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No. VIII.]

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**NOTICE.**—Whereas a most unfair system of oppression is manifested by the lower grade of Medical Practitioners towards Mr. Morison and his Medicines, we, the undersigned, hereby declare, that we have for some years past used ourselves, and administered to others, the before-mentioned Medicines in all cases of disease, and are of opinion, first, that they are a cure for all curable diseases, and secondly, that the theory upon which such Medicines are administered is the only true one; the whole of which we are ready and willing to verify whenever called upon. In conclusion, we cannot but regret that in such an important question to mankind generally, the Medical Profession should cautiously abstain from all fair and impartial investigation of the subject.

ROBERT LYNCH, M.D.

RICHARD TOTHILL, Surgeon to the Exeter Hygeian Dispensary, Heavitree, near Exeter.

JOHNSON LINCOLN, Surgeon, R.N., Northallerton, Yorkshire.

September 21, 1838.

To James Morison, Esq., President of the British College of Health, London.

SIR,—It is now two years since you appointed me your general Agent for the counties of Somerset and Dorset. It might justly appear extraordinary that such an appointment should be conferred on a female. To many it might seem like presumptuous arrogance and a love of notoriety, while by others a desire of profit may be assigned as the reason. I feel it then a duty to myself, to you, and to the cause I advocate, to state why I, an unprotected woman, leaving my native retirement and home, thus boldly, as it might seem, come forward and place myself so conspicuously before the public. The details of my case and cure having been already published in the *Morisoniana*, &c., I will merely state that in the year 1832, after a whole life of suffering, I became (accidentally) acquainted with your medicines, but from being always accustomed to take only what my medical attendants suggested, I was prejudiced against everything which did not emanate from them. From the earliest age I had never been free from illness, in some form or other, erysipelas, amounting to blindness, and consequent internal and external inflammation; frequent and violent spasms; diseased liver, with gall-stones. Then laid down for months with hip-joint malady, afterwards a cripple on crutches: then rheumatic fever and enlargements of the joints; then aphthæ, or thrush; and after this, tic doloureux, typhus fever, &c., until what with my diseases and the severe treatment which was deemed necessary to attack them, viz., bleeding, blistering, cupping, leeching, salivating by calomel, &c. &c., I may truly add, gallons of medicines, I became an emaciated, useless, helpless creature, and life itself a burden. The medical men who attended me cannot, if this statement meets their eyes, contradict or deny the truth of these assertions. I received from the utmost of their skill, kindness, and attention; but, like the poor woman in the Gospel, "I was not bettered, but rather grew worse, having suffered many things of many doctors," and should have, like her, spent all my substance in my anxious search after health, had I not provisionally heard of your medicines. To be brief, I took them, without intermission, many months, and without allowing the opinions or persuasions of those opposed to them to prejudice my mind, I suffered long, but before a year elapsed all my former maladies were gone, as by a charm! I became a new creature! And now what remained for me to do? How could I testify my gratitude to Him who had permitted your medicines to be thus blessed to one of the most unworthy of His creatures? All my sisters, six in number, had, after equal sufferings with myself, been laid in their tombs, in the bloom of life, and here was I, after a fortune spent in vain, thus marvellously, thus mercifully raised to enjoy robust health, and capable of the utmost bodily or mental exertion! In whose service ought these powers, so freely, so newly given, to be employed? Was I to content myself with selfishly sitting down, like a miser, to hoard my acquired treasure, or by a public devotedness to the alleviation of my fellow-creatures' sufferings, demonstrate the sincerity of my gratitude to Him "who has left us an example that we should trace his steps." I could not hesitate, and here I am a living monument, with the instrument which He has blessed in my possession, your invaluable medicines; and I should feel myself a recreant from my duty as a Christian, did I allow any selfish feeling, any false delicacy or shame, to prevent me from thus again publicly testifying my obligation.

I am aware that this may be called enthusiasm; be it so. I can only say, that amidst the hundreds of cases of cure and of relief from suffering which I have witnessed by your medicines, I have derived more heartfelt delight than I ever did from all the praise, or pleasure, or friendship of the world. The time is coming when every man's work will be proved, and I wait with assured humble hope for that period, remaining, most faithfully, your obedient servant,  
Crewkerne, Somersetshire, Sept. 24, 1838.

HARRIET BEANHAM.

## PROJECTED INTERFERENCE WITH THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE.

At the meetings of Medical Associations, measures have recently been adopted for what its members (overflowing with erudition and philanthropy) are pleased to term the suppression of Quackery, supported by articles which have recently appeared in a medical publication termed the "Lancet." Now, that all means have justly failed to put down MORISON'S PILLS, and that the errors of medical practice have been fully exposed, these champions of Esculapius are about petitioning Parliament to put down by force what they term "Quack Medicines," without considering that the greatest Quackery is to be found in their tottering profession, which they are so vainly endeavouring to support. But will not the public ask, what is it that in this enlightened age calls for legislative interference in such matters? Is it that as knowledge is diffused to the people the medical profession retrogrades, and is compelled, for its support, to seek the assistance of Parliament, in order to make the public at large subservient to its cupidity? Surely any act which would have for its effect the coercion of public opinion in such matters, would not only be an encroachment on the liberty of the subject, but a disgrace to the Statute-book.—British College of Health, New-road, London, October 1, 1838.

## CAUTION.

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The very frequent inquiries for **MATTRESSES** made after the manner of the French, have induced F. HEAL and SON to turn their attention to the making of mattresses on the same principles. The essential difference between FRENCH MATTRESSES and ENGLISH consists in the Materials of which they are made, and consequently a difference in the making. The French use long Fleece Wool, and therefore but little work is requisite, leaving to the Wool the whole of its elasticity. English Mattresses are made of short Wool, the refuse of other Manufacturings, and a great deal of work is necessarily required to keep the material together, which makes them comparatively *Non-Elastic*. The advantages F. HEAL and SON possess by being exclusively Manufacturers of Bedding, enable them to offer Mattresses of *fine long Wool*, equal to the best that are made in France, at the same prices that are usually charged for those generally made in this Country.—F. HEAL & SON, Bedding Manufacturers, 203, Tottenham Court Road.



### INDIA RUBBER GOLOSHES.

J. SPARKES HALL begs to call the attention of Ladies and Gentlemen to his improved **GOLOSHES** for the present Season. For many years he has devoted considerable attention to the manufacture of this excellent article for keeping the feet dry and warm, and he now with confidence offers the most perfect Golosh yet invented.

He has succeeded in combining with the waterproof quality of India Rubber, the strength of Leather, peculiar lightness, elasticity, and neatness of make: if worn with a light pair of Shoes, such as the Leather Cloth, or over a thin French Slipper, perfect ease and comfort is secured, as they never draw the Feet, or check the insensible perspiration.

Ladies, Gentlemen, or Children, may be fitted, by sending a pattern-shoe, addressed J. SPARKES HALL, Patent Pannus Corium, or Leather Cloth Boot and Shoemaker, 308, Regent-street, opposite the Polytechnic Institution.

N.B. A liberal allowance to the Trade.

### MOSLEY'S SUPERIOR METALLIC PENS.

R. D. MOSLEY & CO. beg to call the attention of mercantile men and the public in general, to their Superior Metallic Pens. They possess the highest degree of elasticity and flexibility, and are found perfectly free from all those inconveniences which have hitherto prevented so many persons making use of Metallic Pens. R. D. MOSLEY & CO., having considerably increased their various qualities, degrees, &c. every description of writer may be suited. They are sold at all respectable Stationers throughout the kingdom.

Observe, that every Pen is stamped R. MOSLEY & CO., London.

### PIERCE'S ECONOMICAL RADIATING STOVE-GRATE MANUFACTORY,

No. 5, JERMYN STREET, REGENT STREET.

The Nobility and Gentry are most respectfully solicited to examine a variety of new and elegant Stove Grates upon his so-much-approved Radiating Principle, from his own Designs, being the real Manufacturer of them. These Grates combine the useful and ornamental, blending Economy with Comfort—display a cheerful Fire and a clean Hearth—lessen materially the consumption of Fuel—diffuse a genial Warmth throughout the Apartment, and are adapted for general use. They retain the Heat many hours after the Fire is out—are executed in every style of Architecture—Grecian, Elizabethan, Louis Quatorze, and Gothic, agreeable to any Design.

W. P. has a grate expressly made for the Cure of Smoky Chimneys, and will guarantee its success. He invites attention to his Improved Method of Heating with Hot Water; also to the Domestic Pure Warm-Air Safety Stove, for Churches, Mansions, Houses, Galleries, Entrance-Halls, &c., with Pure Air, which may be seen in daily use at his Show Rooms and Manufactory; as well as an extensive assortment of Fenders, Fire-Irons, Ranges, Boilers, Patent Smoke-Jacks, Hot Plates, Broiling Plates, and all other articles of Kitchen requisites, with the latest Improvements. Baths of every Description, viz., Hot, Cold, Vapour, Douche, Shower, Leg, and Sponge; also Jekyll's Portable Baths.

### MANUFACTURER OF DR. ARNOTT'S STOVE,

(Which may be seen in use in various patterns,) adapted for Churches, Halls, and Offices.

### BEDS, FEATHERS, BEDTICKS, AND MATTRESSES.

Seasoned Feather Beds, 18s. to M.; Prime Dressed Feathers, 9d. to 2s. 6d. per lb.; Ticks, 3s. to 24s.; Field Tent Bedsteads, 20s.; Alva Marina Mattresses to fit, 10s.; Soft Wool Flocks, 2d., 3d., and 4d. per lb. Every description of Bedsteads, Mattresses, Palliasses, and Bedding, full 30 per cent. cheaper. Merchants, Captains, Upholsters, Brokers, and Proprietors of Schools, supplied at D. TIMOTHY'S old-established Manufactory, No. 31, Barbican, corner of Redcross-street, City.

### THE BREATH-WARMING INSTRUMENT.

MR. JEFFREY'S RESPIRATOR, for the Use of all Persons to whom the breathing of Cold Air is Distressing or Injurious; and for affording Rest at Night, where it is interrupted by Cough. It renders warm and genial the most cold or foggy air. From the numerous communications the inventor has been favoured with, describing, in strong terms, the relief afforded by the Respirator, he need not hesitate to refer inquirers to any of the invalids in different parts of the kingdom, wearing the instrument, whose number amounts to many thousands; and these will confer an obligation upon many a person needing its use, if they will make known to the neighbouring agents the result of their own experience of the effects of the Respirator, during whatever period they may have used it.

London Depots, 82, Cheapside; and 148, Regent-street. Wholesale Office, Cheapside. In London, and the larger towns, certain respectable houses are also agents for the Respirator.

**HOSIERY.**

POPE and Co. have removed from 28, Friday Street, to 4, Waterloo Place, Pall Mall.

**THEY** continue to manufacture every description of HOSIERY, in the old-fashioned substantial manner, the greatest attention being paid to *Elasticity and Durability*.—Orders and Patterns to be forwarded to 4, Waterloo Place, or to their manufactory, Mount Street, Nottingham.

**A CERTAIN CURE FOR CORNS AND BUNIONS.**

**ALLINGHAM'S ROTTERDAM SOLVENT**, which gives relief upon the first application. The universally-acknowledged efficacy of this extraordinary, safe, and never-failing remedy for the speedy and certain cure of Corns and Bunions, however obstinate and long standing, induces the Proprietor of this highly-important chemical discovery, to caution the Public against base and spurious imitations, injurious in their effect, and most dangerous to those who, either through ignorance, or the fraudulent pretences of others, are induced to apply them. The proprietor has received testimonials of its beneficial effects from the most respectable families in the kingdom. The genuine has the signature of "J. A. Sharwood" on the outside wrapper. Sold at 55, Bishopsgate-without; and, by appointment, by Sanger, 150, and Chandler, 76, Oxford-street; and most medicine venders.

PATRONISED BY THE ROYAL FAMILY AND THE NOBILITY.

**SHARP'S ROYAL BRITISH CERATES & LINIMENT.**

**THESE** valuable medical applications, long privately known, and highly appreciated by some of the most eminent medical men in the metropolis, constitute, in their various modifications, rapid and effectual remedies for Gout—in some states, Rheumatic Affections, Lumbago, Glandular Swellings, many instances of Scrofulous Sores and Swellings, Tumours, Relaxed Sore Throats, Swelled Face or Gums, some cases of Deafness, external Inflammation—in all its shapes, Boils, Ulcerated and other Wounds, Sprains, Bruises, Burns, Scalds, Erysipelas, Venomous Stings, Itch, Ringworm, Scaldhead, Grocer's Itch, Chilblains, Bunions, Corns, Tender Feet, Paralysis of a local character, and Tic-douloureux. As no class of society is exempt from the liability to some or other of these attacks, so to every rank must access to such a powerful series of simple, but effectual, remedies be highly desirable.

The series consist of a Liniment, with the Plain, and four combinations of Cerates:—Namely, No. 1, Plain; No. 2, Camphorated; No. 3, Emollient; No. 4, Balsamic; and No. 5, Sulphurated; severally applicable to the cure of the above diseases and injuries, in the manner clearly laid down in the full printed directions which accompany each packet.

The Proprietors give their solemn assurance, 'that there is not a fact stated with respect to the powers of these substances, which is not fully established in every class of cases, in the private practice of medical men of great respectability in the metropolis and elsewhere; and that each of the preparations, although most effectual in its remedial character, is in the highest degree innocent in its entire composition; and may, consequently, be used with perfect safety.

The Royal British Cerates are made up, in all their modifications, in Boxes of four Sizes, at 13½d., 2s., 9d., 4s., 6d., and 11s. each; and the Liniment in Bottles of three Sizes, with ground-glass Stoppers, at 2s., 9d., 4s., 6d., and 11s. each; Stamps in all cases included.

Sold by SHARP and Co., 153, Fleet-street, London, sole Proprietors, whose name and address are upon the Stamp; and by the established Licensed Medicine Venders throughout the three kingdoms.

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**ORNAMENTAL HAIR.**

**THE** Public are requested to inspect the extensive and elegant assortment of all kinds of ORNAMENTAL HAIR at ROSS and SONS', 119, Bishopsgate Street, particularly their newly-invented ventilating Perukes and Head-Dresses, in which the use of both weaving and sewing silk is entirely superseded, thus rendering them the nearest imitation of the natural Hair of any extant. Importing their Foreign, and manufacturing on their premises all their British Perfumery, including every description of Combs and Brushes, they are enabled to offer them of the most superior quality, and at a moderate price. A visit to their grand Neapolitan Saloon for cutting and arranging the Hair in, is requested.

**NOTICE.—CISTERN, TANKS, &c.**

—PURE WATER.—LIPSCOMBE and CO. beg to inform the Nobility and Gentry that they have invented a superior ASCENSION FILTER for Cisterns, Tanks, Water-butts, &c., capable of producing from fifty to two hundred gallons of the purest water per day; portable, perfectly self-cleansing, and can be placed in any situation at a small expense. Also their Patent Portable Filters, which have been in extensive use for many years, and are allowed by the faculty and the numerous families who have them to excel all others known for purity and quantity of the water; at prices from Ten Shillings.—Families' orders from the country duly attended to. Filters repaired.—93, Regent-street, and at the Manufactory, Kentish Town.

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With Six Powers, magnifying 20,000 times, packed in a handsome mahogany case, with apparatus complete, price Three Guineas, at J. CRICHTON'S, Manufacturing Optician, 112, Leadenhall Street, five doors from St. Mary Axe. ACHROMATIC TELESCOPES, to show objects distinctly at a distance of eight miles, 18s.; twelve miles, 30s.; sixteen miles, 42s.; twenty miles, 4l. Crichton's Improved Microscopic Phantasmagoria, which may be used either as a Phantasmagoria Lantern, or Lucernal Microscope, magnifies figures with splendid effect to an extent of 14 feet, in case complete, with directions for use, Five Guineas.

N.B. A large variety of Magic Lanterns and Sliders, including Comic, Astronomical, Natural History, and other subjects.

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Of olive brown or green cloth	£2 5 0
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At J. ALBERT'S, Tailor and Draper, 52, King William Street, London Bridge.

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The essential difference between  
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possibility of making it  
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Captains, Colonels,  
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Net Cash Prices for the best Flint Glass Ware.

DECANTERS.

- 25 Strong quart Nelson shape decanters, cut all over, bold flutes and cut brim & stopper, P.M. each 10s6d. to 12 0
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5-in.	7-in.	9-in.	10-in.
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- 32 Oval cup sprig, shell pattern,
 

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FINGER CUPS.

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- Do. plain flint, punted, per doz. .... 18 0
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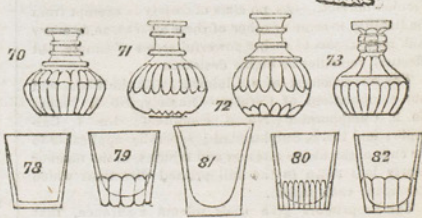


WATER JUGS

- 59 Quarts, neatly fluted and cut rings, each ..... 14s. to 18 0
- 60 Ewer shape, best cut handles, &c. .... 21 0
- 61 Silver do. scolloped edges, ex. lar. flutes 25 0

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- 70 Moulded pillar body, cut neck, each. 3 0
- 71 Cut neck and star. .... 3 0
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- 73 Very strong pillar, moulded body, cut neck and rings ..... 5 6
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| Flint | 5s. | 10s. | 12s. | 12s. | 10s. | 12s. | 14s. | 18s. | 18s. |      | Doz. |
|       |     | to   | to   | to   | to   | to   | to   | to   | to   |      |      |
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|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
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| 7s. | 7s. | 7s. | 7s. | 8s.  | 14s. | 12s. | 13s. | 15s. | 18s. | 21s. | 28s. |
| to  | to  | to  | to  | to   | to   | to   | to   | to   | to   | to   | to   |
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Glass Blowing, Cutting, and Engraving, may be inspected by Purchasers, at Mr. Pellatt's Extensive Flint Glass and Steam Cutting Works, in Halland Street, near Blackfriars' Bridge, any Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. Merchants and the Trade supplied on equitable Terms.

No Abatement from the above specified Ready Money Prices. No Connexion with any other Establishment.



## LABERN'S BOTANIC CREAM.

By appointment, patronised by her Most Gracious Majesty, celebrated for strengthening and promoting the growth of Hair, and completely freeing it from Scurf.—Sold by the Proprietor, H. Labern, Perfumer to her Majesty, 49, Judd Street, Brunswick Square, in pots, 1s. 6d., 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d., and 5s., and in Bottles 3s. 6d. and 5s. each, and by all Perfumers and Medicine Venders. Beware of counterfeits. Ask for "Labern's Botanic Cream."

\*\*\* Trade Orders from the Country to come through the London Wholesale Houses.

## AUTUMNAL INFLUENCES.

That each season produces its appropriate and peculiar effects, both in the animal and vegetable economy, is pretty generally admitted; though in its more minute operations, a sufficient accuracy of observation has rarely been attained. On the subject of the Hair, and the relaxing agency exercised on it at this particular season, enough has recently been set forth, to show the necessity of directing especial attention to this point. A mild yet effectual stimulant is required to counteract this tendency; and the popularity of OLDRIDGE'S BALM OF COLUMBIA points it out as the most salutary and efficient application.

OLDRIDGE'S BALM causes whiskers and eyebrows to grow, prevents the Hair from turning grey, and the first application makes it curl beautifully, frees it from scurf, and stops it from falling off. Abundance of certificates from gentlemen of the first respectability are shown by the Proprietors, C. and A. OLDRIDGE, 1, Wellington Street, Strand, where the Balm is sold, price 3s. 6d., 6s., and 11s. per bottle. No other prices are genuine.

Some complaints have reached the Proprietors of a spurious Balm having been vended; they again caution the Public to be on their guard against the base impostors, by especially asking for OLDRIDGE'S BALM OF COLUMBIA, 1, WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND, LONDON.

## PERRY'S ESSENCE FOR THE TOOTH AND EAR-ACHE, AND PAINS IN THE FACE AND JAWS.

Sold in Bottles, 11s., 2s. 9d., and 1s. 1½d.

PERRY'S ESSENCE has long been patronised by the most distinguished personages in the kingdom, eulogised in numerous highly respectable Medical Journals, and sanctioned by the first Physicians in Europe, who have declared it to be the "best Medicine ever discovered for the Tooth-Ache and Ear-Ache." Excruciating pain is instantaneously relieved by it, and the progress of decay in teeth arrested; loose teeth are fastened, and kept firm, sound, and serviceable to the latest period. It cures the scurvy in the gums, renders them healthy, effectually prevents Tooth-Ache, and also sweetens offensive breath. The Essence retains its virtues in all climates; but it must be very well corked, or it will be good for nothing. By rubbing the hands &c. with pomatum, tallow, or spirits of wine, any stain made by the Essence will be removed.

From Professor Hertz's *Popular Treatise on the Management of Teeth*.—This eminent dentist, in his valuable work dedicated to QUEEN CHARLOTTE, recommends Perry's Essence as the only specific ever discovered for the Tooth-Ache; and from the experience he has had with it, he states positively,—“That the composition is innocent, and it appears to check the progress of decay, instead of increasing it, which it is well known that remedies for the Tooth-Ache, from their caustic qualities, are apt to do.”—See Fourth Edition of Hertz's Dissertation on Teeth, p. 19.

From the *Monthly Gazette of Health*, for October, 1818.—“The most effectual remedy for the Tooth-Ache with which we are acquainted is the Essence prepared by Mr. PERRY, of Farnham, in Surrey. The remedy is perfectly mild, allays the pain almost immediately on being introduced into the carious Tooth, and by lining the internal surface with a resinous gum, it keeps off that disease, and checks the progress of decay.”

Extract from the *Medical Guide*, for 1817.—“PERRY'S ESSENCE.—This composition, applied to the painful Tooth by means of lint, generally affords immediate relief, and is, no doubt, the most efficacious remedy for the Tooth-Ache that has been discovered, having been first prepared by Mr. PERRY, of Farnham.”

From Dr. Reece's *Dictionary of Medicine*, 1813, sanctioned by his late Majesty, KING GEORGE THE FOURTH.—“I have made trial of a remedy for the Tooth-Ache, first recommended by Mr. PERRY, of Farnham, which in every instance (some of which were very violent) afforded instantaneous relief.”

Extract from Dr. Jackson, 1806.—“Having had frequent opportunities of applying PERRY'S ESSENCE to decayed Teeth, and from the instantaneous relief which it afforded to almost all to whom it has been administered, I do not hesitate to declare that it is, in my opinion, the best remedy for the Tooth-Ache, arising from decay, ever discovered.”

*Philosophical Journal* for July, 1820.—“In an early Number we have given an analysis of PERRY'S ESSENCE: the favourable reports we have received from different parts of the country confirm the character we have given of it as a remedy for the Tooth-Ache. It is free from any caustic quality, and is certainly incapable of doing any injury to the Teeth. In cases of Caries, it appears to suspend the process of decomposition or decay.”

From the *Monthly Gazette of Health*, for 1816.—The Editor, in his Preface, on the subject of “Proprietary Medicines,” in remarking on the dangerous tendency of many of them, and of his exposure of their disgraceful practices, concludes by observing, that—“Some Patent Medicines he has discovered to possess merit superior to the London Pharmacopœia; these he has not hesitated to recommend; and of this number is PERRY'S ESSENCE for the Tooth-Ache.”

See also the *Commendations* in No. 1, p. 30, of the same valuable publication, under the head of “PERRY'S ESSENCE for the Tooth-Ache and Pains in the Face.”—“This preparation does not contain any mineral production. To allay pain in a hollow or carious Tooth, this composition, no doubt, affords an efficacious remedy; in consequence of the decomposition which takes place, the internal surface of the caries is defended from the action of atmospheric air and acid matter. This Essence was discovered by Mr. PERRY, of Farnham, who in the printed wrapper of the bottle, asserts, that thousands of cases can be given to prove that his Essence is an infallible remedy for the Tooth-Ache and Ear-Ache, as not one instance has yet been produced in which it has failed, and through the solicitations and sanction of respectable medical men, it is offered to the public; though not till it had passed a severe trial of seven years in private practice, when the Faculty declared it to be ‘the best thing ever discovered, an excellent preserver of the Teeth and Gums, and that it must be a great blessing to the afflicted world.’”

Sold by Messrs. Barclay and Sons, 95, Farringdon-street, London (Sole Agents); also, Wholesale, by E. Edwards, 68, St. Paul's Churchyard; Sutton and Co., Bow Churchyard; and Retail, by Sanger, 150, Oxford street; Heudeboure, Middle-row, Holborn; Burfield, 130, Strand; Johnston, 68, Cornhill; Willoughby, 61, Bishopsgate-street Without; and by the principal Medicine Venders throughout the United Kingdom.

# BEAUFOY'S INSTANT CURE FOR THE TOOTH-ACHE.



This article has been extensively and successfully used for some time past in a populous Neighbourhood, and has proved to be an INSTANT CURE in most cases.

The Selling Price to the Public has been fixed purposely so low as to render the

## "INSTANT CURE FOR THE TOOTH-ACHE"

accessible to all Classes.



MADE BY BEAUFOY & CO., SOUTH LAMBETH, LONDON,

And Sold by most Respectable Druggists and Patent Medicine Venders,  
in Town and Country.

The Bottles, with ample Directions for Use, Price 1s. 1½d. each, Stamp included.

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INSTANT CURE in most cases  
and purposely so low as

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you something that  
will cure it in  
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Patent Medicine Vendors

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1s. 1/4. each, Stamp included

WHITFIELD'S



*Nicholas instructs Smike the Art of Acting.*



*Act of being*



*The great spectacle for Miss Snowbellicci!*

## CHAPTER XXIV.

OF THE GREAT BESPEAK FOR MISS SNEVELLICCI, AND THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF NICHOLAS UPON ANY STAGE.

NICHOLAS was up betimes in the morning; but he had scarcely begun to dress, notwithstanding, when he heard footsteps ascending the stairs, and was presently saluted by the voices of Mr. Folair the pantomimist, and Mr. Lenville, the tragedian.

"House, house, house!" cried Mr. Folair.

"What, ho! within there!" said Mr. Lenville, in a deep voice.

Confound these fellows! thought Nicholas; they have come to breakfast, I suppose. "I'll open the door directly, if you'll wait an instant."

The gentlemen entreated him not to hurry himself; and to beguile the interval, had a fencing bout with their walking-sticks on the very small landing-place, to the unspeakable discomposure of all the other lodgers down stairs.

"Here, come in," said Nicholas, when he had completed his toilet. "In the name of all that's horrible, don't make that noise outside."

"An uncommon snug little box this," said Mr. Lenville, stepping into the front room, and taking his hat off before he could get in at all. "Pernicious snug."

"For a man at all particular in such matters it might be a trifle too snug," said Nicholas; "for, although it is undoubtedly a great convenience to be able to reach anything you want from the ceiling or the floor, or either side of the room, without having to move from your chair, still these advantages can only be had in an apartment of the most limited size."

"It isn't a bit too confined for a single man," returned Mr. Lenville. "That reminds me,—my wife, Mr. Johnson—I hope she'll have some good part in this piece of yours?"

"I glanced at the French copy last night," said Nicholas. "It looks very good, I think."

"What do you mean to do for me, old fellow?" asked Mr. Lenville, poking the struggling fire with his walking-stick, and afterwards wiping it on the skirt of his coat. "Anything in the gruff and grumble way?"

"You turn your wife and child out of doors," said Nicholas; "and in a fit of rage and jealousy stab your eldest son in the library."

"Do I though!" exclaimed Mr. Lenville. "That's very good business."

"After which," said Nicholas, "you are troubled with remorse till the last act, and then you make up your mind to destroy yourself. But just as you are raising the pistol to your head, a clock strikes—ten."

"I see," cried Mr. Lenville. "Very good."

"You pause," said Nicholas; "you recollect to have heard a clock strike ten in your infancy. The pistol falls from your hand—you are overcome—you burst into tears, and become a virtuous and exemplary character for ever afterwards."

"Capital!" said Mr. Lenville: "that's a sure card, a sure card. Get the curtain down with a touch of nature like that, and it'll be a triumphant success."

"Is there anything good for me?" inquired Mr. Folair, anxiously.

"Let me see," said Nicholas. "You play the faithful and attached servant; you are turned out of doors with the wife and child."

"Always coupled with that infernal phenomenon," sighed Mr. Folair: "and we go into poor lodgings, where I won't take any wages, and talk sentiment, I suppose?"

"Why—yes," replied Nicholas; "that is the course of the piece."

"I must have a dance of some kind, you know," said Mr. Folair. "You'll have to introduce one for the phenomenon, so you'd better make it a *pas de deux*, and save time."

"There's nothing easier than that," said Mr. Lenville, observing the disturbed looks of the young dramatist.

"Upon my word I don't see how it's to be done," rejoined Nicholas.

"Why, isn't it obvious?" reasoned Mr. Lenville. "Gadzooks, who can help seeing the way to do it?—you astonish me! You get the distressed lady, and the little child, and the attached servant, into the poor lodgings, don't you?—Well, look here. The distressed lady sinks into a chair, and buries her face in her pocket-handkerchief—'What makes you weep, mama?' says the child. 'Don't weep, mama, or you'll make me weep too!'—'And me!' says the faithful servant, rubbing his eyes with his arm. 'What can we do to raise your spirits, dear mama?' says the little child. 'Aye, what *can* we do?' says the faithful servant. 'Oh, Pierre!' says the distressed lady; 'Would that I could shake off these painful thoughts.'—'Try, ma'am, try,' says the faithful servant; 'rouse yourself, ma'am; be amused.'—'I will,' says the lady, 'I will learn to suffer with fortitude. Do you remember that dance, my honest friend, which, in happier days, you practised with this sweet angel? It never failed to calm my spirits then. Oh! let me see it once again before I die!'—There it is—cue for the band, *before I die*,—and off they go. That's the regular thing; isn't it, Tommy?"

"That's it," replied Mr. Folair. "The distressed lady, overpowered by old recollections, faints at the end of the dance, and you close in with a picture."

Profiting by these and other lessons, which were the result of the personal experience of the two actors, Nicholas willingly gave them the best breakfast he could, and when he at length got rid of them applied himself to his task, by no means displeased to find that it was so much easier than he had at first supposed. He worked very hard all day, and did not leave his room until the evening, when he went down to the theatre, whither Smike had repaired before him to go on with another gentleman as a general rebellion.



Here all the people were so much changed that he scarcely knew them. False hair, false colour, false calves, false muscles—they had become different beings. Mr. Lenville was a blooming warrior of most exquisite proportions; Mr. Crummles, his large face shaded by a profusion of black hair, a Highland outlaw of most majestic bearing; one of the old gentlemen a gaoler, and the other a venerable patriarch; the comic countryman, a fighting-man of great valour, relieved by a touch of humour; each of the master Crummleses a prince in his own right; and the low-spirited lover a desponding captive. There was a gorgeous banquet ready spread for the third act, consisting of two pasteboard vases, one plate of biscuits, a black bottle, and a vinegar cruet; and, in short, everything was on a scale of the utmost splendour and preparation.

Nicholas was standing with his back to the curtain, now contemplating the first scene, which was a Gothic archway, about two feet shorter than Mr. Crummles, through which that gentleman was to make his first entrance, and now listening to a couple of people who were cracking nuts in the gallery, wondering whether they made the whole audience, when the manager himself walked familiarly up and accosted him.

“Been in front to-night?” said Mr. Crummles.

“No,” replied Nicholas, “not yet. I am going to see the play.”

“We’ve had a pretty good Let,” said Mr. Crummles. “Four front places in the centre, and the whole of the stage-box.”

“Oh, indeed!” said Nicholas; “a family, I suppose?”

“Yes,” replied Mr. Crummles; “yes. It’s an affecting thing. There are six children, and they never come unless the phenomenon plays.”

It would have been difficult for any party, family or otherwise, to have visited the theatre on a night when the phenomenon did *not* play, inasmuch as she always sustained one, and not uncommonly two or three, characters every night; but Nicholas, sympathising with the feelings of a father, refrained from hinting at this trifling circumstance, and Mr. Crummles continued to talk uninterrupted by him.

“Six,” said that gentleman; “Pa and Ma eight, aunt nine, governess ten, grandfather and grandmother twelve. Then there’s the footman, who stands outside, with a bag of oranges and a jug of toast-and-water, and sees the play for nothing through the little pane of glass in the box-door—it’s cheap at a guinea; they gain by taking a box.”

“I wonder you allow so many,” observed Nicholas.

“There’s no help for it,” replied Mr. Crummles; “it’s always expected in the country. If there are six children, six people come to hold them in their laps. A family-box carries double always. Ring in the orchestra, Grudden.”

That useful lady did as she was requested, and shortly afterwards the tuning of three fiddles was heard. Which process having been protracted as long as it was supposed that the patience of the audience could possibly bear it, was put a stop to by another jerk of the bell,

which, being the signal to begin in earnest, set the orchestra playing a variety of popular airs, with involuntary variations.

If Nicholas had been astonished at the alteration for the better which the gentlemen displayed, the transformation of the ladies was still more extraordinary. When, from a snug corner of the manager's box, he beheld Miss Snevellicci in all the glories of white muslin with a gold hem, and Mrs. Crummies in all the dignity of the outlaw's wife, and Miss Bravassa in all the sweetness of Miss Snevellicci's confidential friend, and Miss Belvawney in the white silks of a page doing duty everywhere and swearing to live and die in the service of everybody, he could scarcely contain his admiration, which testified itself in great applause, and the closest possible attention to the business of the scene. The plot was most interesting. It belonged to no particular age, people, or country, and was perhaps the more delightful on that account, as nobody's previous information could afford the remotest glimmering of what would ever come of it. An outlaw had been very successful in doing something somewhere, and came home in triumph, to the sound of shouts and fiddles, to greet his wife—a lady of masculine mind, who talked a good deal about her father's bones, which it seemed were unburied, though whether from a peculiar taste on the part of the old gentleman himself, or the reprehensible neglect of his relations, did not appear. This outlaw's wife was somehow or other mixed up with a patriarch, living in a castle a long way off, and this patriarch was the father of several of the characters, but he didn't exactly know which, and was uncertain whether he had brought up the right ones in his castle, or the wrong ones, but rather inclined to the latter opinion, and, being uneasy, relieved his mind with a banquet, during which solemnity somebody in a cloak said "Beware!" which somebody was known by nobody (except the audience) to be the outlaw himself, who had come there for reasons unexplained, but possibly with an eye to the spoons. There was an agreeable little surprise in the way of certain love passages between the desponding captive and Miss Snevellicci, and the comic fighting-man and Miss Bravassa; besides which, Mr. Lenville had several very tragic scenes in the dark, while on throat-cutting expeditions, which were all baffled by the skill and bravery of the comic fighting-man (who overheard whatever was said all through the piece) and the intrepidity of Miss Snevellicci, who adopted tights, and therein repaired to the prison of her captive lover, with a small basket of refreshments and a dark lantern. At last it came out that the patriarch was the man who had treated the bones of the outlaw's father-in-law with so much disrespect, for which cause and reason the outlaw's wife repaired to his castle to kill him, and so got into a dark room, where, after a great deal of groping in the dark, everybody got hold of everybody else, and took them for somebody besides, which occasioned a vast quantity of confusion, with some pistolling, loss of life, and torchlight; after which the patriarch came forward, and observing, with a knowing look, that he knew all about his children now, and would tell them when they got inside, said that there could not be a more appropriate occasion for

marrying the young people than that, and therefore he joined their hands, with the full consent of the indefatigable page, who (being the only other person surviving) pointed with his cap into the clouds, and his right hand to the ground; thereby invoking a blessing and giving the cue for the curtain to come down, which it did, amidst general applause.

"What did you think of that?" asked Mr. Crummles, when Nicholas went round to the stage again. Mr. Crummles was very red and hot, for your outlaws are desperate fellows to shout.

"I think it was very capital, indeed," replied Nicholas; "Miss Snevellicci in particular was uncommonly good."

"She's a genius," said Mr. Crummles; "quite a genius, that girl. By-the-bye, I've been thinking of bringing out that piece of yours on her bespeak night."

"When?" asked Nicholas.

"The night of her bespeak. Her benefit night, when her friends and patrons bespeak the play," said Mr. Crummles.

"Oh! I understand," replied Nicholas.

"You see," said Mr. Crummles, "it's sure to go on such an occasion, and even if it should not work up quite as well as we expect, why it will be her risk, you know, and not ours."

"Yours, you mean," said Nicholas.

"I said mine, didn't I?" returned Mr. Crummles. "Next Monday week. What do you say now? You'll have done it, and are sure to be up in the lover's part long before that time."

"I don't know about 'long before,'" replied Nicholas; "but *by* that time I think I can undertake to be ready."

"Very good," pursued Mr. Crummles, "then we'll call that settled. Now, I want to ask you something else. There's a little—what shall I call it—a little canvassing takes place on these occasions."

"Among the patrons, I suppose?" said Nicholas.

"Among the patrons; and the fact is, that Snevellicci has had so many bespeaks in this place, that she wants an attraction. She had a bespeak when her mother-in-law died, and a bespeak when her uncle died; and Mrs. Crummles and myself have had bespeaks on the anniversary of the phenomenon's birthday and our wedding-day, and occasions of that description, so that, in fact, there's some difficulty in getting a good one. Now won't you help this poor girl, Mr. Johnson?" said Crummles, sitting himself down on a drum, and taking a great pinch of snuff as he looked him steadily in the face.

"How do you mean?" rejoined Nicholas.

"Don't you think you could spare half-an-hour to-morrow morning, to call with her at the houses of one or two of the principal people?" murmured the manager in a persuasive tone.

"Oh dear me," said Nicholas, with an air of very strong objection, "I shouldn't like to do that."

"The infant will accompany her," said Mr. Crummles. "The moment it was suggested to me, I gave permission for the infant to go. There will not be the smallest impropriety—Miss Snevellicci, Sir, is the

very soul of honour. It would be of material service—the gentleman from London—author of the new piece—actor in the new piece—first appearance on any boards—it would lead to a great bespeak, Mr. Johnson.”

“I am very sorry to throw a damp upon the prospects of anybody, and more especially a lady,” replied Nicholas; “but really I must decidedly object to making one of the canvassing party.”

“What does Mr. Johnson say, Vincent?” inquired a voice close to his ear; and, looking round, he found Mrs. Crummles and Miss Snevellicci herself standing behind him.

“He has some objection, my dear,” replied Mr. Crummles, looking at Nicholas.

“Objection!” exclaimed Mrs. Crummles. “Can it be possible?”

“Oh, I hope not!” cried Miss Snevellicci. “You surely are not so cruel—oh, dear me!—Well, I—to think of that now, after all one’s looking forward to it.”

“Mr. Johnson will not persist, my dear,” said Mrs. Crummles. “Think better of him than to suppose it. Gallantry, humanity, all the best feelings of his nature, must be enlisted in this interesting cause.”

“Which moves even a manager,” said Mr. Crummles, smiling.

“And a manager’s wife,” added Mrs. Crummles, in her accustomed tragedy tones. “Come, come, you will relent, I know you will.”

“It is not in my nature,” said Nicholas, moved by these appeals, “to resist any entreaty, unless it is to do something positively wrong; and, beyond a feeling of pride, I know nothing which should prevent my doing this. I know nobody here either, and nobody knows me. So be it then. I yield.”

Miss Snevellicci was at once overwhelmed with blushes and expressions of gratitude, of which latter commodity neither Mr. nor Mrs. Crummles was by any means sparing. It was arranged that Nicholas should call upon her at her lodgings at eleven next morning, and soon afterwards they parted: he to return home to his authorship; Miss Snevellicci to dress for the after-piece; and the disinterested manager and his wife to discuss the probable gains of the forthcoming bespeak, of which they were to have two-thirds of the profits by solemn treaty of agreement.

At the stipulated hour next morning, Nicholas repaired to the lodgings of Miss Snevellicci, which were in a place called Lombard-street, at the house of a tailor. A strong smell of ironing pervaded the little passage, and the tailor’s daughter, who opened the door, appeared in that flutter of spirits which is so often attendant upon the periodical getting up of a family’s linen.

“Miss Snevellicci lives here, I believe?” said Nicholas, when the door was opened.

The tailor’s daughter replied in the affirmative.

“Will you have the goodness to let her know that Mr. Johnson is here?” said Nicholas.

“Oh, if you please, you’re to come up stairs,” replied the tailor’s daughter, with a smile.

Nicholas followed the young lady, and was shown into a small apartment on the first floor, communicating with a back room; in which, as he judged from a certain half-subdued clinking sound as of cups and saucers, Miss Snelvellici was then taking her breakfast in bed.

"You're to wait, if you please," said the tailor's daughter, after a short period of absence, during which the clinking in the back room had ceased, and been succeeded by whispering—"She won't be long."

As she spoke she pulled up the window-blind, and having by this means (as she thought) diverted Mr. Johnson's attention from the room to the street, caught up some articles which were airing on the fender, and had very much the appearance of stockings, and darted off.

As there were not many objects of interest outside the window, Nicholas looked about the room with more curiosity than he might otherwise have bestowed upon it. On the sofa lay an old guitar, several thumbed pieces of music, and a scattered litter of curl-papers: together with a confused heap of play-bills, and a pair of soiled white satin shoes with large blue rosettes. Hanging over the back of a chair was a half-finished muslin apron with little pockets ornamented with red ribbons, such as waiting-women wear on the stage, and by consequence are never seen with anywhere else. In one corner stood the diminutive pair of top-boots in which Miss Snelvellici was accustomed to enact the little jockey, and, folded on a chair hard by, was a small parcel, which bore a very suspicious resemblance to the companion smalls.

But the most interesting object of all, was perhaps the open scrap-book, displayed in the midst of some theatrical duodecimos that were strewn upon the table, and pasted into which scrap-book were various critical notices of Miss Snelvellici's acting, extracted from different provincial journals, together with one poetic address in her honour, commencing—

Sing, God of Love, and tell me in what dearth  
Thrice-gifted SNEVELLICI came on earth,  
To thrill us with her smile, her tear, her eye,  
Sing, God of Love, and tell me quickly why.

Besides this effusion, there were innumerable complimentary allusions, also extracted from newspapers, such as—"We observe from an advertisement in another part of our paper of to-day, that the charming and highly-talented Miss Snelvellici takes her benefit on Wednesday, for which occasion she has put forth a bill of fare that might kindle exhilaration in the breast of a misanthrope. In the confidence that our fellow-townsmen have not lost that high appreciation of public ability and private worth, for which they have long been so pre-eminently distinguished, we predict that this charming actress will be greeted with a bumper." "To Correspondents.—J. S. is misinformed when he supposes that the highly-gifted and beautiful Miss Snelvellici, nightly captivating all hearts at our pretty and commodious little theatre, is *not* the same lady to whom the young gentleman of immense fortune, residing within a hundred miles of the good city of York, lately made honourable proposals. We have reason to know that Miss Snelvellici is the lady who was implicated in that

mysterious and romantic affair, and whose conduct on that occasion did no less honour to her head and heart, than do her histrionic triumphs to her brilliant genius." A most copious assortment of such paragraphs as these, with long bills of benefits all ending with "Come Early," in large capitals, formed the principal contents of Miss Snevellicci's scrap-book.

Nicholas had read a great many of these scraps, and was absorbed in a circumstantial and melancholy account of the train of events which had led to Miss Snevellicci's spraining her ankle by slipping on a piece of orange-peel flung by a monster in human form, (so the paper said,) upon the stage at Winchester,—when that young lady herself, attired in the coal-scuttle bonnet and walking-dress complete, tripped into the room, with a thousand apologies for having detained him so long after the appointed time.

"But really," said Miss Snevellicci, "my darling Led, who lives with me here, was taken so very ill in the night that I thought she would have expired in my arms."

"Such a fate is almost to be envied," returned Nicholas, "but I am very sorry to hear it nevertheless."

"What a creature you are to flatter!" said Miss Snevellicci, buttoning her glove in much confusion.

"If it be flattery to admire your charms and accomplishments," rejoined Nicholas, laying his hand upon the scrap-book, "you have better specimens of it here."

"Oh you cruel creature, to read such things as those. I'm almost ashamed to look you in the face afterwards, positively I am," said Miss Snevellicci, seizing the book and putting it away in a closet. "How careless of Led! How could she be so naughty!"

"I thought you had kindly left it here, on purpose for me to read," said Nicholas. And really it did seem possible.

"I wouldn't have had you see it for the world!" rejoined Miss Snevellicci. "I never was so vexed—never. But she is such a careless thing, there's no trusting her."

The conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of the phenomenon, who had discreetly remained in the bedroom up to this moment, and now presented herself with much grace and lightness, bearing in her hand a very little green parasol with a broad fringe border, and no handle. After a few words of course, they sallied into the street.

The phenomenon was rather a troublesome companion, for first the right sandal came down, and then the left, and these mischances being repaired, one leg of the little white trowsers was discovered to be longer than the other; besides these accidents, the green parasol was dropped down an iron grating, and only fished up again with great difficulty and by dint of much exertion. However it was impossible to scold her, as she was the manager's daughter, so Nicholas took it all in perfect good humour, and walked on with Miss Snevellicci, arm in arm on one side, and the offending infant on the other.

The first house to which they bent their steps, was situated in a

terrace of respectable appearance. Miss Snevellicci's modest double-knock was answered by a foot-boy, who, in reply to her inquiry whether Mrs. Curdle was at home, opened his eyes very wide, grinned very much, and said he didn't know, but he'd inquire. With this, he showed them into a parlour where he kept them waiting, until the two women-servants had repaired thither, under false pretences, to see the play-actors, and having compared notes with them in the passage, and joined in a vast quantity of whispering and giggling, he at length went up stairs with Miss Snevellicci's name.

Now, Mrs. Curdle was supposed, by those who were best informed on such points, to possess quite the London taste in matters relating to literature and the drama; and as to Mr. Curdle, he had written a pamphlet of sixty-four pages, post octavo, on the character of the Nurse's deceased husband in *Romeo and Juliet*, with an inquiry whether he really had been a "merry man" in his lifetime, or whether it was merely his widow's affectionate partiality that induced her so to report him. He had likewise proved, that by altering the received mode of punctuation, any one of Shakspeare's plays could be made quite different, and the sense completely changed; it is needless to say, therefore, that he was a great critic, and a very profound and most original thinker.

"Well, Miss Snevellicci," said Mrs. Curdle, entering the parlour, "and how do *you* do?"

Miss Snevellicci made a graceful obeisance, and hoped Mrs. Curdle was well, as also Mr. Curdle, who at the same time appeared. Mrs. Curdle was dressed in a morning wrapper, with a little cap stuck upon the top of her head; Mr. Curdle wore a loose robe on his back, and his right fore-finger on his forehead after the portraits of Sterne, to whom somebody or other had once said he bore a striking resemblance.

"I ventured to call for the purpose of asking whether you would put your name to my bespeak, ma'am," said Miss Snevellicci, producing documents.

"Oh! I really don't know what to say," replied Mrs. Curdle. "It's not as if the theatre was in its high and palmy days—you needn't stand, Miss Snevellicci—the drama is gone, perfectly gone."

"As an exquisite embodiment of the poet's visions, and a realisation of human intellectuality, gilding with refulgent light our dreamy moments, and laying open a new and magic world before the mental eye, the drama is gone, perfectly gone," said Mr. Curdle.

"What man is there now living who can present before us all those changing and prismatic colours with which the character of Hamlet is invested?" exclaimed Mrs. Curdle.

"What man indeed—upon the stage;" said Mr. Curdle, with a small reservation in favour of himself. "Hamlet! Pooh! ridiculous! Hamlet is gone, perfectly gone."

Quite overcome by these dismal reflections, Mr. and Mrs. Curdle sighed, and sat for some short time without speaking. At length the lady, turning to Miss Snevellicci, inquired what play she proposed to have.

"Quite a new one," said Miss Snellicci, "of which this gentleman is the author, and in which he plays; being his first appearance on any stage. Mr. Johnson is the gentleman's name."

"I hope you have preserved the unities, Sir?" said Mr. Curdle.

"The original piece is a French one," said Nicholas. "There is abundance of incident, sprightly dialogue, strongly-marked characters—"

"—All unavailing without a strict observance of the unities, Sir," returned Mr. Curdle. "The unities of the drama before everything."

"Might I ask you," said Nicholas, hesitating between the respect he ought to assume, and his love of the whimsical, "might I ask you what the unities are?"

Mr. Curdle coughed and considered. "The unities, Sir," he said, "are a completeness—a kind of a universal dove-tailedness with regard to place and time—a sort of a general oneness, if I may be allowed to use so strong an expression. I take those to be the dramatic unities, so far as I have been enabled to bestow attention upon them, and I have read much upon the subject, and thought much. I find, running through the performances of this child," said Mr. Curdle, turning to the phenomenon, "a unity of feeling, a breadth, a light and shade, a warmth of colouring, a tone, a harmony, a glow, an artistical development of original conceptions, which I look for in vain among older performers—I don't know whether I make myself understood?"

"Perfectly," replied Nicholas.

"Just so," said Mr. Curdle, pulling up his neckcloth. "That is my definition of the unities of the drama."

Mrs. Curdle had sat listening to this lucid explanation with great complacency, and it being finished, inquired what Mr. Curdle thought about putting down their names.

"I don't know, my dear; upon my word I don't know," said Mr. Curdle. "If we do, it must be distinctly understood that we do not pledge ourselves to the quality of the performances. Let it go forth to the world, that we do not give *them* the sanction of our names, but that we confer the distinction merely upon Miss Snellicci. That being clearly stated, I take it to be, as it were, a duty, that we should extend our patronage to a degraded stage even for the sake of the associations with which it is entwined. Have you got two-and-sixpence for half-a-crown, Miss Snellicci?" said Mr. Curdle, turning over four of those pieces of money.

Miss Snellicci felt in all the corners of the pink reticule, but there was nothing in any of them. Nicholas murmured a jest about his being an author, and thought it best not to go through the form of feeling in his own pockets at all.

"Let me see," said Mr. Curdle; "twice four's eight—four shillings a-piece to the boxes, Miss Snellicci, is exceedingly dear in the present state of the drama—three half-crowns is seven-and-six; we shall not differ about sixpence, I suppose. Sixpence will not part us, Miss Snellicci?"

Poor Miss Snellicci took the three half-crowns with many smiles



and bends, and Mrs. Curdle, adding several supplementary directions relative to keeping the places for them, and dusting the seat, and sending two clean bills as soon as they came out, rang the bell as a signal for breaking up the conference.

"Odd people those," said Nicholas, when they got clear of the house.

"I assure you," said Miss Snevellicci, taking his arm, "that I think myself very lucky they did not owe all the money instead of being sixpence short. Now, if you were to succeed, they would give people to understand that they had always patronised you; and if you were to fail, they would have been quite certain of that from the very beginning."

The next house they visited they were in great glory, for there resided the six children who were so enraptured with the public actions of the phenomenon, and who, being called down from the nursery to be treated with a private view of that young lady, proceeded to poke their fingers into her eyes, and tread upon her toes, and show her many other little attentions peculiar to their time of life.

"I shall certainly persuade Mr. Borum to take a private box," said the lady of the house, after a most gracious reception. "I shall only take two of the children, and will make up the rest of the party, of gentlemen—your admirers, Miss Snevellicci. Augustus, you naughty boy, leave the little girl alone."

This was addressed to a young gentleman who was pinching the phenomenon behind, apparently with the view of ascertaining whether she was real.

"I am sure you must be very tired," said the mama, turning to Miss Snevellicci. "I cannot think of allowing you to go without first taking a glass of wine. Fie, Charlotte, I am ashamed of you. Miss Lane, my dear, pray see to the children."

Miss Lane was the governess, and this entreaty was rendered necessary by the abrupt behaviour of the youngest Miss Borum, who, having filched the phenomenon's little green parasol, was now carrying it bodily off, while the distracted infant looked helplessly on.

"I am sure, where you ever learnt to act as you do," said good-natured Mrs. Borum, turning again to Miss Snevellicci, "I cannot understand (Emma, don't stare so); laughing in one piece, and crying in the next, and so natural in all—oh, dear!"

"I am very happy to hear you express so favourable an opinion," said Miss Snevellicci. "It's quite delightful to think you like it."

"Like it!" cried Mrs. Borum. "Who can help liking it! I would go to the play twice a week if I could: I dote upon it—only you're too affecting sometimes. You do put me in such a state—into such fits of crying! Goodness gracious me, Miss Lane, how can you let them torment that poor child so?"

The phenomenon was really in a fair way of being torn limb from limb, for two strong little boys, one holding on by each of her hands, were dragging her in different directions as a trial of strength. However, Miss Lane (who had herself been too much occupied in contem-

plating the grown-up actors, to pay the necessary attention to these proceedings) rescued the unhappy infant at this juncture, who, being recruited with a glass of wine, was shortly afterwards taken away by her friends, after sustaining no more serious damage than a flattening of the pink gauze bonnet, and a rather extensive creasing of the white frock and trowsers.

It was a trying morning, for there were a great many calls to make, and everybody wanted a different thing; some wanted tragedies, and others comedies; some objected to dancing, some wanted scarcely anything else. Some thought the comic singer decidedly low, and others hoped he would have more to do than he usually had. Some people wouldn't promise to go, because other people wouldn't promise to go; and other people wouldn't go at all, because other people went. At length, and by little and little, omitting something in this place, and adding something in that, Miss Snellicci pledged herself to a bill of fare which was comprehensive enough, if it had no other merit (it included among other trifles, four pieces, divers songs, a few combats, and several dances); and they returned home pretty well exhausted with the business of the day.

Nicholas worked away at the piece, which was speedily put into rehearsal, and then worked away at his own part, which he studied with great perseverance and acted—as the whole company said—to perfection. And at length the great day arrived. The crier was sent round in the morning to proclaim the entertainments with sound of bell in all the thoroughfares; extra bills of three feet long by nine inches wide, were dispersed in all directions, flung down all the areas, thrust under all the knockers, and developed in all the shops; they were placarded on all the walls too, though not with complete success, for an illiterate person having undertaken this office during the indisposition of the regular bill-sticker, a part were posted sideways and the remainder upside down.

At half-past five there was a rush of four people to the gallery-door; at a quarter before six there were at least a dozen; at six o'clock the kicks were terrific; and when the elder master Crummles opened the door, he was obliged to run behind it for his life. Fifteen shillings were taken by Mrs. Grudden in the first ten minutes.

Behind the scenes the same unwonted excitement prevailed. Miss Snellicci was in such a perspiration that the paint would scarcely stay on her face. Mrs. Crummles was so nervous that she could hardly remember her part. Miss Bravassa's ringlets came out of curl with the heat and anxiety; even Mr. Crummles himself kept peeping through the hole in the curtain, and running back every now and then to announce that another man had come into the pit.

At last the orchestra left off, and the curtain rose upon the new piece. The first scene, in which there was nobody particular, passed off calmly enough, but when Miss Snellicci went on in the second, accompanied by the phenomenon as child, what a roar of applause broke out! The people in the Borum box rose as one man, waving their hats and handkerchiefs, and uttering shouts of "bravo!" Mrs.

Borum and the governess cast wreaths upon the stage, of which some fluttered into the lamps, and one crowned the temples of a fat gentleman in the pit, who, looking eagerly towards the scene, remained unconscious of the honour; the tailor and his family kicked at the panels of the upper boxes till they threatened to come out altogether; the very ginger-beer boy remained transfixed in the centre of the house; a young officer, supposed to entertain a passion for Miss Snevellicci, stuck his glass in his eye as though to hide a tear. Again and again Miss Snevellicci curtsied lower and lower, and again and again the applause came down louder and louder. At length when the phenomenon picked up one of the smoking wreaths and put it on sideways over Miss Snevellicci's eye, it reached its climax, and the play proceeded.

But when Nicholas came on for his crack scene with Mrs. Crummles, what a clapping of hands there was! When Mrs. Crummles (who was his unworthy mother), sneered, and called him "presumptuous boy," and he defied her, what a tumult of applause came on! When he quarrelled with the other gentleman about the young lady, and producing a case of pistols, said, that if he *was* a gentleman, he would fight him in that drawing-room, till the furniture was sprinkled with the blood of one, if not of two—how boxes, pit, and gallery joined in one most vigorous cheer! When he called his mother names, because she wouldn't give up the young lady's property, and she relenting, caused him to relent likewise, and fall down on one knee and ask her blessing, how the ladies in the audience sobbed! When he was hid behind the curtain in the dark, and the wicked relation poked a sharp sword in every direction, save where his legs were plainly visible, what a thrill of anxious fear ran through the house! His air, his figure, his walk, his look, everything he said or did, was the subject of commendation. There was a round of applause every time he spoke. And when at last, in the pump-and-tub scene, Mrs. Grudden lighted the blue fire, and all the unemployed members of the company came in, and tumbled down in various directions—not because that had anything to do with the plot, but in order to finish off with a tableau—the audience (who had by this time increased considerably) gave vent to such a shout of enthusiasm, as had not been heard in those walls for many and many a day.

In short, the success both of new piece and new actor was complete, and when Miss Snevellicci was called for at the end of the play, Nicholas led her on, and divided the applause.

## CHAPTER XXV.

CONCERNING A YOUNG LADY FROM LONDON, WHO JOINS THE COMPANY, AND AN ELDERLY ADMIRER WHO FOLLOWS IN HER TRAIN; WITH AN AFFECTING CEREMONY CONSEQUENT ON THEIR ARRIVAL.

THE new piece being a decided hit, was announced for every evening of performance until further notice, and the evenings when the theatre was closed, were reduced from three in the week to two. Nor were these the only tokens of extraordinary success; for on the succeeding Saturday Nicholas received, by favour of the indefatigable Mrs. Grudden, no less a sum than thirty shillings; besides which substantial reward, he enjoyed considerable fame and honour, having a presentation copy of Mr. Curdle's pamphlet forwarded to the theatre, with that gentleman's own autograph (in itself an inestimable treasure) on the fly-leaf, accompanied with a note, containing many expressions of approval, and an unsolicited assurance that Mr. Curdle would be very happy to read Shakspeare to him for three hours every morning before breakfast during his stay in the town.

"I've got another novelty, Johnson," said Mr. Crummles one morning in great glee.

"What's that?" rejoined Nicholas. "The pony?"

"No, no, we never come to the pony till everything else has failed," said Mr. Crummles. "I don't think we shall come to the pony at all this season. No, no, not the pony."

"A boy phenomenon, perhaps?" suggested Nicholas.

"There is only one phenomenon, Sir," replied Mr. Crummles impressively, "and that's a girl."

"Very true," said Nicholas. "I beg your pardon. Then I don't know what it is, I am sure."

"What should you say to a young lady from London?" inquired Mr. Crummles. "Miss So-and-so, of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane?"

"I should say she would look very well in the bills," said Nicholas.

"You're about right there," said Mr. Crummles; "and if you had said she would look very well upon the stage too, you wouldn't have been far out. Look here; what do you think of that?"

With this inquiry Mr. Crummles severally unfolded a red poster, and a blue poster, and a yellow poster, at the top of each of which public notification was inscribed in enormous characters—"First appearance of the unrivalled Miss Petowker, of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane!"

"Dear me!" said Nicholas, "I know that lady."

"Then you are acquainted with as much talent as was ever compressed into one young person's body," retorted Mr. Crummles, rolling up the bills again; "that is, talent of a certain sort—of a certain sort. 'The Blood Drinker,'" added Mr. Crummles with a prophetic sigh, "'The Blood Drinker' will die with that girl; and she's the only sylph

I ever saw who could stand upon one leg, and play the tambourine on her other knee, *like a sylph*."

"When does she come down?" asked Nicholas.

"We expect her to-day," replied Mr. Crummles. "She is an old friend of Mrs. Crummles's. Mrs. Crummles saw what she could do—always knew it from the first. She taught her, indeed, nearly all she knows. Mrs. Crummles was the original Blood-Drinker."

"Was she, indeed?"

"Yes. She was obliged to give it up though."

"Did it disagree with her?" asked Nicholas, smiling.

"Not so much with her, as with her audiences," replied Mr. Crummles.

"Nobody could stand it. It was too tremendous. You don't quite know what Mrs. Crummles is, yet."

Nicholas ventured to insinuate that he thought he did.

"No, no, you don't," said Mr. Crummles; "you don't, indeed. I don't, and that's a fact; I don't think her country will till she is dead. Some new proof of talent bursts from that astonishing woman every year of her life. Look at her—mother of six children—three of 'em alive, and all upon the stage!"

"Extraordinary!" cried Nicholas.

"Ah! extraordinary indeed," rejoined Mr. Crummles, taking a complacent pinch of snuff, and shaking his head gravely. "I pledge you my professional word I didn't even know she could dance till her last benefit, and then she played Juliet and Helen Macgregor, and did the skipping-rope hornpipe between the pieces. The very first time I saw that admirable woman, Johnson," said Mr. Crummles, drawing a little nearer, and speaking in the tone of confidential friendship, "she stood upon her head on the butt-end of a spear, surrounded with blazing fireworks."

"You astonish me!" said Nicholas.

"*She astonished me!*" returned Mr. Crummles, with a very serious countenance. "Such grace, coupled with such dignity! I adored her from that moment."

The arrival of the gifted subject of these remarks put an abrupt termination to Mr. Crummles's eulogium, and almost immediately afterwards, Master Percy Crummles entered with a letter, which had arrived by the General Post, and was directed to his gracious mother; at sight of the superscription whereof, Mrs. Crummles exclaimed, "From Henrietta Petowker, I do declare!" and instantly became absorbed in the contents.

"Is it——?" inquired Mr. Crummles, hesitating.

"Oh yes, it's all right," replied Mrs. Crummles, anticipating the question. "What an excellent thing for her, to be sure!"

"It's the best thing altogether that I ever heard of, I think," said Mr. Crummles; and then Mr. Crummles, Mrs. Crummles, and Master Percy Crummles all fell to laughing violently. Nicholas left them to enjoy their mirth together, and walked to his lodgings, wondering very much what mystery connected with Miss Petowker could provoke such merriment, and pondering still more on the extreme surprise with which

that lady would regard his sudden enlistment in a profession of which she was such a distinguished and brilliant ornament.

But in this latter respect he was mistaken ; for—whether Mr. Vincent Crummies had paved the way, or Miss Petowker had some special reason for treating him with even more than her usual amiability—their meeting at the theatre next day was more like that of two dear friends who had been inseparable from infancy, than a recognition passing between a lady and gentleman who had only met some half-dozen times, and then by mere chance. Nay, Miss Petowker even whispered that she had wholly dropped the Kenwigses in her conversations with the manager's family, and had represented herself as having encountered Mr. Johnson in the very first and most fashionable circles ; and on Nicholas receiving this intelligence with unfeigned surprise, she added with a sweet glance that she had a claim on his good-nature now, and might tax it before long.

Nicholas had the honour of playing in a slight piece with Miss Petowker that night, and could not but observe that the warmth of her reception was mainly attributable to a most persevering umbrella in the upper boxes ; he saw, too, that the enchanting actress cast many sweet looks towards the quarter whence these sounds proceeded, and that every time she did so the umbrella broke out afresh. Once he thought that a peculiarly shaped hat in the same corner was not wholly unknown to him, but being occupied with his share of the stage business he bestowed no great attention upon this circumstance, and it had quite vanished from his memory by the time he reached home.

He had just sat down to supper with Smike, when one of the people of the house came outside the door, and announced that a gentleman below stairs wished to speak to Mr. Johnson.

"Well, if he does, you must tell him to come up, that's all I know," replied Nicholas. "One of our hungry brethren, I suppose, Smike."

His fellow-lodger looked at the cold meat, in silent calculation of the quantity that would be left for dinner next day, and put back a slice he had cut for himself, in order that the visitor's encroachments might be less formidable in their effects.

"It is not anybody who has been here before," said Nicholas, "for he is tumbling up every stair. Come in, come in. In the name of wonder—Mr. Lillyvick !"

It was, indeed, the collector of water-rates who, regarding Nicholas with a fixed look and immoveable countenance, shook hands with most portentous solemnity and sat himself down in a seat by the chimney-corner.

"Why, when did you come here ?" asked Nicholas.

"This morning, Sir," replied Mr. Lillyvick.

"Oh ! I see ; then you were at the theatre to-night, and it was your umb——"

"This umbrella," said Mr. Lillyvick, producing a fat green cotton one with a battered ferrule : "what did you think of that performance ?"

"So far as I could judge, being on the stage," replied Nicholas, "I thought it very agreeable."

"Agreeable!" cried the collector. "I mean to say, Sir, that it was delicious."

Mr. Lillyvick bent forward to pronounce the last word with greater emphasis; and having done so, drew himself up, and frowned and nodded a great many times.

"I say, delicious," repeated Mr. Lillyvick. "Absorbing, fairy-like, toomultuous." And again Mr. Lillyvick drew himself up, and again he frowned and nodded.

"Ah!" said Nicholas, a little surprised at these symptoms of ecstatic approbation. "Yes—she is a clever girl."

"She is a divinity," returned Mr. Lillyvick, giving a collector's double knock on the ground with the umbrella before-mentioned. "I have known divine actresses before now, Sir; I used to collect—at least I used to *call for*—and very often call for—the water-rate at the house of a divine actress, who lived in my beat for upwards of four year, but never—no, never, Sir—of all divine creatures, actresses or no actresses, did I see a diviner one than is Henrietta Petowker."

Nicholas had much ado to prevent himself from laughing; not trusting himself to speak, he merely nodded in accordance with Mr. Lillyvick's nods, and remained silent.

"Let me speak a word with you in private," said Mr. Lillyvick.

Nicholas looked good-humouredly at SMIKE, who, taking the hint, disappeared.

"A bachelor is a miserable wretch, Sir," said Mr. Lillyvick.

"Is he?" asked Nicholas.

"He is," rejoined the collector. "I have lived in the world for nigh sixty year, and I ought to know what it is."

"You *ought* to know, certainly," thought Nicholas; "but whether you do or not, is another question."

"If a bachelor happens to have saved a little matter of money," said Mr. Lillyvick, "his sisters and brothers, and nephews and nieces, look *to* that money, and not to him; even if by being a public character he is the head of the family, or as it may be the main from which all the other little branches are turned on, they still wish him dead all the while, and get low-spirited every time they see him looking in good health, because they want to come into his little property. You see that?"

"O, yes," replied Nicholas: "it's very true, no doubt."

"The great reason for not being married," resumed Mr. Lillyvick, "is the expense; that's what's kept me off, or else—Lord!" said Mr. Lillyvick, snapping his fingers, "I might have had fifty women."

"Fine women?" asked Nicholas.

"Fine women, Sir!" replied the collector; "aye! not so fine as Henrietta Petowker, for she is an uncommon specimen, but such women as don't fall into every man's way, I can tell you that. Now suppose a man can get a fortune *in* his wife instead of with her—eh?"

"Why, then, he is a lucky fellow," replied Nicholas.

"That's what I say," retorted the collector, patting him benignantly on the side of the head with his umbrella; "just what I say: Hen-

rietta Petowker, the talented Henrietta Petowker, has a fortune in herself, and I am going to——.”

“To make her Mrs. Lillyvick?” suggested Nicholas.

“No, Sir, not to make her Mrs. Lillyvick,” replied the collector. “Actresses, Sir, always keep their maiden names, that’s the regular thing—but I’m going to marry her; and the day after to-morrow, too.”

“I congratulate you, Sir,” said Nicholas.

“Thank you, Sir,” replied the collector, buttoning his waistcoat. “I shall draw her salary, of course, and I hope after all that it’s nearly as cheap to keep two as it is to keep one; that’s a consolation.”

“Surely you don’t want any consolation at such a moment?” observed Nicholas.

“No,” replied Mr. Lillyvick, shaking his head nervously: “no—of course not.”

“But how come you both here, if you’re going to be married, Mr. Lillyvick?” asked Nicholas.

“Why, that’s what I came to explain to you,” replied the collector of water-rate. “The fact is, we have thought it best to keep it secret from the family.”

“Family!” said Nicholas. “What family?”

“The Kenwises of course,” rejoined Mr. Lillyvick. “If my niece and the children had known a word about it before I came away, they’d have gone into fits at my feet, and never have come out of ‘em till I took an oath not to marry anybody—or they’d have got out a commission of lunacy, or some dreadful thing,” said the collector, quite trembling as he spoke.

“To be sure,” said Nicholas. “Yes; they would have been jealous, no doubt.”

“To prevent which,” said Mr. Lillyvick, “Henrietta Petowker (it was settled between us) should come down here to her friends, the Crummleses, under pretence of this engagement, and I should go down to Guildford the day before, and join her on the coach there, which I did, and we came down from Guildford yesterday together. Now, for fear you should be writing to Mr. Noggs, and might say anything about us, we have thought it best to let you into the secret. We shall be married from the Crummleses’ lodgings, and shall be delighted to see you—either before church or at breakfast-time, which you like. It won’t be expensive, you know,” said the collector, highly anxious to prevent any misunderstanding on this point; “just muffins and coffee, with perhaps a shrimp or something of that sort for a relish, you know.”

“Yes, yes, I understand,” replied Nicholas. “Oh, I shall be most happy to come; it will give me the greatest pleasure. Where’s the lady stopping—with Mrs. Crummles?”

“Why, no,” said the collector; “they couldn’t very well dispose of her at night, and so she is staying with an acquaintance of hers, and another young lady; they both belong to the theatre.”

“Miss Snellicci, I suppose?” said Nicholas.

“Yes, that’s the name.”



"And they'll be bridesmaids, I presume?" said Nicholas.

"Why," said the collector, with a rueful face, "they *will* have four bridesmaids; I'm afraid they'll make it rather theatrical."

"Oh no, not at all," replied Nicholas, with an awkward attempt to convert a laugh into a cough. "Who may the four be? Miss Snellicci of course—Miss Ledrook—"

"The—the phenomenon," groaned the collector.

"Ha, ha!" cried Nicholas. "I beg your pardon, I don't know what I'm laughing at—yes, that'll be very pretty—the phenomenon—who else?"

"Some young woman or other," replied the collector, rising; "some other friend of Henrietta Petowker's. Well, you'll be careful not to say anything about it, will you?"

"You may safely depend upon me," replied Nicholas. "Won't you take anything to eat or drink?"

"No," said the collector; "I haven't any appetite. I should think it was a very pleasant life, the married one—eh?"

"I have not the least doubt of it," rejoined Nicholas.

"Yes," said the collector; "certainly. Oh yes. No doubt. Good night."

With these words, Mr. Lillyvick, whose manner had exhibited through the whole of this interview a most extraordinary compound of precipitation, hesitation, confidence and doubt; fondness, misgiving, meanness, and self-importance, turned his back upon the room, and left Nicholas to enjoy a laugh by himself if he felt so disposed.

Without stopping to enquire whether the intervening day appeared to Nicholas to consist of the usual number of hours of the ordinary length, it may be remarked that, to the parties more directly interested in the forthcoming ceremony, it passed with great rapidity, insomuch that when Miss Petowker awoke on the succeeding morning in the chamber of Miss Snellicci, she declared that nothing should ever persuade her that that really was the day which was to behold a change in her condition.

"I never will believe it," said Miss Petowker; "I cannot really. It's of no use talking, I never can make up my mind to go through with such a trial!"

On hearing this, Miss Snellicci and Miss Ledrook, who knew perfectly well that their fair friend's mind had been made up for three or four years, at any period of which time she would have cheerfully undergone the desperate trial now approaching if she could have found any eligible gentleman disposed for the venture, began to preach comfort and firmness, and to say how very proud she ought to feel that it was in her power to confer lasting bliss on a deserving object, and how necessary it was for the happiness of mankind in general that women should possess fortitude and resignation on such occasions; and that although for their parts they held true happiness to consist in a single life, which they would not willingly exchange—no, not for any worldly consideration—still (thank God), if ever the time *should* come, they hoped they knew their duty too well to repine, but would the

rather submit with meekness and humility of spirit to a fate for which Providence had clearly designed them with a view to the contentment and reward of their fellow-creatures.

"I might feel it was a great blow," said Miss Snevellicci, "to break up old associations and what-do-you-callems of that kind, but I would submit my dear, I would indeed."

"So would I," said Miss Ledrook; "I would rather court the yoke than shun it. I have broken hearts before now, and I'm very sorry for it: for it's a terrible thing to reflect upon."

"It is indeed," said Miss Snevellicci. "Now Led, my dear, we must positively get her ready, or we shall be too late, we shall indeed."

This pious reasoning, and perhaps the fear of being too late, supported the bride through the ceremony of robing, after which, strong tea and brandy were administered in alternate doses as a means of strengthening her feeble limbs and causing her to walk steadier.

"How do you feel now, my love?" enquired Miss Snevellicci.

"Oh Lillyvick!" cried the bride—"If you knew what I am undergoing for you!"

"Of course he knows it, love, and will never forget it," said Miss Ledrook.

"Do you think he won't?" cried Miss Petowker, really showing great capability for the stage. "Oh, do you think he won't? Do you think Lillyvick will always remember it—always, always, always?"

There is no knowing in what this burst of feeling might have ended, if Miss Snevellicci had not at that moment proclaimed the arrival of the fly, which so astounded the bride that she shook off divers alarming symptoms which were coming on very strong, and running to the glass adjusted her dress, and calmly declared that she was ready for the sacrifice.

She was accordingly supported into the coach, and there "kept up" (as Miss Snevellicci said) with perpetual sniffs of *sal volatile* and sips of brandy and other gentle stimulants, until they reached the manager's door, which was already opened by the two master Crummleses, who wore white cockades, and were decorated with the choicest and most resplendent waistcoats in the theatrical wardrobe. By the combined exertions of these young gentlemen and the bridesmaids, assisted by the coachman, Miss Petowker was at length supported in a condition of much exhaustion to the first floor, where she no sooner encountered the youthful bridegroom than she fainted with great decorum.

"Henrietta Petowker!" said the collector; "cheer up, my lovely one."

Miss Petowker grasped the collector's hand, but emotion choked her utterance.

"Is the sight of me so dreadful, Henrietta Petowker?" said the collector.

"Oh no, no, no," rejoined the bride; "but all the friends—the darling friends—of my youthful days—to leave them all—it is such a shock!"

With such expressions of sorrow, Miss Petowker went on to

enumerate the dear friends of her youthful days one by one, and to call upon such of them as were present to come and embrace her. This done, she remembered that Mrs. Crummles had been more than a mother to her, and after that, that Mr. Crummles had been more than a father to her, and after that, that the Master Crummleses and Miss Ninetta Crummles had been more than brothers and sisters to her. These various remembrances being each accompanied with a series of hugs, occupied a long time, and they were obliged to drive to church very fast, for fear they should be too late.

The procession consisted of two fays; in the first of which were Miss Bravassa (the fourth bridesmaid), Mrs. Crummles, the collector, and Mr. Folair, who had been chosen as his second on the occasion. In the other were the bride, Mr. Crummles, Miss Snellicci, Miss Ledrook, and the phenomenon. The costumes were beautiful. The bridesmaids were quite covered with artificial flowers, and the phenomenon, in particular, was rendered almost invisible by the portable arbour in which she was enshrined. Miss Ledrook, who was of a romantic turn, wore in her breast the miniature of some field-officer unknown, which she had purchased, a great bargain, not very long before; the other ladies displayed several dazzling articles of imitative jewellery, almost equal to real; and Mrs. Crummles came out in a stern and gloomy majesty, which attracted the admiration of all beholders.

But, perhaps the appearance of Mr. Crummles was more striking and appropriate than that of any member of the party. This gentleman, who personated the bride's father, had, in pursuance of a happy and original conception, "made up" for the part by arraying himself in a theatrical wig, of a style and pattern commonly known as a brown George, and moreover assuming a snuff-coloured suit, of the previous century, with grey silk stockings, and buckles to his shoes. The better to support his assumed character he had determined to be greatly overcome, and, consequently, when they entered the church, the sobs of the affectionate parent were so heart-rending that the pew-opener suggested the propriety of his retiring to the vestry, and comforting himself with a glass of water before the ceremony began.

The procession up the aisle was beautiful. The bride, with the four bridesmaids, forming a group previously arranged and rehearsed; the collector, followed by his second, imitating his walk and gestures, to the indescribable amusement of some theatrical friends in the gallery; Mr. Crummles, with an infirm and feeble gait; Mrs. Crummles advancing with that stage walk, which consists of a stride and a stop alternately—it was the completest thing ever witnessed. The ceremony was very quickly disposed of, and all parties present having signed the register (for which purpose, when it came to his turn, Mr. Crummles carefully wiped and put on an immense pair of spectacles), they went back to breakfast in high spirits. And here they found Nicholas awaiting their arrival.

"Now then," said Crummles, who had been assisting Mrs. Grudden in the preparations, which were on a more extensive scale than was quite agreeable to the collector. "Breakfast, breakfast."

No second invitation was required. The company crowded and squeezed themselves at the table as well as they could, and fell to, immediately: Miss Petowker blushing very much when anybody was looking, and eating very much when anybody was *not* looking; and Mr. Lillyvick going to work as though with the cool resolve, that since the good things must be paid for by him, he would leave as little as possible for the Crummleses to eat up afterwards.

"It's very soon done, Sir, isn't it?" inquired Mr. Folair of the collector, leaning over the table to address him.

"What is soon done, Sir?" returned Mr. Lillyvick.

"The tying up—the fixing oneself with a wife," replied Mr. Folair.

"It don't take long, does it?"

"No, Sir," replied Mr. Lillyvick, colouring. "It does not take long. And what then, Sir?"

"Oh! nothing," said the actor. "It don't take a man long to hang himself, either, eh? ha, ha!"

Mr. Lillyvick laid down his knife and fork, and looked round the table with indignant astonishment.

"To hang himself!" repeated Mr. Lillyvick.

A profound silence came upon all, for Mr. Lillyvick was dignified beyond expression.

"To hang himself!" cried Mr. Lillyvick again. "Is any parallel attempted to be drawn in this company between matrimony and hanging?"

"The noose, you know," said Mr. Folair, a little crest-fallen.

"The noose, Sir?" retorted Mr. Lillyvick. "Does any man dare to speak to me of a noose, and Henrietta Pe—"

"Lillyvick," suggested Mr. Crummles.

—"and Henrietta Lillyvick in the same breath?" said the collector.

"In this house, in the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Crummles, who have brought up a talented and virtuous family, to be blessings and phenomena, and what not, are we to hear talk of nooses?"

"Folair," said Mr. Crummles, deeming it a matter of decency to be affected by this allusion to himself and partner, "I'm astonished at you."

"What are you going on in this way at me for?" urged the unfortunate actor. "What have I done?"

"Done, Sir!" cried Mr. Lillyvick, "aimed a blow at the whole frame-work of society—"

"And the best and tenderest feelings," added Crummles, relapsing into the old man.

"And the highest and most estimable of social ties," said the collector. "Noose! As if one was caught, trapped into the married state, pinned by the leg, instead of going into it of one's own accord and glorying in the act!"

"I didn't mean to make it out, that you were caught and trapped, and pinned by the leg," replied the actor. "I'm sorry for it; I can't say any more."

"So you ought to be, Sir," returned Mr. Lillyvick; "and I am glad to hear that you have enough of feeling left to be so."

The quarrel appearing to terminate with this reply, Mrs. Lillyvick considered that the fittest occasion (the attention of the company being no longer distracted) to burst into tears, and require the assistance of all four bridesmaids, which was immediately rendered, though not without some confusion, for the room being small and the table-cloth long, a whole detachment of plates were swept off the board at the very first move. Regardless of this circumstance, however, Mrs. Lillyvick refused to be comforted until the belligerents had passed their words that the dispute should be carried no further, which, after a sufficient show of reluctance, they did, and from that time Mr. Folair sat in moody silence, contenting himself with pinching Nicholas's leg when anything was said, and so expressing his contempt both for the speaker and the sentiments to which he gave utterance.

There were a great number of speeches made, some by Nicholas, and some by Crummles, and some by the collector; two by the master Crummles in returning thanks for themselves, and one by the phenomenon on behalf of the bridesmaids, at which Mrs. Crummles shed tears. There was some singing, too, from Miss Ledrook and Miss Bravassa, and very likely there might have been more, if the fly-driver, who stopped to drive the happy pair to the spot where they proposed to take steam-boat to Ryde, had not sent in a peremptory message intimating, that if they didn't come directly he should infallibly demand eighteen-pence over and above his agreement.

This desperate threat effectually broke up the party. After a most pathetic leave-taking, Mr. Lillyvick and his bride departed for Ryde, where they were to spend the next two days in profound retirement, and whither they were accompanied by the infant, who had been appointed travelling bridesmaid on Mr. Lillyvick's express stipulation, as the steam-boat people, deceived by her size, would (he had previously ascertained) transport her at half price.

As there was no performance that night, Mr. Crummles declared his intention of keeping it up till everything to drink was disposed of; but Nicholas having to play Romeo for the first time on the ensuing evening, contrived to slip away in the midst of a temporary confusion, occasioned by the unexpected development of strong symptoms of inebriety in the conduct of Mrs. Grudden.

To this act of desertion he was led, not only by his own inclinations, but by his anxiety on account of Smike, who, having to sustain the character of the Apothecary, had been as yet wholly unable to get any more of the part into his head than the general idea that he was very hungry, which—perhaps from old recollections—he had acquired with great aptitude.

"I don't know what's to be done, Smike," said Nicholas, laying down the book. "I am afraid you can't learn it, my poor fellow."

"I am afraid not," said Smike, shaking his head. "I think if you—but that would give you so much trouble."

"What?" inquired Nicholas. "Never mind me."

"I think," said Smike, "if you were to keep saying it to me in little bits, over and over again, I should be able to recollect it from hearing you."

"Do you think so!" exclaimed Nicholas. "Well said. Let us see who tires first. Not I, Smike, trust me. Now then. 'Who calls so loud?'"

"Who calls so loud?" said Smike.

"Who calls so loud?" repeated Nicholas.

"Who calls so loud?" cried Smike.

Thus they continued to ask each other who called so loud, over and over and over again; and when Smike had that by heart, Nicholas went to another sentence, and then to two at a time, and then to three, and so on, until at midnight poor Smike found to his unspeakable joy that he really began to remember something about the text.

Early in the morning they went to it again, and Smike, rendered more confident by the progress he had already made, got on faster and with better heart. As soon as he began to acquire the words pretty freely, Nicholas showed him how he must come in with both hands spread out upon his stomach, and how he must occasionally rub it, in compliance with the established form by which people on the stage always denote that they want something to eat. After the morning's rehearsal they went to work again, nor did they stop, except for a hasty dinner, until it was time to repair to the theatre at night.

Never had master a more anxious, humble, docile pupil. Never had pupil a more patient, unwearying, considerate, kind-hearted master.

As soon as they were dressed, and at every interval when he was not upon the stage, Nicholas renewed his instructions. They prospered well. The Romeo was received with hearty plaudits and unbounded favour, and Smike was pronounced unanimously, alike by audience and actors, the very prince and prodigy of Apothecaries.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

IS FRAUGHT WITH SOME DANGER TO MISS NICKLEBY'S PEACE OF MIND.

THE place was a handsome suite of private apartments in Regent-street; the time was three o'clock in the afternoon to the dull and plodding, and the first hour of morning to the gay and spirited; the persons were Lord Frederick Verisopht, and his friend Sir Mulberry Hawk.

These distinguished gentlemen were reclining listlessly on a couple of sofas, with a table between them, on which were scattered in rich confusion the materials of an untasted breakfast. Newspapers lay strewn about the room, but these, like the meal, were neglected and unnoticed; not, however, because any flow of conversation prevented the attractions of the journals from being called into request, for not a word was exchanged between the two, nor was any sound uttered, save when one, in tossing about to find an easier resting-place for his aching head, uttered an

exclamation of impatience, and seemed for the moment to communicate a new restlessness to his companion.

These appearances would in themselves have furnished a pretty strong clue to the extent of the debauch of the previous night, even if there had not been other indications of the amusements in which it had been passed. A couple of billiard balls, all mud and dirt, two battered hats, a champagne bottle with a soiled glove twisted round the neck, to allow of its being grasped more surely in its capacity of an offensive weapon; a broken cane; a card-case without the top; an empty purse; a watch-guard snapped asunder; a handful of silver, mingled with fragments of half-smoked cigars, and their stale and crumbled ashes;—these, and many other tokens of riot and disorder, hinted very intelligibly at the nature of last night's gentlemanly frolics.

Lord Frederick Verisopht was the first to speak. Dropping his slippered foot on the ground, and, yawning heavily, he struggled into a sitting posture, and turned his dull languid eyes towards his friend, to whom he called in a drowsy voice.

"Hallo!" replied Sir Mulberry, turning round.

"Are we going to lie here all da-a-y?" said the Lord.

"I don't know that we're fit for anything else," replied Sir Mulberry; "yet awhile, at least. I haven't a grain of life in me this morning."

"Life!" cried Lord Verisopht. "I feel as if there would be nothing so snug and comfortable as to die at once."

"Then why don't you die?" said Sir Mulberry.

With which inquiry he turned his face away, and seemed to occupy himself in an attempt to fall asleep.

His hopeful friend and pupil drew a chair to the breakfast-table, and essayed to eat; but, finding that impossible, lounged to the window, then loitered up and down the room with his hand to his fevered head, and finally threw himself again on his sofa, and roused his friend once more.

"What the devil's the matter?" groaned Sir Mulberry, sitting upright on the couch.

Although Sir Mulberry said this with sufficient ill-humour, he did not seem to feel himself quite at liberty to remain silent; for, after stretching himself very often, and declaring with a shiver that it was "infernal cold," he made an experiment at the breakfast-table, and proving more successful in it than his less-seasoned friend, remained there.

"Suppose," said Sir Mulberry, pausing with a morsel on the point of his fork, "Suppose we go back to the subject of little Nickleby, eh?"

"Which little Nickleby; the money-lender or the ga-a-l?" asked Lord Verisopht.

"You take me, I see," replied Sir Mulberry. "The girl, of course."

"You promised me you'd find her out," said Lord Verisopht.

"So I did," rejoined his friend; "but I have thought further of the matter since then. You distrust me in the business—you shall find her out yourself."

"Na—ay," remonstrated Lord Verisopht.

"But I say yes," returned his friend. "You shall find her out

yourself. Don't think that I mean, when you can—I know as well as you that if I did, you could never get sight of her without me. No. I say you shall find her out—*shall*—and I'll put you in the way."

"Now, curse me, if you ain't a real, deyvlish, downright, thorough-paced friend," said the young Lord, on whom this speech had produced a most reviving effect.

"I'll tell you how," said Sir Mulberry. "She was at that dinner as a bait for you."

"No!" cried the young Lord. "What the dey—"

"As a bait for you," repeated his friend; "old Nickleby told me so himself."

"What a fine old cock it is!" exclaimed Lord Verisopht; "a noble rascal!"

"Yes," said Sir Mulberry, "he knew she was a smart little creature—"

"Smart!" interposed the young lord. "Upon my soul, Hawk, she's a perfect beauty—a—a picture, a statue, a—a—upon my soul she is!"

"Well," replied Sir Mulberry, shrugging his shoulders and manifesting an indifference, whether he felt it or not; "that's a matter of taste; if mine doesn't agree with yours, so much the better."

"Confound it!" reasoned the lord, "you were thick enough with her that day, anyhow. I could hardly get in a word."

"Well enough for once, well enough for once," replied Sir Mulberry; "but not worth the trouble of being agreeable to again. If you seriously want to follow up the niece, tell the uncle that you must know where she lives, and how she lives, and with whom, or you are no longer a customer of his. He'll tell you fast enough."

"Why didn't you say this before?" asked Lord Verisopht, "instead of letting me go on burning, consuming, dragging out a miserable existence for an a-age?"

"I didn't know it, in the first place," answered Sir Mulberry carelessly; "and in the second, I didn't believe you were so very much in earnest."

Now, the truth was that in the interval which had elapsed since the dinner at Ralph Nickleby's, Sir Mulberry Hawk had been furtively trying by every means in his power to discover whence Kate had so suddenly appeared, and whither she had disappeared. Unassisted by Ralph, however, with whom he had held no communication since their angry parting on that occasion, all his efforts were wholly unavailing, and he had therefore arrived at the determination of communicating to the young lord the substance of the admission he had gleaned from that worthy. To this he was impelled by various considerations; among which the certainty of knowing whatever the weak young man knew was decidedly not the least, as the desire of encountering the usurer's niece again, and using his utmost arts to reduce her pride, and revenge himself for her contempt, was uppermost in his thoughts. It was a politic course of proceeding, and one which could not fail to redound to his advantage in every point of view, since the very circumstance of his having extorted from Ralph Nickleby his real design in introducing



his niece to such society, coupled with his extreme disinterestedness in communicating it so freely to his friend, could not but advance his interests in that quarter, and greatly facilitate the passage of coin (pretty frequent and speedy already) from the pockets of Lord Frederick Verisopht to those of Sir Mulberry Hawk.

Thus reasoned Sir Mulberry, and in pursuance of this reasoning he and his friend soon afterwards repaired to Ralph Nickleby's, there to execute a plan of operations concerted by Sir Mulberry himself, avowedly to promote his friend's object, and really to attain his own.

They found Ralph at home, and alone. As he led them into the drawing-room, the recollection of the scene which had taken place there seemed to occur to him, for he cast a curious look at Sir Mulberry, who bestowed upon it no other acknowledgment than a careless smile.

They had a short conference upon some money matters then in progress, which were scarcely disposed of when the lordly dupe (in pursuance of his friend's instructions) requested with some embarrassment to speak to Ralph alone.

"Alone, eh?" cried Sir Mulberry, affecting surprise. "Oh, very good. I'll walk into the next room here. Don't keep me long, that's all."

So saying, Sir Mulberry took up his hat, and humming a fragment of a song disappeared through the door of communication between the two drawing-rooms, and closed it after him.

"Now, my lord," said Ralph, "what is it?"

"Nickleby," said his client, throwing himself along the sofa on which he had been previously seated, so as to bring his lips nearer to the old man's ear, "what a pretty creature your niece is!"

"Is she, my lord?" replied Ralph. "Maybe—maybe—I don't trouble my head with such matters."

"You know she's a deyv'lish fine girl," said the client. "You must know that, Nickleby. Come, don't deny that."

"Yes, I believe she is considered so," replied Ralph. "Indeed, I know she is. If I did not, you are an authority on such points, and your taste, my lord—on all points, indeed—is undeniable."

Nobody but the young man to whom these words were addressed could have been deaf to the sneering tone in which they were spoken, or blind to the look of contempt by which they were accompanied. But Lord Frederick Verisopht was both, and took them to be complimentary.

"Well," he said, "p'raps you're a little right, and p'raps you're a little wrong—a little of both, Nickleby. I want to know where this beauty lives, that I may have another peep at her, Nickleby."

"Really—" Ralph began in his usual tones.

"Don't talk so loud," cried the other, achieving the great point of his lesson to a miracle. "I don't want Hawk to hear."

"You know he is your rival, do you?" said Ralph, looking sharply at him.

"He always is, d-a-amn him," replied the client; "and I want to steal a march upon him. Ha, ha, ha! He'll cut up so rough,

Nickleby, at our talking together without him. Where does she live, Nickleby, that's all? Only tell me where she lives, Nickleby."

"He bites," thought Ralph. "He bites."

"Eh, Nickleby, eh?" pursued the client. "Where does she live?"

"Really, my lord," said Ralph, rubbing his hands slowly over each other, "I must think before I tell you."

"No, not a bit of it, Nickleby; you mustn't think at all," replied Verisopht. "Where is it?"

"No good can come of your knowing," replied Ralph. "She has been virtuously and well brought up; to be sure she is handsome, poor, unprotected—poor girl, poor girl."

Ralph ran over this brief summary of Kate's condition as if it were merely passing through his own mind, and he had no intention to speak aloud; but the shrewd sly look which he directed at his companion as he delivered it, gave this poor assumption the lie.

"I tell you I only want to see her," cried his client. "A ma-an may look at a pretty woman without harm, mayn't he? Now, where *does* she live? You know you're making a fortune out of me, Nickleby, and upon my soul nobody shall ever take me to anybody else, if you only tell me this."

"As you promise that, my Lord," said Ralph, with feigned reluctance, "and as I am most anxious to oblige you, and as there's no harm in it—no harm—I'll tell you. But you had better keep it to yourself, my Lord; strictly to yourself." Ralph pointed to the adjoining room as he spoke, and nodded expressively.

The young Lord, feigning to be equally impressed with the necessity of this precaution, Ralph disclosed the present address and occupation of his niece, observing that from what he heard of the family they appeared very ambitious to have distinguished acquaintances, and that a Lord could, doubtless, introduce himself with great ease, if he felt disposed.

"Your object being only to see her again," said Ralph, "you could effect it at any time you chose by that means."

Lord Verisopht acknowledged the hint with a great many squeezes of Ralph's hard, horny hand, and whispering that they would now do well to close the conversation, called to Sir Mulberry Hawk that he might come back.

"I thought you had gone to sleep," said Sir Mulberry, re-appearing with an ill-tempered air.

"Sorry to detain you," replied the gull; "but Nickleby has been so ama-azingly funny that I couldn't tear myself away."

"No, no," said Ralph; "it was all his lordship. You know what a witty, humorous, elegant, accomplished man Lord Frederick is. Mind the step, my Lord—Sir Mulberry, pray give way."

With such courtesies as these, and many low bows, and the same cold sneer upon his face all the while, Ralph busied himself in showing his visitors down stairs, and otherwise than by the slightest possible motion about the corners of his mouth, returned no show of answer to the look of admiration with which Sir Mulberry Hawk seemed to compliment him on being such an accomplished and most consummate scoundrel.

There had been a ring at the bell a few moments before, which was answered by Newman Noggs just as they reached the hall. In the ordinary course of business Newman would have either admitted the new-comer in silence, or have requested him or her to stand aside while the gentlemen passed out. But he no sooner saw who it was, than as if for some private reason of his own, he boldly departed from the established custom of Ralph's mansion in business hours, and looking towards the respectable trio who were approaching, cried in a loud and sonorous voice, "Mrs. Nickleby!"

"Mrs. Nickleby!" cried Sir Mulberry Hawk, as his friend looked back, and stared him in the face.

It was, indeed, that well-intentioned lady, who, having received an offer for the empty house in the city directed to the landlord, had brought it post-haste to Mr. Nickleby without delay.

"Nobody *you* know," said Ralph. "Step into the office, my—my—dear. I'll be with you directly."

"Nobody I know!" cried Sir Mulberry Hawk, advancing to the astonished lady. "Is this Mrs. Nickleby—the mother of Miss Nickleby—the delightful creature that I had the happiness of meeting in this house the very last time I dined here! But no;" said Sir Mulberry, stopping short. "No, it can't be. There is the same cast of features, the same indescribable air of—But no; no. This lady is too young for that."

"I think you can tell the gentleman, brother-in-law, if it concerns him to know," said Mrs. Nickleby, acknowledging the compliment with a graceful bend, "that Kate Nickleby is my daughter."

"Her daughter, my Lord!" cried Sir Mulberry, turning to his friend. "This lady's daughter, my Lord."

"My Lord!" thought Mrs. Nickleby. "Well, I never did—!"

"This, then, my Lord," said Sir Mulberry, "is the lady to whose obliging marriage we owe so much happiness. This lady is the mother of sweet Miss Nickleby. Do you observe the extraordinary likeness, my Lord? Nickleby—introduce us."

Ralph did so, in a kind of desperation.

"Upon my soul, it's a most delightful thing," said Lord Frederick, pressing forward: "How de do?"

Mrs. Nickleby was too much flurried by these uncommonly kind salutations, and her regrets at not having on her other bonnet, to make any immediate reply, so she merely continued to bend and smile, and betray great agitation.

"A—and how is Miss Nickleby?" said Lord Frederick. "Well, I hope?"

"She is quite well, I'm obliged to you, my lord," returned Mrs. Nickleby, recovering. "Quite well. She wasn't well for some days after that day she dined here, and I can't help thinking, that she caught cold in that hackney coach coming home: Hackney coaches, my lord, are such nasty things, that it's almost better to walk at any time, for although I believe a hackney coachman can be transported for life, if he has a broken window, still they are so reckless, that they nearly all

have broken windows. I once had a swelled face for six weeks, my lord, from riding in a hackney coach—I think it was a hackney coach," said Mrs. Nickleby reflecting, "though I'm not quite certain, whether it wasn't a chariot; at all events I know it was a dark green, with a very long number, beginning with a nought and ending with a nine—no, beginning with a nine, and ending with a nought, that was it, and of course the stamp office people would know at once whether it was a coach or a chariot if any inquiries were made there—however that was, there it was with a broken window, and there was I for six weeks with a swelled face—I think that was the very same hackney coach, that we found out afterwards, had the top open all the time, and we should never even have known it, if they hadn't charged us a shilling an hour extra for having it open, which it seems is the law, or was then, and a most shameful law it appears to be—I don't understand the subject, but I should say the Corn Laws could be nothing to *that* act of Parliament."

Having pretty well run herself out by this time, Mrs. Nickleby stopped as suddenly as she had started off, and repeated that Kate was quite well. "Indeed," said Mrs. Nickleby, "I don't think she ever was better, since she had the hooping-cough, scarlet-fever and measles, all at the same time, and that's the fact."

"Is that letter for me?" growled Ralph, pointing to the little packet Mrs. Nickleby held in her hand.

"For you, brother-in-law," replied Mrs. Nickleby, "and I walked all the way up here on purpose to give it you."

"All the way up here!" cried Sir Mulberry, seizing upon the chance of discovering where Mrs. Nickleby had come from. "What a confounded distance! How far do you call it now?"

"How far do I call it!" said Mrs. Nickleby. "Let me see. It's just a mile, from our door to the Old Bailey."

"No, no. Not so much as that," urged Sir Mulberry.

"Oh! It is indeed," said Mrs. Nickleby. "I appeal to his lordship."

"I should decidedly say it was a mile," remarked Lord Frederick, with a solemn aspect.

"It must be; it can't be a yard less," said Mrs. Nickleby. "All down Newgate Street, all down Cheapside, all up Lombard Street, down Gracechurch Street, and along Thames Street, as far as Spig-wiffin's Wharf. Oh! It's a mile."

"Yes, on second thoughts I should say it was," replied Sir Mulberry.

"But you don't surely mean to walk all the way back?"

"Oh no," rejoined Mrs. Nickleby. "I shall go back in an omnibus. I didn't travel about in omnibuses, when my poor dear Nicholas was alive, brother-in-law. But as it is, you know—"

"Yes, yes," replied Ralph impatiently, "and you had better get back before dark."

"Thank you, brother-in-law, so I had," returned Mrs. Nickleby.

"I think I had better say good bye, at once."

"Not stop and—rest?" said Ralph, who seldom offered refreshments unless something was to be got by it.

"Oh dear me no," returned Mrs. Nickleby, glancing at the dial.

"Lord Frederick," said Sir Mulberry, "we are going Mrs. Nickleby's way. We'll see her safe to the omnibus?"

"By all means. Ye-es."

"Oh! I really couldn't think of it!" said Mrs. Nickleby.

But Sir Mulberry Hawk and Lord Verisopht were peremptory in their politeness, and leaving Ralph, who seemed to think, not unwisely, that he looked less ridiculous as a mere spectator, than he would have done if he had taken any part in these proceedings, they quitted the house with Mrs. Nickleby between them; that good lady in a perfect ecstacy of satisfaction, no less with the attentions shown her by two titled gentlemen, than with the conviction, that Kate might now pick and choose, at least between two large fortunes, and most unexceptionable husbands.

As she was carried away for the moment by an irresistible train of thought, all connected with her daughter's future greatness, Sir Mulberry Hawk and his friend exchanged glances over the top of the bonnet which the poor lady so much regretted not having left at home, and proceeded to dilate with great rapture, but much respect, on the manifold perfections of Miss Nickleby.

"What a delight, what a comfort, what a happiness, this amiable creature must be to you," said Sir Mulberry, throwing into his voice an indication of the warmest feeling.

"She is indeed, Sir," replied Mrs. Nickleby; "she is the sweetest-tempered, kindest-hearted creature—and so clever!"

"She looks clayey," said Lord Verisopht, with the air of a judge of cleverness.

"I assure you she is, my lord," returned Mrs. Nickleby. "When she was at school in Devonshire, she was universally allowed to be beyond all exception the very cleverest girl there, and there were a great many very clever ones too, and that's the truth—twenty-five young ladies, fifty guineas a-year without the et-ceteras, both the Miss Dowdles, the most accomplished, elegant, fascinating creatures—Oh dear me!" said Mrs. Nickleby, "I never shall forget what pleasure she used to give me and her poor dear papa, when she was at that school, never—such a delightful letter every half-year, telling us that she was the first pupil in the whole establishment, and had made more progress than anybody else! I can scarcely bear to think of it even now. The girls wrote all the letters themselves," added Mrs. Nickleby, "and the writing-master touched them up afterwards with a magnifying glass and a silver pen; at least I think they wrote them, though Kate was never quite certain about that, because she didn't know the handwriting of hers again; but any way, I know it was a circular which they all copied, and of course it was a very gratifying thing—very gratifying."

With similar recollections Mrs. Nickleby beguiled the tediousness of the way, until they reached the omnibus, which the extreme politeness of her new friends would not allow them to leave until it actually started, when they took their hats, as Mrs. Nickleby solemnly assured

her hearers on many subsequent occasions, "completely off," and kissed their straw-coloured kid gloves till they were no longer visible.

Mrs. Nickleby leant back in the furthest corner of the conveyance, and, closing her eyes, resigned herself to a host of most pleasing meditations. Kate had never said a word about having met either of these gentlemen; "that," she thought, "argues that she is strongly prepossessed in favour of one of them." Then the question arose, which one could it be. The lord was the youngest, and his title was certainly the grandest; still Kate was not the girl to be swayed by such considerations as these. "I will never put any constraint upon her inclinations," said Mrs. Nickleby to herself; "but upon my word I think there's no comparison between his lordship and Sir Mulberry—Sir Mulberry is such an attentive gentlemanly creature, so much manner, such a fine man, and has so much to say for himself. I hope it's Sir Mulberry—I think it must be Sir Mulberry!" And then her thoughts flew back to her old predictions, and the number of times she had said, that Kate with no fortune would marry better than other people's daughters with thousands; and, as she pictured with the brightness of a mother's fancy all the beauty and grace of the poor girl who had struggled so cheerfully with her new life of hardship and trial, her heart grew too full, and the tears trickled down her face.

Meanwhile, Ralph walked to and fro in his little back office, troubled in mind by what had just occurred. To say that Ralph loved or cared for—in the most ordinary acceptation of those terms—any one of God's creatures, would be the wildest fiction. Still, there had somehow stolen upon him from time to time a thought of his niece which was tinged with compassion and pity; breaking through the dull cloud of dislike or indifference which darkened men and women in his eyes, there was, in her case, the faintest gleam of light—a most feeble and sickly ray at the best of times—but there it was, and it showed the poor girl in a better and purer aspect than any in which he had looked on human nature yet.

"I wish," thought Ralph, "I had never done this. And yet it will keep this boy to me, while there is money to be made. Selling a girl—throwing her in the way of temptation, and insult, and coarse speech. Nearly two thousand pounds profit from him already though. Pshaw! match-making mothers do the same thing every day."

He sat down, and told the chances, for and against, on his fingers.

"If I had not put them in the right track to-day," thought Ralph, "this foolish woman would have done so. Well. If her daughter is as true to herself as she should be from what I have seen, what harm ensues? A little teasing, a little humbling, a few tears. Yes," said Ralph, aloud, as he locked his iron safe. "She must take her chance. She must take her chance."

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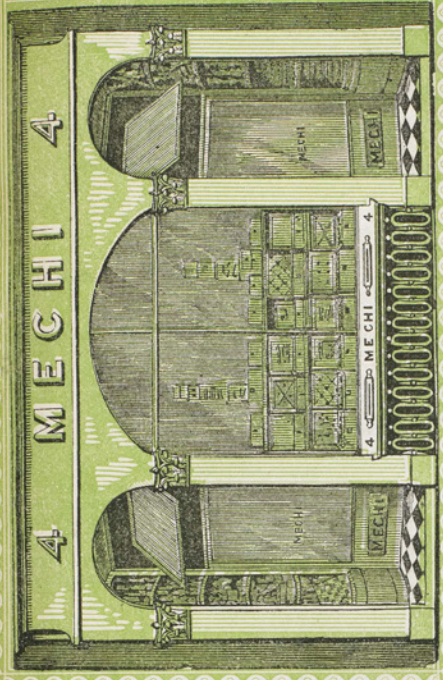
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A small piece of Naples Soap, the size of a pea, spread on the chin will, with the assistance of the brush and a little water, produce a similar result.

Indeed, to all shavers, I recommend this, whether travelling or not, as the best means of easy shaving; for how frequently is time wasted in raising a lather in the dish (where it is not wanted) in lieu of doing it on the face, where a good deal of friction and soap is indispensably necessary.

One trial alone of the above plan will bring conviction to the most strenuous advocate of the dish system.

It may be well to remark, that to avoid having the lather thick or thin in the extreme, I dip my brush in water, giving it a gentle shake, which throws off the superfluous, and leaves enough to raise the soap on the face to a consistent lather.

Where the soap is glutinous, the surface of beard extensive, or the brush small, a second or even a third recourse to the basin may be necessary during the process. The cake of soap quickly rubs away on the face, the beard acting as a file.

I think I may remark that, generally speaking, there is too much rubbing in the dish, and too little on the face.

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taking care to press most on the back. Fresh Paste should be applied once a month.

In turning the Razor in stropping, be sure to keep the back down on the Strop, changing at the same time the position of your hand and arm, both of which must act freely as high as the elbow. A cramped hand does not answer for stropping a Razor properly: a light, free, brisk action far surpasses a dull heavy stroke.

When the Strop becomes notched or uneven, it is no longer fit for use. In fact, so easily are the Teeth of a good Razor disturbed, that *only once* stropping it on an improper composition will destroy its fine edge and make it painful to shave with. If you shave from heel to point of the Razor, strop it from point to heel; but if you begin with the point, then strop from heel to point. Those who have not one of MECHT'S MAGIC STROPS, will do well before shaving to strop the Razor on the fleshy part of the hand, and then upon a small piece of dry clean wash leather (plate-leather).

A Razor that is badly tempered, can never maintain its fine edge even during one shaving. The practice of pressing on the edge of a Razor in stropping, generally rounds it; it should be directed to the back, which must never be raised from the Strop. It would be better not to strop your Razor at all, than to do so hastily or carelessly; when the Razor is once in good condition a few strokes on the Strop will keep it so, with a stiff beard, but for a light and tender face, stropping once or twice a week is sufficient; but the hand or wash-leather should be used every day. If you *only once* put away your Razor without stropping, you must no longer expect to shave well, the soap and damp so soon rust the fine teeth. A piece of plate-leather should be always kept with the Razors.

The operation of shaving is in effect precisely that of mowing. We may compare the stiff beard to coarse grass, and the Razor to the scythe. The mower would cut but little did he not, frequently by using the stone, renovate the edge of the instrument: the same remark applies to the shaver. Experience convinces me, however, that many have never drawn the comparison, or they would not continue to labour away for years on an old disfigured Strop, from which every particle of composition must have long since been worn off, or at all events have lost its cutting properties: for the composition, which should consist of sharp cutting angles, wears away as well as the Razor. Besides, the Strop, by being frequently laid down without its case, absorbs all sorts of dust and grit (injurious in the extreme to a smooth edge), and requires occasional scraping, which may be best done by the back of a knife. Light silky beards require a keen, thin, elastic edge: stiff gristy beards, on the contrary, require a stronger edge, with but little elasticity.

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Those who have very *thin irritable skins*, I recommend to rub their beards with sweet oil *before lathering*, the alkali will then act on the oil instead of the skin, and assist in producing a more durable lather. Besides, the skin will not then absorb the liquid part of the lather too quickly, as it otherwise does.

*Never fail to well wash your beard with soap and cold water*, immediately before you apply the lather, of which the more you use the easier you will shave. *Never use warm water*, which makes a tender face. Place the Razor (closed of course) in your pocket, or under your arm, to warm it. In order to shave very clean, it is sometimes necessary to lather and go over your beard a second time. The moment you leave your bed is the best time to shave; always putting your shaving brush away with the lather on it.

The Razor (being only a very fine saw) should be moved in a sloping or sawing direction, holding it *nearly flat* to your face, care being taken to *draw the skin as tight as possible* with the left hand, so as to present an even surface and throw out the beard.

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