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December 29th 1894, by Various and F. C. Burnand

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Title: Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 107, December 29th 1894

Author: Various

Editor: F. C. Burnand

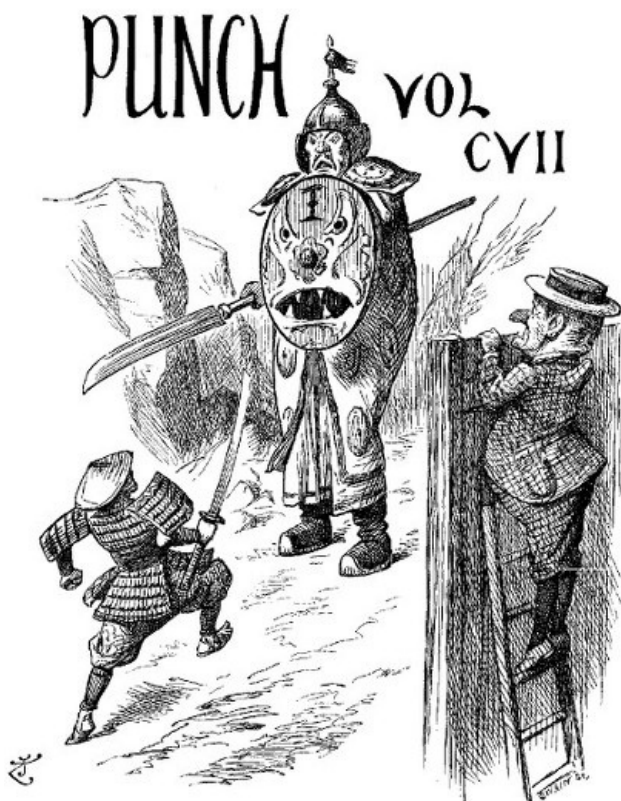
Release date: September 9, 2014 [EBook #46826]

Most recently updated: June 8, 2015

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Malcolm Farmer, Wayne Hammond and the Online
Distributed Proofreading Team at <http://www.pgdp.net>

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI,
VOLUME 107, DECEMBER 29TH 1894 ***



Punch, or the London Charivari

Volume 107, December 29th 1894

edited by Sir Francis Burnand

THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON

(Founded upon the Farce of Christmas Cards.)

Scene—A London Drawing Room. PATERFAMILIAS discovered reading a paper, and MATERFAMILIAS superintending the despatch of a number of cards.

Mater. (in a tone of irritation). I really think, JOHN, that, considering you have nothing earthly to do this afternoon, you might come and help me.

Pater. You have said that twice before, my dear. Don't you see I am enjoying myself?

Mater. So like you! As if you couldn't give up that stupid paper—you declare there's no news in it—and do me a favour!

Pater. (putting down his paper). Well, anything for a quiet life! What is it?

Mater. I am sending a card to Mrs. BROWN.

Pater. (taking up his paper again). Send it.

Mater. My dear JOHN, do attend. I want to know what I shall put into the envelope.

Pater. (giving up paper, and examining Christmas Cards with some vague show of interest). Oh, well—here. (Casually picking up a picture of a country churchyard by moonlight). Won't this be the sort of thing?

Mater. (shocked). How can you, John! Don't you know that Mrs. Brown lost her husband only a year ago?

Pater. Then why are you wishing her "A Merry Christmas"?

Mater. Well, you see she has married again, and so I thought of sending her something with "A Happy New Year" in it.

Pater. (taking up a card showing an owl in an ivy bush). Why not this?

Mater. Well that would be better, but then she might think that the owl was intended for a sneer at her second husband. And then I always like to keep the happy new year cards till Christmas is over, as you can send them afterwards to the people who have remembered you when you have forgotten them.

Pater. But you wouldn't have "A Merry Christmas," and now you object to "A Happy New Year." What do you want?

Mater. Can't you get something impersonal?

Pater. (taking up card). Well, here's a yacht in full sail.

Mater. Oh, how cruel! It will remind her of her cousin who was lost at sea!

Pater. (selecting another sketch). Then why not this bouquet of flowers?

Mater. Not for worlds! One never knows what the flowers may mean, and we might offend her.

Pater. (trying again). Well, here is a windmill.

Mater. My dear John, you are absolutely provoking. A windmill is suggestive of frivolity, and I wouldn't let Mrs. Brown think that we meant *that* on any account.

Pater. (making another selection). Well, here's a parrot in a cage.

Mater. You surely are not serious? Fancy sending such a card! Why, as everyone knows that dear Mrs. BROWN is rather talkative, all the world would say it was an "insult."

Pater. (losing patience). Oh, hang Mrs. BROWN!

Mater. I am ashamed of you, JOHN! And I suppose you would hang the cards, too! You would curse "Merry Christmas."

Pater. (promptly). That I would, and what is more, I would—well never mind—the glad New Year!

[Scene closing in upon an anti-seasonable squabble.]



Disgusted Keeper (who has just beaten up a brace or so of Pheasants, which young Snookson has missed "clane and clever"—to dog, which has been "going seek" and "going find" from force of habit). "AH, RUBY, RUBY, BAD DOG! T' HEEL, RUBY, T' HEEL! AH MUUST APOLOGISE FOR RUBY, SIR. YOU SEE, RUBY'S BEEN ACCUSTOMED TO PICK 'EM UP!"

THREE CHRISTMAS GREETINGS.

Before the fireside's ruddy glow
I sit, and let my thoughts fly free;
Lo, these my Christmas greetings go
To three good friends beyond the sea.
Vain is the winter tempest's wrack,
It cannot keep my greetings back.

Oh wind and rain, and rain and wind,
How purposeless and blind ye are,
Like fate, for fate was surely blind
That bade my three friends range afar.
Like mine, perchance, their fancy strays
To other scenes and distant days.

Dear FRANK, I think I see you now,
My flaxen-haired American,
Brave heart, grey eye, unclouded brow,
Two stalwart yards of wilful man,
How oft in laughter and in song
With you I sped the hours along.

Ah me, the days were all too short,
Too swift the unreturning hours
In that old town of Hall and court,
Of ancient gateways flanked with towers,
Where once we feared the near exam...
And dared the dons, and stirred the Cam.

You went, and now expound the law

(As *Bumble* said, the law's a hass)
And argue, as I note with awe,
For litigants in Boston, Mass. ;
And, though you wear no warlike suit,
They call you "General" to boot.

And, FRED, how fares it now with you
In that drear country of the North?
Too great your needs, your means too few,
A whim of temper drove you forth.
On far Vancouver's shore, alone
You hear the sad Pacific moan.

With us, God wot, you little throve;
Your life all fire, and storm, and fret,
Against relentless fate you strove,
But strove in vain—and yet, and yet
God shapes in storm and fire his plan,
And moulds a world or makes a man.

Good luck be yours on that bleak shore,
Some fortunate, some golden prize;
Then be it mine to see once more
Those friendly, lustrous, Irish eyes.
Return and face with us your fate,
The world is small and England great.

You shall return and fill your place,
But never shall I clasp his hand,
Whose bright and smiling boyish face
Makes sunshine in the shadowland.
Yet shall the night my heart beguile,
And let me dream I see him smile.

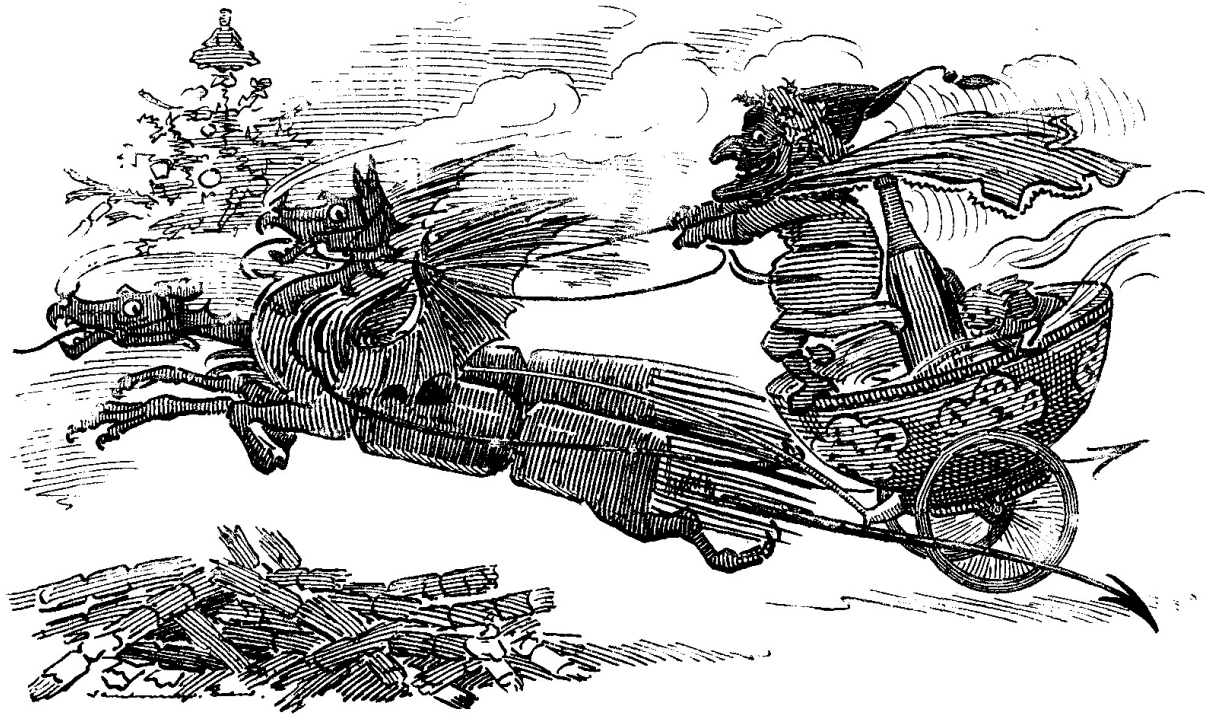
Your voice I may not hear again,
Oh dear and unforgotten friend,
Beloved, but ah! beloved in vain,
Whom love could mourn, but not defend.
Still take, though far and lost you dwell,
My love, dear HUGH, and so farewell.

And thus before the fireside's glow
I sit and let my thoughts fly free;
Lo, these my Christmas greetings go
To three good friends beyond the sea;
To FRANK, to FRED, and ah, to you,
Beloved, irrevocable HUGH.

MR. PUNCH'S CHRISTMAS BOXES.

To Japan.—A piece of china.
To China.—A japanned hot-water can.
To Russia.—A slice of turkey.
To Turkey.—A russia bag.
To the French Republic.—A napoleon or a louis.
To Hawaii.—A sovereign.
To the King of Spain.—Half a sovereign.
To Don Carlos.—A crown.
To King Milan.—Half a crown.
To the German Emperor.—A few notes, and a good mark (for attention to harmony).
To Mr. Labouchere.—An antique noble.

"SOUND CRITICS."—Musical ones.



A CHRISTMAS IDYLL.

THE SNAPDRAGON GALOP.]

TO PHILADELPHIA.

To Resolve his Doubt.

I have no passion to bestow,
My heart no more can beat
Like the caged bird that to and fro
Flutters your hand to greet.

In a sad peace no raptures stir
My twilight years have set,
Embalming but in bitter myrrh
All I cannot forget.

When hope is dead, and sweet desire
And love's brief April rains,
Only the spirit to inquire
Unconquered still remains.

'Tis that that bows my soul; although
I'm prostrate at your feet,
Only because I want to know—
That's why I ask you, sweet!

SUGGESTED TITLE.—GEORGE NEWNES brings out *Zigzags at the Zoo*, writ by MORRISON and drawn most humorously by the Gentle SHEPHERD. A good title would have been *Fore-Newnes at the Zoo*.

A DOG ON HIS DAY.

(A Pitiful Epistle from Pongo to Mr. Punch at Christmastide.)

Every dog has his day—so they say,—
 And mine it seems comes round once a year.
 When all the painter fellows mix their blacks and browns and yellows,
 And paint me, in some attitude that's queer,
 And unnatural, and silly; spilling milk or supping skilly;
 With a bonnet or a bib on, or tied up in bows of ribbon!
 Oh, the Dogs' "Decline and Fall" might inspire a doggish Gibbon!
 And they make me most unhappy, and my temper sharp and snappy,
 Do these pictures poor and pappy. I'm a decent doggish chappie,
 But in gaudy Christmas Numbers, watching o'er the sloppy slumbers
 Of a baby pink and podgy; or squatting scared and stodgy,
 Like a noodle of a poodle—oh! its really wretched foodle!—
 At a beetle or a frog staring wildly, in a fog,
 Or lapping baby's custard, or refusing baby's mustard,
 Or dress'd up like a guy, or winking t'other eye,
 In a gown, trimmed with down, like a clown,
 Or coquetting with a cat,
 Or chasing that old rat
 Down that everlasting hole in the stable! On my soul,
 A dog as is a dog, and not a duffer,
 When the Yuletide pictures come is bound to suffer
 Endless agonies of shame at the loss of his good name
 As the sionsie friend of man, and a watchful guar-di-an,
Not an adjunct of the nursery!
 At this happy anniversary
 (*Mr. Punch*)
 I could cr-r-r-runch!
 The daubers who malign me, and such stupid rôles assign me.
Why, it's worse than hydrophoby!!!
Mr. Punch, do turn on Toby,
 As our champion canine to request each painter chap
 To turn off the old stale tap of the porridge and the pap, and the
 baby in the cap, or the kid (who needs a slap) and the pug (not
 worth a rap) in an apoplectic nap, the toy-terrier on the snap, or
 a-sniffing at a trap, or essaying milk to lap, like a small pot-bellied
 Jap; and all the old clap-trap
 Which makes a decent doggy in sheer desperation say
 That he'd rather be a kitten with a ball and string to play,
 Or live on clockwork rats, or make breakfast on chopped hay,
 Or be smeared all o'er with mustard like a cold beef sandwich,—Aye!
 Or—*whisper!*—Bite a Baby!!—on the nose!! in nursery play!!!
 Better dare renewed distemper than another Christmas Day!!
 For unless I have your promise—and dear Toby's—I much fear
 I must spend a pappy Christmas and a yappy New Year!

AN AFTERPART À LA L. C. C.

As the L. C. C. have taken in hand the morals of the music halls, and shown an inclination to supersede the Lord Chamberlain, it may be as well to publish a rough sketch of a specimen scene from the afterpart of a pantomime for the guidance of theatrical managers desirous of standing well with the successors to the members of the Metropolitan Board of Works. The "opening" would, of course, be written by "a serious bard with a mission." No doubt the story would be told in a manner most productive to the manufacture of prigs. The transformation over, Clown, Pantaloon, Harlequin and Columbine would be discovered in a group.

Clown (in the conventional tone). Here we are again!

Bumble (representing the L. C. C.). Scarcely. Allow me to point out that in future you will be entirely different.

Clown (as before). Come along, old'un; let's make a butter slide.

Bumble. You must permit me to interpose. The Council cannot recognise any practical joke of the kind. If you wish to have the same sort of fun, pull up the streets in the most frequented thoroughfares in the metropolis—the Strand and Fleet Street for choice.

Clown (as before). Oh, here's a baby! Let's smash it!

Bumble. Please accept my advice. The Council do not object to the keeping down of babies in the abstract. But personal violence is contrary to the law. If you really wish to decrease the surplus population, why not work it to death at a board-school? It may be a slower process than throwing

it over a lamp-post, but the incident will be truer to life, and therefore more convincing.

Clown (as before). Oh! old 'un, here's a peeler coming!

Bumble. Pray be under no apprehension. Until the Police Force is placed under the direct control of the Council, the members will do their best to protect you. It stands to reason that a great community like London should have its own guardians under its own direct control.

Clown (as before). And now let's jump through this building.

Bumble. Again I must put my veto upon your proceedings. If you were to jump through that wall no doubt a placard would appear bearing the legend "Somersault Place." This might be apt, but no change in the nomenclature of the streets can be permitted without the direct sanction of Spring Gardens.

Clown (as before). And now let's pelt this house, and all who's in it!

Bumble. Stop, stop! You are attacking our own sacred building. (*To Harlequin.*) Will you be so good as to change the *locale*. (*Harlequin strikes building, which turns into the Mansion House.*) Now you may do what you please. For the Corporation of the City of London is so effete that we have no sympathy for it!

[*Scene of bustle and confusion, and curtain.*]

NEW MUSICAL WORK: *Leading Strings*.—If it isn't a title it ought to be for the biographies of celebrated violinists from Paganini to Joachim.

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THOSE LANCERS.

Pretty partner, how are you
After such a set of lancers?
No one knowing what to do;
We alone of sixteen dancers,
Knew a figure, one or two.
Pretty partner, how are you?

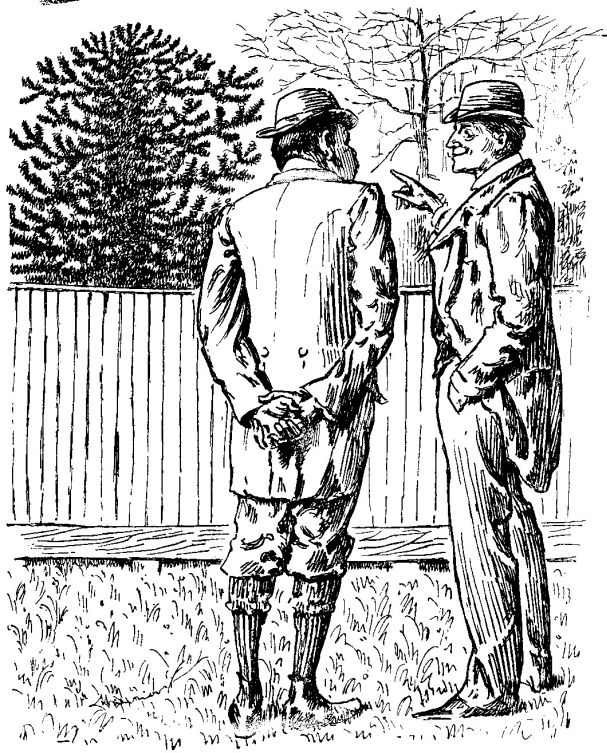
Seven men and seven girls,
All in such a fog together;
One pair strides, and one pair twirls,
Neither of them knowing whether
That is what they ought to do,
Pretty partner, not like you.

You, who dance so very well,
Slight, and light, and quite delightful,
Belle who bears away the bell;
We were forced to stop, how frightful!
Yet I found one thing to do,
Pretty partner—look at you.

In that lamentable block,
Some poor lout was sure to trample
On the lace that trims your frock,
Though the space of floor seemed ample
Even for his feet which flew,
Pretty partner, after you.

Oh, the links of that "grand chain"
In such desperate confusion!
Feet, not hands, I met with pain,
Stamps on toes, kick, bruise, contusion!
Yet, alive, I've struggled through,
Pretty partner, here with you.

Figures! one alone was good,
That was yours, so slim and charming.
In your company I would
Welcome bruises more alarming.
I would dance till all was blue,
Pretty partner, if with you.



THE ARAUCARIA.

(Reversion to an early Ancestral Type.)

Grigson. "I SAY, OLD CHAPPIE, IT WOULD PUZZLE YOU TO CLIMB THAT TREE!"

AT THE WESTMINSTER PLAY

Plaudite! Bravo! Brave! Domini Quippus et Punnus are very much alive! A fact that may be inferred from just one line (there are more whence this came) in the Westministerial play, when *Davus* takes *Mysis* "the New Woman," for his wife, and exclaims:—

"O Mysis, Mysis, tu mea Missis eris!"

Surely if the punhating Criticus Sagitarius (Mundi) were present he must have staggered out weeping on hearing the Latin-Anglo-modern-classical pun! O shade of 'Arry Stophanes! O Ghost of Terence (the Corkasian)! are our youths at Westminster to start thus on their career, with nothing better than a poor pun not worth a punny in their pockets! Let Sagitarius watch this youthful punster's line of life! He will live to be punished! or to be rewarded as he deserves? After all, Great Pun is not dead; he may be dull, commonplace sometimes, but as he was prehistoric, so is he immortal. There is a great future before the author of the Westminster epilogue.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

BORN NOVEMBER 13, 1850.

DIED DECEMBER 8, 1894.

Brave bringer-back of old Romance
From shores so few may see,
Who oft hath made our pulses dance
With thy word-wizardry.
We wished, who loved thee long and well,
Thy life as endless as the spell
Which lured us lingeringly
To loiter, like a moon-witched stream,
Through thine enchanted world of dream.

We mused, with much-expectant smile,
On that strange life afar,
Flower-girt, in yon Pacific isle,
Whereto an alien star
Had drawn thee from thy northern home,
Scourged by a greyer, chillier foam,
Yet dear as the white bar
Whose snowy break home-haven marks
To battered shore-returning barks.

And now across the sundering seas,
Delayed, unwelcome, dread,
Comes news that breaks our dreamful ease.
The Great Romancer dead?
It comes like an unnatural blight.
That sunny vision quenched in night,
That subtle spirit fled?
One-half our best soul-life seems gone
Out like a spark with STEVENSON.

Enough for fame that hand had wrought,
But not enough for those
Who dreamed his dream, who thought his thought,
And grieve that so should close
Fresh-opened doors to Faëryland
Before the poet-Prospero's wand
Had wrought the spells he chose.
Without *him* amaranth-blooms to cull
The world looks Stygian now, and dull.

Teller of Tales, those southern folk
Their *Tusitala* hailed.
Samoan hearts may mourn the stroke.
We, who must leave unscaled,
Save in fond fancy, that high peak
Where he is tombed, who, though flesh-weak
In spirit never failed
More than his stalwart fathers,—we
Send half our hearts across the sea.

The lighthouse-builder raised no light
That shall outshine the flame
Of genius in its mellowest might
That beacons him to fame.
And Pala's peak shall do yet more
Than the great light at Skerryvore
To magnify his name,
Who mourned, when stricken flesh would tire,
That he was weaker than his sire.

Teller of Tales! Of tales so told
That all the world must list.
Story sheer witchery, style pure gold,
Yet with that tricky twist
Of Puck-like mockery which betrays
The wanderer in this world's mad maze,
Not blindly optimist,
Who woos Romance, yet sadly knows
That Life's sole growth is *not* the Rose.

Dreamer of dreams! Such dreams as draw
Glad through the Ivory Gate,
In rapt and visionary awe,
The soul alert, elate;
Eblis obscure, Elysium dim,
And a strange Limbo of wild whim,
Upon us seem to wait,
In solemn pomp, when willing thrall
To him who held the keys of all.

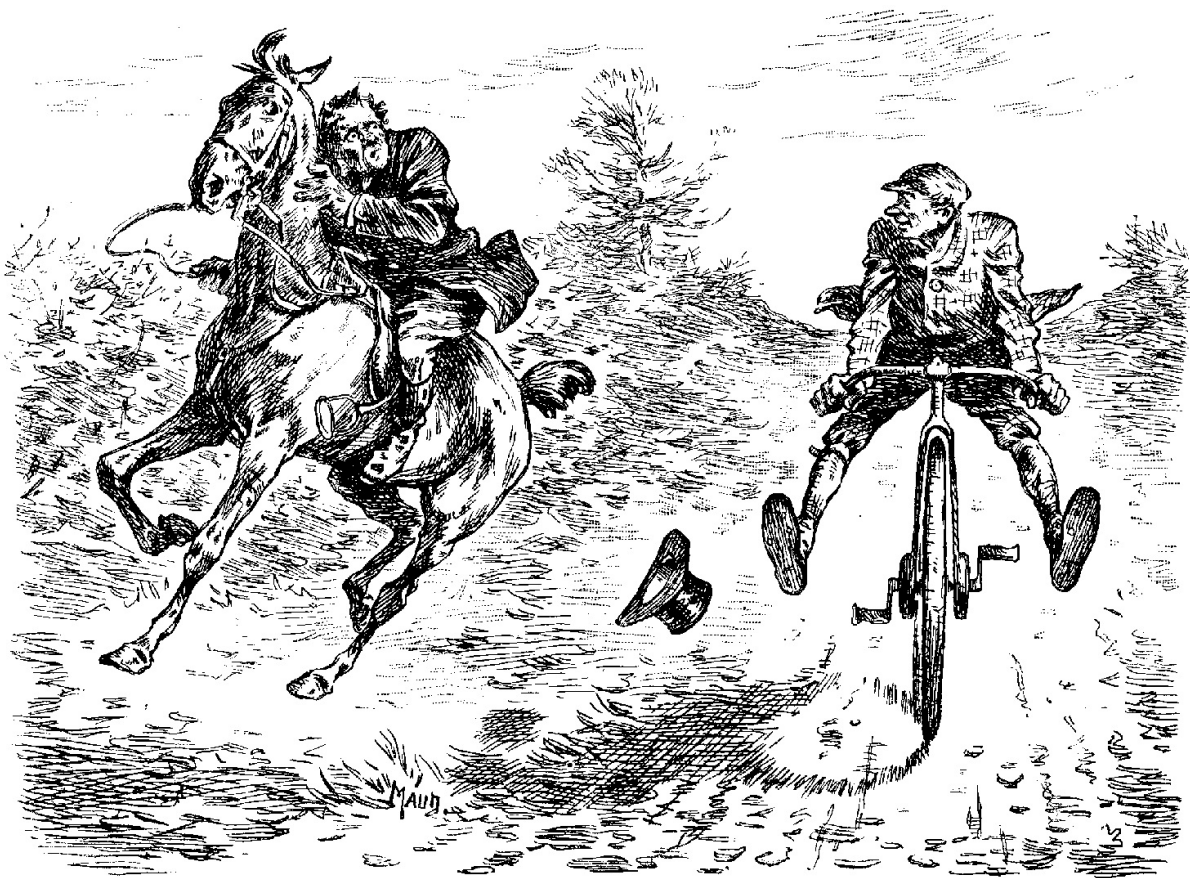
Thinker of thoughts, fresh, poignant, fine,
Wherein no wit may trace
That burthen of the Philistine,
Chill, barren Commonplace.
Who hath not felt the subtle stroke
Which can in one choice phrase invoke

The soul of charm and grace,
Haunting the ear like an old rhyme,
A cherished memory for all time?

No more, no more! We shall not see
Again the glorious show;
No more will wake the wizardry,
Nor the charmed music flow.
Samoa's silence holds it hushed,
The voice whereat our cheeks have flushed
A hundred times; and lo!
For happy hours, for haunted days,
We can but pay with sad, proud praise!

CRACKERS.—TOM SMITH, the up-to-date magician, sends forth from his treasure-cave "bright things which gleam," but not "unrecked of"—at least they won't remain so long, especially if any quiet demon of a schoolboy with martial aspirations hears a report of "The Gatling Gun Cracker." The repeating process will be an uncertain pleasure—to others. Then "Snap Shots," taken unawares by a naughty little Cupid—we can imagine the "Surprises!" Knick-knacks are boomed in "Ye Olde Curiosity Shop"—but soft! I will not reveal any further the secrets of the "King of Crackers." Get them—they are an "Open Sesame" to a gaiety of delights.

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ADDING INSULT TO INJURY.

Cyclist (to Fox-hunter, thrown out). "Oi say, Squire, 'ave you seen the 'Ounds?"

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

A Baroness junior sends word from the children's quarters that *Your Fortune and Character* is an amusing game, told by WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, but published by JOHN JAQUES & Co.—evidently not a descendant of the "melancholy JAQUES," for he would have "rail'd on Lady Fortune in good terms" had the game been at his expense.

Massa BLACKIE & SON send in a story by G. A. HENTY, always so Hentytaining, entitled *When London Burned*. We all ken that when Rome burned NERO fiddled, but this hero—not an 'ero—had every opportunity of extinguishing—my Baronite means "distinguishing himself;" and our cavalier availed himself, after many other wondrous episodes, to rush with warm enthusiasm to throw cold water on this enlightenment of London. Needless to remark, he came scatheless through the fire!

From Snowdon to the Sea, by MARIE TREVELYAN, shows us Wales in the days of *Merlin* and mythical superstitions, likewise of queer doings on the part of bold, bad buccaneers, in whom we seem to trace something of the origin of the modern Welsher.

A perfect black and white school romance is continued in *My Lost Manuscript*, by MAGGIE SYMINGTON (WELLS, GARDNER AND DARTON). Evidently this youthful writer had not read the wise counsels conveyed in a manual *On the Art of Writing Fiction* (brought out by same publishers), or so much ink would not have been wasted. "After perusing this cheery little book, the much encouraged aspirant," quoth our Baronitess with a sigh, "for literary fame, will promptly lay down the pen and write no more." Good news for the editors.

MISS BRADDON, in her delightful story *Christmas Hirelings* (SIMPKINS, MARSHALL & Co.), hits upon a novel suggestion for those folks who don't know how to keep the festive season as it should be kept. Away flies boredom! How? I will not reveal the secret, but if any nicely suppressed little children possess an average Scrooge-like relative, take my advice, and present him with this book. The result will be more than even a child's dream can anticipate. Rather powder in jam to boys will be *The Battle of Frogs and Mice*, by JANE BARLOW (METHUEN), who is evidently a distant connection of the immortal *Mr. Barlow*, with so much kind thought for youthful learning. It may be Greek to many who have but a dim, far-off knowledge of the first great burlesque writer: but this his book will bring it all Homer again to us. Quite a relief to turn to our dear *Nonsense Songs and Stories*, by EDWARD LEAR (FREDERICK WARNE & Co.) Vague yellow undulating pessimism notwithstanding, how pleasant is real good nonsense! And even the fairy story cannot be crushed by our juggernaut modern science, than which the imaginative impossible, as in *Thought Fairies*, by HELEN WATERS, and in the *Seven Imps*, by KATHLEEN WALLIS, is so much more attractive to youthful brains. Both books issued by DIGBY, LONG, & Co., and wise of them to do so. MACMILLANS issue a splendid new edition of the wonderful *Gulliver's Travels*, with over a hundred illustrations by CHARLES E. BROCK, which ought to make the book go off like BROCK's fireworks. Its very warm cover suggests a seasonable book, *A Righte Merrie Christmasse*, by JOHN ASHTON (*Leadenhall Press*), who, fancying that some of its customs and privileges might be forgotten, collects all that has been done or could be done at this annual event. Some of ye anciente goinges on make one wonder whether feasts were better kept when they spelt with such unreasonable euphony. It must have been "merrie in halle" when the wassail song was ordinarily sung as depicted by A. C. BEHREND in his exquisite copper etching.

London Society is peculiarly bright and cheerful this Yuletide, and keeps up its excellent reputation. A good medley is *London Society*. And here is a very bright little *Woman* this Christmastide. Quite a festive party with her capital stories and supplement of "Types of the World's Women." Just "Woman, lovely woman" in all styles and shades. Without being more vain than any other average islander, one feels grateful for belonging to the British group—no offence to the other ladies, to whom we take off our hat, and, whilst including the rest, salute advancing *Woman*. "And it is this New *Woman*, not *the* New *Woman* of the period, whom," quoth the Baron, "I salute with pleasure," and to whom he wishes a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year, and signs himself

THE GENIAL BARON DE BOOK-WORMS.

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READING BETWEEN THE LINES.

(*A Physician's Protest.*)

MR. PUNCH,—As a specialist of some standing and experience, I wish, Sir, to call attention, through the medium of your valuable paper, to the injurious effects of a certain occupation upon the minds of the individuals engaged therein, and their protection.

The occupation to which I refer is that of devising and arranging what I understand are technically known as "headlines" for the contents-bills of the more inexpensive London evening papers—an occupation which I have no hesitation in characterising, on evidence unconsciously supplied by the sufferers themselves, as highly dangerous employment.

I am not sufficiently versed, Sir, to the *minutiæ* of newspaper routine, to know what precise class of persons are entrusted with this particular responsibility, though I have a strong suspicion that it may be one of the many forms of degrading drudgery which the selfishness of man has imposed upon the weaker sex. If so, of course it only increases the necessity for interference.

And, whoever and whatever the persons performing such duties may be, it is painfully obvious that they are labouring under conditions of mental excitement, the strain of which no nervous system can support for any length of time without inevitable and complete collapse.

Should there be any who consider this an overstatement on my part, I merely ask them to give a glance at some of these same content-sheets which are nightly displayed in our chief thoroughfares. Let them mark the monstrous size of the lettering, the peculiar extravagance of the epithets selected, the morbid insistence upon unpleasant details, and then doubt, if they can, that the unhappy persons employed in such an industry are affected thereby with some obscure

form of hysteria. Otherwise, let me ask you, Sir, is it likely, is it credible, that seasoned journalists, tough men of the world, in touch with life at innumerable points, could, in a normal state of health, be so constantly "Startled," "Amazed," "Astounded," "Shocked," "Appalled," and "Revolted," as they admit themselves to be, almost every evening, by reports and rumours which a little reflection would convince them were utterly unfounded, or by events too ordinary and commonplace, one might have supposed, to upset the mental equilibrium of a neurotic rabbit?

Occasionally, too, there are symptoms of an excessive reverence for rank, which, when found in the more democratic organs (where, indeed, they are chiefly observable), denote a somewhat distempered state of intellect, the delusion apparently being that the mere possession of any sort of title renders its owner immaculate. Thus, they announce with awestricken solemnity "A Peer's Peccadilloes," or "A Baronet Bilks his Baker," giving these events a poster all to themselves, as others would an earthquake, or some portent of direst significance.

Now this loss of the sense of proportion in human affairs, Sir, is a very bad sign, and a well-nigh infallible indicator of nerve-strain and general overpressure.

But I find a yet more unmistakable evidence in support of my contention in the extraordinary emotional sensibility revealed by these headlines whenever some unfortunate person has been sentenced to death for the most commonplace murder. There is clearly a profound conviction that the jury who heard the evidence, the judge who pronounced their verdict of guilty, the only possible conclusion they could reasonably come to, and the HOME SECRETARY who found himself unable to recommend a reprieve, were, one and all, engaged in a cold-blooded conspiracy against a perfectly innocent man. The convict has said to himself, and that seems to be considered sufficient. And so, night after night, the authors of these headlines harrow themselves by announcing such items as "Blank protests his innocence to his Solicitor." "A petition in Preparation." "Painful Interview." "Blank Hopeful." "Blank Depressed." "Distressing Scene on the Scaffold." "Blank's Last Words."

Consider the strain of all these alterations of hope and despair, repeated time after time, and almost invariably without even the consolation of deferring the fate of their *protégé* by a single hour! Is it not too much for the strongest constitution to endure? a service which the society has no right to demand from any of its members?

Yes, Sir, whether these devoted servants of the public know it or not, they are running a most frightful risk; the word which hangs above their heads may fall at any moment.

Suppose, for example—and it is surely not wholly an imaginary danger I foresee—suppose that some day some event should happen somewhere of real and serious importance. Have they left themselves any epithet in reserve capable of expressing their sensations at all adequately? They have not; they have squandered participles and adjectives in such reckless profusion that they will discover they are reduced to the condition of inarticulate bankrupts; and, speaking as a medical man, acute cerebral congestion would be the very least result that I should anticipate.

Or the determining shock might come from more trivial causes. For instance, we might lose a distinguished statesman, or an ironclad, at the very moment when a football match was decided, or when the professional tipster attached to their particular journal published his "finals." Think of the mental conflict before determining the relative importance of these events, and awarding one or the other its proper prominence on the posters; and then ask yourself, Sir, whether it is an ordeal that any human being of an impressionable, excitable temperament should be required to undergo.

What precise remedy should be adopted I do not profess to point out. Perhaps some one of the numerous leagues established to protect adult citizens against themselves might take the matter up, and insist upon these contents-bills being set up for the future in smaller type and with epithets of a more temperate order. Perhaps Parliament or the London County Council might be asked to interfere. All that is not within my province, Sir, but this I do say: unless some measures are taken *soon*, the heavy responsibility will be upon us of having permitted a small but deserving class of our fellow-creatures to hurry themselves into premature mental decay by the pernicious and unwholesome nature of their employment.

I am, Sir, Your obedient servant,
HIPPOCRATES HELLEBORE, M.D., F.R.C.P.



VERY HARD LINES.

Young Farmer (pulling up at urgent appeal of Pedestrian).
"HILLO! THAT YOU, TIM? WANT ANOTHER SITUATION! WHY, I THOUGHT YOU WERE LIVING WITH CAPTAIN ADDLEPATE AS COACHMAN?"

Tim. "SO I WAS, SOR; BUT 'T WASN'T A FAIR BARGIN. SHURE WE WAS NEVER TO GET THRUNK BOTH AT WANCE, SOR!"

Young Farmer (amused). "WELL, THAT SEEMS FAIR ENOUGH, ANYWAY."

Tim. "BUT, BEGORRA, SOR, THE CAPTIN WAS THRUNK THE WHOLE BLISSID TOIME!"

The Rev. Dr. GEE, Vicar of Windsor, is now installed Canon of St. George's Chapel. *Prosit!* Our best wish for him is that, when he is going to give an exceedingly good sermon, may this particular Gee not discover that he is a little hoarse.



MIGHT HAVE BEEN SAID OTHERWISE!

He (to elderly Young Lady, after a long Waltz). "YOU MUST HAVE BEEN A SPLENDID DANCER!"

"OH, THE MISTLETOE BOUGH!"

(A New Seasonable Song to an old Seasonable Tune.)

The mistletoe hung on the brave old oak,
The sickle went clinketing stroke upon stroke;
The lads and the lasses were blithe and gay,
And gambolled in Old Father Christmas's way.
Old Christmas held high with a joyous pride
The berried branch dear unto damsel and bride;
For its silvery berries they seemed to be
The stars of that goodly companie.

Oh! the Mistletoe Bough!

Oh! the Mistletoe Bough!!

"Who wearies of kissing?" the Old Man cried.
"Let her be a New Woman, but never a bride!
Ha! ha! The old custom's approval I trace
In red lip and blue eye upon every face.
It was ever so, since time began.
'Tis the way of the maid, 'tis the way of the man.
'Tis also 'the way of a man with a maid,'
For Cupid's barter's the oldest trade."

Oh! the Mistletoe Bough!

Oh! the Mistletoe Bough!

"They are seeking to-day every new fangled way;
Some tell us that wooing has had its day.
In the highest, the lowest, the loneliest lot,
The gleam of Love's berry makes one bright spot.
And years may fly, as they will fly, fast,
But one good old custom at least shall last;
And when Christmas appears still the maids will cry:—
'See! the Old Man bears the Love-berry on high!'"

Oh! the Mistletoe Bough!

Oh! the Mistletoe Bough!!

"Gather!" he cried, and he waved his sickle.
"Oh! fortune changes, and fashion's fickle;
And youth grows mannish, and manhood old,
And red lips wither, warm hearts grow cold:
But whenever I come, midst the Yuletide snows,
'Tis not Spring's lily, or Summer's rose
Young men and maidens demand, I trow.
But old Winter's white-berried Kissing-bough."

Oh! the Mistletoe Bough!

Oh! the Mistletoe Bough!!

"For lilies wither, and roses pale,
But the Kissing-bough keeps up the old, old tale.
And dull were the world should the old tale cease!
Be it kiss of passion, or kiss of peace,
The meaning when lip unto lip is laid
Is goodwill on earth to man, and maid.
That's Yule's best lesson, good friends I vow,
So reck ye the rede of the Mistletoe Bough!"

Oh! the Mistletoe Bough!

Oh! the Mistletoe Bough!!

So they gather around him with laugh and joke,
'Neath the spreading boughs of that brave old oak,
Which hath shelter for all, from the English rose
To the whitest snow-bell from Canada's snows,
Or hot India's lotus-bud dainty and sweet.
But the cry of them all, as in mirth they meet
Old Father Christmas, as ever, so now,
Is "Hands all round 'neath the Mistletoe Bough!"

Oh! the Mistletoe Bough!!

Our brave, bonny Mistletoe Bough!!!



"OH, THE MISTLETOE BOUGH!"

FATHER CHRISTMAS. "HA! HA! WITH ALL THEIR NEW-FANGLED NOTIONS, HERE'S ONE OLD CUSTOM ALL AGREE IN KEEPING UP!"

CURIOUS ACCIDENT TO MRS. RAMSBOTHAM.

Strolling through Pimlico the other day Mrs. R. was attracted by evidence of a sale by auction going forward in one of the residences in that desirable quarter. Having half an hour to spare she thought she would look in. "I was quite surprised," she writes to her son, "when I entered the room to see a gentleman standing in a pulpit which I knew was Mr. PIPCHOSE, leastway, his whiskers were not so mutton-choppy; but I could not mistake him, though meeting him only once at tea at Mrs. BROWN'S where he was very pressing with the muffins. He looked at me in just the same meaning way as when he said, 'Mrs. RAM. won't you take another piece of sugar, though as I know it's carrying coals to Newcastle?' I'm not above recognising my friends, wherever I meet them, and gave him a friendly nod, and before I knew where I was, I found I had bought for £3 9s. 6d. a wool mattress; a pair of tongs (rather bent); a barometer (with the quicksilver missing); a small iron bedstead; a set of tea-things (mostly cracked); an armchair, and a sofa warranted

hair-stuffed, but certainly having only three legs. It wasn't Mr. PIPCHOSE at all, as I might have known if I had taken another look at his whiskers, but only a forward auctioneer."

"The Chinese Government," observed the *City Times* last week, "is seeking new channels for money." Decidedly China is in straits, and will soon be apparently quite at sea.

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TO MELEND A.

(A Repentance in Triolets.)

I swore to you, dear, there was mistletoe there,
Though I knew all the time there was none.
As I stole a sweet kiss from you out on the stair
I swore to you, dear, there was mistletoe there.
I have plenty of sins on my soul, dear, to bear,
But at least I've confessed now to one.
I swore to you, dear, there was mistletoe there
Though I knew all the time there was none.

I am sorry. I never will do it again,
And please am I fully forgiven?
In the future from falsehood I mean to refrain.
I am sorry. I never will do it again,
But look at yourself in your glass to explain
Why to mistletoe tale I was driven.
I am sorry. I never will do it again,
And please am I fully forgiven?

There's an answer you'll send if you're thoroughly kind,
That will make me feel free from all blame.
I hope you'll be glad, dear MELEND A, to find
There's an answer you'll send if you're thoroughly kind.
It's this, "Though the mistletoe was but a blind,
Still with none I'd have done just the same."
There's the answer you'll send if you're thoroughly kind
That will make me feel free from all blame.



THE BARON'S P.S.—*The Border Waverley*, brought out by NIMMO, and edited by ANDREW LANG, is now concluded, and a fine set of volumes it makes. No better collection of books as a Christmas present for anyone with a regard to a future of literary enjoyment.

Nos omnesne laudamus Nimmo?
Et respondit Echo: "Immo."

"Ha! ha! I don't go to a Westminster Play for nothing quoth the Baron;" though he added *sotto voce*, "Yes I do though, as I'm a guest."

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

Genoa in November. It is summer time. Put on thin suit, drink my *café au lait* by open window, and stroll out into beautiful Genoa, basking in the sunshine. *Déjeuner* in the garden of a restaurant, among the old palaces. Sit in the shade, without my hat. Think of all the poor people in London. Wonder if anyone is having a frugal lunch at the funny little open-air restaurant in Hyde Park. Lemonade and a bath bun in a fog. Should imagine not.

Charming place, Genoa. Hardly any Germans. Can at last hear people talking Italian. In Venice there are so many Germans that one might as well be in Germany. Sitting out on the Piazza, one hears incessantly their monotonous, guttural chatter, always in the same tone of voice, without inflections, without emotion, and, worst of all, without end. Watched at the hotel *table d'hôte* a German lady sitting between two German gentlemen. One man talked loudly without ceasing, mouth full or mouth empty, from soup to dessert. The other man, rather older and feebler, also talked without ceasing, but he could not equal the other's noise; he only added to it. As for the lady, her lips moved all the time; one could imagine the *ja wohl*, the *ach, so?* the *ja, ja, ja*, but one could not hear a word. At Florence, at Milan, on the Lakes it is the same. If by chance one hears a Frenchman speak, his charming language sounds more vivacious and melodious than ever before. So it is good to be in Genoa, where even the best hotel is kept by Italians. Apparently every other good hotel in Italy is kept by HERR SCHMIDT, or HERR WEBER, or HERR SOMETHINGROTHER, and all the



servants are German also. There is one hotel in Genoa kept by a German. It faces the harbour. All night long there are whistles, screams, bangs, rumblings, bumps, roars, and other sounds from trains, ships, and tramways. All day long there is the same noise, only more of it. But the Germans do not mind; they talk just the same, and they make each other hear through it all.

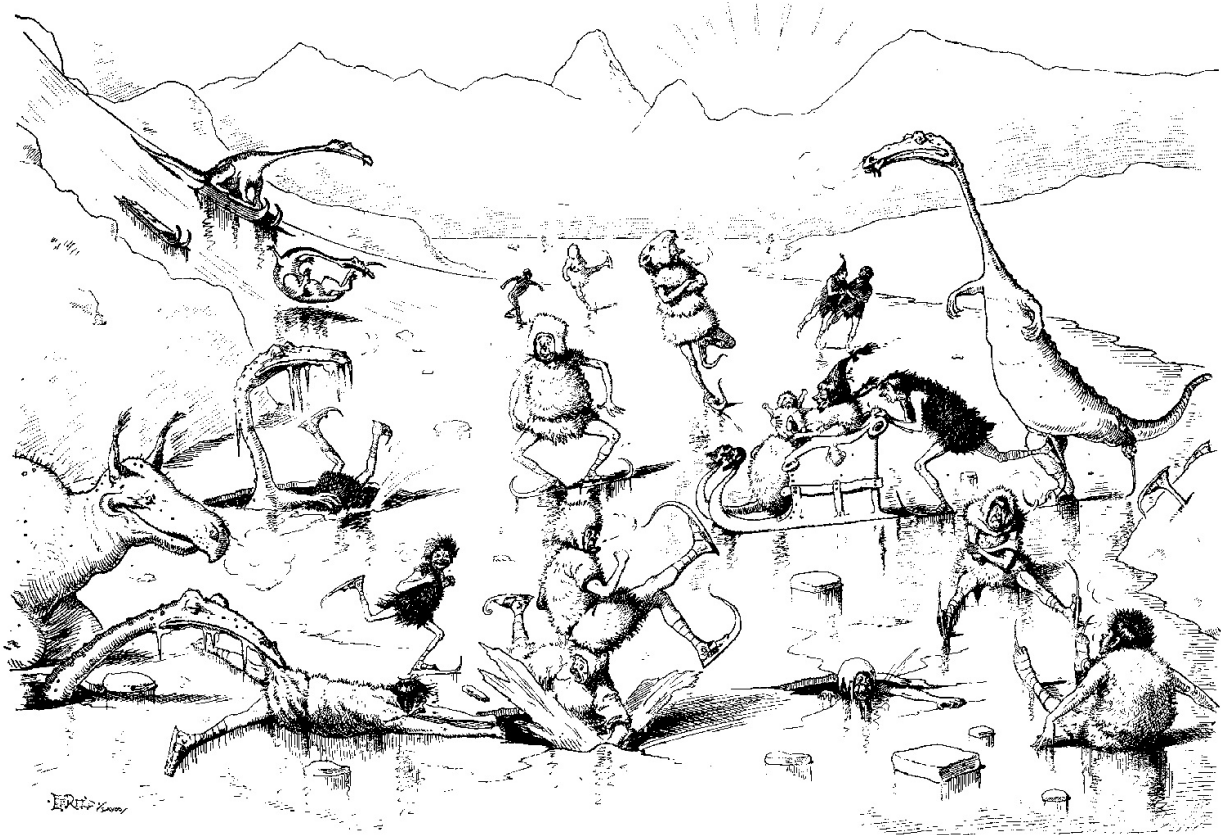
Charming place, Genoa, with a town hall that is the gayest imaginable. Marble staircases, vestibules adorned with palms, beautiful little gardens, at all sorts of levels, outside the windows of the various offices. Everywhere flowers. If the town rates in Genoa are paid at the Town Hall, the paying of them must be almost pleasant. One would go with that horrible demand note, if that is used also in Italy, and fancy that one was arriving at a ball. The palm-decorated entrance looks just like it. It only needs a lady rate collector, such as one hears of in England, and one surely, in whatever manner the Italians may say it, would beg the charming signora to give one the honour and pleasure of a dance, and scribble her name on the programme—I mean the demand note. And no doubt, the Italian officials being leisurely and the space being ample, one could find time for a waltz in the intervals of rate paying, or at least sit it out in one of the delightful little gardens of this ideal Palazzo Municipale.

And so farewell to sunny Genoa, and off to Turin. German hotel again, German proprietor, German servants. Solitary German visitor drinking his morning coffee. The hotels of Turin are not crowded; he and I are alone. What will the poor man do? He must talk his awful language to someone. He shan't talk it to me, for I will pretend I do not understand even one word. The waiter has left the room. Must the poor man be silent? Thunderweather, ah no! Happilywise he is saved. The considerate proprietor, thoughtful of his countryman's needs, enters; he stands by the visitor's table, and the talk begins. When it ends I cannot say, for I leave them, well started and in good voice, and hear, as I think, their sweetly melodious phrases for the last time in Italy. The train carries me away. There is not much more of Italy now, for here is the Mont Cenis tunnel. Farewell, beautiful country, beautiful pictures, beautiful language! There is someone leaning out of the next carriage window. No doubt he is also saddened; he is speaking to others inside, his voice is cheerful, he is evidently trying not to give way to despair. Now I hear what he says, "*Da werde ich ein Glas Bier trinken, ja, ja, ja!*"

A FIRST IMPRESSIONIST.

WANTED! a Perfect Cure for the incompatibility of Judges' sentences.

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PREHISTORIC PEEPS.

DURING A CONSIDERABLE PORTION OF THE YEAR THE SKATING WAS EXCELLENT, AND WAS MUCH ENJOYED BY ALL CLASSES.

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LONDON: BRADBURY, AGNEW, & CO., LIMITED. PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS

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