

# Bunkum Entertainments:

BEING A COLLECTION  
OF  
ORIGINAL LAUGHABLE SKITS

ON  
CONJURING, PHYSIOGNOMY, JUGGLING, PERFORMING FLEAS,  
WAXWORKS, PANORAMA, PHRENOLOGY, PHONOGRAPH,  
SECOND SIGHT, LIGHTNING CALCULATORS,  
VENTRILOQUISM, SPIRITUALISM, ETC.,

TO WHICH ARE ADDED  
HUMOROUS SKETCHES, WHIMSICAL RECITALS,  
AND  
DRAWING-ROOM COMEDIES.

---

BY  
ROBERT GANTHONY,  
*Author of the "Spoffin's Sketches;" "Practical Ventriloquism;"*  
*"Amateur Entertainments, and How to Organise Them, etc."*

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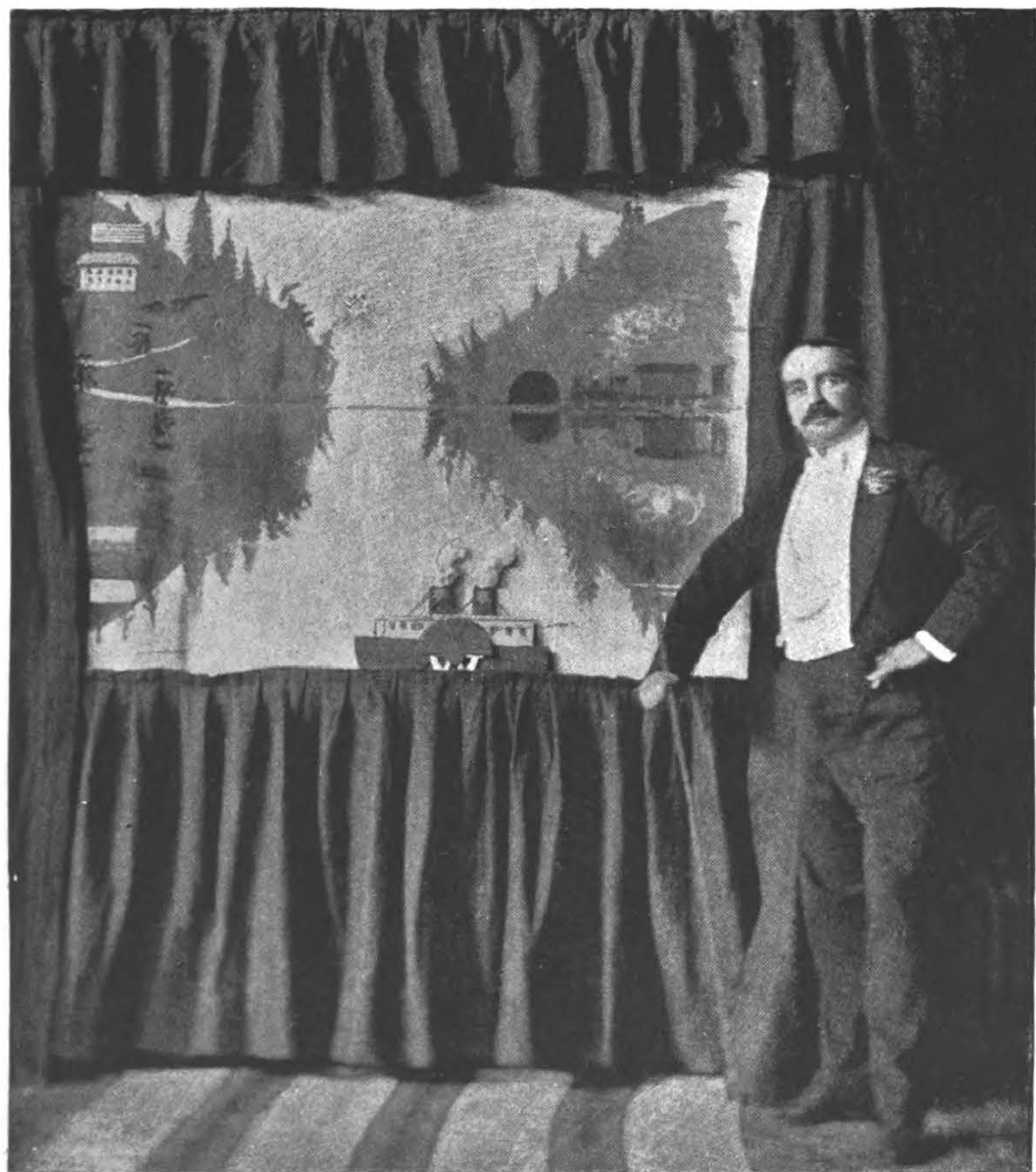
TO MY SISTER,  
**Hellie Ganthony,**

IN MEMORY OF OUR MANY STAGE COURTSHIPS  
WHILE PRESENTING THE COMEDIETTAS HEREIN  
CONTAINED,  
THIS VOLUME  
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

(RECAP)

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THE AUTHOR AND HIS BUNKUM PANORAMA.

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## PREFACE.

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THE following collection of travestical or burlesque sketches are intended to offer to the amateur an opportunity of amusing his friends with a new class of entertainment in which the fun created is a substitute for the genuine entertainment parodied, and an excuse for the humorous swindle perpetrated. The items being fresh and original, they are more valuable to laughter-makers than the hackneyed extracts from standard authors given in the numerous books of recitations.

I reserve the rights of public performance because many of the items form part of my professional repertoire, and by so reserving them I am able to give the amateur some of my best things wherewith to amuse his friends. If the amateur desire to give a public representation from this work, he can do so,

#### PREFACE.

provided permission be obtained from the publisher or myself.

In addition to the Bunkum Entertainments I have given a few miscellaneous pieces that I am constantly asked for, and which I feel sure will be useful, and some Drawing-room Comedies that I have given with my sister, Miss Kate Mills, and other actresses with the greatest success.

I have had much pleasure in arranging this collection, and to those who have not the time to take up entertaining as a serious study I hope this book will prove serviceable.

ROBERT GANTHONY,  
The Poplars, Richmond-on-Thames

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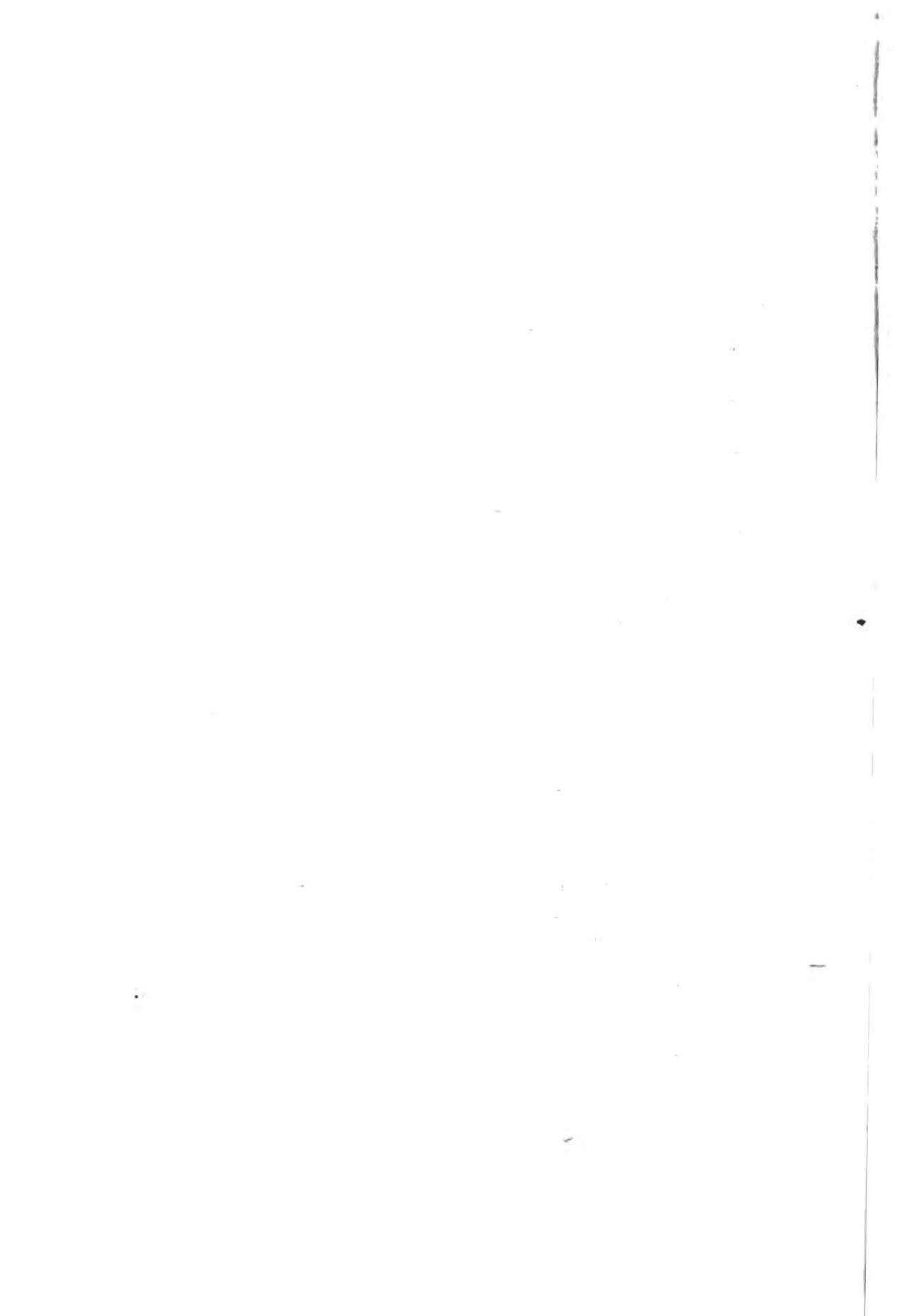
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# BUNKUM ENTERTAINMENTS.

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## PART I.

### INTRODUCTION.

It is always understood that in speaking of stage left or right, the right and left when on the stage facing the audience is understood. The business—that is, by-play and stage and other directions—are printed in italics, while what is to be spoken is printed in large type.

When Bunkum Entertainments require confederacy or other assistance, they must be rehearsed just as a play is; there should be no bungling in satire, or it is spoilt. I speak throughout of the “stage” for convenience, though the sketches are for drawing-rooms. Where it is found necessary, some kind of proscenium must be arranged.

## CONJURING.

### Preliminary Remarks.

IN skits on a recognised form of entertainment like conjuring, try, if possible, to imitate the style of a conjurer. It always seems to me that the conjuror's laugh, like the grin of the circus clown, is an artificiality easily imitated, and his manner of talking to an audience as though they were children, together with his everlasting desire to borrow articles, are recognised attributes that are easily copied. If the reader will add characteristics of his own personal observation and carry out the following travesty with a waiter-like civility while doing rude things and robbing everybody he can, he will find his efforts astonishingly successful.

### The Performance.

Ladies and gentlemen, with your kind and polite attention I shall commence my entertainment, which I have had the honour of performing before the King of the Cockatoo Islands, by turning up the sleeves of my coat and trousers (*does so*), not to show you my arms and ankles, of which my mother tells me I may justly feel proud, but to convince you before I begin that I

have nothing secreted in my sleeves nor in the legs of my trousers, nor do I resort to them to produce articles used in my experiments.

The best professors in the art of pres-ti-di-gi—pres-di-ti-gi—well, the best conjurors use very little apparatus, I use none at all, nothing but the ordinary articles found in any dwelling-house.

I require, for my first experiment, a small table—round, square, octagonal, or oblong. I prefer borrowing it from a member of the audience, as it looks less suspicious than if I borrowed one of my own.

Is there no lady or gentleman present who will lend me a small table? I assure you that I will not injure it in any way, and that I will return it. I would much prefer to borrow it than have it lent to me. Any kind of table will do.

It is a great pity that ladies and gentlemen do not come to an entertainment of this kind prepared to supply what is asked for. Will any lady or gentleman, man, woman, or child, lend me a table? No? Then I must procure one somewhere else (*brings one from side and shows it to audience*). Would any lady or gentleman like to examine this table? Would you, sir, kindly pass this table round for examination. (*As the table is probably a heavy deal one no one complies with the request.*) I want everybody present to see for themselves that there are no pockets, traps, electric

batteries, springs, or secret drawers in the table. While the table is being examined I want to borrow about six to half-a-dozen good-looking gentlemen from the audience.

I am not particular as to the kind of gentlemen, I prefer male gentlemen if possible, and Europeans if procurable. Three ladies and three gentlemen will do, but I prefer from half-a-dozen to six gentlemen. I trust the ladies present will submit to the deprivation for a few moments. I prefer them to be over sixteen if possible, because any man under that age knows too much for me. I shall not cut your heads off or otherwise be rude to you. (*Six friends go on stage and sit, some cross their legs.*) Now, please, make yourselves at home. I will order refreshments presently—don't cross your legs, just behave as though you were in a drawing-room. Now, the table having been examined (*no one has examined it*), I shall ask these gentlemen, that I have borrowed from the audience, to act as a committee to see that I do not deceive you nor waste time unnecessarily. The table having been examined and pronounced as free from deception as I am myself, I place it there. Now the first trick, as no conjuring is possible without a lighted candle, is to make a lighted candle appear on that table without touching the table or candle, or going near to either.

There are several ways of performing this trick; some conjurers (those in India) do it one way, and some (the Japanese) do it the other way; I do it my own way. (*To side*) Will you kindly lend me a candle? Thanks. May I ask you, sir, to take that candle and place it there? (*Indicates table where gentleman places candle and box of matches.*) You see, ladies and gentlemen, the candle has appeared on the table without my touching it, or going near the table. This will conclude my first trick. But this is only to prepare your mind for greater wonders to follow. (*To one of the committee*) Do you know why they didn't applaud? No? Then I'll tell you! They were too much overcome with astonishment.

The next feat I do, is called a sleight of hand feat—it is to light the candle. (*Opens match-box and while talking rubs the wrong ends and throws them down, Swedish matches are of course used.*) This was an easy trick when we used English matches, but now that the matches—are—(*strikes and breaks match*)—are—made—in Germany, or somewhere else, the trick of lighting a candle is a very difficult one. (*Strikes match.*) Ah! accidents will happen (*lights candle*) even with the worst manufactured matches; and the second trick is happily accomplished. The applause having subsided, I pass on to the next trick, for which I require the loan of a new £50 Bank of England note;

only one—years ago when——Will any lady or gentleman kindly lend me a new £50 Bank of England note? No? Any of the committee got £50? No? Then perhaps someone will lend me a half-crown? Silver has depreciated so much of late that there should be no difficulty in your making up this amount among you. (*Confederate lends half-a-crown.*) Will you, Mr. Rothschild, kindly mark it so that you would know it should you ever see it again? (*Confederate does so.*) Thanks. There is a heavy fine for defacing the currency of the realm, but I won't say anything about it this time. This gentleman has given me half-a-crown—(*to Confederate*)—what do you say? Oh! only lent it? Very well! This gentleman has lent me a florin. Eh? (*Shows Confederate coin, the audience do not see the half-crown.*)

*Conf.* I gave you half-a-crown.

*Conj.* Excuse me, sir, a two-shilling piece. (*Shows half-crown again.*) I now take this gentleman's two shillings.

*Conf.* Half-a-crown!

*Conj.* I take this gentleman's two shillings.

*Conf.* Half-a-crown!

*Conj.* Well, look for yourself (*shows coin*), but call it half-a-crown if you like, there is no use spoiling the entertainment for the sake of sixpence. I take his half-a-crown and swallow it. (*Puts it in his mouth.*)

*Conf.* Oh, I say my half-crown ! (*Jumps up. Produces another from waistcoat pocket, where it has been previously placed.*)

*Conf.* Ah ! (*Goes to take it.*)

*Conj.* (*Puts him back and places half-crown in trousers pocket and again discovers it in his shoe, places coin in shoe, puts shoe on head, and protrudes original half-crown from mouth ; puts on shoe and returns half-crown to his trousers pocket, where it remains. The effect on the audience is that one half-crown only has been used, whereas there are four. If they suspect a swindle so much the better.*) For the next trick I wish to borrow.

*Conf.* (*Gets up and goes to him, in stage whisper says*) : You didn't give me back my half-crown.

*Conj.* Please don't interrupt me, sir, in my experiments. I now wish to borrow—eh ! (*to Confederate*)—I may want it later on ; please sit down, you are here to assist me, not to interrupt. (*Confederate returns to his seat.*) I now want to borrow two black gentlemen's hats ; I mean two gentlemen's black hats. These I place on the table. Now, will any lady or gentleman lend me another table to match this ? No ! Then I borrow one of my own. (*One is given from side.*) I place one table on this side, and one table on this side ; perhaps you, sir, will be good

enough to hold the candle—don't spill the grease on your trousers. (*Gives candle to one of the committee.*) On this table I place one hat, on the other table I place the other hat. If you prefer me to place this hat on the other table, and the other hat on this table I will do so. You do not mind? Very well, we will leave them as they are. I should now like to borrow a couple of ordinary gentleman's socks. Will any gentleman lend me his socks? Of course if I am not supplied with the mere necessities of my—perhaps if the gentlemen present don't wear socks I can borrow two ordinary calico handkerchiefs. You will not lend them? Very well, it does not matter. (*Takes two from the pockets of committee.*) Thanks—now I want to borrow a glass of water—will any lady or gentlemen lend me a glass of water? (*One is handed from side by a committee man.*) Thank you so much. I was afraid that I should have to give up all idea of performing this trick. (*Taking up hats.*) You will kindly observe, ladies and gentlemen, that there is nothing in these hats—there is very little in them when they are being worn, but they are absolutely empty now. Here we have an ordinary glass filled with ordinary water—this I place on this table here, or on the other table there. It is immaterial to me which—this one? Very well (*places tumbler on table R.*); over it I place the hat—can I borrow a little music, please? (*Waltz pp.*



*Places hat over glass of water.)* Upon the hat I place the handkerchief (*does so*).

*Conf.* I say, old chappie, when do you give me back my half-crown? (*Music stops.*)

*Conj.* I must ask you, sir, not to interrupt me, as you will destroy the illusion.

*Conf.* There's no illusion about your having my half-crown.

*Conj.* The other hat I place on this table (*table L.*) and cover it with the handkerchief, so. Now I cause the tumbler to pass from under this hat on this table (*R.*) to that hat on that table (*L.*). Presto, pass, go! (*chord, etc.*) and the glass of water has passed from under that hat and is now under this hat; but the trick does not end here, for I make the glass go back to the other hat. Pass, presto, go! (*Chord and agitato music, during which conjuror runs to one table and removes handkerchief, which he pockets, same with the other, removes left hat.*) You see, ladies and gentlemen, the glass has vanished. I raise the other hat (*R.*) and you find it has returned and not a drop of water spilt. Will any lady lend me a new-laid egg? I don't want a rasher of bacon, merely an ordinary new-laid egg. If it has a chicken in it so much the better. No eggs about? Then I should like to borrow a dog biscuit; will any lady or gentlemen lend me a biscuit? Then I must use one I intended eating for supper. Now, I break

the biscuit in half, and will ask a lady and a gentleman to initial the pieces. In this gentleman's pocket (*the Confederate's*) I find a pack of playing-cards (*They are not shown to audience, the pack is all Queens of Clubs.*) Now, sir, will you please think of a card? (*To Confederate.*) Have you thinked—I mean thought? Very good, sir. I turn over the hat on this table so. (*Crown on table.*) Now, at what numbered card would you like the card you thought of to appear? By the way, what was your card?

*Conf.* The Queen of Clubs.

*Conj.* And at what number as I deal them into the hat would you like it to appear?

*Conf.* Thirteen.

*Conj.* Very well, sir; one, two, etc. (*Counts cards until he comes to thirteen, when the card shown is the Queen of Clubs.*) I will ask you, sir, not to tell me the name of the card you think of, but tell some member of the committee, merely telling me what number it shall appear.

*Conf.* Number one.

*Conj.* (*Shows card.*) The Queen of Clubs, is that the card you thought of?

*Conf.* Yes.

*Conj.* Now, I will ask each member of the committee to take two cards.

*Conf.* I would rather have my half-crown.

*Conj.* I will use it presently, sir. Take two cards (*gives cards*), do not look at them, gentlemen; hold them up in the air, one in each hand, backs to audience. I now borrow three watches (*takes them from committee*); I put the watches in my pocket.

*Conf.* With my half-crown.

*Conj.* Now I take the two pieces of biscuit—you would know them again if you saw them? (*Proceeds to eat them.*) Now, under which hat would you like the biscuit to appear? This one? Very well. I now ask the gentlemen to blow out the candle and show their cards to the audience. The biscuits (*putting on hat, card falling over him*) are now under the hat selected. (*He goes out quickly, followed by the committee shouting for their watches, money, etc.*)

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## PHYSIOGNOMY.

### Preliminary Remarks.

THE drawings are copied from this book on cartridge paper large enough to be seen and shown as required, either held up or put on cardboard and placed on a chair, or a chair on a table. Their size and the height they are placed are determined by circumstances; always remember that an audience must see and hear distinctly to enjoy what you do. If a mock scientific

make-up of long hair, blue glasses, and black frock-coat be adopted it adds to the amusement and makes success easier. Broad fun has a larger number to appreciate it than humour which is subtle.

### **The Performance.**

The subject of my lecture is Physiognomy, a word derived from the Greek words "fizz" the face, "iog" the eye, and "nomy" the rest of the counting-house or countenance. It is not unusual to hear, among persons of classical education, the face being referred to as the "Fizz" or the "Fizog," while those of meaner bringing up stick to the counting-house or countenance, and use this comprehensive term to denote the whole features.

As you are all doubtless aware, the "Fizz"—to use a classical expression—consists of two eyes, one nose, two ears, one mouth, one hair—unless bald—and one neck; sometimes a few moles, warts, or carbuncles are added, but these excrescences have nothing to do with the science upon which I have the honour to lecture.

Physiognomy has no connection with palmistry, thought-reading, milking cows, pickling walnuts, nor the prevention of cruelty to children. It has nothing to do with foretelling the past, or looking backward into the future. It is not a two-guinea incubator, a

hand-sewing machine, pumping apparatus, windmill, nor an intoxicated elephant. No, it is none of these, it is the art of reading character—I do not mean a servant's character, that she obtains from her last place, or buys ready made—I mean an ordinary person's character, or an ordinary person of no character, and by the shape of his or her mouth, eyes, nose, and ears, I discover just what he or she is up to, what they are thinking about, the amount of their washing-bill, and who stole the donkey.

There is no use a servant girl telling me that her missus is out when I can see her peeping round the parlour window-blind, because I do not believe her; I am a physiognomist, and if she hasn't got the lying eyebrow she ought to have it, or science is at fault; but we must not anticipate.

Physiognomy is not phrenology, and phrenology is not physiognomy; neither are the same, consequently both are different.

I must here make a few remarks which I don't quite understand, and that is that facial expression is caused by the action of the cranial nerves, which have their deep origin in the base of the brain, and disseminate through its various organs to the controlling at the will of the brain, which causes facial expression, so by touching the "cordus ha-ha," or laughter-chord,

as I do now (*business*), I cause the face to smile (*grin*); but if I place the finger, or thumb, if you have no finger, upon the "cordus doloroso," or sorrowful-chord (*business*), the face—my face in this inkstand—I mean instance, at once becomes sad (*business and sad face*). Whatever chord you touch, the face is in harmony at once, or, so to speak, in accord with the chord.

Though, as I stated, physiognomy is *not* phrenology, and phrenology is *not* physiognomy, they are, to a certain extent, connected. A head is incomplete if there be no face, a face is incomplete without a forehead, and a man who has no features had better buy a second-hand set or take rat poison.

A human being is composed of brain, nerve, bone, muscle, blood, flesh, hair; some, however, have no hair, and others are only cuffs, shirt-collar, hook-stick, and cigarette.

The head is the only portion that contains brains. You may imagine that some people have their brains in their feet—where, by-the-way, there is ample space for them—or that some leave them at home in a hat-box, for all the use they make of them when out; but this is not so, what brains they have are placed behind the ears, which protect them from sun-stroke or the east wind, as the case may be.

My first diagram represents the Intellectual Head.  
(Show Fig. 1.)

A A A (*indicate letters*) represent the ordinary two-storey forehead which is necessary for the intellect. B stands for benevolence. You will notice that this gentleman has neither hair nor shirt-

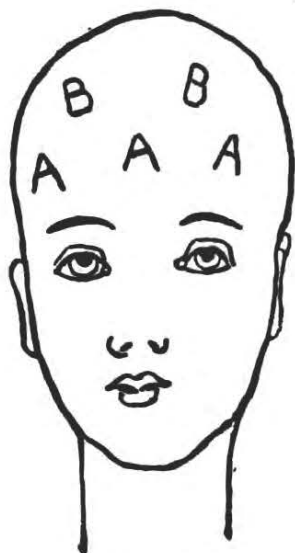


FIG. 1.  
THE INTELLECTUAL  
HEAD.

collar; in fact, he has no shirt either. I would not draw your attention to these things, but that their absence denotes intellect and benevolence — the hair having dropped off with excessive thinking, while the absent collar and shirt indicate benevolence, these articles of attire having been given away to some starving child; and the same remark applies to the absence of all other clothing.

All poets have the two-storey forehead, Shakespeare, Dante, George R. Sims, and the dramatic critic of the *War Cry*.

The intellectual man has the forehead built up above the ears, while foolish people have very little above the ears. An ass, for instance, has his ears on the top of his head.

Ladies and gentlemen, The Ass! (*Show Fig. 2.*) No, you are all looking at *me*; kindly regard the diagram.

The donkey has no brains, for the same reason that it prefers thistle to corn, that is because it's an ass,



FIG 2. THE ASS.

and because it would have nowhere to put brains if it had them.

Let us now examine the features separately, and commence with the nose. Some people imagine that the use of the nose is for breathing during the day and for snoring during the night. The nose is simply manufactured so that the physiognomist can tell your character.



I will show you that this is so if you will allow me to introduce you to a few noses.



FIG. 3.  
THE NOSE OF ATTACK.

The first nasal organ is the Nose of Attack. (*Show Fig. 3.*)

A man with a nose like that is always fighting. You will find this nose on the faces of all pugilists if you examine them before their first encounter. You will find this nose on any box of stove polish that contains a portrait of the Duke of Wellington; you will see it on the face of Henry Irving, the Archbishop

of Canterbury, or the professor of any boxing academy.

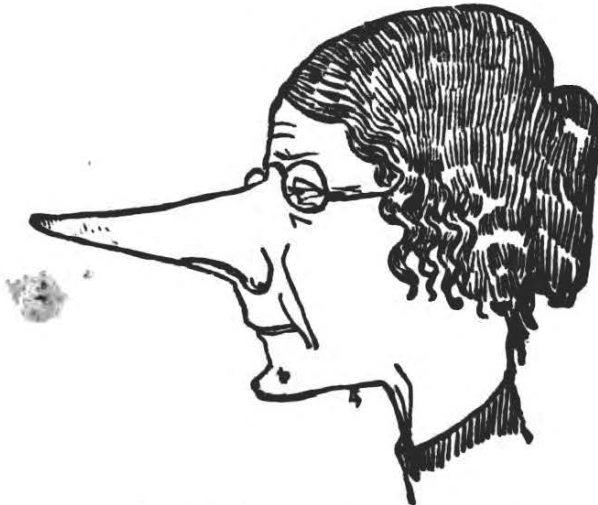


FIG. 4. THE INQUISITIVE NOSE.

This is the Inquisitive Nose. (*Show Fig. 4.*)

You will generally find a person with a nose like that peering over your back garden palings, or looking under a circus tent to see the hoofs of the horses.

This is the Coarse Nose. (*Show Fig. 5.*)

A person with a nose like that will tell you all his or her family affairs, is very fond of raw onions,



FIG. 5. THE COARSE NOSE.

generally eats peas with a knife, prefers Kops' Ale to Thames water, and can take two pinches of snuff with one sniff. If you invite a person with a nose like this to stay with you, you needn't put any soap in his bedroom, because he won't use it; and it will be as

well to have a definite understanding as to the



FIG. 6. THE UNPLEASANT NOSE.

length of his visit, or you will not get rid of him.

This is the Unpleasant Nose. (*Show Fig. 6.*)

If this nose wants to visit you, don't give him an invitation, or if he *will* come, put him in a damp bed.

This is the Vegetable Nose. (*Show Fig. 7.*)

This is called the vegetable nose because if it is not a little reddish it is always a turn-up.



FIG. 7. THE VEGETABLE NOSE

We now come to the eyes.

When you see the white of the eye above, below, and all round the pupil, you have the Stupid Eye, or the person has you are looking at. (*Show Fig. 8.*)

A person like this would look a full moon in the face and ask it where its hands were, and then, on reaching home, would put his umbrella and overcoat



FIG. 8. THE STUPID EYE.

carefully to bed, and then hang himself on the hat-pegs.

Language is sometimes shown by a person having a black eye, but this is bad language; a command of language is shown by the eye being full; a man with a full eye who wanted to know the correct time would,

with his command of language, ask a policeman, not wonder why the moon hadn't hands, like the man with the stupid eye. Even a dumb man with a full eye is generally unbearably loquacious.

The eyebrow is very characteristic. Persons with eyebrows that grow right across the head nearly always take tea or coffee for breakfast. Vegetarians have the "right-across-the-head" eyebrow, because *they* eat vegetables and their eyebrows *meet*.

There is one prevalent vice from which even the professional physiognomist is not exempt if he wishes to live by his business, and that is telling little tarry-didelums, or indulging, while standing up, in the habit of lying.



FIG. 9. THE LYING EYEBROW

This is shown by the Chinese Lying Eyebrow. (*Show Fig. 9.*)

All Chinese lie standing, if there be any truth in this science, but as they all lie in China it doesn't so much matter there; but if you see an Englishman with the Celestial eyebrow, you may be sure that the Chancellor

of the Exchequer loses heavily every time he pays his income-tax.

The Erratic or Rabbit Mouth and Desire-to-be-Loved Chin. (*Show Fig. 10.*)

A person with a mouth and chin like this will give chocolate creams to children, and sing for nothing at "At Homes" just to be loved. The rabbit mouth also



FIG. 10. THE ERRATIC MOUTH.

denotes a person who is constant to nothing. Rabbit mouths are Roman Catholics one moment, Unitarians the next, and Jews or Methodists directly afterwards. They are always changing. I have known people with this class of mouth change three times in going by train from Charing Cross to Kew Gardens.

This is the Criminal Jaw. (*Show Fig. 11.*)

This mouth is generally found in prisons and reformatories ; sometimes, if you hear a noise in your house at night, you will find this mouth below the nose of the man who is eloping with your silver spoons and tea-pot.

The proper study for mankind is man ; and what I have told you in my lecture is a help to that study, for by it you know your fellow creatures, and when you see



FIG. 11. THE CRIMINAL JAW.

the criminal jaw coming along you hug your tea-pot, and hide your spoons in your stockings. And when a bald-headed man in a barber's shop tells you that he can sell you a bottle of stuff that will produce golden ringlets on your marble top, look at him attentively, and if he have the Celestial eyebrow, tell him that you don't believe him. If the man with the stupid eye informs you that he has invented a flying loco-

motive that will lay eggs and hatch them in its steam chest, smile incredulously. Avoid getting into a railway carriage if you see the man with the vulgar nose sitting in the corner; and above all, ladies with private incomes, think of the meaning of the Celestial eyebrow if a Chinese proposes marriage to you, and never marry anyone who hasn't the constancy guaranteed by the double chin. With these few words of advice I close my mouth, eyes, and nose lecture.

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## JUGGLING.

### Preliminary Remarks.

THERE is no dialogue to a juggling entertainment, the various acts being carried out to an accompaniment of what is termed "pantomime music," that class of melody that supports the clown through the harlequinade. The juggling should be done in evening dress, when it must be announced as an imitation of a juggler, or done without announcement in the costume of a street tumbler, which should be grotesque if not verging on the outrageous. The kissing of hands and bowing with the hand on heart must be indulged in after each swindle, as though great dexterity had been exhibited. The explanation of how each act is accomplished will be found in the notes at end.



### The Performance.

Music plays, and Juggler enters.

(No. 1.) He removes a handkerchief from breast or waist and twists it into the form of a rope, attempts to balance it on finger, but it falls into his hand; this is done again and again until the handkerchief remains upright, poised on his finger. He removes hand to heart and bows, when the handkerchief is seen suspended in the air. He clutches handkerchief and walks off with it.

(No. 2.) He next enters with a wand and billiard-ball, the wand is held horizontally and the ball balanced on wand and made to run to and from performer at will—the ball is shown to audience and put away.

(No. 3.) A handkerchief is next thrown up in the air and caught on the wand and turned till it looks like a parasol shading his head. With this impromptu parasol the performer walks off.

(No. 4.) Enter with three balls, with which he juggles, and exit.

(No. 5.) A Japanese umbrella is next brought on open, a ball being held at the edge; the umbrella is made to revolve by turning handle, it is then shut and the swindle exposed as he leaves, or takes it back to table.

(No. 6.) Plates are next spun on wand, thrown up, caught, and returned to table.

(No. 7.) Performer next comes forward with a hoop and glass of water; after a lot of preliminary balancing, hoop and glass are exchanged for a hoop with a glass fixed in it, which can be whirled about without difficulty.

(No. 8.) A printed card, which says "Signior Polonio will now give an imitation of two men wrestling," is now put on a chair.

The performer comes forward and gives an imitation, which concludes the show.

### Explanation of Juggling Tricks.

#### 1. The handkerchief act.

The handkerchief before entering is fastened by a piece of thread to one end, the other end of the thread being attached to the ceiling of the room, the flys of the theatre, or the fishing-rod held by the confederate, who keeps it concealed from the audience. With this explanation the proceedings are simple.

#### 2. Wand and billiard-ball.

This apparently marvellous feat can be done by anyone with a specially-prepared wand.\*

3. An attachment to the wand, that can be purchased, makes this feat simple.

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\* NOTE.—The reader can procure all the necessary trick juggling apparatus not described in detail at Hamley's, 231, Holborn, London. The secrets of such apparatus being revealed in confidence, it is obviously unfair to divulge them where they belong to this firm, who sell them at such a moderate cost that there is nothing gained by trying to make them.

4. Through the courtesy of Mr. R. H. Douglass, the well-known mimic and actor, the author is indebted for the following description of the bunkum juggling balls :—

Procure three twopenny white indiarubber balls. Two of these are attached to two pieces of thread about

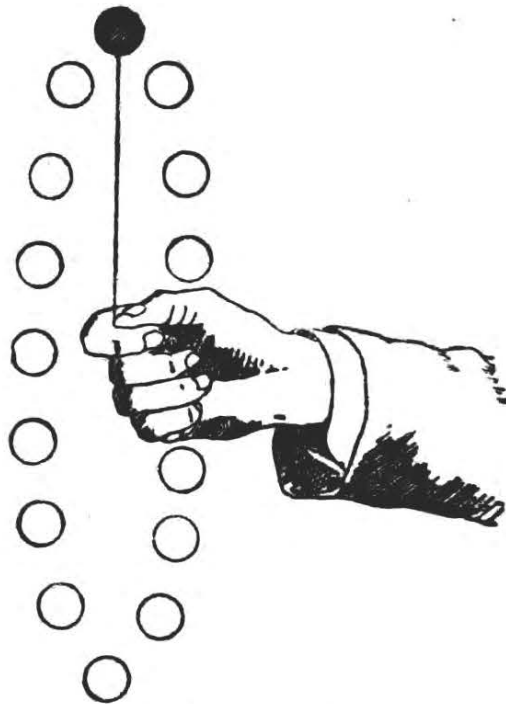


FIG. 12. JUGGLING.

two feet six inches long each. Taking an end of each thread in the left and right hand, they are rapidly whirled round in the manner shown in Fig. 12, where the shaded ball represents the rubber ball and the outline balls the optical illusion created.

When a juggler performs this trick there is always one ball in mid air, thus:  
The "mid air" ball is worked by using a wire, which is attached to a piece of wood held in the mouth, to which the third ball is attached by a short piece of string.



FIG. 13. JUGGLING BALLS.

The three balls are whirled at the same time, and the effect is produced, as the necessary movement of the

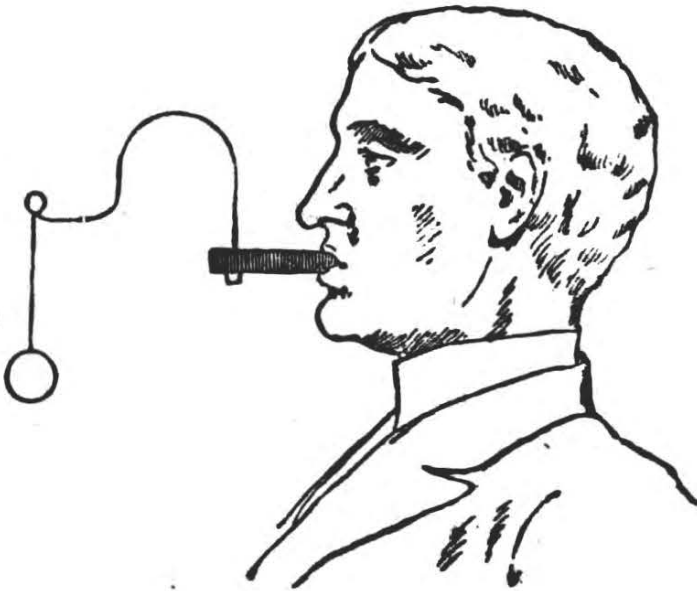


FIG. 14. HEAD JUGGLING.

head to revolve the "mid air" ball simulates the movement of the head in actual juggling. In this, as in all similar illusions, the reader must perfect himself by

actual practice and give sufficient application to the matter to secure success.

5. The Japanese umbrella has the ball or ring attached to a string and fastened to the ferrule, which

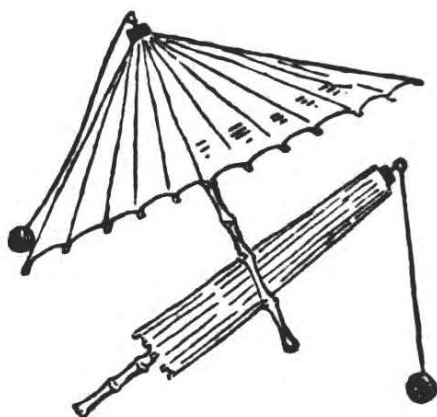


FIG. 15. JAPANESE UMBRELLA.

revolves, allowing the ball to travel round the edges of the umbrella.

6. Juggling plates can be procured.

7. The hoop and glass can be easily made.

8. The wrestling is a really marvellous optical illusion, which the author a year or so back made familiar to the various London clubs by private representations, and also to the public in a pantomime sketch, entitled "Le Reve de Pierrot."

The performer stands with his back to the audience in the attitude of a wrestler about to grip. He then closes with an imaginary antagonist, putting his own arms round his own body as far back as possible. The

hands being seen behind suggest another person, while the movement of wrestling adds to this effect. The legs are kept together, and the grip of the hands must correspond with those of the body. If the hand clutches the neck or head the body is dragged forward and the

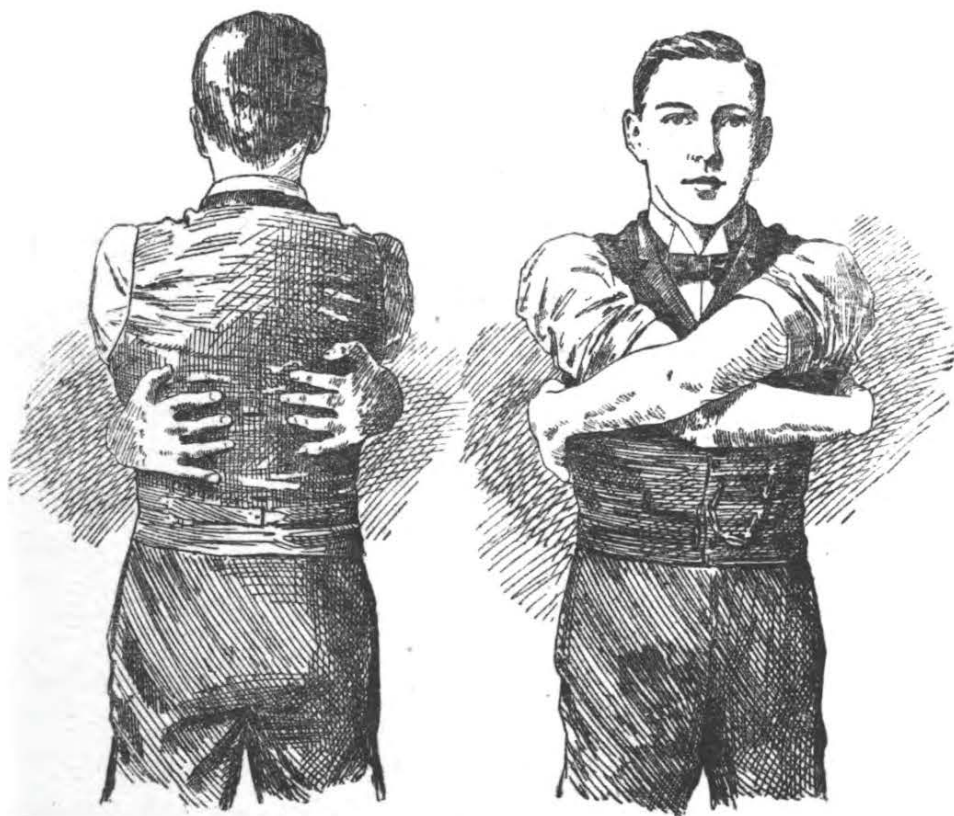


FIG. 16. WRESTLING.

head disengages itself as in real combat. After a grip round waist, the body is lifted. The performer must use imagination, must believe his hands represent one wrestler and his body the other, and he must practise with a friend as audience, each trying in

turn. That the illusion provokes roars of laughter, experience has proved; but let it be understood, once for all, that these illusions can only be fully understood by actual experiment.

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## THE PERFORMING FLEAS.

### Preliminary Remarks.

IN giving this skit you have a number of pieces of square cardboard on which you put a few dots or pellets to represent the fleas, in which case you tilt the cards so that the audience can see nothing, and are obliged to accept your description of what you are looking at for the entomological entertainment they should witness.

If preferred you can make some large fleas, and carry your entertainment through by showing things as large as bats.

Any make-up can be used, or the sketch can be given *in propria personâ*.

### The Performance.

The subject of my lecture is Fleas, and I shall have the honour to introduce to your notice one or two highly intelligent specimens. I find my most apt pupils in schoolrooms, or any place where crowds



assemble for educational purposes. On this card you will perceive some ten or a dozen students. These I obtained from the orchestra of an east-end music-hall (*shows card*), which I have by dint of enormous patience and assiduity taught a variety of musical instruments; they will now perform the Intermezzo from the opera of "Cavalleria Rusticana," and I must ask for absolute silence, as it is such a strain on the insects' lungs to play while conversation or other fashionable accompaniment is in progress. (*Pause.*) The Intermezzo is finished. The fleas cannot get up and bow, as they are fastened to their seats, but they would have appreciated your applause none the less had you given them any. Having offered you an opportunity of seeing for yourselves to what extent the flea can be trained *musically*, I shall next show you how he can learn a trade. People imagine that fleas can only jump, but they can do other things, as possibly many of you are aware of. On this card you have a miniature representation of a barber's shop (*takes up another card*); the flea with the bald head is endeavouring to sell his customer a bottle of Hair Restorer, while this flea in the white apron is skilfully stropping a razor previous to removing a two-day old beard from the customer's chin. Now you perceive the smaller flea with the soap adroitly applies the soapsuds, as the customer flea is about to decline the bottle of Hair Restorer, and con-



verts what would have been a refusal of the article into an acceptance. Now he shaves him, wiping the suds off the razor on the lappels of the customer's coat. The operation is now finished, and the customer flea looks at himself in the glass, declines to have his corns cut or his teeth attended to, and walks out without purchasing the Hair Restorer.

On this card (*takes up another*) I have a small model of an india-rubber tyred hansom cab. The flea in the shafts, owing to the smallness of the girths, has died from the effects of tight-lacing, and gone to the land where lecturers cease from troubling and exhibitions of this kind are at rest.

The driver of the cab is still alive, but, unhappily, the constant contemplation of his defunct brother in the shafts has depressed his spirits and given his thoughts a tendency to sadness. Fortunately, the decease of the equine flea in the shafts need not interfere with your enjoyment, as, by slightly tilting the card so, the vehicle is propelled backwards and forwards with even more velocity than is attained by a flea in the prime of manhood.

A flea will not work when it is hungry, whereas men won't work till they are hungry, an interesting dissimilarity between insect and human life.

It might interest you to know how we train the fleas This (*takes up another*) card is the training-room for

advanced students. You will observe that all the fleas that are to pursue a musical career are tied by the left leg, while those who intend to learn a trade are tied by the right. There is no reason why this should be so, but we do it so, and that is the reason you find the legs tied as we have tied them.

After being tied by the leg for a few years the flea becomes comparatively docile and capable of higher things, and then its education begins in earnest. Some trainers, during the flea's novitiate, feed it upon fried fish and potatoes, others on potatoes and fried fish, and at intervals it has Bass or Allsopp's or Kops' Pale Ale, or, if it prefers the cash instead, it gets neither, as cash is of no use to a flea whose leg is attached to the cardboard with a piece of thread.

Some fleas become bald much sooner than others, while some keep their hair and lose their tempers.

If a flea gets the rheumatism in one leg it always jumps round a corner; if it uses the other while the leg with the rheumatism is very painful, it hurts just as it does in human beings, only more so in proportion to its smallness.

After ten years' exhibition work fleas get dissatisfied with life, and lose that great interest in the show business that characterises their youth. At this period some take to drink, others go in for religion, while not a few commit suicide.

A flea will live under water for about a year and a half, so that anyone who desires to destroy them in this way by holding them head under water in a basin requires a good deal of patience. The better plan is to lead the insect out into the streets where they are mending the roads and place it on the road between the man with the red flag and the steam-roller, which will so disable it that it is almost certain to die in consequence. No flea has ever been known to attack a man carrying a red flag, so that it need not be muzzled before being let loose on the road.

I have here a histrionic flea, which will recite to you "Curfew shall not toll to-night" and oblige with a few imitations of music-hall artists, and also an imitation of a Scotch bricklayer eating a plate of stewed eels. (*Short pause.*) These imitations will conclude my exhibition, and while this flea whistles "God save the Queen" a collection plate will be passed round towards defraying the expenses of erecting a new wing to the Home for Lost Fleas.

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## WAXWORKS.

### Preliminary Remarks.

IN describing the waxworks, point off and imagine that the groups you describe are really there. In this, as in the preceding skits, a comic make-up assists.

### The Performance.

Ladies and gentlemen, I intended to-night to have had the distinguished honour of showing you my superb collection of Wax Figures, but the Room where I kept my works unfortunately caught fire, and the Figures, instead of doing what we would have done under the circumstances—that is, save ourselves by getting out of the burning building—remained, and not only made no effort to put out the flames, but quietly melted, and instead of running away ran over the floor and stimulated the flames in their devastation until not a particle was left of either building or waxworks.

A catastrophe of this kind is not propitious to a proper presentation of the Figures, and the few charred remains I have in this parcel offer no adequate substitute for the waxen prototypes of the numerous notorious and illustrious people my collection contained. Having described them so often, I can do so without having anything to describe, and I will ask you to accept my description in lieu of the Figures which have met with such a terrible end—an end which, I am sure, will melt your hearts as it did theirs.

In addition to the collection of waxworks we had a lion-faced lady, Madame Jones ; she was in the habit of sleeping in Mahomet's coffin, and in this substitute for a hammock was discovered by the firemen and saved, but, unfortunately, not before the flames singed

all the hair off her face, and now that hirsuteness which was her peculiar characteristic is gone, for the lady once lion-faced is now bare-faced, and has gone to Margate to grow a new crop of hair, where she will remain until able to resume her professional career.

This lady was a native of Sierra Leone, in South Africa. Her sad history tells how her father, being an English soldier, was travelling in that part of the country with her mother, who always accompanied him wherever the call of duty carried him. While in Sierra Leone her father and mother were going for a stroll in the jungle when a fierce lion, mistaking her husband in his red coat for a boiled lobster, immediately swallowed him, and then ran away with all his might and mane and the disconsolate widow's husband. Her mother shortly after died, and the lion-faced and lion-hearted lady I now present to you was left to face the stern world alone.

Some twenty-five years afterwards the mother, from this circumstance, died of grief, having, however, exhibited the child from its earliest infancy and amassed a large fortune through her connection with the show business. This lady is one of the greatest freaks ever living, unfortunately at present the freak is living at Margate, which circumstance, like the conflagration which destroyed my collection of Figures, prevents my showing her to you now.

The first group you would have seen but for the fire is the Judgment of Solomon. The man (*pointing off*) wearing a Life-guardsman's breast-plate, a fireman's helmet, and a short petticoat is one of Mr. Solomon's militia. He is called a centurion because he is commander over a hundred men—the men are not modelled but painted on the canvas behind. In one hand he holds aloft a large doll, in the other one of those harmless kind of Turkish scimetars or swords made in Germany. Two women, cast in the same mould, stand looking on, while Solomon appears to have gone to sleep in his arm-chair. I have tried very often to understand what it all meant, but I never succeeded in doing so.

The group on the right is "Cetewayo and his Wives"—a few head of oxen will purchase a wife in Zululand, and the king is accredited with having several hundreds, with which number you will please also accredit him. In England we find one wife enough, oftentimes too much; so we only give him one on account of English prejudice and the prohibitive price of wax.

The next group is "Mary Queen of Scots." This unfortunate princess was a French woman, the daughter of James V. King of Scotland and Marie of Lorraine, and was born in 1542, so that had she lived to the present day she would have been more than 300

years old, but having died at Fotheringay Castle in 1587, she only lived to be a little over forty. She was married to Henry VIII., whose eyes she put out in the Tower, where he was found by Oliver Cromwell and imprisoned in the Island of St. Helena. For this act of unprecedented cruelty Mary Queen of Scots was beheaded, and these, ladies and gentlemen, are what we call the good old times.

The next group is "Daniel in the Lions' Den," but owing to the ravages by moths it is difficult to determine which is the Lion and which is Daniel; but we have always regarded the animal with check trousers and stove-pipe hat to be Daniel, while the animal with the ragged beard and no clothing we assume to be the Lion. The moral to be deduced from this group is, always be kind to animals.

"Columbus discovering America" is the next group. He is about to land on the shore, not observing that the spot he has chosen is the ladies' bathing-ground. The ladies, though pleased to see him, don't care to be discovered bathing, and so modestly retire to their machines and peep at him through the ventilators. On the shore at the left is the Mayor of Long Branch, and a few members of the Town Council are waiting for him with an address of welcome. This wonderful group throws more light upon this historical event than any history that has ever been published.



The last group is "Sir Isaac Newton discovering that an over-ripe apple will fall to the ground." The great scientist is lying on his back on the grass neath the shady leafage of a codlin tree; the apple has fallen and struck him in the eye and smashed all over his face. It is from this simple accident that perpetual motion was discovered and Child's night-lights brought into use to keep babies' food warm at nights. The musical box, had it not been destroyed, would have now played the National Anthem and concluded this remarkable Exhibition of Waxworks, in which I am sure you have seen nothing that would bring a blush to the cheek of the oldest naval officer present.

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## PANORAMA SKIT.

### Preliminary Remarks.

IN this skit the pictures are copied on cartridge paper gummed and pasted together, and passed along as required. An oblong opening is made in a piece of baize or other material, which, stretched across the room, forms the proscenium and masks the assistants.

To what extent the panorama is perfected the reader must please himself. The scenes in my own are painted with distemper on canvas and worked by handles and rollers like a real panorama, but a simpler



form is more suitable for private entertainments, and perhaps offers more possibilities of fun. Piano plays "Yankee Doodle," and the Lecturer, who looks and speaks like the Yankee, steps forward, and uses a long rod with which to point out the different objects.

### The Performance.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have great pleasure in introducing to you my new panorama, "The Hudson

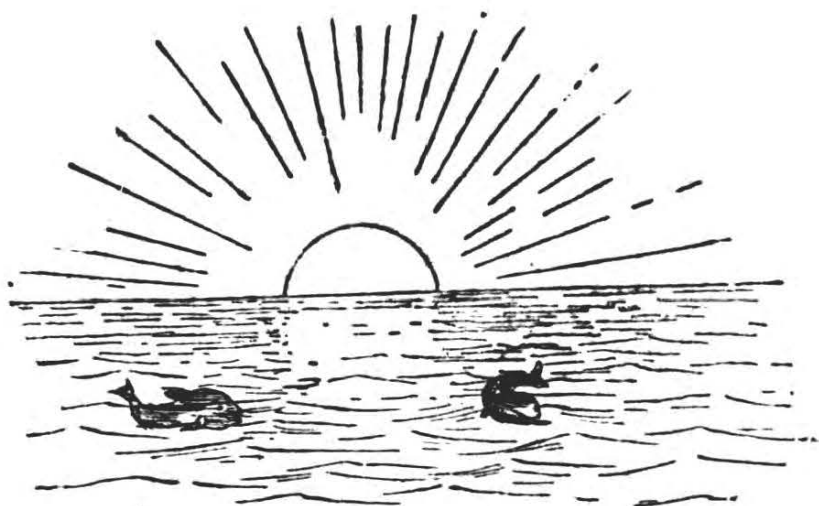


FIG. 17. ON THE HUDSON.

River ; or, the Rhine of America." You will see on looking at the first picture closely that it is divided into two parts. (*Show Fig. 17.*)

The upper part (*pointing*), which is above ; the lower part, which is underneath. You will also notice that the lower part consists entirely of water—except

the fish—and that the water is of a brownish nature or hue. This is not the colour of the Hudson River, but this colour is this colour because this canvas was originally painted for another panorama—we have several—entitled “The Thames from Southend to the Source,” and a little of the sauce appears to have got mixed up with the water and made it this colour, which I frankly confess to you is not the colour of the Hudson River. Here (*indicate*) you perceive, at a great expenditure of yellow paint, a sunrise or sunset taking place. It can’t be either, so it might be both; but it is neither, as this is the north, where sunrises and sunsets are impracticable; but we have been obliged to introduce it, for where that sun is now sun-rising or sunsetting, London Bridge formerly spanned the River, and our artist has been obliged to introduce the sunrise or sunset in order to obliterate all traces of London Bridge.

The magnificent steamer “The Albany”\* will now step forward—I don’t mean that, I was thinking of another panorama where I introduce the bounding steed of the prairie. I should have said, “The Albany will sail majestically across that vast expanse of water.” (*Piano plays “Life on the ocean wave;” Lecturer assumes a satisfied air, after a time looks at panorama, and seeing no boat appear, he repeats cue.*)

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\* Pronounced “Awlbany.”

"The Albany" will now sail majestically across that "vast expanse of water." (*Piano plays ; seeing no boat, speaks to pianist.*) Wait a moment, please. (*Music ceases, and Lecturer speaks to back of panorama, imitating the voice of a boy in answer or allowing someone behind to reply, when the following dialogue or duologue takes place*):—

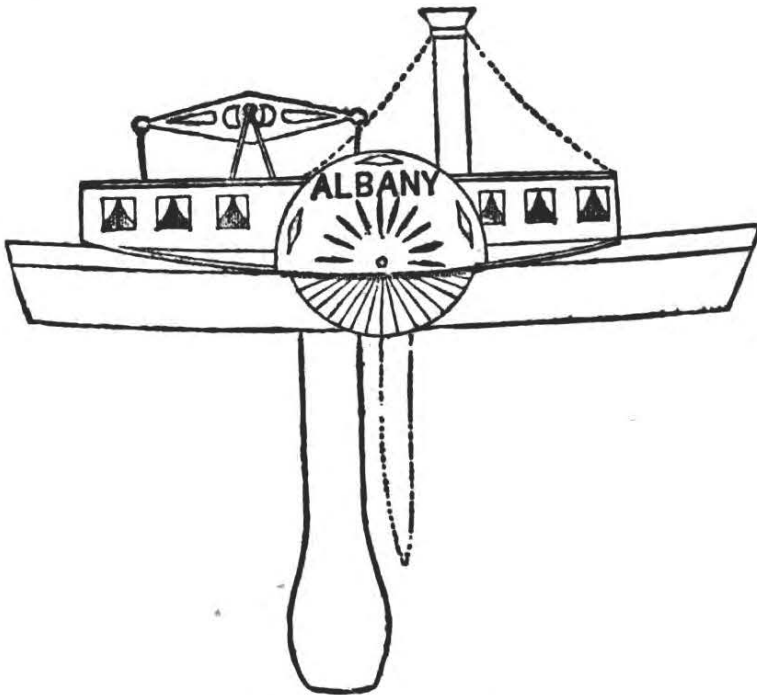


FIG. 18. THE ALBANY.

*Lect.* Didn't you hear me say "vast expanse of water?" Why don't you send the boat across?

*Boy's Voice.* If yer please, Bill's gone out to get 'arf a pint for hisself.

*Lect.* Can't you do it?

*Boy.* The cog-wheels is so stiff, sir.

*Lect.* Rub them with that tallow candle; don't spoil the whole show for a bit of candle. (*To audience.*) Ladies and gentlemen, "The Albany" will now sail majestically across that vast expanse of water. (*Piano plays; Lecturer assumes position looking at audience, and boat (Fig. 18), in a very jerky fashion, is pushed across from left to right, where it stops. Lecturer sees it, and immediately stops music and speaks in an apologetic manner to the audience*):

Ladies and gentlemen, I must apologise to you for the way in which that vessel sailed across that vast expanse of water, but my assistant was formerly with me in another panorama—we have several—entitled "Palestine; or, the East," in which it was his particular province to work a flight of locusts across the desert, ever since which time he has, by mere force of habit, imparted to every duty he undertakes that jerky motion you saw there, which, though characteristic of grasshoppers, is not peculiar to the movements of the Hudson River steamers. The vessel shall pass backwards across the picture, and if you will kindly imagine that the vessel you see going backwards is going forwards you will have a correct notion of the direction in which the vessel ought to be travelling. (*Aside, to back of panorama*) Send the boat back, and if you can't stop them jerks and suggest the undulating effect of

waves I'll come behind and make things so hot you'll think you are working "India." (*To audience*) Ladies and gentlemen, the vessel will now pass backwards across the picture. (*Music plays and "The Albany" returns abruptly to the centre, where it remains when music ceases.*) I now draw your attention to one of those effects in which a panorama eclipses in sublimity nature herself, and that is, that when the vessel arrives in the centre of the picture—which it has done after some considerable difficulty—it remains stationary, the wheels go round, (*louder*) the wheels go round, (*aside, to back*) why don't you turn the wheels? (*Wheels go round.*) No, the other way (*wheels reverse*); smoke, or rather cotton wool, is seen protruding from the smoke stack, and the effect of progress is simulated by the scenery passing from the left to right to the melodious strains of appropriate music. (*Piano plays "The power of love," whereupon Lecturer turns to pianist.*) Didn't I say appropriate music; what has "The power of love" got to do with going up the river? Try the power of steam. (*Pianist plays "The heart bowed down," or any unsuitable piece.*) Now, my boy (*spoken to back*), push the pictures across. (*To audience*) Ladies and gentlemen, we have now a long vista of chalk cliffs, called "The Pallisades," said very much to resemble the cliffs of Margate; in fact, the resemblance is so great that it is difficult to decide whether they are not rather more like

the cliffs of Margate than the cliffs of Margate are like them. They have one great advantage, which is, that they recall both to Englishmen and Americans their native land. (*Music "Home, sweet home."*)

Before we leave this masterpiece of pictorial art, I should like to draw your attention to the various patent medicine advertisements that glorify the face of nature and contribute to the happiness of mankind.

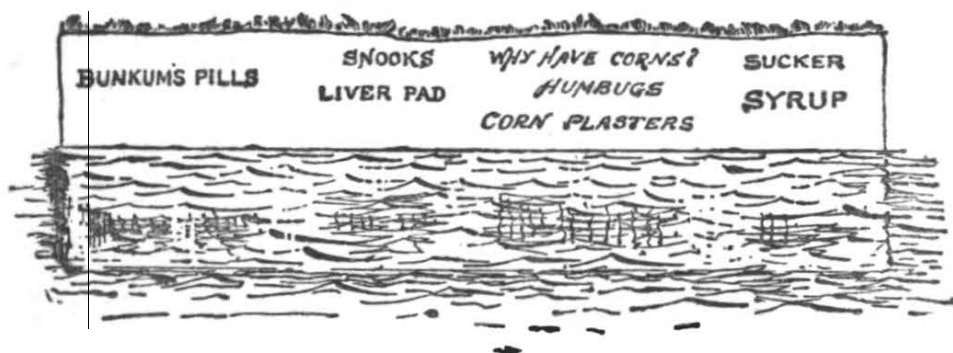


FIG. 19. THE PALISADES.

We now pass on. (*Music plays, and picture of West Point (Fig. 20) is substituted.*)

Ladies and gentlemen, we have now arrived at West Point, the military college of the United States, where young gentlemen are being educated as officers for the American army. You see here (*indicate with wand*) various mountains coming up from the river, on this side you see various mountains going down into the river. Here you may observe reflections coming up out of the river, here they descend into the river. The

college on the mountain (*pointing*), here the reflection of the college in the river. Real paths winding down the mountain, real reflections of the paths winding up the mountain. Gooseberry bush on the mountain with no gooseberries on it, reflected gooseberry bush full of gooseberries—as the fruit grows on the under side, this shows the acuteness of our artist's observation. Cat wandering down the mountain, cat wandering up the reflection. Everything you see is reflected in the water, which makes this the cheapest canvas we have, because directly I wear out the mountains pointing at them, I turn the picture upside down and use the reflections for the mountains and the mountains for the reflections. (*Lecturer is still describing West Point.*)

You will perceive various couples walking down these paths, each couple consisting of two persons; these persons are young gentlemen who are being educated as officers for the American army. You will perceive two noses flattened against this window-pane; those noses belong to the faces of young gentlemen who are being educated as officers for the American army.

Here on this bluff or promontory you will perceive a couple, also consisting of two persons; one is a young gentleman who is being educated as an officer for the American army, and the other, I blush to say, is not—the other is a lady of the opposite sex, and she has

suggested their sitting there in order to escape observation, but our artist has been one too many for them, and they are both here immortalised.

I will now introduce you to the moon—the American

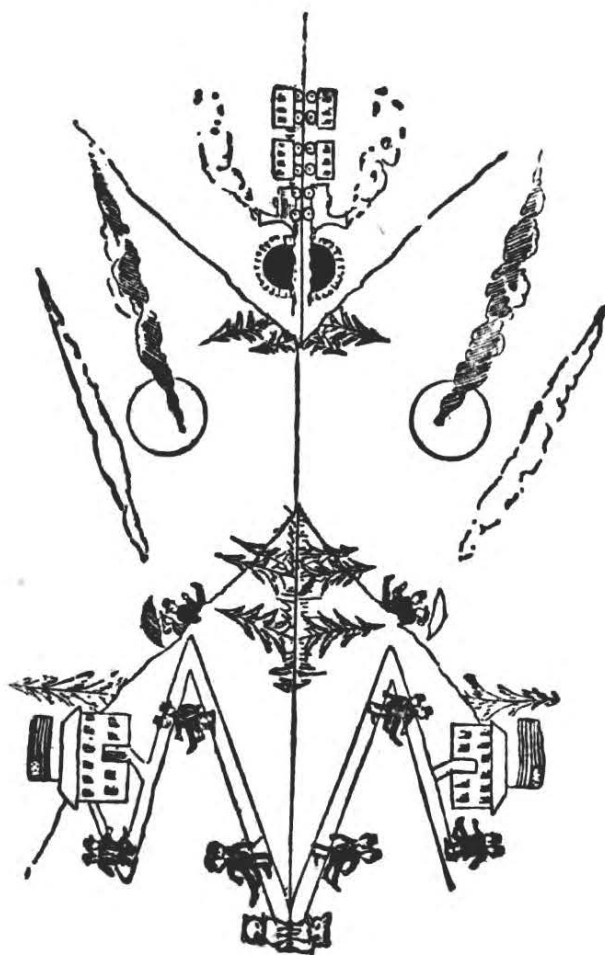


FIG. 20. WEST POINT.

moon—not the worn-out, emaciated luminary you have to put up with in this inclement island. The moon, ladies and gentlemen, will now shine forth with all its divine effulgence. (*Music* “*Bright shines the*



*moon to-night."* Looks round and sees that the moon is not alight.) The moon will now shine forth with all its divine effulgence. (*To boy at back*) Don't you know the meaning of divine effulgence? Light up.

*Boy's voice.* Please, sir, I used the candle on the cog-wheels.

*Lect.* Well, take that piece of soap—that hasn't been used—stick the wick in the soap and light up the soap—don't spoil the show for a piece of soap. (*To audience*) Ladies and gentlemen, the moon will now shine forth with all its divine effulgence. (*Music. Looking round*) No, my boy, that's the reflection (*cease music*); get on a chair.

Ladies and gentlemen, there is a little something the matter with the electro hydrohumbuggo light, so I cannot show you the moon and the reflection at the same time, but I will first show you the moon shining forth with all its divine effulgence. (*To back*) Don't waggle the soap about or you'll set the moon on fire. (*To audience*) These dark objects passing across the moon are clouds (*pointing*); that hole, that's an accident. Now if you will kindly imagine that the moon is still shining, I will show you the reflection; (*to back*) get off the chair; (*light is shown at reflection*) there is the—(*light goes out.*). Ladies and gentlemen, the electricity has given out, so we will proceed, with that rapidity for which a panorama is celebrated, at once to

Charing Cross Railway Station\* (*change picture suddenly to Railway Station, Fig. 21*), and having brought you so far I trust you will all be able to find your own way

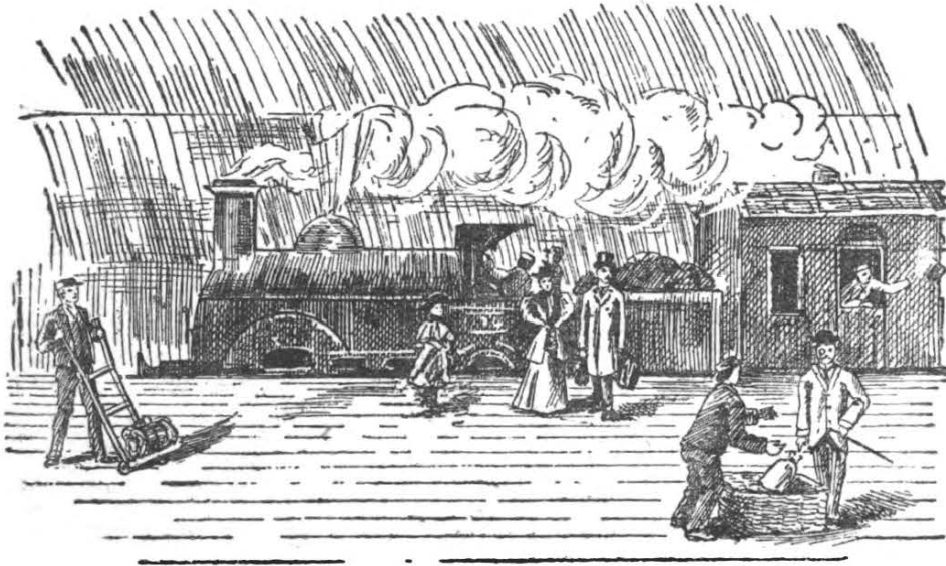


FIG. 21. THE TERMINUS.

home again without any further assistance from me.  
(*Piano plays "God save the King" as Lecturer goes off.*)

## PHRENOLOGY.

### Preliminary Remarks.

ANY skull, phrenological head, or phrenological charts, such as are seen in a phrenologist's window, can be placed about, and a travestic scientific get-up

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\* Or the Local Railway Station, in which characters known can be drawn on platform and pointed out.

adopted. The accomplice should be a funny make-up and in amusing contrast. He wears a bald wig, and on it a dress wig.

The Lecturer must adopt a preachy, enthusiastic style.

### **The Performance.**

Oh, my friends, have you sons? Oh, my friends, have you daughters? Oh, my friends, have you any children at all, or do you keep poultry? If you have children, lose no time in having their heads felt. Do not be content with having their hats felt; for a felt hat, my friends, is not the same thing as a felt head.

The one is the product of the mad hatter, the other is the glorious science of phrenology, of which your humble servant, Professor Knobtickler, A.S.S., M.U.G., is a humble disciple.

You do not know what is in a child's head, and there may be wonderful things in a child's head which are only revealed by the researches of the phrenologist. It is he who discovers the bumps of genius, and then, oh, my friends, how easy it is for you, when these are pointed out to you, to lead the child in the direction of its bumps, rather than allow it to stumble in its career and create bumps for itself—bumps with which the science of phrenology has nothing in common.

Let the child follow its bump, which is as easy for it as following its nose, and where will the bumps

lead it? They will lead it to fame and fortune, to the possession of house property, white hairs, a troop of friends, and an expensive tombstone.

But where is the child who has not had its head felt? Nowhere—I mean everywhere—groping about in mental darkness, drowning in a sea of ignorance, lying perished and dying of thirst in the desert of despair, and with what result? This, my friends, that the child cradles its grey hairs in the union—that union which is not strength, but weakness, and takes its final repasts at the expense of the parish.

Pause and think on this dreadful picture, all consequent upon the child not having a felt hat—not having had the felt hat, I mean the head felt, and the knowledge secured which would have enabled it to end its career in affluence.

Does anyone here hesitate between affluence and the workhouse? If not, step this way, ye wise ones, and have your bumps felt. Will any lady or gentleman, man, woman, or child step forward and be examined? Is there no one in this vast audience cares twopence about their future? Is there no one prefers affluence to penury, no single soul present who yearns for silk neckties, white vests, and an elaborate tombstone? (*Confederate steps forward; is very near-sighted, cannot find his way.*) This way, sir—no, that's the exit in case of fire—this way, my lord—this way.

*Conf.* (*Goes on stage, shakes hands with the Professor, sits down.*) Just take off the ends.

*Prof.* (*Smiling.*) I am not going to cut your hair, sir.

*Conf.* I beg your pardon. (*Gets up to go.*)

*Prof.* Stay where you are, sir (*reseats him and feels his head, standing behind him*).

*Conf.* It does tickle, if that's anything!

*Prof.* I must ask you not to speak. (*Feels head.*)

*Conf.* There was a girl I knew used to do that.

*Prof.* I must ask you, sir, not to say these things.

*Conf.* But they are true. She was always doing it.

*Prof.* There are some wonderful things in this gentleman's head (*feels*). Are you a married man, sir?

*Conf.* Yes, to the girl that did what you are doing; she's rougher now—tears it out.

*Prof.* I thought you were married. This bump appears to have been made with the poker—am I correct?

*Conf.* Quite right, the kitchen poker.

*Prof.* Here is another, is that the poker?

*Conf.* No, that's when she threw the paraffin lamp at me; don't pinch it, it was only made last week and it's rather tender.

*Prof.* Alas, poor Yorick! These bumps are called paraffin and poker bumps and show what is called

uncongeniality of temper. From the formation of your skull at the top, sir, you are a man that would commit a horrible murder on the slightest provocation.

*Conf.* Well, she makes me feel like it sometimes, Professor.

*Prof.* You would poison all your little children, the dog, the cat, and the canary.

*Conf.* Am I really as bad as that?

*Prof.* (*Feeling head.*) You would at times, when you let your angry passions rise, whack into the woman you have sworn to love, honour, and obey.

*Conf.* I would if it wasn't for the poker.

*Prof.* Once accustomed to take life, the desire would never become satiated, but, as Shakespeare says, "grow on what it feeds on."

*Conf.* How did he know I was so bad?

*Prof.* (*Feeling head.*) The world would ring with your fiendish outrages!

*Conf.* Would it? Well, you surprise me!

*Prof.* Yes, sir; it is the light of phrenology that reveals the innermost cavities of the human brain. The most secret springs of the working of the heart are like an open book. The hypocrite stands unmasked, the charlatan is exposed, the villain is proclaimed in his villainy, and no subterfuge availeth, for the mask is torn from his face! (*Taking wig in hand, with a flourish he removes it, and discloses a bald head.*)

*Conf.* Here, what are you doing? (*Starts up.*)

*Prof.* I beg your pardon (*throws wig on one side and proceeds to examine head, pushing him down into seat.*). I now perceive your head is full of benevolence and veneration.

*Conf.* Quite right, Professor.

*Prof.* (*Feeling.*) You are not married?

*Conf.* No—divorced yesterday.

*Prof.* And have no bumps made by the kitchen poker (*feeling bald head*)?

*Conf.* Not lately.

*Prof.* You are hot-headed.

*Conf.* No, Professor, head's rather cold just now.

*Prof.* (*Feeling.*) You have very little sense.

*Conf.* No, or I shouldn't be here.

*Prof.* No children.

*Conf.* No, only a canary, and that's my mother's.

*Prof.* I have been misled by the stuffing of your wig. You (*feeling*) wouldn't hurt anybody.

*Conf.* Couldn't kill a cockroach to save my life.

*Prof.* I thought so—you can go now.

*Conf.* Not afore I gets my chignon.

*Prof.* Here you are.

(*Confederate puts it on wrong way round and goes off.*)

*Prof.* Will any one else have their bumps tried? No? Then I reluctantly bring my lecture to a close.

## THE FUNNYGRAPH.

### Preliminary Remarks.

THE skit, which the author has given as a ventriloquial sketch since the phonograph was first introduced into England, can be presented with the assistance of a confederate concealed and using a speaking-trumpet, when he can give imitations of anything he likes, or the subject matter of the following skit can be adhered to, and worked ventriloquially if the lecturer can ventriloquise; \*or done by confederacy, which is, perhaps, more consistent with Bunkum Entertainments. A burlesque phonograph can be made with a cigar-box, egg-cup, white reel of cotton, tin funnel, and, as shown in drawing, the funnel fits into a speaking-tube, as will be understood by accompanying illustration. (*Lecturer assumes Yankee accent.*)

### The Performance.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have much pleasure in introducing to your notice the very latest phonograph. I have just brought it over from the States, and will set it before you (*arranges it*). There are some parts

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\* See "Practical Ventriloquism," published by Upcott Gill.



of this apparatus that have been misunderstood (*takes up a couple of "baby soothers"*), these are the parts.

I used to invite gentlemen up on to the platform,

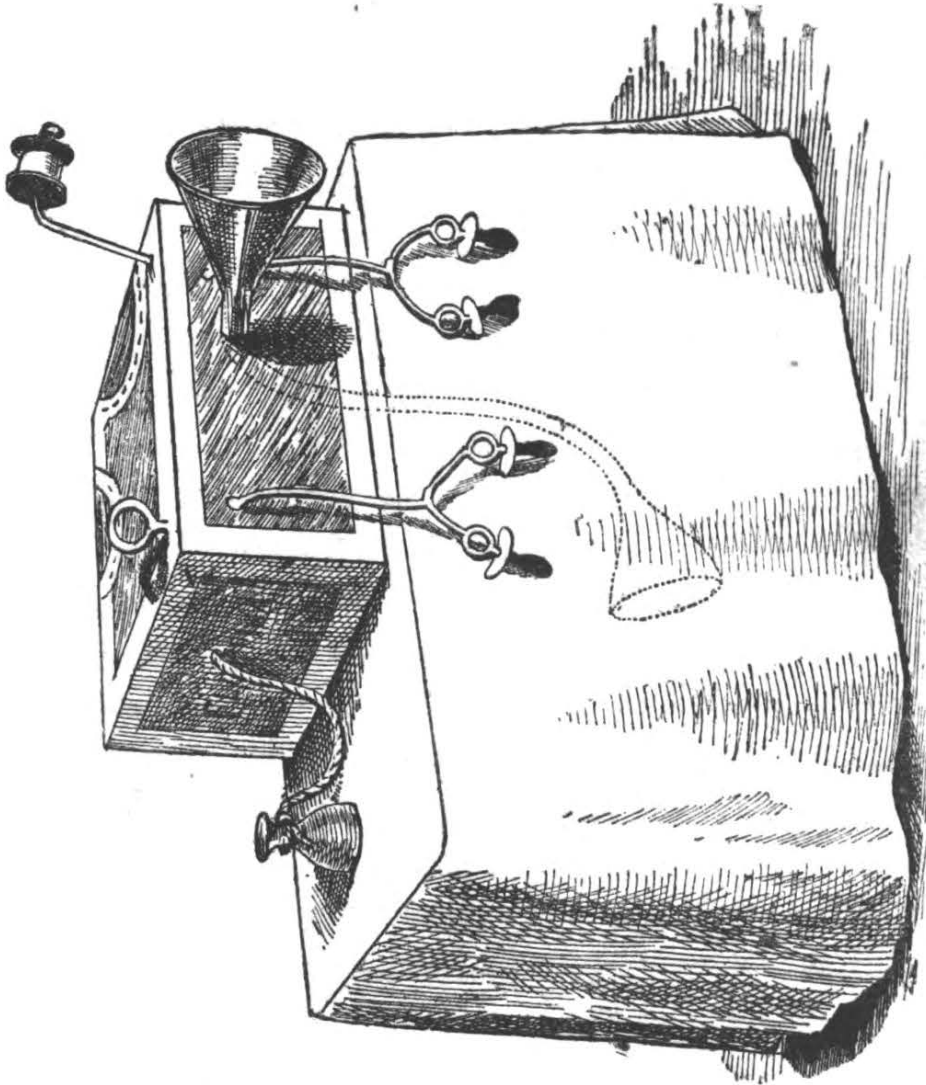


FIG. 22. THE FUNNYGRAPH.

so that they might inspect everything as we went along, until one night an old gentleman got hold of these and began sucking away at them, under the

impression that this was a sort of feeding bottle placed here to refresh anyone who came on the stage to assist, whereas, anyone who has seen a phonograph knows that these are intended for the ears.

You place one of these in each ear—if you happen to have two; of course, if you have only *one*, you place either of them in whichever ear you happen to have, but if you have *two*, you place one in each. You ram them through until they meet in the middle of the head, so, and then you hold your breath and listen—you keep on listening, and if you don't hear anything, well, your case is hopeless!

You see that I only have accommodation here for two heads with two ears each, or four heads with only one ear each; and therefore, as most of you this evening appear to have two ears each, I cannot show it you in that way, but I have recourse to this gold trumpet (*shows tin funnel*), which allows the sound to be permeated all over this vast building. This is the gold trumpet—the reason that it looks like it does is that I don't want to appear ostentatious; I have had this electro-plated to resemble silver, and it looks like tin, but otherwise it is all right (*places it in hole A*). I will just put it in there, and it will stop there if it does not happen to fall out.

This is different (*takes up egg-cup*). This is when you make the sound, like a pair of boots, while you

wait. The sound, as you speak into this receiver, strikes the tympanum there, passes round there, down this tube (*indicate cord*), goes into here, on to this new-laid wax (*cotton reel*). I know it's new laid, because I saw the bees lay it last night, and then it goes from here to there (*indicates reel and funnel*), from this to that (*indicate*), from—well, we don't want to get into an argument about it—it goes from *there* to *there*, and that's all I have to say about it. I explain this apparatus because I like you to understand it before we begin. I don't quite understand it myself, even when we have finished, but as I don't pay to hear the lecture that doesn't matter.

The reproductions of the human voice and other noises, which I shall now introduce to you, are called "Records"—they are called "Records" because the sound is recorded by indentations made in the wax, when, on electricity being passed through those indentations, the air is reverberated in the same way, and that's why they are called "Records."

The first English "Record" will be a Scotch one, a Scotch gentleman playing a Scotch bagpipes on a Scotch mountain twenty Scotch miles off. If you think you would like to hear that I will get the apparatus in order. The Scotch bagpipes twenty miles off. (*Pause.*) Did you hear anything? No, I guess not, well, that shows you *the accuracy of the apparatus.*

We now proceed to Record No. 2. Record No. 2 is a rooster. Perhaps I may as well, in addressing an English audience, explain that a rooster is a male hen. The rooster you are about to hear was called Robinson, and as people do not know why, I may mention that it was because Robinson Crusoe. This, then, is a record of Robinson when he *crew* so. (*Phonograph crows.*) That is Robinson. Now, while I was taking this Record of Robinson a flock of rooks passed across, a dog barked at the rooks, he had cause, a man reproved the dog for barking at the rooks, he had cause, and the rooks had caws, of caws, and this is the *effect* of the *cause*. (*Phonograph caws. Phonograph imitates in succession rooks cawing, dog barking, man saying "Lie down, will you lie down!"*) And that is the *cause* of the *effect*.

You may think that this is all done by an automaton, but I can assure you that there is nothing of an automatic character about this; you can see for yourselves that this is a real funnygraph and not an automaton.

I shall now make a Record, and let you hear for yourselves how faithfully the apparatus repeats any sound submitted to it. To select a familiar illustration, I shall imitate two English swells asking each other the way about London. You might notice how well I imitate the English swell. Of course, I don't want to offend anyone present, you quite understand this is

*science*, it is not *impertinence*—there's not much difference, but it *is science* really. (*Speaking with American accent into egg-cup*) "Well, Guss, are you going up Pall Mall or are you going up Piccadilly? Yah! Yah! Yah! (*Pause and phonograph repeats.*) A little imitation of laughing and crying may perhaps amuse you more. (*Into egg-cup*) Can you—(*to audience*) of course it can't—I'm only asking it that to make a kind of conversation of it and get you interested. (*Into cup*) Can you laugh, Mr. Funnygraph? Ha! ha! ha! Can you cry, Mr. Funnygraph? Oh! oh! oh! (*Phonograph repeats.*) The last "Record" will not be a record at all. I'm going to sing; you needn't get up and go out, I sha'n't sing very much. I shall just sing a little song, written and composed by an American, called "The Last Rose of Summer;" it is a very nice song when you hear it, as you doubtless do to-night, for the first time. (*Sings into cup*) "'Tis the—(*to audience*) I'm sorry I haven't a better voice, but you quite understand that this is not a concert that is going on now, it's a *scientific lecture*; you're learning something now, it's not like a lot of tomfoolery (*taking up egg-cup and singing into it*). "'Tis the—(*to audience*) of course, if I had a better voice I should use it. I am doing the best I possibly can with what Nature has provided me with, and I can't do more than that—if I had a voice like Santley or

Sims Reeves I shouldn't be playing the fool here, I should be at the Albert Hall. (*Mouth to egg-cup, and then to audience*) You understand this is a scientific voice, quite good enough for science. (*Sings.*) "'Tis the last rose of summer, left—"(phonograph concludes "*blooming alone.*"). You see, ladies and gentlemen, it not only *repeats* things, but *finishes a song, words and all, it never heard before*, and concludes my lecture on the Funnygraph.

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## SECOND SIGHT.

### Preliminary Remarks.

FOR this skit adopt two absurd make-ups. If the medium be made up as a Woman the effect is characteristic and ludicrous. Where it is stated that an article is borrowed from the audience it is what is termed planted there first. It does not do to leave obtaining anything to chance.

### The Performance.

The most wonderful, astounding, bewildering, and delightful entertainment is Second Sight. I will first introduce my medium, and you will notice that, without a word being spoken, he will sit down in this chair, which I place in full view of the audience. (*Introduces*

*Confederate, who sits down.*) As I told you, without a word being spoken. I now proceed to bind his eyes with an ordinary pocket-handkerchief. (*Feels in pockets, then whispers to Confederate, who feels in his pockets unsuccessfully.*) Will any lady or gentlemen lend me a pocket-handkerchief? I make this request as, should I use one of my own or one of my friend's it would or might—(*Confederate in audience offers handkerchief.*) Thank you, you are quite sure you don't want it for a few minutes? Thank you. (*takes handkerchief from audience.*) Now I bind this gentleman's eyes (*puts it across mouth while standing behind him*); it is impossible for him to see anything that is going on. (*Looks at him*) I beg your pardon—there (*places band on eyes.*) Now, without a word being spoken, this figure of Justice will not only tell you the name of any article I touch, but describe its colour and peculiarities.

What is this? (*touching his head.*)

A head.

Right. Whose head is it?

Mine.

Right again. What colour is it?

(*Answer red, black, as may be.*)

Quite right; you see, ladies and gentlemen, without a word being spoken. Now will any member of the audience lend me a penny? Thank you. Now, Justice, what have I in my hand?

A coin.

Right. Its denomination ?

A penny.

Perfectly correct. The colour ?

Brown.

No.

Bronze ?

Quite correct. Its value ?

Four farthings.

Perfectly accurate. (*Aside to audience*) I see the year is eighteen hundred and ninety-two. What is the date of the coin ?

One thousand eight hundred and ninety-two.

Quite correct. To whom does this coin belong ?

To you.

Wrong.

No, I'm not.

How do you make that out, sir ? I have borrowed it from a gentlemen in the audience.

Well, then, its yours.

How so ?

Because you never return money when you borrow it.

(*Putting coin in pocket.*) Be careful, sir. What substance is this ? (*Strikes note on piano.*)

Ivory.

Quite correct. Its name ?



It is a note on the piano.

Perfectly accurate. What note?

A flat.

Quite correct. Now I will give the medium a more difficult task. I have tested his powers in asking him to tell you what that note was, and he has come out of the ideal with flying colours. He shall tell you the name of a whole tune. (*Play "God save the King" or have it played.*) What tune is that?

"Ta-ra-ra boom-de-ay."

(*Pause.*)

"The man who broke the bank at Monte Carlo."

(*Pause.*)

"The last rose of summer."

(*Pause.*)

"Tommy make room for your uncle."

(*Pause.*)

"Maid of Athens."

(*Pause.*)

Made in Germany.

(*Pause.*)

Made in Germany.

Wrong.

Right.

Wrong.

Right, "God save the King" was made in Germany.

Ah! quite correct. "God save the *King*" is the German national anthem. I will try the medium with a few colours.

What is the colour of this blue cravat?

Mauve.

Wrong.

Blue.

Right. What is the colour of this orange?

Yellow.

Quite correct. Is this candle black?

No.

What colour is it?

White.

What colour is the wick?

Has it been lighted?

Yes.

Black.

Quite correct, and without a word being spoken. What is the colour of this gentleman's evening dress cloth coat?

Black.

This gentleman's nose?

Red.

Quite correct. What are gold sleeve-links made of?

Brass and copper.

Quite right. The colour?

Yellow.

The value ?

Elevenpence the pair, including a cardboard box and a piece of cotton wool to wrap them in.

How many hands has this gentleman got ?

Four.

How so ?

One on each arm and two on his watch.

Right. How many fingers on each hand ?

Four on each hand and one thumb.

Quite correct.

What colour is this "Daily Telegraph?" (*or other paper.*)

Black.

Yes.

White.

Yes.

And red.

No.

Yes; it's read all over by somebody.

Quite correct. (*To audience*) And without a word being spoken. You see I do not tell the medium when he is wrong—there is no prompting, not a word spoken, and the eyes and mouth are both shut; all three shut.

*Conf.* Are we going to do the cards ?

*Lect.* Ah! by the way, I had almost forgotten our great card trick; will any clergyman present oblige me with the loan of a pack of cards? (*A pack is handed*

*in by Confederate.)* Ah, thank you! (*Takes cards.*) I will use our own, because I know they are free from preparation. I will ask some lady or gentleman present to shuffle these cards (*gives cards to be shuffled*). To give you an adequate idea of the difficulty of performing this trick, I may mention that my assistant and I practise twenty-five or twenty-six hours a day, Sundays and Bank Holidays excepted; we never think of anything else from the time we rise in the afternoon until we retire to rest in the morning. Anything stronger than barley-water we dare not drink, and we cannot eat anything but starch without injuring the extraordinary powers we possess—we eat starch because we intend to stick to it. We must not wash ourselves too often, or the animal magnetism compaginated in the adipose tissue loses its communicative quality, and prejudices the success of our experiments. You have shuffled the cards? Thank you. Now I take a card, and without a word being spoken, I ask the medium what the card is.

*Conf. (Waving hands about.)* The card I picture is a cherry coloured card.

*Lect.* Quite correct, a black cherry, you mean?

*Conf.* Yes, a black cherry. I picture it to be the Ace of Spades.

*Lect. (Stamps foot.)*

*Conf.* No, it's the Knave of Clubs.

*Lect.* (*Stamps foot.*)

*Conf.* No, it's the Queen of Hearts.

*Lect.* Yes, you meant red cherry all the time, didn't you?

*Conf.* Yes.

*Lect.* Now, ladies and gentlemen, we must have perfect silence; if anyone wants to cough or sneeze I must ask them to wait till I have finished. (*Holds up cards in succession, but does not let audience see them.*)

*Conf.* King of Diamonds.

*Lect.* (*Places card face downward on table, and holds up another.*)

*Conf.* Two of Spades.

*Lect.* (*Holds up another.*)

*Conf.* King of Clubs.

*Lect.* (*Places card down, etc. This is continued as long as audience takes it.*) Will any lady lend me a tooth-brush? I merely wish to use it for a few moments, I will not injure it. Perhaps some lady or gentlemen will lend me a hair-pin? Never mind, a slate and a piece of chalk will do as well. I will now borrow a few five-pound notes (*pause*). Now, Mr. Medium, how many five-pound notes have I got?

*Conf.* None.

*Lect.* Quite right; we have done this trick several thousand times and he never failed in giving the correct answer. I thank you for your patronage. (*Leads medium*

*off.-)* Oh, I beg pardon, my friend was just escaping with some gentleman's handkerchief. (*Returns it and goes off.*)

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## THE LIGHTNING CALCULATOR.

### Preliminary Remarks.

THE confederate should wear dark Romeo wig and big moustache, cloak and sombrero hat, or any Spanish get-up. A blackboard, chalk, and easel are on stage. If the reader desire to conclude skit with the appearance of the figures on the board without touching it, Hamley's mystic slate should be used. The addition can then be made to appear on board without performer going near it, when the skit would be finished by confederate, instead of saying "Oh, find out," etc., would say, "Let them add themselves up."

*Lect.* Perhaps they will. (*To board*) Kindly add yourselves up. (*The figures of the addition appear and Lecturer and Confederate leave while being applauded.*)

### The Performance.

I have the honour, ladies and gentlemen, to introduce to you Señor Algarez de Portando de Velasquez de Tomatoe, the world-renowned lightning calculator. This Spanish nobleman has left a life of ease and indolence in his own country, where the raisins

and chestnuts grow, and the vines cluster. He has let his palace to a retired English brewer, and come over here to do sums in mental arithmetic for the benefit of his fellow creatures. His Serene Highness does not speak nor understand a word of English, so I shall be compelled to translate every word. (*To side*) You can come in now. (*Confederate enters with black cloak, long black hair, and big moustache, etc. He bows over and over again.*) The Spanish nobility, as you perceive by this specimen, are very polite. Sit down, Joey. (*Confederate sits.*)

I have here an ordinary blackboard and some ordinary chalk, and an ordinary duster. I don't appear to have a duster, so I will borrow His Serene Highness's handkerchief (*takes it out of his pocket*). There is no preparation about this board, and this is not prepared chalk. (*Confederate gets up and bows.*) You mustn't mind him, it's his politeness. Sit down. (*Confederate sits.*)

I shall commence by trying this noble Iberian with a sum in addition, in addition to others I shall submit to him later on. (*Confederate rises and bows.*) Please don't mind him, it's only his politeness. Sit down. (*Confederate sits.*) Now, may it please your Royal Highness : una and twoa, how mucha ?

*Conf.* Threea.

*Lect.* Quite correct. Threea is the Castilian for three.

*Conf.* (*Rises and bows.*)

*Lect.* I must ask you to applaud heartily or His Serene Highness gets quite disheartened and cannot possibly go through his performance. (*To Conf.*) Sit down. From the result I subtract one. How much?

*Conf.* (*Looks at board as Lecturer's back is turned.*) Threeta.

*Lect.* Absolutely correct, without looking at board, ladies and gentlemen! Now, your Highness, divide this by six.

*Conf.* (*Puts his finger on the side of his nose.*)

*Lect.* He says it can't be done. Quite correct.

*Conf.* (*Rises and bows.*)

*Lect.* You must bear in mind that the prince has to do these sums twice over, once in Spanish and once in English, and as arithmetic in Spanish is almost impossible, you can understand the extreme difficulty of this performance. Sit down.

*Conf.* (*Who has been perpetually bowing, sits.*)

*Lect.* I will now give him a sum in proportion, that is out of all proportion to the others. If a negro has five million two hundred and thirty-six hairs on his head, and a Welshman has several front teeth missing, what article of toilet does a bald man part his hair with?

*Conf.* Chestnut.



*Lect.* Quite correct. Chestnut is the Spanish for towel ; Spanish chestnut is a Spanish towel.

*Conf.* (*Rises and bows, and sits.*)

*Lect.* I will now show what he can do in vulgar fractions.

*Conf.* (*Shakes head.*)

*Lect.* His Highness is so refined that he will have nothing to do with anything vulgar—not even vulgar fractions. I will call them divided units. Now, my noble Spaniard, are you ready ?

*Conf.* (*Glares at him and nods.*)

*Lect.* (*As fast as he can speak.*) Divide six hundred and fifteen by two and a half, multiply the result by four three-quarters, take two-fifths of that, add fifteen to it, subtract eight forty-thirds, multiply by sixteen, take forty-two twenty-thirds of that, halve the remainder, multiply by the number of rivers in Scotland, subtract the number of verses in the New Testament, and add the number of inmates in Colney Hatch. How much ? Quick (*rushes to Confederate, who whispers in his ear*). Quite right.

*Conf.* (*Jumps up and bows.*)

*Lect.* And all done in his head, and you saw for yourselves that His Highness used no ready-reckoner, nor made any calculations on paper or otherwise. (*To Confederate*) Sit down, or you'll get tired. I will now give a further proof of His Highness's

powers, I will ask him the time. I must put the question in Spanish on account of his absolute ignorance of English. *Que hora esta?*

*Conf.* (*Looks at watch.*) Half-past eight.

*Lect.* Yes. (*Looks at watch.*) It is now—— (*mention time*), which would be in Madrid exactly half-past eight. When will it be nine?

*Conf.* Spanish or English time?

*Lect.* Spanish.

*Conf.* In half an hour; but there is no use your keeping asking questions in English because I am a Spaniard and don't understand it.

*Lect.* I beg your Serene Highness's pardon. Now I blindfold the prince, and to prevent any possibility of his seeing I join his eyelids together with two unused postage stamps.

*Conf.* (*Shakes head.*)

*Lect.* His Highness objects, so I shall merely use the ordinary bandage. (*Takes handkerchief which he has used as duster and binds his eyes.*) Now are you ready?

*Conf.* Si (*pronounced see*), Señor.

*Lect.* You mustn't see.

*Conf.* Well, "Yes" then—go ahead.

*Lect.* (*In a quick, sharp manner.*) 2, 5, 7, 6, 9, 8, 4, 3, 2, 1, 8, 4, 7, 6, 9, 3. How much?

*Conf.* (*At once.*) Eighty-four.

*Lect.* Right. 3, 2, 9, 8, 4, 3, 2, 6, 1, 5, 8, 4, 7, 7,

3, 1. How much?

*Conf.* Seventy-three.

*Lect.* Right. 4, 3, 2, 9, 5, 4, 3, 2, 6, 8, 4, 2, 7, 4,

2, 1. How much?

*Conf.* Sixty-seven.

*Lect.* Right. 3, 2, 7, 8, 4, 9, 6, 2, 1, 5, 4, 3, 2, 9,

8, 6. How much?

*Conf.* Seventy-nine.

*Lect.* Right. What are they together? (*Removes bandage.*)

*Conf.* Oh, find out for yourself! I've had enough of it. (*Goes out.*)

*Lect.* The prince having become tired, I must bring these interesting experiments to a close. (*Follows Confederate.*)

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## VENTRILLOQUISM.

CONFEDERATE dresses up in knee breeches and coat made of cretonne. On his last entrance he wears a mask in personating a ventriloquial figure. The performer then addresses his audience.

### The Performance.

Ventriloquism is the art of speaking through the ears without winking the left eye. The only animal

besides man that has been known to ventriloquise is the lobster, and he is not particularly successful. Many people imagine that the ventriloquial voice is produced by eating lawn seed, but I never heard of anyone attaining proficiency by these means. The best way is to roll the back and shoulders with an ordinary garden roller every Wednesday. If you haven't got a roller you can use a bicycle, but the roller is quicker. The effect of this is to send the voice into your boots, which enables you to imitate a Chinee on the other side of the globe without difficulty.

In ordinary conversation people drop a remark ; some confine themselves to letters and drop their h's, but the ventriloquist *throws* his voice anywhere. I knew a ventriloquist who threw his voice so far that he lost it entirely and had to buy a milk walk in order to get a living, which trade he now pursues with the amount of success a dumb man can reasonably expect to command.

Some ventriloquists use figures, some do not ; those who do not, dispense with them, and those who do, employ them. Some ventriloquists have good figures, others become corpulent and wear frock coats.

It is very rare to find a ventriloquist in Greenland or Lapland, because in those countries it is as much as they can do all day to catch fish enough to live upon, and so they have no time for anything else,

whereas the Arabian never tries it because it makes him so hot.

There is a widespread belief that ventriloquism is associated with the art of raising chickens under glass for hotel consumption; but you may accept my assurance, ladies and gentlemen, that poultry raising and the art of ventriloquism have nothing to do with each other.

In telling you what ventriloquism is, and what it is not, I am merely following accepted precedent and imitating other professors who are struggling to obtain by assiduity that position which I have attained through the employment of those gifts Nature has so lavishly bestowed upon me; but I am not here to praise myself. I give you a few illustrations and leave you to return to the bosom of your families—if you have families and those families have bosoms—and speak of the extraordinary achievements that you have witnessed.

I may add previous to commencing that the charge made for witnessing these illustrations is extremely moderate, if you take into consideration the number of collars I split in the ordinary course of my ventriloquial experiments.

I shall first astonish you with a very remarkable effect. I clap my hands, which I shall repeat in the distance by ventriloquism. (*Claps hands, Confederate at*

*side does the same. Ventriloquist bows. The second time he bows Confederate claps, whereupon the Ventriloquist in assumed anger goes to the side to expostulate.) (Aside.)* Wait for me, you ass; if you clap when I don't clap you give me and the show away. *(To audience)* Ladies and gentlemen, there is a curious echo in this building which causes my imitations to repeat themselves. I will now give the sound of clapping while my hands are in my pockets, or any one else's pockets. *(Waits, but there is no sound.)* This is even more difficult than the other. *(Waits—looks off, then walks hurriedly to side and again expostulates.)* Why didn't you clap? *(Pause.)* Not when I clap the first time, but this is different, this time you clap when I don't, at the cue "in my pockets." Ladies and gentlemen, I will now—*(Confederate claps L.)* I will now—*(claps)*—I will—*(speaking very quickly)*—I will now give you an imitation of distant clapping with my hands in my pockets. *(Confederate claps, and Ventriloquist bows.)* My next illustration will be that of a traveller on the distant mountains. *(Puts hand to mouth and shouts, looking off L.)* Hullo, Bill, are you there? *(Confederate R. replies in husky voice "all right, Guv'nor, I'm here. Ventriloquist, who has been stooping holding hand to ear in a listening attitude L., turns annoyed and walks to stage entrance R.) (Aside.)* What do you want to come this

side for, you make me look like a fool. Ladies and gentlemen, I will repeat this illustration—the distant mountains. Hullo, Bill, are you there?

*Conf.* (*From L.*) *I'm here, Guv'nor, keep your hair on.*  
(*Ventriloquist, who has assumed listening attitude R., goes to L.*)

*Conf.* You told me this side, Guv'nor.

*Vent.* (*Aside.*) Very well. Ladies and gentlemen, this is a very difficult illustration. I will try once more (*shouts*). Are you there?

*Conf.* (*Very husky.*) I'm here.

*Vent.* The traveller's voice is a long way off, so in order to get here he gets a little hoarse. My next illustration will be the distinct voice of the traveller quite close.

*Vent.* Are you there?

*Conf.* No, I've gone back to the mountain.

*Vent.* I do not know if you have ever heard a whistling sheep, if not I will make that the subject of my next illustration.

*Conf.* (*At side.*) I haven't got no whistle, Guv'nor.

*Vent.* When I said whistling sheep I meant talking ass, which you have just heard. I will now give an imitation of that useful quadruped the "cuckoo," first imitating the animal near, and then giving an imitation of its mate in the distance. (*The Ventriloquist shouts "cuckoo," and Confederate replies from side,*

*keeping it up as long as the audience are amused when the dialogue concludes as follows):—*

*Vent.* Cuckoo.

*Conf.* Cuckoo.

*Vent.* (*Aside.*) That'll do.

*Conf.* Cuckoo.

*Vent.* (*Aside.*) Stop it.

*Conf.* Cuckoo.

*Vent.* (*Aside.*) Be quiet.

*Conf.* Cuckoo.

*Vent.* (*Aside.*) If you don't stop I'll come off to you.

*Conf.* Cuckoo.

*(Ventriloquist rushes off, there is a crash and a bang off, after which Ventriloquist returns smiling to audience.)* My next will be an imitation of a drunken man sawing the leg of his best drawing-room chair. *(Imitates action of sawing, while Confederate saws a piece of wood off stage at side.)*

*(Ventriloquist bows to audience, Confederate walks on with saw and the two pieces of wood, which he shows that he has sawn in half. He wears cretonne dress, but no mask.)*

*Conf.* How was that?

*Vent.* Get off directly—spoiling everything.

*Conf.* Just wanted to know if I saw'd it all right.

*Vent.* Go off, I tell you. *(Pushes him off.)* I will now give you an imitation of a piping bullfinch



*(mouth-organ, banjo, or anything else will do). I take a piece of paper and roll it up, so, place it to my lips, so. (Confederate whistles off with bird-call, Ventriloquist bows, and Confederate walks in with whistle and glass of water in his hand. Ventriloquist sees him, makes a rush for him, and he runs off.) I will now introduce you to my celebrated walking figure. (Leads on Confederate, who wears a big mask and burlesque dress of cretonne. Confederate walks as though an automaton, and sits in a jerky way on chair when assisted to do so by Ventriloquist, who pretends to work mouth.)*

*Vent.* And how are you this evening, sir?

*Conf.* I—am—not—very—well.

*Vent.* May I ask you to favour the company with a song?

*Conf.* With—much—plea—sure.

*Vent.* What song will you sing, sir?

*Conf.* "Wait till the clouds roll by."

*Vent.* Rather a doleful song, sir.

*Conf.* Don't—know—any—other.

*Vent.* Very well. I will ask you to oblige the company with "Wait till the clouds roll by." You will notice, ladies and gentlemen, that during my conversation with the prisoner—puppet, I should say—you can detect no movement of my lips whatsoever, as I speak entirely through my ears. The figure will now sing.

*Conf. (Very huskily sings.) "Wait till the clouds"—*  
*(stops.)*

*(Vent. goes to side, and taking a glass of water, sips it, and returns to figure, who now shouts the song.)*  
Ladies and gentlemen, this will conclude my part of the performance. *(Bows and goes out. Confederate stares at audience for some time, then gets up, stamps his foot in anger, and walks off.)*

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## THE QUACK DENTIST.

*A table with shabby cover on it, a turnip cut to look like a face, a small tray of Indian corn to represent teeth. A sardine opener, cycle spanner, and high collar are put on a piece of thick string, which passes over shoulder and allows sardine opener, etc., to hang behind. This skit allows of any absurd make-up, which should be of a professional Irish character. The lecture is delivered with a strong Irish accent.*

I am an American dentist, you can hear by my spache that I come from America and by the almost imperceptible dash of Irish in my accent that I have come *via* Queenstown. You can see by this thray full of teeth that I have pulled, and that I have not pulled, that I am a dintist. Half thim teeth you see in this thray belonged to Napoleon's army, they were

collected by my mother-in-law on the field of Waterloo, where, it will be remembered, the battle of Trafalgar was fought in eight *rounds* as soon as the soldiers could form *squares*. *De facto don't disputandem*. Don't dispute facts with a donkey in a tandem.

A French tooth (*take up Indian corn*) is dissimilar to the tooth of a potted bloater; and it differs from an English tooth inasmuch as the English tooth (*handling corn*) has, as you percave, an English polish, while the French tooth, as you percave (*handling another corn*) has a French polish. Do not forget this.

I remember once operating upon the jaw of a woman (*take up turnip*)—you can always tell a woman's jaw from a man's jaw because there is more of it and it moves more rapidly. I was operating on a female's jaw, and had taken out five teeth (*indicating on turnip*), a back mollusc, two steak-tearers, and a whelk-chewer, when she says to me, says she, "I don't hear no better, sor; are you sure this is the Ear Hospital? (*Putting down turnip.*) Now, its absurd of people to come to me and not describe their symptoms more accurately. Do not forget this.

Not long after my wife started for her honeymoon—on which excursion I accompanied her—I discovered, *per constanto chinmusicubus*—excuse the Latin, but I was edjicated by the parish and can't help it. I

discovered that she had a great deal too much jaw. I have operated upon it till I have effectually stopped her jaw, and I am now *homo tranquillo*—a peaceful man. It is a difficult matter to stop a woman's jaw, but I did it. Any gentleman similarly situated can obtain my address from the attendant. Married men, do not forget this.

There is a lot of imagination about the toothache ; some people think that they have it in their arm or chest, but it is not so—they are much mistaken—*quantam spoofandi*. Some imagine they think they fancy that they have it in their teeth. Nonsense—*semper stupido crammum bungo*, it is the gums that ache, not the teeth. When a *molar stonibus* grinder, or back tooth (*indicate on turnip*) is extracted, the pain is—what we term *non feltum*—not felt, but only—and do not forget this—until the gum recovers from its astonishment, when the pain returns, and the patient returns to have an aching tooth extracted which isn't there. Ha! ha! *Quid rides in omnibus!* who rides in an omnibus! I cannot help but laugh. Ha! ha!

We use gas in dentistry ; there are very few professions that can get along without gas nowadays! Wonderful thing gas! If men can't be gassed in the newspapers, they go to a dentist. A man once came to me who was so fond of gas that he had all his teeth taken out, just in order to be gassed. He doesn't

come now. He's dead, was cremated, left the earth—gas! *Sic transit gloria gas-bag!* Do not forget this.

Medical men work with us; I always have a doctor to administer the gas, and perform such post-mortem examinations as may be necessary after the bawl is over, and I spell bawl with a w. Do not forget this.

I do not pay him in money but in kind. I allow him to stale the patient's socks while he is insensible. If a lady, I restrict him to hair-pins, a lady's socks are stockings, stockings are silk, sometimes Liberty silk, and it would not do to allow a doctor to take a Liberty silk stocking.

If I make a patient a set of false teeth, doctor orders him to eat toffee—teeth stick to toffee and are swallowed—new set required every few days; I know a man who swallowed so many sets that they settled him.

A set of teeth sometimes changes the voice; a patient of mine had a bass voice—no teeth—had to sing songs widout words, and a blessin' it is that there are songs written for those so afflicted. He came to me, had a new set, and now sings with a falsetto-teeth.

I have invented a great many things in dintistry—this piece of string is an invention of mine (*shows string*); nothing in a pace of sthring, you will say, but there may be something *on* a pace of string, and so let

it be with Cæsar, for there is something on this. This, ladies and gintlemen, is nothing more nor less than an instrument case, always there in case I want my instruments.

You observe it passes over the shoulder, so, and across my bosom, so, under the other arm, so, and is tied at the lower portion of the venerable column. On it I have (*showing articles described*) my gum-splitter (*sardine-opener*)—forceps—fit to any nut, I mean any tooth in any nut (*cycle spanner*), and throat elevator (*high collar*).

I approach the patient, so—showing the hands perfectly empty—and I say—Just let me look at yer tooth and count the aches—no instrument in hand, no resistance from patient. I pretend to look for the aches, and then, suddenly plunging my hand behind me, I saze the instrument I want, and before a quarter of an hour has passed the tooth is out—it may not be the right tooth, but as I do not charge for failures, it doesn't matter, cause I take out the others widout extra charge. (*Go to side, or have some one come and whisper and retire.*)

Ladies and gintlemen, I am just apprised that some patients have called at my study, a thing that hasn't happened for months, and now that I have patients of my own I need not trespass on your patience any longer.

**THE SOUL-STIRRING TRAGEDY.****"The Blooming Flower of Bethnal Green."**

*With explanatory introduction about the scenery, characters, general absence of mis-en-scène, and the personal grievances of the author. Long hair and frock coat and shabby gloves, if reciter dress up.*

Ladies and gentlemen, I am a dramatic author, but owing to the want of discrimination on the part of managers, my works, superior as they are to the plays of Shakespeare, Milton, and other dramatists, are never produced; they are produced from my coat-tail pocket, when the sight of them causes the affrighted manager to fly; but they are not produced on the stage, managers will not have them at any price, and they sha'n't have them for nothing. I can starve, thank Heaven! without their assistance. It is my purpose this evening to act one of my plays myself. I will therefore submit to you the soul-stirring tragedy, called "The Blooming Flower of Bethnal Green;" or, "The Wirgin, the Willan, and the Wirtuous Willager." You will please imagine the scenery, as by doing so you will save me the expense of having it painted. I will undertake all the characters myself, which arrange-



ment also saves the expense of engaging a company. The said characters are as follows :—

GILES . . . . . *Hedger, Ditcher, and Hero.*

THE WICKED SQUIRE. *An opulent Justice of the Peace.*

CROSS BONES . . . *A Retired Pirate and the Rightful Heir.*

FARMER FUNGUS . . *The Supposititious Father of Maria.*

MARIA . . . . . *A Female Youth, the Supposititious Daughter to her Supposititious Father.*

*Peasants and peasantesses, cows, sheep, and other agricultural implements.*

By telling you the characters I save you sixpence each, which would have been the price of the programmes had I had them printed, and which sum you will kindly put into the plate I will hold at the door as you leave.

The band have just played a magnificent overture, and the lovely velvet curtains are drawn back and disclose to you a beautiful landscape ; you see before you the country in all the richness of early autumn, on the left is the village church with its graveyard dotted with stone tablets to the memory of those who have gone under. All above is blue sky, except where the white clouds, like bunches of cotton wool, eclipse



the glorious azure. Hills you perceive in the distance, while a chaff-cutter and a milk-pail make a realistic foreground.

Imagine all this, ladies and gentlemen, and you will enjoy my tragedy; for even the adverse circumstance under which the play is presented does not prevent the genius of the work asserting itself and moving you as you have never been moved before. I have moved audiences so much with some of my plays that there hasn't been one person left to hear the end.

In the lovely autumnal scene I described on the rising of the curtain you will observe a number of stage supers in smock frocks drinking nothing out of cardboard cups in celebration of their Harvest Home.

The harvest is suggested by a truss of straw borrowed from a neighbouring mews—the locality being Essex, one truss is considered sufficient.

A gentleman, termed the first peasant, sings a solo, to the discomfiture of the Squire, while looking lovingly at the aforesaid truss of straw, as though it admirably suggested the prodigality of nature and the enormous profits that accrue from agriculture.

This is the song of the first peasant, and you will please notice I use a spontaneous melody and the language, ideas, and ignorance of metre that a peasant would be guilty of under the circumstances—this, though I say it who should not, is true dramatic

authorship. The peasant sings as follows, but to a different melody:—

“Here’s bad ’ealth to the wicked Squire,  
Which person we do not admire;  
For what he pays us all for hire  
Should really be a trifle higher.  
But ’eres an ’ealth to our Maria,  
Though no fellow may go nigh ’er,  
But Giles, whose werry ’eart’s afire  
With the Wedding Bell’s desire.  
Though she might have had the Squire  
If he wasn’t such a liar,  
Or that Billy Dip the Dyer,  
Who could not conjecture why ’er  
Loving heart was given prior  
To our Giles and not the Squire,  
Nor to Billy Dip the Dyer.”

When the first peasant has finished he doesn’t sing any more; he has an encore verse, but as nobody ever applauds this song he doesn’t use it. At the conclusion of the song the first peasant buries his face in the cardboard cup, while the others say “Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!” or rather ’urrah, urrah! ’urrah! and knock their knuckles on the wooden tables. Removing the cardboard cup from his lips, the first peasant says, “Groan, the Squee-ire approaches”—they groan while groan off right—I mean while *going* off right—as the Squire enters left.

Here is where knowledge of the stage comes in, because had I made the villagers go off at the same side of the stage as the Squire enters they would have bumped against each other, and all would have been confusion.

Enter Squire left.

The Squire takes the stage, which they have left, and folds his arms, which indicates wickedness, and thus soliloquises :—

“ And so they ge-roan when they see me coming, and in bucolic verses, to which I averse is ; they satirise me with their low-born wit at Bacchanalian feasts, whose import, if I do mistake me not, is to propitiate the goddess Ceres. They satirise me. Pshaw! pooh! bah! me, a justice of the peace. I would crush them beneath my feet, but that my heart is softened by love. Yes, I love the Blooming Flower of Bethnal Green, the red-headed Maria Fungus! She turns red when her eye meets mine, and blushes like the negro-hued lobster when exposed to the action of the boiling fluid, and I, Sir Gooseberry Fool, Bart., I turn red also as though bathed in the lurid glow of a chemist’s danger-signal bottle ; but avaunt, ye similes and metaphor! what avail they to a broken-hearted baronet who loves as he has never loved before, since, or afterwards? ’Tis true I am married for the fifth time, but is that *my* fault? Why did my wife accept me, and

why does Maria, simply because I am married, reject me? It must be because she loves another. Who can it be? Perhaps the man she is about to wed. Giles, the unpleasantly virtuous Giles! Oh, why did I not think of this before? Ah, what's that? A foot-fall on the distant mountains—'tis her, I mean 'tis she; I will hide me behind yon blade of grass, and, as she always speaks her inmost thoughts at the top of her voice, I shall discover the secret workings of her soul."

The Squire hides behind the blade of grass, and Maria enters about two hours afterwards. This gives the audience an idea that she has really come from the mountains.

I now personate the coy village maiden—she enters reading a letter, and speaks with rhyme but with very little reason. (*Assumes a high falsetto voice.*)

"Another letter from my faithful Giles,  
With whom I've sat on all the neighbouring stiles,  
Walked in the green lanes the whole night through,  
And like two thieves, we've took a spoon or two.  
The wicked Squire for me such love confesses,  
And plagues me daily with his fond addresses;  
But as I tells him, he can't be sincere,  
For he have married five this fourteen year.  
So while this heart for man o'er biles,  
That overflow I'll bottle up for Giles."

Maria kisses letter, and the Squire bursts from his blade of grass, the band plays a chord, and we have one of the most effective situations ever witnessed on the English stage.

Then the Squire speaks :—

‘ Excuse me, beauteous damsel, but ter—rimble,  
You sha’n’t escape me, be you e’er so nimble,  
Permit me, cruel maid, I do entreat,  
To lay myself and fortune at your feet.”

Maria. “ I loves another.”

Squire. “ Yes, Giles, a workus pauper.”

Maria. “ His love is pure,

While yours is most imprauper.

His heart is honest, and please you note

He have a cow, three acres, and a vote.”

Squire. “ Don’t believe such politicians’ tattle,  
He hasn’t got a single good nor chattel,  
No corn, but what’s created by boot-  
makers,

Those corns which pinch him are his only  
achers,

And, as for the ground, beyond what’s in  
his nails,

To any claim he signalally fails.

Now I’m possessed of wealth derived from  
rents,

A man of dollars, be thou a girl of cents.”

Maria. "Never!"

Squire. "Say yes, Maria, and smile upon my *suet*,  
If you won't, then I am forced to do it."

Maria. "Ah, what! Release me!"

Squire. "No; you are mine, talk not of release,  
I'm Gooseberry Fool and Justice of the  
Peace."

Maria. "Help! Murder! Fire! Burglars!"

They struggle until Giles rushes in and stabs the  
Squire with a stale carrot, thereupon the Squire falls,  
and Maria, seeing that he is down, gives him a kick.

Squire quotes from a burlesque:—

"Thine image, dear, 's imprinted on my heart,  
Thy foot's imprinted on another part."

Turning to Giles, continues in original verse:—

"For this behaviour, scoundrel, you shall pay,  
Consider your rent doubled from to-day."

The Squire crawls off to raise Giles' rent.

Giles. "He'll raise my rent, oh, heavy days!"

Maria. "Yes, raise the rent you cannot raise."

Giles. "It ain't as how I minds the rent,  
But all my money's out at three per cent."

Maria. "Money! Art thou not poor, Giles?"

Giles. "Poor! Pshaw, listen! (Giles speaks in a  
whisper that can be heard all over the theatre.)  
I could buy up the Squire and all the parish, but  
I have not come by my vast possessions honestly. Do

not shrink from me, Maria, but listen to the history of Giles, the poacher." Giles sings:—

"I be a poacher quite 'appy and free,  
What prigs a spring chicken or grouse;  
And if I do find a servant-girl kind,  
Will burglariously enter a house.  
At railway depôts when free from a cotch  
I do lead pennies drop systematic,  
And collar some chocolate or butter-scotch  
From ingenious machines automatic.  
Do you think you could live on pheasant and deer  
And reside in Belgravia with me?  
If so, we'll be married the end of the year,  
And this poacher your popsey will be."

Maria. "I cannot see." (Weeps.)

Giles. "Eye-water—see, would you  
Follow me to jail—the felon's cell?  
I ask these things—it's just as well."

Maria. "My sweetest Giles, my dove, my treasure,  
I'd follow you to the grave with the greatest  
pleasure."

They go away arm-in-arm.

Now the plot thickens, for the Squire's elder brother enters. He has been stolen by pirates in his youth, and rather liking the occupation he has pursued it with varying success for some years; but having found the business fallen off so much lately, he has determined to

revisit his native land and either go on the music-halls or live upon the property to which he has an indisputable claim.

The Pirate enters as soon as the others go off.

"Ah, my native village! Good old native village! Same old railway station, same young lady in the refreshment department, same buns on the counter which I remember as a boy. There is the house to let with the same board up that I remember in my youth, and the same lame horse grazing in the same field, and the same scarecrow pointing in the same idiotic manner it did years ago. Ah, I am observed! Why did I not discard this penny-plain-and-twopence-coloured costume of the pirate and purchase a ready-made ladies' rational cyclist costume, and thus escape observation?"

Enter the Squire from the back. He sees his piratical brother, and thus apostrophises him:—

"Ah! that cock hat and feathers, that broad belt and pistols, the worsted tights and bell-shaped boots and useless cutlass—it is a pirate, the very person for my fell purpose, a man who would, could, or should commit a murder for a mere trifle. Sir, a word in your private ear."

Pirate. (Aside.) "Privateer—he has discovered what I am. Well, Justice!"

Squire. "It's well justice does not settle you; but we may do business together. I love a village maiden,



she spurns me; entreaties are of no avail, she rejects my suit, so she must be carried off *nolens volens*, can you undertake it?"

Pirate. "Yes."

Squire. "Good, take my purse."

Pirate. "I do not do this for money."

Squire. "Have no fear, there's nothing in it, but it's real Russia leather."

Pirate. "Thanks, farewell."

The Squire leaves him to brood over his prospective crime, and the bold, bad Pirate has a fine soliloquy all to himself, in which remorse for the past and an awakening conscience strive to make him a better man, but they don't.

Pirate. "Shiver my timbers, but I don't like this ere business, partly because I don't exactly understand what I have to do, and partly because my hand is out—not out of joint, but out of practice. There was a time when anything like robbing a hen-roost or other foul play, such as a bit of garotting, incendiarism, petty larceny, or company promoting, came quite natural. Ah, happy childhood! I don't believe in presentments, because I haven't the faintest conception of the meaning of the word, but I feel to-night as though something was going to happen. I felt the same way yesterday, but it didn't. I know that the past cannot be recalled and that the future will reveal itself

in due course, provided I don't die in the meantime. Memory takes me back, free of charge, to a period when I can remember everything that I have not forgotten. Ah, someone approaches! I mean some two approaches, for there is one and another, a father and his child. The father appears to be older than the child and the child appears to be younger than the father, which after all is natural. If I listen to their conversation I will in all probability hear what they are talking about."

He conceals himself as Maria and Farmer Fungus enter.

Fungus. "You are now old enough to be told who and what you are; I have waited till you were thirty-seven, and now I break the news to you gently—You are not my child!"

Maria. "Not your child, father? But, father, I must be—I must be your child, or somebody else's child, if so, whose? Do not keep me in an agony of suspense, but speak."

Fungus. "Calm yourself, child, and listen: Some years ago I purchased a pound of tea, given away with which was a prize-packet, you were that prize-packet. I prized it open, and I prized it ever since. I was only a small farmer then, guiding the hand-plough my wife pulled with difficulty across the landscape, but we lived on—on bread and water—in order that you

might receive a costly education. The threepence a week pinched us, but our adopted child was made a lady."

Enter Pirate.

Pirate. "What do I hear? My child alive and lady-like—the pirate's prize-packet."

Maria. "Are *you* my father?"

Pirate. "I am employed to carry you off by the villainous Squire, but this newly-discovered relationship puts a different complexion on the matter. Do you not recognise me, Fungus, as the rightful heir?"

Fungus. "I do, the Squire's elder brother and this girl's father."

Pirate. "My child, come to your pirate's arms—I mean parent's arms."

Enter Giles.

Giles. "What, my old red-headed Maria in the arms of a bold, bad pirate! Perjured cockatrice, I cast you off!"

Pirate. "I'm only her father. Take her, virtuous peasant, I have only had her a minute and a half, but take her."

Giles. "Do I not recognise Sir Absolute Fool, the rightful heir?"

Pirate. "My guilty brother shall answer. You see, he comes."

**Squire Enters.**

Squire. "You do; this gentleman is my long-lost brother, and I give up the estates and ask forgiveness."

Pirate. "You shall have it; but get out of the castle by Wednesday next, because I want to have a spring clean and get the place in order for my daughter's wedding. And now call in the lads and lasses, bring out the May-pole and the blind fiddler, distribute the cakes, oil the village pump-handle, and let them drink their fill to the defeat of villainy, the victory of virtue, and the future happiness of Giles and the red-headed Maria, the Blooming Flower of Bethnal Green."

I shall, ladies and gentlemen, have the honour of reciting a five-act melodrama, called "The Midnight Crime," some other evening. You will now please imagine that I have finished, and the lights will shortly be turned out, as will anyone else who remains.

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**HAMLET UP TO DATE.**

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, in order that you may appreciate the stories of Shakespeare's plays, I have arranged them in suitable language that will delight highly-educated audiences, and also modernised them to make them easy of comprehension. The play this

evening is one known as "Hamlet, Prince of Denmark." Instead of making him a prince, of whose habits the general public know very little, I have made him a grocer, of whose ways and habits everybody is unfortunately too familiar, and as I have located the story in London, near the Tower, I call it "The Tower Hamlets."

### "The Tower Hamlets."

The death of old Hamlet, the founder of the well-known grocery store situated opposite the Tower of London, was of a somewhat suspicious character.

The fact of his having persisted in sampling his own teas and tinned meats would have satisfactorily accounted for his death, had it not been more sudden than even this reckless enthusiasm for trade warranted.

A brother, named Claudius, whose history previous to his taking possession of the shop seems involved in obscurity, then carried on the business, and it must be added that he did so in a manner highly creditable to one who had apparently had no previous experience.

The life-destroying character of the retail grocery, to those who make a personal investigation of the wares their customers are to consume, is so universally admitted by the faculty, that Mr. Claudius obtained a certificate of his brother's death without

difficulty, and buried him with all the promptitude and despatch that characterises a man of business.

He took the most effective method of comforting the disconsolate widow by marrying her, and thus became step-father to his nephew.

This youth, whose name was Hamlet, was exceedingly annoyed at this unexpected interruption to his business prospects, and he also felt his moral susceptibilities outraged by this marriage, which lost him an uncle who went a step farther than he ought in wedding his mother.

The marriage caused Hamlet anxiety, as he doubted its legality. If a man may not marry his deceased wife's sister, why should my mother marry her deceased husband's brother?

Is my mother my aunt, or is my uncle my father? Will my future cousins be my brothers and sisters, or will my mother's children be my cousins?

The complexity of this problem is supposed to have unhinged his mind, but he had enough intellect left to water the already moist sugar, and grind foreign substances to powder in order, by admixture, to mollify the excessive pungency of their low-priced peppers and increase the revenues of the business.

Hamlet, like most young chaps in the East, had his "bit of frock," to wit, Miss Ophelia Polonius, a fair-haired, good-looking girl, singularly docile and

obedient to the only parent she ever appears to have possessed, but without any specially high intellectual attainments or social accomplishments. This is accounted for by the fact of having spent all her time sitting for her portrait, if we may judge by the number of pictures we see painted of her.

Hamlet was what is termed in good society a bit "mashed" on Miss Polonius, whose only fault, in his mind, was that she had a Christian name he found impossible to abridge or curtail, when she, in the plenitude of her affection, endearingly abbreviated his patronymic (the only name he possessed) to Hammy or Ham. It may be mentioned as a curious circumstance that in Shakespeare Hamlet should complain of Ophelia not having Christian burial when he had not even a Christian name.

He also regretted that his future mother-in-law should be a man, though he admitted that there was a good deal of the old woman about "Pol," whose gossiping qualities procured him this playful sobriquet.

With this momentary preface you will understand somewhat the position of affairs when I introduce you to the Hamlet family in their grocery shop near the Tower, which locality of business and residence gave them the title of the Tower Hamlets, and distinguished them from other Hamlets of meaner occupation and less opulent circumstances.



To meet the exigencies of retail trade, Hamlet's mother married his uncle by licence, and postponed the honeymoon to the usual summer vacation.

They had the wedding-breakfast for supper after the shop was closed to avoid the incessant interruption of infinitesimal though remunerative custom.

Hamlet expostulated with his mother when he recognised, among the hermetically-sealed dainties at the wedding-breakfast, many that had done service at the refectory provided for the mourners at the demise of his father. His mother pointed out to him the injustice of his adverse criticism by reminding him that their tinned meats not only withstood the effect of any climate, but remained good so long that they could, if not eaten, take part in family festivities for generations without giving posterity the slightest ground for objection on the score of bad taste.

It must be conceded that the wedding-breakfast was not a success; Hamlet was tired with the day's work, having had the entire responsibility of the shop during the enforced absence of his mother and uncle at the registrar's, and was inclined to be a little sarcastic in his muttered references to the whole proceedings.

His uncle's speech was not bad, judged by the standard of excellence attained by post-prandial orations generally. It was of a philosophic character, and in it he admitted that it was necessary to indulge in such



exequial ceremony as feeling dictated and custom required, but that such expression of grief should never prevent us taking care of number one.

He added a step-fatherly reproof to Hamlet in reference to the gloomy view he took of his marital festivities, and in a brief peroration told him that he should have the shop when he had finished with it—to all of which Hamlet said “Walker” and went to bed.

Once in his attic, he lighted his candle, and broke out into soliloquy as follows :—“To beer or not to beer ? that is the question ; whether to become a hopeless inebriate by seeking solace in the flowing bowl, or to join the Salvation Army and become a religious fanatic. I can have the shop when he has finished with it—bah ! Why should my mother not die first, and then, with a lady for my mother with whom I am not even acquainted, where should I be ? Chucked ! there is no other word for it.” Hamlet buried his face in his hands, which were sufficiently grimy for the purpose, and wept copiously. We draw a curtain on this pathetic picture.

O. Ratio was a friend of Hamlet, and a distant connection of the Inverse Ratios so often mentioned in mathematical literature.

Out one night with a beef-eater, this young gentleman actually saw the ghost of old Hamlet prowling about the ramparts of the Tower Gardens.

He mentioned this to Hamlet, who was sufficiently interested in the phenomenon to go with them to the same place on the off-chance of its reappearing

They were perfectly successful, the ghost was punctual. He wore the same suit he wore when alive, which was now very much out of fashion.

Hamlet managed to get a few minutes' private conversation with the ghost behind a bush. This was the conversation:—

"Hamlet, don't you recognise your old dad's spirit?"

"I cannot *recognise* what I have never seen before, and as to your spirit, I can see that at the 'Blue Cow.'"

"I came to tell you that my brother, your step-father, and my widow's husband, under pretence of curing my ear-ache, poisoned my ear."

"Against *me*, father?"

"No, against *myself*, Hamlet. It is given out that, sleeping in mine orchard, a serpent stung me; but that is all my eye and Betty Martin, 'cause I ain't got no orchard, and don't own no sarpint."

"What would you like me to do in the matter?"

"Cut his blooming head off. Revenge!"

"I do so object to murder, Guv'nor, it's such an unpleasant business; couldn't you as a ghost call on him one night and frighten the life out of him?"

At that moment a cock crew and the ghost went home rather disgusted with Hamlet's want of enthusiasm.

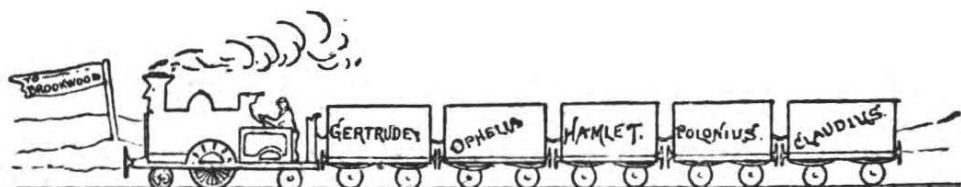
Hamlet returned to O. Ratio and the beef-eater, and getting their promise of secrecy, told them nothing they could possibly reveal.

Hamlet personally was a little sceptical respecting the veracity of ghosts—when a man lies in the earth for some time he is very apt to lie when he comes out of it. He was, as his speech indicated, not an enthusiast about murder; as a matter of fact, he disliked murdering people. In execution he considered murder unpleasant, and the consequences, if discovered, left him open to public censure.

"How can I discover the accuracy of the ghost's statement?" he muttered, as he whisked an importunate fly off the moist sugar displayed in the window.

At that moment a Punch and Judy show stopped right opposite the shop. "I have heard of guilty creatures sitting at a play," remarked Hamlet, "why not re-write the comedy about to be enacted; the man could play it without study, as he could read it off by pinning it on the baize inside. Uncle will be down in the shop in a few minutes. The play shall be called 'A Cure for the Ear-ache and a Cure for a Step-father.' It won't cost me more than twopence, or threepence at the outside."

No sooner had Hamlet resolved that the play was the thing than it was done. The uncle witnessed the Punch and Judy show, confessed his guilt, and stabbed himself with a sardine-opener. Ophelia went off her chump. Mrs. Hamlet poisoned herself with a bottle of their eighteenpenny sherry. Polonius was run over by a cyclist; while Hamlet and Laertes had a row in the shop, which resulted in their both dying; whereupon O. Ratio shut up the shutters and went to the undertaker's and ordered coffins for six, in which they were respectively placed and buried. The rest is silence.



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## SPIRITUALISM.

### Preliminary Remarks.

THIS piece of fooling requires a confederate, and causes enormous fun. As the reader is giving a Bunkum Entertainment, he does not mind if he is found out, but it is not likely that he will be, for the more audacious the swindle the more readily is it

swallowed, and so many natures have such a craving for the ghostly and supernatural that they like to believe there is something in it. It would be troublesome to make the apparatus if I described it, and it would not be worth the reader's while to attempt to do so. Mr. Hamley, of 231, High Holborn, London, will supply what is wanted for about 30s., and give any particulars of his secret to intending purchasers, when the particular manifestations can be selected which the reader fancies.

### The Performance.

We are now, ladies and gentlemen, about to witness a manifestation of spirits and, under cover of the darkness, let you see for yourselves that communication with other worlds than this is not only possible but extremely interesting. To those who have never been in the dark before the sensation will be both a novel and an awe-inspiring one. Usually sixpence is charged to see a dark séance, but I make no charge, not because I doubt your ability to produce the sixpence, but because I am interested in these wonderful psychological experiments, and I wish to obtain converts to the new Belief. By virtue of Spiritualism I can once more let a married man hear the voice of his departed mother-in-law saying that she has come to stay a week with him, or give

the single man the delight of again hearing the voice of a dead creditor asking him when he intends to return the fiver he lent him. The young widow can again hear the voice of her departed husband, the tallow-chandler, and ascertain his opinion respecting the flirtation she is now carrying on with the good-looking draper's assistant who lives opposite. These are but a few of the advantages to be derived from Spiritualism. Light is thrown on many things by your being kept in the dark. I sincerely trust that to-night the spirits will be suspicious—I should say auspicious—and manifest themselves to you in their own peculiar way.

With due apology to the Gas Company, we will turn out the gas, and without any apology to the gas or other company, we will turn out any disbeliever in the absolute genuineness of these experiments. The disbeliever and the doubter are not only a nuisance, but they have the effect of destroying all manifestations whatsoever. What we want is absolute faith—complete trust and belief in the supernatural character of these presentations. What is belief without faith? Nothing more or less than faith without belief. The incomprehensible cannot be understood, and that which is incapable of solution cannot be solved; the illimitable cannot be bound, and the everlasting has no defined conclusion (*produces rope*). Many people are under the impres-

sion when they see this that I intend hanging myself and appearing to you as a spirit, but though I would do this if it were necessary to convince you, it is not necessary. Human beings have been dying now for ages, so that the air is as full of spirits as a New Cut public-house, as they keep on accumulating; in fact, many have told me privately that they are getting uncomfortably crowded, and if they had known there was so little room in the spirit world they wouldn't have left this.

I shall not only let those present hear the voices of their departed friends and relations, but will put you in communication with celebrities—Christopher Columbus, for instance, the discoverer of America, who, I believe, was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, or if he wasn't he ought to have been; Adam and Eve just as they were in the Garden of Eden—don't be alarmed, remember you don't see them, you only hear them, and as they spoke French the majority present will understand what they say if I translate it for them.

In addition to these phenomena, mystic voices and unearthly sounds will be heard in all parts of the room, although I shall be firmly fastened in a chair, bound by cords, with which one of you shall tie me. Mysterious hands will, under cover of the darkness, float about the room and touch any sceptic present, and give him a cold shiver.



Musical boxes glide about in the air, playing any air but that in which they glide. This is the most enchanting effect to be obtained in this vale of tears—apart from the effect of a street organ—that you have probably ever heard; tambourines, trumpets, whistles, gongs belonging to dead bicyclists will be heard, while the odour of steak pies containing phantom lights will perfume the air.

A strange-looking head—not mine—will be made visible, and, what is much more difficult in the dark, made invisible, which head will answer orally any question put to it, while answers of a more private character will appear in writing upon a slate—placed out of my reach, mark you—and when I give you my word of honour that I do not move you need not believe me, for you yourselves shall see me tied to this chair. I trust you will banish all doubts, all this wretched scepticism from your minds, and that you will all become—yes, all of you—become converts to this new faith.

I will now ask one of the company to bind me, after which the gas will be extinguished and the manifestations will be proceeded with. (*Confederate binds Lecturer, tying cord round body but leaving hands free from elbows. The selection and sequence of the experiments as made are now carried out.*)



## THE BULLET-PROOF CUIRASS.

### Preliminary Remarks.

I GAVE this skit at the Lyric Theatre, appearing in the double character of spokesman and marksman.

With the advantages of a well-stocked property-room, quaint muskets, cannon, donkey collar, etc., are easily procured; but should the reader not be able to obtain any of the properties, his ingenuity must devise substitutes for them.

Herr Oihl is made up as a German, and says nothing, merely bowing at inconvenient periods.

So many people have heard or seen the cuirass experiments, that this skit has been included as it was given in London.

### The Performance.

*(Enter dressed in red flannel shirt, belt, high boots, long hair, broad-brimmed hat, etc. Speak with a Yankee drawl.)*

Ladies and gentlemen, I have the distinguished honour to introduce to you Herr Oihl, the inventor of the bullet, cannon-ball, and waterproof cuirass. They call him *Herr*, but he is really a man, though he

does not come from *man-heim*.\* I must mention to you that being a Pole he is very *pole-ite*; all Poles are *pole-ite* because it takes forty poles to make one rood. I will bring him in. (*Lead in Herr Oihl, who keeps bowing awkwardly.*) This is Herr Oihl (*touches his hair in introducing him, and wipes his fingers on Herr Oihl's coat*). I will allow you a few seconds to gaze upon his Teutonic features and admire the singularity of his vestments, made, I presume, in Germany; when clothes are made to fit a pole, they hang loose on a human.

You are all aware of the great interest taken in the cuirass; at the present moment no well-dressed person would walk down Regent Street without wearing a cuirass, gentlemen wearing them upon their chests, the ladies—well, at the back of their waists. The dress-material of a lady who wears a cuirass is, of course, *shot silk*.

I will now show you a few cuirasses and give you a short history of each. (*Fetches Dickey. Herr Oihl bows to everybody.*) This is the first cuirass ever invented. (*Shows Dickey.*)

It was lent to a soldier who wore flannel shirts. He never complained that the cuirass was ineffective, but he left his dead body on the field of battle as a sort of mild protest.

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\* The inventor of the cuirass was born at Mannheim, or Manheim.

The bullet appears to have gone through the button-hole, otherwise the noble warrior would have been here, or at some other public-house, at the present moment.

We do not now offer these for war purposes, but they are in great demand by the ordinary civilian who

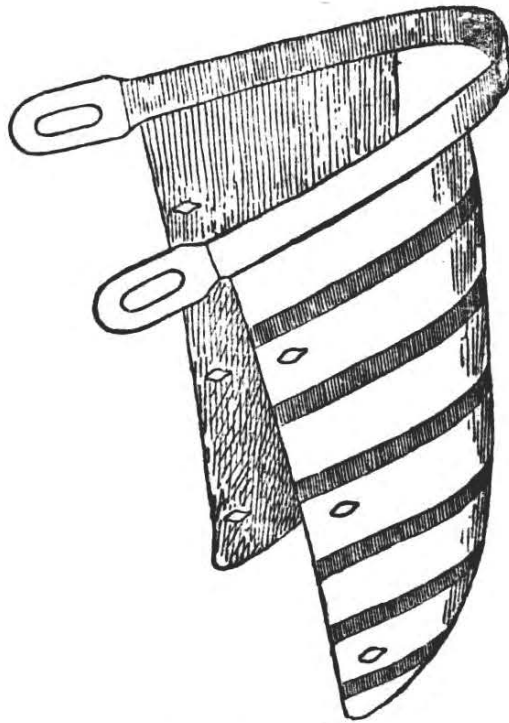


FIG. 23. THE DICKEY CUIRASS.

wishes to hide a dirty shirt and save his washing bill. (*Herr bows and marksman puts dicky round his neck and fetches a donkey's collar.*)

This cuirass was worn by a *curus* donkey—a queer ass, in fact, which originated the name now world-

renowned. The queer ass wore this cuir-ass for 27 years, travelling to and from Walworth and Covent Garden, and never got hit once, though several whips were worn out over him during that period. The Whip-proof Cuirass. (*Puts collar on Herr and fetches Chastisement Cuirass—a piece of wadding sewn on to a schoolboy's belt.*) This is a line we find in great request

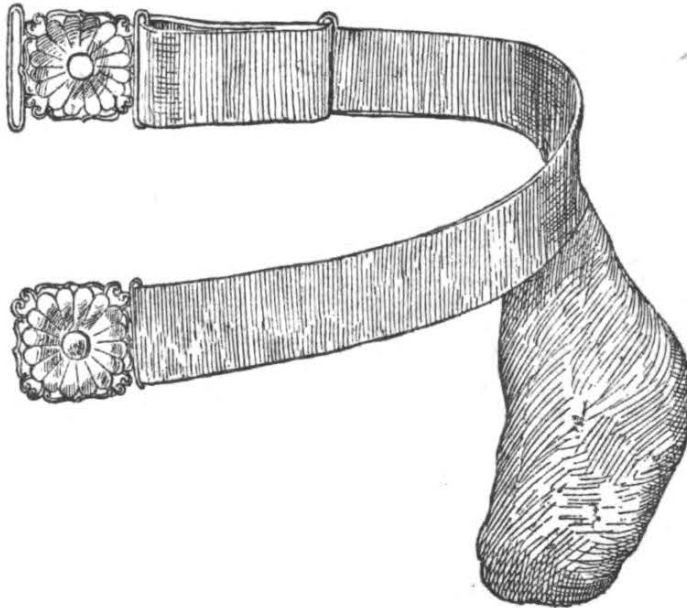


FIG. 24. THE CHASTISEMENT CUIRASS.

by refractory boys at school ; it is called the Chastisement Cuirass, and is warranted absolutely cane and birch proof. I do not wish to be indelicate, but the Chastisement Cuirass is not worn by the boy upon the chest. (*Fastens it on Herr, and fetches Kiss-proof Cuirass. This is made by cutting an oblong hole in an oblong*

*piece of cardboard and covering it with black gauze, putting tapes to tie it round the head.)*

Here we have the Kiss-proof Cuirass—any lady, however pretty, cannot be kissed provided she wears one of these. I may add that there is no demand whatever for this cuirass.

I will, however, show you that it is bullet-proof, and give you an illustration of my skill as a marksman by placing it upon the mouths of two gentlemen in the

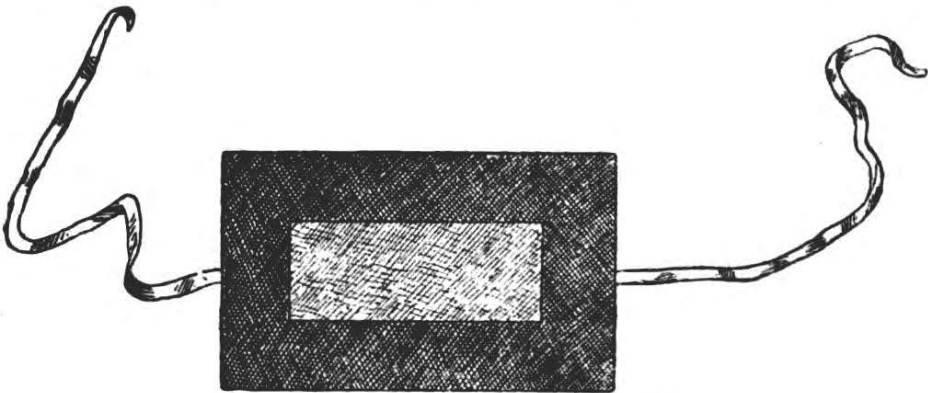


FIG. 25. THE KISS-PROOF CUIRASS.

audience who will hold in front of their mouths two lighted candles, one opposite each mouth, when I will extinguish them with my rifle—the candles I mean, not the gentlemen. (*Two gentlemen come from audience, when the Kiss-proof Cuirass is tied on their mouths; the lighted candles held by them are blown out when the report of the rifle is simulated.*)

I always fire with air guns, because there is less smoke, and as I load them at Brighton or Southend,

when I discharge them the air is filled with sea breezes. Are you ready? (*Simulates firing and gentleman blows out candle and retires.*)

He walks off uninjured and unkissed. This time I fire backwards (*business*) and the second gentleman goes out like the candle. For the last shot I place the cuirass on the distinguished inventor's distinguished mouth and show you a little boomerang firing—the bullet will travel round the gallery (or room), and I must ask my friends not to lean forward, as if the bullet hits their noses and the bridge is broken they won't get over it.

(*Herr holds lighted candle—marksman fires and points at bullet going round the room and then points to candle, which, after several attempts, Herr succeeds in blowing out, when he bows and marksman fetches pillow.*)

This is the Perfect Cuirass—the Midsummer '94 cuirass with all the modern improvements. If you are not being shot at you can use it as a chest protector. If your indigestion is out of order and you do not wish to die jest (digest) yet you will find it effective as a liver pad. If you want a harness belt—you'd better buy this (donkey collar). At sea, if you fall overboard it makes an excellent life-buo. Travelling you need not go first-class if you have a cuirass. All you do is to place the cuirass on the

seat of a third-class carriage, when you will enjoy all the delights of travelling first-class without going to the necessary expense; and further, should there be an accident and the seat of the carriage be smashed, the cuirass will prevent your being impaled by the splinters.

The price of this cuirass when new laid is £150,000, but to anyone who comes to us with the cash in hand they can have it for 7s. 6d. : this is the *maxim*\* price. I will now have a shot or two at the inventor.

To show you the resisting power of the cuirass, I shall use a 91-ton gun, but the ladies need not be alarmed, as I always use violet-powder, so the puff will not alarm them. This is a well-behaved gun—it was formerly a canon of St. Paul's, but I never keep guns that don't act properly, as any gun in my service that misbehaves itself is immediately discharged.

*(Bring in toy cannon.)*

Are you ready, Herr Oihl? One, two—.

*(Policeman enters and whispers.)*

Ladies and gentlemen, I have just heard from the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Germans, who say this is a dangerous performance and cannot be

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\* Maxim is the name of the inventor of a cheap cuirass.

allowed. I shall therefore imitate the cannon and go off quietly; you will hear no report when I go off, though you may see one in to-morrow's newspapers,

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## HYPNOTISM.

### Preliminary Remarks.

UNDER the various titles of electro-biology, mesmerism, etc., a peculiarly unhealthy, and often fatally dangerous, form of entertainment has for years been offered to the public—at present it is called hypnotism—I therefore make no apology for this travesty, as I might do for those on more genuine entertainments. In actual representation confederacy is largely employed, and in "Bunkum" hypnotism this plan of assuring success will be strictly observed. Hypnotism being purely emotional, it is looked upon as a science, so that no make-up is necessary. The pathos in the skit is given with the necessary oratorical flourish.

### The Performance.

Ladies and gentlemen, nothing has more interested the world since the coronation of Oliver Cromwell than hypnotism. Of late years hypnotism has furnished the plot-exhausted novelist with a thesis upon which to formulate, as it were, the fructifications of



his imaginative invention and gather in the fruits of his fiction, the harvest of his literary conceits. It has enabled the playwright to graze, as it were, on fresh pastures, to browse and fatten on the sward of theatrical royalties. It has given him the materials wherewith to build dramatic scenes, hypnotic scenes that have caused audiences to rise from their seats spell-bound, applauding heartily and screaming with delight as they remained transfixed in silent astonishment. They have not only shouted hip-hip-hurrah. but they have shouted hip-hip-hypnotism, and this brings me back to my subject.

Very few of you would believe the cures hypnotism has effected. I know a man who was cured of the tooth-ache before he had it. The powers of hypnotism have changed incorrigible rogues and vagabonds into archdeacons and members of the County Council. There may be many here to-night who would benefit by a little hypnotic treatment; therefore I will, without further oratory, allow you to see for yourselves what an extraordinary science this hypnotism is.

I may mention before I commence that I never kill anyone in the course of my experiments, as it always seems to me to deprive an entertainment, to a certain extent, of its pleasure if an evening's amusement is accompanied by loss of life, and it further has the

effect of making many people reluctant about submitting themselves for experiment.

Will some gentleman kindly step forward and be hypnotised? I will not take his life; of course accidents may happen at any time, but I will be as careful as I can.

Now, gentlemen, walk up, please; no one? Will no gentleman step forward and be made a fool of? No? Then I must use my hypnotic powers and draw a gentleman from the audience (*points and beckons to Confederate, who comes slowly forward, looking at Hypnotic's finger, until his nose almost touches it.*)

*Hyp.* Now, sir, did you ever suffer from chilblains?

*Conf.* (*Meekly.*) Did you say chilblains?

*Hyp.* Yes.

*Conf.* No.

*Hyp.* Then you will do.

*Conf.* (*Goes away.*)

*Hyp.* Where are you going?

*Conf.* Didn't you say "You may go."

*Hyp.* No, I said "You will do."

*Conf.* Oh! do?

*Hyp.* Not "oh! do," simple do.

*Conf.* Did you say this was a simple do?

*Hyp.* Tell me, sir, are you married?

*Conf.* Did you say "Are you married?"

*Hyp.* Yes.

*Conf.* No—not exactly.

*Hyp.* What do you mean, sir ? not *exactly*.

*Conf.* Well, you see that girl over there ?

*Hyp.* With the corkscrew ringlets and smoked spectacles.

*Conf.* No, that's her mother (*laughs*): the girl with the rose, looking at me and blushing, well I—here, let me whisper (*whispers*).

*Hyp.* So that is what you mean by not being actually married.

*Conf.* Yes, I popped the question while you were telling us what tricks you were going to do.

*Hyp.* Tricks !

*Conf.* Yes, conjuring show, ain't it ?

*Hyp.* We shall see. Kindly gaze at me—(a little music, please.) Now, sir, look at me (*makes passes and then claps his hands. Music stops*). Now, you are the champion swimmer of the world.

*Conf.* Quite right.

*Hyp.* All the other swimmers are ready to race you—French, Italians, Irish, Turks, Greeks ; in two minutes you all start.

*Conf.* (*Looking at him, removes coat, then collar and vest.*)

*Hyp.* (*To audience.*) He is now under the influence. He imagines that he is about to sustain the prestige

of our nation in the swimming bath. He prepares for the contest unconscious of all around him. He sees nothing. (*Turns to Confederate.*) I say, that will do, don't remove anything else, you can swim like that.

*Conf.* (*Excited.*) I must win—I'm the champion.

*Hyp.* Yonder is the jumping-off place.

*Conf.* (*Gets on chair, and together both work up the excitement until Confederate dives on to the floor, swims across, turns and swims back, Hypnotic urging him on.*)

*Hyp.* Now, remember, you are the English champion pitted against all Chinese, Turks, and Welshmen.

*Conf.* Yes, I feel them all round me.

*Hyp.* You await the signal gun. (*Blows out paper-bag.*) The crowd are cheering (*blows bag*).

*Conf.* Yes.

*Hyp.* The ladies are—(*blows*).

*Conf.* Yes, yes.

*Hyp.* Waving their hands.

*Conf.* Yes.

*Hyp.* The starter says, One, two, three, the gun fires (*explode bag*) and you're off.

*Conf.* (*Dives on to floor. He should imitate side stroke, turning as though racing, and put any fooling he likes into it. He then gets up and puts on collar, etc.*)

*Hyp.* I now present you with a gold medal, champion of the world. (*Puts a biscuit with a string through it round his neck.*) Stop, you are a statue.

*Conf.* (*Strikes attitude. Music.*)

*Hyp.* Ajax defying the lamp-post. Now you are the "Dying Gladiator—

*Conf.* (*Strikes attitude. Music.*)

*Hyp.* "Butchered to make a Roman holiday." Now you are Napoleon on the Alps.

*Conf.* (*Business.*)

*Hyp.* You are no longer a statue, but a lady of the corps de ballet.

*Conf.* (*Dances to music.*)

*Hyp.* After all I am mistaken; you are a barn-door fowl.

*Conf.* (*Beats sides with arms, and crows.*)

*Hyp.* And now be yourself.

*Conf.* (*Looking at sleeves.*) What am I doing up here in my shirt-sleeves?

*Hyp.* Merely affording me the means of exhibiting my wonderful powers of hypnotism.

*Note.*—It is of course left to the reader to introduce any feature that exhibits special talents. The Confederate may mimic a lady or old man, etc.

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## THOUGHT-READING.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, ah, I have the, ah, honour this evening to give you, ah, a few illustrations of my, ah, marvellous powers of thought-reading. The principal feat I perform is the finding of a pin, and I am sure any lady or gentleman present will understand how difficult it is to find a pin when you want it. Finding a pin is not only the most difficult thing a human being can attempt, but there is no more delightful method of spending a spare evening than in seeing a gentleman—I say gentleman, ah, advisedly, because all thought-readers are gentlemen—try and find a pin; this is not a matter of *opinion* but *fact*, ah—a joke, excuse me. I must ask some member of the audience to lend me a pin, black or white it is *in* material, I mean immaterial—second, ah, joke—ah, don't trouble, I have found one already in my vest, I must have *invested* it—ah, third joke; now will some other joker come on the—some other gentleman, ah—fourth joke—come on the platform? Or will some member of the audience kindly hide this pin while I blindfold myself? (*Confederate takes pin, bends it so that audience can see, and then places it on a chair in auditorium. Thought-reader is all this time bandaging his eyes with his back to audience.*)

Now, sir, lend me your hand, and I must ask you, sir, have you hidden the pin?

*Conf.* I was.

*T. R.* You was?

*Conf.* I mean I did.

*T. R.* Now lend me your hand—how agitated I am!—please don't cough or sneeze in the audience or you will spoil everything—oh, how nervous I am! Where is your hand? Now, sir, think of that pin, fix your mind intently on that pin.

*Conf.* My mind is on the pin.

*T. R.* That's the point—fifth joke! But I am too nervous. (*Gropes about amongst audience, dragging Confederate after him. Always exercising the greatest delicacy, he can pass his hand over people's heads and move amongst audience in a manner that will cause laughter, mistaking bonnets, bald head, etc., for the pin. The fun consists of the assumed terrible earnestness with which this nonsense is usually carried through.*)

*Conf.* That's a lady's bonnet (or, You're in a corner, or appropriate remark).

*T. R.* I shall fail; oh, I feel I shall! Oh, mother, why did you not feed me on Spratts' dog biscuits? Ah, I am on the scent again!

*Conf.* (*Now leads him against his will to where the pin is.*)

*T. R.* I shall fail ! I shall never find that pin. I must rest, ah, a chair (*sits on chair where pin is, jumps up in assumed agony and joy*). Ah, I have found it, I have not failed (*tears off bandage and rushes on to platform*).

That, ladies and gentlemen, concludes the first experiment. There being now no necessity to enforce silence, you are at liberty to applaud.

*Conf.* (*Claps from his seat, which he has resumed.*)

*T. R.* I dare say, ladies and gentlemen, you have observed that no thief or murderer has ever escaped since the invention of thought-reading. They do not attempt it because they know it is useless. Now we will suppose that a member of this audience has committed a terrible murder, slaughtered an innocent babe for the sake of its hoarded millions. The knife with which he committed the deed is buried near the place of the murder. I now blindfold myself and first discover the body (*Confederate leads him down*). Please don't laugh or frown, or it will be impossible—oh, what a state of excitement I am in (*finds a doll under chair*)! Ah, here is the body : now for the murderous weapon (*finds sardine-opener under another chair*). Here is the weapon, and this (*putting hand on a member of the audience, Confederate No. 2*) is the murderer (*removes bandage*).

*Conf. 2.* You say that I am the murderer of that gentleman (*pointing to doll*).



*T. R.* The thought-reader is never mistaken.

*Conf. 2.* You say that I murdered that doll with a sardine-opener?

*T. R.* I do. I am sardine you did (*returns to stage.*  
*Confederate soothes No. 2*). Ladies and gentlemen,  
we will now imagine that a cyclist has stolen another  
man's spanner and gone off with it on his racing  
roadster. I am now going in pursuit of him, and will  
wish you good-evening.

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## PART II.

### MISCELLANEOUS.

#### THE MAN WITH ONE HAIR.

HE was not bald, for on his shining cranium  
Remained one hair, its colour pink geranium.  
Oh, how he idolised that single hair,  
Which, last of loved ones, grew luxuriant there;  
He counted it each morning, fondly viewed it  
This way and that way, carefully shampooed it,  
Combed it, brushed it, scented it, and oiled it,  
Dared scarcely put his hat on lest he spoiled it.  
Arrayed in evening dress for swell society,  
He'd part it in the middle for variety,  
Omitting nothing; with devoted care  
He'd pet his hirsute pride, his single hair.  
But, sad to say, ah, heavy was the blow!  
There came a day, a day of direst woe,  
'Twas in his soup it fell; he quick espied it,  
Then rescued it, and on his napkin dried it.  
"I'm bald at last, oh, bitter, bitter grief!

My only hair has fallen like a leaf.  
What ho ! a taxidermist," shouted he,  
"I'll have it stuffed, for all the world to see ;  
And when within its case of glass installed,  
They'll all perceive I was not always bald !"

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## MONSIEUR JOUE A LA CRICKETTE.

J'AVAIS toujours envie d'être sportsman Anglais  
Quand on joue viz one balle and one bat and one  
vickette,  
On ne peut pas être English until zat von plays,  
A ze jeu national of ze Englishmens, crickette !  
Mais, at first, je demand avant que de jouer,  
Si rien dans ce beau jeu pourrait pas trop me nuire  
Car je n'aime pas les jeux ou il y a du danger.  
On ma dit que la balle etait seulement de cuir  
Ah, c'est bon ! je me dis c'est toujours le meilleur  
moyen,  
De savoir ses affairs just as much as one can.  
I do not eat ze fire, mais je n'en ai pas peur  
One need not be fool to be de rigueur.  
Ze day come of ze match, je pars—zat is I go,  
Et je suis 'd'une humeur et galante et joyeuse  
Comme un natif of England j'ai l'air comme il faut  
Dans mon suit of flannel, and my cricketing shoes,

On m'a dit que je suis square-legged and put me out  
far,

Oh, mon Dieu ! qu'il fait chaud et que le soleil brule.

Je ne bouge pas de longtemps je reste planté là

Et je pense que le game at crickette is a fool ;

Mais tiens, un monsieur come, he take up ze bat

And verever I stand ze balle fly zozare vay.

Je cours comme un lièvre and jump like a cat.

Zo mes mains suffer fort, I cannot l'attraper

Puis il frappe par ci et il frappe par là,

Et je cours, et je cours, and I run, and I run,

Mais avec toutes mes forces, je ne puis pas jeter so  
far

Et je perd mon haleine, et je don't see ze fun.

Zen ze balle fly en l'air he give er soch a smack,

On se cria, "Ders von chance ! cotch 'im out !" I  
prepare,

But she sleep zrew mes mains, into my estomac

And double me up, on dit "Butter fingaire !"

Quand les autres was got out, c'est pour nous to go in,

Tout le monde vient ce grand match to look at

Je mets pads on my finger et pad on my shin.

Prens ze club dans les mains I long for to bat

Je suis prêt, zen ze bowlair run five or seex pace,

Eh morbleu, he do virl ze arm round in ze air,

Et ses jambes et se bras fly all over ze place.

A zat moment I vish dat I 'ad not been zaire ;

Mais je n'avais pas le temps de réfléchir alors  
Car avant de pouvoir m'écrier " Lord, oh my !"  
Je me fis un tel mal que je pense être mort  
For ze sacré dam ball it me right in the eye ;  
Car cette balle allait d'une vitesse affreuse  
Comme un coup de fusil and as 'ard as von stone  
Zat I sort bose ze eye and ze 'ead I might lose  
And I fell viz ze vind from my insides all gone.  
Ces messieurs sont tres bons and a docteur zey seek  
Font tout en leur pouvoir pour me faire vor to see  
Un piece de bifsteak on met sur mon cheek  
On lave mon œil noir avec de l'eau de vie.  
Ven ve take ze refreshment more 'appy I feel  
Je me souviendra toute ma vie of zat lunch,  
Là nous mangeons de lobstaire, rosbif, 'am, and  
veal,  
And I drink portarre bierre zo my eye he 'ave punch.  
But a vorm in ze bud of my 'appiness reign  
Mid de portarre bierre, rosbif, and ozare good zings  
La penseé vish like my poor eye give me pain  
Zat dere vas to follow von second innings.  
Soon ze dreadful time come ven again I go in  
Je prend garde, turn my back and shut bose ze eye,  
Zen ze balle 'it my bat and I run and I run  
J'étais last to go in et nous etions a tie  
C'est moi qui a gagné ze von run and won.  
Je me sentais quite proud in spite of ze blows

For I did on zat day for ze love of ze sport  
Bear ze knocks on ze shin and ze eyes and ze nose  
Comme les Anglais for crickette ! ah, jusq' à la mort,  
Quoique j'aime tous les jeux and ze games I vill play  
Mais vous pouvez parier c'est à dire you may bet  
If I play at lawn tennis, ze golf or croquet  
Plus jamais de ma vie do I play ze crickette.

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## MARVELLOUS ADVENTURES OF A FOUR-WHEELER.

### Preliminary Remarks.

THIS sketch should be given in a cabby's get-up—cape, oilskin, badge, whip, etc., just as though he had come in out of the street.

### The Performance.

*As told by a Cockney Cab-driver.*

Ladies and gents, my respects to you, and don't you all get the fidgets about my 'orse outside, a-thinkin' as 'ow he'll run away, 'cause he won't, for the fact is he 'ave died almost, so to speak, on the doorstep; yes, excuse me a-crying, but there he is standing in the gutter as dead as you or me might be if we wasn't alive. Failure of the 'art's action vas the cause of it. If a 'orse's 'art don't hact, well, it soon tells on his con-

stitootion. I shall 'ave to get him out of the 'arness and drag the wehicle 'ome myself. If I leaves him a-standing in the gutter it looks better than seeing 'im a-lying in the road, and the dustman will take him away in the morning if 'e ain't prevusly appropriated by the rag and bone merchant.

'Osses dies werry often with me. I buys 'em so young that they often hexpire a-cuttin' of their teeth. I remembers a 'oss a-dying with me—well, if I didn't tell yer this circumstance myself, what is the most voracious cabby whatever breafed, you wouldn't believe it; but, 'appening to 'ave drived the hanimal myself, I can wouch for the truth of what I'm a-telling yer, and so I wouches.

Vell, I vas a-drivin' a hold hinvalide gent to catch a train for the seaside. I had just took a patient to the small-pox 'orspital—though why they calls it a 'orspital when it's not for 'orses I don't know—when the afore-mentioned hinvalide gent 'ails me from his willa, and directly I checks my Arib barb in 'is 'eadlong career in he jumps, afore I could set light to the straw at the bottom of the cab and fumigate the wehicle, or rub it over with raspberry winegar, which I usually does on such occasions.

"Drive on, coachman," screams the hinvalide afore-mentioned, "£5 if you catches the train to Herne Bay. My 'oss was a Herne Bay, so I says, "Right!" and I

whips up my Herne Bay with the butt end of my whip, and 'er henginees begins to vork, but it was a 'ard struggle! Two miles up 'ill and we'd been a travelling day and night for a week vithout no sleep nor food; but the whip wasn't quite wore out, so I urged the animal up the 'ill, and ven ve gets to the top the faithless creature gives a sort of hinnard bust and caves in. The cab stood for a moment balinced right on the werry top of the 'ill, whereupon the afore-mentioned hinvalide, what 'ad 'ailed me from his willa and got into the very vehicle afore I 'ad 'ad time to disaffect it, puts 'is 'ead hout of the vinder and yells, "What's the matter?"

"The 'oss 'ave only stopped to tie er shoelace, Guv'nor," I says, trying to be cheerful and amusin'.

"Don't make a hass of yourself," says the afore-mentioned hinvalide.

I vishes I could, thinks I, I'd soon get the cab to the station; but as it was, there was my £5 clean gone, for there was the 'oss a-sinking to the hearth. I gives the reins a pull and puts 'er on 'er legs again, a-lifting the deceased quadruped horf the ground. When I does so I a-suddenly feels the cab a-movin' forward—a actually going down the 'ill by its own spelific gravy. I whacks into the dead 'oss to please the afore-mentioned hinvalide inside, what 'ad 'ailed me from 'is willa and got into the cab afore I 'ad time to disaffect it, and who was a-catching of the small-pox faster than we



was a-catching of the train, until I lifted the 'oss orf the ground, then we went like the—well, I never went so fast when the hanimal was alive. When ve gets a-going too fast I lowers the 'oss on the road, which hacted as a brake, don't yer see? Then I 'auls 'im horf when I wants to go quicker, and on we goes, a-tearin' along as it's only possible to go when you've got a dead 'oss to drive down 'ill and £5 when you gets to the bottom.

The first mile wore off the hanimal's legs, the second its stummick, and when we got into the station—and you may believe me or not as yer thinks proper—there wasn't nothink left but the stumps of the shafts. I got my £5, the hinvalide afore-mentioned, what 'ad 'ailed me from his willa and got in the cab afore I 'ad time to disaffect it, caught the train and the small-pox, and I a-strolls 'ome with the cab a-buying a noo bonnet for the missus and getting a ounce of shag for myself, and I says to the missus when I 'ad told 'er the story—“Truth is stranger than fiction,” I says. “Your truth is, Bill,” says she; and I says to her, “There's a lot of people wouldn't believe that story;” and she says, “I'm one on 'em,” says she, but though that vas eight year ago she vears that bonnet to this day. And as for me, I don't drive no four-wheelers no more, no, I drive 'an 'ansom, for I don't want sich a thing to 'appen to me again like wot I've told you.

## HANS THE BOOTS AND THE BRANDY.

### Preliminary Remarks.

To make this sketch effective a wooden table should have a number of boots on it, a bottle of brandy, or toast and water in brandy bottle.

The dialogue must be spoken with a German accent, and the make-up should be a German cap, light hair, blouse, etc.

The gradual weakening of his resolve and the final giving way to temptation must be well studied and expressed.

### The Performance.

Vell dot make me laugh, you know. I vas gleaning de poots in dis hotel, and some Englishmen, who dinks dey knows everyding, says to me, "Hans, ve make a pet about you mit dose poots." (*Cleans boot.*) "So?" Dey say "ja!" unt it vas dis. "On your table you vill see a half-sovereign, dot vas ten shilling in gold, also you vill see a pottle of pranty; now ve pet you ten shilling you can't glean dose poots mitout trinking dot pranty. If you does glean dose poots mitout trinking dot pranty, ve give you de ten shilling half-sovereign." I says, "Gentlemen, you don't know Hans,

he can trink de pranty mitout gleaning de poots. I mean trink de poots mitout gleaning de pranty. Vell, you knows vat I means," unt dey laughs, and den I goes to mine table, and dere, so soon already vas de ten shilling, also de pottle of pranty, and of course dere vas de dirty poots. Dey don't know Hans, dose Englishmen. (*Takes up boot and begins cleaning it.*) Hans soon gets dese poots gleaned, den he trinks de pranty, und den he takes de money. (*Brushes.*) Hans vill haf de poots done, de money spent, and de pranty drunk before dey can say spillerhausenhoffenchuseneinvigshaffengeburghdeheinvellspurtzenlarger. (*Brushes.*) Of course, until de pranty—I mean de poots is bolished, I do not touch de pranty. (*Pause, looks at it.*) Vell, it don't matter, I joost bolish de poots first, ven dot is did I haf de pranty und ten shilling—six pottles of pranty ve may call it. I soon get through. (*Stops and looks at brandy.*) I suppose I may look at de pottle. I vas a bit close eyesighted so I boot de pottle dere (*places bottle in front of him*), only to look at it, I know de vager; perhaps it don't be pranty at all! Vell den, I take de money, put now I glean de poots. (*Brushes.*) It looks like pranty, but perhaps it don't be goot pranty. Vell, it don't matter, till I have gleaned de poots I mustn't touch it. (*Brushes.*) It may be goot, or it may be pad, but dot don't matter now (*pause, looking at bottle*), but still dose young

men may be only making a fool of me. I tink I should know if it vas pranty. I should know dot. Hans should know vere he are. (*Puts down boot and takes up bottle, eyes it, removes cork.*) How easy de cork come out! dey vas smart dose Englishmen to have de cork so easy. If I vas going to trink it—but I vas not such a fool. (*Smells cork.*) I smell de cork, dot vas all. Vat a nice smell, vat goot pranty. (*Smells cork.*) I smell de cork once more again. Smelling de cork ain't trinking. (*Replaces cork.*) Ven I do dese poots (*takes one up and continues brushing*) I can smell six corks mit de ten shilling. It vas a nice smell dat cork, so refreshing! luffy! but only to smell de cork ain't to be satisfied dat it is goot pranty. It may smell all right, but (*puts down boots, takes up bottle, and removes cork*) when you trink it do it taste? (*Lifts bottle to lips and puts it down.*) But de taste don't come till de poots is finished. (*Corks bottle and continues brushing boots.*) Who knows but dat might be some cork from some other pottle? If I vas joost to boot a little of de pranty on mein vinger and den licked mein vinger dot vas not trinking. (*Puts finger to bottle, tilts bottle, and licks finger.*) How goot it dastes! but den props dot's mein vinger vat dastes so goot. I must dry mit-out mein vinger or I shall not be satisfied. (*Drinks from bottle.*) Dot vas not mein vinger, dot vas de pranty. I thought if I didn't use mein vinger I should

find out if it vas de pranty. (*Drinks again.*) Oh, das ist besser als goot! Dot dastes goot! It vas so long time since I vas dasting such pranty as dot. Vonce in der Faterland I trink so goot pranty. Yes, I dink it vas so goot as dis, I dink it vas, but I can't make sure. (*Drinks.*) No, dot pranty I had in der Faterland vas not so old like dis. (*Drinks.*) Vot is de goot of smelling corks ven you can find out so much more quicker by—(*Drinks.*) Look at dose stupid poots vaiting to pe gleaned. My friends, you must learn to glean yourselves. (*Drinks.*) Vot vos I doing mit so much poots, I have only got (*hic*)—only got (*looking at feet*) four feet. Vats de matter? Der two pottles, dey var poth empty. Ven dose Englishmen come pack, I shall say, "You see, gentlemen, de poots is all pright and sparkling like de dewdrops, and de pranty"—ach Himmel! I have lost mein ten shilling—no, it vas dere. I dake it and get a man to glean de poots, and get the pranty pottle filled. Dey don't get de (*hic*) best of Hans. (*Tries to pick up money.*) I dakes de ten shilling (*tries again*)—I dakes de ten shilling (*tries again*). Vat a mean drick! It vas screwed to de table, and dey come und found only von poot gleaned. Vell, vat matter if dey don't find *me*! I've had de pranty and dot vas goot pranty, and dam if I glean dem poots. (*Exit.*)

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**COMMON-SENSE.****Casabianca.**

THE boy stood on the burning deck,  
Whence all but he had fled,  
He calmly thought the matter out,  
And this is what he said :  
“ It’s rather rum that dad don’t come,  
The wessel is a-blazing,  
And all the sparks is at their larks  
And jumps about amazing.  
He’d say ‘ Oh, fudge ! ’ if I did budge  
When ‘ e ‘ave told me not to ;  
But I ain’t learnt that to be burnt  
Is to do what you’ve got to.  
If I stays here it’s very clear  
I’ll need no coach and hearses,  
For I’ll cremate to personate  
The hero of some worses.  
The sort of rhymes at Christmas times  
That schoolboys likes reciting,  
When lads like me gets burnt at sea  
Or summat else exciting.

Why should I brown to bring renown  
To some 'alf starvin' poet,  
When I can dive and keep alive?  
No, not if I do know it.  
To stay and bake and take the cake  
As an 'ero is all rot;  
I will not cook, but sling my 'ook  
Afore it gets too 'ot.  
Why act the part of the faithful 'eart  
For lit'ry chaps' palaver?  
Never fear, I don't stay 'ere,  
It's *Mother* waits for *Father*."  
The boy stood on the sea-washed shore  
Beside his dripping dad,  
Who, when he saw his clothes were singed,  
Did straightway cuff the lad.  
He cuffed till with a deaf'ning sound  
The wreck blew up at sea,  
And when he turned to cuff again,  
The boy—Oh, where was he?

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### THE PHONOGRAPH.

THE phonograph, the phonograph,  
'Tis a wonderful thing, the phonograph;  
But what happened to me will make you laugh,  
When I brought home a new phonograph.

I felt rather gay,  
So I thought I'd essay  
How a kiss would come out  
In a phonograph way.  
I said "Oh, you darling! delighted to meet you,  
With a chaste osculation permit me to greet you;"  
Then I fired off a regular volley of kisses  
Like a parting salute of a school of young misses.  
But Jane, who that moment came in at the door,  
And never had heard such a sound there before,  
Said, "Oh, sir, how can you? What are you doing?"  
"Oh, Jane!" I exclaimed, "there is mischief a-  
brewing.  
How could you with such indiscretion address me,  
Why not in some silent way seek to repress me?  
As sure as your mistress comes home from her  
walking  
This horrid machine will set to a-talking;  
And things will be lively 'tween you and your missis,  
For when, after 'darling' and hundreds of kisses,  
Your voice exclaims, 'Oh, sir!' and 'what are you  
doing,'  
She'll be sure to suppose it was *you* I was wooing."  
"Oh, drat it!" cried Jane, as she lifted her broom.  
"If I'd known it I wouldn't have entered the room!  
But I'm sure I won't let such an insinuation  
Be the means of my losing a good situation.



And if there's no other way out out of it, dash it!  
I'll give it a crack with my broom and I'll smash it."  
And crash on the floor, broken in half,  
Fell the wonderful phonograph.

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### THE EDITORIAL GOAT.

WHAT am I looking at, Guv'nor?

Why, the Editor's office up there,  
Which ye finds if yer goes down that alley  
And climbs up the rickety stair;  
There you'll see the plates what 'e heats off  
A-covered on top with a tin.

Lor! 'e lives like a foine lady's lap-dog,

While me, what's 'is brotherly twin—  
But ye don't want to know about *me*, sir,  
Though you'll pardin a tear if it comes,  
It's 'ard to see him lease a willa

While I gets distrained in the slums.  
But it ain't of 'is orfice I'm thinkin',  
Or the paper or books what he's wrote,  
What I want is what's caged by 'is side, sir,  
A mangy old she billy goat.

Ah! I fort you'd be askin' me that, sir,  
Why he keeps that there animal there,

A-makin' the place smell quite awful,  
A-taintin' the pure Fleet-street air.  
We was twins—'im and me vas,  
With always a dry kind of throat,  
So ven mother givs out over both, sir,  
Vy 'im over there sucked the goat.  
It took to 'im just like a kid, sir,  
For she'd 'eard father call 'im one p'raps  
So mother kep on nursing me, sir,  
'E looked to the goat for 'is schnaps.  
In the yard vere that goat vas a brousin'  
Vas papers and books for to eat,  
With a lustrious comical journal,  
Throw'd in by vay of a treat.  
So in course, it's quite natural, you see, sir,  
When my twin was a-taking 'is drink,  
For the noos what the old goat 'ad swallowed,  
To set on my brother to think.  
And afore he could 'ardly speak, sir,  
'E could write them their articles prime.  
And dash off a leader like Winky  
And collar 'is penny a line ;  
While for me there is only the vorkus  
Vere my vife an' the brats now all dwells ,  
But if I'd 'ad a pull at that goat, sir,  
I could write like them noospaper swells,  
Go 'ome to my 'ouse in a 'ansom,

'Ave viskies at pubs all day long,  
Vere a noo 'at an' boots—patint leathers,  
I tell yer I would come it strong.  
But that goat vat's a sort of step-mother  
Can never do nuffin' for me,  
'Cause it really belongs to my brother,  
Whose as mean as a covey can be.  
Some person 'ave stole yer gold ticker,  
You thinks as yer just feels it go?  
Vell, I guess I'll turn in for a liquor  
While you looks about in the snow.  
An' next time ven ye sees a chap starin'  
Don't trouble yourself about 'im,  
Or you may 'ear another long story,  
'Bout a bloke an' 'is 'evingly twir.

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## PART III.

### DRAWING-ROOM COMEDIES.\*

#### THE PROPOSAL. (Monologue.)

*Scene, a room. Doors C. and L. Table, on which is a photo in frame. Picture of Middleweight on wall.*

#### The Performance.

*Enter Mr. Horatio Benedek C., removing hat as he does so.*

Ah, she is not here! So much the better. It gives me a moment to breathe—a brief and last chance to consider the wisdom or folly of the important step I am about to take. Matrimony *is* an important step to a man who from his earliest youth upwards has been a bachelor, and marriage with a widow is entering the matrimonial stakes handicapped; for what does a bachelor know about matrimony? Nothing, except what he reads in the divorce cases and breach of

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\* Public performing rights can be obtained at small cost on application to the Author.

promise suits. And what does a widow know—a woman who has seen it all, from the day she said, “Henry, dear, this is so sudden,” and accepted him; from the time of plighting her troth at the altar to putting her husband in his coffin and planting him ’neath the weeping willow? Why, she knows everything.

The world should have pity upon me at this moment, for I am like a swimmer standing on the brink of bachelordom, about to plunge into the ocean of matrimony; and what fate awaits the swimmer? Conjugal cramp, domestic drowning, the whirlpools of wedded life, adverse connubial currents, social storms—I dread to think of it; but I am here to do the deed, and as I don’t propose not to propose, propose I will.

I will place my hat and stick somewhere. In these matters of love-making, especially in the case of widows over forty with copious waists, the hands have other employment than holding hats and sticks. I will put them here. (*In placing hat and stick on table he sees widow’s portrait and regards it as he slowly removes his gloves.*) There she is, the pretty, slim little Miss Darlington that was. Look at her now! That comes of marrying a butcher and eating rump steaks at every meal (*regarding portrait critically*). Rather imperious—Miss Darlington had a bit of a temper, I remember, which, if I may judge from this photo, she has assiduously

cultivated. (*Takes up photo.*) "An eye like Mars, to threaten and command," as the poet says. Good old poet! How these fellows hit off the truth, and yet he lived three hundred years ago—yes, before Mrs. Middleweight, *née* Darlington, was born. (*Puts down photo.*) How time flies! When I knew Belle Darlington I wore my own hair and didn't know I had a liver. I remember taking her for a walk, when she treated me to lunch, and we had buns, shrimps, and ginger-beer. (*Shudders.*) The thought of it makes me shiver. Well, we get older as we advance in years, and as we get older we begin to consider the advisability of settling and taking to oneself a wife—in my case somebody else's wife, the wife of a defunct butcher, who has now no further use for her, a man who has left her better-off—yes, a woman is better off who is not married to a butcher!

If she lives over the shop, is happiness possible in summer? If she is not over the shop, she would be put in a glass case at the back with an account book and nothing to look at but sanguinary carcasses, and nothing but a bunch of flowers in a tumbler to counteract the atmosphere. But the shop is sold, so I need not enter into the shop. (*Walks about room.*) So that is Middleweight. (*Regards portrait on wall.*) A capital specimen of a cheap oil painting with a complexion the colour of a veal cutlet (*moves*), and eyes

that follow me about as though I intended to steal the ink. I shall take Middleweight's picture down and put it in the bath-room. I wouldn't have that fellow's eyes follow me about like that for anything. What was that? I thought I heard a door open. (*Goes to door L.*) No, there does not appear to be anybody. I was afraid it was Middleweight's relict swooping down upon me like a hungry kestrel before I was ready. I'll put my gloves in my hat. (*Does so.*) No, if I do that she will think I haven't got any. I will lay them on the side of the brim. What was that? How nervous I am getting! Of course I am impatient to clasp her in my arms and gaze into her eyes as she whispers in my ear, "Horatio, I am thine!"—of course she may not say that; she may say, "Horatio, I am yours," or she may say, "My heart is another's," and show me the door.

Everything depends on the way these things are done. She enters there. (*Indicating door L.*) The servant said she was at home, so she won't come in from the street. I bow in a graceful manner, so; she sits on that chair and I sit here; I lean my arm upon the table and gaze into her face, so; she blushes on that chair; I place my arm round her waist. (*Tries.*) Chairs are too far apart. (*Moves chairs closer.*) That is better. I put my arm round her waist—let me see, have I proposed to her yet? If not, I had better leave her waist alone until I am accepted. I say (*kneels*),

"Dearest Arabella" (*rises*)—Arabella, what a brute of a name! I wonder it never occurs to godfathers and godmothers that they seriously hamper a girl's matrimonial prospects by calling her Arabella. A man can only change surnames—surnames, good idea! perhaps it would sound more courteous to say, "Dear Mrs. Middleweight." (*Kneels.*) "My dear Mrs. Middleweight"—but then she isn't *mine* till she accepts me, so I shall say, "Dear Mrs. Middleweight, what solace can I offer you? What crumb of comfort is there with which I can fill your aching bosom? What can I suggest, Mrs. Middleweight, that will better fill the void created by the departed butcher?"—perhaps "dear departed" would sound better—"what would fill the place of the dear departed better than a matrimonial substitute, a husband who has not departed, a husband who is a possibility of the future, a man who, though not possessing the hoarded millions of his predecessor, has a wealth of affection, a personal loveliness, to which the butcher was a comparative stranger." (*Rises.*) No, I don't think that will do; I mustn't run down the butcher too much to start with. I had better dwell upon the loneliness of her position, the dangers to which a lovely young—I think I might say young without overdoing it—the dangers to which a lovely young woman—young and accomplished—she plays "Home, Sweet Home" on the piano with one



finger, so I'll say accomplished. Then speak of her lacerated heart that has thrown its tendrils round the defunct butcher and which now seeks solace of a similar kind; then allude to the advantages of matrimony. Advantages! who to? who gains the advantage? If I intended that she live with me I could speak of the advantages of my chambers off Bond Street to a dreary house in Notting Hill. When I come to think of it, I don't know that I care to live in Notting Hill. I may not be allowed a latch-key, possibly expected to go to bed at 10 o'clock and to church twice a day, possibly be compelled to teach in a Sunday-school, not allowed to smoke, and be deprived of my club. (*Takes up hat, stick, and gloves.*) Egad! when I come to think of it, I don't think I'll propose at all. (*Exit.*)

*Curtain.*

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LIKE MISTRESS, LIKE MAID.

(Duologue Comedietta.)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MAJOR DE LAIN. . *An Indian Officer in search of a Wife.*

MISS FOTHERINGAY . *An Heiress who assumes the character of her maid.*

*Scene—Drawing-room. Doors R.C. and L. Window L.C. Looking-glass over fire-place L. Vase of flowers on table, also bell, chairs, etc.*

### The Performance.

*Enter Miss Fotheringay L., carrying a servant's cap and apron in her hand; she goes to door R.C. cautiously, then looks out of window L.C., and then puts on cap and apron as she talks. Her dress should be tight-fitting and of a dark material that with cap and apron suggests a servant-maid.*

*Foth.* Really, Pa thinks that he can order a daughter's feelings and affections about as though they were a regiment of soldiers. I wonder he didn't say (*mimics*), "'Tention! prepare to receive matrimony—engagement commences to-day," instead of pulling his white moustache and saying, "Margaret dear, de Lain and I have been discussing our children's future, that is, your future, Margaret, and that of his son Henry, and nothing we find will make us happier than a union between the two families, so I have invited the Major to call on you this afternoon. He has come over to England to take back a wife to India, and I hope his choice will fall on Margaret Fotheringay;" and I, Margaret Fotheringay, respectfully decline to be trotted out for inspection and approval; but Major de Lain is so well spoken of that I will see him, not as myself,

but in the character of a servant, which this plain dress and this cap and apron will allow me to adopt, when, if I find that he is not—like many others—merely attracted by my fortune, I may accept him as a lover, and I shall announce his arrival to my other self; but if he prove as the rest, Miss Fotheringay will be “not at home.” (*Knock.*) How he startled me! (*At window.*) It is *he*, I suppose! I wonder if my cap is all right. (*Arranges it at glass, L.*) James has my instructions.

*De Lain.* (*Outside.*) Miss Fotheringay at home?

*Foth.* It is my military suitor. (*Runs to door and quickly turns handle.*)

*Butler.* (*Outside.*) Yes, sir; walk in, sir.

*De Lain.* (*Outside.*) In here?

*Foth.* (*Opening door wide.*) This way, sir, if you please, this way.

*Enter Major—goes down C.*

*Major.* (*Flurried and excited.*) Humph! not a bad style of house, and I dare say if critically examined would give some index to the character of its charming inhabitant, for, of course, the woman you intend marrying—that is, proposing to—must be charming; but, egad! I am too nervous to do anything of the kind. Never felt in such a flurry in all my life, but then I have never proposed before—that is, nothing stronger

than a game of billiards or a rubber of whist. Where did I put my hat? (*Takes it off.*) On my head, I declare—I thought I'd lost it—the hat I mean.

*Foth.* (*Has closed door with a smile and then regarded the Major critically, comes down and stands R. very demurely.*) What name, sir?

*Major.* Name, egad! yes. (*Smiles to her.*) She ought to know that if she intends to adopt it. (*Puts on hat and fumbles in pockets for card-case.*) Where's my card-case?

*Foth.* (*Coming down R. and indicating breast-pocket.*) Try the other pocket, sir.

*Major.* Eh? (*She touches breast-pocket.*) I'm hanged if it isn't there (*feeling outside*)—excuse me being hanged—military ejaculation. (*Produces card-case and opens it.*) Sharp girl that (*looks from card-case to her*), not bad-looking either (*looks from card-case to her after fixing eye-glass*)—devilish good-looking. (*Gives card and drops eye-glass.*) There you are, my dear.

*Foth.* Thank you, sir. (*Goes to door L. reading card, but stops, smiles, and demurely comes down L. during his next speech.*)

*Major.* (*Crossing to R.*) Military fathers are so tyrannical. Because my dad and General Fotheringay arrange a marriage between Miss Margaret and myself, they seem to think everything is settled and that a

week is ample time for me to come here, propose, get married, and start with my wife to join my regiment in India. Whether I propose or not depends on what I think of the lady. Hang it! a man should have something to say in regard to whom he marries, if he can't choose his father and mother. (*Sees Foth.*) What's the matter?

*Foth.* This is a lady's card, sir. (*Hands it to him.*) I don't think I'd let my mistress see that, sir.

*Major.* (*Confused.*) No, it's an aunt of mine.

*Foth.* Yes, sir. Shall I take your hat, sir?

*Major.* Where is it?

*Foth.* (*Points to it.*)

*Major.* (*Who has stick in one hand and card-case in the other, finds difficulty in taking off hat, whereupon she removes it.*) Thanks. (*Looks for card.*)

*Foth.* (*Puts hat on side of her head and walks up stage in masher style and places it on chair. Directly she faces audience her face and attitude are very demure.*)

*Major.* (*Fumbling with card-case and eye-glass.*) Stupid of me giving her that card; but I am in as great a state of excitement as if this were a military, and not a matrimonial, engagement. Didn't know I had it in my case: a red-headed girl I met on board ship, who was returning, single. Smart of her not to have taken it in—that would have settled me with the heiress. Where are the cards?

*Foth.* (*At R.*) Shall I take your stick, sir?

*Major.* Thanks. (*Gives it.*)

*Foth.* (*Makes a few fencing cuts behind him and puts it up stage.*)

*Major.* (*Removes left glove and takes stage, L.*)  
A neat little woman that. Very demure; almost too serious, yet I think she smiled slightly when she handed me back that compromising card, but that may have been accidental. (*Goes R.*)

*Foth.* (*Comes down L.*) Shall I take your coat and glove, sir?

*Major.* Yes; if there's to be an engagement I'd better prepare for action. (*Smiles.*)

*Foth.* (*Demurely.*) Thank you, sir. (*Puts on glove when a little up stage, and putting arm round overcoat waltzes up stage with it.*)

*Major.* That girl's too serious (*at card-case*); she's seen a lot of trouble. (*Pause.*) Miss Fotheringay has heaps of money, my father says so. He's one of the executors, so he ought to know—good looks, good temper, good breeding.

*Foth.* (*Comes down R.*)

*Major.* Good gracious! Here's the maid again. (*Takes off frock coat and throws it to her mechanically.*)

*Foth.* Do you undress to propose—I mean propose to undress?

*Major.* Undress? Of course not; plunging into matrimony is not bathing in the Serpentine.

*Foth.* No, sir. A gentleman should press his suit when it's on.

*Major.* Then give me back my coat or my suit will be off. (*Attempts to take it.*)

*Foth.* Allow me. (*Holds coat.*)

*Major.* Oh, thanks; but, really I cannot allow you to—thanks. (*She assists him on with coat, leaving collar up, and waits.*) What now?

*Foth.* (*L.*) The other glove, sir.

*Major.* No, I think I'll keep it on, and I fancy I shall feel more at my ease if I have my overcoat, hat, and stick.

*Foth.* (*Goes up stage and collects things.*)

*Major.* I'll get out a card while my hands are still free. (*Puts a card, after looking at it very carefully, in his mouth and replaces case.*)

*Foth.* (*Coming down.*) There are your things if you feel lonely without them.

*Major.* (*Speaking with card in teeth.*) Thanks. (*Takes hat and puts it on her head, then puts on overcoat, she helping him and giving as much trouble as possible. He then takes hat, stick, and glove.*) Thank—you—I'm—sure—you—are—just—like—a—clerk—in—a—cloak-room.

*Foth.* I shall be more so when you give me your ticket.

*Major.* There you are. (*She takes card from his mouth, she smiles as she takes it.*) (*Aside.*) What a heavenly set of teeth!

*Foth.* (*At door L.*) I'll go and tell my mistress you are here, sir.

*Major.* (*R.*) No, don't go—not yet—don't leave me—with only one glove.

*Foth.* (*L.*) I beg your pardon. Here it is. (*Offers it.*)

*Major.* That was a subterfuge.

*Foth.* (*Looking at it.*) It's a glove now, anyway. (*Gives it and goes up L.*)

*Major.* Don't misunderstand me. You see before you a man who is in want of an adviser, a friend, at a most critical period of his existence. Come here, I want to speak to you.

*Foth.* (*Coming down slowly and demurely.*) But my mistress, sir.

*Major.* Hang your mistress!

*Foth.* Sir!

*Major.* Military ejaculation—that's all. (*Seizes her wrist.*) Behold in me a man on the verge of committing—

*Foth.* (*Shrinking from him.*) Murder?

*Major.* Worse.

*Foth.* Ah!

*Major.* Matrimony. The next half-hour will decide my fate. Your mistress is about to accord me an inter-



view, I shall ask her to be mine, and we, that is, you and I, will be separated for ever. (*Wipes eye with the glove in his hand and goes R.*)

*Foth.* (*Sucking her wrist and looking at him.*) We shouldn't be separated if you married us; but s'pose she refuses you?

*Major.* Refuses me! How the devil can she refuse me? Excuse the devil—military ejaculation—she can't refuse me.

*Foth.* Well, I don't know so much about that, sir. I have refused a gentleman like you before now.

*Major.* The deuce you—excuse the deuce—military ejaculation—was he a soldier?

*Foth.* Yes, sir, a private gentleman—in the militia.

*Major.* But I am an officer.

*Foth.* (*Coquettishly.*) I've refused officers too.

*Major.* You have? They must have looked pretty blue afterwards.

*Foth.* They did, sir. They were police officers.

*Major.* Police officers. Ha, ha!

*Foth.* There is nothing to laugh at, sir.

*Major.* No, you're right. I should feel sorry—sorry for them—for you really are a very pretty girl, and have as neat a little waist—(*puts his arm round her.*)

*Foth.* You mustn't do that, sir. (*Releases herself.*)

*Major.* Do you mind?

*Foth.* No, sir, but John wouldn't like it.

*Major.* John?

*Foth.* The young man that comes from the Window Cleaning Company to do the windows.

*Major.* A man come here to clean the windows and—oh, I'll put a stop to that!

*Foth.* (*Slyly.*) If you marry us?

*Major.* Yes, I'll have such work done by the household.

*Foth.* May I do it?

*Major.* Certainly, if you like.

*Foth.* I do, for nothing shows a girl's figure to greater advantage than a neat print dress and a seat on the window-sill, when her arms are raised over her head in graceful sweeps across the grimy pane, and the strings of her pretty white cap floating in the wind. Then what a sense of conquest she experiences while looking coquettishly over her shoulder into the admiring street below, as she perceives the early clerk from the heights of the inexpensive 'bus throw her a passing kiss as he is whirled to his commercial labours.  
(*Goes to R.*)

*Major.* (*Comes to L.*) Humph! perhaps the male window-cleaner is best after all—but I shall sack that fellow John.

*Foth.* (*Going up R.*) I will tell my mistress you've come, sir.

*Major.* No, not yet, don't be in such a violent hurry. Are you not aware of the exceptional character of my visit?

*Foth. (Turning.)* There is nothing exceptional about it—you've come to pop the question, I suppose?

*Major.* You suppose?

*Foth.* Yes, the poppers always do come about this time. They pop in, pop, and pop off again very quickly.

*Major.* Do they?

*Foth.* Yes, sir. (*Coming down R.*) Between you and me, sir, mistress is almost too particular. Always something wrong with her mashes, they don't pop in the right way, their neckties ain't straight, moustaches out of curl, or something else that soon gets them sent about their business.

*Major.* Egad! it is fortunate I had a chat with you first.

*Foth.* Very; 'cause if I take a fancy to you, you're pretty safe with (*points thumb L.*)—and you wouldn't make a bad master, you're nice and friendly, you are.

*Major.* I'm glad you (*puts arm round her waist*) think so.

*Foth.* You don't keep a girl at a distance.

*Major.* No; oh, no! (*Draws her closer.*) I don't know your name.

*Foth.* Thompson.

*Major.* How can a fellow call a pretty girl Thompson?

*Foth.* If it wasn't wrong to behave like Christians, you might call me Margaret. (*Forgetting herself.*)

*Major.* Margaret? why, that is your mistress's name!

*Foth.* "Like mistress, like maid," they say.

*Major.* But they don't say like mistress, love maid, do they? (*Kisses her.*)

*Foth.* (*Wiping lips with apron.*) Was that a military ejaculation?

*Major.* No, that was a military salute.

*Foth.* (*Off guard, laughs.*) Not at all bad.

*Major.* You like it. (*Attempts to kiss her again.*)

*Foth.* (*Keeping him at arm's length.*) I meant your joke, not your misbehaviour.

*Major.* (*To L.*) 'Pon my soul, I like you!

*Foth.* (*Mimicking him.*) 'Pon my lips, I believe you!

*Major.* You have a smart tongue.

*Foth.* You didn't make that smart. (*Rubs lips.*)

*Major.* Now, come, if you think I will prove a kind and affectionate master, tell me how to choose the right casket.

*Foth.* (*Off guard.*) Do you imagine that Bassanio had a friend at Court when he won Portia?

*Major.* (*Regarding her with surprise.*) Well, yes; I indulged in a simile.

*Foth.* A very pretty one. I am delighted to find that you read Shakespeare, for my mistress's sake. I will tell you which is the casket, or, what is the same thing, how to win Miss Fotheringay, the heiress. (*Crosses to R.*)

*Major.* And I somehow don't seem at all eager to know.

*Foth.* (*Looks pleased, then acts her part.*) What's the matter with you?

*Major.* I've changed my mind—I mean—

*Foth.* Do you wish to be refused? Do you desire (*sob*) that we should be separated for ever? (*Sobs, goes up R.*)

*Major.* No, Thompson—I mean Margaret.

*Foth.* (*R.U.E.*) You will do your best to marry us?

*Major.* Yes. (*Crosses R.*)

*Foth.* (*Crosses to L.C. and turns.*) Then I will be Miss Fotheringay and put you through your paces. (*In military style*) 'tention!

*Major.* (*At attention.*)

*Foth.* (*Coming down.*) Now you are not going to stand like a tailor's dummy in a fit, are you?

*Major.* Tailor's dummy in a fit?

*Foth.* Well, a *misfit* if you prefer it, stand more this way (*L.C.*); you should try and look elegant.

*Major.* Elegant? then I'll take off my overcoat. (*Removes coat.*)

*Foth.* (*Takes it and puts it down.*) That's better, now place your left arm akimbo, so! holding your hat in the hand, so! (*Indicates.*) The knob of your stick should rest on the lower lip, so! (*Indicates and retreats to judge effect.*) I think a twist of the moustache would suggest. (*He raises his hand, which she arrests.*) Allow me—don't move. (*Twists moustache.*) An air of authority, a "see the conquering hero comes" sort of effect. Your collar is up. (*Business.*) Don't move, I'll put it right. (*Regards him critically.*) Turn your toes out; now, you don't want me to do that for you, do you? (*He turns his toes out.*) Clever boy! Where is your eyeglass? All right, I've got it. (*Puts it in his eye.*) There! (*Regards him.*) No, I think it will look better in the other eye. (*Changes eyeglass.*) Coat's rather dusty for a man who is about to propose! What's this? a hair! (*Holds fingers a few inches apart and then increases distance, looking at him reprovingly.*) A lady's hair! (*Matches it with her own.*) I see, it's one of mine, so it doesn't matter. (*Retires and regards him.*) You must have some flowers in your button-hole, it shows a desire to please horticulturally. (*Takes flowers from vase, which are long, and in putting them in his coat the flowers keep going in his face.*) There, you look quite captivating, I shouldn't mind paying for a photograph of you like that—if it didn't cost more than sixpence. Your best smile for Miss Fotheringay;

stand still and I'll show you how she'll come in. (*Exit door L.*)

*Major.* (*After long pause.*) That girl is making a fool of me—there was no need to do that.

*Enter Fotheringay.*

(*She walks into the room with an absurd assumption of pride and disdain, passing round room and past the Major, whom she regards scornfully, and finally, with great fuss, seats herself in arm-chair.*)

*Foth.* (*Seated.*) So, sir, you are the person what have come to propose?

*Major.* Bless my life, will she say that?

*Foth.* Bless my life, will *you* say *that*? Go on, sir.

*Major.* Excuse me—ahem! Miss Fotheringay, at my father's earnest request I have called to ask you a question which is made more easy, I mean less difficult, by the way you show your fee——

*Foth.* (*Covering feet hastily.*) Eh?

*Major.* Feelings.

*Foth.* (*Relieved.*) Ah!

*Major.* The way you—you——

*Foth.* (*Dramatically.*) Listen to the outpourings of my bursting heart.

*Major.* That's not what I intended saying.

*Foth.* That's what she likes—you must remember you are proposing to a woman.

*Major.* Your cordial greeting and hearty welcome.

*Foth.* That sentence strikes me as being a little tautological, but 'twill serve; only be a little more passionate in your language.

*Major.* (*With assumed passion.*) To see you is to open the floodgates of my heart. (*Pause.*)

*Foth.* What do you stop for if the floodgates are open?

*Major.* And in a burst of extemporaneous and spontaneous——

*Foth.* What nice long words.

*Major.* Eloquence——

*Foth.* Go on, don't stop.

*Major.* (*Fumbling in pockets.*) I've lost my speech.

*Foth.* Eh?

*Major.* The written one, I mean. May I change my position?

*Foth.* Yes, it's getting a little monotonous.

*Major.* (*Puts his written speech in hat.*) Where was I?

*Foth.* Stuck in the floodgates.

*Major.* (*Reading.*) I implore you to be mine, on my knees——

*Foth.* Down on your marrow-bones, dearest!

*Major.* (*Kneeling.*) I forgot that. I ask you, dearest—dearest——

*Foth.* (*Prompting.*) Margaret.



*Major.* Dearest Margaret, to be my wife. Let me kiss your lily hand.

*Foth.* Which is that?

*Major.* Either. (*Takes her hand.*) How white it is!

*Foth.* Go on with the proposal.

*Major.* And placing this ring on its finger ask you to be my bride.

*Foth.* Now, get up and brush your knees. (*Crosses to R.*)

*Major.* (*Rises, brushes knees, and crosses L.*) You think I did that pretty well?

*Foth.* (*Taking his arm and looking up at him.*) Yes, you dear old thing!

*Major.* (*Starting.*) Dear old thing?

*Foth.* Yes, I don't know your other name.

*Major.* De Lain.

*Foth.* A girl can't call a chap De Lain. What is the one represented by H.?

*Major.* Henry—but why?

*Foth.* Why—you know why, Henry. (*Looking at ring on her finger.*) I feel as you felt when you couldn't call me Thompson. Kiss me, Henry.

*Major.* I don't mind doing that. (*Salutes.*)

*Foth.* Oh, isn't it nice—when you are engaged—(*leans head on his shoulder.*)

*Major.* Yes, but don't you think you'd better give me back that ring now and tell your mistress I'm here.

*Foth.* Give you back the ring?

*Major.* Yes.

*Foth.* After all you said?

*Major.* Come, there's a good girl!

*Foth.* (*Goes up L.*) Then you don't care for me?

*Major.* I do care for you. Do I not give you proof of the interest I take in your advancement by desiring to marry your mistress? You see, I've known you such a short time.

*Foth.* (*Turns.*) But you've made such good use of your short time, and though it is short it's longer than you have known my mistress, and you kissed me—kissed me several times, and said you couldn't call me Thom—Thom—Thom—oh, dear! (*Sobs.*)

*Major.* There, don't cry, it was only my fun.

*Foth.* (*Sobs.*) Oh, dear! oh, dear!

*Major.* (*Comes to R. as she goes up stage to L. C.*) Confound it! I came to propose, but I didn't mean to do it wholesale in this way. There's nothing to cry about, my girl.

*Foth.* (*Turning.*) Not for you, sir, you are a regular Don Jones, and you've broke my ha-ha-heart. (*Sobs.*) Take my ring—oh, dear, I'll go and tell my mistress you are here—oh, dear, to part like this when I had got so fond of you! (*Exit crying, L.*)

*Major.* 'Pon my word I never felt such a cad in all my life. The girl naturally fell in love with me.

There's sympathy at the bottom of it. What eyes she has! what a figure! and that demure face of hers. Gad! she's an angel, that's what she is! Nobody would know who she was out in India, and as the wife of Major de Lain she'd hold her own with any of them; and what a soldier's wife she'd make. Humph, there's no doubt about it, I have fallen in love with the maid instead of the mistress. I'll ring and ask her to be mine. (*Rings bell and crosses to R.*)

*Foth.* (*Enters L.*) Mistress will come down directly, boo—boo—(*Going.*)

*Major.* Don't go.

*Foth.* I can't stay. (*Getting closer to him.*) I can't stay, sir.

*Major.* I behaved very badly to you just now.

*Foth.* T—T—T—Thompson.

*Major.* Hang Thompson!—I beg pardon.

*Foth.* Don't, sir; I understand, sir, (*sobs*) one of your military ejaculations. (*Sobs.*)

*Major.* Yes, that's all. Tell me, Margaret (*embracing her tenderly*), if the proposal we rehearsed just now were reality, would you give up the window-cleaner and accept me.

*Foth.* (*Wiping her eyes and looking up.*) You are so handsome, Henry!

*Major.* Yes, I know that; but your answer is scarcely a sequiter.

*Foth.* I don't understand you, sir.

*Major.* If I were to ask you to marry me in earnest, would you leave your mistress and be mine alone?

*Foth.* It would be difficult for me to leave Miss Fotheringay.

*Major.* I can understand that.

*Foth.* (*Aside.*) Can you? (*Shows lady's card.*) But will you give up your aunt and be mine alone?

*Major.* (*Takes card and tears it up.*) You will follow me to India, Margaret, dearest!

*Foth.* I could keep you out of mischief better if I went with you, Henry, darling. But have you fully considered what you are doing, Henry? If you marry me you are not, like a dutiful child, doing what your ma and pa told you, you are refusing to marry a lovely young lady, an heiress—

*Major.* I've thought of all that.

*Foth.* You are making a mess-alliance and run the risk of being cut off with a shilling—you are marrying a servant.

*Major.* I've thought of all that.

*Foth.* Had I not better return the ring? (*Takes it off and offers it.*)

*Major.* No, Margaret, my mind and heart are fixed. If you are content to face the future with me, be my wife. (*Embraces her.*)

*Foth.* Miss Fotheringay is here.

*Major.* (*Looking round.*) Where?

*Foth.* (*Removing cap.*) Here! Where she ought to be on the day of her betrothal, in the arms of her future husband. (*Laughs and releases herself, Major looks on dumbfounded.*) Ha! Ha! Don't you understand? I am Miss Fotheringay. But, there, you don't want a long speech. (*Rings bell.*) When I've changed my frock we will meet again at dinner, and meantime James will take you to papa, when you will, without going into particulars, tell him that I am ready to obey his wishes. (*Major kisses her hand.*)

*Curtain.*

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## A ROMANCE OF THE PAST.

(Comedietta.)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CAPTAIN HERBERT	} <i>Travellers.</i>
LADY MANLOVE	

MRS. BUFFET. . . *Landlady of the "Ploughshare."*

*Scene—Room at an Inn. Door R.U.E. Window C.*

*Properties—Plates, wine-glasses; for supper—fowl, water-cresses, etc. Rose for Captain Herbert.*

*Mrs. Buffet setting supper. (If there is a curtain she is discovered, if not she enters with tray and proceeds.)*

It is the way of the world, "it never rains but it pours," and now it rains in the company pours. For weeks nothing comes to the "Ploughshare" but a neighbour's chicken in search of breadcrumbs, and now my house is full of sheep-shearers, cattle-drovers, and such-like respectable people, what should drive up but a fine carriage with a grand lady sleeping inside and a young man sitting on the spikes outside. They alighted together, and are now quarrelling as though

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\* A detailed description of the method of fitting up a scene with rods and curtains will be found in "Amateur Entertainments, and How to Organise Them."

they were man and wife. I hope they are, for this is the only room I have left.

*(Noise outside. Buffet opens door R.U.E.)*

*Enter Lady Manlove, closing door and holding it.*

*Lady M. (Speaking to outside.)* If you do not cease to annoy and follow me I will send someone to you who will bring you to your senses. *(Shuts door.)*

*Buffet. (Aside.)* It's not her husband! Perhaps they'll make it up. Poor young man, why do you send him away?

*Lady M.* Why do I send him away? An impertinent stranger who persists in following me here. Tell me, can I engage this room?

*Buffet.* Certainly, madam.

*Lady M.* But you have laid supper for two!

*Buffet.* One plate for you and one for the young man.

*Lady M.* Tell the coachman to put the horses to; I will leave your Inn at once.

*Buffet.* Leave my Inn?

*Lady M.* Yes, I will endure this persecution no longer. How do you expect me to sit down to supper with a person I do not know?

*Buffet.* That would be the way to make his acquaintance.

*Lady M.* I do not desire his acquaintance—leave the table—I will pay for both. *(Gives money.)*

*Buffet.* A guinea, that is exactly your amount.

*Lady M.* And should my husband arrive you will show him up—tell him supper is waiting—that I am waiting, and advise that young man to keep out of his way.

*Buffet.* (*Aside.*) She's married! That young man can't have supper here. If he wants female society he shall have a basin of soup with me. (*Exit R.U.E.*)

(*Lady Manlove sits in arm-chair L, and warms her hands at fire.*)

*Lady M.* Ah me! when my friend at Greystone Castle hears of my adventures she will not blame me for being a day late, and with one horse lame she will wonder I ever reached her at all. She says I am going to meet my fate, this seems a country for devoted lovers, for even now I have to pretend that I expect a husband to avoid one being forced upon me.

(*Noise outside. Lady M. looks out at window.*) A traveller at this hour of the night. He dismounts from his horse. They appear to be directing him to this room. They suppose he is the husband I spoke of and are sending him up to his wife; a nice state of affairs. I must not stay here. (*Creeps to door. Hears Captain and stops R.C.*)

*Capt.* (*Outside.*) No, thank you, I can find it.

*Buffet.* (*Outside.*) In there, sir—in there.



*Capt. (Outside.)* You will see to my mare ?

*Lady M. (Comes down and stands at door with her back to audience, as he enters she hands him end of her cloak, which he holds to his breast as he enters ; she tries to escape but is caught.)* Sir, you have caught me.

*(Lady M.R. Captain L.)*

*Capt. (Raising hat.)* I beg a thousand pardons.

*Lady M.* Your button has caught my cloak.

*Capt.* Or your cloak that has caught my button.

*Lady M.* It amounts to the same thing.

*Capt.* Yes, but what a ridiculous position to be placed in !

*Lady M.* Most ridiculous !

*Capt.* But not unpleasant.

*Lady M.* Take care, sir—you will entangle me again.

*Capt.* A further proof of attachment—I trust mutual attachment. There ! *(Releases her, and goes L.C.)*

*Lady M. (Curtseys.)* Good-night, sir !

*Capt. (Going down left.)* Good-night, madam !

*Lady M. (Low curtsey.)* Good-night, sir ! *(Exit R.U.E.)*

*Capt. (Low bow.)* Good-night, madam ! A very fine-looking woman—a lady too ! What on earth can she be doing in a place like this ? Bad roads, I suppose ; but for the weather I should have got to Greystone

Castle before bedtime. (*Smiles.*) However, to-morrow will be time enough to hear the old lecture again about bachelors in general and myself in particular.

*Enter Buffet with fowl and watercress.*

*Capt.* Ah! just what I am dying for.

*Buffet.* (*Putting watercress, etc., on table.*) And how do you find your wife?

*Capt.* (*Astonished.*) My wife? (*Aside.*) What is the old woman talking about? You will see to the mare?

*Buffet.* (*Not hearing him.*) When you leave you go together?

*Capt.* Of course we do—poor old Bess!

*Buffet.* His wife's name's Elizabeth.

*Capt.* Let her be rubbed down before she has any supper.

*Buffet.* Your wife?

*Capt.* Wife? no, the mare.

*Buffet.* Ah, then you didn't know your wife was here?

*Capt.* (*Aside.*) Didn't know that I was married. My wife, eh!

*Buffet.* Yes, sir, she's been expecting you.

*Capt.* Indeed! What sort of looking woman is she?

*Buffet.* Sir!

*Capt.* It may be somebody else's wife.

*Buffet.* (*Lifts plates.*)

*Capt.* Two plates, I can't sit down with a cattle-driver.

*Buffet.* No, this is for your wife.

*Capt.* My wife—the lady that was here, of course I recognised her—quite right, I'll pay. (*Gives guinea.* Where is she?

*Buffet.* I'll go and fetch her. (*Exit.*)

*Capt.* What strange adventure is this? A lady in distress evidently, perhaps I can be of some assistance (*Noise outside.*) Hullo! here she is, and what a temper; I don't quite like it, but it's too late to retreat (*Retires L.C.*)

*Enter Lady M. and Buffet.*

*Lady M.* Have my horses put to, I shall depart immediately. I will be persecuted no longer.

*Capt.* (*Aside.*) She has been persecuted.

*Buffet.* Persecuted with cold fowl and water-cresses.

*Lady M.* Oh, would I had a protector!

*Capt.* (*Aside.*) She wants a protector; shall I risk it?

*Lady M.* You may tell that young man that he will see my husband sooner than he expects.

*Buffet.* Well, there he is to speak for himself.

*Capt.* Pardon me, my dear love, for intruding myself so abruptly but—but, how do you do?

*Lady M.* Oh, my husband! how singular!

*Capt.* (*Aside to Lady M.*) Leave everything to me and rely upon my discretion. Shall we have supper?  
(*Offers chair, etc.*)

*Lady M.* I shall be charmed.

*Buffet.* Charmed! my old man hasn't been charmed since we was married. (*Exit.*)

*Lady M.* (*Distantly.*) Now, sir, if you will have the goodness to retire. (*L. of table.*)

*Capt.* Madam, if you will do me the honour to remain. (*R. of table.*)

*Lady M.* Sir, I asked you to——

*Capt.* And I begged you to partake of my supper.

*Lady M.* Pardon me, the supper is mine.

*Capt.* I have paid for it.

*Lady M.* And so have I.

*Capt.* Then we should compromise the matter by supping together.

*Lady M.* Well, if it be but for the singularity of the adventure I accept your proposition. (*He offers chair, they sit, he carves.*)

*Capt.* Madam, will you allow me to help you?

*Lady M.* Thank you. (*Any business with serviettes, etc.*)

*Capt.* (*Carving.*) This fowl must have been a lover

*Lady M.* How do you know that?

*Capt.* It is so remarkably tender.

*Lady M.* You are learned on such matters, sir?

*Capt.* No, madam, my knowledge of the tender passion is merely theoretical, I am woefully ignorant of its practice. Allow me to give you a merry-thought.

*Lady M.* Thanks! 'Tis strange how soon travellers become acquainted.

*Capt.* Very, particularly when they are physiognomists. Have you studied the science, madam?

*Lady M.* Well enough to form an opinion of you.

*Capt.* Be frank—tell me my character—and oblige me with the salt.

*Lady M.* You are——

*Capt.* Yes, madam, I am——

*Lady M.* Good-tempered, courteous, and a man a woman could trust.

*Capt.* Madam, you are very polite! I will give you a glass of wine for that. (*Pours out wine, they touch glasses.*) Now, madam, allow me to read your face. (*Regards her.*)

*Lady M.* You make me blush.

*Capt.* You mustn't blush till your face is read. In the first place you have beautiful eyes!

*Lady M.* Sir, I cannot allow you to—(*looking away and holding up left hand.*)

*Capt.* Do allow me to offer you—(*Hands watercresses.*)

*Lady M.* No, not one—(*Puts hand on watercresses.*)

*Capt.* Watercress.

*Lady M.* (*Laughing.*) Oh, I thought you meant—

*Capt.* Compliments? oh, dear no, quite the contrary, I am unskilled in flattery! (*They eat.*) I presume you travel for amusement?

*Lady M.* And you—I suppose you only seek pleasure?

*Capt.* If I did, since I have met you my journey would be at an end.

*Lady M.* No more——

*Capt.* Fowl?

*Lady M.* No, compliments.

*Capt.* Must my compliments cease with the supper?

*Lady M.* I am very tired, so will thank you for having enlivened a dreary meal, and wish you good-night. (*Rises.*)

*Capt.* (*Rises.*) Shall I see if your carriage is ready?

*Lady M.* (*Cross to door R.*) I will not trouble you.

*Capt.* (*Cross to L. down stage.*)

*Lady M.* The door is locked!

*Capt.* Allow me to open it.

*Lady M.* Impossible, it is locked on the outside. It is the landlady's plan to preserve us from intrusion. Really, this is the most embarrassing situation a lady was ever placed in. (*She crosses stage, he always doing the same thing.*)

*Capt.* Do not distress yourself, *I* will not leave you.

*Lady M.* (*Crossing.*) That is the worst of it. Why do they not come and say my carriage is ready?

*Capt.* Because they suppose that you have met your—husband.

*Lady M.* Must *I* stay here all night—and with you? (*Cross.*) Oh, this is too horrible!

*Capt.* Well, if you are so particular *I'll* divide the room. (*Lays down riding-whip in centre.*) There, you shall have the half with the supper. (*Moves table R. for business at window later.*) Now (*rolling up gloves*) shall we play catch-ball or ask riddles?

*Lady M.* This matter is too serious to be made a joke of; you must go.

*Capt.* It is very easy to say "go," but she has locked the door.

*Lady M.* (*Coolly.*) There is a window.

*Capt.* Really, madam!

*Lady M.* Think of my reputation.

*Capt.* Think of my neck.

*Lady M.* (*Impatiently.*) Are you a gentleman?

*Capt.* Possibly; but *I* am not an acrobat.

*Lady M.* This is an affair of honour, sir.

*Capt.* No, madam (*looking out of window*), it is an affair of distance—a few feet less and *I* should have jumped at it.

*Lady M.* Then you refuse my small request?

*Capt.* Small (*opening window and looking out*), it's thirty-five feet deep if it is an inch; but I never refuse a lady, so here goes. (*Gets out of window, and looks down.*) A trellis, and not so very rotten—and now for it.

*Lady M.* (*Gives him his hat.*)

*Capt.* (*Takes it, puts it on.*) Thank you, I had better not catch cold in my head, though I break my neck.

*Lady M.* Good-night!

*Capt.* (*Getting lower.*) I am going as fast as I can. (*Disappears.*)

*Lady M.* He has saved my reputation.

*Capt.* (*Outside a few laths are broken and voice heard afterwards.*) Oh, my knee!

*Lady M.* (*Kneeling on window-seat and looking out.*) There he goes. I hope he won't fall. Why, he's coming back. (*Closes window, walks on tip-toe to arm-chair, and pretends to sleep.*)

*Capt.* (*Hand first appears on window-sill with rose in it, afterwards his head appears and he looks in.*) have brought you a rose—they are rare so late in the autumn.

*Lady M.* (*Crossing to window.*) I thank you, your path is strewn with roses.

*Capt.* And thorns too. I suffer for your sake, madam.

*Lady M.* (*Gaily.*) And so raise yourself in my estimation.

*Capt.* I feel I am lowering myself. (*Disappears.*)



*Lady M. (Leaving window.)* Brave fellow, he jests at danger. What a strange meeting! (*Sits L.* And now he is gone and I may never see him again. (*Barking of dogs outside.*) What's that?

*Capt. (Appearing at window.)* I have had a narrow escape!

*Lady M.* I did not know there was a dog there.

*Capt.* Neither did I till I got down.

*Lady M.* I assure you I felt for you.

*Capt.* So did the dog.

*Lady M.* Did he bite?

*Capt.* Began at my boot, and having gnawed one of my spurs (*or gnawed the heel off according to dress*) thought I was too tough to be eaten. (*Getting in.*)

*Lady M. (Rises.)* Pardon me, you must not come in

*Capt.* Have you any objection to my hanging on to your window-sill?

*Lady M.* No, you will look like a red rose.

*Capt.* Yes, I feel like a climber.

*Lady M. (Reseats herself in arm-chair.)*

*Capt.* Madam, what made you put up at a wretched inn like this?

*Lady M.* To escape from the addresses of an importunate stranger.

*Capt.* That's too bad, when I am risking my life to satisfy your notions of decorum.

*Lady M.* I was not referring to you.

*Capt.* To whom, then?

*Lady M.* To a young man who followed me here.

*Capt.* Oh, indeed! Where is he now?

*Lady M. (Carelessly.)* Oh, hanging about somewhere.

*Capt.* What, on the outside of the house, like I am? Really you treat your lovers very badly.

*Lady M.* You are not presumptuous enough to consider yourself a lover?

*Capt.* No, I am only your husband, you remember. I wonder if every married man feels as happy and comfortable as I do?

*Enter Mrs. Buffet.*

*Buffet.* Lawks a'mercy, what's the matter with the good man?

*Capt.* Nothing, I was only cooling myself; help me in—thanks! (*Enters.*)

*Buffet.* Oh! if you please, madam, the young man—

*Capt.* I'd quite forgot about the young man.

*Buffet.* He says you're not the lady's husband, that he'll shoot the gentleman, and he'll see that this makes a pretty noise in the neighbourhood. (*Exit in a flurry.*)

*Capt.* The young vagabond. (*Takes up whip.*)

*Lady M.* My reputation will be lost for ever.

*Capt.* Madam, I will allow no lady to suffer injury on my account.

*Lady M.* But you will be shot.

*Capt.* I am hit already.

*Lady M.* Where?

*Capt.* (*Hand to heart.*) Here. Will you be my wife?

*Lady M.* But this is so sudden.

*Capt.* I know it is, but there is not a moment to be lost, your reputation, my very existence, depends on your answer—madam, I'll be shot if you don't marry me.

*Lady M.* (*Smiling.*) Then I suppose I must.

*Capt.* Of course you must, and I am a respectable member of society at last. (*Kisses her hand.*)

*Enter Mrs. Buffet.*

*Buffet.* If you please, madam, the coachman says one of the horses is too lame to get to Greystone Castle.

*Capt.* Oh, have no fear, I am going to Greystone Castle!

*Lady M.* But you are not a horse.

*Buffet.* If your husband——

*Lady M.* My what?

*Capt.* Husband, my dear; she said husband.

*Lady M.* Oh, she said husband!

*Buffet.* If the gentleman would allow his mare to——

*Capt.* I should be delighted!

*Buffet.* Delighted! married people are not delighted.  
(*Exit.*)

*Capt.* And so we meet, Lady Manlove, for I am sure it can be no other.

*Lady M.* And have I put Captain Herbert out of window?

*Capt.* No, you didn't put me out at all. See, the day is breaking bright and rosy.

*Lady M.* And the dark night and its horrors have passed away.

*Capt.* (*Putting on his cloak.*) A strange adventure, is it not?

*Lady M.* Very, quite a romance.

*Capt.* Yes, quite a romance.

*Enter Buffet.*

*Buffet.* We have harnessed the mare and the carriage is ready.

*Lady M.* I cannot sufficiently thank you, Captain Herbert, good-bye! (*Crosses R.*)

*Buffet.* Is the husband to walk?

*Lady M.* (*To him.*) May I offer you a seat in my carriage?

*Capt.* Charmed, I'm sure! (*Crosses.*)

*Buffet.* Madam will recommend "The Ploughshare?"

*Lady M.* Certainly; an inn that provides a husband for the price of a supper deserves encouragement.

*Capt.* Yes, landlady, when we pass this way again you shall have our custom, and we'll chat over this strange meeting as a Romance of the Past.

*Curtain.*