Title: Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 104, March 25, 1893

Author: Various

Release date: September 22, 2007 [eBook #22724]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Lesley Halamek, Juliet Sutherland and the
Online Distributed Proofreading Team at http://www.pgdp.net

PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.

Volume 104, March 25th 1893

edited by Sir Francis Burnand

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THE PANGS OF MATRIMONY!!!

Casual Acquaintance. "Hear you're to be Married, Mr. Ribbes. Congratulate you!"

Mr. Ribbes. "Much obliged, but I dunno so much about Congratulations. It's corstin' me a pretty Penny, I tell yer. Mrs. Ribbes as is to be, she wants 'er *Trousseau*, yer know; an' then there's the Furnishin', an' the Licence, an' the Parson's Fees; an' then I 'ave to give 'er an' 'er Sister a bit o' Jool'ry a-piece; an' wot with one thing an' another—she's a 'eavy Woman, yer know, Thirteen Stun odd—well, I reckon she'll 'a corst me pretty near *Two-an'-Eleven a Pound* afore I git 'er 'Ome!"

SMALL BY DEGREES.

A Story of Defiance not Defence.

There was once a Battalion of Volunteers with its full complement of field, company, and non-commissioned officers, and rank and file. And according to experts the Regiment was a most valuable addition to the national defence. One day a General, covered over with gold lace and wearing a cocked hat, rode up to the Colonel and called him out.

"Colonel," said the General, "we are thinking of giving over your command to a C.O. of a Dépôt Centre. It won't interfere with you much and give you less to do. You may still call yourself Colonel—not that I call you so myself. I mean off parade."

But the Colonel did not seem to see it, and so he sent in his papers and rode away.

Then the General from the War Office called up the two remaining Field Officers.

"Majors" said he, "it seems to us we can help you a good deal by appointing a Major from a service battalion as Adjutant. Then you can rank beneath him, and he can look after you and the two half battalions you each of you are supposed to command. You may still call yourselves Majors—not that I call you so myself. I mean off parade."

But the Majors did not seem to see it, so they sent in *their* papers too.

Then the General from the War Office called up the Company Officers.

"Gentlemen," said he, "we shall continue the snubbing, of which you have had so much experience. You will do all sorts of new work, and go to all sorts of fresh expense in the near future. Not that it will increase your dignity—not a bit of it. However, you may still call yourselves Captains and Lieutenants—not that I call you so myself. I mean off parade."

But the Company Officers did not seem to see it, so they sent in their papers and marched away. Then the General from the War Office called up the rest of the Regiment.

"Now, Non-commissioned Officers and Men," said he, "you have no one to command you, and no one to pay for your marches out, prizes, and the rest of it. But don't let that bother you. You may still call yourselves Soldiers—not that I call you so myself. I mean off parade."

But the remainder of the Regiment did not seem to see it, so they sent in *their* resignations, and vanished.

Then the Officer from the War Office rode towards Pall Mall.

"It won't interfere with me much," said he, "and give the Department less to do. And I can still call myself General—though I scarcely deserve the title, either on or off parade!"

HOW IT STRIKES "THE CONTEMPORARY."

["Why should not women take the B.A. degree?... Unfortunately the older Universities have resented every attempt at breaking down their cherished exclusiveness."—*From an Article in "The Contemporary Review" for March.*]

Despotic Dons' dominion
  Still subjugates us all,
They scoff at our opinion,
  Our purposes miscall;
Will no deliverer appear,
And is it vainly, as we fear,
We hold our meetings every year
  Within St. James's Hall?

Our wrongs, if brought to knowledge,
  Would surely move your hearts,
Degreeless from her College
  The Wrangler-ess departs;
And shall not too the maids, who can
Give all the usages of ἀν,
As well as any living man
  Be Bachelors of Arts?

Persuasive or abusive
  We fail our point to gain,
Disgracefully exclusive
  These ancient seats remain:
But yet a future we foresee
When Women will the rulers be,
And Men will beg a Pass-degree,
  Will beg, and beg in vain!

———

P.S.—The pith of our petition
Is seldom understood,
It is not all ambition,
Though this, no doubt, is good;
But, speaking frankly, we declare
The point for which we really care
Is just to gain the right to wear
That *most* becoming hood!

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THE WITLER'S WISION OF WENGEANCE.

(In a slightly Pickwickian Sense.)

Being the Dream of an angry "Brother Bung" after attending the Meeting at St. James's Hall, and trying to soothe himself with a dip into Dickens.

["He" Lord Burton, "asked why this drastic, this dishonest, this catchpenny, this gerrymandering Bill should have been brought in?.... They had heard much of late about the Nonconformist Conscience, which was said to be the backbone of the Liberal Party. He firmly believed that the Bill had been brought forward to suit the Nonconformist Conscience, to pander to the hypocritical self-righteousness, and the sham respectability of a certain class."—*Lord Burton, at the St. James's Hall Meeting, on the Direct Veto Bill.*]

Mr. Witler, the elder, gave vent to an extraordinary sound, which, being neither a groan, nor a grunt, nor a gasp, nor a howl, nor a hoot, nor a hiss, nor a shout, nor a shriek, yet seemed to partake in some degree of the character of all these inarticulate laryngeal exercises. It was a big vocal blend, and a stentorian; it made him pant and turn apoplectically purple in the face, it shook the house, and very nearly "brought it down."

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Mr. Witler's "wocal wagaries" (as his son called them) when he *was* roused, were something tremendous, earthquaky, appalling!

Mr. Swigslop Stiggins, a leading Shepherd of the Nonconformist Rechabite Flock, unwarned by this nondescript sound, which he understood to betoken remorse or repentance, in fact, an awakening of the "Nonconformist Conscience," in a somewhat unlikely quarter, looked about him, rubbed his hands, wept, smiled, wept again, and then mechanically uttering a guttural "Hear! Hear!" (as though he were listening, in the House of Commons, to the jocund Harcourt, or the jocular Lawson, or the robustious T. W. Russell, or the astute Caine) and then, walking across the room to a well-remembered pigeon-hole, took thence an official-looking scroll, sat down, formally unfolded it, cleared his throat, and began with pompous complacency to read aloud its title,

preamble, clauses, and provisions, compulsory regulations, and peremptory prohibitions to the apparently semi-asphyxiated Mr. WITLER.

The elder Mr. WITLER, who still continued to make various strange and uncouth attempts to appear indifferent, offered not a single word during these proceedings; but when STIGGINS stopped for breath, previous to a second reading, he darted upon him, and, snatching the scroll from his hand, first buffeted him briskly about the head therewith, and then threw it into the fire. Then, seizing the astonished gentleman firmly by the collar, he suddenly fell to kicking him most furiously, accompanying every application of his boots to Mr. STIGGINS'S person with sundry violent and incoherent anathemas, such as—"Blatant Barabbas!"—"Bumptious busybody!"—"Unblushing bandit!"—"Barefaced spoliator!"—"Hypocritical humbug!"—"Iniquitous inquisitor!"—"Fanatical faddist!"—"Self-righteous sneak!"—"Sham saint!"—"Jerrymandering JEREMY DIDDLER!"—"Pragmatical pump!"—"Little Bethelite Boanerges!" and "Nonconformist *Tartuffe*!!!"

"SAMMY," said Mr. WITLER, "put my cap on tight for me!" SAM dutifully adjusted the cap more firmly on his father's head, and the old gentleman, resuming his kicking with greater agility than before, tumbled Mr. STIGGINS through the bar, and through the passage, out at the front door, and so into the street, the kicking continuing the whole way, and increasing in vehemence rather than diminishing every time the boot was lifted.

It was a beautiful and exhilarating sight (*to "the Trade"*) to see the water-drinker writhing in Mr. WITLER'S grasp, and his whole frame quivering with anguish as kick followed kick in rapid succession; it was a still more exciting spectacle (*to Bungdom all round, from boisterous* Lord BURTON *to the humblest rural Boniface*) to behold Mr. WITLER, after a powerful struggle, immersing Mr. STIGGINS'S head in a horse-trough full of water, and holding it there until he was half suffocated.

"There!" said Mr. WITLER, throwing all his energy into one most complicated kick, as he at length permitted Mr. STIGGINS to withdraw his head from the trough, "send any vun o' them villainous Vetoists, from burly Sir VILLIAM BARABBAS hisself down to the pettifoggingest Local Hoptioniser in Little Peddlington, *here*, or to St. James's 'All, or the Alhambra, or elseveres in public meeting or privit pub, and I'll pound him to a argymentative jelly fust, and drownd him in public-speritted opinion arterwards!"

"SAMMY" (added Mr. WITLER, puffing and perspiring freely), "help me in, and fill me a stiff glass o' Speshal Scotch; for I'm out of breath, my boy!"

RATHER SUSPICIOUS.

Mistress (*to Housekeeper, after "the Young Person" has left the room*). "REALLY, WILKINS, I COULD NOT ENGAGE THAT YOUNG PERSON. SHE IS TOO UGLY BY FAR!"

Housekeeper. "VERY SORRY, MUM. BUT YOU SAID *SO PARTICULARLY* THAT I WAS TO LOOK OUT FOR A GOOD PLAIN COOK,—'QUITE A PLAIN COOK,' YOU SAID, MUM,—THAT I THOUGHT YOU HAD SOME PARTICULAR REASON——"

VERY NATURAL.—Mrs. R. pays great attention to the Parliamentary debates, and listens attentively while her Nephew reads the speeches as reported in *The Times*. Last Thursday he was in the midst of the discussion on the Welsh Liquor-Traffic Bill, and came to this: "Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, whose opening remarks were interrupted by a Count——" Whereupon his Aunt exclaimed, "How very rude! What was the Count's name? And how does a Count come to be in the House of Commons?"

PILL-DOCTOR HERDAL.

(*Translated from the Original Norwegian by Mr. Punch.*)

THIRD ACT.

On the right, a smart verandah, attached to Dr. HERDAL'S *dwelling-house, and communicating with the Drawing-room and Dispensary by glass-doors. On the left a tumble-down rockery, with a headless plaster Mercury. In front, a lawn, with a large silvered glass globe on a stand. Chairs and tables. All the furniture is of galvanised iron. A sunset is seen going on among the trees.*

Dr. Herdal (*comes out of Dispensary-door cautiously, and whispers*). HILDA, are you in there?

[*Taps with fingers on Drawing-room door.*

Hilda (*comes out with a half-teasing smile*). Well—and how is the Rainbow-powder getting on, Dr. HERDAL?

Dr. Herd. (*with enthusiasm*). It is getting on simply splendidly. I sent the new Assistant out to take a little walk, so that he should not be in the way. There is Arsenic in the powder, HILDA, and Digitalis too, and Strychnine, and the best Beetle-killer!

Hilda (*with happy, wondering eyes*). *Lots* of Beetle-killer? And you will give some of it to *her*, to make her free and buoyant. I think one really *has* the right—when people happen to stand in the way——!

Dr. Herd. Yes, you may well say so, HILDA. Still—(*dubiously*)—it *does* occur to me that such doings may perhaps be misunderstood—by the narrow-minded and conventional.

[*They go on the lawn, and sit down.*

Hilda (*with an outburst*). Oh, that all seems to me so foolish—so irrelevant! As if the whole thing wasn't intended as an Allegory!

Dr. Herd. (*relieved*). Ah, so long as it is merely *allegorical* of course—— But what is it an allegory *of*, HILDA?

Hilda (*reflects in vain*). How can you sit there and ask such questions? I suppose I am a symbol, of some sort.

Dr. Herd. (*as a thought flashes upon him*). A cymbal? That would certainly account for your bra —— Then am *I* a cymbal too, HILDA?

Hilda. Why yes—what else? You represent the Artist-worker, or the Elder Generation, or the Pursuit of the Ideal, or a Bilious Conscience—or something or other. *You*'re all right!

Dr. Herd. (*shakes his head*). Am I? But I don't quite see—— Well, well, cymbals are meant to clash a little. And I see plainly now that I ought to prescribe this powder for as many as possible. Isn't it terrible, HILDA, that so many poor souls never really die their own deaths—pass out of the world without even the formality of an inquest? As the district Coroner, I feel strongly on the subject.

Hilda. And, when the Coroner has finished sitting on all the bodies, perhaps—but I shan't tell you now. (*Speaks as if to a child.*) There, run away and finish making the Rainbow-powder, do!

Dr. Herd. (*skips up into the Dispensary*). I will—I will! Oh, I do feel such a troll—such a light-haired, light-headed old devil!

Rübub (*enters garden-gate*). I have had my dismissal—but I'm not going without saying good-bye to Mrs. HERDAL.

Hilda. Dr. HERDAL would disapprove—you really must not, Mr. KALOMEL. And, besides, Mrs. HERDAL is not at home. She is in the town buying me a reel of cotton. *Dr.* HERDAL is in. He is making real Rainbow powders for regenerating everybody all round. Won't *that* be fun?

Rübub. Making powders? Ha! ha! But you will see he won't *take* one himself. It is quite notorious to us younger men that he simply daren't do it.

Hilda. (*with a little snort of contempt*). Oh, I daresay—that's so likely! (*Defiantly.*) I know he *can*, though. I've *seen* him!

Rübub. There is a tradition that he once—but not now—he knows better. I think you said Mrs. HERDAL was in the town? I will go and look for her. I understand her so well. [*Goes out by gate.*

Hilda (*calls*). Dr. HERDAL! Come out this minute. I want you—awfully!

Dr. Herd. (*puts his head out*). Just when I am making such wonderful progress with the powder! (*Comes down and leans on a table.*) Have you hit upon some way of giving it to ALINE? I thought if you were to put it in her arrowroot——?

Hilda. No, thanks. I won't have that now. I have just recollected that it is a rule of mine never to injure anybody I have once been formally introduced to. Strangers don't count. No, poor Mrs. HERDAL mustn't take that powder!

Dr. Herd. (*disappointed*). Then is nothing to come of making Rainbow powders, after all, HILDA?

Hilda (*looks hard at him*). People say you are afraid to take your own physic. Is that true?

Dr. Herd. Yes, I am. (*After a pause—with candour.*) I find it invariably disagrees with me.

Hilda (*with a half-dubious smile*). I think I can understand *that*. But you did *once*. You swallowed your own pills that day at the *table d'hôte*, ten years ago. And I heard a harp in the air, too!

Dr. Herd. (*open-mouthed*). I don't think that *could* have been Me. I don't play any instrument. And that was quite a special thing, too. It's not every day I can do it. Those were only *bread* pills, HILDA.

Hilda (*with flashing eyes*). But you rolled them; you took them. And I want to see you stand once more free and high and great, swallowing your own preparations. (*Passionately.*) I *will* have you do it! (*Imploringly.*) Just *once* more, Dr. HERDAL!

Dr. Herd. If I did, HILDA, my medical knowledge, slight as it is, leads me to the conclusion that I should in all probability burst.

Hilda (*looks deeply into his eyes*). So long as you burst *beautifully*! But no doubt that Miss BLAKDRAF——

Dr. Herd. You must believe in me utterly and entirely. I will do anything—*anything*, HILDA, to provide you with agreeable entertainment. I *will* swallow my own powder! (*To himself, as he goes gravely up to Dispensary.*) If only the drugs are sufficiently adulterated!

[*Goes in; as he does so, the* New Assistant *enters the garden in blue spectacles, unseen by* HILDA, *and follows him, leaving open the glass-door.*

Senna Blakdraf (*comes wildly out of Drawing-room*). Where is dear Dr. HERDAL? Oh, Miss WANGEL, he has discharged me—but I can't—I simply *can't* live away from that lovely ledger!

Hilda (*jubilantly*). At this moment Dr. HERDAL is in the Dispensary, taking one of his own powders.

Senna (*despairingly*). But—but it is utterly impossible! Miss WANGEL, you have such a firm hold of him—*don't* let him do that!

Hilda. I have already done all I can.

[RÜBUB *appears, talking confidentially with Mrs.* HERDAL, *at gate.*

Senna. Oh, Mrs. HERDAL, RÜBUB! The Pill-Doctor is going to take one of his own preparations. Save him—quick!

Rübub (*with cold politeness*). I am sorry to hear it—for his sake. But it would be quite contrary to professional etiquette to prevent him.

Mrs. Herd. And I never interfere with my husband's proceedings. I know *my* duty, Miss BLAKDRAF, if *others* don't!

[pg 137] *Hilda* (*exulting with great intensity*). At last! Now I see him in there, great and free again, mixing the powder in a spoon—with jam!.... Now he raises the spoon. Higher—higher still! (*A gulp is audible from within.*) There, didn't you hear a harp in the air? (*Quietly.*) I can't see the spoon any more. But there is one he is striving with, in blue spectacles!

The New Assistant's Voice (*within*). The Pill-Doctor HERDAL has taken his own powder!

Hilda (*as if petrified*). That voice! *Where* have I heard it before? No matter—he has got the powder down! (*Waves a shawl in the air, and shrieks with wild jubilation.*) It's too awfully thrilling! My—*my* Pill-Doctor!

The N. A. (*comes out on verandah*). I am happy to inform you that—as, to avoid accidents, I took the simple precaution of filling all the Dispensary-jars with Camphorated Chalk—no serious results may be anticipated from Dr. HERDAL'S rashness. (*Removes spectacles.*) NORA, don't you know me?

Hilda (*reflects*). I really don't remember having the pleasure——And I'm *sure* I heard a harp in the air!

Mrs. Herd. I fancy, Miss WANGEL, it must have been merely a bee in your bonnet!

The N. A. (*tenderly*). Still the same little singing-bird! Oh, NORA, my long-lost lark!

Hilda (*sulky*). I'm *not* a lark—I'm a Bird of Prey—and, when I get my claws into anything——!

The N. A. Macaroons, for instance? I remember your tastes of old. See, NORA! (*Produces a paper-bag from his coat-tail pocket.*) They were fresh this morning!

Hilda (*wavering*). If you insist on calling me NORA, I think you must be just a little mad yourself.

The N. A. We are all a little mad—in Norway. But TORVALD HELMER is sane enough still to recognise his own little squirrel again! Surely, NORA, your education is complete at last—you have gained the experience you needed?

Hilda (*nods slowly*). Yes, TORVALD, you're right enough *there*. I have thought things out for myself, and have got clear about them. And I have quite made up my mind that Society and the Law are all wrong, and that I am right.

"My—*my* Pill-Doctor!"

Helmer (*overjoyed*). Then you *have* learnt the Great Lesson, and are fit to undertake the charge of your children's education at last! You've no notion how they've grown! Yes, NORA, our marriage will be a true marriage now. You will come back to the Doll's-House, won't you?

Hilda-Nora-Helmer-Wangel (*hesitates*). Will you let me forge cheques if I do, TORVALD?

Helmer (*ardently*). All day. And at night, NORA, we will falsify the accounts—together!

H. N. H. W. (*throws herself into his arms, and helps herself to macaroons*). That will be fearfully thrilling! My—*my* Manager!

Dr. Herd. (*comes out, very pale, from Dispensary*). HILDA, I *did* take the——I'm afraid I interrupt you?

Helmer. Not in the least. But this lady is my little lark, and she is going back to her cage by the next steamer.

Dr. Herd. (*bitterly*). Am I *never* to have a gleam of happiness—? But stay—do I see my little SENNA once more?

Rübub. Pardon me—*my* little SENNA. She always believed so firmly in my pill!

Dr. Herd. Well—well. If it must be. RÜBUB, I will take you into partnership, and we will take out a patent for that pill, jointly. ALINE, my poor dear ALINE, let us try once more if we cannot bring a ray of brightness into our cheerless home!

Mrs. Herd. Oh, HAUSTUS, if only we *could*—but why do you propose that to me—*now*?

Dr. Herd. (*softly—to himself*). Because I have tried being a troll—and found that nothing came of it, and it wasn't worth sixpence!

[HILDA-NORA *goes off to the right with* HELMER; SENNA *to the left with* RÜBUB; Dr. HERDAL *and* Mrs. HERDAL *sit on two of the galvanised iron-chairs, and shake their heads disconsolately as the Curtain falls.*

THE END.

OMNIS CELLULA A CELLULÂ.

(*Professor Virchow—vide Daily Paper.*)

Life's a cell and all things show it.
I thought so once, and now I know it.

Gay (*up to date*).

A RADICAL RIDDLE.

Why are the Tories so eager to discuss Black-edged Envelopes, and Black-lead Pencils?—Because they belong to a Stationary Party.

POLITICS AND TRADE.

(*A Poser for "Patriots."*)

["Our Trade is our Politics." Motto of the Licensed Victualler, as publicly avowed at a recent "great Meeting."]

DEAR Bung, that frank but huckster-like avowal
Is made continually, behind the bar.
It *means*—though rather "laid on with a trowel"—
A Trade with Public Spirit quite at jar.
The "mercenary politician," making
A pocket-business of a patriot's task,
Recently put your Press in a great taking;
But sordid selfishness here doffs all mask!
Which with a patriot's conscience plays most tricks?
Which most the venal virus has betrayed,—
The man who makes his Trade his Politics,
Or he who makes his Politics his Trade?

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

BURDETT'S Official Intelligence for 1893 is just out, a promising young thing in its twelfth year. It is a little early to talk of the holidays, but my Baronite, regarding this thin Vol. of 1783 pages, says he cannot help thinking with what pleasure the City merchant, or his clerk, hastening to the seaside, will pack it up with his collar-box. Every year the monumental work increases in value, by reason of accumulated information. To the tired City man, scaling some Alp, gliding in well-found yacht over silver seas, or prone in bosky dell, there can be nothing more soothing or delightful than to take his "BURDETT" out of his waistcoat-pocket, and read it through from first page to last.

For *The Tragedy of Ida Noble* the Baron tenders his grateful thanks to W. CLARK RUSSELL. It starts well, and the excitement is artistically sustained. At the close of every chapter *Oliver*, the reader, is perpetually "asking for more." A capital story of adventure, where all, including the reader, are "quite at sea" until the very last chapter. On nearing the middle of the book, the question will occur to everyone experienced in such matters, "Does the hero marry the heroine?" Now this, being a lady's secret, will not be revealed by THE BARON DE B.-W.

Obstruction.

The Plea of the Party Man.

(*On either side.*)

"THERE'S *no* Obstruction!"—Why, then, all this ruction?
"When *we* obstruct, who dares to call't Obstruction?"
To dam a deluge, stop a bolting horse,—
That is obstruction, of a sort, of course;
Our sort, in fact! But theirs on t'other side?
That's quite another matter. They can't hide
The cloven foot of malice, the false faitours!
Not obstruct *them*? As well say not hang traitors!

FAR TOO PREVIOUS.

In the Agony-Column of the *Times* we now see daily the following Advertisement:—

TO IRISH LOYALISTS AND PROTESTANTS.—Death before Slavery!

Surely a most blameless sentiment. But the bearings of it lie in the application. And what is that? It seems as applicable to any existing situation as, say, "Lunch before Dinner," or "Business before Pleasure," or "Age before Honesty," or "Fingers before forks." *Mr. Punch* ventures to suggest a modification, less striking, perhaps, in an "Agony-Column," but more in accord with patriotism and common-sense:—

To Irish Loyalists and Protestants!
Be Loyal, and Protest—*Constitutionally*!

The flamboyant, melodramatic, "Death before Slavery!" *may* be applicable—when "Slavery" becomes a conceivable, proximate probability, or "Death" a possible alternative. Then let us have "Death before Slavery," by all means. At present, *Punch* would say, "Common-sense before either!"

Poor Political Economy!

(*By an elated Parliamentary Want-to-Knower.*)

Oh! to waste half the time asking Questions is grand!
"Supply" is not in it, just now, with "Demand"!

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INSTINCTIVE CRITICAL ACUMEN.

"That looks like an Old Picture, John! What is it?"
"It's 'Moses striking the Rock'!"
"Ah! I told you it was Old—*didn't* I, Now!"

"ALL A-BLOWING!"

Air—*The celebrated Duet in "The Mikado."*

Much-sold Pater and Mater sing:—

Pater. The flowers that bloom in the Spring,
Tra la,
To purchase henceforth I decline.
The hawkers those blossoms who bring—
Ah! bah!—
Will "swop 'em for most anything,"
Ha! ha!
But as soon as you've bought 'em they pine.

Both. And that's what they mean when they say, or they sing,
"He's as green as a man who buys flowers in the Spring,"
Tra la la la la la, &c.

Mater. The flowers that bloom in the Spring,
Tra la!
Are a sell, my dear hub, in *our* case.
I bought *this* with a "suit"—there's the sting,
Pa-pa!
Which *he* said was "a worn-hout hold thing,"
(O-la!)
Just fancy his having the face!
Now 'tis shrunken, and shrivelled, and that's why I sing,
Oh, bother the flowers that bloom in the Spring!
Tra la la la la la, &c.

Both (*to Servant*). So tell the next rascal who ventures to ring,
We'll buy no more flowers that bloom in the Spring!

[*Dance, and exeunt, determined never again to be diddled by the howling "A-a-blowing and a-growing!" impostors, who, at this season, hawk heat-forced or illrooted pot-plants about the streets of the suburbs.*

HOW IT WOULD LOOK IN ENGLISH.

(*An adaptation from the French.*)

Anyone. Let us accuse the Ministry of misappropriating twopence-halfpenny.

The Entire Press. Certainly, why not?

The Opposition. The Ministry are thieves.

The Government. After this insult we resign *en masse*.

One of the Public. It is said that Mr. Briefless Junior has accused the First Lord of having stolen the Horse-Guards clock.

First Lord. Please, Lord Chief Justice, request Mr. Briefless Junior to keep a civil tongue in his head.

L. C. J. The Attorney-General is the proper person to offer a remonstrance.

Sir Charles. Can't undertake rows since I have restricted my private practice.

Ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer. I accuse the Lord Chancellor.

Lord Chancellor. Why, and of what?

Those Concerned. Never mind that. What does it matter *who's* accused, so long as everybody forgets *us*.

Someone. And now everything's completely mixed, does anyone know what the row's about?

Everybody Else (*after a short silence*). Don't know, and don't care!

"PUTTING OFF."

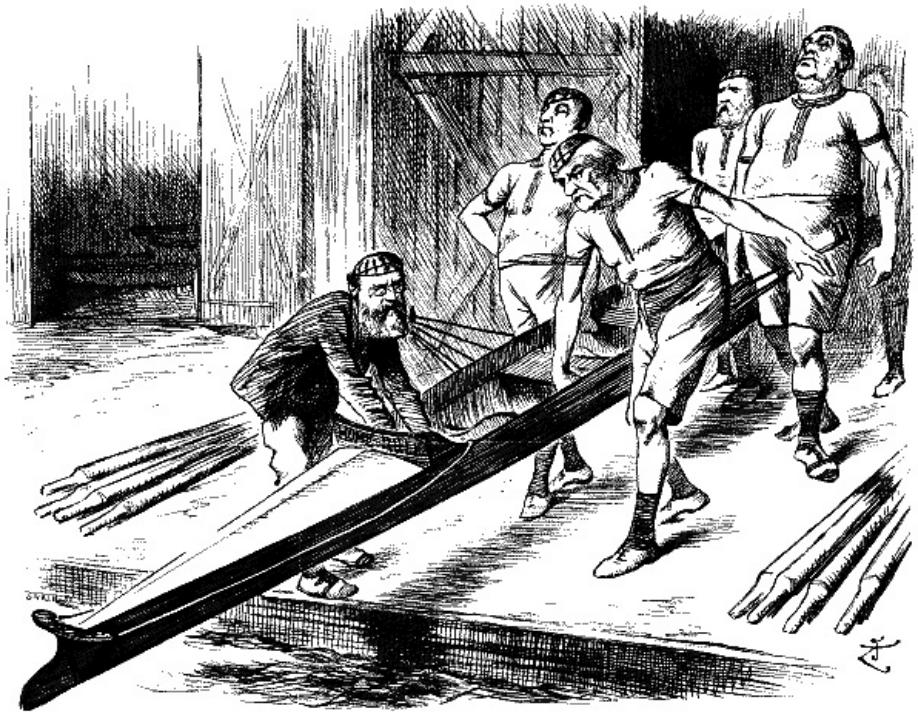
Old Aquatic Hand, loquitur:—

Look here, bonny boys! As we're launching our ship,
And stringing our energies up for the tussle,
Allow your old Stroke to suggest the straight tip!
This is not a mere matter of Milo-like muscle.
You are all looking fit, we've the pull in the weights—
Not *much*, to be sure, forty pounds, say, or thereabout.
Still, that much should tell 'gainst the smartest of eights;
It should give us the race, which is all that we care about.

'Twill be a close fight, bet your boots about that,
If we get a clear course without serious obstruction,
Of which I'm not sanguine; the practice of Pat
Has proved to possess universal seduction.
Our last spin was muffed; never mind whose the fault;
Let bygones be bygones! But now comes the crisis!
It's now win or lose. Every man worth his salt
Will pull like a Titan from Cam or from Isis.

But—pull clean together, and put on the pace
When I call for a spurt, or we're in for a licking.
And, Cox, don't *you* steer us all over the place.
In the fight that's before us, the course requires picking!
So keep at attention, MAC, sharp all the way;
A split-second's slackness may set our foes grinning.
Verb. sap.! Our last "spin" proved a "mull," I must say;
We *must* quicken the pace, if this bout we mean winning!

[pg 139]



"PUTTING OFF."

GLADSTONE (*the Old Blue*). "NOW, MY BOYS,—WE MUST ROW A QUICKER STROKE IF WE'RE TO WIN!"

[pg 140]

[pg 141]

MIXED NOTIONS.

No. VIII.—THE BOAT-RACE.

Inquirer. Are any of you chaps going to the Boat-Race?

First Well-Informed Man. No, I shan't. Everybody knows which is going to win, so there's deuced little interest in the race; and then you can always read it on the tape at your Club. Besides, I don't care much about rowing. It's a silly sort of exercise; anybody can do it.

Second W. I. M. Have you ever tried?

First W. I. M. (*indignantly*). Have I ever tried? Of course I have. Why, you were with me last Summer when we had that water-party from Taplow to Cookham.

Second W. I. M. Ah! but you didn't do much rowing then. You let me get all the blisters, and you just sat in the stern and steered us like a blessed corkscrew.

First W. I. M. Did I? I didn't remember that; but I do remember you catching about half-a-dozen crabs one after another.

Second W. I. M. True enough I caught one, but that was because you would keep standing up in the boat, and moving your body backwards and forwards. I suppose you thought the coxswains do that in their racing-boats?

First W. I. M. (*boldly*). They do. I've seen 'em doing it often.

Second W. I. M. Why, I thought you'd never seen the crews at all.

First W. I. M. Bosh! I never said anything of the kind. I'm not going to see the race this year, but I've often seen 'em practising down at Putney. Everybody knows the coxswains have to stand up. How do you suppose they could see to steer if they didn't? So where are you now, with all your accurate information, eh?

Second W. I. M. I'm where I was before, and I know I'm right, because my brother-in-law had a cousin who was at school with one of the Coxes about ten years ago. [*A pause.*

Inquirer (*looking up from his sporting paper*). I say, I thought the crews rowed in racing-boats.

First W. I. M. So they do.

Inquirer. Well, then, what does this mean? (*Reads.*) "Both yesterday and to-day Cambridge rowed with a bucket. They must improve this if they want to win."

First W. I. M. (*smiling*). My dear fellow, they call their big practising-boat a bucket.

Second W. I. M. No, they don't—they call it a tub.

First W. I. M. Well, tub or bucket, it's the same thing. (*To* Inquirer.) What you read just now means that their practising-boat has gone rotten, and they'll have to mend her up a bit.

Inquirer (*dubiously*). But they don't row the race in a tub or a bucket, do they?

Second W. I. M. No, they row in a Clinker-Clasper.

Inquirer. What the deuce is that?

Second W. I. M. (*plunging*). Oh, it's a specially fast kind of racing-boat, built by CLINKER AND CLASPER. They're a firm of boat-builders—I thought everybody knew that.

Inquirer. But then, what does this paper mean by saying that Oxford are rowing in a Rough?

Second W. I. M. Why it means that their boat isn't so smooth as that of Cambridge.

Inquirer (*puzzled*). But then it goes on to say that "She is as fine a specimen of a racing-craft as this eminent boat-builder has ever turned out." How can she be that, if she isn't as smooth as the Cambridge boat? Besides, who's "this eminent boat-builder?"

Average Man. ROUGH.

Second W. I. M. Rot!

Average Man. ROUGH, not Rot. ROUGH'S his name.

Second W. I. M. Let me see the paper. (*He reads, and addresses the* Inquirer.) Why didn't you say the word was printed with a capital R? (*To* Average Man.) Perhaps you're right, after all; but I know some boats *are* rougher than others. [*A pause.*

Inquirer. What's the difference between First Trinity and Third Trinity? Three of the Cambridge men are from First Trinity, and two from Third Trinity, besides the Cox.

First W. I. M. What's your difficulty? First is first, and Third's third, all the world over. Don't you see, the First Trinity men come first in the crew, and then the Third Trinity men.

Inquirer. But why don't some of 'em call themselves Second Trinity men?

First W. I. M. Oh, that's one of their silly bits of College etiquette. These chaps at the Universities are never happy unless they do things quite differently from all the rest of the world.

Inquirer. This beastly paper says, "the Cambridge stroke rowed much longer to-day."

First W. I. M. Well, what then?

Inquirer. Oh! nothing; only I thought they all rowed exactly the same distance when they're practising; so I don't quite see how any of 'em could have rowed longer than the rest.

First W. I. M. I daresay they made him row a good bit by himself; they often do that to give the stroke some extra practice. He wants it more than any of the rest.

Second W. I. M. Why?

First W. I. M. Oh, ah—well, because he's got to set the stroke for the others, or something of that sort.

Inquirer. How far do they row in the race?

Second W. I. M. About six miles or so.

Inquirer. By Jove, then, how on earth do they manage to get over all that distance with so few strokes. (*Refers to paper.*) It says, "Oxford rowed 37 all the way, while Cambridge contented themselves with a well-pulled 35." (*With a happy inspiration.*) If Cambridge can do it in 35 strokes, while Oxford take 37, it looks jolly like Cambridge winning by two strokes, don't it?

First W. I. M. All right; I'll lay you the odds on Oxford.

Second W. I. M. Good, I'll take 'em to five pounds. Oxford can't win.

First W. I. M. (*confidently*). Cambridge can't win. Anyway, I'll lay you ten pounds to five.

Inquirer. I should like to have a bet with somebody.

Average Man. You'd better write to one of the Presidents of the University-Boat Clubs. They're always ready to oblige a keen fellow like you with a bet.

Inquirer. Of course. That's my best plan. I'll write to-day.

[*Terminus.*

UPON TERMS.

(*A Forensic Drama of the Future.*)

[In a recent trial, Mr. Justice Hawkins corrected a learned Counsel who talked about Witnesses "coming up to the scratch."]

The Judge (*taking his seat*). I think, Mr. Smallfee, that you were examining a Witness when we adjourned yesterday. Are you ready to go on with the examination?

Mr. Smallfee (*pleasantly*). I am sorry to say that Witness has not turned up yet, m'Lud!

The Judge (*pained*). Not *what*?

Mr. Smallfee. I beg your Lordship's pardon. Of course what I *meant* was that the Witness has not, as yet, condescended to irradiate the precincts of this tribunal with the sunshine of his presence.

The Judge. That's better! Then we must go on to the next Witness.

Mr. Smallfee (*with an evident attempt to keep up his spirits, in spite of misfortune*). The next Witness, also, I regret to say, has not turned——I mean, has failed to appear. The Solicitor informs me that he solemnly promised to attend; but I suppose the promise was all my eye.

The Judge. Dear, dear! What extraordinary expressions you do use, Mr. Smallfee! All my eye! Perhaps you will kindly interpret the phrase, for the benefit of the Court.

Mr. Smallfee (*desperately*). As your Lordship pleases! But, as I feel rather down in the mouth now, and as the twelve sufferers in the Jury-box evidently think that this trial has lasted long enough already, and that we ought to stir our stumps, I would suggest——

The Judge. Usher! Step across to Booksellers' Row, and buy me a Slang Dictionary! I cannot—I really *cannot* follow the learned Counsel.

The Foreman (*interposing*). *We* do not object to colloquial expressions, my Lord. Y' see, we're a *Common* Jury, and we rather like them. All we want to do is to get on with the case. And perhaps it may assist the Court if at this stage I remark that the Jury has quite made up its mind, and is ready to give its verdict.

The Judge (*astounded*). But—but—there has been no evidence for the defence!

The Foreman (*calmly*). No, my Lord. But no doubt the learned Counsel's two Witnesses, had they been present, would have supplied some; and, anyhow, we are so pleased with his talking down to our level, and not—as usual—over our heads, that we are all agreed to find a verdict for his client, the Defendant.

Mr. Smallfee (*bowing*). Thanks for your good opinion, Gentlemen. I thought, by the cut of your jibs, you were the right sort.

[*Winks, in passing out.*

The Judge. And this is what the Law has come to! Call on the next case!

New Proverb (*for the use of the Panama Cheque-takers*).—"The game is not worth the Scandal."

DISCRETION.

"And here's an extra Sixpence for you, Cabman—to get yourself some *Tea*, you know!"

"Yes, Ma'am! Thank yer, Ma'am! I s'pose I may choose my own *Grocer*, Ma'am?"

WILL WATERPROOF'S MONOLOGUE.

Adapted to a Direct-Vetoed Parish.

O pale Head-Waiter at "The Cock,"
  How changed for you and me
Is this sad time! 'Tis five o'clock,
  Go, fetch a cup of tea;
My pint of port is changed to that—
  Weak Cowper's washy liquor!
Did tea make Cellarer Simon fat,
  Or cheer Bray's jolly Vicar?

No more libations to the Muse!
  Will cocoa make her kind?
Will water whisper words to use?
  Will milk make up my mind,
When writing melancholy rhymes,
  Of days not half forgotten,
Before these daft teetotal times
  When common-sense seems rotten?

Head-Waiter, those good pints of port
  Are stopped for you and me,
By legislation of the sort
  They call grandmotherly;
Two-thirds majority has said
  That alcohol would hurt you,
And so you meekly bow your head,
  And practise painful virtue.

We fret, we fume, we scoff, we sneer,
  And evil fate upbraid;
Your care is for the ginger-beer,
  The milk, the lemonade.
To come and go, and come again
  With coffee that you keep hot,
And watched by silent gentlemen,
  That trifle with the tea-pot.

Live long, for water to the head

Was never known to fly,
Your flabby face will not grow red,
Nor will your washy eye.
Live long as you can bear these woes,
Whilst bigots thus defy sense,
Till watery Death's last Veto shows
Life's quite suspended licence.

"Aquarius," when you shall cease
Teetotal drinks to quaff,
And end life's not repairing lease,
Might be your epitaph.
No carved cross-pipes, no pint-pot's wreath,
Shall show you past to Heaven;
But water-pipes, and, underneath,
A milk-pot neatly graven.

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

Extracted From the Diary of Toby, M.P.

House of Commons, Monday Night, March 13.—No use disguising fact that when House discovered Frederick Milner standing behind Front Opposition Bench, brandishing heavy boot in his hand as he addressed Asquith, it held its breath. Political passion runs pretty high of late; Opposition stirred to deepest depths by persistence of Government in attempting to read Home-Rule Bill Second Time before Easter. There have been sittings after midnight; sittings through Saturday; hot words bandied about; preparation for deadly duel in lobby. No one can say whither men may be led when once they permit angry passions to rise. Charles Russell, whose acquaintance with criminal classes is extensive, tells me it is by no means uncommon thing for prisoner in dock to take off boot and hurl it at head of presiding Magistrate or Judge.

"Usually an old woman who does it," he added.

"But this is Sir Frederick Milner, Bart.," I said.

"Um!" said Russell, with odd significance in the observation.

Turns out the apprehension groundless. Milner only wants to know why Police at Leeds and Bradford should enjoy ultimate resources of civilisation in respect of "Scaith's silent boots," whilst London Policemen not so privileged? Milner tells me his earliest idea was to get a pair of the boots, put 'em on, and surprise Speaker by approaching with noiseless tread from behind Chair, lean over his shoulder, and suddenly say, "Boo!" That, Milner thought, would be conclusive proof of the efficacy of the boots as making the tread inaudible. On other hand, Speaker mightn't like it. So, by way of compromise, brought down odd boot in tail-pocket of his coat, and shook it at Home Secretary when he put question.

Asquith behaved very well under trying circumstances. Did not visibly blench; answered, in off-hand manner, that London Police had had opportunity of substituting the silent boot for those in ordinary use, and had not availed themselves of it. Some had objected on domestic grounds. Female friends engaged in responsible posts in certain households on their beat were accustomed to the sound of their footfall on the pavement, and would not have things ready if they approached like rose-leaves flitting over shaven lawns. Others, assuming higher ground, resented silent boot as taking unfair advantage of the burglar or footpad. "Give a 'ardworking cove a fair chanst, that's my motter," one honest fellow in blue said to Home Secretary when Right Hon. Gentleman brought silent boot under his notice. No use attempting to run counter to feeling of this kind. Conclusion in which Dicky Temple heartily concurred.

"Silent boot," he said, "forced upon Metropolitan Police might play in history a part analogous to that of the greased cartridges on which we slipped into the Indian Mutiny."

Milner saw it was evidently no use, so returning boot to coat-tail pocket, moodily regarded Treasury Bench.

"WANTING TO KNOW;" OR, THE BEWILDERED USHER.

But there were consolations. Squire of Malwood, asked by Prince Arthur what he now thought of prospects of reading Home-Rule Bill Second Time before Easter, admitted impossibility; triumphant shout from Opposition. Not in vain had they sat through morning sitting on Friday discussing the hour at which they should adjourn on Saturday. Not without recompense had they
[pg 144] taken care that when Saturday came it should see accomplished the minimum of business. Tussling with Mr. G. ever since Session opened; in first rounds he came off best; drew first blood; seemed likely to carry everything with him; Opposition pulled themselves together; went at it hammer and tongs; and now it is Mr. G. who has retired to corner; the sponge is in requisition on the Treasury Bench; the air around it redolent of the perfume of the indispensable vinegar.

"Guinness will go up a point or two on this," said Ellis Ashmead Bartlett, Knight, who has taken Irish securities under his wing. "Go down a pint or two, you mean," said Wilfrid Lawson, who is irreclaimable.

Business done.—Attack on Justice Mathew and Evicted Tenants' Commission repulsed by 287 Votes against 250.

Tuesday.—Squire of Malwood a changed man. No longer the light-hearted, sometimes almost frivolous youth who through six years sat on Front Opposition Bench, and girded at the Unionist Government. A Minister himself now; Mr. G.'s right-hand man; First Lieutenant of the Ship of State; acting Captain when, as happens just now, Mr. G. temporarily turned in. Once this afternoon something of old spirit stirred within him when Howard Vincent (as he said) used the Stationary Vote as a peg on which to hang Protection heresies. But, for most part, he sits silent and self-communing, saying nothing, but, probably, like the parrot of old, thinking the more. In Conservative ranks feeling of profound respect growing in his favour. Curious to hear them say, "Ah! if everyone on Treasury Bench bore himself like Harcourt, things would be different." Even the blameless Bryce is held up to contumely in contrast with mild-mannered Master of Malwood. As for Charles Russell, after his speech last night, good Conservatives, following an Eastern custom, well enough in its place, spit when they mention his name. For them the model of all Parliamentary virtue is the Squire of Malwood.

Don't know how long this passion of appreciation will last; interesting to observe while yet with us. A lull all round in sympathy with soothing moments of Chancellor of Exchequer. Even J. W. Lowther's perturbed mind at rest. Knows now, to a fraction, how many lead-pencils are annually in use in directing destinies of British Empire. Rumour current that origin of this inquiry was a little undertaking promoted by Hon. Member in substitution of proscribed word-guessing competitions. Sweep got up; £5 entry; every man to guess at precise figure of lead-pencil census; the one coming nearest to clear the pool. Lowther tells me not word of truth in report. In putting his question as to number of lead-pencils in use, and in sticking to it in spite of jeers of bystanders and guilty reticence of Minister, he was actuated simply by motives of public policy; desired, in short, to live up to standard of late lamented Leader and do his duty to his Queen and Country.

Business done.—Great lead-pencil question settled. Excited House Counted Out at 9.20.

Thursday Night.—House dying to know what Major Frederick Carne Rasch had to say on Navy Estimates. Not being Major of Marines, initial difficulty is to imagine what he did in this galley. If it had been the Army, or even the Militia, the Major would have seemed all right. But what had

"Back!! Rasch intruder!"

he to do with the Navy? That, however, is for the Major a minor point. "You CARNE be too RASCH when attacking this Government," said KENYON, with his pretty elliptical speech.

It was half-past ten, and a dull night. Navy Estimates been talked round for nearly five hours. SQUIRE of MALWOOD meekly hoped that a Vote would now be taken; DICKY TEMPLE presented himself at footlights with bewitching smile on his lips and elegantly bound gilt-edged volume under his arm; bowed to audience; opened volume; proceeding to offer few remarks when SQUIRE swooped down on him with Closure.

This was cue for RASCH. Chairman rose to put question. So did RASCH. Closure must not be debated; attempt to speak is unpardonable breach of order. The Major stood in the imminent deadly breach; House howled; Chairman cried, "Order! Order!" RASCH glared round, and, after moment's hesitation, sat down; up again as soon as Question was put; howls more anguished than ever. Committee having agreed that Question be put, nothing to do but put it, and here was RASCH bubbling over with speech. Chairman on his feet peremptorily signalling Major to sit down; Members near him tugged at his coat-tails; those further off frantically wave deprecatory hands. Major stood to his guns; shouts of "Name! Name!" Chairman, desperately pegging away, succeeded in putting Question, being money-vote for Navy. Major by this time hauled down in his seat. Up again, like Jack out of box. Chairman also on his feet, putting next vote; hubbub tremendous; Major's lips observed in motion; not an articulate syllable rose above uproar.

Meanwhile Chairman had dexterously put and run through supplementary vote for Excess of Expenditure; friends near him had got the catapultic Major down again, in time to hear Chairman declare "the Ayes have it!" Major up again. "Order! order!" shouted the Chairman. "Question: is——" Not quite clear amid uproar what question was; something to do with Army. Anyhow, there was STANHOPE standing at table discussing Army Votes. Major again on his feet, his moustache twitching with astonishment. STANHOPE a peculiarly painful circumstance; all very well for good Conservative to gird against Government, and jostle Mr. G.'s Chairman of Committees; different (especially for a Major in the Militia) to struggle with Statesman who had been Secretary of State for War on his own side. So Major, defiantly glaring round House slowly dropped into his seat:—"dying with all his music in him," as JUSTIN MCCARTHY, who knows the poets, said. But what was the tune he meditated? What is the secret of this unspoken speech?

On the Stroke of Twelve; or, Cinderella Balfour!

Business done.—Money voted for Naval men. Halt cried on Army Vote.

Friday.—RASCH broken out again; turns up as usual at critical moment. Committee of Supply adjourned at ten minutes to seven; sharp at seven morning sitting must be suspended. Report of Supply under consideration; only tremulous ten minutes to get through it. RASCH resolved, now or never, to finish the speech he commenced yesterday. House, after protest, settles down to listen. Seems KAY SHUTTLEWORTH been "saying things" about the warrior. "He behaved towards me," said the Major, "in a manner that would be brusque on the part of Providence addressing a black beetle." House undecided as to which simile more happily bestowed. On the whole, agreed more polite to contemplate U. KAY SHUTTLEWORTH as Providence, than Major RASCH as the other thing.

Business done.—Some Votes in Supply.

Transcriber's Note:

Missing or illegible/damaged punctuation has been repaired.

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