, and more like a drowned excursionist than an American pilot this little man is hauled on board.

I think a great deal of the Atlantic, but I am sorely disappointed with the American pilot.

The Americans pride themselves upon their independence, and surely a more independent race never existed. The brow-beaten Britisher is not long in finding this out, and in my case it was most clearly demonstrated to me at the first stoppage of the steamer after leaving Queenstown. After our headlong race across the broad Atlantic, after every nut and screw in the vessel has been strained to save every particle of time, and every moment watched and calculated, here at the mouth of the Hudson, in sight of the colossal statue of Liberty, we are kept waiting under a broiling sun on a beautiful day for an unconscionable time whilst forsooth the health officer or his subordinate is enjoying his lunch. Fancy 1,700 foreigners being kept waiting because a paid official—paid by the shipowners of England—wishes to satisfy his selfish greediness!

I watched for this gentleman as he crawled on board, having come across eventually from his riparian villa. There were no apologies (Americans never apologise). I don't know the gentleman's name, but here I show you his face. His check I have described already.

Now that I have touched on America itself, I wish it to be understood that it is not my intention to look out for and comment upon the faults of our American cousins, but rather in describing my all too brief visits to a charming people in a charming [Pg 45] country to deal with their merits. But it is proverbial that first impressions are everything, and the first I received of official America, in the person of this particular individual, was the only instance I saw which would not compare favourably with the red-tapeism of our own country. And I must say, from what I was told even by Americans themselves, that the worst side of their countrymen is to be seen where the official department is concerned, and to illustrate this I shall still stick to the official (or his representative, whichever it was) that I have just been describing.

THE HEALTH OFFICER COMES ON BOARD.

The ship which followed that in which I came over brought from England some persons who were at the time the talk of American society. They had been connected with some gigantic scandal, and the interviewers, scenting copy from afar, were ready to spring upon them. Of course, it was known that it was to the interest of the reporters (and they were only doing their duty) to get on board at Sandy Hook, and to frustrate them a special steamer was sent down with

instructions to the captain of the liner that no one was to accompany the officer of health on board. The medical officer came in his tug with the whole batch of reporters, and declared that he would not permit the vessel to proceed into port unless his friends were allowed on board. The almighty dollar had polluted officialism, and disclosed to the incoming strangers that the huge statue of Liberty before them, which held on high the torch of advancement and enlightenment, was really a snare and a delusion, at any rate as far as red-tapeism was concerned. [Pg 46]

JUST IN TIME!

And so I arrived after a week's thorough rest, with my sketch-book full! I could not help breaking my pledge; it was my first trip across the Atlantic, and everything was therefore new and interesting. In fact, so was all I saw in the States, and my pencil was always busy. I was looking forward to a genuine rest on my return journey, but it happened to be in the crowded season, and the ship was so full I was asked, as a particular favour to "a very distinguished cleric," to share my cabin with him.

The departure of an Atlantic liner has a great attraction on both sides of the "Herring Pond," but there is a difference. Passengers leaving England are surrounded with cheap and vulgar literature, newspapers, guide-books, sticks, and umbrellas. Leaving America, the liner is turned into a floating flower show. Most beautiful bouquets labelled with the names of the lady passengers are on view in the saloon. Just as the last gangway is drawn on to the shore, amid cries of "Clear away!" we hear suddenly "Hold hard!" There is a commotion. Someone has not yet arrived; we lean over the side of the ship to see who is coming. Perhaps it is an important emissary of the Government, or even the President himself. We all push forward; the stalwart New York police keep back the crowd; the crew of the good ship *Majestic* hold the gangway in its place as the centre of attraction trips gaily up it. It is a diminutive nigger messenger from a florist's, with a huge bouquet of flowers. I imagine I see my own name on the label, so I modestly seclude myself in my own cabin, whence I only emerge after we have passed Bartholdi's colossal figure, just to have one last peep at the country in which I have stored up such pleasant memories. [Pg 47]

"A FLOATING FLOWER SHOW."

By this time the bouquets of the flower show had been transferred to the cabins of their owners. I may mention, by the way, that the cynical lady on board, who wore a solitary bunch of faded violets in her dress, informed me that most of the ladies paid for the bouquets themselves, and had them sent on board with their names attached. I don't wish to seem egotistical, but I know that when I went back to my own cabin I found the greatest difficulty in forcing the door open. There was a

huge bundle of something or other pressing against it. A fragrant scent was wafted through the opening, which sent a thrill through me. It must be the big bouquet! I gave one final shove, burst the door open, and discovered the bouquet to be a bishop, who was scenting his handkerchief at the time with otto of roses. It was worth the journey to America to have the honour of sharing a cabin with a bishop on the return journey. But what a contrast between us! What a theme for W. S. Gilbert! *Punch* and the pulpit rocked together in the cradle of the deep!

When I first came on board I made arrangements at once with the bath steward, and, being rather an early bird, I fixed my time to be called at seven o'clock. When I retired to the cabin I found the worthy bishop (he is now Lord Primate of Ireland) looking plaintively at his berth. Like all on board it was roomy and comfortable, but probably Sir Edward Harland had not taken the portly prelate (who, by the way, is almost a neighbour of his) as a gauge for the size of the berths. Mine was, if anything, a trifle larger, so I respectfully invited the bishop to change with me. [Pg 48]

THE BATH STEWARD AND THE BISHOP. "YOUR TIME, SIR! YOUR TIME!"

I was awakened next morning by assault and battery being committed on the poor bishop, of which I was the innocent cause. An athletic-looking man, with a white jacket, and sleeves rolled up to his elbows, was shaking the very life out of my clerical friend and shouting "Seven o'clock! Your time, sir! Seven o'clock! Your time!" The bishop looked something like a criminal sentenced to death must do when the hangman awakes him on the fatal morning, and I had to explain to the bath steward that we had changed berths, and that in future No. 2 was to be awakened instead of No. 1.

Perhaps it is not generally known that suicide is nearly as prevalent as *mal de mer* amongst these Americans who are rushing over for a few weeks' repose. They work at such a fearful rate, slaves to that insatiable god the almighty dollar, that eventually they either have to fly to a lunatic asylum or an Atlantic liner. After a day or two on the latter the calm and repose and the vast sea around them prove too much of an antidote; the overtaxed brain gives way, and overboard they go. An [Pg 49] Englishman is too fond of exercise to allow high pressure to get the better of him in this way, and the difference between English and American people on these liners is most marked. Directly an American family comes on board they select places for their deck chairs, which, except for meals, they never leave. From early morning until late at night, much to the astonishment of the Americans, the English passengers—men, women, and children—pace the deck as if it were a go-as-you-please contest for immense prizes. Being a good sailor but a bad sleeper, I think I fairly qualified for first prize. Morning, noon, and night, round and round those magnificent decks I went, to the disgust and envy of those who could not move off their deck chairs, and who loathed the very sight of me.

AMERICANS AND ENGLISH ON DECK.

It so happened that together with a few other privileged passengers I dined a little later than the rest, so I had an opportunity of observing the weak ones suffering on deck whilst others were struggling with their meals below, and I promenaded round that deck, battling with the elements to get an extra edge on my excellent appetite. I remember that when passing some ladies on my way down to dinner, they feebly endeavouring to eat a biscuit or two and drink a glass of champagne, one turned her pallid face to another and murmured, "I *am* so glad that energetic little man has been obliged to give in at last!" [Pg 50]

They ought to have seen me at the table half-an-hour afterwards, that's all!

That reminds me of my friend poor Alfred Cellier, who was wintering in the South once at the same time as we were there for my wife's health. I was returning from a meet one day, hot and mud-bespattered, when I met the talented musician walking feebly along in the sun with his furs on. He called to me to stop, which I did, and his dreamy, good-natured face assumed a most malevolent expression as he hissed at me, "I hate you! I hate you! *You look so beastly healthy.*"

Even on board ship the American still clings to his iced water, but some think it is time to train for the European habit of taking wine at dinner. I noticed a Westerner who with his wife was sitting down for probably the first time to *table d'hôte*. He took up the wine list, and went right through the sherries, hocks, clarets, champagnes, and even liqueurs. Now at the end of the wine lists on these vessels there is appended a list of various mineral waters. The names of these (or was it the price?) seemed to take the fancy of the American. "I guess this *Hunyadi Janos* sounds well—I calculate if you put a bottle of that on ice it'll do us just right."

Sailors are superstitious. Some will, or used to, rob themselves of the necessities of life to purchase a baby's "caul," and wear it around their neck as a charm.

To sail out of harbour on a Friday was unheard of. In these days of science, days in which steam has driven the old frigate-rigged sailing ships from the seas, one would have thought that superstition would have vanished with the old hulks, and that in the floating palaces crossing the Atlantic, in which longshoremen take the place of old-time sea-dogs, charms and omens would have lost their power. Yet sailor superstitions are as hard to kill even in these gorgeous up-to-date liners as it is to exterminate the rats in the hold or the cockroaches in the larder.

The last journey I made to America was in the favourite liner the *Germanic*. I was chatting to one of the crew, an old salt, the day we left Queenstown; he was looking out to sea; his brow was clouded, and he shook his head mournfully. [Pg 51]

"Are we in for a bad passage?" I asked.

"Don't know yet, sir; aren't seen all them on board yet. We had a terrible passage the week afore last goin' East, but I expected it. We 'ad an Archbishop on board!"

I informed him that on the present journey we had two priests on board, and two professional atheists—"so what kind of passage were we to expect?"

After a moment's serious thought the mariner replied, "I think, sir, we may reckon we shall have an average." And curious to relate we did.

The two Freethinkers who thus balanced the ecclesiastics were Messrs. Foote and Watts, who were on a mission to America to induce Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll to visit England.

The stranger in America, if he be a public man in his own country, is treated like a

suspected criminal. Every movement is watched, every action reported, and as he passes from city to city a description and report precedes him, and there is an eye, or rather a couple of dozen eyes, to mark his coming and grow keener when he comes.

But he is watched by friends, not by detectives, and his actions are reported in public prints, not in private ledgers. It is not the arm of the law, but the hand of friendship, that shadows him, and those stereotyped passports to friendship, letters of introduction from friends at home, are as needless to introduce him as a life-preserver or a Colt's revolver to protect him. He had better amuse himself while in mid-ocean by presenting them to the porpoises that dive and splutter round the ship, for the only object they will accomplish will be the filling of his waste-paper basket on his return home.

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[Pg 53]

AMERICAN INTERVIEWING—IMAGINARY.

AMERICAN INTERVIEWING—REAL.

Major Hospitality arrested me the moment I arrived, and handed me over to the Inky Inquisition—eight gentlemen of the Press—who placed me on the interviewer's rack at the demand of insatiable modern journalism. I scraped through the ordeal as well as could be expected in the circumstances, considering I hadn't yet acquired my land-legs. The raging waves may roar their loudest, and the stormy winds may blow their hardest, but they don't affect me. It is only when I find myself on *terra firma* once more that I feel any effects from an ocean trip. For the benefit of those who are subject to *mal de mer* I will disclose my

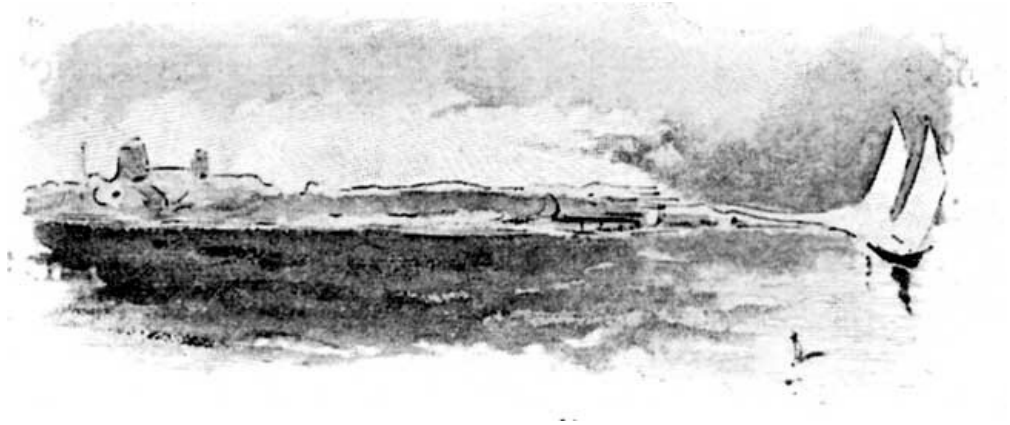
[Pg 54]

prescription to act as a reliable safeguard, and that is to mesmerise yourself so that once on board no sensations seem to you strange or unwonted. The only drawback is that I have not yet discovered how to unmesmerise myself, although my theory worked splendidly when on board, so that when I get on shore I feel as if I were still on the sea. I am always ducking breakers, descending companion ladders, and I roll across the street as if it were the deck of a liner. Every building I enter seems to be rocking up and down, up and down, and as on the occasion I refer to I sat before the knights of the quill to be cross-examined, I felt as if I were in the cabin of a ship rather than in my own room at the hotel, and that the books on the table were in reality fiddles to keep the glasses and other things from falling off.

It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that the next day I find myself described as "not a well man," although "his face is ruddy," and "his blue eyes have a tired look and his hand is not so steady as it might be." I would like to know whose hand would be steady if, after six days of Atlantic travel, he was landed to find himself suddenly confronted with eight talented gentlemen, cross-questioning him *ad lib.*, measuring the length of his foot, counting the buttons on his coat, and the hairs on his head, and if, after his tiring journey, he happened to yawn, looking to see whether he had false teeth or not!

And then to be handed a bad pen and worse paper, and have to draw pictures in pen and ink, in the space of five minutes, for the eight gentlemen who were watching to see "how it's done"! I have sketched crowned heads on their thrones, bishops in their pulpits, thieves in their dens, and beauties in their drawing-rooms; but I never felt such nervousness as I did when I had to caricature myself on the occasion of my first experience of American interviewing. [Pg 55]

In my seeing America in a hurry, I addressed the reporters somewhat in this fashion:



"SANDY."

"I am not disappointed with anything I have seen. I was told that I would find the worst-paved streets in the world. I have found them. I was told that I would see unsightly, old-fashioned telegraph-poles sticking up in the streets. I have seen them. I was told that I would have to pay a small fortune for my cab from the docks to my hotel. I have paid it. I was told that a newspaper reporter would ask me what I thought of America as soon as I landed. I am asked that question by eight gentlemen of the Press; indeed, I was interrogated upon that point by the representative of a leading American paper before I left the shores of England. I was told that I would find the most charming and best-dressed women in the world. That promise is more than realised.

"I find New York as bright as Paris, as busy as London, as interesting as Rome, and, in fact, I am so delighted and bewildered with everybody and everything that, like the old lady's parrot, I don't say much, but I think a deal; and now my difficulty is to convey those thoughts to the public through the medium of your valuable papers."

Scores of Columbuses arrive at Sandy Hook every week to discover America for themselves, from Charles Columbus Dickens to Rudyard Columbus Kipling, to say nothing of Tom, Dick, Harry Columbus Brown, Jones, Robinson. It is hardly fair to say that they go over with their pockets full of letters of introduction to their American cousins, who receive them with open arms and unlimited hospitality, and then that these Toms, Dicks, and Harrys bring back in exchange notes for columns of ridicule and abuse of their Transatlantic friends. If our Americans *have* a fault, it is a very slight one. They are too sensitive. They seem to forget that they receive [Pg 56] and honour some of our countrymen as critics and satirists, but they expect that on leaving their shores their late guests will wash off the critical and satirical sides of their natures just as an actor removes his paint and make-up on leaving the

boards.

Americans, both publicly and privately, are incessantly interviewing the stranger: "What do you think of our great country? What do you think of ourselves?" They live in a glass house filled with forced young plants, from out of which house they may throw stones at the stranger, but woe betide the critic who has the temerity to cast one in return. He gets his impressions from the hothouse society snobs reared in the hotels of the cities, the dollar worshipper, the vulgar millionaire, made more obnoxious by the newer European importation, happily a plant not true to the American soil. We strangers too often see but the cut flowers, showy, glaring, to-day; jaded, gone to-morrow. We do not see the cultured orchid or the natural wild flowers of America, for the simple reason we do not look for them in seeing that wonderful country in a hurry.

My first impression of New York was that of a faded back-cloth in a melodrama; but when you get upon the stage, or, in other words, into the streets, you find yourself amid a transformation scene of wonderful activity and brilliancy. Some of the streets, in fact most of them in which business is transacted, resemble strongly the shop scenes in harlequinades, for the Americans have carried advertising so far that their streets of shops, and especially those in New York, are simply museums of grotesque advertisement.

Gigantic hands advertising gloves, huge hats, boots, and animals form a heterogeneous collection of anything but beautiful models, gilded and painted in all the most flaming colours, piled on top of each other on every house from street level to attic, each tradesman vieing with the other in screeching to the public to "Buy! buy!! buy!!!" by means of the curiosities and monstrosities of the advertiser's art.

CHIROPODY.

A few years ago a celebrated Continental authoress came to London for the first time, in the height of the season, to stay a week in order to get her impressions for a book she was writing, in which the heroine had flown to London for that period of time. She went everywhere and saw everything; just before she left London I asked her what had impressed her most of all she had seen. In reply she said, "The fact that the drivers of public vehicles never cracked their whips!" [Pg 57]

If I were asked what impressed me most about New York, I should not say Brooklyn Bridge, or Wall Street, or the Elevated Railway, but the number of chiropodists' advertisements! They confront you at every turn; these huge gilded models of feet outside the chiropodists' establishments, some painted realistically and many adorned with bunions, are destined to meet your eye as you stroll through the streets. Should you look up, you will see them suspended from the first floor window, or painted on canvas on the front of the house. Avoid the shops altogether, and you are bound to knock up against some gentleman in the gutter encased in a long white waterproof, on which is portrayed the inevitable foot and the name and address of the chiropodist.

Now why is this? The Americans have pretty feet and small hands, both men and women. Is it vanity, and do they squeeze their feet into boots too small for them, or are their pedal coverings badly made, or does the secret lie in the rough pavements of their thoroughfares? I am glad to say that I never required the services of a foot doctor, but I know that my feet have ached many and many a time after promenading the New York pathways. [Pg 58]

New York ought to be called New Trilby.

"NEW TRILBY."

I was offered more than once an open cheque which I might fill in to cover all my expenses from the time I left England until I reached the shores of the Old Country again if I would supply a journal with *one page* of impressions of America illustrated. A suggestion of this sort in an English newspaper office would have just about the same effect as a big canister of dynamite! I didn't accept any of these tempting offers. I didn't go to the States on my first visit to paint glaring pictures, or to make up stories, or to marry an American heiress, nor did I go in search of the almighty dollar. I simply went as a tourist in search of health, and with the desire of shaking hands with my many friends on the other side.

I was therefore extremely annoyed on my arrival to find the irrepressible lecture agent, Major Pond, had coolly announced that I was going over to him, and he had actually taken rooms for me at the Everett House! Of course I informed the interviewers that I was not going to tour with Pond or to make money in any way. I was merely a bird of passage, a *rara avis*, a visitor without an eye on the almighty dollar.

After I returned to England an irresponsible paragraphist informed the American public that I went home determined to give it to them hot. This contradiction of mine appeared, and was sent to me by the Major. Note in it I contradict his report that I went over in his interests. [Pg 59]

Major Pond is a typical American, hospitable, kind, with an eye for business, but I do not appear in his entertaining book, nor was I ever on his business books either. He sat for me on the shoeblack's street chair outside his office when I made a sketch of him, and he was so obliging I believe he would have stood on his head if I had asked him. He managed to get me to stand in front of the camera, but not in front of an audience.

Some day I shall write a paper entitled "Photographers I Have Met," for few people have faced the fire of the camera oftener than I. I am not a fashionable beauty, nor much of a celebrity, neither am I honestly a vain man—I shrink from the rays of the too truthful lens—but I have been dragged into the line of fire and held there until the deed is done, like an unwilling convict. In nearly every town I have visited have I undergone this operation, and the result is a collection of criminal-looking, contorted countenances of a description seldom seen outside the museum of a police station.

I was therefore determined not to incur this risk in America. Photographers sent their cards, but they saw me not (perhaps if they had they would have repented of their invitation). However, one day I was secured by stratagem. [Pg 60]

I was walking along Union Square with Major Pond, whose martial bearing impressed me as much as his 'cuteness fascinated me. He had that morning heard of my determination not to be photographed, and as he walked along he suddenly stepped into a doorway, his arm in mine, touched a button in a side panel, down rushed an elevator, the door was flung open, and I was flung in. "Sarony," said the Major, and up, up, up we flew.

"The

AMIABLE MR. HARRY FURNISS.

The London Punch Cartoonist Denies Certain Unfriendly Reports.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Paragraphs have appeared in some American papers to the effect that I "went home determined to give it to New York and the Americans hot." I can only suppose that this is invented for the purpose of firing off a very feeble joke upon my name at the sacrifice of the truth, for I had a most pleasant time in America, and have brought back with me most agreeable reminiscences, which I intend to publish.

Will you be kind enough to contradict this unfair insinuation, and also the incorrect surmise that I went to the States, in the interest of any paper or person? I simply made the journey in search of health, and not in quest of the almighty dollar.

By the way, before the end of the year I may contribute to London *Punch* a few pages from my well-stocked American sketch book. Faithfully yours. HARRY FURNISS.

GARRICK CLUB, LONDON, July, 1892.

MAJOR POND.

photographer?" I asked hurriedly.

"The artist," the Major replied; "one of the greatest flesh drawers" (nude studies) "we have in this gr—e—a—t country, sir. Here he is, deaf to everything but art, and to everyone but artists."

Who can say photography is not high art when you have to go up seven stories to it?

I now stood before the greatest photographer in the world—and the smallest. I stood—he danced. He talked—I listened.

"Come here," he cried; "you are an artist—you can understand genius—you can appreciate my work."

And he produced from a portfolio a quantity of studies, or, as the Major would call them, "flesh drawings," prettily touched in with the stump and chalk with a *chic* familiar to those who know the facility of the French school. He patted me on the shoulder, kissed his hand to his work, and fell into raptures over the human form divine with an earnestness which showed him to be a true artist. With his sitter in front of him he was even more enthusiastic, placing you into position, and striking attitudes in front of you till you felt inclined to dance "Ta ra ra boom de ay" instead of remaining rigid. I pointed out to him that my hair being of an auburn hue, that on my chin and the remnant on my head came out black.

"Ah, we shall alter that," he said, and he powdered my head. "And now to counteract that—here goes!" and with some soot or charcoal he touched over the scanty parts on my "dome of thought." During this process I noticed that his own luxurious head of hair was not a fixture. He wore a fez, and as he paused and pirouetted and struck attitudes, he would pull the fez over one eye coquettishly, or over the other one ferociously, and with it went his hair, parting and all. It is no wonder this energetic photographer was so successful with the instantaneous process, or that he so cleverly caught in the lens theatrical dancers and others in motion to perfection. Of the most successful of his photos that I saw was that of a row of comedians dancing together, and although I was not present at the moment the photograph was taken, I have no doubt, from the pleasant smile of their faces and their artistic poses, that all credit was due to the late Sarony.

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The Major had his "Bureau" in Everett

THE GREAT SARONY.

House. There he arranged for his "stars," and there under false pretences he decoyed me, and there for the first time initiated me into the obnoxious habit of drinking iced water.

Most people are aware that in Nicaragua there dwell a tribe who gradually kill themselves by an extraordinary predilection for eating a certain kind of clay. These people are of the lowest order, and may therefore be pardoned for their foolishness in turning themselves into plaster casts; but why the enlightened Americans choose to convert themselves into walking icebergs through drinking so much iced water is unaccountable to the alien. They certainly do play havoc with their digestions. They eat rapidly and recklessly, and swallow with startling rapidity, for having all the dishes placed before them at once they have no waiting in between the courses to assist digestion, and almost before they have swallowed their food they freeze it with draughts of iced water.

At this hotel in New York there lived for some years an Italian singer, who was a great favourite in the city, and whose horror of iced water was a terror to all the waiters. They knew that it was as much as their lives were worth, and certainly as much as the glass was worth, to set a drink of this concoction before him. If any new or forgetful waiter offered the obnoxious liquid to the foreigner, it was soon thrown at his head or to the other end of the room. Americans seldom show their feelings, but anything they resent they will harbour in their minds, and never forget. [Pg 62]

In due course this singer died. The weather was hot at the time, and the body in the shell was surrounded by ice until the time came to carry it out of the hotel. As it passed through the hall the manager, who had had many and many an upbraiding from the excitable Italian after the latter had been proffered the hateful iced water, rushed out and triumphantly exclaimed:

"'Guess, sir, you've got plenty of ice now, whether you like it or not!'"

I was told that kindness would be showered upon me in America. I lived in a perfect blizzard of hospitality, the force of which was too much for me to stand up against. The poet asks, "What's in a name?" I don't know, I'm sure, but I know what's not in a name, and that's something by which you can identify the owner of it.

You are introduced to a man, his name being given you as Mr. James B. Brown. You could never forget his face as long as you live, but there is nothing in the name of James B. Brown to fix it in your memory. Indians are more practical—they adopt nicknames. Amongst them the gentleman in question would probably be known as "Cherrybeak," "Bleary Eye," or some such descriptive cognomen.

I felt the want of this common-sense system when in America terribly. While there I lived at the highest pressure of hospitality. Breakfasts, luncheons, teas, dinners, suppers, receptions and all sorts of gatherings, sometimes two or three of them in one day. At each of them I was introduced to most interesting people, names perfectly familiar to me but faces unknown. I was bewildered beyond description. I made many friends, and as a natural consequence I made many blunders. The worst of these latter I really must record, and pray that should this confession meet the eye of my hospitable friend I trust he will forgive me—indeed I know he will, for he is one of the best and cleverest of men. [Pg 63]

I was invited to an excellent dinner by a well-known man of letters I had never met before. I accepted the invitation on condition I should be allowed to leave early, as I had engagements two or three deep for that evening. I came away with the best impression of my host and all his friends. I saw their jokes and their faces, and knew I would recollect both, but their names! how to recollect them was the puzzle. That evening I met more distinguished people at the second house I visited, more at the third, and still more at the fourth. I shall never forget their kindness, but I gave up all hopes of trying to recollect hundreds of names, all new to me in one evening. The problem was hopeless. The following morning callers began early, and more invitations poured in. At breakfast one of my new acquaintances called.

"Tell me, Mr. Furniss, have you met our great

literary man and renowned humorist, Mr. James B. Brown?"

"Brown, Brown!" I repeated (that was not the name of course, but it will do). "Well, no. I know his name so well, but I don't think I have yet had the pleasure of making his acquaintance."

"Not know James B. Brown? Well, you must straightaway. Now let me reckon. You leave New York at four this afternoon—you must lunch first. Why not with me at the —— Club? I'll get James B. Brown there or I'll swallow Bartholdi's statue!"

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I found refusals were of no avail, so I agreed. At one I entered the club, at two minutes past one James B. Brown entered, and we met. He was my first host of the previous evening!

We were formally introduced. I smiled—James B. Brown didn't. James B. Brown pulled himself up to his full height—about double mine—I never felt so small before. I shook his hand (he didn't shake mine) and said:

"This is a great honour and pleasant surprise," and I pulled the dismayed celebrity gently to my side, when getting on tip-toes I telephoned up the string of his eye-glass:

JAMES B. BROWN!

"Keep up the joke, Mr. Brown, keep it up. Fact is, I was so delighted at meeting you last night and so charmed with you that when I was asked if I had met you before I said 'No,' so that I might have the pleasure of meeting you again. Forgive me!"

James B. Brown shook my hand warmly, and telephoned down:

"Sir, this is the greatest compliment I have ever received. Your sin will be forgiven for your sincere flattery of so humble an admirer as myself."

Americans claim to be superior to us in respect of three things—their facility in travelling, their fire system, and their after-dinner speaking. One of these I will not question, and that is the Fire Brigade. It is necessary for America to excel in this respect, for with their huge warehouses and stores overstocked with inflammable goods fire would destroy their cities as Chicago was destroyed, were they not so wonderfully prompt and efficient with their engines and appliances.

When I arrived in the States I only presented two of the very numerous letters of introduction with which I was supplied. One was to the Chief of Police in New York, and the other was to the Captain of the Fire Brigade. The latter I met, when I arrived at the station at which he is located, just coming out in ordinary clothes, for it was his night off; but such is the pride taken by the Fire Brigade in their work that whatever engagement he was going to keep was abandoned, and he was at my service until I had seen everything it was possible to see in connection with the famous Fire Brigade.

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FIRE!

As I was speaking to the Captain in the engine-room I noticed a couple of horses standing there. One of them was a grey mare with a most cunning look, and as the Captain was informing me that "she had done continuous work here for some years," she gave me an artful wink of confirmation. Just at that moment the alarm bell suddenly vibrated, and before you could say Jack Robinson (even if you wanted to), seemingly by magic but in reality by electricity, the halters fell from the horses' heads, and to my surprise, without any one being near them they rushed to their places at either side of the shaft of the engine. There were manholes in the ceiling, through which brass rods were suspended vertically. Down these slid half-dressed men, who seemed to turn a somersault into their clothes during the descent on to the engine, the harness suspended above the horses dropped on to their backs, and in an instant they were in the street, the engine manned, its fire ablaze, and the horses alive to the stiff job they had before them of reaching the fire in an incredibly short space of time. But hardly had they taken the first leap from one of the boulders over the cavities with which New York streets abound to another, than a whistle from the Captain stopped them. It was a false alarm given for my edification. Before they could get back into the engine-house I was conducted by the Captain into the dormitory, where I concealed myself under a bed. Without a grumble the men came up and literally walked out of their clothes, for boots, pants and everything are all one piece. They opened these carefully and laid them ready by the side of their beds, and in a few minutes were all snoring fast asleep.

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The Captain gave a slight tap on the floor as a signal for another false alarm. At the first sound of the bell, with one bound the men were out of bed, in another into their combinations, and in a third they were going head over heels down the holes in the floor, just as mice would disappear down theirs at the sight of a cat, and in a second or two I heard again the rumbling of the engine over the pavement.

We escaped before the men were back again to bed, but hardly had I been shown the completeness of everything, and gone into details which I need not repeat here, and had another wink from the old grey mare, which plainly said, "Ah, I knew those alarms were false," when her two ears went up like a flash as she sprang under her harness once more, the other animal as quickly by her side. The third alarm was a genuine one, and she knew it. The Captain and I, as soon as the alarm was given, rushed in the direction of the fire, but we had not got to the first corner before the old mare and her companion flew past, and I just had time to notice that the men were completing their toilet as they were hurled by. Quickly followed the officer of the night in his one-horse trap, and by the time we got to the fire, which was only round a block of buildings, an exhibition of fire engines and appliances

was collected there which beggars description. The water tower, a huge affair seventy or eighty feet high, built up like a crane, which shoots water on to the top of the burning building; so also are the hook and ladder brigade, the men with the jumping net—in fact, everything is at hand. This is accounted for by the fact that a policeman at any corner, when giving the alarm of a fire, touches an electric button or turns a handle, which gives the signal at every fire station, unloosing the horses and putting everything into motion at once.

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THE ALARM.

The one weak point in the whole system is that the alarms are not isolated, which means that every signal of fire in the big city of New York disturbs every man and horse at every station, some of them nine miles away from the scene of the conflagration, for so anxious are the men to be up to time that they are often in the street, harnessed, equipped and ready, before the second signal comes to acquaint them with the locality and extent of the fire. At least that was then the system.

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When I returned to England I stopped once as I was passing a fire station and told the men of the wonders I had seen in America. A very athletic, sailor-looking fireman, who had listened attentively to all I had to say, chimed in with "Yes, sir, what you've said is quite true, for I've been in America myself, and seen them at work; but though they may possibly get to the fire a few seconds quicker than we, when we *do* get there we put it out. That's more than they do generally."

"Well, perhaps so," I rejoined; "but then you haven't the wonderful electric apparatus for dropping the harness on to the horses' backs!"

"No," said he, "we go a step further than that; the harness is on the horses' backs beforehand!"

This youth's visit to America had evidently had a sharpening effect upon him, for he was a bit too wideawake for me.

Being on a trip for rest and health, I found the gaiety of New York too much for me, so having whispered to my friends that I was going to study culture and eat bacon and beans in Boston, I quietly slipped off to study Congress and to feast my eyes on the beautiful city of Washington.

Not being clean-shaven I could not wear a false beard, so I took a false name. "Mr. Harry Furniss of London *Punch*" went in the spirit to Boston (for had I stayed much longer in New York my used-up body would have been returned in spirits to England); "Mr. French of Nowhere" went in the flesh to Washington.

On arriving at my hotel I signed "Mr. French of Nowhere." Reporters who scan the hotel list did not think "Mr. French of Nowhere" a subject worthy of dissection, so for a few days I thought I should enjoy perfect peace with profit. A "stocky little Englishman" taking notes *en passant* with an amateurish fervency was probably what most people would think who cared to think at all of the stranger in their midst.

But it so happened that in going down by train from New York I sat opposite to a very delightful American gentleman, and we chatted away in the most friendly fashion. We parted on arriving at the city. Next day I happened to "strike" him in the street. [Pg 69]

"I've been on the look-out for you everywhere, Mr. French" (I had given him my assumed name in the train). "I am very anxious to show you all over this beautiful city, and my brother the Judge is also anxious that you should dine at his house."

I thanked him most cordially, and accepted his kind offer, saying that I should be ready for him at my hotel at 9 o'clock the next morning. We parted, but my conscience pricked me for giving him a false name, so I hurried back after him and explained to him the whole circumstance. It was flattering to me to see that he took a greater interest than ever in being my guide. The next morning Mr. French (to all but my new acquaintance) was in the hall of the "Arlington" at the appointed time. I waited and waited, but my guide did not put in an appearance. Presently a strange gentleman came up to me, and boldly addressed me by my proper name. I saw at once I was in the clutches of an interviewer, so I point-blank contradicted him, and asserted that my name was French.

"That won't do for me," he said.

"Then you won't do for me," I said, and turned upon my heel.

However, I rather liked the look of the man, and didn't like to disappoint him altogether, being a journalist myself.

"I am waiting for a gentleman," I said. "I expect him every minute, and then I must be off."

"You may wait, but I guess that gentleman won't arrive," said the journalist, "and I want a column out of you for our evening paper."

A frightful thought flashed across my mind.

"Have I been sold?"

I had, and I thought more of the gentleman of the Press (all the Pressmen were very kind to me in Washington, and, indeed, all over America) than I did of my newly-made erratic acquaintance.

When I paid my second and professional visit to Washington years afterwards, of course it was a different matter. My representative had for business reasons to invite the Press to "boom" me. I was rated a good subject for interviewers, being only too pleased to do my best for our mutual benefit. One day a representative of the important Washington family paper called. We lunched and chatted, and subsequently over a cigar he informed me that he knew nothing about art or artists or politics, nor had he any object in common with me—in fact, he was the sporting editor. The interview appeared—two long columns on prize fighting! I was the innocent "peg" upon which the sporting writer hung his own ideas. He discussed "a rendezvous in the Rockies," remote from the centre of civilisation, as surely an appropriate locale for a train-scuttling speciality or a fight to a death finish between Roaring Gore and Wild Whiskers. A pair of athletes, scienced to the tips of their vibrating digits, compelled to appeal to the courtesy of a wild and well-whiskered Legislature, would doubtless appear inconsistent to gentlemen of the National Sporting Club of London, who were anxious to have the big fight settled within earshot of Bow Bells, in the luxurious rooms of the London National Sporting Club. One combatant, I declared, "swallowed the gruel rammed at him as if it were mother's milk," the lads "had enough blood on tap to run a sizeable slaughterhouse"; then a British fighter "swallowing a lobster salad on top of a whiskey sour, with a dose of prussic acid by way of dessert"; and references to my knowledge of the "Freds," "Toms," or "Dicks" of the Sporting Press of London, and to my familiarity with "Charlies," "Fitzs," and "Jims" of the "Magic Circle," were astounding. [Pg 70]

My manager rushed into my rooms with the paper in question. "This will ruin your prospects here! We depend on the women folk; they will never come to hear you after reading this!" And so it was. In spite of other interviewers at Washington writing of me as "an English good fellow, rich and juicy, and genial in flavour, like other hot stuffs of that remarkable country"; and another,

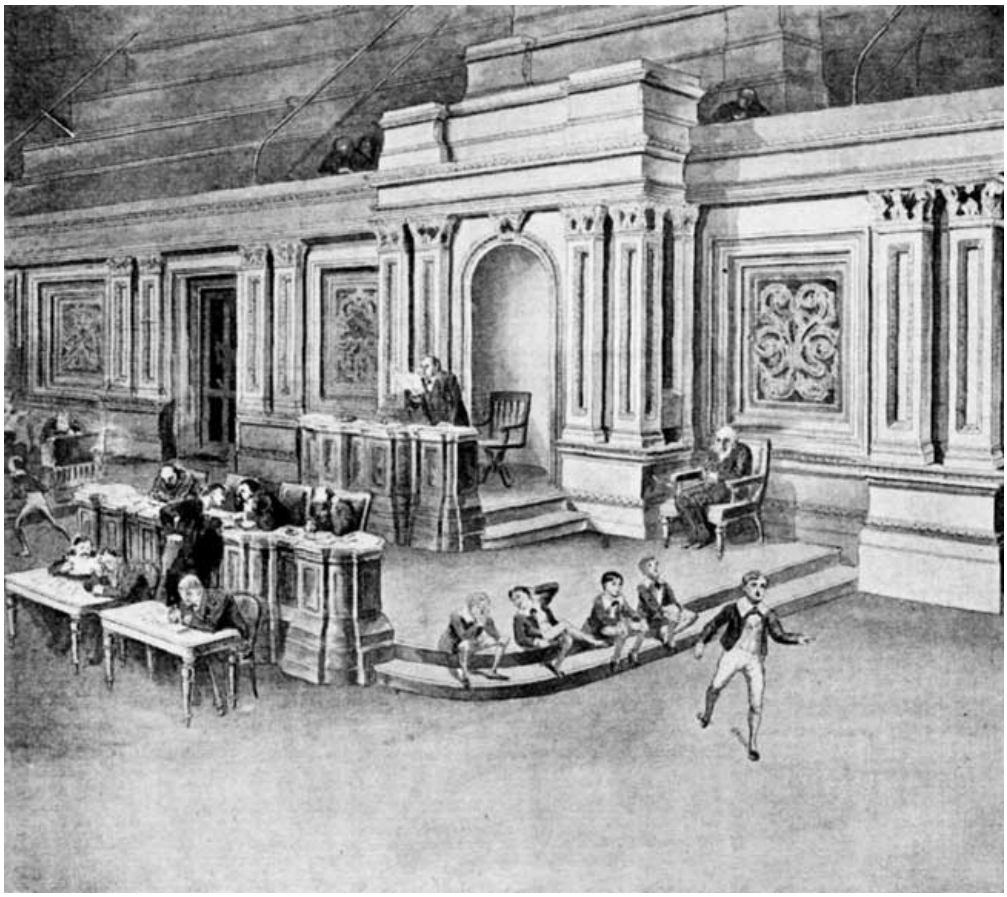
> "Harry Furniss' eclipse of the gayety of John Bull, with facile pencil and brilliant tongue, attracted a cultured assemblage to the Columbia Theatre. Furniss, a plump lump of a man, all curves from pumps to poll, in gesture and in the breezy flourish of his sentences, genially cynical like Voltaire, cuts an engaging figure in his black coat that he wears with the inborn grace of a well-dined Londoner, a bon vivant, whose worldly shaft tickles and never bites, for he is a gentleman whose wit wins and never wounds. Furniss is Thackeray in the [Pg 71]

satirist's mellow moments, and there is no little of the Thackerian spirit radiating in the pictures of this rotund and quaint little caricaturist."

I did very bad business in Washington, largely due to bad management. Five o'clock teas had become the rage of Washington Society, and my appearances in the theatre were between 4.15 and 6 o'clock in the afternoon. Alluding to this a critic wrote in the *Morning Times*: "It may help Mr. Furniss to forgive the small audiences here in Washington if he is informed that during this season none of his English friends have made a very glittering success; nearly all of them have lost money or made very little. We seem to be somewhat down on Englishmen this year."

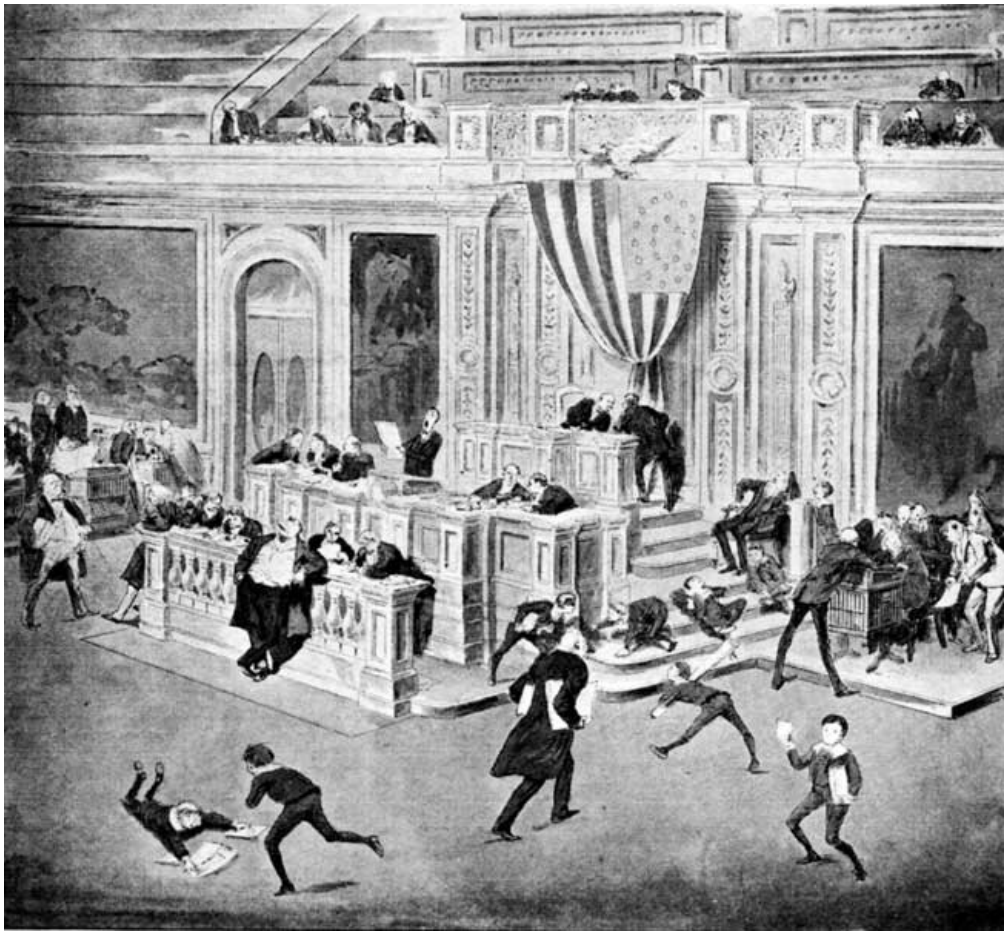
As Washington is the capital of America, so the Capitol, where Congress meets, is the cap of the capital, the dome, of course, being the Capitol's cap, and a capital cap it is, covering the collective councillors of the country. The Capitol itself looks like a huge white eagle protecting the interests of the States. Audubon's Bird of Washington is the name of the eagle well-known to naturalists, but this *rara avis* is the *Falcho Washingtoniensis*. At its heart is seated the Supreme Court, keeping an eagle eye on the laws of the land; under its right wing is the Senate (equivalent to the English House of Lords); and the left shelters the House of Representatives (corresponding to our House of Commons). At first this bird of buildings had no wings, and the three representative assemblies sat in the Central Edifice; afterwards the wings were added, and now the Capitol is fly enough for anything. It soars high above the city, and from its summit a capital birdseye view is naturally obtained.

The Senate in the American Congress answers to the House of Lords in the British Parliament. The "sporting editor" would doubtless say that each in its respective country is the right hand of the Government, and when there happens to be a genuine stand-up fight, as foreseen with Spain, an international contest, although the "left," in prize ring phraseology (the House of Representatives in America and the House of Commons in England), does all the preliminary work, it is reserved for the right, when the critical moment arrives, to administer the knock-out blow. [Pg 72]



THE THRONE IN THE SENATE.

In both the Old Country and the New these superior senators are politically alike. Representatively they are as different as iced water is to old port.



THE THRONE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

The seating of the senators in these two assemblages is typical of the countries they represent. In the British House of Lords the Peers loll about on scarlet sofas; in America the chosen ones sit at desks. The British Peer has forsaken one lounge to occupy another; the American has left the office desk for the desk in office. In Britain the House of Lords is composed of Princes and Peers, with an admixture of bishops, brewers, and other political party pullers; it is also an asylum for stranded political wrecks from the Lower House. Soldiers and sailors, too, are honoured and are sent there, not as politicians, but merely to exist for the time being in a sort of respectable retreat, before being translated to the crypt of Westminster Abbey or St. Paul's. John Bull has made this hereditary hotch-potch, and he must swallow it. Jonathan selects his senators to his own taste, and has them dished up fresh from time to time.

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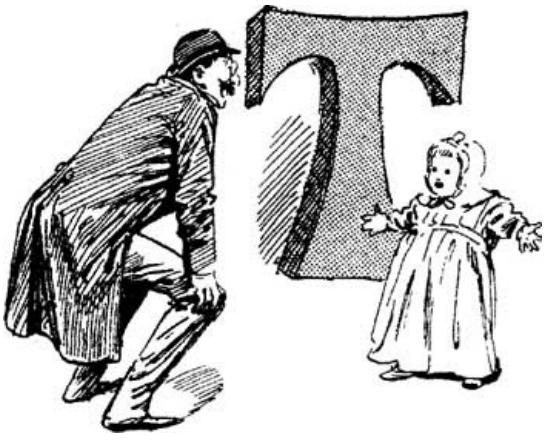
The Senate is not sombre and sedate as is our Upper House, but simplicity itself—no gilded throne, no Lord Chancellor in wig and gown, no offensive officialism. It looks like a huge auction room, the auctioneer being the deputy President standing at a table hammer in hand knocking down the separate business of State lot by lot as put up by the clerks.

The House of Representatives, like the Senate, reminds one very much of an auction room. It is a splendid hall, but its size prevents Members from being heard very distinctly, particularly as they talk away amongst themselves, except when anything particularly interesting is going on. In the Senate the table, and the clerks' table, are of dark wood; in the House of Representatives they are of white marble. The American flag hanging over the balcony gives it a semi-theatrical look, and the white marble table resembles an American bar, making one feel inclined to go up to it and order a brandy-smash, a gin-sling, or a corpse-reviver.



HE House has not met as I enter. The page-boys are playing at leapfrog, and some early Members are disposing of their correspondence, and instead of reproving the boys cast glances at them that seem to signify they would like to join in the game themselves. Presently a Member comes in backwards through one of the doorways, calling out to something that is following him. I lean over to see if he has brought his favourite dog or domestic cat, when a little infant in modernised Dutch

costume comes in waddling laughingly after her parent. Another Member turns round on his swivel chair as his page-boy runs up to him, shakes him heartily by the hand, tosses him on his foot and gives him a "ride-a-cock-horse." Oh, you English sticklers for etiquette! What would you say if Mr. Labouchere came in on all fours with his little child pulling his coat-tails and whacking him with a stick, or if Sir William Harcourt played at leapfrog with Lulu round the Speaker's chair?

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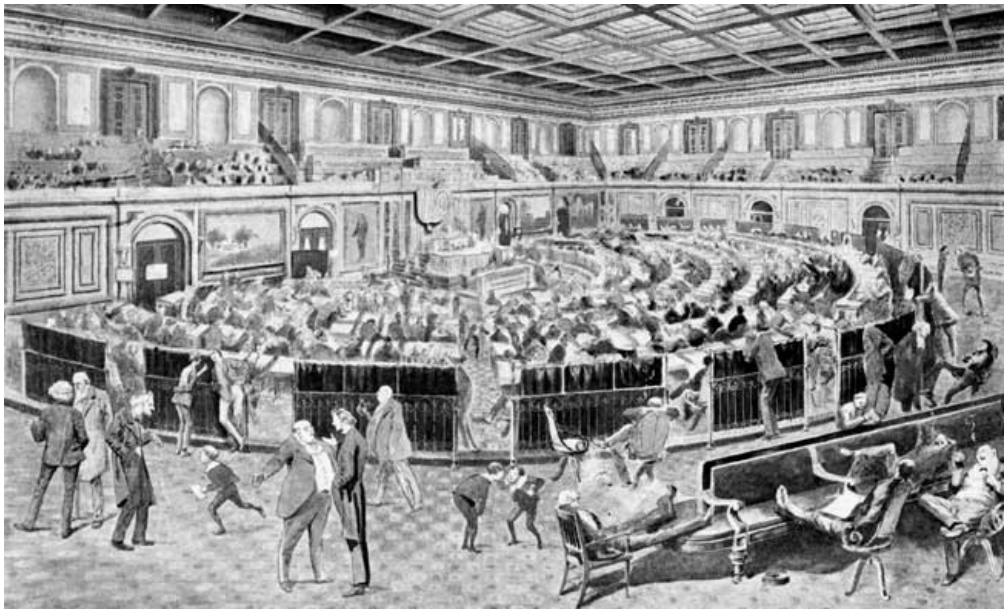

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

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My drawing will show you better what the House of Representatives is like than any written description I can give. Each Member has his own desk, with his Parliamentary papers all around him. He is not bothered, as Members are in England, by having his papers sent to his private house, or having to call for them at the office when he arrives, or actually having to fight for a seat. Americans pay their Representatives, and consider that they too have a right to be accommodated with a seat whenever they want one to see them, and to know who they are; so you have in front of you a diagram of the sitting arrangements of the House, with the names of the Members.

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AN EX-SPEAKER.

At 12 o'clock the procession enters. An official carries a little wand with the eagle on top, and after the Chaplain (during my first visit I saw the "Blind Chaplain," the Rev. W. H. Milburn) has delivered a few touching words about the floods in Minnesota, the reading of the "reakard" begins. The House buzzes with conversation and displays the utmost indifference while the minutes of the last meeting are read with extraordinary rapidity by a clerk with a grating voice. Every now and then a Member corrects a misprint in the "reakard" of what he has said, and then leave of absence is given to applicants for it, who have to state their reasons. The Chairmen of the various Committees then report to the House, Chairmen of Committees taking in turn to sit in the Speaker's Chair and preside over the House, whilst anyone can examine them.

Instead of calling out a Member by his name—Mr. Bacon or Mr. Beans—the Speaker calls upon "the gentleman from Illinois," or "the gentleman from Michigan." But if any question arises to which some Member has an objection filibustering is rampant. The Speaker rises and asks if there is any objection to the consideration of the Bill. After a pause he says, "The Chair hears none," and is about ordering the Bill to be engrossed when some Member objects and a division is taken, the Members standing up to be counted. Groups of them, however, do not

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pay a bit of attention, and sit about on their desks smoking cigars and telling stories, and when the numbers are given some of these will get up and complain that their names are not included, as they did not hear, or went out to speak to a friend, or some trivial excuse like that, so they are counted again. One in particular I noticed and made a sketch of peeling and eating an apple, and he strolled up afterwards and demanded to have his name inserted. More delay; then "the gentleman from Somewhere-else" informs the Speaker that there is not a quorum. "The gentleman from Bedlam" demands a division taken by tellers, and the Speaker agrees, and is just appointing the tellers, when "the gentleman from Obstructianna" calls for "Yeas and Nays," which means, gentle reader, that the whole of the House of Representatives have to be called out by name, from Alpha to Omega. Those not wishing to vote smoke or eat apples. Then some Member comes in and informs the Speaker that he didn't hear his name when it was called.

In case the reader may think I am exaggerating I append the following cutting from the "Congressional Record," vol. xxiii., No. 93.:

> "Mr. O'NEILL of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I am paired, but I have voted in order to make a quorum.
>
> The SPEAKER. There is no quorum.
>
> Mr. HENDERSON of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, when my name was called the first time I did not hear it, and the second time I was examining some papers and my name was passed before I could answer.
>
> The SPEAKER. Did the gentleman fail to hear his name?
>
> Mr. HENDERSON of Iowa. I heard it called, but did not answer in time.
>
> The SPEAKER. The gentleman understands the rule. If the gentleman states that he was in the Hall of the House and failed to hear his name, his vote will be recorded.
>
> Mr. HENDERSON of Iowa. I was.
>
> The vote of Mr. HENDERSON of Iowa was recorded.
>
> Mr. PATTERSON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I desire to vote.
>
> The SPEAKER. Was the gentleman in the Hall, and did he fail to hear his name called?
>
> Mr. PATTERSON of Tennessee. Yes, sir.
>
> The vote of Mr. PATTERSON of Tennessee was recorded. [Pg 79]
>
> Mr. DOLLIVER. Mr. Speaker, although paired I have voted to make a quorum.
>
> Mr. McKEIGHAN. Mr. Speaker, I was in the Hall and heard my name, but did not vote because I did not understand the measure. If it is in order I desire now to vote.
>
> The SPEAKER. The Chair can not entertain the gentleman's request under the rule.
>
> Mr. HUFF. Mr. Speaker, I voted to make a quorum. I am paired with Mr. KRIBBS.
>
> The SPEAKER. On this vote the yeas are 136 and the nays 3. No quorum has voted.
>
> Mr. O'NEILL of Pennsylvania. I withdraw my vote.
>
> Mr. HOLMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that another vote be taken, which I have no doubt will show the presence of a quorum.
>
> Mr. BURROWS. Mr. Speaker, can not that request be modified so as to provide for taking the vote on the passage of the Bill instead of on the engrossment and third reading? I ask unanimous consent that the vote may be taken on the passage of the Bill.
>
> Mr. CHIPMAN rose.
>
> The SPEAKER. The Chair will state that the roll call having disclosed the absence of a quorum, no business is in order but a call of the House or a motion to adjourn.
>
> Mr. HOLMAN. Then, Mr. Speaker, I move a call of the House.
>
> A call of the House was ordered."

Then that grating voice calls out the list from A to Z, the pairs are called, more explanations given, then there is more filibustering (I think that is the correct word) on the part of the obstructionists, and for the third time the same farce is enacted. Then the division takes place, when the Members leave their seats and are counted as they enter. No, the division takes place before the last count, for after the names are called again and there are more explanations, when the Speaker "recognises the gentleman's right," or does not as the case may be. I know three hours of this was enough to show me that, although the Americans may boast of being our superiors in many ways, such a farce as I have described could never take place in the British Parliament. Why on earth don't they take a division as we do, when the Members leave their seats and the Ayes and Noes are locked in separate Lobbies, and as they re-enter their votes are recorded and they are counted by the tellers, and the question at issue is settled finally without doubt? I must say that for a practical people the Parliamentary procedure seemed to me the most unpractical ceremony I had ever witnessed. Yet they are practical in some Parliamentary matters. For instance, there is a Committee of Rules, presided over by the Speaker, which meets to decide what time the House shall devote to each question, say two hours—one for the Democrats and one for the Republicans. Each speaker in the debate is allowed five minutes, and when this is up the Speaker reminds him of the fact by rapping the table with his hammer.

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Again, it is very convenient that a Member can have speeches that he has never delivered printed on the Parliamentary record. In England a country Member is about to make a speech, and being anxious to let his constituents have it in full he gives it to the representatives of his local paper, and it is in the press before he delivers it. Something may happen to prevent the delivery of the speech, and Hansard has not a line of it. A curious thing happened in the "Congressional Record" a year or two ago. The same speech was published as having been uttered by two very different Members. This occurred through a New York orator handing his speech (a eulogium on a deceased Member) to a friend to correct. This friend had an eye to business, and he picked out another Member who yearned to be thought an orator but who was not blessed with forensic power and had never made a speech in his life, and sold him the speech for forty dollars. He walked into the House swelling in anticipation of his coming effort, but his chagrin was great when he discovered precisely the same speech in the "Record." How is this for an instance of American journalistic smartness?

AN EX-MINISTER.

After the exhibition of filibustering I described the House adjourned, having done absolutely nothing but convince the stranger in the gallery that payment of Members leads to a waste of time, which is not played ducks and drakes with by the Members of our House.

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An evening sitting is, of course, livelier, though at the outset there are more strangers in the gallery than Members on the floor. It is amusing to note how the ladies crowd the seats, and how the Congressman lolls on the sofa in the outer circle of the chamber, or turns round in his chair at his desk, crossing his legs on the desk in front of him, puffs his cigar, and, heedless of the fate of the nation, turns round and fascinates the fair ones in the gallery. It is amusing also to see a Member leave his seat during his speech and walk all over the floor, snapping his fingers and pummelling any desk handy. The official reporter follows him about, book in hand, wherever the Member's eloquence leads him, and his friends crowd around him when he stands or walks and vigorously applaud him; so do the audience in the gallery when his eloquence ceases, while his friends rush to shake his hand. He then walks round and receives congratulations, like a man passing round the hat. The clapping of the desk lids is very effective as a means of approval or otherwise; but if the orator goes too far and a scene is the result, the noise is too much even for the American House of Representatives, and the Serjeant-at-Arms has to take the spread-eagle on a toasting fork and walk up to the windy Member. I have made a sketch of a Member who made an aggressive speech, and on being replied to by another Member, walked up to the Speaker, leant on his desk, and puffed his cigar right under his nose. All this to one accustomed to the English House of Commons is beyond comprehension, and the only parallel I can think of is the trial scene in "The Bells," when Mathias walks about the court and snaps his fingers at the judges and then acts the perpetration of the deed for which he is called upon to answer.

During my stay I heard a very funny specimen of rant from a gentleman of the name of Turner, who was suffering from an attack of Anglophobia. He would delight the Mortons and Conybeares whom we have to tolerate, and his pronunciation of the Old Country's language was even worse than the sentiments he expressed. He spoke of the "extremest spirit" of "*o*fficial day*tee*," whatever that may mean; the next screech brought out "*do*mestic *hoo*rizon," and he pathetically alluded to his constituents as the people who lived in the "boomed city, who do not get an elegant *re*ward for their la*bor*." [Pg 82]

ANGLOPHOBIA.

I was also amused by another gentleman in a discussion about some Bills. He jumped up, and rushing over to where his opponents sat, he shouted at them, "*Talk! You?*—you—you—you—you—you—you?" (and with dreadful emphasis) "I've reported your little Bills!"

Then there were cries of "Go ahead! Vote! vote! vote! vote!" and to crown the gentleman's vehemence he cried out repeatedly, "I demand a division!" (Chorus): "Pull him down!"

"I demand a division!" "Pull him down!"

"I demand a division!" "Pull him down!"

And he refused to leave off until the eagle-topped toasting fork was brought into play once more.

A veritable pandemonium is this Parliament! Fascinating to me, who have spent so much time in studying every detail of our own Parliament, which I have not the slightest doubt would prove just as strange and funny to the American visitor, if like me he sees the ridiculous side of everything, even of such an august assemblage as that of the legislators of a nation.

THE PRESIDENT—IDEAL.

THE PRESIDENT—REAL.

Privacy is unknown in America. Everyone there, from the President in the White House to your Chinese washerman in his laundry, is accessible to all. I have visited [Pg 83] both with less difficulty than I would experience in approaching Brown, Jones or Robinson in this country. Here the business man's time is his own, and you must not rob him of a minute any more than of his cheque-book. In America a business man's time belongs to anyone who may require it. You walk in to see him at will, and if Jonathan can earn a dollar whilst in his bath by talking to you through the keyhole he will do it, and he is just as open in giving his time to show you any gracious action. The busiest man in America, the President, surrounded by affairs of State, leaves them and shakes my hand in welcome to his country. I say shakes my hand, for although I apologise for my intrusion (which, by the way, was quite unnecessary) and pay him some pleasant compliments, President Harrison replies only by shaking my hand. I wax eloquent over the magnificence of the great country over which he presides; I touch upon the coming election, and even give him some information of value which I happen to have overheard by accident. I lead him to believe that I am entrusted with secrets by the English Cabinet about [Pg 84] the Behring Straits and other vexed questions, and I openly tell him what I believe to be the dark designs of England upon a free country; in fact, I don't know what I don't tell him, and now that he is no more I see no just cause or impediment why I should not now make public his reply. It is all on the next page.

PRESIDENT HARRISON'S REPLY.

[Pg 86]

MR. PUNCH AT NIAGARA.

HEBE.

S all English people could not get to Niagara, Niagara was brought to them in the shape of an excellent diorama, which proved a great success in London a few years ago. The atmospheric effect in all dioramas is procured by making the visitor first pass through dark passages, fall up unlighted stairs, and tumble about in the tortuous corridors in the blackness; then, brought suddenly face to face with the picture well lit up, the eye is affected by the glare of light, which would not be the case if the spectator walked straight into the diorama from the street. Now, curiously enough, you approach the real Niagara in much the same way—that is, if, as I did, you go from Buffalo, and as was my lot, in the most depressing weather.

I had to wait for the train to start at Buffalo in a *Dee*po which eclipsed anything I have seen for gloom. The shoeblack's platform, of more than ordinary proportions, occupied a good fifth of the waiting-room. Its dusky proprietor was in possession of the throne, and was discussing politics with a brother brush whose massive feet were resting on the structure, an advertisement for the operating shoeblack, implying that both the quality and quantity of his shine were superior.

A BUFFALO GIRL.

[Pg 85]

The train was also very gloomy. My vis-à-vis was an old Buffalo girl who must have remembered coming out to "dance by the light of the moon" a couple of generations ago, when that melody was popular.

The exit from the town is made through a hideous quarter—wooden houses and huts, depressing dirty streets, and the sides of the railway covered with the refuse of a generation. Then some miles of open country, with a building here and there which might possibly have added a little picturesqueness to the dismal scene had

not those despoilers of all picturesqueness, the advertisers—and, above all, the advertisers of pills—made an eyesore wherever the same was possible. Then through a mile or two of apple orchards and more country with huts advertising pills—probably the apples in those orchards are most particularly sour. The rain came down fast, the train went on slowly; at every station damp people with wet umbrellas came in and made me shudder. Altogether the prospect of my getting a favourable impression of Niagara was a black one. But it so happens the effect was quite the reverse—it was precisely the same as passing through the gloomy passages leading to the diorama.

As I walked to an hotel to have some lunch before seeing the Falls, I was startled to see in wood (everything is either water or wood at Niagara) my old friend Mr. Punch standing outside a cigar shop, smiling as usual; so after I had taken one of his cigars and lighted it, we had a chat about Fleet Street and all his friends there. [Pg 87]

"Guess, stranger, I'm here to draw the Britishers. 'Amurrcans' don't understand me. They try to draw me, but they might just as well try to draw one of these wooden cigars in my hand. Their sarcasm runs off me like this rain, and I keep on smiling. They laugh at the Britishers journeying thousands of miles to see this place, just as the English smile at the Americans pilgrimaging to Stratford-on-Avon. Why, it's real cheap to find natives round here who've lived all their lives within earshot of the Falls and never seen them yet!"

MY DRIVER.

We compared notes—American and English—and parted.

At the hotel to which I repaired for the purpose of refreshing the inner man I was waited upon by a Hebe for the first, last and only time while I was in the States. Quick, quiet and clean—what a relief after the coloured gentleman!

FRA' HUDDERSFIELD

Hiring a covered conveyance with two horses and a very intelligent driver, shaped something like his own whip, who was to act as my guide as well as my Jehu, I was driven through the town of wooden houses to an office where I bought tickets to pass me to the various places of interest. The purveyor of this pasteboard looked like a French peasant, spoke with an American accent, and came from the town of Huddersfield in England.

I had no doubt the driver had graduated in his work from the perch of a London hansom, and that probably the horses had been trained at Newmarket. Everything is so very "English, you know," at Niagara, from the wooden Punch to the pasteboard man. [Pg 88]

I was informed by everyone that Niagara would grow upon me. I was rather alarmed to find it growing upon me the moment I arrived, for it was raining in torrents and I had juvenile Niagaras all round my umbrella. I should rather say you grow upon Niagara—at least, for my own part, I felt that if I were left there long enough I should do so. It was the most fascinating sight I ever saw, and I felt as I stood motionless and riveted to the spot I had had enough water to last me for the remaining term of my existence.

NIAGARA GROWING UPON ME.

Everyone, even the clerk of the weather, had arranged that my visit to America should be pleasant. Niagara, to be seen at its best, must be viewed on a pouring wet day. I know few of my readers will accept this assertion as a serious fact, but it's true. It is just as true as the fact that the way to obtain the full flavour of strawberries is to put pepper on them, and that the sole method of fully relishing ham is to use a dash of champagne as a sauce. There are people who even in this enlightened age vegetate upon the face of the earth and know not these things, and a very great many more who do not know that they ought to select a soakingly wet day to appreciate the Falls of Niagara at their highest value.

It is not for the extra bucketful or so of water that you may behold, for that is imperceptible, but for the water you *don't* see. A fine day is a mistake, and the finer the day the greater the mistake, for the reason that distances appear nearer, and the scene as a picture appears contracted in consequence. But when the rain falls in torrents at your feet, and then gradually disappears in mist, it gives to the Falls a certain mystery and suggestion of vastness that cannot possibly be experienced by the spectator except upon a thoroughly wet, misty day. [Pg 89]

Therefore I congratulated myself that I saw Niagara on my first visit at its wettest and best. Had I waited till the next day I could have gone to exactly the same points at Niagara and seen the same pictures, in water and colour of course, totally different in effect. You ought to allow at least three days instead of three hours to inspect Niagara. The first day ought to be wet, then one fine morning you should see it early and drive round it in the beautiful afternoon, and stroll there alone or otherwise by moonlight.

I ADMIRE THE GREAT HORSESHOE FALL.

There I stood under my umbrella, with the rain coming down in sheets and the spray and mist rising up, feeling that I must do one or both of two things—write poetry or commit suicide. I had just got to—

"Oh, dashing, splashing King of Water,
Is that mist thy lovely daughter?
Tell me, through thy roar and thunder,
Canst thou——"

[Pg 90]

when the crack of a whip brought me to my senses. It was produced by my faithful driver, who had come in search of me. I was saved.

He explained to me the wonders of the Great Horseshoe Fall (who more able to do this than a driver?), and wound up by saying:

"Guess we'll harness Niagara yet—we've got the traces nearly on now."

JONATHAN HARNESSING NIAGARA.

We had reached the carriage and pair when this meditative remark escaped him. Thinking he was referring to some other gee-gee of his, possibly one called appropriately after the Falls, and which was being broken in, I said that I thought

the present pair went very well in harness together and had a lot of work in them yet.

"Why, certn'ly," was all he said as he shut the carriage door, but he gave me a puzzled, anxious look, and I saw that he caught sight of my poetry. I evidently had not understood his remark, nor had he comprehended mine. At the next stopping [Pg 91] place, about a mile above the Falls, he explained that "there was seven million horse-power running wild." It is to be "harnessed" at a cost of about 5,200,000 dollars, and horse-power of upwards of 260,000 will be collared. Yes, Jonathan, mounted upon his thirsty steed Dollars, is about to lasso picturesque Niagara. I saw through the mist the destroyers at work; mills with their hideous chimneys and dirty smoke, and attendant railways puffing commerce will be seen when the landscape is clear. Jonathan cares not; as a writer on this act of ultra-vandalism declares:

"Nothing is sacred to the practical man of the present age, especially when he happens to dwell on the other side of the Atlantic. There he uses the wonders of Nature as advertising boards for puffing quack medicines or patent stoves, and the picturesque and the grandiose are only appreciated by him in proportion to their utilitarian value."

"THE THREE SISTERS."

Of course I paid my respects to the sisters of Niagara, or rather, to the islands of that name. To do so I had to leave the carriage and walk to the islands over little bridges, and again that feeling of fascination overcame me, and looking round to see that the driver was not following me a second time, I stealthily pulled out my verse and abandoned myself to my poetical inspirations. I had my eyes fixed upon three rocks in front of me, round which the waters, in all sorts of forms and colours, were dashing. "The Three Sisters," I repeated to myself. "Three sisters—some idea to work in here. Let me see, the daughter is the mist—the three sisters—why, there they are!" Oh, why was I born a caricaturist? All poetry had vanished; Niagara's fascination was dispelled!

When next you visit Niagara stand on the last of the three sisters and find the [Pg 92] three portraits in the rocks. It is a puzzle picture; a *fac-simile* of which I here present you with.

I was next driven to the Inclined Railway, to descend which would enable me to see the Falls from below. Arrived there, I found an old lady cross-examining the attendant anent the safety of the railway, which, truth to tell, is somewhat appalling to look at, the incline being at an angle of thirty-one degrees. The motive-power is water, and what the old lady wanted to know was whether the water would hold out long enough to bring her back again.

"Niagara dry up in five minutes? Wal, old gal, that's clever! Guess this railway's bin workin' every day you have—forty-five years now."

The questioner, who had witnessed, at the least computation, sixty summers come and go, promptly vanished at this soft impeachment, and I descended alone.

Wonderful, magnificent as Niagara indubitably is, that sense which enables me to drink in and appreciate to the full Nature's works of sublime grandeur and vastness was ruined for the day. My eyes had beheld the "Three Sisters" in the rocks; after that they discovered faces in everything. They fell upon this mountain of ice and beheld spray that had frozen into a grinning mask. Cautiously I picked my way along the treacherous surface in the direction of its ear to see the spray rising up from the other side, when suddenly my feet slipped on the ice and I had had a fall as well as seen one.

In all probability this *contretemps* would have been avoided had I not been followed by one of those pests, a guide, the sight of whom caused me to make undue hurry over the frozen surface. Harpies of this ilk are the bane of sight- [Pg 93] seeing all the world over.

My next performance was to drive through

INCLINED RAILWAY, NIAGARA.

the town of wood for the purpose of striking the water at another point; this accomplishment being attended with the risk of being run over by passing trains, which run vindictively as well as promiscuously over the unprotected thoroughfares.

Having run this gauntlet successfully, I passed through a house which is a store containing photographs and mementoes of the place and a couple of persevering, persuasive maidens, whose efforts to make life a burden to you until you buy some of the rubbish are usually rewarded with unqualified success. After fighting my way through this edifice I was taken in hand by a juvenile guide, who discoursed in the orthodox fashion of his kind about the Whirlpool Rapid, pointed out where plucky, foolish Captain Webb met his death, crushed by the force of water, and, lower down, the spot where his body was found. Then my young chaperon unburdened himself of a string of horrors concerning men in barrels, insane women who from time to time have thrown themselves in, the little steamer whose occupants shot the rapids for a wager and nearly paid for their temerity with their lives, and many more similarly pleasant reminiscences were conjured up through Niagara's haze on this drizzly afternoon.

WHERE CAPTAIN WEBB WAS KILLED.

Subsequently I had to make use of another "elevator," which, judging by the velocity of the ascent and descent, is probably worked by a detachment of specially-trained tortoises. Down by the rapids I made the pleasing discovery that after all I had some sense of the sublime left, for I was roused to further anticipated flights of enthusiasm by the magnificent spectacle of the vast volumes of water foaming, rushing, eddying, swirling along on their onward course with rush impetuous and irresistible as the whirlwind, and I felt for my pocket-book to complete my ode to mighty Niagara.

[Pg 94]

I had not noticed until that moment two commercial-looking individuals, obviously British, seated close by and gazing biliously upon the marvellous rapids; but I heard one remark to the other:

"'Enery, that's where Webb 'it 'is 'ed, hain't it?"

I disappeared rapidly in the direction of the "helevator," and fled the disenchanted scene.

Blondin vulgarised Niagara; Jonathan is going to turn it into a colossal mill-sewer. So make hay while the sun shines, or rather when the rain falls, and see it soon.

To us in England who are in the habit of rushing to a station to demand a ticket for a journey across England, or to the North of Scotland, or to the West of Ireland, and expect as a matter of course to find the necessary accommodation, it seems strange that the Americans are so "previous" in their arrangements. The sale of tickets, which is here conducted with ease and despatch at the various termini, or, if you desire to be "previous," at the depots of the companies in the centre of the town, is in the States made a means of causing "corners" in speculation. There are, I am informed, actually brokers who buy up the tickets for the express mail trains, and whose prices rise and fall like the

TOURISTS.

stocks on 'Change.

For instance, in Chicago there is a whole street of these brokers. I wanted to go to Buffalo. I got a prominent citizen to escort me to the railway, and I felt some honour had been conferred upon me when I paid the full fare and had a corner seat in the Pullman allotted to me. When I arrived at the station I discovered that next to me was [Pg 95] a mother with two children, who were already climbing over my armchair instead of their own, and fighting for and tearing the papers and magazines I had just purchased. There was another horror I hadn't noticed at my first glance, moreover. This took the shape of an infant of some months, which immediately began to squeal with a shrillness that forcibly reminded me of the siren on the Atlantic. No craft ever flew before the siren of an approaching Atlantic liner more quickly than did I from that infant. I at once abandoned my seat.

Now instead of going as one would in England to a station official, telling him you are going by the next train and taking your seat in it as a matter of course, I had to go into the city again, interview the officials at their office, and ask as a special compliment to be allowed to start a few hours later. All this is very surprising in a country where, of all places, time is money.

In a long journey you pass through many States, in the two senses of the word. Possibly you may find yourself in a state of thirst, but although you are surrounded by drinks galore you cannot get the wherewithal to quench it, for you are passing through a proclaimed State, and drinking in that is illegal. Or you may be passing through a State free from the temperance faddist, where intoxicating beverages are to be had for paying for them, and suddenly discover that you are in a state of hunger, say five hours after your dinner; but the coloured gentleman who officiates as cook is snoring, and fifty dollars won't buy you a mouthful of bread, so you find that your last state is considerably worse than your first. I have experienced both.

I had the good fortune to "strike" an English friend on my journey, and with him I shared a compartment in the Pullman. The overheated state of the cars caused us both to have an unnatural thirst, and we longed for a refreshing draught of air and liquid. Lunch was announced. I was quickly in the dining car, and sat down opposite to an American, who had already tackled his soup and poured out his first glass of claret from a quart bottle. Feverishly I seized the wine-card. My vis-à-vis [Pg 96] looked at me over his spectacles, and called out to the "coloured gentleman," "Bring another glass." The glass was brought, and the stranger (I had never seen him before) filled it with claret and placed it in front of me. "Thanks awfully!" I said, "but—er—really—er I am going to order. Don't let me deprive you of your wine."

AMERICAN TRAVELLING. NOTHING TO EAT.

"Why, sir, guess you may order what you like, but you won't get it! I was caught once myself, fifteen years ago. Kean't buy liquor in this State we're strikin' now, stranger. I bring mine along with me now—enough for two, in case some green traveller crops up. You're heartily welcome, sir, and here's your health!" [Pg 97]

This is the local legislation! My feeling of disgust for the arbitrary, narrow-minded, parochial parasite of the law-jobber was tempered by the generosity of the native, and this is only one instance out of hundreds I have experienced of the extreme kindness and courtesy of strangers in the States.

I could not resist this splendid opportunity to tantalise my Scotch friend and fellow traveller. He sat down beside me and I handed him the wine-card. He wiped his fevered brow and his parched lips parted in a smile as he ran his eager eye down the list. When he had scanned the names (and prices) I broke in with: [Pg 98]

"I say, old fellow, champagne to-day; a magnum of the best—it's my birthday, so hang the expense! Oh, yes, I know it's a ten-pound note, but I do feel this infernal shaking, noise and heat, and when else would we feel better able to appreciate a good sparkling 'tall drink'? I pay, and I insist—you order it and see that we get it!"

My friendly stranger on the other side simply gazed at me without moving a muscle of his face, and said not a word, still I haven't the slightest doubt that he was thoroughly enjoying the joke in his American fashion. My Scotch friend's face brightened up at the prospect of refreshing his parched larynx with a long drink of champagne; but it was difficult to see whether he or the "coloured gentleman" looked the blacker when the latter informed him that the only beverage he could have was ginger ale! *Verb. sap.*: Never travel on an American railway without your own wine. Surely the railway companies, who justly pride themselves on the way they study the comfort of their travellers, should warn the unwary in time, for it is not everyone who is lucky enough to meet with a good Samaritan as I did.

A friend tells me that some of the "coloured gentlemen-in-waiting" on these cars have an eye for business, and when a stranger is victimised by these stupid and selfish laws, they serve up to him Rhine wine out of a teapot as weak tea!

If you doubt the truth of the following, ask any traveller who has rushed through the States at the rate of two hundred and fifty miles an hour to verify it.

You sit down to the principal meal of the day in the dining car at say six o'clock. Not happening to be an American, you intend to eat your meal in a reasonable time, say an hour, instead of five minutes. Why hurry? What is there to do before retiring to the sleeping car to be jolted sleeplessly about for seven or eight hours? Nothing; so take as long as possible over your meal. You leisurely order a wine from the list, and it is brought, uncorked and placed by your side. After the soup and fish you think you will take glass No. 1, but no, not a bit of it! You are now rushing through a proclaimed State, and your glass and bottle are promptly removed. Sancho Panza never looked so surprised as you do. To add insult to injury, or rather injury to insult, you are brought that frightful cause of indigestion, "iced water." I have been told "by one who knows" never to touch the ice on these railway cars; it is not safe, though for what reason I cannot at the moment recollect. It comes from some wayside cesspool or out of a rusty copper boiler, or is the refrigerated perspiration off the railway carriage windows, or something dreadful; anyway, it is unsafe. So you look at it and toy with the next course on the chance of flying quickly through this detestable state of narrow-mindedness and broad absurdity. Your patience is rewarded. You fly past some wooden houses and blazing factories and vulgar advertisements of quack medicines, the vendors of which forsooth are those who prohibit a weary traveller from aiding digestion by drinking an innocent and harmless beverage. The "coloured gentleman" returns smiling with the bottle and glass. [Pg 99]

"Guess we've cut through that State; this isn't proclaimed."

You drink confusion to the priggish provincial faddist whose State we have just passed, and continue your dinner.

I am a slow drinker. During my late illness, the illness that caused my trip to America, I had to take all my meals dry—allowed to drink nothing whatever, not even a drop of water; so perhaps it is not unnatural that after months of this treatment I should find a difficulty in drinking before my meal is over. So when the above-mentioned incident occurred to me, it so happened that I was in no hurry to raise my glass to my lips. At last I took it up, but before I could transfer any of its contents to the interior of my throat a dusky hand was placed on mine and the glass was removed.

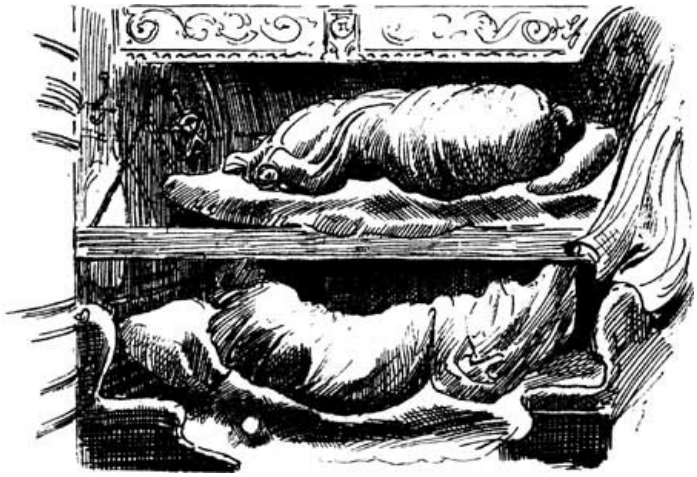
"Sorry, but we're in another proclaimed State now!"

I prayed that one of these fiendish faddists might enter the car at that moment. I passed a solemn resolution that I would pour all the contents of the cruets down his cursed throat and make hideous caricatures of him all over the wine list! [Pg 100]

More wooden houses and their wooden-headed occupants were passed, and at last I was at liberty to have a drink.

Ice is not of necessity pure nor wine impure. If these ignorant fools are unable to drink without proving to the world that Nature intended them for beasts, it is no reason why they should make laws for their betters, particularly for the stranger flying through their country, which they misappropriately call free.

Again I hark back to the laying of railway lines, which I repeat we manage better in England than they do in the States. The sleeper in his berth in an American car is tossed up and down to such an extent that his vocabulary is exhausted in anathematising the sleepers under the rails. It doesn't seem as if the Transatlantic lines are ever going to adopt our thorough system of track-laying. I met a railway expert on the boat going out who had been to England to inspect officially the laying of a railway, and he assured me that if they were to take up all the tracks in America and relay them in our way it would financially break them, enormously rich as the railway kings of the States are.



SLEEP(!)

I must candidly say I don't care about sleeping in those cars. The heat can be avoided by paying extra and having a coupé to yourself, or sharing it with a friend, as I did. My first experience was on that journey from Chicago which I mentioned before, and I [Pg 101] shall never forget it. I had at the last moment to take the only berth left, and it happened to be a top one. I was the last to retire that night, and my struggles to climb to my perch were so ludicrous that I was glad there were no spectators. I placed my handbags, hat-boxes, &c., one on top of another, and mounted them as cautiously as an acrobat ascending a pyramid of decanters, and scrambled in. I then proceeded to divest myself of my articles of clothing. I noticed that the snoring of the gentleman in the berth underneath grew softer and somewhat stifled, and as I wound up my watch and placed it, as I thought, under the pillow, he jumped frantically out from behind his curtains and went head over heels amongst my improvised steps. Then I began to realise what had happened. I had not understood the mechanism of the arrangements, and under the impression that I was placing my clothes, &c., on the ledge, I was in reality dropping them on to the unfortunate occupant of the nether berth, hence the muffled snoring, and when my forty guinea repeater descended upon some unprotected portion of his cranium it put the closure on his dreams in a most abrupt manner.

When you are introduced to an Englishman he invariably invites you to eat something. "You must come and dine with us quietly at home, don't-cher-know," or "I must rig up a dinner for you at the club some night," &c. A Scotchman suggests your drinking something—urges upon you the claims of the Mountain Dew; a Frenchman wishes at once to show you something, the Bois de Boulogne or the Arc de Triomphe; a German desires you to smoke something; an Italian to buy something; and an Australian to kill something, but an American wants an opinion "right away."

"Waal, sur, what do you think of our gre—e—eat country? What do you think of this wonderful city? What do you think of the Amurrican gurl?"

This latter is a question which one is asked in the States morning, noon, and night.

To endeavour to effect a compromise by admitting that she is quite as charming as the English girl, as pretty—though of course of a different type—still equally [Pg 102] charming, is a waste of time. You will be met with the commonplace "Get out!" and an added enquiry, "Now don't you think she's just the most fascinating and lovely creature on this earth, and by comparison with your English girls ain't she just sweet?"

A WASHINGTON LADY.

My own tactics were simple—I hedged. [Pg 103]

"Well, you see," I replied to a question similar to the above, "I have met but few as yet of your representative American girls. To be sure, I have seen your cosmopolitan New York beauty, your Washington diplomat, and your Chicago daughter of Boom, and so on; but there are yet many fields of beauty unexplored, and I prefer to withhold my opinion till I have had an opportunity of judging from further experience. I am quite prepared to admit, however, that the general impression made upon an observant Englishman is that American ladies dress better than does the average Englishwoman; or, at any rate, carry themselves with more grace, and thus show off their gowns to greater advantage."

"Correct! That is absolutely true," said a lady to me in Washington, after I had delivered myself of the above stereotyped remark. "Your English girls have awful figures, and they know absolutely nothing about putting on their gowns. Why, my dressmaker in London—the very best—made me laugh till I was nearly sick, by describing to me the stupidity of her English customers. She declares that she positively has to pin on a new dress when sending it home, a label stating: 'This is the front'; and one day, when she omitted this precaution, she had a riding-habit returned with the complaint that it did not 'set' correctly. The lady had put it on wrong side foremost." This was told me in all seriousness by one of the brightest and most intelligent ladies I met during my stay in America, who, I am quite sure, was firmly convinced of the truth of the statement made by the dressmaker.

It happened that one day I had been hard at work in my rooms at the hotel, and as the daylight failed, before turning on the unrestful electric light, I lit a cigarette and threw myself into the rocking-chair to enjoy a peaceful quarter of an hour, when a knock came to the door and a card was brought to me, "Miss Liza Prettyville Simmerman, the *Examiner*."

Another interviewer! Had the card been Patrick McKee O'Fleister, the *Examiner* might disappear with the setting sun for aught I cared, but the name struck me as being pretty (lady interviewers generally have pretty names). It occurred to me [Pg 104] that it would be interesting to see if the name fitted the owner, so I said I would see her.

It fitted. "Sorry to disturb you," with a delightful accent and musical voice. A pretty interviewer! A pretty American girl with a musical voice! A *rara avis*.

I ordered up tea for two.

"You know, sir, what I am going to ask you. What do you think of the American girl?"

"That," I said, "I'll tell you on one condition, Miss Simmerman, that you first tell me what you think of her yourself."

"Ah!" she replied, with a laugh, "that is not so easy a task—we do not see ourselves as others see us."

"No, Miss Simmerman, and even when one

A LADY INTERVIEWER.

listens to strangers, or reads their impressions, one is apt to form a wrong estimate of oneself. Let me therefore change the question, and ask, what do you think of the English girl?"

"Oh! I think she is delightful."

"How would you describe the typical English girl?"

"Well, she is very tall and thin, and quiet, and has a nice voice, lots of hair, and walks well."

"And talks seldom?"

"Yes, she is not as vivacious as the American girl, but she is more sincere and thorough, and a deeper thinker, and not so much merely on the surface as our girls are."

"But," I put in, "you say, do you not, that she does not know how to dress her hair or wear her clothes properly?"

"Yes, that is so, and it is noticeable more particularly in her headgear, which she wears well over her eyes; in fact the higher she is in the social scale, the more tilted is her hat. One thing the American girls do envy is the healthy, fresh, clear complexion of the English girl. The green of the grass and the splendid complexion of your girls are the two things which first strike the American visiting England. Both of these, we are told, are due to the climate, and this doubtless is a fact, for when an American girl has been in England a short time the colour comes to her cheeks, only to disappear on her return to her native land. Another thing we admire is the English girl's figure. American girls are either slim as compared with English girls, or else very stout. We have not the happy medium of the daughters of England." [Pg 105]

"Pardon me, but is not the pale-faced daughter of America a little spoilt?"

"From an English point of view, yes. American men's one idea besides work is the worship of American women. You say anything you like about America or Americans to Jonathan, but you must give nothing but praise to the American woman."

"But we in England love our women folk also."

"Ah! yes, but there is not such a contrast between an Englishman and an English lady as there is between an American and his wife. Our 'Qui Vive' women are so much superior to the men."

"I will admit that."

"Very well, then, I will admit that American girls are somewhat awkward with their arms, and have no idea what to do with them. As they walk they stick their elbows out, and when they stand still they hold their arms exactly the way the dressmakers pose when having a dress tried on."

"I suppose they have little use for their arms?"

"Well, as a fact, American girls do not busy themselves or enjoy work as English girls do. Their fathers, husbands, and brothers work, and they look on."

A SKETCH AT "DEL'S."

"Yes, I have noticed that all over the States. Women talk, men listen, but when men talk it is dollars, dollars, dollars. The girl is bored, and sighs for London or Paris, until she is old enough to talk dollars herself." [Pg 106]

In face, I notice, the American girl is quite distinct from her English sister. I notice a difference in the way the upper lip sweeps down from the outer edge of the nostril; but more noticeable still is the fact that the cheek-bones of the American girls are not so prominent, and the smooth curve down the cheek to the chin is less broken by smaller curves. In social life the American girl charms an Englishman by

her natural and unaffected manner. Our English girls are very carefully brought up, and are continually warned that this thing or that is "bad form." As a result, when they enter Society they are more or less in fear of saying or doing something that will not be considered suitable. As a matter of fact they are not lacking in energy or vivacity, but these qualities are suppressed in public, and only come to the surface in the society of intimates. American girls from childhood upwards are much more independent; they have much more freedom and encouragement in coming forward than ours. The vivacity and liberty expected of an American girl in social intercourse are considered—as I say—bad form for our girls.

YOUNG AMERICA.

The observant stranger will, if an artist, also be struck by the fact that the face of an American girl, as well as the voice, is often that of a child; in fact, if one were not afraid of being misunderstood, and therefore thought rude, one could describe the American girl better by saying that she has a baby's face on a woman's body than by any word-painting or brush-painting either. The large forehead, round eyes, round cheeks, and round lips of the baby remain; and, as the present fashion is to dress the hair ornamentally after the fashion of a doll, the picture is complete.

The eyes of an American girl are closer together than those of her English cousin, and are smaller; her hands are smaller, too, and so are her feet, but neither are so well-shaped as the English girls.

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Let me follow the American girl from her babyhood upwards. The first is the baby, plump, bright-eyed, and with more expression than the average English child; a little older, see her still plump, short-legged, made to look stout by the double covering of the leg bulging over the boots; older, but still some years from her teens, she is still plump from the tip of her toe to her eyebrow, with an expression and a manner ten years in advance of her years, and you may take it from this age onwards the American girl is always ten years in advance of an English girl; next the school-girl; then that ungainly age "sweet seventeen." She seems twenty-seven, and thenceforwards her plumpness disappears generally, but remains in her face, and the cheeks and chin of the baby are still with her.

Suddenly, ten years before the time, and in one season, happens what in the life of an English matron would take ten. The bubble bursts, the baby face collapses, just as if you pricked it with a pin, and she is left sans teeth, sans eyes, sans beauty, sans everything. This is the American girl in a hurry, and these remarks only apply to the exhausted New York, the sensational Chicago, the anxious Washington, and the over-strained child of that portion of America in a hurry.

AN AMERICAN MENU.

I have not quite made up my mind as to whether I like the American girl or her mother the better. They are both vivacious and charming, but of course the younger is the prettier, and in point of attractiveness scores more than her mother.

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It is true, as I have said, that American girls do "go off" very soon. I must confess that one evening at dinner, surrounded by charming young Americans, I was bold enough to say so. It was a very inopportune moment to have made the remark, for seated next to me was a remarkably fine and handsome young lady, who informed me that she had five sisters—I think it was five—and I was assured by our host that they were all of them as "elegant" as my fair neighbour, and that the mother looked as young as the daughters.

At the reception, after dinner, I was introduced to the mother, and found the exception that proved the rule. We had quite a discussion upon the staying powers of the American beauty; but despite all arguments I am convinced, through my own observations in England and America, that American ladies do not wear so well as English. No doubt this is due, in some measure, to the climate, and in a greater degree to the mode of living. However, before dealing with this rather ticklish subject, I had better finish what I had to say about the evening in question, or this particular young lady may take my remarks as personal.

We discussed age and wear and tear

MY PORTRAIT—*IN THE FUTURE.*

ad nauseam. I felt rather aggrieved by being put down by those members of the Press who had discussed my personal failings for the benefit of their readers, as several years older than I really am (all due, no doubt, to my premature baldness). So I asked for the secret of the American hair-preserving elixir, and my charming companion assured me that she had really and truly discovered an infallible composition for producing hair! This she promised to send to me, and upon my return to England I received the following charming letter, which I publish for the benefit of all those whose hair, like my own, is becoming, to quote an American paper, "a little depleted on the top of the dome of thought." I have not yet tried the remedy, but I intend to do so, and when I appear again on the American platforms I shall probably rival Paderewski, who owes a great deal of his success and fortune to his "thatch."

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The following is copyright: "**LIKA JOKO HAIR RESTORER.**"

"My dear *Mr. Furnace*,

"Fearing you would think me lacking in a sense of humor I have hesitated to send you the receipt you asked for, but, being an American, I fear it would not be true to my country's principles to allow such an opportunity for promoting growth to pass unheeded.

Two tablespoonsful alcohol,
Two tablespoonsful flour of sulphur,
Two tablespoonsful castor oil,
One pint boiling water.

"Put in bottle, shake well and allow it to stand three days before using. Rub well into the scalp every night.

"Here it is, and I trust soon to receive the pen and ink sketch in proof of its unrivalled success.

"Very sincerely,
"———"

"Brooklyn,
"April 20th, 1892."

I suppose my benefactress, if I disclosed her name, would be worried to death by the multitudinous proprietors of shiny-surfaced "domes of thought." Notice she calls me a furnace! Too suggestive of the sulphur! alcohol!! boiling water!!!

I must confess that it was with some trepidation I accepted an invitation to a reception of the Twelfth Night Club of New York—a club for ladies only, which invites one guest, a man, once a month—no other member of male sex is allowed within the precincts of the club. I survived. Next day the papers announced the fact under the following characteristic American headlines:—

TWELFTH NIGHT GIRLS REJOICE.
FURNISS GETS A WARM GREETING.

CARICATURIST TALKS TO TWELFTH NIGHT WOMEN.

ROTUND ENGLISHMAN TELLS HIS EXPERIENCES IN HIS BREEZY WAY.

I AM ENTERTAINED AT THE TWELFTH NIGHT CLUB.

I was pleased to read that the lady reporter considered that I "bore the courtesies with the grace of a well-bred Englishman and with less embarrassment than the average man evinces at being the only one of his sex present upon these occasions(!). According to one of the iron bound rules of this club the guest of honour is the only man admitted, and as such Mr. Furniss was received with enthusiasm. If he could have projected his astral body to the other end of the room, and from there have sketched himself as he turned off autographs to the pleading group of women, it would not have made the least funny picture in his collection."

I agree in this latter part, for the whole affair struck me as intensely funny, and not at all appalling—in fact, I spent a very delightful afternoon. A lady whose dress the papers described as "a costume of brown brocade and lace" played beautifully. [Pg 111] Another "dressed in grey satin and chiffon" sang charmingly. A third who wore "a skirt of black and a primrose bodice trimmed with lace" recited with much talent, and a galaxy of the belles of New York, ladies of society, and professional stars of the pen, the platform and the stage combined to make feel at home. I had to acknowledge in thanking them that although I perhaps failed to draw American women, American women had certainly succeeded in drawing me.

After this pleasant experience it was with a light heart I accepted a similar invitation when shortly afterwards I visited another city. Again I was to be entertained at a Ladies' Club, but to my surprise I found it, not as I did the New York Club, modestly accommodated in a large flat, but a club having its own imposing building—as important as any in the West End of London. Carriages lined the street, and a crowd surrounded the entrance. Still, I was not unhappy. The entertainment would surely be proportionately long, and I would have less to say. I was, as at the other club, unprepared, preferring to pick up some idea for a reply during the entertainment prepared to honour me. The hall and staircases were crowded with a most fashionable gathering; two large reception-rooms—with open folding doors—were well filled with ladies seated. The President met me at the door and escorted me to a small platform in the centre of the rooms, on which were a reading-desk and a glass of water! After formally and briefly introducing me, she asked if any man was present. It so happened that in a corner behind the piano one was found and immediately ejected, and I was left alone to begin! My first impulse was to make a rush for that corner behind the piano, but rows and rows of seated dazzling beauty formed a barricade I could not negotiate. I had in the few words of introduction caught the name of Sir Edwin Arnold and others who had stood where I did at that moment. Yes,—but they were doubtless warned beforehand of what was expected of them, and therefore came prepared. I, on the other hand, stood there "flabbergasted"! I confess I never felt so cornered. No, if I had been cornered—but there on a platform to face the music! No, not the music, [Pg 112] there was none! I had to speak—about what? for how long? to whom?

RECEPTION AT A LADIES' CLUB.

I made a plunge. I confessed honestly I was unprepared. I explained that I had accepted the invitation on my arrival—believing I was to be entertained, not to be the entertainer. That I had none of the flattering phrases ready of those who had stood before them on similar occasions, and furthermore I did not believe in such platitudes. This I quickly saw was my key.

"Now, ladies, as I am face to face with this unique gathering of American women—and alone—I have at last a chance I have long waited for. I want to tell what I *really* think of you. I respect you for your cleverness. To roll off empty compliments and—if I could—poetical platitudes also with my tongue in my cheek, as others have done, would be to insult your intelligence. You only want to hear me speak on one subject, yourselves, the American woman, and compare her with the English woman. Let me first speak as an artist. [Pg 113]

WIFE AND HUSBAND.

"Now, if there is one thing I have heard repeatedly from the lips of American women it is that the English man is superior to the English girl. You, in fact, look upon the English girl with contempt. You certainly admire and emulate to a certain extent the fashionable Society women of England, but the ordinary English girl you treat with indifference, and speak of with contumely. You look upon her as a badly-dressed idiot. That may strike your ears as a sweeping assertion, but my ears have tingled over and over again by hearing that very sentiment coming from your own pretty mouths. Now, as we are alone, let me say a word or two on that point. You say the English woman is a fool. You say that the English man is bright, clever and brave. One has only to look round the world to realise that your opinion of the English man is right. That one little dot on the map, England, predominates the greater portion of the globe. That is the result of the plucky and accomplished English man you so much admire. Now, I will ask you one question. Did you ever hear of a clever man who had a stupid mother? The history of the world shows that all great men had mothers with brains. In considering this recollect that we are agreed that the English man is superior to the American man. Does that show that the American mothers are cleverer than the English mothers? No,—it points to the reverse, that the English girl you look down upon, under her soft, gentle manner has something superior to you American women—she has solidity and brain-power. That is why the English man is superior [Pg 114]

to the American. Now, ladies, you, with your pretty faces, your charming manners, your vitality, and shall I say it? your worldliness, have boys who are—well, equal to what you consider the English girl to be. Of course it is always unsafe to generalise, but as you generalise yourselves and sweepingly assert that the English girls are born idiots, I want you to understand from a man who has not come here to tell you lies, but to tell you the truth, that if America is really to be the great country of the future, the sooner you begin to model yourselves on the English girls the better."

I said a great deal more, but I shall not confess anything further about the charming American ladies just now.

A DREAM OF THE WHITE HOUSE.

We English have an impression that all American men, women, and children are politicians, and it is the dream of every youthful American one day to occupy the White House. But in the great contest of 1896 there was something deeper than mere ambition. When I went over in the steamer I travelled with some overworked, big city merchants who were sacrificing their holiday in Europe to vote for Mr. McKinley; the little children wore the national flag in their buttonholes; and the last evening we had at sea a lady called me on to the deck and said, "Look at that beautiful golden sunset! It is a symbol that America is for gold." And as we looked behind at the sea-mist we had passed through, she found in that the symbol of silver! In fact, for a foreigner, I had had quite enough of the Presidential election before the steamer arrived at the White Star Line landing-stage.

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I crossed the Herring Pond in chill October, so as to be in New York for the last stages of the Presidential contest. The last stages of these elections, although exciting and interesting from a political point of view, are not to be compared with the earlier scenes for effect. For the purpose of sketching scenes the artist should be there in the heat of summer, and in the heat of the Conventional controversies. At the time of brilliant sunshine, when in that year America was so much *en évidence* in England, when Yale was rowing so pluckily at Henley, when Haverford College was playing our schools at our national game, when the Ancient and Honourable Artillery Company of Boston were being fêted right royally in the Old Country, when London was fuller of American visitors than at any other time—it was then that all the fun of political affairs was taking place in the United States for the fight for Gold *v.* Free Silver.

It is at the two gigantic Conventions at which the rival candidates are nominated that the artist finds material for his pencil, the satirist for his pen, and the man of the world food for reflection. By all accounts, these Conventions baffle description. Everything is sacrificed to spectacular effect. They take place in huge buildings decorated with banners, emblems of all kinds, startling devices, transparencies, and portraits of the candidates. Bands play different airs at the same time; processions are formed and marched all over the hall, carrying emblems and portrait banners, the State delegates carrying the State standards in front of each procession to the cheers and yells of their supporters. Similar demonstrations are carried on in the galleries. Girls dressed symbolically representing silver or gold, or some topic of interest in the election, wave flags and lead demonstrations, perhaps acting as an antidote to the less attractive surroundings.

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The election being a purely commercial question, I attended the meetings held in commercial districts, where the excitement ran high. During the lunch hour crowds attend the political gatherings held in the centre of the business districts in large stores turned into halls for speechifying and demonstrations, and great as the subject is, and grave as is the issue, the ludicrous is the first feature to strike the stranger. A great empty store, running the whole length of the ground floor of one of the monster ten, twenty, or what you will storied buildings, was appropriated for the purpose. The bare walls were draped with stars and stripes, and innumerable portraits of McKinley and Hobart confronted you on every side. In the centre was a roughly-constructed platform; on this a piano and seats for the orators. At 12.30 sharp (the business lunch hour) a crowd surged in; bankers, brokers, dry goods merchants, clerks, messengers, and office-boys, straight from the Quick Lunch Counters—a great institution there—filling every corner of the hall. An attendant carried the inevitable pitcher of ice water to the orators' table; a

"Professor" hastily seated himself at the piano and played a few bars; a solemn-faced quartette took its position in front of the rostrum, and the meeting was opened.

THE POLITICAL QUARTETTE.

The campaign songsters had taken a leaf from the Salvation Army, and appropriated all popular airs for political purposes. Praises of Sound Money and Protection were sung to the air of "Just tell them that you saw me," and denunciations of Bryan, Free Silver, and all things Democratic to the tune of "Her golden hair was hanging down her back!" The quartette aroused the greatest enthusiasm. An aged Republican seated immediately in front of the platform, who had voted every Republican ticket since Lincoln was elected, waved his stick over his head, and the crowd responded with cheers and encores. The quartette retired, the chairman advanced, motioned with his hand for silence, and announced the name of the first orator of the occasion, who happened to be a clergyman—a tiresome, platitudinous person. Somehow, clergymen on the platform can never divest themselves of their pulpit manner. They bring an air of pews and Sabbath into secular things. The minister denounced Bryan and Democracy in the same tones he used in declaiming against Agag and the Amalekites on Sunday. At last he brought his political sermon to a close, and the quartette again came to the front, sang a few more political adaptations of popular songs, and the chairman announced the next speaker, a smart young lawyer of the Hebrew persuasion. After him, more songs and more speakers of all kinds, and at half-past one the meeting came to an abrupt conclusion. The crowd vanished like magic, the hall was empty, the lunch hour was over! [Pg 117]

When night fell, oratory was again rampant in all parts of the city. At every street corner one saw a waggon decorated with a few Chinese lanterns and covered with portraits of the candidates. In front the orator shouted to the casual mob, and at the tail end his companion distributed campaign literature. One crowd exhausted, the waggon drove on, and gathered more listeners at another stand. In this way, in strolling through the streets, one was met with a fresh line of argument at every turning. Republicans, Democrats, Prohibitionists, Socialists, etc., all had their perambulating orators. It was as if all the Sunday Hyde Park orators had taken to waggons, and were driven about through all quarters of the town, from Whitechapel to Kensington. At one street corner a Catholic priest was rallying his Irish compatriots to Tammany and Bryan, and urging them to shake off the fetters of the bloated British capitalist; and at the next a Temperance orator was pleading the hopeless cause of the Prohibitionist party. [Pg 118]

The campaign was not so much a fight between Silver and Gold as between Sound Money and Sound Lungs.

BRYAN'S CAMPAIGN.

Number of speeches delivered	501
Cities and towns spoken in	417
States spoken in	29
Miles travelled since the nomination	17,395
Number of words spoken on the stump (estimated)	737,000

WHAT BRYAN DID IN ONE DAY.

Travelled from Jacksonville, Ill., to Alton, Ill., and spoke in seven towns and cities.	
Slept eight hours.	
Talked seven hours.	
Miles travelled,	110.
Speeches made,	9.
Persons who heard him,	60,000.

It would be impertinent on the part of any English journalist to use the ordinary language at his command to describe that scene. Let him copy the headings of those who have given the people of the United States a language of their own:

ARMY OF LOYALISTS.

A Hundred and Twenty Thousand Men March with Old Glory up Broadway.

GRANDEST PARADE IN ALL HISTORY.

The Great Thoroughfare a Tossing Sea of Red, White, and Blue and Gold.

Cheers and Music fill the Air with Melody.

Legions Marshalled for the Honor and Safety of the Union and the Prosperity of the People.

PATRIOT ARMY'S GLORIOUS MARCH.

WARRIORS OF PEACE, BATHED IN GOLDEN SUNLIGHT, PASS THROUGH STAR-SPANGLED LINES.

PARADE'S RECORD-MAKING FIGURES.

Number in Line,	125,000.
Miles long (estimated),	14.
Parade started at 10 a.m.	
Parade finished at 6.26 p.m.	
Number of spectators (estimated),	1,200,000.

No pen or pencil could give any idea of the intense feeling and excitement over that election. To realise its effect one must have seen the faces of business men in cities like New York—faces pallid with care, eyes restless with inquiry and uncertainty, mouths twitching with anxiety. To them Bryan spelt ruin. You could read that in the faces of every one of responsibility. [Pg 119]

We had huge meetings and long speeches from morning to midnight. In the churches the pulpits were turned into hustings, and for the moment ministers preached the Gospel and McKinley in equal proportions. Miles of sound money men paraded the streets, and at night the rivers north and east were given over to political aquatic demonstrations. Huge banners flaunted the sky, and tons of party literature strewed the floors of every house; but the whole story was better told and more impressively demonstrated in the faces of those united in commerce—99 per cent. of the better class in the city. They looked worn and anxious; their words were words of confidence, but expressed with an uncertainty and reserve which were significant.

One day I met a prominent citizen—an ardent Republican—and I asked him how he thought the elections were going. He said, "I feel like the old woman Ingersoll tells of, who did not believe in ghosts, but was terribly frightened of them." This reminds me that the Free-thinking Ingersoll had been stumping the country, and clergymen, such as Dr. Parkhurst, had been turning their pulpits into political platforms to bring their influence to bear on the voters. To all those who were in New York during that momentous time the scene will linger in their memories when the names of Bryan and McKinley have ceased to interest them.

And the curious thing is that this is no exaggeration. To see, as I did, thousands of well-dressed city men marching past at quick time, with martial tread, to the music of innumerable bands, from half-past ten in the morning till seven o'clock at night, is a performance that Englishmen can hardly realise, and one that they will certainly never see in their own country. Its very seriousness, simplicity, and impressive monotony made it all the more striking. Not a soldier to be seen, no triumphal cars, no break in the stream of respectability mechanically moving throughout the day. In England, on public demonstrations, one goes to look at the crowd, but here the crowd was the procession. This political fever seemed to work up the enthusiasm of every man, woman, and child when the march was over, on, I may tell you, a bright, hot Indian summer's day in November. [Pg 120]

AFTER THE GREAT PARADE: "AM I TO SIT ON AN ORDINARY SEAT TO-NIGHT?"

Crowds of the paraders continued to march in smaller squads through the side streets for their own enjoyment, and overflowed into hotel lobbies and restaurants, covered with emblems, flags, gold bugs, and chrysanthemums, which were brought into the city by thousands for the occasion. And then some humour was imported into the serious business of the day. One youth strolled into a *café*, and when he was offered a chair by the waiter, he drew himself up, and said, "Am I to sit on an ordinary seat to-night?" They blew their tin horns, rattled their rattles, and waved their flags in and out of every place until late at night, and they were still singing and demonstrating in [Pg 121] the morning, but with that extraordinary common-sense which is characteristic of Americans, the Bryanites and the McKinleyites shaking hands and setting about their business with redoubled energy, having another crisis in the country to record as a landmark in the history of the republic.

On the last day of my first visit to America I found myself in the head depôt of the New York detective force. The courteous and talented presiding genius of that establishment had left his busy office to show me over their museum, a chronicle of the city's crime, and as I was thanking him afterwards, he said:

"Is there anything I can do for you?"

"Well," I replied, "I have seen the best side of life in New York, now I should like to see the worst."

"The very worst?"

"The worst you have."

The worthy officer eyed me up and down as if he were going to measure me for a suit of clothes.

"Very well," he replied, seemingly satisfied with my resolute bearing and undaunted mien and determined visage, which showed my daring and enterprise. Beside me a Stanley or a Burton would have looked effeminate. "A detective will be at your hotel at ten o'clock to-night."

And he was.

I had just come in from dinner, and had changed my clothes for an old suit that had braved the weather in crossing, and was consequently well salted by Atlantic brine.

"May I offer you a cocktail?" I say.

"No, thank you," he replies.

(*His* nerve doesn't want fortifying, evidently!) Mine does, so I have a Manhattan as I hastily pencil a line to my wife to be sent to England in case I do not leave by the *Majestic* next day.

"Now, then, what's your programme?" said I in an airy way, as we reached the street.

"Trust to me," said the "'tec," "interfere with no one, and keep your pencil and your notebook in your pocket till I tell you. Keep your mouth shut and your ears and eyes open, and as they say in [Pg 122] the pantomime, 'you shall see what you shall see.'"

We were soon whizzing along the elevated railway, and I was trying to impress my guide with stirring tales of midnight meanderings in the greater city, London. I left out any mention of Dublin, for my companion rejoiced in a truly Milesian cognomen, and still bore strong evidence of

his native country in his accent, mixed with a good dash of American.

"Guess you're a pretty 'cute Britisher, and shure it's the likes of you I'm mighty glad to strike in this *tre*menjious city!"

I felt somewhat flattered by this encouraging condescension, and I admit now that I did not feel particularly happy at the idea of bearding the thieving lion, with his hyena-like satellites, in his den. I felt something like a criminal under arrest myself, and I am sure that everyone in the car must have thought that the world-famed detective force of New York had added another notorious catch to the many they have so cleverly made.

As we passed close to the windows of the houses, and actually looked into the rooms on the second and third stories, Detective Jonathan H. O'Flaherty would point out to me a room here and there which was being watched by his comrades, and as we approached nearer and nearer to the purlieus of the poor, he positively detected seated in rooms in shady hotels which harboured thieves a forger, a housebreaker, and other notabilities of a worse character. Indeed, I would not have been surprised had the arm of the law been literally stretched out at any moment, and one of these gentlemen transferred from his seat through the window and deposited by my side in the carriage.

America is a free country. England, we are assured, is not; but the fact that the police are allowed to arrest anybody they please without showing any authority whatever is a curious contradiction which the Britisher may be pardoned for smiling at. [Pg 123]

Detective Jonathan H. O'Flaherty and I had a rather warm argument upon this point, and I must say that in the end I had to admit that there was a good deal to be said in favour of the utter want of liberty to which Americans have to submit.

"For instance," said my guide, "to-morrow is a public holiday. At daybreak I guess we'll be afther locking up every thief, vagabond, and persons suspected of being varmint of this description in this great city, and it's free lodgings they'll have till the holiday's played out. In that way crime is avoided, and the truth of the saying proved that 'prevention is better than cure.'"

ITALIANS.

"But there is an unpleasant feeling that this autocratic power may lead to mistakes. In England the police must have a warrant," I said.

"Guess, stranger, if we waited for a warrant the varmint'd vanish, and there'd be the divil to pay. No, sir, I reckon we Amurricans don't wait for anything—we just take the law into our own hands right away. A short time ago I was sitting enjoying some singing in one of the saloons in the Bowery here, and right through in front of me sat two foreigners with the most perfect false whiskers on that I ever clapped eyes on. That was enough for me. I went outside, sent one of my men for assistance, and then sent in a theatrical lady's card to one of the gentlemen. The bait was taken, and he came out. We arrested him straight away, and made him send in for his friend, who came out, and we nailed him as well. Turned out afterwards that they had come to kill one of the actresses—love affair, revenge, and all that sort of thing. In your country guess you'd have arrested them after the murder; we had them before. There was no harm done, but they got a fine of a few dollars." [Pg 124]

He put his hand suddenly upon mine as he said this. For a second I thought that he imagined *my* whiskers were false, and that this was only a plant to lock me up! It was evident my nerves were becoming unstrung, and as soon as we were in the street my good-humoured and excellent guide told me that in another five minutes we would begin our voyage of discovery. We passed through the Chinese quarter, down Mott Street, and I could not but feel a pang of sympathy for these aliens, looked upon by the Americans as vermin. It is a strange war, this between John Chinaman and Sambo for the vassalage of the States; but in poor England, the asylum of the alien, all nationalities have an equal chance, and the nigger, the Chinaman, the Jew, and the German can walk arm in arm, whether in the squalid streets of Spitalfields or the aristocratic precincts of Pall Mall.

But there is a war going on in London between two races of different colour, undisturbed and unseen, for the gory scenes of warfare are enacted in the bowels of the earth. It is to the death, and has been going on for years, the combatants being the red cockroach and the blackbeetle. Both came to our shores in ships from distant lands. The blackbeetles were first, and had possession of underground London, but the cockroaches followed, disputed the right of territory, and thus the war began. The latest reports from the seat of war assert that the cockroaches are victorious all along the line as far as Regent's Park.

But this is digression. I merely made use of the cockroach simile because it occurred to me as I traversed the Italian quarter and gazed upon its denizens, an occasional accidental rub against one of whom made me shudder. Innocent they may be, but they don't look it, and when I was taken up a court—a horrible, dark, dank *cul-de-sac*—and shown the identical spot which a few weeks beforehand had been the scene of a murder, I made a sketch in the quickest time on record, keeping one eye on the ghastly place and the other on a window where a ragged blind was pulled quickly and nervously back, and a white face peered suddenly out and as suddenly retreated.

I did the same, pulling my detective friend after me. [Pg 125]

WHERE THE DEED WAS DONE!

[Pg 126]
[Pg 127]

It is said that one-half the world does not know how the other half lives, but not the ninety-ninth part knows how it dies. In the vicinity of Mulberry Bend I was shown a house in which another bloody deed had recently been perpetrated—another cockroach killed. The blood was as fresh and visible as that of Rizzio in Holyrood Palace, but this excited no curiosity among the passers-by—crimes are more plentiful than mulberries here.

Paradise Park, The Bowery, New York, is a very high-sounding address. It is one that any European might imagine as a retreat of aristocratic refinement and sylvan beauty; there is nothing in the name to suggest the Seven Dials of London in its old days; and yet the place is its counterpart, the only difference being that the Five Points, as it is called, is two degrees worse than the Seven Dials that's, all!

Standing at these misnamed crossways, I noticed hurrying past an Italian woman bearing a load of household furniture on her back, and followed by a man—her husband, I was told—cursing her.

"They always move at night," said my guide. "The women do all the carrying, and this is in a country where woman reigns *soo*preme, too!"

Next comes a youth with a crutch.

"One of the cleverest thieves in the city. No one suspects him—guess his crippling is his fortune."

I should like to tell you of other interesting people I saw, of my perambulations through Baxter Street, the Jewish quarter, of the visits to the joss house, opium joint, grocery stores, halls of dazzling delight, and dens of iniquity I made that night. I had my sketches and notes before me to continue this chapter, when I received a New York paper. In it I discovered

an illustrated article headed "In His Own Black Art," purporting to be an account of my visit to the slums with a detective. After reading it I laid down my pen and took up my scissors, I felt it impossible to disclose any more. The rest I leave to my shadower on that occasion, reproducing also some of the sketches this "faithful copper-fastened distorter of features" set down, with many thanks to him and a sincere wish that his headache is better. [Pg 128]

IN AN OPIUM JOINT.

"IN HIS OWN BLACK ART.

"Mr. Furniss writes very cleverly, it should be said. He writes good London English, for he, like many of 'the infernally good fellows' of Fleet Street, 'don't you know,' believes that the vernacular is only written in its virgin purity in that city. However, let that pass.

"But there was one thing that I couldn't consent, even as his friend, to overlook. Mr. Furniss was determined to go 'slumming.' He had letters to several members of the police department, but the friends who had given these valuable credentials had evidently selected only the captains of the highly respectable precincts. Of course, they could not imagine that Mr. Furniss would want to visit the joss house and opium joints of Chinatown. Nobody would, to look at him. And yet, in his tireless study of 'American' character, he penetrated even these mysteries. [Pg 129]

"Everything was arranged for the tour during the night before his departure on the *Majestic*. It was a charmingly dark night, admirably suited for those *chiaroscuro* effects that a black-and-white artist is supposed to seek even in his dreams. An experienced Central Office detective took him in hand with all the *savoir faire* of an Egyptian dragoman.

"HITTING THE PIPE.

"With the wisdom of an artist and the news-sense of a Park Row hustler, Mr. Furniss lit a cigarette, and said:

"'Show me all.'

"This remark filled me with terror. Was it right to permit this well-meaning but over-zealous friend of my country, my people and myself to sound the depths of social degradation in the metropolis and lard an otherwise charming book with screed and sketches dragged from the slums? He was likely to mistake Donovan's Lane for Harlem Lane, and Paradise Square for Maddison Square! Any man would be liable to do so after a few days' visit to a strange city. How many of the American birds of passage who flock to London every summer know the distinction between Mitre and Capel Courts? One is the scene of a ghastly Whitechapel murder; the other is the financial center of the Eastern world!

"When, therefore, it was seen to be impossible to dissuade the talented young caricaturist from his blue-glass view of metropolitan society, it seemed necessary to provide for our self-defence.

One of the cleverest pen-and-ink artists in America was engaged to accompany the party as a second detective. A flying visit was paid to Mott Street, and the services of High Lung, a distinguished crayon manipulator, recently arrived (by way of Vancouver and the dark of the moon), were secured to make a Chinese-American caricature of the charming but over-curious Englishman.

"Everything worked to a charm. Mr. Furniss went where he intended. He saw all. He made sketches. He visited the shrine of the great Joss. He ate birds' nests and rice. He saw the deadly opium smoked, and 'hit the pipe' a few minutes himself.

[Pg 130]

"The night came to an end with dawn. Headache destroyed curiosity. Our own faithful, copper-fastened distorter of facial beauty set down in Mr. Furniss's black art what he had seen and did know. Here are the results, H. F. It is to be feared he has imitated your style.

"Bon voyage, master of the quick and the lead! Draw us, if you must; but draw not the long bow.

"J. C."

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CHAPTER X.

AUSTRALIA.

Quarantined—The Receiver-General of Australia—An Australian Guidebook—A Death Trap—A Death Story—The New Chum—Commercial Confessions—Mad Melbourne—Hydrophobia—Madness—A Land Boom—A Paper Panic—Ruin.

Sydney—The Confessions of a Legislator—Federation—Patrick Francis Moran.

Adelaide—Wanted, a Harbour—Wanted, an Expression—Zoological—Guinea-pigs—Paradise!—Types—Hell Fire Jack—The Horse—The Wrong Room!

ISE chroniclers are welcome to the opinion that "the dreaded Cape Leeuwin was first rounded by a Dutch vessel, 1622." All I can say is that the Cape has got sharpened again, for there is no roundness about save the billows of the Indian Ocean, which everlastingly dash against its side. I'll agree, however, with any chronicler that the cause of the chronic fury of the Indian Ocean at this point is caused through anger. To call that grand if barren promontory after a twopenny-halfpenny Dutch cockle-shell is a gross insult to the thousands of miles of sea between that point and any other land. Fortunately the little Dutch vessel had a name which sounds all right if only pronounced in plain English—*Lioness* in place of *Leeuwin*—but the vessel might have been called *Rats*, or *Schnapps*, or some other name even less dignified, and one that would have been adopted just the same. It is the principle of the thing that the great sea objects to, and it is not slow to show its rage, as all who round it know full well. Chroniclers are found who [Pg 132] seem to have agreed that the name is the whole cause of the roaring winds and waves around Cape Leeuwin, but that the roughness is in reality the result of satisfaction in bearing one so awe-inspiring, and that the "Lioness" is trying to live up to her natural wildness and fury, and fully succeeding in doing it.

I regret that I was in too great a hurry to visit Fremantle, which lies at the head of the Lioness, particularly as on my journey to Australia I had cut out the following passage from a description I came across of that place. I read this, and re-read it, and still continue to read it, as a choice specimen of the guide-book-maker's delirium:

"The first *coup d'œil* of Fremantle is a white scattered township on an undulating plain fringed by a sea-beach and scant vegetation. As you land you are struck on all sides with the unusual activity around you. Long sinuous trains of loaded cargo trucks are coming and going, locomotive whistles warning the pedestrian to beware, lines of rails intersecting each other, crowds of lumpers, and the busy air of a large shipping centre bewilder you, and you are carried back to some old-world port where ships of all nations call and disgorge their lading."

COALING.

There! Are you not anxious to go to a place with the assurance that you will be struck on all sides as soon as you land with unusual activity? Do you not burn to see what "a long sinuous train" is like? Are you not willing to brave the dangerous locomotives crossing the intersecting lines of railways, just to see those crowds of lumpers? Then to be bewildered by the busy mercantile air, and before you have time to fully realise all this you are to be "carried back to some old-world port where ships of all [Pg 133] nations call and disgorge their lading."

That last proposal settled my mind; no attractive trains or lumpers, undulating plains or scant vegetation, or anything equally attractive, would induce me to arrive at a place, after five or six weeks' travelling to get there, to find myself at once carried back to some old-world port before seeing something of the rest of Australia to repay one for the long and tedious journey. I therefore avoided Fremantle.

There is one attraction to visit that port which the traveller from the Old World will appreciate, after his experience of the fleecing dues and charges at Adelaide, Melbourne, and other Australian ports, in which officials all but tear the clothes off the visitor's back to tax them. In this port your mantle at least is free.

In spite of the following paragraph from the same source: "Western Australia has emerged into the full glare of the world's light and renown, and not to know its golden wonders is to argue oneself unknown," I determined to remain in obscurity.

The guide-books assure us Albany deserves more than "passing notice." This is true enough, but travellers do not always get a chance of giving the place its deserts. This was particularly the case with me on my first visit. Quarantine was then in force, and, with my fellow-passengers, I was forbidden to land. All I then saw of the people of Western Australia was limited to a few hours watching the coal-lumpers at work trucking coal along a

plank from an ancient hulk moored by the side of the P. and O. steamship *Victoria*. After the animated scenes of coaling at Malta and Aden, and particularly the wild, indescribable scene at Port Said, coaling at Albany fell decidedly flat. The [Pg 134] only diversion that varied the monotony of the proceedings was when a truck would capsize in its Blondin-like trip and pitch the coals into the sea.

THE most interesting personage in Albany is Captain B——, the harbour master. I call him the Receiver-General of Australia, for he is the first inhabitant of Australia to receive and welcome the new comer, and he is also the last to take farewell of the parting guest. Captain B—— has held the post of harbour master at King George's Sound, Albany, for over thirty years, and, though over seventy years of age, he seems equal to many years of service yet. Certainly a stranger gets a good impression of the country if he takes Captain B—— as a sample Australian, and one wonders, when one sees this fine old salt run up the gangway with the agility of a youth of seventeen, whether all Australians are equally active. Chatting with Captain B——, I complimented him on his youthful physique. "Why, sir," said he, "I can climb up anything. I can board the ship hand-over-hand on a rope and never touch the side with my feet." This seemed pretty good for a man of over seventy, but I did not regard it as an exaggeration. Captain B—— remembered his father and uncle, both naval men, going to the funeral of King George IV. His reminiscences included the experiences of singing in a choir at the coronation of the Queen, and also when Her Majesty was married. When the Captain ran down the gangway shouting orders to his men, the strength of his lungs was as evident as the agility of his body. Anyone who took this worthy official as a typical Australian would be greatly deceived. Diminutive in stature and voluble in speech, he is in every way the reverse to the average-born Australian. The Australian is generally tall, not to say lanky, and by no means communicative.

An American walked into the smoking-room of a P. and O. ship outward bound, as it was leaving St. George's Sound, threw himself down on a sofa, stuck his feet on to a table, spit, and said to [Pg 135] those in the saloon:

"I thank my stars I am clean out of that one-horse town Albany!"

Another traveller who had joined the ship at the same town and who lay huddled up in a corner more dead than alive after a severe attack of typhoid followed by pleurisy, remarked:

"Well, you must admit, sir, it is the healthiest place in Western Australia."

"Co-rect, stranger—co-rect," replied the Yankee. "Co-rect! guess that's why I have cleared out. This darned Albany is 90 per cent. of climate and only 10 per cent. of business."

SLEEPY HOLLOW.

I visited Albany on my return journey. It struck me that in "Sleepy Hollow" 90 per cent. of the natives were in bed and the other 10 per cent. were dozing on the seats on the parade.

When I started for the Antipodes the place that I looked forward to seeing more than any other was Western Australia. It is the part of Australia most discussed at home, where it is being boomed with all the artifice of the promoter's gang. Every ship brings living cargoes to Western Australia; every newspaper is full of Western Australia. On the front page are shipping advertisements offering every facility for quick and cheap transit; in the centre of the paper leading articles appear to ventilate the wonders of the West; towards the end of the paper—in the [Pg 136]

City news—thousands eagerly scan the Stock Exchange for prices of Western Australia. There is another column still in which one might find interesting news concerning Western Australia—the deaths column.

When I arrived in Australia the one place that I determined nothing should drag me to was Western Australia. No, not all the gold in the mines would get me to that pestilential plague spot. Here is a place boomed "at home" and abroad at the time of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, when nightly speeches were made at banquets glorifying the charms of the speculators' Eldorado, Western Australia—when columns were written of its boasted civilisation, and cheers were given when "Advance Australia" was roared out, and bumpers were drunk by the stop-at-home wirepullers. Just read the following, published at the moment:—

"A WESTERN PLAGUE SPOT.

"How Fever Is Raging in Perth.

> "Various visitors to Perth have expressed their opinions upon the awful conditions, from a sanitary point of view, of the Western city, and almost daily news is telegraphed across of the ravages from typhoid, pneumonia, and other diseases in consequence.
>
> "That the state of affairs is in no way exaggerated by prejudiced outsiders is proved by a full-page account in a recent issue of the Perth *Herald*, and which is headed: 'Typhoid Fever in Perth; An Alarming Situation; The Position of Affairs Grows Worse.'
>
> "The opinions of doctors, nurses, experts, and others are published, all going to show that public and private action is almost in every case as if the one aim was to increase the death-rate to the highest possible figures.
>
> "The water supply is contaminated; drainage runs into the catchment area, and even fæcal matter is plainly evident in the samples analysed; there is no supervision of the milk supply; vegetables are grown under most dangerous conditions; stagnant drains are in almost all the streets; about public places of recreation there are fever beds; many of the population are crowded in small boarding-houses like rabbits, and ordinary precautions for the removal of filth neglected, even if that were enough in itself; houses are built on pestilential swamps; the wind blows the dust about spots where the typhoid excrement has been deposited to breed germs by the million; and bread, meat, and other food carts go about uncovered to collect it, as if to make sure that any who escaped all other sources of the danger should not be allowed to escape the plague. [Pg 137]
>
> "Even the public esplanade has to be shunned, the silt from the sewer which is being used for reclaiming being a mass of foul matter.
>
> "It will interest 't'othersiders' to read this about the conditions of life:—
>
> "'Many of the dwellings in which the t'othersiders are to be found huddled together are first-class fever "germinators." The rooms are small, the ventilation bad, the bed linen rarely changed, while not the slightest attention whatever is paid to sanitation. It is estimated that there are at least 400 small tenements, from two to five rooms, serving as "boarding" and "lodging" houses, and in these over 3,000 persons are sheltered.'"

Stories of how fortunes are made and lives are lost in the race for wealth in Western Australia would fill volumes.

A typical story, and a genuine one to boot, is worth recording. A well-known racing man travelling on a steamer round the coast was attracted by a seedy, out-of-elbows individual seated all alone. He got into conversation with him. The seedy stranger was reticent about himself, but voluble about others, particularly those who were making their piles in Western Australia—he was going there if he had to walk. The idea of a man walking was a repulsive thought to a racing man, so he most generously insisted upon this dilapidated acquaintance accepting £10 to help him to get to the goldfields. The stranger was to pay him back some day if he ever struck oil. Time went on, and one morning the Good Samaritan received a letter with the £10 enclosed and a request to make an appointment. The two met again. The out-of-elbows fellow-traveller turned up to keep the appointment he had asked for, dressed in the height of fashion; he not only looked a millionaire, but he was one! Yet he was sad and depressed, and recited the history of his good fortune to the good-natured sportsman in a most dismal tone. Though his words were full of gratitude and thankfulness, he seemed, strange as it may appear, somewhat reproachful.

"Yes, thanks to you, I have struck a gold mine, the one the world is now talking about, and you shall have half of it; that is the reason I asked to see you."

"Not I," was the reply. "I don't want it; besides, you have relatives."

"I had," said the millionaire, looking sorrowfully away. "I had three brothers. I was very fond of [Pg 138] them, and sent for them when my luck came and, thanks to you, my fortune also. They arrived in Western Australia full of life and hope and jubilation, three of the finest and strongest fellows in

the Colonies. They were all dead and buried within a month—stricken down by the damned typhoid fever."

PROSPECTORS.

Every day I spent in Australia I had similar stories to these told me—of how those rushing into the death-trap to dig up gold were buried themselves instead. Every day I heard of the swindles as well as of the sewerage. Both the towns and the business stank. Bogus mines were foisted into the "new chum," and huge companies started to work them; businesses advertised as big affairs with tremendous capitals were in reality a paltry village hut or two, with a few pounds of goods flung into them.

If you are not robbed in England right away by such swindles, you are invited to sail for Western Australia.

I met the manager of a Western Australian mining property, who was justly savage at the influx of "new chums" sent out by the directors of the company he represents. These ne'er-do-wells, of [Pg 139] all ages and of all degrees of stupidity and vice, arrive weekly, with letters of recommendation from the London directors, and in most cases actual contracts signed for berths as book-clerks, secretaries, corresponding clerks, &c., &c.—worthless incumbrances, but, even should they be found capable, not a berth open for one per cent. sent out: a fault showing that the directors in London are ignorant of the working of things they are supposed to direct. A sharp manager, finding himself face to face with a cargo of these silly "new chums" so landed, after going carefully over the binding contracts they came armed with, addressed them thus:—

"You, Mr. Nogood, hold a contract made in London by your uncle, a director of this company, to be engaged on arrival as clerk at £10 a week. You, Mr. Boozer, are to be engaged at £6 a week as book-keeper; and you, Mr. Flighty, at £5 a week as an assistant engineer, and so on. Now, gentlemen, in my position as manager here I may tell you plainly that your relatives and friends—the directors in London—are not conversant with the business here in detail. Were they, I am certain, gentlemen, you would never have signed these contracts agreeing to give your valuable services to us for such a ridiculously small remuneration. Things are dearer here than in London, you know; you could not live on such miserable pittances. Now I am unfortunately in the unhappy position that whilst here absolutely at the head of affairs and an autocrat, I am at the same time bound to accept these contracts made in London, and am therefore powerless to improve your unfortunate acceptances of these posts assigned to you. However, if you will agree to tear up these contracts I shall engage you weekly all the same, but at double salaries. Do you agree to this, gentlemen?"

They all did. The contracts were destroyed, they received double salaries, for a fortnight, were not asked to do anything, and were all dismissed with a week's notice by the autocrat, the manager of the property, who has his picked, tried, and trusted men to do all the work necessary.

The Western Australian boom is over. The rooks have plucked every feather they can off the poor [Pg 140] pigeon. The Land of Promise, the Land of Myth, the Land of Sharks and Sharpers, is discovered by the paying public, and is in disgrace. Truth will out, and the truth about Western Australia is out of the designing promoter's bag now, never to be caught in it again. Africa suggests a comparison. In mining there is a great difference between Africa and Australia. Take, for instance, the Rand in Africa: it is one long reef of general excellence, divided into mines all of solid value. Australian mines, with one or two notable exceptions, do not run so; they are short, broken and erratic.

Each of these when struck may or may not yield the three ounces to the ton they are boomed as having, but what is not explained to the investing public is the fact that the mines are limited and uncertain—they are not continuous, they are most expensive to open and work, and consequently

they are practically worthless, and the investors' money is swamped and the land shows no return.

A man who has most exceptional experience in mining, in a conversation with me used an expression *à propos* of the character of the mining lodes. He said that they were "patchy." That expresses everything Australian. Australia is a patchy country. Look at the sheep stations: a good season or two, property investment, rush, extravagance, no rain, ruin, despair, exodus. So it is with land, with everything—it is patchy. The people are patchy. One set, pleasant, refined, kindly, lovable; the next objectionable, vulgar, low and detestable.

A friend of mine on board the steamer had the following interesting conversation with an Irish lady moving in Australian society:

"Do you happen to know Mrs. Larry O'B. and Mrs. Mike O'C.?

"Do I know thim? Well, iv course I do. Shure, me darlin', both of their husbands stood in the same dock wid moi husband on their thrial for murder—for killin' a process server in Oireland years ago. Moi husband was acquitted, worse luck!"

"Worse luck?" [Pg 141]

"Yis. Maybe y'don't know as how the other two gintlemen got sintinced and were sent out here as convicts, and both of thim now are millionaires, and my poor man is still workin' hard for his livin' in the ould counthry."

Hydrophobia is unknown in Australia. A traveller on arrival has his pet dog taken from him and the poor animal is thrust into quarantine for six months. These four millions of inhabitants, spread over the largest colony in the world, consider themselves so precious they quarantine everything and everybody but lunatics. Why not quarantine lunatics? Are they not dangerous? Did not a whole city go mad? Stark, staring, raving mad—Mad Melbourne—and yet a Maltese terrier is quarantined in the same port for six months!

QUARANTINE ISLAND.

Yet lunatics arrive and make lunacy rampant, and a whole city is left after such a visitation an asylum of melancholia—Mad Melbourne. Lunacy frequently takes the form of egotism. Peasants imagine themselves princes; Calibans believe themselves to be Adonises; beggars imagine themselves millionaires. It is a harmless vanity and hurts no one, but a mad city may ruin thousands by suddenly imagining itself a gold mine. Melbourne a few years ago imagined it suddenly became the hub of the universe. The world and his wife had but one burning desire—that was to live in Melbourne. Some lunatic started this ridiculous idea, and the boom spread like lightning. Melbourne was by this magic boom turned into an Aladdin cave. No prairie fire ever [Pg 142] started with such suddenness, with such fury, burning up, as it leapt and galloped along, all the reasoning powers and common sense of the people. Those who cleared a space around them to avoid destruction were tongued by the fire of speculation, and before they could move away were irreparably lost. Great and small, old and young, were carried away in the blaze of speculation. The frightened reptiles and beasts running in front to escape it were, it was thought, miserable fools who had not the pluck or sense to aid in setting speculation in Melbourne on fire. A fanciful picture on paper this? True, so was the great boom of 1887 merely a fanciful picture on paper. Had it been otherwise banks would not have failed, nor would families have been ruined wholesale, nor would trade and speculation have been left charred roots and stubble on the scene of folly—Mad Melbourne.

It is difficult to say how it began—it is unnecessary to say how it ended. I am told that at the height of the boom Melbourne went frantically and absolutely mad. Poor men and women rushed about fancying that they had suddenly become millionaires. In the few hours between breakfast and lunch they had bought a piece of land for £1,000, and in a few hours had sold the same block for £10,000—on paper. They then heard that the purchaser had re-sold it for £20,000 before dinner, they bought it back for £30,000, and re-sold it over supper again for £50,000, a good day's work—on paper. Everyone did the same—all were mad. Money flowed in from the Old Country in millions, champagne flowed freely all over Melbourne in gallons, everyone was intoxicated with joy and soused themselves and their friends in champagne to wash down

success. Vehicles rushed speculators through the streets, trains whisked them to the land free, luncheons free awaited all at every turn, fortunes at every step. Melbourne was mad drunk—lost!

Buildings—comfortable, sensible buildings—were pulled down and "sky scrapers" and mansions were erected in their places. Bridges, good for a hundred years to come, were pulled down and millions spent in erecting in place of the old ones others not more serviceable or of more use. [Pg 143] Huge docks, not wanted, were built at fabulous outlays—all these buildings stand as monuments of Melbourne's Madness.

The extraordinary good spirits of the Melbournites is a healthy sign. Those who not only lost all their money invested, chagrined by their folly and left with liabilities that will cripple them for life, smile and bear their fall right cheerily.

Some of these notes made by me whilst seeing the Kangarooists at home "in a hurry" may not be received in the proper spirit. All new countries are sensitive, and resent truths coming from a stranger, while at the same time their home critics, though far more severe, are tolerated and unchallenged. Now I met one of the most prominent Australians, a man of the world, a leading legal light and a Member of Parliament. It was in the Legislative Chamber I had a conversation with him on matters Australian. He led off: "This bit of a place here (Sydney), with a population less than that of a second-class provincial town in England, has in it people with more cheek than would be found in the capitals of London, Paris and St. Petersburg rolled into one. Why, these people have some ingrained vain idea that everything and everybody connected with them are the most important things and the most important people in the world. Small-minded people in a large country—that is what they are—a country the size of Europe with a population less than that of London with the intellect of a country village. That is Australia."

I AM INVITED TO PRESENT MYSELF.

"And divided among themselves. Do you believe in Federation?"

This conversation took place in June, 1897, and three years after, Australian Federation had become a reality. It is therefore interesting to repeat the opinion of this important Australian on [Pg 144] Federation, exactly as it took place:

"Well—yes and no. I believe in the principle, properly worked, in a country ripe for it; but here in Australia, my dear sir, we do not know what federal government means. I have travelled round and round the world—ha! ha! not in a hurry, my dear sir, but with the object of seeing and learning all about the political workings of countries as well as other subjects. I travel so much sometimes that on waking in the morning I have to rub my eyes to think for a moment whether I am in St. Petersburg or Ottawa, San Francisco or London. I travel so much, one country and another to me is like walking out of this room into the next. I am, in this respect, an exception. This place is provincial, the minds of the people are essentially provincial, they do not understand big questions—Federation is a very big question. Now, sir, I am shown a new machine that you have at home for cutting your hair—good, it is scientific, a thing of beauty and tremendously costly. I say, 'Yes, that's all very well, but I cannot see how Mr. Furniss can afford such a machine for cutting his hair.' Then everyone cries: 'Oh, he does not believe hair should be cut!' Why, I say nothing of the sort—hair-cutting is an excellent thing, a necessary thing perhaps, but why have in a small establishment tremendous machinery to do it?"

At that moment I caught sight of my head in a glass; the same thought struck me, why indeed?

"That is Federation here," my interesting acquaintance continued. "Here, in this little bit of a community, not the population of one city—London—spread over the whole of it want five separate governments to govern those few millions cut up into States!"

From all I could gather, Federation in Australia might possibly be realised some day, but it would be in the dim and distant future, certainly not "in our time"!

There is a good story told *à propos* of the candidature of "The Cardinal." Of course, the votes recorded for him were solely Catholic, the Irish turning up in great force. Two gentlemen from [Pg 145] Erin were found fighting a deadly battle. When separated and the battle changed for one of words in place of blows, Mike declared that he'd "livil the baste to the ground for not voting for the Cardinal."

"And who has he voted for?"

"Whoi the blackguard tills me he's voted for Patrick Francis Moran—who ever heard of Patrick Francis Moran?"

"Oive voted for the Cardinal—iv course Oi have," replied the other, "and it's glad Oi am that Oive nearly kilt that varmint for Moran's sake!"

Needless to explain to you Patrick Francis Moran was the Cardinal.

Kangarooists drive engines much in the same way as they drive horses, or anything else—a reckless, devil-may-care style.

A certain driver in Queensland was told to run the journey through and make no stoppages—this just suited him. On he went. He found the iron gates closed at a crossing in a town he passed through; he did not pull up—not he—he rushed right through, carrying the gates away. Of course, he was reprimanded for this recklessness.

"You might have killed the passengers."

"Why, we only carried two!"

This satisfied the Enquiry Committee as reasonable—in Australia.

This Queensland driver has his prototype in New South Wales. You will find him on the express between Melbourne and Sydney, known as "Hell Fire Jack," a *sobriquet* he has gained by his dash and daring in running the express. He had brought us on at a rare rate, and having completed the middle run, we pulled up to exchange drivers and engines. The conductor noticed me gazing at the portly form of the engine-driver, who had just jumped off.

"That is Hell Fire Jack. Jack is a wonder—here we are a quarter of an hour before time, and Jack had an hour and a half to make up in his run—he did it—Jack always does—he'd make up anything. It's he as nearly got the sack for making a splendid run some time ago—160 miles without a stop. Nothing wrong in that? Well, you see we had four stops to make in that 160 miles, [Pg 146] and he didn't make 'em. Some bookies in the train wanted to get to the races, and made Jack a handsome bet he couldn't get 'em there in time—Jack did—that's all—bless you, he's a wonder—never had an accident neither, not one! He knows all about engines—can stop and mend 'em on the road if it's wanted. And you ought to see him pick up his express disc with his train going at 60 miles an hour. There is a little arm sticks out of the side of the engine, and the disc is suspended at the station. Jack takes it, as I say, going 60 miles an hour, never eases up—not he—but the disc he has to drop in its place has fallen off long before! and the next train has to wait an hour to find it. Oh, Jack is a wonder—good-bye, Jack!"

I returned to the carriage relieved by knowing that Hell Fire Jack was no longer in charge. Two men were conversing about travelling of a different kind—one was saying to the other: "Why, the last time we met was on the Coolgardie Coach—wasn't as smooth going as this, eh? ha! ha! I shall never forget our driver—don't you remember how drunk he was, and how we had to tie him into his seat?—and when he did upset us we went flying a couple of hundred yards away. I saw him as I was landing on my head on the rock tied to his seat turning over, laughing at us. I wonder what became of the old lady and gentleman inside—they carried 'em off for dead, you know. He did make those horses fly—they were glad of the rest, never moved when first down, did they?"

I suppose this was the joke of a Hell Fire Tom. Motor-cars will soon be introduced into Australia; then we shall hear of Hell Fire Harry—and a funeral.

The Kangarooists really do not value life as we in the Old Country do—they certainly do not value horseflesh. You can buy a good horse for one shilling. Catsmeat in London is dearer than live horseflesh in Australia. They ride and drive anything and everything.

I recollect visiting the best-known horse-bazaar in the Colonies, and was shown round by an expert. [Pg 147]

"That horse is all right, but I can't recommend it as a stayer. You want it for harness? Well, I don't like to deceive you; it ain't much good after going seventy miles—no, it's a rotten-hearted beast. It might go eighty miles at a stretch, but I won't guarantee more."

"Eighty miles! Good heavens! In the Old Country half that distance at a stretch would mean cruelty to animals."

"Maybe it would—those English horses have the best barrels in the world, and they are pretty to look at, but no legs. Why, 120 miles is a decent run here; rough work through the bush too, but then soft as tan—no hard roads like in the Old Country, you know."

"Yes, but the bush is the bush, and you have to go up and down ravines and over trees and obstacles of all kinds."

"Right you are. It frightens you at first, but, like the Irishman who said his wife didn't mind a beating as she had got so accustomed to it, these horses are accustomed to the ups-and-downs of the bush, and you get accustomed to it too after a few hours. You may have it pretty rough. Lor' bless you, some never stop at anything—there's Jack Madcapper and Tom Devil McCary, why, they are daisies. They buy their horses here—well, they work 'em, never stop to open a gate, let the horses go and clear it, over they go buggy and all. Fences? Well it's a little relish now and then to jump 'em, and you ought to see the buggies fly in the air. They always take a rope or two to mend up a bit. If a horse is injured, they go on with the rest and leave it, and wire us for another team. Horses ain't worth thinking about out here, and the gates ain't much use, nor the fences either, now that we have nothing to keep in them."

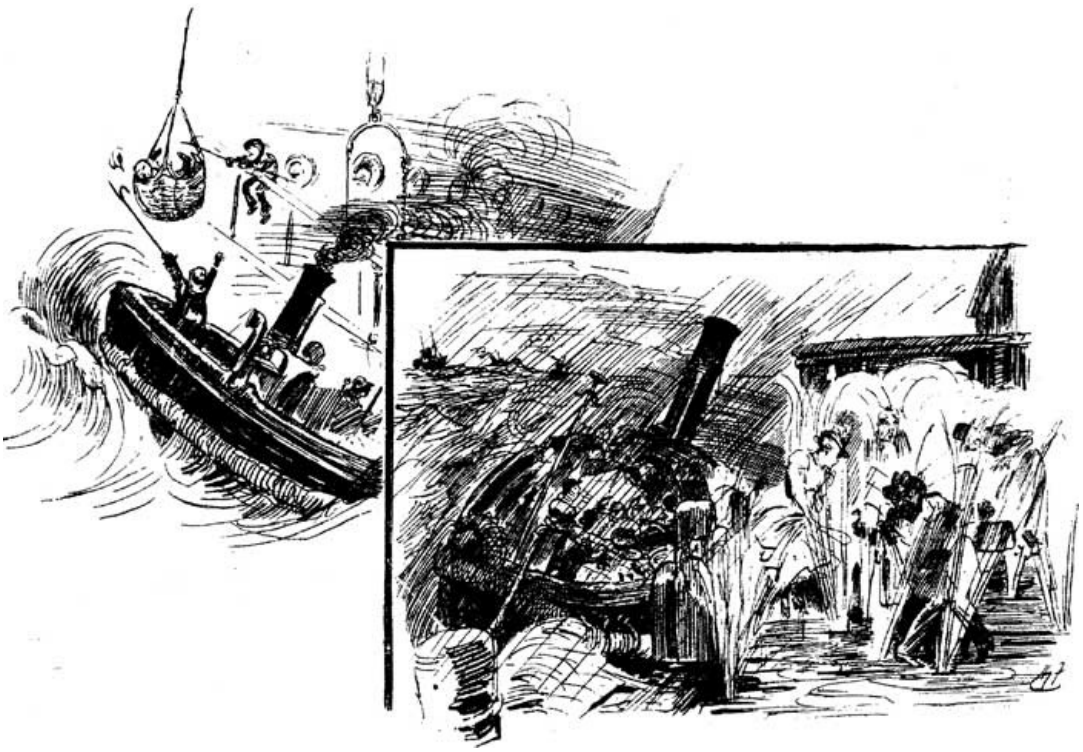
I turned to the "vet."

"Valuable race-horses are the best off after all, then?"

"Well, they have neither bits of gates nor fancy fences to negotiate; they have stone walls and solid five-foot timber jumps. They have to go over the whole lot clear, or come to grief. I have shot about 1,000 crippled first-class crack racers in ten years on the course alone."

"Then there is no love for the horses here?" [Pg 148]

"Nonsense! we love 'em. Why, it is a touching incident, I tell you, when I come on the scene to save further pain for the poor animal. The boy who has had it in charge runs over with a cloth to throw over his favourite. Then he draws me on one side, and says, 'Don't shoot, sir, till I'm away, I can't bear it.'"



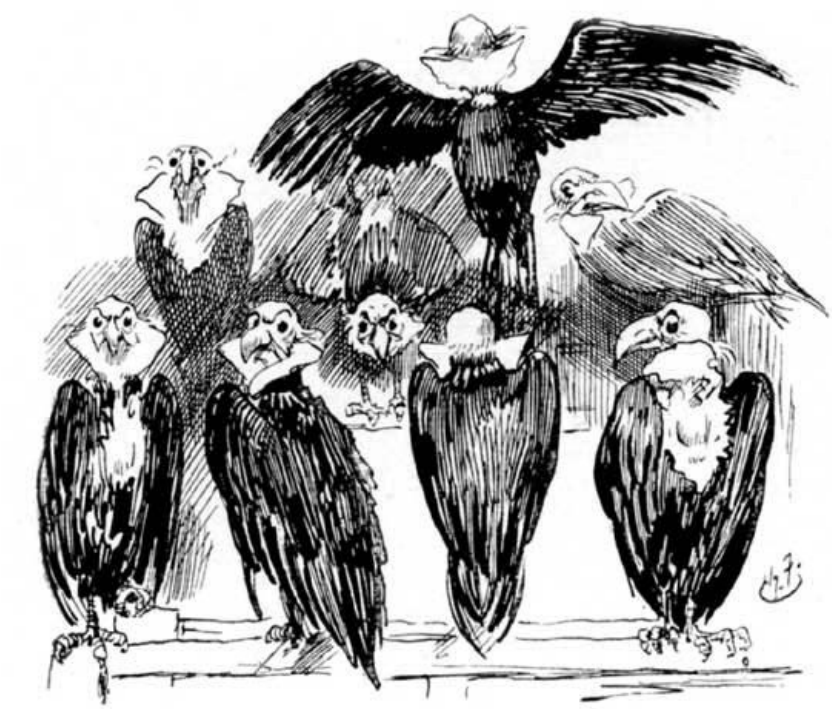
LANDING AT ADELAIDE.

Adelaide is a charming place when you get there, but you have to get there first. Getting there is no easy matter if you arrive by sea, as you must when coming direct from the Old Country. Both for comfort and effect Adelaide is better approached by land, as when coming by rail from Melbourne. The railway has to cross the range of hills which shuts Adelaide in from the east, and some fine views of the city and the plains are obtained.

From the anchorage at Largs Bay the city is barely visible, and travellers have to take train through Port Adelaide up to the city, a journey of about eight miles across the plains. These plains have been cleared of trees, and the country is bare and uninteresting.

Before starting on this journey, however, the unhappy voyager has much to go through. In this respect Adelaide compares badly with Melbourne and Sydney. Sydney harbours the largest steamers in the centre of the city; Melbourne allows them to come to the back door—at Port Melbourne; while Adelaide compels them to stay outside in the middle of the road, or roadstead, and a very rough roadstead it is. When the weather is at all fresh, the landing is positively dangerous. The steam launches which come out to the mail steamers are bound round from stem [Pg 149]

to stern with huge rope fenders. When the launches are jumping, wriggling and plunging alongside the steamers, it is no easy matter to get into them, and anyone but a sailor or a professional acrobat would find it safest to be lowered over the side in a basket. The voyage to the jetty at Largs Bay is a brief epitome of the Bay of Biscay, the Australian Bight, and the monsoons of the Indian Ocean. When you reach the jetty, you are hoisted on to it by practised hands as the launch jumps to the right level. Then—splash! and up comes a green sea through the boards and you are wet to the skin. Bathing, it seems, like education, is "free and compulsory" at Adelaide. Perhaps this is a part of the quarantine operations—disinfection by salt water. This sea bath is, however, the only thing, as far as I am aware, that the traveller gets for nothing in South Australia. Passengers' baggage is charged for when it lands at the jetty at the rate of 1*s.* 3*d.* per cwt., and the same has to be paid on leaving. When at last you get into the train!—such a train! but perhaps the railway department does not like the risk of having good carriages soiled by passengers' wet clothes—you compare this "boat express" with those of Folkestone, Dover, Harwich, and Southampton. The first-class carriages are not equal to the third-class on the English lines. Being an express, this train runs more than a mile without stopping. Then you have to change trains. When you get along again, you notice that the railway to Port Adelaide runs along the street without any fence whatever to prevent people from driving or walking on to the line. Fatalities of course are common, and excite little notice; bolting horses and consequent accidents are of almost daily occurrence, and the local residents get quite to enjoy being pitched out of their buggies. Life here cannot be dull, while it lasts. Passengers are lucky if they reach Adelaide within an hour and a half of leaving the steamer, the distance being about ten miles. [Pg 150]



PONDICHERRY VULTURES.

The Zoological Gardens of Adelaide are particularly fine. The situation is lovely, the plan is excellent, and originality shown in the design of the houses. The specimens are fairly numerous and all excellent of their kind, and at most points, this is the best "Zoo" in the Colonies. The most original house is that of the guinea-pigs, which is a huge doll's house, complete with blinds and even a scraper at the door, and an inscription outside, "School for Young Ladies—conducted by the Misses Guinea Pig." The cage that attracted me most was that of Pondicherry vultures. Mr. Gladstone has often been caricatured as a grand old bird, but the Pondicherry vulture is a replica of the veteran statesman, collar and all.

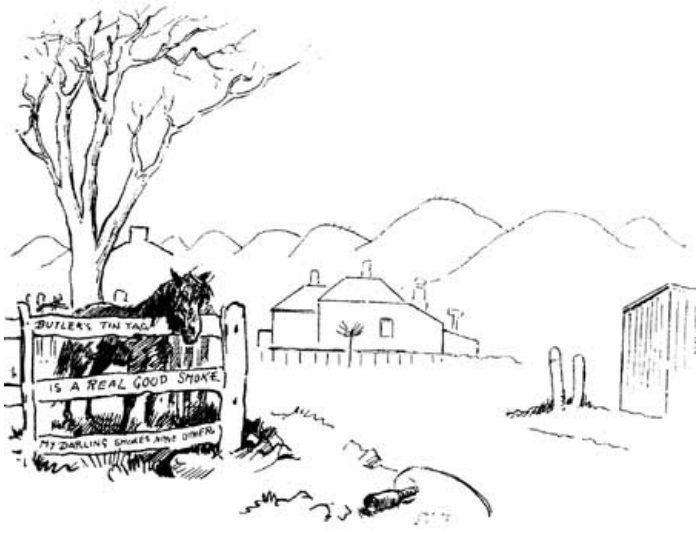
THE MAID OF THE INN.

There are many beautiful drives around Adelaide—at least, as beautiful as is possible when the scenery is marred by a barrenness of soil, a lack of greenness in the grass, an absence of wild flowers, and a dull uniform and sombre tint upon all the trees. The hills, which look somewhat featureless from the city, are riven in a hundred places by rocky gorges or gullies, and many well-made roads cross the range at various points. The roads to Belair and Mount Lofty, to Green Hill, Marble Hill, Moriatta, and a score of other places, give at numerous points fine views of the hills and the plain, and some of the waterfalls, notably the one at Waterfall Gully and at Fourth Creek, [Pg 151]

are eminently picturesque in a rugged way. I was advised to ignore all these beauty spots in favour of one—namely, Paradise. The name seemed to augur well, and my adviser seemed so serious that I determined to make my way to Paradise. In my mind I conjured up a place of infinite romance and beauty, the choice of all the pleasant places in a pleasant land; the Garden of Eden of the Southern Hemisphere. Expectation was at flood with sunny imaginings as I journeyed over level and dusty roads towards this land of promise. I drew Paradise as I saw it, and the sketch will tell more about its beauties than volumes of description. I made for the hotel, and there I found a lady who took me into the garden and pointed out a gap in the fence through which I could squeeze my way into Paradise. I went expecting to be rewarded by a glimpse of the romantic and picturesque of which I was in search. I had been told of the wonderful orange groves of this place. There were trees with oranges growing—about enough to feed an average school-treat; and at last I saw the point of all the joke—a girl-child was tempting a boy to steal oranges; the serpent had left, so I made for the hole in the fence and quitted Paradise for ever, I have looked for the humorist who sent me there, but we have not met since, which is perhaps as well.

[Pg 152]

THE WAY INTO PARADISE.



PARADISE.

One of the chief characteristics of Australian city life is its lack of characteristic features. The types of civilised humanity one meets might be denizens of Islington or Battersea for any distinguishing trait to stamp them as Antipodeans. There is a certain breezy familiarity and absence of suavity in their manners and deportment, but otherwise they are an average lot of mixed Britishers and no more.

ADAM AND EVE.

As soon as I arrived I went about in search of a type of the Australian girl for my pictures, and was sketching one from my hotel window as typical of a real Australian, when the Captain of our ship came in and said, "Oh, there's that Cockney, Miss So-and-so!"

She came over in our ship second-class, and had never been in Australia before!

I recollect a similar instance in Ottawa, Canada. I was returning from Government House, where I had been taken by the Mayor to sign the visitors' book, and as we were returning in the electric car I sat opposite a fine, smart specimen of a youth. I whispered to my Canadian acquaintance, "Is that a genuine type of a true Canadian?"

"Yes, a perfect type."

I made the sketch.

The following evening I was the guest at Government House, and to my surprise I noticed that one of the servants at dinner was the typical Canadian I had sketched. He was MacSandy, fresh from Aberdeen!

But if I have been mistaken, others are sometimes mistaken in me, for a few hours before the surprise recorded above happened I was in my hotel in Ottawa, the morning after I had appeared in the Opera House in the "Humours of Parliament." An eminent Canadian divine was ushered into my quarters, and addressing me said:

[Pg 153]

"Allow me to introduce myself, and to say that I listened

with the greatest pleasure and profit to your most admirable discourse last evening."

I bowed my very best.

"I must say," continued the rev. gentleman, "that your efforts in the cause of Christianity in this city are marked by a fervour and earnestness that cannot fail to convert."

"Really," I said, "you flatter me."

"Ah, no, sir; you are one of the brave soldiers of Christianity who march through the world addressing huge audiences and influencing the masses, taking life seriously, and denouncing frivolity and worldliness."

"Well," I said, "I don't think I do any harm, but I must disclaim for my poor efforts to amuse—"

"Amuse, sir!" repeated the astonished divine. "Surely I am speaking to the gentleman whose stirring discourse it was my good fortune to listen to last evening in Dominion Church?"

A TYPE.

"No, sir, I was in the Grand Opera House."

"Then you are not Dr. Munhall, the Revivalist?"

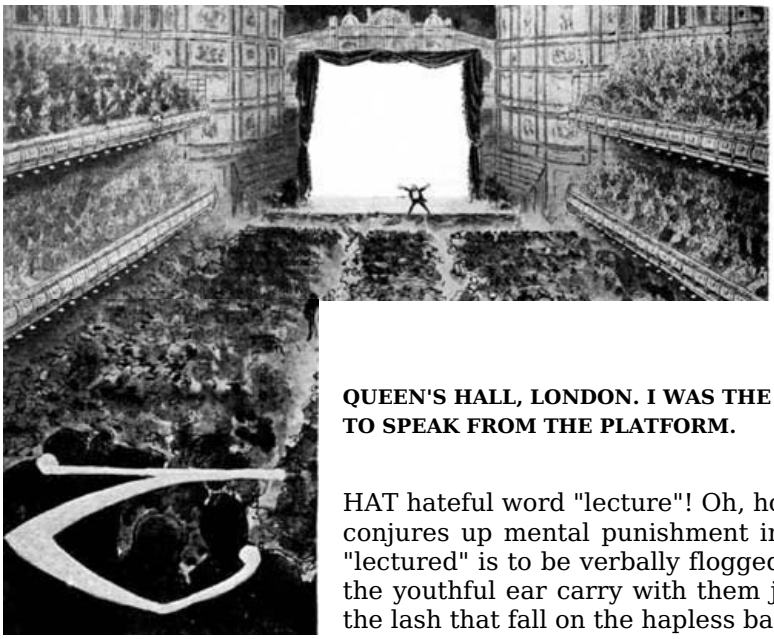
"Bless you, no, sir. I am Furniss, the caricaturist."

"Good gracious! where's the door? Let me out! They have brought me to the wrong room!" [Pg 154]

CHAPTER XI.

PLATFORM CONFESSIONS.

Lectures and Lecturers—The Boy's Idea—How to Deliver It—The Professor—The Actors—My First Platform—Smoke—Cards—On the Table—Nurses—Some Unrehearsed Effects—Dress—A Struggle with a Shirt—A Struggle with a Bluebottle—Sir William Harcourt Goes out—My Lanternists Go Out—Chairmen—The Absent Chairman—The Ideal Chairman—The Political Chairman—The Ignorant Chairman—Chestnuts—Misunderstood—Advice to Those about to Lecture—I am Overworked—"'Arry to Harry."



QUEEN'S HALL, LONDON. I WAS THE FIRST TO SPEAK FROM THE PLATFORM.

HAT hateful word "lecture"! Oh, how I detest it! In the juvenile brain it conjures up mental punishment in the shape of a scolding, for to be "lectured" is to be verbally flogged, and the wrathful words that smite the youthful ear carry with them just as sharp a sting as the knots of the lash that fall on the hapless back of the prison culprit. [Pg 155]

To the boyish mind the lecturer is pictured as an old fossil to whom he has to listen attentively for an hour without understanding a word of his learned discourse. The funereal blackboard, the austere diagrams, the severe pointer and the chilly glass of water, a professor something like one of the prehistoric creatures he is talking about, with his long hair and long words, his egotistical learning, his platitudes and pauses and mumblings, combine to depress the youngster, who all the time is longing for the fresh air and an hour of cricket or football. Then the notes he is supposed to take! True, there is a certain momentary feeling of pleasure and importance on acquiring the first clean, new notebook and long, well-sharpened

pencil, but it is of very, very brief duration. The boy won't be happy till he gets it, but he's anything but happy when he's got it! He sees (of course I refer here to public lectures) some "prehistoric gurls," as an Irish boy once termed them to me, taking copious notes, but the long words and learned phrases stagger the budding scientist and befog his as yet undeveloped brain. I am speaking from my experience when I attended the first of a series of lectures by leading professors of the Dryasdust species.

Nor does the subsequent cross-examination by the parents enhance in the youthful idea the pleasure of being lectured to.

In boyhood's days the student has to attend his lectures, and when they are over he rejoices accordingly; but what about the lectures in after life? Although I have given many of these latter myself, I cannot say that my experience as one of the audience has been very extensive, as I have only heard one or two. The first I heard was delivered by Professor Herkomer some years ago. The subject interested me, as I thought I knew more about it than the lecturer himself, and Herkomer's delivery was particularly good, but it was a "lecture" in the strict sense of the word. We were scolded, and went away like whipped boys. When I stood on that identical platform a few years afterwards *I* scolded everybody—it is the duty of the lecturer to do so. [Pg 156]

A lecturer must be a personage altogether superior—this is essential. If he does not possess this attribute, he must assume it. Modesty is ineffective; mock-modesty is distasteful; you must instruct your audience. The commonest platitudes will serve if you call it a "lecture," and address them to an audience as if they were a lot of school children.

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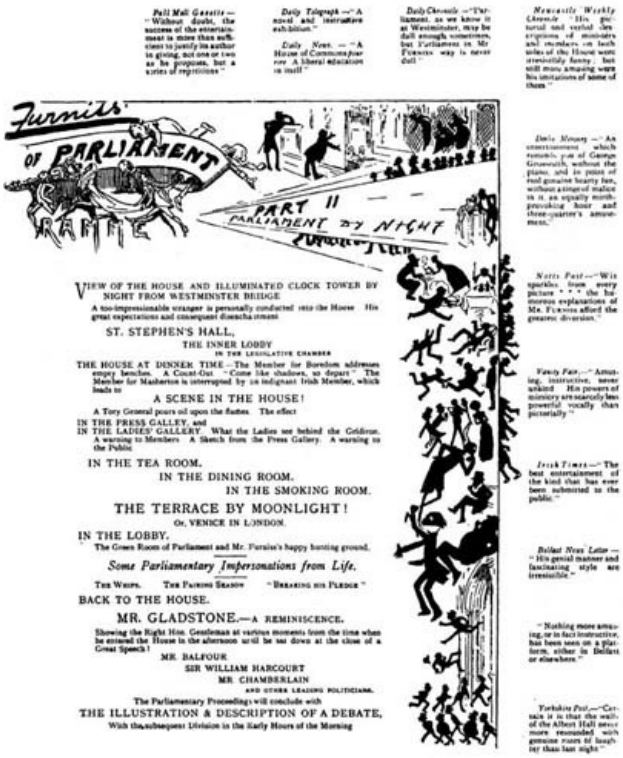

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When a lecture-entertainment has been written, the question then is how to deliver it. Now, with the exception of returning thanks for "art" or "literature" or for "the visitors" now and then at a [Pg 157] City banquet, I was quite unaccustomed to public speaking. A friend of mine suggested I should take lessons in elocution from "one of those actor fellows." "It is not what you say but how you say it," he said to me. "Indeed!" I replied, rather nettled. "Matthew Arnold had a wretched delivery, and I think there was something in what he said." "True, but you are not a Matthew [Pg 158] Arnold, nor I should say a George Dawson either. So take lessons in elocution, my boy, and save yourself and your audience." Therefore, modestly I went to consult a professor of elocution with my lecture in my pocket, feeling very much as I did when I first walked to school, or to my first editor with my youthful artistic attempts. I had, by the way, attended an elocution class and a drawing class in my school days, but no boy was expected to learn anything from either.

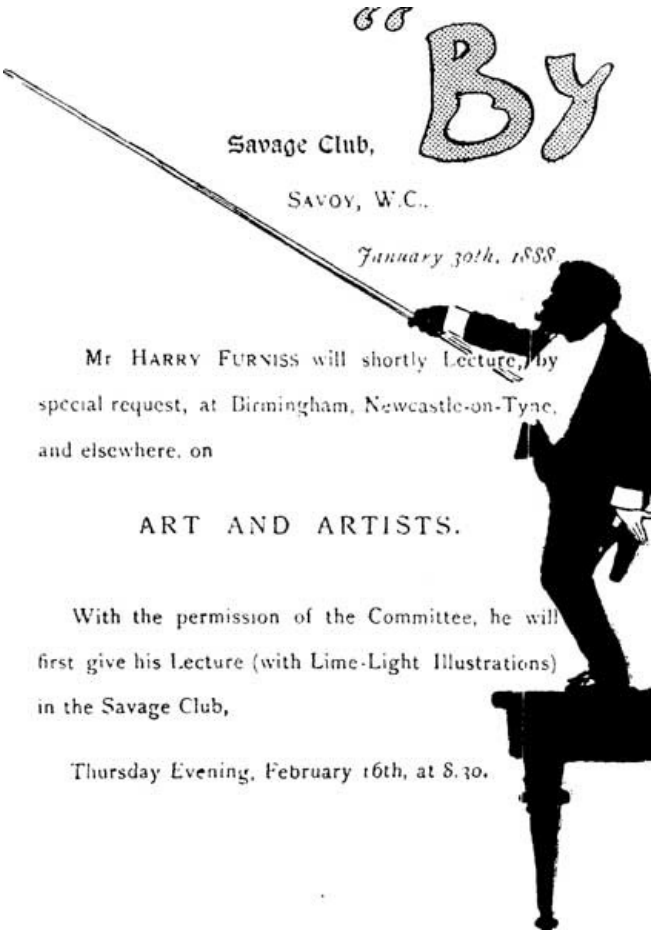
MISS MARY ANDERSON.

It is curious to notice how parents willingly subscribe to the school extra, "Elocution class," in the belief that it gives boys confidence. I was a nervous boy, so I joined. The drawing extra certainly gives a boy confidence, because he sees the feeble productions of the drawing-master and feels he has little to learn in order to become one himself. I shall never forget my first attempt in the elocution class at school. The Professor selected a piece for the day—it was to be learned letter-perfect. Now I unfortunately parodied it and burlesqued the Professor, who stood at the end of the library, giving us suitable actions to the words. We all faced him like a company of soldiers formed in a square. Being small, I, sheltered by the big boys in front, indulged in my antics with impunity. Certainly I did not want confidence at that moment. This over, we sat down round the library, and then the custom was to call out a boy to recite the piece of the day alone for the benefit of the others. He called upon me! Confidence had fled. I was not struck with stage fright, but with Professor fright. I tried to repeat the words and thought I did, but not until I was stigmatised by the Professor as incorrigible, and ordered to sit down, was I aware that I had really given my parody and not the piece. [Pg 159]

When I went in search of another Professor this incident of my last came to my memory, and I felt unhappy. Attitude is everything, thought I. I shall look in at the picture galleries as I pass and compare the oratorical attitudes of the people of the past. I was rehearsing before one in the National Gallery when my antics attracted a lady. I looked round to see the effect—she was laughing. It was Miss Mary Anderson, the celebrated actress. I told her I was about to lecture and was on my way to take lessons in elocution. "Do nothing of the sort," she cried. "The public does not want to hear your attempts at elocution. Say what you have to say in your own way. Speak slowly and distinctly, and let everyone hear right at the end of the room." So it came to pass that Miss Mary Anderson was my only teacher in elocution, and this was the only lesson I received. Although what I say on the platform may not be worth listening to, I take good care that

no one has to ask me to speak up, and put their hands to their ears to hear what I am saying; nor do I think, as I avoid the "preachy" style of delivery, my audiences get weary of hearing my voice.

MY FIRST PLATFORM.



DESIRE," I rehearsed my first lecture, "Art and Artists," at the Savage Club, previous to my giving it in public. In those days the Savages smoked their pipe of peace in a long room in the Savoy, overlooking the graveyard where so many of their tribe lay at rest. I recollect the reading-room at the back looked on to a huge building with mournful black lettering on it, announcing the fact that it was the office of some Necropolis. Truly a doleful surrounding for the club whose members are engaged in promoting the gaiety of nations! The long room was divided into two, the longer portion being the dining-room, and the smaller one the card-room, and on Saturday evenings, when they all sat round smoking [Pg 160] their calumets, and singing their songs, and dancing their war-dances, the room was tried to its utmost capacity, and as on the occasion to which I am referring the tribe paid me the compliment of assembling in its numbers, the whole room was required. It was late in the evening when I arrived, and I found the lanternist in a state of agitation because the partition was not down, and he was, therefore, unable to put up the screen, as the card-players vigorously protested against any disturbance.

Now it has always struck me, perhaps more forcibly on this occasion than on any other, that the most selfish men on the face of the earth are to be found in the card-rooms of clubs. The time was close at hand for me to make my maiden effort in public lecturing, and I was not going to be baffled by a handful of card-players; so, backed by the authority of the secretary, I ordered them in Cromwellian tones to "Take away that partition!" The players were all but invisible, surrounded as they were by volumes of smoke, out of which there issued incalculable quantities of great big D's intermixed with the fumes of poisonous nicotine. Down went the partition, up went the screen, on went the game. I firmly believe they would not have looked up had Cavendish come to deliver a discourse from the platform on whist. I was quite prepared to proceed without disturbing their game, but a difficulty arose—there was no platform, and I required their tables for the purpose. The grumbling gamblers had to submit at last, and cards in hand they betook themselves to another room, so I was able to mount my first platform—a collection of tables. Now I don't know how it is, but it is a fact that there is nothing more unnerving than to stand on a table. The infantile prodigy who is put up on a table for the first time so as to be better admired by fair visitors, and who has previously struggled manfully from one end of the room to the other on the floor, totters and falls at the first step when raised to this higher elevation. Anyone can with ease stand on a chair and hang up a picture or anything of the sort, but standing on a table has the effect of making you grow weak in the knees and light in the head. This is not the effect of the extra height, but the knowledge that the table was constructed so that you could put your [Pg 161] feet under it, and, therefore, they have no right on top of it.

Have you ever been in a court of justice in Ireland and seen a witness perched upon a table? In that enlightened country a table takes the place of the witness-box. The result is delightful. Standing in a witness-box and leaning comfortably over the bar, you can be comparatively at your ease, your legs can tremble unobserved, and you seem to be in a measure protected from the searching gaze of the public. Not so in the Emerald Isle. The chair is placed in the centre of the table in the well of the court between the judges and the counsel, and the unfortunate witness, finding himself in this elevated and awkward position, becomes nervous in the extreme. His feet are a great source of discomfort to him. He doesn't seem to know what to do with them. First he tucks them under the chair, then he crosses them, then he turns his toes out, then he turns them in, and just when he is beginning to get accustomed to his embarrassing situation, the cross-examination begins, and he is at the counsel's mercy:

"Now thin, don't be gaping at the jury, sir; why arrn't you respectful and keep your eye on his lordship?"

"Now, sir, attind to me whin I'm speaking, look me straight in the face, and answer me!"

"D'ye see this gintleman on me right? Now, now, don't hisitate, keep cool!"

It is more than the poor witness can do to keep on the chair. The judge is on his right, the counsel on the left, and the jury in front of him, and after vainly trying to keep his eye on them all at the same time, in obedience to his counsel's injunctions, he is requested by the opposing counsel to observe some witness in the court behind him. In my opinion the witness ought to be provided with a swivel chair, or else the clerks who sit round ought to be adepts in the art of table-turning.

Some years later I had another experience of speaking from an impromptu platform; perhaps the most unique audience I ever addressed. It was at Merchant Taylors' Hall, when a reception was [Pg 162] given to hospital nurses from all over the kingdom. My pencil perhaps can give a better idea of the sundry and various varieties of the "nursus hospitalicus" from the different nurseries of the country. There was no proper platform or stage, so the attendants had the task of moving all the heavy tables in the splendid hall together, so as to form a substitute. This I thought very efficient, but when I mounted it I found that I could much better have given an exhibition of fancy sliding or skating than illustrations of the pedestrian peculiarities of Members of Parliament. I was inwardly pleased to think that my audience was entirely composed of skilled nurses, who were close at hand should anything happen, for I had serious misgivings about the slippery surface of my improvised stage. Visions of myself with a broken arm or leg floated before me, and, indeed, I [Pg 163] don't think I should have been so very sorry had an accident occurred, so enraptured was I by the sight of so much feminine beauty.

GIVING MY "HUMOURS OF PARLIAMENT" TO THE NURSES.

Those in front were all seated on the floor, while the rest were standing in the huge hall, there being no seats. I noticed that the prettiest dress was that worn by the nurses from the lunatic asylums. I felt that I would eventually come under the supervision of these ladies, for a military band, regardless of my performance, was playing a selection from the "Gondoliers" just outside in the corridor, and if I had not had it stopped, I would certainly have gone out of my mind. I particularly noticed on this evening that various points were passed over in silence by my audience which are invariably taken by others. In the second part of my entertainment I make a speech in the character of the "Member for Boredom," anent the use of black sticking-plaster in public hospitals. This is intended by me to be more of a satire than a humorous incident, and I am supposed to bore my audience as the honourable gentleman is supposed to bore the House; but on this occasion the nurses, who understood very little about politics, simply roared with laughter at the mention of a subject with which they were so familiar. Truth to tell, I was rather doubtful whether I had succeeded in entertaining the charming ladies, and was therefore particularly gratified to receive the following note from Sir Henry Burdett:

> "Dear Mr. Furniss,—I hope you were satisfied with your audience after all. They were quite delighted with your 'Humours of Parliament,' and the fame of your handiwork will be carried all over the United Kingdom and to the Colonies, for there were over 1,100 nurses present, and some from the Colonies. This is the

greatest gathering of nurses which has ever been held, and I was much struck with the discipline they displayed in responding cheerfully to the request that they would keep quiet and settle down.

"If you were as pleased with the audience as they were with you, the meeting ought indeed to be a happy one....

"With many thanks for your most excellent and successful performance, which gave just *éclat* to the gathering to-night,

"Believe me, faithfully yours,

"HENRY C. BURDETT."

The most difficult audience of all to address is a small audience. I feel far more at home before an audience of three or four thousand than I do before three or four hundred. But the most critical audience, I think, is a boys' school. Not that they criticise you so much at the moment, particularly if you appear as an antidote to Dryasdust. But experience has shown me that something one may have said has opened a fresh idea in the youthful mind, and the criticism, though frequently belated, is more genuine than that of the matured members of the public who simply wish to be amused for the passing hour. [Pg 164]

SPEAKER BRAND, AFTERWARDS VISCOUNT HAMPDEN.

SOMETIMES I have discovered in my audience public men I am "taking off" in my entertainment. This more frequently happened in the "Humours of Parliament," where the M.P. of the place in which I appeared came if I was not too unkind to him. But it more often happened he sent a member of the family in advance, to find out whether the great man was lampooned or not.

A friend of mine on a visit to a country house informed me that his hostess, seeing I was "billed" for two nights in the neighbourhood, previous to arranging a house party to hear me, took the precaution to send the Curate the first night to report. He came back and condemned me and my show unmercifully; my manner, matter, and voice were all bad, and I was certainly not worth hearing. So the party did not go. It so happened that in the particular entertainment I was giving—"America in a Hurry"—I imitate a lisping country parson struggling through a wretched entertainment with a lantern!

The most trying, at the same time most interesting, experience I had was in my first tour with my "Humours of Parliament," when I appeared at Lewes. The ex-Speaker of the House of Commons, Viscount Hampden, was in my audience, and it was interesting to watch him as I gave my imitations of him, calling an unruly Member to order.

It was all but arranged for me to give my "Humours of Parliament" before her late Majesty at Balmoral. I got as far as Aberdeen, but a death in the Royal Family put a stop to all entertainments. [Pg 165]

SOME UNREHEARSED EFFECTS.

The dress suit and the regulation white tie are essential to those who appear in public upon the platform. Mr. Frederick Villiers, the popular war correspondent, is an exception to this rule. He appears in his campaigning attire, with his white helmet on and a water-bottle slung round him; but of course it would be somewhat incongruous for a man in evening dress, that emblem of civilisation and peace, more suggestive of the drawing-room than the battle-field, to dilate upon the platform on the horrors of campaigning, and to take you through the stirring scenes of "War on a White Sheet." It would be equally absurd for a lecturer on, say, "The Life and Habits of a Microbe," to be dressed in the garb of a backwoodsman; but I was once obliged to deliver a lecture on "Art" in a rough tweed suit.

It so happened that I was giving a series of lectures in the vicinity of Birmingham, and I was stopping with a friend of mine, the Director of the Art Gallery and Museum there. He suggested my leaving my Gladstone bag, containing my change of clothes, in his office, while I spent my day rummaging about old book shops for first editions and making calls on various friends. My host having had to go to London that day, I was left to my own devices, and it was about five o'clock in the evening when I went to the Museum for my belongings. To my horror I saw a notice up: "Museum closed at three o'clock on Wednesdays," and this was Wednesday! I rang and knocked, and knocked and rang, but all in vain. I crossed over to some other municipal buildings to see if there was anyone there who could help me out of my dilemma, but my spirits went down to zero when I was there informed that the custodian of the keys lived miles out of the town. Back I went to the Museum, fiercely plotting an ascent up the water-spout or a burglarious entrance through a back window, when, to my delight, I saw an attendant gesticulating to me from a window three or four stories from the ground. My time was running very short, so I rapidly explained to him the predicament I was in, and implored him to throw my bag out of the window. He told me that he was a prisoner locked in to look after the building, that there were three or four double-locked doors between him and the private office in which my coveted bag was lying, and wound up with the cheering announcement that my case was hopeless. [Pg 166]

I had only a few minutes left in which to catch my train. A glance at my cuffs showed me that one's linen has to be changed pretty frequently in a Midland town, so I made a frantic dive into a shirt-maker's.

"White shirt, turn-down collar. Look sharp!"

"Yes, sir; size round neck, sir?"

"Oh, thirty, forty—anything you like, only look sharp." Time was nearly up.

He measured my neck carefully. The size was a little under my estimate, so I got the shirt, bolted for the station, and jumped into the train as it was going off, my only luggage being my recent purchase. I got into this, and soon I was on the platform in my tweed suit. I apologised to the audience for making my appearance minus the orthodox costume, saying it might have been worse, and that it was better to appear without my dress clothes than without the lantern or the screen. I believe they soon forgot there was anything unusual about me, but I think that as I worked up to my subject, and became more and more energetic, they could see that I wasn't altogether happy. That wretched shirt certainly fitted me round the neck, but the sleeves were abnormally long for me, and the cuffs being wide, they shot out over my hands with every gesture. If I uplifted my hands imploringly, up they went, halfway up the screen; if with outstretched arms I drove one of my best points home, those cuffs would come out and droop pensively down over my hands; if I brought my fist down emphatically, a vast expanse of white linen flew out with a lightning-like rapidity that made the people in the first row start back and tremble for their safety; and when, after my final grand peroration, I let my hands drop by my side, those cuffs came down and dangled on the platform.

THE SURPRISE SHIRT.

[Pg 167]

If my reader happens to be much under the medium height, and rather broad in proportion, I would warn him not to buy his shirts ready-made. I cannot understand the idea of measurement that leads a shirtmaker to cut out a shirt taking the circumference of the neck as a basis. I know a man about six feet high who has a neck like a walking-stick. If he bought a shirt on the shirtmakers' system, it would barely act as a chest-preserver; and on the other hand, this shirt in question, as I said before, certainly fitted me round the neck, but I nearly stepped on the sleeves as I went off the platform at the close of my lecture, and some of the audience must think to this day that I am a conjuror, and that on this occasion I was going to show them some card trick with the aid of my sleeves, which would have been invaluable to the Heathen Chinee. Indeed, this is not the only time I have been suspected of being a sort of necromancer.

I had a friend who was so anxious to improve his artistic knowledge that he used to come night after night with me to hear my lecture on "Art." It frequently happened that there was not a seat to spare in the hall, and on these occasions he used to come up on the platform and sit behind the screen, where he could see the pictures just the same. I think on the particular night I refer to I was delivering a lecture on "Portraiture," and at a certain passage I show a very flattering portrait, supposed to be the work of an old master. The portrait having appeared, I then dwelt upon the original, and pointed out "that no doubt, if we could see the original of this portrait, if we could see again the man who sat for it, I would not hesitate to say that we would be alarmed at the inconsistency of pictorial art. I will show you, ladies and gentlemen, what I imagine this gentleman must have been like!"

[Pg 168]

DISCOVERED!

As I was speaking, some old gentleman in the side gallery had either fallen asleep or was very excited by my remarks, for he somehow jerked the cord which fastened the top of the screen to the gallery, and snap went the cord and down came the screen! Behind it there was an expanse of empty platform, with a semi-circular seat, and on it sat my friend, the enthusiast on art, fast asleep! The limelight, no longer checked by the screen, fell full upon him, and the rounds of applause which followed showed me that my unrehearsed effect, which might have ruined the evening, had made it instead a great success.

There are sure to be occasional mishaps when the lecturer is assisted by the lantern; but as in my case, when one is not taken too seriously, it is easy to turn the misfortune off with a joke.

A fly was the offender on one occasion in my experience. I was showing some portraits of Mr. Gladstone in my entertainment "The Humours of Parliament," and was doing my level best to rouse an appreciative North Country audience to a high pitch of enthusiasm for the man they

worshipped so. I was telling them that at one moment he looks like this, and at another moment he looks like that, when I was amazed to hear them go into fits of laughter! In describing Mr. Gladstone I dilate upon him first in a rhetorical vein, and then proceed to caricature my own delineations, and it has always been flattering to me to find that the serious portraits have been received with a grave attention only equalled by the laughter with which the caricatures have [Pg 169] been greeted. But not so on this occasion. I spoke of his flashing eye (titters!), his noble brow (laughter!), his patriarchal head (roars!), and a mention of his commanding aquiline nose nearly sent them into hysterics! Now in my lecturing days mishaps may have occurred which were due to some fault of the lantern or operator provided by the society I lectured to; but with the splendid set of lanterns I had made for my entertainment, engineered by the infallible Professor who exhibited for me, I never troubled to look round to see if the picture was all right. But for a second it struck me that by some mischance he might be showing the caricatures in place of the serious portraits. Quickly I turned round, and the sight that met my eyes made me at once join in the general roar. There was a gigantic fly promenading on the nasal organ of the Grand Old Man, unheeding the attempts which were being made on its life by the Professor, armed with a long pointed weapon. It had walked into the Professor's parlour—that is to say, into his lantern—and taken up its temporary residence between the lenses, whence it was magnified a hundredfold on to the screen!

If anything of this kind happens to a Professor lecturing on some scientific subject, it is no laughing matter, especially to a gentleman lecturing at a meeting of the British Association. At one of these gatherings a well-known Professor was giving a most interesting and appreciated address, illustrated by the limelight, on the subject of "Quartz Fibres." If I remember rightly, he was explaining to the audience that the strands of a spider's web were purposely rough so that the spider could climb them easily, but that a quartz fibre was smooth and glassy, and a spider would never attempt to ascend one. He showed on the sheet a single thread of a spider's web and a single quartz fibre, and amid the breathless excitement of the audience a real live spider was put into the lantern. The applause with which it was greeted must have made the poor thing nervous, I suppose, or else it may have had an attack of stage fright; anyhow, it curled itself up in a corner and refused to budge. A sharpened pencil, which magnified on the screen looked like a battering-ram, was brought into play, and the unfortunate creature had to rouse itself. "Now, ladies and gentlemen, you will notice that it is quite impossible for the spider to ascend the quartz fibre—it may try, but it is bound to fail—but see how it will rush to the strand from its familiar web!" The spider received an extra dig with the pencil, and then with astonishing alacrity ran to the quartz fibre, up which it climbed with the greatest ease amid the roars of the delighted audience. The fact was that the Professor had omitted to explain that his argument only applied to female spiders. These have a pernicious habit of running after their spouses and belabouring them, so the poor hubby is provided by Nature with a hirsute growth on his legs which enables him to escape by climbing, and nothing would delight him more than for his wife to give chase to him if there was a quartz fibre anywhere near.

THE FLY IN THE CAMERA.

[Pg 170]

Sometimes there is no gallery in which to place the lantern, and then the pictures have to be shown from the floor of the hall, when it seems to be the delight of everyone coming in late to walk up the centre in the full light of the powerful rays of the lantern, presumably for the pleasure of beholding their image projected in silhouette on to the screen. Those awful feminine hats ought to be abolished, and all late comers ought to be made to find their seats on their hands and knees, as they run the risk of upsetting the thread of the lecturer's discourse, and the gravity of the audience as well, I remember once when I was giving my lecture on "Portraiture: Past and Present," and illustrating the portraits on medals, I came to some near the bottom of the screen. "Here," said I, "we have the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress of London, 1300 A.D." At that moment the Mayor and Mayoress of the town, who, for effect I suppose, had come in a [Pg 171] quarter of an hour late to the seats reserved for them in the centre of the hall, walked past the rays of the lantern, and were of course projected on to the screen, unconsciously burlesquing my picture, and causing an effect they had not anticipated.

I referred just now to mishaps that will occur with the best-regulated lanterns. The gas, for instance, may become prematurely exhausted, which necessitates a stoppage while the cylinders are being changed, and when Rudyard Kipling's work, "The Light that Failed," was published, I immediately sent for a copy, thinking that probably the author had tried entertaining with the aid of the limelight in India and had had some experience of this kind. I could give that clever author plenty of material for another volume on "The Light that Failed"—a collection of anecdotes connected with the magic lantern. But, as I said, it doesn't so much matter to the entertainer as the lecturer, who must be *au sérieux*, and when I was a lecturer I felt any mishap of the kind very keenly; but an entertainer is a privileged being, and can turn the matter off with a joke at the expense of his manager, his gas-man, his audience, or his subject. No less a personage than Sir William Harcourt happened to be on the screen when my gas went out one evening in Scotland. I had to retire from the platform while new

LATE ARRIVALS.

cylinders of gas were being adjusted, and when I made my reappearance I assured my audience that it was probably the first occasion on which Sir William had been put out for want of gas!

I recollect, though, once at Bradford, where I was lecturing, the audience were put out for want of it, for the operators supplied by the association I was lecturing to were utterly incompetent. The gas was bad, to begin with—it became small by degrees and beautifully less, and suddenly went out altogether! So did the operators. They simply bolted out of the hall, and left the lantern to manage itself. [Pg 172]

CHAIRMEN.

Du Maurier made a delightful drawing for *Punch* of a sandwich advertising contractor dismissing a man with a board on which was the letter H. "Now, look 'ere, you H! The public don't want yer, nor *I* don't, nor nobody don't—so 'ook it!" Or something to that effect.

RESERVED SEATS.

I wish lecturers could dismiss chairmen in the same peremptory fashion, for I am sure the public don't want him, nor *I* don't, nor nobody. Their boredom had better be dropped like the poor letter H—which, by the way, some chairmen drop pretty frequently.

I'll classify the chairmen as follows:—The Absent Chairman, the Ideal Chairman, the Political Chairman, and the Ignorant Chairman. [Pg 173]

The Absent Chairman.—I must divide the Absent Chairman into two heads. Two heads are better than one, but if both are absent—the one in body and the other in mind—it is evident no head is better than two. The absent in body does not turn up at the lecture—forgets all about it, or remembers too well what he suffered before. The lecturer and his audience are kept waiting. The absent in mind does turn up, though—turns up anything but trumps. He—"ah!—feels—ah!—the honour—ah!—of presiding this evening." He "has the honour—ah!—of introducing the lecturer, a lady—ah!—a gentleman, I should say, whose name is a household word. Who does not know the name of—ah (feels in all his pockets for syllabus)—of—ah—this gentleman who is about to delight us all this evening on a—yes, yes,"—takes from his pocket a piece of paper from which he reads: "The Rev. Carbon Chalker, M.A., on Microbes found in the Middle Strata of Undiscovered Coal." "This rev. gentleman no doubt——" he proceeds, when he is quickly interrupted by the secretary, who jumps up and says, "Excuse me, Mr. Chairman, that is last year's syllabus you have in your hand."

The Ideal Chairman is one who rises and says, "Ladies and gentlemen,—I have the honour this evening to introduce to you Mr. Snooks, who has something interesting to tell you, and one hour in which to tell it. I will not stand in his way or take up your time by saying anything further." Now how seldom this happens! As a rule the chairman makes an excuse to deliver a speech on his own account. The most extraordinary case of that kind I ever heard of occurred at Birmingham. The amiable Member for one of the districts in Birmingham, whose name is always associated with "three acres and a cow," had to take the chair at a lecture given one evening to the people. As soon as the popular M.P. rose to speak there were loud cries of "Three acres—three acres! How is the coo? How is the coo?" It was just at the time when he had introduced that question. He rose to the occasion and made a long and elaborate speech upon the subject at heart. He went on speaking from about thirty-five to forty minutes. When he sat down the gentleman who had arrived from London to give his lecture on "Wit and Humour" simply rose and [Pg 174] said: "Ladies and gentlemen,—I have the honour this evening to propose a vote of thanks to our member for his very interesting address upon the subject of 'Three Acres and a Cow.'" Someone else got up and seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously amid great laughter and cheering. Then the chairman rose and began thanking the audience for the compliment they had paid him, and for the kind way in which they had listened to him. And a twelve-month later it dawned upon him that he was only the chairman of the meeting. This may be a pure invention, but it is the story as I heard it.

CHAIRMAN NO. 1.

A story is told of a distinguished irritable Scotch lecturer who on one occasion had the misfortune to meet with a loquacious chairman, the presiding genius actually speaking for a whole hour in "introducing" the lecturer, winding up by saying: "It is unnecessary for me to say more, so I call upon the talented gentleman who has come so far to give us his address to-night." The lecturer came forward: "You want my address. I'll give it to you: 322, Rob Roy Crescent, Edinburgh—and I am just off there now. Good-night!"

I cannot vouch for the truth of either of these stories. However, I have known chairmen myself who were very nearly as bad. I remember one—I think he was a doctor—who rose to introduce me. Instead of two or three minutes he took ten or twelve minutes. Of course he said I was very well known, and went on with some very flattering remarks about my work, and then he added: "Ah, how well I remember—yes, ladies and gentlemen, how well I remember years ago those [Pg 175] political sketches of the late Doyle and others, and when I think that in years to come that Mr. Furniss's attempts will be handed down to our children as I may say, recording the great events of the time we are passing through. Yes, let us see what the value will be to our children to know that Mr. Gladstone once—("Order, order," and "Hear, hear")—that, I say, Mr. Gladstone—(cries of "Sit down, we have not come to hear you")—that, I say, Mr. Gladstone, the grand old man of our time—("Sit down, sit down, sit down, we have not come to hear you—sit down")—Yes, and when I say that Lord Beaconsfield, whom I have no doubt you will see upon the sheet—("Wrap yourself up in yours, go home to bed, go home to bed")." Cries of this sort went on; the gentleman struggled on for about a quarter of an hour and then sat down. Well, I discovered afterwards that he was a very ardent politician, not altogether in tone with the audience, who were opposed to him in politics, and that he seized this chance of repeating a political speech he had often given to others of a different class. As a matter of fact my lecture that night had nothing whatever to do with Parliament; it was purely art matter; and this gentleman happened to be a great art collector and connoisseur, and in returning thanks for me afterwards made a very graceful little speech about art matters. If he had only asked me beforehand, of course it would have been a very agreeable opening instead of rather an unfortunate one. But it is quite as distressing to the lecturer to find that a chairman knows too much about his subject as to find one who knows nothing. If you happen to have delivered your lecture in another hall, and someone present who has heard you is the chairman of an evening when you are going to give it again, he will get up and inform his audience, with the usual flattery of chairmen, that there is a great treat in store for them, that he has had the pleasure of hearing you before, and you are going to tell them this,

and going to tell them that, and in some cases he will even give a mangled version of some of the stories—in fact, will take all the plums out of the pudding that you have ready to tickle the appetites of your audience with. [Pg 176]

Some chairmen impress their audience that they know far more about the subject than the lecturer. But worst of all is the chairman who knows absolutely nothing about the subject or about yourself. I remember one evening some pompous chairman getting up and saying: "I have great pleasure this evening in introducing to you Mr. Furniss. I know you have all heard of Mr. Furniss, and anyone connected as I am with engineering must look upon one of his great achievements with delight. All who have been to the great Metropolis and travelled along the Thames Embankment—a beautiful way that skirts the Thames—and have considered that at one time what was a heap of mud is now one of the handsomest thoroughfares in the world, must always consider that the work of the gentleman in front of you in being the constructor of that immense work deserves the gratitude of his countrymen, and I therefore take this occasion, before he rises to address you and enlighten you upon the engineering and the large contracting work in the great city in which he has the pleasure to live, to assure him as a brother engineer of the great work which he has performed for his fellow-countrymen."

On enquiry I discovered that a namesake of mine was the contractor for the Thames Embankment, which was built when I was in knickerbockers.

Of recent years I have had few experiences of chairmen, but proportionately their mistakes seem to be as of old. In the North of England last year I was specially engaged to appear before a literary society, and I supposed, by their paying me to go so far, they were, with Northern shrewdness, acquainted with the article in which they were investing. On these special occasions it is strange that a chairman is considered a compliment to the performer, and most certainly it affords the entertainer himself amusement. For instance, in this case I recollect my chairman—a most accomplished and representative man in the neighbourhood—was introduced to me as soon as I arrived at the hall. (I may mention it was not my first visit.) He quickly introduced me to the audience: "Ladies and gentlemen,—This evening I have the honour of introducing to you a [Pg 177] gentleman whom we have all heard about, but few of us, if any, have seen before. We all know his work in Parliament in the pages of *Punch* for some years past; we all have enjoyed the writings of 'Toby, M.P.' This is Mr. H.W. Lucy, of *Punch*, our old friend 'Toby, M.P.'" I was giving my "Humours of Parliament," and during the evening I, of course as "Toby, M.P.," informed the audience at times that this was Harry Furniss's idea of Parliament, but I begged to differ with that gentleman, and it was rather a variety for me to play a Parliamentary Jekyl and Hyde for one night only.

If one must have a chairman, why should not the performer be allowed to turn a chairman into account, as that popular and versatile barrister, the late Sir Frank Lockwood, was in the habit of doing? When he lectured at Hackney he "brought down the house" in his description of Sergeant Buzfuz in "Pickwick" by giving a laughable imitation of his chairman—the late Lord Chief Justice, when Sir Charles Russell—cross-examining a witness. For all I know, others may follow the example of poor Lockwood. We shall read of the Bishop of Ripon giving imitations of the Archbishop of Canterbury; Sir Alexander Mackenzie is ready to make the musical world roar by his burlesque of Paderewski; and Lord Kitchener, when he returns from the war and gives the inevitable lecture, will delight military circles by his imitations of his chairman, the Commander-in-Chief.

CHAIRMAN NO. 2.

But I personally have no objection to a chairman if I am announced as a *lecturer* and it is the habit of the particular society to pay the lecturer the compliment of formally introducing him. But my appearances as a lecturer are few [Pg 178] and far between, and when I, as I generally do, appeal direct to the public, I am most anxious to avoid giving my platform work any appearance of a lecture; yet the Press insist upon any entertainment given by men of my class being a lecture. I am a bit of an amateur conjurer, and I thoroughly believe were I to appear on the platform on a bicycle or on an acrobat's globe, and keep three balls in the air with one hand and spin a plate on a stick with the other, and at the same time retail some stories, the notice in the Press on the following morning would begin: "Mr. Harry Furniss gave an instructive *lecture* last night on subjects with which we are familiar. Some of his stories were good, some poor, and some we had heard before." And that is the rub! We had heard some stories before! I repeat I honestly have no objection to a chairman—the Ideal Chairman, who will inform the audience that you are an acrobat, and not a lecturer; but I do object to my friends and brother journalists who will tell the public you are a lecturer when you are not, keeping many of their readers away, and who will also publish your jokes. Of course, all stories are "chestnuts" an hour after they are told. When I first went on the platform I retailed new stories, but they were invariably served up in the next morning's papers, and were therefore known to many of the audience who came to hear me on the following evening. In fact, I once overheard a man at breakfast in an hotel saying, "No, I don't think much of Furniss; I have read

that story of his about the pumpkin in the papers." Now this story of the pumpkin was an impromptu of mine the evening before, and I was naturally puzzled by over-hearing this remark. When the speaker left the room I took up the paper he had been reading. It contained an account of my effort on the platform the night before, and my impromptu story was in it! [Pg 179]

THE PUMPKIN—A CHESTNUT.

Of course, as in everything else, one must not be too original on the platform if he is to be served up in every course. If you treat general subjects in anything but a general way, and you are humorous and occasionally satirical, you will find that national failing, want of humour, will tell against you, as well as certain prejudices political and social. The selection of lecturers is generally in the hands of a committee. You have probably said something that grated upon the Radical opinions of one member, or upon the old Tory prejudices of another, or told some joke that they failed to see. So long as you keep to microbes, and heavenly bodies, and objects of the sea, you are proportionately successful with your dulness. But to be professionally humorous and a critic is to be eyed with suspicion. Your programme is criticised and generally misunderstood. Perhaps I can show no better instance of this than what occurred to me in connection with my old friend "Lewis Carroll," the author of "Alice in Wonderland."

The Rev. C. L. Dodgson ("Lewis Carroll") in some respects was the typical Oxford Don—once a schoolmaster always a schoolmaster. He lectured his friends as he had lectured his youths, and treated grown-up men of the world as if they were children. In due course I visited Oxford to give my entertainments—"Humours of Parliament" first; "America in a Hurry" followed a few years afterwards. In the latter I gave a wordless imitation of that eccentric American, Talmage, at the same time carefully pointing out to my audience that I imitated his gestures and voice—not Talmage in the character of a preacher, but as a showman; I was therefore surprised to receive the following letter:

> "CHRISTCHURCH, OXFORD.
>
> "DEAR MR. FURNISS,—Yesterday I went to Russell's shop and bought four 5*s.* tickets for your American entertainment on the 23rd, thinking I would treat three young friends to it, and feeling quite confident that there could be no objectionable feature in any entertainment produced by you. An hour afterwards I chanced to notice in the programme the item 'A Sermon in Spasms,' and, in the quotations from Press notices, a commendation of your 'clever imitations of Dr. Talmage's sermons,' and immediately went and returned the tickets.... It did not seem necessary to speak (to the shopkeeper) of the more serious aspect of such an insult to Christianity, and such profaning of holy things...." [Pg 180]

I hastened to assure the rev. gentleman that Talmage was an "entertainer," like myself, that I used no words in imitation of him; merely his eccentric manner and showman's voice. I also hinted that I always had a number of clergymen in my audiences, and those who had heard me found nothing whatever objectionable, nor could they detect in what I did anything touching upon sacred things. This brought a lengthy rejoinder, from which I quote the following interesting passage:

> "The fact that thousands of clergymen have *not* been deterred by that announcement from going to the entertainment does not surprise me. In this age of ever-increasing irreverence, it is my lot to hear many a profane anecdote told; and the *worst* offenders in this line are, I am sorry to say, *Clergymen*."

If this was so—and the Rev. C. L. Dodgson could not possibly exaggerate any more than "Lewis Carroll" could avoid exaggeration—how much better it would have been for him to listen to my wordless and harmless imitation of a public entertainer than to sit in the Common Room and listen to profane anecdotes from the lips of his fellow ministers of religion!

To those about to appear on the platform I would give the same advice as Mr. Punch gave to those about to marry—"Don't." "Lectures," "Readings," or whatever they are called, are very little in demand now compared with twelve years ago. Many of the literary institutes and lecture societies are either dying from inanition or are content with a course of lectures of a poor description. This has been brought about by trying to do the thing on the cheap, and thereby disgusting the subscribers, who are not going to turn out of their cosy, warm houses on a winter's night to hear a poor speaker with a dull subject. The subscription lists are therefore depleted, and the societies cannot afford to engage experienced lecturers and entertainers. [Pg 181]

It is a great mistake to imagine one has only to "write something," and, provided with a few "slides," a reading-desk, and a glass of water—and a chairman, mount a platform and read. Of course, an agent can always "boom" a novice—someone who has

travelled, or written a book, or gone to smash, or become notorious in any way—for a course of "lectures," provided there are sufficient chairmen to be found willing to act as an extra draw.

Anyone nowadays thirsting for notoriety jumps on to the platform as a lecturer. He may have been "Perhaps a soldier full of 'cute ways, and fearless like his Pa! Stake your dollar sudden and quick to boom. Seeking a bauble reputation even at the Commons mouth." Or he may have been an aristocratic stowaway in a troop-ship, for instance, and become the hero in the pages of our new English-Americanised Press paying for and publishing his startling disclosures.

The lecture is the natural sequence of the boom fever—a lecture, say, on "Red Tape Rats." A reading-desk, a glass of water, a map, a few amateurish snapshot slides exhibited by means of a lantern, *and* a great and popular chairman—then success is assured. But the crowd is not present to be interested in rats, nor are the reporters there to write about rats, nor is the chairman presiding so as to refer to the stowaway's paper on rats. For the chairman has his own Red Tape Rats to let loose with which to startle the audience and nobble the Press. The next day the report of the lecture is not headed "The Hon. Babbling Brook on Rats," but runs "An Admiral of the Fleet on Naval Reform," or "A Field Marshal with a Grievance," and a list of the fashionable party on the platform is considered of more importance than the lecturer's remarks.

IN "THE HUMOURS OF PARLIAMENT." BALLYHOOLEY PATHETIC.

[Pg 182]

HARRY FURNISS AS A PICTORIAL ENTERTAINER.
Drawn by Clement Flower. Reproduced by permission of the proprietors of "The Graphic."

[Pg 183]

In more tranquil times a penny-reading style of entertainment will suffice. A bishop or a duke may take the chair, and Charity take the proceeds. But the chairman with a name is the thing with which to catch the interest of the public.

What I have said about lecturing in England applies equally to America and Australia, and I wish it to be distinctly understood that, as I am writing these lines for the benefit of those who think of accepting the tempting offers to go on the platform, I have no personal feeling in the matter whatever. Both in America and in Australia I have had splendid audiences; but in consequence of the long distances and expenses lecturing does not pay, and the stories one reads about men returning with thousands and thousands of pounds in their pockets are absolutely false. Do not

believe them. They are manufactured statements for booming purposes. Dr. Conan Doyle honestly gave his opinion, and the correct one, that taking one thing with another you can make just as much money in England as you can in America or the Colonies. Of course there are exceptions,—I might more truly say accidents. Even a poor speaker, if he happens to be a clergyman (and some critics are unkind enough to say that these generally go together), and an author who has written a successful story, may in America have a great chance of making money, for the publishers and booksellers will advertise and push him so as to sell his books,—they will go so far as turning their shops into ticket offices. Then, too, he will find the *meenisters*, particularly if he is a Scotchman, will advertise him in advance from their pulpits, and probably in return get the "lecturer" to preach a sermon. Consequently he has two publics to work upon which no other lecturer or reader can procure,—the religious and the literary. But that is not a genuine test of the professional lecturer or reader. All literary men on the platform will get a certain number of people who have read their books in a celebrity-hunting country. They want to see the author, and once they have seen him they are satisfied. Return visits I know of, such as these, have been appalling failures. No, a man must give an entertainment which is in itself [Pg 184] amusing and of such stuff that people will go even if any one else had given it—metal attractive to his audience, instead of merely being looked upon as a curiosity in the same way that one looks upon an orchid in a flower-show or a prize ox at Islington. But for the ordinary man, no matter how good he may be, to expect to have a triumphal tour, returning with a shipload of American dollars, is, believe me, absurd on the face of it. The lecture business died out years ago. When that country was younger all the people in the provinces attended lectures as part of their daily education, but now that class of entertainment is as out-of-date as a German Reed entertainment.

I confess that I was overworked at one time. As an illustration of mere physical endurance it is perhaps worth recording. In fact, much in these pages might well have been published under the title of "Confessions of Endurance" in Sandow's magazine or in the *Lancet*, for the edification of those professional men who give advice to others not to overwork and invariably overwork themselves at the same time. Travelling every day, giving "The Humours of Parliament," with my imitations of ranting M.P.'s—nearly a two hours' tearing recitation—to large audiences every night, was perhaps sufficient for one man. The excitement of the success I made, the "booming," interviewing, and unavoidable entertainment at every town, the late hours, the early start, the business worries, fresh to each place, day after day, week after week, can only be understood by those who have gone through it. But this was only part of my work. Each week as I travelled I had to keep up my contributions to *Punch*—a whole page and several small drawings. I also wrote an article, fully illustrated, on every town I went to week by week for *Black and White* (subsequently reprinted in book form, "On Tour"), to say nothing of drawing in the train.

Let me briefly give a fair average of one day's work at the time:

[Pg 185]

REDUCTION OF A PAGE DRAWING FOR *PUNCH* MADE BY ME WHILST TRAVELLING BY TRAIN

View larger image

[Pg 186]

Morning.—Start 9.30 train, eight hours' journey,—means up at seven, breakfast at eight. In train dictate letters to secretary, who takes down in shorthand. (I never yet found a secretary who [Pg 187] could write in a train. I can write quite easily; the secret is to *sit up*, holding pad in hand, and let the body move with the oscillation of the train. To write on your knee or on a table, or in any other way but this, is impossible.) 3.30 arrive at destination; go to hotel and order dinner. Then to my "travelling studio"—a large case fitted up with everything necessary for drawing in black and white. Straight to private sitting-room, order dinner to be ready in half-an-hour, at work at once—before the others and the luggage arrive. After light dinner, to hall or theatre to see if arrangements are complete. Then visit from local manager or secretary—friends—strangers, a walk round the town to get "copy," tea, a good hour's drawing (no matter how tired I can work on tea), dress, off to evening's work on stage; autographs to be written and people to meet; back to change, supper at some club, speeches; back 3 a.m., bed, sleep—no, only occasionally. Hotel servants turn on electric light, begin sweeping the passage—sw—w—w—whish, sw—w—w—whish! they chat and laugh just outside one's door; they gradually sweep down the long, long passage. Doze—sleep. Bang, bang! "Five o'clock, sir." Bang, bang! the Boots awakening commercial men for early trains. Thump, thump! baggage packing-room over your head. Commercial, or sportsman, or entertainer, or whatever he may be, whistles or sings loudly as he dresses. Altercation with Boots about trains in passage. Bells, bells! "Hot water, hot water. Bath ready, sir." Train leaves at 8.15. I'm up. Something attempted—sleep—something not done,—I have earned but not got a night's repose. So in the cold, wet, misty morning off again with a heart for any amount of work; still achieving, still pursuing, learning to labour—and not to wait!

Mr. E.J. Milliken, of *Punch*, frequently wrote to me in 'Arry verse. When I was confined to my bed with fever in the summer of 1893, I was terribly busy. I had my *Punch* work, my syndicated "London Letter" (a column-and-a-half of a newspaper, with four or five illustrations), and much other work to do every week, and I, much against my doctor's and nurse's wish, worked all the [Pg 188] time. *A propos* of this I received the following:

"'ARRY TO HARRY.

"Dear 'Arry,

"'Ow are yer, old 'ermit? I 'opes you're gittin' on prime For a sick man you put in good work, mate, and make the best use o' your time. You're like no one else, that's a moral. When *I'm* ill I go flabby as suet, But you keep the pot at full bile! 'Ow the doose do yer manage to do it?

"I'm glad to believe you're a-mendin', though kep' on the strictest Q.T. The confinement must fret you, I'm sure, 'ow I wish I could drop in to see, And give you a regular rouser. But that is a pleasure to come; When we *do* meet again, we will split a fizz magnum, and make the thing hum.

"I drop yer these lines just to show yer you ain't gone slap out o' my 'ed, Because I'm cavortin' round pooty permiskus, while you're nailed to bed! 'Taint a prison I'm nuts on, old pal, and I'll swear as it doesn't suit *you,* So 'ere's wishin' you out of it, 'Arry, and well on Life's war-path, Hurroo!!!

"I sent over my pasteboard this mornin' to do the perlite *cummy fo,* But this 'ere is *entry noo* barney, a bit of a lark like, yer know. I picter you jest rampin' round like a big arktic bear in a cage! Well, keep up yer pecker, my pippin, and keep down yer natural rage. I'm yours to command, when you want me, to gossip or work, fetch or carry;

"And that Harry may soon be O.K. and a 'arf, is the wish of

"Yours,
"'Arry."

I should like to confess my real reason for going on to the platform. The fact is that for many years I was mistaken in the country, particularly in Liverpool, Leeds and Bradford, for an artist who signed political caricatures "H. F.," and whose name, strange to say, is Harold Furniss. I understand he is about twice my size. So that I thought if I showed myself in public, particularly in the provinces, it would be seen that I was not this Mr. Harold Furniss. Now, unfortunately, on the stage or platform I look tall—in fact, bets have been made that I am over six feet high. On three or four occasions after I have left the platform or the stage I have had to grant an interview [Pg 189] to gentlemen who have made bets on this point. The explanation is, however, simple enough: as there is no one on the stage or platform but myself, there is nothing to give my height, so the particular object of my appearing in public was frustrated.

DOWN WITH DRYASDUST.

[Pg 190]

CHAPTER XII.

MY CONFESSIONS AS A "REFORMER."

Portraiture Past and Present—The National Portrait Gallery Scandal—Fashionable Portraiture—The Price of an Autograph—Marquis Tseng—"So That's My Father!"—Sala Attacks Me—My Retort—Du Maurier's Little Joke—My Speech—What I Said and What I Did Not Say—Fury of Sala—The Great Six-Toe Trial—Lockwood Serious—My Little Joke—Nottingham Again—Prince of Journalists—Royal Academy Antics—An Earnest Confession—My Object—My Lady Oil—Congratulations—Confirmations—The Tate Gallery—The Proposed Banquet—The P.R.A. and Modern Art—My Confessions in the Central Criminal Court—Cricket in the Park—Reform!—All About that Snake—The Discovery—The Capture—Safe—The Press—Mystery—Evasive—Experts—I Retaliate—The *Westminster Gazette*—The Schoolboy—The Scare—Sensation—Death—Matters Zoological—Modern Inconveniences—Do Women Fail in Art?—Wanted a Wife.

From a Photo by Debenham & Gould.

My attack upon the National Portrait Gallery was in the form of a lecture entitled "Portraiture Past and Present." I found the subject so large, so complicated, I may say so octopus-like, embracing such varied periods and phases, and throwing forth its arms or ramifications in so many directions, that I soon discovered I was struggling with a monster subject, with which it was impossible to grapple completely in the limited time allowed for the performance. Still I managed in a light way to review the history of portraiture from Dibutades to Millais, and from [Pg 191] its display in the Temples to its discouragement at the National Portrait Gallery, taking as my text Carlyle's dictum that "Human Portraits faithfully drawn are of all pictures the welcomest on Human Walls," a sentiment that appeals to all, for there is no doubt human beings interest us more than anything else. The Pyramids of Egypt awe, but our interest is in those who raised them; Ancient Rome enchants in exact proportion to our interest in the Ancient Romans; the Forum is but a frame which the imagination instinctively fills with the forms of the mighty men who moved there; the Amphitheatre would have little interest but for those who made its dust; and when we wander through our Parliament at Westminster it is not so much the place that interests us as the senators associated with its name. I confess that when I travel on the Continent I cut cathedrals and study the people, in the boulevards, in the streets, in the market-place. When I have spare time in London I do the same, and at one time made a point of spending a day now and then wandering about the East End of London for the purpose of studying character; and it was while so occupied that I happened to stray into our National Portrait Gallery. I was astonished and disgusted at such a collection having such a name, and there and then decided that I would make this the subject of my lecture, and the following is briefly my indictment as I

then laid it before the Grand Jury, composed of the Press and the Public:

"Of all places, a Portrait Gallery should appeal to you most, and the National Portrait Gallery is the place in which to spend a happy day.

"That is, if you are not critical. If you are, then get thee to a library and bury thyself in books of biography, for portrait painters were deceivers ever, historical portrait painters in particular.

"The National Portrait Gallery was founded about thirty years ago, and the founder, Lord Stanhope, had the audacity to ask for a yearly grant of £500 for the purpose of supplying the nation with a representative collection of national portraits. The first purchase made by the [Pg 192] trustees was a portrait of Sir Walter Raleigh (rather suggestive of the undertaking ending in smoke). However, it has struggled on, such as it is.

"Truly it is in no sense a National Portrait Gallery, and although the richest and most civilised nation in the world now generally grants £1,000 a year to supply itself with representative portraits of its great men and women, being I may say about the price of one portrait by a successful painter, the portraits of our great lights do not swell the number of the collection.

"It has been difficult, no doubt, even with this immense amount of cash, to get portraits of those of the past. They have been locked up in the stately homes of England.

"Of late years Charles Surface, Earl of Spendthrift, knocks his ancestors down to the highest chance bidder, but the National Portrait Gallery knows them not.

"The reason of this is not far to seek.

"Taking up at random an annual report of the trustees, I read: 'The salaries of officials amount to £1,176, other expenses £591, the police £635, total £2,402.' And now we come to the interesting item: 'The money spent on the purchase of portraits £255'! But the particular section of the report dealing with this item says seven works have been purchased for £143 18*s.*—that is, £20 11*s.* 1*d.* each.

"Small wonder then that many works in the National Portrait Gallery of England—England where portraiture flourishes—are unworthy of the attendance of even £35 worth of policemen. Can we wonder when £635 is paid to the police to gaze at £143 18*s.* worth of portraits, the purchase of the year?" and so on.

The result of this "ridiculing the State," as the *Times*, in its leader, expressed it, for the penurious pittance it doles out of the revenues of the richest country in the world towards the maintenance of a National Portrait Gallery, was that I was the cause of arousing the Press of Great Britain to the miserable condition of the National Portrait Gallery, which ended in our having one in its place more worthy of the country. [Pg 193]

Besides drawing public attention to the National Portrait Gallery, in the same lecture I put in a word for the struggling unknown portrait painters. Speaking of payment reminded me of the story told of Bularchus, a successful painter 716 B.C. Candaules, King of Lydia, paid him with as much gold as would cover the surface of the work. I told my audience that I doubted whether, if that system existed now, the portrait painters would leave any room at all on the Academy walls for subject pictures.

Would Meissonier or Alma Tadema, say, paint your portrait for three napoleons, and would you pay Slapdash, R.A., fifteen thousand for a larger one? I then made the assertion, "It is not too much to say that a fashionable portrait painter often receives £900 for his name, and £100 for the value of the picture to the sitter as a portrait. It is the artist's autograph with a dash of something attached." I asked, "Why should snobbery tempt those away from an honest, well-painted portrait by a less-known man, to accept a failure with a Society signature?" a query that was replied to by my receiving any number of letters from all over the country asking me to recommend artists; in fact, at the time I might have started an agency for portrait painters. One of the artists I suggested had already had a very striking portrait of the Chinese Ambassador, Marquis Tseng, hung in the Academy, and over that painting he had had a trying experience. His sitter, like Queen Elizabeth, objected to shadows, not like the conceited Queen through vanity, but, being an Oriental, he really did not understand what the shadows were, and rushed to the glass to see if his face was dirty. He was a high official in his own country, and naturally anxious not to be mistaken for the Dirty Boy. Again he got into a frightful state at the glazy appearance of his skin —it was an oil painting.

"Only opium-eaters have shiny skins, and I am free from that vice. This is a libel, sir, and will disgrace me at home."

Then he had no idea of perspective, but a great idea of his own rank, and commanded my bewildered brother-artist to paint the red button on the top of his hat, the feather down the back, [Pg 194] the orders in front, and was disappointed that his different coats and sashes, three and four deep, could not all be shown at once.

Another illustration of the difficulties of portrait painters I gave in the same lecture has since been so frequently repeated in the Press that I fear it will be stale to most of my readers—the story of the man who called upon the portrait painter and asked him to paint his father.

"But where is your father?"

"Oh, he died ten years ago."

"Then how can I paint him?" asked the artist.

"Why, I've just seen your picture of Moses, and surely if you can paint the portrait of a man who died thousands of years ago, you can more easily paint my father, who has only been dead ten years!"

Seeing the sort of man with whom he had to deal, the young artist agreed to paint the defunct gentleman, and the picture in due time was sent home. It was carefully hung on the drawing-room wall, and the newly-blossomed art patron was called in to see it. He gazed at it for some time in silence, his eyes filled with tears, and then, slowly nodding his head, he said softly and reverently, "So that is my father! Ah, how he is changed!"

But out of this lecture comes another story—the story of "The Great Six Toes Trial." I must start at the beginning of its strange, eventful history, the same way as, in my lecture, I began with the origin of portraiture.

Now the late George Augustus Sala, in his leader in the *Daily Telegraph* on this lecture, accused me of not giving the origin of portraiture. "Mr. Harry Furniss was bold enough to maintain that, although Greek art remained the model art of the world, portraiture had very little to do with it. Mr. Furniss should not tell this story to the prehistoric toad, for that reptile's presumably long memory might enable it to remind the graphic artist that thousands of years ago the art of portraiture was invented by a sentimental young Greek girl, the daughter of a potter of Corinth, Dibutades." In the same article he sneered at "a whimsical caricaturist lecturing his contemporaries," and in his references to me was about as offensive as he could be. [Pg 195]

G. A. SALA.

The second stage was my letter to the Editor of the *Daily Telegraph*. That paper not printing it, I sent it, with a note, to the Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, who gave both letters a prominent position:

> "Sir,—Can you find space for the publication of the following letter which I addressed to the *Daily Telegraph* in answer to their leader in last Friday's issue, as the insignificant paragraph, 'Greek Portraits,' which alone the *Daily Telegraph* inserted, in no way states the facts of the case?" [Pg 196]
>
> "Sir,—The writer of the leader in your issue of last Friday is guilty of the very fault of which he accuses me. He charges me with not acquainting myself with the subject I treated of in my lecture; he has manifestly not troubled to acquaint himself with that lecture. The ignorance—at any rate, the omissions—that he lays to my door do not exist. Did he expect me in the course of a short hour's lecture to a general audience—which was certainly not prepared for any history or

technicalities—to bring forward in my opening sentences the whole story of the rise and development of Greek portraiture? The principal omission of which he complains is the legend of the daughter of Dibutades—calling it an omission because, forsooth, he did not read it in the *Times* report! But, in point of fact, not only did I give the story at length, but I reproduced on the screen Mortimer's well-known picture of the incident. Surely it is not too much to ask, even for a caricaturist to ask—for such he somewhat scornfully terms me—that when so powerful a personality as a leader writer levels his pen against an individual, however humble, he should not depend upon the report of another newspaper, the exigencies of whose space naturally prevent, it may be assumed, the devotion of more than a column verbatim report to any utterances of a 'mere caricaturist.' But, frankly, does the nature of my own occupation in the arts preclude me from pronouncing a correct judgment on portraits and portraiture? For that, after all, is the burden of your article. Is not an opinion, if correct, as good coming from a bootblack as from a Royal Academician? If so, I submit that mine, if worthy of discussion at all, might at least be ascertained and be considered with respect. If not, then I bring the lecture of Professor Herkomer, A.R.A., published on the very same day as your article, to witness that my judgment was a fair one. By a curious coincidence, he lectured at Leeds on the self-same subject within twenty-four hours of the delivery of my own little lecture; he travelled over much the same ground; brought forward in some instances the very same examples as I, and deduced very much the same conclusions."

I happened to call in at the Garrick Club on my way to the *Punch* dinner, and there found a copy of the *Daily Telegraph* containing the leader, on the margin of which was written with the familiar purple ink, in Lewis Wingfield's handwriting, "G.A.S. on Hy. F." Wingfield was Sala's neighbour and friend, so this settled any doubt I had about the authorship of the article I have just referred to. When I showed it to du Maurier, who sat next to me at dinner, he said, "I say, old chap, I'll tell you a capital story about Sala which you might use. When he was an art student, he [Pg 197] tried to get into the Art Schools of the Royal Academy, and for that purpose had to draw the usual head, hand, and foot. When the Examiners counted the toes on the foot Sala had drawn, they found six, so Sala didn't get in, don't you know!" Now, as other journalists had quoted Sala against me, and a Nottingham paper attacked me in a long and rather vulgar and offensive leader, I, finding myself shortly afterwards the guest of the Literary Club in Nottingham, seized the opportunity to reply. I regretted—though I supposed it was flattering to me—to find that quite recently, although I had been treated for many years with the greatest kindness in the Press, I had been rather attacked. "I was proud," I said, "to find that the first person to attack me in the Press was the greatest journalist the Press possessed—Mr. George Augustus Sala." What I really said after this I print side by side with what I was reported to have said:

"What I Said.	**"How I was Reported.**
"I have not the pleasure of Mr. Sala's personal acquaintance, but no one has a greater admiration than I have for that great man in literature. Mr. Sala began life as an artist; not only so, but he began in that walk of art which I pursue, like another great man of the pen had done before him, for, of course, you all know the story of Thackeray going to Dickens and offering to illustrate his books. Dickens declined Thackeray's offer, and it is generally believed that that refusal so annoyed Thackeray that he became a writer and a rival to Dickens. It was a very good thing for him and for literature that Dickens gave him the refusal he did. Now, Mr. Sala, as I said, also began life as an artist, and I am informed that when an applicant for the Royal Academy he had to send in for examination the usual chalk drawings of a head, a hand, and a foot. The Examiners, however, discovered that Sala had drawn six toes on the foot. He was rejected, and no doubt this caused him, like	"He (Mr. Furniss) had not the pleasure of Mr. Sala's personal acquaintance, but no one had a greater admiration for him than he had as being a great man in literature. Mr. Sala began life as an artist, and not only so, but he began in that walk of life which he (Mr. Furniss) pursued. He went to Dickens, and wanted to illustrate his books, but Dickens would not have the sketches; afterwards Mr. Sala went into literature, and it was a very good thing for him and for literature that Dickens gave him the refusal that he did. (Hear, hear.) "Mr. Sala began not only as an artist, but as a caricaturist, and he had to send into the Academy Schools three 'short drawings,' as they were called, of a head, a hand, and a foot. Unfortunately for Mr. Sala, he had six toes upon the foot he drew, and the Examiner, having counted these toes, pointed the matter out to Mr. Sala,

Thackeray, to forsake the pencil for the pen, and he is now Art Critic of the *Daily Telegraph*.
"In 1851 Mr. Sala painted the pictures upon the walls of an eating saloon, and that probably had given him the taste for cooking which he had evinced ever since."

who did not get into the Academy Schools, so now he was the Art Critic of the *Daily Telegraph*. In 1851, Mr. Sala painted the pictures upon the walls of an eating saloon, and that probably had given him the taste for cooking which he had evinced ever since."

The reporter had evidently trusted to his memory, and not to shorthand notes—thus the blunder. I pointed it out, and at once corrected it in a letter printed in the same paper a day or so afterwards. My object in all sincerity was to have a joke—du Maurier's joke—at Sala's expense, but in leading up to it my very complimentary and perfectly accurate parallel illustration of Thackeray was unfortunately, by the reporter's carelessness, attributed to Sala!

This correction was entirely lost sight of by the Press, and I was accused by papers all over the country of having falsely accused him of offering to illustrate Dickens. Papers printed apologies to Sala, and in some cases paid Sala's solicitor money to avoid actions-at-law. I then heard that he was going for me. I found a letter from Burnand to that effect the evening I returned from a lecturing tour. Strange to say, that night Sala and I were both guests of a Medical Society's dinner at the Holborn Restaurant. Both had to make speeches. I spoke before Sala, and referred to a misquotation from a speech I had made in the country, and purposely then and there made the *amende honorable*, of which he at least understood the meaning. He ignored this altogether, and I now merely mention the incident to show that he was vindictive from the very first. He would not listen to reason. Sir George Lewis, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Burnand, and other mutual friends failed: Sala remained obdurate. It was freely reported after the verdict was given that the plaintiff never had any desire to make money out of me, and had specially instructed his counsel not to ask for damages! As a matter of fact, when our mutual friends implored Sala not to proceed with such a trivial and ridiculous action, he admitted that he wanted money, and in conversation with Sir George Lewis—who all through acted as my good friend, and Sala's too, doing all in his power (which is great) to induce Sala to accept my necessary *amende*,—Sala declined. He had already pocketed several amounts from papers publishing the Nottingham paper's fanciful report, and said to Sir George: "When Friswell libelled me, I got £500 damages; and why should I not be equally successful against Furniss?" "Yes," said the astute Sir George, "but you must remember that I got you that £500, and now I am on the other side."

[Pg 199]

What I really said, and what I was reported to have said, here I plainly show are two very different things. Still, in the words "and now he is Art Critic of the *Daily Telegraph*" there was a germ of libel—slander one must call it, as the words were spoken—so I was advised to withdraw. Sala, however, made this an impossibility, and the silly action, fanned into "almost European importance," to quote Lockwood, was to be. To make matters worse, just before the

GREAT SIX TOES TRIAL

I received a note from du Maurier:

> "I am awfully sorry, old chap, but the capital story I told you of Sala and the six toes was about another fellow after all!"

Although a letter from me was published immediately correcting this ridiculous blunder on the part of the reporters, pointing out that what I did say was that Mr. Sala was not the only literary man who began life as an artist; and that I had quoted casually as an instance that *Thackeray* in early life went to Dickens, my correction—though well known to Sala—was, to my surprise, ignored, and the words *I had never used* were made the point of the whole action!

[Pg 200]

COUNSEL FOR THE PLAINTIFF.

Mr. Kemp, counsel for Sala, rolled them out with unctuousness then paused for the Judge to write them down. Mr. Sala, in the witness-box, in melodramatic style denied that he had ever taken sketches to Dickens, and the jury noted that fact. Yet I had never said he did! and furthermore Sala knew I had referred to Thackeray and not to him. Still, for some reason I could never understand, Lockwood allowed this to pass, and cross-examined Sala, admitting that he had heard the story of Thackeray and Dickens—as to my right as a critic—but never denied that these words attributed to me were absolutely a false report! The next point Sala made was that an "offensive caricature" (reproduced by permission on this page) was by me! It was Mr. F. C. Gould's. Sala knew

this; so did Lockwood, but he did not deny it: in fact, when the jury considered their verdict, the two points they were clear upon were (1) that I said Sala had offered work to Dickens, and had been refused; (2) that I was the author of the clever (but in Sala's opinion most offensive) caricature of himself and me.

I prompted Lockwood in Court, but he told me that he would not bother about facts, or call me, or deny anything—he took the line that the whole thing was too absurd for serious consideration, and that he would "laugh it out of Court." [Pg 201]

One report says that "Mr. Lockwood handled Mr. Sala very gently in cross-examination, and got from him an explosive declaration that Mr. Furniss's statements represented him as an ignorant and impudent pretender. 'Don't be angry with me, Mr. Sala.'"

But the Judge was angry with dear, good, kind Frank Lockwood, and scotched his humour, and refused to allow him to "laugh it out of Court." It annoyed him, and he summed up dead against me. Lockwood could only squeeze one joke out of the whole thing.

Sala in cross-examination said to Lockwood in a bombastic, inflated, Adelphi-drama style:

"That was not my greatest artistic work. Perhaps my greatest was an engraving of the funeral of the Duke of Wellington. It was from my original drawings. I engraved it on a steel plate, and it contained many thousand figures."

MR. F. C. GOULD'S SKETCH IN THE *WESTMINSTER*, WHICH SALA MAINTAINED WAS MINE.

Lockwood: "All, I suppose, had the proper number of toes?" (Laughter.)

"They had boots on." (Continued laughter.)

Sala got five pounds for the Judge's want of humour, not for mine.

Having no chance of making my little joke in Court, I took my revenge by accepting a commission to report and illustrate my own trial for the *Daily Graphic*, and the following—the only authentic account of the Great Six Toes Trial—appeared the following morning:

"It was unfortunate that the Royal Academicians were all busy varnishing their pictures for the forthcoming exhibition at Burlington House when the Great Sala-Furniss Libel Case was heard on Friday last, and that in their absence you have had to apply to me (the defendant) for sketches of the scene in Court. What a chance Mr. Calderon has missed for a companion picture to the one he is painting of another great legal battle—the Parnell Commission! A picture in next year's Royal Academy of the trial between two art critics is surely worthy to be handed down to posterity, say, in the Council Room of the Royal Academy. [Pg 202]

DEFENDANT.

"That the subject is not a picturesque one, I admit, but I can offer the painter an historical incident connected with it that should recommend itself. We all know that Sir Francis Drake playing at bowls when the Spanish Armada was sighted is a favourite theme with artists. In this case, although there is nothing Spanish about it, there is a parallel incident. I was, like Drake, by the sad sea waves, not playing at bowls, but sketching a common, or garden, donkey, when a telegram arrived from London to say that the great trial was in sight, and my presence was demanded at the Royal Courts of Justice (Court 3) at eleven o'clock the following morning. Let it be recorded that my nerve was equal to the great Admiral's—I finished the drawing of that donkey.

MY HAT.

"The morning was a gloomy one, and no doubt the weather had something to do with the solemn tone of the proceedings. A collection of briefless barristers, irritated jurymen, and wet umbrellas in dark corridors is not enlivening; and when you arrive, to find the Court crowded, and you happen to be, like me, considerably under the medium height, and rather broad in proportion, it is difficult to come up at all, much less smiling, to the feet of justice. Here is a

subject for a *Punch* puzzle. The defendant—how is he to get into Court? It is a mystery to me how I managed to squeeze myself through. I stuck to my hat, and my hat pulled me through (alas, a new one!). The hat was more rubbed the wrong way by the trial than was its wearer; but it is an item in the expense of legal warfare that ought not to be forgotten by the taxing master. However, I found myself sitting next my consulter and friend, the 'sage of Ely Place,' in good time. Although a case is down to be tried in a particular Court, it may be transferred to another [Pg 203] Court at a moment's notice. This is bewildering to the parties interested and, from what I saw, irritating to the legal fraternity. Tomkins *v.* Snooks is down for trial, Court 2. The legal call-boys bustle in the counsel and others engaged. Mr. Buzfuz, Q.C., pushes his way into Court, surrounds himself with briefs and other documents, when some mysterious harlequin of the Law Courts changes Tomkins *v.* Snooks to Court 4, and calls upon Brown *v.* Jones, who are packed away in Court 3, waiting their turn. Buzfuz gets very angry, and bustles off to Court 4. In fact, getting your case into Court reminded me forcibly of that amusing toy, so popular then, called 'Pigs in Clover'—wigs in clover, I was nearly writing. I apologise at once for the mere thought. We were transferred from one Court to another, and our friends sat out a case in the Court advertised to try ours, wondering what on earth 'The Prince of Journalists' and I had to do with 'chops and tomato sauce.' What followed has been pretty fully reported, so I need not dwell upon it. Indeed, I could not live in the frightful atmosphere of those Courts, and would gladly pay twice five pounds to be allowed to sit on the roof if ever I find myself a defendant again.

THE EDITOR OF *PUNCH* SUPPORTS ME.

"According to the reports, 'the plaintiff was supported by his wife, and the defendant by the editor of *Punch*.' The solemn occasion demanded a certain amount of gravity, which was particularly difficult for me to retain, as my 'supporter,' although fully alive to the tremendous bearings of the case and the importance of the issues, failed to hide in his

THE PLAINTIFF.

expression those 'happy thoughts' that flow ceaselessly through his fertile brain. The outward effect was a see-saw antic with his imposing eyebrows—a proof to me that his sense of the ridiculous had got the better of his gravity. 'Put on your gloves at once,' he whispered impressively to me. 'Why?' I asked. 'Because you may then leave the court with clean hands!' (The 'putting on the gloves' must not be taken in a double sense.) But this is a digression. You [Pg 204] merely ask for sketches in Court. Well, I send you my recollection of Mr. Kemp, Q.C., trying to be very angry with me; of my 'brother caricaturist' (*vide* reports), Mr. Lockwood, struggling to be very angry with Mr. Kemp, and pointing to the defendant, 'That miscreant! (note the effect upon me), and the Judge very serious with everybody. As an antidote, I was spoiling a beautiful sheet of white blotting-paper by drawing recollections of the donkey I was studying in the country when I was summoned to town to take my trial. I am anxious to make this public, as I now remember that I left that sheet of sketches in the court; and who can tell? Some one may yet 'invest those sketches with an almost European importance,' and the number of five pounds I shall be called upon to dole out all round will be something appalling.

SIR F. LOCKWOOD AND MYSELF.

"*A propos* of this truly great trial, the *Observer* remarked, in its leader upon it, that 'future treatises on the law of libel will, if properly and picturesquely indexed, be enriched with this entry, "Art critic, statement held to be a libel upon, see Toes." Indeed, the antics of the law of libel ought to be written, edited, let me suggest, by Mr. George Lewis, and illustrated by the genius of Mr. Frank Lockwood. I will supply a footnote."

Over this *jeu d'esprit* on my part Sala waxed very wroth, for besides having to pay £80 costs of his own, he brought upon himself columns of chaff, of which the following is a fair specimen. "The Prince of Journalists," wrote a wag of journalists, "is lamenting that he has jumped out of the Furniss into the fire, for of a surety five pounds will hardly repay Mr. Sala for the roasting he will receive from his good-natured friends." Skits showing six toes were plentiful, jokes in burlesque and on the music-hall stage were introduced as a matter of course, and private chaff in letters was kept up for some time. One private letter I wrote du Maurier, "Sala has no sole for humour—you have made me put my foot in it," and added the Six Toes signature sketch. In this no doubt du Maurier found inspiration for Trilby.

[Pg 205]

In the witness-box Mr. Sala took up a curious position with regard to that filched and fatal joke. He said that I told that joke because he had been invited to distribute the prizes at the Art School at Nottingham shortly before, and that I had run down and, like the miscreant who sowed tares in his neighbour's wheat, deliberately made him look ridiculous. As a matter of fact, I neither knew that Sala had distributed the prizes, nor that he had ever put in an appearance at Nottingham. Sala in his evidence said, "I have always been well received there (Nottingham). The people have always been very kind to me, and they expressed surprise at the libel." Nottingham people reading this, assured me it was the very reverse of the facts, that Sala was socially anything but friendly and most objectionable in his behaviour when there; and they invited me to distribute the prizes the following year, which I did —the last stage of all of this strange, eventful joke, which ended, as it began, in good-natured laughter.

[Pg 206]

THE SEQUEL: I DISTRIBUTE THE PRIZES AT NOTTINGHAM.

HE one confession I desire in all seriousness should reach the ears of my fellow artists is that my

object in attacking the Royal Academy ("Royal Academy Antics," 1890), was a thoroughly unselfish one. "It was published for the sake of those who, for one reason or another, are not within the inner circle. I was prompted to call the discriminating attention of the public to the evil the Academy works and permits to exist," by appeals from artists outside—heartbroken men and women smarting under unfair treatment; I received letters recording cases of gross injustice, followed by ruin and poverty—which made my blood boil. The shortcomings of the Academicians had been the subject of criticism for many years, yet no improvement resulted. As the *Times* pathetically observed: "At least it should not be taken for granted that improvement is impossible till improvement has been attempted. This much has been forced upon us by the painful knowledge of the many bitter, often heartbreaking, disappointments which cloud the opening of the Royal Academy Exhibition, when London looks bright and blooming, and everyone and everything around seems so full of life, and so eager and capable of enjoyment. It is impossible for those whose office carries them behind the scenes, in the midst of the festive and fashionable crowd which throngs the stately rooms of the Academy, not to think of the poor lodging and the shabby studio, and the easel, the rejected picture, the subject of so much labour, the spring of so many hopes, which was expected to win bread, if not fame, for the painter." Perfectly true, but oh, how pathetic! to those, like myself, [Pg 207] "whose office carries them behind the scenes." It is pleasant to keep friendly with those Royal Academicians and their friends and worshippers—that "festive and fashionable crowd"—and to be on good terms with the givers of banquets and the pets of Society; but I care little for such, for I am neither a logrolling journalist nor a Society-seeking artist, and at the risk of having my independence mistaken for egotism, I have always expressed my opinions openly and freely, quite regardless of, and not caring one jot for, those whose friendship I lost in consequence—no, not even as in this case, where the very artists who confessed to me, and who appealed to me to attack the Academy, subsequently avoided me, as "it wouldn't do, don't you know, to be seen with Furniss, as I am in the running for the Academy." This was my dedication.

THE SEE-SAW ANTIC.

The one object in view was to disabuse the public mind of the erroneous impression that the Royal Academy is an unprejudiced official public body, that they elect only the best artists, and reject only the unworthy—in fact, that R.A. should be considered a hall-mark on work, as too [Pg 208] many believe it to be, to the detriment of the majority of artists. "Most of those artists who write and talk of art may be considered prejudiced—no one can well say that you are. What is the Royal Academy to you?" was said to me. I was even encouraged by some of the Academicians themselves, who had from time to time fruitlessly attempted to introduce reforms; but notwithstanding the efforts of the right-minded members of their body, the majority adopt the Fabian policy of sitting down and doing nothing, or bury their heads, ostrich-like, till the storm of indignation raised by their unworthy selfishness and indolence has blown over.

I went thoroughly into the subject. I read Blue-books, criticisms, sober, solid reviews, Royal

Academicians' confessions and defence. I read everything connected with the history of the Royal Academy from beginning to end. Then I appeared on the platform and gave lectures on Art and Artists and the Royal Academy, which drew forth leading articles from the *Times* and nearly every paper in the land.

In my researches I found that the Royal Academy has been a narrow-minded clique from its very initiation. It was procured by the trickery of an American (its first President), West, from that "dull lad brought up by narrow-minded people," George the Third, described by Thackeray: "Like all dull men, the King was all his life suspicious of superior people. He did not like ... Reynolds.... He loved mediocrities—Benjamin West was his favourite painter."

"A royal patron on the sly secured,
Which from the first its cheek to shame inured."[A]

It was a contemptible pandering to unblushing and self-interested sycophancy, involving practically the ruin of all that the best spirits in the art world had laboured for since the commencement of the century. A society of unmitigated selfishness was thus started, and still continues. When everything else around has been reformed, as the country has advanced and increased, the Royal Academy remains exactly as it was when so hurriedly formed one hundred and thirty years ago. [Pg 209]

To all this I received endless confirmation, but, alas! the writers did not give me permission to publish their names. I have on my desk before me as I write this page a letter from the editor of our most artistic illustrated weekly: "Allow me to congratulate you; keep pegging away. The Royal Academy of Arts (plural) is nonsense; it is, as you say, a Royal Academy of oil. If the R.A. had done their duty years ago, we would not see such farcical statues in the streets, nor should I (as at present moment employed) be writing to Berlin and Vienna for assistance in matters where skill and taste are required by art workmen." The President of a certain Royal Academy wrote: "I have just read your 'Royal Academy Antics,' and I must confess that, as far as I can judge, many of its strictures are deserved; ... but I can venture to say that many of the antiquated mistakes made by the parent Academy have been carefully avoided by our governing body."

THE FIRST P.R.A.

From all sorts and conditions of artists and art employers I received congratulations. Those from the poor struggling outsiders alone repaid me for the trouble I had taken. At that time, only eleven years ago, the Royal Academy and other picture shows were in a very different position from what they are now. Art is no longer a fashion; proportionately the Royal Academy is going down. The glory of Lord Leighton, one of the brightest of Society's stars, attracted hosts of fashionable people to the gatherings of the Academy, and Sir John Millais, too, was much run after by the fashionable crowd. Now that these are gone, the Academy has lost all interest in smart Society. "Academy Antics up to Date" would not have any sale, "An Artistic Joke" in Bond Street would not have any visitors. I fought for the weak when they were crushed by the strong. Now that "My Lady Oil" is feeble and powerless, I desist. [Pg 210]

NO WATER-COLOUR OR BLACK-AND-WHITE NEED APPLY.

"The Royal Academy has been the subject of many bitter attacks," wrote the editor of the *Magazine of Art*, "during the last hundred years—attacks which, directed against unjust or antiquated rules, have usually been well founded. But never, perhaps, has so effective a charge been made as that which Mr. Furniss brings in his entertaining volume; and if it be true that ridicule will pierce there whence the shafts of indignation will rebound, no little good may be looked for from the publication."

Precisely so. Others, serious and influential, had exposed the R.A.; I tried what ridicule would do. But the public did not take me seriously, and the Press took me too seriously; and as the public does not buy books on art, but is content with a *réchauffé*, my object to a certain extent was defeated.

My Lady Oil of Burlington House is a very selfish creature; she persistently refuses to recognise her twin-sister Water Colour, giving her but one miserable room in her mansion, and no share whatever in her honours. My Lady Oil is selfish; My Lady Oil is unjust to favour engravers and

architects, and to ignore painters in water-colours and artists in black-and-white. She showers honours on her adopted sisters, Engraving and Architecture, because the former mechanically reproduces her work, and the latter builds her pretty toy-houses for her children to live in. [Pg 211]

This is really altogether absurd when you reflect that it is in water-colour that English art excels, and that the copyist, the engraver's occupation will soon be gone, beaten away by slightly more mechanical, but more effective, modes of reproduction.

Sooner or later John Bull will open his inartistic eyes, and see that mediocrity in oil is not equal to excellence in water, and that those who originate with the pencil are far before copyists with the graver and drawers of plans.

I then advocated a National Academy, a Commonwealth of Art, presided over by a State Minister of Fine Art, in which mediocrity will find no space till a welcome and a place have been given to all earnest work, regardless of its nature.

Where the number of works of any one man will be limited, and where there will be no such mockery of good work as "rejection for want of space."

Where all the fine arts, and especially the national fine art (water-colour paintings), shall be recognised as arts, and the best of the professors of them shall at least be eligible for election.

Where the committee of selection and hanging shall be—as in the Salon—elected by the body of exhibitors.

Where reasonable time shall be given to the proper consideration of every work sent in.

Where the women, in the rare event of their being equal to their brother brushes, shall be elected into the magic circle.

Very few of the great public who find the splendid Tate Gallery "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever," recollect the disgraceful treatment the donor of it received at the hands of the Government and others. The way in which Mr.—afterwards Sir—Henry Tate was "held up to derision and contempt by a handful of irresponsible cranks" was a public scandal. Mr. Tate, in consequence, temporarily withdrew his princely offer of £150,000 to the nation. All his friends, and they were [Pg 212] legion, deeply sympathised with him. I, being one of the few who were asked by Mr. Tate to meet at his house and consider the form of the "British Luxembourg" before the offer was made public at all, took upon myself to write to the *Times* as follows:—

> "Red-tapeism has triumphed, and all your art-loving readers are disgusted, but not altogether surprised, to find this morning that Mr. Henry Tate has retired from the scene with his princely offer of £80,000 and his magnificent collection of pictures, which was to form the nucleus of the proposed gallery of British art. It is a bitter disappointment to the munificent Mr. Tate, and a warning to others who, like him, come forward with their purse and their pictures and offer them to an unartistic nation. It is bad enough to find that a splendid gift like this cannot be accepted; but even worse features in this lengthy controversy have been the gross personal attacks and ungenerous insinuations made against the would-be donor, which must be particularly hurtful to his modest and unobtrusive nature, and I now write to suggest that all those who sympathise with him (and surely their name is legion) should show him some public mark of their appreciation. To the British mind this at once suggests a banquet, and I would most willingly undertake all the arrangements in connection with it if my present state of health did not preclude my doing so; but, without a doubt, among Mr. Tate's countless admirers there must be many eager to adopt and carry out this suggestion."

Of course I was chaffed in the Press for so "characteristically, though gravely," suggesting such a thing. My object in making the proposal was misunderstood. I was accused of putting the crowning absurdity on the whole thing, of making a cheaply canonised martyr of Mr. Tate, and some ungenerously hinted I was following up my joke of my "offer to the nation" by another. In fact, for the first time in the history of England, a public man was not to have a public dinner when there happened to be a matter of public importance to celebrate and ventilate! On the other hand, I received a letter from Mr. Tate, from Bournemouth, the day my letter in the *Times* appeared, in which he thanked me for my warm hearted letter in the *Times*, but begged of me not to press my proposal in his honour. "As you say, I am a modest man, and it would be more than I could stand. What I *should like* would be to see the artists calling a public meeting and protesting [Pg 213] against the way in which British art has been shelved." In the same letter he assured me "that too much could not be said in condemnation of Sir Frederick Leighton's and the Academicians' supineness." In writing to thank me for dropping the proposed banquet, he again referred to his great surprise and disappointment that neither Sir Frederick Leighton nor any one of the Academicians had given his scheme any support, and complained that the President of the Royal

Academy had been much more loyal to his friend Lord Carlisle "than to the cause of British art."

THE OLD BAILEY.

In the winter of 1885 the following paragraph ran through the Press:—"A statement has been circulated from a quarter that may be taken as well informed, that the City Lands Committee of the Corporation of London have perfected plans for the improvement of the Central Criminal Court. It is not improbable that the process of reform has been accelerated by a recent letter to the public Press of Mr. Harry Furniss, the well-known comic artist, who, having been summoned as a juryman, suffered many woes while waiting to be called into the box." As the *Saturday Review* remarked, the bitter cry of the outcast juror which I uttered is familiar enough to the public ear, but I had given it a more penetrating note than usual; but it did not hesitate to say that it would not produce any more effect upon those whom I sought to influence "than the less articulate, or even than the absolutely inarticulate, protests of many generations of his fellow-sufferers." And the *Saturday Review* was right, for fifteen winters have passed since I wrote my protest to the *Daily News*.

> "I cannot help thinking the prisoners at the Old Bailey have every reason to congratulate themselves they are brought there as prisoners, and not as jurymen. They are well looked after, and have a clear way into Court, and plenty of room when they get there. These are their advantages; but, alas! the lot of the poor jurymen is not such a happy one. For some reasons, which may (or may not) exist in the mind of the summoning officer, I received a demand from him to appear and [Pg 214] perform a 'super's' part in trial by jury at the Old Bailey Petty Sessions. I arrived at the Court punctually at the hour requested, and after fighting my way through a mixture of other small ratepayers, detectives, bailed prisoners, and nondescripts, I came to the first floor. Then I entered a dark passage, 'standing room only,' and found it quite impossible to get near the Court, the outside of which resembled the entrance to Old Drury on Boxing Night. 'There ain't no room; just stand outside there!' where I managed to keep my temper and my feet for a considerable time. By degrees I squeezed into the Court with my hat and temper ruffled. I arrived at barrier No. 1. 'Have I been called?' 'Name?' 'Yes, yer 'ave, long ago; fined five pounds for not answering to your name'; explanation. Shoved on to barrier No. 2; explanation repeated. Shoved on to barrier No. 3; explanation repeated again, and reached barrier No. 4. The Judge: 'Swear'; and I swore. Final explanation; fine taken off. I have an excuse. 'Stand down!' Here I remain for an hour and a half in a pen, huddled up with more 'Hexcuses,' as Mr. Husher calls us, some of whom, by their own statement, came from houses in which there were infectious diseases. Imagine how nice this would be with the jury-box full! I must admit the presiding Judge performed his task of selection with discretion, particularly when he let me off. But I observe that before the Judge there is a bouquet of flowers. I am told that this is the survival of an old custom of placing hyssop before the Bench by way of febrifuge to protect him from pestilential vapours from the dock. I would like to suggest that a bunch of hyssop be again substituted for the bouquet of flowers. In justice, I ask you this: Is it reasonable to fine an over-taxed ratepayer five pounds for not having heard his name through a musty brick wall? And may I through you make a proposal—that busy professional men should be exempt from this annoyance on payment of one guinea per annum, and that this fund should either be employed in building a new court, or provide fees for a really competent jury of junior barristers, who undoubtedly would be the right men in the right place?"

My "cry" was taken up by the Press. "Purgatory is no name for it," "The Old Bailey Scandal," and other startling headlines failed to move Bumbledom. The most celebrated Criminal Court in the world, situated in the richest city, to this day remains a public scandal and a purgatory to unfortunate jurymen. My suggestion in this "amusing jeremiad," as it was called by one paper, contained one serious proposal; but my protest against the only form of conscription known to our laws, and my suggestion that the jury should be paid junior barristers, was, I confess, the [Pg 215] only humorous idea I had in writing the letter! The major portion was serious—so again I have been a victim to the want of humour on the part of my journalistic friends.

THE CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT.
From "Punch."

Mr. *Punch* appeared as my "champion stout and warm" in a series of verses, a few of which I quote:

[Pg 216]

"That citizen is now in Court, a dismal den and dusty;
Frowsy and foul its fittings be, its atmosphere is fusty;
And oh, its minor myrmidons are proud and passing crusty!

"They chivy him, that citizen, hustle him here and there;
One elbow looseth his trim tie, one rumpleth his back hair:
They greet his queries with a grunt, his grumblings with a stare.

"A close-packed crowd doth hem him round, a tight, malodorous 'block'
Of fustian men and women gross, of dry and dusty lock;
His 'By your leaves' they heed no whit, his struggles wild they mock.

"He may not stir, he cannot see. At length, in tones of blame,
He hears them toss from lip to lip his own much-honoured name:
'What! Fined for absence!!! That be blowed!' He swells with wrath and shame.

"And through the throng he madly thrusts, like Viking, through the press
Strewing his path with buttons burst and fragments of his dress,
Claiming reversal of that fine with dearly-bought success.

"How long, oh British citizens, will ye in patience bide
The torture of the Jury-box remorselessly applied,
The Usher's haughty insolence, the Bobby's baleful pride?

"How long shall the 'twelve honest men,' our constitution's end,
Be treated worse than criminals, their time and money lend,
Long hours of thankless horror in their country's cause to spend?

"*Punch* riseth in indignant wrath, your champion stout and warm:
'Tis time that Somebody should take this old abuse by storm,
And sweep out the Old Bailey with the besom of Reform."

I have to confess that letters to the Press have, as a rule, little effect in reforming; in fact, my only direct success was caused by an illustrated letter to *Punch*. The tent-jobbers were evicted, and the pleasant and not altogether picturesque pavilion for cricketers, in the centre of Regent's Park, was erected in consequence of this letter of mine to *Punch*:

"Dear Mr. *Punch*,—I have discovered a nasty spot in one of the lungs of London. As you are the Doctor to cure all evils, I trust you will take up the case.

"I re-visited the neighbourhood of dear old Regent's Park last week. I strolled through the Zoo to renew the acquaintance of all my

friends there, deserted in the 'Out of Town' season, and longing in vain, alas! for their day in the country. It was early; the Park was deserted, except by the birds, and here and there laughing children with their nurses. Everything was pleasant, so fresh and green, and free and easy, unlike the West End 'lungs.'

"I sat myself down on a bench. Shut out from the madding crowd, one could breathe in comfort. I recalled Locker's lines in praise of Piccadilly—that crowded thoroughfare, dusty and noisy—and while trying to fit them in to suit the beautiful scene around me, I nodded, and fell asleep.

THANK YO-O-U!

REGENT'S PARK AS IT WAS.
***From "Punch."* A ROUGH SKETCH ON WOOD.**

"Bang! I'm awake! What's that? A cannon-ball hit me in the back? I'm all of a heap on the grass, my hat one way, my umbrella another—and I nowhere! or, where am I? Dear me, am I dreaming? Have I been carried by a shot? (Volunteers do practise in the Park.) Was it a suburban race-meeting? Yes, it must be, and one of a low order. And yet this is surely Regent's Park!

"'Thank you, sir!'—'Thank y-o-o-u!'—'Th-a-n-k y-o-o-o-u!'"

I pick myself up. *Is* it the monkeys' half-holiday? Yes! They are imitating boys playing cricket. Their cages are close at hand.

"Bang! Another blow!! This time I receive the enemy's blow—as an Englishman should—in front. It brings me up standing—I see it all! The monkeys are boys; the cages are practising nets; and the balls come off the bats! A nurse in charge of five children is under fire—in terror that some of her little ones may be hit and killed—and it is a wonder they are not. I gallantly cover her retreat, for no park-keeper is to be seen. Then I turned my attention to what I thought—when half-dazed, but not altogether wrong—was a corner of a low race-meeting, or gipsy encampment. Here is a sketch, sir, made on the spot. It certainly was like both—dirty unfinished

tents, casks, rubbish and rags, something boiling, and some people brawling, the grass all worn, and the walk cut up! An eyesore, a disgrace, sir!

"A somewhat artistically-built kiosk stands a hundred yards or so away. If the mass of cricketers want another, by all means let them have it, and drive the unsightly tent-jobbers out of the Park.

"If this sort of thing is allowed by officials in charge, then, sir, I venture to think the sketch heading this letter, 'What it will come to,' will be an actual illustration of fact.

"Yours truly,
"STURMIE STUMPS."

Unfortunately my more recent attack on "Lord's," and my letters and articles on various other public matters, have not met with the same success. Even domestic annoyances have been ventilated by me, and I fondly hope have had some effect.

A propos of the foregoing, I may here make full confession of how

I FOUND A SNAKE IN REGENT'S PARK.

The following incident may prove interesting to the public in general and naturalists in particular:

While taking an early walk in Regent's Park on Saturday, June 12th, 1894, I captured, not the proverbial worm, but a specimen of a rare species of snake, which was indulging in a constitutional on one of the broad paths. "What a gigantic worm!" was my first thought, but on my using my stick to arrest its further progress it rose in the orthodox snake-like fashion at my cane, throwing itself into an attitude of defence and hissing with anger. The park-keeper, park-labourers who were mowing the grass close by, and divers members of the British public, from the piscatorial street arab with his minnow-ensnaring thread and bent pin to the portly merchant wending Citywards, were soon on the spot, and really that diminutive reptile caused more consternation than would have been the case had it been instead an Anarchist bomb. I sent over to the cricket pavilion for a tin canister wherein to cage *pro tem.* the wily stranger, and [Pg 219] excitement waxed high as preparations were made to accomplish the fearsome feat. This was safely managed by the aid of a newspaper, which naturally enough, considering the events of the week, proved to be of a sporting character, and the viper, probably anxious as to the result of the Oaks, glided to the column containing that news, whence it was expeditiously shaken into the canister, which I perforated at the top, and walked off with my tinned snake to the Zoological Gardens hard by, where its roaming propensities were kept in check within the walls of the reptile house.

I was somewhat startled to learn that my captive had not escaped from the Gardens, which did not contain one of its species, and Mr. Bartlett gave it as his opinion that there must have been a number more wherever this one came from. This new danger further enhanced the charms of Regent's Park, which on Saturdays is a perfect pandemonium, the pedestrian having to exert a great deal of agility to dodge the whizzing cricket balls and avoid being maimed for life. Now that we have had snakes in the grass we may expect vultures in the air, and who knows that in time to come we may not be shooting big game in the jungles of the north-west!

The above is the substance of a letter I wrote to the *Times*, the publication of which caused no little consternation in some papers and no little chaff, at my expense, in others. The London evening papers appeared with startling contents bills and sensational headings:

"*LIKA-JOKO, THE SERPENT HUNTER.*"
"SNAKES IN REGENTS PARK!"
"THE TALE OF THE SERPENT," "SNAKES ALIVE!" &c.

The *Westminster Gazette*, "In the hope of gleaning some valuable information about this newly-discovered fearful reptile which lies in wait for wayfarers in the wilds of Northern London," sent a representative post-haste to interview Mr. Bartlett, the superintendent of the Zoological [Pg 220] Gardens. This report in the *Westminster* is headed:

"He thought he saw an elephant
Upon the mantelpiece;
He looked again, and found it was
His sister's husband's niece,"

and then proceeds to throw doubt upon my veracity.

"Mr. Harry Furniss has been suffering from a delusion very similar to that of the subject of Mr. Lewis Carroll's nonsense-verse. Mr. Bartlett is a man of few words, though what he does say is both interesting and humorous.

THE LATE MR. BARTLETT.

Without replying"—(the *Westminster* representative required him to tell him all he knew about my snake)—"he took up his pen and, on the back of a visiting-card which lay before him, he drew a circle as large as the card would hold, the ends of which did not quite meet. 'There,' he said, 'that is about the actual size of Mr. Harry Furniss's snake. You see its size is not alarming, and its nature is not venomous. In fact, it is absolutely harmless.'

"'But it is of rare variety, is it not?'

"'The variety is not common, certainly, though I have known it for the last eighteen or twenty years. It is known as the small crowned snake (*Coronella lævis*), and is occasionally found in Hampshire and in one or two other counties. The first specimen I had was brought to me from Hampshire by a friend of mine, a young officer. As he pulled it out of his hand-bag in this room I saw it biting at his fingers. I thought it was a viper; but, of course, on examining it I soon saw what it really was. It has no fangs, and it is, as I said, quite harmless. At its full size it may measure from fourteen to sixteen inches. As for its rarity, here is a fairly long list of the specimens we have had, and we have several at present. But come along to the reptile house and see it for yourself.'

"Arrived, at the reptile house, Mr. Bartlett called the keeper, and in solemn tones and with a grave countenance requested him to 'show this gentleman Mr. Harry Furniss's serpent.' The man looked puzzled for a moment, and then gradually a broad grin spread over his face as he replied: 'Oh, yes, sir, if I can find it, but I am not sure about that,' However, he removed the lid from a glass case containing several lively little creatures just about as large as a fresh-water eel at the age at which it is known to the small boy who tries to catch it in his hands as the 'darning needle.' After groping about in the sand at the bottom of the case he found the specimen required and handed it over to Mr. Bartlett, who held it in his hand and allowed it to make savage darts at his fingers. 'You see,' he said, it is a lively little thing—extremely spiteful, but quite powerless to hurt me.' After it had been put back and carefully secured, lest it should make another descent upon London, Mr. Bartlett gave his theories as to how it might have got into Regent's Park. 'There are two ways in which it might have come here,' he explained. 'I imagine it has been brought in some of the plants or shrubs which have been provided for the Park gardeners; or else somebody may have brought a female with young ones from the country and carelessly allowed this one to escape. But stray animals like this are almost sure to come to us sooner or later. Whenever people find anything unusual, they think it must be an escaped specimen and forward it here. Why, when the great explosion on the canal occurred in 1874, the glass in our aviaries was shattered. Of course a great number of our birds escaped, but it was in November, and most of them were glad enough to return to the warmth and to the food provided for them. But people were continually sending us birds for a long time, and, in fact, more birds were sent here than had actually escaped.'

[Pg 221]

"'Then, as a last question, Mr. Bartlett, what does the fuss which has been made about this snake mean?'

"Mr. Bartlett looked more solemn than ever as he suggested: 'Well, Mr. Harry Furniss is fond of a joke—Lika-Joko is a capital name for him; he may have been serious, or he may not."

I was serious, and so was dear old Mr. Bartlett, whom it was my privilege to know well, but he did not let the representative of the *Westminster* see this.

I replied to the above article:

"On reading your descriptive interview with Mr. Bartlett *à propos* of my finding a reptile in Regent's Park, I was, believe me, far more surprised than when I captured the primary cause of your representative's journey to the Zoological Gardens. You endeavour to sum up the incident and my veracity by quoting the following lines of Mr. Lewis Carroll's:—

"'He thought he saw an
Elephant
Upon the mantelpiece;
He looked again, and found
it was
His sister's husband's niece,'

[Pg 222]

"Now it seems to me that another extract from the same work would have lent itself better to your requirements:

"'He thought he saw a Rattlesnake
That questioned him in Greek;
He looked again, and found it was
The Middle of Next Week.
"The one thing I regret," he said,
"Is that I cannot speak!"'"

I very much regret that it—the snake—cannot speak, for were it gifted with articulate power your representative could hold a *viva voce* interview with his snakeship, and therefore become enlightened as to the real facts of the case. The reptile might also disclose the locality he hails from, as that important point is still shrouded in mystery.

"As soon as I had read your article, which deals somewhat frivolously with a very serious subject, I went forth to the Zoo in quest of Mr. Bartlett, but that gentleman had left town. Perhaps the article in question had something to do with his departure. Why I sought to see him was to put to him the following questions to test the accuracy of your statements:

"1. How comes it that you informed me on Saturday that the snake was a foreigner, while according to the *Westminster Gazette* it is English?

"2. Did you not give it to me as your opinion that it must have come in fruit? You are now made to say that it must have been brought in plants or shrubs, and if that is so, why did the Park gardeners declare that they had never seen anything like it before?

"3. Did you not say it was only a week old, and also that where it came from there must be a number more?

"4. Did you not emphatically declare that you had no specimen of the kind in the Gardens, and was it not for this reason I made you a present of this one? How do you reconcile that with the following passage in your interview with the representative of the *Westminster Gazette*: 'As for its rarity, here is a fairly long list of the specimens we have had, and we have several at present'? And did you not give as a reason the reptile could not have strayed from the Gardens the very cogent one that you had none of the kind in your collection? And may I ask whether you really have any or not? For if you have, and the one in question has escaped, what is to prevent rattlesnakes and cobras and other venomous specimens from escaping also?

"5. If, as you say, you doubted my seriousness, why was the snake duly entered in the books of the Zoological Society, from whom I received a formal letter of thanks for the presentation?

"6. Would you not rather handle a snake, however dangerous, than the special interviewer of a London evening paper?"

This I followed with another letter, which explains the conflicting information received at the Zoo: [Pg 223]

SKETCH BY MR. F. C. GOULD.

> "Since writing to you it has struck me that probably your representative saw Mr. Bartlett senior, whereas I deposited my snake into the care of, and received my information from, Mr. Bartlett junior (the present superintendent). This may account for your representative describing in his article Mr. Bartlett drawing a circle the size of my snake on a visiting-card, and that, too, without the two ends of the circle coming into conjunction. This is so utterly absurd that it is evident Mr. Bartlett could not have seen the reptile at the time. The exact measurement of my baby serpent is seven and a-half inches in length—nearly an inch longer than the word 'Westminster' at the top of your front page—and it is *still growing*!"

So did the story grow—in correspondence, in prose, in verse, and in picture. Mr. F. C. Gould treated the subject in Japanese-Lika-Joka spirit, and from quantities of verse I select the following [Pg 224] from the *Sketch* as the best:

"PICKED UP NEAR THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

"'I am the snake of Regent's Park;
I lie in wait for men of mark.
I'd gladly give my latest breath
To fright a funny man to death.
So when from ambush I espy
A comic artist passing by,
I think there is no joy like this—
To stand upon my tail and hiss.
For it is quite a novel charm
To see him start in wild alarm
And haste to tell the awful crimes
Of Horrid Serpents in the *Times*.
It used to be a bitter pang
That I was born without a fang,
That Nature made me as a toy
For any silly idle boy.
But now the humble snake may pass
For lurking cobra in the grass,
While people think that Regent's Park
Is Kipling Jungle after dark!'"

Several letters appeared. One from a "Harrow School Boy," in the *Times*, was generally accepted at the time as a solution of the mystery:

> "SIR,—I keep snakes as pets, and allow them a wriggle on the grass every day. Early last week I missed one, a little black chap about 10 to 11 in. long, and have

not seen him since. Perhaps the one Mr. Harry Furniss found on Saturday is my lost pet, carried away, not by one of the expected vultures, but by a roving Regent's Park rook."

This soothed some nervous readers' fears; but not all. Another correspondent wrote:

"The tale of the Regent's Park serpent (*Likajokophis harryfurnissii*), discovered, patented, and greatly improved upon by the vivacious caricaturist, appears to be even now not told to its bitter sequel; for I am credibly informed at the Zoological Gardens that an official of a large hospital in the neighbourhood was sent there yesterday to enquire how soon it would be safe for the convalescent patients to resume their daily airing in the Park, as to the probabilities of further lethal reptilian monsters lurking within its fastnesses, etc." [Pg 225]

The truth of the matter was, several snakes were at the same time found in gardens of private houses close to the Zoological Menagerie. "Mr. A. B. Edwards" wrote, from an address close to the Zoo, to the *Daily Telegraph*, a few weeks after my finding the cause of all the snake sensation:

"This afternoon we were taking tea in our garden when we saw a snake 2 ft. long frisking on the lawn close to our feet. Fortunately one of our fowls had got loose from the cage, and came to pick up the crumbs. When it caught sight of the snake it pounced upon it, and a great battle was fought between fowl and serpent. After ten minutes' hard fighting, the snake lay dead. Your readers may be interested to hear of this, and, being forewarned, they will be forearmed against snakes in their gardens."

The *Westminster Gazette*, *à propos* of this:

"'Lika-Joko's' snake may now crawl away into its native insignificance when it reads of the exploits of its comrade, who preferred death to captivity."

But my snake did not crawl away; far from it. The man in the reptile house, who "looked puzzled" and grinned, and had to grope about the sand at the bottom of the case to find the snake for the edification of the *Westminster Gazette* interviewer, did not grin to that purpose for long. Never before in the history of the Zoo was the reptile house so crowded. Day after day people thronged to see the specimen of *Coronella lævis* found on the path in Regent's Park. Not one looked at the two splendid specimens of the largest and finest and fiercest snakes bought that very week by the Zoological Society, at a cost of three hundred pounds. My snake was valued at anything between sixpence and eighteenpence, but it brought more money to the turnstiles of the Zoo than all the other snakes put together in twenty years.

From an address not half-a-mile from the gates of the Zoological Gardens a gentleman wrote to the *World* about a snake he found in his garden. A London and North-Western guard found a boa-constrictor, 22 feet long, in his van! "The son of a well-known Member of Parliament" found a huge snake in one of the rooms of his father's London house. In fact, snake-finding became an epidemic, and if I had come across any more of the ophidian brood, I would have feared the consequences. Alas! the British public killed my snake—as it has killed many another celebrity of the hour—by too much attention and flattery. But how the cause of all this excitement got on to the path in the centre of Regent's Park remains a mystery. I feel certain myself it had escaped from the Zoological Gardens through the drains, and the fact that others were discovered in the vicinity of the Park at the same time explains the confusion and mild chaff accepted by the *Westminster* interviewer as a complete explanation, forgetting that officialism when criticised is much the same all the world over. [Pg 226]

THE LADY AND HER SNAKES.

"The Harrow School Boy" correspondent—probably a very old boy—is not alone in his strange choice of pets. A lady who had sent her pet snakes to the Zoological Gardens—not by "The Roving Rook Post," but by the usual course of presentation—happened to visit the Gardens at the time that other great attraction was drawing all London, the great Jumbo craze. When she arrived to see the elephant of the hour, the crowd was so dense around his cage that there was no chance of getting a peep, so she marched off to the reptile house and soon returned with one of her pets coiled round her neck. She took her stand close to the people engaged in struggling to pat the trunk of the Jumbo, feed it with the most expensive sweetmeats, decorate it with choice flowers, and weep bitter tears over its impending departure. (The public of the present day can hardly realise the excitement over this favourite elephant.) Struggling at the same time to be prominent in this Jumbo worship, however, the head of a snake appearing

suddenly over one's shoulder is too much for some of us. One after another the visitors vanished as the snake thrust its head near them, and soon the ingenious lady had the place and Jumbo to herself. [Pg 227]

She was not a professional "snake-charmer," but an eccentric lady of private means; her pet was large, but harmless. Strange to say, about the same time a company of Japanese "snake-charmers" were causing a sensation at a show in the West End of London by their performance with snakes of a well-known dangerous species. Some of the reptiles they performed with fell sick—languid and useless for sensational show-work. They were despatched to the "Zoo" by the manager to be looked after—possibly the climate affected them. They would not eat anything, and were gradually pining away, when it was discovered that their poison-fangs had been extracted, and their mouths were sewn up with silk. Charming, certainly!

Having lived close to the Zoological Gardens for over twenty years, and being a Fellow of the Society, I have spent a great deal of enjoyable time rambling about its ever-interesting collection. The "Zoo" is very like London itself—one never exhausts its interest. There is always a surprise in store for those even most intimately acquainted with it. One suddenly comes across an object of interest that has existed in the place for years, but one has not happened to pass at the moment that object appears. How many visitors to the "Zoo," for instance, have ever seen the beavers at work? To see them, the most interesting animals in the collection, one has to go very late or very early. Knowing old Mr. Bartlett as I did, I frequently saw interesting events, and heard from him interesting tales of the Gardens.

Another letter of mine to the *Times* took the form of a confession. It was what was described in the Press as "a humorous, yet withal pathetic complaint" (December, 1895) respecting the irritating inconvenience caused by so-called "modern conveniences," which do not always act satisfactorily. I had been driven to "let off steam" (which is better accomplished through a pen than with a pencil) by my experience in one week of the modern inventions which are designed to facilitate business and to benefit the public generally, and I still seriously question if these wonderful inventions and the extra expense incurred by adopting them are not a mistake. [Pg 228]

The working of the telephone has become, of course, a farce, and the sooner the Government take it up the better. Several large business houses have given it up, and in the working of the telephone London, which ought to be the most favoured, is probably the most unfortunate city of any in the world. I have tried half-a-dozen times in one day to ring up different people on the telephone without succeeding in getting through, and have had to send notes by hand.

DO WOMEN FAIL IN ART? THE CHRYSALIS.

The electric light is another disappointing "improvement." It has gone out four times in one week, and we had to use candles and lamps.

Then the District Messengers' wire, which I had in communication with my house, would not act. I rang up for a cab; no response. I rang up again; nothing came. I sent out for a cab, and was late for dinner. The next day a representative called casually to inform me that we could not use the wire for two or three days, as something had gone wrong.

I then tried the phonograph; but I had more correspondence about it than I had through it.

A plague on these experiments in the advancement of science intended to facilitate our work and add to our comfort! The electric light kills our sight; the telephone destroys our temper; the District Messenger call ruins our dinner; and, conjointly, they waste our time and deplete our purses.

When there was a controversy in the *Daily Graphic* I wrote in the interests of women to make one confession:

Do women fail in art?

Confession—Certainly not.

In the opinion of many, women fail in nothing, but base man fails in [Pg 229] appreciating women in art as in everything else where appreciation of talent is due. The fashion-plate young lady, with her doll's face, her empty head, and her sawdust constitution, monopolises all the attention that selfish man can afford to give outside thoughts about his own sweet self.

Every year we see some work in the Academy from the easel of a woman which is far better than many of the works exhibited by Academicians, and although when that selfish body was being formed there were not enough men to supply the number of figure-heads required, and two women were requisitioned to launch the ship, all the gratitude shown to the sex has been years of continued insult. Yet there are certain Academicians who paint like women for women, and instead of leaving it to women receive all the honour and remuneration; and those having this feminine art and spirit behave the worst to those whom they copy. The pretty-pretty pictures of conventional coquetries which we have served up year after year by the chefs of this pastry of art might be concocted by the dainty fingers of the lady artist just as well as, or even better than, by the effeminate man who takes her place and robs her of her honours. But after all, are not the women themselves to blame? Art, I hold, is nowadays purely a commercial affair. Burlington

House is simply a huge shop, and it is all nonsense to talk for one instant about the encouragement it gives to art, or to take seriously the prosy platitudes which are poured forth year by year at that picture tradesmen's dinner—the Royal Academy Banquet. Women are not invited—women, forsooth, whose works on the walls have done their share towards bringing the shillings to the turnstiles of the Academy. But more ridiculous still is the omission of lady patrons of art, for it is well known that this feast is given with two objects—to advertise the coming show, merely "chicken and champagne" in theatrical phraseology, and to feast Mr. Crœsus, who buys the pictures of his host.

THE BUTTERFLY.

Now, it is the influence of women that makes the majority of men buy pictures. Few men buy pictures to please themselves; they buy them to please their wives. Why women are not patronised in art is for this simple reason, that women would rather patronise [Pg 230] the work of a fool, if that fool be a man, than the work of a genius, if that genius happen to be a woman. I agree with Mrs. Jopling, that "with men success is reached with a fair wind and every favour, while with women those only succeed who have the power of weathering many storms." Quite true. Grace Darling will row out to help some feeble man struggling in the billows of incompetency, but she will sit on a rock and see a woman sink before she will stretch out a helping hand. If women fail in art, it is because women fail to help them, and I hold that but for women we might even to-day find the Royal Academy incapable of forming a quorum without calling in lady artists, as they did before. I see that the two ladies most qualified to speak about this subject disagree on the most essential point. Mrs. E.M. Ward gives it as her opinion that if women studied with the same quiet devotion as the male student they would be more successful; but Mrs. Louise Jopling asserts that young girls show quite as much disposition for art as young men do. I have no hesitation in saying that the latter opinion is the correct one. The male art student vies with the medical student in playing the fool. A friend of mine has recently been driven out of his studio, which was situated next to an art school, by the asinine behaviour of these "quiet devotional students." But in any school I have been through I have noted with astonishment the painstaking sincerity of the lady students.

All that has been written on the subject from time to time seems to me to be quite devoid of common sense. We all know what a delightful poet Mr. Sterry is, and how fondly he sings the [Pg 231] praises of women. Probably he has been so engrossed in describing the grace of the girl that he has failed to look for the natural elegance of the boy. Possibly no artist admires the female form more than I do, but any artist will corroborate me when I say it is a matter of the greatest difficulty to find a graceful young female model, while you seldom find a youth who is really awkward. The playground of a girls' school is a conglomeration of awkward figures, awkward running, awkward gesticulating, enough to make an artist shudder, while the cricket or football ground of a college is the best study an artist can possibly have for the poetry of motion. Mr. Sterry cannot be in earnest when he says that girls think the study of anatomy tiresome, drawing from the antique a bore, painting from the nude superfluous, and studies of the old masters uninteresting. An afternoon round the art schools and art galleries will prove to him the very reverse. But then the "lazy minstrel" cannot intend his readers to take him seriously, for he says that women have greater delicacy of touch and facility of manipulation than men, and that their hands are less awkward and their fingers more lissom than those of the sterner sex. In poetry, my minstrel, yes; in reality, bosh. Where are your women conjurors? You say that their brain is not strong enough to second their manual advantage, but that they can "knock off" a pretty water-colour or oil study of flowers, or a graphic caricature! Caricature, indeed! Perhaps no one has seen more caricatures than I have, but I have never seen a caricature by a woman. If women have a failing, it is lack of humour. We poor caricaturists know that; but we also know that whereas women can compete side by side with painters on the line of the Royal Academy, we are not honoured by even a failure in caricature.

It is curious how clever lady artists become when they happen to be the wives of successful painters, but it is a significant fact that while all writers seem to agree that marriage is the cause of obliterating artistic ambition in women, it has in many cases been the birth of genius; and while domestic companionship with an artist will make a woman a painter, no caricaturist has [Pg 232] ever succeeded in making his wife a humorist in art, and I shall ask Mr. Sterry what he means by placing "graphic caricature" on a par with "knocked-off" pretty water-colours and the weak studies of flowers by lady amateurs. Mr. Sterry is an artist himself, and this disparagement of a most difficult and most unique art fully qualifies him to be a member of the Royal Academy.

EARLY VICTORIAN ART.

YOUNG LADY'S PORTRAIT OF HER BROTHER.

At the beginning of the Victorian Era art was at its lowest ebb. The young lady students of the period were copying those impossible lithographed heads which formed the stock-in-trade of the drawing-master, or those fashion-plate Venuses whose necks recalled the proportions of the giraffe, with the eyelashes of a wax doll, and fingers that tapered off like the point of a pencil. These sirens of the drawing-board were invariably smelling a rose or kissing a canary, and always had a weakness for pearls. They used to be drawn upon tinted paper, and when the faces had been duly smeared over with the stump to suggest shadow, and after the drawing-master had endowed the work with artistic merit by the application of white chalk to the high lights, the pearls, the canary's eyes, and the pathetic tear-drops upon the damsels' faces, the immortal productions were ready for framing. The giraffe or swan-necked angel was the keynote for all ideal work, and even the recognised artists of those days, with one or two brilliant exceptions, followed in her train.

Now she rushes into a large oil picture—perhaps a portrait of her brother in riding costume, *et hoc genus omne*. These are caricatures, but, like many of the pictures on the walls of the Royal Academy, they are unconscious ones.

As I am writing about the failure or success of women, I should like to introduce a curious request once made to me. [Pg 233]

It is a very common thing for me to receive all sorts and conditions of curious letters from all sorts of people. The following, sent to me from the Colonies, is worth reprinting:

> "Dear Sir,—I have taken the liberty to address you upon a little matter, and earnestly hope you will exert and use your influence on my behalf to the utmost of your ability. I am a young man twenty-three years of age, of good family, handsome, worth in stock and cash about £18,000. I intend coming to reside in dear Old England permanently (the land of my birth) as soon as I can dispose of my property and stock to an advantage here. I came out to Africa as a youngster, and have remained here ever since. I've not had an opportunity even of paying a visit to England. Will you be good enough to try and induce some young lady to correspond with me with a view to matrimony? I should like to get married upon my arrival, and live in joyful anticipation of meeting my love at the docks or station. I am well aware that I am transgressing the rules of good breeding and etiquette by my familiarity and audacity, but the fact is I am totally unacquainted in the city and know of no one else in whom I could put implicit faith and confidence with regard to so delicate a matter. Pardon me, therefore, dear sir, if I have been in any way intrusive or have unwillingly offended you. I have had scores of favourable opportunities to get married here, but, to tell the plain truth, I would sooner die than marry anybody not of my own nationality. She must have a lady's blood in her veins, and born and bred in the auld country, or I'll die a confirmed old bachelor. The society of these Cape girls is somewhat detestable to me, and their ways, looks, figure, dress, education, refinement, and accomplishments are not to be compared to Old England's. Hoping I've not occupied too much of your valuable time, and trusting to hear from you at your earliest convenience or opportunity, with kind regards, I beg to remain,
>
> "Yours truly,
> "——."

WAITING.

I was puzzled to know what to do with this letter—I really felt for my correspondent. I therefore printed his request in a London letter I was writing at the time and which appeared in the principal local papers in the United Kingdom, and also in the papers of America and Australia, and added a portrait of the lady I had selected, with the following note:

"Unless the publication of this letter leads to some favourable offers I shall send my unknown, but hymeneally disposed, correspondent this sketch of a lady capable of looking after so young and venturesome a man, seated at the docks waiting his arrival, for unless he has a sketch or photograph how is he to identify his 'love' amidst the crowd which greets the homeward-bound steamer?"

And I have preserved a few out of the scores of letters I received, to hand to this gentleman should I ever have the pleasure of meeting him.

Judging from this, the manager of a matrimonial agency must indeed get a curious insight into the minds of the maids of Merry England. This single experience has been quite enough for me. [Pg 235]

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CONFESSIONS OF A DINER.

My First City Dinner—A Minnow against the Stream—Those Table Plans—Chaos—The City Alderman, Past and Present—Whistler's Lollipops—Odd Volumes—Exchanging Names—Ye Red Lyon Clubbe—The Pointed Beards—Baltimore Oysters—The Sound Money Dinner—To Meet General Boulanger—A Lunch at Washington—No Speeches.

The Thirteen Club—What it was—How it was Boomed—Gruesome Details—Squint-Eyed Waiters—Superstitious Absentees—My Reasons for being Present—'Arry of *Punch*—The Lost "Vocal" Chords—The Undergraduate and the Undertaker—Model Speeches—Albert Smith An Atlantic Contradiction—The White Horse—The White Feather—Exit 13.

ROBABLY no meal varies so much in the time of its celebration as that most important one, dinner. Some people still exist who dine at one o'clock; some also there are who daily observe that fearsome feast yclept "High Tea." The majority of people dine at various times ranging between seven o'clock and half-past eight, but there is one individual alone who dines at six. It is the City Guilder. Time was when City princes dwelt in City palaces, and rose at five, breakfasted at seven, lunched at twelve, dined at five and retired to rest at ten; but nowadays these magnates are lords of the City from ten till four, and of the West End and the suburbs for the remainder of the twenty-four hours, and they would in the ordinary course of things invite you to dinner at eight o'clock or so. What inscrutable law, then, compels them to hold their state dinners at the dread hour of six? [Pg 236]

For it is at this time, when the ebb-tide of humanity sets strongest from the City, that the honoured guest of a City Company may be seen fighting his way, like a minnow against stream, in a hansom to his dinner at the hall of the Guild. Still, he goes "where glory waits him," so what recks he that the hour is altogether uncongenial and inconvenient?

Nevertheless, I know as a matter of fact that this earliness compels many invited guests to decline the honour and pleasure of dining with a "Gill" (as "Robert" would say), who would without doubt accept the invitation were the hours of the Guild as reasonable as their cuisine is excellent.

Personally, however, it has often been a pleasure to me to leave my easel at four o'clock and prepare to meet my practical City patrons "on their own midden" at "5.30 for 6."

As an illustration I will record a reminiscence of a very pleasant evening I once spent in the City, when the festivities—save for my having to make a speech—went off with that success which is inseparable from City dinners.

Imprimis, I arrive in daylight and evening dress. These two, like someone and holy water, don't agree, for not all the waters of Geneva nor the arts of the queen of all *blanchisseuses* can destroy the horrid contrast between a white tie and a white shirt; yet another good argument in favour of a reasonable dinner hour.

I hate being in a minority. More especially do I detest being in such a decidedly pronounced minority as one joins when one drives *into* the City about six o'clock in the evening against a vast current of toilers of commerce homeward bound. It may be weak, but I feel it all the same. I seem to divine the thoughts of the omnibus driver as he gazes down upon me from his exalted perch—he does not think my shirt is clean. His sixteen "outsides" bestow upon me a supercilious look that conveys to me that they opine I am merely cabbing it to the station *en route* for a "suburban hop." But I bear up under it all, and think of the magnificent banquet of which they, poor things, know nothing, and I am beginning to feel quite proud when a brute of a fellow in charge of a van catches his wheel in that of my cab and nearly pitches me out. I hurriedly decide to decline the next invitation I receive for a City dinner. [Pg 237]

MENU OF THE DINNER GIVEN TO ME BY THE LOTOS CLUB, NEW YORK.

However, I live to reach Cannon Street and the mansion of the "Gill." [Pg 238]

I am soon ushered into the Cedar Room, where I am received by the Master and the Wardens in their robes.

I mingle with the Guilders and their guests, and find the members of the Worshipful Company informing their friends that they are now in the Cedar Room; then they sniff, and the guests sniff and say "Charming!" Then they remark, "What a lot of pencils it would make!" and laugh, and the artists present agree that City folks are shoppy.

On a side table the stranger sees a number of what appear to him diagrams of City improvements, with mains and drains and all sorts of things, but on closer inspection they turn

out to be the plans of the table. You discover one bearing your name, and opposite it a red cross, or perhaps I ought to say an exaggerated asterisk.

When you have taken your seat downstairs in the Banqueting Hall you inspect your plan, from which you find that you can tell who everybody is. Capital idea!

"Ah, seat Number 24, the great Professor Snuffers!"

You direct your gaze across the table to seat No. 24, and lo! your cherished preconception of the Professor vanishes instanter, for his bearing is military, and his whole appearance seems to denote muscle rather than mind.

This plan opens up a mine of instruction and information. You refer again, and next to the Professor you find the "Master of the Scalpers' Company."

"Dear, me, what a clerical-looking old gentleman!" is your mental comment.

Next you look for "The Rev. Canon Dormouse."

"Why, he's quite a youth! Can't be more than five-and-twenty, and wears a medal and an eye-glass! How types have changed!"

It occurs to you to open a conversation with your next neighbour, which you do by making a casual allusion to the Canon.

"Yes, dear old gentleman; does a lot for the poor—life devoted to them." [Pg 239]

"Dear me, does he? Now to my mind, judging from appearances, the Master of the Scalpers' Company seems more cut out for that kind of work."

"Ha! ha! *He's* better at curing hams than souls."

"Well, I should not have thought so, merely judging character as an artist. Professor Snuffers seems to me also curiously unique. I know a good many Professors, but I never met one so anti-professional in appearance as that gentleman."

ALDERMAN. IDEAL. REAL.

"Ah, Snuffers! Old friend of mine—where is he?"

"There," and you point to the name on the plan and nod over to the other side of the table.

"No, that's not Snuffers! I recollect now he told me he would not be able to come. That's Major Bangs, a guest asked to fill a vacant chair."

Similarly you find that the eye-glass youth is *not* Canon Dormouse, the clerical-looking gentleman *not* the Master of the Scalpers' Company, and so on. Oh, they are a capital idea, those plans!

On the occasion in question I met one of the Sheriffs of the City, who is also an Alderman—not a fat, apoplectic, greasy, vulgar Crœsus, but a handsome, thoughtful-looking gentleman, decidedly [Pg 240] under fifty, who might be anything but an Alderman. But indeed the long-accepted type of an Alderman is exploded—such a type, bursting with good dinners, wealth and vulgarity, must explode—and the phœnix which has risen from his ashes would scarcely be recognised by the most liberal of naturalists as belonging to the same species. John Leech may have had living examples for his gross and repulsive monuments of gluttony; in my own experience, however, I find a gulf of great magnitude between the Alderman of caricature and the Alderman I have met in the flesh. The former has gone over to the majority of "four-bottle men" and other bygone phenomena.

Well, let us return to the dinner. The fare is excellent, the company delightful, and I am just revelling in that beatific state of mind born of a sufficiency of the good things of this earth, when nothing seems to me more pleasant than a City dinner, when I am tapped upon the shoulder by

the Toastmaster, who bears a warrant to consign me to misery. I have to make a speech. I have passed through the ordeal before, but I find that familiarity, as far as speech-making is concerned, breeds no contempt. Between the City and the art in which I am interested there exists no affinity, and this perhaps is a blessing in disguise, as for once in a way one is of necessity compelled to "sink the shop." However, it is soon over. A plunge, a gasp or two, a few quick strokes, and I am through the breakers and on the shore—I mean on my seat. That was years ago—I am an old hand now.

I never could subscribe to that unwritten and unhonoured law which provides that an after-dinner speaker is entitled to five minutes in which to apologise for his incompetency in that capacity, and fifty-five minutes in which to speechify; and I have often wished that speechmakers one and all would recollect that a few words well-chosen and to the point, and a timely termination, are far more acceptable to the listener than all their maundering oratorical tours "from China to Peru," from the Mansion House to the moon. When I am going to a City dinner my own children show a lively interest to know the name of the Company, and if I name the Skinners' Guild their interest culminates in uproarious delight; but if I mention any other, most uncomplimentary groans greet the announcement, for the guests of the Company to which I refer can choose either to take or have sent to them a huge box of the choicest sweetmeats when the entertainment is over. [Pg 241]

A propos of this, I recollect an incident the mention of which will, I fear, send a cold shudder through any worshipper of "Nubian" nocturnes and incomprehensible "arrangements." On one occasion after leaving the banquet of this Guild I beheld Whistler—"Jimmy" of the snowy tuft, the martyred butterfly of the "peacock room"—to whose impressionable soul the very thought of a sugar-stick should be direst agony, actually making his way homewards hugging a great box of lollipops!

J. WHISTLER, AFTER A CITY DINNER. (DRAWN WITH MY LEFT HAND.)

AN ODD VOLUME.

I met a curious City man, not at a City dinner, but at "Ye Odd Volumes," where we both happened to be guests. He was certainly an odd-looking guest, a very old volume out-of-date—odd-fashioned overcoat with gold buttons, an odd-fashioned "stock," and an odd-looking shirt. While waiting for dinner he looked at me oddly, and eventually addressed me in this odd way:

"Sir, may I have the pleasure of exchanging names with you?"

"Why, certainly; my name is Harry Furniss."

"H'm, ha, eh, ha!" and he walked away. [Pg 242]

After dinner came the speeches. As each guest was called upon, my odd friend was to his evident chagrin not named; I noticed from time to time the old gentleman was elevated—sitting high. At last, after I had returned thanks for the visitors, he rose and asked to be allowed to speak. He said something nice about me—the reason he explained to me later. The burthen of his speech was a protest that he had not seen one odd volume that night. "If you've got 'em, produce 'em. Ah!" (snapping his fingers at the company in general) "I don't think you know what an odd volume is!" And then turning round he placed on the table a huge volume on which he had been sitting all through dinner.

MY DESIGN FOR SETTE OF ODD VOLUMES. I WAS A GUEST.

"There," he said, "that's an odd volume if you like—that's something unique. It contains 9,987 hotel bills—a chronicle (of my hotel expenses) for two-thirds of the present century."

Later he came round to me. He assured me that he didn't catch my name when he asked for it, but when I was speaking he recognised me and was glad to have the opportunity of making my acquaintance. It appeared he had bought many hundreds of "Romps" books for children and given them to Children's Hospitals and other institutions. So he had besides an odd volume a [Pg 243] good heart—and what is more surprising, a watch in every pocket! Watch-collecting was his hobby, and, like a conjuror, he produced them from the most unexpected and mysterious places. One belonged to the Emperor Maximilian, and had in its case moving figures to strike the time. I confess I wished he had exchanged watches with me in place of names. His name, by the way, was Holborn; he was a well-known City tea-merchant.

MY DESIGN (REDUCED) FOR THE DINNER OF YE RED LYON CLUBBE.

A DISTINGUISHED "LYON."

When I visited Leeds for the British Association Meeting, I was made a member of Ye Red Lyon Clubbe, a dining club which I understand meets once a year as a relief to the daily monotony of the serious business of the Association—in fact, "for one night only" the British Ass. assumes the Lion's skin. To see learned Professors who have been dilating for hours and days on the most abstruse scientific subjects, with the most solemn faces, amidst the dullest surroundings, suddenly appear wagging their dress-coat tails to represent the tail of the hungry lion, and emitting the most extraordinary mournful, growling sounds, the nearest approach at imitating the roar of the lion, and otherwise behaving like a lot of schoolboys on the night before the holidays, is certainly a scene not familiar to the thousands who belong to the British Association. [Pg 244]

Burlesque-scientific speeches are made after dinner, and although there are generally some practical jokes in chemical illustrations, the merry wits do not tamper with the dinner itself further than preparing a most excellent burlesque menu, which I take the liberty of here introducing:

JOURNAL
OF
SECTIONAL PROCEEDINGS.

Issued Tuesday Evening, September 9th, 1890, at 5.30 p.m.

SECTION A... *Hors d'Œuvres*—Kinetic Vacua.

SECTION B... *Purée Pontoise*—Isomeric Naphthalene.
Consommé à la Princesse—Hydracid Halogen.

SECTION C... *Boiled Salmon*—Glacial Lepidodendron.
Fried Smelts—Horned Dinosaur.

SECTION D... *Kromesky à la Russe*—Androgynous Cones.
Poulet Sauté à la Chasseur—Chytridian Woronina.

SECTION E... *Braised Fillet of Beef*—Lobengula Lion.
Roast Saddle of Mutton—Native Kalahari.
SECTION F... *Grouse*—Statistics of Slaughter.
Partridge—Progressive Decimation.
**Savarin à l'Abricot*—Diamagnetic amperes.
Sicilian Cream—A New Lubricant.
SECTION G... *Victoria Jelly*—High Carbon Slag.
Maids of Honour—Kinetic Leverage.
Pastry—Approaching the Elastic Limit.
Ice Pudding—Prognathous Brachycephaloid.
SECTION H... *Croûte d'Anchois*—Unidentified Origin.
Dessert—Prehistoric Jourouks.

* Should the discussion of these Papers interfere with the transactions of the other Sections, one or more will be taken as eaten.

H.B. ——, Jackals.
W. ——,

[Pg 245]

The Pointed Beards

OMEBODY has said that an Englishman will find any excuse to give a dinner, but my experience has been that this is truer of Americans. I have been the guest of many extraordinary dining clubs, but as the most unique I select the Pointed Beards of New York. To club and dine together because one has hair cut in a particular way is the *raison d'être* of the club; there is nothing heroic, nothing artistic or particularly intellectual. It is not even a club to discuss hirsute adornments; such a club might be made as interesting as any other, provided the members were clever.

That most delightful of *littérateurs*, Mr. James Payn, once interested himself, and with his pen his readers, in that charming way of his, on the all-important question, "Where do shavers learn their business? Upon whom do they practise?" After most careful investigation he answers the question, "The neophytes try their prentice hands upon their fellow barbers." That may be the rule, but every rule has an exception, and I happened once to be the unfortunate layman when a budding and inexperienced barber practised his art upon me. I sat in the chair of a hairdresser's not a hundred miles from Regent Street. I had selected a highly respectable, thoroughly English establishment, as I was tired of being held by the nose by foreigners' fingers saturated with the nicotine of bad cigarettes. I entered gaily, and to my delight a fresh-looking British youth tied me up in the chair of torture, lathered my chin, and began operations. I was not aware of the fact that I was being made a chopping-block of until the youth, agitated and extremely nervous, produced a huge piece of lint and commenced dabbing patches of it upon my countenance. Then I looked at myself in the glass. Good heavens! Was I gazing upon myself, or was it some German student, lacerated and bleeding after a sanguinary duel? I stormed and raged, and called for the proprietor, who was gentle and sorry and apologetic, and explained to me that the boy must begin upon somebody, and I unfortunately was the first victim! I allow my beard to grow now.

[Pg 246]

Otherwise I should not have been eligible for the New York Pointed Beards, for no qualification is necessary except that one wear a beard cut to a point.

The tables were ornamented with lamps having shades cut to represent pointed beards. A toy goat, the emblem of the club, was the centre decoration. We had the "Head Barber," and, of course, any amount of soft soap. A leading Republican was in the barber's chair, and during dinner some sensation was caused by one of the guests being discovered wearing a false beard. He was immediately seized and ejected until after the dinner, when he returned with his music. It

so happened we had present a member of the Italian Opera, with his beautiful pointed beard, and he had also a beautiful voice. But New York could not supply an accompanist with a pointed beard! So a false beard was preferred to false notes. The speeches were pointed, but not cut as short as the beard—rather too pointed and too long. It was just after the Bryan political crisis. The leading politician in the chair and one of the guests, a political leader writer, who had not met—not even at their barber's—since the election, had some electioneering dispute to settle. Americans, unlike us, drag politics into everything. Take away this peculiarity and you take away two-thirds of their excellent after-dinner speaking. The Pointed Beards may have something to do with the matter. The two lost their temper, and the evening was all but ruined thereby, when a happy thought struck me. Although as the guest of the evening I had spoken, I rose again to apologise for being an Englishman! I confessed that I had listened to the two speeches, but their [Pg 247] brilliancy and wit were entirely lost upon me; the subtle humour of the American passed an Englishman's understanding. Their personalities and political passages were no doubt ingenious "bluff," but so cleverly serious and so well acted that I had for four-fifths of the acrimonious speeches been entirely taken in. At this all laughed loud at my stupidity, and the evening ended pleasantly.

The secretary of this dinner, which was a most excellent one, was the celebrated Delmonico, but it was not held at his famous restaurant. To have been complete it ought really to have been held in a barber's shop, for some of those establishments in America are palatial, and even minor barbers' shops are utilised in a curious way. One Sunday afternoon as I was taking a walk I overheard some singing in a shop devoted to hair dressing, and looking in I saw an extraordinary sight. There were about a dozen old ladies seated in the barbers' chairs, with their backs to the looking-glasses and brushes, singing hymns. It was a meeting of the Plymouth Brethren, who hired the shop for their devotions!

Of course at the Pointed Beards' dinner in New York we had oysters with beards—but no American dinner is complete without their famous oysters. Unfortunately I have to make the extraordinary confession that I never tasted an oyster in my life, and as I am touching upon gastronomy, I may also mention that I never touch cheese, or hare, or rabbit, or eel, and I would have to be in the last stage of starvation before I could eat cold lamb or cold veal; so it will be seen by these confessions that my cook's berth is not a sinecure, and that these complimentary dinners, as dinners, are to a great extent wasted upon me. I once, in fact, was asked to a dinner at a club, and I could not touch one single dish! But my friends kindly provided some impromptu dishes without cheese or oysters and other, to me, objectionable things. I was not so lucky in Baltimore. We all know Baltimore is celebrated for its oysters, and the night I arrived a dinner was given to me at the Baltimore Club, which opened as usual with dishes of magnificent oysters. The head waiter, a well-known figure, an old "darkie" with grey hair, placed a dish of oysters [Pg 248] down before me with pride, and stood to watch my delight. I beckoned to him to take them away. He seized the dish and examined the oysters; got another dish, placed them before me. I again requested him to remove them. This happened a third time. I then told him plainly and emphatically that I did not eat oysters. By this time my host and his guests were at their third course, and I and the head waiter were still discussing oysters. My host did not notice this, as he was at the other end of the table, and there were many floral decorations between us; but I made bold to inform him of the fact that the waiter had not only taken away my plates but had removed my glasses, knives and forks, and left me with a bare cloth and no dinner. My host had to call the waiter out of the room and remonstrate with him, but it required some time and a great deal of persuasion before I, the guest of the evening, was allowed to begin my dinner when they were finishing theirs. It transpired that the humorous paper of Baltimore had published the impressions I would receive on visiting their great city, and prominently was a caricature of myself swallowing my first Baltimore oyster. This so interested the waiters of the club that they selected the largest for me, and were so disappointed at my refusing them that they punished me in the same way as Sancho Panza was punished before me.

Perhaps the most extraordinary dinner I ever took part in was held in New York on November 3rd, 1896, when twelve leading Democrats and twelve Republicans sat down on the night of the most sensational election that has ever taken place in the United States. English readers will hardly realise what such a combination meant. The only parallel in this country was probably caused by Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill, when leading Liberals and Conservatives stood on the same platform. But that was the result of a purely political question; political questions of that national character do not interest the better-class American. For instance, on my first visit to America I sat next to a very influential New Yorker at dinner. At that time also elections were pending, and I casually asked my acquaintance what he thought of the situation. He raised his [Pg 249] eyebrows with great surprise and said:

"Pardon me, sir, we take no interest in politics here; we leave that to our valets."

I met that man the day of this dinner four years later. He was positively ill with excitement; he could talk of nothing but politics. Party emblems decorated his coat; every pocket was full of pamphlets—he had been working night and day to defeat Bryan. His valet, no doubt, was sleeping soundly the sleep of indifference—nothing to lose or nothing to gain should Bryan succeed. The silver scare of Bryan's touched the pockets, not the politics, of the prosperous; and that touch is the one touch that makes the whole American world kin.

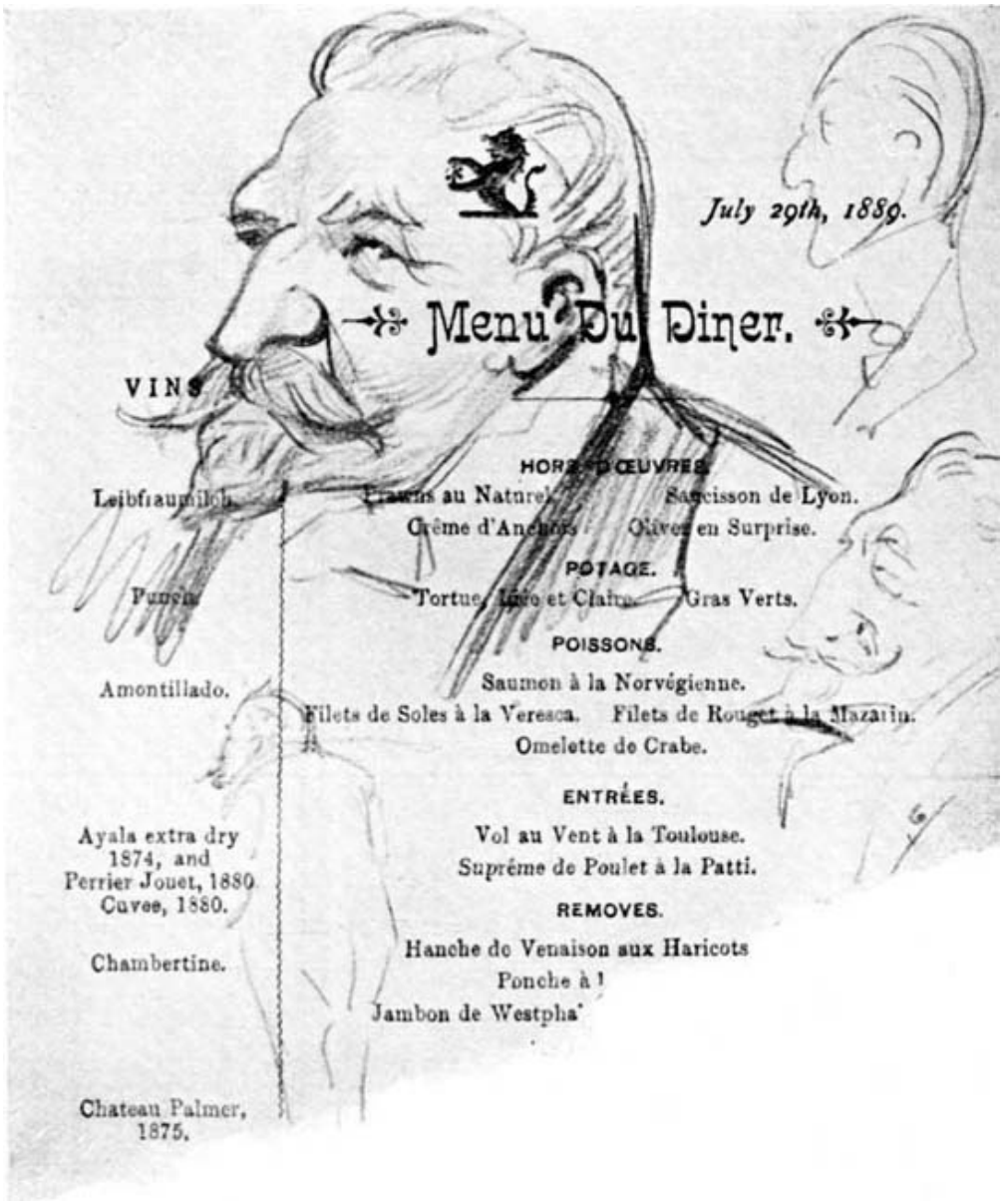
It happened that I was dining at the house of the chairman of this unique dinner ten days before the election, and he was telling us of the coming election-night dinner as the most extraordinary in the history of their politics. To my surprise, days afterwards, I received an invitation. They all had to be consulted, and agreed that I was the only outsider they would allow to be present.

The dinner was held in an hotel in the centre of New York, and special permission had been given to have the room next to the one in which we dined turned into a telegraph office, where all the messages going to the central office were tapped, and we knew the result in the room as soon as [Pg 250] it was known at the central office. Perhaps I was the only one present thoroughly indifferent, and certainly the only one who enjoyed his dinner. Speeches were indulged in even earlier than usual, and one of them had the portentous title of "England" coupled with my name! I rose and said that I felt exactly like a man who had been invited to a country house, and on his arrival was met by his friend on the doorstep with a long face and a cold, nervous hand. He was glad to see you, but had sad news: his wife was lying between life and death, and the doctors were round her bedside. Now, under such circumstances, one does not exactly feel one can make one's self at home. I assured my listeners that at the moment the Republic was lying in a critical condition, doctors were at her bedside, and it would be settled before midnight whether she was to live or die. If they would allow me I would rise later, and I trusted then my friends would be in a more genial and less excited mood. I had the pleasure of continuing my speech late that night, and congratulating them on the Republic having survived the Bryan crisis.

To describe the scenes after dinner when the results were announced, if I had a pen capable of so doing, would simply dub me in the minds of many readers as a second de Rougemont.

Late that night I reached the waterside. The North River was ablaze with red and blue lights, and rockets shot into the darkness from either shore. Every ferry-boat, tug-boat, scow, or barge in the harbour passed in an endless procession. The air quivered with the bellowings of fog-horns, steam whistles, and sirens. It was indescribable; language fails me. I can only quote the words of the New York paper with "the largest circulation in the world": "The wind-whipped waters of river and harbour glowed last night with the reflection of a myriad lights set aflame for the glory of the new sound and golden dollar. East and west, north and south, dazzling streams of fire played in fantastic curves across the heavens, and beneath this canopy of streaming flame moved a mammoth fleet of steam craft, great and small." [Pg 251]

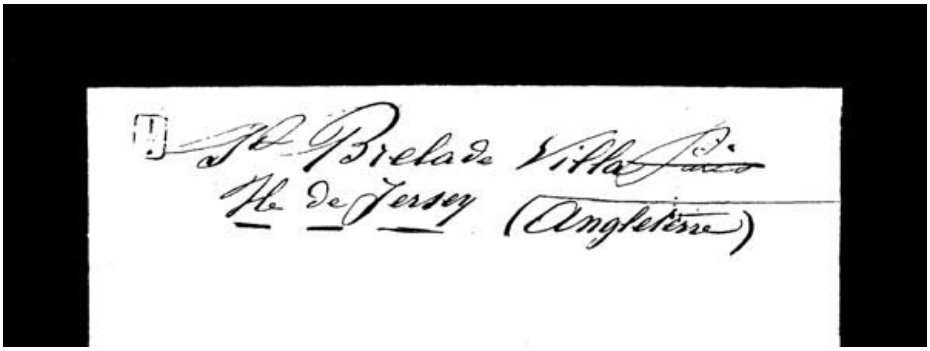
As I laid my aching head on my pillow I murmured: "Had I been an American citizen, much as I believe in sound currency and an honest dollar, one more rocket, a few more fog-horns, and I should have cast my vote for Bryan and Free Silver!"



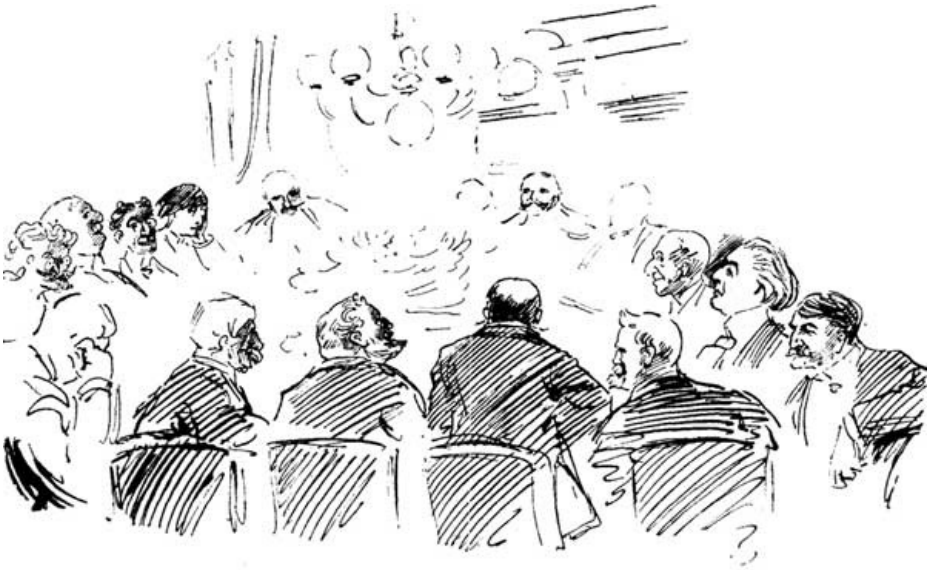
A SKETCH OF BOULANGER.

At this dinner I contrasted the look of anxiety with the callous indifference of a face I had watched under similar but still more unique circumstances a few years before: the face of the chief of French *poseurs*—General Boulanger—whom I was asked to meet at dinner in London. It happened to be the night the result of his defeat at the polls was made known. He sat, the one man out of the score-and-five concerned; but as telegrams were handed to him, of defeat, not success, he never showed any signs of interest. [Pg 252]

A few years afterwards, when on tour with my lecture-entertainments, I "put in" a week in the Channel Islands, under the management of a gentleman who had been intimately acquainted with Boulanger when he was a political recluse in Jersey; and one afternoon he drove me to the charming villa the General had occupied, situated in an ideal spot on the coast. The villa was most solidly built, and of picturesque architecture—the freak of a rich Parisian merchant, who had spared no pains or money over it. The work both inside and out was that of the best artists Paris could supply. It was magnificently furnished—a museum of beautiful objects, and curious ones, too. One bedroom was a model of an officer's apartments on board a man-of-war, even to the water (painted) splashing through a porthole. Another bedroom was a replica of an officer's tent. These were designed and furnished for the sons of the Parisian merchant, who for some domestic reason never went near his *petite* palace. He lent it to Boulanger, and there he lived the life of an exiled monarch. The place has never been touched since he walked out of it. In the stateroom, in which he received political deputations of his supporters from France, the chairs were arranged in a semi-circle round the table at which he sat when he received the last one. On the blotter was his speech, and a sheet of paper on which was written the address of the retreat. This was given to me, and here I reproduce it:—



We had coffee on the balcony, served out of china which had on it his monogram, and silver spoons with his crest. I did not pocket the spoons, nor the powder-puff of Madame, and other [Pg 253] relics lying about; the rooms remained as they were left, even to gowns in the wardrobe. The delightful garden, cut out of the rocks, had run wild. The grapes hung in clusters, the flowers were one mass of colour, the paths were covered with grass. Below stood the summer-house where Madame drank her tea. In one corner on a wall was a small target with revolver bullet marks all over it, the result of the General's practice, when possibly he used the same revolver which he turned upon himself at the tomb of Madame de Bonnemain, in the cemetery at Ixelles, Brussels.



A NOTE ON MY MENU.

It would be impossible for me in a short chapter to deal with all the interesting dinners and other entertainments I have attended; but I must confess that I was immensely flattered by a lunch given to me in Washington by the Rev. Dr. Wesley R. Davis, the well-known Albany preacher, who had retired from the pulpit and become an official of the Postal Department in Washington.

The novelty of this lunch was the idea of the chairman to sandwich each course with a story. We began with some very fine and large Lynhaven oysters. We English, with one exception, have no appreciation of the size of these huge American oysters. That one exception was Thackeray. And I may safely say that I never sat down to a meal in America and expressed my surprise at the size of the oysters (which I purposely did) but that someone told me what Thackeray said of them. On this occasion I was told the story by none other than General Horace Porter, one of the best if not [Pg 254] the greatest of all *raconteurs* in the United States. Here it is:

"You know what Thackeray said when he first saw one of our oysters,—that he felt in eating it he was swallowing a new-born baby."

REMARKABLE AND MUCH TALKED OF LUNCH TO ME AT WASHINGTON. THE AUTOGRAPHS ON BACK OF MENU.

View larger image

After the green turtle Mr. Willard, the well-known actor, was called upon, and related a brace of capital theatrical stories.

After Carolina shad and *pommes Parisienne* I was called to my legs. Now there is nothing so depressing as telling stories or making speeches at two o'clock in the afternoon. General Porter remarked that he could never tell a story till after eleven o'clock at night. He managed, however, to tell several of his best on this occasion. As the gallant General will tell them again, and I trust many times, I shall not publish them here. Mine are not worth repeating. As I said, I felt at the moment something like a well-known literary celebrity distinguished for his capital Scotch tales and his conversational brevity. He was invited to meet the late James Payn, who had expressed [Pg 255] such a strong desire to make his acquaintance that he agreed to dine at the Reform Club (which he had not done for a considerable time), and this was only arranged by their giving him the same waiter and allowing him to sit at the same table he was in the habit of having at lunch every day. The others were Sir Wemyss Reid and Sir John Robinson, of the *Daily News*. The four enjoyed a capital dinner. Payn, Sir Wemyss and Sir John were at their best, but the guest never made a remark. However, towards the end of the dinner, he put his knife and fork down, looked round, and said, "This is the very first time in my life I have sat down with three editors." This was all his conversation.

I was referring to the fact that brevity is the soul of wit, and that the Scotch author's remark about the three editors expressed my fear in addressing so many members of the Government as were present.

Then came the pheasant, and before we had quite relished the excellence of the celery salad that favourite American comedian, W. H. Crane, mixed a salad of stories which were highly relished. I shall pass over his theatrical stories and select two which followed, and which are so typical of American humour, that I give them in full.

A poor man on tramp in the country one fine July day staggered in an exhausted state into the garden of a rich old lady, and falling on his hands and knees on the grass plot at the feet of the lady, pulled himself along biting at the grass like a half-starved animal.

"My good man," the lady said, "why do you eat the grass in that way? Are you really so hungry?"

"Madam," cried the man, looking up, "I am starving!"

"Poor man, poor man!" remarked the lady, with a look of pity. "My eyes fill with tears—my heart bleeds for you. Go round to the kitchen door, go round to the kitchen door, the grass is longer there!"

The other referred to the darkie railway hand who had by degrees worked into a position at the

depot (pronounced day-po, de-pot or de-poo), where he strutted about in a costume embellished with gold lace. An English tourist (oh, those poor fools—English tourists!) was standing by the rails as an express train flew past at ninety miles an hour—s-c-h-w-r-r-r-r! and in a second was lost to sight. [Pg 256]

"Ah!" remarked the English tourist to the gentleman of colour. "The—ah, train—ah, didn't—ah, stop—ah, here—ah!"

"No sir, nebber eben hesitated!"

On May the 17th, 1888, I gave a dinner at the Garrick Club to my fellow-workers on *Punch*, and others,—a merry meeting of twenty-four. Mr. F. C. Burnand was at the other end of the table, and as the *soufflé glacé aux fleurs d'oranges* heralded the near approach of the end of the dinner I noticed a mischievous look in Burnand's eyes, and it struck me he intended to make a speech! As there was no "object" in my giving the dinner except a purely social one,—in fact to reciprocate the hospitality of some present whom I could not ask to my house in consequence of my wife's long illness,—I naturally felt extremely anxious when I saw that Mr. Burnand intended introducing speeches. I had sent a message to him that I wished for none. My evening would be spoilt by speeches, and even the witticisms of Burnand could not save it—yet he was incorrigible. I must pay him back! A happy thought struck me as he was speaking. I sent for note-paper. I, unobserved, tore it into strips and slipped the pieces into my breast-pocket. When I rose I acted being extremely nervous, assured my friends that I had implored the "Vice" not to introduce speeches, and with (true) feeling implored them not to credit the "chicken and champagne" the "Vice" had more than hinted at, and of course said I was unaccustomed to speaking, etc. I then fumbled about my pockets, and nervously produced my "notes," carefully laying them out in a long column in front of me. My guests looked with pity upon me, and their dismay was evident when I began as follows: "I was born—I was born—in 1854. I—I——" (break down). Note No. 2. "I came to London—I came to London——" [Pg 257]

"Hear, hear," murmured the sufferers.

Another collapse,—I sought other "notes." "Art—art—Greek art——"

"Hear, hear, ha, ha!" (They were beginning to guy me!)

"*Punch*——" (another painful pause). "Gentlemen, *Punch*——"

"Yes, yes, we know all about that!"

"Yes," I said, "but, gentlemen, before that toast is honoured I beg to propose to you a toast. The toast, always the *premier* toast in every gathering composed of English gentlemen." The joke was then mine. In the most perfunctory and glib manner I gave the Royal Toast. After it was duly honoured I gave the second Loyal Toast, "The House of Lords," "The Houses of Parliament," "The Army, Navy and Reserve Forces,"—each time calling upon some one or two to respond. The reply

for "The Navy," I recollect, fell to Sir Spencer Wells, who was originally in the Navy. (The Army had a legitimate representative.) We had Law, Art, Letters, Music, the Medical Profession, Commerce, the Colonies, America (responded to by E. A. Abbey)—in fact we had no fewer than twenty-four toasts; twenty-four or more replies. But this was only the first round! I was determined to keep the speeches going and not to let Burnand say another word. So I passed him over, and ignoring his appeals from the chair, I got through—or very nearly through—another score of speeches, reinforced by Toole and others coming in after the theatres, until the closure was moved and the meeting adjourned.

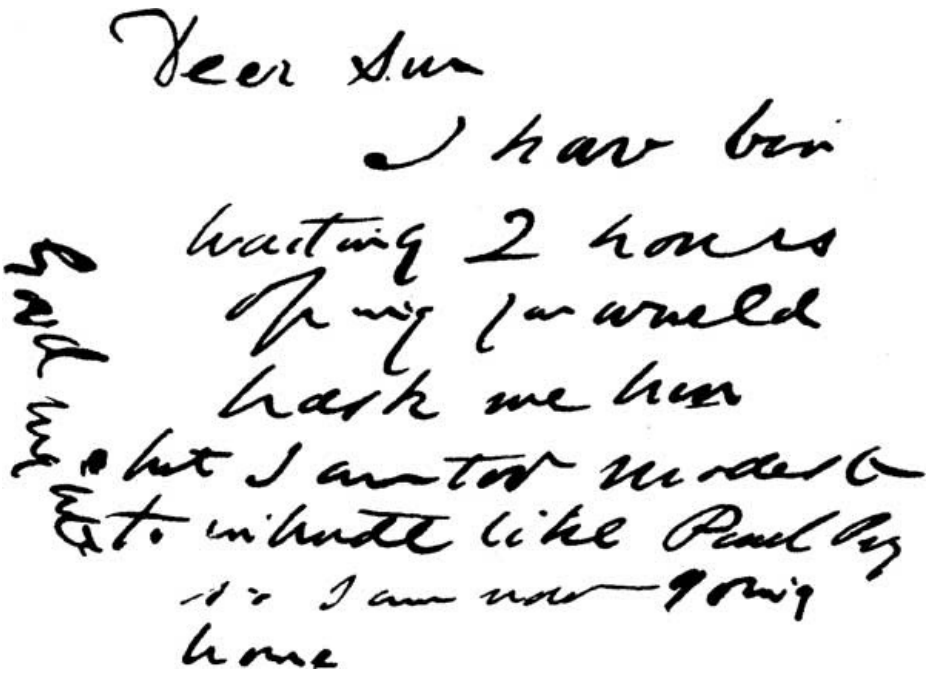
Burnand and I rode to Mill Hill and back the next morning, and he had to admit I had utterly routed him. The victory was mine!

To keep up the flow of oratory in the second series of speeches I had to call upon my guests to speak to a different toast from the one they replied to earlier. This added to the fun. But the best-regulated humour, such as Burnand's introductory speech, often gives a false impression. For instance, I actually managed to get Charles Keene on to his legs,—I think I am right in saying the only occasion on which he ever spoke. I coupled his name with "Open Spaces" (Sir Robert Hunter, the champion of "open spaces," had responded the first time). It struck me that I was paying Keene a compliment when I referred to his marvellous talent in depicting commons and fields and vast spaces in his unequalled drawings of landscapes. [Pg 258]

"Umph! Furniss, I see, chaffs me about leaving so much white in my work—not filled up with little figures like his."

And I do not think he ever understood I intended to compliment him.

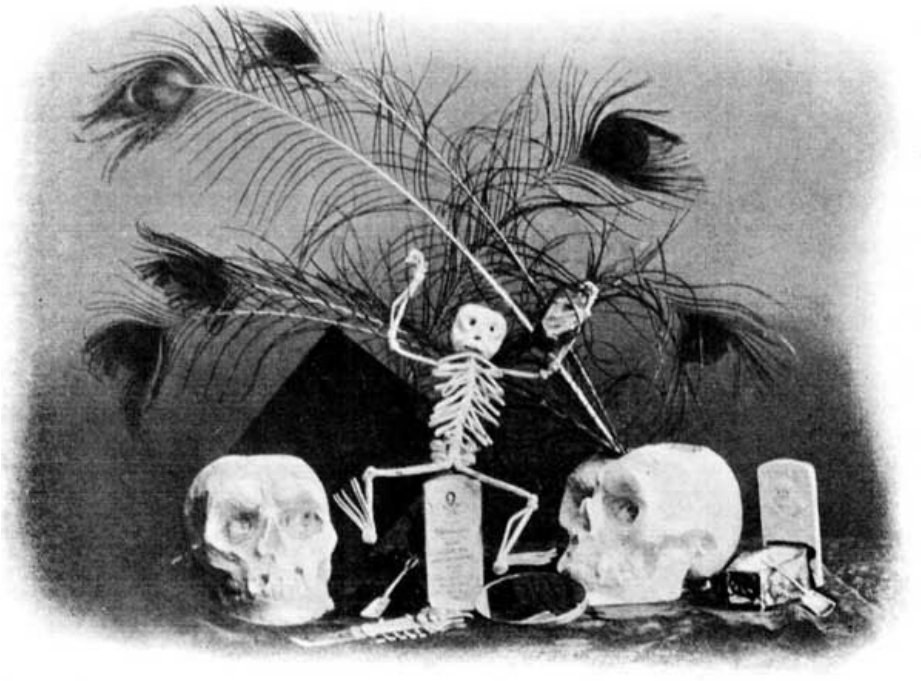
Towards the end I received a memorandum in pencil on a soiled piece of paper:



And he walked in—dear old Toole in an old coat.

I have given many another sociable dinner, but none with greater success than this at which I turned Burnand's accidentally unhappy speech into a Happy Thought.

When I was offered the chairmanship of the dinner of the London Thirteen Club, it was with a light heart that I accepted. I was under the impression that the dinner was to be a private kind of affair—a small knot of men endowed with common sense meeting to express their contempt for ignorant and harmful superstition. I had already had the honour of being elected an honorary member of the Club, but somehow or other I had never attended any of its gatherings, nor had I met with one of its members. [Pg 259]



THIRTEEN CLUB BANQUET. THE TABLE DECORATIONS.

When the time came, it was with a heavy heart that I fulfilled my promise. This Thirteen Club idea, which hails from America, had in the meantime been "boomed," as our cousins across the Herring Pond would put it, into an affair of great magnitude. It was taken up by the Press, and paragraphs, leaderettes and leaders appeared in nearly every journal all over the country. This is the style of paragraph I received through a Press cutting agency from numberless papers:—

MR. W. H. BLANCH.

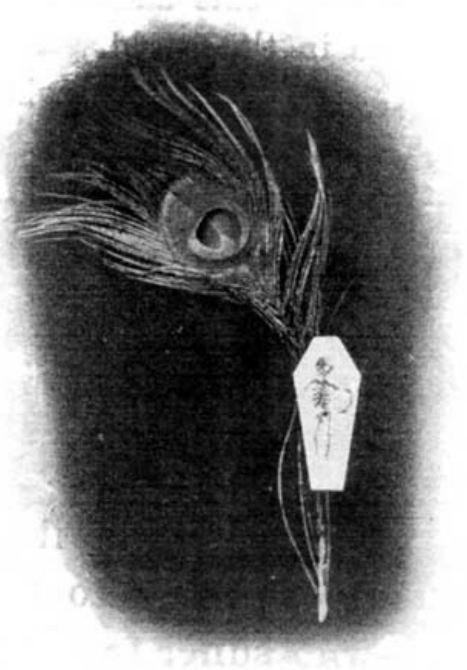
[Pg 260] "Mr. W. H. Blanch, who has been elected President of the London Thirteen Club for the year 1894, is the promoter of an organised protest against the popular superstition which led to the formation of the Thirteen Club four years ago. In his new position as President, Mr. Blanch has evidently resolved upon a more vigorous and aggressive campaign than that which has hitherto characterised the operations of the Club, for the New Year's dinner which is announced to take place on Saturday, the 13th of January, promises to be something altogether unique as a social gathering. Mr. Harry Furniss, one of the hon. members of the Club, will preside at this dinner, which is announced to take place at the Holborn Restaurant, and in room No. 13. The members and their friends will occupy 13 tables, with of course 13 at each table, and perhaps needless to say peacock feathers will abound, whilst the knives and forks will be crossed, and any quantity of salt will be split. During the evening the toastmaster on this somewhat memorable occasion, instead of informing the assembled company that the Chairman will be happy to take wine with them, will vary this stereotyped declaration by announcing that the Chairman will be happy to spill salt with them. The Club salt-cellars, it is stated, are coffin-shaped, whilst the best 'dim religious light' obtainable from skull-shaped lamps will light up the banqueting-hall, before entering which the company will pass under the Club ladder. Other details too gruesome to mention will perhaps only be revealed to the company who will sit down to this weird feast, which promises to make a record, nothing of the kind having yet been attempted in London."

These paragraphs rather frightened me. What had I let myself in for? Where would it all end?

Then other notices, inspired no doubt by the President, made their appearance from time to time, and heaped upon my devoted head all manner of responsibilities. Waiters suffering from obliquity of vision were to be sought out and fastened on to me:

[Pg 261] "The Secretary of the London Thirteen Club has requested the manager of the Holborn Restaurant to provide, if possible, cross-eyed waiters on the occasion of the New Year's dinner of the Club over which Mr. Harry Furniss is announced to preside on the 13th inst. Mr. Hamp, the manager, while undertaking that the Chairman's table shall be waitered as requested, has grave doubts whether the supply of waiters blessed in the way described will be equal to the large demand so suddenly sprung upon him."

THE BROKEN LOOKING-GLASS.



THE BADGE.

Other dreadful proposals there were, too, "too gruesome to mention." I may at once frankly admit that I do not like the introduction of the "gruesome" graveyard element. The ladder we all had to walk under, the peacock's feathers, the black cat, the spilling of salt, breaking of mirrors, presenting of knives, wearing of green ties (not that I wore one—the colour doesn't suit my complexion) or opal rings, are fair fun, and I think that in future it would be as well to limit the satire to these ceremonies, to the exclusion of the funereal part of the business. For badges each wore in his button-hole a small coffin to which dangled a skeleton, and peacock's feathers. In my opinion the peacock's feathers would have been sufficient for the purpose of the Club: the only object I had in going to the dinner was to help to prove that these stupid superstitions should be [Pg 262] killed by ridicule. I detest Humbug, and Superstition is but another name for Humbug. I am a believer in cremation, but that is no reason why I should hold up to ridicule the clumsier and more unhealthy churchyard burials about which so much sentiment exists.

It was amusing to note my absent superstitious friends' excuses for their non-appearance. One declined because he had an important engagement that he could not possibly put off on any account. Late on the evening of the dinner I heard this same gentleman grumbling because no one had turned up at his club to play a game of billiards with him! Another had fallen asleep and did not wake in time, and a third had been unlucky with his speculations of late, which he attributed to having seen the new moon through glass, and therefore he declined to tempt the fates further. Mr. George R. Sims, the well-known "Dagonet," betrayed sheer fright, as the following letter will testify:

> "My Dear Sir,—At the last moment my courage fails me, and I return the dinner ticket you have so kindly sent me.
>
> "If I had only myself to think of, I would gladly come and defy the fates, and do all that the members are pleased to do except wear the green necktie suggested by my friend Mr. Sala (that would not suit my complexion). But I have others to think of—dogs and cats and horses—who if anything happened to me would be alone in the world.
>
> "For their sakes I must not run the risks that a faithful carrying out of your programme implies.
>
> "Trusting that nothing very terrible will happen to any of you in after life,
>
> "Believe me,
> "Sincerely yours,
> "(Signed) Geo. R. Sims."

I confess my real and only reason was to protest. In England superstition is harmlessly idiotic, but elsewhere it is cruel and brutal, and a committee should be formed to try the lunatics—everyday men of the world—who suffer from it, for there is no doubt that they and their families are made miserable through superstitious belief. Nothing kills like ridicule, and it is the Club's object by this means to kill superstition. Some, like Mr. Andrew Lang, may think it a pity to [Pg 263] interfere with this humbug, but I venture to think it is a charity when one considers the absurdity of educated men of the present day making themselves unhappy through the stupid nonsense of the dark ages. For instance, take two of my most intimate friends. One in particular suffered in mind and body through having a supposed fatal number. This number was 56, and as he approached that age he felt that that year would be his last. Fancy that for a man of the world, who is also a public man, and a member of the Government at the time of the dinner! He was also

a charming companion and a delightful friend, and no man I knew had a wider circle of acquaintance. I happened to accompany him in a six weeks' tour on the Continent during the year he believed fatal to him, or perhaps it may have been the year previous; anyway, he was suffering from that horrible complaint, superstition. He first made me aware of it the night we arrived in Paris by thumping at my door in a terrible state to implore me to change rooms with him—his number was 56, and it terrified him! Next day we travelled in a carriage numbered 56, and my friend was miserable. At the theatre his seat was 56, the ticket for his coat was 56, 56 was the number of the first shop he entered to buy some trifle I suggested to him. Indeed, I may at once confess that I took care that 56 should crop up as often as possible, as I thought that that would be the best way to cure the patient. Not a bit of it; he got worse, and was really ill until his 56th birthday was passed.

SQUINT-EYED WAITER.

To take the chair at this "most unique" banquet, as the papers styled it, was no easy task, and to be waited upon by cross-eyed menials was quite enough to make a sensitive, imitative being like myself very nervous. Some of this band of gentlemen who had neglected to go to the Ophthalmic Hospital seemed to consider that their being bought up for the occasion was a great honour, and one youth in particular, with black hair, a large sharp nose—and oh! such a squint!—whose duty it was to open the door of the reception-room, at which I stood to receive the guests as they arrived, was positively proud of his unfortunate disfigurement, and every time he opened the door he flashed his weirdly set eyes upon me to such an extent that I felt myself unintentionally squinting at every guest I shook hands with.

[Pg 264]

When dinner was served a huge looking-glass was flung at my feet, where it shattered into a thousand fragments with a tremendous crash, giving one a shock so far removed from any superstitious feeling as to act on one as an appetiser before dinner.

Then whilst everybody else is enjoying his dinner without let or hindrance, the poor Chairman has to hold himself prepared for various surprises. Telegrams of all sorts and descriptions were handed to me.

But perhaps the most interesting of all the postal and telegraph deliveries brought me during the dinner was a letter from my old and valued friend "'Arry" of *Punch*, who had accepted an invitation, and was to have proposed the health of the Chairman, but unfortunately was laid up with a sore throat:

> "Try and make my kind and would-be hosts understand that as 'Arry would say, there is 'no kid about this.' I enclose a few doggerel verses penned painfully on a pad perched on a pillow, which—if you can read 'em—you are welcome to do so.
>
> "My elbow's sore
> And so no more
> At present, from yore
> Old friend (and bore)
>
> "E. J. Milliken."

Here is the "painfully-penned" doggerel:— [Pg 265]

"13 *Jany.*, 1894.

"THE LOST (VOCAL) CHORDS.

"Lying to-day on my pillow, I am weary and ill at ease,
And the Gargles fail to soothe me,
And the Inhalations tease. I know not what is the matter;
To swallow is perfect pain,
And my Vocal Chords seem palsied!—
Shall I ever use them again?

"So I *can't* propose your health, friend,
Or drink to the 'Thirteen's' luck.
I must dine on—Eucalyptus,
And Sulphur, or some such muck.
I have no Salt to be spilling;
My only knife is a spoon;
And I have not the smallest notion
If there is, or isn't, a Moon!

"But I picture you on your legs, there,
And the 'Thirteens' ranged around;

And I feel I *could* sound your praises,
If these Vocal Chords *would* sound.
But I know that in guttural gurgling
The point of my jokes you would miss;
If I tried to lead the cheers, friend,
My 'hooray' you'd take for a hiss.

"So 'tis just as well as it is, friend,
And doubtless 'the other chap'
Will do you the fullest justice;
So I'll turn and try for a nap.
But before I resume my gargle,
And my throttle with unguents rub,
I'll drink—in a glass of Thirteen port—
To the health of the 'Thirteen Club.' [Pg 266]

"It may be that some bright Thirteenth
They may ask me to Dinner again;
It may be I then shall be able
To speak without perfect pain.
It may be my unstrung larynx
May speak once again *with words*:
For the present, excuse me—along of
My poor Lost (Vocal) Chords!!!"

COFFINS, SIR!

I was relieved and amused to find one present even a little more embarrassed than myself. He was a rotund, happy-looking man of the world, and he had to sit isolated during part of the dinner, as his guests were afraid to attend the uncanny banquet. However, the Secretary, being a man of resource, ordered two of the cross-eyed attendants to fill the vacant places. I shall never forget the face of the poor man sandwiched between them. During the course of the dinner the black-edged business card of an "Undertaker and Funeral Furnisher," of Theobald's Road, Bloomsbury, was brought to me. Under the impression that he had supplied the coffin-shaped salt-cellars, and wished to be paid for them, I sent to enquire his business, whereupon the undertaker sent me in the following telegram he had just received from Cambridge:

> "Call upon Harry Furniss this evening Holborn Restaurant Thirteen Club Dinner for orders *re* funeral arrangements."

The receiver of the telegram, I learnt from his card, had been in business fifty-four years, but evidently this was the first time he had been the victim of this Theodore Hookish joke. I called the funeral furnisher in. Unobserved by the green-tied guests and the cross-eyed waiters, he walked through the banqueting hall, and as soon as he arrived at the chair, black-gloved, hat in hand, with the ominous foot rule projecting from the pocket of his funereal overcoat, I stood up and introduced him to the company, read the telegram, and invited him to go round the tables and take the orders. Whether it was that the man of coffins met the gaze of any particularly cross-eyed waiter, or was overcome by the laughter called forth by my solemn request—an outbreak foreign to the ears of a gentleman of his calling—I know not, but he promptly vanished. Later in the evening a request came from him for a present of one of the coffin-shaped salt-cellars, and no doubt the one I sent him will adorn his window for another fifty-four years, to the delight of the Cambridge undergraduates whose little joke was so successful. [Pg 267]

THE CHAIRMAN WILL BE PLEASED TO SPILL SALT WITH YOU.

From the "St. James's Budget."

In place of the old-fashioned formula, "The Chairman will be pleased to drink wine with the gentlemen on his right," and then on his left, the Toastmaster had to announce that the Chairman would be pleased to "spill salt" with those on his right, etc.; but force of habit was too strong, and "drink wine" came out, and although this was corrected, it was strange that in some cases the guests held up their glasses and did not spill salt. Of course, throwing salt over the shoulder was prohibited; that superstitious operation would have been sufficient to disqualify any member. [Pg 268]

A KNIFE I WAS PRESENTED WITH.

Beside each member was placed a looking-glass, and in the course of the evening it went forth that "The Chairman will be pleased to shiver looking-glasses with the members," and smash! smash! went the mercury-coated glass all over the tables.

It then fell to me to present each of the thirteen chairmen with a pen-knife, refusing of course the customary coin in return. I was presented with a ferocious-looking knife, with a multiplicity of blades and other adjuncts, which I treasure as a memento of the dinner.

These are a few trifles I had to deal with in addition to the usual toasts, and I fervently trust it may never again be my lot to be called upon to take the chair at a "unique banquet" entailing such surprises and shocks and so many speeches:

I proposed the loyal toast as follows:—

The
Queen
Prince
and
Princess
of
Wales
and
rest
of
the
Royal
Family
13

I had a point to make, but forgot it (oh, those squinting waiters!), showing that 1894 was a very unlucky year. However, any mathematician could prove that '94 = 9 + 4 = 13. *Q.E.D.* I might also have really utilised only thirteen words in giving the toast of the evening, as follows: [Pg 269]

Enemies
of
Superstition
Ignorance
and
Humbug
drink
success
to
The
London
Thirteen
Club

13

On my way to the Thirteen Club Dinner I met a well-known *Punch* artist, also a keen man of the world. I invited him. He started with horror. "Not for worlds! I *am* superstitious—never more so than at this moment. Why, do you know that this has been a most unlucky month with me? Everything has gone wrong, and I'll tell you why. The other night I woke up and went to my bedroom window to see what kind of a night it was—rash, stupid fool that I was! What do you think I saw?" "A burglar?" "Not a bit of it—I wouldn't have cared a pin for a brace of 'em. I saw the new moon through glass! That's why everything's gone wrong with me. What a fool I was!" "What a fool you *are*!" I ejaculated, as I jumped into a hansom for room 13, recalling to mind that my fellow-worker was not the only humorist who has been superstitious.

Albert Smith, the well-known author and entertainer, was very superstitious, and a curious incident has been related me by a friend who was present one night when Smith startled his friends by a most extraordinary instance of his fear of the supernatural. It was in the smoking-room of the old Fielding Club, on New Year's Eve, 1854. The bells were just ringing in the New Year when Smith suddenly started up and cried, "We are thirteen! Ring, ring for a waiter, or some of us will die before the year is out!" Before the attendant arrived the fatal New Year came in, and Smith's cup of bitterness was full to overflowing. Out of curiosity my friend wrote the names of all those present in his pocket-book. Half of them were ordered to the Crimean War, and fought throughout the campaign. No doubt Smith eagerly scanned the lists of killed and wounded in the papers, for as the waiter did not arrive in time to break the unlucky number, one of them was sure to meet his death. However, all the officers returned safe and sound, and most of them are alive now. The first man to depart this life was Albert Smith himself, and this did not happen until six and a half years afterwards. [Pg 270]

Correspondence from the superstitious and anti-superstitious poured in upon me. But I select a note received by the President some time before the dinner as the most interesting:

> "Christiania, Norway.
>
> "Sir,—I see you are going to have an anniversary dinner on the 13th of this month, and I take the liberty to send you the following:
>
> "In 1873, March 20th, I left Liverpool in the steamship *Atlantic*, then bound for New York. On the 13th day, the 1st of April, we went on the rocks near Halifax, Nova Scotia. Out of nearly 1,000 human beings, 580 were frozen to death or

drowned.

"The first day out from Liverpool some ladies at my table discovered that we were thirteen, and in their consternation requested their gentleman-companion to move to another table. Out of the entire thirteen, I was the only one that was saved. I was asked at the time if I did not believe in the unlucky number thirteen. I told them I did not. In this case the believers were all lost and the unbeliever saved.

"Out of the first-cabin passengers saved, I was one of the thirteen saved.

"At the North-Western Hotel, in Liverpool, there can be found thirteen names in the book of passengers that left in the *Atlantic* on the 20th of March, 1873, for New York; amongst them my own. Every one of those passengers except myself were lost. [Pg 271]

"Now, if these memorandums about the number thirteen—by one that does not believe in it—is of any interest to you, it will please me very much.

"I am, yours very truly,
"N. BRANDT.
"9, KONGENS GADE."

It is absurd to say that I have been unlucky since presiding at that dinner. On the contrary, I have been most lucky—I have never presided at another!

[Pg 272]

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CONFESSIONS OF AN EDITOR.

Editors—Publishers—An Offer—Why I Refused it—The *Pall Mall Budget*—*Lika Joko*—The *New Budget*—The Truth about my Enterprises—*Au Revoir*!

Only the fortunate—or should we not rather say the unfortunate?—man who has made up his mind to produce a journal of his own can have the very faintest conception of the work and worry, the pains and penalties, the hopes and fears, the anxiety and exasperation, involved in the process. I have gone through it all, and perhaps something more than all by comparison with other people in the same peculiar predicament. For weeks before the promised periodical sees the light the unfortunate proprietor feels himself to be a very Atlas supporting Heaven knows how many cosmic schemes.

The first editor of my acquaintance was a little boy in knickerbockers, with a lavish profusion of auburn locks, an old-fashioned physiognomy, a wiry if diminutive frame, and a quick, nervous temperament, whose youthful eyes had beheld the suns of fourteen summers.

My last editor is one whose physique would be commonly qualified by the adjective *podgy*, of a full face, but with head somewhat depleted of its capillary adornments, for which deprivation it has to thank the snows of six-and-forty winters.

Our intimacy has been of long standing, for my first and last editor is one and the same being—the present writer.

From the day that I, as a little schoolboy, seated on the uncompromising school-form looked upon as a necessary adjunct to the inception of knowledge, produced in MS. and for private circulation only my first journalistic attempt, up to the present moment, I can confidently assert that during my varied experience I never was brought into contact with a more interesting set of men than [Pg 273] those I have seen stretched upon the editorial rack.

The primary requirements which tend to make up the composition of an editor are good health, an impenetrably thick skin, and the best of humour. Secondly, he must be able to command experience, a thirst for work, and the power of application; and, thirdly, he must possess tact and discretion. A universal and comprehensive knowledge of human nature must also be his, for not only has he to be capable of judging and humouring the overstrung men and women of talent with whom he deals—those fragile, sensitive flowers from whom he extracts the honey wherewith to gratify the palate of a journalistically epicurean public—but he must also have a thorough knowledge of that public to enable him to direct those who work for him, for they, shut up in their studies and studios, may not realise that the man at the look-out has to weather the storms of public opinion, of which they reck little if it be that what they work at may be to their own liking, albeit unpalatable to those whom they seek to feed.

Like poets, editors are born, not made. An editor may make a paper, but a paper never made an editor. But as to the commercial success or failure of a periodical, the editor is absolutely a nonentity. There are two sides to the production of a periodical: one is the business side, the other the editorial. The success or failure of a periodical depends almost entirely upon the business manager.

One of the youngest and most successful newspaper proprietors once called me a fool. I wrote and asked him why. We had an interview. He said frankly: "You are a fool, in my opinion, for producing too good an article for the money. The public does not appreciate good work, and you will never make a commercial success of your paper. Your staff is too good; your printing is too good; your paper is too good. I am a success because I know where to buy paper cheap and sell it for a profit. I have thirty publications, but their names, their contents, writing, or art I never think about, nor does the public either. We ink something on the paper, and sell it at so much a [Pg 274] pound profit."

But I had nothing whatever to do with the commercial side of the arrangements connected with ventures associated with my name. Ah! how little the public know what goes on behind the scenes in the newspaper world! If you stop a publication with which your name is associated, everyone at once, very properly, dubs you a failure. As what? An editor, of course. That is the mistake, the injustice. How many periodicals have the most talked of publishers started and stopped? Scores of them. Yet are they therefore failures? No, no more than the manager of a theatre is who produces a piece which runs a night or two and comes off. He still has his theatre, and other plays. So is it in the publishing world.

It is the isolated editor, without the machinery of a big office, or the head of the man of commerce,—if he stops, from whatever cause, his one effort is the failure! The "successful publisher" stops a dozen new ventures in the same time, and he is still considered successful. A publisher is very much like a conjuror: he must start two or three tricks, so that if one is likely to go wrong he can draw the attention of the public off it by another, and the first is quickly dropped or reintroduced under another name. My one mistake in publishing was that having started a success, *Lika Joko*, I let it drop to take up another. But let my confessions on this subject be brief and in order.

Before I had any notion of leaving *Punch* I had conceived an idea for a monthly magazine to be called *Lika Joko; Harry Furniss's Monthly*, and had already had a number of drawings engraved, specimen copies printed, and had gone to great expense in the preliminary work. Of course, the *Punch* men were to be the chief contributors, and Mr. E.J. Milliken was writing a great deal, and Mr. Bernard Partridge was illustrating for me. Shortly afterwards I retired from the staff of *Punch*. I was then approached by the proprietors of an influential daily and weekly paper to edit a sixpenny high-class weekly, and they offered to put down £50,000 at once. This I would have [Pg 275] willingly accepted, but it so happened that just at that time Mr. Astor reconstructed the *Pall Mall Budget*, regardless of expense—an extravagance with which no other paper could compete. In these circumstances I declined the offer. I soon found many friends to support me if I would start a paper connected solely with my name, but wishing to have the largest risk myself I took the largest share (over £5,000 in cash), and allowed a few to join me. It was decided to drop the idea of a monthly and make it a humorous weekly.

LIKA JOKO.

That name was originated some years before by Mr. Burnand and myself jointly in a chaffing conversation. It was universally connected with me, but as it has been said that I had no right to use it, I here reproduce a document that settles any doubt on that point:

> "This is to certify that Harry Furniss has the sole right to use the name of 'Lika Joko.' That he is at liberty to use it in any way he wishes, and no one else can adopt or utilise the name without his permission.
>
> "(Signed) F.C. Burnand, Editor of *Punch*.
> "Philip Leslie Agnew,

Wishing to be certain that the name "Lika Joko" was a wise one, I was advised to consult the leading editor of our largest publishing house. Strange to say, when I called he had on his wall rows of titles of publications under consideration. He looked at mine, and thought the matter over, then shook hands and told me there was a fortune in the title alone.

A few years afterwards I heard to my dismay that the same great man declared the title I had selected was a fatal mistake!

The first friend I consulted about capital suggested £20,000. He was very rich, but said that he would only put cash in equal to what I myself would. I put down £5,000, and he followed suit. I subsequently added more. The rest of the capital was found by various friends.

My friends subsequently said that as I supplied the editorial brains I ought not to have supplied the largest share of the capital! [Pg 276]

I was requested by my friends to introduce a business man, accustomed to publishing, and leave all business arrangements to him. My friends brought in two. Yet I am held responsible for the business arrangements made!

Few new periodicals have caused more interest. The scene at the railway stations and book-stalls was unparalleled. We could not print quick enough to supply the demand. 140,000 copies went off in a few days—which, for a threepenny humorous journal, is a record.

It is said I wrote the journal myself. I never wrote one line in it from the first number to the last. I had the best writers money could procure, and I venture to say it was the best-written paper of its class ever produced in England.

It is said I illustrated it all myself!

I had in the *first number* alone George du Maurier, Bernard Partridge, Fred Barnard, A. C. Corbould, W. Ralston, J. F. Sullivan, G. Ashton, W. D. Almond, J. B. Yeats, and myself. Ten artists!—eight of whom have contributed to *Punch*. In subsequent numbers I added work by Sir Frank Lockwood, Arthur Hopkins, Gordon Browne, W. Maud, W. F. Thomas, C. Richardson, Louis Wain, G. Montbard, James Greig, "Rab," Max Cowper, J. H. Roberts, René Bull, S. Adamson, J. E. Donnison, W. H. Overend, Charles Burton Barber, A. T. Elwes, Hal Hurst, F. Miller, E. F. Skinner, George Morrow, J. Jellicoe, A. Greenbank, and others—in all nearly forty artists, and this in six months!

I have another inaccuracy to nail to the counter of Dame False Rumour's shop. That I stopped *Lika Joko* because it was a failure.

The facts about this incident are brief and instructive.

Mr. Astor stopped his artistic weekly, the *Pall Mall Budget*, suddenly. It so happened it was printed in the same office as *Lika Joko*. This very paper, which had prevented me accepting the editorship of the proposed new sixpenny weekly paper, and had driven me into publishing a threepenny weekly, was "put to bed" (to use a printer's phrase) week after week side by side with mine. I was sent for one Saturday morning. The expensive sixpenny child was to die that day. Could I not adopt it? There was a chance—splendid circulation, splendid returns for advertisements. [Pg 277]

Why then does Mr. Astor discontinue it?

Because, I was told, Mrs. Astor had just died,—it was so dear to her that Mr. Astor felt he could not continue it, for purely sentimental reasons.

This was pathetically explained to me. It was so natural. Yet why should such a splendid paper cease when I had a large proprietor with capital waiting to start one? I was the man. So I was told, and so I believed, and so I proved to be. Not a moment was to be lost. I was with Sir George Lewis. Has Mr. Astor any objection? He thought certainly not.

I therefore engaged the same staff, the same printers, the same paper and machines were used. The paper, with the exception that the title was changed from the *Pall Mall* to the *New Budget*, came out in four days—the following Wednesday morning. Sir William Ingram was the first to purchase a copy. The whole edition was sold out before sunset. I have been assured that this was the smartest journalistic feat on record.

I then sought the people whom I had advised not to oppose this very paper, but they were on the Continent. I would bring it out and await their return. They did return. But it unfortunately happened that in the meantime they had speculated in one of those American imported "booms" of illustrated literature and lost!

Lika Joko came out too, and I immediately met all the members of my company and placed both papers before them, my *New Budget* and our joint property *Lika Joko*. The result was the following announcement in the next week's issue of the latter:

"A FAREWELL FABLE.

"Once upon a time there was a wealthy shipowner who possessed one of the best vessels on the

seas. Her name was the *Pall Mall Budget*. Week after week she left port, well manned, well rigged, laden with passengers, and made a prosperous voyage. No vessel in her own line was better built and appointed, and gradually she drew away those people who once had travelled by her rivals, and carried them herself. [Pg 278]

"And then, one day, without assigning any reason, the shipowner forbade her ever again to leave port, and nothing could shake his resolve.

"Now, there was at this time also afloat a merry little passenger boat which made a weekly cruise in waters only occasionally entered by the larger vessel, and her name was *Lika Joko*. No sooner did the news of the great shipowner's decision reach the ears of the captain of the *Lika Joko* than he made all sail for port, drew up alongside of the *Pall Mall Budget*, and boarded her.

"Then he asked her captain and crew, who were all regretful at the loss of their vessel, if they would put to sea again in a vessel built by himself, as like the *Pall Mall Budget* as might be, but, if anything, swifter, more trim, with later improvements to make the passage easier and more entertaining to all on board. And they agreed.

"Forthwith he set about giving his orders, and so heartily did everyone work that a week later, in fair weather, and to the surprise of all spectators, this vessel, which was christened the *New Budget*, crossed the harbour bar and made one of the best passages on record, leaving the competing craft far behind, and carrying on board not only the old passengers of the *Pall Mall Budget*, but those of the *Lika Joko* as well, and many new ones. 'Henceforth,' said the captain of the *Lika Joko*, who had now become the captain of the *New Budget*, 'we will set our sails every Thursday morning.'"

Little did I think the change was a fable. I had not long to wait to find I had been utterly deceived. According to Mr. Astor, his reason for his stopping his expensive paper was not as stated! As soon as I discovered this I called together my friends, and as they would have to supply a huge capital to carry on the *Budget*, and as I had been deceived, it was arranged that they should retire with their unused capital, and I carried on the *New Budget* with my own capital of £6,000. The paper cost me £100 a day—£700 each number. I had the best artists, the best writers, the best printers—the same as Mr. Astor—but here comes in my difficulty. As I had amalgamated *Lika Joko* with the *New Budget*, I was legally bound to the contract made with the advertising manager. That contract worked out in nearly every case at 40 per cent. commission for advertisement. That finished me. Was that editorial or business? I think the latter. Was I to blame? I think not. [Pg 279]

As the American millionaire had discovered before me that it was impossible to give a shillingsworth for sixpence (although I ran it for a longer period than he did), I ceased its publication. Few papers, it has been said, were more admired than this artistic and refined *New Budget*, and I take this opportunity of denying that it was in any way a failure compared with papers in existence for years still losing money, and I am sincerely proud of my contribution to the publishing of periodicals. But had I not been deceived, and dropped *Lika Joko*, that paper would now have been a splendid property.

I confess that the financial loss, severe to a professional man who has made it all by his own hand, was not what upset me. I am not a gambler—I never bet a shilling in my life—but I thought better of my fellow-men than they deserve. What did trouble me was that I never was given credit for my pluck. I was, and I am still, grossly misrepresented by a certain section of journalists. When the *Pall Mall Budget* was discontinued, was it written down a failure? No, certainly not. A pathetic excuse was manufactured. That excuse was as clever as it was untrue, as I discovered to my cost.

I think the man who stepped in single-handed, saved the *Pall Mall Budget* as I did to the benefit of contributors, printers, and paper-makers, who then strangled his own child-paper and gave all the money at his disposal to keep the *Budget* going, who was deserted by his Company in consequence—they taking with them their remaining capital—who fought on, and lost thousands and thousands of pounds more of his own money, who worked night and day for months without any encouragement, any return, who discovered he had been deceived all round, and then, finding this, paid everyone every penny and said nothing, but turned round and went on with his own professional work, is surely a man at least to be respected; certainly not the man to be belittled, misrepresented, and maligned by brother workers. [Pg 280]

I have other matters to confess regarding my experiences of publishing—but they will keep. I am anxious, however, that the facts recorded in this chapter should be known, as a warning to others who like myself, being a successful editor, imagine that editing can make a commercial success without a commercial pilot. I paid for my experience—I do not regret it.

FOOTNOTE

[A] Soden's "Rap at the R.A."

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