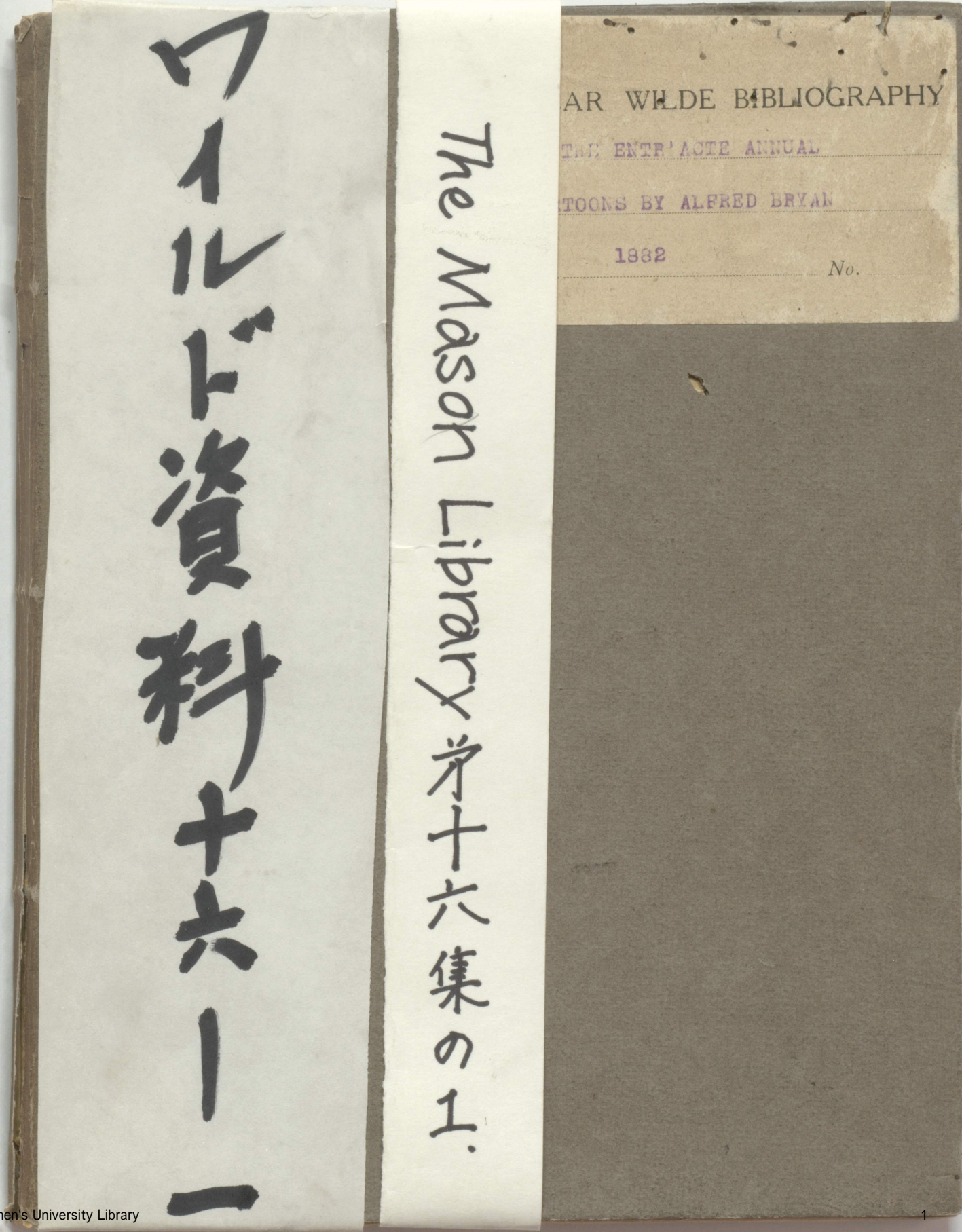


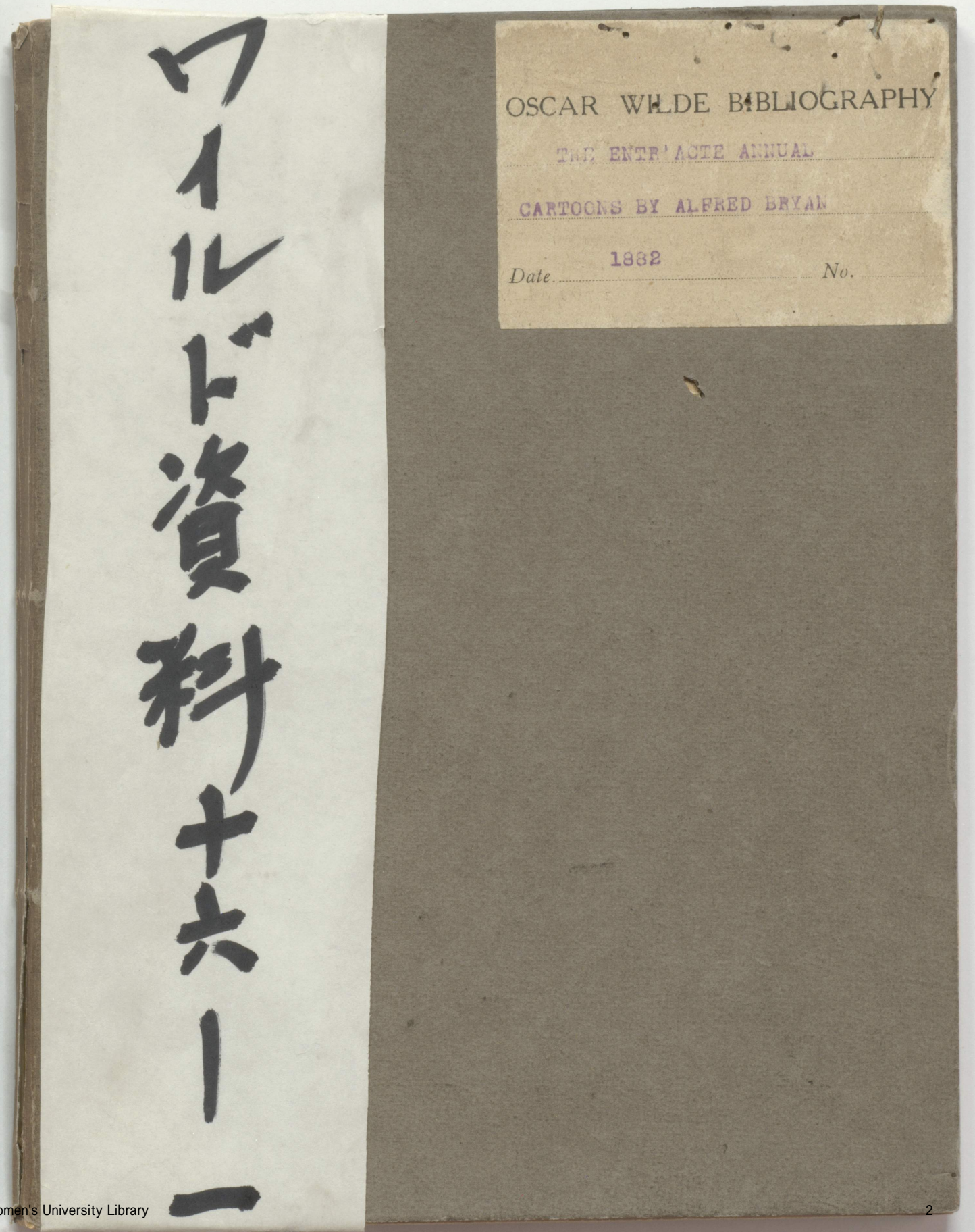


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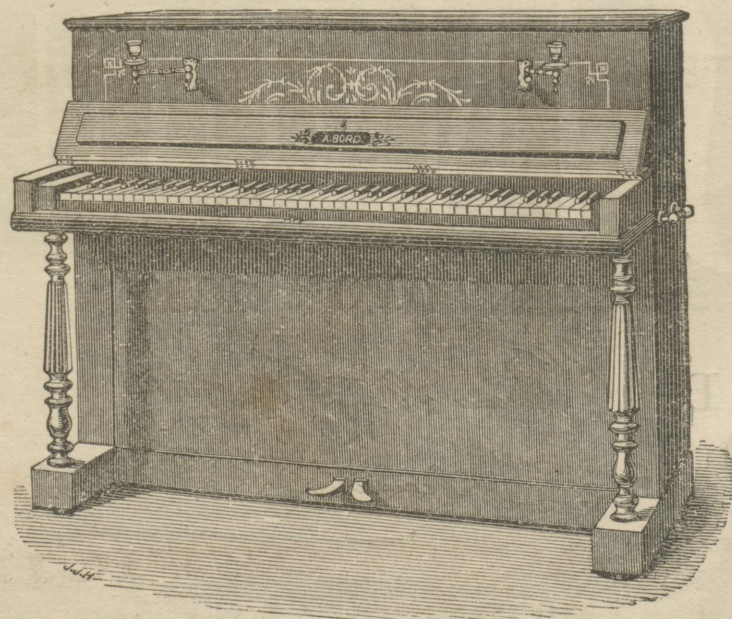
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THE ENTR'ACTE



ANNUAL. 1882.

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THE LYCEUM LION.



GOODS AND CHATTELS.
TWO TRUE STORIES.

BY JOHN HOLLINGSHEAD.

No. 1.—THE WANDERING CABINET.

FORTY years ago the old city of Frankfort-on-the-Maine was not quite so prim as it is at present. The substantial villas of the merchants and bankers, so suggestive of Clapham and Clapton, were not so numerous, and the old part of the City near the river was not so degraded and deserted. The *Jüden-Gasse* was not quite so like a "backslum" in Ratcliffe Highway, and the house in which the founder of the Rothschild family is said to have been born had not fallen a heap of ruins across the narrow footway.

In those days fairs were held, as they are held now,—fairs in which people bought food, clothing, furniture, and jewels,—fairs which would be more justly described by

our term "market." A constant attendant at this Frankfort fair was an itinerant Jew, who dealt in old silver, furniture, and *bric-à-brac*. As his goods were valuable he occupied a booth, and amongst his treasures was a faded cabinet standing on four high legs, its body consisting of four large *plaques* of *Louis XVI. Sèvres*. One of the *plaques* was cracked, and, considering the antiquity of the cabinet, and the way it had been dragged about the country, the wonder is that it held together in anything like form to tempt a purchaser. The dealer was evidently tired of it. How he came by it was probably a mystery which no one cared to fathom; how he was to get rid of it

appeared to be another mystery. He had brought it to Frankfort twice, and taken it away again; but the third time it caught the eye of an English lady, whose amusement it was to collect odds and ends in out-of-the-way places, and whose knowledge and keenness had been sharpened by long practice. The usual higgling went on, but not for long, as the dealer meant to sell the cabinet, and in less than half-an-hour it became the lady's property for the sum of Fourteen Pounds. When it was brought into civilised society, brushed and cleaned up, and introduced to many disjointed members of the same family, it was at last identified as having belonged to *Marie Antoinette*, and to have formed part of the furniture of her boudoir. What its history

NO. 2.—THE DESPISED TREASURE.

A LITTLE later than the date of the last true story—in fact, about ten years ago—a party were assembled at the country house of a popular English nobleman in the middle of the hunting season. One day during a spell of unfavourable weather, when it was necessary to keep indoors, read books, play at billiards, smoke, and fidget, one of the party, whose scent for old china was keener even than his scent for foxes, made a minute inspection of the premises, with the full consent of the host, and found himself, in due course, in the basement and housekeeper's room. He had turned over the contents of several cupboards and packing-cases, examined one or two old book-cases, ascended steps to look on high shelves, and descended steps to peer into dark cellars. The servants had begun to vote him a bore, and to wonder why he was privileged to rake out forgotten corners, and so-called "Slut's-holes," when he suddenly pounced upon a heap of dusty china, half covered with straw, that was lying uncared for at the bottom of a pickle and preserve closet. He uncovered his treasures one by one, dusted them carefully with his own silk handkerchief, laid them out in a row on a kitchen table, and then questioned his host

had been since the stormy times of the revolution must be left to the imagination, but some of its fellow-pieces came into the possession of the late Lord Hertford, and may still be amongst the noble collections of Sir Richard Wallace. After gladdening the eyes of several masters and mistresses, this wandering cabinet was put up to auction at Christie's about four years ago, with a reserve of £3,000, but was bought in, the biddings only reaching £2,600. It was bought immediately afterwards by a Bond-street dealer in *bric-à-brac* for the sum fixed, £3,000, and it is believed that it has gone back to Frankfort, and has found a probable final resting place in the house of one of the Rothschild's.

as to how long they had been in his possession or in their late half-hidden position. The host could throw very little light upon the subject, thought they had been in the family for many years, and believed they were removed from a small old drawing room some years before when the family mansion was altered and enlarged. He was not apparently disposed to treat the matter as of much importance, until the discoverer aroused his curiosity with one or two extraordinary questions, put in a "piling up" series familiar to gentlemen at the bar.

"Would you be surprised to hear that Two Thousand Pounds are standing on that table?" Signs of incredulity from all present. "Four Thousand Pounds?" More signs of greater incredulity. "Six Thousand Pounds?" And so on to seven, eight, and nine. Bets were freely made, as it was a sporting house, and a telegram was sent to one of the leading *bric-à-brac* dealers in London, asking him to come down, if possible, by the next train, and see something that he would be eager to purchase. The long-buried treasures were then carefully removed upstairs by the discoverer, who would allow no rough and careless hand to

touch them, and they turned out to be a complete *garniture de cheminée*, consisting of a centre-piece representing a ship (the arms of Paris), and two vases about 6 inches high, all three perfect old *Sèvres Rose du Barry*, with festoons of green ribbon.

The same night the dealer arrived—the dealer mentioned before—from Bond-street, and his first question was, after examining the *garniture*, "Have these been shown or offered to any other dealer?" On being assured that he was the first man honoured with a view, he offered £10,000 for the set, without the slightest hesitation. The host was now aroused, and before closing with the Bond-street dealer, he thought it best to

take another opinion, and in this he was supported by the discoverer. An equally celebrated dealer from Pall Mall was summoned, who knew that the Bond-street dealer had been before him. He offered £11,000. The owner now thought that the most satisfactory way of testing the real value of the treasures was to send them to a sale, and sent they were accordingly to the everlasting *Christie's*. Here they formed the subject of much excitement and "spirited bidding," and they eventually became the property of Lord Dudley for £10,500, and are now on a chimneypiece at his house in Park-lane, the delight of many admirers who are ignorant of their past history.



FISHING AT THE WELLS.



SOLOMON IN ALL HIS GLORY WAS NOT



ARRAYED LIKE ONE OF THESE.



ROYAL PATRONAGE—BY PROXY.

A DREAM.

ANY person who makes up his mind to read this little story will do well to bear in mind that it is not fact, it is only a dream, and it is very necessary to think so.

Well, then; I dreamt that my friend Jerry Fray and myself were co-partners in a London theatre. We were preparing a lightish kind of piece which Jerry said would be a "go," and concerning which I confess I had very little hope. While talking over our projects a week before the production of the piece, I said to my partner, "You see we are in this position: we have a West-end piece, and our theatre is anything but West-end. In my opinion, there is only one thing to save this three-act farce." "And that is?"—said Jerry, interrogatively. "A visit from the Prince."

I replied. Jerry was considerably tickled, and said he should like to see royal carriages drawn up at the Chameleon Theatre. "But," he seriously continued, "do you really think that this piece would be a success if the public thought that the Prince favoured it?" "I have not the smallest doubt about it," I answered. "Then," we must try to do all we can to make the public believe that the Prince delights in "Muggridge's Mistake"—this was the name of the piece. "But how?" I asked. "Leave it to me," he replied. "But you must consent to spending ten or fifteen pounds over the business." He appeared to be so sanguine that I consented.

But please to bear in mind this is only a dream.

"Muggridge's Mistake" was thoroughly well rehearsed during the next week. Jerry did not interfere with this branch of the business, but I heard him say one day to one of the principal members of the company, "I feel sure it will be a big go; and I think so all the more because I have a slight suspicion that the Prince will be here the first night." I couldn't help laughing when I heard this; but when I was at leisure I called my partner aside, and said, "I heard you tell Miss Ayres that the Prince would possibly be here on the first night. Now, is this wise? Why do you circulate such reports?" "Because I want them believed," replied Jerry. "Directly I told Miss Ayres," he continued, "she went off and told Mr. Strutt, and in ten minutes everybody in the theatre knew what I had said. You may be sure that every member of the cast will advertise the circumstance thoroughly, and will be letter perfect now that they imagine a Prince may possibly be among the audience on the first night. And you don't know that he will not be here." "What for heaven's sake do you mean?" I asked somewhat impatiently. "Now leave it all to me, there's a good fellow," he replied in a comforting way. "Don't you pretend to know anything at all about it when questions are put to you, and it will all come right in the end." "Well," urged I, "I trust that you will not bring the place into ridicule." "Trust me for that," he said, and went away to what he called his "royal rehearsal."

But please to bear in mind this is only a dream.

On the morning of the eventful day when "Muggridge's Mistake" was to be produced I repaired to the Chameleon. Before I reached the door I saw a great crowd watching some operations that were being carried on in front. I hurried up thinking that something was the matter, and found that the vestibule was being divided, and that an awning was in course of erection. I encountered the foreman, and asked who gave him instructions to do this? and he informed me that Mr. Fray had ordered it;

following up the statement by assuring me very confidentially that some of the royal folks were expected once before midnight. I soon found Jerry, and more impatiently than ever asked what were his intentions. He again begged me not to interfere; told me that all was going on swimmingly; that his Prince would look beautiful. I was getting quite angry, and, among other things, complained concerning the crowd about the doors. "The very thing I wanted to get," he replied hastily. "You'll see, they'll be fetched," he shouted, as he ran off to superintend the laying down of the carpet.

But please to bear in mind this is only a dream.

The evening came, and I was down at the theatre very early. There were crowds waiting outside; while, guarding an awning, under which crimson carpet was to be seen, were a couple of constables who had been—so I subsequently found—specially retained by Jerry. I also discovered that this luminary had given strict injunctions to everybody in or about the theatre, when they were asked as to what member of the Royal Family was expected, to answer that they believed the Prince was expected, but that the management was anxious that the visit should be kept a secret.

Hundreds of people made inquiries, and at the request of various informants, promised they would never say a word about it, instantly starting off and giving the utmost publicity to the expected event. "How is this all to end?" I asked Jerry, as he came into our room. "Splendidly I hope," he replied. He went on, "You don't quite understand this little dodge; but if you will place yourself in No. 7 box at 8.30, and keep your eye on the opposite side, you will see through the swindle."

The opening farce had been played, to a house crammed in every part, and the first act of "Muggridge's Mistake" was being treated, when I heard shouting outside. I ran to the door, and there was the neatest of private broughams, and a pair of beautiful horses.

Remembering Jerry's instructions, I

hurried to No. 7 box, keeping my eye on the box which had been specially prepared; and here entered first of all, a young man who looked nothing less than a duke, and after him came what everybody thought was the Prince. Every eye in the theatre was directed to this particular box. His "Royal Highness" came to the front, but as he kept considerably behind the curtain during the performance, the audience quite believed that they had been informed rightly, and that the matter was intended to be kept quiet.

His "Royal Highness" was seen to clap his hands very much during the performance, and it was noticed that when he applauded, the audience pretty generally followed suit. Everybody seemed glad that they were lucky enough to be here on the eventful night, and the company on the stage acted at their very best.

No sooner had "Muggridge's Mistake" come to a termination, and the Prince had been seen to applaud most vehemently, than the same neat brougham drove to the door, and his "Royal Highness" and his companion, who were bursting with laughter, got inside. The people in the theatre heard "Hooray!" from the folks outside, and the royal visit was supposed to be over.

Jerry was in great glee, and as I was under the impression that it was the Prince I saw in the opposite box, I was also pretty much delighted. "How did it go off?" he asked. "Couldn't be better," I said; "You'll send particulars to the papers of course." "Now, will you kindly leave this matter to me?" he replied. "Here have I been telling everybody that this visit must be kept quiet, and you want to publish it to the world. Besides, he'll be here again on Wednesday night." "In the name of everything that's good, what do you mean?" I asked. "Now, will you leave this little business to me?" he urged, adding, "You don't quite understand this matter." I could say nothing, and Jerry ran off; but I noticed that he was laughing.

Bear in mind this is only a dream.

"Muggridge's Mistake" went only mode-

ately well on the Tuesday (it was really a poor piece), but there was an excellent audience, and this was, doubtless, to be attributed to the visit of the "Prince."

On Wednesday morning, when I got down to the box office, I saw workmen again erecting the awning and laying down the carpet. I was determined to say nothing this time. Jerry met me, and in a merry way told me that this would be the last appearance of his "Royal Highness," and that to-night's visit he thought would do the trick. The people gathered about the doors watching the workmen manufacture a royal entrance just the same as they did on the Monday, and those who watched, doubtless reflected that if "Muggridge's Mistake" could attract a Prince twice in one week, it must necessarily be a wonderful kind of piece.

The evening came, and the house was crowded from floor to ceiling. Just the same programme was gone through, only that the Prince this time had a couple of companions. He was seen to applaud very heartily, and when his brougham took him away there was the some sort of hooraying. After he had gone I met Jerry: "Well, do you see through my little device now?" he said. I told him that I thought we had been very fortunate. He exploded with laughter when I told him I thought that his Prince was the genuine article. Then he unfolded to me how he secured the sham Prince, how he rehearsed him in his part, and the arrangements that were made concerning the brougham and the special constables. "But," said I, "supposing the genuine article had been at the Gaiety or some other theatre on the evenings when the audience believed they saw him here; why the revelation of such a dodge would have ruined us!" "I took care to provide against an accident of that nature," replied Jerry. "I knew that the Prince was engaged at private dinners on Monday and Wednesday evening, and I was certain there was no chance of reading of his movements in the following morning's paper." "But is this kind of thing honourable do

you think?" I asked. "I don't see anything dishonourable about it," Jerry exclaimed. "You thought the success of 'Muggridge's Mistake' would be assured if the Prince could be got to come and see it, and as I couldn't get the real thing I got the nearest thing to it. The public fancy that a piece is better because a Prince

happens to look at it, and I have humoured their fancy. I have not made the piece on whit better or worse by what I've done, but I think I have made it a success" And he had.

But please to remember this is only a dream.

SUTTON ROWE.



You don't want to be told when you are moved; but as Clement Scott says, "You feel it!"



MR. CORNEY GRAIN.
'The Lord Chief Justice didn't know him & Fancy.'



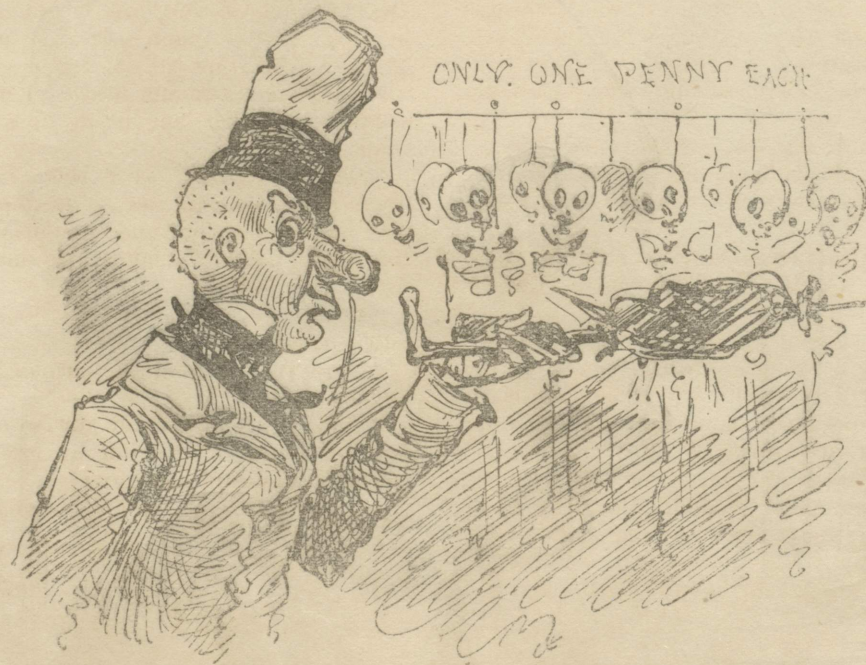
SIR JULIUS BENEDICT.
A new "Cradle Song."



MESSRS. ARTHUR ROBERTS AND JAMES FAWN.
"Goodness Gracious!"



ARCHDEACON DUNBAR.
How they have maligned this good man!



ALLY SLOPER ALL TO PIECES.

IT has been urged by backbiters and slanderers that the old and ancient, venerable moss-grown moralist never had a father. Need I say that this is untrue? Without a father our Ally would have been next to nowhere. Sloper *had* a father; and no father, both during his life or after his death, could have done more for a son than Sloper's father has done for him, and no son could have done his father better than Sloper, all his life.

'Twas a pleasant sunshiny afternoon, in the lane of Shoe, that the *litterateur* encountered a friend of his bosom by the name of McGoosely, and, harpooning him with the umbrella, else he would have slipped past

him, Ally murmured in tearful tones, "I'm told that now the old 'un's copyright is out, you mean to boil him down into penn'orths."

"I do," said McGoosely.

"McGoosely," the old man murmured, "'tis an unfriendly action; companion of my boyhood's hour, and an insult to the memory of what was great and good."

"But its business," said McGoosely.

"Possibly," said the old man, with a mournful shake of the head, "but he has been a good father to me. I have brought him out in all sorts of editions and on all qualities of paper. I have let parties make plays out of him, and I have let the play-writing parties alter his climaxes and touch

him up generally, but this didn't spoil the sale in book form. The books, sir, as they were, are a property, and the lowest price you could get one at before this boiling-down scheme of yours came up, was four-pence halfpenny. The illustrious dead did not ought to be treated that way—it spoils trade."

"Ally, old boy," said McGoosely, "your sentiments do you honour. Would you consider it beneath you to drink at my expense?"

"At your expense—never!" and he took McGoosely's arm and led him gently thitherwards.

"May I venture to inquire," asked McGoosely, as they grouped themselves in front of two twos cold, "whether you have any monetary interest in the sale of your revered parent's works?"

"Well," said A. Sloper, "not to deceive you, I disposed on it some time ago to a cold-blooded scoundrel in the publishing line."

"Then how, dear boy, do I do you an

injury? The public can still buy your poor papa's works in their more lengthy, and excuse me if I say, more tedious form, and are not forced to buy my bright and eminently readable penn'orth. It is not as though I had sawn off the legs of a statue—the statue still remains intact. I have only taken a reduced copy of it, of a portable shape."

"That's not it," said the *litterateur*; "you don't seem to see. I've done pretty well by the Guv'nor one way or other, but I never thought of what you've done. Why was'nt I in it?"

And, gulping up his two, A. Sloper turned sadly on his heel.

"Now then," cried the barman, "which o' you pays?"

"This gentleman," said McGoosely. "He said he would never drink at my expense when I asked him just now."

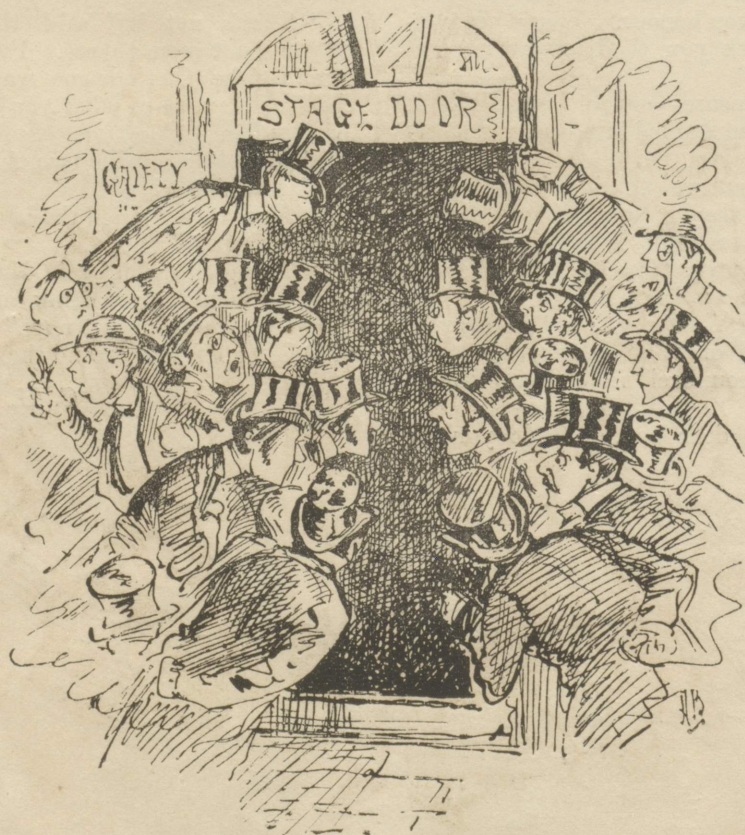
And he left Sloper and the barman busy.

C. H. ROSS,

PRO ALLY.



THE GAIETY STAGE DOOR.

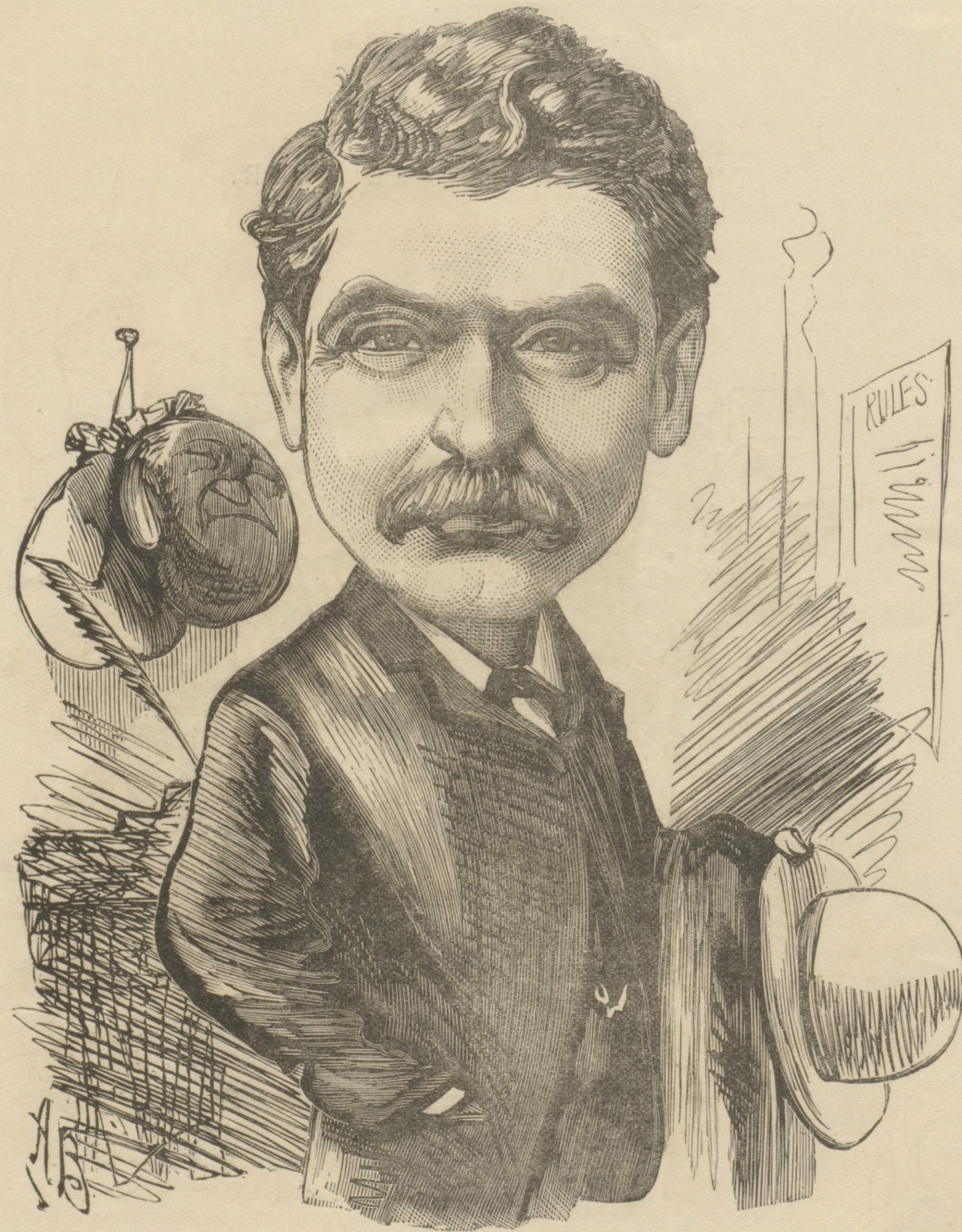


The little door down stairs had squeaked;
the whisper had gone round—"Here she comes!"

THE GAIETY STAGE DOOR.



And after all it was only Moore, the Stage-door Keeper
going for his supper beer. "Yah!"



MR. HENRY SAMPSON.
By special desire of Mr. Clement Scott.



MR. GEORGE R. SIMS.
A Successful Author's Christmas.



BURLESQUE.

A REFLECTION.

Just half a hundred! Can it be?
Have fifteen years been spent
In writing jingles to jig tunes
For Folly's merriment?

I count the titles—yes, 'tis so,
These figures stare the truth;
Fifty burlesques! to please the taste
Of London's gilded youth!

A sad confession!—as my mind
Looks backward thro' past times
It ranks the vapid nonsense in
The Calendar of Crimes.

How came it thus? What secret chance,
Or whim of fiend grotesque
Diverted *me* from nobler aims
To perpetrate Burlesque?

Who knows?—I never backward turned
My hand once on the plough,
And thus I celebrate, Burlesque,
Your golden wedding now!

It's Christmas, and I drink your health,
Which still is sound, I see,
But, all the same, I'm bound to ask
"What have you done for *me*?"

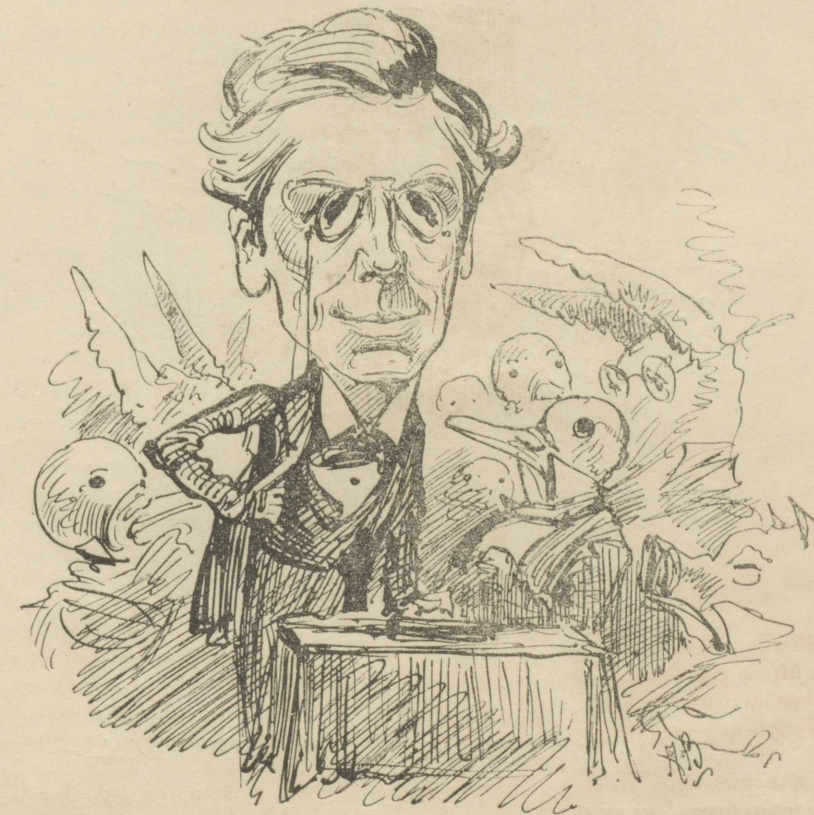
Ah! but for you, a golden day
Had followed a fair morn,
And I had reaped the praise of men,
Instead of critics' scorn!

Whate'er I do for you must fade,
To darkest limbo sent,
Achieving, for its meed, abuse,
Or scant encouragement;

Well—there—no malice! Christmas time
Still works its subtle charm
Shake hands—if we've done little good,
We've done but little harm!

And now the day will shortly come
When I must close my desk,
And, humbly laying down my pen,
Conclude Life's Great Burlesque!

ROBERT REECE



A HIGHLY MORAL VESTRY.

The Vestrymen of Duffus Heath, as far as I can
tell,
Had really got no work to do, and did it very well.
They occupied their time in making very rash
assertions,
And casting on each other most unflattering
aspersions.

They used to meet on Tuesday, and on Wednesday
eve as well;
While on Thursday and on Friday personalities
would swell.

They never met on Saturday—they never met on
Monday—
"Twould *never* do to row on days too *near*
approached to Sunday.

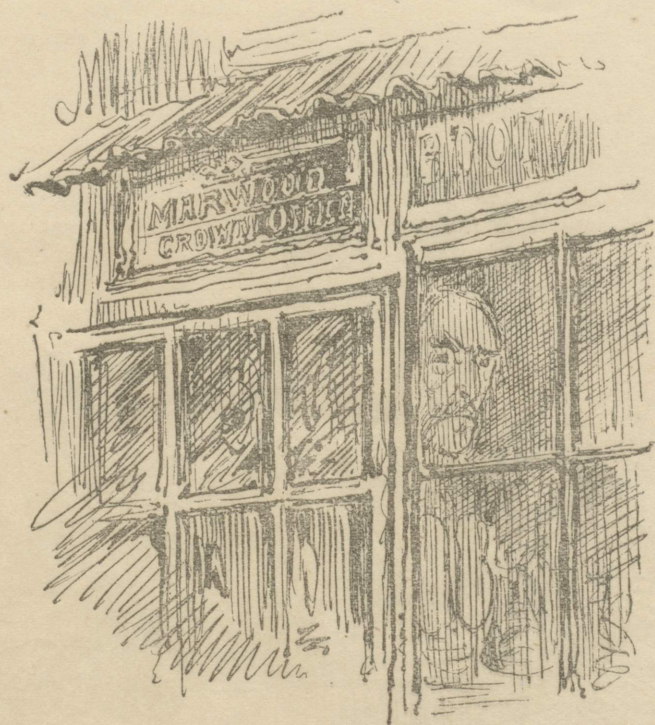
They went to church on Sunday thrice—his good-
ness each man feels.

They always said their grace before, as well as
after meals.

However bad they used to be till Saturday from
Monday,

They atoned for all their sins by being *very good*
on Sunday.

GEO. GROSSMITH.



MR. WILLIAM MARWOOD OFF THE STAGE.

A FEW months ago I was on tour, and giving a concert at the Corn Exchange, Horncastle, Lincolnshire. I am generally in the neighbourhood of the pay-box when I travel with my concert party; and on the evening in question, as I was at my customary place, some little time after the doors opened, an elderly man, shortish rather, with iron-grey whiskers and moustache, accompanied by a stout female, came up to me and presented a card, on which was printed "William Marwood, Executioner, Church Lane, Horncastle." Being a Crown official, I of course passed him in free. When I told the various members of my troupe that among the audience was a no less distinguished individual than England's hangman, they no sooner came on the stage than they began to use their eyes in a manner as enterprising

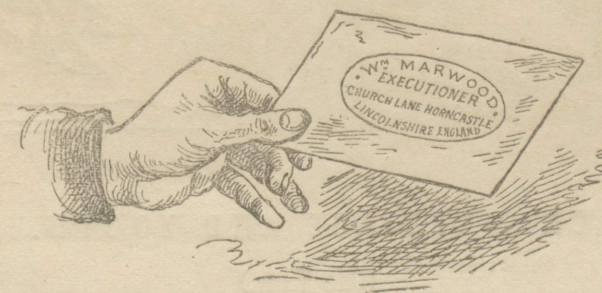
as it was comic. After the performance was over I found that he had waited to thank me for a most pleasant evening, and to say that he had been delighted with the whole of the entertainment; but more particularly with the drawing-room sketch, in which Mrs. Lloyd and myself had appeared. He supplemented this politeness by inviting me over to the neighbouring hotel to have a drop with him; and when I expressed a hope that he didn't mean his notorious *long-drop*, he grimly smiled. I accepted his invitation, and accompanied him to the hotel. We had a cigar and drink together, and during our conversation I found him a most intelligent man. There was really nothing in his appearance either, which indicated his profession, except, perhaps, a very firmly set lower jaw. He talked with the greatest freedom concerning

his sensational experiences, and told me how some of his best-known clients, such as Wainwright and Kate Webster, behaved during the little time he had the opportunity of knowing them. He also showed me his pinioning straps, assuring me that he always provided his own. Until this interview I had been under the impression that before he obtained his present appointment, Marwood had acted as an assistant to Calcraft; but he assured me that such was not the case. I asked him if he was personally acquainted with his predecessor, and then he vouchsafed to me the information that he had seen him but once, and that that solitary interview was not altogether of a pleasant nature. I rather pressed him on this point, and then he informed me that the only occasion on which he had seen and spoken to Calcraft was once when he had been taken to the house of the latter by a mutual friend; that the old man was not over-rejoiced at the introduction, and was, in fact, anything but agreeable; told him that he did not believe in the "long-drop," nor in his (Marwood's) style of doing business generally. I asked my informant if he had ever given the old man any offence that would justify his surliness, and he replied that the cause, he thought, was this:—it seems that when Marwood was announced as the successor of Calcraft he received a letter from the old man telling him that he had no right to take the appointment, as he (Calcraft) had promised the office to a gentleman, a friend of his, who was anxious to try his

hand when Calcraft retired. This, I thought, very funny. I suppose, though, that hangmen have their little affairs of honour like other folks.

During my stay in Horncastle I got to know that Marwood had been doing duty as a hangman some time before his neighbours knew of the circumstance. And it would have been a secret for some time longer, but that a Horncastle man happened to be present at an execution which took place at some distant town, and, on seeing the operator, recognised his fellow-townsmen. The news spread like wildfire at Horncastle, and when Marwood arrived home he found himself the object of a few attentions which were more demonstrative than nice. And for some time after, when he started for, or came back from, an execution, he was followed about by people who showed their displeasure by hooting him, and by beating tin kettles, pots, and pans. This grew to be a veritable nuisance, so bad that Marwood was compelled to write to the Home Secretary claiming protection. After he had done this the head of the Horncastle police was communicated with, and since that time Marwood has been permitted to depart from, and return to this town without molestation; in fact, he walks about the place without attracting any special attention. I noticed that his fellow-townsmen greeted him in an unmarked but friendly manner, and he appeared to be on good terms with everybody. He keeps a shoemaker's shop, and is comfortably off, owning several houses in Horncastle.

ARTHUR LLOYD.





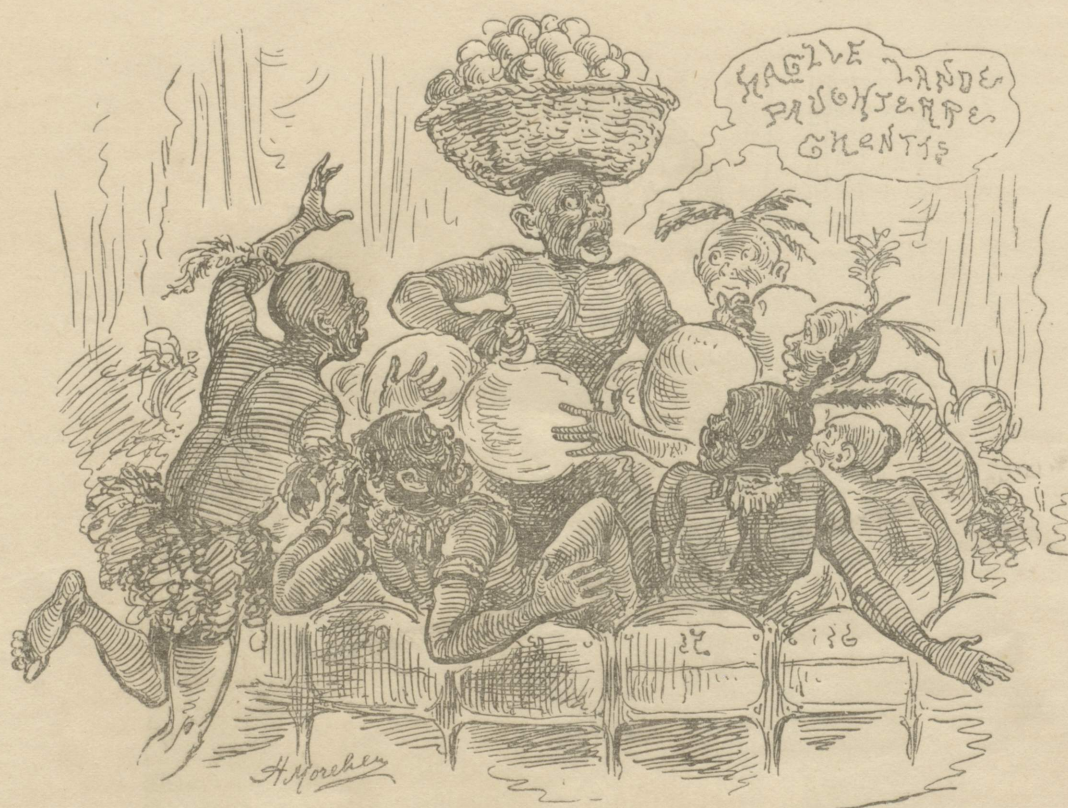
CRABBED AGE AND YOUTH.

(One View.)



CRABBED AGE AND YOUTH.

(Another View.)



THESPIAS IN CENTRAL AFRICA; OR, THE DJEESANS AT HOME.

NOTHING, I think, struck me more during my recent journeyings on the south-eastern shores of the Great Albert Nyanza Lake than the very eccentric, and, from our civilised point of view, utterly mistaken notions the tribes in that mysterious region entertain on the subject of popular amusements. For a long time my fixed opinion was that all entertainments of a public nature were absolutely wanting, and it was not until I had learned the language sufficiently well to understand most of the talk I heard, that I arrived at the fact that the amusements of the people constituted in every district a most important feature in the national or tribal life.

Gatherings, which I had previously asso-

ciated with the performance of severe religious penances, or the carrying out of harsh penal sentences, I now found to be in reality the voluntary assembly of this or that tribe or people for recreational purposes; whilst the sounds I had imagined to be the groans of the sufferers turned out to be merely vocal expressions of popular approval.

It was at the important city of Djeesa, the capital of the extensive country of Bommgnu, ruled by King Vpamjee, that I halted for the purpose of learning the language, and here it was, thanks to the friendly way in which I was welcomed (I need scarcely say that Mr. Stanley had not paid Djeesa a visit), made that ela-

borate study of the national manners and customs which, in so far as it bears on the question of "Public Amusements," may be of interest to the readers of a publication like the *Entr'acte Annual*.

As soon as my linguistic attainments permitted, I told King Vpamjee my desire, and he most courteously directed a trusted chief, Gimji by name, to act as my guide, and show and explain to me anything and everything I might be anxious to investigate in the city.

I shall not soon forget the night of my first visit to what may be considered the principal theatre in Djeesa. It was an immense hut, circular in shape, and when I entered it with my cheery old guide, Gimji, was crammed with thousands of that worthy's fellow-countrymen and women, who, instead of sitting at their ease in the most comfortable attitudes they could assume (which, I need scarcely stay to point out parenthetically, *we*, as a civilised people, always take good care to do), were each of them, large or small, wedged into a kind of frame made of wood and iron, which held its occupant tightly and prevented any natural movement of the body or limbs.

Half-an-hour's experience of one of these man-traps would have been quite enough for me; even if the atmosphere had not been positively pestilential. Not only was it exceedingly hot, but it was reeking with the fumes of a peculiarly noxious compound called by the natives *Ssag*, which was blazing all around, and after gasping in it for some minutes, I turned to my guide and asked him why something was not done to relieve the half asphyxiated audience.

The old chief looked at me with an odd expression of mingled wonderment and pity. "Why is not something done?" he echoed. "Don't you know that these people you see all come and pay their cowries to breathe this atmosphere? It is part of the entertainment!"

I almost laughed in the old gentleman's

face. "And I suppose that is part of the entertainment also?" I exclaimed, as during a temporary lull on the part of the actors a stalwart native with a large bamboo basket on his head and a pair of immense calabashes in either hand, rushed in from a side entrance, and darting in between two rows of the tightly-wedged Djeesans, began to dance along heavily on their toes, swinging the calabashes in their faces and working his elbows into their eyes, loudly shouting and gesticulating the while. "That I suppose is part of the entertainment also?" I repeated, again directing Gimji's attention to the excited native.

"That," returned the chief, laughing to himself at this fresh proof of my ignorance, "Why that is how refreshment is served to those who are ahungered or athirst! Listen! the man is asking if any one will take food or drink?"

I have reason to believe my informant was quite right. Certain it is that none of the natives he so savagely assaulted attempted in any way to resent his rough treatment. Nay, some I noticed actually pressed cowry shells on their aggressor, who having with strict impartiality danced along each row, disappeared as suddenly as he had arrived.

Being acclimatised to some extent to the foul air I was breathing, I was now able to direct my attention to what was passing on a raised platform at one end of the structure; though in spite of my closest attention, not one word could I understand of the animated conversation which was being carried on there.

Disappointed at this failure, I again appealed to Gimji. "I know your language, as you are aware," said I; "but yet I cannot detect one word that is familiar. There now, what is that fat man saying?"

"I really cannot tell you," returned the Chief.

"Not tell me!" I echoed; "then are you deaf?"

The old gentleman smiled and shook his

(Continued on page 34.)



THE ROYAL BIRD-CATCHERS

IN MEMORY OF CLAUDE DUVAL.
The Good Young Man who Died.

THESPIS IN CENTRAL AFRICA; OR, THE DJEESANS AT HOME.

(Continued from page 32.)

head. "Surely you can catch that," I went on as the fat man raised his voice.

"No," said Gimji, "indeed I can't. This is one of our very grandest play-huts, you know."

"Well?" I queried, "What of that?"

"Oh, didn't I tell you? Why, you see, the language the *stijcks** talk here is not our's at all, but that spoken by the Zulus away down South. All those men and women you hear are Zulus, in fact."

"And do your country men and women know the Zulu tongue better than you?"

"Not a bit."

"And so they pay to listen to what they do not understand."

"Pay!" cried the old Chief; "I should think they did. Why the entrance here is four times as much as it is into a play-hut where they *stijcks* are Djeesans."

This seemed so incredible to me, steeped as I was in the ways of a civilised community, that I made further inquiries the next day. But the result confirmed the old chief's assertion, and it is a literal fact that the richer inhabitants of Djeesa willingly, nay, eagerly, pay the, relatively speaking, large number of twenty-one cowry shells each to go and be wedged into a species of vice and listen for three or four hours to the ravings of a distant tribe, whose language is utterly unintelligible to them.

As for me, a half-hour was quite as long as I cared to remain in that reeking play-hut, and aching in every limb and with a head already throbbing with the poisonous atmosphere I had inhaled, I signed to old Gimji to wrench me out of the so-called seat into which I had been wedged, and take me further.

* It is difficult to translate this term; our word "actors," however, expresses nearly the same meaning.

As we stepped into the open air two natives of rank, as I could see by the blue stripes on their breasts, walked up to the entrance and were about to enter, having placed their cowries in the lap of the attendant, when a diminutive but active savage stepped out from behind a screen of coconut fibre and seized the coral necklace which was round the neck of the taller of the natives, who for the moment seemed very angry and assumed a threatening aspect. His diminutive assailant, however, chattered glibly away, and in a very few moments the tall Djeesan with a sigh of resignation unfastened his necklace, placed it in the hands of the former, and at the same time presented him with several cowry shells.

His companion, without waiting to be told, drew a small bamboo cane from his girdle and also handed it with some cowries to the small man, who on that retired and allowed the two natives of rank to pass.

"More mystery!" I exclaimed to my *cicerone*. "What was all that about?"

"Oh," he returned, "these two fellow-chiefs of mine were going to sit in what we call the 'private wedges,' and no one is ever allowed to wear a necklace in them, nor carry a bamboo either."

"Indeed," I returned, "and why are these restrictions made, please?"

"Don't ask me," returned Gimji with a laugh. "You might as well wish me to tell you why at this hut we are passing the comic singers all whitewash their faces."

"And do they really do so?" I enquired.

"Certainly," answered the chief. "No Djeesan would think of going there if they didn't. But come—we are just in time to see the most successful thing in our city. Look how they are crowding in to it."

He was right. The natives by hundreds

were pressing into a large hut, similar in construction to that I had lately left, and if possible a little more pestilential in its atmosphere. After about ten minutes of fighting and pushing, I found myself inside, and the old chief, minus the kitchen towel he usually girded about his loins, close behind me. "It ought to be something very splendid to pay us for all this trouble and pain," I whispered.

"So it will be, never fear!" he answered. "Look! look!" he added excitedly as the thousands of natives wedged in on all sides of us, burst into the most tremendous shouts of "Vobra! Vobra!" followed by a smart knocking of the calves of their legs together.

I accordingly did look in the direction in which all eyes were gazing; and saw on a platform, raised much as the stage is in our theatres, a very small and sickly-looking elephant, which having little room to tread was walking about most gingerly.

"There!" exclaimed Gimji, as the loud shouts continued, "there's a triumph for you. A real elephant inside a play-hut! Vobra! Vobra!" and the old gentleman, carried away by his feelings, knocked his calves together till he sank exhausted in my lap.

"Yes, I see the elephant," I said to him, when he had recovered a little; "but it is a poor-looking creature. I saw fifty better ones about the streets of Djeesa this morning."

The old chief for the first time seemed a little cross at my comment. "Dear, dear, dear!" he exclaimed testily, "but this elephant is in a play-hut. It is most marvellous! Never has a *Llessjee** in our city been able to bring one on the platform before. But look, that is not all!"

Amidst renewed shouts of approval which drowned all the *stijcks* then on the platform were saying, I looked again and saw two brawny men drag in a real native canoe, whilst some others brought into sight a coconut tree growing in a tub, a kind of

* *Llessjee*.—Manager is the English word most nearly representing this.

palanquin similar to that in which King Vpamjee travelled, and a large white ass alive and kicking.

For some minutes I thought the audience would go actually mad, so frenzied was their excitement. Poor savages! it never seemed to occur to them that they could go out into the streets of Djeesa any day and see bigger elephants, and cocoanut trees; and better palanquins and white donkeys for nothing.

I told old Gimji as much, but he did not seem to see how absurd was the whole proceeding. I, though, as a civilized traveller, saw it; and you, gentle reader, will also appreciate these ignorant natives' folly. Why, for them to go half crazy over a real elephant, and a real cocoanut tree in a tub, was very much as though—to imagine an absurdly impossible case—we were to wax enthusiastic at a theatre at seeing a real hansom cab or a real pump, with real water coming out of its spout!

Perhaps the most curious entertainment I saw though, after all (and this shall be the last reminiscence of Djeesa I inflict upon you), was one to which my guide took us at one of the smaller play huts where I found assembled the King's eldest son, his principal friends, and the leading chiefs of the country, all eagerly awaiting the advent of a small native girl, who looked about six, but may have been a little older.

As she toddled in sucking a native sweetmeat, every chief present rose to his feet and cast gifts of various kinds, such as valuable tusks of ivory, packets of gold dust, precious stones, &c., at her little feet. When a nurse in attendance had gathered these carefully up, the tiny urchin took a rope and began to skip about the platform, whilst the King's son, and many of the chiefs threw themselves on the ground, and rolled about in the intensity of their admiration: and, on regaining their feet, flung a fresh volley of rich and rare gifts at the girl's feet.

But the poor little thing soon grew tired, and had to be carried away, on which the King's son and most of the chiefs left the

hut, though the platform was then occupied by some of the very cleverest *stijcks* to be found in all Bommgnu.

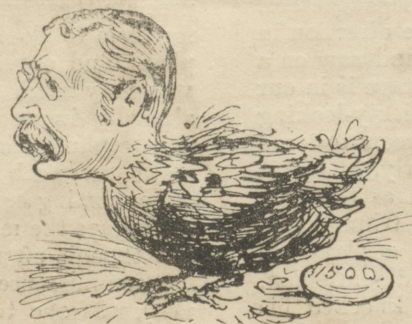
I saw the Prince in fact, and several of his trusted friends struggling for the honour of pushing home the little go-cart in which the tiny native girl had been placed by her nurse; and the next morning I heard men

in the street selling pieces of the rope she had skipped with, at six cowries per inch.

But this, as I said, shall be my last quotation from my diary, at all events for this year.

I can only, in conclusion, again congratulate my readers that Djeesa is not London.

A. A. DOWTY.



The Lay of a Londoner.

Speaking of Mr. French's establishment in the Strand, "Merry-go-Round," in *The Entr'acte*, says:—"Not only does this gentleman supply actors and amateurs with everything in the shape of printed acting-plays, but he has proved the greatest friend to the amateur in the many devices he has introduced for obviating the difficulties which all people necessarily encounter who want to give any kind of theatrical representation, and have not a theatre at their disposal. In the first place, he has published a work called 'A Guide to Selecting Plays,' which gives the number of characters necessary for the performance of no less a number than 1,500 of the most popular pieces. If I want to see how many persons are required to play, say, 'Still Waters Run Deep,' I refer to this Guide, and it tells me, not only how many male and female characters co-operate in it, but it informs me as to the character of the piece, the time it takes to play, and the costumes necessary for its adequate treatment. But, perhaps, amateurs will find Mr French their greatest friend in the matter of scenery, for, if they want a representation of a garden, cottage, interior, wood, or drawing-room, they can get it at once at this establishment, and at a most reasonable figure. This notion of providing scenery is an excellent one, and, unless I make a very huge mistake, will be most liberally encouraged."—[ADVT.]



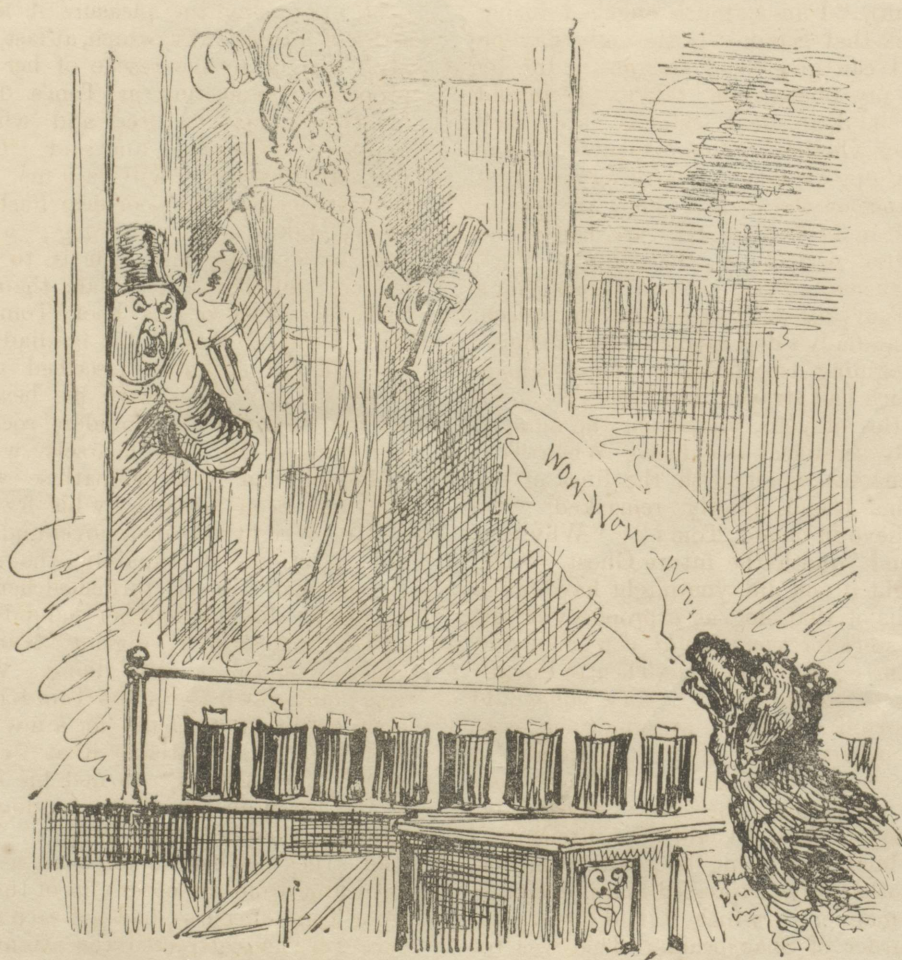
JONATHAN WILD.



MR. PINERO.
A Birkbeck Institution.



MR. GEORGE SANGER.
The Ring.



THE TRUTH ABOUT A GHOST; OR, BURTON'S BOOT.

ON a June evening Tom Burton stood in front of his looking-glass, and muttered "To be or not to be?" He had no thoughts of committing suicide, but was simply asking himself whether he was to seek an interview with the manager of a company of strolling players who, for by no means the first time, had taken up their quarters in a neighbouring field. They were not doing such good business in Dullstown as they had done in other years. In fact, so scanty were receipts that even the manager himself had turned a

portion of the van in which he lived into a photographer's studio, and was endeavouring to increase his income by the taking of photographs; and—to the horror of Dullstown—on Sundays. The natives remembered "old George" and his troupe as frequenters of the parish church. They spoke more kindly of him than when he became "a Sabbath breaker." Tom Burton, who was not a native, did not share their objection. "You see, my boy," said he to his friend Harry Taylor (not the popular

comedian), "I am so much engaged during the week that Sunday is the only day on which I can give "old George" a lift by having my photograph taken. I intend having it done next Sunday, and shall then see whether the manager will give me the opportunity of making my first appearance on the stage. They are sure to play "Hamlet" while they are here; and I'm letter perfect in the Ghost's lines. Just hear me." Then, without pausing for a reply, Tom proceeded to growl out the speech.

His landlady's dog, attracted by the noise, and imagining it to proceed from a strange dog which had strayed into Tom's room, set up a series of yells, and, from the outside, violently scratched the door. When Tom had done his worst with the lines of the Bard, his friend quietly remarked, "Do you believe in omens, Tom?" "Why that question?" quoth the future Ghost. "Oh, I thought if you did, you might have taken the yells of that dog as a prophecy of the fate in store for you *should* you succeed in appearing on the stage of the Theatre Royal." "Sirrah!" raved Tom, "because you would yell yourself, you are so presumptuous as to credit others with your intentions. I despise you." "Then I'll go, my dear Tom." "Yes; leave the room." "Certainly: for I don't see how I could take it with me."

As Harry was going he patted the dog, and in other ways expressed his appreciation of the manner in which it had objected to the murder of Shakspeare. This was too much for the Ghost that was to be. Throwing himself on the bed, and looking towards the door, he murmured "*Et tu Brute!*" Hearing the lament, the remorseless Harry retraced his steps, opened Tom's door, and exclaimed—"All right, old man: 'we shall meet again at Phillipi.'" This mixing of the colloquial with the classical enraged Tom. He sprang from the bed, seized his boot, and threw it after Harry. Then, utterly regardless of the fate in store for the missile, closed his door, and played Othello to the Iago of his bolster.

No sooner had Tom closed the door than Mrs. Wright's dog violently attacked the

boot, expressing the pleasure it felt by a series of joyous barks, which, at last, brought Mrs. Wright to the rescue of her lodger's property. Knocking at Tom's door, she lengthened her features, and when Tom appeared, whimpered, and said, "Oh! that dog, Mr. Burton: it will ruin me. Almost the last words of my poor dear husband was 'Mary, take care of the dog;' and all I gets by obeying his wish is to lose my lodgers: for Tiny allers eats their boots." Still regardless of his boot, Tom put his right hand in that of his landlady, placed his left arm akimbo, described an angle of forty-five degrees with his head, raised a hump between his shoulders, rocked himself to and fro, and hoarsely whispered, "Madam, can you sympathise with one who has been mocked by his fr—riend?"

Mrs. Wright was in a novel and undesirable position. Fortunately, the sound of the postman's knock furnished her with an excuse for disengaging her hand from that of Tom, instead of crying out "Murder!" as she was on the point of doing. While she was going down the stairs Tom took up his boot, held it in his hand for a few minutes, and then anathematising it as "a thing of shreds and patches," turned his face from it and threw it out of the window. "I'm killed," shrieked Mrs. Wright. The boot had struck her on the forehead, as she was returning from the other end of the garden. Poor Tom, of course, had not seen her. He, however, had attracted the attention of a neighbour, who, like Mrs. Wright, was a widow. "Yes, mem," said the old lady in answer to Mrs. Wright's exclamation, "you've bin murdered by yer villin of a lodger. He said as ow you was a thing of threads and patches, and then threw his boot at you. The monster! Summons him if yer lives, mem—I'll be your witness." Mrs. Wright did live; the old lady became her witness: and the unfortunate Tom had to leave his lodgings, and pay such a fine as prevented him from having his photograph taken on the following Sunday.

Two other Sundays, and "old George" saw not the ambitious tyro; but on the

third Sunday Tom presented himself to the manager, had his portrait taken, and thus, to use his own expression, "broke the ice." "You may play the Ghost," said the manager, "if—but no, I cannot take advantage of a lad." The impulsive Tom threw himself at the manager's feet, saying "Tis money you require." "It is, young man, it is; 'would it were not so.'" Tom quickly drew five shillings from his pocket, placed them in "old George's" hand, and said "Tis all I have; but 'tis yours for ever." "Capital! Capital! my boy; you're a born actor. Is it six o'clock yet?" Tom pulled out his watch. It was five minutes past that hour, which, on Sunday, is so dear to thousands of thirsty, but barrelless, empty-bottled, wine cellarless, and clubless souls. "Then, come on, my brave, and I will drink to thy success as the Ghost—as the Ghost. But stay; take back thy money, and pay for what we have." "Never!" exclaimed Tom.

The manager was not to be thwarted. He informed Tom in a stage whisper that were the landlord to see him (the manager) in possession of money, Boniface might request him to settle the accounts of such members of his company as had run up a score. "And such an exposure would disgrace the dramatic profession. You will surely not hasten the consummation of such a catastrophe." "Indeed, my lord, not I," quoth Burton. "Then take back thy money, and together let us hie to the 'Lock and Key—and Key.'" Accordingly, to that old-fashioned inn the twain hied them: remaining there till the five shillings were spent. On parting with Tom, the manager informed him that, for his convenience, they would have a rehearsal at one o'clock on Tuesday. Burton attended the rehearsal; and as "old George" never objected to an audience on such occasions it soon became known that the "local tragedian" who was to play the Ghost on Wednesday was none other than young Burton, the compositor, who had recently been fined for assaulting his landlady. The manager, like other great men, knew little of what transpired unless he was the chief actor in affairs; and,

as we shall see, it was not to the interest of Dullstown playgoers to inform him of Tom's recent appearance in the police court.

The day, "big with the fate" of Tom, dawned, and very soon after it had dawned even "the oldest inhabitant" was astonished.

Till the Ghost had to announce its identity Tom was not disturbed. No sooner, however, had he said "I am," than he ceased to look at Hamlet: for, seated on the top of the pianoforte was Mrs. Wright's dog. Burton was puzzled and pained: puzzled as to the reason of that dog's appearance on the pianoforte; pained: well, we who have unexpectedly encountered the cause of a deed for which we have suffered, need not say why Tom Burton was pained; nor can we wonder that he trembled. "That ghost's got the agur," shouted one "god." "No he ain't; he's bin and joined the Shakers," said another; and because Tom expressed his rage at such interruption with a most unghostly stamp, "god" No. 3 yelled out, "He ain't a Shaker: he's a beetle-crusher." After the laughter caused by the last sally had ceased, Tom proceeded; but he never got beyond the words, "foul crimes. As they fell from his lips, scores of old boots were sent flying through space, and when they had reached the stage uproarious peals of laughter and cries of "The landlady is avenged," saluted the Ghost, as it chased round the stage a dog with a boot in its mouth.

"Much-chucked," though my venerable friend and sneakiest of the sneaking (A. Sloper) has been, never has even he been so vigorously ejected as was Tom Burton from the Theatre Royal, Dullstown.

* * * *

The cause of the oldest inhabitant's astonishment was the large demand for boots on that memorable Wednesday. Almost needless to say that the chief conspirator was Harry Taylor. He had not only suggested the use of the old boots; but, with a biscuit, had enticed Mrs. Wright's dog from home. For a day he kept it without food;

and, in order that it might be within easy reach of the boots, had bribed the *chef d'orchestra*, who had only himself to conduct, and was always ready to sell his services for a "wee drop of whiskey."

Burton told me this story as a comic one; but, gentle reader, deems't thou that Tom thought his position a comical one on that eventful night? I trow not.

C. W. BARKER.

CHRISTMAS FAIRIES.

I.

Boxing night has come round again,
And, best delight of the Christmas time
Is the wonderful, wonderful pantomime.
None of us miss the show at the "Lane;"
Grandpapa, with his silver hair,
Mother and father, and all are there.

II.

Seen from the front in the glare of the lights,
It seems an enchanted world, the stage;
A magical, living, breathing page
Out of those famed "Arabian Nights."
And the children; oh! how they crane and stand
For a better look at the fairy-land!

III.

They envy those fairy children there,
Who are not sent to bed at a regular hour,
But fall asleep in a magic bower

To the lullaby of some soothing air.
And baby Tom, from his mother's knee,
Cries, "Happy children that they must be!"

IV.

Ah! when the last of the well-worn jokes
Has set the mighty house in a roar,
The watcher sees, from the stage's door,
Figures shrouded in scanty cloaks
Speed shivering into the bitter night—
Those are the fairies taking flight.

V.

Oh! guardians, with your wealth of gold,
Can you do nothing to ease their pain?
Nothing to break the bitter chain
Of those terrible masters, want and cold?
For, when tears flow into the eyes instead,
It's hard to laugh for your daily bread.

DAVISON SYMONS.



THE MIDDLESEX.



THE SOUTH LONDON.



DR. LENNOX BROWNE.

There is no pride about him ; he will go behind the scenes rather than neglect a patient.



MR. E. STERLING.

Going to Rehearsal.

A VOICE FROM THE BACK ROW.

BY ALFRED R. MARSHALL.

'Twas the voice of an amiable matron,
And she spake in a querulous key;
Her figure was fine, but extensive,
And her age it was forty and three.
"Have I been in the ballet for long, sir?
Well, a matter o' nigh forty years;
But times isn't like what they was, sir,—
They 'chivy' me when I appears.
The days o' the ballet are over,
True 'hartists,' like me, they replace
By a parcel of impident hussies,
All smothered in diamonds and lace.
They keep such as me in the back, sir—
We shall be out of everythink soon,—
If they get all their fin'ry by dancing,
Why, they dance to a pretty good toon.
But it isn't as if they could dance, sir,—
A 'hartist,' like me, knows the ropes:
But they can no more dance than you, sir—
Which the same you'll excuse me, I 'opes.
They figure about and do nothink;
They've neither got talent or nous;
But I can remember the time, sir,
When my pirouettes brought down the 'ouse.
So I axes you, isn't it 'ard, sir,
That such impident creatures as those

Should get all the 'fat,' just because, sir,
I don't look so well in short clothes?
I've heerd as 'ow preachers, and such, sir,
Who don't often go to the play,
Spout a lot about all the temptations
Which are thrown in a ballet-gal's way:
Of how Dooks send 'bokays' to the dancers,
And diamonds, and such-like, you see.
Well, the front-row might tell you about it,
But they've never sent diamonds to me.
I'm sure, sir, they'd come very handy,
'Cause my gal was took poorly to-day.
Oh, I'm married, sir, legal and lawful,
Which is more than some people can say;
But I dessay we'll struggle along, sir,
I don't think I ought to complain,
My 'usband,—a hexcellent actor,—
Comes on in the crowd at 'the Lane,'
Young Bob's got a job as a demon,
And Sarah, who's not in her teens,
Comes on as a 'nimp' or a 'syrup'
In one o' the principal scenes.
So what with one thing and another,
No doubt we shall keep ourselves clear,
So it's best not to think of the worst, sir;
But to 'ope for a 'appy new year!"



Mr. G. A. SALA.

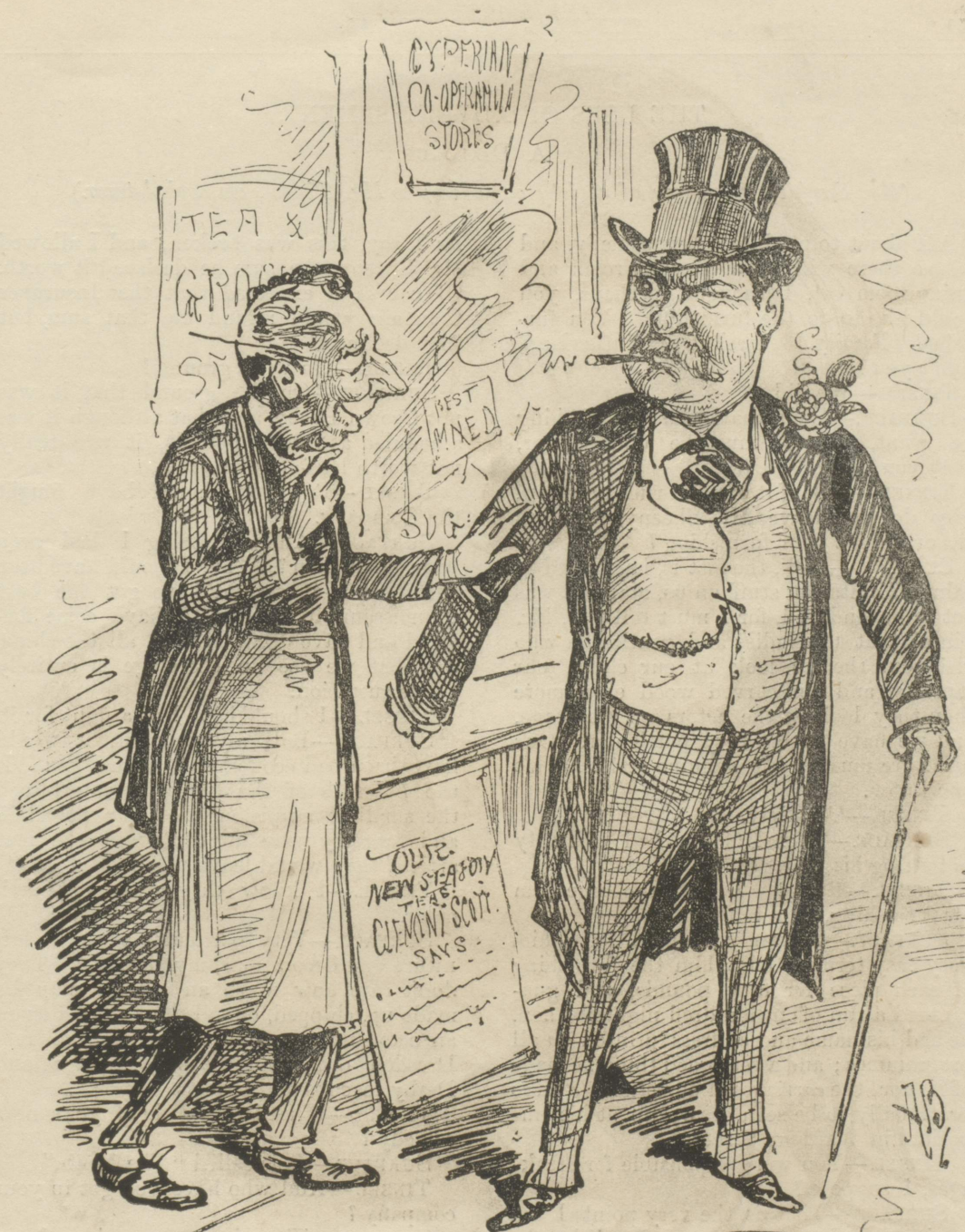


PANTOMIME.

MR. COOPER.
Stout and Mild.



THE GAIETY OFF SEASON.



"MR. G. A. SALA SAYS"—WHAT IT MAY COME TO.
 Grocer—to eminent journalist—"Couldn't you kindly give my Tea a lift, Sir, so that
 I could advertise it like Mr. 'Arris does?"

THE USES OF ADVERTISEMENT.

A DIALOGUE.

(Mr. Surface, producer of society comedies; to Mr. Tinsel, an upholsterer.)

I AM about to produce a new comedy, and as there will be a drawing-room and dining-room set, I thought, perhaps, you would like to do the furnishing. You furnished "Family Breezes" at the Sutherland, didn't you?"

TINSEL.—We did.

SURFACE.—Well, that's the sort of thing we want, only it must be done better, don't you know.

TINSEL.—But, if it is not a rude question, why do you leave Mr. Sheeny, who has hitherto done your furnishing?

SURFACE.—Well, the fact is, he wished to palm off imitation stuff on us, and this was not to be endured, for I must tell you, Mr. Tinsel, that the ladies and gentlemen who visit our theatre look at our china, our tapestry, and our carved wood even more than they look at the actors on the stage, and we have to be very particular. Our furniture must be the genuine article, don't you know.

TINSEL.—Certainly.

SURFACE.—Then I always had difficulty in getting his rent.

TINSEL.—Rent! Did you charge him for furnishing, then?

SURFACE.—Certainly. But I gave him very easy terms. I let him the furnishing of each piece for fifty pounds, and guaranteed a run of one hundred nights. Then, he had his name and address printed on all programmes; and a very good thing he made of it, for the carriages of our *cléentele* were continually to be seen drawn up at his emporium in Wardour Street.

TINSEL.—You were responsible for breakages, I suppose?

SURFACE.—That is the very point I am coming to. I engaged to pay for all breakages, and I covered myself by insuring. Well, we broke a teapot which was scheduled as Crown Derby, and worth fifteen pounds.

As I say, this was broken, and I allowed Mr. Sheeny the sum he declared it worth. Of course, I expected that the Insurance Company would refund me that sum, but they declined.

TINSEL.—On what ground?

SURFACE.—On the ground that it was not Crown Derby, and that although it was scheduled at fifteen pounds, it was really not worth half-a-crown.

TINSEL.—But you should have fought the Company.

SURFACE.—And supposing I had even won, what then? Why, I should have been a loser unless I could have got the best connoisseurs in London to have come forward and have declared that all the china, &c., that we use on the stage is entirely above suspicion.

TINSEL.—I should have had a fight for it.

SURFACE.—But, my dear sir, it would have been bad economy, I assure you. If the *habitués* of the Butterfly entertained the smallest suspicion that our porcelain and tapestry were anything but the real article, they would leave us directly.

TINSEL.—I know they are very particular.

SURFACE.—Very particular as to the furniture and decorations, my dear sir. They don't care how much an actress may be made up, chipped, or soiled, or what a sham an actor may be, but they *will* have real Dresden ornaments, and Worcester and Derby teacups and saucers.

TINSEL.—What is the title of your new comedy?

SURFACE.—It is called "The Moth."

TINSEL.—And who have you got in your company?

SURFACE.—There is not a member of our troupe who is not hand and glove with the aristocracy.

TINSEL.—Then, if I pay you fifty pounds,

I can furnish "The Moth" for the run of the piece, which you will guarantee to be not less than one hundred nights.

SURFACE.—Exactly. But of course you must furnish it according to the sketch which we shall supply you with.

TINSEL.—Certainly. And you, on your part, will state in your programme in capitals—the size of which can be agreed upon by and by—that the furniture of such and such scenes has been supplied by Mr. Tinsel, of 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, Tottenham Court Road.

SURFACE.—Of course I shall engage to do this.

TINSEL.—How about ladies' dresses? Can I put in a contract for them, for I have an

establishment in Regent Street, carried on under the name of Madame Morisse.

SURFACE.—No, thank you; we have our own dressmaker.

TINSEL.—Then how about your real flowers and shrubs?

SURFACE.—Oh, Mr. Groundsel gives me forty pounds a year for this advertisement.

TINSEL.—Then there is nothing more to be said. If it will suit you, I will call at the theatre to-morrow at noon, and see the sketch then. If you like, you can go back with me to my place and see the sort of stuff I can give you.

SURFACE.—To-morrow, at noon, I will be ready, Mr. Tinsel.

And that's how it is done.

THE "LAY" OF THE INFANT "ARRY."

I'm nineteen years old, and I've seen enough life
To startle the nerves of an old-fashioned gaby;
I'm down as a hammer, and sharp as a knife,
Yet the "law of the land" says I'm only a "baby."
If you doubt it, just lend me a couple of quid,
And I'll lay any odds you will change your
impression
When the County Court Judge says, "he's only
a kid!
Why, he hasn't arrived at the age of discretion."

At billiards I'm somewhat a bit of a "don,"
And am not above now and then coming it
"shifty;"
If with Mister Juggins I get a bit on,
And get him to give me say fifteen in fifty.
But sometimes this "Infant" gets dropt on
himself,
And then I'm obliged to divulge the confession,
That I really can't part and haven't the pelf,
Besides I've not come to age of discretion.

At the "Confidence dodge" I'm the simple young
thing,
Whose got a large legacy left by his Uncle;
I sport the queer flimsies and flash a big ring,
With a large piece of glass like a wopping car-
buncle.

If caught, my excuse is, I'm only nineteen,
And I put on a wonderfully simple expression.
The Magistrate says: "Let him go, he's so green,
And he hasn't arrived at the age of discretion."

Some three or four months since I opened a shop,
And trade being bad, I got credit like winking,
But when the time came to pay up, what a drop!
The Travellers called and could not get their
chink in.

The writs all came tumbling in by the score;
The movement I made might be called "retro-
gression."

I bolted, and wrote on the front of the door,
"Will return when I get to the age of discretion."

Alas! just a year and ten days from this date
Is my coming of age. It is no satisfaction
To know in my manly and more mature state,
My "Infantine" plea is no bar to an action.
Now—thank goodness—I'm free, and can do as I
please,
Then, I'll have to beware of each tiny digression,
Oh! why can't I chizzle and chouse at my ease,
And never arrive at the age of discretion?

FRANK HALL.

D 2



CATLING MAVOURNEEN.

A1 at Lloyds'.

STAGE-DOOR NUISANCES.

SOME eighteen years ago a popular dramatic author, since dead, in describing the Dramatic College Fête at the Crystal Palace, wrote incidentally thus: "When I was at the age of sixteen did I not haunt the stage-door of the Adelphi night after night to see Mr. Paul Bedford pass out? . . . Did I not, as I have said, haunt that stage-door for nights, and walk Maiden Lane at ghost hour on Saturdays in the hope of seeing the illustrious Paul in the guise of the real world? At last, after many disappointments, after long and patient vigils under the lamp-post, occasionally in the rain, I cast eyes upon him."

This describes a very harmless sort of curiosity which must be common to the minds of a great number of youths in their 'teens. Who has not, after paying a schoolboy visit to the theatre or circus, longed to see the actors in their ordinary apparel; to cast eyes upon them when they have doffed the false beards and noses and have rubbed the rouge off their cheeks? But when one has learnt that actors are only mortal; that a popular comedian and a successful cheesemonger have much the same outward appearance—save, perhaps, that the former looks a little blue about the cheeks, whereas the latter carries a pair of fine mutton-chop whiskers—this desire to spy upon our public entertainers as they emerge from the stage-door gradually dies out, and the now-come-of-age youth thinks—or used to think—no more of it. Used to think: that is just the point. Unfortunately, *nous avons changé tout cela*; and the stage-door haunting of the present day has become such an abominable nuisance, that the only course is to smite it hip and thigh at every available opportunity.

Some ten years ago, when burlesque had attained at once to its highest and its lowest pitch, this nuisance began to show. Burlesque was then at its highest, inasmuch as it was being played at an immense number of theatres, and was popularly said to be the only theatrical commodity that would

pay: indeed, a manager who had a good deal of experience, then told us that "Byron spelt bankruptcy, and Shakspeare ruin." Burlesque was, at the same time, at its lowest, because it had come to mean one of the most degraded forms of dramatic entertainment (save the mark!) which the uneducated palate of the public would assimilate. As it may be possibly urged that burlesque is still very largely played, and still receives a great amount of patronage, it may be safely stated that the proportion of theatres in 1881 playing burlesque as their chief attraction as compared with the number in 1871, is very small; and, further, it is not saying too much to assert that this class of entertainment now presented will compare very favourably with that of ten years ago. The system, that then prevailed, of allowing shameless women—actresses in name alone—to exhibit their charms upon the stage merely by way of advertisement for themselves, and in order that they might thereby be enabled to keep a brougham, dress in furs and silks, and display much jewelry on a salary of thirty shillings a week, is now almost abolished; and our "golden youth" do not take theatres, as was done at that time, to serve merely as a playground for their mistresses.

When this state of things existed, and when the moral condition of a large proportion of the burlesque "actresses" was a matter of notoriety, was it very surprising that the brainless "young bloods" who loitered in the stalls should, when the performance was at an end, gravitate to the stage-door for the same purpose as they had in previous times lounged at night in the Argyll Rooms or up Regent Street?

But burlesques, like the other pursuits of its patrons, became "stale" and "a bore" to the class who most largely ran after it—the young fops of the period; the so-called "leaders of fashion." We had something to say concerning the intellectual status of these folk in last year's ENTR'ACTE ANNUAL, and it is not at all necessary to repeat those

remarks. It is a well-known biological fact that a species, before dying out, gradually deteriorates; and, if deterioration may be taken as indicative of approaching extinction, we may console ourselves with the reflection that the race of this *genus*, who "toil not, neither do they spin," is almost run. The advancing wave of increased culture and education must either change them entirely—that is, improve and develop them,—or sweep them out of existence. There are no means of predicting which event will happen, or method of influencing the result: the force of social evolution must alone effect this.

Burlesque declined, then, in matter of supply; and its patrons declined intellectually and morally. But their hobby of stage-door haunting once begun was not so easily cast aside. Use becomes second nature; and the adjournment "round the corner" to the stage-exit, when the performance was over, became as essential a part of the night's visit to the theatre as is the dozen of oysters at Rule's to the more healthy class of playgoers. But when the stage itself became gradually purged of *cocottes*, and respectable actresses took their places, these social ephemera found their attentions were not so warmly received; they had to learn that a handsome bouquet, or a sealskin jacket, or a diamond ring did not, in the eyes of an honest woman, make amends for a gross insult; and that the boot of a husband or a brother (with a powerful foot inside) was not the best salve to soften a rebuff.



THE QUEEN'S



THE CAMBRIDGE.

Then these dung-flies took to worshipping child-actresses. Oh, their intentions were strictly honourable—how could it be otherwise when the object of them was a child of fifteen? Well, this problem it is fortunately unnecessary to discuss: it is just possible that these "strictly honourable intentions" would not very well bear the searching bull's-eye of criticism and truth. The question solely is, by what right do these deteriorated specimens of playgoers, who would bring themselves to a state of mental masturbation by the contemplation of a basket of soiled under-linen, haunt the back-doors of our public entertainers, spy out all their private actions, and thrust their odious and unsolicited attentions upon unwilling recipients? What would these "swells" think if a parcel of young men were to collect round the doors of their mansions, and, on their sisters or wives sallying forth to spend the evening with friends, thrust flowers upon them, call them by petnames, and openly leer at them? The course adopted would be to call a policeman and have the offenders thrust into durance vile; and the proper course for actors to take is to seize upon a few of the most outrageous offenders and make thereof a smarting and startling example. This sort of dirt will only be swept from the stage-door by the broom of vigorous treatment.

T. W. LITTLETON HAY.



RUBENSTEIN.



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The Stage.



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Recollections of the Strand.



Where is Parselle?



Where is Turner?



Where is Edge?



Where is Collier?



Where is Poynter?

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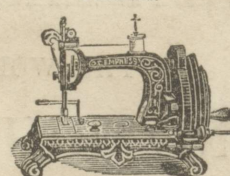
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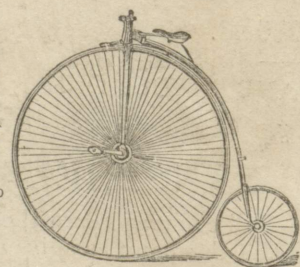
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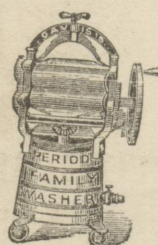
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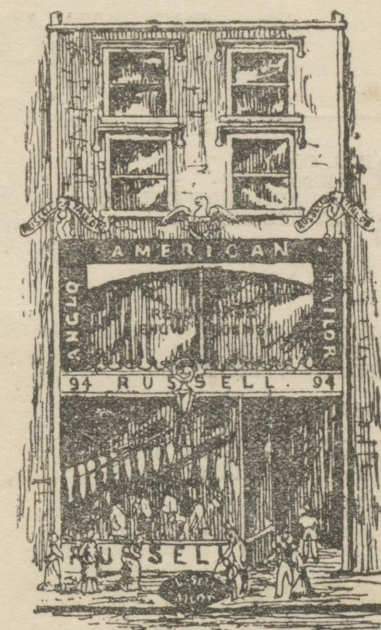
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