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February 15, 1890, by Various and F. C. Burnand**

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI,
VOL. 98 FEBRUARY 15, 1890 ***

**PUNCH,
OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.**

VOLUME 98

FEBRUARY 15, 1890.

UNTILED; OR, THE MODERN ASMODEUS.

"Très volontiers," repartit le démon. "Vous aimez les tableaux changeans: je veux vous contenter."

Le Diable Boiteux.



XX.

Sweet odours, radiant colours, glittering light!
How swift a change from the dusk sodden night
Of London in mid-winter!
Titania here might revel as at home;
Fair forms are floating soft as Paphian foam,
Bright as an iceberg-splinter.

Dianas doubtless, yet their frost holds fire;
The snowiest bosom covers soft desire,
And these are snowy, verily.
As blanched—and bare—as Himalaya's peaks,
Light-vestured as a troop of dancing Greeks.
Waltz-measures ripple merrily.

Merrily? Yes; the music throbs with mirth,
Feet trip in time to it; yet what strange dearth
Of glee midst all these graces!
The quickening fire of spirit, passion, will,
Seems scarce to move these dancing forms or thrill
These irresponsible faces.

The Shadow smiled. "True, yet not true," he said.
"Good Form demands that men should look half dead,
And women semi-frozen.
Yet Nature lives beneath these modish masks
Somewhere, sometimes, with energy that tasks
Caste's rigid rule to cozen.

"Pygmalion's prayer breathed life into the stone,
But see yon graceful girl, with straitened zone
And statuesque still bearing.
You'd say in her the marble must invade
The flesh, in so much loveliness arrayed,
Such radiant raiment wearing.

"Whirled in the waltz's formal maze by one
Who might be a broad-cloth'd automaton,
For any show of pleasure,
She moves with drooping lids, and lips apart,
And scarce a flush to show that a young heart
Throbs to the pulsing measure."

"Men meet to moon, and women whirl to wed,
The cynic says. Is joy in life quite dead,
Gladness in concourse banished
From the parades of fashionable youth?
Have maiden tenderness and manly truth
From Vanity Fair quite vanished?"

"Soft!" sneered the Shadow. "Questionings like these
Sound *gauche* and gushing. Better far to freeze
To the right social zero,
Than stoop to zeal and frank display of zest,
Notes of the vulgar glories that invest
The housemaid-novel's hero.

"Nothing more useful than the surface-ice
Of stiff stolidity. Vigour, aye, and vice,
Therein find ready covert.
Wickedness here may lurk, or even wit.
Not to name happiness; but naught of it
Is obvious and overt.

"How bored they look, the slim stiff-collared boys!
Energy that is eager and enjoys
They may anon make show of
In some less honest haunt; here as in pain
They creak and crawl, devoid of that *sans gêne*
That virtue seems sworn foe of.

"Languidly circumvolving, lounging lank,
In scuffling circle or in mural rank,

Of misery mechanic
They look the wooden symbols; nought to show
That even well-starched linen's sheeny snow
Veils impulses volcanic.

"That straight-limb'd son of Anak circling there
Much like a whirling semaphore, strange care
His boyish forehead wrinkling?
The season's catch! His sire, is great in Soap,
His partner's mother yonder sits; with hope
Her watchful eyes are twinkling.

"The twirling twain are silent. Silence sits
Lord of the revel, incubus of wits
Arch palsier of prattle
Yet many a girl here mute's a chatterer sweet,
And many a youth in circles less discrete
Is an 'agreeable rattle.'

"Respectability's austere restraint
Rules them relentlessly; smiles forced and faint
And joyless facial spasms
Their meetings and their mutterings attend.
Jerky approximations quickly end
In void unvocal chasms.

"Yet still they circle, and yet still they loll.
A marionette wooing a wooden doll
Would look more animated
Than yonder pair, revolving interlaced,
Exchanging commonplaces leaden-paced,
Or repartees belated."

"Mammon by day and maundering at night
Oh, Shade!" I cried, "can furnish scant delight,
The Race for Wealth is rapid.
How can the feverish rush find true relief
In heartless intercourse, as bald as brief,
Amusement vain as vapid?"

"Amusement? Intercourse? They scarce exist."
The Shadow answered. "Some Bœotian mist
Society blinds and muddles.
True recreation in this joyless round?
The sea's bright changefulness as soon were found
In Pedlington's rain-puddles.

"The cliques and coteries know not how to mix.
A barrier more impassable than Styx
Is Philistine stupidity.
Were mutual amusement meeting's aim,
Mind *must* move maidenhood inert and tame,
Melt masculine rigidity.

"Concourse, not intercourse, is what you see:
To mix, and sympathise, and to be free,
Is the true sociality.
These meet, like marbles mingled in a bag,
And the net outcome, friend, is friction, fag,
Boredom, and sheer banality.

"The strongest symptom of quick life crops out
In watchful mutual mockery. Gibe and flout
In low asides flow freely.
Oh, bland elysium for the brave and fair,
Whose pleasures are the snigger and the stare,
Chill snub, and eye-glance steely!

"Prigdom's Philistia, though a polished State,
Has not yet learned quite how to recreate.
Gath in the ball-room gathers,
Askelon haunts 'At homes,' but little joy
Bring they to man or matron, girl or boy,
To swells or City-fathers."

(To be continued.)

AU REVOIR!

Mr. PUNCH and Mr. J. L. TOOLE *discovered smoking a last cigar.*

Mr. P. And so, my dear JOHNNIE, you are leaving us at once?

Mr. J. L. T. Yes, Sir, but I hope soon to be back again. I am looking forward to the voyage as an excellent digestive to all the luncheons, dinners, and suppers I have been taking for the last five or six weeks.

Mr. P. I have no doubt they have been a little trying—eh, JOHNNIE?

Mr. J. L. T. And yet, as I have observed in the *Upper Crust*, "they were very welcome." But, Sir, how did I get through my oratory? Did you notice my speeches at the Garrick and the Savage? Which did you prefer?

Mr. P. I heard the first, and read a report of the second, and can conscientiously declare they were equally good.

Mr. J. L. T. I am glad to hear you say so, Sir. I confess I didn't think there was *much* to choose between them. And now (*with deep emotion*), will you excuse my glove?

Mr. P. No; I won't say good-bye; for wherever you may roam, my dear JOHNNIE, you will have this consolation—you will find me there before you!



"There is now a strong impression that the Money Market has at last tided over the period of tightness."—*Daily News*, Feb. 4.



A Song of a Strange Development.

Will you walk into my Congress? says the Emperor unto Labour;
 'Tis the nicest little Congress; I'm inviting many a neighbour.
 The way into my Congress by this Rescript I prepare,
 And we shall have some curious things to show you—when you're
 there.

Then won't you, won't you, little International Working-Man?

We've already done a little to improve poor Labour's lot,
 Shorten its hours, insure its life, and help to fill its pot.
 But the poorer and the weaker yet fall short of the reality
 Of "conformity to the principles of Chris-ti-an morality."

Then won't you, &c.

'Tis one of the State's duties, friends, to regulate the time,
 The duration and the nature of your work,—a task sublime;
 And you'll find we'll do it better, if you only won't resist,
 Than that most obnoxious personage, the shouting Socialist.

Then won't you, &c.

I'm an Emperor by profession, but I have my little plan
 For improving the position of the German Working-man.
 But the International Question stands a little in the way,
 So I've asked the Nations to convene—I only hope they may.

Then won't you, &c.

And when they get together they will do—well, we shall see;
 But the Socialists shan't have *all* their own way with Industry.
 I recognise the justice of the Workmen's aspirations,
 And upon their wants and wishes I would start "negotiations."

Then won't you, &c.

Oh, I know my plan will bring up all the fogies in full blast,
 And Coercion and Protection I see looking on aghast.
 But I'm game to turn deaf ear to them, if *you* will only list,
 To that latest, strangest birth of time, the Imperial Socialist!

Then won't you, &c.

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF IT.

Hints from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's correspondence.

Sir,—If you wish to immortalise yourself as Chancellor of the Exchequer, now is your opportunity.

You have a surplus, I believe, of eight or nine millions? This is about the figure required to provide the Members of the London County Council with a moderate-sized palace, not perhaps entirely suited to their exalted dignity, but, at least, sufficient to house them in something like proper and fitting style. A site should be secured on the Embankment, by clearing away Somerset House, and the intervening buildings, including the blocks of the Inner and Middle Temple, which could all be carted away and re-erected further down, say, at Millbank, and on the space thus secured a white marble structure could be reared with an adequately imposing façade facing the river, that would in some slight degree represent the majesty of the illustrious body destined to occupy it. I don't say that nine millions would be enough thoroughly to carry out the design I have in view, but your surplus might serve as a central fund to begin upon, to which Parliament, no doubt, would cheerfully add another five or six millions if required. Such an obvious use for your money, I feel, needs no further argument from yours encouragingly and suggestively,

A FULL BLOWN LONDON COUNTY COUNCILLOR.

Sir,—I have several near relatives in the Colonies, with whom I have, owing to the present exorbitant rates for postage, not communicated for many years. This fact has suggested to me that *the* golden opportunity now offers itself to you of re-uniting family ties, re-opening closed correspondence, restoring natural affection in otherwise hardened breasts, and, in a word, consolidating the Empire, it may be, for countless ages yet unborn. Spend your surplus, Sir, in providing this country and all her dependencies with a *farthing postage*—mind, not a *penny*, but a FARTHING POSTAGE! I read somewhere that the actual cost to the Government for the transport of letters was at the rate of ten for a penny. Thus your four millions sunk in the enterprise ought to produce you an immediate profit, at least so I make it, of six millions a year. But, profit or no profit, think of the boon to thousands of Englishmen like myself, who could then stand a penny-worth of correspondence in the year, with children with whom now they are unable to communicate, owing to the cruel and crushing charge of fivepence for a single letter. Picture one who, though not close over money matters, and full of love for his offspring, must yet sign himself

A CIRCUMSPECT AND CAUTIOUS PARENT.

Sir,—Have you read Lord WOLSELEY's article in this month's *Harper*? He advises a higher rate of pay for the rank and file of the British Army? *Verbum sap.* You understand. It is clear what you must do with your surplus. Ensure TOMMY ATKINS six-and-six-pence a day, and you will have every Regiment in the Service thronged with real live Gentlemen. This is what is wanted (so I gather from Lord W.'s article) to make the British Army, if not the most costly, at least the most respectable in the world. Come, Sir, do not make it necessary that you should be reminded a second time of your plain and obvious duty by

A SANGUINE AND EXPECTANT PRIVATE.

Sir,—There can be no doubt in regard to the proper destination of those surplus millions, the fitting disposition of which, I am informed, is involving you in no little perplexity. They seem in a special manner to furnish the legitimate answer to the almost universal cry, now going forth, for "Free Education." Here then is your opportunity. And it is a magnificent one. Your surplus will enable a wise and paternal Government to give not merely education, free of cost, to every child in the three kingdoms, but will supply it with ample means to infuse the very highest culture attainable into the very dregs of the population. Spanish, Italian, German, Russian, French, Chinese, together with riding, dancing, painting in oil colours, hydrostatics, and the elements of Court etiquette, will, henceforth, comprise the curriculum of the veriest gutter-child.

Can you, Sir, contemplate such a brilliant, such a soul-stirring prospect unmoved? That you cannot, and will at once hand over your useful millions for the purpose of carrying into effect the above modest but magnificent scheme, is the firm belief of yours suggestively,

THE LATEST TEACHER OF THE YOUNG IDEA.



A DIAGNOSIS.

"IT SAYS 'ERE, AS YOUR OLD BOSS, COLONEL M'WHUSKEY, HAS BEEN TOOK ILL."—"AH! SO I 'ERD!"—"RUSSIAN EPIDEMIC?"—"No,—SCOTCH."

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.



Book Markers.

"Bring me my Scotch Dictionary!" cried the Baron. "Alas, my Lord!" was the answer of the faithful servitor, "there is none such here." "I'fakins!" quoth the Baron, "then will I buckle to and read *A Window in Thrums* without it, even though I break all my teeth and nigh choke myself, as indeed, I have well-nigh done in my gallant attempt to master the first two chapters." So I, the Baron, being convalescent and having a few hours to spare, lay me down and read, and read, and read, and stumbled over the Scotch words and phrases, until I hit on the plan of reading it aloud to two or three other convalescents; just to see how *they* would like it. And as I read aloud, this book,—which on account of its apparent difficulty, and by reason of my education having been neglected, "lang syne," in respect to the Scotch language, an intimate knowledge of which I have not yet acquired "the noo,"—it gained my affection gradually, steadily, and increasingly. Though I could not have translated individual words and phrases, yet I instinctively understood them, and was delighted with the homely simplicity of the style, the keen observation, the shrewd wit, and the gentle pathos of *A Window in Thrums*. The BARON DE BOOK-WORMS is grateful to Mr. J. M. BARRIE; and when an opportunity is offered him, he is seriously thinking of re-reading some of the Scotchiest of Sir WALTER SCOTT'S Novels, and having a "Nicht or twa wi' ROBBIE BURNS."

I await the Reminiscences of Mr. MONTAGU WILLIAMS, Q.C. and P.M., with considerable interest.

Mr. KEITH FLEMING'S romance, *Can such Things be? or, the Weird of the Beresfords*,—no relation to Lord CHARLES of that ilk,—starts, and will make the reader start too, with a very creepy idea. The story would have been a genuine weird and eerie one but for the continual twaddling interruptions about "spookikal" research and metaphysical problems, which, however, the experienced skipper, who knows the chart, can easily avoid after the first two or three bumps, and even the inexperienced reader will be able, after an hour or two, to hop from point to point like a robin from twig to twig. But skipping and hopping is wearying, and the story is too long, and so we become familiar with the ghost, and we all know what the fatal consequence of familiarity is. The repetitions of the Spook's appearance are monotonous. Had *The Weird* been condensed like milk in tins, or essenced like Liebig, and been presented to the public as a story in two numbers of *Blackwood* (always such an appropriate title for a Magazine full of mysterious stories,—BLACK WOOD so like Black Forest) or *Macmillan*, or *Cornhill* (where, somehow, a ghost-story always reads so uncommonly well), this romance would have created a great sensation. As it is, it doesn't, at least not much. BARON DE BOOK-WORMS.

MR PUNCH'S MORAL MUSIC-HALL DRAMAS

Our present Drama (No. VI.) represents an attempt to illustrate upon the Music-hall Stage the eternal truth that race *will* tell in the long run, despite—but, on second thoughts, it does not *quite* prove that, though it certainly shows the unerring accuracy of parental—at least, that is not exactly its tendency, either; and the fact is that *Mr. Punch* is more than a little mixed himself as to the precise theory which it is designed to enforce. He hopes, however, that, as a realistic study of Patrician life and manners, it will possess charms for a democratic audience.

COMING OF AGE

A Grand Social Psychological Comedy-Drama, in One Act.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The Earl of Burntalmond.

The Countess of Burntalmond (his wife).

Robert Henry Viscount Bullsaye (their son and heir).

The Lady Rose Caramel (niece to the Earl).

Horehound. } (Travelling as "The Celebrated Combination
Mrs. Horehound. } Korffdropp Troupe," in their refined and
Coltsfoot Horehound. } elegant Drawing-room Entertainment.)

Tenantry.



SCENE—*The Great Quadrangle of Hardbake Castle; banners, mottoes, decorations, &c. On the steps, R., the Earl, supported by his wife, son, and niece, is discovered in the act of concluding a speech to six tenantry, who display all the enthusiasm that is reasonably to be expected at ninepence a night.*

The Earl (patting Lord BULLSAYE's shoulder). I might say more, Gentlemen, in praise of my dear son, Lord BULLSAYE, here—I might dwell on his extreme sweetness, his strongly marked character, the variety of his tastes, and the singular attraction he has for children of all ages—but I forbear. I will merely announce that on this day—the day he has selected for attaining his majority—he has gratified us all by plighting troth to his cousin, the Lady ROSE CAMEL, with whose dulcet and clinging disposition he has always possessed the greatest natural affinity.

[*Cheers.*

Lord Bullsaye (aside to Lady R.). Ah, ROSE, would such happiness could last! But my heart misgives me strangely—why, I know not.

Lady R. Say not so, dear BULLSAYE—have you not just rendered me the happiest little Patrician in the whole peerage?

Lord B. 'Tis true—and yet, and yet—pooh, let me snatch the present hour!

[*Snatches it.*

The Earl. And now, let the Revels commence.

Enter the Korffdropp Troupe, who give their marvellous Entertainment, entitled, "The Three Surprise Packets;" after which—

Horehound. This will conclude the first portion of our Entertainment, Lords, Ladies, and Gentlemen; and, while my wife and pardner retires to change her costoom for the Second Part, I should be glad of the hoppertoony of a short pussonal hexplanation with the noble Herl on my right.

[*Exit Mrs. HOREHOUND.*

The Earl (graciously). I will hear you, fellow! (*Aside.*) Strange how familiar his features seem to me!

Horeh. The fact is, your Lordship's celebrating the coming of hage of the *wrong heir*. (*Sensation —i.e., the six tenantry shift from one leg to the other, and murmur feebly.*) Oh, I can prove it. Twenty-one years ago—(*slow music*)—I was in your Lordship's service as gamekeeper, 'ead whip, and hextry waiter. My son and yours was born the selfsame day, and my hold woman was selected to hact as foster-mother to the youthful lord. Well—(*tells a long, and not entirely original, story; marvellous resemblance between infants, only distinguishable by green and magenta bows, &c., &c.*) Soon after, your Lordship discharged me at a moment's notice—

The Earl (haughtily). I did, upon discovering that you were in the habit of surreptitiously carrying off kitchen-stuff, concealed within your umbrella. But proceed with your narration.

Horeh. I swore to be avenged, and so—(*common form again; the shifted bows*)—consequently, as a moment's reflection will convince you, the young man on the steps, in the button-'ole and tall 'at, is my lawful son, while the real Viscount is—(*presenting COLTSFOOT, who advances modestly on his hands*)—'ere!

[*Renewed sensation.*]

The Earl. This is indeed a startling piece of intelligence. (*To Lord B.*) And so, Sir, it appears that your whole life has been one consistent imposition—a gilded *lie*?

Lord B. Let my youth and inexperience at the time, Sir, plead as my best excuse!

The E. Nothing can excuse the fact that you—you, a low-born son of the people, have monopolised the training, the tenderness and education, which were the due of your Patrician foster-brother. (*To COLTSFOOT.*) Approach, my injured, long-lost boy, and tell me how I may atone for these years of injustice and neglect!

Coltsf. Well, Guv'nor, if you could send out for a pot o' four arf, it 'ud be a *beginning*, like.

The E. You shall have every luxury that befits your rank, but first remove that incongruous garb.

Colts, (to Lord B.). These 'ere togs belong to *you* now, young feller, and I reckon exchange ain't no robbery.

Lord B. (with emotion, to Countess). Mother, can you endure to behold your son in tights and spangles on the very day of his majority?

Countess (coldly). On the contrary, it is my wish to see him attired as soon as possible, in a more appropriate costume.

Lord B. (to Lady R.). ROSE, *you*, at least, have not changed? Tell me you will love me still—even on the precarious summit of an acrobat's pole!

Lady Rose (scornfully). Really the presumptuous familiarity of the lower orders is perfectly appalling!

The Earl (to Countess, as Lord B. and COLTSFOOT retire to exchange costumes). At last, PAULINE, I understand why I could never feel towards BULLSAYE the affection of a parent. Often have I reproached myself for a coldness I could not overcome.

Countess. And I too! Nature was too strong for us. But, oh, the joy of recovering our son—of finding him so strong, so supple, so agile. Never yet has our line boasted an heir who can feed himself from a fork strapped on to his dexter heel!

The E. (with emotion). Our beloved, boneless boy!

[*Re-enter COLTSFOOT in modern dress, and Lord B. in tights.*]

Colts. Don't I look slap-up—O.K. and no mistake? Oh, I *am* 'aving a beano!

All. What easy gaiety, and unforced animation!

The E. My dear boy, let me present you to your *fiancée*. ROSE, my love, this is your *legitimate* lover.

Colts. Oh, all right, *I've* no objections—on'y there'll be ructions with the young woman in the tight-rope line as I've been keepin' comp'ny with—that's all!

The E. Your foster-brother will act as your substitute there. (*Proudly.*) *My* son must make no *mésalliance*!

Rose (timidly). And, if it would give you any pleasure, I'm sure I could soon learn the tight-rope!

Colts. Not at *your* time o' life. Miss, and besides, 'ang it, now I'm a lord, I can't have my wife doin' nothing low!

The E. Spoken like a true BURNTALMOND! And now let the revels re-commence.

[*Re-enter Mrs. HOREHOUND.*

Horeh. (to Lord B.). Now then, stoopid, tumble, can't you—what are you 'ere for?

Lord B. (to the Earl). Since it is your command, I obey, though it is ill tumbling with a heavy heart!

[*Turns head over heels laboriously.*

Colts. Call that a somersault? 'Ere, 'old my 'at (*giving tall hat to Lady R.*) I'll show yer 'ow to do a turn.

[*Throws a triple somersault.*

All. What condescension! How his aristocratic superiority is betrayed, even in competition with those to the manner born!

Mrs. Horeh. (*still in ignorance of the transformation*) Halt! I have kept silence till now—even from my husband, but the time has come when I *must* speak. Think you that if he were indeed a lord, he could turn such somersaults as those? No—no. I will reveal all. (*Tells same old story—except that she herself from ambitious motives transposed the infants' bows.*) Now, do with me what you will!

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Horeh. Confusion, so my ill-judged action did but redress the wrong I designed to effect!

The E. (*annoyed*). This is a serious matter, reflecting as it does upon the legitimacy of my lately recovered son. What proof have you, woman, of your preposterous allegation?

Mrs. H. None, my lord,—but these—

[*Exhibits two faded bunches of ribbon.*

The E. I cannot resist such overwhelming evidence, fight against it as I may.

Lord B. (*triumphantly*). And so—oh, Father, Mother, ROSE—dear, dear ROSE—I am no acrobat after all!

The E. (*sternly*). Would you were anything half so serviceable to the community, Sir! I have no superstitious reverence for rank, and am, I trust, sufficiently enlightened to discern worth and merit—even beneath the spangled vest of the humblest acrobat. Your foster-brother, brief as our acquaintance has been, has already endeared himself to all hearts, while you have borne a trifling reverse of fortune with sullen discontent and conspicuous incapacity. He has perfected himself in a lofty and distinguished profession during years spent by *you*, Sir, in idly cumbering the earth of Eton and Oxford. Shall I allow him to suffer by a purely accidental coincidence? Never! I owe him reparation, and it shall be paid to the uttermost penny. From this day, I adopt him as my eldest son, and the heir to my earldom, and all other real and personal effects. See, ROBERT HENRY, that you treat your foster-brother as your senior in future!

Coltsf. (to Lord B). Way-oh, ole matey, I don't bear no malice, I don't! Give us your dooks.

[*Offering hand.*

The C. Ah, BULLSAYE, try to be worthy of such generosity!

[*Lord B. grasps COLTSFOOT'S hand in silence.*

Lady Rose. And pray, understand that, whether Mr. COLTSFOOT be viscount or acrobat, it can make no difference whatever to the disinterested affection with which I have lately learnt to regard him.

[*Gives her hand to COLTSFOOT, who squeezes it with ardour.*

Coltsf. (*pleasantly*). Well, Father, Mother, your noble Herlship and Lady, foster-brother BULLSAYE, and my pretty little sweetart 'ere, what do you all say to goin' inside and shunting a little garbage, and shifting a drop or so of lotion, eh?

The E. A most sensible suggestion, my boy. Let us make these ancient walls the scene of the blithest—ahem!—*beano* they have ever yet beheld!

[*Cheers from Tenantry, as the Earl leads the way into the Castle with Mrs. HOREHOUND, followed by HOREHOUND with the Countess and COLTSFOOT with Lady ROSE, Lord BULLSAYE, discomfited and abashed, entering last as Curtain falls.*]

KICKED!

(By the Foot of Clara Groomley.)

In the little sitting-room above his shop sat Mr. ASSID ROPES. It was the afternoon before Christmas Day. He had generously allowed all his assistants to leave. "If anybody wants their hair cut, or their hat ironed," he said, "I'll do it myself, and then they'll wish they hadn't."

Yet, when a customer rapped on the floor below, Mr. ROPES felt exceedingly angry.

"What do you want?" he called down the stairs.

"I want my hat ironed," said a clear, manly voice.

"Go away! Your hat doesn't want ironing. Go to bed!"

"I will not go away," said the clear, firm voice, "until you have attended to my hat—hat once, if you please."

Mr. ROPES came grumbling down the stairs. For one moment he gazed at the man in the shop, and then flung his arms round him and wept tears of joy.

"My dear old friend, CYRIL MUSH!" he exclaimed.

They had been boys together at Eton, and rowed in the Trinity boat together at Cambridge. Fate had separated them.

In less than a minute they were talking over old times together in the little sitting-room over the shop. CYRIL MUSH was delighted. "You can't charge an old friend anything for just ironing his hat," he said, with his peculiarly winning smile.

Before Mr. ROPES could correct this impression, another voice was heard in the shop below.

"Can you come down for a minute—to oblige a lady?"

Mr. ROPES descended once more. In a minute he returned.

"Awfully sorry, MUSH, but I must go. I've got to shave a dead poodle, and the men are coming to stuff it at nine o'clock to-night. It's for a lady—*noblesse oblige*, you know. I'll finish your hat when I come back."

In a second he was gone. CYRIL MUSH replaced the lining in his hat, and placed it on his head. He went out into the streets. He was wondering what poodle it was which Mr. ASSID ROPES had gone to shave. Could it be the same? No, most certainly not. So of course it was the same.

In the meanwhile Mr. ROPES had arrived at the house, and had been ushered into the chamber of death. The light was very bad, and he happened to cut the animal while engaged in shaving it.

"Very sorry, Sir," said Mr. ROPES, from force of habit, "but it's not my fault. You've got a pimple there, and you jerked your head just as I was going over it. A little powder will put that all right."

Suddenly it flashed across him that the poodle was not dead if the blood flowed. He rushed out of the room, and found himself confronted by a handsome, wicked-looking man, of about thirty.

"Excuse me, Sir, but that poodle's not dead. It's in a trance. Just run down to the kitchen and fetch me some brandy, some blankets, and some hot bricks, and I'll bring it round."

"The dog *is* dead, and in a very few hours he'll be stuffed," was the cruel reply. "You needn't trouble to bring it round. If you've brought your tackle round, you can shave it."

"I've been shaving it—and that's how I know."

A door opened on the other side of the passage, and a fair young girl came out in tears and a black dress.

"What's the matter, ALGERNON?" she said.

"It's nothing, ALICE. This idiot says that *Tommy's* not dead."

With one wild yell of joy, a yell that broke the gas-globes, and unlinked carriages at all the principal London railway stations, ALICE SMITH fell senseless on the floor.

"Out you get!" exclaimed her cousin ALGERNON to Mr. ROPES. "If the dog is not dead, come back in two hours, and *prove* it—otherwise it will be dead, and stuffed too."



"Now then," said ALGERNON, when Mr. ROPES had gone, "if *Tommy Atkins* is not dead, he soon will be." He grasped his walking-stick, and tried the door of the room. It was locked. Mr. ROPES had locked it, and taken the key!

"Aha!" he exclaimed. "Baffled! Baffled! Kindly turn the lime-light off the swooned maiden, and throw it on to me. Sympathetic music from the violins, if you please."

One hour had passed. Mr. ALKALOID, the photographer, had met Mr. MUSH. Mr. ALKALOID had come from Ryde to London to get his hair singed. The two accidentally met Mr. ROPES as he was dashing wildly down the street towards his own shop. In one minute all was explained. Mr. ALKALOID had fetched his photographic apparatus, and the three were careering back to the house where the poodle lay dead. But was he dead? You know he wasn't, as well as I do. What do you ask such senseless questions for? "It's the only sure test," said ALKALOID. "If that dog's alive, he'll wag his tail when I try to photograph him. I never knew it fail."

Outside the door of that gorgeously-furnished room stood an excited group. ALGERNON, the villain, was soliloquising. ALICE was explaining to CYRIL how he had dropped his note down the neck of the wrong girl—who was also named SMITH—and how she had been compelled to believe him unfaithful. Mr. ROPES was listening attentively at the key-hole, and CYRIL was kissing ALICE.

Within the room Mr. ALKALOID was photographing the dead poodle. (I call it dead, but of course that doesn't humbug *you*.)

"Now then, we're ready," they heard Mr. ALKALOID say. "Don't stare. Just a natural, easy—now then—thank you!"

There was dead silence within the room and without. Then the door opened, and Mr. ALKALOID came out cheerfully.

"The poodle's dead all right," he said. "What you took to be blood, ROPES, was blacking off your razor. You really ought not to strop them on your boot. I'll walk round to your shop with you. I want my hair singed."

ALICE went into hysterics; ALGERNON swooned with joy; and CYRIL MUSH had a fit.

At the moment of going to press, they are all three still in the above condition. The dog, in the meantime, has been accidentally stuffed with the stuffing intended for the stuffer's Christmas goose. The goose was found, on carving, to be stuffed with several shilling shockers, which had been intended to pad the poodle.

And to what better use could they have been put—especially if they were all like this?

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MISUNDERSTOOD!

(ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.)

Daughter of the House (anxious to introduce Partners to each other). "IS YOUR CARD QUITE FULL, MR. M'SAWNEY?" *Mr. M'Sawney*. "OH DEAR, NO! WHICH DANCE SHALL I GIVE YOU?"

THE "SALUTE;" OR, TAKING DISTANCE.

"When the assault is given in the presence of spectators, it is not uncommon to precede it by the Salute, which shows the scheme and various figures, as it were, of the attack and defence in a precise, ceremonious manner, and with the same kind of courtly ritual as that which distinguishes the minuet."—*H. A. Colmore Dunn's "Fencing."*

There, standing face to face, foil in hand,
Just out of lunging range they salute,
Who anon, swordsman stark, old fencer grand,
Must fight their duel out, foot to foot.
Mere preliminary flourish, all of this;
The punctilio of "form" without a fault;
But soon the blades shall counter, clash, and twist,
In assault.

The ritual of the rapier or the foil;
Vastly pretty ceremonial parade.
Merest preface to the hot and breathless toil
Of the fencers fiercely battling blade to blade.
In position! Featly, formally on guard,
Engage the blades in quarte. But by-and-by
Every subtle thrust and parry, feint and ward,
Each will try.

Foible to foible! Measure distance! Lunge!
Now the thrust ends in the merest harmless touch;
But ere the beaten man throws up the sponge,
As the boxers say, relaxing his hilt-clutch,
There'll be lunges and ripostes of other sort.
Firm foot and steady hand must be their friend;
The encounter will be struggle, not mere sport,
Ere the end.

First to left and then to right! Parry of quarte!
In pronation by a turn of supple wrist!
Parry in tierce! All elegant and smart;
But the lethal thrust no parry can resist
Comes not in this preliminary play.
The defender, so complacent and erect,
Will show another pose another day,
We suspect.

And that grey Grand Old Assailant, who's expert
At beat and re-beat, press, and graze, and bind,
Will try his best at a disabling hurt;
It is not mere parade that's in his mind.
Meanwhile he's taking measure of his foe,
Meanwhile his foe of him is taking stock;
And anon they'll come together in a glow,
With a shock!

THE PREMIER'S POWER.

Brief Fragment of a current Historical Romance.

[It is whispered that the PRIME MINISTER has of late taken too much into his own hands the conduct of the foreign affairs of the Government.—*Smoking-room Gossip.*]

The PRIME MINISTER stood upon the rug, with his back to the fire, and regarded his assembled colleagues with an imperious and angry scowl. There was a profound and significant silence for several minutes. At length it broke. He was addressing them once more.

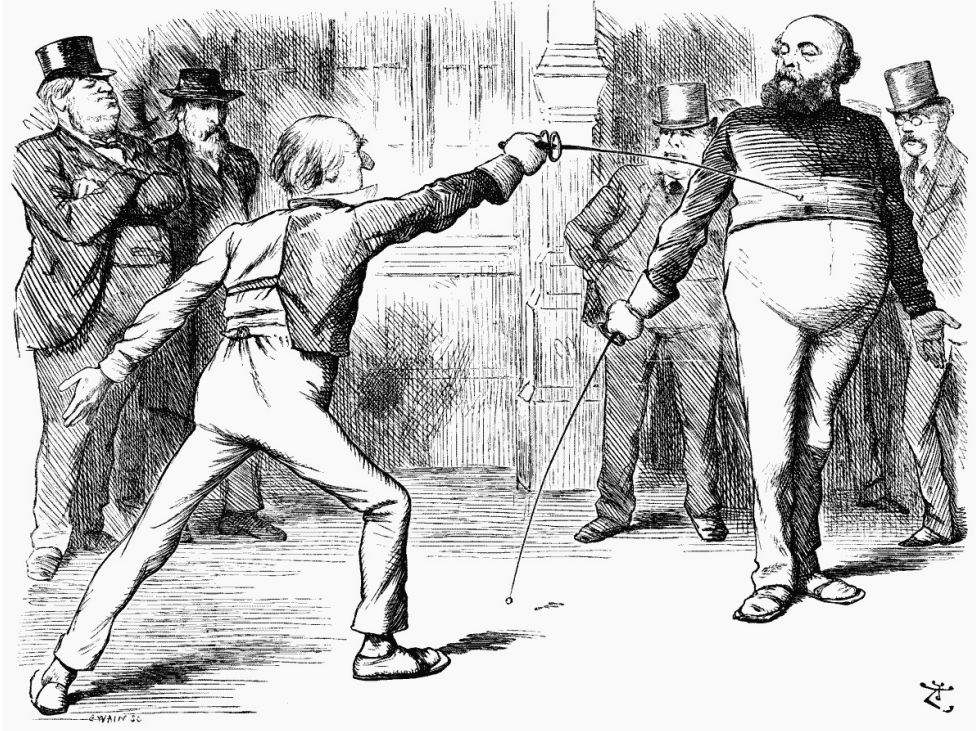
"You understand the official relationship that exists between us. You are my creatures. I am your Master. What I originate, you accept. I act, you endorse. Do I," he continued, his voice rising to a shrill, piping treble, "do I make myself sufficiently clear?"

A sickly smile of abject acquiescence overspread the features of the now trembling Ministers. Their Chief noted it with a gloomy glare. Then with a furious gesture, he suddenly kicked a waste-paper basket into the air. "You may go!" he growled. They did not wait for a second permission. Swiftly, but obsequiously, they glided out of the room, and with traces of terror stamped on their blanched countenances, silently sought the little neighbouring Railway Station, and took the next train to London.

That night the Premier sat up late. But his work, when he began it, did not take him long. Yet it was not unimportant, for the departing mail-bag carried a set of sealed orders for the Admiral in Command of the British Squadron in East African Waters, another Ultimatum to the Government of Portugal, a threatening communication to the Porte, and disturbing despatches, threatening to the peace of Europe, to the Governments of Russia, France, and Germany respectively. He laughed long and loud when he thought of their contents. Then he went to bed.

Later on, his work bore fruit; and people then said that the Cabinet of the day must have been a strange one!

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THE "SALUTE!" OR, TAKING HIS MEASURE.

(OPENING OF SESSION, FEB. 11, 1890.)

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HORRIBLE RESULT OF USING THE "EGYPTIAN FUR-TILISER."

"A cargo of 180,000 mummified Cats has just been landed at Liverpool, to be used as Manure."—*Daily Paper.*

ROBERT'S COMPANIONS.



I'm a beginning for to think as we're rayther a rum lot in this werry strawnery world of ours. I've jest bin a collectin from sum of my brother Waiters sum of their little historys, as far as they remembers 'em, and werry strange and werry warious sum on 'em is. There's one pore chap who's about as onest and as atentif a Waiter as I nos on anywheres, but you never, no never, ewer sees him smile, not ewen wen a ginerus old Deputy, or a new maid Alderman, gives him harf-a-crown! I've offen and offen tried to cheer him hup with a good old glass of ginerus port, wen sum reglar swells has bin a dining and has not emtied the bottels—as reel Gennelmen never does—but never quite suck-seeded, tho' he drank down his wine fast enuff and ewidently injoyed it

quite as much as if he'd paid for it, praps jest a leetle bit more. So one day I wentured to arsk him how it was as he was allers as sollem as a Churchwarden at a Charity Sermon, or a Clown in summer time, and he told me as it was all caused by the suckemstances of his hurly life, which he had never been abel to shake off hissself, pore Fellar! tho' they was none of 'em his own fault, which they was as follers.

To begin with. He was born on a Fryday, on the 1st of April, and amost all his days for years after seems to have been either Frydays or Fust of Aprils, sumtimes one, sumtimes tother, sumtimes both. He was the youngest of eleven children, and so made the family party consist of 13, always as we all knos a unlucky number, and he seemed to have been treeted as if it had bin his own fault, which in course it wasn't, not by no means, no more than it was his fault the having the Skarlet Fever on one Crismus Day, which he did to heverybody's disgust.

He was afterwards told by his old Nuss BECKY that one speshal greevance of his pore mother was, that her youngest child being seven years old when BILLY was born, all the warious prepperashuns customary on such himportant occasions had been dun away with as useless, ewen to the customary gigantick Pincushon, so that in his case there was no "Welcum to the Little Stranger!" So long, too, as his oldest brother remained at tome, he was never allowed to set down to dinner with the rest of the famerly, because, in course, he made up the unlucky number, the werry nateral consequence being, that when his oldest brother suddenly took his departure from among 'em, poor little BILLY was werry severely flogged for setting down to dinner with a smiling countinghouse! Of course ewery time as his unfortnit Birthday came round he was made a April Fool of, all his six lovin Brothers jining in the sport, one arter the other, nearly all day long. When he went to school, ewerybody knowed of his afflickshun, and made a fool of him, hushers and all.

After he growed up, his Father got him a plaice at a Lunatic Asylum, as being the most properest for his sollem natur; and there he remained for no less than five years!

Then, on the other hand, there's old TOM, or rayther yung TOM, for he's one of them jolly chaps as never seems to get no older. Why he goes about a grinning away, and a chatting away, and a chaffing of old BILL, who's much younger than him, like anythink. So I naterally arsked him how he accounted for his good sperrits. And what was his arnser? Why, hurly training. His Father was a Comic Play Actor, and allers ready for a larf, and offen took yung TOM with him to the Theater till he becum quite a favrite with all the merry gals there, who used to pet him, and give him sweets, and teach him to say all sorts of funny things; and, when he was old enuff, he was promoted to the dignity of a full-blown Super, at 18 shillings a week, and all his close found. His grate differculty was in looking serious and keeping serious when serious bizziness was a going on; and on one occashun, when he was playing one of a band of sangwinerry ruffians, sumthink so took his fansy, that he not only bust into a loud larf hissself, but set all the rest of the sangwinerry ruffians a larfing too, and quite spiled all the effect of the scene. So he was bundled off neck and crop, and soon afterwards got a sitewashun as a Pleaceman, but, for the life of him, he never could keep hissself serrius when he was before a Magistrate with a case; for if ennybody made a joke, or ennybody larfed, TOM set off a grinning with the best of 'em, and once axshally made a joke with his Worship; so of course off he was sent again, to find a rest for the soles of his feet, and a free play for his good sperrits, in the honnerabel capacity of a Waiter.

ROBERT.



PUNCH'S PARLIAMENTARY PUPPETS.

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ULTIMA RATIO.

Small Rustic. "YEOU CAN'T GO THAT WAY."
Stalwart Young Lady (out Sketching). "WHY NOT?"
Small Rustic. "'CAUSE THERE'S—THERE'S HURDLES."
Stalwart Young Lady. "BUT I CAN GET OVER HURDLES."
Small Rustic. "AND THEN THERE'S THE BULL!"

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M P.



ouse of Commons, Tuesday, February 11.
—"How do you do, TOBY? A merry New Session and many of them."

It was OLD MORALITY who spoke; his kindly face beamed on me; his friendly hand grasped mine. Walked up the floor together through the old familiar scene. Benches crowded, though a vacant seat here and there: HARTINGTON'S for example. Everybody sorry to hear he's been ill, and glad to think of him enjoying the sunlight of Monte Carlo. Grand Old Man more Grand and less Old than ever; just up from Oxford; passed very well, it is said. Comes into Parliament with every prospect of distinguishing himself; his maiden speech looked for with much interest.

"I think I'll put it off for a month or two, TOBY," he said, blushing with the ingenuousness of youth. "You see I'm so fresh from college, that it would ill become me to plunge into public affairs. It's all very well for a young fellow like me to get up at the Union; but here it's different. You're very good to say that great things are expected of me; but, if you please, I'll keep in the background a bit. I'll feel my feet first, as they used to say

in the nursery, in what seems only yesterweek."

Very nice this of him. Wish all young fellows fresh from the University, even when they have taken honours, were equally modest.

"Haven't seen you since we met at Greenlands' icy mountains in the Recess," OLD MORALITY said, continuing our conversation interrupted by the cheers that greeted our arrival. "You remember how bitterly cold the day was? Rather thought you hurried away. Wish you could have stayed to luncheon. We happened to have something succulent. However, you must come and dine in my room behind the SPEAKER'S Chair; AKERS-DOUGLAS will show you the way. We do it pretty snug there, I can tell you. What sort of a Session shall we have? Who can tell? Usual sort of thing, I suppose. We shall bring in a lot of Bills; Gentlemen opposite will talk some of them out; at Easter and Whitsuntide Recesses we shall squeeze a stage of some through, under pressure of the holidays; then three weeks in June and most of July will be wasted; and in August we'll suspend Standing Orders, and ram through everything we can. As for me, I shall endeavour to do my duty to the QUEEN, to the Country, and to the Members of this House, in whichever part they sit. Did you ever, dear TOBY, consider how a kettle boils? The water nearest to the fire is first heated, and (being heated) rises to the top. Its place is supplied by colder portions, which are heated in turn, and this interchange takes place till all the water is boiling hot. That is how we shall get through the Session. The Report of the Parnell Commission, being most heated, will rise to the top first. Then the Tithes Bill, Land Purchase, the Education question, and one or two other little matters will follow, till we're all in boiling water. Good-bye now; don't forget to come across AKERS-DOUGLAS about Eight o'Clock."

Business done.—Session opened.

KILLING FOR A SHILLING.—Lord WOLSELEY (who seems to have read the regulations governing communications from soldiers to the Press in a very liberal spirit) has published an article on the British Army in the pages of an American Twelvepenny Magazine. The contribution is embellished with sketches of the costumes of TOMMY ATKINS and his predecessors. For the rest, some of the letterpress is sufficiently alarming to warrant "Our Only General" in assuming a title which he apparently appears to covet—that of a "Shilling Shocker!"

SOMETHING LIKE A DINNER.

Now that the Parliamentary Session has opened, and the Season threatens to set in with its usual severity, the dinner question comes prominently to the front. Even in the best-regulated households there is a sameness about dinner which, towards the end of the week, palls upon the appetite. Some ambitious young men have attempted to deal with the matter and surprise their guests by introducing cheese immediately after the soup (*soufflé au parmesan*), and after a cut of beef comes the fish (*turbot à la Russe*). That is well meant, but it is crude. *Mr. Punch* has given his great mind to the subject, and presents to the consideration of the dining world the following hints for a meal:—



Vol au Vent.

Half-om-half.
 Blauwe Landtongsche Oesters.
 Hoog-Sauterneswijn.
 Soepen.
 Dikke Rivierkreeften Soep. Volmaakte Soep in Van Dijk Stijl.
 Amontillado.
 Zuschotelles.
 Selderij. Olijven. Radijs. Haringen. Poukenvorm gebakken in Berg-op-Zoomsche Stijl.
 Liebfraumilch.
 Gekruide Gerechten.
 Volmaakte Soep in Van Dijk Stijl. Lambasteien met Zeeuwsche Saus.
 Chateau Danzac.
 Voorgerechten.
 Hoenden Vleugels, met Haagsche Saus.
 Heetkoudegemakten Ganzenlevers in Zwolsche Stijl.
 Ruinart, wrang wijn, Bijzonder Perrier Jouet, Louis Roederer, wrang,
 Giesler & Co., G. H. Mumm, buitengewoondroog.
 Groenten.
 Aardappelen in Sneeksche Stijl.
 Doperwten, Fransche Stijl.
 Gebakkene Kropsalade.
 Sorbet, Anneke Jans.
 Gebraad.
 Kanefasrug Eendvogels. Gekruide Seiderij-sla.
 Richebourg.
 Nagerecht.
 Curacaogelei. Italiaansche Ijs. Edamsche Kaas. Vruchten.
 Gemonteerde Stukken.
 Koffie.
 Likeuren. Sigaren.
 Pupen en Tabak.

It may be objected that half-and-half, even when badly spelt, is a cold preparation for dinner; and others may take exception to *Poukenvorm*, as likely to have an earthy taste. But did they ever try it *gebakken in Berg-op-Zoomsche Stijl*? It is no use mincing matters. Let anyone in search of a good dinner enter any well-appointed *restaurant*, and order this *menu* right through down to *Pupen en Tabak* (which is not a preparation of dog's meat), and if they are not satisfied, *Mr. Punch* is a Dutchman.

"RICHARDSON'S SHOW" AND A "BILL OF THE PLAY."

The Vaudeville, when it was opened, was devoted to all that was light and cheerful. Comedy and Burlesque went hand-in-hand, and the audience, if ever asked to weep, were begged to cry with laughter. But Mr. ROBERT BUCHANAN (with the assistance of the late Mr. RICHARDSON) "has changed all that." *Clarissa*, the present attraction at the little theatre on the North-side of the Strand, is a piece of the most doleful character. The First Act is devoted to a very heartless abduction, and the last to a lingering death and a fatal *duello*. When it is announced that the successful fencer who "kills his man" is no less a person than that excellent Comedian, Mr. THOMAS THORNE, it will be readily understood that "the New Drama" is the reverse of lively. *Clarissa* has scarcely a laugh in it from beginning to end. Certainly, in the last Scene but one, there is a revel, in which "pseudo-Ladies of Fashion" take part, but the merriment with which it is spiced is decidedly ghastly. Miss WINIFRED EMERY is exceedingly clever, but her death-scene is painfully protracted. Mr. THALBERG, as *Lovelace*, is a sad dog in every sense—a very sad dog, indeed. The only incident in the piece ever likely to provoke a smile, is the appearance of some comic bearers of grotesque sedan-chairs. When *Clarissa* is carried out *à la GUY FAUX* at the end of the Second Act, there is certainly a moment's hesitation whether the audience should cry or laugh. But the sighs have it, and pocket-handkerchiefs remain to the front. On the occasion of the initial performance, some slight amusement was caused by the introduction of Mr. BUCHANAN in unconventional nineteenth century morning dress amongst the old-fashioned costumes of the company; but, of course, the slight amusement was for once and away, and could not advantageously be frequently repeated. Thus, take one thing with another, the life of the Vaudeville audiences at this moment cannot be truthfully described as a merry one.



Something Lively at the Vaudeville.

At the Avenue quite a different story may be told. People who visit this pretty little house desirous of being moved even unto tears by that finest of *Fausts*, Mr. ALEXANDER, will be disappointed—they had far better stay at home, or go to see *Clarissa*. Mr. HAMILTON AIDÉ has adapted from the French of CARRÉ (a case of fetch and carry) a Farcical Comedy in Three Acts, which *he* calls *Dr. Bill*, in preference to *Dr. Jojo* the Gallic original. The prescription from which the Doctor concocts his mixture might have been supplied by the Criterion. Mr. FREDERICK TERRY plays a part that would have suited Mr. WYNDHAM down to the ground, and Mr. CHEVALIER is continually suggesting the peculiarities of Mr. MALTBY. Miss FANNY BROUGH is MISS FANNY BROUGH, which means that no one could play the part so well, much less better. For the rest, the company (although a new one) work together with a "go" that carries all before it. ALEXANDER has certainly conquered the world—of Comedy. He may do less wise things if he rests satisfied, and leaves Tragedy alone for an indefinitely lengthened period.

SERGEANT COX, ON BEHALF OF PRIVATE BOX.



Making up Dr. Bill's Prescription.

P.S.—Mr. JEROME's new piece (which he describes as "comparatively speaking, new and original"), just produced at Terry's Theatre, is rather disappointing. Its title of *New Lamps for Old* strongly suggests a "Night's Entertainment." But when the poverty of the plot and the quality of the dialogue are taken into consideration, it would be almost too much to say that this pleasant idea is fully realised by the evening's performances. It must be confessed, however, that Mr. PENLEY, rising and descending in a dinner-lift, is (at first) funny; and Miss CISSY GRAHAME is ever welcome.



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