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PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.

Vol. 93.

October 1, 1887.

THE WAIL OF MESSRS. BURT AND FENWICK.

THE Northumberland Miners' U-ni-on
Have bidden their BURT bego-o-one.
It seems, by the ballot, we soon shall be all out,
And there'll be an end to our fun.

Chorus.—We've got no work to do-o-o-o!
We have no work to do-o-o!
We are poor Members, poor Working-Men Members,
Who've got no work to do!

Oh, Morpeth and Wansbeck, o-o-oh!
This same is a pretty go-o-o!
The feelings why hurt of your FENWICK and BURT?
We wouldn't have served *you* so!
Chorus.—We've got no work, &c.

The Working-Men's Members of la-a-ate
Were getting a power in the Sta-a-ate,

But now they're rejected, or coldly ejected,
  Which same is a sorrowful fate.
    Chorus.—We've got no work, &c.

  Joe Arch he had to go-o-o-o,
  Then Leicester, the other Jo-o-oe!
And now we two'll have to forfeit our "screw,"
  Which is jolly hard lines, you know.
    Chorus.—We've got no work, &c.

  It's hardly fair play to gi-i-ive,
  To a Labour-Representati-i-ve,
For without your cash, O Miners most rash,
  How, how shall we manage to live?
    Chorus.—We've got no work, &c.

  It is no doubt exceedingly tru-u-ue;
  We've found little work to do-o-o,
In the House. For that same 'tis not *we* who're to blame,
  But the long Irish hullaballo.
    Chorus.—We've got no work, &c.

  We know these are very hard ti-i-imes,
  To scrape up the dollars and di-i-imes;
But when *we*, dear Miners, are robbed of the shiners,
  We're punished for other folks' crimes.
    Chorus.—We've got no work, &c.

  Of course if you give us the sa-a-ack,
  Our Gladstone bags we must pa-a-ack,
But perhaps for this hurry some day you'll be sorry,
  And wish Burt and Fenwick both back.

Chorus.—We've got no work to do-o-o-o!
  We're ballotted out of our scre-e-ew;
Poor Working Men's Members, this worst of Septembers,
  In sorrow we sigh and boho-o-o!

THE 'EAT OF DISCUSSION.

(*A Fancy founded on Facts.*)

He left the court with his colleagues at twenty minutes to one o'clock. He said nothing, but listened intently while the question of the Inquest was canvassed. Was it to be a verdict of Manslaughter or Murder, or only Accidental Death? He listened so intently that he was quite surprised when the clock struck two.

Yes two o'clock—time for his lunch!

He rose from his seat, and went to the door. He spoke to one on the other side, he talked of cuts from the joints, and chops and steaks.

He was answered with laughter!

Then he returned to his chair, rather put out at this ill-timed pleasantry, and listened once more to the arguments of his colleagues. They had got beyond the verdict now, and were discussing the "riders." The first, elaborately blaming the Magistrates, had been framed and passed, and the second dealing with the bye-laws of the Town Council was under consideration. Before it was finally settled the clock struck three!

Yes, three! and since twenty-minutes to one he had been locked in lunchless! He went to the door and beat it with his fists!

"Might he have a cut off the joint?"

"No!"

Again he was silent, and again his colleagues continued their discussion. They spoke in lower tones now, because they too were feeling the want of food. Four struck, and then five.

He staggered once more to the door, and in piteous tones made a last request,

Might he have a sandwich?

No!!!!!

It was too much! He ground his teeth in rage! Five hours had elapsed, and then the last and eighth rider, suggesting that after its final completion a theatre should be thrown open for public inspection for a week before a licence was granted, was passed. The work of the Jury was over.

It was indeed a painful scene. The eleven men who had taken part in the discussion were entirely exhausted. Some were slumbering from weakness, others were wearily "talking on their fingers." Hunger had made these last absolutely dumb. Reams of papers were scattered about covered with writing. Here and there was a quill-pen partly consumed. Even the blotting-pads testified to the presence of hungry men—some of the leaves showed the traces of a stealthy nibble. In the heat of argument hours before, a juryman, anxious to impress an opinion upon a sceptic colleague, had offered to "eat his hat." He now gazed at the head-gear with greedy eyes, as if anxious to carry out his proposition.

The Foreman, in a whisper, asked if anyone had any further suggestions to make.

Then the rage of the starving one gave him fictitious strength. He stood up, and shrieked out, "I express my opinion that the non-supply of refreshments to the Jury for several hours is a blot on the legal system of the country!"

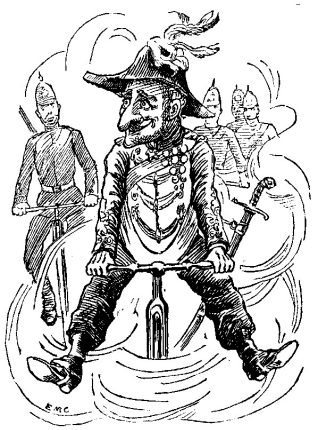
In a moment the Foreman and his colleagues sprang to their feet, and, making a supreme effort, shouted out, "Agreed! agreed! agreed!"

And what further did these poor famished men, these heroes of the long, foodless day, these martyrs to a cruel system—a wretched system—these victims to an abuse that should be swept away like chaff before the wind—ay, what farther did they do after their trumpet-tongued cry of indignant denunciation?

Why (it is to be sincerely hoped) that they went home and had their dinner!

THE BICYCLISTS OF ENGLAND.

"Mr. STURMEY, in the preface to the new edition of his *Handbook of Bicycling*, sketches the progress of this enormously popular amusement since the appearance of his last edition, rather more than five years ago."—*Daily Paper.*



YE Bicyclists of England
  Who stride your wheels with ease,
How little do you think upon
  What Mr. STURMEY sees.
The wheelmen's standard rises high
  With every year that goes.
Wheels sweep, fast and cheap,
  Whereof STURMEY'S trumpet blows—
Our cycles range more swift and strong,
  And STURMEY'S trumpet blows.

The Cycles of our fathers
  Were "bone-shakers," and few,
But the cinder-path's broad field of fame
  Shows what their sons can do.
When WYNDHAM rose, and STANTON fell,
  The pace was cramped and slow;
Their creep to our sweep
  Rouses STURMEY'S scorn, you know—
Our Cycles now run fleet and strong,
  And STURMEY'S trumpets blow.

Britannia needs no bulwark—
  Tariffs her trade to keep,
Her "wheels" are found on every path;
  Coventry's not asleep.
Our Woods and Howells wheel like fun,
  Jack Keen can make 'em go.
Foes we floor from each shore,
  Whereof Sturmey's trumpets blow—
Our Cyclists lick the world by long,
  And Sturmey's trumpets blow.

The "Meteor" wheels of England
  Shall yet terrific turn;
'Tis true that France gave us a start—
  Now she has much to learn.
To you, our brave wheel-warriors,
  Our song and glass shall flow;
To the fame of your name
  Mr. Sturmey's trumpets blow—
Cycles or Cyclists, *ours* are best,
  So why should we *not* blow?

Heavy Lightning.—Lord Grimthorpe, *à propos* of Lightning Conductors, with his customary courtesy, writes to the *Times* of his opponent's (also a Correspondent to the leading journal) desire "to display his own smartness," and speaks of that opponent's opinions as "mere nonsense, due to his ignorance." He concludes, "If he wants the last word, he is welcome to it." Lord Grimthorpe's last word (if really the last) is preferable.

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AMERICAN CHINA.

"The Mandarin had an only daughter, named Li-Chi, who fell in love with Chang, a young man who lived in the island-home represented at the top of the pattern, and who had been her father's secretary. The father overheard them one day making vows of love under the orange-tree, and sternly forbade the unequal match; but the lovers contrived to elope, lay concealed for awhile in the gardener's cottage, and thence made their escape in a boat to the island-home of the young lover. The enraged Mandarin pursued them with a whip, and would have beaten them to death, had not the gods rewarded their fidelity by changing them both into turtle-doves. The picture is called the Willow-Pattern, not only because it is a tale of disastrous love, but because the elopement occurred 'when the willow begins to shed its leaves.'"—*Legend of the Willow-Pattern.*

Scene—*that of the tradition. Season, willow-fall. Hour, sundown.*

Li-Chi (*sings*)—

The poor soul sat sighing by a rum-looking tree,
Sing, once a green willow;
But now all its leaves smell of base £ *s. d.*;
Sing willow, willow, willow!

The old stream runs by her, not with the old tones,
Sing willow, willow, willow!
But, churned by coarse paddles, it plashes and groans;
Sing willow, willow, willow!

Chang. Ah, yellow and irradiant sunflower of my soul's secret shrine, sing not thus dolefully, I entreat thee. What avails the permission to escape awhile our old ornithological metamorphosis, and revisit once again the glimpses of the Mandarin's country seat, the pavilion, the peach and the orange-tree, the elegant wooden fence, the bridge, the boat, and, above all, the willow, only to sing songs whose spirit-cleaving cadences sting thy Chang more than ever did the angry Mandarin's whip-lash?

Li-Chi (mournfully). What, indeed? But O, sublimated saffron-bag of my spirit's idolatry, who can help weeping at sight of *this*?

Chang (reading). "National and International Amalgamated Bank!" O, mighty but much-too-free-with-the-whip-hand-of-parental-authority Mandarin of the Middle Kingdom, what would you have thought of this transformation?

[pg 147] *Li-Chi.* Papa was impetuous. Our—our elopement angered him. But Telegraph-poles, Telephone Exchanges, River Steamers, Banks and Blazing Posters!!—Alas!!!

Chang (hotly). By the isolated button of Celestial supereminence, it is too bad! What *can* Li Hung Chang, that dragon-claw of the throne, that amber-souled prop of imperial perpendicularity be about, I wonder?

Li-Chi (meditatively). We—e—ell,—perhaps he knows, after all.

Chang. What meaneth the tintinnabulant tea-blossom of my trivial and ephemeral personality?

Li-Chi (archly). The "Heathen Chinee," as the wanton Western scribe insolently calls him, is indeed "peculiar," as perchance even Count Eugene Stanislow Kostka de Mitkiewicz and Mr. Jay-Gould, Hood, Mackay the multi-millionnaire, and Barker Brothers the Bankers, New York Syndicates and Philadelphian Silver Rings, may yet discover as clearly and completely as did *Bill Nye* and *Truthful James* of the ribald ballad.

Chang (admiringly). Verily even the orbicular contractility of dexter-optical semi-closure becometh those almond eyes, oh! flesh-enshrined opium-ecstasy of my most transcendental inwardness.

Li-Chi (smartly). I should think it did, indeed! A wink is as good as a nod to a blind lover. "Melican Man" is very 'cute and enterprising; but whether he'll find it quite so easy as he fancies to "run" the Celestial Kingdom, or "exploit" the Flowery Land, remains as the never-sufficiently-to-be-commended-and-left-carefully-unread Kung-foo-tze would say, "to be duskily adumbrated in the spirit-speculum of the yet To-be."

Chang. Quite so. Still, O million-berried mulberry-tree of my mean and inconsiderable soul-garden, to have our own secular love-legend and its many-centuried Scene thus sordidly transmogrified, cannot, O, shining one of my spirit's crepuscular gloom. O, beneficent betel-nut of my supersensual Palate"—

Li-Chi. Well, Chang, after all, novelty hath its charm—after a cycle or two, you know. Marquis Tseng talks about "the awakening of China." As if there was ever a Celestial who, for all his childlikeness and blandness, was not very wide-awake indeed! Why, Li-Chi, if ever *we* had our time over again, *do* you think that transmutation into a pair of turtle-doves,—bird-beatitudes, my Chang, are *so* limited!—would form the acme of our mutual aspirations?

Chang. Well, per—haps not, LI-CHI.

> Better fifty years of Europe
> Than a Cycle of Cathay,—

—as turtle-doves, you know. Still, that chuckling and cavorting American fowl, that two-headed and vulturine Russo-Polish Eagle, do not quite fit into the Mongolian Arcadia of the Willow-pattern plate; now do they? We have fallen, lily of my life, upon sordid, and subversive, and sceptical times, when millions of taels move our Mandarins to Modernism, when Silver Rings and Syndicates, can set up a Party of Progress in the Realm of the Immutable, and when doubts have been thrown by shallow scribes upon the existence of the Great Wall of China itself!

Li-Chi (shuddering). Dreadful, dear! Let's turn back into turtle-doves at once, and coo ourselves into truly Celestial obliviousness of this colossal Yankee *coup*, which threatens—perchance prematurely—to fix for all time *this* preposterously Western and barbaric picture as the Willow Pattern of the Future! [*They do so.*

SAGACITY.

Countryman. "Fi' Pounds too much for him? He's a won'erful good Sportin' Daug, Sir! Why he come to a Dead Pint in the Street, Sir, close ag'in a ol' Gen'leman, the other day—'Fust o' September it was, Sir!—an' the Gen'leman told me arterwards as his Name were 'Partridge'!"

Customer. "You don't say so!" [*Bargain struck!*

"PAYING THEIR SHOT."

A Party of excursionists from the Tyne thought it a pleasant way of spending a Bank-holiday to go wantonly shooting swarms of sea-birds on the Farne Islands. When remonstrated with by the

more humane man in charge, they considered it still greater "sport" to threaten to push an oar down his throat, and make a target of him. These sportive souls indeed managed amongst them to "hit his felt hat and graze his left thumb" with shot. But when 239 of them were summoned under the Wild Birds Act, and had to pay fines and expenses to the tune of some £70, they probably modified their notion of the nature and claim of "Sport," and found that "paying the shot" in that sense was the least pleasant part of shooting. Some of them were probably left without "a shot in the locker." A few more such wholesome lessons, and the "Cad with a Gun," the "Brute with a Double-Barrel," may no longer be found depopulating Nature's feathered preserves and disgracing the name of honest Sport.

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SALUBRITIES ABROAD.

At last I have seen him!—the travelling Englishman, the English Milord of the French Farce—"Oah, c'est moa!" of the *Journal Comique*.

But if the farce Milord is grotesque, the English "Mees" is equally ridiculous. I met, the other day, a lady of Albion, who was strutting about with an enormous "handled" *pince-nez* raised to her eyes, while she expressed her opinion "that those foreigners really *do* dress *so* absurdly!"

Diary of a Day.—At all these Stations Thermales the pleasantest hours of the day are sacrificed to the interests of the band, the casinos, the cercle, and the evening amusements. *Les Baigneurs sérieux* ought not to require any amusement after 9·30, and by ten they should be in bed. Their hours for walking and other exercise should be very early in the morning, or late in the evening before dinner. The remainder of the day should be given up to baths, to drinking waters, *déjeuner à la fourchette*, and rest.

"L'Anglais pour rire."

By the way, at the top of the daily menu at the Continental Hotel the *déjeuner à la fourchette* at 11 A.M. is styled "Lunch." Puller resents this as strongly as he does a waiter's answering him, "Yees, Sare," when he has given an order in his best French. Now this meal at 11 A.M. is not an English lunch, but is the French *déjeuner à la fourchette*. Is it becoming the common practice in hotels on the Continent? If so, the English will soon remember that they don't come abroad for lunch—they can "lunch" well enough at home—but they do come abroad for *déjeuner à la fourchette*, and, if they do not get it, they will stay away.

Mees "O'Shocking!"

"It's confoundedly insulting!" exclaims Puller, indignantly. "Do they think we don't know what a *déjeuner à la fourchette* means? But, dash it, you know," he goes on, in the tone of a man whom a very little more of this sort of treatment would disgust with life generally, "they're making everybody abroad so English." Then he repeats, "So English, you know," in imitation of some American burlesque actor, and this has the effect of restoring his good humour. He thinks the quotation so apt and so humorous, that he expands in chuckles, and goes out of the *salle-à-manger* doing a step, and repeating, "So English, you know!" The French, Spanish, and the visitors of various nationalities, shake their heads, shrug their shoulders, and evidently hope he is harmless. The waiters smile, and this reassures the guests.

The special merit of the Royat Drinking Waters and Baths consists in the large amount of iron contained in them. Over the gates of the Park at Royat, where the *Etablissement* and *Buvettes* are situated, should be inscribed, for the benefit of English visitors, "Washing and Ironing done here."

The Cravate au Moulin.

The Uncertain Bather.—My acquaintance Mordel is another variety of the genus *baigneur*. He is dissatisfied only with himself. He is perpetually having a row with himself. The Hotel is good enough, he says; the Doctor is all that can be desired. The baths and waters are managed very well; but the question is, he says to himself, "Was I right in coming here at all? Ought I not to have gone to Aix? or to Vichy? or to Homburg? or to Mont Dore, or to La Bourboule?" "Well, but"—I say to him, with a view to reconciling him to himself—"are the waters doing you good?" He reluctantly admits that they are not doing him any harm—as yet. In this state of uncertainty he remains during the whole course of treatment, and, to the last, he is of opinion that he ought to have gone to some other place, no matter where.

It is a real pleasure to see Smith, of the Colosseum Club, meet Brown, also a member of the same sociable institution. He greets Brown heartily,—never was

so glad to see anybody. Yet they are anything but inseparables in London; and it certainly was not owing to Smith's good offices that Brown was elected to the Colosseum. Brown has just arrived at Royat, and is not so effusive at the sight of Smith, as Smith, who has been here ten days, is on beholding Brown. "Thompson's here, so's Jones," Smith tells Brown, beamingly. "Are they?" returns Brown, who recognises the names as those of eminent Colosseum men. "And now," exclaims Smith, heartily, "in the evening we can have a rubber!" This was why Smith was so overjoyed at meeting Brown; not because he was an old friend, not even because he was a member of the same social set, but because *he would make a fourth*! "You'll want a rubber," adds Smith, cajolingly. "If he does," interposes Puller, in excellent spirits this morning, "he'll have to go to Aix-les-Bains. They don't do the *massage* here. Aix is the place for Rubbers." The joke falls among us like a bombshell, and the group disperses, each wondering how long Puller is going to remain at Royat. His movements may govern our own!

Uneventful! General Boulanger has called here to-day. No, not on me, but on a noble English poet, who is staying at the Continental. From the portrait in the *Salon* I should have expected a fine fellow of six feet high, rather Saxon and swaggery. Had he resembled his portrait I should not have believed in him. Now I do. There is hope for Boulanger. He is a short man. Napoleon was a short man. "*Il grandira!*"

Encore des Pensées.—"There is a time to talk, and a time to be silent." The first occasion is, when I have something to say, and an audience to say it to; the other is, when I don't feel well, and hate everybody equally. Puller, when high-spirited, cannot understand this. Undergoing these Royat Waters, Puller and myself are on a see-saw. When he is up, I am down, and *vice versâ*. After trying to breakfast together, and to be mutually accommodating, which is done in the most disagreeable manner possible, we separate, on account of incompatibility of temper. Temporarily our relations are strained. This only applies to the morning. I want to be quiet in the morning, and detest early liveliness. Jane and myself, in future, breakfast together at our own time, and at our own table, in a corner. (And this is also within the first seven days of the *traitement*.)

By the way, what a chance of *réclame* I lost on the occasion of Boulanger's visit. It never occurred to me till too late. I ought to have been at the front door, awaiting his departure. At the moment of his leaving, I should have left too. Then the report could have been spread about that I had "gone out with" General Boulanger. How astonished M. Ferry would have been. "Quite a Fairy tale for him," says Puller, who wishes to exhibit his acquaintance with the proper French pronunciation of M. Ferry's name.

The dear Old Things who won't have a Door or Window open in our small Salle-à-manger.

The Twenty-Second Morning.—I shall give myself three days' leave of absence, and revisit La Bourboule and Le Mont Dore. These two places are higher up in the mountains of Auvergne.

La Bourboule Revisited.—Very beautiful the line of country between Royat and La Bourboule. But the latter is an out-of-the-way place as compared with Royat, which has the great advantage of being within a quarter of an hour's ride, or walk, of such a real good town as Clermont-Ferrand, whereas La Bourboule and Mont Dore are an hour-and-a-half's drive each of them from their own station, Laqueuille, which is nothing more than a mere country railway station, with a simple buffet, and four hours from Clermont-Ferrand, which I suppose is the market town, and certainly the only place of any importance to which one can go, "there and back again," in a long day.

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Of course the descendants of Balbus, who "*murum ædificavit" in* our old Latin Grammar—(Are Balbus and Caius still at it in the Grammars of the present day?)—could not leave La Bourboule alone, and villas have been springing up in every direction. Shops, too. Already one side of a Boulevard has been commenced, represented by half-a-dozen superior shops, one of which, it is needless to say, is a sweet-stuff emporium, and another a Tabac. Then they've a Hotel de Ville at La Bourboule. In our time there was only a solitary Gendarme, in full cocked-hat and sword, who, as an official, was a failure, but, as a playmate of the children, and a friend of the bonnes, was a decided success. He looked well, and inspired the stranger on his arrival. But the feeling of awe soon wore off. Perhaps he, also, was a *baigneur*. Invalid Gendarmes might be usefully employed in this manner, their imposing appearance at various watering-places would inspire confidence, while they might be benefiting their physique. Policemen could be also effectively used in this way. "Recruiting Sergents-de-ville" they might be called, engaged in recruiting their own health.

A storm of rain and wind swept us out of La Bourboule—we subsequently heard that there was snow at Mont Dore—and drove us post-haste back to Royat warmth—comparative warmth, that is, for they were having two or three cold, rainy, and gusty days at Royat, too, preceding the day fixed for the Eclipse. But such weather is bearable at Royat, if you have once experienced it at La Bourboule. The valley of Royat is fairly high up, and well sheltered; but as to the situation of La

Bourboule and Mont Dore, one may say, reversing the quotation, "And in the highest heights a higher still!" "Only not, by any means still," says PULLER, who knows the country, and whom no inducement will lead away from Royat.

I have mapped out a short tour by way of return from Royat, which is at the disposition of anyone who is preparing to make himself a *baigneur* and a *titulaire* next season.

My *itinéraire* is this: London to Paris, taking care to travel by the *Empress* from Dover to Calais. Inquire beforehand at the L. C. and D. Station. Victoria. Go by the A.M. Dine in Paris at 8·30. In a forthcoming little work I contemplate benefiting the travelling public generally with a few useful details, of which these are only hints. Paris next morning, to Clermont-Ferrand, for Royat. At Royat, I should naturally recommend the Hotel I know best. This is the Continental. It may change hands next year; if it changes hands, it changes heads at the same time, and my advice may or may not be useful.

Stay at Royat for cure; visit—as excursions easily done in a day, when you're in fettle—La Bourboule and Mont Dore. For all information, ask the most civil of men, and the most obliging, the agent, who has an office in a line with the few shops situated on the upper terrace of the Parc. He will tell you everything—and be delighted to do it.

By the way, when once you've settled your tour, take my advice, and visit Messrs. COOK, of Ludgate Circus. Provide yourself with all your tickets beforehand. It will save you a heap of trouble afterwards. Too many Cooks can't spoil your journey, as you will take them on the "play or pay" system, and it binds you to nothing, except, in case of not using them, a slight discount; whereas, on the other hand, it helps the person who is at all "infirm of purpose" to make up his mind, and keeps him to his original plan, which any experienced traveller will agree with me in saying, is, nine times out of ten, the wisest and best course to pursue. Of this more anon in my forthcoming *parvum opus* on this and cognate subjects.

Royat (if you are a *baigneur*, recommended here by your Doctor) is an easy place to get to, and to get away from. My friend SKURRIE, who, immediately he has arrived at any place, passes all his time there in consulting guide-books, maps, *Bradshaws*, COOK'S tourist books, and local *indicateurs*, with a view to see how he can best get away, comes to me with a paper full of closely-written details, and says, "Here's my plan:—Royat, Lyon (why do we put an 's' on to it, and make it 'Lyons?' it would be as sensible for the French to call Liverpool 'Liverpools,' or Manchester 'Manchesters.' And why can't the French call London 'London,' instead of 'Londres?') —then Aix-les-Bains (for a *massage*, and an excursion or two) ... then Geneva. This is, if you've got time to spare. If not, in a week you can make a really refreshing tour by pushing on from Lyon to Geneva, to Bâle, to Heidelberg, to Mainz, down the Rhine to Cologne, then Antwerp, Flushing, Queenborough. This will complete your week, and you will return to England with a store of variety to last you a year."

VALUABLE MEM. FOR A CERTAIN ARCHITECT IN HIS NEXT BUILDING OPERATION.—"To construct a much-more-*Exiter* Theatre than the one recently destroyed by fire."

OUR ADVERTISERS.

THEATRICAL AND RE-ASSURING.

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE.—The sole Lessee and Manager begs to inform his patrons, the public, that he has left no stone unturned to render it by a long way.

THE SAFEST THEATRE IN THE TWO HEMISPHERES. The mere perusal of the advertisements appearing in the daily press, furnishing the intending audience with a complete handbook of escape in the event of any sudden catastrophe, must, he feels, afford them.

REAL PLEASURE, which, owing to the precautionary measures he has taken for their protection, they may genuinely experience when securing their places for a performance in the unique fireproof auditorium.

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE EXITS.—A hop, skip and a jump will take any member of the audience from any part of the house directly into the street outside in five seconds.

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE has all its doors taken off their hinges the moment the performance commences.

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE possesses concrete Stalls.

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE, has its private boxes constructed with perforated shower-bath ceilings that drench the occupants without ceasing the entire evening.

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE.—An "Apprehensive Playgoer" writes:—"We were in one continual downpour from the rising of the Curtain to its fall; and though we are all still suffering from rheumatism, our party was enabled, with the aid of umbrellas and waterproofs, to enjoy the evening's entertainment with a sense of security that was as novel as it was refreshing."

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE.—The Management provides everyone paying at the doors with a Fire-Escape, that can be left outside, and a Life Assurance Policy, available for the duration of the evening's entertainment.

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE has, in every gangway, a steam fire-engine served by a fully-equipped complement of members of the London Fire Brigade, who inspire the audience with confidence by, from time to time, playing on portions of them with a five-inch hose.

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE.—People recommended a cold *douche* by their medical adviser, cannot do better than secure a front seat in the upper boxes.

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE is provided with cast-iron scenery, and has, as its Stage Manager, a retired Fire-King.

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE is surrounded by a network of balconies, affording access, by iron staircases, to the roofs of all the adjacent houses in the neighbourhood.

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE has in effect no walls, and is practically all "Exit."

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE can be virtually emptied before a checktaker could say "Jack Robinson!"

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE.—A "Nervous First-Nighter" writes: "Being seized the other evening in the middle of the front row of the stalls with a purely private and personal, but uncontrollable panic, I rushed from my place, and made with all the haste I could command for the street. Though, in my hurry I found it necessary to have a couple of vigorous fights of several rounds each with two box-keepers in succession, which resulted in my being eventually removed from the house, struggling with three policemen, six refreshment-stall-keepers, and nine firemen, it only took me twenty-seven minutes and a half from the time I started from my place inside till I found myself deposited in the midst of a jeering crowd on the steps of the principal entrance."

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE will set up chronic lumbago in the Dress Circle.

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE is the dampest Public Lounge in Europe.

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE may be visited freely by pleasure-seekers, in whom, as Members of Burial Clubs, their families take a lively interest.

REAL PLEASURE, to be experienced nightly by those who pay a visit to

THE ROYAL UNINFLAMMABLE THEATRE, affording the only recognised Incombustible Entertainment on record.

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WANTED, A THESEUS;

Or, The Betting Centaurs of the Race-Course and the Cinder-Path.

Half-man, half-horse! A fitting blend indeed
To type the monster of a modern breed,

SEA-SIDE WEATHER STUDIES. STORMY. THREE PIC-NIC PARTIES SUDDENLY INTERRUPTED BY THE RAIN.

The mongrel thing, half Houyhnhnm to the view,
But fouler than the Swiftian Yahoo,
Who makes the race-course rascaldom's resort,
And shames the manliest scenes of British Sport.

Sport? The Cad-Centaur hath as little sense
Of the fine joy to which he makes pretence,
The English glorying in a fair-fought fight,
A well-run race, a show of speed or sleight,
As of the love that males of British breed
Moves in the presence of a gallant steed.
No Sportsman's fervour his; he never thrills
To the contagious sentiment that fills
The solid Saxon when, with thundering stride,
Ormonde and *Minting* struggle side by side;
When Cam and Isis prow to prow contend;
When GEORGE and CUMMING strain from end to end
Of the long cinder-path in panting speed;
When wheelmen swift alternate lag and lead;
When white-plumed yachts spread emulative wings
To the salt wind that through the cordage sings;
When Notts and Surrey fight for pride of place,
Or the ring cheers the "many-centuried" GRACE.
Bound by his betting-book, the cynic churl—
With coarse-gemmed hands and greasy frontal curl,

When fortune smiles, or frowsy when she frowns
As wolfish waifs that haunt the slums of towns—
Is brute all through and ever; blatant, base,
"Rough" in his speech, and rascal in his face;
A radiant rowdy now when some base stroke
Of juggling skill has flushed him; now "stone-broke,"
Black-hearted, beetle-browed, true gaolbird type,
Reeling and reeking, ever ruffian-ripe
For any coward act of ruthless greed
That craft may scheme, or violence may speed.

Curse of the race-course and the cinder-path!
Roughdom no dirtier, darker danger hath,—
Roughdom, that gulf of guilt with peril rife,
That lurks beneath our glittering civic life,
Like fires beneath the smiling southern wave,
Which, given volcanic vent, make earth a grave
And sea a sepulchre. Top bold it grows
In the neglect of its appointed foes,
The modern Fenris-wolf whose ravening maw

Needs muzzling with the Gleipner-chain of Law.
Eurytus at the banquet gorged with glee;
"Most savage of the savage Centaurs," he,
As Ovid sings. Pirithous, lulled to trust,
Forgot the secret strength the lurking lust,
Until wine-freed and fury-fired they broke,
From sleek civility's too slender yoke;
Then tables overset, and feast disturbed,
Destructiveness unleashed, and wrath uncurbed,
"The appearance of a captured city," lent
To the late scene of concord and content;
Then disappointed craft and thwarted greed,
Broke law's frail barriers like a trampled reed,
And the tumultuous storm of wild desire,
Found vent in rioting force and ravening fire.

Is there no moral in the classic tale?
Let vigilance but sleep and vigour fail,
Authority of prescience be bereft,
And, like Hippodamia, Law is left
To battling, fierce brute forces, prone to blood,
Civilisation's coarser Centaur-brood.
Of old the heroes conquered. At the stroke
Of angered Theseus' club of knotted oak,
The Centaurs feared and fled toward the sea,
Pursued by the triumphant Lapithæ,
Law's Lapithæ lay prone in our late fray.
Do we not need a Theseus then to-day?

NOT A "DEUS EX MACHINÂ."

Some philosophers are very anxious to demonstrate that man is a mere Automaton. A man, however, can at any rate be regulated, and, at need, "run in," which it seems that the Automatic Cigarette and Sweetmeat Machines now so much in vogue cannot. Naughty little boys are convicted of beguiling them of Butter Scotch by means of discs of card and base metal, instead of coins of the realm. On the other hand the Automata are charged with absorbing the coppers of honest would-be purchasers without rendering up the proper portion of Toffee or Tobacco. Machines which are at once dishonest themselves and the cause of dishonesty in others can hardly be looked upon as an improvement upon living vendors, who if they have little conscience to appeal to, have at least persons to be punished.

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HYGIENIC.

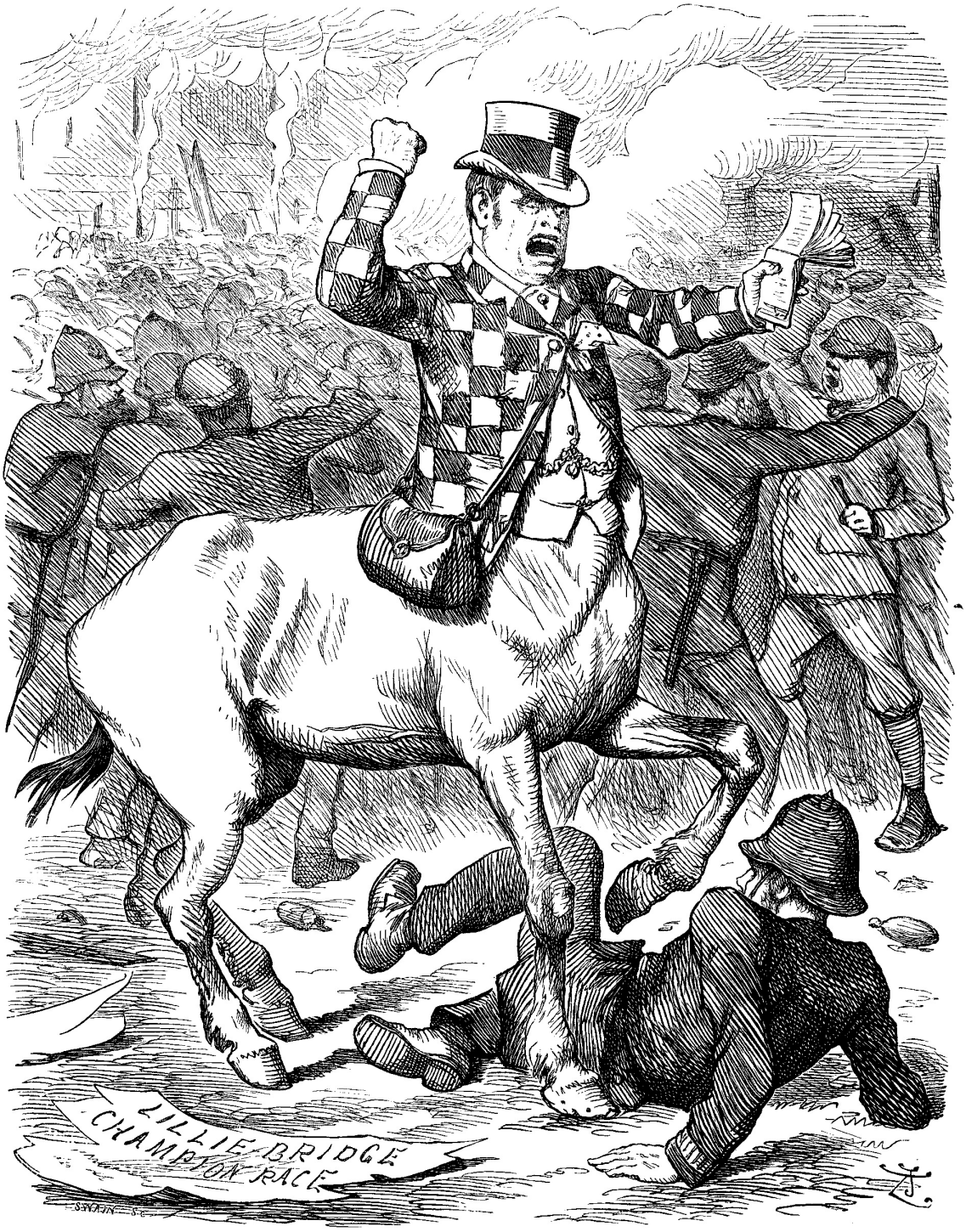
No; that sickly-looking child that you notice entering the Board School is not, as you imagine, "pining for the fresh air of the country." He is recovering from an acute attack of scarlet fever, and is described by his fond parent as "peeling wonderful."

"Why does the medical man who attends the case,"—you ask—"not give instant notice to the Local Sanitary Authority, the Parish Doctor, the School Board Officials, and the nearest Fever Hospital?" Because self-preservation (or preserving a case for oneself) is the first law of nature, and also because in London neither the registration nor the isolation of infectious disease is considered at all essential.

Of course it is to be regretted that some of the fever patients who were taken the other day first to the West London Hospital in Hammersmith, then to the London Fever Hospital, and afterwards to Stockwell, and who finally—as those institutions were quite full—spent the night in a draughty corridor of the Homerton work-house, should have collapsed owing to exhaustion; but then what an admirable thing it is that there should be so many places for the reception—or rejection—of patients, and that they should be scattered all over the Metropolis!

It is really rather irritating that the laundress, whose services we have had to dispense with owing to five of her children being down with typhus, should call us "selfish" and "finicking," and threaten to summon us to the Police Court for interfering with her business.

Yes, a trip by steamer on the Thames can be confidently recommended to delicate persons in search of health. Wrap the whole face in cotton-wool, which has previously been soaked in some powerful disinfectant. Get the man at the wheel to sprinkle your clothing every ten minutes with the anti-cholera mixture. When passing "Barking Outfall," be particularly careful to go below, and keep your head completely buried in a basin containing a mixture of smelling salts in solution and Eau de Cologne. Beyond a sore throat for a week or two, you will probably—thanks to these precautions—experience no evil results.



WANTED, A THESEUS; OR, THE BETTING CENTAUR.

SUBJECT FOR A GRAND HISTORICAL CARTOON.

THE SULTAN IMPLORING MR. PUNCH NOT "TO TAKE HIM OFF."
(See Daily papers.)

ALL IN PLAY.

My Dear Mr. Punch,

I think, however pleased you may look in your stall while listening to the charming music of Mr. Cellier in *The Sultan of Mocha*, you will agree with me that that gifted gentleman has been most unfortunate in the selection of his *librettos*. *Dorothy* was certainly feeble, but the revived opera at the Strand is feebler still. I admit that the work is well staged, equally as to scenery, dresses, and *mise-en-scène*, but the plot and the dialogue are unworthy of serious criticism. When the curtain rose upon a capital "set" of the Thames near Greenwich Hospital, when there were a lively chorus and a pretty dance, I imagined I was "in" for what other occupants of the stalls would have called "a real good thing." But the characters had only to talk to cause a sense of depression to envelope me, that nearly moved me to tears. Ponderous allusions to such recent "topics" as Lord Charles Beresford's signal from the Royal Yacht at the Naval Review, the Endacott matter and Turkish impecuniosity now and again attracted my attention, and I felt that I would give worlds to slumber as does the hero in the Third Act who appropriately sings himself to sleep. But Mr. Cellier's music made a success of *Dorothy*, and it is not impossible that "the movement may be continued" in the *Sultan of Mocha*. Of those who take part in the performance I may single out Mr. Charles Danby as fairly amusing. I do not remember to have seen him before, and it is to be trusted that the applause of a London audience will not cause him to favour a policy of exaggeration. So far he is good—not too good (as Mr. Brough was wont to amusingly observe), but just good enough. The voice of Miss Violet Cameron is as strong as ever, but at times I traced a *tremolo* that might wisely be abandoned. Mr. C. H. Kenney has good intentions, and no doubt some day will be seen and heard to greater advantage. I was not surprised to learn from the playbill that as the *Sultan* Mr. Ernest Birch was making "his first appearance." Of the remainder of the cast, Mr. Bracy sang well and acted fairly as "a heart of oak," and the sailors, villagers, and slaves were sufficiently comely to satisfy the requirements of a Strand audience met together to enjoy an *opéra bouffe*.

A new *lever de rideau* added to the programme of the Globe has called attention to the merry moments of *The Doctor*. From the first this piece went wonderfully well—now it goes better than ever. The house is nightly full of patients, who seem willingly to give themselves over to what I may call "the laughter cure and joke treatment."

Dandy Dick has moved from the Court to King William Street, Strand. Mr. Clayton, capital as the Dean, and Mrs. John Wood inimitable, exquisite, everything-superlative as the lady horse-owner. Mr. Bishop now plays Mr. Arthur Cecil's part in a manner that reduces our regret at the absence of his predecessor to a minimum.

A wonderful piece called *Racing*, by the "Great Macdermott," is being performed at Islington. It is

composed of a mixture of Comedy and Tragedy. Both ingredients are equally funny.

Removing my *gibus*, and laying down my programmes and opera-glasses, I again sign myself One Who Has Gone to Pieces.

GARDEN TALK.

As arranged for the neighbourhood of the Round Pond under existing circumstances.

Can this be Kensington Gardens, or is it Tophet? This perfume is scarcely suggestive of flowers.
How nicely this little girl is burying the dead cat.
What a game at hide and seek those boys in white sailor suits are having in that reeking garbage.
It is strange, but the morning breeze is laden with *Bacteria*.
Why, that is the fifth dust-cart that has emptied its contents here this afternoon.
How merrily the dustmen are spreading the refuse over the surface of the grass.
The haggard Park-keeper seems to be growing paler and palerevery day.
I wonder why that entire family of children have broken out into green spots.
Who would have thought that the baby that had been brought
here for a little fresh air would have turned blue in the perambulator!
Who is really responsible for the conversion of an open pleasure-ground into a deadly centre for the dissemination of fever?

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A PRETTY KETTLE OF FISH.

"The King of the Belgians is understood to be acting as his own Ambassador in the matter of the North Sea Fishery disputes. His visit to this country is stated to have for its object the prevention of future conflicts between British and Belgian fishermen in the North Sea."—Times.

Mr. Punch. Ah happy to see you, *mon Chef*! Here's a mess!

You'll soon put it all straight, Sir; you couldn't do less.
Your people you'll find are entirely to blame
For the kettle o'erboiling, the steam and the flame.
What is there in fish that in every quarter
So leads—in non-natural sense—to hot water?
And why should a Billingsgate dame, or a trawler,
Or Belgian or British, so oft be a brawler?
A Saint once held forth, Sir, the fishes to teach.
What a sermon to us, Sir, the fishes might preach!
The sea's lavish harvest was certainly sent
Man's palate to please, and his hunger content;
Not, *not*, my dear *Chef*, as mere strife-stirring spoil
His kitchen to slop, and his cooks to embroil.
Verb. sap.—you are sapient, I know, like your Sire—
And—you'll take this strange "kettle of fish" off the fire!

"Mighty Polite."—Last week Mr. Harrington, Barrister-at-Law (in Ireland), was called to account by Mr. Eaton, and threatened with removal from the Court over which that Magistrate presided, for conduct unworthy of a Counsel. Had "the learned gentleman" had the advantage of the influence of another Eton earlier in his career, his manners would doubtless have been less deficient in polish.

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(NOT AT ALL) BAD HOMBURG.

Travel Notes, from the Diary of Toby, M.P.

Thursday.—Homburg emptying and re-filling; but former process decidedly winning race. Change in class of company moreover striking. Natural order of things here reversed. The butterfly disappears and the grub succeeds. Now have come to us young men and maidens from the country. Elderly burgesses, wives and families from Frankfort, Coblentz and more distant Cologne. Prices specially designed for English falling away. Principal hotels humbly proffer pension at ten marks a day, and proprietors are accused of rapacity by their fellow-countrymen.

At *table d'hôte* last night at Hotel Russie, overheard one of those "things one would rather not have said," feigned by the fancy of English Artist of world-wide renown. Gentleman of distinguished appearance opens conversation with lady on his left:

He. "Homburg still seems very full."

She. "Yes, but they're a horrid lot now arriving compared with those who have just left; doncha think so?"

He. "Really, Madam, I cannot say, as I reached here only this afternoon." Pause in conversation.

Friday.—There are compensations for everything. Weather has not permanently recovered earthquake-breaking-up on day of our arrival. Still sun occasionally comes out, making it worth while to be on foot at seven o'clock in the night, when the sky is an unclouded arc of blue, and the sun sparkles on dewy grass. Pleasant then at noon, or afternoon, to stroll about under the lindens in the Park, still full of leaves, or to lounge in Tennis grounds watching the play. Oftener it is cold and rainy, and here's where philosophic mind finds its recompense. Homburg perhaps most open-windowed town north of Alps. On sunny days not a window in any house closed. Every home has its piano, more or less in tune. Every piano has its relays of players. Pianist at No. 14A, Untere Promenade, cannot help hearing pianiste next door, and plays loud to hold the field. Next door hears practitioner on other side, and plays louder still; so it goes on all up and down the street. Here and there the uproar is pierced by the shrill voice of a singer. It is the same in the next street, and in the street after, till all Homburg becomes a Pandemonium of piano-pounding. Now I sit in my room, with windows closed, listening with gratitude to the pelting rain and the soughing of the wind through the dripping trees. All other windows are necessarily closed, and above wind and rain is audible undertone of universal piano-playing, like the sound of a barrel-organ in far-off back-street. Perhaps not quite worth while coming all the way to Homburg for; but I like to make best of things.

Monday.—His Serene and Blind Highness still here, dutifully taking waters, and pluckily striding forth to complete regulation-turns. No one would guess at his affliction, except upon close observation. A photographic portrait of him on view in one of the Studios here, in which he looks forth open-eyed as keenest-sighted of his subjects; a kindly, genial, brave-hearted gentleman. All unconscious, he is made the occasion for a little satire on Royalty which would have delighted Thackeray. To him ladies, entering into passing conversation, curtsey; gentlemen doff their hats; and *Jeames de la Pluche* stands bare-headed as he hands him glass of water from spring. It is horrible to think that Jeames might, with impunity—there being no on-lookers—shake his fist playfully in his Royal Master's face. Hope he never takes base advantage of his opportunities. But there is a look in Jeames's eye, as he hands the glass of water, which melikes not.

Tuesday.—Between one and two in afternoon of revolving days, great centre of life in Homburg is Madame Brahe's little shop in Louisen-strasse; little only on first glance: contains unsuspected recesses in rear, whither surplus population flows. A model place for light luncheon such as Dr. Deetz ordains: also for English visitors convenient exchange and mart for latest gossip and display of newest dresses. Whilst season in full tide, Madame Brahe's painfully reminiscent of Bourse at Paris. Evil communications have wrought proverbial effect; Germans feared throughout Europe by reason of their conversational shouting; but English ladies, and some gentlemen, met for luncheon *chez* Madame Brahe, might give them odds and beat them. Three or four girls, decently spoken at home one hopes, seated at small table here, carry on conversation at top of voice; many small tables, and as many friendly parties; one group not to be shouted down by a neighbour. British ladies never acknowledge defeat; competition kept up all round, till, dazed and deafened, the stray traveller gulps down luncheon and rushes into street.

Wednesday.—Homburg really not Bad at all, but best part of it lies outside. To the north are delightful walks through illimitable beech woods and pathless pine forests. Messrs. Blanc, who created the place, knew very well ruling passion of gamester. The green tables, the sound of the roulette ball, the pattern on the cards, and the brilliantly-lighted Casino, only ostensibly attractions for him. What his heart desires is opportunity for communing with Nature. The solemn silence of the beech wood, the fragrance of the pines, the modest beauty of the wild flowers that gem the edges of the wood, are what he really hankers for. So Messrs. Blanc took surrounding country in hand; planted splendid pine woods with delightful footpaths, with

benches wooing the pensive and wearied traveller.

Walked to-day by devious shady ways to Friedrichsdorf, a few miles out; a quaint old-world village of charmingly-tiled houses, straggling down a villanously paved street. Only one street in Friedrichsdorf, but more in it than meets the eye. Houses have way of playing hide-and-seek; you look up passage that seems entry to back of premises, when, lo! there lurks a complete house, with tiny casement-windows, and graciously-sloped red-tiled roof. JESSIE COLLINGS ought to know Friedrichsdorf, and Right Hon. RITCHIE would find in it encouragement for Amended Allotments Bill. It is, like many other villages hereabout, home of colony of small land-proprietors. All the rich and smiling country that lies around is theirs. Passed them working in the fields, men and women, comfortably dressed, sturdy, and apparently happy as day is long. Every man has at least his three acres, many more; the cow is also there, but is chiefly in shaft of cart or plough. As we picked way down awesome street, Friedrichsdorf, save for few children and old men, seemed deserted village; all able-bodied inhabitants at work in field. By-and-by, when sun goes down, they come trooping home, tramping down stony street, a jocund throng.

Thursday.—Rain departed; for days in succession Homburg been at its best; almost seems like early spring, save that we still have roses; sun shining in cloudless sky, trees still rich in foliage; grass thick and green, with here and there abundant crocuses. Still emptying process going on with increasing rapidity. "Lawn tennis," writes anonymous author of *Miss Bayle's Romance*, "has become the outdoor dissipation at Homburg, and Dutch Top the indoor one." Only stray couples are left to frequent the courts on the tennis-ground, and the rattle of the Dutch Top is happily silenced. Still the band plays thrice a day. Springs go on like The Brook, and the few who are left begin to think that, after all, Homburg more enjoyable without the crowd than with it.

A STRAIGHT TIP.

"A—a—Boy! Have you seen any Birds about here this Morning?"
"Ees, Zur! I seed a lot of 'em about 'arf an hour back, a sittin' on the Telegraph Woires!"

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SOME NOTES AT STARMOUTH.

Chill-sea.

MY Nautical Drama is not making much progress. Must go more amongst men and things. That is the only way to gain ideas. World full of *dramatis personæ*, who will provide their own dialogue, if you can only find them a good part. Interview old sailor; capital character—the very man to be "discovered drinking," (which must have frequently occurred to him) as curtain rises. Talk to him half-an-hour, but without hearing a single really telling line. Half-a-crown wasted! Pleasure-boat just "putting off,"—which is naturally a dilatory operation—Skipper says they are only waiting for me. I hesitate; does Art demand this sacrifice? Hitherto my voyages have been chiefly confined to journeyings in a penny steamer from Chelsea to Lambeth. But can I reasonably expect to become familiar with marine matters without some actual experience? If M. ZOLA could go and live for weeks down a coal-mine, surely I may trust

myself in a pleasure-boat for one short half-hour? It is only sixpence.

I subdue my diffidence, and embark—that is, I fall over the stern, and stumble to the only vacant seat—a thwart in the middle. Should have *preferred* a place nearer the gunwale.... We are off; boat pretty full, twenty-four passengers, to crew of two boatmen and a cornet-player. People enjoying what they call "a blow on the jetty," wave handkerchiefs to us as we pass. Curious, this blind impulse to wave greetings to perfect strangers—does it spring from vague enthusiasm for humanity? Chatty old gentleman next to me *will* talk: he tells me confidentially that it is a singular thing, but it does so happen that he has never been on the sea without an accident of some sort occurring,—never! There is no superstitious nonsense about him, it seems, so he thought he would "chance it" once more. Very creditable—but more considerate if he would chance it in a canoe. The Cornet-player quite a cockney Arion (though nobody thinks, somehow, of pitching him overboard). He performs appropriate airs during trip. *A Life on the Ocean Wave*, as we start; *Only a Pansy Blossom*, (though I don't see the precise connection of this) as we tack; and the *Harbour Lights*, when we turn. Somehow, this rather vulgarises the Ocean—for me. Sea fortunately smooth: nobody at all unwell. I feel nothing—except perhaps a growing conviction that a very young infant opposite should not be permitted to eat a jam-puff in public. Boatmen use no nautical expressions. Passengers lively at first, though, by time we turn, the expression on our features, like that of young lady who wore the wreath of roses, seems "more thoughtful than before." We are close in now—the musician is sending round his hat. Resent this privately, it is *not* seamanlike! In beaching, yacht swings round with her broadside to breakers, causing sudden wave to drench the Jonah gentleman and myself before we can disembark. He seems rather gratified than otherwise by so apposite an illustration of his ill-luck. The brown-eyed girl on sands watches me alight—on all fours, dripping. Sea-trip a mistake, I feel damped rather than fired.

On the Beach again.—Cheap photographers, galvanic machines, chiropodist, tea-stalls, grim old ladies eating shrimps, as if they were cherries, out of paper bags. Open-air music-hall, where comic songs are shouted from platform by dreary men in flaxen wigs to harmonium—this always crowded. Enjoyment at Starmouth hearty perhaps—but hardly refined. Constantly haunted by song from open-air platform about "The Gurls," with refrain describing how "they squeeze, And they tease. And they soy, 'Oh, what joy!'" (or perhaps it should be—"sigh, 'Oh, what jy!'") Either way, it has hit the popular taste here. I may be prudish—but, even if a couple *are* engaged, it seems to me that a nicer sense of propriety would deter them from dozing in a sand-pit, *coram publico*, with their arms around one another's neck. Nobody thinks anything of this at Starmouth, however.

What a matter of circumstance are our prejudices! I should once have thought that nothing would induce me to drive about on a *char-à-banc*—like one of the band in a circus procession. Yet I have just returned from a drive in one—and enjoyed it!

Lamb-bath.

She—my brown-eyed divinity of the Phrenology lecture—was on one of the seats, which redeemed a drive otherwise prosaic. We went to ruined castle; scenery unpicturesque (she showed, I thought, delicate perception of this by reading *Family Herald* all the way). Starmouth children ran by side of carriage, turning head-over-heels, and gasping comic songs for coppers. Had last glimpse of them standing gratefully in a row on their heads.

We did not alight to see castle, as coachman said there was nothing to see. On way home, conductor made collection on his own account. (The hat is not much worn at Starmouth.) Yet I was happy—I have made *her* acquaintance! Charming as she is beautiful—so simple and *naïve* in the few remarks she made. She is called Louise, and the person I took to be her maid is, it appears, her aunt—a most shrewd and sensible old lady, full of quiet good sense. We became friendly at once.

A Week later.—No time for notes lately—too absorbed in study of Louise's character—most complex and fascinating. Am I drifting into love? Why not—who could help it? The rank she occupies is not, perhaps, a lofty one; but at least there is nothing unfeminine in the duty of providing old ladies and children with light refreshment from behind the counter of an Oxford Street confectioner. And her tastes are refined; she is a gentlewoman by nature and instinct. The lady-phrenologist has delineated her (privately), and declared that Louise "could learn science easily, and play the piano, if she turns her attention that way." As a matter of fact, she has not, because neither science nor the piano is in demand at a confectioner's; but still she undoubtedly possesses a superior intellect; no ordinary girl would enter into the Nautical Drama, for instance, as she does.

"A Blow on the Jetty."

We have been to see *Caste* at the theatre. Louise very grave and critical; she only laughed once, and that was when *Eccles* blew rather loudly down his pipe to clear it. So many girls have an inconvenient sense of humour—quite unsexing, I have always thought.

Her aunt is not precisely patrician in her manner, which would be totally out of place in a Fancy Wool Repository—but, after all, I shall not have to go through any experiences like poor *D'Alroy's*. And I am sure my uncle's heart will warm to Louise at once. Why hesitate, then? I will not.

I have taken the plunge—Louise has consented. She tells me that she was won by my appearance in the Professor's chair, and still more by the character he gave me. How our choicest blessings masquerade! Drama, for the moment, in the background—but only apparently so. Literature has no stimulus like love, and I am constantly talking the play over with Louise. She has made one suggestion that convinces me she has a keen sense of dramatic effect—a hornpipe in one of the Acts. I am to read her the first Scene, as soon as it is put into shape.

Her brother "Alf" is expected down to-night. Louise is certain we shall "take to one another," he has "such spirits," and is "quite a cure." Always thought a "cure" was a kind of jumping clown—but Alf is a clerk in a leading establishment, somewhere in Marylebone—a steady, industrious young fellow, no doubt. However, I shall meet him to-morrow.

I *have* met Alf. Although I love Louise with the first real passion of a lifetime, I cannot disguise from myself that her brother is an unmitigated Blazer. I would almost rather that he did not take to me—but he does. In half an hour he is addressing me as "Old gooseberry-pudden." If he is going to do this often, I shall have to hint that I do not like it.

I have been strolling with him on the sands, where he has already found several of his acquaintance. He *will* introduce me to all of them. Hearty, high-spirited fellows, full of rough but genuine British humour. From the manner in which they all inquire "How my bumps are getting on," I infer they were amongst Professor Skittles' audience the other day. But they mean to be friendly enough—I must not let them see how they annoy me.... It is absurd to be stiff at Starmouth.

THE TYMPANUM.

(*A Remonstrance at a Railway Station.*)

The tympanum! The tympanum!
Oh! who will save the aural drum
By softening to some gentler squeak
The whistle's shrill *staccato* shriek?
Oh! Engine-driver, did you know
How your blast smites one like a blow,
An inward shock, a racking strain,
A knife-like thrust of poignant pain,
Whilst groping through the tunnel murk
You would not with that fiendish jerk
Let out that *sudden* blast of steam
Whose screaming almost makes *us* scream.
Thy whistle weird perchance may be
A sad and sore necessity,
But cannot Law and sense combine
To—well, in short, to draw the line?—
Across the open let it shrill
From moor to moor, from hill to hill,
But in the tunnel's crypt-like gloom,
The Station's cramped reverberant room,
A gentler, *graduated* blast!
Do let it loose, whilst dashing past,
So shall it spare us many a pang;
That dread explosive bursting "bang"
Which nearly splits the aural drum,
The poor long-suffering tympanum!

TRANSCRIBER NOTES:

On page 149, a period was added after "by a long way".

On page 149, a period was added after "he feels, afford them".

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

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