

OUR STREET FOLK.

I.—STREET EXHIBITORS.

PUNCH.

THE performer of Punch that I saw was a short, dark, pleasant-looking man, dressed in a very greasy and very shiny green shooting-jacket. This was fastened together by one button in front, all the other button-holes having been burst through. Protruding from his bosom, a corner of the pandean pipes was just visible, and as he told me the story of his adventures, he kept playing with the band of his very limp and very rusty old beaver hat. He had formerly been a gentleman's servant, and was especially civil in his manners. He came to me with his hair tidily brushed for the occasion, but apologised for his appearance on entering the room. He was very communicative, and took great delight in talking like Punch, with his call in his mouth, while some young children were in the room, and who, hearing the well-known sound of Punch's voice, looked all about for the figure. Not seeing the show, they fancied the man had the figure in his pocket, and that the sounds came from it. The change from Punch's voice to the man's natural tone was managed without an effort, and instantaneously. It had a very peculiar effect.

"I am the proprietor of a Punch's show," he said. "I goes about with it myself, and performs inside the frame behind the green baize. I have a pardner what plays the music—the pipes and drum; him as you see'd with me. I have been five-and-twenty year now at the business. I wish I'd never seen it, though it's *been* a money-making business—indeed, the best of all the street exhibitions I may say. I am fifty years old. I took to it for money gains—that was what I done it for. I formerly lived in service—was a footman in a gentleman's family. When I first took to it, I could make two and three pounds a-day—I could so. You see, the way in which I took first to the business was this here—there was a party used to come and 'cheer' for us at my master's house, and her son having a hexhibition of his own, and being in want of a pardner, axed me if so be I'd go out, which was a thing that I degraded at the time. He gave me information as to what the money-taking was, and it seemed to me that good, that it would pay me better nor service. I had twenty pounds a-year in my place, and my board and lodging, and two suits of clothes, but the young man told me as how I could make one pound a-day at the Punch-and-Judy business, after a little practice. I took a deal of persuasion, though, before I'd join him—it was beneath my dignity to fall from

a footman to a showman. But, you see, the French gennelman as I lived with (he were a merchant in the city, and had fourteen clerks working for him) went back to his own country to reside, and left me with a written kerrackter; but that was no use to me: though I'd fine recommendations at the back of it, no one would look at it; so I was five months out of employment, knocking about—living first on my wages and then on my clothes, till all was gone but the few rags on my back. So I began to think that the Punch-and-Judy business was better than starving after all. Yes, I should think anything was better than that, though it's a business that, after you've once took to, you never can get out of—people fancies you know too much, and won't have nothing to say to you. If I got a situation at a tradesman's, why the boys would be sure to recognise me behind the counter, and begin a shouting into the shop (they *must* shout, you know): 'Oh, there's Punch and Judy—there's Punch a-sarving out the customers!' Ah, it's a great annoyance being a public kerrackter, I can assure you, sir; go where you will, it's 'Punchy, Punchy!' As for the boys, they'll never leave me alone till I die, I know; and I suppose in my old age I shall have to take to the parish broom. All our forefathers died in the workhouse. I don't know a Punch's showman that hasn't. One of my pardners was buried by the workhouse; and even old Pike, the most noted showman as ever was, died in the workhouse—Pike and Porsini. Porsini was the first original street Punch, and Pike was his apprentice; their names is handed down to posterity among the noblemen and footmen of the land. They both died in the workhouse, and, in course, I shall do the same. Something else *might* turn up, to be sure. We can't say what this luck of the world is. I'm obliged to strive very hard—very hard indeed, sir, now, to get a living; and then not to get it after all—at times, compelled to go short, often.

"Punch, you know, sir, is a dramatic performance in two haets. It's a play, you may say. I don't think it can be called a tragedy hexactly; a drama is what we names it. There is tragic parts, and comic and sentimental parts, too. Some families where I performs will have it most sentimental—in the original style; them families is generally sentimental theirselves. Others is all for the comic, and then I has to kick up all the games I can. To the sentimental folk I am obliged to perform werry steady and werry slow, and leave out all comic words and business. They won't have no ghost, no coffin, and no devil; and that's what I call spiling the performance

entirely. It's the march of hintellect wot's a doing all this—it is, sir. But I was a going to tell you about my first jining the business. Well, you see, after a good deal of persuading, and being drew to it, I may say, I consented to go out with the young man as I were a-speaking about. He was to give me twelve shillings a-week and my keep, for two years certain, till I could get my own show things together, and for that I was to carry the show, and go round and collect. Collecting, you know, sounds better than begging; the pronunciation's better like. Sometimes the people says, when they sees us a coming round, 'Oh, here they comes a-begging'—but it can't be begging, you know, when you're a hexerting yourselves. I couldn't play the drum and pipes, so the young man used to do that himself, to call the people together before he got into the show. I used to stand outside, and patter to the figures. The first time that ever I went out with Punch was in the beginning of August, 1825. I did all I could to avoid being seen. My dignity was hurt at being hobligated to take to the streets for a living. At fust I fought shy, and used to feel queer somehow, you don't know how like, whenever the people used to look at me. I remember werry well the first street as ever I performed in. It was off Gray's Inn, one of them quiet, genteel streets, and when the mob began to gather round I felt all-overish, and I turned my head to the frame instead of the people. We hadn't had no rehearsals aforehand, and I did the patter quite permiscuous. There was not much talk, to be sure, required then; and what little there was, consisted merely in calling out the names of the figures as they came up, and these my master prompted me with from inside the frame. But little as there was for me to do, I know I never could have done it, if it hadn't been for the spirits—the false spirits, you see (a little drop of gin), as my master guv me in the morning. The first time as ever I made my appearance in public, I collected as much as eight shillings, and my master said, after the performance was over, 'You'll do!' You see I was partly in livery, and looked a litt'le bit decent like. After this was over, I kept on going out with my master for two years, as I had agreed, and at the end of that time I had saved enough to start a show of my own. I bought the show of old Porsini, the man as first brought Punch into the streets of England. To be sure, there was a woman over here with it before then. Her name was—I can't think of it just now, but she never performed in the streets, so we consider Porsini as our real forefather. It isn't much more nor seventy years since Porsini (he was a werry old man when he died, and blind) showed the hexhibition in the streets of London. I've heard tell that old Porsini used to take very often as much as ten pounds a-day, and he used to sit down to his fowls and wine, and

the very best of everything, like the first gennelman in the land; indeed, he made enough money at the business to be quite a tip-top gennelman, that he did. But he never took care of a halfpenny he got. He was that independent, that if he was wanted to perform, sir, he'd come at his time, not your'n. At last, he reduced himself to want, and died in St. Giles's workhouse. Ah, poor fellow! he oughtn't to have been allowed to die where he did, after amusing the public for so many years. Every one in London knowed him. Lords, dukes, princes, squires, and wagabonds—all used to stop to laugh at his performance, and a funny clever old fellow he was. He was past performing when I bought my show of him, and werry poor. He was living in the Coal-yard, Drury-lane, and had scarcely a bit of food to eat. He had spent all he had got in drink, and in treating friends,—aye, any one, no matter who. He didn't study the world, nor himself neither. As fast as the money came it went, and when it was gone, why, he'd go to work and get more. His show was a very inferior one, though it were the fust—nothing at all like them about now—nothing near as good. If you only had four sticks then, it was quite enough to make plenty of money out of, so long as it was Punch. I gave him thirty-five shillings for the stand, figures and all. I bought it cheap, you see, for it was thrown on one side, and was of no use to any one but such as myself. There was twelve figures and the other apparatus, such as the gallows, ladder, horse, bell, and stuffed dog. The characters was Punch, Judy, Child, Beadle, Scaramouch, Nobody, Jack Ketch, the Grand Senoor, the Doctor, the Devil (there was no Ghost used then), Merry Andrew, and the Blind Man. These last two kerracters are quite done with now. The heads of the kerracters was all carved in wood, and dressed in the proper costume of the country. There was at that time, and is now, a real carver for the Punch business. He was dear, but werry good and hexcellent. His Punch's head was the best as I ever seed. The nose and chin used to meet quite close together. A set of new figures, dressed and all, would come to about fifteen pounds. Each head costs five shillings for the bare carving alone, and every figure that we has takes at least a yard of cloth to dress him, besides ornaments and things that comes werry expensive. A good show at the present time will cost three pounds odd for the stand alone—that's including baize, the frontispiece, the back scene, the cottage, and the letter cloth, or what is called the drop-scene at the theatres. In the old ancient style, the back scene used to pull up and change into a gaol scene, but that's all altered now.

"We've got more upon the comic business now, and tries to do more with Toby than with the prison scene. The prison is what we calls the sentimental style. Formerly

Toby was only a stuffed figure. It was Pike who first hit upon hintroducting a live dog, and a great hit it were—it made a grand alteration in the hexhibition, for now the performance is called Punch and Toby as well. There is one Punch about the streets at present that tries it on with three dogs, but that ain't much of a go—too much of a good thing I calls it. Punch, as I said before, is a drama in two hacts. We don't drop the scene at the end of the first—the drum and pipes strikes up instead. The first act we consider to end with Punch being taken to prison for the murder of his wife and child. The great difficulty in performing Punch consists in the speaking, which is done by a call, or whistle in the mouth, such as this here." (He then produced the call from his waistcoat pocket. It was a small flat instrument, made of two curved pieces of metal about the size of a knee-buckle, bound together with black thread. Between these was a plate of some substance (apparently silk), which he said was a secret. The call, he told me, was tuned to a musical instrument, and took a considerable time to learn. He afterwards took from his pocket two of the small metallic plates unbound. He said the composition they were made of was also one of the "secrets of the pufession." They were not tin, nor zinc, because "both of them metals were poisons in the mouth, and hinjurious to the constitution.") "These calls," he continued, "we often sell to gennelmen for a sovereign a-piece, and for that we give 'em a receipt how to use them. They ain't whistles, but calls, or unknown tongues, as we sometimes names 'em, because with them in the mouth we can pronounce each word as plain as any parson. We have two or three kinds—one for out-of-doors, one for in-doors, one for speaking and for singing, and another for selling. I've sold many a one to gennelmen going along, so I generally keeps a hextra one with me. Porsini brought the calls into this country with him from Italy, and we who are now in the pufession have all learnt how to make and use them, either from him or those as he had taught 'em to. I larnt the use of mine from Porsini himself. My master whom I went out with at first would never teach me, and was werry partickler in keeping it all secret from me. Porsini taught me the call at the time I bought his show of him. I was six months in perfecting myself in the use of it. I kept practising away night and morning with it, until I got it quite perfect. It was no use trying at home, 'cause it sounds quite different in the hopen hair. Often when I've made 'em at home, I'm obliged to take the calls to pieces after trying 'em out in the streets, they've been made upon too weak a scale. When I was practising, I used to go into the parks, and fields, and out-of-the-way places, so as to get to know how to use it in the hopen hair. Now I'm reckoned

one of the best speakers in the whole pufession. When I made my first appearance as a regular performer of Punch on my own account, I did feel uncommon narvous, to be sure: though I know'd the people couldn't see me behind the baize, still I felt as if all the eyes of the country were upon me. It was as much as hever I could do to get the words out, and keep the figures from shaking. When I struck up the first song, my voice trembled so as I thought I never should be able to get to the hend of the first hact. I soon, however, got over that there, and at present I'd play before the whole bench of bishops as cool as a cowcumber. We always have a pardner now to play the drum and pipes, and collect the money. This, however, is only a recent dodge. In older times we used to go about with a trumpet—that was Porsini's ancient style; but now that's stopped. Only her majesty's mails may blow trumpets in the streets at present. The fust person who went out with me was my wife. She used to stand outside, and keep the boys from peeping through the baize, whilst I was performing behind it; and she used to collect the money afterwards as well. I carried the show and trumpet, and she the box. She's been dead these five years now. Take one week with another, all through the year, I should say I made then five pounds regular. I have taken as much as two pounds ten shillings in one day in the streets; and I used to think it a bad day's business at that time if I took only one pound. You can see Punch has been good work—a money-making business—and beat all mechanics right out. If I could take as much as I did when I first began, what must my forefathers have done, when the business was five times as good as ever it were in my time? Why, I leaves you to judge what old Porsini and Pike must have made. Twenty years ago I have often and often got seven shillings and eight shillings for one hexhibition in the streets: two shillings and three shillings I used to think low to get at one collection; and many times I'd perform eight or ten times in a day. We didn't care much about work then, for we could get money fast enough; but now I often show twenty times in the day, and get scarcely a bare living at it arter all. That shows the times, you know, sir—what things was and is now. Arter performing in the streets of a day we used to attend private parties in the hevening, and get sometimes as much as two pounds for the hexhibition. This used to be at the juvenile parties of the nobility; and the performance lasted about an hour and a half. For a short performance of half-an-hour at a gennelman's house we never had less than one pound. A performance outside the house was two shillings and sixpence; but we often got as much as ten shillings for it. I have performed afore almost all the nobility. Lord — was particular partial to us, and one of

our greatest patronizers. At the time of the Police Bill I met him at Cheltenham on my travels, and he told me as he had saved Punch's neck once more; and it's through him principally that we are allowed to exhibit in the streets. Punch is exempt from the Police Act. If you read the fact throughout, you won't find Punch mentioned in it. But all I've been telling you is about the business as it was. What it is, is a werry different consarn. A good day for us now seldom gets beyond five shillings, and that's between myself and my pardner, who plays the drum and pipes. Often we are out all day, and get a mere nuffing. Many days we have been out and taken nuffing at all—that's werry common when we dwells upon horders. By dwelling on horders, I means looking out for gennelmen what want us to play in front of their houses. When we strike up in the hopen street we take upon a haverage only threepence a show. In course we may do more, but that's about the sum, take one street performance with another. Them kind of performances is what we call 'short showing.' We gets the halfpence and hooks it. A 'long pitch' is the name we gives to performances that lasts about half-an-hour or more. Them long pitches we confine solely to street corners in public thoroughfares; and then we take about a shilling upon a haverage, and more if it's to be got—we never turns away nuffing. 'Boys, look up your fardens,' says the outside man; 'it ain't half over yet, we'll show it all through.' The short shows we do only in private by-streets, and of them we can get through about twenty in the day; that's as much as we can tackle—ten in the morning, and ten in the afternoon. Of the long pitches we can only do eight in the day. We start on our rounds at nine in the morning, and remain out till dark at night. We gets a snack at the publics on our road. The best hours for Punch are in the morning from nine till ten, because then the children are at home. Arter that, you know, they goes out with the maids for a walk. From twelve till three is good again, and then from six till nine; that's because the children are mostly at home at them hours. We make much more by horders for performance houtside the gennelmen's houses, than we do by performing in public in the hopen streets. Monday is the best day for street business; Friday is no day at all, because then the poor people has spent all their money. If we was to pitch on a Friday, we shouldn't take a halfpenny in the streets, so we in general on that day goes round for horders. Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday is the best days for us with horders at gennelmen's houses. We do much better in the spring than at any other time in the year, excepting holiday time, at Midsummer and Christmas. That's what we call Punch's season. We do most at hevening parties in the holiday time, and if there's a pin to choose

between them, I should say Christmas holidays was the best. For attending hevening parties now we generally get one pound and our refreshments—as much more as they like to give us. But the business gets slacker and slacker every season. Where I went to ten parties twenty years ago, I don't go to two now. People isn't getting tired of our performances, but stingier—that's it. Everybody looks at their money now afore they parts with it, and gennelfolks haggles and cheapens us down to shillings and sixpences, as if they was guineas in the holden time. Our business is werry much like hackney-coach work; we do best in vet vether. It looks like rain this evening, and I'm uncommon glad on it, to be sure. You see, the vet keeps the children in-doors all day, and then they wants something to quiet 'em a bit; and the mothers and fathers, to pacify the dears, gives us a horder to perform. It mustn't rain cats and dogs—that's as bad as no rain at all. What we likes is a regular good, steady Scotch mist, for then we takes double what we takes on other days. In summer we does little or nothing; the children are out all day enjoying themselves in the parks. The best pitch of all in London is Leicester-square; there's all sorts of classes, you see, passing there. Then comes Regent-street (the corner of Burlington-street is uncommon good, and there's a good publican there besides). Bond-street ain't no good now. Oxford-street, up by Old Cavendish-street, or Oxford-market, or Wells-street, are all favourite pitches for Punch. We don't do much in the City. People has their heads all full of business there, and them as is greedy arter the money ain't no friend of Punch's. Tottenham-court-road, the New-road, and all the henvirons of London, is pretty good. Hampstead, tho', ain't no good; they've got too poor there. I'd sooner not go out at all than to Hampstead. Belgrave-square, and all about that part, is uncommon good; but where there's many chapels Punch won't do at all. I did once, though, strike up hopposition to a street preacher wot was a holding forth in the New-road, and did uncommon well. All his flock, as he called 'em, left him, and come over to look at me. Punch and preaching is two different creeds—hopposition parties, I may say. We in generally walks from twelve to twenty mile every day, and carries the show, which weighs a good half-hundred, at the least. Arter great exertion, our voice werry often fails us; for speaking all day through the 'call' is werry trying, specially when we are chirruping up so as to bring the children to the vinders. The boys is the greatest nuisances we has to contend with. Wherever we goes we are sure of plenty of boys for a hindrance; but they've got no money, bother 'em! and they'll follow us for miles, so that we're often compelled to go miles to avoid 'em. Many parts is swarming with boys, such as Vitechapel. Spitalfields,

that's the worst place for boys I ever come a-near; they're like flies in summer there, only much more thicker. I never shows my face within miles of them parts. Chelsea, again, has an uncommon lot of boys; and wherever we know the children swarm, there's the spots we makes a point of avoiding. Why, the boys is such a hobstruction to our performance, that often we are obliged to drop the curtain for 'em. They'll throw one another's caps into the frame while I'm inside on it, and do what we will, we can't keep 'em from poking their fingers through the baize and making holes to peep through. Then they will keep tapping the drum; but the worst of all is, the most of 'em ain't got a farthing to bless themselves with, and they will shove into the best places. Soldiers, again, we don't like, they've got no money—no, not even so much as pockets, sir. Nusses ain't no good. Even if the mothers of the dear little children has given 'em a penny to spend, why the nusses takes it from 'em, and keeps it for ribbins. Sometimes we can coax a penny out of the children, but the nusses knows too much to be gammoned by us. Indeed, servants in generally don't do the thing what's right to us—some is good to us, but the most of 'em will have poundage out of what we gets. About sixpence out of every half-crown is what the footman takes from us. We in generally goes into the country in the summer time for two or three months. Watering-places is werry good in July and August. Punch mostly goes down to the sea-side with the quality. Brighton, though, ain't no account; the Pavilion's done up with, and therefore Punch has discontinued his visits. We don't put up at the trampers' houses on our travels, but in generally inns is where we stays; because we considers ourselves to be above the other showmen and mendicants. At one lodging-house as I stopped at once in Warwick, there was as many as fifty staying there what got their living by street performances—the greater part were Italian boys and girls. There are altogether as many as sixteen Punch-and-Judy frames in England. Eight of these is at work in London, and the other eight in the country; and to each of these frames there are two men. We are all acquainted with one another; are all sociable together, and know where each other is, and what they are a-doing on. When one comes home, another goes out; that's the way we proceed through life. It wouldn't do for two to go to the same place. If two of us happens to meet at one town, we jine, and shift pardners, and share the money. One goes one way, and one another, and we meet at night, and reckon up over a sociable pint or a glass. We shift pardners so as each may know how much the other has taken. It's the common practice for the man what performs Punch to share with the one wot plays the drum and pipes—each has half wot is

collected; but if the pardner can't play the drum and pipes, and only carries the frame, and collects, then his share is but a third of what is taken till he learns how to perform himself. The street performers of London lives mostly in little rooms of their own; they has generally wives, and one or two children, who are brought up to the business. Some lives about the Westminster-road, and St. George's East. A great many are in Lock's-fields—they are all the old school that way. Then some, or rather the principal part of the showmen, are to be found about Lisson-grove. In this neighbourhood there is a house of call, where they all assembles in the evening. There are a very few in Brick-lane, Spitalfields, now; that is mostly deserted by showmen. The West-end is the great resort of all; for it's there the money lays, and there the showmen abound. We all know one another, and can tell in what part of the country the others are. We have intelligence by letters from all parts. There's a Punch I knows on now is either in the Isle of Man, or on his way to it."

Punch Talk.

"'Bona parlare' means language; name of patter. 'Yeute munjare'—no food. 'Yeute lente'—no bed. 'Yeute bivare'—no drink. I've 'yeute munjare,' and 'yeute bivare,' and, what's worse, 'yeute lente.' This is better than the costers' talk, because that ain't no slang at all, and this is a broken Italian, and much higher than the costers' lingo. We know what o'clock it is, besides."

Scene with two Punchmen.

"'How are you getting on?' I might say to another Punchman. 'Ultra cateva,' he'd say. If I was doing a little, I'd say, 'Bonar.' Let us have a 'shant a bivare'—pot o' beer. If we has a good pitch we never tell one another, for business is business. If they know we've a 'bonar' pitch, they'll oppose, which makes it bad."

"'Co. and Co.' is our term for partner, or 'questa questa,' as well. 'Ultray cativa,'—no bona. 'Slumareys'—figures, frame, scenes, properties. 'Slum'—call, or unknown tongue. 'Ultray cativa slum'—not a good call. 'Tambora'—drum; that's Italian. 'Pipares'—pipes. 'Questra homa a vardring the slum, scapar it, Orderly'—there's someone a looking at the slum. Be off quickly. 'Fielia' is a child; 'Homa' is a man; 'Dona,' a female; 'Charfering-homa'—talking-man, policeman. Policeman can't interfere with us, we're sanctioned. Punch is exempt out of the Police Act. Some's very good men, and some on 'em are tyrants; but generally speaking they're all werry kind to us, and allows us every privilege. That's a flattery, you know, because you'd better not meddle with them. Civility always gains its esteem."

The man here took a large clasp-knife out of his breeches pocket.

"This here knife is part of Punch's tools or materials, of great utility, for it cannot be done without. The knife serves for a hammer, to draw nails and drive them in again, and is very handy on a country road to cut a beefsteak—not a mistake—Well, ye cannot cut a mistake, can ye?—and is a real poor man's friend to a certainty.

"This here is the needle that completes our tools (*takes out a needle from inside his waistcoat collar,*) and is used to sew up our cativa stumps, that is, Punch's breeches and Judy's petticoats, and his master's old clothes when they're in holes. I likes to have everything tidy and respectable, not knowing where I'm going to perform to, for every day is a new day that we never see afore and never shall see again; we do not know the produce of this world, being luxuriant (that's moral), being humane, kind, and generous to all our society of life. We mends our cativa and slums when they gets tearey (if you was to show that to some of our line they'd be horrified; they can't talk so affluent, you know, in all kinds of black slums). Under the hedgeares, and were no care varder us questa—'questa' is a shirt—pronunciation for *questra homa*.

"Once, too, when I was scarpering with my culling in the monkey, I went to mendare the cativa slums in a churchyard, and sat down under the tombs to stitch 'em up a bit, thinking no one would varder us there. But Mr. Crookshank took us off there as we was a sitting. I know I'm the same party, 'cos Joe seen the print you know and draw'd quite nat'ral, as now in print, with the slumares a laying about on all the tombstones round us."

The Punchman at the Theatre.

"I used often when a youth to be very fond of plays and romances, and frequently went to theatres to learn knowledge, of which I think there is a deal of knowledge to be learnt from those places (that gives the theatres a touch—helps them on a bit). I was very partial and fond of seeing Romeau and Juliet; Otheller; and the Knights of St. John, and the Pretty Gal of Peerlesspool; Macbeth and the Three Dancing Witches. Don Goovarney pleased me best of all though. What took me uncommon were the funeral purcession of Juliet—it affects the heart, and brings us to our nat'ral feelings. I took my ghost from Romeau and Juliet; the ghost comes from the grave, and it's beautiful. I used to like Kean, the principal performer. Oh, admirable! most admirable he were, and especially in Otheller, for then he was like my Jim Crow here, and was always a great friend and supporter of his old friend Punch. Otheller murders his wife, ye know, like Punch does. Otheller kills her, 'cause the green-eyed monster has got into his 'art, and he being so extremely fond on her; but Punch kills his'n by accident, though he did not intend to do it, for the Act of Parliament against husbands

beating wives was not known in his time. A most excellent law that there, for it causes husbands and wives to be kind and natural one with the other, all through the society of life. Judy irritates her husband, Punch, for to strike the fatal blow, vich at the same time, with no intention to commit it, not knowing at the same time, being rather out of his mind, vot he vas about. I hope this here will be a good example both to men and wives, always to be kind and obleeing to each other, and that will help them through the mainder with peace and happiness, and will rest in peace with all mankind (that's moral). It must be well worded, ye know, that's my beauty."

Mr. Punch's Refreshment.

"Always Mr. Punch, when he performs to any nobleman's juvenile parties, he requires a little refreshment and sperrits before commencing, because the performance will go far superior. But where teetotallers is he plays very mournful, and they don't have the best parts of the dramatical performance. Cos pump-vater gives a person no heart to exhibit his performance, where if any sperrits is given to him he wou'd be sure to give the best of satisfaction. I likes where I goes to perform for the gennelman to ring the bell, and say to the butler to bring this here party up whatever he chooses. But Punch is always moderate; he likes one eye wetted, then the tother after; but he likes the best: not particular to brandy, for fear of his nose of fading, and afeerd of his losing the colour. All theatrical people, and even the great Edmund Kean, used to take a drop before commencing performance, and Punch must do the same, for it enlivens his sperrits, cheers his heart up, and enables him to give the best of satisfaction imaginable."

The History of Punch.

"There are hoperas and romarnces. A romarnce is far different to a hopera, you know; for one is interesting, and the other is dull and void of apprehension. The romance is the interesting one, and of the two I likes it the best; but let every one speak as they find—that's moral. Jack Sheppard, you know, is a romarnce, and a fine one; but Punch is a hopera—a hur-roar, we calls it, and the most pleasing and most interesting of all as was ever produced, Punch never was beat and never will, being the oldest performance for many hundred years, and now handed down to prosperity (there's a fine moral in it, too).

"The history or origination of Punch—(never put yerself out of yer way for me, I'm one of the happiest men in existence, and gives no trouble)—is taken from Italy, and brought over to England by Porsini, and exhibited in the streets of London for the first time from sixty to seventy years ago; though he was not the first man who exhibited, for there was a female here before him, but not to perform at all in

public—name unknown, but handed down to prosperity. She brought the figures and frame over with her, but never showed 'em—keeping it an unknown secret. Porsini came from Hitaly, and landed in England, and exhibited his performance in the streets of London, and realized an immense sum of money. Porsini always carried a rum-bottle in his pocket ('cause Punch is a rum fellow, ye see, and he's very fond of rum), and dranked out of this unbeknown behind the baize afore he went into the frame, so that it should lay in his power to give the audience a most excellent performance. He was a man as gave the greatest satisfaction, and he was the first man that brought a street horgan into England from Hitaly. His name is handed down to prosperity among all classes of society in life.

"At first, the performance was quite different then to what it is now. It was all sentimental then, and very touching to the feelings, and full of good morals. The first part was only made up of the killing of his wife and babby, and the second with the execution of the hangman and killing of the devil—that was the original drama of Punch, handed down to prosperity for 800 years. The killing of the devil makes it one of the most moral plays as is, for it stops Satan's career of life, and then we can all do as we likes afterwards.

"Porsini lived like the first nobleman in the land, and realized an immense deal of money during his lifetime; we all considered him to be our forefather. He was a very old man when he died. I've heard tell he used to take very often *ps* much as 10*l.* a-day, and now it's come down to little more than 10*d.*; and he used to sit down to his fowls and wine, and the very best of luxuriousness, like the first nobleman in the world, such as a bottle of wine, and cetera. At last he reduced himself to want, and died in the workhouse. Ah! poor fellow, he didn't ought to have been let die where he did, but misfortunes will happen to all—that's moral. Every one in London knowed him: lords, dukes, squires, princes, and wagabones, all used to stop and laugh at his pleasing and merry interesting performance; and a funny old fellow he was, and so fond of his snuff. His name is writ in the annuals of history, and handed down as long as grass grows and water runs—for when grass ceases to grow, ye know, and water ceases to run, this world will be no utility; that's moral.

"Pike, the second noted street performer of Punch, was Porsini's apprentice, and he succeeded him after his career. He is handed down as a most clever exhibitor of Punch and showman—'cause he used to go about the country with waggons, too. He exhibited the performance for many years, and at last came to decay, and died in the workhouse. He was the first inventor of the live dog called Toby, and a great invention it was, being a great undertaking of a new and excellent addition to

Punch's performance—that's well worded—we must place the words in a superior manner to please the public.

"Then if, as you see, all our forefathers went to decay and died in the workhouse, what prospect have we to look forward to before us at the present time but to share the same fate, unless we meet with sufficient encouragement in this life? But hoping it will not be so, knowing that there is a new generation and a new exhibition, we hope the public at large will help and assist, and help us to keep our head above water, so that we shall never float down the river Thames, to be picked up, carried in a shell, coroner's inquest held, taken to the workhouse, popped into the pithole, and there's an end to another poor old Punch—that's moral.

"A footman is far superior to a showman, 'cause a showman is held to be of low degrade, and are thought as such, and so circumstantiated as to be looked upon as a mendicant; but still we are not, for collecting ain't begging, it's only selliciting; 'cause parsons, you know (I gives them a rub here), preaches a sermon and collects at the doors, so I puts myself on the same footing as they—that's moral, and it's optional, ye know. If I takes a hat round, they has a plate, and they gets sovereigns where we has only browns; but we are thankful for all, and always look for encouragement, and hopes kind support from all classes of society in life.

"Punch has two kind of performances—short shows and long ones, according to denare. Short shows are for cativa denare, and long pitches for the bona denare. At the short shows we gets the ha'pence and steps it—scafare, as we say; and at the long pitches ve keeps it up for half an hour, or an hour, maybe—not particular, if the browns tumble in well—for we never leave off while there's a major solde (that's a halfpenny), or even a quarterteen (that's a farden), to be made. The long pitches we fixes at the principal street-corners of London. We never turn away nothink.

"'Boys, look up your fardens,' says the outside man; 'it ain't half over yet, and we'll show it all through.'

"Punch is like the income-tax gatherer, takes all we can get, and never turns away nothink—that is our moral. Punch is like the rest of the world, he has got bad morals, but very few of them. The showman inside the frame says, while he's a working the figures, 'Culley, how are you a getting on?' 'Very inferior indeed, I'm sorry to say, master. The company, though very respectable, seems to have no pence among 'em.' 'What quanta denare have you chafered?' I say. 'Soldi major quarterteen;' that means, three half-pence three fardens; 'that is all I have accumulated amongst this most respectable and numerous company.' 'Never mind, master, the showman will go on; try the generosity of

the public once again.' 'Well, I think it's of very little utility to collect round again, for I've met with that poor encouragement.' 'Never mind, master, show away. I'll go round again and chance my luck; the ladies and gentlemen have not seen sufficient, I think. Well, master, I've got tres major—that is, three half-pence—'more, and now it's all over this time. Boys, go home and say your prayers,' we says, and steps it. Such scenes of life we see! No person would hardly credit what we go through. We travel often yeute munjare (no food), and oftentimes we're in fluence, according as luck runs.

"We now principally dwells on orders at noblemen's houses. The sebubs of London pays us far better than the busy town of London. When we are dwelling on orders, we goes along the streets chirripping 'Roo-toorovey ooeey-ooey-ooerovey;' that means, Any more wanted? that's the pronounciation of the call in the old Italian style. 'Toorovey-to-roo-to-roo-toroo-torooey; that we does when we are dwelling for orders mostly at noblemen's houses. It brings the juvenials to the window, and causes the greatest of attractions to the children of noblemen's families, both rich and poor: lords, dukes, earls, and squires, and gentlefolks.

"Call-hunting,—that's another term for dwelling on orders—pays better than pitching; but orders is very casual, and pitching is a certainty. We're sure of a brown or two in the streets, and noblemen's work don't come often. We must have it authentick, for we travels many days and don't succeed in getting one; at other times we are more fluent; but when both combine together, it's merely a living, after all's said and done, by great exertion and hard perseverance and asidity, for the business gets slacker and slacker every year, and I expect at last it will come to the dogs—not Toby, because he is dead and gone. People isn't getting tired with our performances; they're more delighted than ever; but they're stingier. Everybody looks twice at their money afore they parts with it.—That's a rub at the mean ones, and they wants it uncommon bad.

"And then, sometimes the blinds is all drawed down, on account of the sun, and that cooks our goose; or, it's too hot for people to stop and varder—that means, see. In the cold days, when we pitch, people stops a few minutes, drops their browns, and goes away about their business, to make room for more. The spring of the year is the best of the four seasons for us.

"A sailor and a lass half-seas over we like best of all. He will tip his mag. We always ensure a few pence, and sometimes a shilling, of them. We are fond of sweeps, too; they're a sure brown, if they've got one, and they'll give before many a gentleman. But what we can't abide nobow is the shabby genteel—them altray cativa, and no mistake: for they'll stand

with their mouths wide open, like a nut-cracker, and is never satisfied, and is too grand even to laugh. It's too much trouble to carry ha'pence, and they've never no change, or else they'd give us some; in fact, they've no money at all, they wants it all for, &c."

Mr. Punch's Figures.

"This is Punch; this his wife, Judy. They never was married, not for this eight hundred years—in the original drama. It is a drama in two acts, is Punch. There was a Miss Polly, and she was Punch's mistress, and dressed in silks and satins. Judy catches Punch with her, and that there causes all the disturbance. Ah, it's a beautiful history; there's a deal of morals with it, and there's a large volume wrote about it. It's to be got now.

"This here is Judy, their only child. She's three years old, come to-morrow, and heir to all his estate, which is only a saucepan without a handle.

"Well, then I brings out the Beadle.

"Punch's nose is the hornament to his face. It's a great value, and the hump on his back is never to be got rid on, being born with him, and never to be done without. Punch was silly and out of his mind—which is in the drama—and the cause of his throwing his child out of winder, vich he did. Judy went out and left him to nurse the child, and the child gets so terrible cross he gets out of patience, and tries to sing a song to it, and ends by chucking it into the street.

"Punch is cunning, and up to all kinds of antics, if he ain't out of his mind. Artful like My opinion of Punch is, he's very incentric, with good and bad morals attached. Very good he was in regard to benevolence; because, you see, in the olden style there was a blind man, and he used to come and ax charity of him, and Punch used to pity him and give him a trifle, you know. This is in the olden style, from Porsini you know.

"The carving on his face is a great art, and there's only one man as does it reg'lar. His nose and chin, by meeting together, we thinks the great beauty. Oh, he's admirable!—He was very fond of hisself when he was alive. His name was Punchinello, and we calls him Punch. That's partly for short and partly on account of the boys, for they calls it Punch in hell O. 'Oh, there's Punch in hell,' they'd say, and gentlefolks don't like to hear them words.

"Punch has very small legs and small arms. It's quite out of portion, in course; but still it's nature, for folks with big bellies generally has thin pins of their own.

"His dress has never been altered; the use of his high hat is to show his half-foolish head, and the other parts is after the best olden fashion.

"Judy, you see, is very ugly. She represents Punch; cos, you see, if the two comes together, it generally happens that they're summat alike; and you see it's because his wife were

so ugly that he had a mistress. You see, a head like that there wouldn't please most people.

The mistress, Polly, dances with Punch, just like a lady in a drawing-room. There ain't no grievance between him and Judy on account of Miss Polly, as she's called. That's the olden style of all, cos Judy don't know nothing about it.

"Miss Polly was left out because it wasn't exactly moral; opinions has changed: we ain't better, I fancy. Such things goes on, but people don't like to let it be seen now, that's the difference.

"Judy's dress, you see, is far different, bless you, than Miss Polly's. Judy's, you see, is bed-furniture stuff, and Polly's all silk and satin. Yes, that's the way of the world,—the wife comes off second-best.

"The baby's like his father, he's his pet all over and the pride of his heart; wouldn't take all the world for it, you know, though he does throw him out of window. He's got his father's nose, and is his daddy all over, from the top of his head to the tip of his toe. He never was weaned.

"Punch, you know, is so red through drink. He'd look nothing if his nose were not deep scarlet. Punch used to drink hard one time, and so he does now if he can get it. His babby is red all the same, to correspond.

"This is the Beadle of the parish, which tries to quell all disturbances but finds it impossible to do it. The Beadle has got a very reddish nose. He is a very severe, harsh man, but Punch conquers him. Ye see, he's dressed in the olden style—a brown coat, with gold lace and cock'd hat and all. He has to take Punch up for killing his wife and babby; but Punch beats the Beadle, for every time he comes up he knocks him down.

"This next one is the merry Clown, what tries his rig with Punch, up and down—that's a rhyme, you see. This is the merry Clown, that tries his tricks all round. This here's the new style, for we dwells more on the comical now. In the olden time we used to have a scaramouch with a chalk head. He used to torment Punch and dodge him about, till at last Punch used to give him a crack on the head and smash it all to pieces, and then cry out—'Oh dear, Oh dear; I didn't go to do it—it was an accident, done on purpose.' But now we do with Clown and the sausages.

Scaramouch never talked, only did the ballet business, dumb motions; but the Clown speaks theatrical, comic business and sentimental. Punch being silly and out of his mind, the Clown persuades Punch that he wants something to eat. The Clown gets into the public-house to try what he can steal. He pokes his head out of the window and says, 'Here you are, here you are;' and then he asks Punch to give him a helping hand, and so makes Punch steal the sausages. They're the very best pork-wadding sausages, made six years

ago and warranted fresh, and 'll keep for ever.

"This here's the poker, about which the Clown says, 'Would you like something hot?' Punch says 'Yes,' and then the Clown burns Punch's nose, and sits down on it himself and burns his breeches. Oh, it's a jolly lark when I shows it. Clown says to Punch, 'Don't make a noise, you'll wake the landlord up.' The landlord, you see, pretends to be asleep.

"Clown says, 'You mustn't hollar.' 'No,' says Punch, 'I wont;' and still he hollars all the louder.

"This is Jim Crow: ye see he's got a chain but he's lost his watch. He let it fall on Fish-street Hill, the other day, and broke it all to pieces. He's a nigger. He says, 'Me like ebery body; not 'every,' but 'ebery,' cos that's nigger. Instead of Jim Crow we used formerly to show the Grand Turk of Sinoa, called Shallaballah. Sinoa is nowhere, for he's only a substance yer know. I can't find Sinoa, although I've tried, and thinks it's at the bottom of the sea where the black fish lays.

"Jim Crow sprung from Rice from America, he brought it over here. Then, ye see, being a novelty, all classes of society is pleased. Everybody liked to hear 'Jim Crow' sung, and so we had to do it. The people used to stand round, and I used to take some good money with it too, sir, on Hay-hill. Everybody's funny now-a-days, and they like comic business. They won't listen to anything sensible or sentimental, but they wants foolishness. The bigger fool gets the most money. Many people says, 'What a fool, you must look!' at that I put my head back. 'Come on.' 'I shan't. I shall stop a little longer.'

"This is the Ghost, that appears to Punch for destroying his wife and child. She's the ghost of the two together, or else, by rights, there ought to be a little ghost as well, but we should have such a lot to carry about. But Punch, being surprised at the ghost, falls into exstericks—represented as such. Punch is really terrified, for he trembles like a haspen leaf, cos he never killed his wife. He's got no eyes and no teeth, and can't see out of his mouth; or *cannot*, rather. Them cant words ain't grammatical. When Punch sees the Ghost he lays down and kicks the bucket, and represents he's dead.

"The Ghost is very effective, when it comes up very solemn and mournful-like in Romeau and Juliet. I took it from that, yer know: there's a ghost in that when she comes out of the grave. Punch sits down on his seat and sings his merry song of olden times, and don't see the Ghost til he gets a tap on the cheek, and then he thinks it's somebody else; instead of that, when he turns round, he's most terrible alarmed, putting his arms up and out. The drum goes very shaky when the Ghost comes up. A little bit of 'The Dead March in Saul,' or 'Home, sweet Home:' anything like

that, slow. We none on us likes to be hurried to the grave.

"I now takes up the Doctor. This is the Doctor that cures all sick maids and says, 'Taste of my drugs before you die, you'll say they are well made.' The Doctor always wears a white ermine wig: rabbit skin wouldn't do, we can't go so common as that; it's most costly, cos it was made for him.

"After the Ghost has appeared Punch falls down, and calls loudly for the Doctor, and offers 50,000*l.* for one; then the Doctor feels his pulse and says, 'Very unfortunate misfortune! I have forgot my spectacles, cos I never had none. I can see all through it—the man's not dead.

"The Doctor gives Punch physic. That's stick-lickerish wot he subscribes for him; but Punch don't like it, though it's a capital subscription for a cure for the head-ache. (I dare say, Mr. Mayhew, sir, you thinks me a very funny fellow.) Punch tries to pay the Doctor back with his own physic, but he misses him every time. Doctors don't like to take their own stuff anyhow.

"This is the Publican as Punch steals the sausages from; he used to be the Grand Turk of Senoa, or Shallallah, afore the fashion changed—for a new world always wants new things: the people are like babies, they must have a fresh toy ye know, and every day is a new day that we never seed before.—There's a moral for you; it'll make a beautiful book when you comes to have the morals explained. Ye see you might still fancy Punch was the Grand Turk, for he's got his moustaches still; but they're getting so fashionable that even the publicans wears 'em, so it don't matter.

"This tall figure is the hangman and finisher of the law, as does the business in the twinkling of a bed-post. He's like the income-tax gatherer, he takes all in and lets none out, for a guilty conscience needs no accusing. Punch being condemned to suffer by the laws of his country, makes a mistake for once in his life, and always did, and always will keep a-doing it. Therefore, by cunningness and artfulness, Punch persuades Jack Ketch to show him the way—which he very 'willingly doeth'—to slip his head into the noose, when Punch takes the opportunity to pull the rope, after he has shown him the way, and is exempt for once more, and quite free.

"Now this is the coffin, and this is the pall. Punch is in a great way, after he's hung the man, for assistance, when he calls his favourite friend Joey Grimaldi, the clown, to aid and assist him, because he's afeard that he'll be taken for the crime wot he's committed. Then the body is placed in the coffin; but as the undertaker ain't made it long enough, they have to double him up. The undertaker requests permission to git it altered. Ye see it's a royal coffin, with gold, and silver, and copper nails; with no plates, and scarlet cloth, cos that's royalty. The undertaker's forgot the lid of

the coffin, ye see: we don't use lids, cos it makes them lighter to carry.

"This is the pall that covers him over, to keep the flies from biting him. We call it St. Paul's. Don't you see, palls and Paul's is the same word, with a *s* to it: it's comic. That 'ud make a beautiful play, that would. Then we take out the figures, as I am doing now, from the box, and they exaunt with a dance. 'Here's somebody a-coming, make haste!' the Clown says, and then they exaunt, you know, or go off.

"This here is the Scaramouch that dances without a head, and yet has got a head that'll reach from here to St. Paul's; but it's scarcely ever to be seen. Cos his father was my mother, don't ye see. Punch says that it's a beautiful figure. I've only made it lately. Instead of him we used to have a nobody. The figure is to be worked with four heads, that's to say one coming out of each arm, one from the body, and one from the neck. (He touches each part as he speaks.) Scaramouch is old-fashioned newly revived. He comes up for a finish, yer know. This figure's all for dancing, the same as the ghost is, and don't say nothing. Punch being surprised to see such a thing, don't know what to make on it. He bolts away, for ye see (whispering and putting up two hands first, and then using the other, as if working Scaramouch), I wants my two hands to work him. After Punch goes away the figure dances to amuse the public, then he exaunts, and Punch comes up again for to finish the remainder part of his performance. He sings as if he'd forgot all that's gone before, and wishes only to amuse the public at large. That's to show his silliness and simplicity. He sings comic or sentimental, such as 'God save the Queen;—that's sentimental; or 'Getting up stairs and playing on the fiddle;' or 'Dusty Bob;' or 'Rory O'More, with the chill off;'—them's all comic, but 'the Queen's' sentimental.

"This here is Satan,—we might say the devil, but that ain't right, and gennelfolks don't like such words. He is now commonly called 'Spring-heeled Jack;' or the 'Roosian Bear;'—that's since the war. Ye see he's chained up for ever; for if yer reads, it says somewhere in the Scripture that he's bound down for two thousand years. I used to read it myself once; and the figure shows ye that he's chained up never to be let loose no more. He comes up at the last and shows himself to Punch, but it ain't continued long, yer know, the figure being too frightful for people to see without being frightened; unless we are on comic-business and showing him as Spring-heeled Jack, or the Roosian Bear; and then we keeps him up a long time. Punch kills him, puts him on the top of his stick, and cries, 'Hooray! the devil's dead, and we can all do as we like! Good-by, farewell, and it's all over!' But the curtain don't come down, cos we haven't got none.

"This here's the bell. Stop a minute, I forgot: this is Punch's comic music, commonly called a peanner sixty,—not peanner forty, cos Punch wants something out of the common way,—and it plays fifty tunes all at once. This is the bell which he uses to rattle in the publican's ears when he's asleep, and wakes his children all up after the nuss as put 'em to bed. All this is to show his foolishness and simplicity; for it's one of his foolish tricks and frolics for to amuse himself: but he's a chap as won't stand much nonsense from other people, because his morals are true, just, right, and sound; although he does kill his wife and baby, knock down the Beadle, Jack Ketch, and the Grand Signor, and puts an end to the very devil himself."

Description of Frame and Proscenium.

"Ladies and gents,' the man says outside the show, afore striking up, 'I'm now going to exhibit a performance worthy of your notice, and far superior to anythink you hever had a hoportunity of witnessing of before.' (I am a doing it now, sir, as if I was addressing a company of ladies and gentlemen, he added, by way of parenthesis.) 'This is the original performance of Punch, ladies and gents; and it will always gain esteem. I am going to hintroduce a performance worthy of your notice, which is the dramatical performance of the original and old-established performance of Punch, experienced many year. I merely call your attention, ladies and gents, to the novel attraction which I'm now about to hintroduce to you.

"I only merely place this happyratus up to inform you what I am about to preform to you. The performance will continue for upwards of one hour—*provising as we meets with sufficient encouragement.* (That's business, ye know, master; just to give 'em to understand that we wants a little assistance afore we begins.) It will surpass anythink you've had the hoportunity of witnessing of before in all the hannuals of history. I hope, ladies and gents, I am not talking too grammatical for some of you.'

"That there is the address, sir," he continued, "what I always gives to the audience outside before I begins to preform—just to let the respectable company know that I am a working for to get my living by honest industry.

"Those ladies and gents,' he then went on, as if addressing an imaginary crowd, 'what are a-standing round, a-looking at the performance, will, I hope, be as willing to give as they is to see. There's many a lady and gent now at the present moment standing around me, perhaps, whose hearts might be good though not in their power.' (This is Punch's patter, yer know, outside; and when you has to say all that yourself, you wants the affluency of a methodist parson to do the

talk, I can tell ye.) 'Now boys, look up yer ha'pence! Who's got a farden or a ha'penny? and I'll be the first brown towards it. I ain't particular if it's a half-crown. Now, my lads, feel in your pockets and see if you've got an odd copper. Here's one, and who'll be the next to make it even? We means to show it all through, *provising we meets with sufficient encouragement.*' (I always sticks to them words, 'sufficient encouragement.') 'You'll have the pleasure of seeing Spring-heeled Jack, or the Roosian Bear, and the comical scene with Joey the clown, and the fryngpan of sassage!' (That's a kind of gaggery.)

"I'll now just explain to you, sir, the different parts of the frame. This here's the letter-cloth, which shows you all what we performs. Sometimes we has wrote on it—

THE DOMINION OF FANCY,

or,

PUNCH'S OPERA:

that fills up a letter-cloth; and Punch is a fancy for every person, you know, who-ever may fancy it. I stands inside here on this footboard; and if there's any one up at the winders in the street, I puts my foot longways, so as to keep my nob out of sight. This here is the stage front, or *proceedings* (proscenium), and is painted over with flags and banners, or any different things. Sometimes there's George and the Dragging, and the Rile Queen's Arms, (we can have them up when we like, cos we are sanctioned, and I've played afore the rile princes). But anything for freshness. People's tired looking at the Rile Arms, and wants something new to cause attraction, and so on.

"This here's the playboard, where sits Punch. The scenes behind are representing a gardening scene, and the side-scenes is a house and a cottage—they're for the exaunts, you know, just for convenience. The back scene draws up, and shows the prison, with the winders all cut out, and the bars showing, the same as there is to a gaol; though I never was in one in my life, and I'll take good care I never shall be.

"Our speaking instrument is an unknown secret, cos it's an 'unknown tongue,' that's known to none except those in our own profession. It's a hinstrument like this which I has in my hand, and it's tuned to music. We has two or three kinds, one for out-doors, one for in-doors, one for speaking, one for singing, and one that's good for nothing, except selling on the cheap. They ain't whistles, but 'calls, or 'unknown tongues;' and with them in the mouth we can pronounce each word as plain as a parson, and with as much affluency.

"The great difficulty in performing Punch consists in speaking with this call in the mouth—cos it's produced from the lungs: it's all done from there, and is a great strain, and requires suction—and that's brandy-and-

water, or summat to moisten the whistle with.

"We're bound not to drink water by our purfession, when we can get anything stronger. It weakens the nerves, but we always like to keep in the bounds of propriety, respectability, and decency. I drinks my beer with my call in my mouth, and never takes it out, cos it exposes it, and the boys (hang 'em!) is so inquisitive. They runs after us, and looks up in our face to see how we speaks; but we drives 'em away with civility.

"Punch is a dramatical performance, sir, in two acts, patronised by the nobility and gentry at large. We don't drop the scene at the end of the first act, the drum and pipes strikes up instead. The first act we consider to end with Punch being took to prison for the murder of his wife and baby. You can pick out a good many Punch performers, without getting one so well versed as I am in it; they in general makes such a muffing concern of it. A drama, or dramatical performance, we calls it, of the original performance of Punch. It ain't a tragedy; it's both comic and sentimental, in which way we think proper to perform it. There's comic parts, as with the Clown and Jim Crow, and cetera—that's including a deal more, yer know.

"It's a pretty play Punch is, when preformed well, and one of the greatest novelties in the world; and most ancient; handed down, too, for many hundred years.

"The prison scene and the baby is what we calls the sentimental touches. Some folks where I performs will have it most sentimental, in the original style. The families is generally sentimental theirselves. To these sentimental folks I'm obliged to perform werry steady and werry slow; they won't have no ghost, no coffin, and no devil; and that's what I call spiling the performance entirely. Ha, ha!" he added, with a deep sigh, "it's the march of intellect that's a doing all this: it is, sir.

"Other folks is all for the comic, specially the street people; and then we has to dwell on the bell scene, and the nursing the baby, and the frying-pan, and the sassage, and Jim Crow.

"A few years ago Toby was all the go. Formerly the dog was only a stuffed figure, and it was Mr. Pike what first hit upon introducing a live animal; and a great hit it war. It made a surprising alteration in the exhibition, for till lately the performance was called Punch and Toby as well. We used to go about the streets with three dogs, and that was admirable, and it did uncommon well as a new novelty at first, but we can't get three dogs to do it now. The mother of them dogs, ye see, was a singer, and had two pups what was singers too. Toby was wanted to sing and smoke a pipe as well, shake hands as well as seize Punch by the nose. When Toby was quiet, ye see, sir, it was the timidation of

Punch's stick, for directly he put it down he flew at him, knowing at the same time that Punch was not his master.

"Punch commences with a song. He does roo-too-rooey, and sings the 'Lass of Gowrie' down below, and then he comes up, saying, 'Ooy-ey; Oh, yes, I'm a coming. How do you do, ladies and gents?'—ladies always first; and then he bows many times. 'I'm so happy to see you,' he says; 'Your most obedient, most humble, and dutiful servant, Mr. Punch.' (Ye see I can talk as affluent as can be with the call in my mouth.) 'Ooy-ey, I wishes you all well and happy.' Then Punch says to the drum-and-pipes man, as he puts his hand out, 'How do you do, master?—play up; play up a hornpipe: I'm a most hexcellent dancer;' and then Punch dances. Then ye see him a-dancing the hornpipe; and after that Punch says to the pipes, 'Master, I shall call my wife up, and have a dance; so he sings out, 'Judy, Judy! my pratty creetur! come up stairs, my darling! I want to speak to you'—and he knocks on the play-board.—'Judy! Here she comes, bless her little heart!'

Enter JUDY.

Punch. What a sweet creature! what a handsome nose and chin! (He pats her on the face very gently.)

Judy. (Slapping him.) Keep quiet, do!

Punch. Don't be cross, my dear, but give me a kiss.

Judy. Oh, to be sure, my love. [They kiss.]

Punch. Bless your sweet lips! (Hugging her.) This is melting moments. I'm very fond of my wife; we must have a dance.

Judy. Agreed. [They both dance.]

Punch. Get out of the way! you don't dance well enough for me. (He hits her on the nose.) Go and fetch the baby, and mind and take care of it, and not hurt it. [Judy exclaims.]

Judy. (Returning back with baby.) Take care of the baby, while I go and cook the dumplings.

Punch. (Striking Judy with his right hand.) Get out of the way! I'll take care of the baby.

[Judy exclaims.]

Punch (sits down and sings to the baby)—

"Hush-a-by, baby, upon the tree-top,
When the wind blows the cradle will rock;
When the bough breaks the cradle will fall,
Down comes the baby and cradle and all."

[Baby cries.]

Punch. (Shaking it.) What a cross boy! (He lays it down on the play-board, and rolls it backwards and forwards, to rock it to sleep, and sings again.)

"Oh, slumber, my darling, thy sire is a knight,
Thy mother's a lady so lovely and bright;
The hills and the dales, and the tow'rs which you see,
They all shall belong, my dear creature, to thee."

(Punch continues rocking the child. It still cries, and he takes it up in his arms, saying, What a cross child! I can't a-bear cross

children. Then he vehemently shakes it, and knocks its head up against the side of the proceedings several times, representing to kill it, and he then throws it out of the winder.)

Enter JUDY.

Judy. Where's the baby?

Punch. (In a lemoncholy tone.) I have had a misfortune; the child was so terrible cross, I throwed it out of the winder. (Lamentation of Judy for the loss of her dear child. She goes into asterisks, and then excites and fetches a cudgel, and commences beating Punch over the head.)

Punch. Don't be cross, my dear: I didn't go to do it.

Judy. I'll pay yer for throwing the child out of the winder. (She keeps on giving him knocks of the head, but Punch snatches the stick away, and commences an attack upon his wife, and beats her severely.)

Judy. I'll go to the constable, and have you locked up.

Punch. Go to the devil. I don't care where you go. Get out of the way! (Judy exclaims, and Punch then sings, "Cherry ripe," or "Cheer, boys, cheer." All before is sentimental, now this here's comic. Punch goes through his roo-too-to-rooey, and then the Beadle comes up.)

Beadle. Hi! hallo, my boy!

Punch. Hello, my boy. (He gives him a wipe over the head with his stick, which knocks him down, but he gets up again.)

Beadle. Do you know, sir, that I've a special order in my pocket to take you up?

Punch. And I've a special order to knock you down. (He knocks him down with simplicity, but not with brutality, for the juvenal branches don't like to see severity practised.)

Beadle. (Coming up again.) D'ye know, my boy, that I've an order to take you up?

Punch. And I've an order I tell ye to knock you down. (He sticks him. Punch is a tyrant to the Beadle, ye know, and if he was took up he wouldn't go through his rambles, so in course he isn't.)

Beadle. I've a warrant for you, my boy.

Punch. (Striking him.) And that's a warrant for you, my boy. (The Beadle's a determined man, ye know, and resolved to go to the ends of justice as far as possible in his power by special authority, so a quarrel ensnoos between them.)

Beadle. You are a blackguard.

Punch. So are you.

(The Beadle hits Punch on the nose, and takes the law in his own hands. Punch takes it up momentary; strikes the Beadle, and a fight ensnoos. The Beadle, faint and exhausted, gets up once more; then he strikes Punch over the nose, which is returned pro and con.)

Beadle. That's a good 'un.

Punch. That's a better.

Beadle. That's a topper. (He hits him jolly hard.)

Punch. (With his cudgel.) That's a wopper. (He knocks him out of his senses, and the Beadle exclaims.)

Enter MERRY CLOWN.

Punch sings "Getting up Stairs," in quick time, while the Clown is coming up. Clown dances round Punch in all directions, and Punch with his cudgel is determined to catch him if possible.

Clown. No bono, allez tooti sweet, Mounseer. Look out sharp! Make haste! catch 'em alive! Here we are! how are you? good morning! don't you wish you may get it? Ah! coward, strike a white man! (Clown keeps bobbing up and down, and Punch trying to hit all the time till Punch is exhausted nearly.)

(The Clown, ye see, sir, is the best friend to Punch, he carries him through all his tricks, and he's a great favorite of Punch's. He's too cunning for him though, and knows too much for him, so they both shake hands and make it up.)

Clown. Now it's all fair; ain't it, Punch?

Punch. Yes.

Clown. Now I can begin again.

(You see, sir, the Clown gets over Punch altogether by his artful ways, and then he begins the same tricks over again; that is, if he wants a long performance; if not, we cuts it off at the other pint. But I'm telling you the real original style, sir.)

Clown. Good! you can't catch me.

(Punch gives him one whack of the head, and Clown exclaims, or goes off.)

Enter JIM CROW

Jim sings "Buffalo Gals," while coming up, and on entering Punch hits him a whack of the nose backhanded, and almost breaks it.

Jim. What for you do that? Me nigger! me like de white man. Him did break my nose.

Punch. Humbly beg your pardon, I did not go to help it.

(For as it had been done, you know, it wasn't likely he could help it after he'd done it—he couldn't take it away from him again, could he?)

Jim. Me beg you de pardon. (For ye see, sir, he thinks he's offended Punch.) Nebber mind, Punch, come and sit down, and we'll hab a song.

JIM CROW prepares to sing.

Punch. Bravo, Jimmy! sing away, my boy—give us a stunner while you're at it.

JIM SINGS.

"I'm a roarer on the fiddle,
Down in the ole Virginny;
And I plays it scientific,
Like Master Paganinni."

Punch. (Tapping him on the head.) Bravo! well done, Jimmy! give us another bit of a song.

Jim. Yes, me will.

[Sings again.]

"Oh, lubly Rosa, Sambo come;
Don't you hear the banjo?
Tum, tum, tum!"

Jim hits Punch with his head over the

nose, as if butting at him, while he repeats tum-tum-tum. Punch offended, beats him with the stick, and sings—

"Lubly Rosa, Sambo come;
Don't you hear the banjo?
Tum, tum, tum!"

Jim. (Rising.) Oh mi! what for you strike a nigger? (Holding up his leg.) Me will poke your eye out. Ready—shoot—bang—fire. (Shoves his leg into Punch's eye.)

Punch. He's poked my eye out! I'll look out for him for the future.

Jim Crow excites, or exaunts. Exaunt we calls it in our purfession, sir,—that's going away, you know. He's done his part, you know, and ain't to appear again.

Judy has died through Punch's ill usage after going for the Beadle, for if she'd done so before she couldn't ha' fetched the constable, you know,—certainly not. The beholders only believe her to be dead though, for she comes to life again afterwards, because, if she was dead, it would do away with Punch's wife altogether—for Punch is doatingly fond of her, though it's only his fun after all's said and done.

The Ghost, you see, is only a representation, as a timidation to soften his bad morals, so that he shouldn't do the like again. The Ghost, to be sure, shows that she's really dead for a time, but it's not in the imitation; for if it was, Judy's ghost (the figure) would be made like her.

The babby's lost altogether. It's killed. It is supposed to be destroyed entirely, but taken care of for the next time when called upon to preform—as if it were in the next world, you know,—that's moral.

Enter Ghost. Punch sings meanwhile 'Home, sweet Home.' (This is original.) The Ghost represents the ghost of Judy, because he's killed his wife, don't you see, the Ghost making her appearance; but Punch don't know it at the moment. Still he sits down tired, and sings in the corner of the frame the song of "Home, sweet Home," while the Sperrit appears to him.

Punch turns round, sees the Ghost, and is most terribly timidated. He begins to shiver and shake in great fear, bringing his guilty conscience to his mind of what he's been guilty of doing, and at last he falls down in a fit of frenzy. Kicking, screeching, hollaring, and shouting "Fifty thousand pounds for a doctor!" Then he turns on his side, and draws hisself double with the screwmatics in his gills. [Ghost excites.]

Enter Doctor.

Punch is represented to be dead. This is the dying speech of Punch.

Doctor. Dear me! bless my heart! here have I been running as fast as ever I could walk, and very near tumbled over a straw. I heard somebody call most lustily for a doctor. Dear me (looking at Punch in all directions, and

examining his body), this is my pertickler friend Mr. Punch; poor man! how pale he looks! I'll feel his pulse (counts his pulse)—1, 2, 14, 9, 11. Hi! Punch, Punch, are you dead? are you dead? are you dead?

Punch. (Hitting him with his right hand over the nose, and knocking him back.) Yes.

Doctor. (Rubbing his nose with his hand.) I never heard a dead man speak before. Punch, you are not dead!

Punch. Oh, yes I am.

Doctor. How long have you been dead?

Punch. About six weeks.

Doctor. Oh, you're not dead, you're only poorly; I must fetch you a little reviving medicine, such as some stick-lickrish and balsam, and extract of shillalagh.

Punch. (Rising.) Make haste—(he gives the Doctor a wipe on the nose)—make haste and fetch it. [Doctor exaunts.]

Punch. The Doctor going to get me some physic! I'm very fond of brandy-and-water, and rum-punch. I want my physic; the Doctor never brought me no physic at all. I wasn't ill; it was only my fun. (Doctor reappears with the physic-stick, and he whacks Punch over the head no harder than he is able, and cries—"There's physic! physic! physic! physic! physic! pills! balsaam! stick-lickerish!")

Punch. (Rising and rubbing his head against the wing.) Yes; it is stick-lickrish.

(Ah! it's a pretty play, sir, when it's showed well—that it is—it's delightful to read the morals; I am very fond of reading the morals, I am.)

Punch. (Taking the stick from the Doctor.) Now, I'll give you physic! physic! physic! (He strikes at the Doctor, but misses him every time.) The Doctor don't like his own stuff.

Punch. (Presenting his stick, gun-fashion, at Doctor's head.) I'll shoot ye—one, two, three. Doctor. (Closing with Punch.) Come to gaol along with me.

(He saves his own life by closing with Punch. He's a desperate character is Punch, though he means no harm, ye know.) A struggle ensuoes, and the Doctor calls for help, Punch being too powerful for him.

Doctor. Come to gaol! You shall repent for all your past misdeeds. Help! assistance! help, in the Queen's name!

(He's acting as a constable, the Doctor is, though he's no business to do it; but he's acting in self-defence. He didn't know Punch, but he'd heard of his transactions, and when he came to examine him, he found it was the man. The Doctor is a very sedate kind of a person, and wishes to do good to all classes of the community at large, especially with his physic, which he gives gratis for nothink at all. The physic is called 'Head-e-cologne, or a sure cure for the headache.')
Re-enter BEADLE. (Punch and the Doctor still struggling together.)

Beadle. (Closing with them.) Hi, hi! this is him; behold the head of a traitor! Come along! come to gaol!

Punch. (A-kicking.) I will not go.

Beadle. (Shouting.) More help! more help! more help! help! help! Come along to gaol! come along! come along! More help! more help!

(Oh! it's a good lark just here, sir, but tremendous hard work, for there's so many figures to work—and all struggling, too,—and you have to work them all at once. This is comic, this is.)

Beadle. More help! be quick! be quick!

Re-enter JIM CROW.

Jim Crow. Come de long! come de long! come de long! me nigger, and you beata me. [Exaunts all, Punch still singing out, "I'll not go."]

END OF FIRST ACT.

Change of Scene for Second Act.

Scene draws up, and discovers the exterior of a prison, with Punch peeping through the bars, and singing a merry song of the merry bells of England, all of the olden time. (That's an olden song, you know; it's old ancient, and it's a moral,—a moral song, you know, to show that Punch is repenting, but pleased, and yet don't care nothink at all about it, for he's frolicsome, and on the height of his frolic and amusement to all the juveniles, old and young, rich and poor. We must put all classes together.)

Enter Hangman Jack Ketch, or Mr. GRABALL. That's Jack Ketch's name, you know; he takes all, when they gets in his clutches. We mustn't blame him for he must do his duty, for the sheriffs is so close to him.)

[Preparation commences for the execution of Punch. Punch is still looking through the bars of Newgate.]

The last scene as I had was Temple-bar Scene; it was a prison once, ye know; that's the old ancient, ye know, but I never let the others see it, cos it shouldn't become too public. But I think Newgate is better, in the new edition, though the prison is suspended, it being rather too terrific for the beholder. It was the old ancient style; the sentence is passed upon him, but by whom not known; he's not tried by one person, cos nobody can't.

Jack Ketch. Now, Mr. Punch, you are going to be executed by the British and Foreign laws of this and other countries, and you are to be hung up by the neck until you are dead—dead—dead.

Punch. What, am I to die three times?

Jack. No, no; you're only to die once.

Punch. How is that? you said I was to be hung up by the neck till I was dead—dead—dead? You can't die three times.

Jack. Oh, no; only once.

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Punch. Why, you said dead—dead—dead. Jack. Yes; and when you are dead—dead—dead—you will be quite dead.

Punch. Oh! I never knowed that before.

Jack. Now, prepare yourself for execution.

Punch. What for?

Jack. For killing your wife, throwing your poor dear little innocent baby out of the window, and striking the Beadle unmercifully over the head with a mop-stick. Come on.

[Exaunt Hangman behind Scene, and re-enter, leading Punch slowly forth to the foot of the gallows. Punch comes most willingly, having no sense.]

Jack. Now, my boy, here is the corfin, here is the gibbet, and here is the pall.

Punch. There's the corfee-shop, there's giblets, and there's St. Paul's.

Jack. Get out, young foolish! Now then, place your head in here.

Punch. What, up here?

Jack. No; a little lower down.

(There's quick business in this, you know; this is comic—a little comic business, this is.)

Punch. (Dodging the noose.) What, here?

Jack. No, no; in there (showing the noose again).

Punch. This way?

Jack. No, a little more this way; in there.

[Punch falls down, and pretends he's dead.]

Jack. Get up, you're not dead.

Punch. Oh, yes I am.

Jack. But I say, no.

Punch. Please, sir, (bowing to the hangman)—(Here he's an hypocrite; he wants to exempt himself,—do show me the way, for I never was hung before, and I don't know the way. Please, sir, to show me the way, and I'll feel extremely obliged to you, and return you my most sincere thanks.)

(Now, that's well worded, sir; it's well put together; that's my beauty, that is; I am obliged to study my language, and not have any thing vulgar whatsoever. All in simplicity, so that the young children may not be taught anything wrong. There arn't nothing to be learnt from it, because of its simplicity.)

Jack. Very well; as you're so kind and condescending, I will certainly oblige you by showing you the way. Here, my boy! now, place your head in here, like this (hangman putting his head in noose); this is the right and the proper way; now, you see the rope is placed under my chin; I'll take my head out, and I will place yours in (that's a rhyme) and when your head is in the rope, you must turn round to the ladies and gentlemen, and say—Good-by; fare you well.

(Very slowly then—a stop between each of the words; for that's not driving the people out of the world in quick haste without giving 'em time for repentance. That's another moral, yer see. Oh, I like all the morals to it.)

Punch (quickly pulling the rope). Good-by; fare you well. (Hangs the hangman.) (What a hypocrite he is again, yer see, for

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directly he's done it he says: 'Now, I'm free again for frolic and fun;' calls Joey, the clown, his old friend, because they're both full of tricks and antics: 'Joey, here's a man hung hisself;'—that's his hypocrisy again, yer see, for he tries to get exempt after he's done it hisself.)

Enter CLOWN, in quick haste, bobbing up against the gallows.

Clown. Dear me, I've run against a milk-post! Why, dear Mr. Punch, you've hung a man! do take him down! How came you to do it?

Punch. He got wet through, and I hung him up to dry.

Clown. Dear me! why you've hung him up till he's dried quite dead!

Punch. Poor fellow! then he won't catch cold with the wet. Let's put him in this snuff-box.

[Pointing to coffin.]
Joey takes the figure down and gives it to Punch to hold, so as the body do not run away, and then proceeds to remove the gallows. In doing so he by accident hits Punch on the nose.

Punch. Mind what you are about! (for Punch is game, yer know, right through to the back-bone.)

Clown. Make haste, Punch, here's somebody a-coming! (They hustle his legs and feet in; but they can't get his head in, the undertaker not having made the coffin large enough.)

Punch. We'd better double him up, place the pall on, and take the man to the brave,—not the grave, but the brave: cos he's been a brave man in his time may be.—Sings the song of 'Bobbing around,' while with the coffin he bobs Joey on the head, and exaunt.

Re-enter PUNCH.

Punch. That was a jolly lark, wasn't it? Sings,—

"I'd be a butterfly, born in a bower,
Making apple-dumplings without any flour."

All this wit must have been born in me, or nearly so; but I got a good lot of it from Porsini and Pike—and gleanings, you know.

[Punch disappears and re-enters with bell.]

Punch. This is my pianner-sixty: it plays fifty tunes all at one time.

[Goes to the landlord of the public-house painted on the side-scene, or cottage, re-presented as a tavern or hotel. The children of the publican are all a-bed. Punch plays up a tune and solicits for money.]

Landlord wakes up in a passion through the terrible noise; pokes his head out of window and tells him to go away.

(There's a little window, and a little door to this side-scene.) If they was to play it all through, as you're a writing, it 'ud open Drury-lane Theatre.

Punch. Go away? Yes, play away! Oh,

you means, O'er the hills and far away. (He misunderstands him, wilfully, the hypocrite.) *[Punch keeps on ringing his bell violently, Publican, in a violent passion, opens the door, and pushes him away, saying, "Be off with you!"]*
Punch. I will not. *(Hits him over the head with the bell.)* You're no judge of music. *(Plays away.)*

Publican exaunts to fetch cudgel to pay him out. Punch no sooner sees cudgel than he exaunts, taking his musical instrument with him. It's far superior to anything of the kind you did ever see, except 'seldom.' You know it's silver, and that's what we says 'seldom;' silver, you know, is 'seldom,' because it's seldom you sees it.

Publican comes out of his house with his cudgel to catch old Punch on the grand hop. Must have a little comic.

Punch returns again with his bell, while publican is hiding secretly for to catch him. Publican pretends, as he stands in a corner, to be fast asleep, but keeps his eyes wide awake all the while, and says, 'If he comes up here, I'll be one upon his tibby.'

Punch comes out from behind the opposite side, and rings his bell violently. Publican makes a blow at him with his cudgel, and misses, saying, "How dare you intrude upon my premises with that nasty, noisy bell?"

Punch, while publican is watching at this side-scene, appears over at the other, with a hartful dodge, and again rings his bell loudly, and again the publican misses him; and while publican is watching at this side-scene, Punch re-enters, and draws up to him very slowly, and restes his pianner-sixty on the board, while he slowly advances to him, and gives him a whack on the head with his fist. Punch then disappears, leaving his bell behind, and the landlord in pursession of his music.)

Landlord (collaring the bell). Smuggings! pursession is nine points of the law! So this bell is mine, *(guarding over it with a stick).* Smuggings! this is mine, and when he comes up to take this bell away, I shall have him. Smuggings! it's mine.

Punch re-enters very slowly behind the publican as he is watching the bell, and snatching up the bell, cries out, 'That's mine,' and exaunts with it.

Publican. Dear me! never mind; I look after him; I shall catch him some day or other. *(Hits his nose up against the post as he is going away.)* (That's comic.) Oh, my nose! never mind, I'll have him again some time.

[Excite PUBLICAN.]

CLOWN re-enters with PUNCH.

Clown. Oh, Punch, how are you?

Punch. I'm very glad to see you. Oh, Joey, my friend, how do you do?

Clown. Here, Punch, are you a mind for a lark? *(Peeping in at the cottage window, re-presented as a public-house.)* Are you hungry, Punch? would you like something to eat?

Punch. Yes.

Clown. What would you like?

Punch. Not peculiar.

(Not particular, he means, you know; that's a slip word.)

Clown. I'll go up into the landlord, and see if he's got anything to eat. *(Exaunt into cottage, and poking his head of the window.)* Here, Punch; here's the landlord fast asleep in the kitchen cellar; here's a lot of sausages hanging up here.

(Joey's a-thieving; don't you see, he's a robbing the landlord now?)

Would you like some for supper, eh, Punch?

Punch. Yes, to be sure.

Clown. Don't make a noise; you'll wake the landlord.

Punch (whispering as loud as he can bawl through the window). Hand 'em out here. *(Punch pulls them out of the window.)*

Clown. What are we to fry them in? I'll go and see if I can find a fryingpan.

[Exaunt from window, and re-appears with fryingpan, which he hands out of window for Punch to cook sausages in, and then disappears for a moment; after which he returns, and says, with his head out of window, "Would you like something hot, Punch?"]

Punch. Yes, to be sure.

(Punch is up to everything. He's a helping him to rob the publican. One's as much in the mud as the other is in the mire.)

Clown (Thrusting red-hot poker out of window.) Here, lay hold—Here's a lark—Make haste—Here's the landlord a coming. *(Rubs Punch with it over the nose.)*

Punch. Oh my nose!—that is a hot 'un.

[Takes poker.]

Clown. (Re-enters, and calls in at window.) Landlord, here's a fellow stole your sausages and fryingpan. *(Wakes up Landlord and exaunts.)*

Landlord. (Appears at window.) Here's somebody been in my house and axually stole my sausages, fryingpan, and red-hot poker!

(Clown exaunts when he has blamed it all to Punch. Joey stole 'em, and Punch took 'em, and the receiver is always worse than the thief, for if they was never no receivers there wouldn't never be no thieves.)

Landlord. Seizing the sausages in Punch's hand, says, How did you get these here?

Punch. Joey stole 'em, and I took 'em.

Landlord. Then you're both jolly thieves, and I must have my property. A scuffle ensues. Punch hollars out, Joey! Joey! Here's the landlord a stealing the sausages!

(So you see Punch wants to make the landlord a thief so as to exempt himself. He's a hypocrite there again, you see again—all through the piece he's the master-piece. Oh a most clever man is Punch, and such an hypocrite.)

(Punch, seizing the fryingpan, which has been on the play-board, knocks it on the

publican's head; when, there being a false bottom to it, the head goes through it, and the sausages gets about the Publican's neck, and Punch pulls at the pan and the sausages with vehemence, till the landlord is exhausted, and exaunts with his own property back again; so there is no harm done, only merely for the lark to return to those people what belongs to 'em—What you take away from a person always give to them again.)

Re-enter CLOWN.

Clown. Well, Mr. Punch, I shall wish you a pleasant good morning.

Punch. [Hits him with his cudgel.] Good morning to you, Joey.

Exaunt JOEY.

Punch sits down by the side of the poker, and Scaramouch appears without a head.

Punch looks, and beholds, and he's frightened, and exaunts with the poker.

Scaramouch does a comic dance, with his long neck shooting up and down with the actions of his body, after which he exaunts.

Punch re-enters again with the poker, and places it beside of him, and takes his cudgel in his hand for protection, while he is singing the National Anthem of "God save the Queen and all the Royal Family."

Satan then appears as a dream (and it is all a dream after all), and dressed up as the Roossian Bear (leave Politics alone as much as you can, for Punch belongs to nobody).

Punch has a dreadful struggle with Satan, who seizes the red-hot poker and wants to take Punch away, for all his past misdeeds, and frolic and fun, to the bottomless pit.

By struggling with Satan, Punch overpowers him, and he drops the poker, and Punch kills him with his cudgel, and shouts "Bravo! Hooray! Satan is dead," he cries (we must have a good conclusion): "we can now all do as we like!"—(That's the moral, you see.) "Good-by, Ladies and Gentlemen: this is the whole of the original performance of Mr. Punch; and I remain still your most obedient and most humble servant to command. Good-by, good-by, good-by. God bless you all. I return you my most sincere thanks for your patronage and support, and I hope you'll come out handsome with your gold and silver."

There is one Punch in France, but far different to the English Punch; they exhibiting their figures in a different way by performing them with sticks, the same as Scaramouch is done. They has a performing Punch sitivated at the Boulevards, in Paris, where he has a certain piece of ground allotted for him, with seats attached, being his own freehold property; the passers-by, if they wish to see the performance, they take their seat with the juveniles, sits down, and he performs to them for what they think proper to give him.

I never was over in France, but I've heard talk of him a deal from foreigners who has

given us inflammation about it, vich they was so kind to do. They shows the difference between English and French you know.

THE FANTOCCINI MAN.

EVERY one who has resided for any time in London must have noticed in the streets a large roomy show upon wheels, about four times as capacious as those used for the performance of Punch and Judy.

The proprietor of one of these perambulating exhibitions was a person of some 56 years of age, with a sprightly half-military manner; but he is seldom seen by the public, on account of his habit of passing the greater part of the day concealed within his theatre, for the purpose of managing the figures. When he paid me a visit, his peculiar erect bearing struck me as he entered. He walked without bending his knees, stamped with his heels, and often rubbed his hands together as if washing them with an invisible soap. He wore his hair with the curls arranged in a Brutus, à la George the Fourth, and his chin was forced up into the air by a high black stock, as though he wished to increase his stature. He wore a frock coat buttoned at waist, and open on his expanded chest, so as to show off the entire length of his shirt-front.

I could not help asking him, if he had ever served in the army. He, however, objected to gratify my curiosity on that point, though it was impossible from his reply not to infer that he had been in her majesty's service.

There was a mystery about his origin and parentage, which he desired should remain undisturbed. His relations were all of them so respectable, he said, that he did not wish to disgrace them by any revelations he might make; thus implying that he considered his present occupation a downfall in life.

"I followed it as my propensity," he proceeded, "and though I have run through three fortunes, I follow it still. I never knew the value of money, and when I have it in my pocket I cannot keep it there. I have spent forty-five pounds in three days."

He seemed to be not a little fond of exhibiting his dolls, and considered himself to be the only person living who knew anything of the art. He said orders were sent to him from all parts of the country to make the figures, and indeed some of them were so intricate, that he alone had the secret of their construction.

He hardly seemed to like the Marionettes, and evidently looked upon them as an interference with "the real original character" of the exhibition. The only explanation he could give of the difference between the Marionettes and the Fantoccini was, that the one had a French title, and referred to dolls in modern costume, whilst the other was an Italian word, and applied to dolls in fancy dresses.

He gave me the following interesting statement:—

"The Fantoccini," he said, "is the proper title of the exhibition of dancing dolls, though it has lately been changed to that of the 'Marionettes,' owing to the exhibition under that name at the Adelaide Gallery.

"That exhibition at the Adelaide Gallery was very good in its way, but it was nothing to be compared to the exhibition that was once given at the Argyll Rooms in Regent-street, (that's the old place that was burned down). It was called '*Le petit Théâtre Matthieu*,' and in my opinion it was the best one that ever come into London, because they was well managed. They did little pieces—heavy and light. They did Shakespeare's tragedies and farces, and singing as well; indeed, it was the real stage, only with dolls for actors and parties to speak for 'em and work their arms and legs behind the scenes. I've known one of these parties take three parts—look at that for clever work—first he did an old man, then an old woman, and afterwards the young man. I assisted at that performance, and I should say it was full twenty years ago, to the best of my recollection. After the Marionettes removed to the Western Institution, Leicester-square, I assisted at them also. It was a passable exhibition, but nothing out of the way. The figures were only modelled, not carved, as they ought to be. I was only engaged to exhibit one figure, a sailor of my own making. It was a capital one, and stood as high as a table. They wanted it for the piece called the 'Manager in Distress,' where one of the performers is a sailor. Mine would dance a hornpipe, and whip its hat off in a minute; when I had finished performing it, I took good care to whip it into a bag, so that they should not see how I arranged the strings, for they was very backwards in their knowledge. When we worked the figures it was very difficult, because you had to be up so high—like on the top of the ceiling, and to keep looking down all the time to manage the strings. There was a platform arranged, with a place to rest against.

"The first to introduce the Fantoccini into London—that is, into London streets, mind you, going about—was Gray, a Scotchman. He was a very clever fellow,—very good, and there was nothing but what was good that belonged to it—scenery, dresses, theatre and all. He had a frame then, no longer than the Punch frame now, only he had a labouring man to carry it for him, and he took with him a box no larger than a haberdasher's box, which contained the figures, for they were not more than nine inches high. Now my figures are two feet high, though they don't look it; but my theatre is ten feet high by six foot wide, and the opening is four feet high. This Gray was engaged at all the theatres, to exhibit his figures at the masquerades. Nothing went down but Mr. Gray, and he put poor Punch up altogether. When he performed at the theatres, he used to do it as a wind-up to the entertainment, after the dancing was over, and

they would clear the stage on purpose for him, and then let down a scene with an opening in it, the size of his theatre. On these occasions his figures were longer, about two feet, and very perfect. There was juggling, and slack and tight rope-dancing, and Punches, and everything, and the performance was never less than one hour, and then it was done as quick as lightning, every morning, and no feat longer than two or three minutes. It didn't do to have silly persons there.

"This Gray performed at Vauxhall when Bish, the lottery-man in Cornhill, had it, and he went down wonderful. He also performed before George the Fourth. I've heard say that he got ten pounds a-week when he performed at Vauxhall, for they snatched him out of the streets, and wouldn't let him play there. It's impossible to say what he made in the streets, for he was a Scotchman and uncommon close. If he took a hatful, he'd say, 'I've only got a few;' but he did so well he could sport his diamond rings on his fingers,—first rate—splendid.

"Gray was the first to exhibit gratis in the streets of London, but he was not the first to work fantoccini figures. They had always been exhibited at theatres before that, Old Porsini knowed nothing about them—it was out of his business all together, for he was Punch and nothing more. Gray killed Porsini and his Punch; regular shut him up. A man of the name of Flocton from Birmingham was, to the best of my knowledge, the first that ever had a fantoccini exhibition in England; but he was only for theatres.

"At this time I had been playing in the orchestra with some travelling comedians, and Mr. Seawood, the master, used among other things to exhibit the dancing figures. He had a proscenium fitted up so that he could open a twenty-foot theatre, almost large enough for living persons. He had the splendidest figures ever introduced into this country. He was an artist as well, splendid scene and transparent painter; indeed, he's worked for some of the first noblemen in Cheltenham, doing up their drawing-rooms. His figures worked their eyes and mouths by mechanism; according to what they had to say, they looked and moved their eyes and mouths according; and females, if they was singing, heaved their bosoms like Christians, the same as life. He had a Turk who did the tight-rope without anybody being seen. He always performed different pieces, and had a regular wardrobe with him—beautiful dresses—and he'd dress 'em up to their parts, and then paint their faces up with distemper, which dries in an hour. Somebody came and told me that Gray was in London, performing in the streets, and that's what brought me out. I had helped Mr. Seawood to manage the figures, and I knew something about them. They told me Gray had a frame, and I said, 'Well, it's a bit of genius, and is a fortune.' The only

figures they told me he had—and it was true—was a sailor, and a Turk, and a clown, and what we calls a Polander, that's a man that tosses the pole. I left Seawood directly, and I went to my father and got some money, and began instantly making my frame and figures. Mine was about sixteen inches high, and I had five of 'em. I began very strong. My fifth figure was a juggler. I was the second that ever came out in the streets of London. It was at the time that George the Fourth went to Scotland, and Gray went after him to try his luck, following the royal family. As the king went out of London I came in. I first of all put up at Peckham, just to lay to a bit and look about me. I'll tell you the reason. I had no one to play, and I couldn't manage the figures and do the music as well, consequently I had to seek after some one to do the pandean pipes. I didn't like to make my first appearance in London without music. At last I met a party that used to play the pipes at Vauxhall. I met him one day, and he says, 'What are you up to now?' so I told him I had the fantoccini figures. He was a beautiful pipe player, and I've never heard any one like him before or since. He wouldn't believe I had the figures, they was such a novelty. I told him where I was staying, and he and his partner came over to see me, and I performed the figures, and then we went on shares. He had worked for Gray, and he knew all his houses where he used to perform, and I knew nothing about these things. When Gray came back he found me performing before one of his houses in Harley-street, where he always had five shillings.

"They was a tremendous success—wonderful. If we had a call at a house our general price was two-and-sixpence, and the performance was, for a good one, twenty minutes. Then there was the crowd for the collection, but they was principally halfpence, and we didn't care about them much, though we have taken four shillings. We never pitched only to houses, only stopping when we had an order, and we hadn't occasion to walk far, for as soon as the tune was heard, up would come the servants to tell us to come. I've had three at me at once. I've known myself to be in Devonshire-place, when I was performing there, to be there for three hours and upwards, going from house to house. I could tell you how much we took a-day. It was, after taking expenses, from four to five pounds a-day. Besides, there was a labourer to whom we paid a guinea a-week to carry a frame, and he had his keep into the bargain. Where Punch took a shilling we've taken a pound.

"I recollect going down with the show to Brighton, and they actually announced our arrival in the papers, saying, that among other public amusements they had the Fantoccini figures from London. That's a fact. That was in the paper. We did well in Brighton.

We have, I can assure you, taken eighteen shillings and sixpence in half an hour, corner-pitching, as we call it; that is, at the corner of a street where there is a lot of people passing. We had such success, that the magistrates sent the head-constable round with us, to clear away the mob. If we performed before any gentleman's place, there was this constable to keep the place clear. A nasty busy fellow he was, too. All the time we was at Brighton we made twenty pounds a-week clear, for we then took only shillings and sixpences, and there was no fourpenny pieces or threepenny bits in them times. We had gentlemen come up many a time and offer to buy the whole concern, clear. What an idea, wasn't it? But we didn't want to sell it, they couldn't have given us our price.

"The crowd was always a great annoyance to us. They'd follow us for miles, and the moment we pitched up they'd come and gather about, and almost choke us. What was their ha'pence to us when we was taking our half-crowns? Actually, in London, we walked three and four miles to get rid of the mob; but, bless you! we couldn't get rid of them, for they was like flies after honey.

"We used to do a great business with evening parties. At Christmas we have had to go three and four times in the same evening to different parties. We never had less than a guinea, and I have had as much as five pounds, but the usual price was two pounds ten shillings, and all refreshments found you. I had the honour of performing before the Queen when she was Princess Victoria. It was at Gloucester-house, Park-lane, and we was engaged by the royal household. A nice berth I had of it, for it was in May, and they put us on the landing of the drawing-room, where the folding-doors opened, and there was some place close by where hot air was admitted to warm the apartments; and what with the heat of the weather and this 'ere ventilation, with the heat coming up the grating-places, and my anxiety performing before a princess, I was near baked, and the perspiration quite run off me; for I was packed up above, standing up and hidden, to manage the figures. There was the maids of honour coming down the stairs like so many nuns, dressed all in white, and the princess was standing on a sofa, with the Duke of Kent behind her. She was apparently very much amused, like others who had seen them. I can't recollect what we was paid, but it was very handsome and so forth.

"I've also performed before the Baroness Rothschild's, next the Duke of Wellington's, and likewise the Baron himself, in Grosvenor-place, and Sir Watkyn W. Wynne, and half the nobility in England. We've been in the very first of drawing-rooms.

"I shall never forget being at Sir Watkyn Wynne's, for we was very handsomely treated, and had the best of everything. It was in

St. James's-square, and the best of mansions. It was a juvenile-party night, and there was a juggler, and a Punch and Judy, and our Fantoccini. One of the footmen comes up, and says he, 'Would any of you men like a jelly?' I told him I didn't care for none, but the Punch-and-Judy man says—'My missus is very partial to them.' So the footman asks—'How will you carry it home?' I suggested he should put it in his hat, and the foolish fellow, half silly with horns of ale, actually did, and wrapped it up in his pocket-handkerchief. There was a large tumbler full. By and by he cries—'Lord, how I sweat!' and there was the stuff running down his hair like so much size. We did laugh, I can assure you.

"Fantoccini has fallen off now. It's quite different to what it was. I don't think the people's tired of it, but it ain't such a novelty. I could stop up a whole street if I liked, so that nothing could get along, and that shows the people ain't tired of it. I think it's the people that gave the half-crowns are tired of it, but those with the ha'pence are as fond of it as ever. As times go, the performance is worth two pounds a-week to me; and if it wasn't, I couldn't afford to stop with it, for I'm very clever on the violin, and I could earn more than thirty shillings a-week playing in bands. We still attend evening parties, only it isn't to princesses, but gentry. We depend more upon evening parties. It isn't street work, only if we didn't go round they'd think I was dead. We go to more than thirty parties a-year. We always play according to price, whether it's fifteen shillings, or ten shillings, or a guinea. We don't get many five-guinea orders now. The last one was six months ago, to go twenty-eight miles into Kent, to a gentleman's house. When we go to parties, we take with us a handsome, portable, fold-up frame. The front is beautiful, and by a first-rate artist. The gentleman who done it is at the head of the carriage department at a railway, and there's the royal arms all in gold, and it stands above ten feet high, and has wings and all, so that the music and everything is invisible. It shuts up like a portfolio. The figures are first-rate ones, and every one dressed according to the country, whatever it may be, she is supposed to represent. They are in the best of material, with satin and lace, and all that's good.

"When we perform in the streets, we generally go through this programme. We begins with a female hornpipe dancer; then there is a set of quadrilles by some marionette figures, four females and no gentleman. If we did the men we should want assistance, for four is as much as I can hold at once. It would require two men, and the street won't pay for it. After this we introduces a representation of Mr. Grimaldi the clown, who does tumbling and posturing, and a comic dance, and so forth, such as trying to catch a butterfly. Then comes the enchanted Turk. He comes

on in the costume of a Turk, and he throws off his right and left arm, and then his legs, and they each change into different figures, the arms and legs into two boys and girls, a clergyman the head, and an old lady the body. That figure was my own invention, and I could if I like turn him into a dozen; indeed, I've got one at home, which turns into a parson in the pulpit, and a clerk under him, and a lot of little charity children, with a form to sit down upon. They are all carved figures, every one of them, and my own make. The next performance is the old lady, and her arms drop off and turn into two figures, and the body becomes a complete balloon and car in a minute, and not a flat thing, but round—and the figures get into the car and up they go. Then there's the tight-rope dancer, and next the Indian juggler—Ramo Samee, a representation—who chucks the balls about under his feet and under his arms, and catches them on the back of his head, the same as Ramo Samee did. Then there's the sailor's hornpipe—Italian Scaramouch (he's the old style). This one has a long neck, and it shoots up to the top of the theatre. This is the original trick, and a very good one. Then comes the Poland, who balances a pole and two chairs, and stands on his head and jumps over his pole; he dresses like a Spaniard, and in the old style. It takes a quarter of an hour to do that figure well, and make him do all his tricks. Then comes the Skeletons. They're regular first class, of course. This one also was my invention, and I was the first to make them, and I'm the only one that can make them. They are made of a particular kind of wood. I'm a first-rate carver, and can make my three guineas any day for a skull; indeed, I've sold many to dentists to put in their window. It's very difficult to carve this figure, and takes a deal of time. It takes full two months to make these skeletons. I've been offered ten pounds ten shillings for a pair, if I'd make 'em correct according to the human frame. Those I make for exhibiting in the streets, I charge two pounds each for. They're good, and all the joints is correct, and you may put 'em into what attitudes you like, and they walk like a human being. These figures in my show come up through a trap-door, and perform attitudes, and shiver and lie down, and do imitations of the pictures. It's a tragic sort of concern, and many ladies won't have 'em at evening parties, because it frightens the children. Then there's Judy Callaghan, and that 'liven's up after the skeletons. Then six figures jump out of her pockets, and she knocks them about. It's a sort of comic business. Then the next is a countryman who can't get his donkey to go, and it kicks at him and throws him off, and all manner of comic antics, after Billy Button's style. Then I do the skeleton that falls to pieces, and then becomes whole again. Then there's another out-of-the-way comic figure that falls to pieces

similar to the skeleton. He catches hold of his head and chucks it from one hand to the other. We call him the Nondescript. We wind up with a scene in Tom and Jerry. The curtain winds up, and there's a watchman prowling the streets, and some of those larking gentlemen comes on and pitch into him. He looks round and he can't see anybody. Presently another comes in and gives him another knock, and then there's a scuffle, and off they go over the watch-box, and down comes the scene. That makes the juveniles laugh, and finishes up the whole performance merry like.

"I've forgot one figure now. I know'd there was another, and that's the Scotchman who dances the Highland fling. He's before the watchman. He's in the regular national costume, everything correct, and everything, and the music plays according to the performance. It's a beautiful figure when well handled, and the dresses cost something, I can tell you; all the joints are counter-sunk—them figures that shows above the knee. There's no joints to be seen, all works hidden like, something like Madame Vestris in Don Juan. All my figures have got shoes and stockings on. They have, indeed. If it wasn't my work, they'd cost a deal of money. One of them is more expensive than all those in Punch and Judy put together. Talk of Punch knocking the Fantoccini down! Mine's all show; Punch is nothing, and cheap as dirt.

"I've also forgot the flower-girl that comes in and dances with a garland. That's a very pretty figure in a fairy's dress, in a nice white skirt with naked carved arms, nice modelled, and the legs just the same; and the trunks come above the knee, the same as them ballet girls. She shows all the opera attitudes.

"The performance, to go through the whole of it, takes an hour and a half; and then you mustn't stand looking at it, but as soon as one thing goes off the music changes and another comes on. That ain't one third, nor a quarter of what I can do.

"When I'm performing I'm standing behind, looking down upon the stage. All the figures is hanging round on hooks, with all their strings ready for use. It makes your arms ache to work them, and especially across the loins. All the strength you have you must do, and chuck it out too; for those four figures which I uses at evening parties, which dance the polka, weighs six pounds, and that's to be kept dangling for twenty minutes together. They are two feet high, and their skirts take three quarters of a yard, and are covered with spangles, which gives 'em great weight.

"There are only two of us going about now with Fantoccini shows. Several have tried it, but they had to knock under very soon. They soon lost their money and time. In the first place, they must be musicians to make the figures keep time in the dances; and, again, they must be carvers, for it won't pay to put

the figures out to be done. I had ten pounds the other day only to carve six figures, and the wood only come to three shillings; that'll give you some idea of what the carving costs.

"Formerly I used to make the round of the watering-places, but I've got quite enough to do in London now, and travelling's very expensive, for the eating and drinking is so very expensive. Now, at Ramsgate I've had to pay half-a-guinea for a bed, and that to a man in my position is more than I like. I always pays the man who goes along with me to play the music, because I don't go out every day, only when it suits me. He gets as good as his twenty-three shillings a-week, according to how business is, and that's on an average as good as four shillings a-day. If I'm very lucky I makes it better for him, for a man can't be expected to go and blow his life away into pandean pipes unless he's well paid for it."

GUY FAWKESES.

UNTIL within the last ten or twelve years, the exhibition of guys in the public thoroughfares every 5th of November, was a privilege enjoyed exclusively by boys of from 10 to 15 years of age, and the money arising therefrom was supposed to be invested at night in a small pyrotechnic display of squibs, crackers, and catherine-wheels.

At schools, and at many young gentlemen's houses, for at least a week before the 5th arrived, the bonfires were prepared and guys built up.

At night one might see rockets ascending in the air from many of the suburbs of London, and the little back-gardens in such places as the Hampstead-road and Kennington, and, after dusk, suddenly illuminated with the blaze of the tar-barrel, and one might hear in the streets even banging of crackers mingled with the laughter and shouts of boys enjoying the sport.

In those days the street guys were of a very humble character, the grandest of them generally consisting of old clothes stuffed up with straw, and carried in state upon a kitchen-chair. The arrival of the guy before a window was announced by a juvenile chorus of "Please to remember the 5th of November." So diminutive, too, were some of these guys, that I have even seen dolls carried about as the representatives of the late Mr. Fawkes. In fact, none of these effigies were hardly ever made of larger proportions than Tom Thumb, or than would admit of being carried through the garden-gates of any suburban villa.

Of late years, however, the character of Guy Fawkes-day has entirely changed. It seems now to partake rather of the nature of a London May-day. The figures have grown to be of gigantic stature, and whilst clowns, musicians, and dancers have got to accompany them in their travels through the streets, the traitor Fawkes seems to have been almost

laid aside, and the festive occasion taken advantage of for the expression of any political feeling, the guy being made to represent any celebrity of the day who has for the moment offended against the opinions of the people. The kitchen-chair has been changed to the costermongers' donkey-truck, or even vans drawn by pairs of horses. The bonfires and fireworks are seldom indulged in; the money given to the exhibitors being shared among the projectors at night, the same as if the day's work had been occupied with acrobating or nigger singing.

The first guy of any celebrity that made its appearance in the London streets was about the year 1844, when an enormous figure was paraded about on horseback. This had a tall extinguisher-hat, with a broad red brim, and a pointed vandyked collar, that hung down over a smock frock, which was stuffed out with straw to the dimensions of a water-butt. The figure was attended by a body of some half-dozen costermongers, mounting many coloured cockades, and armed with formidable bludgeons. The novelty of the exhibition ensured its success, and the "coppers" poured in in such quantities that on the following year gigantic guys were to be found in every quarter of the metropolis.

But the gigantic movement did not attain its zenith till the "No Popery" cry was raised, upon the division of England into papal bishoprics. Then it was no longer Fawkes, but Cardinal Wiseman and the Pope of Rome who were paraded as guys through the London thoroughfares.

The figures were built up of enormous proportions, the red hat of the cardinal having a brim as large as a loo-table, and his scarlet cape being as long as a tent. Guy Fawkes seated upon a barrel marked "Gunpowder" usually accompanied His Holiness and the Cardinal, but his diminutive size showed that Guy now played but a secondary part in the exhibition, although the lantern and the matches were tied as usual to his radishy and gouty fingers. According to the newspapers, one of these shows was paraded on the Royal Exchange, the merchants approving of the exhibition to such an extent that sixpences, shillings, and half-crowns were showered in to the hats of the lucky costers who had made the speculation. So excited was the public mind, that at night, after business was over, processions were formed by tradespeople and respectable mechanics, who, with bands of music playing, and banners flying, on which were inscribed anti-papal mottoes and devices, marched through the streets with flaming torches, and after parading their monster Popes and Cardinals until about nine o'clock at night, eventually adjourned to some open space—like Peckham-rye or Blackheath—where the guy was burned amid the most boisterous applauses.

Cardinal Wiseman and the Pope reappeared

for several years in succession, till at length the Russian war breaking out, the Guy-Fawkes constructors had a fresh model to work upon. The Emperor of Russia accordingly "came out" in the streets, in all forms and shapes; sometimes as the veritable Nicholas, in jack-boots and leather breeches, with his unmistakable moustache; and often as Old Nick, with a pair of horns and a lengthy appendage in the form of a tail, with an arrow-headed termination; and not unfrequently he was represented as a huge bear crouching beneath some rude symbol of the English and French alliance.

On the 5th of November (1856) the guys were more of a political than a religious character. The unfortunate Pope of Rome had in some instances been changed for Bomba, though the Czar, His Holiness, and his British representative the Cardinal, were not altogether neglected. The want of any political agitation was the cause why the guys were of so uninteresting a character.

I must not, however, forget to mention a singular innovation that was then made in the recognised fashion of guy building—one of the groups of figures exhibited being (strange to say) of a complimentary nature. It consisted of Miss Nightingale, standing between an English Grenadier and a French foot-soldier, while at her feet lay the guy between two barrels marked "Gunpowder," and so equivocally attired that he might be taken for either the Emperor of Russia or the Pope of Rome.

At Billingsgate, a guy was promenaded round the market as early as five o'clock in the morning, by a party of charity-boys, who appeared by their looks to have been sitting up all night. It is well known to the boys in the neighbourhood of the great fish-market, that the guy which is first in the field reaps the richest harvest of halfpence from the salesmen; and indeed, till within the last three or four years, one fish-factor was in the habit of giving the bearers of the first effigy he saw a half-crown piece. Hence there were usually two or three different guy parties in attendance soon after four o'clock, awaiting his coming into the market.

For manufacturing a cheap guy, such as that seen at Billingsgate, a pair of old trousers and Wellington boots form the most expensive item. The shoulders of the guys are generally decorated with a paper cape, adorned with different coloured rosettes and gilt stars. A fourpenny mask makes the face, and a proper cocked hat, embellished in the same style as the cape, surrounds the rag head.

The general characteristics of all guys consists in a limpness and roundness of limb, which give the form a puddingy appearance. All the extremities have a kind of paralytic feebleness, so that the head leans on one side like that of a dead bird, and the feet have an unnatural propensity for placing themselves

in every position but the right one; sometimes turning their toes in, as if their legs had been put on the wrong way, or keeping their toes turned out, as if they had been "struck so" while taking their first dancing-lesson. Their fingers radiate like a bunch of carrots, and the arms are as shapeless and bowed as the monster sausage in a cook-shop window. The face is always composed of a mask painted in the state of the most florid health, and singularly disagreeing with the frightful debility of the body. Through the holes for the eyes bits of rag and straw generally protrude, as though birds had built in the sockets. A pipe is mostly forced into the mouth, where it remains with the bowl downwards; and in the hands it is customary to tie a lantern and matches. Whilst the guy is carried along, you can hear the straw in his interior rustling and crackling, like moving a workhouse mattress. As a general rule, it may be added, that guys have a helpless, drunken look.

When, however, the monster Guy Fawkes came into fashion, considerably greater expense was gone to in "getting up" the figures. Then the feet were always fastened in their proper position, and although the arrangement of the hands was never perfectly mastered, yet the fingers were brought a little more closely together, and approached the digital dexterity of the dummies at the cheap clothes marts.

For carrying the guys about, chairs, wheelbarrows, trucks, carts, and vans are employed. Chairs and wheelbarrows are patronised by the juvenile population, but the other vehicles belong to the gigantic speculations.

On the Surrey side a guy was exhibited in 1856 whose straw body was encased in a coachman's old great coat, covered with different colours, as various as the waistcoat patterns on a tailor's show-book. He was wheeled about on a truck by three or four young men, whose hoarse voices, when shouting "Please to remember the Guy," showed their regular occupation to be street-selling, for they had the same husky sound as the "Eight a-groat fresh herrrens," in the Saturday night street-markets.

In the neighbourhood of Walworth, men dressed up as guys were dragged about on trucks. One of them was seated upon a barrel marked "Gunpowder," his face being painted green, and ornamented with an immense false nose of a bright scarlet colour. I could not understand what this guy was meant to represent, for he wore a sugarloaf hat with an ostrich feather in it, and had on a soldier's red coat, decorated with paper rosettes as big as cabbages. His legs, too, were covered with his own corduroy trousers but adorned with paper streamers and bows. In front of him marched a couple of men carrying broomsticks, and musicians playing upon a tambourine and a penny tin whistle.

The most remarkable of the stuffed figures of 1856 was one dressed in a sheet, intended

to represent the Rev. Mr. Spurgeon in a surplice! It was carried about on a wooden stage by boys, and took very well with the mob, for no sooner did the lads cry out,—

“Remember, remember,
The fifth of November,
Old Spurgeon’s treason and plot!”

than a shout of laughter burst from the crowd, and the halfpence began to pour in. Without this alteration in the November rhyme, nobody would have been able to have traced the slightest resemblance between the guy and the reverend gentleman whose effigy it was stated to be.

Further, it should be added, that the guy exhibitors have of late introduced a new system, of composing special rhymes for the occasion, which are delivered after the well-known “Remember, remember.” Those with the figures of the Pope, for instance, sing,—

“A penn’orth of cheese to feed the pope,
A twopenny loaf to choke him,
A pint of beer to wash it down,
And a good large fagot to smoke him!”

I heard a party of costermongers, who had the image of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias wabbling on their truck, sing in chorus this home-manufactured verse,—

“Poke an ingun in his eye—
A squib shove up his nose, sirs;
Then roast him till he’s done quite brown,
And Nick to old Nick goes, sirs.”

With the larger guys little is usually said or done beyond exhibiting them. In the crowded thoroughfares, the proprietors mostly occupy themselves only with collecting the money, and never let the procession stop for a moment. On coming to the squares, however, a different course is pursued, for then they stop before every window where a head is visible and sing the usual “Remember, remember,” winding up with a vociferous hurrah! as they hold out their hats for the halfpence.

At the West-end, one of the largest guys of 1856 was drawn by a horse in a cart. This could not have been less than fourteen feet high. Its face, which was as big as a shield, was so flat and good-humoured in expression that I at once recognised it as a pantomime mask, or one used to hang outside some masquerade costumier’s shop door. The coat was of the Charles the Second’s cut, and composed of a lightish coloured paper, ornamented with a profusion of Dutch metal. There was a sash across the right shoulder, and the legs were almost as long as the funnel to a penny steamer, and ended in brown paper cavalier boots. As the costermongers led it along, it shook like a load of straw. If it had not been for the bull’s-eye lantern and lath matches, nobody would have recognised in the dandy figure the effigy of the wretched Fawkes.

By far the handsomest turn-out of the day, at this time, was a group of three figures, which promenaded Whitechapel and Bethnal-green. They stood erect in a van drawn by a blind horse, and accompanied by a “band” of one performer on the drum and pandean pipes. Four clowns in full costume made faces while they jumped about among the spectators, and collected donations. All the guys were about ten feet high. The centre one, intended for Fawkes himself, was attired in a flowing cloak of crimson glazed calico, and his black hat was a broad-brimmed sugar-loaf, the pointed crown of which was like a model of Langham-place church steeple, and it had a profusion of black hair streaming about the face. The figures on either side of this were intended for Lords Suffolk and Montague, in the act of arresting the traitor, and accordingly appeared to be gently tapping Mr. Fawkes on either shoulder. The bodies of their lordships were encased in gold scale-armour, and their legs in silver ditto, whilst their heads were covered with three-cornered cocked hats, surmounted by white feathers. In the front of the van were two white banners, with the following inscriptions in letters of gold:—

“APPREHENSION OF GUY FAWKES ON THE 5TH OF NOVEMBER, IN THE YEAR 1605.”

And,—

“THE DISCOVERY OF THE GUNPOWDER PLOT ON THE 5TH OF NOVEMBER, 1605.”

At the back of the van flaunted two flags of all nations. In addition to the four clowns, there were several other attendants; one in particular had the appearance of half a man and half a beast, his body being clad in a green frock-coat, whilst his legs and feet were shaggy, and made to imitate a bear’s.

The most remarkable part of this exhibition was the expression upon the countenances of the figures. They were ordinary masks, and consequently greatly out of proportion for the height of the figures. There was a strong family resemblance between the traitor and his arrestors; neither did Fawkes’s countenance exhibit any look of rage, astonishment, or disappointment at finding his designs frustrated. Nor did their lordships appear to be angry, disgusted, or thunderstruck at the conspirator’s bold attempt.

In the neighbourhood of Bond-street the guys partook of a political character, as if to please the various Members of Parliament who might be strolling to their Clubs. In one barrow was the effigy of the Emperor of the French, holding in his hands, instead of the lantern and matches, a copy of the *Times* newspaper, torn in half. I was informed that another figure I saw was intended to represent the form of Bomba.

In the neighbourhood of Lambeth Palace the guys were of an ecclesiastical kind, and

such as it was imagined would be likely to flatter the Archbishop of Canterbury into giving at least a half-crown. One of these was drawn by two donkeys, and accompanied by drums and pipes. It represented Cardinal Wiseman in the company of four members of “the Holy Inquisition.” The Cardinal was dressed in the usual scarlet costume, while the Inquisitors were robed in black with green veils over their faces. In front of the cart was a bottle, labelled “Holy Water,” which was continually turned round, so that the people might discover that on the other side was printed “Whisky.”

The practice of burning guys, and lighting bonfires, and letting off fireworks, is now generally discontinued, and particularly as regards the public exhibitions at Blackheath and Peckham Rye. The greatest display of fireworks, we are inclined to believe, took place in the public streets of the metropolis, for up to twelve o’clock at night, one might occasionally hear reports of penny cannons, and the jerky explosions of crackers.

GUY FAWKES (MAN).

“I’m in the crock’ry line, going about with a basket and changing jugs, and glass, and things, for clothes and that; but for the last eight years I have, every Fifth of November, gone out with a guy. It’s a good job for the time, for what little we lay out on the guy we don’t miss, and the money comes in all of a lump at the last. While it lasts there’s money to be made by it. I used always to take the guy about for two days; but this last year I took him about for three.

“I was nineteen year old when I first went out with a guy. It was seeing others about with ’em, and being out of work at the time, and having nothing to sell, I and another chap we knocked up one between us, and we found it go on pretty well, so we kept on at it. The first one I took out was a very first-rater, for we’d got it up as well as we could to draw people’s attention. I said, ‘It ain’t no good doing as the others do, we must have a tip-topper.’ It represented Guy Fawkes in black velvet. It was about nine feet high, and he was standing upright, with matches in one hand and lantern in the other. I show’d this one round Clerkenwell and Islington. It was the first big ’un as was ever brought out. There had been paper ones as big, but ne’er a one dressed up in the style mine was. I had a donkey and cart, and we placed it against some cross-rails and some bits of wood to keep him steady. He stood firm because he had two poles up his legs, and being lashed round the body holding him firm to the posts—like a rock. We done better the first time we went out than we do lately. The guy must have cost a sovereign. He had a trunk-hose and white legs, which we made out of a pair of white drawers, for fleshings and yellow

boots, which I bought in Petticoat-lane. We took over 3*l.* with him, which was pretty fair, and just put us on again, for November is a bad time for most street trades, and getting a few shillings all at once makes it all right till Christmas.

“A pal of mine, of the name of Smith, was the first as ever brought out a big one. His wasn’t a regular dressed-up one, but only with a paper apron to hang down the front and bows, and such-like. He put it on a chair, and had four boys to carry it on their shoulders. He was the first, too, as introduced clowns to dance about. I see him do well, and that’s why I took mine in hand.

“The year they was chalking ‘No Popery’ all about the walls I had one, dressed up in a long black garment, with a red cross on his bosom. I’m sure I don’t know what it meant, but they told me it would be popular. I had only one figure, with nine bows, and that tidivated all about him. As we went along everybody shouted out ‘No Popery!’ Everybody did. He had a large brimmed hat with a low crown in, and a wax mask. I always had wax ones. I’ve got one at home now I’ve had for five year. It cost two-and-six-pence. It’s a very good-looking face but rather sly, with a great horse-hair beard. Most of the boys make their’n devils, and as ugly as they can, but that wouldn’t do for Christians like as I represent mine to be.

“One year I had Nicholas and his adviser. That was the Emperor of Russia in big top-boots and white breeches, and a green coat on. I gave him a good bit of mustachios—a little extra. He had a Russian helmet hat on, with a pair of eagles on the top. It was one I bought. I bought it cheap, for I only gave a shilling for it. I was offered five or six for it afterwards, but I found it answer my purpose to keep. I had it dressed up this year. The other figure was the devil. I made him of green tinsel paper cut out like scale armour, and pasted on to his legs to make it stick tight. He had a devil’s mask on, and I made him a pair of horns out of his head. Over them was a banner. I was told what to do to make the banner, for I had the letters writ out first, and then I cut ’em out of tinsel paper and stuck them on to glazed calico. On this banner was these words:—

‘What shall I do next?’
‘Why, blow your brains out!’

That took immensely, for the people said ‘That is very well.’ It was the time the war was on. I dare say I took between 3*l.* and 4*l.* that time. There was three of us rowed in with it, so we got a few shillings a-piece.

“The best one I ever had was the trial of Guy Fawkes. There was four figures, and they was drawn about in a horse and cart. There was Guy Fawkes, and two soldiers had hold of him, and there was the king sitting in a chair in front. The king was in a scarlet

velvet cloak, sitting in an old arm-chair, papered over to make it look decent. There was green and blue paper hanging over the arms to hide the ragged parts of it. The king's cloak cost sevenpence a-yard, and there was seven of these yards. He had a gilt paper crown and a long black wig made out of some rope. His trunks was black and crimson, and he had blue stockings and red boots. I made him up out of my own head, and not from pictures. It was just as I thought would be the best way to get it up, out of my own head. I've seed the picture of Guy Fawkes, because I've got a book of it at home. I never was no scholar, not in the least. The soldiers had a breast-plate of white steel paper, and baggy knee-breeches, and top boots. They had a big pipe each, with a top cut out of tin. Their helmets was the same as in the pictures, of steel paper, and a kind of a dish-cover shape, with a peak in front and behind. Guy was dressed the same kind as he was this year, with a black velvet dress and red cloak, and red boots turning over at top, with lace sewed on. I never made any of my figures frightful. I get 'em as near as I can to the life like.

"I reckon that show was the best as I ever had about. I done very well with it. They said it was a very good sight, and well got up. I dare say it cost me, with one thing and another, pretty nigh 4l. to get up. There was two of us to shove, me and my brother. I know I had a sovereign to myself when it was over, besides a little bit of merry-making.

This year I had the apprehension of Guy Fawkes by Lord Suffolk and Monteaule. I've followed up the hist'ry as close as I can. Next year I shall have him being burnt, with a lot of faggits and things about him. This year the figures cost about 3l. getting up. Fawkes was dressed in his old costume of black velvet and red boots. I bought some black velvet breeches in Petticoat-lane, and I gave 1s. 9d. for the two pair. They was old theatrical breeches. Their lordships was dressed in gold scale-armor like, of cut-out paper pasted on, and their legs imitated steel. They had three-corner cock'd hats, with white feathers in. I always buy fierce-looking masks with frowns, but one of them this year was a smiling—Lord Monteaule, I think. I took the figures as near as I can form from a picture I saw of Guy Fawkes being apprehended. I placed them figures in a horse and cart, and piled them up on apple-chests to the level of the cart, so they showed all, their feet and all. I bind the chests with a piece of table-cover cloth. The first day we went out we took 2l. 7s., and the second we took 1l. 17s., and the last day we took 2l. 1s. We did so well the third day because we went into the country, about Tottenham and Edmonton. They never witnessed such a thing down them parts. The drummer what I had with me was a blind man, and well known down

there. They call him Friday, because he goes there every Friday, so what they usually gave him we had. Our horse was blind, so we was obliged to have, one to lead him in front and another to lead the blind drummer behind. We paid the drummer 16s. for the three days. We paid for two days 10s., and the third one most of it came in, and we all went shares. It was a pony more than a horse. I think we got about a 1l. a-piece clear, when we was done on the Friday night. It took me six weeks getting up in my leisure time. There was the Russian bear in front. He wore a monkey dress, the same as in the pantomimes, and that did just as well for a bear. I painted his face as near as I could get it, to make it look frightful.

"When I'm building up a guy we first gits some bags and things, and cut 'em out to the shape of the legs and things, and then sew it up. We sew the body and arms and all round together in one. We puts two poles down for the legs and then a cross-piece at the belly and another cross-piece at the shoulder, and that holds 'em firm. We fill the legs with sawdust, and stuff it down with our hands to make it tight. It takes two sacks of sawdust for three figures, but I generally have it give to me, for I know a young feller as works at the wood-chopping. We stand 'em up in the room against the wall, whilst we are dressing them. We have lots of chaps come to see us working at the guys. Some will sit there for many hours looking at us. We stuff the body with shavings and paper and any sort of rubbish. I sew whatever is wanted myself, and in fact my fingers is sore now with the thimble, for I don't know how to use a thimble, and I feel awkward with it. I design everything and cut out all the clothes and the painting and all. They allow me 5s. for the building. This last group took me six weeks,—not constant, you know, but only lazy time of a night. I lost one or two days over it, that's all.

"I think there was more Guy Fawkeses out this year than ever was out before. There was one had Guy Fawkes and Punch and a Clown in a cart, and another was Miss Nightingale and two soldiers. It was meant to be complimentary to that lady, but for myself I think it insulting to bring out a lady like that as a guy, when she's done good to all.

"They always reckon me to be about the first hand in London at building a guy I never see none like them, nor no one else I don't think. It took us two quire of gold paper and one quire of silver paper to do the armour and the banner and other things. The gold paper is 6d. a-sheet, and the silver is 1d. a sheet. It wouldn't look so noble if we didn't use the gold paper.

"This year we had three clowns with us, and we paid them 3s. a-day each. I was dressed up as a clown, too. We had to dance

about, and joke, and say what we thought would be funny to the people. I had a child in my arms made of a doll stuffed with shavings, and made to represent a little boy. It was just to make a laugh. Every one I went up to I told the doll to ask their uncle or their aunt for a copper. I had another move, too, of calling for 'Bill Bowers' in the crowd, and if I got into any row, or anything, I used to call to him to protect me. We had no time to say much, for we kept on moving, and it loses time to talk.

"We took the guy round Goswell-road and Pentonville the first day, and on the second we was round Bethnal-green way, among the weavers. We went that way for safety the second day, for the police won't interrupt you there. The private houses give the most. They very seldom give more than a penny. I don't suppose we got more than 3s. or 4s. in silver all the three days.

"Sometimes we have rough work with the Irish going about with guys. The 'No Popery' year there was several rows. I was up at Islington-gate, there, in the Lower-road, and there's loads of Irish live up there, and a rough lot they are. They came out with sticks and bricks, and cut after us. We bolted with the guy. If our guy hadn't been very firm, it would have been jolted to bits. We always nailed straps round the feet, and support it on rails at the waist, and lashed to the sides. We bolted from this Irish mob over Islington-green, and down John-street into Clerkenwell. My mate got a nick with a stone just on the head. It just give him a slight hurt, and drew the blood from him. We jumped up in the donkey-cart and drove off.

"There was one guy was pulled out of the cart this year, down by Old Gravel-lane, in the Rateliff-highway. They pulled Miss Nightingale out of the cart and ran away with her, and regular destroyed the two soldiers that was on each side of her. Sometimes the cabmen lash at the guys with their whips. We never say anything to them, for fear we might get stopped by the police for making a row. You stand a chance of having a feather knocked off, or such-like, as is attached to them.

"There's a lot of boys goes about on the 5th with sticks, and make a regular business of knocking guys to pieces. They're called guy-smashers. They don't come to us, we're too strong for that, but they only manage the little ones, as they can take advantage of. They do this some of them to take the money the boys have collected. I have had regular prigs following my show, to pick the pockets of those looking on, but as sure as I see them I start them off by putting a policeman on to them.

"When we're showing, I don't take no trouble to invent new rhymes, but stick to the old poetry. There's some do new songs. I usually sing out,—

'Gentlefolks, pray
Remember this day;
'Tis with kind notice we bring
The figure of sly
And villanous Guy,
Who wanted to murder the king.
By powder and store,
He bitterly swore,
As he skulk'd in the walls to repair,
The parliament, too,
By him and his crew,
Should all be blowed up in the air.

But James, very wise,
Did the Papists surprise,
As they plotted the cruelty great;
He know'd their intent,
So Suffolk he sent
To save both kingdom and state.
Guy Fawkes he was found
With a lantern underground,
And soon was the traitor bound fast:
And they swore he should die,
So they hung him up high,
And burnt him to ashes at last.
So we, once a-year,
Come round without fear,
To keep up remembrance of this day
While assistance from you
May bring a review
Of Guy Fawkes a-blazing away.

So hollo, boys! hollo, boys!
Shout and huzza;
So hollo, boys! hollo, boys!
Keep up this day!
So hollo, boys! hollo, boys!
And make the bells ring!
Down with the Pope, and God save the Queen!

"It used to be King, but we say Queen now, and though it don't rhyme, it's more correct.

"It's very seldom that the police say anything to us, so long as we don't stop too long in the gangway not to create any mob. They join in the fun and laugh like the rest. Wherever we go there is a great crowd from morning to night.

"We have dinner on Guy Fawkes' days between one and two. We go to any place where it's convenient for us to stop at, generally at some public-house. We go inside, and leave some of the lads to look after the guy outside. We always keep near the window, where we can look out into the street, and we keep ourselves ready to pop out in a minute if anybody should attack the guy. We generally go into some by-way, where there ain't much traffic. We never was interrupted much whilst we was at dinner, only by boys chucking stones and flinging things at it; and they run off as soon as we come out.

"There's one party that goes out with a guy that sells it afterwards. They stop in London for the first two days, and then they work their way into the country as far as Sheerness, and then they sells the guy to form part of the procession on Lord-mayor's day. It's the watermen and ferrymen mostly buy it, and they carry it about in a kind of merriment among themselves, and at night they burn it and let off fireworks. They don't make no charge for coming to see it burnt, but it's open to the air and free to the public.

"None of the good guys taken about on

the 5th are burnt at night, unless some gentlemen buy them. I used to sell mine at one time to the Albert Saloon. Sometimes they'd give me 15s. for it, and sometimes less, according to what kind of a one I had. Three years, I think, I sold it to them. They used to burn it at first in the gardens at the back, but after they found the gardens fill very well without it, so they wouldn't have any more.

"I always take the sawdust and shavings out of my guys, and save the clothes for another year. The clothes are left in my possession to be taken care of. I make a kind of private bonfire in our yard with the sawdust and shavings, and the neighbours come there and have a kind of a spree, and shove one another into the fire, and kick it about the yard, and one thing and another.

"When I am building the guy, I begin about six weeks before 5th of November comes, and then we subscribe a shilling or two each and buy such things as we want. Then, when we want more, I goes to my pals, who live close by, and we subscribe another shilling or sixpence each, according to how we gets on in the day. Nearly all those that take out guys are mostly street traders.

"The heaviest expense for any guy I've built was 4l. for one of four figures."

GUY FAWKES (Boy).

"I ALWAYS go out with a Guy Fawkes every year. I'm seventeen years old, and I've been out with a guy ever since I can remember, except last year; I didn't then, because I was in Middlesex Hospital with an abscess, brought on by the rheumatic fever. I was in the hospital a month. My father was an undertaker; he's been dead four months: mother carries on the trade. He didn't like my going out with guys, but I always would. He didn't like it at all, he used to say it was a disgrace. Mother didn't much fancy my doing it this year. When I was a very little un, I was carried about for a guy. I couldn't a been more than seven years old when I first begun. They put paper-hangings round my legs—they got it from Baldwin's, in the Tottenham Court-road; sometimes they bought, and sometimes got it give 'em; but they give a rare lot for a penny or twopence. After that they put me on a apron made of the same sort of paper—showy, you know—then they put a lot of tinsel bows, and at the corners they cut a sort of tail like there is to farriers' aprons, and it look stunnin'; then they put on my chest a tinsel heart and rosettes; they was green and red, because it shows off. All up my arms I had bows and things to make a show-off. Then I put on a black mask with a little red on the cheek, to make me look like a devil: it had horns, too. Always pick out a devil's mask with horns: it looks fine, and frightens the people a'most. The boy that dressed me was a very clever chap, and made a guy to rights. Why, he

made me a little guy about a foot high, to carry in my lap—it was piecings of quilting like, a sort of patch-work all sewn together,—and then he filled it with saw-dust, and made a head of shavings. He picked the shavings small, and then sewed 'em up in a little bag; and then he painted a face, and it looked very well; and he made it a little tinsel bob-tail coat, and a tinsel cap with two feathers on the top. It was made to sit in a chair; and there was a piece of string tied to each of the legs and the arms, and a string come behind; and I used to pull it, and the legs and arms jumped up. I was put in a chair, and two old broom-handles was put through the rails, and then a boy got in front, and another behind, and carried me off round Holborn way in the streets and squares. Every now and then they put me down before a window; then one of 'em used to say the speech, and I used all the time to keep pulling the string of my little guy, and it amused the children at the windows. After they'd said the speech we all shouted hurrah! and then some of them went and knocked at the door and asked 'Please to remember the guy;' and the little children brought us ha'pence and pence; and sometimes the ladies and gentlemen chucked us some money out of the winder. At last they carried me into Russell-square. They put me down before a gentleman's house and begun saying the speech: while they was saying it, up comes a lot o' boys with sticks in their hands. One of our chaps knowed what they was after, and took the little guy out of my hand, and went on saying the speech. I kept all on sitting still. After a bit one of these 'ere boys says, 'Oh, it's a dead guy; let's have a lark with it!' and then one of 'em gives me a punch in the eye with his fist, and then snatched the mask off my face, and when he'd pulled it off he says, 'Oh, Bill, it's a live un!' We was afraid we should get the worst of it, so we run away round the square. The biggest one of our lot carried the chair. After we'd run a little way they caught us again, and says, 'Now then, give us all your money;' with that, some ladies and gentlemen that see it all came up to 'em and says, 'If you don't go we'll lock you up;' and so they let us go away. And so we went to another place where they sold masks; and we bought another. Then they asked me to be guy again, but I wouldn't, for I'd got a black-eye through it already. So they got another to finish out the day. When we got home at night we shared 2s. a-piece. There was five of us altogether; but I think they chisselled me. I know they got a deal more than that, for they'd had a good many sixpences and shillings. People usen't to think much of a shilling that time a-day, because there wasn't any but little guys about then; but I don't know but what the people now encourage little guys most, because they say that the chaps with the big ones ought to go to work.

"Next year I was out with a stuffed guy. They wanted me to be guy again, because I wasn't frightened easy, and I was lightish; but I told 'em 'No, I've had enough of being guy; I don't be guy any more: besides, I had such fine money for getting a whack in the eye!' We got on pretty well that year; but it gets wus and wus every year. We got hardly anything this year; and next I don't suppose we shall get anything at all. These chaps that go about pitchin' into guys we call 'guy smashers;' but they don't do it only for the lark of smashing the guys: they do it for the purpose of taking the boys' money away, and sometimes the clothes. If one of 'em has a hole in his boots, and he sees a guy with a good pair on, he pretty soon pulls 'em of the guy and hooks it off with 'em.

"After I'd been out with guys for three or four years, I got big enough to go to work, and I used to go along with my brother and help him at a coal-shed, carrying out coals. I was there ten months, and then one night—a bitter cold night, it was freezing hard—we had a naphtha lamp to light in the shop; and as me and my brother was doing it, either a piece of the match dropped in or else he poured it over, I can't say which, but all at once it exploded and blowed me across the road and knocked him in the shop all a-fire; and I was all a-fire, too—see how it's burnt my face and the hand I held the lucifer in. A woman run out of the next shop with some wet sacks, and throw'd 'em upon me, but it flared up higher then: water don't put it out, unless it's a mass of water like a engine. Then a milkman run up and pulled off his cape and throwed it over me, and that put it out; then he set me up, and I run home, though I don't know how I got there, and for two days after I didn't know anybody. Another man ran into the shop and pulled out my brother, and we was both taken to the University Hospital. Two or three people touched me, and the skin came off on their hands, and at nine o'clock the next morning my brother died. When they took me to the hospital they had no bed for me, and so they sent me home again, and I was seven months before I got well. But I've never been to say well since, and I shall never be fit for hard work any more.

"The next year I went out with a guy again, and I got on pretty well; and so I've done every year since, except last. I've had several little places since I got burnt, but they haven't lasted long.

"This year I made a stunning guy. First of all I got a pair of my own breeches—black uns—and stuffed 'em full of shavings. I tied the bottoms with a bit of string. Then I got a black coat—that belonged to another boy—and sewed it all round to the trousers; then we filled that with shavings, and give him a good corporation. Then we got a block, sich as the milliners have, and shoved that right in the neck of the coat, and then we shoved

some more shavings all round, to make it stick in tight; and when that was done it looked just like a dead man. I know something about dead men, because my father was always in that line. Then we got some horsehair and some glue, and plastered the head all round with glue, and stuck the horse-hair on to imitate the hair of a man; then we put the mask on: it was a twopenny one—they're a great deal cheaper than they used to be, you can get a very good one now for a penny—it had a great big nose, and it had two red horns, black eyebrows, and red cheeks. I like devils, they're so ugly. I bought a good-looking un two or three years ago, and we didn't get hardly anything, the people said, 'Ah! it's too good-looking; it don't frighten us at all.' Well, then, after we put on his mask we got two gloves, one was a woollen un, and the other a kid un, and stuffed them full of shavings, and tied 'em down to the chair. We didn't have no lantern, 'cos it keeps on falling out of his hands. After that we put on an old pair of lace-up boots. We tied 'em on to the legs of the breeches. The feet mostly twistes round, but we stopped that; we shoved a stick up the leg of his breeches, and the other end into the boot, and tied it, and then it couldn't twist round very easy. After that we put a paper hanging cap on his head; it was silk-velvet kind of paper, and decorated all over with tinsel bows. His coat we pasted all over with blue and green tinsel bows and pictures. They was painted theatrical characters, what we buy at the shop a ha'penny a sheet plain, and penny a sheet coloured: we bought 'em plain, and coloured them ourselves. A-top of his hat we put a hornament. We got some red paper, and cut it into narrow strips, and curled it with the blade of the scissors, and stuck it on like a feather. We made him a fine apron of hanging-paper, and cut that in slips up to his knees, and curled it with the scissors, the same as his feather, and decorated it with stars, and bows, and things, made out of paper, all manner of colours, and pieces of tinsel. After we'd finished the guy we made ourselves cock'd hats, all alike, and then we tied him in a chair, and wrote on his breast, 'Villanous Guy.' Then we put two broomsticks under the chair and carried him out. There was four of us, and the two that wasn't carrying, they had a large bough of a tree each, with a knob at the top to protect the guy. We started off at once, and got into the squares, and put him in front of the gentlemen's houses, and said this speech:—

'Pray, gentlefolks, pray
Remember this day,
At which kind notice we bring
This figure of sly,
Old, villanous Guy,
He wanted to murder the king.

With powder in store,
He bitterly swore
By him in the vaults to compare,
By him and his crew,
And parliament, too,
Should all be blow'd up in the air.

So please to remember
The fifth of November,
The gunpowder treason and plot,
I see no reason
Why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot.

So hollo, boys! hollo, boys!
Shout out the day!
Hollo, boys! hollo, boys!
Hollo, Hurrah!

"After we'd finished our speech in one of the squares, and hollowed Hurrah! the beadle come out, and said he'd give us the stick about our backs, and the guy too, if we didn't go away. So we went away, and got into Russell-square and Bedford-square; but there was such a lot of small guys out, that we did worse than ever we'd done before. When we was in Southampton-street, Holborn, I finished the speech with 'Down with the Pope, and God save the Queen;' so four shoe-black boys come up, and says, says they, 'What do you say, Down with the Pope and God save the Queen for?' And I says, 'I didn't mean no harm of it.' With that they makes use of some bad language, and told me they'd smash my head and the guy's too; and they was going to do it, when up comes a boy that I knew, and I says to him, 'They're going to knock me about;' so he says, 'No they won't;' so then the boys made their reply, and said they would. So I told 'em they was very fast about fighting, I'd fight one of them; so with that they all got ready to pitch upon me: but when they see this other boy stuck to me, they went off, and never struck a blow. When we got home I opened the money-box and shared the money; one had 5*d.*, and two had 4½*d.* each, and I had 7*d.* because I said the speech. At night we pulled him all to pieces, and burnt his stuffing, and let off some squibs and crackers. I always used to spend the money I got guying on myself. I used to buy sometimes fowls, because I could sell the eggs. There is some boys that take out guys as do it for the sake of getting a bit of bread and butter, but not many as I knows of.

"It don't cost much to make a guy. The clothes he never burns—they're generally too good: they're our own clothes, what we wears at other times; and when people burn a guy they always pull off any of the things that's of use fust; but mostly the guy gets pulled all to pieces, and only the shavings gets burnt."

AN OLD STREET SHOWMAN.

A SHORT, thick-set man, with small, puckered-up eyes, and dressed in an old brown velvetene shooting-jacket, gave me an account of some bygone exhibitions of the galantee show.

"My father was a soldier," he said, "and was away in foreign parts, and I and a sister lived with my mother in St. Martin's workhouse. I was fifty-five last New-year's-day. My uncle, a bootmaker in St. Martin's-lane, took my mother out of the workhouse, that

she might do a little washing, and pick up a living for herself; and we children went to live with my grandfather, a tailor. After his death, and after many changes, we had a lodging in the Dials, and there —, the sweep, coaxed me with pudding one day, and encouraged me so well, that I didn't like to go back to my mother; and at last I was 'prenticed to him from Hatton-Garden on a month's trial, and I liked chimley-sweeping for that month; but it was quite different when I was regularly indentured. I was cruelly-treated then, and poorly fed, and had to turn out barefooted between three and four many a morning in frost and snow. In first climbing the chimleys, a man stood beneath me, and pushed me up, telling me how to use my elbows and knees, and if I slipped, he was beneath me and ketched me, and shoved me up again. The skin came off my knees and elbows; here's the marks now, you see. I suffered a great deal, as well as Dan Duff, a fellow-sweep, a boy that died. I've been to Mrs. Montague's dinner in the Square on the 1st of May, when I was a boy-sweep. It was a dinner in honour of her son having been stolen away by a sweep." (The man's own words.) "I suppose there were more than three hundred of us sweeps there, in a large green, at the back of her house. I run away from my master once, but was carried back, and was rather better used. My master then got me knee and ankle-pads, and bathed my limbs in salt and water, and I managed to drag on seven sorrowful years with him. I was glad to be my own man at last, and I cut the sweep-trade, bought pandean pipes, and started with an organ-man, as his mate. I saved money with the organ-man and then bought a drum. He gave me five shillings, a-week and my wittles and drink, washing and lodging; but there wasn't so much music afloat then. I left the music-man and went out with 'Michael,' the Italy bear. Michael was the man's name that brought over the bear from somewhere abroad. He was a Italy man; and he used to beat the bear, and manage her; they called her Jenny; but Michael was not to say roughish to her, unless she was obstreperous. If she were, he showed her the large mop-stick, and beat her with it—hard sometimes—specially when she wouldn't let the monkey get a top on her head; for that was a part of the performance. The monkey was dressed the same as a soldier, but the bear had no dress but her muzzle and chain. The monkey (a clever fellow he was, and could jump over sticks like a Christian) was called Billy. He jumped up and down the bear, too, and on his master's shoulders, where he set as Michael walked up and down the streets. The bear had been taught to roll and tumble. She rolled right over her head, all round a stick, and then she danced round about it. She did it at the word of command. Michael said to her, 'Round and round again.' We

fed her on bread, a quarter-loaf every night after her work in half-a-pail of water, the same every morning; never any meat—nothing but bread, boiled 'tatoes, or raw carrots: meat would have made her savage. The monkey was fed upon nuts, apples, gingerbread, or anything. Besides them we had two dancing-dogs. The bear didn't like them, and they were kept on one side in performing. The dogs jumped through hoops, and danced on their hind legs; they're easyish enough trained. Sometimes the butchers set bull-dogs, two or three at a time, at Jenny; and Michael and me had to beat them off as well as the two other men that we had with us. Those two men collected the money, and I played the pipes and drum, and Michael minded the bear and the dogs and monkey. In London we did very well. The West-end was the best. Whitechapel was crowded for us, but only with ha'pence. I don't know what Michael made, but I had seven shillings a-week, with my wittles and lodging. Michael done well. We generally had twenty to thirty shillings every night in ha'pence, and used to give twenty-one shillings of it for a one-pound note; for they was in then. When we've travelled in the country, we've sometimes had trouble to get lodgings for the bear. We've had to sleep in outhouses with her, and have sometimes frightened people that didn't know as we was there, but nothing serious. Bears is well-behaved enough if they ain't aggravated. Perhaps no one but me is left in England now what properly understands a dancing-bear.

"Jenny wasn't ever baited, but offers was made for it by sporting characters.

"The country was better than London, when the weather allowed; but in Gloucester, Cheltenham, and a good many places, we weren't let in the high streets.

"The gentlefolk in the balconies, both in town and country, where they had a good sight, were our best friends.

"It's more than thirty years ago—yes, a good bit more now; at Chester races, one year, we were all taken, and put into prison: bear, and dogs, and musicianer, and all—every one—because we played a day after the races; that was Saturday.

"We were all in quod until Monday morning. I don't know how the authorities fed the bear. We were each in a separate cell, and I had bread and cheese, and gruel.

"On Monday morning we were discharged, and the bear was shot by the magistrate's orders. They wanted to hang poor Jenny at first, but she was shot, and sold to the hair-dressers.

"I couldn't stay to see her shot, and had to go into an alehouse on the road. I don't know what her carcase sold for. It wasn't very fat.

"Michael and me then parted at Chester, and he went home rich to Italy, taking his monkey and dogs with him, I believe.

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"He lived very careful, chiefly on rice and cabbage, and a very little meat with it, which he called 'manesta.' He was a very old man. I had 'manesta' sometimes, but I didn't like it much. I drummed and piped my way from Chester to London, and there took up with another foreigner, named Green, in the clock-work-figure line.

"The figures were a Turk called Bluebeard, a sailor, a lady called Lady Catarina, and Neptune's car, which we called Nelson's car as well; but it was Neptune's car by rights.

"These figures danced on a table, when taken out of a box. Each had its own dance when wound up.

"First came my Lady Catarina. She, and the others of them, were full two feet high. She had a cork body, and a very handsome silk dress, or muslin, according to the fashion, or the season. Black in Lent, according to what the nobility wore.

"Lady Catarina, when wound up, danced a reel for seven minutes, the sailor a hornpipe, and Bluebeard shook his head, rolled his eyes, and moved his sword, just as natural as life. Neptune's car went either straight or round the table, as it was set.

"We often showed our performances in the houses of the nobility, and would get ten or twelve shillings at a good house, where there were children.

"I had a third share, and in town and country we cleared fifty shillings a-week, at least, every week, among the three of us, after all our keep and expenses were paid.

"At Doncaster races we have taken three pounds in a-day, and four pounds at Lincoln races.

"Country, in summer, is better than town. There's now no such exhibition, barring the one I have; but that's pledged. It cost twenty pounds at Mr. —'s for the four figures without dress. I saved money, which went in an illness of rheumatic gout. There's no bears at all allowed now. Times are changed, and all for the worsen. I stuck to the clock-work concern sixteen years, and knows all parts of the country—Ireland, Scotland, Guernsey, Jersey, and the Isle of Wight.

"A month before Christmas we used to put the figures by, for the weather didn't suit; and then we went with a galantee show of a magic lantern. We showed it on a white sheet, or on the ceiling, big or little, in the houses of the gentlefolk, and the schools where there was a breaking-up. It was shown by way of a treat to the scholars. There was Harlequin, and Billy Button, and such-like. We had ten and sixpence and fifteen shillings for each performance, and did very well indeed. I have that galantee show now, but it brings in very little.

"Green's dead, and all in the line's dead, but me. The galantee show don't answer, because magic lanterns are so cheap in the shops. When we started, magic lanterns

wasn't so common; but we can't keep hold of a good thing in these times. It was a reg'lar thing for Christmas once—the galantee shows.

"I can make, in a holiday time, twenty shillings a-week; but that's only at holiday times, and is just a mere casualty a few times a year.

"I do other jobs, when I can get 'em—at other times, I delivers bills, carries boards, and helps at funerals."

THE CHINESE SHADES.

"THE proper name of my exhibition," said a showman of this class to me, "is *Lez Hombres*, or the shades; that's the proper name for it, for Baron Rothschild told me so when I performed before him. We calls it the Chinese galantee show. It was invented over there with the Chinese, and some travellers went over there and see them doing it, and they come over here and tell us about it. They didn't do it as we do, you know. As for doing pieces, we lick them out of the field. Them only did the shadows, we do a piece with 'em.

"I should say, sir,—let me calculate—it is about twenty-six years since the ombres first come out. Reduce it if you like, but that's the time. Thomas Paris was the first as come out with them. Then Jim Macklin, and Paul Herring the celebrated clown, and the best showman of Punch in the world for pantomime tricks—comic business, you know, but not for showing in a gentleman's house—was the next that ever come out in the streets with the Chinese galantee show. I think it was his own ingenuity that first gave him the notion. It was thoughts of mind, you know,—you form the opinion in your own mind, you know, by taking it from the Chinese. They met a friend of theirs who had come from China, and he told him of the shadows. One word is as good as fifty, if it's a little grammatical—sound judgment. When it first come out, he began with the scene called 'Mr. Jobson the Cobbler,' and that scene has continued to be popular to the present day, and the best scene out. He did it just equally the same as they do it now, in a Punch-and-Judy frame, with a piece of calico stretched in front, and a light behind to throw the shadows on the sheet.

"Paul Herring did excellent well with it—nothing less than 30s. or 2l. a-night. He didn't stop long at it, because he is a stage clown, and had other business to attend to. I saw him the first time he performed. It was in the Waterloo-road, and the next night I were out with one of my own. I only require to see a thing once to be able to do it; but you must have ingenuity, or it's no use whatsum-diver. Every one who had a Punch-and-Judy frame took to it; doing the regular business in the day and at night turning to the shadows. In less than a week there were two others out, and then Paul Herring cut it. He only done

it for a lark. He was hard up for money and got it.

"I was the first that ever had a regular piece acted in his show. I believe there's nobody else as did, but only them that's copied me. They come and follow me, you understand, and copied me. I am the author of 'Cobbler Jobson,' and 'Kitty biling the Pot, or the Woodchopper's Frolic.' There's 'Billy Button's journey to Brentford on horseback, and his favorite servant, Jeremiah Sticheem, in want of a situation.' I'm the author of that, too. It's adapted from the equestrian piece brought out at Astley's. I don't know who composed 'the Broken Bridge.' It's too far gone by to trace who the first author is, but it was adapted from the piece brought out formerly at Drury-lane Theatre. Old ancient gentlemen has told me so who saw it, when it was first brought out, and they're old enough to be my grandfather. I've new revised it.

"We in general goes out about 7 o'clock, because we gets away from the noisy children—they place them to bed, and we gets respectable audiences. We choose our places for pitching: Leicester-square is a very good place, and so is Islington, but Regent-street is about the principal. There's only two of us about now, for it's dying away. When I've a mind to show I can show, and no mistake, for I'm better now than I was twenty years ago.

"'Kitty biling the Pot, or the Woodchopper's Frolic,' is this. The shadow of the fireplace is seen with the fire alight, and the smoke is made to go up by mechanism. The wood-chopper comes in very hungry and wants his supper. He calls his wife to ask if the leg of mutton is done. He speaks in a gruff voice. He says, 'My wife is very lazy, and I don't think my supper's done. I've been chopping wood all the days of my life, and I want a bullock's head and a sack of potatoes.' The wife comes to him and speaks in a squeaking voice, and she tells him to go and chop some more wood, and in half-an-hour it will be ready. Exaunt. Then the wife calls the daughter Kitty, and tells her to see that the pot don't boil over; and above all to be sure and see that the cat don't steal the mutton out of the pot. Kitty says, 'Yes, mother, I'll take particular care that the mutton don't steal the cat out of the pot.' Cross-questions, you see—comic business. Then mother says, 'Kitty, bring up the broom to sweep up the room,' and Kitty replies, 'Yes, mummy, I'll bring up the room to sweep up the broom.' Exaunt again. It's regular stage business and cross-questions. She brings up the broom, and the cat's introduced whilst she is sweeping. The cat goes Meaw! meaw! meaw! and Kitty gives it a crack with the broom. Then Kitty gets the bellows and blows up the fire. It's a beautiful representation, for you see her working the bellows, and the fire get up, and the sparks fly up the chimney. She says, 'If I don't make haste the mutton will be sure to

steal the cat out of the pot.' She blows the fire right out, and says, 'Why, the fire's blowed the bellows out! but I don't mind, I shall go and play at shuttlecock.' Child like, you see. Then the cat comes in again, and says, Meaw! meaw! and then gets up and steals the mutton. You see her drag it out by the claw, and she burns herself and goes, spit! spit! Then the mother comes in and sees the fire out, and says, 'Where my daughter? Here's the fire out, and my husband's coming home, and there isn't a bit of mutton to eat!' She calls 'Kitty, Kitty!' and when she comes, asks where she's been. 'I've been playing at shuttlecock.' The mother asks, 'Are you sure the cat hasn't stolen the mutton?' 'Oh, no, no, mother,' and exaunt again. Then the mother goes to the pot. She's represented with a squint, so she has one eye up the chimney and another in the pot. She calls out, 'Where's the mutton? It must be down at the bottom, or it has boiled away.' Then the child comes in and says, 'Oh! mother, mother, here's a great he-she-tom cat been and gone off with the mutton.' Then the mother falls down, and calls out, 'I shall faint, I shall faint! Oh! bring me a pail of gin.' Then she revives, and goes and looks in the pot again. It's regular stage business, and if it was only done on a large scale would be wonderful. Then comes the correction scene. Kitty comes to her, and her mother says, 'Where have you been?' and Kitty says, 'Playing at shuttlecock, mummy;' and then the mother says, 'I'll give you some shuttlecock with the gridiron,' and exaunt, and comes back with the gridiron; and then you see her with the child on her knee correcting of her. Then the woodchopper comes in and wants his supper, after chopping wood all the days of his life. 'Where's supper?' 'Oh, a nasty big he-she-tom cat has been and stole the mutton out of the pot.' 'What?' passionate directly, you see. Then she says, 'You must put up with bread and cheese.' He answers, 'That don't suit some people,' and then comes a fight. Then Spring-heeled Jack is introduced, and he carries off the fireplace and pot and all. Exaunt. That's the end of the piece, and a very good one it was. I took it from Paris, and improved on it. Paris had no workable figures. It was very inferior. He had no fire. It's a dangerous concern the fire is, for it's done with a little bit of the snuff of a candle, and if you don't mind you go alight. It's a beautiful performance.

"Our exhibition generally begins with a sailor doing a hornpipe, and then the tight-rope dancing, and after that the Scotch hornpipe dancing. The little figures regularly move their legs as if dancing, the same as on the stage, only it's more cleverer, for they're made to do it by ingenuity. Then comes the piece called 'Cobbler Jobson.' We call it 'the laughable, comic, and interesting scene of old Father Jobson, the London cobbler; or, the old

Lady disappointed of her Slipper.' I am in front, doing the speaking and playing the music on the pandanean pipe. That's the real word for the pipe, from the Romans, when they first invaded England. That's the first music ever introduced into England, when the Romans first invaded it. I have to do the dialogue in four different voices. There is the child, the woman, the countryman, and myself, and there's not many as can do it besides me and another.

"The piece called Cobbler Jobson is this. It opens with the shadow of a cottage on one side of the sheet, and a cobbler's stall on the other. There are boots and shoes hanging up in the windows of the cobbler's stall. Cobbler Jobson is supposed at work inside, and heard singing:

'An old cobbler I am,
And live in my stall;
It serves me for house,
Parlour, kitchen, and all.
No coin in my pocket,
No care in my pate,
I sit down at my ease,
And get drunk when I please.
Hi down, hi derry down.'

"Then he sings again:

'Last night I took a wife,
And when I first did woo her,
I vowed I'd stick through life
Like cobblers' wax unto her.
Hi down, derry down-down.'

"Then the figure of a little girl comes in and raps at the door: 'Mr. Jobson, is my mamma's slipper done?' 'No, miss, it's not done; but if you'll call in half-an-hour it shall be well done, for I've taken the soles off and put the upper leathers in a pail to soak.' 'What, in a pail?' 'Yes, my dear, without fail.' 'Then you won't disappoint.' 'No, my dear, I'd sooner a pot than a pint.' 'Then I may depend?' 'Yes, and you won't have it.' He says this aside, so the girl don't hear him. Then Jobson begins to sing again. He comes in front and works. You see his lapstone and the hammer going. He begins to sing:

'T'other morning for breakfast on bacon and spin-
nage,
Says I to my wife, 'I'm going to Greenwich';
Says she, 'Dicky Hall, then I'll go too!'
Says I, 'Mrs. Hall, I'll be dished if you do.
Hi down, hi derry down.'

"Then the little girl comes in again to know if the slipper is done, and as it isn't, it's 'My dear, you must go without it.' Then she gets impertinent, and says, 'I shan't go with it, you nasty old waxy, waxy, waxy, waxy! Oh, you nasty old ball of bristles and bunch of wax!' Then he tries to hit her, and she runs into the house, and as soon as he's at work she comes out again: 'Ah, you nasty cobbler! who's got a lump of wax on his breeches? who sold his wife's shirt to buy a ha'porth of gin? Then the cobbler is regularly vexed, and he tries to coax her into the stall to larrup her. 'Here, my dear, here's a

lump of pudden and a farden.' 'Oh, yes, you nasty old cobbler! you only want to give me a lump of pudden on my back.' 'Here's a penny, my dear, if you'll fetch it.' 'Chuck it here, and I'll fetch it.' At last she goes into the stall, and she gets a hiding with the hammer. She cries out, 'You nasty old cobbler waxy! waxy, waxy! I'll go and tell my mother all about it.' That's what we call the aggrivating scene; and next comes the passionate scene.

"He begins singing one of his songs. He thinks he's all right now he's got rid of the girl.

"Then comes in the old lady, shaking with rage. 'How dare you to strike my child in this here kind of a manner! Come out of the stall, or I'll pull you out neck and crop!' Then Jobson is in a funk, and expects a riding. 'Oh, mum! I'm very sorry, but your child said, I skinned a cat for ninepence, and called me cobbler waxy, waxy, waxy.' 'I won't believe a word of it, Mr. Jobson.' 'Yes, mum, your child's very insulting.' 'How dare you strike the chick? You nasty old villain! I'll tear the eyes out of you.'

"A fight then commences between them, and the old lady gets the worst of it. Then they make it up, and they'll have some gin. 'I'll be a penny to your threepence,' says the cobbler; and the old lady says, 'Oh, I can always treat myself.' Then there's another fight, for there's two fights in it. The old lady gets the worst of it, and runs into the cottage, and then old Jobson cries, 'I'd better be off, stall and all, for fear she should come back with the kitchen poker.' That finishes up the scene, don't you see, for he carries off the stall with him.

"Cobbler Jobson is up to the door, I think. It's first rate; it only wants elaborating. 'Billy Button' is a very laughable thing, and equally up to the door. There's another piece, called 'Billy Waters, the celebrated London Beggar,' and that's a great hit. There's the 'Bull-baiting.' That's all the scenes I know of. I believe I am the only man that knows the words all through. 'Kitty biling the pot' is one of the most beautifullest scenes in the world. It wants expounding, you know; for you could open it the whole length of the theatre. I wanted to take Ramsgate Theatre, and do it there; but they wanted 2*l.* a-night, and that was too much for me. I should have put a sheet up, and acted it with real figures, as large as life.

"When I was down at Brighton, acting with the Chinese galantee show, I was forced to drop performing of them. Oh dear! oh dear! don't mention it. You'd have thought the town was on fire. You never saw such an uproar as it made; put the town in such an agitation, that the town authorities forced me to desist. I filled the whole of North-street, and the people was pressing upon me so, that I was obliged to run away. I was

lodging at the Clarence Hotel in North-street, at the time. I ran off down a side-street. The next day the police come up to me and tell me that I mustn't exhibit that performance again.

"I shall calculate it at 5*s.* a-night, when I exhibit with the ombres. We don't go out every night, for it's according to the weather; but when we do, the calculation is 5*s.* every night. Sometimes it is 10*s.*, or it may be only 2*s.* 6*d.*; but 5*s.* is a fair balance. Take it all the year round, it would come to 9*s.* a-week, taking the good weather in the bad. It's no use to exaggerate, for the shoe is sure to pinch somewhere if you do.

"We go out two men together, one to play the pipes and speak the parts, and the other to work the figures. I always do the speaking and the music, for that's what is the most particular. When we do a full performance, such as at juvenile parties, it takes one about one hour and a quarter. For attending parties we generally gets a pound, and, perhaps, we may get three or four during the Christmas holiday-time, or perhaps a dozen, for it's according to the recommendation from one to another. If you goes to a gentleman's house, it's according to whether you behave yourself in a superior sort of a manner; but if you have any vulgarity about you you must exaunt, and there's no recommendation.

"Tom Paris, the first man that brought out the ombres in the streets, was a short, stout man, and very old. He kept at it for four or five years, I believe, and he made a very comfortable living at it, but he died poor; what became of him I do not know. Jim Macklin I've very little knowledge of. He was a stage performer, but I'm not aware what he did do. I don't know when he died, but he's dead and gone; all the old school is dead and gone—all the old ancient performers. Paul Herring is the only one that's alive now, and he does the clown. He's a capital clown for tricks; he works his own tricks: that's the beauty of him.

"When we are performing of an evening, the boys and children will annoy us awful. They follow us so that we are obliged to go miles to get away from them. They will have the best places; they give each other raps on the head if they don't get out of each other's way. I'm obliged to get fighting myself, and give it them with the drumsticks. They'll throw a stone or two, and then you have to run after them, and swear you're going to kill them. There's the most boys down at Spital-fields, and St. Luke's, and at Islington; that's where there's the worst boys, and the most audacious. I dare not go into St. Luke's; they spile their own amusement by making a noise and disturbance. Quietness is everything; they haven't the sense to know that. If they give us any money it's very trifling, only, perhaps, a farden or a halfpenny, and then it's only one out of a fifty or a hundred.

The great business is to keep them quiet. No; girls ain't better behaved than boys; they was much wus. I'd socner have fifty boys round me than four girls. The impertinence of them is above bearing. They come carrying babies, and pushing, and crowding, and tearing one another to pieces. 'You're afore me—I was fust—No you wasn't—Yes I was'—and that's the way they go on. If a big man comes in front I'm obliged to ask him to go backwards, to let the little children to see. If they're drunk, perhaps they won't, and then there's a row, and all the children will join in. Oh, it's dreadful erksome!

"I was once performing on Islington-green, and some drunken people, whilst I was collecting my money, knocked over the concern from wanton mischief. They said to me, 'We haven't seen nothing, master.' I said, 'I can see you; and haven't you got a brown?' Then they begun laughing, and I turned round, and there was the show in a blaze, and my mate inside a kicking. I think it was two or three drunken men did it, to injure a poor man from gaining his livelihood from the sweat of his brow. That's eighteen years ago.

"I was up at Islington last week, and I was really obliged to give over on account of the children. The moment I put it down there was thousands round me. They was sary and impertinent. There was a good collection of people, too. But on account of the theatrical business we want quiet, and they're so noisy there's no being heard. It's morals is everything. It's shameful how parents lets their children run about the streets. As soon as they fill their bellies off they are, all they are hungry again.

"The higher class of society is those who give us the most money. The working man is good for his penny or halfpenny, but the higher class supports the exhibition. The swells in Regent-street ain't very good. They comes and looks on for a moment, and then go on, or sometimes they exempt themselves with 'I'm sorry, but I've got no pence.' The best is the gentlemen; I can tell them in a minute by their appearance.

"When we are out performing, we in generally burn three candles at once behind the curtain. One is of no utility, for it wants expansion, don't you see. I don't like naphtha or oil-lamps, 'cos we're confined there, and it's very unhealthy. It's very warm as it is, and you must have a eye like a hawk to watch it, or it won't throw the shadows. A brilliant light and a clean sheet is a great attraction, and it's the attraction is everything. In the course of the evening we'll burn six penny candles; we generally use the patent one, 'cos it throws a clear light. We cut them in half. When we use the others I have to keep a look-out, and tell my mate to snuff the candles when the shadows get dim. I usually say, 'Snuff the candles!' out loud, because

that's a word for the outside and the inside too, 'cos it let the company know it isn't all over, and leads them to expect another scene or two."

EXHIBITOR OF MECHANICAL FIGURES.

"I AM the only man in London—and in England, I think—who is exhibiting the figuer of *méchanique*; that is to say, leetle figuers, that move their limbs by wheels and springs, as if they was de living cretures. I am a native of Parma in Italy, where I was born; that is, you understand, I was born in the Duchy of Parma, not in the town of Parma—in the campagne, where my father is a farmer; not a large farmer, but a little farmer, with just enough land for living. I used to work for my father in his fields. I was married when I have 20 years of age, and I have a child aged 10 years. I have only 30 years of age, though I have the air of 40. Pardon, Monsieur! all my friends say I have the air of 40, and you say that to make me pleasure.

"When I am with my father, I save up all the money that I can, for there is very leetle business to be done in the campagne of Parma, and I determine myself to come to Londres, where there is affair to be done. I like Londres much better than the campagne of Parma, because there is so much affairs to be done. I save up all my money. I become very *économique*. I live of very leetle, and when I have a leetle money, I say adieu to my father and I commence my voyages.

"At Paris I buy a box of music. They are made at Genève these box of music. When I come to Londres, I go to the public-house—the palais de gin, you understand—and there I show my box of music—yes, musical box you call it—and when I get some money I live very *économique*, and then when it become more money I buy another machine, which I buy in Paris. It was a box of music, and on the top it had leetle figuers, which do move their eyes and their limbs when I mounts the spring with the key. And then there is music inside the box at the same time. I have three leetle figuers to this box: one was Judith cutting the head of the infidel chief—what you call him?—Holeferones. She lift her arm with the sword, and she roll her eyes, and then the other hand is on his head, which it lifts. It does this all the time the music play, until I put on another figuer of the soldat which mounts the guard—yes, which is on duty. The soldat goes to sleep, and his head falls on his bosom. Then he wake again and lift his lance and roll his eyes. Then he goes to sleep again, so long until I put on the other figuer of the lady with the plate in the hand, and she make salutation to the company for to ask some money, and she continue to do this so long as anybody give her money. All the time the music in the box continues to play.

"I take a great quantity of money with these

figuers, 3s. a-day, and I live very économique until I put aside a sum large enough to buy the figuers which I exhibit now.

"My most aged child is at Parma, with my father in the campagne, but my wife and my other child, which has only 18 months of age, are with me in Londres.

"It is two months since I have my new figuers. I did have them sent from Germany to me. They have cost a great deal of money to me; as much as 35*l.* without duty. They have been made in Germany, and are very clever figuers. I will show them to you. They perform on the round table, which must be level or they will not turn round. This is the Impératrice of the French—Eugénie—at least I call her so, for it is not like her, because her cheveleure is not arranged in the style of the Impératrice. The infants like better to see the Impératrice than a common lady, that is why I call her the Impératrice. She holds one arm in the air, and you will see she turns round like a person waltzing. The noise you hear is from the wheels of the méchanique, which is under her petticoats. You shall notice her eyes do move as she waltz. The next figure is the carriage of the Emperor of the French, with the Queen and Prince Albert and the King de Sardaigne inside. It will run round the table, and the horses will move as if they gallop. It is a very clever méchanique. I attache this wire from the front wheel to the centre of the table, or it would not make the round of the table, but it would run off the side and break itself. My most clever méchanique is the elephant. It does move its trunk, and its tail, and its legs, as if walking, and all the time it roll its eyes from side to side like a real elephant. It is the cleverest elephant of méchanique in the world. The leetle Indian on the neck, who is the driver, lift his arm, and in the pavilion on the back the chieftain of the Indians lift his bow and arrow to take aim, and put it down again. That méchanique cost me very much money. The elephant is worth much more than the Impératrice of the French. I could buy two—three—Impératrice for my elephant. I would like sooner lose the Impératrice than any malheur arrive to my elephant. There are plenty more Impératrice, but the elephant is very rare. I have also a figuer of Tyrolese peasant. She go round the table a short distance and then turn, like a dancer. I must get her repaired. She is so weak in her wheels and springs, which wind up under her petticoats, like the Impératrice. She has been cleaned twice, and yet her méchanique is very bad. Oh, I have oiled her; but it is no good, she must be taken to pieces.

"When I sent to Germany to get these méchanique made for me, I told the mechanician what I desired, and he made them for me. I invented the figuers out of my own head, and he did the méchanique. I have voyaged in Holland, and there I see some

méchanique, and I noticed them, and then I gave the order to do so and so. My elephant is the best of my leetle figuers; there is more complication.

"I first come to England eighteen years ago, before I was married, and I stop here seven years; then I go back again to Parma, and then I come back again to England four years ago, and here I stop ever since.

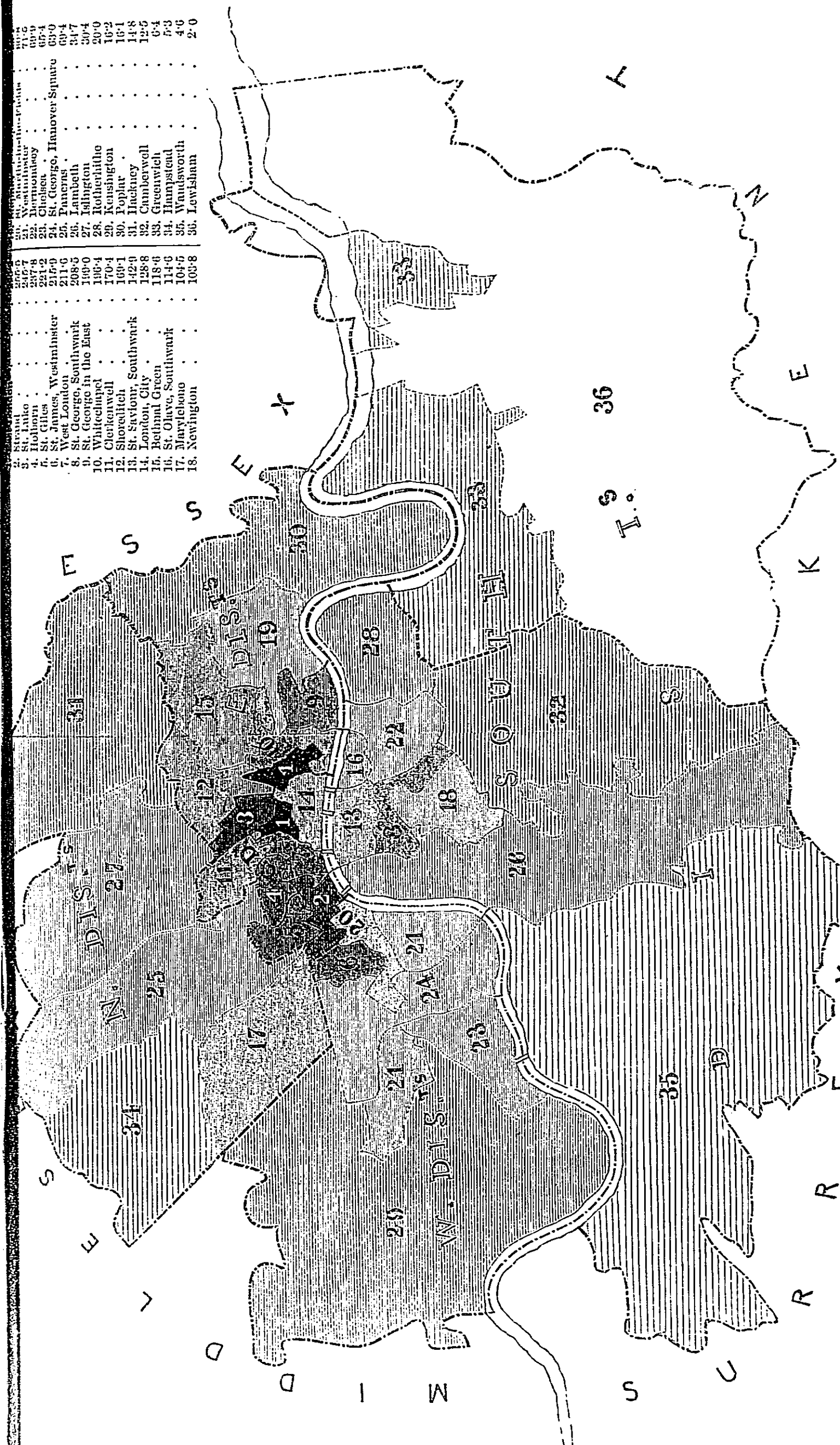
"I exhibit my leetle figuers in the street. The leetle children like to see my figuers méchanique dance round the table, and the carriage, with the horses which gallop; but over all they like my elephant, with the trunk which curls up in front, like those in the Jardin des Plantes, or what you call it Zoological Gardens.

"When I am in the street I have two men beside myself, one plays the organ, and the other carry the box with the méchanique figuers inside, and I carry the table. The box with the méchanique is in weight about 80 lbs. English, and there are straps at the back for the arms to go through. It is as large as a chest of drawers, for the leetle figuers are eighteen inches high, and each has a compartment to itself. I pay my men 1*l.* a-month, besides lodge, clean, and grub him.

"The organ for the music is mine. I have another organ, with a horse to draw it, which I want to sell; for the horse, and the two men to play it, destroy all the profits.

"When I make my figuers to play in the street I must make the table level, for they will not mount up a hill, because the méchanique is not sufficiently strong for that. I go to the West-end to show my leetle figuers to the gentlemen and ladies, and their families; and I go to the East-end to the families of the work-people. I also go to Brixton and Hoxton, where they are severe for religion. They like my figuers because they are moral, and their children can see them without sinning. But everywhere my figuers have much success. Of all the places, I prefer, rather, Regent-street, and there I go to the leetle streets, in the corners, close by the big street. If I calcule how much money I receive for all the year,—but I have only had them two months,—it is six shillings by day regularly. Sometime I take ten shillings, and sometimes four shillings, but it settles itself to six shillings a-day. After paying for my men, and to clean, lodge, and grub them, I have three shillings for myself.

"In wet weather, when it makes rain, or when there is fog, I cannot quit my house to show my figuers, for the humidity attack the springs and wheels of the méchanique: besides, when it falls rain the dresses of my figuers are spoiled; and the robes of the Impératrice and the Tyrolese peasant are of silk and velvet bodies, with spangles, and they soon spoil. They cost me much money to repair their springs,—never less than eight shillings for each time: my peasant has been



MAP ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE DISTRIBUTION AND DENSITY OF THE POPULATION OF LONDON.

[The blackest portions indicate the quarters which are the most thickly peopled; and, on the contrary, the lightest portions those in which the population is the thinnest.]

arranged twice in her springs. It was a watch-maker who arranged her, and he had to take all her inside out; and you know what those kind of people charge for their time.

"Sometimes, when I am out with my figures, the ladies ask me to perform my figures before their windows, to show them to their families. The little children look through the window, and then they cannot hear the movement of the *mécanique*, and the figures look like living. When the organ play a valtz to the *Impératrice*, he has to turn the handle quick at the commencement, when the spring is strong in the *mécanique*, and she turn quick; and to make the music slow when she turn less often, when the spring get weak at the end. This makes it have the look of being true to one living,—as if she danced to the music, although the organ play to her dancing. I always mount the figures with the key myself.

"I have never performed to a school of young scholars, but I have visited evening-parties of children with my *mécanique*. For that they give me sometimes 8s., sometimes 10s., just as they are generous. My *mécanique* require nearly one hour to see them to perfection. The *Impératrice* of the French is what they admire more than the *paysanne* of Tyrol. The dress of the *Impératrice* has a long white veil behind her hairs, but her costume is not so *soignée* as the peasant's, for she has no spangles; but they like to see the *Impératrice* of the French, and they excuse her toilet because she is noble. My elephant is the greatest delight for them, because it is more complicated in its *mécanique*. I have always to mount with the key the springs in its inside at least three times before they are fatigued with admiring it.

"I never perform in the streets during the night, because the air is damp, and it causes injures to my *mécanique*; besides, I must have lights to show off the costume of my figures, and my table is not large enough.

"It is not only the little children that admire my *mécanique*, but persons of a ripe age. I often have gentlemen and ladies stand round my table, and they say 'Very clever!' to see the lady figures valtz, but above all when my elephant lift his trunk. The little children will follow me a long way to see my figures, for they know we cannot carry the box far without exhibiting, on account of its weight. But my table is too high for them, unless they are at a distance to see the figures perform. If my table was not high, the little children would want to take hold of my figures. I always carry a small stick with me; and when the little children, who are being carried by other little children, put their hand to my figures, I touch them with stick, not for to hurt them, but to make them take their hand away and prevent them from doing hurt to my *mécanique*.

"When the costume of my *Impératrice* is

destroyed by time and wear, my wife makes new clothes for her. Yes, as you say, she is the dress-maker of the *Impératrice* of the French, but it is not the Emperor who pays the bill, but myself. The *Impératrice*—the one I have, not that of the Emperor—does not want more than half a yard of silk for a petticoat. In the present style of fashion I make her petticoat very large and full, not for the style, but to hide the *mécanique* in her inside."

THE TELESCOPE EXHIBITOR.

"It must be about eight years since I first exhibited the telescope. I have three telescopes now, and their powers vary from about 36 to 300. The instruments of the higher power are seldom used in the streets, because the velocity of the planets is so great that they almost escape the eye before it can fix it. The opening is so very small, that though I can pass my eye on a star in a minute, an ordinary observer would have the orb pass away before he could accustom his eye to the instrument. High power is all very well for separating stars, and so forth; but I'm like Dr. Kitchener, I prefer a low power for street purposes. A street-passer likes to see plenty of margin round a star. If it fills up the opening he don't like it.

"My business is a tailor. I follow that business now. The exhibiting don't interfere with my trade. I work by day at tailoring, and then, at this time of the year (26th Oct. 1856), I go out with the instrument about six o'clock. You see I can, with a low power, see Jupiter rise. It is visible at about half-past five, but it gets above the horizon, out of the smoke, about a quarter past six. Saturn rises about ten.

"From a boy I was fond of philosophical instruments. I was left an orphan when I was ten years of age; indeed, I haven't a relation in the world that I'm aware of, only excepting my wife's family. My mother died the same year as the Princess Charlotte (1818) for I can remember her being in mourning for her. My name is a very peculiar one—it is Tregent. This will show you that it is. I some time ago advertised an instrument for sale, and I had a letter from gentleman living in Liverpool. He said that he was sitting down to lunch and he took up the paper, and cried out, 'Good God! here's my name.' He sent for paper and pens and wrote off at once. He asked whether I was a relation of Tregent, the great chronometer maker. He said he always thought he was the only Tregent in England. He said he was a bachelor, and hoped I was too. Perhaps he wanted the name to die out. His father, he told me, kept a paper-mill. We corresponded a long time, till I was tired, and then one day a friend of mine said, 'Let me write to him, and I'll tell him that if he wants any more information he must pay your expenses down to

Liverpool, and you'll pay him a visit. This letter was sent, and by and by comes an answer, telling me that I was no gentleman to make such a proposition, and then the matter dropped.

"When I was six years old I was brought up to tailoring. I was kept very close to work—always on the board, working. I even took my meals there. I don't consider it was hard, for it was done for my own benefit. If there was no work going on I used to be made to learn verses out of the Bible. I highly respected my master, for I consider this was done for my benefit. He died in the country, and I was sorry for it; for if I had known it, I would have gone anywhere to see him buried—ay, even if it had been a hundred miles off. I stopped with this party till I was ten years old.

"The next party I was with I was 'prenticed to, but he failed when I had been with him three or four years, and then I had more the keeping of him than he of me; I had that resolve in me even at that young age.

"After I finished my 'prentice articles I went with my society card on the tramp. I went all through Yorkshire, going to the tailors' houses of call, where the clubs are held, and a certain sum of money subscribed weekly, to relieve what are called tramps. In some towns I worked for months—such as Leeds. What is called 'a tramp' by tailors, means a man searching for work about the country. After I got back to London I went to my trade again, and I was particularly fortunate in getting good situations. Whenever I was out of work I'd start off to the country again. I was three years in Brighton, doing well, and I had six men under me.

"It's about eight years ago that I first exhibited in the streets. It was through a friend of mine that I did this. Me and my wife was at Greenwich-hill one Sunday. I was looking through a pocket-telescope of mine, and he says, 'Look through mine.' I did so, and it was a very good one; and then he says, 'Ah, you should see one I've got at home; it's an astronomical one, and this is terrestrial.' I did so, and went and saw it. The first planet I saw was Venus. She was in her horns then, like the moon. She exhibits the same phases as the moon, as does also Mercury; sometimes horns, sometimes half a sphere, and so on; but they're the only two planets that's known that does so. When I saw this, I said, 'Well, I must have something of this sort.' I went to a telescope-maker up at Islington, and I made a bargain with him, and he was to make me a day-and-night telescope for five suits of clothes. Well, I bought the cloth, and raised all the money to complete my part of the contract, and then, when the telescope was finished, it wasn't worth a d—. You might as well have looked through a blacking-bottle. When I told him of it he said he couldn't

help it. It was worth something to look at, but not to look through. I pawned it for 15*l.* and sold the ticket for 5*l.* The gentleman who bought it was highly satisfied with it till he found it out. I took this one out in the streets to exhibit with, but it was quite useless, and showed nothing; you could see the planetary bodies, but it defined nothing. The stars was all manner of colours and forks. The bodies look just like a drawing in chalk smudged out. The people who looked through complained, and wouldn't come and look again, and that's why I got rid of it.

"The next telescope I had made was by the manufacturer who made the one my friend first showed me. That maker has taken some hundred of pounds of me since then; indeed, I've had eleven five or six feet telescopes of him, and his name is Mr. Mull, of 13 Albion-place, Clerkenwell, and the value of each of the object-glasses was, on the average, 30*l.*, though he charged me only trade-price, so I got them for less.

"The first telescope that was of any good that I exhibited with in the streets was worth to me 25*l.* If you was to go to Dollond he would have charged 105*l.* on a common tripod stand. I had it done under my own direction, and by working myself at it, I got it very cheap. It wasn't good enough for me, so I got rid of it. I've got so nice about object glasses and their distinct vision, and the power they bear, that I have never rested content until I have a telescope that would suit the first astronomer.

"I've got one now that will bear a magnifying power 300 times, and has an object-glass 4½ inches diameter, with a focal length of 5 feet 6 inches. The stand is made of about 250 pieces of brass-work, and has ratchet action, with vertical and horizontal movement. It cost me 80*l.* and Ross, Featherstone-buildings, would charge 250*l.* for it. I'm so initiated into the sort of thing, that I generally get all my patterns made, and then I get the castings made, and then have them polished. The price of the object-glass is 30*l.* I'm going to take that one out next week. It will weigh about 1½ cwt. My present one is a very fine instrument indeed. I've nothing but what is excellent. You can see Jupiter and his satellites, and Saturn and his belt. This is a test for it. Supposing I want to see Polaris—that's the small star that revolves once in 180 years round the pole. It isn't the pole star. It isn't visible to the naked eye. It's one of the tests for a telescope. My instrument gives it as small as a pin's point. There's no magnifying power with a telescope upon stars. Of course they make them more brilliant, and give some that are not visible to the naked eye, for hundreds and thousands will pass through the field in about an hour. They also separate double stars, and penetrate into space, nebula, and so on; but they don't increase the size of stars, for the distance is too great.

"I've worked about five years with this last one that I've now. It weighs, with the stand, about 1 cwt., and I have to get somebody to help me along with it. One of my boys in general goes along with me.

"It depends greatly upon the weather as to what business I do. I've known the moon for a month not to be visible for twenty days out of the lunation. I've known that for three moons together, the atmosphere is so bad in London. When I do get a good night I have taken 35*s.*; but then I've taken out two instruments, and my boy has minded one. I only charge a penny a peep. Saturdays, and Mondays, and Sundays, are the best nights in my neighbourhood, and then I can mostly reckon on taking 20*s.* The other nights it may be 7*s.* or 8*s.*, or even only 2*s.* 6*d.* Sometimes I put up the instrument when it's very fine, and then it'll come cloudy, and I have to take it down again and go home. Taking the year round, I should think I make 125*l.* a-year by the telescope. You see my business, as a tailor, keeps me in of a day, or I might go out in the day and show the sun. Now to-day the sun was very fine, and the spots showed remarkably well, and if I'd been out I might have done well. I sold an instrument of mine once to a fireman who had nothing to do in the day, and thought he could make some money exhibiting the telescope. He made 8*s.* or 10*s.* of an afternoon on Blackfriar's-bridge, showing the dome of St. Paul's at the time they were repairing it.

"When the instrument is equatorially mounted and set to time, you can pick out the stars in the day-time, and they look like black specs. I could show them.

"People can't stop looking through the telescope for long at a time, because the object is soon out of the field, because of the velocity of the earth's motion and the rapidity at which the planets travel round the sun. Jupiter, for instance, 26,000 miles an hour, and Saturn 29,000, soon removes them from the field of the telescope. I have to adjust the telescope before each person looks through. It has, I fancy, hurt my eyes very much. My eyesight has got very weak through looking at the moon, for on a brilliant night it's like a plate of silver, and dazzles. It makes a great impression on the retina of the eye. I've seen when looking through the telescope a black spec, just as if you had dropped a blot of ink on a piece of paper. I've often had dancing lights before my eyes, too—very often. I find a homœopathic globule of belladonna very excellent for that.

"When I exhibit, I in general give a short lecture whilst they are looking through. When I am not busy I make them give me a description, for this reason: others are listening, and they would sooner take the word of the observer than mine. Suppose I'm exhibiting Jupiter, and I want to draw customers, I'll say, 'How many moons do you see?'

They'll answer, 'Three on the right, and one on the left,' as they may be at that time. Perhaps a rough standing by will say, 'Three moons! that's a lie! there's only one, everybody knows.' Then, when they hear the observer state what he sees, they'll want to have a peep.

"When I'm busy, I do a lecture like this. We'll suppose I'm exhibiting Saturn. Perhaps we had better begin with Jupiter, for the orbit of Saturn's satellites is so extensive that you can never see them all without shifting the glass: indeed it's only in very fine climates, such as Cincinnati, where the eight may be observed, and indeed up to a late period it was believed there were only seven.

"When the observer sees Jupiter, I begin: 'Do you see the planet, sir?' 'Yes.' 'I introduce to you Jupiter with all his four satellites. It is distant 600 millions of miles from the sun, and its diameter is about 7900 miles. It travels round the sun at about 27,000 miles an hour, and its orbit is over four years, and of course its seasons are four times the length of ours, the summer lasting for a year instead of three months.' One night an Irishman, who was quite the gentleman, came to me rather groggy, and he says,—'Old boy, what are you looking at?' 'Jupiter,' says I. 'What's that?' says he. 'A planet you may call it, sir,' says I; 'and the price is one penny.' He paid me and had a look, and then he cries out, 'What a deception is this! By J— it's a moon, and you call it a star!' 'There are four moons,' said I. 'You're another,' said he; 'there's a moon and four stars. You ought to be took up for deception.' After a time he had another look, and then he was very pleased, and would bring out gin from a neighbouring public-house, and if he brought one, he brought seven.

"Another time, a man was looking through; and I had a tripod stand then, and one of the legs was out, and he pushed the tube and down it came right in his eye. He gave a scream and shouted out, 'My God! there's a star hit me slap in the eye!'

"Another night an old woman came up to me, and she says, 'God bless you, sir; I'm so glad to see you. I've been looking for you ever such a time. You charge a penny, don't you? I'm a charwoman, sir, and would you believe it, I've never had a penny to spare. What are you looking at? The moon? Well, I must see it.' I told her she should see it for nothing, and up she mounted the steps. She was a heavy lusty woman, and I had to shove her up with my shoulder to get up the steps. When she saw the moon she kept on saying, 'Oh, that's beautiful! well, it is beautiful! And that's the moon, is it? Now, do tell me all about it.' I told her all about Mount Tycho, and about the light of the sun being seen on the mountain tops, and so on. When she'd looked for a time, she said, 'Well, your instrument is a finer one than my master's, but it don't show so much as his, for he says

he can see the men fighting in it.' This made me laugh so, I very nearly let her tumble by taking my shoulder away from under her. But when she came down the steps, she said something quite moved me. She threw her hands up and cried, 'If this moon is so beautiful and wonderful, what must that God be like who made it?' And off she went. It was very fine, wasn't it?

"Sometimes when I'm exhibiting there is quite a crowd collects. I've seen them sitting down on the curb smoking and drinking, whilst they are waiting for their turns to have a peep. They'll send to the public-house for beer, and then they'll stop for hours. Indeed, I've had my business quite interfered with by the mob, for they don't go away after having their look. I seldom stop out after 12 o'clock at night.

"Sometimes when I have been exhibiting, the parties have said it was all nonsense and a deception, for the stars was painted on the glass. If the party has been anything agreeable, I've taken the trouble to persuade him. I've, for instance, placed the star on the very edge of the glass, and then they've seen it travel right across the field; and as I've told them, if it was painted it couldn't move and disappear from the lens.

"Most of the spectators go away quite surprised and impressed with what they have seen. Some will thank me a dozen times over. Some will say, 'Well, my penny is well laid out. I shouldn't have credited it with my own eyes.' Others, but there are very few of them, won't believe when they have looked. Some, when I can see the moon on their eye as they look in, swear they don't see it. Those I let go on and don't take their money, for the penny is no object. When I tell the people what the wonders of the heavens are, and how each of these planets is a world, they go away wonderfully grateful and impressed.

"I went down to Portsmouth with my telescope at the time the fleet sailed under Sir Charles Napier, and the Queen led them out in her yacht. I took a great deal of money there. I didn't exhibit in the day-time: I didn't trouble myself. I took two guineas showing the yacht the day she sailed, and at night with the moon. The other nights, with the moon and planets only, I took from 12s. to 14s. I refused 15s. for one hour, for this reason. A lady sent her servant to ask me to go to her house, and my price is one guinea for to go out, whether for an hour, or two, or three; but she first offered me 10s., and then the next night 15s. Then I found I should have to carry my instrument, weighing one cwt., two miles into the country, and up hill all the way; so, as I was sure of taking more than 10s. where I was, I wouldn't for an extra shilling give myself the labour. I took 12s. 6d. as it was. At Portsmouth a couple of sailors came up, and one had a look, and the other said 'What is there to see?' I told him the

moon, and he asked the price. When I said 'One penny,' he says, 'I aint got a penny, but here's three halfpence, if that's the same to you;' and he gives it, and when I expected he was about to peep, he turns round and says, 'I'll be smothered if I'm going to look down that gallows long chimney! You've got your money, and that's all your business.' So you see there are some people who are quite indifferent to scientific exhibitions.

"There are, to the best of my knowledge, about four men besides myself, going about with telescopes. I don't know of any more. Of these there's only one of any account. I've seen through them all, so I may safely say it. I consider mine the best in London exhibiting. Mine is a very expensive instrument. Everything depends upon the object-glass. There's glasses on some which have been thrown aside as valueless, and may have been bought for two or three pounds.

"The capital required to start a telescope in the streets all depends upon the quantity of the object-glass, from 3l. to 50l. for the object-glass alone.

"Nobody, who is not acquainted with telescopes, knows the value of object-glasses. I've known this offer to be made—that the object-glass should be placed in one scale and gold in the other to weigh it down, and then they wouldn't. The rough glass from Birmingham—before it is worked—only 12 inches in diameter, will cost 96l. Chance, at Birmingham, is the principal maker of the crown and flint for optical purposes. The Swiss used formerly to be the only makers of optical metal of any account, and now Birmingham has knocked them out of the field: indeed they have got the Swiss working for them at Chance's.

"You may take a couple of plates of the rough glass to persons ignorant of their value, and they are only twelve inches in diameter, and he would think one shilling dear for them, for they only look like the bits you see in the streets to let light through the pavement. These glasses are half flint and half crown, the flint for the concave, and the crown for the convex side. Their beauty consists in their being pure metal and quite transparent, and not stinging. Under the high magnifying power we use you see this directly, and it makes the object smudgy and distorts the vision.

"After getting the rough metal it takes years to finish the object-glass. They polish it with satin and putty. The convex has to be done so correctly, that if the lens is the 100th part of an inch out its value is destroyed.

"The well-known object-glass which was shown in the Great Exhibition of 1851, was in Mr. Ross's hands (of Featherstone-buildings, Holborn,) for four years before it was finished. It was very good, and done him great credit. He is supposed to have lost by the job, for the price is all eat up by wages pretty near.

"The observatory on Wandsworth-common

is a complete failure, owing to the object-glass being a bad one. It belongs to the Rev. Mr. Cragg. The tube is 72 feet long, I believe, and shaped like a cigar, bulging at the sides. He wanted to have a new object-glass put in, and what do you think they asked him at Birmingham for the rough metal alone?—2000l.! It is 24 inches in diameter. Mr. Ross asks 6000l., I was told, to make a new one—finished for him.

"The making of object-glasses is dreadful and tedious labour. Men have been known to go and throw their heads under waggon wheels, and have them smashed, from being regularly worn out with working an object-glass, and not being able to get the convex right. I was told by a party that one object-glass was in hand for 14 years.

"The night of the eclipse of the moon, (the 13th October, 1856,) when it was so well seen in London, I took 1l. 1d. at 1d. each. I might as well have took 2l. by charging 2d., but being so well known then I didn't make no extra charge. They were forty deep, for everybody wished to see. I had to put two lads under the stand to prevent their being trod to death. They had to stay there for two hours before they could get a peep, and so indeed had many others to do the same. A friend of mine didn't look at all, for I couldn't get him near. They kept calling to the one looking through the tube, 'Now, then, make haste, you there.' They nearly fought for their turns. They got pushing and fighting, one crying, 'I was first,' and, 'Now it's my turn.' I was glad when it was over, I can assure you. The buttons to my braces were dragged off my back by the pressure behind, and I had to hold up my breeches with my hand. The eclipse lasted from 21 minutes past 9 to 25 minutes past 12, and in that time 247 persons had a peep. The police were there to keep order, but they didn't interfere with me. They are generally very good to me, and they seem to think that my exhibition improves the minds of the public, and so protect me.

"When I went to Portsmouth, I applied to Mr. Myers the goldsmith, a very opulent and a rich man there, and chairman of the Esplanade Committee at Southsea, and he instantly gave me permission to place my stand there. Likewise the mayor and magistrates of Portsmouth, to exhibit in the streets."

EXHIBITOR OF THE MICROSCOPE.

"I EXHIBIT with a microscope that I wouldn't take fifty guineas for, because it suits my purpose, and it is of the finest quality. I earn my living with it. If I were to sell it, it wouldn't fetch more than 15l. It was presented to me by my dear sister, who went to America and died there. I'll show you that it is a valuable instrument. I'll tell you that one of the best lens-makers in the trade looked

through it, and so he said, 'I think I can improve it for you;' and he made me a present of a lens, of extreme high power, and the largest aperture of magnifying power that has ever been exhibited. I didn't know him at the time. He did it by kindness. He said, after looking through, 'It's very good for what it professes, but I'll make you a present of a lens made out of the best Swiss metal.' And he did so from the interest he felt in seeing such kinds of exhibitions in the streets. With the glass he gave me I can see cheese-mites as distinctly as possible, with their eight legs and transparent bodies, and heads shaped like a hedgehog's. I see their jaw moving as they eat their food, and can see them lay their eggs, which are as perfect as any fowl's, but of a bright blue colour; and I can also see them perform the duties of nature. I can also see them carry their young on their backs, showing that they have affection for their offspring. They lay their eggs through their ribs, and you can tell when they are going to lay for there is a bulging out just by the hips. They don't sit on their eggs, but they roll them about in action till they bring forth their object. A million of these mites can walk across a flea's back, for by Lardner's micrometer the surface of a flea's back measures 24 inches from the proboscis to the posterior. The micrometer is an instrument used for determining microscopic power, and it is all graduated to a scale. By Lardner's micrometer the mite looks about the size of a large black-beetle, and then it is magnified 100,000 times. This will give you some idea of the power and value of my instrument. Three hundred gentlemen have viewed through it in one week, and each one delighted; so much so, that many have given double the money I have asked (which was a penny), such was the satisfaction my instrument gave.

"My father was a minister and local preacher in the Wesleyan Methodists. He died, poor fellow, at 27 years of age, therefore I never had an opportunity of knowing him. He was a boot and shoe maker. Such was the talent which he possessed, that, had it not been for his being lamed of one foot (from a fall off a horse), he would have been made a travelling minister. He was a wonderful clever man, and begun preaching when he was 21. He was the minister who preached on the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of Hoxton Chapel, and he drew thousands of people. I was only two years old when he died, and my mother was left with five of us to bring up. She was a visitor of the sick and the dying for the Strangers' Benevolent Fund, and much respected for her labours. After my father's death she was enabled to support her family of one son and four daughters by shoe-binding. She was married twice after my father's death, but she married persons of quite opposite principles and opinions to her own, and she was not comfortable with them,

but left them, and always found shelter under her son's roof, where she died triumphantly happy.

"I was apprenticed when I was 13 years of age to a shoemaker, who was a profound philosopher, and very fond of making experiments and of lecturing on various branches of science. I could produce bills—I have them at home—such as that at the Friar's-mount Sunday-school, some six or seven years ago, where it states that William Knock, minister and lecturer, will lecture on zoology and natural history. He's about 70 now. Electricity is his favourite science. Whilst I was his apprentice, he had an observatory built at the top of his house in Underwood-street, Spitalfields, for the purpose of taking astronomical observations. My being in his house, and seeing him so busy with his instruments, gave me a great taste for science. I was his assistant when he went lecturing. I was apprenticed with him for five years. He was a kind and good master, and very affectionate. He encouraged me in my scientific studies, and gave me access to his library, which was immense, and consisted of 3000 volumes. Amongst other employment I used to copy out sermons for him, and he gave me a penny each, which by saving up enabled me to buy a watch of him for 5*l.* 5*s.* He was a shoemaker and manufacturer of ladies and children's boots and shoes, so that he might have made from his 2*l.* to 3*l.* a-week, for he was not a journeyman, but an employer.

"After I was out of my time I went to Mr. Children, a bootmaker of Bethnal-green-road, well known in that locality. My master had not sufficient employment for me. One night this Mr. Children went to hear a lecture on astronomy by Dr. Bird, and when he came home he was so delighted with what he had seen, that he began telling his wife all about it. He said, 'I cannot better explain to you the solar system, than with a mop,' and he took the mop and dipped it into a pail of water, and began to twirl it round in the air, till the wet flew off it. Then he said, 'This mop is the sun, and the spiral motion of the water gives the revolutions of the planets in their orbits.' Then, after a time, he cried out, 'If this Dr. Bird can do this, why shouldn't I?' He threw over his business directly, to carry out the grand object of his mind. He was making from 3*l.* to 4*l.* a-week, and his wife said, 'Robert, you're mad!' He asked me if I knew anything of astronomy, and I said, 'Sir, my old master was an astronomer and philosopher.' Then I got books for him, and I taught him all I knew of the science of astronomy. Then he got a magic-lantern with astronomical slides. The bull's-eye was six inches in diameter, so they were very large, so that they gave a figure of twelve feet. For the signs of the zodiac he had twelve separate small lanterns, with the large one in the centre to show the diverging rays of the

sun's light. He began with many difficulties in his way, for he was a very illiterate man, and had a vast deal to contend with, but he succeeded through all. He wrote to his father and got 500*l.*, which was his share of the property which would have been left him on his parent's death. At his first lecture he made many mistakes, such as, 'Now, gentlemen, I shall present to your notice the *consternations*,' at which expression the company cried, 'Hear, hear,' and one said, 'We are all in a consternation here, for your lamp wants oil.' Yet he faced all this out. I was his assistant. I taught him everything. When I told him of his mistake he'd say, 'Never mind, I'll overcome all that.' He accumulated the vast sum of 6000*l.* by lecturing, and became a most popular man. He educated himself, and became qualified. When, he went into the country he had Archbishops and Bishops, and the highest of the clergy, to give their sanction and become patrons of his lectures. He's now in America, and become a great farmer.

"After I left Mr. Children, I connected myself with a Young Men's Improvement Meeting. Previous to that, I had founded a Sunday-school in the New Kent-road. Deverell-street Sabbath-schools were founded by me, and I was for fourteen years manager of it, as well as performer of the funeral service in that place; for there was a chapel, and burying-ground and vaults, attached to the schools, and I became the officiating minister for the funeral service. Three thousand children have been educated at these schools, and for fourteen years I lectured to them every Sunday on religious subjects. With the tutors and the eldest scholars I formed a Young Men's Improvement Meeting. I became the president of that meeting, and their lecturer. I lectured on the following subjects,—Natural History, Electricity, Astronomy, and Phrenology.

"At this time I was a master-shoemaker, and doing a business of fifty guineas a-week, of which ten were profit. I built large workshops at the back of my house, which cost me 300*l.* Unfortunately, I lent my name to a friend for a very large amount, and became involved in his difficulties, and then necessity compelled me to have recourse to street-exhibitions for a living. When I was in affluent circumstances I had a library of 300 volumes, on scientific subjects mostly, and from them I have gleaned sufficient information to qualify me for street-exhibition, and thereby enable me to earn more money than most individuals in such circumstances.

"I began my street-life with exhibiting a telescope, and here is the origin of my doing so. I had a sister living at the west-end of the town who was a professed cook, and I used to visit her three times a-week. One night I saw a man in the Regent-circus exhibiting a telescope. I went up to him, and I said, 'Sir, what is the object to-night?' And he told me it was Jupiter. I was very much interested

with looking at Jupiter, and I stopped with that man for two hours, conversing with him, and I saw exactly how much he took. Then I thought, 'Why shouldn't I do this?' So I wrote to my brother-in-law, and I told him this man was taking at the rate of 1*d.* per minute, and I offered, if he would provide me with a telescope, that I should be very happy and contented to take half of the receipts as my share, and give him the other for the use of his instrument. He did so, and bought a telescope which cost him 14*l.* I took up my stand on London-bridge, and did very well, taking on the average 6*s.* a-night. I gave up the telescope for this reason,—my brother-in-law was going to America, and was anxious to call in all his money. The telescope was sold, and my sister, the professed cook, fearing that I should be left without a means of living, bought for me a microscope out of her own earnings, which cost her 5*l.* She said to me, 'The microscope is better than the telescope, for the nights are so uncertain.' She was quite right, for when the telescopes have been idle for three months at a time, I can exhibit my microscope day and night. She gave it to me as a mark of her respect. She died in America, just after she arrived. That instrument has enabled me to support an afflicted and aged mother, and to bury her comfortably when she died.

"My microscope contains six objects, which are placed on a wheel at the back, which I turn round in succession. The objects are in cell-boxes of glass. The objects are all of them familiar to the public, and are as follows:—1. The flea. 2. The human hair, or the hair of the head. 3. A section of the old oak tree. 4. The animalcule in water. 5. Cheese-mites. And 6. The transverse section of cane used by schoolmasters for the correction of boys.

"I always take up my stand in the day-time in Whitechapel, facing the London Hospital, being a large open space, and favourable for the solar rays—for I light up the instrument by the direct rays of the sun. At night-time I am mostly to be found on Westminster-bridge, and then I light up with the best sperm oil there is. I am never interfered with by the police; on the contrary, they come and have a look, and admire and recommend, such is the interest excited.

"The first I exhibit is the flea, and I commence a short lecture as follows:—'Gentlemen,' I says, 'the first object I have to present to your notice is that of a flea. I wish to direct your attention especially to the head of this object. Here you may distinctly perceive its proboscis or dart. It is that which perforates the cuticle or human skin, after which the blood ascends by suction from our body into that of the flea. Thousands of persons in London have seen a flea, have felt a flea, but have never yet been able by the human eye to discover that instrument which made them

sensible of the flea about their person, although they could not catch the old gentleman. This flea, gentlemen, by Dr. Lardner's micrometer, measures accurate 2½ inches in length, and 11 across the back. My instrument, mark you, being of high magnifying power, will not show you the whole of the object at once. Mark you, gentlemen, this is not the flea of the dog or the cat, but the human flea, for each differ in their formation, as clearly proved by this powerful instrument. For they all differ in their form and shape, and will only feed upon the animal on which they are bred. Having shown you the head and shoulders, with its dart, I shall now proceed to show you the posterior view of this object, in which you may clearly discover every artery, vein, muscle and nerve, exact like a lobster in shape, and quite as large as one at 2*s.* 6*d.*' That pleases them, you know; and sometimes I add, to amuse them, 'An object of that size would make an excellent supper for half-a-dozen persons.' That pleases them.

"One Irishwoman, after seeing the flea, threw up her arms and screamed out, 'O J——! and I've had hundreds of them in my bed at once.' She got me a great many customers from her exclamations. You see, my lecture entices those listening to have a look. Many listeners say, 'Ain't that true, and philosophical, and correct?' I've had many give me 6*d.* and say, 'Never mind the change, your lecture is alone worth the money.'

"I'll now proceed to No. 2. 'The next object I have to present to your notice, gentlemen, is that of the hair of the human head. You perceive that it is nearly as large as yonder scaffolding poles of the House of Lords.' I say this when I am on Westminster-bridge, because it refers to the locality, and is a striking figure, and excites the listeners. 'But mark you, it is not, like them, solid matter, through which no ray of light can pass.' That's where I please the gentlemen, you know, for they say, 'How philosophical!' 'You can readily perceive, mark you, that they are all tubes, like tubes of glass; a proof of which fact you have before you, from the light of the lamp shining direct through the body of the object, and that light direct portrayed in the lens of your eye, called the retina, on which all external objects are painted.' 'Beautiful!' says a gentleman. 'Now, if the hair of the head be a hollow tube, as you perceive it is, then what caution you ought to exercise when you place your head in the hands of the hair-dresser, by keeping your hat on, or else you may be susceptible to catch cold; for that which we breathe, the atmosphere, passing down these tubes, suddenly shuts to the doors, if I may be allowed such an expression, or, in other words, closes the pores of the skin and thereby checks the insensible perspiration, and colds are the result. Powdering the head is quite out of date now, but if a little was used on those occasions referred to, cold in

the head would not be so frequent.' What do you think of that? I never had an individual complain of my lecture yet.

"Now comes No. 3. 'This, gentlemen, is the brave old oak, a section of it not larger than the head of a pin. Looking at it through this powerful instrument, you may accurately perceive millions of perforations, or pores, through which the moisture of the earth rises, in order to aid its growth. Of all the trees of the forest, none is so splendid as the brave old oak. This is the tree that braves the battle and the breeze, and is said to be in its perfection at 100 years. Who that looks at it would not exclaim, in the language of the song, 'Woodman, spare that tree, and cut it not down?' Such is the analogy existing between vegetable and animal physiology, that a small portion of the cuticle or human skin would present the same appearance, for there are millions of pores in the human skin which a grain of sand is said to cover; and here are millions of perforations through which the moisture of the earth is said to rise to aid the growth of the tree. See the similitude between the vegetable and animal physiology. Here is the exhibition of nature—see how it surpasses that of art. See the ladies at the Great Exhibition admiring the shawls that came from India: yet they, though truly deserving, could not compare with this bit of bark from the brave old oak. Here is a pattern richer and more deserving than any on any shawl, however wonderful. Where is the linendraper in this locality that can produce anything so beautiful as that on this bit of bark? Such are the works of art as compared with those of nature.'

"No. 4 is the animalculæ in water. 'Gentlemen, the object now before you is a drop of water, that may be suspended on a needle's point, teeming with millions of living objects. This one drop of water contains more inhabitants than the globe on which I stand. See the velocity of their motion, the action of their stomachs! the vertebræ is elegantly marked, like the boa-constrictor in the Zoological Gardens. They are all moving with perfect ease in this one drop, like the mighty monsters of the vast deep.'

"On one occasion a gentleman from St. Thomas's Hospital disputed my statement about it's being only one drop of water, so I said to the gent: 'If you will accompany me to some coffee-house the drop of water shall be removed, and perhaps what you see you may believe,' which he did, and he paid me 1s. for my experiment. He told me he was a doctor, and I told him I was surprised that he was not better acquainted with the instrument; for, said I, 'how can you tell the effects of inoculation on the cuticle, or the disease called the itch, unless you are acquainted with such an instrument?' He was quite ashamed as he paid me for my trouble. I tell this anecdote on the bridge, and I always conclude with,

'Now, gentlemen, whilst I was paid 1s. by the faculty for showing one object alone, I am only charging you 1d. for the whole six.' Then I address myself to the person looking into the microscope, and say, 'What do you think of this one drop of water, sir?' and he says, 'Splendid!' Then I add, 'Few persons would pass and re-pass this instrument without having a glance into it, if they knew the wonders I exhibit;' and the one looking says, 'That's true, very true.'

"The next object is the cheese-mite—No. 5. I always begin in this way,—'Those who are unacquainted with the study of entomology declare that these mites are beetles, and not mites; but could I procure a beetle with eight legs, I should present it to the British Museum as a curiosity.' This is the way I clench up the mouths of those sceptics who would try to ridicule me, by showing that I am philosophic. 'Just look at them. Notice, for instance, their head, how it represents the form of an hedgehog. The body presents that of the beetle shape. They have eight legs and eight joints. They have four legs forward and four legs back; and they can move with the same velocity forwards as they can back, such is their construction. They are said to be moving with the velocity of five hundred steps in one minute. Read Blair's 'Preceptor,' where you may see a drawing of the mite accurately given, as well as read the description just given.' A cheesemonger in Whitechapel brought me a few of these objects for me to place in my microscope. He invited his friends, which were taking supper with him, to come out and have a glance at the same objects. He gave me sixpence for exhibiting them to him, and was highly gratified at the sight of them. I asked him how he could have the impudence to sell them for a lady's supper at 10d. a-pound. The answer he gave me was,—'What the eye cannot see the heart never grieves.' Then I go on,—'Whilst this lady is extending her hand to the poor, and doing all the relief in her power, she is slaying more living creatures with her jaw-bone than ever Samson did with his.' If it's a boy looking through, I say, 'Now, Jack, when you are eating bread and cheese don't let it be said that you slay the mites with the jaw-bone of an ass. Cultivate the intellectual and moral powers superior to the passions, and then you will rise superior to that animal in intellect.' 'Good,' says a gentleman, 'good; here's sixpence for you;' and another says, 'Here's twopence for you, and I'm blessed if I want to see anything after hearing your lecture.' Then I continue to point out the affection of the mite for its young. 'You see fathers looking after their daughters, and mothers after their sons, when they are taking their walks; and such is their love for their young, that when the young ones are fatigued with their journey the parents take them up on their backs. Do you not see it?' And then some will say, 'I'll

give a penny to see that;' and I've had four pennies put in my hand at once to see it. Excitement is everything in this world, sir.

"Next comes the cane—No. 6. 'The object before you, gentlemen, is a transverse section of cane,—common cane,—such, mark you, as is used by schoolmasters for the correction of boys who neglect their tasks, or play the wag.' I make it comic, you know. 'This I call the tree of knowledge, for it has done more for to learn us the rules of arithmetic than all the vegetable kingdom combined. To it we may attribute the rule of three, from its influence on the mind,'—that always causes a smile,—'just look at it for one moment. Notice, in the first place, its perforations. Where the human hand has failed to construct a micrometer for microscopic or telescopic purposes, the spider has lent its web in one case, and the cane in the other. Through the instrumentality of its perforations, we may accurately infer the magnifying power of other objects, showing the law of analogy. The perforations of this cane, apart from this instrument, would hardly admit a needle's point, but seem now large enough for your arm to enter. This cane somewhat represents a telescopic view of the moon at the full, when in conjunction with the sun, for instance. Here I could represent inverted rocks and mountains. You may perceive them yourself, just as they would be represented in the moon's disc through a powerful telescope of 250 times, such as I have exhibited to a thousand persons in St. Paul's Churchyard. On the right of this piece of cane, if you are acquainted with the science of astronomy, you may depicture very accurately Mount Tycho, for instance, representing a beautiful burning mountain, like Mount Vesuvius or Etany, near the fields of Naples. You might discover accurately all the diverging streaks of light emanating from the crater. Further on to the right you may perceive Mount St. Catherine, like the blaze of a candle rushing through the atmosphere. On the left you may discover Mount Ptolemy. Such is a similar appearance of the moon's mountainous aspect. I ask you, if the school-boy had but an opportunity of glancing at so splendid an object as the cane, should he ever be seen to shed a tear at its weight?'

"This shows that I am scientific, and know astronomy. The last part makes them laugh.

"This is the mode in which I exhibit my instrument, and such is the interest been excited in the public mind, that though a penny is the small charge which I make, that amount has been doubled and trebled by gentlemen who have viewed the instrument; and on one occasion a clergyman in the Commercial-road presented me with half-a-sovereign, for the interest he felt at my description, as well as the objects presented to his view. It has given universal satisfaction.

"I don't go out every night with my instru-

ment. I always go on the Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturday, for those are the nights when I take most money, especially on the Monday and Saturday. The Monday and Saturday are generally 6s., Tuesdays about 5s., and Wednesdays about 2s. 6d. Then the Thursday averages 1s. 8d., and the Fridays, in some localities, where the men are paid on that night, are equal to Saturday. Such are the benefits arising from night exhibition. In the day it comes to rather more. I've been to Greenwich, and on the One-tree Hill I've done more with the sun light than the night light. Taking the changes of weather, such as rain and cold bleak nights, and such weather as isn't suitable to such an exhibition, I may say safely that my income amounts to 80l. a-year. The capital required for such a business amounts to from 10l. to 20l. My instrument only cost 5l.; but it was parted with to raise money;—and I wouldn't take 50l. for it. It was my sister's son-in-law who sold it. It was a gift more than a sale. You can buy a very good microscope for 10l., but a great deal, of course, is required in choosing it; for you may buy a thing not worth 20s. You'd have an achromatic microscope for 20l. It costs me about 4d. a-week for oil, the best sperm, at 1s. 4d. the pint; and a quarter of a pint will last me the week. I get my specimens in London. I prepare them all myself, and always keep a stock by me. For the sake of any gentleman who may have any microscope, and wish to procure excellent living specimens of mites and animalculæ in water, may do so in this way. (This is a secret which I give from a desire which I feel to afford pleasure to gentlemen of a scientific mind.) Get mites from a cheesemonger. Mites differ in their shape and form, according to the cheese they are taken from. The Stilton-cheese differs from the Dutch-cheese mite, and so does that of the aristocratic Cheshire, as I call it. In order to rise them clear and transparent, take a wooden box, of 2½ inches deep and 2½ inches in diameter, with a thick screw-lid, and let the lid take off half-way down. Place the dust in the bottom of the box, damp the thread of the screw-lid, to make it air-tight. The mites will ascend to the lid of the box. Four or five hours afterwards unscrew the lid gently, and, removing it, let it fall gently on a piece of writing paper. The mites crawl up to the lid, and by this way you get them free from dust and clean. To make the animalculæ water, I draw from the bottom of the water-tub a small quantity of water, and I put about a handful of new hay in that water. I expose it to the influence of the solar light, or some gentle heat, for three or four hours. Skim off its surface. After washing your hands, take your finger and let one drop of the hay-water fall on the glass, and then add to it another drop of pure water to make it more transparent. This information took me some years of experience to discover. I never read it or learnt

it from any one, but found it out myself; but all liberal scientific men like to share their information.

"It's impossible for me to say how many people have looked through my instrument, but they must be counted by tens of thousands. I have had 160 looking through in one night, or 13s. 4d. worth. This was on a peculiar occasion. They average about 6s. worth. If I could get out every night I should do well. As it is, I am obliged to work at my trade of shoemaking to keep myself: for you must take it into consideration, that there are some nights when I cannot show my exhibition. Very often I have a shilling or sixpence given to me as a present by my admirers. Many a half-crown I've had as well.

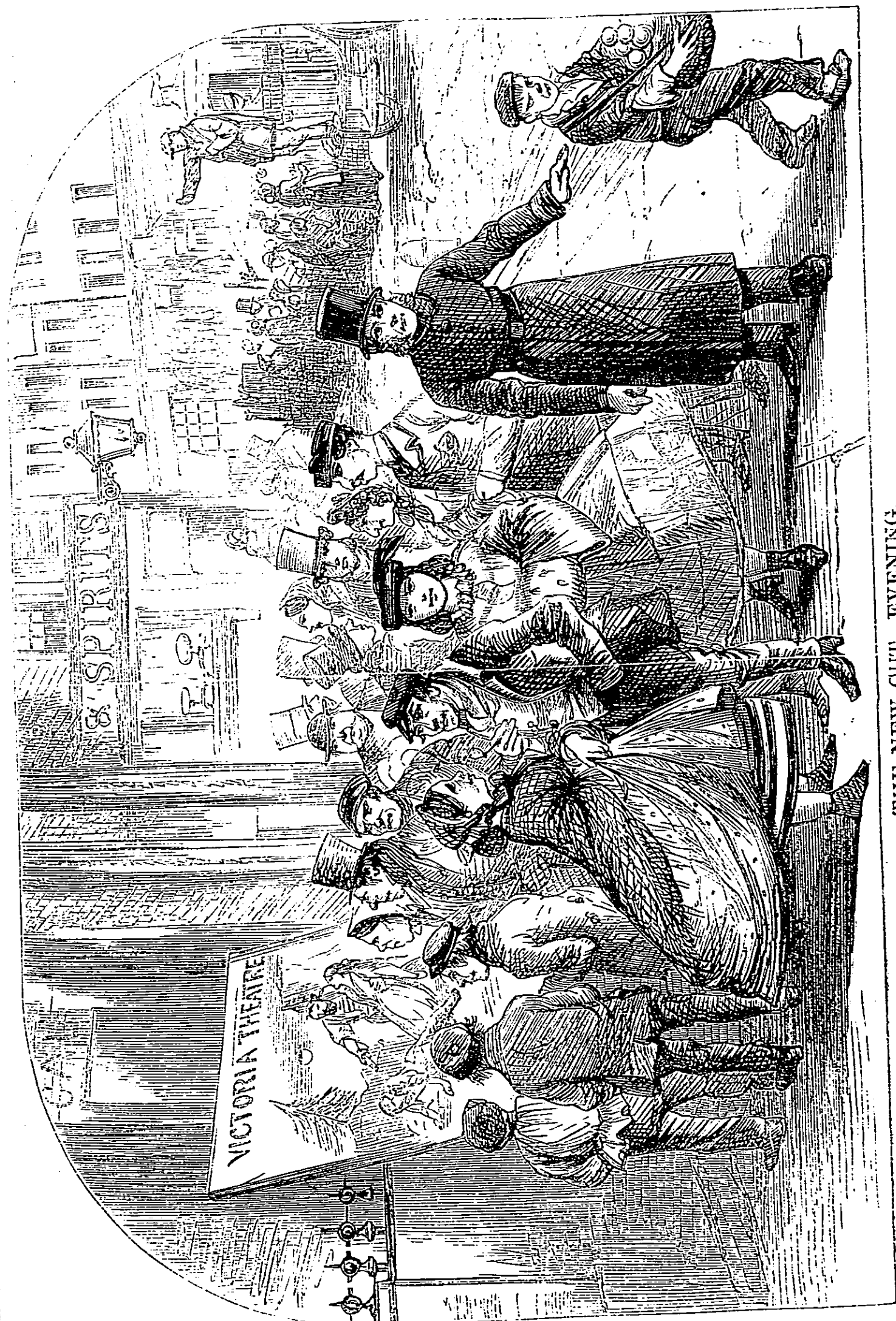
"One night I was showing over at the Elephant and Castle, and I saw a Quaker gentleman coming along, and he said to me, 'What art thee showing to night, friend?' So I told him; and he says, 'And what doth thee charge, friend?' I answered, 'To the working man, sir, I am determined to charge no more than a penny; but to a gentleman, I always leave it to their liberality.' So he said, 'Well, I like that, friend; I'll give thee all I have.' And he put his hand into his pocket, and he pulled out five penny pieces. You see that is what I always do; and it meets with its reward."

PEEP-SHOWS.

CONCERNING these, I received the subjoined narrative from a man of considerable experience in the "profession:"—

"Being a cripple, I am obliged to exhibit a small peep-show. I lost the use of this arm ever since I was three months old. My mother died when I was ten years old, and after that my father took up with an Irishwoman, and turned me and my youngest sister (she was two years younger than me) out into the streets. My father had originally been a dyer, but was working at the fiddle-string business then. My youngest sister got employment at my father's trade, but I couldn't get no work, because of my crippled arms. I walked about till I fell down in the streets for want. At last a man, who had a sweetmeat-shop, took pity on me. His wife made the sweetmeats, and minded the shop while he went out a-juggling in the streets, in the Ramo Samee line. He told me as how, if I would go round the country with him, and sell prints while he was a-juggling in the public-houses, he'd find me in wittles and pay my lodging. I joined him, and stopped with him two or three year. After that, I went to work for a werry large waste-paper dealer. He used to buy up all the old back numbers of the cheap periodicals and penny publications, and send me out with them to sell at a farden a-piece. He used to give me fourpence out of every shilling, and I done very well with that, till the periodicals came

so low, and so many on 'em, that they wouldn't sell at all. Sometimes I could make 15s. on a Saturday night and a Sunday morning, a-selling the odd numbers of periodicals, such as 'Tales of the Wars,' 'Lives of the Pirates,' 'Lives of the Highwaymen,' &c. I've often sold as many as 2000 numbers on a Saturday night in the New Cut, and the most of them was works about thieves, and highwaymen, and pirates. Besides me there was three others at the same business. Altogether, I dare say, my master alone used to get rid of 10,000 copies of such works on a Saturday night and Sunday morning. Our principal customers was young men. My master made a good bit of money at it. He had been about 18 years in the business, and had begun with 2s. 6d. I was with him 15 year on and off, and at the best time I used to earn my 30s. a-week full at that time. But then I was foolish, and didn't take care of my money. When I was at the 'odd-number business,' I bought a peep-show. I gave 2l. 10s. for it. I had it second-hand. I was persuaded to buy it. A person as has got only one hand, you see, isn't like other folks, and the people said it would always bring me a meal of victuals, and keep me from starving. The peep-shows was a-doing very well then (that's about five or six years back), when the theaytres was all a shilling to go into them whole price, but now there's many at 3d. and 2d., and a good lot at a penny. Before the theaytres lowered, a peep-showman could make 3s. or 4s. a-day, at the least, in fine weather, and on a Saturday night about double that money. At a fair he could take his 15s. to 1l. a-day. Then there was about nine or ten peep-shows in London. These were all back-shows. There are two kinds of peep-shows, which we call 'back-shows' and 'caravan-shows.' The caravan-shows are much larger than the others, and are drawn by a horse or a donkey. They have a green-baize curtain at the back, which shuts out them as don't pay. The showmen usually lives in these caravans with their families. Often there will be a man, his wife, and three or four children, living in one of these shows. These caravans mostly go into the country, and very seldom are seen in town. They exhibit principally at fairs and feasts, or wakes, in country villages. They generally go out of London between March and April, because some fairs begin at that time, but many wait for the fairs at May. Then they work their way right round, from village to town. They tell one another what part they're a-going to, and they never interfere with one another's rounds. If a new hand comes into the business, they're werry civil, and tells him what places to work. The caravans comes to London about October, after the fairs is over. The scenes of them caravan shows is mostly upon recent battles and murders. Anything in that way, of late occurrence, suits them. Theatrical plays ain't no good for country



THE NEW CUT—EVENING.

towns, 'cause they don't understand such things there. People is werry fond of the battles in the country, but a murder wot is well known is worth more than all the fights. There was more took with Rush's murder than there has been even by the Battle of Waterloo itself. Some of the carawan-shows does werry well. Their average taking is 30s. a-week for the summer months. At some fairs they'll take 5*l.* in the three days. They have been about town as long as we can recollect. I should say there is full 50 of these carawan-shows throughout the country. Some never comes into London at all. There is about a dozen that comes to London regular every winter. The business in general goes from family to family. The cost of a carawan-show, second-hand, is 40*l.*; that's without the glasses, and them runs from 10s. to 1*l.* a-piece, because they're large. Why, I've knowed the front of a peep-show, with the glasses, cost 60*l.*; the front was mahogany, and had 36 glasses, with gilt carved mouldings round each on 'em. The scenes will cost about 6*l.* if done by the best artist, and 3*l.* if done by a common hand. The back-shows are peep-shows that stand upon trussels, and are so small as to admit of being carried on the back. The scenery is about 18 inches to 2 foot in length, and about 15 inches high. They have been introduced about fifteen or sixteen years. The man as first brought 'em up was named Billy T—; he was lame of one leg, and used to exhibit little automaton figures in the New Cut. On their first coming out, the oldest back-showman as I know on told me they could take 15s. a-day. But now we can't do more than 7s. a-week, run Saturday and all the other days together,—and that's through the theayters being so low. It's a regular starving life now. We has to put up with the hinsults* of people so. The back-shows generally exhibits plays of different kinds wot's been performed at the theayters lately. I've got many different plays to my show. I only exhibit one at a time. There's 'Halonzor the Brave and the Fair Himogen;' 'The Dog of Montargis and the Forest of Bondy;' 'Hyder Halley, or the Lions of Mysore;' 'The Forty Thieves' (that never done no good to me); 'The Devil and Dr. Faustus;' and at Christmas time we exhibit pantomimes. I has some other scenes as well. I've 'Napoleon's Return from Helba,' 'Napoleon at Waterloo,' 'The Death of Lord Nelson,' and also 'The Queen embarking to start for Scotland, from the Dockyard at Woolich.' We takes more from children than grown people in London, and more from grown people than children in the country. You see, grown people has such remarks made upon them when they're a-peeping through in London, as to make it bad for us here. Lately I have been hardly able to get a living, you may say. Some days I've taken 6*d.*, others 8*d.*, and sometimes 1s.—that's what I call a good day for any of the week-days. On

a Saturday it runs from 2s. to 2s. 6*d.* Of the week-days, Monday or Tuesday is the best. If there's a fair on near London, such as Greenwich, we can go and take 3s., and 4s., or 5s. a-day, so long as it lasts. But after that, we comes back to the old business, and that's bad enough; for, after you've paid 1s. 6*d.* a-week rent, and 6*d.* a-week stand for your peep-show, and come to buy a bit of coal, why all one can get is a bit of bread and a cup of tea to live upon. As for meat, we don't see it from one month's end to the other. My old woman, when she is at work, only gets five fardens a-pair for making a pair of drawers to send out for the convicts, and three half-pence for a shirt; and out of that she has to find her own thread. There are from six to eight scenes in each of the plays that I shows; and if the scenes are a bit short, why I puts in a couple of battle-scenes; or I makes up a pannerammer for 'em. The children *will* have so much for their money now. I charge a halfpenny for a hactive performance. There is characters and all—and I explains what they are supposed to be a-talking about. There's about six back-shows in London. I don't think there's more. It don't pay now to get up a new play. We works the old ones over and over again, and sometimes we buys a fresh one of another showman, if we can rise the money—the price is 2s. and 2s. 6*d.* I've been obligated to get rid on about twelve of my plays, to get a bit of victuals at home. Formerly we used to give a hartist 1s. to go in the pit and sketch off the scenes and figures of any new play that was a-doing well, and we thought 'ud take, and arter that we used to give him from 1s. 6*d.* to 2s. for drawing and painting each scene, and 1*d.* and 1½*d.* each for the figures, according to the size. Each play costs us from 15s. to 1*l.* for the inside scenes and figures, and the outside painting as well. The outside painting in general consists of the most attractive part of the performance. The New-Cut is no good at all now on a Saturday night; that's through the cheap penny hexhibitions there. Tottenham-court-road ain't much account either. The street-markets is the best of a Saturday night. I'm often obliged to take bottles instead of money, and they don't fetch more than threepence a dozen. Sometimes I take four dozen of bottles in a day. I lets 'em see a play for a bottle, and often two wants to see for one large bottle. The children is dreadful for cheapening things down. In the summer I goes out of London for a month at a stretch. In the country I works my battle-pieces. They're most pleased there with my Lord Nelson's death at the battle of Trafalgar. 'That there is,' I tell 'em, 'a fine painting, representing Lord Nelson at the battle of Trafalgar.' In the centre is Lord Nelson in his last dying moments, supported by Capt. Hardy and the chaplain. On the left is the hexplosion of one of the enemy's ships by fire. That represents a fine

painting, representing the death of Lord Nelson at the battle of Trafalgar, wot was fought on the 12th of October, 1805. I've got five glasses, they cost about 5s. a-piece when new, and is about 3½ inches across, with a 3-foot focus."

ACROBAT, OR STREET-POSTURER.

A MAN who, as he said, "had all his life been engaged in the profession of Acrobat," volunteered to give me some details of the life led and the earnings made by this class of street-performers.

He at the present moment belongs to a "school" of five, who are dressed up in fanciful and tight-fitting costumes of white calico, with blue or red trimmings; and who are often seen in the quiet by-streets going through their gymnastic performances, mounted on each other's shoulders, or throwing somersaults in the air.

He was a short, wiry-built man, with a broad chest, which somehow or another seemed unnatural, for the bones appeared to have been forced forward and dislocated. His general build did not betoken the great muscular strength which must be necessary for the various feats which he has to perform; and his walk was rather slovenly and loutish than brisk and springy, as one would have expected. He wore the same brown Chesterfield coat which we have all seen him slip over his professional dress in the street, when moving off after an exhibition.

His yellow hair reached nearly to his shoulders, and not being confined by the ribbon he usually wears across his forehead in the public thoroughfare, it kept straggling into his eyes, and he had to toss it back with a jerk, after the fashion of a horse with his nose-bag.

He was a simple, "good-natured" fellow, and told his story in a straightforward manner, which was the more extraordinary, as he prefaced his statement with a remark, "that all in his 'school,' (the professional term for a gang or troop,) were terribly against his coming; but that as all he was going to say was nothing but the truth, he didn't care a fig for any of 'em."

It is a singular fact, that this man spoke fluently both the French and German languages; and, as will be seen in his statement, he has passed many years of his life abroad, performing in several circuses, or "pitching" (exhibiting in the streets) in the various large towns of Sweden, Denmark, Prussia, Switzerland, and France.

The following is the history of his life, from his earliest remembrance,—from two years old, indeed,—down to his present age, thirty-six:—

"I am what is known as a street-posturer, or acrobat. I belong to a school of five, and we go about the streets doing pyramids, bending, juggling, and la perche.

"I've been at acrobating for these thirty-five years, in London and all parts of England, as well as on the Continent, in France and Germany, as well as in Denmark and Sweden; but only in the principal towns, such as Copenhagen and Stockholm; but only a little, for we come back by sea almost directly. My father was a tumbler, and in his days very great, and used to be at the theatres and in Richardson's show. He's acted along with Joe Grimaldi. I don't remember the play it was in, but I know he's acted along with him at Sadler's Wells Theatre, at the time there was real water there. I have heard him talk about it. He brought me regular up to the profession, and when I first came out I wasn't above two years old, and father used to dance me on my hands in Risley's style, but not like Risley. I can just recollect being danced in his hands, but I can't remember much about it, only he used to throw me a somersault with his hand. The first time I ever come out by myself was in a piece called 'Snowball,' when I was introduced in a snowball; and I had to do the splits and strides. When father first trained me, it hurt my back awfully. He used to take my legs and stretch them, and work them round in their sockets, and put them up straight by my side. That is what they called being 'cricked,' and it's in general done before you eat anything in the morning. O, yes, I can remember being cricked, and it hurt me terrible. He put my breast to his breast, and then pulled my legs up to my head, and knocked 'em against my head and cheeks about a dozen times. It seems like as if your body was broken in two, and all your muscles being pulled out like India-rubber.

"I worked for my father till I was twelve years of age, then I was sold for two years to a man of the name of Tagg, another showman, who took me to France. He had to pay father 5*l.* a-year, and keep me respectable. I used to do the same business with him as with father,—splits, and such-like,—and we acted in a piece that was wrote for us in Paris, called "Les deux Clowns anglais," which was produced at the Porte St. Antoine. That must have been about the year 1836. We were dressed up like two English clowns, with our faces painted and all; and we were very successful, and had plenty of flowers thrown to us. There was one Barnet Burns, who was showing in the Boulevards, and called the New Zealand Chief, who was tattooed all over his body. He was very kind to me, and made me a good many presents, and some of the ladies were kind to me. I knew this Barnet Burns pretty well, because my master was drunk all day pretty well, and he was the only Englishman I had to speak to, for I didn't know French.

"I ran away from Tagg in Paris, and I went with the 'Frères de Bouchett,' rope-dancers, two brothers who were so called, and I had to clown to the rope. I stopped with them

three years, and we went through Belgium and Holland, and done very well with them. They was my masters, and had a large booth of their own, and would engage paraders to stand outside the show to draw the people; but they did all the performances themselves, and it was mostly at the fairs.

"From them I came to England, and began pitching in the street. I didn't much like it, after being a regular performer, and looked upon it as a drop. I travelled right down by myself to Glasgow fair. I kept company with Wombwell's show,—only working for myself. You see they used to stop in the towns, and draw plenty of people, and then I'd begin pitching to the crowd. I wasn't lonely because I knew plenty of the wild-beast chaps, and, besides, I've done pretty well, taking two or three shillings a day, and on a Saturday and Monday generally five or six. I had a suit of tights, and a pair of twacks, with a few span-gles on, and as soon as the people came round me I began to work.

"At Glasgow I got a pound a day, for I went with Mr. Mumford, who had some dancing dolls showing at the bottom of the Stone buildings. The fair is a week. And after that one of our chaps wrote to me that there was a job for me, if I liked to go over to Ireland and join Mr. Batty, who had a circus there. They used to build wooden circuses in them days, and hadn't tents as now. I stopped a twelve-month with him, and we only went to four towns, and the troupe did wonders. Mr. Hughes was the manager for Mr. Batty. There was Herr Hengler, the great rope-dancer among the troupe, and his brother Alfred, the great rider, as is dead now, for a horse kicked him at Bristol, and broke his arm, and he wouldn't have it cut off, and it mortified, and he died.

"When I left Ireland I went back to Glasgow, and Mr. David Miller gave the school I had joined an engagement for three months. We had 6*l.* a-week between four of us, besides a benefit, which brought us 2*l.* each more. Miller had a large penny booth, and had taken about 12*l.* or 14*l.* a-night. There was acting, and our performances. Alexander, the lessee of the Theatre Royal, prevented him, for having acted, as he also did Anderson the Wizard of the North, who had the Circus, and acted as well, and Mumford; but they won the day.

"I left Glasgow with another chap, and we went first to Edinburgh and then to Hamburg, and then we played at the Tivoli Gardens. I stopped abroad for fourteen years, performing at different places through France and Switzerland, either along with regular companies or else by ourselves, for there was four on us, in schools. After Hamburg, we went to Copenhagen, and then we joined the brother Prices, or, as they call 'em there, Preece. We only did tumbling and jumping up on each other's shoulders, and dancing the the pole on our feet, what is called in French

'trankr.' From there we joined the brothers Layman,—both Russians they was,—who was very clever, and used to do the 'pierrot;' the French clown, dressed all in white,—for their clown is not like our clown,—and they danced the rope and all. The troupe was called the Russian pantomimists. There we met Herr Hengler again, as well as Deulan the dancer, who was dancing at the Eagle and at the theatres as Harlekin; and Anderson, who was one of the first clowns of the day, and a good comic singer, and an excellent companion, for he could make puns and make poems on every body in the room. He did, you may recollect, some few years ago, throw himself out of winder, and killed himself. I read it in the newspapers, and a mate of mine afterwards told me he was crazy, and thought he was performing, and said, "Hulloa, old feller! I'm coming!" and threw himself out, the same as if he'd been on the stage.

"In Paris and all over Switzerland we performed at the fairs, when we had no engagements at the regular theatres, or we'd pitch in the streets, just according. In Paris we was regular stars. There was only me and R—, and we was engaged for three months with Mr. Le Compte, at his theatre in the Passage Choiseul. It's all children that acts there; and he trains young actors. He's called the 'Physician to the King;' indeed, he is the king's conjurer.

"I'm very fond of France; indeed, I first went to school there, when I was along with Tagg. You see I never had no schooling in London, for I was so busy that I hadn't no time for learning. I also married in France. My wife was a great bender (used to throw herself backwards on her hands and make the body in a harch). I think she killed herself at it; indeed, as the doctors telled me, it was nothing else but that. She would keep on doing it when she was in the family way. I've many a time ordered her to give over, but she wouldn't; she was so fond of it; for she took a deal of money. She died in childbed at St. Malo, poor-thing!

"In France we take a deal more money than in England. You see they all give; even a child will give its mite; and another thing, anybody on a Sunday may take as much money as will keep him all the week, if they like to work. The most money I ever took in all my life was at Calais, the first Sunday cavalcade after Lent: that is the Sunday after Mardi-gras. They go out in a cavalcade, dressed up in carnival costume, and beg for the poor. There was me, Dick S—, and Jim C— and his wife, as danced the Highland fling, and a chap they calls Polka, who did it when it first came up. We pitched about the streets, and we took 700 francs all in half-pence—that is, 28*l.*—on one Sunday: and you mustn't work till after twelve o'clock, that is grand mass. There were liards and centimes, and half-sous, and all kinds of copper

money, but very little silver, for the Frenchmen can't afford it; but all copper money change into five-franc pieces, and it's the same to me. The other chaps didn't like the liards, so I bought 'em all up. They're like button-heads, and such-like; and they said they wouldn't have that bad money, so I got more than my share: for after we had shared I bought the heap of liards, and gave ten francs for the heap, and I think it brought me in sixty francs; but then I had to run about to all the little shops to get five-franc pieces. You see, I was the only chap that spoke French; so, you see, I'm worth a double share. I always tell the chaps, when they come to me, that I don't want nothink but my share; but then I says, 'You're single men, and I'm married, and I must support my children; and so I gets a little out of the hôtel expenses, for I charges them 1s. 3d. a-day, and at the second-rate hôtels I can keep them for a shilling. There's three or four schools now want me to take them over to France. They calls me 'Frenchy,' because I can talk French and German fluently—that's the name I goes by.

"I used to go to all the fêtes in Paris along with my troupe. We have been four and we have been five in one troupe, but our general number is four, for we don't want any more than four; for we can do the three high and the spread, and that's the principal thing. Our music is generally the drum and pipes. We don't take them over with us, but gets Italians to do it. Sometimes we gets a German band of five to come for a share, for you see they can't take money as we can, for our performance will cause children to give, and with them they don't think about it, not being so partial to music.

"Posturing to this day is called in France 'Le Dislocation anglais;' and indeed the English fellows is the best in the world at posturing: we can lick them all. I think they eat too much bread; for though meat's so cheap in the south of France (2d. a-lb.), yet they don't eat it. They don't eat much potatoes either; and in the south they gives them to the pigs, which used to make me grumble, I'm so fond of them. Chickens, too, is 7d. the pair, and you may drink wine at 1d. the horn.

"At St. Cloud fête we were called 'Les Quatre Frères anglais;' and we used to pitch near the Cascade, which was a good place for us. We have shared our 30s. each a-day then easy; and a great deal of English money we got then, for the English is more generous out of England. There was the fête St. Germain, and St. Denis, and at Versailles, too; and we've done pretty well at each, as well as at the Champs Elysées on the 1st of May, as used to be the fête Louis-Philippe. On that fête we were paid by the king, and we had fifty francs a man, and plenty to eat and drink on that day; and every poor man in Paris has two pound of sausages and two pounds of

bread, and two bottles of wine. But we were different from that, you know. We had a *déjeuné*, with fish, flesh, and fowl, and a dinner fit for a king, both brought to us in the Champs Elysées, and as much as ever we liked to drink all day long—the best of wine. We had to perform every alternate half-hour.

"I was in Paris when Mr. Macready come to Paris. I was engaged with my troupe at the Porte St. Martin, where we was called the Bedouin Arabs, and had to brown our faces. I went to see him, for I knew one of the actors. He was very good, and a beautiful house there was—splendid. All my other partners they paid. The price was half-a-guinea to the lowest place. The French people said he was very good, but he was mostly supported by the English that was there. An engagement at the Porte St. Martin was 1000 francs a-week for five of us; but of course we had to leave the streets alone during the four weeks we was at the theatre.

"I was in Paris, too, at the revolution in 1848, when Louis-Philippe had to run off. I was in bed, about two o'clock in the morning, when those that began the revolution was coming round—men armed; and they come into everybody's bed-room and said, 'You must get up, you're wanted.' I told them I was English; and they said, 'It don't matter; you get your living here, and you must fight the same as we fight for our liberty.' They took us—four English as was in the same gang as I was with—to the Barrière du Trône, and made us pick up paving-stones. I had to carry them; and we formed four barricades right up to the Faubourg St. Antoine, close to the Bastille. We had sometimes a bit of bread and a glass of wine, or brandy, and we was four nights and three days working. There was a great deal of chaff going on, and they called me 'le petit Supplier' posturer, you know—but they was of all countries. We was put in the back-ground, and didn't fire much, for we was ordered not to fire unless attacked; and we had only to keep ground, and if anything come, to give warning; but we had to supply them with powder and ammunition of one sort and another. There was one woman—a very clever woman—from Normandy, who used to bring us brandy round. She died on the barricade; and there's a song about her now. I was present when part of the throne was burned. After that I went for a tour in Lorraine; and then I was confined in Tours for thirty-four days, for the Republicans passed a bill that all foreigners were to be sent home to their own countries; and, indeed, several manufactories where English worked had to stop, for the workmen was sent home.

"I came back to England in 1852, and I've been pitching in the streets ever since. I've changed gangs two or three times since then; but there's five in our gang now. There's three high for 'pyramids,' and 'the Arabs

hang down; that is, one a-top of his shoulders, and one hanging down from his neck; and 'the spread,' that's one on the shoulders, and one hanging from each hand; and 'the Hercules,' that is, one on the ground, supporting himself on his hands and feet; whilst one stands on his knees, another on his shoulders, and the other one a-top of them two, on their shoulders. There's loads of tricks like them that we do, that would almost fill up your paper to put down. There's one of our gang dances, an Englishman, whilst the fifth plays the drum and pipes. The dances are mostly comic dances; or, as we call them, 'comic hops.' He throws his legs about and makes faces, and he dresses as a clown.

"When it's not too windy, we do the perch. We carry a long fir pole about with us, twenty-four feet long, and Jim the strong man, as they calls me, that is I, holds the pole up at the bottom. The one that runs up is called the sprite. It's the bottom man that holds the pole that has the dangerous work in la perche. He's got all to look to. Anybody, who has got any courage, can run up the pole; but I have to guide and balance it; and the pole weighs some 20 lbs., and the man about 8 stone. When it's windy, it's very awkward, and I have to walk about to keep him steady and balance him; but I'm never frightened, I know it so well. The man who runs up it does such feats as these; for instance, 'the bottle position,' that is only holding by his feet, with his two arms extended; and then 'the hanging down by one toe,' with only one foot on the top of the pole, and hanging down with his arms out, swimming on the top on his belly; and 'the horizontal,' as it is called, or supporting the body out sideways by the strength of the arms, and such-like, winding up with coming down head fust.

"The pole is fixed very tightly in a socket in my waistband, and it takes two men to pull it out, for it gets jammed in with his force on a-top of it. The danger is more with the bottom one than the one a-top, though few people would think so. You see, if he falls off, he is sure to light on his feet like a cat; for we're taught to this trick; and a man can jump off a place thirty feet high, without hurting himself, easy. Now if the people was to go frontwards, it would be all up with me, because with the leverage and its being fixed so tight to my stomach, there's no help for it, for it would be sure to rip me up and tear out my entrails. I have to keep my eyes about me, for if it goes too fur, I could never regain the balance again. But it's easy enough when you're accustomed to it.

"The one that goes up the pole can always see into the drawing-rooms, and he'll tell us where it's good to go and get any money, for he can see the people peeping behind the curtains; and they generally give when they

find they are discovered. It's part of his work to glance his eyes about him, and then he calls out whilst he is up, 'to the right,' or 'the left,' as it may be; and although the crowd don't understand him, we do.

"Our gang generally prefer performing in the West-end, because there's more 'calls' there. Gentlemen looking out of window see us, and call to us to stop and perform; but we don't trust to them, even, but make a collection when the performance is half over; and if it's good we continue, and make two or three collections during the exhibition. What we consider a good collection is 7s. or 8s.; and for that we do the whole performance. And besides, we get what we call 'ringings' afterwards; that's halfpence that are thrown into the ring. Sometimes we get 10s. altogether, and sometimes more and sometimes less; though it's a very poor pitch if it's not up to 5s. I'm talking of a big pitch, when we go through all our 'slang,' as we say. But then we have our little pitches, which don't last more than a quarter of an hour—our flying pitches, as we call them, and for them 5s. is an out-and-outer, and we are well contented if we get half-a-crown. We usually reckon about twenty pitches a-day, that's eight before dinner and twelve after. It depends greatly upon the holidays as to what we makes in the days. If there's any fairs or feasts going on we do better. There's two days in the week we reckon nothing, that's Friday and Saturday. Friday's little good all day long, and Saturday's only good after six o'clock, when wages have been paid. My share may on the average come to this:—Monday, about 7s. or 8s., and the same for Tuesday. Then Wednesday and Thursday it falls off again, perhaps 3s. or 4s.; and Friday ain't worth much; no more is Saturday. We used to go to Sydenham on Saturdays, and we would find the gents there; but now it's getting too late, and the price to the Palace is only 2s. 6d., when it used to be 5s., and that makes a wonderful difference to us. And yet we like the poor people better than the rich, for it's the halfpence that tells up best. Perhaps we might take a half-sovereign, but it's very rare, and since 1853 I don't remember taking more than twenty of them. There was a Princess—I'm sure I've forgotten her name, but she was German, and she used to live in Grosvenor-square—she used to give us half-a-sovereign every Monday during three months she was in London. The servants was ordered to tell us to come every Monday at three o'clock, and we always did; and even though there was nobody looking, we used to play all the same; and as soon as the drum ceased playing, there was the money brought out to us. We continued playing to her till we was told she had gone away. We have also had sovereign calls. When my gang was in the Isle of Wight, Lord Y— has often give us a sovereign, and plenty to eat and drink as well.

"I can't say but what it's as good as a

hundred a-year to me; but I can't say, it's the same with all posturers: for you see I can talk French, and if there's any foreigners in the crowd I can talk to them, and they are sure to give something. But most posturers make a good living, and if they look out for it, there are few but make 30s. a-week.

Posturing as it is called (some people call it contortionists, that's a new name; a Chinese nondescript—that's the first name it came out as, although what we calls posturing is a man as can sit upon nothing; as, for instance, when he's on the back of two chairs and does a split with his legs stretched out and sitting on nothing like)—posturing is reckoned the healthiest life there is, because we never get the rheumatics; and another thing, we always eat hearty. We often put on wet dresses, such as at a fair, when they've been washed out clean, and we put them on before they're dry, and that's what gives the rheumatism; but we are always in such a perspiration that it never affects us. It's very violent exercise, and at night we feels it in our thighs more than anywhere, so that if it's damp or cold weather it hurts us to sit down. If it's wet weather, or showery, we usually get up stiff in the morning, and then we have to 'crick' each other before we go out, and practise in our bed-rooms. On the Sunday we also go out and practise, either in a field, or at the 'Tan' in Bermondsey. We used to go to the 'Hops' in Maiden-lane, but that's done away with now.

"When we go out performing, we always take our dresses out with us, and we have our regular houses appointed, according to what part of the town we play in, if in London; and we have one pint of beer a man, and put on our costume, and leave our clothes behind us. Every morning we put on a clean dress, so we are obliged to have two of them, and whilst we are wearing one the other is being washed. Some of our men is married, and their wives wash for them, but them as isn't give the dress to anybody who wants a job.

"Accidents are very rare with posturers. We often put our hip-bone out, but that's soon put right again, and we are at work in a week. All our bones are loose like, and we can pull one another in, without having no pullies. One of my gang broke his leg at Chatham race-course, through the grass being slippery, and he was pitched down from three high; but we paid him his share, just the same as if he was out with us;—it wouldn't do if we didn't, as a person wouldn't mount in bad weather. That man is getting on nicely,—he walks with a crutch though,—but he'll be right in another month, and then he'll only be put to light work till he's strong. He ought not to be walking out yet, but he's so daring there's no restraining him. I, too, once broke my arm. I am a hand-jumper; that is, I a'most always light on my hands when I jump. I was on a chair on a top of a table,

and I had to get into the chair and do what we call the frog, and jump off it, coming down on my hands. Everything depends upon how you hold your arms, and I was careless, and didn't pay attention, and my arm snapped just below the elbow. I couldn't work for three months. I was at Beauvais, in France, at the time, but the circus I was with supported me.

"My father's very near seventy-six, and he has been a tumbler for fifty years; my children are staying with him, and he's angry that I won't bring them up to it: but I want them to be some trade or another, because I don't like the life for them. There's so much suffering before they begin tumbling, and then there's great temptation to drink, and such-like. I'd sooner send them to school, than let them get their living out of the streets. I've one boy and two girls. They're always at it at home, indeed; father and my sister-in-law say they can't keep them from it. The boy's very nimble.

"In the winter time we generally goes to the theatres. We are a'most always engaged for the pantomimes, to do the sprites. We always reckon it a good thirteen-weeks' job, but in the country it's only a month. If we don't apply for the job they come after us. The sprites in a pantomime is quite a new style, and we are the only chaps that can do it,—the posturers and tumblers. In some theatres they find the dresses. Last winter I was at Liverpool, and wore a green dress, spangled all over, which belonged to Mr. Copeland, the manager. We never speak in the play, but just merely rush on, and throw somersaults, and frogs, and such-like, and then rush off again. Little Wheeler, the greatest tumbler of the day, was a posturer in the streets, and now he's in France doing his 10l. a-week, engaged for three years."

THE STREET RISLEY.

THERE is but one person in London who goes about the street doing what is termed "The Risley performance," and even he is rarely to be met with.

Of all the street professionals whom I have seen, this man certainly bears off the palm for respectability of attire. He wore, when he came to me, a brown Chesterfield coat and black continuations, and but for the length of his hair, the immense size of his limbs, and the peculiar neatness of his movements, it would have been impossible to have recognized in him any of those characteristics which usually distinguish the street performer. He had a chest which, when he chose, he could force out almost like a pouter pigeon. The upper part of his body was broad and weighty-looking. He asked me to feel the muscle of his arm, and doubling it up, a huge lump rose, almost as if he had a cocoa-nut under his sleeve; in fact, it seemed as fully developed as the gilt arms placed as signs over the gold-beaters' shops.

Like most of the street professionals, he volunteered to exhibit before me some of his feats of strength and agility. He threw his head back (his long hair tossing about like an Indian fly-whisk) until his head touched his heels, and there he stood bent backward, and nearly double, like a strip of whalebone. Then he promenaded round the room, walking on his hands, his coat-tails falling about his shoulders, and making a rare jingle of half-pence the while, and his legs dangling in front of him as limp as the lash of a cart-whip. I refused to allow him to experiment upon me, and politely declined his obliging offer to raise me from the ground, "and hold me at arm's-length like a babby."

When he spoke of his parents, and the brothers who performed with him, he did so in most affectionate terms, and his descriptions of the struggles he had gone through in his fixed determination to be a tumbler, and how he had worked to gain his parents' consent, had a peculiarly sorrowful touch about them, as if he still blamed himself for the pain he had caused them. Farther, whenever he mentioned his little brothers, he always stopped for two or three minutes to explain to me that they were the cleverest lads in London, and as true and kind-hearted as they were talented.

He was more minute in his account of himself than my space will permit him to be; for as he said, "he had a wonderful remembrance, and could recollect anything."

With the omission of a few interesting details, the following is the account of the poor fellow's life:—

"My professional name is Signor Nelsonio, but my real one is Nelson, and my companions know me as 'Leu,' which is short for Lewis. I can do plenty of things beside the Risley business, for it forms only one part of my entertainment. I am a strong man, and a fire-king, and a stone-breaker by the fist, as well as being sprite, and posturer, and doing 'la perche.'

Last Christmas (1855) I was, along with my two brothers, engaged at the Theatre Royal, Cheltenham, to do the sprites in the pantomime. I have brought the bill of the performances with me to show it you. Here you see the pantomime is called 'THE IMP OF THE NORTH, OR THE GOLDEN BASON; AND HARLEQUIN AND THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.' In the pantomimical transformations it says, 'SPRITES—BY THE NELSON FAMILY:—that's me and my two brothers.

"The reason why I took to the Risley business was this. When I was a boy of seven I went to school, and my father and mother would make me go; but, unfortunately, I was stubborn, and would not. I said I wanted to do some work. 'Well,' said they, 'you shan't do any work not yet, till you're thirteen years old, and you shall go to school.' Says I, 'I will do work.' Well, I wouldn't; so I plays

the truant. Then I goes to amuse myself, and I goes to Haggerstone-fields in the Hackney-road, and then I see some boys learning to tumble on some dung there. So I began to do it too, and I very soon picked up two or three tricks. There was a man who was in the profession as tumbler and acrobat, who came there to practise his feats, and he see me tumbling, and says he, 'My lad, will you come along with me, and do the Risley business, and I'll buy you your clothes, and give you a shilling a-week besides?' I told him that perhaps mother and father wouldn't let me go; but says he, 'O, yes they will.' So he comes to our house; and says mother, 'What do you want along with my boy?' and he says, 'I want to make a tumbler of him.' But she wouldn't.

"My father is a tailor, but my uncle and all the family was good singers. My uncle was leader of the Drury-lane band, and Miss Nelson, who came out there, is my cousin. They are out in Australia now, doing very well, giving concerts day and night, and clearing by both performances one hundred and fifty pounds, day and night (and sooner, more than less), as advertised in the paper which they sent to us.

"One day, instead of going to school, I went along with this man into the streets, and then he did the Risley business, throwing me about on his hands and feet. I was about thirteen years old then. Mother asked me at night where I had been, and when I said I had been at school, she went and asked the master and found me out. Then I brought home some dresses once, and she tore them up, so I was forced to drop going out in the streets. I made some more dresses, and she tore those up. Then I got chucking about, à la Risley, my little brother, who was about seven years old; and says mother, 'Let that boy alone, you'll break his neck.' 'No, I shan't,' say I, and I kept on doing till I had learnt him the tricks.

"One Saturday night, father and mother and my eldest brother went to a concert-room. I had no money, so I couldn't go. I asked my little brother to go along with me round some tap-rooms, exhibiting with me. So I smuggled him out, telling him I'd give him lots of cakes; and away we went, and we got about seven shillings and sixpence. I got home before father and mother come home. When they returned, father says, 'Where have you been?' Then I showed the money we had got; he was regular astonished, and says he 'How is this? you can do nothing, you ain't clever!' I says, 'Oh, ain't I? and it's all my own learning:—so then he told me, that since he couldn't do nothing else with me, I should take to it as my profession, and stick to it.

"Soon after I met my old friend the swal-lower again, in Ratcliffe highway. I was along with my little brother, and both dressed up in tights and spangled trunks. Says he, 'Oh, you

will take to tumbling will you? Well, then, come along with me, and we'll go in the country.' Then he took us down to Norwich (to Yarmouth); then he beat me, and would give me no clothes or money, for he spent it to go and get drunk. We not sending any money home, mother began to wonder what had become of me; so one night, when this man was out with a lot of girls getting drunk, I slipt away, and walked thirty miles that night, and then I began performing at different public-houses, and so worked my way till I got back to London again. My little brother was along with me, but I carried him on my shoulders. One day it came on to rain awful, and we had run away in our dresses, and then we was dripping. I was frightened to see little Johnny so wet, and thought he'd be ill. There was no shed or barn or nothing, and only the country road, so I tore on till we came to a roadside inn, and then I wrung his clothes out, and I only had fourpence in my pocket, and I ordered some rum and water hot, and made him drink. 'Drink it, it'll keep the cold out of you.' When we got out he was quite giddy, and kept saying, 'Oh, I'm so wet!' With all these misfortunes I walked, carrying the little chap across my shoulders. One day I only had a halfpenny, and Johnny was crying for hunger, so I goes to a fellow in a orchard and say I, 'Can you make me a ha'path of apples?' He would take the money, but he gave a cap-full of fallings. I've walked thirty-eight miles in one day carrying him, and I was awfully tired. On that same day, when we got to Colchester, we put up at the Blue Anchor, and I put Johnny into bed, and I went out myself and went the round of the public-houses. My feet was blistered, but I had my light tumbling slippers on, and I went to work and got sixteen pence-halfpenny. This got us bread and cheese for supper and breakfast, and paid threepence each for the bed; and the next day we went on and performed in a village and got three shillings. Then, at Chelmsford we got eight shillings. I bought Johnny some clothes, for he had only his tights and little trunks, and though it was summer he was cold, especially after rain. The nearer we got to London the better we got off, for they give us then plenty to eat and drink, and we did pretty well for money. After I passed Chelmsford I never was hungry again. When we got to Romford, I waited two days till it was market-day, when we performed before the country people and got plenty of money and beer; but I never cared for the beer. We took four shillings and sixpence. I wouldn't let Johnny take any beer, for I'm fond of him, and he's eleven now, and the cleverest little fellow in England; and I learnt him everything he knows out of my own head, for he never had no master. We took the train to London from Romford (one shilling and sixpence each), and then we went home.

"When we got back, mother and father

said they knew how it would be, and laughed at us. They wanted to keep us at home, but I wouldn't, and they was forced to give way. In London I stopped still for a long time, at last got an engagement at two shillings a night at a penny gaff in Shoreditch. It was Sambo, a black man, what went about the streets along with the Demon Brothers—acrobats—that got me the engagement.

"One night father and mother came to see me, and they was frightened to see me chucking my brother about; and she calls out, 'Oh, don't do that! you'll break his back.' The people kept hollaring out, 'Turn that woman out!' but she answers, 'They are my sons—stop 'em!' When I bent myself backwards she calls out, 'Lord! mind your bones.'

"After this I noticed that my other brother, Sam, was a capital hand at jumping over the chairs and tables. He was as active as a monkey; indeed he plays monkeys now at the different ballets that comes out at the chief theatres. It struck me he would make a good tumbler, and sure enough he is a good one. I asked him, and he said he should; and then he see me perform, and he declared he would be one. He was at my uncle's then, as a carver and gilder. When I told father, says he, 'Let 'em do as they like, they'll get on.' I said to him one day, 'Sam, let's see what you're like: so I stuck him up in his chair, and stuck his legs behind his head, and kept him like that for five minutes. His limbs bent beautiful, and he didn't want no cricking.

"I should tell you, that before that he done this here. You've heard of Baker, the red man, as was performing at the City of London Theatre; well, Sam see the cut of him sitting in a chair with his legs folded, just like you fold your arms. So Sam pulls down one of the bills with the drawing on it, and he says, 'I can do that,' and he goes home and practises from the engraving till he was perfect. Then he showed me, and says I, 'That's the style! it's beautiful! you'll do.'

"Then we had two days' practice together, and we worked the double-tricks together. Then, I learned him style and grace, what I knowed myself; such as coming before an audience and making the obedience; and by and by says I to him, 'We'll come out at a theatre, and make a good bit of money.'

"Well, we went to another exhibition, and we came out all three together, and our salary was twenty-five shillings a-week, and we was very successful. Then we got outside Peter's Theatre at Stepney fair, the last as ever was, for it's done away with now; we did very well then; they give us twelve shillings a-day between us for three days. We did the acrobating and Risley business outside the parade, and inside as well. Sam got on wonderful, for his mind was up to it, and he liked the work. I and my brothers can do as well as any one in this business, I don't

care who comes before us. I can do upwards of one hundred and twenty-one different tricks in tumbling, when I'm along with those little fellows. We can do the hoops and glasses—putting a glass of beer on my forehead, and going through hoops double, and lying down and getting up again without spilling it. Then there's the bottle-sprite, and the short stilts, and globe running and globe dancing, and chair tricks; perform with the chairs; and the pole trick—*la perche*—with two boys, not one mind you.

"We've been continuing ever since at this Risley business. I lay down on a carpet, and throw then summersets from feet to feet. I tell you what the music plays to it,—it's the railway overtime, and it begins now and then quicker and quicker, till I throw them fast as lightning. Sam does about fifty-four or fifty-five of these summersets one after another, and Johnny does about twenty-five, because he's littler. Then there's standing upright, and stand 'em one in one hand and one on the other. Then I throws them up in summersets, and catch 'em on my palm, and then I chuck 'em on the ground.

"The art with me lying on the ground is that it takes the strength, and the sight to see that I catch 'em properly; for if I missed, they might break their necks. The audience fancies that it's most with them tumbling, but every thing depends upon me catching them properly. Every time they jump, I have to give 'em a jerk, and turn 'em properly. It's almost as much work as if I was doing it myself. When they learn at first, they do it on a soft ground, so as not to hurt themselves. It don't make the blood come to the head lying down so long on my back—only at first.

"I've done the Risley business first at penny exhibitions, and after that I went to fairs; then I went round the country with a booth—a man named Manly it was; but we dropped that, 'cos my little brother was knocked up, for it was too hard work for the little fellow building up and taking down the booth sometimes twice in a-day, and then going off twenty miles further on to another fair, and building up again the next day. Then we went pitching about in the main streets of the towns in the country. Then I always had a drum and pipes. As soon as a crowd collected I'd say, 'Gentlemen, I'm from the principal theatres in London, and before I begin I must have five shillings in the ring.' Then we'd do some, and after that, when half was over, I'd say, 'Now, gentlemen, the better part is to come, and if you make it worth my while, I go on with this here entertainment;' then, perhaps, they'd give me two shillings more. I've done bad and done good in the country. In one day I've taken two pounds five shillings, and many days we've not taken eight shillings, and there was four of us, me and my two brothers and the drummer, who had two-and-sixpence a-day, and a pot of beer besides. Take one

week with another we took regular two pounds five shillings, and out of that I'd send from twenty to thirty shillings a-week home to my parents. Oh, I've been very good to my parents, and I've never missed it. I've been a wild boy too, and yet I've always taken care of father and mother. They've had twelve in family and never a stain on their character, nor never a key turned on them, but are upright and honourable people.

"At a place called Brenford in Norfolk—where there's such a lot of wild rabbits—we done so well, that we took a room and had bills printed and put out. We charged threepence each, and the room was crowded, for we shared twenty-five shillings between us. When the people see'd me and my brothers come on dressed all in red, and tumble about, they actually swore we were devils, and rushed out of the place; so that, though there was a room full, there was only two stopped to see the performances. One old man called out, 'O wenches'—they call their wives wenches—'come out, they be devils.' We came out with red faces and horns and red dresses, and away they went screaming. There was one woman trampled on and a child knocked out of her arms. In some of these country towns they're shocking strict, and never having seen anything of the kind, they're scared directly.

"About six months ago I went to Woolwich with the boys, and there was a chap that wanted to fight me, because I wouldn't go along with him. So, I says, 'We won't have no fighting;' so I went along with him to Gravesend, and then we asked permission of the mayor, 'cos in country towns we often have to ask the mayor to let us go performing in the streets. There we done very well, taking twenty-five shillings in the day. Then we worked up by Chatham, and down to Hernebay, and Ramsgate; and at Ramsgate we stopped a week, doing uncommon well on the sands, for the people on the chairs would give sixpence and a shilling, and say it was very clever, and too clever to be in the streets. We did Margate next, and then Deal, and on to Dover by the boat. At Dover, the mayor wouldn't let us perform, and said if he catched us in the streets he'd have us took up. We were very hard up. So I said to Sam, 'You must go out one way and I and Johnny the other, and busk in the public-house.' Sam got eight shillings and sixpence and I four shillings. But I had a row with a sailor, and I was bruised and had to lay up. When I was better we moved to Folkestone. There was the German soldiers there, and we did very well. I went out one day with our carpet to a village close by, and some German officers made us perform, and gave us five shillings, and then we went the round of the beer-shops, and altogether we cleared five pounds before we finished that day. We also went up to the camp, where the tents was, and I asked the colonel to let me perform before the men, and

he said, 'Well it ain't usual, but you may if you like.' The officers we found was so pleased they kept on giving us two-shilling pieces, and besides we had a lot of foreign coin, which we sold to a jeweller for ten shillings.

"I worked my way on to Canterbury and Winchester, and then, by a deal, of persuasion I got permission to perform in the back-streets, and we done very well. Then we went on to Southampton. There was a cattle fair, on—Celsey fair is, I think, the name of it; and then I joined another troupe of tumblers, and we worked the fair, and after that went on to Southampton; and when we began working on the Monday, there was another troupe working as well. After we had pitched once or twice, this other troupe came and pitched opposition against us. I couldn't believe it at first, but when I see which was their lay, then says I, 'Now I'll settle this.' We was here, as it was, and they came right on to us—there, as it may be. So it was our dinner-time, and we broke up and went off. After dinner we came out again, and pitched the carpet in a square, and they came close to us again, and as soon as they struck up, the people run away to see the new ones. So I said 'I don't want to injure them, but they shan't injure us.' So I walked right into the middle of their ring, and threw down the carpet, and says I, 'Now, ladies and gentlemen, the best performance is the one that deserves best support, and I'll show you what I can do.' I went to work with the boys, and was two hours doing all my tumbling tricks. They was regularly stunned. The silver and the halfpence covered the carpet right over, as much as it would hold. I think there was three pounds. Then I says, 'Now you've seen the tumbling, now see the perche.' They had a perche, too; it was taller than mine; but, as I told them, it was because I couldn't get no higher a one. So I went to work again, and cries I, 'Now, both boys up;' though I had only stood one on up to that time, and had never tried two of 'em. Up they goes, and the first time they come over, but never hurt themselves. It was new to me, you see. 'Up again, lads,' says I; and up they goes, and did it beautiful. The people regular applauded, like at a theatre. Down came the money in a shower, and one gentleman took his hat round, and went collecting for us. Says I to this other school, 'You tried to injure us, and what have you got by it? I beat you in tumbling, and if you can match the perche, do it.' Then they says, 'We didn't try to injure you; come and drink a gallon of beer.' So off we went, and the police told 'em to choose their side of the town and we would take ours. That settled the opposition, and we both done well.

"I've done the Risley in the streets of London, more so than at theatres and concerts. The stone paving don't hurt so much as you would think to lie down. We don't do it when it's muddy. The boys finds no

difference whatsoever in springing off the stones. It pays very well at times, you know; but we don't like to do it often, because afterwards they don't like to appreciate you in concerts and theatres, and likewise penny exhibitions.

"My brother Sam can jump like a frog, on his hands, through his legs, out of a one-pair window; and little Johnny throws out of a one-pair-of-stairs window a back summerset.

"It's astonishing how free the bones get by practice. My brother Sam can dislocate his limbs and replace them again; and when sleeping in bed, I very often find him lying with his legs behind his neck. It's quite accidental, and done without knowing, and comes natural to him, from being always tumbling. Myself, I often in my dreams often frighten my wife by starting up and half throwing a summersault, fancying I'm at the theatre, and likewise I often lie with my heels against my head.

"We are the only family or persons going about the streets doing the Risley. I've travelled all through England, Scotland, and Wales, and I don't know anybody but ourselves. When we perform in the London theatres, which we do when we can get an engagement, we get six or seven pounds a-week between us. We've appeared at the Pavilion two seasons running; likewise at the City of London, and the Standard, and also all the cheap concerts in London. Then we are called 'The Sprites' by the Nelson family will appear; 'or, 'The Sprites of Jupiter;' or, 'Sons of Cerea;' or, 'Air-climbers of Arabia!'

"Taking all the year round, I dare say my income comes to about thirty-five shillings or two pounds, and out of that I have to find dresses."

THE STRONG MAN.

"I HAVE been in the profession for about thirteen years, and I am thirty-two next birthday. Excepting four years that I was at sea, I've been solely by the profession. I'm what is termed a strong man, and perform feats of strength and posturing. What is meant by posturing is the distortion of the limbs, such as doing the splits, and putting your leg over your head and pulling it down your back, a skipping over your leg, and such-like business. Tumbling is different from posturing, and means throwing summersets and walking on your hands; and acrobating means the two together, with mounting three stories high, and balancing each other. These are the definitions I make.

"I was nineteen before I did anything of any note at all, and got what I call a living salary. Long before that I had been trying the business, going in and out of these free concerts, and trying my hand at it, fancying I was very clever, but disgusting the audience, for they are mostly duffers at these free concerts;

which is clearly the case, for they only do it for a pint every now and then, and depend upon passing the hat round after their performance. I never got much at collections, so I must have been a duffer.

"My father is an architect and builder, and his income now is never less than a thousand a-year. Like a fool, I wouldn't go into his office: I wish I had. I preferred going to sea. I was always hankering after first one vessel and then another. I used to be fond of going down to the docks, and such-like, and looking at the vessels. I'd talk with the sailors about foreign countries, and such-like, and my ambition was to be a sailor. I was the scabby sheep of the family, and I've been punished for it. I never went into the governor's office; but when I was about fourteen I was put to a stonemason, for I thought I should like to be a carver, or something of that sort. I was two years there, and I should have done very well if I had stayed, for I earned a guinea a-week when I left.

"Before I went to the stonemason I was at the Victoria, taking checks—when there was any. I had an uncle there who kept the saloon there. I was always very partial to going to the theatre, for all our people are chapel people, and that I never liked. My father's parlour is always smothered with ministers, and mine with tumblers, and that's the difference. I used to go and see my uncle at the Vic., so as to get to the theatre for nothing. I wasn't paid for taking the checks, but I knew the check-taker, and he'd ask me to help him, and I was too glad to get inside a theatre to refuse the job. They were doing dreadful business. It was under Levi, and before Glossop's time. It was before the glass curtain come out. The glass curtain was a splendid thing. It went straight up, never wound. You can even now see where the roof was highered to receive it. Levi has got the Garrick now. They say he's not doing much.

"The first thing I did was at a little beer-shop, corner of Southwark-bridge-road and Union-street. I had seen Herbert do the Grecian statues at the Vic., in 'Hercules, King of Clubs,' and it struck me I could do 'em. So I knew this beer-shop, and I bought half-a-crown's worth of tickets to be allowed to do these statues. It was on a boxing-night, I remember. I did them, but they were dreadful bad. The people did certainly applaud, but what for, I don't know, for I kept shaking and wabbling so, that my marble statue was rather rickety; and there was a strong man in the room, who had been performing them, and he came up to me and said that I was a complete duffer, and that I knew nothing about it at all. So I replied, that he knew nothing about his feats of strength, and that I'd go and beat him. So I set to work at it; for I was determined to lick him. I got five quarter-of-hundred weights, and used to practice throwing them at a friend's back-yard

in the Waterloo-road. I used to make myself all over mud at it, besides having a knock of the head sometimes. At last I got perfect chucking the quarter hundred, and then I tied a fourteen pound weight on to them, and at last I got up half-hundreds. I learnt to hold up one of them at arm's length, and even then I was obliged to push it up with the other hand. I also threw them over my head, as well as catching them by the ring.

"I went to this beer-shop as soon as I could do, and came out. I wasn't so good as he was at lifting, but that was all he could do; and I did posturing with the weights as well, and that licked him. He was awfully jealous, and I had been revenged. I had learnt to do a split, holding a half-hundred in my teeth, and rising with it, without touching the ground with my hands. Now I can lift five, for I've had more practice. I had tremendous success at this beer-shop.

"It hurt me awfully when I learnt to do the split with the weight on my teeth. It strained me all to pieces. I couldn't put my heels to the ground not nicely, for it physicked my thighs dreadful. When I was hot I didn't feel it; but as I cooled, I was cramped all to bits. It took me nine months before I could do it without feeling any pain.

"Another thing I learnt to do at this beer-shop was, to break the stone on the chest. This man used to do it as well, only in a very slight way—with thin bits and a cobbler's hammer. Now mine is regular flagstones. I've seen as many as twenty women faint seeing me do it. At this beer-shop, when I first did it, the stone weighed about three quarters of a hundred, and was an inch thick. I laid down on the ground, and the stone was put on my chest, and a man with a sledge hammer, twenty-eight pounds weight, struck it and smashed it. The way it is done is this. You rest on your heels and hands and throw your chest up. There you are, like a stool, with the weight on you. When you see the blow coming, you have to give, or it would knock you all to bits.

"When I was learning to do this, I practised for nine months. I got a friend of mine to hit the stone. One day I cut my chest open doing it. I wasn't paying attention to the stone, and never noticed that it was hollow; so then when the blow came down, the sharp edges of the stone, from my having nothing but a fleshing suit on, cut right into the flesh, and made two deep incisions. I had to leave it off for about a month. Strange to say, this stone-breaking never hurt my chest or my breathing; I rather think it has done me good, for I'm strong and hearty, and never have illness of any sort.

"The first time I done it I was dreadful frightened. I knew if I didn't stop still I should have my brains knocked out, pretty well. When I saw the blow coming I trembled a good bit, but I kept still as I was able. It

was a hard blow, for it broke the bit of Yorkshire paving, about an inch thick, into about sixty pieces.

"I got very hard up whilst I was performing at this beer-shop. I had run away from home, and the performances were only two nights a-week, and brought me in about six shillings. I wasn't engaged anywhere else. One night, a Mr. Emanuel, who had a benefit at the Salmon Saloon, Union-street, asked me to appear at his benefit. He had never seen me, but only heard of my performances. I agreed to go, and he got out the bills, and christened me Signor C—; and he had drawings made of the most extravagant kind, with me holding my arms out with about ten fifty-six-pound weights hanging to them by the rings. He had the weights, hammers, and a tremendous big stone chained outside the door, and there used to be mobs of people there all day long looking at it.

"This was the first success I made. Mr. Emanuel gave five shillings for the stone, and had it brought up to the saloon by two horses in a cart to make a sensation. It weighed from four to five hundred weight. I think I had such a thing as five men to lift it up for me.

"I had forgotten all about this engagement, and I was at the coffee-house where I lodged. The fact was, I was in rags, and so shabby I didn't like to go, and if he hadn't come to fetch me I should not have gone. He drove up in his chaise on the night in question to this coffee-shop, and he says, 'Signor C—, make haste; go and change your clothes, and come along.' I didn't know at first he was speaking to me, for it was the first time I had been Signor C—. Then I told him I had got my best suit on, though it was very ragged, and no mistake about it, for I remember there was a good hole at each elbow. He seemed astonished, and at last proposed that I should wear his great-coat; but I wouldn't, because, as I told him, his coat would be as well known at the saloon as he himself was, and that it didn't suit me to be seen in another's clothes. So he took me just as I was. When we got there, the landlady was regularly flabbergasted to see a ragged fellow like me come to be star of the night. She'd hardly speak to me.

"There was a tremendous house, and they had turned above a hundred away. When I got into the saloon, Emanuel says, 'What'll you have to drink?' I said, 'Some brandy;' but my landlord of the coffee-house, who had come unbeknown to me, he grumbles out, 'Ask him what he'll have to eat, for he's had nothing since the slice of bread-and-butter for breakfast.' I trod on his toe, and says, 'Keep quiet, you fool!' Emanuel behaved like a regular brick, and no mistake. He paid for the supper and everything. I was regularly ashamed when the landlord let it out though. That supper put life into me,

for it almost had the same effect upon me as drink.

"It soon got whispered about in the saloon, that I was the strong man, and everybody got handing me their glasses; so I was regularly tipsy when it was time to go on, and they had put me off to the last on purpose to draw the people and keep them there drinking.

"I had a regular success. When the women saw the five men put the stone on my chest, they all of them called out, 'Don't! don't!' It was a block like a curb, about a foot thick, and about a four feet six inches long. I went with Emanuel to buy it. I had never tried such a big one before. It didn't feel so heavy on the chest, for, you see, you've got such out-and-out good support on your hands and heels. I've actually seen one man raise a stone and another a waggon. It's the purchase done it. I've lifted up a cart-horse right off his legs.

"The stone broke after six blows with a twenty-eight pound sledge-hammer. Then you should have heard the applause. I thought it would never give over. It smashed all the atoms, just like glass, and there was the people taking away the bits to keep as a remembrance.

"As I went out the landlady asked me to have a bottle of soda-water. The landlady was frightened, and told me she had felt sure I should be killed. I was the second that ever done stone-breaking in England or abroad, and I'm the first that ever did such a big one. The landlady was so alarmed that she wouldn't engage me, for she said I must be killed one of the nights. Her behaviour was rather different as I went out to when I came in.

"I, of course, didn't go on in my rags. I had a first-rate stage dress.

"After this grand appearance I got engaged at Gravesend fair by Middleton, and there I had eight shillings a-day, and I stopped with him three weeks over the fair. I used to do my performances outside on the parade, never inside. I had to do the stone-breaking about nine or ten times a-day. They were middling stones, some larger and some smaller, and the smaller ones about half-a-hundred weight, I suppose. Any man might bring his stone and hammer, and break it himself. The one who struck was generally chosen from the crowd; the biggest chap they could find. I've heard 'em say to me, 'Now, old chap, I'll smash you all to bits; so look out!' The fact is, the harder they strike the better for me, for it smashes it at once, and don't keep the people in suspense.

"It was at Gravesend that I met with my second and last accident. With the cutting of the chest, it is the only one I ever had. The feller who came up to break the stone was half tipsy and missed his aim, and obliged me by hitting my finger instead of the stone. I said to him, 'Mind what you are doing,' but

I popped my hand behind me, and when I got up I couldn't make out what the people was crying out about, till I looked round at my back and then I was smothered in blood. Middleton said, 'Good God! what's the matter?' and I told him I was hit on the finger. When the cry was given of 'All in to begin,' I went into a booth close by and had some brandy, and got a doctor to strap up the finger, and then I went on with the parade business just the same. It didn't pain me nothing like what I should have thought. It was too hard a knock to pain me much. The only time I felt it was when the doctor dressed it, for it gave me pepper taking the plaster off.

"I was at Gravesend some time, and I went to work again stone-masonry, and I had a guinea a-week, and in the evening I used to perform at the Rose Inn. I did just as I liked there. I never charged 'em anything. I lived in the house and they never charged me anything. It was a first-rate house. If I wanted five shillings I'd get it from the landlord. I was there about eleven months, and all that time I lived there and paid nothing. I had a benefit there, and they wouldn't even charge me for printing the bills, or cards, or anything. It was quite a clear benefit, and every penny taken at the doors was given to me. I charged a shilling admittance, and the room was crowded, and they was even on the stairs standing tip-toe to look at me. I wanted some weights, and asked a butcher to lend 'em to me, and he says, 'Lend 'em to you! aye, take the machine and all if it'll serve you.' I was a great favourite, as you may guess.

"After Gravesend I came up to London, and went and played the monkey at the Bower Saloon. It was the first time I had done it. There was all the monkey business, jumping over tables and chairs, and all mischievous things; and there was climbing up trees, and up two perpendicular ropes. I was dressed in a monkey's dress; it's made of some of their hearth-rugs; and my face was painted. It's very difficult to paint a monkey's face. I've a great knack that way, and can always manage anything of that sort.

"From the Bower I went on to Portsmouth. I'd got hard up again, for I'd been idle for three months, for I couldn't get any money, and I never appear under price. I walked all the way to Portsmouth, carrying a half-hundred weight, besides my dress, all the way; I played at the tap-rooms on the road. I did pretty middling, earned my living on the road, about two shillings a-day. When I got to Portsmouth I did get a job, and a good job it was, only one shilling and sixpence a-night; but I thought it better to do that than nothing. I only did comic singing, and I only knew two songs, but I set to and learnt a lot. I am very courageous, and if I can't get my money one way, I will another. With us, if you've got a shilling, you're a fool if you spend that before you have another. I stopped at this public-

house for two months, and then a man who came from Portsea, a town close by, came one night, and he asked me what I was doing. He had heard of what I could do, and he offered me two pounds a-week to go with him and do the strong business. He kept the Star Inn at Portsea. I stopped there such a thing as two years, and I did well. I had great success, for the place was cramm'd every night. For my benefit, Major Wyatt and Captain Holloway gave me their bespeak, and permission for the men to come. The admission was sixpence. Half the regiment marched down, and there was no room for the public. I was on the stage for two hours during my performances. I was tired, and fainted away as dead as a hammer after the curtain fell.

"Among other things I announced that I should, whilst suspended from the ceiling, lift a horse. I had this horse paraded about the town for a week before my night. There was such a house that numbers of people was turned away, and a comic singer who was performing at a house opposite, he put out an announcement that he too would lift a horse, and when the time came he brought on a clothes-horse.

"The way I did the horse was this: I was hanging by my ankles, and the horse was on a kind of platform under me. I had two sheets rolled up and tied round the horse like belly-bands, and then I passed my arms through them and strained him up. I didn't keep him long in the air, only just lifted him off his legs. In the midst of it the bandage got off his eyes, and then, what with the music and the applauding, the poor brute got frightened and begun plunging. I couldn't manage him at all whilst he was kicking. He got his two hind legs over the orchestra and knocked all the float-lights out. They kept roaring, 'Bring him out! bring him out!' as if they thought I was going to put him under my arm—a thundering big brute. I was afraid he'd crack his knees, and I should have to pay for him. The fiddler was rather uneasy, I can tell you, and the people began shifting about. I was frightened, and so I managed to pop part of the sheet over his head, and then I gave a tremendous strain and brought him back again.

"How the idea of lifting a horse ever came into my head, I don't know. It came in a minute; I had never tried it before. I knew I should have a tremendous purchase. The fact is, I had intended to do a swindle by having lines passed down my dress, and for somebody behind to pull the ropes and help me. The town was in an uproar when I announced I should do it.

"It was at my benefit that I first broke stones with my fist. I don't know whose original notion it was. I was not the first; there's a trick in it. It's done this way: anybody can do it. You take a cobbler's lapstone, and it's put on a half-hundred weight; you must hold it half an inch above, and then the concussion

of the fist coming down smashes it all to bits. Any one can do it.

"I cleared about eight pounds by my benefit. I was a regular swell in those days. The white coats had just come up, and I had one made with two-shilling pieces for buttons, and with polished-leather Wellington's I'd walk about the town, the king of the place.

"I've been down to Manchester performing. I've been, too, to the Standard Theatre as well as the Victoria and the Marylebone. People won't believe I really do break the stone on my chest. Some ask me what I wear under my dress, though the fact is, that if I had anything hard there, it would just about kill me, for it's by yielding to the blow that I save myself. I actually gammoned one chap that the stones were made of small pieces stuck together with paste, and he offered to give me any sum to tell him what the paste was made of.

"When I'm engaged for a full performance I do this. All the weights, and the stone and the hammer, are ranged in front of the stage. Then I come on dressed in silk tights with a spangled trunk. Then I enter at the back of the stage, and first do several feats of posturing, such as skipping through my leg or passing it down my back, or splits. Then I take a ladder and mount to the top, and stand up on it, and hold one leg in my hand, shouldering it; and then I give a spring with the other leg, and shoot off to the other side of the stage and squash down with both legs open, doing a split. It's a very good trick, and always gets a round. Then I do a trick with a chair standing on the seat, and I take one foot in my hand and make a hoop of the leg, and then hop with one leg through the hoop of the other, and spring over the back and come down in a split on the other side. I never miss this trick, though, if the chair happens to be rickety, I may catch the toe, but it doesn't matter much.

"Then I begin my weight business. I take one half-hundred weight and hold it up at arm's-length; and I also hold it out perpendicularly, and bring it up again and swing it two or three times round the head, and then throw it up in the air and catch it four or five times running; not by the ring, as others do, but in the open hand.

"The next trick is doing the same thing with both hands instead of one, that is with two weights at the same time; and then, after that, I take up a half-hundred by the teeth, and shouldering the leg at the same, and in that style I fall down into the splits. Then I raise myself up gradually, till I'm upright again. After I'm upright I place the weight on my forehead, and lay down flat on my back with it, without touching with the hands. I take it off when I'm down and place it in my mouth, and walk round the stage like a Greenwich-pensioner, with my feet tucked up like crossing the arms, and only using my

knees. Then I tie three together, and hold them in the mouth, and I put one in each hand. Then I stand up with them and support them. It's an awful weight, and you can't do much exhibiting with them.

"When I was at Vauxhall, Yarmouth, last year, I hurt my neck very badly in lifting those weights in the mouth. It pulled out the back of my neck, and I was obliged to give over work for months. It forced my head over one shoulder, and then it sunk, as if I'd got a stiff neck. I did nothing to it, and only went to a doctor-chap, who made me bathe the neck in hot water. That's all.

"One of my most curious tricks is what I call the braces trick. It's a thing just like a pair of braces, only, instead of a button, there's a half-hundred weight at each end, so that there are two behind and two in front. Then I mount on two swinging ropes with a noose at the end, and I stretch out my legs into a split, and put a half-hundred on each thigh, and take up another in my mouth. You may imagine how heavy the weight is, when I tell you that I pulled the roof of a place in once at Chelsea. It was a exhibition then. The tiles and all come down, and near smothered me. You must understand, that in these tricks I have to put the weights on myself, and raise them from the ground, and that makes it so difficult.

"The next, and the best, and most difficult trick of all is, I have a noose close to the ceiling, in which I place one of my ankles, and I've another loose noose with a hook at the end, and I place that on the other ankle. Two half-hundreds are placed on this hook, and one in each hand. The moment these weights are put on this ankle, it pulls my legs right apart, so that they form a straight line from the ceiling, like a plumb-line, and my body sticks out at the side horizontally, like a T-square sideways. I strike an attitude when I have the other weights in my hand, and then another half-hundred is put in my mouth, and I am swung backwards and forwards for about eight or twelve times. It don't hurt the ankle, because the sling is padded. At first it pulls you about, and gives you a tremendous ricking. After this rope-performance I take a half-hundred and swing it round about fifty times. It goes as rapidly as a wheel, and if I was to miss my aim I should knock my brains out. I have done it seventy times, but that was to take the shine out of an opposition fellow.

"I always wind up with breaking the stone, and I don't mind how thick it is, so long as it isn't heavy enough to crush me. A common curb-stone, or a Yorkshire-flag, is nothing to me, and I've got so accustomed to this trick, that once it took thirty blows with a twenty-eight pound sledge-hammer to break the stone, and I asked for a cigar and smoked it all the while.

"I'll tell you another trick I've done, and

that's walking on the ceiling. Of course I darn't do it in the Professor Sands' style, for mine was a dodge. Professor Sands used an air-exhausting boot, on the model of a fly's foot, and it was a legitimate performance indeed; he and another man, to whom he gave the secret of his boots, are the only two who ever did it. The chap that came over here wasn't the real Sands. The fact is well known to the profession, that Sands killed himself on his benefit night in America. After walking on the marble slab in the Circus, somebody bet him he couldn't do it on any ceiling, and he for a wager went to a Town-hall, and he done it, and the ceiling gave way, and he fell and broke his neck. The chap that came over here was Sands' attendant, and he took the name and the boots, and came over as Professor Sands.

"The first who ever walked on the ceiling, by a dodge, was a man of the name of Herman, a wizard, who wound up his entertainment at the City of London by walking on some planks suspended in the air. I was there, and at once saw his trick. I knew it was a sleight-of-hand thing. I paid great attention and found him out.

"I then went to work in this way. I bought two planks about thirteen foot long, and an inch thick. In these planks I had small traps, about two inches long by one inch wide, let into the wood, and very nicely fitted, so that the cracks could not be seen. The better to hide the cracks, I had the wood painted marble, and the blue veins arranged on the cracks. These traps were bound on the upper side with iron hooping to strengthen them. Then I made my boots. They were something like Chinese boots, with a very thick sole, made on the principle of the bellows of an accordion. These bellows were round, about the size of a cheese-plate, and six inches deep. To the sole of the boot I had an iron plate and a square tenter-hook riveted in.

"Then came the performance. There was nonet under me, and the planks was suspended about twenty feet from the stage. I went up on the ladder and inserted the hook on one boot into the first trap. The sucker to the boot hid the hook, and made it appear as if I held by suction. The traps were about six inches apart, and that gave me a very small step. The hooks being square ones—tenter-hooks—I could slip them out easily. It had just the same appearance as Sands, and nobody ever taught me how to do it. I did this feat at the Albion Concert-rooms, just opposite the Effingham Saloon. I had eighteen shillings a-week there for doing it. I never did it anywhere else, for it was a bother to carry the planks about with me. I did it for a month, every night three times. One night I fell down. You see you can never make sure, for if you swung a little, it worked the hook off. I always had a chap walking along under me to catch me, and he broke my fall, so that I

didn't hurt myself. I ran up again, and did it a second time without an accident. There was tremendous applause. I think I should have fallen on my hands if the chap hadn't been there.

"If the Secretary of State hadn't put down the balloon business, I should a made a deal of money. There is danger of course, but so there is if you're twenty or thirty feet. They do it now fifty feet high, and that's as bad as if you were two hundred or a mile in the air. The only danger is getting giddy from the height, but those who go up are accustomed to it.

"I sold the ceiling-walking trick to another fellow for two pounds, after I had done with it, but he couldn't manage it. He thought he was going to do wonders. He took a half-hundred weight along with him, but he swung like a pendulum, and down he come.

"Why this walking on the ceiling of mine was very near the same as what Harvey Leach did at the Surrey as the gnome fly. He was a tremendous clever fellow. His upper part of the body was very perfectly made, but his legs was so short, they weren't more than eighteen inches long. That's why he walked as much on his hands as his legs. That 'What is It,' at the Egyptian Hall killed him. They'd have made a heap of money at it if it hadn't been discovered. He was in a cage, and wonderfully got up. He looked awful. A friend of his comes in, and goes up to the cage, and says, 'How are you, old fellow?' The thing was blown up in a minute. The place was in an uproar. It killed Harvey Leach, for he took it to heart and died.

"I reckon Astley's is the worst money for any man. If a fellow wants to be finished up, let him go there. It doesn't pay so well as the cheap concerts, unless a man is a very great star, and they must give him his money.

"There are six men, including myself, who do the strong business. That's all I'm beware of in London, or England. Sometimes they change their names, and comes out as Herrs, or Signors, or Monsieurs, but they are generally the same fellows. Most of our foreigners in England come out of Tower-street. There was a house of call there for professionals of all nations, but that 'public' is done up now, and they mostly go to the Cooper's Arms now.

"If a strong man properly understands his business, and pays attention to his engagements, his average earnings will be about two pounds ten shillings a-week. As it is, they now make less than thirty shillings, but they spend it so readily that it doesn't go so far as a working man's pound. There's plenty of people to ask you, 'What'll you have?' but if you're anything of a man you're obliged to return the compliment at some time. The swells get hold of you. Perhaps a bottle of wine is called for, and then another; well,

then a fellow must be no good if he doesn't pay for the third when it comes, and the day's money don't run to it, and you're in a hole."

THE STREET JUGGLER.

THE juggler from whom I received the following account, was spoken of by his companions and friends as "one of the cleverest that ever came out." He was at this time performing in the evening at one of the chief saloons on the other side of the water.

He certainly appears to have been successful enough when he first appeared in the streets, and the way in which he squandered the amount of money he then made is a constant source of misery to him, for he kept exclaiming in the midst of his narrative, "Ah! I might have been a gentleman now, if I hadn't been the fool I was then."

As a proof of his talents and success he assured me, that when Ramo Samee first came out, he not only learned how to do all the Indian's tricks, but also did them so dexterously, that when travelling "Samee has often paid him ten shillings not to perform in the same town with him."

He was a short man, with iron-grey hair, which had been shaved high upon the temples to allow him to assume the Indian costume. The skin of the face was curiously loose, and formed deep lines about the chin, whilst in the cheeks there were dimples, or rather hollows, almost as deep as those on a sofa cushion. He had a singular look, from his eyebrows and eyes being so black.

His hands were small and delicate, and when he took up anything, he did it as if he were lifting the cup with the ball under it.

"I'm a juggler," he said, "but I don't know if that's the right term, for some people call conjurers jugglers; but it's wrong. When I was in Ireland they called me a "manulist," and it was a gentleman wrote the bill out for me. The difference I makes between conjuring and juggling is, one's deceiving to the eye and the other's pleasing to the eye—yes, that's it—it's dexterity.

"I dare say I've been at juggling 40 years, for I was between 14 and 15 when I begun, and I'm 56 now. I remember Ramo Samee and all the first process of the art. He was the first as ever I knew, and very good indeed; there was no other to oppose him, and he must have been good then. I suppose I'm the oldest juggler alive.

"My father was a whitesmith, and kept a shop in the Waterloo-road, and I ran away from him. There was a man of the name of Humphreys kept a riding-school in the Waterloo-road (there was very few houses there then, only brick-fields—aye, what is the Victoria theatre now was then a pin-factory and a hatter's; it wasn't opened for performance then), and I used to go to this riding-school and practise tumbling when the horse-dung

was thrown out, for I was very ambitious to be a tumbler. When I used to go on this here dung-heap, sometimes father would want me to blow the fire or strike for him, and he'd come after me and catch me tumbling, and take off his apron and wallop me with it all the way home; and the leather strings used to hurt, I can tell you.

"I first went to work at the pin-factory, where the Coburg's built now, and dropped tumbling then. Then I went to a hatter's in Oakley-street, and there I took to tumbling again, and used to get practising on the wool-packs (they made the hats then out of wool stuff and hare-skins, and such-like, and you couldn't get a hat then under 25s.); I couldn't get my heart away from tumbling all the time I was there, for it was set on it. I'd even begin tumbling when I went out on errands, doing hand-spring, and starts-up (that's laying on your back and throwing yourself up), and round-alls (that's throwing yourself backwards on to your hands and back again to your feet), and walking on my hands. I never let any of the men see me practise. I had to sweep the warehouse up, and all the wool was there, and I used to have a go to myself in the morning before they was up.

"The way I got into my professional career was this: I used to have to go and get the men's beer, for I was kept for that. You see, I had to go to the men's homes to fetch their breakfasts, and the dinners and teas—I wish I had such a place now. The men gave me a shilling a-week, and there was twelve of them when in full work, and the master gave me 4s. 6d. Besides that they never worked on a Monday, but I was told to fetch their food just the same, so that their wives mightn't know; and I had all their twelve dinners, breakfasts, and so on. I kept about six of the boys there, and anybody might have the victuals that liked, for I've sometimes put 'em on a post for somebody to find.

"I was one day going to fetch the men's beer when I meets another boy, and he says, 'You can't walk on your hands.' 'Cant I!' says I, and I puts down the cans and off I started, and walked on my hands from one end of the street to the other, pretty nigh. Mr. Sanders, the rider, one of the oldest riders that was (before Ducrow's time, for Ducrow was a 'prentice of his, and he allowed Sanders 30s. a-week for all his lifetime), was passing by and he see me walking on my hands, and he come up and says, 'My boy, where do you belong to?' and I answers, 'My father;' and then he says, 'Do you think he'd let you come along with me?' I told him I'd go and ask; and I ran off, but never went to father—you'll understand—and then in a minute or two I came back and said, 'Father says yes, I may go when I thinks proper;' and then Mr. Sanders took me to Lock's-fields, and there was a gig, and he drove me down to Ware, in Hertfordshire.



COSTERMONGERS IN HOLIDAY ATTIRE.

[From a Photograph.]

"You may as well say this here. The circusses at that time wasn't as they are now. They used to call it in the profession moulding, and the public termed it mountebanking. Moulding was making a ring in a field, for there was no booths then, and it comes from digging up the mould to make it soft for the horses' feet. There was no charge for seeing the exhibition, for it was in a field open to the public; but it was worked in this way: there was prizes given away, and the tickets to the lottery were 1s. each, and most of the people bought 'em, though they weren't obligated to do so. Sometimes the prizes would be a five-pound note, or a silver watch, maybe, or a sack of flour, or a pig. They used to take the tickets round in a hat, and everybody saw what they drawed. They was all prizes—perhaps a penny ring—but there was no blanks. It was the last night that paid best. The first and second nights Sanders would give them a first-rate prize; but when the last night came, then a half-crown article was the highest he'd give away, and that helped to draw up. I've know'd him give 4*l.* or 3*l.* away, when he'd not taken 2*l.* Mr. Sanders put me to tumbling in the ring. I could tumble well before I went with him, for I'd practised on this dung-heap, and in this hatter's shop. I beat all his apprentices what he had. He didn't give me anything a-week, only my keep, but I was glad to run away and be a showman. I was very successful in the ring-tumbling, and from that I got to be clever on the stilts and on the slack-rope, or, as they call it in the profession, the vaulting-rope. When I was ragged I used to run home again and get some clothes. I've many a time seen him burst out into tears to see me come home so ragged. 'Ah,' he'd say, 'where have you been now?—tumbling, I suppose.' I'd answer, 'Yes, father;' and then he'd say, 'Ah, your tumbling will bring you to the gallows.' I'd stop with him till he gave me some fresh clothes, and then I'd bolt again. You see I liked it. I'd go and do it for nothing. Now I dread it; but it's too late, unfortunately.

"I ran away from Sanders at last, and went back to father. One night I went to the theatre, and there I see Ramo Samee doing his juggling, and in a minute I forgot all about the tumbling, and only wanted to do as he did. Directly I got home I got two of the plates, and went into a back-room and began practising, making it turn round on the top of a stick. I broke nearly all the plates in the house doing this—that is, what I didn't break I cracked. I broke the entire set of a dozen plates, and yet couldn't do it. When mother found all her plates cracked, she said, 'It's that boy;' and I had a good hiding. Then I put on my Sunday suit and bolted away again. I always bolted in my best clothes. I then went about tumbling in the public-houses, till I had got money enough to have a tin plate made with a deep rim, and with this tin plate I learnt

it, so that I could afterwards do it with a crockery one. I kept on my tumbling till I got a set of wooden balls turned, and I stuck brass coffin-nails all over them, so that they looked like metal when they was up; and I began teaching myself to chuck them. It took a long time learning it, but I was fond of it, and determined to do it. I was doing pretty well with my tumbling, making perhaps my 3*s.* or 4*s.* a-night, so I was pretty well off. Then I got some tin knives made, and learnt to throw them: and I bought some iron rings, and bound them with red and blue tape, to make them look handsome; and I learnt to toss them the same as the balls. I practised balancing pipes, too. Every time I went into a public-house I'd take a pipe away, so it didn't cost me anything. I dare say I was a twelvemonth before I could juggle well. When I could throw the three balls middling tidy I used to do them on the stilts, and that was more than ever a man attempted in them days; and yet I was only sixteen or seventeen years of age. I must have been summut then, for I went to Oxford fair, and there I was on my stilts, chucking my balls in the public streets, and a gentleman came up to me and asked me if I'd take an engagement, and I said 'Yes, if it was a good un'—for I was taking money like smoke; and he agreed to give me a pound a-day during the fair; it was a week fair. I had so much money, I didn't know what to do with it. I actually went and bought a silk neckerchief for every day in the week, and flash boots, and caps, and everything I could see, for I never had so much money as in them days. The master, too, made his share out of me, for he took money like dirt.

"From Oxford I worked my way over to Ireland. I had got my hand into juggling now, but I kept on with my old apparatus, though I bought a new set in Dublin. I used to have a bag and bit of carpet, and perform in streets. I had an Indian's dress made, with a long horse-hair tail down my back, and white bag-trousers, trimmed with red, like a Turk's, tied right round at the ankles, and a flesh-coloured skull-cap. My coat was what is called a Turkish fly, in red velvet, cut off like a waist-coat, with a peak before and behind. I was a regular swell, and called myself the Indian Juggler. I used to perform in the barracks twice a-day, morning and evening. I used to make a heap of money. I have taken, in one pitch, more than a pound. I dare say I've taken 3*l.* a-day, and sometimes more indeed; I've saved a waggon and a booth there,—a very nice one,—and the waggon cost me 14*l.* second-hand; one of Vickry's it was, a wild-beast waggon. I dare say I was six months in Dublin, doing first-rate. My performances was just the same then as they is now; only I walked on stilts, and they was new then, and did the business. I was the first man ever seed in Ireland, either juggling or on the stilts.

"I had a drum and pipes, and I used to play them myself. I played any tune,—anything, just what I could think of, to draw the crowd together; then I'd mount the stilts and do what I called 'a drunken frolic,' with a bottle in my hand, tumbling about and pretending to be drunk. Then I'd chuck the balls about, and the knives, and the rings, and twirl the plate. I wound up with the ball, throwing it in the air and catching it in a cup. I didn't do any balancing pipes on my nose, not whilst on the stilts.

"I used to go out one day on the stilts and one on the ground, to do the balancing. I'd balance pipes, straws, peacocks' feathers, and the twirling plate.

"It took me a long time learning to catch the ball in the cup. I practised in the fields or streets; anywhere. I began by just throwing the ball a yard or two in the air, and then went on gradually. The first I see do the ball was a man of the name of Dussang, who came over with Ramo Samee. It's a very dangerous feat, and even now I'm never safe of it, for the least wind will blow it to the outside, and spoil the aim. I broke my nose at Derby races. A boy ran across the ring, and the ball, which weighs a quarter of a pound, was coming right on him, and would have fallen on his head, and perhaps killed him, and I ran forward to save him, and couldn't take my aim proper, and it fell on my nose, and broke it. It bled awfully, and it kept on for near a month. There happened to be a doctor looking on, and he came and plastered it up; and then I chucked the ball up again, (for I didn't care what I did in them days), and the strain of its coming down made it burst out again. They actually gived me money not to throw the ball up any more. I got near a sovereign, in silver, give me from the Grand Stand, for that accident.

"At Newcastle I met with another accident with throwing the ball. It came down on my head, and it regularly stunned me, so that I fell down. It swelled up, and every minute got bigger, till I almost thought I had a double head, for it felt so heavy I could scarce hold it up. I was obliged to knock off work for a fortnight.

"In Ireland I used to make the people laugh, to throw up raw potatoes and let them come down on my naked forehead and smash. People give more money when they laugh. No, it never hurt my forehead, it's got hardened; nor I never suffered from headaches when I was practicing.

"As you catch the ball in the cup, you are obliged to give, you know, and bend to it, or it would knock the brains out of you pretty well. I never heard of a man killing himself with the ball, and I've only had two accidents.

"I got married in Ireland, and then I started off with the booth and waggon, and she used to dance, and I'd juggle and balance. We went to the fairs, but it didn't answer, and

we lost all; for my wife turned out a very bad sort of woman. She's dead now, through drink. I went to the Isle of Man from Ireland; I had practised my wife in the stilts, and learnt her how to use them, and we did well there. They never see such a thing in their lives, and we took money like dirt. They christened us the 'Manx Giants.' If my wife had been like my present one, I should be a made gentleman by this time; but she drank away my booth, and waggon, and horse, and all.

"I saved up about 20*l.* in the Isle of Man; and from there we went to Scotland, and there my wife died,—through drink. That took away all the money I had saved. We didn't do much in Scotland, only in one particular town,—that's Edinburgh,—on New-year's day. We took a good deal of money, 2*l.* I think; and we carried coppers about in a stocking with me.

"I travelled about in England and Wales when I married my second wife. She's a strong woman, and lifts 700 lbs. by the hair of her head.

"When I got back to London I hadn't a shilling in my pocket, though my wife was very careful of me; but times got bad, and what not. We got a situation at 12*s.* a day, and all collections, at Stepney fair, which would sometimes come to a pound, and at others 30*s.*; for collections is better than salary any days: that set us up in a little house, which we've got now.

"I'm too old now to go out regularly in the streets. It tires me too much, if I have to appear at a penny theatre in the evening. When I do go out in the streets, I carry a mahogany box with me, to put my things out in. I've got three sets of things now, knives, balls, and cups. In fact, I never was so well off in apparatus as now; and many of them have been given to me as presents, by friends as have gi'n overperforming. Knives, and balls, and all, are very handsome. The balls, some a pound, and some 2 lbs. weight, and the knives about 1½ lbs.

"When I'm out performing, I get into all the open places as I can. I goes up the Commercial-road and pitches at the Mile-end-gate, or about Tower-hill, or such-like. I'm well known in London, and the police knows me so well they very seldom interfere with me. Sometimes they say, 'That's not allowed, you know, old man!' and I say, 'I shan't be above two or three minutes,' and they say, 'Make haste, then!' and then I go on with the performance.

"I think I'm the cleverest juggler out. I can do the pagoda, or the canopy as some calls it; that is a thing like a parasol balanced by the handle on my nose, and the sides held up by other sticks, and then with a pea-shooter I blow away the supports. I also do what is called 'the birds and bush,' which is something of the same, only you knock off the birds

with a pea-shooter. The birds is only made of cork, but it's very difficult, because you have to take your balance agin every bird as falls; besides, you must be careful the birds don't fall in your eyes, or it would take away your sight and spoil the balance. The birds at back are hardest to knock off, because you have to bend back, and at the same time mind you don't topple the tree off.

"These are the only feats we perform in balancing, and the juggling is the same now as ever it was, for there ain't been no improvements on the old style as I ever heard on; and I suppose balls and knives and rings will last for a hundred years to come yet.

"I and my wife are now engaged at the 'Temple of Mystery' in Old Street-road, and it says on the bills that they are 'at present exhibiting the following new and interesting talent,' and then they calls me 'The Renowned Indian Juggler, performing his extraordinary Feats with Cups, Balls, Daggers, Plates, Knives, Rings, Balancing, &c. &c.'

"After the juggling I generally has to do conjuring. I does what they call 'the pile of mags,' that is, putting four halfpence on a boy's cap, and making them disappear when I say 'Presto, fly!' Then there's the empty cups, and making 'taters come under 'em, or there's bringing a cabbage into a empty hat. There's also making a shilling pass from a gentleman's hand into a nest of boxes, and such-like tricks: but it ain't half so hard as juggling, nor anything like the work.

"I and my missis have 5*s.* 6*d.* a-night between us, besides a collection among the company, which I reckon, on the average, to be as good as another pound a-week, for we made that the last week we performed.

"I should say there ain't above twenty jugglers in all England—indeed, I'm sure there ain't—such as goes about pitching in the streets and towns. I know there's only four others besides myself in London, unless some new one has sprung up very lately. You may safely reckon their earnings for the year round at a pound a-week, that is, if they stick to juggling; but most of us joins some other calling along with juggling, such as the wizard's business, and that helps out the gains.

"Before this year, I used to go down to the sea-side in the summer, and perform at the watering-places. A chap by the name of Gordon is at Ramsgate now. It pays well on the sands, for in two or three hours, according to the tides, we picks up enough for the day."

THE STREET CONJURER.

"I CALL myself a wizard as well; but that's only the polite term for conjurer; in fact, I should think that wizard meant an astrologer, and more of a fortune-teller. I was fifteen years of age when I first began my professional life; indeed I opened with Gentleman

Cooke at the Rotunda, in Blackfriars'-road, and there I did Jeremiah Stitchem to his Billy Button.

"My father held a very excellent situation in the Customs, and lived at his ease, in very affluent circumstances. His library alone was worth two hundred pounds. I was only ten years of age when my father died. He was a very gay man, and spent his income to the last penny. He was a very gay man, very gay. After my mother was left a widow, the library was swept off for a year's rent. I was too young to understand it's value, and my mother was in too much grief to pay attention to her affairs. Another six-months' rent sold up the furniture. We took a small apartment close in the neighbourhood. My mother had no means, and we were left to shift for ourselves. I was a good boy, and determined to get something to do. The first day I went out I got a situation at four shillings a-week, to mind the boots outside a boot-maker's shop in Newington Causeway. The very first week I was there I was discharged, for I fell asleep on my stool at the door, and a boy stole a pair of boots. From there I went to a baker's, and had to carry out the bread, and for four years I got different employments, as errand boy or anything.

"For many years the mall opposite Bedlam was filled with nothing else but shows and show-people. All the caravans and swing-boats, and what not, used to assemble there till the next fair was on. They didn't perform there, it was only their resting-place. My mother was living close by, and every opportunity I had I used to associate with the boys belonging to the shows, and then I'd see them practising their tumbling and tricks. I was so fond of this that I got practising with these boys. I'd go and paint my face as clown, and although dressed in my ordinary clothes I'd go and tumble with the rest of the lads, until I could do it as well as they could. I did it for devilment, that's what I call it, and that it was which first made me think of being a professional.

"From there I heard of a situation to sell oranges, biscuits, and ginger-beer, at the Surrey Theatre. It was under Elliston's management. I sold the porter up in the gallery, and I had three-halfpence out of every shilling, and I could make one shilling and sixpence a-night; but the way I used to do it at that time was this: I went to fetch the beer, and then I'd get half-a-gallon of table-beer and mix it with the porter; and I tell you, I've made such a thing as fifteen shillings of a boxing-night. I alone could sell five gallons of a night; but then their pints at that time was tin measures, and little more than half-a-pint: besides, I'd froth it up. It was three-pence a pint, and a wonderful profit it must have been. From there I got behind the scenes as supernumerary, at the time Nelson Lee was manager of the supers.

"At this time the Rotunda in the Blackfriars' road was an hotel kept by a Mr. Ford. Mr. Cook rented certain portions of the building, and went to a wonderful expense building a Circus there. The history of the Rotunda is that at one time it was a museum, and the lecture-hall is there to the present day. It's a beautiful building, and the pillars are said to be very valuable, and made of rice. It's all let to one party, a Frenchman, but he keeps the lecture-hall closed. When Cook took the Rotunda I asked him for an engagement, and he complied. I was mad for acting. I met with great success as Jeremiah Sticheam; and the first week he gave me one pound. Cook didn't make a good thing of it. Nobody could get their money, and the circus was closed. Then a Mr. Edwards took it. He was an optician, and opened it as a penny exhibition, with a magic lantern and a conjurer. Now comes how I became a conjurer. I couldn't tear myself away from the Rotunda. I went there and hovered about the door day and night. I wanted to get a situation there. He knew me when I was in the circus, and he asked me what I was a-doing of. I said, 'Nothing, sir.' Then he offered to give me one of the door-keeper's places, from ten in the morning till eleven at night, for three shillings a-day, and I took it. One day the conjurer that was there didn't come, but they opened the doors just the same, and there was an immense quantity of people waiting there. They couldn't do nothing without the conjurer. He always left his apparatus there of a night, in a bag. Well, this Edwards, knowing that I could do a few tricks, he came up to me and asks whether I knew where the wizard lived. I didn't, and Edwards says, 'What am I to do? I shall have to return this money: I shall go mad.' I said I could do a few tricks; and he says, 'Well, go and do it.' The people was making a row, stamping and calling out, 'Now then, is this here wizard coming?' When I went in, I give great satisfaction. I went and did all the tricks, just as the other had done it. At that time it was the custom to say after each performance, 'Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to inform you that I get no salary here, and only have to rely upon your generosity for a collection.' When the plate went round I got one shilling and sixpence. 'Hulloa!' I said to myself, 'is this the situation?' Then I sold some penny books, explaining how the tricks was done, and I got sixpence more. That was two shillings. I had four shillings a-day besides, and they would have sometimes twenty houses of a day, and I have seen thirty. The houses were not always very good. Sometimes we'd perform to seven or to twenty. It all told up. It was at night we did the principal work,—crowded upwards of two hundred there. We weren't in the Circus, but in the Rotunda. I'd make fifteen shillings a-night then. I got a permanent engagement then. I made too much

money. I went and bought a pack of cards and card-boxes, and a pea-caddy for passing peas from a handkerchief to a vase, and linking-rings, and some tape. That, with tying knots in a silk handkerchief, concluded the whole of my performances. In fact, it was all I knew. My talking helped me immensely, for I could patter well to them, and the other wizard couldn't.

"I left the Rotunda in consequence of the party having other novelties. He had Ambrosini, who done the sticks and string balls; but I was there three or four years, and that's a long time to be at one place. Then I joined a street-performer. He used to do the fire-proof business, such as eating the link, and the burning tow, and so on. Then I manufactured a portable table: it folded up, and I could carry it under my arm. It was as large as an ordinary dressing-table. We went in equal shares. I was dressed with ballet shirt, and braces, with spangled tights and fleshings. We pulled our coats off when we begun to perform. All the tricks we carried in a bag.

"The first pitch we made was near Bond-street. He began with his part of the performance whilst I was dressing up the table. It was covered with black velvet with fringe, and the apparatus ranged on it. After him I began my performance, and he went round for the nobbings. I did card tricks, such as the sautez-le-coup with the little finger. It's dividing the pack in half, and then bringing the bottom half to the top; and then, if there's a doubt, you can convey the top card to the bottom again; or if there's any doubt, you can bring the pack to its original position. It was Lord de Roos' trick. He won heaps of money at it. He had pricked cards. You see, if you prick a card at the corner, card-players skin their finger at the end, so as to make it sensitive, and they can tell a pricked card in a moment. Besides sautez-le-coup, I used to do innumerable others, such as telling a named card by throwing a pack in the air and catching the card on a sword point. Then there was telling people's thoughts by the cards. All card tricks are feats of great dexterity and quickness of hand. I never used a false pack of cards. There are some made for amateurs, but professionals never use trick cards. The greatest art is what is termed forcing, that is, making a party take the card you wish him to; and let him try ever so well, he will have it, though he's not conscious of it. Another feat of dexterity is slipping the card, that is, slipping it from top, bottom, or centre, or placing one or two cards from the top. If you're playing a game at all-fours and you know the ace of clubs is at the bottom, you can slip it one from the top, so that you know your partner opposite has it. These are the only two principal things in card tricks, and if you can do them dexteriously you can do a great part of a wizard's art. Sautez-le-

coup is the principal thing, and it's done by placing the middle finger in the centre of the pack, and then with the right hand working the change. I can do it with one hand.

"We did well with pitching in the streets. We'd take ten shillings of a morning, and then go out in the afternoon again and take perhaps fifteen shillings of nobbings. The footmen were our best customers in the morning, for they had leisure then. We usually went to the squares and such parts at the West-end. This was twenty years ago, and it isn't anything like so good now, in consequence of my partner dying of consumption; brought on, I think, by fire eating, for he was a very steady young fellow and not at all given to drink. I was for two years in the streets with the fire-eating, and we made I should say such a thing as fifty shillings a-week each. Then you must remember, we could have made more if we had liked; for some mornings, if we had had a good day before, we wouldn't go out if it was raining, or we had been up late. I next got a situation, and went to a wax-works to do conjuring. It was a penny exhibition in the New Cut, Lambeth. I had four shillings a-day and nobbings—a collection, and what with selling my books, it came to ten shillings a-day, for we had never less than ten and often twenty performances a-day. They had the first dissecting figure there—a Samson—and they took off the cranium and showed the brains, and also the stomach, and showed the intestines. It was the first ever shown in this country, and the maker of it had (so they say) a pension of one hundred pounds a year for having composed it. He was an Italian.

"We were burnt down at Birmingham, and I lost all my rattle-traps. However, the inhabitants made up a subscription which amply repaid me for my loss, and I then came to London, hearing that the Epsom races was on at the time, which I wouldn't have missed Epsom races, not at that time, not for any amount of money, for it was always good to one as three pounds, and I have had as much as seven pounds from one carriage alone. It was Lord Chesterfield's, and each gentleman in it gave us a sov. I went down with three acrobats to Epsom, but they were dealing unfair with me, and there was something that I didn't like going on; so I quarrelled with them and joined with another conjurer, and it was on this very occasion we got the seven pounds from one carriage. We both varied in our entertainments; because, when I had done my performance, he made a collection; and when he had done I got the nobbings. We went to Lord Chesterfield's carriage on the hill, and there I did the sovereign trick. 'My Lord, will you oblige me with the temporary loan of a sovereign?' 'Yes, old fellow: what are you going to do with it?' I then did passing the sovereign, he having marked it first; and then, though he

held it tightly, I changed it for a farthing. I did this for Lord Waterford and Lord Waldegrave, and the whole of them in the carriage. I always said, 'Now, my Lord, are you sure you hold it?' 'Yes, old fellow.' 'Now, my Lord, if I was to take the sovereign away from you without you knowing it, wouldn't you say I was perfectly welcome to it?' He'd say, 'Yes, old fellow; go on.' Then, when he opened the handkerchief he had a farthing, and all of them made me a present of the sovereign I had performed with.

"Then we went to the Grand Stand, and then after our performance they'd throw us halfpence from above. We had our table nicely fitted up. We wouldn't take halfpence. We would collect up the coppers, perhaps five or six shillings worth, and then we'd throw the great handful among the boys. 'A bit of silver, your honours, if you please;' then sixpence would come, and then a shilling, and in ten minutes we would have a sovereign. We must have earned our six pounds each that Epsom Day; but then our expenses were heavy, for we paid three shillings a-night for our lodging alone.

"It was about this time that I took to busking. I never went into tap-rooms, only into parlours; because one parlour would be as good as a dozen tap-rooms, and two good parlours a-night I was quite satisfied with. My general method was this: If I saw a good company in the parlour, I could tell in a moment whether they were likely to suit me. If they were conversing on politics it was no good, you might as well attempt to fly. I have many a-time gone into a parlour, and called for my half-quarter of gin and little drop of cold water, and then, when I began my performances, it has been 'No, no! we don't want anything of that kind,' and there has been my half hour thrown away. The company I like best are jolly-looking men, who are sitting silently smoking, or reading the paper. I always got the privilege of performing by behaving with civility to my patrons. Some conjurers, when the company ain't agreeable, will say, 'But I will perform;' and then comes a quarrel, and the room is in future forbid to that man. But I, if they objected, always said, 'Very well, gentlemen, I'm much obliged to you all the same: perhaps another time. Bad to-night, better next night.' Then when I came again some would say, 'I didn't give you anything the other night, did I? Well, here's a fourpenny bit,' and so on.

"When I went into a parlour I usually performed with a big dice, three inches square. I used to go and call for a small drop of gin and water, and put this dice on the seat beside me, as a bit of a draw. Directly I put it down everybody was looking at it. Then I'd get into conversation with the party next to me, and he'd be sure to say, 'What the deuce is that?' I'd tell him it was a musical box, and he'd be safe to say, 'Well, I should like

to hear it, very much.' Then I'd offer to perform, if agreeable, to the company; often the party would offer to name it to the company, and he'd call to the other side of the room, (for they all know each other in these parlours) 'I say, Mr. So-and-so, have you any objection to this gentleman showing us a little amusement?' and they are all of them safe to say, 'Not in the least. I'm perfectly agreeable if others are so;' and then I'd begin. I'd pull out my cards and card-boxes, and the bonus genius or the wooden doll, and then I'd spread a nice clean cloth (which I always carried with me) on the table, and then I'd go to work. I worked the dice by placing it on the top of a hat, and with a penknife pretending to make an incision in the crown to let the solid block pass through. It is done by having a tin covering to the solid dice, and the art consists in getting the solid block into the hat without being seen. That's the whole of the trick. I begin by striking the block to show it is solid. Then I place two hats one on the other, brim to brim. Then I slip the solid dice into the under hat, and place the tin covering on the crown of the upper one. Then I ask for a knife, and pretend to cut the hat-crown the size of the tin-can on the top, making a noise by dragging my nail along the hat, which closely resembles cutting with a knife. I've often heard people say, 'None of that!' thinking I was cutting their hat. Then I say, 'Now, gentlemen, if I can pass this dice through the crown into the hat beneath, you'll say it's a very clever deception,' because all conjurers acknowledge that they deceive; indeed, I always say when I perform in parlours, 'If you can detect me in my deceptions I shall be very much obliged to you by naming it, for it will make me more careful; but if you can't, the more credit to me.' Then I place another tin-box over the imitation dice; it fits closely. I say, 'Presto—quick—begone!' and clap my hands three times, and then lift up the tin-cases, which are both coloured black inside, and tumble the wooden dice out of the under hat. You see, the whole art consists in passing the solid block unseen into the hat.

"The old method of giving the order for the things to pass was this: 'Albri kira mumma tousha cocus co shiver de freek from the margin under the crippling hook,' and that's a language."

STATEMENT OF ANOTHER STREET CONJURER.

"In London I had a great quantity of parlours where I was known and allowed to perform. One night I'd take the West-end, and another the East-end. Sometimes I have done four or five houses of an evening, and I have had to walk miles for that—to Woolwich and back for instance, or to Edmonton and back—and occasionally I'd only come home with 1s. 6d. I have also had 8s. from one parlour only, and then I'd consider that a night's performance, and come home again.

"I remember one very peculiar circumstance which happened to me whilst I was out busking. There is a house at the bottom of York-street, Westminster, where they wouldn't allow any other conjurer but me. I was very friendly with the landlord, and I went there regularly every week, and I'd invariably take such a thing as 2s. or 3s. out of the room. If I found only a small muster in the parlour, I'd say, 'I'll come another evening,' and go off to another parlour in Pimlico. One night the company in the parlour said, after I had been performing, 'What a pity it is that one of your talent doesn't take a large room somewhere, and we'd patronise you.' 'Why,' says the landlord, 'he can have my large room up-stairs if he likes.' I agreed to it, and says, 'Well, gentlemen, we'll have it next Wednesday evening, if you think proper.' The landlord didn't tell his wife that there was a performance to take place on the Wednesday evening. When I went to this house to the appointment, there were about thirty assembled. The landlord was out. When we asked the landlady for the room, she wouldn't, and we had all the difficulty in the world before we got the apartment. I wanted a large table-cloth to dress up my stand, for I have, in order to perform some of my tricks, to make a bag with the end of the table-cloth to drop things into. We sent the waiter to ask for this cloth, and says she, 'I ain't going to lend no conjurers table-cloths.' Then a gentleman says, 'Oh, nonsense, I'll soon get you a table-cloth. She'll lend me one in a minute.' He goes to the bar, but the reply she made was, 'I'm surprised at Mr. W. having such a performance up there, and no table-cloth shall you have from me.' He came up-stairs, and said he had been grossly insulted at the bar; and then another gentleman said, 'Well, this young man shan't be disappointed, and we'll see if we can't find another house down the street, and move it to there, and we'll all go.' One went out, and came back and said he'd not only got a very large room and everything required, but the landlord had four friends in the bar who'd join our company. I made altogether about 11. that night, for I made no charge, and it was altogether contribution. None of that company ever returned to that house again, so he lost the whole of his parlour customers. I could never go into that house again, and I really was sorry for the landlord, for it wasn't his fault. This is a very good proof that it is to the advantage of landlords to allow respectable performers to visit their parlours.

"At others times I have sometimes gone into a parlour and found the customers talking politics. If it was a very good company, and I saw good business, I'd try to break the thread of the discussion by saying when there was a pause in the debate, 'Gentlemen, would you like to see some of my performances, such as walking round the ceiling with my head down?' Then they'd say, 'Well, that's very

curious; let's see you.' Of course I couldn't do this, and I only said it to attract notice. Then I'd do my card-tricks, and make a collection, and, after that, remark that as the ceiling-walking performance was a dangerous one, I must have a sovereign; of course they wouldn't give this, and I'd take my leave.

"One night, in Oxford-street, I met a singer, and he says, 'Where are you going?' I told him I was hunting for a good parlour, and he told me he had just left a good company at such and such a house. I thanked him, and I went there. It was up a long passage, and I entered the room without asking the landlord's permission, and I called for a glass of porter. As soon as I saw the waiter out of the room I made my appeal to the company. They were all of them agreeable and most happy to see my performances. After I'd done my performance I went to make a collection, and they said, 'Oh, certainly not; we thought you'd done it for your own amusement; we never give anything to anybody. I lost one hour of the best time of the night. I said, 'Very good, gentlemen, I'm satisfied if you are.' It was an agreed plan with the landlord, for he came into the room; and he says, 'What, another one!' and he seized me by the neck and pushed me out. As soon as I got outside I met another conjurer, and he asked where I'd been. I thought I'd let him be served the same as I was, so I showed him the house, and told him he could make a second 'nobbings' as we term it. I stopped outside peeping over the glass, and presently I see him being pushed out by the landlord as I had been. We had a hearty laugh, and then we started off to Regent-street, to one of our principal houses, but there wasn't a soul in the room. It was a house in a back-street, where none but grooms and footmen resort to. But we was determined to have some money that night, as both our families wanted it—both him and me did.

"Passing a tobacconist's shop in Regent-street, we saw three gents conversing with the lady behind the counter. I told him I'll go in, get a pickwick here, and see if I can't have a performance in the front of this counter. These things only wants an introduction; so I looks at my pickwick, and says I, 'This a pickwick? why I swallows such as these;' and I apparently swallowed it. One of them says, 'You don't mean to say you swallowed it?' 'Certainly I did, sir,' I replied; and then he makes me do it again. Then I told them I'd show them something more wonderful still, so I said, 'Have you gentlemen such a thing as a couple of half-crowns about you?' they gave me the money, and I did the trick of passing the money from hand to hand. I said to them, 'Can you tell me which hand the money's in?' says he, 'Why, anybody can see it's in that one.' 'No, sir,' says I, 'I think not.' 'If it

ain't,' says he, 'you may keep 'em.' Then I opened both hands, and they were in neither, and he asked where they was then; so I told him I'd given him them back again, which of course he denied, and appeared much surprised. Then I took 'em out of his cravat. It's a very clever trick, and appears most surprising, though it's as simple as possible, and all done by the way in which you take them out of the cravat; for you keep them palmed, and have to work 'em up into the folds. Of course I returned the half-crowns to him, but when I heard him say you may keep them I did feel comfortable, for that was something to the good. My friend outside was looking through the window, and I could see him rubbing his hands with glee; I got another half-crown out of them gentlemen before I'd done with them, for I showed 'em a trick with some walking-sticks which were lying on the counter, and also cut the tape in two and made it whole again, and such-like performances. When a fellow is on his beam-ends, as I was then, he must keep his eyes about him, and have impudence enough for anything, or else he may stop and starve. The great art is to be able to do tricks with anything that you can easily get hold of. If you take up a bit of string from a counter, or borrow a couple of shillings of a gentleman, your tricks with them startles him much more than if you had taken them out of your own pocket, for he sees there's been no preparation. I got ten shillings out of these two gents I spoke of, and then I and my mate went and busked in a parlour, and got fivepence more; so that we shared five and twopence-ha'penny each.

"I have often made a good deal of money in parlours by showing how I did my little tricks, such as cutting the tape and passing the half-crowns. Another thing that people always want to know is the thimble-rig trick. Of course it doesn't matter so much showing how these tricks are done, because they depend upon the quickness and dexterity of handling. You may know how an artist paints a picture, but you mayn't be able to paint one yourself.

"I never practised thimble-rigging myself, for I never approved of it as a practice. I've known lots of fellows who lived by it. Bless you! they did well, never sharing less than their 4l. or 5l. every day they worked. This is the way it's done. They have three thimbles, and they put a pea under two of 'em, so that there's only one without the pea. The man then begins moving them about and saying, 'Out of this one into that one,' and so on, and winds up by offering to 'lay anything, from a shilling to a pound,' that nobody can tell which thimble the pea is under. Then he turns round to the crowd, and pretends to be pushing them back, and whilst he's saying, 'Come, gentlemen, stand more backwarder,' one of the confederates, who is called 'a button,' lifts up one of the thimbles with a pea under it, and laughs to those around, as much as to say,

'We've found it out.' He shows the pea two or three times, and the last time he does so, he removes it, either by taking it up under his forefinger nail or between his thumb and finger. It wants a great deal of practice to do this nicely, so as not to be found out. When the man turns to the table again the button says, 'I'll bet you a couple of sovereigns I know where the pea is. Will any gentleman go me halves?' Then, if there's any hesitation, the man at the table will pretend to be nervous and offer to move the thimbles again, but the button will seize him by the arm, and shout as if he was in a passion, 'No, no, none of that! It was a fair bet, and you shan't touch 'em.' He'll then again ask if anybody will go him halves, and there's usually somebody flat enough to join him. Then the stranger is asked to lift up the thimble, so that he shouldn't suspect anything, and of course there's no pea there. He is naturally staggered a bit, and another confederate standing by will say calmly, 'I knew you was wrong; here's the pea;' and he lifts up the thimble with the second pea under it. If nobody will go shares in the 'button's' bet, then he lifts up the thimble and replaces the pea as he does so, and of course wins the stake, and he takes good care to say as he pockets the sovereign, 'I knew it was there; what a fool you was not to stand in.' The second time they repeat the trick there's sure to be somebody lose his money. There used to be a regular pitch for thimble-riggers opposite Bedlam, when the shows used to put up there. I saw a brewer's collector lose 7*l.* there in less than half-an-hour. He had a bag full of gold, and they let him win the three first bets as a draw. Most of these confederates are fighting-men, and if a row ensues they're sure to get the best of it.

"A very good place where I used to go busking was at Mother Emmerson's in Jermyn-street. There used to be all sorts of characters there, jugglers, and singers, and all sorts. It was a favourite house of the Marquis of Waterford, and he used to use it nearly every night. I've seen him buy a pipe of port, and draw tumblers of it for any body that came in, for his great delight was to make people drunk. He says to Mrs. Emmerson, 'How much do you want for that port, mother?' and then he wrote a cheque for the amount and had it tapped. He was a good-hearted fellow, was my Lord; if he played any tricks upon you, he'd always square it up. Many a time he's given me half-a-pint of brandy, saying, 'That's all you'll get from me.' Sometimes I'd say to him, 'Can I show you a few tricks, my Lord?' and then, when I'd finished, I knew he never gave money if you asked him for it, so I'd let him abuse me, and order me out of the house as a humbug; and then, just as I'd got to the door, he'd call me back and give me half-a-sovereign. I've seen him do some wonderful things. I've seen him jump into an old woman's

crockeryware-basket, while she was carrying it along, and smash everything. Sometimes he'd get seven or eight cabs and put a lot of fiddlers and other musicians on the roofs, and fill 'em with anybody that liked, and then go off in procession round the streets, he driving the first cab as fast as he could and the bands playing as loud as possible. It's wonderful the games he'd be up to. But he always paid handsomely for whatever damage he did. If he swept all the glasses off a counter, there was the money to make 'em good again. Whenever I did any tricks before him, I took good care not to produce any apparatus that I cared for, or he'd be sure to smash it.

"One night I hadn't a penny in the world, and at home I knew they wanted food; so I went out to busk, and I got over in the Old Kent-road, and went to a house there called the Green Man. I walked into the parlour; and though I hadn't a penny in my pocket, I called for four pen'orth of rum and water. I put my big dice down upon the table by the side of me, and begun sipping my rum, and I could see everybody looking at this dice, and at last, just as I expected, somebody asked what it was. So I says—'Gentlemen, I get my living this way, and if you like, I shall be happy to show you a few of my deceptions for your entertainment.' They said, 'Certainly, young man, we are perfectly agreeable.' Ah! I thought to myself, thank heaven that's all right, for I owed for the rum and water you see, and if they'd refused, I don't know what I should have done. I pulled out my nice clean cloth and laid it upon the table, and to work I went. I had only done one or two tricks, when in comes the waiter, and directly he sees me he cries out, 'We don't allow no conjurers or anything of that kind here,' and I had to pack up again. When he'd gone the company said, 'Go on, young man, it's all right now;' so I out with my cloth again; then in came the landlord, and says he, 'You've already been told we don't allow none of you conjurer fellows here,' and I had to put up a second time. When he'd gone, the gents told me to begin again. I had scarcely spread my cloth when in comes the landlord again, in a towering rage, and shouts out, 'What, at it again! Now you be off;' so I said, 'I only did it to oblige the company present, who were agreeable, and that I hadn't yet finished my rum and water, which wasn't paid for.' 'Not paid for?' says he; 'No,' says I; 'but I'm waiting here for a friend, and he'll pay for it.' You may imagine my feelings, without a penny in my pocket. 'Don't let me catch you at it again, or I'll give you in charge,' says he. Scarcely had he left again when the company began talking about it, and saying it was too bad to stop me; so one of them rings the bell, and when the landlord comes in he says, 'Mr. Landlord, this young person has been very civil, and conducted himself in a

highly respectable manner, and has certainly afforded us a great deal of amusement; now why should you object to his showing us some tricks?' 'Thank heavens,' thought I to myself, 'I'm saved, and the rum will be paid for. The landlord's manner altered all of a sudden, and says he, 'Oh, certainly, gentlemen! certainly! if it's your wish, I don't mind the young man's being here; though I make it a rule to keep my parlour select.' Then I set to work and did all my tricks comfortably, and I made a collection of 7*s.* 6*d.* Then I rang the bell like a lord, and I put down a shilling to pay for the rum and water, and saying, 'Gentlemen, I'm very much obliged to you for your patronage,' to which they replied, 'Not at all, young man; I walked past the bar to leave. Then the landlord comes up to me and says, shaking his fist, and blue in the face with rage, 'If ever I catch you here again, you d—rogue, I'll give you to a policeman.' So, without more ado, I walks round to the other door, and enters the parlour again and tells the company, and they had in the landlord and blowed him well up. This will just show you the risks we have to run when out busking for a living, and what courage is wanted to speculate upon chances.

"There are very few conjurers out busking now. I don't know above four; one of 'em has had the best chances in the world of getting on; but he's a very uneducated man, and that has stood in his way, though he's very clever, and pr'aps the best hand at the cups and balls of any man in England. For instance, once he was at a nobleman's party, giving his entertainment, and he says such a thing as this:—'You see, my lords and ladies, I have a tatur in this hand, and a tatur in that; now I shall pass 'em into this handkercher.' Of course the nobleman said to himself, 'Tatur! handkercher! why, who's this feller?' You may depend upon it he was never asked there any more; for every thing in a wizard's business depends upon graceful action, and his style of delivery, so that he may make himself agreeable to the company.

"When a conjurer's out busking, he may reckon upon making his 20*s.* a-week, taking the year round; pr'aps, some weeks, he won't take more than 12*s.* or 15*s.*; but then, at other times, he may get 6*s.* or 8*s.* in one parlour alone, and I have taken as much as 1*l.* by teaching gentlemen how to do the tricks I had been performing. I have sometimes walked my twenty miles a-day, and busked at every parlour I came to, (for I never enter tap-rooms,) and come home with only 1*s.* 6*d.* in my pocket. I have been to Edmonton and back and only earned 1*s.*, and then, pr'aps, at eleven the same night, when I was nearly done up, and quite dispirited with my luck, I've turned into one of the parlours in town and earned my 6*s.* in less than an hour, where I'd been twelve only earning one."

THE STREET FIRE-KING, OR SALAMANDER.

THIS person came to me recommended by one of my street acquaintances as the "pluckiest fire-eater going," and that as he was a little "down at heel," he should be happy for a consideration to give me any information I might require in the "Salamander line."

He was a tall, gaunt man, with an absent-looking face, and so pale that his dark eyes looked positively wild.

I could not help thinking, as I looked at his bony form, that fire was not the most nutritious food in the world, until the poor fellow explained to me that he had not broken his fast for two days.

He gave the following account of himself:—

"My father was a barber—a three-ha'penny one—and doing a good business, in Southwark. I used to assist him, lathering up the chins and shaving 'em—torturing, I called it. I was a very good light hand. You see, you tell a good shaver by the way he holds the razor, and the play from the wrist. All our customers were tradesmen and workmen, but father would never shave either coalheavers or fishermen, because they always threw down a penny, and said there was plenty of penny barbers, and they wouldn't give no more. The old man always stuck up for his price to the day of his death. There was a person set up close to him for a penny, and that injured us awful. I was educated at St. George's National and Parochial School, and I was a national lad, and wore my own clothes; but the parochials wore the uniform of blue bob-tailed coats, and a badge on the left side. When they wanted to make an appearance in the gallery of the church on charity-sermon days, they used to make all the nationals dress like the parochials, so as to swell the numbers up. I was too fond of entertainments to stick to learning, and I used to step it. Kennington-common was my principal place. I used, too, to go to the outside of the Queen's-bench and pick up the racket-balls as they was chucked over, and then sell them for three-ha'pence each. I got promoted from the outside to the inside; for, from being always about, they took me at threepence a-day, and gave me a bag of whitening to whiten the racket-balls. When I used to hop the wag from school I went there, which was three times a-week, which was the reg'lar racket-days. I used to spend my threepence in damaged fruit—have a pen'orth of damaged grapes or plums—or have a ha'porth of wafers from the confectioner's. Ah, I've eat thousands and thousands of ha'porths. It's a kind of a paste, but they stick like wafers—my father's stuck a letter many a time with 'em. They goes at the bottom of the russetfees cake—ah, ratafees is the word.

"I got so unruly, and didn't attend to school, so I was turned out, and then I went to help father and assist upon the customers. I was confined so in the shop, that I only stopped

there three months, and then I run away. Then I had no home to go to, but I found a empty cart, situated in Red-cross-street, near the Borough-market, and there I slept for five nights. Then Greenwich fair came on. I went round the fair, and got assisting a artist as was a likeness-cutter, and had a booth, making black profiles. I assisted this man in building his booth, and he took a great fancy to me, and kept me as one of his own. He was a shoemaker as well, and did that when fair was over. I used to fetch his bristles and leather, and nuss the child. He lived near the Kent-road; and one day as I was going out for the leather, I fell upon mother, and she solaced me, and took me home; and then she rigged me out, and kept me, till I run away again; and that was when Greenwich fair came on again, for I wanted to go back then. At the fair I got to be doorsman and grease-pot boy inside a exhibition, to let the people out and keep the lamps. I got a shilling a-day for my attendance during fair time, and I travelled with them parties for five months. That was Peterson's, the travelling comedian, or what we call a 'mumming concern.' When we got to Bexley, I thought I should like to see a piece called 'Tricks and Trials,' then being performed at the Surrey Theatre, so I cut away and come up to London again. There I got employment at a japper, boiling up the stuff. I made a little bit of an appearance, and then I went home. I had learnt three or four comic songs, and I used to go singing at consart-rooms. I was a reg'lar professional. I went a busking at the free consart-rooms, and then go round with the cap. I principally sing 'The Four-and-nine,' or 'The Dark Arches,' or 'The Ship's Carpenter,' and 'The Goose Club.'

"It was at one of these free consart-rooms that I first saw a chap fire-eating. You see, at a free consart-room the professionals ain't paid, no more do the audience to come in, but the performers are allowed to go round with a cap for their remuneration. They are the same as the cock-and-hen clubs. This fire-eater was of the name of West, and I know'd him afore, and he used to ask me to prepare the things for him. His performance was, he had a link a-light in his hand, and he used to take pieces off with a fork and eat it. Then he would get a plate with some sulphur, light it, place it under his nose, and inhale the fumes that rose from it; and then he used to eat it with a fork whilst a-light. After that he'd get a small portion of gunpowder, put it in the palm of his hand, and get a fusee to answer for a quick-match, to explode the powder, and that concluded the performance—only three tricks. I was stunned the first time I see him do it; but when I come to prepare the things for him, I got enlightened into the business. When his back was turned, I used to sniff at the sulphur on the sly. I found it rather hard, for the fumes used to

get up your head, and reg'lar confuse you, and lose your memory. I kept on the singing at consarts, but I practised the fire-eating at home. I tried it for the matter of two months, before I found the art of it. It used to make me very thick in my voice; and if I began it before breakfast it used to make you feel ill; but I generally began it after meals. I tried the link and sulphur till I got perfect in these two. It blistered my mouth swallowing the fire, but I never burnt myself seriously at it.

"After I learnt those, I got travelling again with a man that swallowed a poker, of the name of Yates. One of his tricks was with tow. He'd get some, and then get a fryingpan, and he'd put the tow in the fire-pan, and he'd get some ground rosin and brimstone together and put them on top of the tow in the pan. Then, when he'd set light to it, he used to bring it on the outside of the show and eat it with a knife and fork, while I held the pan. I learnt how to do the trick; this was when he had done with it, and I'd take it away. Then I used to eat the portion that was left in the pan, till I became the master of that feat.

"When I left Yates I practised again at home until I was perfect, and then I went about doing the performance myself. The first place that I attempted was at the Fox and Cock, Gray's-inn-lane, and I was engaged there at three shillings a-night, and with collections of what people used to throw to me I'd come away with about seven shillings and sixpence. I was very successful indeed, and I stopped there for about seven months, doing the fire-business; and I got another job at the same place, for one of the potmen turned dishonest, and the master gave me eight shillings a-week to do his work as well. I have continued ever since going to different concert-rooms, and giving my performances. My general demand for a night's engagement is four shillings and six pen'orth of refreshment. When I perform I usually have a decanter of ale and two glasses upon the table, and after every trick I sit down whilst an overture is being done and wash my mouth out, for it gets very hot. You're obliged to pause a little, for after tasting one thing, if the palate doesn't recover, you can't tell when the smoke is coming.

"I wore a regular dress, a kind of scale-armour costume, with a red lion on the breast. I do up my moustache with cork, and rouge a bit. My tights is brown, with black enamel jack-boots. On my head I wears a king's coronet and a ringlet wig, bracelets on my wrists, and a red twill petticoat under the armour dress, where it opens on the limps.

"For my performances I begin with eating the lighted link, an ordinary one as purchased at oil-shops. There's no trick in it, only confidence. It won't burn you in the inside, but if the pitch falls on the outside, of course it will hurt you. If you hold your breath the

moment the lighted piece is put in your mouth, the flame goes out on the instant. Then we squench the flame with spittle. As we takes a bit of link in the mouth, we tucks it on one side of the cheek, as a monkey do with nuts in his pouch. After I have eaten sufficient fire I take hold of the link, and extinguish the lot by putting the burning end in my mouth. Sometimes, when I makes a slip, and don't put it in careful, it makes your moustache fiz up. I must also mind how I opens my mouth, 'cos the tar sticks to the lip wherever it touches, and pains sadly. This sore on my hand is caused by the melted pitch dropping on my fingers, and the sores is liable to be bad for a week or eight days. I don't spit out my bits of link; I always swallow them. I never did spit 'em out, for they are very wholesome, and keeps you from having any sickness. Whilst I'm getting the next trick ready I chews them up and eats them. It tastes rather roughish, but not nasty when you're accustomed to it. It's only like having a mouthful of dust, and very wholesome.

"My next trick is with a piece of tow with a piece of tape rolled up in the interior. I begin to eat a portion of this tow—plain, not a-light—till I find a fitting opportunity to place the tape in the mouth. Then I pause for a time, and in the meantime I'm doing a little pantomime business—just like love business, serious—till I get the end of this tape between my teeth, and then I draws it out, supposed to be manufactured in the pit of the stomach. After that—which always goes immensely—I eat some more tow, and inside this tow there is what I call the fire-ball—that is, a lighted fusee bound round with tow and placed in the centre of the tow I'm eating—which I introduce at a fitting opportunity. Then I blows out with my breath, and that sends out smoke and fire. That there is a very hard trick, for it's according how this here fire-ball busten. Sometimes it bustes on the side, and then it burns all the inside of the mouth, and the next morning you can take out pretty well the inside of your mouth with your finger; but if it bustes near the teeth, then it's all right, for there's vent for it. I also makes the smoke and flame—that is, sparks—come down my nose, the same as coming out of a blacksmith's chimney. It makes the eyes water, and there's a tingling; but it don't burn or make you giddy.

"My next trick is with the brimstone. I have a plate of lighted sulphur, and first inhale the fumes, and then devour it with a fork and swallow it. As a costermonger said when he saw me do it, 'I say, old boy, your game ain't all brandy.' There's a kind of an acid, nasty, sour taste in this feat, and at first it used to make me feel sick; but now I'm used to it, and it don't. When I puts it in my mouth it clings just like sealing-wax, and forms a kind of a dead ash. Of a morning, if I haven't got my breakfast by a certain time, there's a kind of a

retching in my stomach, and that's the only inconvenience I feel from swallowing the sulphur for that there feat.

"The next is, with two sticks of sealing-wax and the same plate. They are lit by the gas and dropped on one another till they are bodily a-light. Then I borrow either a ring of the company, or a pencil-case, or a seal. I set the sealing-wax a-light with a fork, and I press the impression of whatever article I can get with the tongue, and the seal is passed round to the company. Then I finish eating the burning wax. I always spits that out after, when no one's looking. The sealing-wax is all right if you get it into the interior of the mouth, but if it is stringy, and it falls, you can't get it off, without it takes away skin and all. It has a very pleasant taste, and I always prefer the red, as it's flavour is the best. Hold your breath and it goes out, but still the heat remains, and you can't get along with that so fast as the sulphur. I often burn myself, especially when I'm bothered in my entertainment; such as any person talking about me close by, then I listen to 'em perhaps, and I'm liable to burn myself. I haven't been able to perform for three weeks after some of my burnings. I never let any of the audience know anything of it, but smother up the pain, and go on with my other tricks.

"The other trick is a feat which I make known to the public as one of Ramo Samee's, which he used to perform in public-houses and tap-rooms, and made a deal of money out of. With the same plate and a piece of dry tow placed in it, I have a pepper-box, with ground rosin and sulphur together. I light the tow, and with a knife and fork I set down to it and eat it, and exclaim, 'This is my light supper.' There isn't no holding the breath so much in this trick as in the others, but you must get it into the mouth any how. It's like eating a hot beef-steak when you are ravenous. The rosin is apt to drop on the flesh and cause a long blister. You see, we have to eat it with the head up, full-faced; and really, without it's seen, nobody would believe what I do.

"There's another feat, of exploding the gunpowder. There's two ways of exploding it. This is my way of doing it, though I only does it for my own benefits and on grand occasions, for it's very dangerous indeed to the frame, for it's sure to destroy the hair of the head; or if anything smothers it, it's liable to shatter a thumb or a limb.

"I have a man to wait on me for this trick, and he unloops my dress and takes it off, leaving the bare back and arms. Then I gets a quarter of a pound of powder, and I has an ounce put on the back part of the neck, in the hollow, and I holds out each arm with an orange in the palm of each hand, with a train along the arms, leading up to the neck. Then I turns my back to the audience, and my man fires the gunpowder, and it blew up in a

minute, and ran down the train and blew up that in my hands. I've been pretty lucky with this trick, for it's only been when the powder's got under my bracelets, and then it hurts me. I'm obliged to hold the hand up, for if it hangs down it hurts awful. It looks like a scurvy, and as the new skin forms, the old one falls off.

"That's the whole of my general performance for concert business, when I go busking at free concerts or outside of shows (I generally gets a crown a-day at fairs). I never do the gunpowder, but only the tow and the link.

"I have been engaged at the Flora Gardens, and at St. Helena Gardens, Rotherhithe, and then I was Signor Salamander, the great fire-king from the East-end theatres. At the Eel-pie-house, Peckham, I did the 'terrific flight through the air,' coming down a wire surrounded by fire-works. I was called Herr Alma, the flying fiend. There was four scaffold-poles placed at the top of the house to form a tower, just large enough for me to lie down on my belly, for the swivels on the rope to be screwed into the cradle round my body. A wire is the best, but they had a rope. On this cradle were places for the fire-works to be put in it. I had a helmet of fire on my head, and the three spark cases (they are made with steel-filings, and throw out sparks) made of Prince of Wales feathers. I had a sceptre in my hand of two serpents, and in their open mouths they put fire-balls, and they looked as if they was spitting fiery venom. I had wings, too, formed from the ankle to the waist. They was netting, and spangled, and well sized to throw off the fire. I only did this two nights, and I had ten shillings each performance. It's a momentary feeling coming down, a kind of suffocation like, so that you must hold your breath. I had two men to cast me off. There was a gong first of all, knocked to attract the attention, and then I made my appearance. First, a painted pigeon, made of lead, is sent down the wire as a pilot. It has moveable wings. Then all the fire-works are lighted up, and I come down right through the thickest of 'em. There's a trap-door set in the scene at the end, and two men is there to look after it. As soon as I have passed it, the men shut it, and I dart up against a feather-bed. The speed I come down at regularly jams me up against it, but you see I throw away this sceptre and save myself with my hands a little. I feel fagged for want of breath. It seems like a sudden fright, you know. I sit down for a few minutes, and then I'm all right.

"I'm never afraid of fire. There was a turner's place that took fire, and I saved that house from being burned. He was a friend of mine, the turner was, and when I was there, the wife thought she heard the children crying, and asked me to go up and see what it was. As I went up I could smell

fire worse and worse, and when I got in the room it was full of smoke, and all the carpet, and bed-hangings, and curtains smouldering. I opened the window, and the fire burst out, so I ups with the carpet and throw'd it out of window, together with the blazing chairs, and I rolled the linen and drapery up and throw'd them out. I was as near suffocated as possible. I went and felt the bed, and there was two children near dead from the smoke; I brought them down, and a medical man was called, and he brought them round.

"I don't reckon no more than two other fire-kings in London beside myself. I only know of two, and I should be sure to hear of 'em if there were more. But they can only do three of the tricks, and I've got novelties enough to act for a fortnight, with fresh performances every evening. There's a party in Drury-lane is willing to back me for five, fifteen, or twenty pounds, against anybody that will come and answer to it, to perform with any other man for cleanness and cleverness, and to show more variety of performance.

"I'm always at fire-eating. That's how I entirely get my living, and I perform five nights out of the six. Thursday night is the only night, as I may say, I'm idle. Thursday night everybody's fagged, that's the saying—Got no money. Friday, there's many large firms pays their men on, especially in Bermondsey.

"I'm out of an engagement now, and I don't make more than eleven shillings a-week, because I'm busking; but when I'm in an engagement my money stands me about thirty-five shillings a-week, putting down the value of the drink as well—that is, what's allowed for refreshment. Summer is the worst time for me, 'cos people goes to the gardens. In the winter season I'm always engaged three months out of the six. You might say, if you counts the overplus at one time, and minus at other time, that I makes a pound a-week. I know what it is to go to the treasury on a Saturday, and get my thirty shillings, and I know what it is to have the landlord come with his 'Hallo! hallo! here's three weeks due, and another week running on.'

"I was very hard up at one time—when I was living in Friar-street—and I used to frequent a house kept by a betting-man, near the St. George's Surrey Riding-school. A man I knew used to supply this betting-man with rats. I was at this public-house one night when this rat-man comes up to me, and says he, 'Hallo! my pippin; here, I want you: I want to make a match. Will you kill thirty rats against my dog?' So I said, 'Let me see the dog first;' and I looked at his mouth, and he was an old dog; so I says, 'No, I won't go in for thirty; but I don't mind trying at twenty.' He wanted to make it twenty-four, but I wouldn't. They put the twenty in the rat-pit,

and the dog went in first and killed his, and he took a quarter of an hour and two minutes. Then a fresh lot were put in the pit, and I began; my hands were tied behind me. They always make an allowance for a man, so the pit was made closer, for you see a man can't turn round like a dog; I had half the space of the dog. The rats lay in a cluster, and then I picked them off where I wanted 'em, and bit 'em between the shoulders. It was when they came to one or two that I had the work, for they cut about. The last one made me remember him, for he gave me a bite, of which I've got the scar now. It festered, and I was obliged to have it cut out. I took Dutch drops for it, and poulticed it by day, and I was bad for three weeks. They made a subscription in the room of fifteen shillings for killing these rats. I won the match, and beat the dog by four minutes. The wager was five shillings, which I had. I was at the time so hard up, I'd do anything for some money; though, as far as that's concerned, I'd go into a pit now, if anybody would make it worth my while."

THE SNAKE, SWORD, AND KNIFE-SWALLOWER.

HE was quite a young man, and, judging from his countenance, there was nothing that could account for his having taken up so strange a method of gaining his livelihood as that of swallowing snakes.

He was very simple in his talk and manner. He readily confessed that the idea did not originate with him, and prided himself only on being the second to take it up. There is no doubt that it was from his being startled by the strangeness and daringness of the act that he was induced to make the essay. He said he saw nothing disgusting in it; that people liked it; that it served him well in his "professional" engagements; and spoke of the snake in general as a reptile capable of affection, not unpleasant to the eye, and very cleanly in its habits.

"I swallow snakes, swords, and knives; but, of course, when I'm engaged at a penny theatre I'm expected to do more than this, for it would only take a quarter of an hour, and that isn't long enough for them. They call me in the profession a 'Sallementro,' and that is what I term myself; though 'praps it's easier to say I'm a 'swallower.'

"It was a mate of mine that I was with that first put me up to sword-and-snake swallowing. I copied off him, and it took me about three months to learn it. I began with a sword first—of course not a sharp sword, but one blunt-pointed—and I didn't exactly know how to do it, for there's a trick in it. I see him, and I said, 'Oh, I shall set up master for myself, and practise until I can do it.'

"At first it turned me, putting it down my throat past my swallow, right down—about

eighteen inches. It made my swallow sore—very sore, and I used lemon and sugar to cure it. It was tight at first, and I kept pushing it down further and further. There's one thing, you mustn't cough, and until you're used to it you want to very bad, and then you must pull it up again. My sword was about three-quarters of an inch wide.

"At first I didn't know the trick of doing it, but I found it out this way. You see the trick is, you must oil the sword—the best sweet oil, worth fourteen pence a pint—and you put it on with a sponge. Then, you understand, if the sword scratches the swallow it don't make it sore, 'cos the oil heals it up again. When first I put the sword down, before I oiled it, it used to come up quite slimy, but after the oil it slips down quite easy, is as clean when it comes up as before it went down.

"As I told you, we are called at concert-rooms where I perform the 'Sallementro.' I think it's French, but I don't know what it is exactly; but that's what I'm called amongst us.

"The knives are easier to do than the sword because they are shorter. We puts them right down till the handle rests on the mouth. The sword is about eighteen inches long, and the knives about eight inches in the blade. People run away with the idea that you slip the blades down your breast, but I always hold mine right up with the neck bare, and they see it go into the mouth atween the teeth. They also fancy it hurts you; but it don't, or what a fool I should be to do it. I don't mean to say it don't hurt you at first, 'cos it do, for my swallow was very bad, and I couldn't eat anything but liquids for two months whilst I was learning. I cured my swallow whilst I was stretching it with lemon and sugar.

"I was the second one that ever swallowed a snake. I was about seventeen or eighteen years old when I learnt it. The first was Clarke as did it. He done very well with it, but he wasn't out no more than two years before me, so he wasn't known much. In the country there is some places where, when you do it, they swear you are the devil, and won't have it nohow.

"The snakes I use are about eighteen inches long, and you must first cut the stingers out, 'cos it might hurt you. I always keep two or three by me for my performances. I keep them warm, but the winter kills 'em. I give them nothing to eat but worms or gentles. I generally keep them in flannel, or hay, in a box. I've three at home now.

"When first I began swallowing snakes they tasted queer like. They draw'd the roof of the mouth a bit. It's a roughish taste. The scales rough you a bit when you draw them up. You see, a snake will go into ever such a little hole, and they are smooth one way.

"The head of the snake goes about an inch and a half down the throat, and the rest of it continues in the mouth, curled round like. I

hold him by the tail, and when I pinch it he goes right in. You must cut the stinger out or he'll injure you. The tail is slippery, but you nip it with the nails like pinchers. If you was to let him go, he'd go right down; but most snakes will stop at two inches down the swallow, and then they bind like a ball in the mouth.

"I in generally get my snakes by giving little boys hapence to go and catch 'em in the woods. I get them when I'm pitching in the country. I'll get as many as I can get, and bring 'em up to London for my engagements.

"When first caught the snake is slimy, and I have to clean him by scraping him off with the finger-nail as clean as I can, and then wiping him with a cloth, and then with another, until he's nice and clean. I have put 'em down slimy, on purpose to taste what it was like. It had a nasty taste with it—very nasty.

"I give a man a shilling always to cut the stinger out—one that knows all about it, for the stinger is under the tongue. It was this Clark I first see swallow a snake. He swallowed it as it was when he caught it, slimy. He said it was nasty. Then he scraped it with his nail and let it crawl atween his hands, cleaning itself. When once they are cleaned of the slime they have no taste. Upon my word they are clean things, a'most like metal. They only lives on worms, and that ain't so nasty; besides, they never makes no mess in the box, only frothing in the mouth at morning and evening: but I don't know what comes from 'em, for I ain't a doctor.

"When I exhibit, I first holds the snake up in the air and pinches the tail, to make it curl about and twist round my arm, to show that he is alive. Then I holds it above my mouth, and as soon as he sees the hole in he goes. He goes wavy-like, as a ship goes,—that's the comparison. You see, a snake will go in at any hole. I always hold my breath whilst his head is in my swallow. When he moves in the swallow, it tickles a little, but it don't make you want to retch. In my opinion he is more glad to come up than to go down, for it seems to be too hot for him. I keep him down about two minutes. If I breathe or cough, he draws out and curls back again. I think there's artfulness in some of them big snakes, for they seem to know which is the master. I was at Wombwell's menagerie of wild beasts for three months, and I had the care of a big snake, as thick round as my arm. I wouldn't attempt to put that one down my throat, I can tell you, for I think I might easier have gone down his'n. I had to show it to the people in front of the carriages to draw 'em in, at fair time. I used to hold it up in both hands, with my arms in the air. Many a time it curled itself three or four times round my neck and about my body, and it never even so much as squeegeed me the least bit. I had the feeding on it, and I used to

give it the largest worms I could find. Mr. Wombwell has often said to me, 'It's a dangerous game you're after, and if you don't give the snake plenty of worms and make it like you, it'll nip you some of these times.' I'm sure the snake know'd me. I was very partial to it, too. It was a furren snake, over spots, called a boa-constructor. It never injured me, though I'm told it is uncommon powerful, and can squeege a man up like a sheet of paper, and crack his bones as easy as a lark's. I'm tremendous courageous, nothing frightens me; indeed, I don't know what it is to be afraid.

"The one I was speaking of I have often held up in the air in both hands, and it was more than four yards long, and let it curl round my neck in five or six twirls. It was a boa-constructor, and I believe it know'd me, and that's why it didn't hurt me, for I feed him. He had nothing but long great worms, and he grew to know me.

"My performance with the snake is always very successful. The women is frightened at first, but they always stop to see, and only hide their eyes. There's no danger as long as you keep hold.

"I generally perform at concert-rooms, and penny theatres, and cheap circuses, and all round the country, such as in the street, or at farm-houses, or in tap-rooms. I have done it in the streets of London too, and then I'm dressed-up in fleshing tights, skin dress, and trunks. I carry the snake in a box. When I swallow it some holloa out, 'O my God, don't do that!' but when I'm finished, they say, 'It's hardly wonderful to be believed,' and give money.

"I generally mix up the sword-and-snake performances with my other ones; and it's the same in the streets.

"Sometimes I go out to tap-rooms in my every-day dress, with the snake in my pocket, and a sword. Then I go and offer to show my performance. First I'll do some tumbling, and throw a somerset over a table. Then I takes out the snake and say, 'Gentlemen, I shall now swallow a live snake, anybody is at liberty to feel it.' I have—according to the company, you know—made such a thing as five shillings, or one shilling and sixpence, or whatever it may be, by snake-swallowing alone.

"I'm the only one in London who can swallow a snake. There's nobody else besides me. It requires great courage. I've great courage. One night I was sleeping in a barn at a public-house, called the Globe, at Lewes, seven miles from Brighton. A woman who had cut her throat used to haunt the place. Well, I saw her walking about in a long white shroud, the doors opening and shutting before her. A man who was in the room with us jumped up in his bed and cried, 'Tumblers!'

"I must tell you one thing before you finish, just to prove what tremendous courage

I've got. I was out showing the sword-and-snake swallowing in the country, and I travelled down to near Lewes, which is seven miles from Brighton, and there I put up at a house called the Falcon. We slept in a barn, and at night, when all was asleep except myself, I see a figure all in white come into the room with her throat cut, and her face as white as chalk. I knowed she was a apperition, 'cos I'd been told the house was haunted by such. Well, in she come, and she stopped and looked at me, seeing that I was awake. The perspiration poured out of me like a shower; but I warn't afeard, I've that courage. I says, 'God help me!' for I knew I'd done no harm as I could call to mind; so I hadn't no fear of ghosts and such-like spirits. No, I'm certain it wern't no fancy of mine, 'cos others see it as well as me. There was a mate in the same room, and he woke up and sees the ghosts, and up he jumps in bed and cries out: 'Tumblers! Tumblers! here's a woman haunting us!' I told him to lie down and go to sleep, and hold his noise. Then I got out of bed, and it wanished past me, close as could be,—as near as I am to this table. The door opened itself to let her out, and then closed again. I didn't feel the air cold like, nor nothing, nor was there any smell or anything. I'm sure I wasn't dreaming, 'cos I knows pretty well when I'm awake. Besides the doors kept bouncing open, and then slamming-to again for more than an hour, and woke everybody in the room. This kept on till one o'clock. Yet, you see, though the sweat run down me to that degree I was wetted through, yet I had that courage I could get out of bed to see what the spirit was like. I said, 'God help me! for I've done no harm as I knows of,' and that give me courage."

Whilst the "Salamentro" told me this ghost story, he spoke it in a half voice, like that of a nervous believer in such things. When he had finished he seemed to have something on his mind, for after a moment's silence he said, in a confidential tone, "Between ourselves, sir, I'm a Jew." I then asked him if he thought the ghost was aware of it, and had visited him on that account, and the following was his reply: "Well, it ain't unlikely; for, you see, some of our scholars know what to say to the poor things, and they know what to do to rest 'em. Now, pr'aps she thought I knew these secrets,—but, I'm no scholar—for, you see, we Jews always carry prayers about with us to keep off evil spirits. That's one reason why I was so bold as to go up to her."

STREET CLOWN.

HE was a melancholy-looking man, with the sunken eyes and other characteristics of semi-starvation, whilst his face was scored with lines and wrinkles, telling of paint and premature age.

I saw him performing in the streets with

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a school of acrobats soon after I had been questioning him, and the readiness and business-like way with which he resumed his professional buffoonery was not a little remarkable. His story was more pathetic than comic, and proved that the life of a street clown is, perhaps, the most wretched of all existence. Jest as he may in the street, his life is literally no joke at home.

"I have been a clown for sixteen years," he said, "having lived totally by it for that time. I was left motherless at two years of age, and my father died when I was nine. He was a carman, and his master took me as a stable-boy, and I stayed with him until he failed in business. I was then left destitute again, and got employed as a supernumerary at Astley's, at one shilling a-night. I was a 'super' some time, and got an insight into theatrical life. I got acquainted, too, with singing people, and could sing a good song, and came out at last on my own account in the streets, in the Jim Crow line. My necessities forced me into a public line, which I am far from liking. I'd pull trucks at one shilling a-day, rather than get twelve shillings a-week at my business. I've tried to get out of the line. I've got a friend to advertise for me for any situation as groom. I've tried to get into the police, and I've tried other things, but somehow there seems an impossibility to get quit of the street business. Many times I have to play the clown, and indulge in all kinds of buffoonery, with a terrible heavy heart. I have travelled very much, too, but I never did over-well in the profession. At races I may have made ten shillings for two or three days, but that was only occasional; and what is ten shillings to keep a wife and family on, for a month maybe? I have three children, one now only eight weeks old. You can't imagine, sir, what a curse the street business often becomes, with its insults and starvations. The day before my wife was confined, I jumped and labour'd doing Jim Crow for twelve hours—in the wet, too—and earned one shilling and threepence; with this I returned to a home without a bit of coal, and with only half-a-quartern loaf in it. I know it was one shilling and threepence; for I keep a sort of log of my earnings and my expenses; you'll see on it what I've earn'd as clown, or the funnyman, with a party of acrobats, since the beginning of this year."

He showed me this log, as he called it, which was kept in small figures, on paper folded up as economically as possible. His latest weekly earnings were, 12s. 6d., 1s. 10d., 7s. 7d., 2s. 5d., 3s. 11½d., 7s. 7½d., 7s. 9½d., 6s. 4½d., 10s. 10½d., 9s. 7d., 6s. 1½d., 15s. 6½d., 6s. 5d., 4s. 2d., 12s. 10½d., 15s. 5½d., 14s. 4d. Against this was set off what the poor man had to expend for his dinner, &c., when out playing the clown, as he was away from home and could not dine with his family. The ciphers intimate the weeks when there was no

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such expense, or in other words, those which had been passed without dinner. 0, 0, 0, 0, 2s. 2½d., 3s. 9½d., 4s. 2d., 4s. 5d., 5s. 8½d., 5s. 11½d., 4s. 10½d., 2s. 8½d., 3s. 7½d., 3s. 4½d., 6s. 5½d., 4s. 6½d., 4s. 3d. This account shows an average of 8s. 6½d. a-week as the gross gain, whilst, if the expenses be deducted, not quite six shillings remain as the average weekly sum to be taken home to wife and family.

"I dare say," continued the man, "that no persons think more of their dignity than such as are in my way of life. I would rather starve than ask for parochial relief. Many a time I have gone to my labour without breaking my fast, and played clown until I could raise dinner. I have to make jokes as clown, and could fill a volume with all I know."

He told me several of his jests; they were all of the most venerable kind, as for instance:—"A horse has ten legs: he has two fore legs and two hind ones. Two fores are eight, and two others are ten." The other jokes were equally puerile, as, "Why is the City of Rome," (he would have it Rome), "like a candle wick? Because it's in the midst of Greece." "Old and young are both of one age: your son at twenty is young, and your horse at twenty is old: and so old and young are the same." "The dress," he continued, "that I wear in the streets consists of red striped cotton stockings, with full trunks, dotted red and black. The body, which is dotted like the trunks, fits tight like a woman's gown, and has full sleeves and frills. The wig or scalp is made of horse-hair, which is sown on to a white cap, and is in the shape of a cock's comb. My face is painted with dry white lead. I grease my skin first and then dab the white paint on (flake-white is too dear for us street clowns); after that I colour my cheeks and mouth with vermilion. I never dress at home; we all dress at public-houses. In the street where I lodge, only a very few know what I do for a living. I and my wife both strive to keep the business a secret from our neighbours. My wife does a little washing when able, and often works eight hours for sixpence. I go out at eight in the morning and return at dark. My children hardly know what I do. They see my dresses lying about, but that is all. My eldest is a girl of thirteen. She has seen me dressed at Stepney fair, where she brought me my tea (I live near there); she laughs when she sees me in my clown's dress, and wants to stay with me: but I would rather see her lay dead before me (and I had two dead in my place at one time, last Whitsun Monday was a twelvemonth) than she should ever belong to my profession."

I could see the tears start from the man's eyes as he said this.

"Frequently when I am playing the fool in the streets, I feel very sad at heart. I can't help thinking of the bare cupboards at home; but what's that to the world? I've often and often

been at home all day when it has been wet, with no food at all, either to give my children or take myself, and have gone out at night to the public-houses to sing a comic song or play the funnyman for a meal—you may imagine with what feelings for the part—and when I've come home I've call'd my children up from their beds to share the loaf I had brought back with me. I know three or more clowns as miserable and bad off as myself. The way in which our profession is ruined is by the stragglers or outsiders, who are often men who are good tradesmen. They take to the clown's business only at holiday or fair time, when there is a little money to be picked up at it, and after that they go back to their own trades; so that, you see, we, who are obliged to continue at it the year through, are deprived of even the little bit of luck we should otherwise have. I know only of another regular street clown in London besides myself. Some schools of acrobats, to be sure, will have a comic character of some kind or other, to keep the pitch up; that is, to amuse the people while the money is being collected: but these, in general, are not regular clowns. They are mostly dressed and got up for the occasion. They certainly don't do anything else but the street comic business, but they are not pantomimists by profession. The street clowns generally go out with dancers and tumblers. There are some street clowns to be seen with the Jack-in-the-greens; but they are mostly sweeps, who have hired their dress for the two or three days, as the case may be. I think there are three regular clowns in the metropolis, and one of these is not a professional: he never smelt the sawdust, I know, sir. The most that I have known have been shoemakers before taking to the business. When I go out as a street clown, the first thing I do is a comic medley dance; and then after that I crack a few jokes, and that is the whole of my entertainment. The first part of the medley dance is called 'the good St. Anthony' (I was the first that ever danced the polka in the streets); then I do a waltz, and wind up with a hornpipe. After that I go through a little burlesque business. I fan myself, and one of the school asks me whether I am out of breath? I answer, 'No, the breath is out of me.' The leading questions for the jokes are all regularly prepared beforehand. The old jokes always go best with our audiences. The older they are, the better for the streets. I know, indeed, of nothing new in the joking way; but even if there was, and it was in any way deep, it would not do for the public thoroughfares. I have read a great deal of 'Punch,' but the jokes are nearly all too high there; indeed, I can't say I think very much of them myself. The principal way in which I've got up my jokes is through associating with other clowns. We don't make our jokes ourselves; in fact, I never knew one clown who did. I must own that the street clowns like a little drop of

spirits, and occasionally a good deal. They are in a measure obligated to it. I can't fancy a clown being funny on small beer; and I never in all my life knew one who was a teetotaler. I think such a person would be a curious character, indeed. Most of the street clowns die in the workhouses. In their old age they are generally very wretched and poverty-stricken. I can't say what I think will be the end of me. I daren't think of it, sir."

A few minutes afterwards I saw this man dressed as Jim Crow, with his face blackened, dancing and singing in the streets as if he was the lightest-hearted fellow in all London.

THE PENNY-GAFF CLOWN.

THE "professional" from whom I elicited my knowledge of penny-gaff clowning is known among his companions as "Funny Billy." He appeared not a little anxious to uphold the dignity of the penny theatre, frequently assuring me that "they brought things out there in a style that would astonish some of the big houses." His whole being seemed wrapped up in these cheap dramatic saloons, and he told me wonderful stories of first-class actors at "The Effingham," or of astonishing performers at "The Bower," or "Rotunda." He was surprised, too, that the names of several of the artists there were not familiar to me, and frequently pressed me to go and see so-and-so's "Beadle," or hear so-and-so sing his "Oh! don't I like my Father!"

Besides being a clown, my informant was also "an author," and several of the most successful ballets, pantomimes, and dramas, that of late years have been brought out at the City gaffs, have, I was assured, proceeded from "his pen."

In build, even in his every-day clothes, he greatly resembles a clown—perhaps from the broadness of his chest and high-buttoned waistcoat, or from the shortness and crookedness of his legs; but he was the first I had seen whose form gave any indication of his calling.

Since the beginning of this year (1856) he has given up clowning, and taken to pantalooning instead, for "on last boxing-day," he informed me, "he met with an accident which dislocated his jaw, and caused a swelling in his cheek as if he had an apple inside his mouth." This he said he could conceal in his make-up as a pantaloone, but it had ruined him for clown.

His statement was as follows:—

"I'm a clown at penny gaffs and the cheap theatres, for some of the gaffs are twopence and threepence—that's as high as they run. The Rotunda in the Blackfriars'-road is the largest in London, and that will hold one thousand comfortably seated, and they give two in one evening, at one penny, twopence,

and threepence, and a first-class entertainment it is, consisting of a variety of singing and dancing, and ballets, from one hour and a-half to two hours. There are no penny theatres where speaking is legally allowed, though they do do it to a great extent, and at all of 'em at Christmas a pantomime is played, at which Clown and Pantaloon speaks.

"The difference between a penny-gaff clown and a fair, or, as we call it, a canvas clown, is this,—at the fairs the principal business is outside on the parade, and there's very little done (seldom more than two scenes) inside. Now at the penny gaffs they go through a regular pantomime, consisting of from six to eight scenes, with jumps and all complete, as at a regular theatre; so that to do clown to one of them, you must be equal to those that come out at the regular theatres; and what's more, you must strain every nerve; and what's more still, you may often please at a regular theatre when you won't go down at all at a penny gaff. The circus clown is as different from a penny-gaff clown as a coster is from a tradesman.

"What made me turn clown was this. I was singing comic songs at the Albion Saloon, Whitechapel, and playing in ballets, and doing the scene-painting. Business was none of the best. Mr. Paul Herring, the celebrated clown, was introduced into the company as a draw, to play ballets. The ballet which he selected was 'The Barber and Beadle'; and me being the only one who played the old men on the establishment, he selected me to play the Beadle to his Barber. He complimented me for what I had done, when the performance was over, for I done my uttermost to gain his applause, knowing him to be such a star, and what he said was—I think—deserved. We played together ballets for upwards of nine months, as well as pantomimes, in which I done the Pantaloon; and we had two clear benefits between us, in which we realised three pounds each, on both occasions. Then Mr. Paul Herring was engaged by Mr. Jem Douglass, of the Standard, to perform with the great clown, Mr. Tom Matthews, for it was intended to have two clowns in the piece. He having to go to the Standard for the Christmas, left about September, and we was without a clown, and it was proposed that I should play the clown. I accepted the offer, at a salary of thirty-five shillings a-week, under Hector Simpson, the great pantomimist—who was proprietor. This gentleman was well known as the great dog-and-bear man of Covent Garden, and various other theatres, where he played Valentine and Orson with a living bear. He showed me various things that I were deficient in, and with what I knew myself we went on admiringly well; and I continued at it as clown for upwards of a year, and became a great favourite.

"I remember clowning last Christmas (1856) particularly, for it was a sad year for me, and

one of the busiest times I have ever known. I met with my accident then. I was worked to death. First of all, I had to do my rehearsals; then I had the scene-painting to go on with, which occupied me night and day, and what it brought me in was three shillings a-day and three shillings a-night. The last scene, equal to a pair of flats, was only given to me to do on Christmas-eve, to accomplish by the boxing-day. I got them done by five o'clock at Christmas morning, and then I had to go home and complete my dress, likewise my little boy's, who was engaged to sing and play in ballets at two shillings a-night; and he was only five years old, but very clever at singing, combating, and ballet performing, as also the illustrations of the Grecian statues, which he first done when he was two and a half years old.

"The pantomime was the original Statue Blanche, as performed by Joe Grimaldi, as Mr. Hector Simpson had produced it—for it was under his superintendence—at Covent Garden Theatre. Its title was, 'The Statue Blanche, or Harlequin and the Magic Cross.' I was very successful on the boxing-night, but on the second occasion of my acting in it I received an accident, which laid me up for three months, and I was not off my bed for ten weeks.

"I had, previous to this, played clown very often, especially on the Saturday evenings, for the Jews, for I was a great favourite with them; so far, that I knew they would go far and near to serve me. I had performed in 'Harlequin Blue Beard,' and 'Harlequin Merry Milliners, or The Two Pair of Lovers,' and several others, from eight to ten of them; but that was during the summer season. But I had never had a chance of coming out at Christmas before, and to me it was quite an event, and there's no doubt I should have prospered in it only for my accident.

"This accident was occasioned by this. During the comic scene—the scene of the stripping of the child—they allowed an inexperienced person to play the part of the Beadle, and the doll for the child was stuffed with oak sawdust, and weighed twenty-six pounds. He took it up by the leg and struck me a blow in the face, which dislocated the jaw-bone, and splintered it all to pieces. I went through the pantomime with the remnants of the broken jaw still in my face, having then four hours to perform, for we played sixteen houses that boxing-day, to upwards of from three to four thousand people, and we began at half-past eleven in the day, and terminated at twelve at night. I had met with great approbation the whole of the time, and it was a sad event for me. It was quite accidental was my accident, and of course I bore the man no malice for one, but more blamed the manager for letting him come on.

"When I had done that night, after my blow, I felt very fatigued, and my face was very

sore. I was completely jaw-locked, and I imagined I had caught a cold. It hurt me awfully every time I closed my teeth, but I drowned my feelings in a little brandy, and so forth; and the next night I resumed my clowning. After I had done that evening, I found I was so very bad I could hardly move; and going home with my wife and children, I was obliged to sit down every other yard I took, which occupied me very near two hours to do the mile and a quarter. I went to bed, and never got up again for ten weeks, for it brought on fever again. Ah! what I have suffered, God, and God only, knows! When the doctor came, he said I were under a very severe fever, and he thought I had caught a cold, and that I had the erysipilas, my face being so swollen that it hung on my shoulders as they propped me up with pillows. He knew nothing about it. He made 'em bathe my face with poppy-heads, and wash my mouth out with honey, which drove me out of my mind, for I was a fortnight deranged. My wife told me, that whilst I was mad I had behaved very ill to her—poor thing!—for I wouldn't let anybody come near me but her; and when she'd come I'd seize her by the hair, and fancy she was the man who had broke my jaw; and once I near strangled her. I was mad, you know. Ah! what I suffered then, nobody knows. Through that accident my wife and children has had many a time to go without victuals. Everything was sold then to keep me from the workhouse—even my poor little children's frocks. My poor wife saved my life, if anybody did, for three doctors gave me up. I don't believe they knew what I had. The teeth was loose, but the mouth was closed, and I couldn't open it. They thought I had an abscess there, and they cut me three or four times in the neck to open the gathering. At last they found out the jaw-bone was smashed. When I got better, the doctor told me he could do nothing for me, but give me a letter to Dr. Fergusson, at the King's College Hospital. I went to him, and he examined and probed the jaw through the incision under the gland of the neck, and then he said he must take the jaw out. I said I would consult my friends and hear what they said first; and with the idea of such an operation, and being so weak, I actually fainted down in the passage as I was leaving.

"Ah! fancy my distress to make such a hit, and everybody to compliment me as they did, and to see a prospect of almost coming money, and then suddenly to be thrown over, and be told it was either life or death for me!

"I wouldn't undergo the operation. So I went home, and here comes fortitude. I pulled out the teeth with a pair of cobbler's pincers, and cut open my face with a pen-knife to take out the bits of bone. If I hadn't been a prudent, sober man, I should have died through it.

"There was a friend of mine who was like a brother to me, and he stuck to me every

inch. There was lots of professionals I had supported in their illness, and they never come near me; only my dear friend, and but for him I should have died, for he saved up his money to get me port wine and such things.

"Many a time I've gone out when I was better to sing comic songs at concerts, when I could feel the bits of bone jangling in my mouth. But, sir, I had a wife and family, and they wanted food. As it was, my poor wife had to go to the workhouse to be confined. At one time I started off to do away with myself. I parted with my wife and children, and went to say good-by to my good friend, and it was he who saved my life. If it hadn't been for him it would have been a gooser with me, for I was prepared to finish all. He walked about with me and reasoned me out of it, and says he, 'What on earth will become of the wife and the children?'

"I'm sufficiently well now to enable me to resume my old occupation, not as Clown but as Pantaloon.

"Altogether—taking it all in all—I was three years as clown, and very successful and a great favourite with the Jews. My standing salary for comic singing and clown was eighteen shillings a-week; but then at Christmas it was always rose to thirty shillings or thirty-five shillings. Then I did the writing and painting, such as the placards for the outside; such as, 'This saloon is open this evening, and such-like; and that, on the average, would bring me in eight shillings a-week.

"There was seven men and three females in my company when we played 'Harlequin Blue Beard,' for that's the one I shall describe to you, and that we played for a considerable time. I was manager at the time, and I always was liked by the company, for I never fined them or anything like that; for, you see, I knew that to take sixpence from a poor man was to take a loaf of bread from the children.

"This pantomime was of my own writing, and I managed the chorus and the dances, and all. I painted the scenery, too, and moulded the masks—about six altogether—and then afterwards played clown. All this was included in my salary of eighteen shillings a-week, and that was the top price of the company.

"The first scene was with a cottage on the left hand and with the surrounding country in the back; three rows of waters, with the distant view of Blue Beard's castle. Enters the lover (he's the Harlequin) in a disguise dressed as a Turk; he explains in the pantomime that he should like to make the lady in the cottage his bride (which is Fatima, and afterwards Columbine). He goes to the cottage and knocks three times, when she appears at the window. She comes out and dances with him. At the end of the dance the old man comes in, to the tune of 'Roast Beef of Old England.' He wears a big mask, and is the father to Fatima, and afterwards Pantaloon.

He drives lover off stage, and is about to take Fatima back to cottage, when castle gates at back opens and discovers Blue Beard in gondola, which crosses the stage in the waters. Blue Beard wears a mask and a tremendous long sword, which takes two men to pull out. He's afterwards Clown, and I played the part.

"Several other gondolas cross stage, and when the last goes off the chorus begins in the distance, and increases as it approaches, and is thus:

'In fire or in water, in earth or in air:
Wake up; old Blue Beard, these good things to share:
Wake up! wake up! wake old up Blue Beard,
these good things to share.'

"Then comes Blue Beard's march, and enter troops, followed by Shackaback in a hurry. He's Blue Beard's servant. He bears on his shoulder an immense key, which he places in the middle of stage. He then comes to the front with a scroll, which he exhibits, on which is written:

'Blue Beard comes this very day,
A debt of gratitude to pay:
Aye, you needn't trouble, it is all right,
He intends to wed Fatima this very night.'

At which they all become alarmed, and in an immense hurry of music enters Blue Beard majestically. He sings, to the tune of 'The Low-back Car':

'When first I saw that lady,
As you may plainly see,
I thought she was the handsomest girl
As ever there could be;
Such a cheerful chubby girl was she,
With such a pair of eyes,
With such a mouth, and such a nose,
That she did me so surprise:
Which made me cry out,
Ha! Ha!'

"The lover from the side says:

'You're no credit to your dada.'

"Then Blue Beard looks round fiercely, and his mask is made with eyes to work with strings:

'But I shall him surprise
When I opens my eyes,'

(and he opens a tremendous pair of saucer eyes),

'That talks of my dear dada.'

Then the music goes 'Ha! ha!' As he draws his sword into the army of four men, Shackaback gets it on the nose.

"Then Blue Beard goes direct to the old man and embraces him, and shows him a big purse of money. He then goes to the young lady, but she refuses him, and says she would sooner wed the young trooper. The old man gets in a rage, when enters Demon unseen by all; he waves over their heads; they then catch hold of hands and dance round the key again, to the tune of 'The Roast Beef of Old Eng-

land.' Then begins a chorus which is thus, to the tune of 'Stoney Batter':

'Round this magic key
Gaily let us trudge it;
Hoping something new
Will be brought to our Christmas budget.

But a song about a key,
Is but a doleful matter,
So we'll sing one of our own,
And we'll call it Stoney Batter.
Ri too loo ral loo.'

(Fairies from the side:)

'Ri too loo ral rido.'

(Others:)

'Ri too loo ral roo, loo ral lido.'

"After dancing round key, Blue Beard orders two of the troops to seize the girl and carry her to the castle. Then they catch hands and begin singing, to the tune of 'Fine Young Bachelors':

'Here's a jolly lot of us,
Fine Turkish gentlemen;
With plenty of money in our purse,
Fine Turkish gentlemen,' &c. &c.

"And the scene closes on this. Then the lover just crosses, so as to give time to arrange the back scene. He vows vengeance on Blue Beard. Then scene opens, and discovers a chamber with Fatima on couch, and Demon behind with a large heart, on the scene over which is in illuminated letters:

'Whosoe'er this dagger takes,
The magic spells of Blue Beard breaks.'

The large key is placed at the foot of the couch on which she is laying. We don't introduce the haunted chamber scenes, as it would have been too lengthened; but it was supposed that she had been there and examined it, and terror had overcome her and she had swooned. That's when the audience sees her. We couldn't do all the story at a penny gaff, it was too long. To return to the plot.

"Enter Fairy, who dances round the stage, and sees the heart. She goes and snatches the dagger; then a loud crash, and the key falls to pieces on the stage.

"I had five shillings given me as a present for that scene, for I had painted the scene all arches, and round every pillar was a serpent with fire coming from the mouth. I produced that pantomime, so that altogether it did not cost thirty shillings, because each man found his own dress, don't you see.

"After the crash enters Blue Beard. He says the lady has broken the key, and he is about to kill her; when enter lover, and he has a terrific combat, in which they never hit a blow (like a phantom-fight); but the lover is about to be struck to the ground, when enters Fairy, who speaks these words:

'Hold! turn and turn is the Yorkshire way.
You think ours. Now your dog shall have its day.
Behold!'

"Then the scene falls, and discovers a fairy palace at back, with fairies, who sing:

'Come, listen, gentle lover,
Come, listen unto me;
Be guided by our fairy queen,
Who gained your liberty.'

"They all look dismayed at one another, and go to the sides ready for changing their dresses for the comic work.

'The Fairy Queen then says:

'You, the true lover, I think knows no sin,
Therefore grace our pantomime as Harlequin.'

"And turning to the lady she adds:

'Nay, young lady, do not pine,
But attend him as his faithful Columbine.'

"Turning to Blue Beard:

'You, Blue Beard, a man of great renown,
Shall grace our pantomime as Christmas Clown.'

"Then Clown comes forward, and cries: 'Halla! ha, ha, ha! here we are! Shobbus is out;' (that's the Jewish Sunday); and, oh dear! how they used to laugh at that!

"Then she turns to the old man:

'You, old man, you've been a silly loon,
Attend him as slippery fidgety Pantaloon!'

"Then as she's going off she says:

'Ah! I'd almost forgotten;
Never mind, it is all right;
Demon of the magic key,
Attend as Sprite.'

"Then the fairies sing:

'We fairies dance, we fairies sing,
Whilst the silver moon is beaming;
We fairies dance, we fairies sing,
To please our Fairy Queen.'

"Then there is blue fire, and the scene closes, and the comic business begins.

"Clown dances first with Harlequin, and at the end of trip hollars out: 'Ha, here we are!' Then he sings out, each time Harlequin beats him, 'A, E, I;' (Pantaloon drops in and gets a blow, O!); and Clown says, 'Tuppence! all right, you owe me nothing; I shan't give you no change.'

"Then there's a photography scene, and Clown comes on and says, 'Here, I say, what shall we do for a living?' Then Pantaloon says, 'We'll become dancing-masters.' The Clown says, 'They'll take likenesses.'

"Ah, here's somebody coming!

"Enter a swell with white ducks, and a blacking-boy follows, says, 'Clean your boots, sir?' Clown asks him to clean his. As the boy is beginning, Harlequin bangs him, and he knocks the boy over. Next bang he gets he hits Pantaloon, and says he did it. Pantaloon

loon says, 'I never touched you;' and Clown replies, 'Then don't do it again.' Then I'd give 'em a rub up on the smoking mania. I'd say to boy, 'Here, boy, take this farden to get yourself a pipe of tobacco, little boys is fond of smoking;' and Pantaloon would add, 'Yes, men's left off.' Boy goes off to buy the tobacco, and leaves his blacking-box, which Clown promises to take care of and clean the boots. He hollows out, 'Clean your boots?' and Pantaloon puts his foot down, and gets his toes rapped. Enter a lady, who asks where she can have her portrait taken,—Yes, marm; over there,—Clown steals parcel. When lady is gone, Clown discovers parcel to contain blank cards. This is what he takes the portraits on, and it was at a time when they was all the rage at a shilling. Clown then says, he's taking portraits, and makes a camera out of the blacking-box. He cuts a hole in the box, and sticks the blacking-bottle for a lens. Then he places the box on Pantaloon's back for a stand. Then, of course, Clown knocks him over, and he asks what that's for. 'Why, if you're a stand, what do you fall for? I never see such a stand.' Then ladies and gentlemen come in to have their portraits taken, and Clown smears the cards with blacking and gives it, and asks a shilling; when they grumble and won't pay, he rubs the blacking in their faces. General row, and the scene changes to a street-scene. There's another trip by Harlequin and Columbine, and enters Clown in a hurry with six fish, and he meets Pantaloon. 'Look'ee here, what I've found!' 'Oh, fair halves!' 'All right! sit down, and you shall have them.' Pantaloon declines, and Clown knocks him down, and they begin sharing fish. 'There's one for you and one for me, another for you and another for me, another for you and another for me.' 'How many have you got?' asks Clown, and Pantaloon says, 'One—two—three.' Clown says, 'No! you've got more than three.' Then, taking one up, he asks, 'How many is that?'—'One.' Taking another up, 'How many's that?' Pantaloon exclaims, 'Two!' Clown says, 'Then two and one is three,' and takes up another, and asks how many that is. Pantaloon exclaims, 'Three!' Clown says, 'Then three and three makes six.' Clown then counts his own, and says, 'I've only got three; you must give me these three to make me six. That's fair halves. Ain't you satisfied?' 'No!' 'Then take that,' and he knocks him over with a fish.

"The next scene is a public-house—'The Freemasons' Arms, a select club held here.' After trip by Harlequin and Columbine, enters Clown and Pantaloon. 'Look'ee here! it's a public-house! let's have half a pint of half-and-half.' Clown hollows, 'Now ramrod!' meaning landlord, and he comes on. 'Why don't you attend to gentlemen?' 'What's your pleasure, sir?' 'Half a pint of half-and-half for me and my friend.' He brings a tumbler, which Harlequin breaks, and it comes in half. 'Hallo!

cries Clown; 'this is rum half-and-half! Here's half for you and half for me.'

"Then they say, 'I say, here's somebody coming.' Enter two Freemasons, who give each other the sign by shaking both hands, bumping up against each other, whispering in each other's ear, and going into the public-house. Clown then calls the landlord, and says he belongs to the club. Landlord asks him for the sign. Clown says he's got it over the door. He then takes Pantaloon and shakes his hands, and bumps him, and asks if that is the sign. The landlord says 'No.' 'Is that it?' 'No, this is,' and he gives Clown a spank; and he passes it to Pantaloon, and knocks him down. 'That's the sign; now we've got it between us.' 'Yes, and I've got the best half.'

"Clown says, 'Never mind, we will get in;' and he goes to the door and knocks, when the club descends and strikes them on the head. Clown then tells Pantaloon to go and knock, and he'll watch and see where it comes from. The club comes down again, and knocks Pantaloon on the head; but Clown sees from whence it comes and pulls a man in fleshings out of the window. Clown and Pantaloon pursues him round stage, and he knocks them both over, and jumps through a trap in the window with a bottle on it, marked 'Old Tom,' and a scroll falls down, written 'Gone to blazes.' Pantaloon follows, and flap falls, on which is written, 'To be left till called for.' Clown is about to follow, when gun fires and scroll falls with 'Dead letter' on it. Pantaloon is bundled out by landlord and others; general row; policemen springing rattles, fireworks, &c.

"There are from four to five comic scenes like this. But it would take too long to describe them. Besides, we don't do the same scenes every evening, but vary them each night.

"Then comes the catch, or the dark scene, in which Clown, Pantaloon, Harlequin, and Columbine are in the dark, and seize one another.

'Hold! you've done your best with all your might;
And we'll give our friends a charge another night.'

"You see the poetry is always beautifully adapted to ourselves. They've very clever fairies.

"We in generally finale with that there:

'We fairies dance; we fairies sing,
Whilst the silver moon is beaming;
We fairies dance, we fairies sing,
And we have pleased our Fairy Queen.'

"Then the bell rings, and the man who keeps order cries out, 'Pass out! pass out!' "The performance generally takes from one hour and a half to an hour and three-quarters, and we do three of 'em a night. It makes the perspiration run off you, and every house I

have a wet shirt. The only rest I have is with my boy singing 'Hot codlins.' When they call for the song I say, 'Yes, yes; all right; you shall have them; only there's a chip of mine will sing it for me,' and I introduce my little boy—of four then—to sing.

"The general pay for Clowns at penny exhibitions is averaging from twenty to twenty-five shillings a-week. You can say without exaggeration, that there are twenty of these penny exhibitions in London. They always produce a new pantomime at Christmas; and all the year round, in summer as well as winter, they bring 'em out, when business is shy, for a draw, which they always find them answer.

"A Clown that can please at a penny gaff, is capable of giving satisfaction at any theatre, for the audience is a very difficult one to entertain. They have no delicacy in 'em, and will hiss in a moment if anything displeases them.

"A pantomime at a penny exhibition will run at Christmas three weeks or a month, if very successful; and during that time it's played to upwards of twelve hundred persons a-night, according to the size of the house, for few penny ones hold more than four hundred, and that's three times a-night. The Rotunda in the Blackfriars-road, and the Olympic Circus in the Lower Marsh, Lambeth, do an immense business, for they hold near a thousand each, and that's three thousand spectators the night.

"When the pantomime is on we only do a little comic singing before it begins playing."

THE CANVAS CLOWN.

A TALL, fine-looking young fellow, with a quantity of dark hair, which he wore tucked behind his ears, obliged me with his experience as a clown at the fairs. He came to me dressed in a fashionable "paletot," of a ginger-bread colour, which, without being questioned on the subject, he told me he had bought in Petticoat Lane for three shillings.

I have seldom seen a finer-built youth than this clown, for he was proportioned like a statue. The peculiarity of his face was that, at the junction of the forehead with the nose there was a rising, instead of a hollow, somewhat like that which is seen in Roman antiquities.

His face, whilst talking, was entirely without emotion, and he detailed the business outside the show, on the parade, in a sing-song voice, like a child saying its lesson; and although he often said "This makes 'em shout with laughter," his own face remained as solemn as a parish clerk's.

He furnished me with the following particulars of his life:—

"On and off, I've been clowning these twelve year. Previous to that time, I have done busking in public-houses, and comic singing, and ballet performing at penny exhibi-

tions; as well as parading outside shows at fairs. I've done clowning at near every place, at fairs and in the streets, along with a school of acrobats, and at circuses, and at penny gaffs, and at the Standard, and such-like. I first commenced some twelve years ago, at Enfield fair. It was a travelling concern I was with,—the 'Thespian Temple,' or Johnson's Theatre,—where I was engaged to parade on the outside as a walking gentleman. There was no clown for the pantomime, for he had disappointed us, and of course they couldn't get on without one; so, to keep the concern going, old Johnson, who knew I was a good tumbler, came up to me, and said 'he had *nanti vampo*, and your *nabs* must *fake* it;" which means,—We have no clown, and you must do it. So I done the clowning on the parade, and then, when I went inside, I'd put on a pair of Turkish trousers, and a long cloak, and hat and feathers, to play 'Robert, duke of Normandy,' in the first piece.

"You see the performances consisted of all gag. I don't suppose anybody knows what the words are in the piece. Everybody at a show theatre is expected to do general business, and when you're short of people (as we was at Johnson's, for we played 'Robert, duke of Normandy,' with three men and two girls), Clown is expected to come on and slip a cloak over his dress, and act tragedy in the first piece. We don't make up so heavy for the clown for fairs, only a little dab of red on the cheeks, and powder on the face; so we've only just got to wipe off the 'slop' when it's in the way. You looks rather pale, that's all. The dress is hidden by the one we put over it.

"The plot of 'Robert, duke of Normandy,' is this: He and his slave Piccolo come in; and after a little business between them, all gagging, he says, 'Slave! get back to the castle!' he answers, 'Your orders shall be attended to!' Then he says, 'At the peril of your life, and prevent the fair Angelina to escape!' That's the first scene. In the second, two of Robert's slaves attack his rival, and then Robert rushes in and pretends to save him. He cries 'Hold! two to one!' The men go off, saying, 'Well, we part as friends! when next we meet, we meet as foes!' As soon as Robert leaves the rival the lady comes in, and tells him she is flying from Robert's castle, and that Robert has seduced her, and seeks her life. She tells him that the man who just left him is he. 'It is false!' he says; 'that is my friend!' She cries, 'Test him!' 'But how?' he asks. She replies, 'Follow me to the statue, at the bottom of the grove, and then I will tell you!' Then the third comes on. Enter Robert and slave, and the marble statue discovered: that is, it is supposed to be, but it is only Angelina dressed up. He gives the slave instructions to put a ring on the finger of the statue,—for he is supposed to have dealings with Old Nick,

and that every time he put a ring on the statue he can demand a victim. He tells the slave to place a ring on the finger, and pronounce these words: 'When it may please your most gracious majesty to seek your husband, to find a victim, you will find him here!' 'No, no, not here—there!' pointing to Robert. The Duke half draws his sword, and exclaims, 'Slave! what ho!' without touching him. Enters the rival, who demands satisfaction of Robert; who says, 'What can I do to satisfy you?' for he's in a deuce of a go now. He then tells him to kneel to the statue, and swear he is not Robert, duke of Normandy. Instead of that he calls to the servant, and tells him to put the ring on; but Robert, the Duke, is in a deuce of a way, tearing his hair. The servant does it, and exclaims, 'I have done it; but would you believe it, when I placed it on the finger, the finger became collapsed!' Robert cries, 'Slave, thou art a liar! if I find that it is false I will cleave thee to the earth!' Robert examines the finger, and exclaims, 'Alas! it is too true!' and he kneels to the statue and says, 'I swear that I am'—and he's going to say, 'not duke of Normandy,' but the statue is too quick for him, and adds, 'Robert, duke of Normandy!' And then the comic slave pops his head round, and pronounces, 'Oh, the devil!' Then the rival stabs him, and he falls down wounded, and then he's triumphant; and a pen'orth of blue fire finishes the piece; and then ding! ding! dong! and down goes the curtain. We always have blue fire,—a pen'orth each house,—and that makes it go. Sometimes there are two friends in the piece; but it all depends upon whether the piece is powerfully cast or not. We usually knock the two friends into one, or does away with 'em all together. 'Robert, duke of Normandy,' is a never-failing fair piece, and we always does it every year. That and 'Blue Beard, or Female Curiosity,' and 'Fair Rosamond, or the Bower of Woodstock,' are our stock pieces. After the curtain has been down three minutes it goes up again, and the heavy goes in and says,—

'Elves of the mountain, dale, and dell,
This young maid to please within her cell,
Attend unto us, one and all—
Listen to your potent master's call.'

"Then all of us at the sides put their fingers in their mouths and howl like Indians. There's generally a cue given of 'Now, demons.' After that the heavy man says:—

'You, young man, that knows no sin,
Appear as russet-booted Harlequin.'

We called him russet-booted, because he had been playing the lover in the first piece. At Richardson's they called him 'Spangled Harlequin,' but old Johnson couldn't do that, he hadn't no wardrobe. Then the heavy man continues:—

'And you, young maid, no longer pine,
Attend him as his faithful Columbine.'

Then he goes on:—

'Two more slaves will I rise from out the unfathom-
able deep,
Who for a long time have been in perpetual sleep;
They, too, shall share my boon—
Appear as Clown and tottering Pantaloon.
Now away! begin your magic sport,
And bring me back a good report.'

Then I cried, 'Hullo! here we are!' and the sports begin.

"The first *trip*, as we calls it—a dance, to use your terms—is Harlequin comes in with Columbine for a hornpipe. If he can't dance, Clown, as soon as he begins, cries, 'Here we are!' and rushes in and drives them off.

"After that, Clown runs on and says, 'Here we are!' and knocks Pantaloon down; who exclaims, 'Oh! ain't I got the tooth-ache!' Clown says, 'Let me feel your tooth. Oh, it's quite loose! I'll get a bit of string and soon have it out.' Clown goes off for string, Pantaloon singing out, 'Murder! murder!' Clown returns with string and a pistol, and then ties the string, and cries, 'Here goes one, and now it's two, and here goes three,' and fires and pulls a wooden tooth, as big as your fist, with four sharp prongs to it. I've had these teeth often as big as a quartern loaf, but I'm talking of my first appearance. Pantaloon says, 'Here, that's my tooth!' and Clown replies, 'So it is,' and hits him on the head with it. Then he asks Pantaloon if he's better; but he answers, 'No, I'm worse. Oh! oh! I've got a cold in my gum!' Then a red-hot poker is introduced, and he burns him with it all round the stage. That concludes the first scene. Then there's another trip, a would-be polka or so; and then comes the bundle-scene. Enter a Yorkshireman—it's mostly Harlequins do this, because most of the others are outside parading, to keep the crowd together—he's got a smockfrock on and russet boots at Johnson's, and he says, 'I've coome up here to Lunnon to see my Dolly. I feel rather dry, and I'll just gi' in here to get half-a-point of yale. I'll just leave my bunnel outside, and keep a strict eye on it, for they say as how Lunnon has plenty of thieves in it.' Enter Clown, very cautiously. He sees the bundle, and calls Pantaloon. He tells Pantaloon, 'I must have it, because I want it.' He goes and picks up the bundle, and says to Pantaloon, 'I shouldn't wonder but what this bundle belongs to—' 'Me,' the Yorkshireman says, and the Clown says, 'Ah, I thought so;' and then he takes Pantaloon's hand, and says, 'Come along, little boy, we shall get into trouble,' and leads him off. They come on again, and this time Clown tells Pantaloon to get it; so he goes and picks up the bundle, and Yorkshireman knocks him down. Clown runs off and Pantaloon after. Clown then returns on his belly, drawing himself on with his hands.

He gets the bundle in his mouth, and is just going off when Yorkshireman turns round, and Clown seeing him, gives the bundle to Pantaloon, and says, 'Hold this.' Yorkshireman seizes Clown and tells him he wants his bundle. Pantaloon having run away with it, Clown says, 'I haven't got it, starch me' (that means, 'search me'); and there is a regular run over the stage crying 'Hot beef! hot beef!' (instead of 'Stop thief!') The Yorkshireman collars Pantaloon, and says, 'I'll take you to the station-house,' and Clown exclaims, 'Yes, and I'll take this bundle down the lane' (meaning Petticoat-lane, because there is a sale for anything there). Then comes the catch-scene as we call it; that is, they all come on in the dark, Clown singing, 'Puss, puss! have you seen my pussy?' Then in pops the fairy, and cries, 'Hold! your magic sports is run, and thus I step between.' Pantaloon adds, 'Aye, it's all so gay;' and Clown cries, 'Yes, and all serene;' and the fairy says, 'And with my magic wand I change the scene.' Then every-body sings:—

'Now our pantomime's done,
Here's an end to our fun,
We shall shortly commence again:
Our tricks are o'er,
And we're friends once more,
We shall shortly commence again.'

"Then the curtain falls, and Clown puts his head out on one side and exclaims, 'It's all,' and Pantaloon pops out at the other side and adds, 'over.'

"The handing man, who has done Robert, then shouts out from the top, 'Pass out!' in a sepulchral voice, and a door opens in the side of the stage for the people to leave by. That day I was with old Johnson—we used to call him 'Snuffy Johnson,' 'cos he carried a lot of snuff in his waistcoat pocket—we were very busy, and there was a good many people waiting on the outside to come in, so we only did about two of them regular performances; and then about six o'clock in the evening the crowd got so great, old Johnson used to hollow through the parade-door, over people's heads, 'John Aderley,' just as we had commenced playing, and that meant 'Cut it short.' We used to finish it up sharp then, and finish all up in six or seven minutes. We used to knock Robert the Devil into a very little space, doing the scenes, but cutting them short; and as for the pantomime, we had scarcely commenced with 'Two more slaves will I rise from out the unfathomable deep,' than we were singing, 'Our pantomime's done, here's an end to our fun.' Sometimes the people would grumble awful, and at others they laughed to see how they was swindled.

"I got on very fair on my first appearance as Clown, considering the circumstances, but I had, you see, four of the best parading comic men opposing me. There was Teddy W—as Silly Billy, and Black Sambo as Black Fop, and Funny Felix as ring clown, and Steve

Sanderson, another clown, at Frazier's Circus, next door to us; and we didn't stand much chance at clowning alongside of them, as they're the best paraders out. Besides, Frazier's booth took nearly all the ground up; and as we drew up on the ground (that is, with the parade-carriages) late on Sunday evening, we were obliged to have a plot next to the Circus, and we had the town pump right in the audience part, close to the first seat in the gallery, and the Obelisk—or rather a cross it is—took up one side of the stage, which next day we used as the castle in Blue Beard, when the girl gets up on a ladder to the top of the railings, which had a shutter on 'em, and that was Fatima looking out from the spire of the castle for her Salem. Ah! 'twas a great hit, for we put an old scene round it, and it had a capital effect.

"What we do when we go out clowning to a travelling theatre is this. This is what I did at Enfield: we arrived late and drew up the parade-carriages on the ground, which the gov. had gone on a-head to secure. Then we went to sleep for awhile—pitched on a shutter underneath the parade-carriages, for it had been wet weather, and we couldn't sleep on the canvas for the booth, for it had been sopped with rain at Edmonton fair. As soon as it was break of day we begun getting up the booth, and being short-handed it took us till three o'clock before we was ready. First we had to measure our distances and fix the parade-waggons. Then we planted our king pole on the one in the centre; then we put our back-pole on the one near the parade; then we put on our ridge at top, and our side-rails; and then we put our side-ridges, and sling our rafters. We then roll the tilt up, which is for the roof, and it gets heavy with dirt, and we haul it up to the top and unroll it again and fasten it again; then we fix the sides up, with shutters about six feet square, which you see on the top of the travelling parade-carriages. We fixes up the theatre and the seats which we take with us. All the scenes roll up, and is done up in bundles. The performers drop under the parade-waggons, and there's a sacking up to divide the men's part from the women. There's a looking-glass—sometimes an old bit or a two-penny one starred, or any old thing we can get hold of—and the gov. gives you out your dress. We always provide our own slips and such-like.

"When we parade outside, it all depends upon what kind of Pantaloon you've got with you, as to what business you can make. When we first come out on the parade all the company is together, and we march round, form a half-circle, or dress it, as we say, while the band plays 'Rule Britannia,' or some other operatic air. Then the manager generally calls out, 'Now, Mr. Merryman, state the nature of the performances to be given here to-day.' Then I come forward, and this is the

dialogue: 'Well, Mr. Martin, what am I to tell them?' 'The truth, sir! what they'll see here to-day.' 'Well, if they stop long enough they'll see a great many people, I shouldn't wonder.' 'No, no, sir, I want you to tell them what they'll see inside our theatre.' 'Well, sir, they'll see a splendid drama by first-rate performers, of Robert Dooke of Normandy, with a variety of singing and dancing, with a gorgeous and comic pantomime, with new dresses and scenery, and everything combined to make this such an entertainment as was never before witnessed in this town, and all for the small charge of three shillings.' 'No, no, Mr. Merryman, threepence.' 'What! threepence? I shan't perform at a threepenny show.' And then I pretend to go down the steps as if leaving; he pulls me back, and says, 'Come here, sir; what are you going to do?' 'I shan't spoil my deputation playing for threepence.' 'But you must understand, Merryman, we intend giving them one and all a treat, that the working-classes may enjoy themselves as well as noblemen.' 'Then if that's the case I don't mind, but only for this once.'

"Then I begin spouting again and again, always ending up with 'to be witnessed for the low charge of threepence.' Then Pantaloon comes up to say what he's going to do, and I give him the 'nap,' and knock him on his back. He cries 'I'm down,' and I turn him over and pick him up, and say, 'And now you're up.' Then the company form a half set and do a quadrille. When they have scrambled through that, Clown will do a comic dance, and then some burlesque statues. This is the way them statues are done: I go inside and get a birch-broom, and put a large piece of tilt or old cloth round me, and stand just inside the curtains at the entrance from the parade, ready to come out when wanted. Then the male portion of the company get just to the top of the steps, and Pantaloon says to one of them, 'Did you speak?' He says, 'When?' and Pantaloon says, 'Now;' and the whole lot make a noise, hollowing out, 'Oh, oh, oh!' as if they was astonished, but it's only to attract attention. Then the gong strikes, and the trumpets flourishes, and everybody shouts, 'Hi, hi! look here!' Then, naturally, all the people turn towards the caravan to see what's up. Then they clear a passage-way from the front to the entrance and back, and bring me forth with this bit of cloth before me. The music flourishes again, and they make a tremendous tumult, crying out, 'Look here! look here!' and when all are looking I drop the cloth, and then I stand in the position of Hercules, king of Clubs, with a birch-broom across my shoulders, and an old hat on a-top of my wig. Then the band strikes up the statue music, and I goes through the statues; such as Ajax defying the lightning, and Cain killing his brother Abel; and it finishes up with the fighting and dying Gladiator. As a

finale I do a back-fall, and pretend to be dead. The company then picks me up and carry me, lying stiff, on their shoulders round the parade. They carry me inside, and shout out, 'All in to begin; now we positively commence.' Then they drive everybody in off the parade. When the public have taken their seats then we come strolling out, one at a time, till we all get out on the parade again, because the place isn't sufficiently full. It's what we call 'making a sally.' The check-takers at the door prevent anybody leaving if they want to come out again.

"Then I get up to some nonsense again. Perhaps I'll get up a lot of boys out of the fair, and make 'em sit on the parade in a row, and keep a school, as I call it. I get an old property fiddle, and I tell them, when I play they must sing. Then I give out a hymn. The bow has a lot of notches in it, and there's a bit of wood sticking up in the fiddle; so that when I plays it goes 'ricketty, ricketty,' like. This is the hymn I gives out:—

'When I can shoot my rifle clear
At pigeons in the skies,
I'll bid farewell to pork and peas,
And live on pigeon pies.'

"Of course, when they sings, they make a horrible noise, or even if they dont, I begin to wallop them with my bow. I then tell them I must teach them something easier first. Then I give them—

'Alas! old Grimes is dead and gone,
We ne'er shall see him more;
He used to wear a old great coat
All buttoned down before.'

Then I finish up by putting on the boys a lot of masks, and some have old soldiers' coats; and I give them implements of war, such as old brooms or sticks, and then I put them through their military exercises. I stand in front, with the birch-broom as my gun, and I tell them they must do as I do. Then I cry, 'File arms,' and all mark their own muskets. I tell them to lay them all down; and after they have laid down their arms I tell them to shoulder arms, which makes a shout, because they haven't got no arms. One boy, who is put up to it, says, 'I've got no arms;' I go up to him and catch hold of his arms, and ask him what he calls 'these here.' Then I make him put them on his shoulders, and tell him, that's 'shoulder arms.' Then I tell them to ground arms, and I do it at the time, stooping down and putting my arms on the ground. I then call them to attention, and up comes the Pantaloon on a basket-horse, and I tell them they are going to be reviewed by the Duke. I give them all the implements again, and put them to stand attention. Pantaloon gallops round them, reviewing. He wears a large flap cocked-hat and soldier's old coat. He makes a bit of fun with his horse, making

it kick, and breaking the ranks of my soldiers. Then I quarrel with him about that, and he says, 'He's a right to do as he likes, because he's my superior horse-ifer.' Then he orders me to the other end of the parade, to stand attention, with my back towards the boys. Then he tells them to ride about face and charge, and they all run and charge me in behind. They run two or three times round the parade, still charging me, until I run inside to the theatre, and all the company shout out, 'All in to begin; we are now positively to commence.' We then get them in off the parade again, and if the place is full begin; if not, we gradually crawl out again one by one, and one of the girls dances a hornpipe or a Highland fling. We then make a sally, 'All in again,' and by that time we generally begin.

"This is the parade business that is most popular at fairs; we do a few other things, but they are all much of a muchness. It's very hard work; and I have worked, since being with Snuffy Johnson, seventeen hours of a-day; but then we have not had so much to do on the outside. Sometimes I've been so tired at night, that I've actually laid down in my dress and never washed, but slept like that all night.

"The general pay for a clown, during fair-time, is 5s. or 6s. a-day, but that usually ends in your moving on the first day; then 4s. on the second, and, perhaps, 3s. on the third. The reason is, that the second and third day is never so good as the first. The excuse is, that business is not so good, and expenses are heavy; and if you don't like it, you needn't come again. They don't stand about what you agree for; for instance, if it's a wet day and you don't open, there's no pay. Richardson's used, when the old man was alive, to be more money, but now it's as bad as the rest of 'em. If you go on shares with a sharing company it averages about the same. We always share at the drum-head at night, when all's over. It's usually brought out between the stage and the bottom seat of the gallery. The master or missus counts out the money. The money on the drum-head may, if it's a good fair, come to 16l. or 18l., or, as it most usually is, 9l. or 10l. I have known us to share 1l. a-piece afore now; and I've known what it is to take 10d. for a share. We usually take two fairs a-week, or we may stay a night or two after the fair's over, and have a bespeak night. The wages of a clown comes to—if you average it—1l. a-week all the year round, and that's puffing it at a good salary, and supposing you to be continually travelling. Very likely, at night we have to pull down the booth after performing all day, and be off that night to another fair—15 or 16 miles off it may be—and have to build up again by the next afternoon. The women always ride on the top of the parade carriages, and the men

occasionally riding and shoving up behind the carriages up hill. The only comfort in travelling is a short pipe, and many a time I've drowned my woes and troubles in one.

"The scene of sharing at the drum-head is usually this,—while the last performance is going on the missus counts up the money; and she is supposed to bring in all the money she has taken, but that we don't know, and we are generally fiddled most tremendous. When the theatre's empty, she, or him, generally says, 'Now lads, please, now ladies! it's getting late;' and when they have all mustered it's generally the cry, 'We've had a bad fair!' The people seldom speak. She then takes the number of the company,—we generally averages some sixteen performers,—and after doing so she commences sharing, taking up two or three shares, according to the ground-rent; one then to herself for taking money; then for the husband being there, (for they don't often perform); then they takes shares for the children, for they makes them go on for the fairies, and on our parade. Snuffy Johnson used to take two shares for the wardrobes and fittings, and that is the most reasonable of any of 'em, for they mostly take double that; indeed, we always took six. Then there are two shares for ground-rent, and two for travelling expenses. The latter two shares depend entirely upon the fair; for the expenses are just the same whether we takes money or not, so that if it's a bad fair, more has to be deducted, and that's the worse for us, on both sides. That makes twelve or thirteen shares to be deducted before the men touch a penny for themselves. Any strolling professional who reads that will say, 'Well, 'tis very considerate; for it's under the mark, and not over.'

"When we have finished at one fair, if we want to go to another the next day, as soon as the people have gone in for the last performance we commence taking down the pay-box, and all the show-fittings on the outside, and all that isn't wanted for the performance. As soon as the mummers have done their first slang, if they are not wanted in the pantomime they change themselves and go to work pulling down. When the pantomime's over, every one helps till all's packed up; then sharing takes place, and we tramp on by night to the next fair. We then camp as well as we can till daylight, if it isn't morning already, and to work we go building for the fair; and in general, by the time we've done building, it's time to open.

"I've travelled with 'Star's Theatre Royal,' and 'Smith and Webster's,' (alias Richardson's), and 'Frederick's Theatre,' and 'Baker's Pavilion,' and 'Douglass's travelling Shakspearian Saloon;' (he's got scenes from Shakspear's plays all round the front, and it's the most splendid concern on the road), and I've done the comic business at all of them. They are all conducted on the same principle,

and do the same kind of business, as that I've described to you.

"When we're travelling it depends upon the business as to what we eat. They talk of strolling actors living so jollily and well, but I never knew it fall to my share. What we call a mummer's feed is potatoes and herrings, and they always look out for going into a town where there's plenty of fresh herrings. A fellow we called Nancy Dawson was the best hand at herrings. I've known him go into a tavern and ask for the bill of fare, and shout out, 'Well, Landlord, what have you got for dinner? Perhaps he'd say, 'There's beef and veal, sir, very nice—just ready;' and then he'd say, 'No, I'm sick of meat; just get me a nice bloater!' and if it came to much more than a penny there was a row. If we are doing bad business, and we pass a field of swedes, there's a general rush for the pull. The best judges of turnips is strolling professionals. I recollect, in Hampshire, once getting into a swede field, and they was all blighted: we pulled up a hundred, I should think, but when we cut them open they was all flaxy inside, and we, after all, had to eat the rind. We couldn't get a feed. Sausages and fagots (that's made of all the stale sausages and savalays, and unsightly bits of meat what won't sell) is what we gets hold of principally. The women have to make shifts as we do. We always get plenty of beer, even when we can't get money; for we can sing a song or so, and then the yokels stand something: besides, there's hardly a town we go into without some of the yokels being stage-struck, and they feel quite delighted to be among the professionals, and will give us plenty of beer if we'll talk to them about acting.

"It's impossible to say how many clowns there are working at canvas theatres. There's so many meddling at it,—not good uns, but trying to be. I can mention fifty, I am sure, by name. I shouldn't think you would exaggerate, if you was to say there was from one hundred and fifty to two hundred who call themselves clowns. Many of the first-rate clowns now in London have begun at strolling. There's Herring, and Lewis, and Nelson, and plenty more, doing well now.

"It's a hard life, and many's the time we squeeze a laugh out, when it's like killing us to do it. I've never known a man break down at a fair, done up, for, you see, the beer keeps us up; but I've known one chap to faint on the parade from exhaustion, and then get up, as queer as could be, and draw twopence and go and have a fish and bread. A woman at an oyster-stall alongside of the theatre give him a drop of beer. He was hearty and hungry, and had only joined lately,—regular hard up; so he went two days without food. When we shared at night he went and bought a ham-bone, and actually eat himself asleep, for he dropped off with the bone in his hand."

THE PENNY-CIRCUS JESTER.

A MAN who had passed many years of his life as jester at the cheap circuses, or penny equestrian shows frequenting the fairs in the neighbourhood of London, obliged me with the following details:—

"There are only two kinds of clowns, the stage and the circus clown, only there is different denominations: for instance, the clown at the fair and the clown at the regular theatre, as well as the penny gaff (when they give pantomimes there), are one and the same kind of clown, only better or worse, according to the pay and kind of performance; but it's the same sort of business. Now the circus clown is of the same kind as those that go about with schools of acrobats and negro serenaders. He is expected to be witty and say clever things, and invent anything he can for the evening's performance; but the theatre clown is expected to do nothing but what enters into the business of the piece. Them two are the main distinctions we make in the perfession.

"I've travelled along with only two circuses; but then it's the time you stop with them, for I was eighteen months along with a man of the name of Johnson, who performed at the Albion, Whitechapel, and in Museum-street, opposite Drury-lane (he had a penny exhibition then), and for above two years and a half along with Veale, who had a circus at the Birdcage, Hackney-road, and at Walworth.

"At Museum-street we only had one 'prad,' which is slang for pony, although we used to introduce all the circus business. We had jugglers, and globe-runners, and tight-rope dancers also. We never had no ring built, but only sawdust on the stage, and all the wings taken out. They used to begin with a chant and a hop (singing and dancing), after which there was tight-rope hopping. As soon as ever the rope was drawn up, Johnson, who had a whip in his hand, the same as if it was a regular circus, used to say, 'Now, Mr. Merryman.' Then I'd run on and answer, 'Here I am, sir, all of a lump, as the old man said what found the sixpence. I'm up and dressed, like a watchbox. Whatshali I have the pleasure for to come for to go, for to go for to fetch, for to fetch for to carry, to oblige you?' I usually wore a ring dress, with red rings round my trunks, and a fly to correspond. The tights had straight red lines. My wig was a white one with a red comb. Then Johnson would say, 'Have the pleasure to announce Madame Leone.' Then I give it: 'Ladies and gentlemen, this is Madame Leone, a young lady that threw her clothes into bed and hung herself upon the door-nail.' Then she just gets up on the rope, and I go and sit down as if I was going to sleep. Mr. Johnson then says, 'Come, sir, you're going to sleep; you've got your eyes shut.' I answer, 'I beg your pardon, sir, I was not asleep.' And then he says I was, and I contradict him, and add, 'If I had my

eyes shut, I am the first of the family that went to sleep so.' Then he asks how that is? and I reply, 'Because they were afraid of having their pockets picked;' and he says, 'Nonsense! all your family was very poor, there was nothing in their pockets to pick;' and I add, 'Yes, but there was the stitches though.' All these puns and catches goes immense. 'Now, sir,' he continues, 'chalk the rope.' I say, 'Whose place is it?' and he replies, 'The fool's.' 'Then do it yourself,' I answer. And then we go on in this style. He cries, 'What did you say, sir?' 'I said I'd do it myself.' 'Now, Madame Leone, are you ready?' and she nods; and then I tell the music to toodelloo and blow us up. She then does a step or two—a little of the polka—and retires, and I am told to chalk the rope again, and this is our talk: 'Oh dear, oh dear! there's no rest for the wicked. Sir, would you be so kind, so obliging, as to inform me why I chalk the top of the rope?' 'To prevent the young lady from slipping down, sir.' 'Oh, indeed! then I'll chalk underneath the rope.' He then asks, 'What are you doing of, sir?' 'Why didn't you tell me when I chalked the top it's to prevent the young lady from slipping down?' 'Yes, sir.' 'Then I chalked underneath, to prevent her from slipping up again. Would you oblige me with your hand?' Then I look at it and say, 'Plenty of corns in it; you've done some hard work in your time.' 'I have, sir.' 'Beautiful nails, too;' and then I rub the chalk on his hand, and when he asks what I'm doing of, I say 'Chalking it.' 'What for, sir?' 'Why, sir, to keep it from slipping into other people's pockets.' Then he gives me a click of whip and says, 'Out of the way, sir! Now, Madame Leone, proceed.'

"When she's finished the dance I cry, 'Now I'll get on the rope and have a try,' and I mount very courageously, crying,

'I'd be a butcher's boy,
Born in the Borough,
Beef-steaks to-day
And mutton chops to-morrow.'

"Then I find the rope move, and pretend to be frightened, and cry, 'O Lord, don't! it shakes.' Then I ask, 'Mr. Johnson, will you chalk my pulse and hand me up the barber's-pole?' and when I've got it I say, 'Here's a nice ornament on a twelfth-cake.' I also ask him, 'I say, sir, did you ever know some of my friends was first-rate rope-dancers?' 'No, sir.' 'Oh yes, sir, they danced to some of the large houses.' 'What house was that, sir? was it Victoria?' 'I know nothing about Victoria, sir; you must ask Albert.' 'Perhaps, sir, it was the Garrick.' 'Oh, catch my brother dancing in a garret.' 'Perhaps, sir, it was Covent Garden.' 'No, sir, he never danced in no garden, nor a lane neither.' 'Perhaps, sir, it was the Haymarket.' 'No, sir; nor the Corn-market.' 'I see, sir, you can't remember the house.' 'No, sir; I'll

tell you, sir, it's a high stone building between Holborn and Newgate-market.' 'Oh, you mean Newgate.' 'Yes, sir; don't you remember we were both in there for pot stealing?' 'Come down here, sir, and I'll give you a flogging.' 'You mean to say, sir, you'll give me a flogging if I come down?' 'Yes, sir.' 'Then, sir, I shall remain where I am.' I then tell the music to toodelloo and blow us up, and I attempt to dance, and he lets the rope down, which throws me on to my back. He asks, 'Are you hurt?' and I reply, 'No, I'm killed.' 'Get up, sir.' 'I'll not move, sir.' 'I'll give you the whip, sir.' 'That's no use, sir; I've made a bargain with it, that if I don't touch it it won't touch me. Oh, ain't I bad! I've got the cobbler's marbles, or else the hen-flew-out-of-the-window.' 'Here's a policeman coming!' and then I jumps up in a minute, and ask, 'Where?'

"Then I go to his whip, and touch it. 'What's this, Mr. Johnson?' 'My whip, sir.' 'I'll tell you what it is, Mr. Johnson, I'll bet you a bottle of blacking and a three-out brush, that you can't say 'my whip' to three questions that I shall put to you.' 'I'll take you, sir.' I then take the whip from him, and say, 'Providing, sir, you was to meet a poor blind old man, and you was to give him a ha'penny, and you was to meet me and make me a present of a 5*l.* note, what would you deserve?' He says, 'My whip, sir.' 'Yes, sir; that's one to you. I say, sir, you've got a daughter, and if she was to marry and get a great deal of money, what would you deserve?' 'My whip, sir.' 'Certainly, sir; that's two to you. Now, sir, providing you was a top of that rope, and I was to undo the rope and let you down, and I was to give you the cobbler's marbles with the hen-flew-out-of-the-window, and tell you that a policeman was a-coming, what should I deserve?' Then he don't like to say, 'My whip,' and stammers out; at last he says it, and then I beat him round the stage till he runs off. Then I lay it down and cry cock-a-doodle-do, crowing for victory, and he creeps in and gets the whip again, and then lashes me.

"After juggling and globes, we always did 'a laughable sketch entitled Billy Button's ride to Brentford,' and I used to be Jeremiah Stitchem, a servant of Billy Button's, that comes for a 'sitation.' It opens this way. Jeremiah makes applications for this situation. He asks, 'What can you do?' 'Everythink and nothink.' 'Can you clean plates?' 'I can break 'em.' 'Can you run errands?' 'All ways.' He is engaged at 4*s.* a-week and his board; and then comes some comic business about a letter coming by post. Billy tells him to bring him a light to read this letter, and he sets fire to it. This letter is from Brentford, saying that his sister's ill and that he's wanted directly. He goes to a livery stable and asks for a lady's pony, at the same time saying he wants it quiet. The man

says he's got three: one that is blind, and threw the last gentleman that rode it into a ditch, and Billy won't have that. The other is lame of one leg, and he don't like that, for he wants a lady's pony that is very quiet. Then this stable-keeper recommends this pony, saying it's very quiet, but it's a kicker. Then first he gets up the wrong way, and the head comes round to the tail of the horse; Jerry then tells him he's wrong, and then offers to give him a 'bung up,' and chucks him right over the pony's back on to the ground on the other side. He then gets on properly, ready for starting, and tells Jerry he may expect him home in a day or two. He tries to start the pony, but it won't go. Jerry takes a needle and pretends to stick it into the pony's flank, which causes it to kick and rear until he throws Billy Button off; and then the pony chases Jerry round the stage with his mouth open to bite him. Then there's a regular confusion, and that winds it up.

"If that pony caught you he'd give it you, too. He caught hold of me one night by my trousers, and nearly shook my life out of me. It hurt me, but everybody roared and thought it all right. After that I hit upon a dodge. I used to have a roll of calico tacked on to my back, and the pony would catch hold of it and pull out about four yards of what looked like a shirt. Those ponies are very playful, and may be taught anything.

"The stage-clown's dress is what we term full dresses, with a wig and a tail, but the circus clown's is merely the top-knot, and the ring dress, as if they are spangled they are always on the twist, something in the style of the serpent. They don't do the red half-moon on the cheek, like stage clowns, but they have just a dab, running up to the cheek-bone. A stage-clown's dress costs from 5*l.* to 10*l.*; but a circus clown can make a suit complete, with pumps and all, for from 30*s.* to 35*s.* There's such a thing as fourteen or fifteen yards of canvas in a stage-clown's full dress; and that's without exaggerating.

"Veal's was the best circus I was at; there they had six prads (horses) and two ponies, and the performers were the best then of the day; for they had Monsieur Ludovic, a Frenchman, and the best bare-back juggler about. Mr. Moffat's troupe, and Mr. Emery's, was there also. Mr. Douglas was clown along with me, and little Ned and Sam was the tumblers. We had a large tent and regular circus, and could accommodate 1500 or 1600 people. I had 35*s.* a-week all the time I was there, (near 2½ years), and it wasn't much, considering the work, for I had to produce all the pantomimes and act as ballet-master as well.

"It is, and it ain't, difficult to ride round a circus standing up. I've known one man, who had never rode before in all his life, and yet went on one night, when they were short of hands, and done the Olympians to

the best of his abilities, without falling off, though he felt very nervous. For these scenes they go slowly. You have to keep your eye fixed on the horse's head. I've been in a circus so long, and yet I can't ride. Even following the horse round the ring makes me feel so giddy at times, that I have had to catch hold of the tent-pole in the middle just to steady myself.

"I wasn't the regular principal clown at Veal's—only on occasions; I was the speaking clown and jester. I used to do such things as those:—For instance, there is a act—which is rode—called 'The Shipwrecked Sailors,' where he rides round the ring, introducing the shipwreck hornpipe, and doing a pantomime of giving a imitation of the sinking of the ship, and his swimming and returning safe on shore. Between the parts I used to say to the ring-master, 'Are you aware, sir, that I've been to sea?' He'd say, 'No, sir.' Then we'd go on: 'Yes, sir; I once took a voyage to the Ickney Nockney Islands, off Bulbusen, just by the Thames Tunnel, in the mud.'

"Indeed, sir! 'Yes, sir; and I've seen some wonderful sights, sir, in my time.' 'Indeed, sir! 'Yes, sir: on this occasion it come so cold, that as the captain was on the quarter-deck, as he gave the word of command to the men, the words dropped out of his mouth lumps of ice on the deck. The ship would have been lost, had I not had the presence of mind to pick the words up, put them into a fryingpan, and warm them over the galley-fire: and as they thawed, so I gave the word of command to the men.' 'Dear me, sir! that was a wonderful sight!' 'It was indeed, sir!' 'I don't believe a word of it.' 'Ah, sir, if you'd have been there, you'd have seen it yourself.' 'I don't believe a word of it, Mr. Merryman.' 'Oh! come, sir, you must believe some.' 'Well, I believe a part of it.' 'Then I believe the other part, sir, and so that makes the lot.' 'That's right, sir.' 'Well, sir, I went for another voyage; and going through the Needles our vessel sprung a leak; not an onion, a leak; and she got a hole in her side.' 'She, sir?' 'Yes, sir, the ship; so the pumps was put to work; but as fast as they pumped the water out, it came in at the hole, and the ship was sinking, when the captain came on deck and asked if there was any man courageous enough to stop the hole. Of course, sir, I was there.' 'But you're not courageous.' 'Ain't I, sir? try me.' 'Now, says he, 'if there's any man will stop this hole, to him will I give the hand of my daughter and 150*l.* So away I went down in the hold, and there was more than about 15 foot of water, and I pops my head in the hole until they got the vessel ashore. Se you see, sir, I had the hand of his daughter and the 150*l.*' 'That was a good job for you, Mr. Merryman.' 'No, sir; it was a bad job.' 'How was that, sir?' 'Because when I was married I found that she was a cream

of tartar.' 'Then, sir, you had the money; that was a good job for you.' 'No, sir; that was a bad job, sir.' 'How so?' 'I bought some sheep and oxen, and they died of the rot.' 'Ah! that was a bad job, Mr. Merryman.' 'No, sir; it was a good job; for shoes were very dear, and I sold the hides for more than I gave for the cattle.' 'Well, that was a good job.' 'No, sir, that was a bad job: for I built houses with the money and they got burned down.' 'Indeed, sir! that was a very bad job for you.' 'Oh no, sir; it was a very good job, because my wife got burnt in them, and, you see, I got rid of a tormenting wife.'

"There's another famous gag ring-jesters always do, and I was very successful with it. After the act of horsemanship is over, when the ring-master is about leaving the ring, I say, 'Allow me to go first, sir;' and he replies, 'No, sir, I never follow a fool.' Then we go on:—'I always do,' meaning him. 'What did you say, sir?' 'That's quite true, sir.' 'I say, sir, did ever you see my sweetheart?' 'No, sir.' 'There she is, sir; that nice young girl sitting there.' 'I don't see her.'—'Yes, there, sir, a-winking at me now. Ah! you little ducksey, ducksey, ducksey!' 'I don't see her, sir.' Then I gets him to the middle of the ring, and whilst he is pretending to stare in the direction I pointed to, I bolt off, saying, 'I never follows a fool.'

"At fairs we do pretty well, and a circus always pays better than an acting-booth. We are always on salaries, and never go upon shares. The actors often say we look down upon them, and think them beneath our notice; and I dare say it's true, to a great extent. I've heard our chaps cry out, 'Won't you be glad when herrings are cheap?' or, 'How were you off for bits of candle and lumps of coke last night at sharing?' Then, no doubt, we live better at circuses, for we do our steaks and onions, and all that sort of thing; and, perhaps, that makes us cheeky.'

"Some jesters at circuses get tremendous engagements. Mr. Barry, they say, had 10*l.* a-week at Astley's; and Stonalfe, with his dogs, is, I should think, equal to him. There's another, Nelson, too, who plays on the harmonicon, and does tunes on bits of wood—the same as went on the water in a tub drawn by geese, when the bridge broke down at Yarmouth—he's had as much as 15*l.* a-week on a regular travelling engagement.

"There ain't so many jesters as tumbling clowns. I think it's because they find it almost too much for them; for a jester has to be ready with his tongue if anything goes wrong in the ring. I shouldn't think there was more than from thirty to forty jesters in England. I reckon in this way. There are from ten to fifteen circuses, and that's allowing them two jesters each. In the three-penny circus, such as Clarke's or Frazier's,

the salary for a jester is about 2*l.* a-week, take the year round."

SILLY BILLY.

THE character of "Silly Billy" is a kind of clown, or rather a clown's butt; but not after the style of Pantaloon, for the part is comparatively juvenile. Silly Billy is supposed to be a schoolboy, although not dressed in a charity-boy's attire. He is very popular with the audience at the fairs; indeed, they cannot do without him. "The people like to see Silly Billy," I was told, "much more than they do Pantaloon, for he gets knocked about more though, but he gives it back again. A good Silly," said my informant, "has to imitate all the ways of a little boy. When I have been going to a fair, I have many a time stopped for hours watching boys at play, learning their various games, and getting their sayings. For instance, some will go about the streets singing:

'Eh, biggety, eh ho!
Billy let the water go!'

which is some song about a boy pulling a tap from a water-butt, and letting the water run. There's another:

'Nicky nickey nite,
I'll strike a light!'

I got these both from watching children whilst playing. Again, boys will swear 'By the liver and lights of a cobbler's lapstone!' and their most regular desperate oath is,

'Ain't this wet? ain't it dry?
Cut my throat if I tells a lie.'

They'll say, too 'S'elp my greens!' and 'Upon my word and say so!' All these sayings I used to work up into my Silly Billy, and they had their success.

"I do such things as these, too, which is regularly boyish, such as 'Give me a bit of your bread and butter, and I'll give you a bit of my bread and treacle.' Again, I was watching a lot of boys playing at pitch-button, and one says, 'Ah, you're up to the rigs of this hole; come to my hole—you can't play there!' I've noticed them, too, playing at ring-taw, and one of their exclamations is 'Knuckle down fair, and no funkning.' All these sayings are very useful to make the character of Silly Billy perfect. Bless you, sir, I was two years studying boys before I came out as Silly Billy. But then I persevere when I take a thing in hand; and I stick so close to nature, that I can't go far wrong in that line. Now this is a regular boy's answer: when somebody says 'Does your mother know you're out?' he replies, 'Yes, she do; but I didn't know the organ-man had lost his monkey!' That always went immense.

"It's impossible to say when Silly Billy first

come out at fairs, or who first supported the character. It's been popular ever since a fair can be remembered. The best I ever saw was Teddy Walters. He's been at all the fairs round the universe—England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and France. He belonged to a circus when he went abroad. He's done Silly Billy these forty year, and he's a great comic singer beside. I was reckoned very clever at it. I used to look it by making up so young for it. It tires you very much, for there's so much exertion attached to it by the dancing and capering about. I've done it at the fairs, and also with tumblers in the street; only, when you do it in the street, you don't do one-half the business.

"The make-up for a Silly Billy is this: Short white trousers and shoes, with a strap round the ankle, long white pinafore with a frill round the neck, and red sleeves, and a boy's cap. We dress the head with the hair behind the ears, and a dab of red on the nose and two patches of black over the eyebrows. When I went to the fair I always took three pairs of white trousers with me. The girls used to get up playing larks with me, and smearing my white trousers with gingerbread. It's a very favourite character with the women—they stick pins into you, as if you were a pin-cushion. I've had my thighs bleeding sometimes. One time, during Greenwich, a ugly old woman came on the parade and kissed me, and made me a present of a silver sixpence, which, I needn't say, was soon spent in porter. Why, I've brought home with me sometimes toys enough to last a child a fortnight, if it was to break one every day, such as carts and horses, cock and breeches, whistles, &c. You see, Silly Billy is supposed to be a thievish sort of a character, and I used to take the toys away from the girls as they were going into the theatre, and then I'd show it to the Clown and say, 'Oh, look what that nice lady's give me! I shall take it home to my mother.'

"I've done Silly Billy for Richardson's, and near every booth of consequence. The general wages is from 5*s.* to 7*s.* 6*d.* the day, but my terms was always the three half-crowns. When there's any fairs on, I can always get a job. I always made it a rule never to go far away from London, only to Greenwich or Gravesend, but not farther, for I can make it better in town working the concert-rooms. There are some who do nothing but Silly Billy; and then, if you take the year round, it comes to three days' work a-week. The regular salary doesn't come to more than a pound a-week, but then you make something out of those who come up on the parade, for one will chuck you 6*d.*, some 1*s.* and 2*s.* 6*d.* We call those parties 'prosses.' I have had such a thing as 5*s.* give to me. We are supposed to share this among the company, and we generally do. These are the 'nobbings,' and may send up your earnings to as much as 25*s.* a-

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week, besides drink, which you can have more given to you than you want.

"When we go about the streets with tumblers, we mostly only sing a song, and dance, and keep the ring whilst the performance is going on. We also 'nob,' or gather the money. I never heard of a Silly Billy going out busking in tap-rooms and that. The tumblers like the Silly Billy, because the dress is attractive; but they are getting out of date now, since the grotesque clown is so much in the street. I went about with a school termed 'The Demons,' and very clever they was, though they've all broke up now, and I don't know what's become of them. There were four of them. We did middling, but we could always manage to knock up such a thing as 20*s.* each a-week. I was, on and off, about six months with them. After their tumbling, then my turn would begin. The drummer would say: 'Turn and turn about's fair play. Billy, now it's your turn. A song from Billy; and if we meet with any encouragement, ladies and gentlemen, the young man here will tie his legs together and chuck several summer-sets.' Then I'd sing such a song as 'Clementina Clements,' which begins like this:

'You talk of modest girls,
Now I've seen a few,
But there's none licks the one
I'm sticking up to.
But some of her faults
Would make some chaps ill;
But, with all her faults,
Yes, I love her still.
Such a delicate duck was Clementina Clements;
Such a delicate duck I never did see.'

"There's one verse where she won't walk over a potato-field because they've got eyes, and another when she faints at seeing a Dutch doll without clothes on. Then she doesn't like tables' legs, and all such as that, and that's why she is 'such a delicate duck.' That song always tells with the women. Then I used to sing another, called 'What do men and women marry for?' which was a very great favourite. One verse that went very well was:

'If a good wife you've got,
(But there's very few of those.)
Your money goes just like a shot:
They're everlasting wanting clothes.
And when you've bought 'em all you can,
Of course you cannot buy them more;
They cry, Do you call yourself a man?
Was this what we got married for?'

"When I danced, it was merely a comic dance—what we call a 'roley poley.' Sometimes, when we had been walking far, and pitching a good many times, the stones would hurt my feet awful with dancing.

"Pitching with tumblers is nothing compared to fair-parading. There you are the principal of the comic men after Clown, for he's first. We have regular scenes, which take twenty minutes working through. When the parade is slack, then comes the Silly Billy business. There's a very celebrated sketch, or

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whatever you call it, which Clown and Silly Billy do together, taking off mesmerism.

"Clown comes on, dressed up in a tall white hat, and with a cloak on. He says that he has just arrived from the island of Mititti, and that he's the great Doctor Bokanki, the most celebrated mesmeriser in the world. He says, 'Look at me. Here I am. Ain't I mesmerised elephants? Ain't I mesmerised monkeys? and ain't I going to mesmerise him?' He then tells Silly Billy to sit in the chair. Then he commences passing his hands across his eyes. He asks Billy, 'What do you see, Billy?' He turns his face, with his shut eyes, towards the crowd, and says, 'A man with a big nose, sir, and such a many pimples on his face.' 'And now what do you see, Billy?' 'Oh, ain't that gal a-winking at me! You be quiet, or I'll tell my mother.' 'Now what do you see, Billy?' 'Nothink.' Then the doctor turns to the crowd, and says, 'Now, ladies and gentlemen, I shall touch him on the fakement at the back of his head which is called a bump. Oh, my eyes! ain't Billy's head a-swelling! This bump, ladies and gentlemen, is called a organ—not a church nor yet a chapel organ, nor yet one of them they grind in the street. And here's another organ,' he says, putting his hand on Billy's stomach. 'This here is called his wittling department organ, or where he puts his grub. I shall now touch him on another fakement, and make him sing.' Then he puts his finger on Billy's head, and Billy sings:

'As I one day was hawking my ware,
I thought I'd invent something novel and rare;
For as I'm not green, and I know what's o'clock,
So I'll have a go in at the pine-apple rock.
Tol de ro lay, tol de ro lay.'

"Then Billy becomes quiet again, and the doctor says, 'I'll now, ladies and gentlemen, touch him on another fakement, and cause Billy to cry. This here is his organ of the handling department.' Then he takes Billy's finger and bites it, and Billy begins to roar like a town bull. Then the doctor says, 'I'll now, ladies and gentlemen, touch him on another fakement, whereby the youth can tell me what I've got in my hand.' He then puts his hand in his coat-tail pocket, and says, 'Billy, what have I got in my hand?' and Billy says, 'Ah, you nasty beast! why it's a—it's a—it's a—oh, I don't like to say!' They do this a lot of times, Billy always replying, 'Oh, I don't like to say!' until at last he promises that, if he won't tell his mother, he will; and then he says, 'It's a small-tooth comb.' 'Very right, Billy; and what's in it?' 'Why, one of them 'ere things that crawls.' 'Very right, Billy; and what is it?' 'Why, it's a—it's a black-beetle.' 'Very right, Billy; look again. Do you see anything else?' 'There's some crumbs.' Then he tells Billy, that as he is such a good boy he'll bring him to; and Billy says, 'Oh, don't, please, sir; one's quite enough.' Then he brings him to, and Billy says, 'Oh, ain't it

nice! Oh, it's so golly! Here, you young woman, I wish you'd let me touch your bumps.' Then, if the people laugh, he adds, 'You may laugh, but it gives you a all-over sort of a feeling, as if you had drunk three pints of pickling vinegar.'

"That's a very favourite scene; but I haven't give it you all, for it would fill a volume. It always makes a hit; and Billy has a rare chance of working comic attitudes and so on when the doctor touches his bumps.

"There's another very celebrated scene for Silly Billy. It's what we call the preaching scene. Silly Billy mounts up a ladder, and Clown holds it at the bottom, and looks through the steps. Clown has to do the clerk to Billy's parson. Billy begins by telling the clerk that he must say 'Barley sugar' at the end of every sentence he preaches. Billy begins in this way:—'Keyind brethren, and you fair damsels,' and he's supposed to be addressing the chaps and gals on the parade, 'I hope that the text I shall give you will be a moral to you, and prevent you from eating the forbidden sweets of—' 'Barley sugar!' 'No, you fool—sin! and that will put you in the right path as you walk through the fields of—' 'Barley sugar!' 'No; virtue, you fool! My text is taken from the epistle of Thomas to the Ethiopians, the first chapter, and two first slices off a leg of mutton, where it says so beautifully—' 'Barley sugar!' 'No, no; that's not it! Now it come to go along in the first year in the first month, two days before that, as we was journeying through the land of—' 'Barley sugar!' 'No, no, you fool! keep quiet. Flowerpotamia, we met a serpent, and from his mouth was issuing—' 'Barley sugar!' 'No, no! fire.' Then all the people on the parade jump up and shout, 'Where?' Then Billy says, 'Oh, my sister's tom-cat, here's a congregation! Sit down.' When they are all quiet again, Billy goes on: 'Now this I say unto you—' 'Barley sugar!' 'Keep quiet, will you!' and he hits Clown with his foot. 'Two shall be well and two shall be queer. Oh, ain't I ill! Go, men of little understanding, and inherit a basin of pea-soup at the cook-shop, together with—' 'Barley sugar!' 'No such thing!—my blessing. Unto you will I give nothing, and unto you just half as much—' 'Barley sugar!' 'Hold your tongue! You that have had nothing shall give it back again, and you that had nothing at all, you shall keep it. Now let us sing—' 'Barley sugar!' 'No; a song.' Then Billy tells them to get their books, and they take up pint pots, or whatever they can get. 'Let us sing,' and they all jump up, and they all begin:

'If I was a drayman's horse
One quarter of the year,
I'd put my tail where my head ought to be,
And I'd drink up all the—'

'Barley sugar!'—'Hold your tongue!—beer.'

After all of them have sung, Billy says, 'Now let us say,' and all of them howl, 'Aye, aye.'

'Now is the winter of our discontent—
We have not enough money to pay our rent;
And by all the clouds that tip our house,
We've not enough food to feed a—'

'Barley sugar!' 'Yes, barley sugar,' says Billy. Then all the congregation cries—'O—o—o—o;' and Clown says, 'Bar—bar—bar—barley sugar,' and he is so much affected he weeps and goes to wipe his eyes, and lets the ladder fall, and down comes Billy. He gives sundry kicks, and then pretends to be dying. The congregation say, 'Peace be with you, Billy,' and he answers, 'Yes, peas-pudding and fried taters;' and the Clown howls out, 'Barley sugar!' When Billy is dead, if business isn't very good, they put the body on the ladder, and form a procession. The music goes at the head and plays a hornpipe, slowly, and then they leave the booth, and parade through the fair among the people, with Clown as chief mourner. The people are bursting their sides, and wherever we go they follow after. All the mourners keep crying, 'Oh, oh, oh, Billy's dead!' and then Billy turns round, and sometimes says, 'Don't be fools! it's only a lark:' or else, 'Don't tell mother; she'll give me a hiding.' This procession business always brings a flock behind us, and fills the theatre, or goes a great way towards it. When I have been Silly Billy, and representing this scene, and been carried through the fair, I've been black and blue from the girls coming up and pinching me through the ladder. The girls are wonderfully cheeky at fairs, and all for a lark. They used to get me so precious wild, I couldn't help coming to life, and say, 'Quiet, you hussies!' But it were no good, for they'd follow you all about, and keep on nipping a fellow.

"Another celebrated scene or sketch is the teetotal one, and a rich one it is. Billy is supposed to have joined the temperance parties. He calls for a tub to preach upon, and he says he will consider it a favour if they could let it be a water-butt. They lift Billy on to the tub, and a cove—Clown generally—sits under to take the chair of the meeting. Then the paraders stand about, and I begin: 'Ladies and gentlemen, waking friends, and lazy enemies, and Mr. Chairman, what I'm about to tell you I'm a stanch teetotaler.' 'Hear, hear, hear,' everybody cries. 'I have been so for now two—' and the Clown suggests 'Years.' 'No, minutes. I'd have you avoid water as you would avoid a bull that wasn't in a chaney-shop.' 'Hear, hear, hear.' 'I once knew a friend of mine who drank water till he was one solid mass of ice; and he drank tea till the leaves grew out of his nose.' 'Oh, oh, hear, hear.' 'He got so fat, you couldn't see him. This, my friends, comes of tea-drinking!' 'Hear, hear, hear.' 'I hope, kind friends, this will be a lesson to you to avoid

drinking too much'—Then the chairman jumps up and says, 'Beer!' 'No, no; tea. Drink in moderation, and never drink more than I do. Two pots of ale, three pints of porter, four glasses of gin, five of rum, and six of brandy, is enough for any man at one time. Don't drink more, please.' 'Hear, hear, hear.' 'That will cause you to be in the height of bloom. Your nose will blossom; your eyes will be bright as two burnt holes in a blanket; your head will swell till no hat will fit it. These are facts, my friends; undeniable facts, my kind friends.' 'Hear, hear, hear.' 'You will get so fat, you'll take up the pavement to walk. I believe, and I trust, that what I have said will not convince you that teetotalism and coffeetotalism are the best things ever invented. Sign the pledge. The pledge-book is here. You must all pay a penny; and if you don't keep up your payments, you will be scratched. With these few remarks I now conclude my address to you, hoping that every friend among you is so benevolent as to subscribe a pot of beer. I shall be happy to drink it, to show you how awful a thing it is not to become a teetotaler.' Then they all rush forward to sign the pledge, and they knock Clown over, and he tumbles Silly Billy into the barrel up to his neck. Then we all sing

'I likes a drop of good beer,
I likes a drop of good beer;
And hang their eyes if ever they tries
To rob a poor man of his beer.'

And that ends the meeting.

"I was in Greenwich fair, doing Silly Billy, when the celebrated disturbance with the soldiers took place. I was at Smith and Webster's booth (Richardson's that was), and our clown was Paul Petro. He had been a bit of a fighting man. He was bending down for Silly Billy to take a jump over him, and some of the soldiers ran up and took the back. They knocked his back as they went over, and he got shirtey. Then came a row. Four of them pitched into Paul, and he cries out for help. The mob began to pelt the soldiers, and they called out to their comrades to assist them. A regular confusion ensued. The soldiers tumbled us about, and took off their belts. They cut Paul's forehead right open. I was Silly Billy, and I got a broomstick, and when one of the soldiers gave me a lick over the face with his belt, I pitched him over on the mob with my broomstick. I was tumbled down the steps among the mob, and hang me if they didn't pitch into me too! I got the awfulest nose you ever see. There was I, in my long pinafore, a-wiping up the blood, and both my eyes going as black as plums. I cut up a side place, and then I sat down to try and put my nose to rights. Lord, how I did look about for plaster! When I came back there was all the fair a fighting. The fighting-men came out of their booths and let into the soldiers, who was going about flourishing their

belts and hitting everybody. At last the police came; two of them was knocked down, and sent back on stretchers: but at last, when a picket was sent for, all the soldiers—there was about forty of them—were walked off. They got from six to nine months' imprisonment; and those that let into the police, eighteen months. I never see such a sight. It was all up with poor Silly Billy for that fair, for I had to wrap my face up in plaster and flannel, and keep it so for a week.

"I shouldn't think there were more than a dozen Silly Billys going about at the present time; and out of them there ain't above three first-raters. I know nearly all of them. When fairs ain't on they go about the streets, either with schools of tumblers or serenaders; or else they turn to singing at the concerts. To be a good Silly Billy, it requires a man with heaps of funniment and plenty of talk. He must also have a young-looking face, and the taller the man the better for it. When I go out I always do my own gag, and I try to knock out something new. I can take a candle, or a straw, or a piece of gingerbread, or any mortal thing, and lecture on it. At fairs we make our talk rather broad, to suit the audience.

"Our best sport is where a girl comes up on the parade, and stands there before going inside—we have immense fun with her. I offer to marry her, and so does Clown, and we quarrel as to who proposed to the young woman first. I swear she's my gal, and he does the same. Then we appeal to her, and tell her what we'll give her as presents. It makes immense fun. The girls always take it in good part, and seem to enjoy it as much as the mob in front. If we see that she is in any ways shy we drop it, for it's done for merriment, and not to insult; and we always strive to amuse and not to abuse our friends."

BILLY BARLOW.

"BILLY BARLOW," is another supposed comic character, that usually accompanies either the street-dancers or acrobats in their peregrinations. The dress consists of a cocked-hat and red feather, a soldier's coat (generally a sergeant's with sash), white trousers with the legs tucked into Wellington boots, a large tin eyeglass, and an old broken and ragged umbrella. The nose and cheeks are coloured bright red with vermilion. The "comic business" consists of the songs of the "Merry Month of May," and "Billy Barlow," together with a few old conundrums and jokes, and sometimes (where the halfpence are very plentiful) a "comic" dance. The following statement concerning this peculiar means of obtaining a living I had from a man whom I had seen performing in the streets, dressed up for the part, but who came to me so thoroughly altered in appearance that I could hardly recognise him. In plain clothes he had almost a re-

spectable appearance, and was remarkably clean and neat in his attire. Altogether, in his undress, he might have been mistaken for a better kind of mechanic. There was a humorous expression, however, about his mouth, and a tendency to grimace, that told the professional buffoon. "I go about now as Billy Barlow," he said; "the character of Billy Barlow was originally played at the races by a man who is dead. He was about ten years at the street business, doing nothing else than Billy Barlow in the public thoroughfares, and at fairs and races. He might have made a fortune had he took care on it, sir; but he was a great drunkard, and spent all he got in gin. He died seven years ago—where most of the street-performers ends their days—in the workhouse. He was formerly a potman at some public-house, and got discharged, and then took to singing comic songs about the streets and fairs. The song of 'Billy Barlow' (which was very popular then) was among the lot that he sung, and that gave his name. He used to sing, too, the song of 'I hope I don't intrude;' and for that he dressed up as Paul Pry, which is the reason of the old umbrella, the eye-glass, and the white trousers tucked into the boots, being part of the costume at present. Another of his songs was the 'Merry Month of May,' or 'Follow the Drum;' and for that he put on the soldier's coat and cocked-hat and feather, which we wears to this day. After this he was called 'General Barlow.' When he died, one or two took to the same keracher, and they died in the workhouse, like us all. Two months ago I thought I'd take to it myself, as there was a vacancy in the purfession. I have been for thirty years at the street business, off and on. I am fifty now. I was a muffin and biscuit-baker by trade; but, like the rest on us, I got fond of a roving life. My father was a tailor by trade, but took to being a supernumerary at Covent Garden Theayter, where my uncle was a performer, and when I was nine years old I played the part of the child in 'Pizarro,' and after that I was one of the devils what danced round my uncle in 'Mother Goose.' When I was fourteen year old my uncle apprenticed me to the muffin business, and I stuck to it for five years; but when I was out of my time I made up my mind to cut it, and take to performing. First I played clown at a booth, for I had always a taste for the comic after I had played the devil, and danced round my uncle in the Covent-garden pantomime. Some time after that I took to play the drum and pipes; and since then I have been chiefly performing as musicianer to different street exhibitions. When business is bad in the winter or wet weather, I make sweetmeats, and go about the streets and sell them. I never made muffins since I left the business; you see, I've no stove nor shop for that, and never had the means of raising them. Sweetmeats takes little capital—toffy, brandy-balls,

and Albert rock isn't expensive to get up. Besides, I'm known well among the children in the streets, and they likes to patronise the purfession for sweetmeats, even though they won't give nothing while you're a performing; I've done much the same since I took to the Billy Barlow, as I did before at the street business. We all share alike, and that's what I did as the drum and pipes. I never dress at home. My wife (I'm a married man) knows the part I play. She came to see me once, and laughed at me fit to bust. The landlord nor the fellow-lodgers where I live—I have a room to myself—ain't aware of what I do; I sneaks my things out, and dresses at a public-house. It costs us a pot for dressing and a pot for undressing. We has the use of the tap-room for that. I'm like the rest of the world at home—or rather more serious, maybe,—though, thank God, I don't want for food; things is cheap enough now; and if I can't get a living at the buffoonery business, why I tries sweetmeats, and between the two I do manage to grab on somehow, and that's more than many of my purfession can do. My pardner (a street-dancer whom he brought with him) must either dance or starve; and there's plenty like him in the streets of London. I only know of one other Barlow but me in the business, and he's only taken to it after me. Some jokes ain't fit for ladies to listen to, but wot I says is the best-approved jokes—such as has been fashionable for many years, and can't give no offence to no one. I say to the musician, 'Well, master, can you tell me why are the Thames Tunnel and Hungerford Suspension Bridge like two joints badly done?' He'll say, 'No, Mr. Barlow;' and then I give him the answer: 'Because one is over-done, and the other is under-done.' Then I raise my umbrella, saying, 'I think I'm purwided against the weather;' and as the umbrella is all torn and slit, it raises a laugh. Some days I get six shillings or seven shillings as my share; sometimes not a quarter of the money. Perhaps I may average full eighteen shillings a-week in the summer, or more; but not a pound. In the winter, if there's a subsistence, that's all. Joking is not natural to me, and I'm a steady man; it's only in the way of business, and I leave it on one side when I've got my private apparel on. I never think of my public character if I can help it, until I get my show-dress on, and I'm glad to get it off at night; and then I think of my home and children, and I struggle hard for them, and feel disgust oft enough at having been a tom-fool to street fools."

STROLLING ACTORS.

WHAT are called strolling actors are those who go about the country and play at the various fairs and towns. As long as they are acting in a booth they are called canvas actors; but supposing they stop in a town a few days

after a fair, or build up in a town where there is no fair, that constitutes what is termed private business.

"We call strolling acting 'mumming,' and the actors 'mummers.' All spouting is mumming. A strolling actor is supposed to know something of everything. He doesn't always get a part given to him to learn, but he's more often told what character he's to take, and what he's to do, and he's supposed to be able to find words capable of illustrating the character; in fact, he has to 'gag,' that is, make up words.

"When old Richardson was alive, he used to make the actors study their parts regularly; and there's Thorne and Bennett's, and Douglas's, and other large travelling concerns, that do so at the present time; but where there's one that does, there's ten that don't. I was never in one that did, not to study the parts, and I have been mumming, on and off, these ten years.

"There's very few penny gaffs in London where they speak; in fact, I only know one where they do. It ain't allowed by law, and the police are uncommon severe. They generally play ballets and dumb acting, singing and dancing, and such-like.

"I never heard of such a thing as a canvas theatre being prosecuted for having speaking plays performed, so long as a fair is going on, but if it builds at other times I have known the mayor to object to it, and order the company away. When we go to pitch in a town, we always, if it's a quiet one, ask permission of the mayor to let us build.

"The mummers have got a slang of their own, which parties connected with the purfession generally use. It is called 'mummers' slang,' and I have been told that it's a compound of broken Italian and French. Some of the Romanee is also mixed up with it. This, for instance, is the slang for 'Give me a glass of beer,'—'Your nabs sparkle my nabs,' 'a drop of beware.' 'I have got no money,' is, 'My nabs has nanti dinali.' I'll give you a few sentences.

"'Parni' is rain; and 'toba' is ground.

"'Nanti numgare' is—No food.

"'Nanti fogare' is—No tobacco.

"'Is his nabs a bona pross?'—Is he good for something to drink?

"'Nanti, his nabs is a keteva homer'—No, he's a bad sort.

"'The casa will parker our nabs multi' means,—This house will tumble down.

"'Vada the glaze' is—Look at the window.

"These are nearly all the mummers' slang words we use; but they apply to different meanings. We call breakfast, dinner, tea, supper, all of them 'numgare,' and all beer, brandy, water, or soup, are 'beware.' We call everybody 'his nabs,' or 'her nabs.' I went among the penny-ice men, who are Italian chaps, and I found that they were speaking a lot of mummers' slang. It is a good deal

Italian. We think it must have originated from Italians who went about doing pantomimes.

"Now, the way we count money is nearly all of it Italian; from one farthing up to a shilling is this:—

"'Patina, nadsa, oni soldi, duey soldi, tray soldi, quatro soldi, chinqui soldi, say soldi, seter soldi, otter soldi, novra soldi, deshra soldi, lettra soldi, and a biouk.' A half-crown is a 'metsa carroon'; a 'carroon' is a crown; 'metsa punta' is half-a-sovereign; a 'punta' is a pound. Even with these few words, by mixing them up with a few English ones, we can talk away as fast as if we was using our own language.

"Mumming at fairs is harder than private business, because you have to perform so many times. You only wear one dress, and all the actor is expected to do is to stand up to the dances outside and act in. He'll have to dance perhaps sixteen quadrilles in the course of the day, and act about as often inside. The company generally work in shares, or if they pay by the day, it's about four or five shillings a-day. When you go to get engaged, the first question is, 'What can you do?' and the next, 'Do you find your own properties, such as russet boots, your dress, hat and feathers, &c?' Of course they like your dress the better if it's a showy one; and it don't much matter about its corresponding with the piece. For instance, Henry the Second, in 'Fair Rosamond,' always comes on with a cavalier's dress, and nobody notices the difference of costume. In fact, the same dresses are used over and over again for the same pieces. The general dress for the ladies is a velvet skirt with a satin stomacher, with a gold band round the waist and a pearl band on the forehead. They, too, wear the same dresses for all the pieces. A regular fair show has only a small compass of dresses, for they only goes to the same places once in a-year, and of course their costumes ain't remembered.

"The principal fair pieces are 'Blue Beard,' 'Robert, duke of Normandy,' and 'Fair Rosamond, or the Bowers of Woodstock.' I recollect once they played 'Maria Martin,' at a fair, in a company I was with, and we played that in cavalier costume; and so we did 'The Murder at Stanfield Hall,' Rush's affair, in dresses of the time of Charles the Second.

"An actor's share will average for a fair at five shillings a-day, if the fair is anything at all. When we don't work we don't get paid, so that if we only do one fair a-week, that's fifteen shillings, unless we stop to do a day or two private business after the fair.

"'Fair Rosamond' isn't so good a piece as 'Blue Beard,' for that's a great fair piece, and a never-failing draw. Five years ago I was with a company—Star and Lewis were the acting managers. Then 'Blue Beard' was our favourite piece, and we played it five fairs

out of six. 'Fair Rosamond' is too sentimental. They like a comedy man, and the one in 'Fair Rosamond' isn't nothing. They like the secret-chamber scene in 'Blue Beard.' It's generally done by the scene rolling up and discovering another, with skeletons painted on the back, and blue fire. We always carried that scene with us wherever we went, and for the other pieces the same scenes did. At Star's, our scenes were somewhat about ten feet wide and eight feet high. They all rolled up, and there were generally about four in working order, with the drop curtain, which made five.

"You may put the price of a good fair theatrical booth down at from fifty pounds to two hundred and fifty pounds. There's some of them more expensive still. For instance, the paintings alone on the front of Douglas's Shakesperian theatre, must have cost seventy pounds; and his dress must have cost a deal, for he's got a private theatre at Bolton, and he works them there as well as at fairs.

"The 'Bottle Imp' is a very effective fair piece. It opens with a scene of Venice, and Willebald and Albert, which is the comedy man and the juvenile. The comic man's principal line is, 'I'll tell your mother,' every time Albert wants to go and see his sweetheart, or if he's doing anything that he thinks improper. In the first act Albert goes to his sweetheart's house, and the father consents to their union, provided he can gain so many ducats. Albert then finds out a stranger, who is Nicolo, who asks him to gamble with him at dice: Albert says he is poor. Nicolo says he once was poor, but now he has great wealth. He then tells Albert, that if he likes he can be rich too. He says, 'Have you not heard of imps and bottle imps?' 'Stuff!' says Albert; 'me, indeed! a poor artist; I have heard of such things, but I heed them not.' 'But, boy,' says Nicolo, 'I have that in my possession will make you rich indeed; a drop of the elixir in this bottle, rubbed on the outside, will give you all you require; and if ever you wish to part with it, you must sell it for less than you gave.' He gives three ducats for it, and as he gives the money the demon laughs from the side, 'Ha! ha! ha! mine, mine!' Albert looks amazed. Nicolo says, 'Ah, youth! may you know more happiness than I have whilst I had that in my possession:' and then he goes off. Albert then tries the power of the bottle. He says, 'What, ho! I wish for wine,' and it's shoved on from the side. As he is drinking, Willebald exclaims, 'O dear, O dear! I've been looking for my master. O that I were only safe back again in Thread-needle-street! I'll never go hunting pretty girls again. Oh, won't I tell his mother!' 'How now, caitiff!—Leave me!' says Albert. 'All right,' says Willebald; 'I'll leave you—won't I tell your mother!'

"When Willebald goes, Albert wishes for sleep, and the Bottle Imp replies, 'All your

wishes shall be gratified, excepting one. Sleep you cannot have while I am in your possession.' The demon then seizes him by the throat, and Albert falls on stage, demon exulting over him. Enter Willebald, who, seeing the demon, cries, 'Murder! murder! Oh, won't I tell their mothers!' and that ends the first act.

"In the second and last act, Albert gives Willebald instructions to sell the bottle; 'but it is to be for less than three ducats.' Willebald says, 'No marine-storekeeper would give three ducats for an old bottle;' but he goes off shouting, out 'Who'll buy a bottle? Who'll buy a bottle?' In the next scene, Willebald is still shouting his bottle for sale, with folks laughing off stage and dogs barking. He says, 'Ah! laugh away. It's well to be merry, but I'm obliged to cry—Who'll buy a bottle?' He then says he's 'not going walking about all day selling a bottle;' and then he says he's got two ducats, and he'll buy the bottle himself, sooner than trudge about Venice. Then he says, 'Oh, Mr. Bottle, here are the ducats; now you are mine.' Then the demon cries, 'Mine, mine!' He says it was only the wind. Then he says, 'Oh, how I wish I was at home again, and heard my little brothers and sisters singing!' And instantly from the sides you hear, 'Boys and girls come out to play!' Then Willebald says, 'I wish you'd hold your tongue, you little brutes!' and they cease. Next he complains that he's so poor, and he wishes it would rain gold on him, and then down comes a shower. Then in comes Albert, who asks whether the bottle has been sold; and Willebald replies that it's all right. 'Thank heavens,' cries Albert; 'but yet I pity the miserable wretch who has bought it.' 'What do you mean? O dear, O dear! to frighten one so! I'll tell your mother!' 'Know ye not, caitiff!' continues Albert, 'that that bottle contains a demon? O what a weight hast thou removed from my heart!' As Willebald is deploring his lot, enter a poor man, who asks for a drink of water; and Willebald tells him he can't give him any water, but he has an elixir he shall have very cheap. The old man replies that he hasn't got more than a petani, which is the sixtieth part of a farthing. However, Willebald sells him the bottle; and as it's the smallest coin in the world, and the bottle can't go no cheaper, the demon rushes in and seizes the beggar, who turns out to be Nicolo, the first who sold the bottle. As he is being carried off, Willebald cries out, 'For shame, you ugly devil! to treat the old gentleman like that! Won't I tell your mother!' and down comes the curtain.

"The 'Bottle Imp' is a very successful romantic drama. There's plenty of blue fire in it. The 'Bottle Imp' have it at every entrance that fellow do. There is some booths that are fonder of the 'Bottle Imp' than any other piece. We played it at Bill Weale's

theatre more than any other drama. The imp is always acted by a man in a cloak with a mask on. You can see his cavalier boots under his cloak, but that don't matter to holiday folk when once they know it's intended to be a demon.

"It's a very jolly life strolling, and I wouldn't leave it for any other if I had my choice. At times it's hard lines; but for my part I prefer it to any other. It's about fifteen shillings a-week for certain. If you can make up your mind to sleep in the booth, it ain't such bad pay. But the most of the men go to lodgings, and they don't forget to boast of it. 'Where do you lodge?' one'll ask. 'Oh, I lodged at such a place,' says another; for we're all first-rate fellows, if you can get anybody to believe us.

"Mummers' feed is a herring, which we call a pheasant. After performance we generally disperse, and those who have lodgings go to 'em; but if any sleep in the booth, turn in. Perhaps there's a batch of coffee brought forwards, a subscription supper of three. The coffee and sugar is put in a kettle and boiled up, and then served up in what we can get: either a saucepan lid, or a cocoa-nut shell, or a publican's pot, or whatever they can get. Mummers is the poorest, flashiest, and most independent race of men going. If you was to offer some of them a shilling they'd refuse it, though the most of them would take it. The generality of them is cobblers' lads, and tailors' apprentices, and clerks, and they do account for that by their having so much time to study over their work.

"Private business is a better sort of acting. There we do nearly the entire piece, with only the difficult parts cut out. We only do the outline of the story, and gag it up. We've done various plays of Shakspeare in this way, such as 'Hamlet' or 'Othello,' but only on benefit occasions. Then we go as near as memory will let us, but we must never appear to be stuck for words. Our prices of admission in the country for private business is threepence and sixpence, or sometimes sixpence or one shilling, for it all depends upon the town, but in London it's oftener one penny and twopence. We only go to the outskirts and act there, for they won't allow us in the streets. The principal parts for pitching the booth for private business in London, is about Lock's-fields, Walworth. We opened there about six years ago last Easter.

"Our rehearsals for a piece are the funniest things in the world. Perhaps we are going to play 'The Floating Beacon, or The Weird Woman of the Wreck.' The manager will, when the night's performance is over, call the company together, and he'll say to the low-comedyman, 'Now, you play Jack Junk, and this is your part: you're supposed to fetch Frederick for to go to sea. Frederick gets capsized in the boat, and gets aboard of the floating beacon. You go to search for him,

and the smugglers tell you he's not aboard, and they give you the lie; then you say, 'What, the lie to a English sailor!' and you chuck your quid in his eye, saying, 'I've had it for the last fourteen days, and now I send it with a full sail into your lubberly eye.' Then you have to get Frederick off.

"Then the manager will turn to the juvenile, and say, 'Now, sir, you'll play Frederick. Now then, Frederick, you're in love with a girl, and old Winslade, the father, is very fond of you. You get into the boat to go to the ship, and you're wrecked and get on to the beacon. You're very faint, and stagger on, and do a back fall. You're picked up by the weird woman, and have some dialogue with her; and then you have some dialogue with the two smugglers, Ormaloff and Augerstoff. You pretend to sleep, and they're going to stab you, when the wild woman screams, and you awake and have some more dialogue. Then they bring a bottle, and you begin drinking. You change the cups. Then there's more dialogue, and you tackle Ormaloff. Then you discover your mother and embrace. Jack Junk saves you. Form a picture with your mother, the girl, and old Winslade, and Jack Junk over you.'

"That's his part, and he's got to put it together and do the talk.

"Then the manager turns to Ormaloff and Augerstoff, and says: 'Now, you two play the smugglers, do you hear? You're to try and poison the young fellow, and you're defeated.'

"Then he say to the wild woman: 'You're kept as a prisoner aboard the beacon, where your husband has been murdered. You have refused to become the wife of Ormaloff. Your child has been thrown overboard. You discover him in Frederick, and you scream when they are about to stab him, and also when he's about to drink. Make as much of it as you can, please; and don't forget the scream.'

"Winslade, you know your part. You're only got to follow Junk.'

"You're to play the lady, you Miss. You're in love with Frederick. You know the old business: 'What! to part thus? Alas! alas! never to this moment have I confessed I love you!'

"That's a true picture of a mumming rehearsal, whether it's fair or private business. Some of the young chaps stick in their parts. They get the stage-fever and knocking in the knees. We've had to shove them on to the scene. They keep on asking what they're to say. 'Oh, say anything!' we tell 'em, and push 'em on to the stage.

"If a man's not gifted with the gab, he's no good at a booth. I've been with a chap acting 'Mary Woodbine,' and he hasn't known a word of his part. Then, when he's stuck, he has seized me by the throat, and said, 'Caitiff! dog! be sure thou provest my wife unfaithful to me.' Then I saw his dodge, and I said, 'Oh, my lord!' and he continued—

'Give me the proof, or thou hadst best been born a dog.' Then I answered, 'My lord, you wrong your wife, and torture me;' and he said, 'Forward, then, liar! dog!' and we both rushed off.

"We were acting at Lock's-fields, Walworth, once, doing private business, when we got into trouble, and were all put into prison for playing without a license. We had built up in a piece of private ground—in a dust-yard known as Calf's—and we had been there eleven months doing exceedingly well. We treated the policeman every night, and gave him as much, with porter and money, that was equal to one shilling a-night, which was taken up from the company. It was something like a penny a-piece for the policeman, for we were rather afraid of something of the kind happening.

"It was about the time that 'Oliver Twist' was making such a success at the other theatres, and so we did a robbery from it, and brought out our version as 'The Golden Farmer.' Instead of having an artful dodge, we called our comic character Jimmy Twitcher, and made him do all the artful-dodgery business. We had three performances a-night in those days. We was in our second performance, and Jimmy Twitcher was in the act of getting through the window, and Hammer, the auctioneer, was asleep, saying in his sleep, 'Knock 'em down! going! going! gone!' when I saw the police in private clothes rising from the front seats, and coming towards the stage. They opened the side door, and let the other police in, about forty of them. Then the inspector said, 'Ladies and gentlemen, I forbid any of you to move, as I arrest those people for performing without a license.' Nobody moved. Three police took hold of me, one at each arm, and one at the back of the neck. They wouldn't allow us to change our dresses, nor to take our other clothes, though they were close by. They marched us off to the Walworth station, along with about a hundred of the spectators, for some of them got away. My wife went to fetch my clothes for me, and they took her, too, and actually locked her up all night, though she was so near her pregnancy that the doctor ordered her pillows to sleep on. In the morning they took us all before the magistrate. The audience were fined one shilling a-head, or seven days; but they paid the shilling. We were all fined twenty shillings, or fourteen days. Some paid, but I couldn't raise it, so I was walked off.

"We were all in an awful fright when we found ourselves in the police-cell that night. Some said we should get six months, others twelve, and all we could say was, 'What on earth will our old women do?'

"We were all in our theatrical costumes. I was Hammer, the auctioneer, dressed in a long white coat, with the swallow-tails touching the ground, and blue bottoms. I had a

long figured chintz waistcoat, and a pair of drab knee-breeches, grey stockings, and low shoes, and my hat was a white one with a low crown and broad brim, like a Quaker's. To complete it, I wore a full bushy wig. As we were being walked off from Walworth to Kennington-lane, to go before the magistrate, the tops of the houses and the windows were full of people, waiting to see us come along in our dresses. They laughed more than pitied us. The police got pelted, and I caught a severe blow by accident, from a turnip out of a greengrocer's shop.

"I served all the time at Kingston, in my theatrical dress. I had nothing but bread and water all the time, with gruel for breakfast and supper. I had to pick oakum and make mats. I was only there two days before I was made deputy-wardsman, for they saw I was a decent sort of fellow. I was very much cut up, thinking of the wife so near her confinement. It was very hard, I thought, putting us in prison for getting our bread, for we never had any warning, whatever our master may have had. I can tell you, it was a nail in my coffin, these fourteen days, and one of us, of the name of Chau, did actually die through it, for he was of a very delicate constitution, and the cold laid hold of him. Why, fellows of our life and animation, to be shut up like that, and not allowed to utter a word, it was dreadful severe.

"At this time a little penny work came out, entitled the 'Groans of the Gallows.' I was working at an establishment in Whitechapel, and it was thought that something fresh would be a draw, and it was suggested that we should play this 'Groans of the Gallows,' for everything about hanging was always a hit. There was such a thing as ten people in the piece, and five was prominent characters. We got it written by one of the company, and it was called 'The Groans of the Gallows, or The Hangman's Career, illustrated with pictures.' This is how we brought it out. After an overture, the curtain rose and discovered a group on the stage, all with pots and pipes, gin measures, &c. They sing, 'We won't go home till morning,' and 'Kightly's a jolly good fellow.' Here the hangman is carousing with them, and his wife comes in and upbraids him with his intoxicating habits, and tells him that he spends all the money instead of purviding food for the children. A quarrel ensues, and he knocks her down with a quart pot and kills her. I was the hangman. There is then a picture of amazement from all, and he's repenting of what he's done. He then says, 'This comes of a little drinking. From the half-pint to the pint, from the pint to the pot, and so on, till ruin stares me in the face. Not content with starving my children, I have murdered my wife. Oh that this may be a moral to all!'

"The officers come in and arrest him, when enters the sheriff, who tells him that he has

forfeited his life; but that there is a vacancy for the public executioner, and that if he will accept the office his life shall be spared. He accepts the office, and all the characters groan at him. This ends the first scene. In the second enters Kightly and two officers, who have got him and accuse him of murder. He is taken off proclaiming his innocence. Scene the third. Kightly discovered at table in condemned cell, a few months supposing to have elapsed. The bell is tolling, and the hour of seven is struck. Enter sheriff's with hangman, and they tell him to do his duty. They then leave him, and he speaks thus: 'At length, then, two little months only have elapsed, and you, my friend and pot-companion, aye, and almost brother, are the first victim that I have to execute for murder;—and I shudder you know—' which I know you are innocent of. Am I not a murderer, and do I not deserve hanging more than you? but the law will have it's way, and I, the tool of that law, must carry it into force. It now becomes my painful duty to pinion your arms.' Then I do so, and it makes such a thrill through the house. 'I now take you from this place to your execution, where you will be suspended for one hour, and then it is my duty to cut you down. Have you any request to make?' He cries 'None!' and I add, 'Then follow me.' I always come on to that scene with a white night-cap and a halter on my arm. All the audience was silent as death as I spoke, and with tears in their eyes. Scene the fourth. Gallows being erected by workmen. That's a picture, you know, our fixing the top beam with a hammer, another at the bottom, and a third arranging the bolt at the top. The bell still tolling, you know. Ah, it brought it home to one or two of them, I can tell you. As soon as the workmen have finished they go off. Enter procession of sheriff, parson, hangman, and the victim, with two officers behind. The parson asks the victim if he has any request to make, and he still says 'None,' only he is innocent. The sheriff's then tell the hangman to do his duty. He then places the white cap over the man's head, and the noose about his neck, and is about leaving to draw the bolt, when I exclaim, 'Something here tells me that I ought not to hang this man. He is innocent, and I know it. I cannot, and I will not take his life.' Enter officer in haste, with pardon for Kightly. I then say, 'Kightly, you are free; live and be happy, and I am—' Here the sheriff adds, 'Doomed to the galleys for life.' That's because I refused to kill him, you know. I then exclaim, 'Then I shall be happy, knowing that I have not taken this man's life, and be thus enabled to give up the office of executioner and it's most horrid paraphernalia.' Then there's blue fire and end of piece.

"That piece was very successful, and run for three weeks. It drew in a deal of money. The boys used to run after me in the

streets and call me Calcraft, so great was the hit I made in the part. On one occasion a woman was to be hung, and I was going along Newgate, past the prison, on the Sunday evening. There was a quantity of people congregated, and some of the lads then recognised me from seeing me act in the 'Groans from the Gallows,' and they sung out 'Here comes Calcraft!' Every eye was turned towards me. Some said, 'No, no; that ain't him;' but the boys replied, 'Oh, yes it is; that's the man that played it at the gaff.' Of course I mizzled, for fear of a stone or two.

"The pay of an actor in private business varies from two shillings and sixpence to three shillings, and each man is also supposed to sing two songs in each performance, which makes three performances a night besides performing a sketch. Your engagement lasts as long as you suit the audience; for if you're a favourite you may have such a thing as nine months at a time. Whenever we have a benefit it's a ticket one, which amounts to two hundred tickets and your night's salary, which generally brings you in a pound, with your pay included. There's one in the company generally has a benefit every Thursday, so that your turn comes once in about six months, for the musicians, and the checktakers, and all has their turn.

"The expense of putting a new piece on the stage is not more than a pound, and that includes new scenery. They never do such a thing as buy new dresses. Perhaps they pay such a thing as six shillings a-week for their wardrobe to hire the dresses. Some gives as much as ten shillings; but then, naturally, the costume is more showy. All that we are supposed to find is russet boots, a set of fleshings, a ballet shirt, and a wig.

"Town work is the more quiet and more general-business like. There's no casualty in it, for you're not in shares, but on salaries, and after your work there's your money, for we are paid nightly. I have known as much as thirty-five shillings a-week given at one of these theatres, when the admission is only a penny and twopence. Where I was at it would hold from six to seven hundred people, and there was three performances a-night; and, indeed, on Saturdays and Mondays generally four. We have no extra pay for extra performances. The time allowed for each representation is from one hour to an hour and three-quarters. If we find there is a likelihood of a fourth house, we leave out a song each singer, and that saves half an hour. As soon as one house is turned out another comes in, for they are always waiting outside the doors, and there is a rush immediately the house is empty. We begin at six and are over by a few minutes before twelve. When we do speaking pieces we have to do it on the sly, as we should be stopped and get into trouble."

Ballet Performers.

"THE Ballet," said a street-dancer to me, "is a very favourite amusement with the people who go to cheap penny theatres. They are all comic, like pantomimes; indeed, they come under that term, only there's no comic scenes or transformations. They're like the story of a pantomime, and nothing else. Nearly all the popular clowns are famous for their ballet performances; they take the comic parts mostly, and the pantaloons take the old men's parts. Ballets have been favourites in this country for forty or fifty year. There is always a comic part in every ballet. I have known ballets to be very popular for ever since I can remember,—and that's thirty years. At all the gaffs, where they are afraid to speak their parts, they always have a ballet. Every one in London, and there are plenty of them, have one every night, for it's very seldom they venture upon a talking play.

"In all ballets the costume is fanciful. The young ladies come on in short petticoats, like them at the opera. Some of the girls we have are the same as have been in the opera corps-de-ballet. Mr. Flexmore, the celebrated clown, is a ballet performer, and there's not a greater man going for the ballet that he appears in, called 'The Dancing Scotchman.' There's Paul Herring, too; he's very famous. He's the only man I know of that can play Punch, for he works the speaker in his mouth; and he's been a great Punch-and-Judy man in his time. He's very clever in 'The Sprite of the Vineyard, or the Merry Devil of Como.' They've been playing it at Cremorne lately, and a very successful affair it was.

"When a professional goes to a gaff to get an engagement, they in general inquires whether he is a good ballet performer. Everything depends upon that. They also acts ballets at some of the concert-rooms. At the Rising Sun, Knightsbridge, as well as the Brown Bear, Knightsbridge, they play them for a week at a time, and then drop them for a fortnight for a change, and perhaps have tumblers instead; then they have them again for a week, and so on. In Ratcliffe Highway, at Ward's Hoop and Grapes, and also the Albion, and the Prince Regent, they always play ballets at stated intervals. Also the Effingham Saloon, Whitechapel, is a celebrated ballet-house. The admission to all these houses is 2d. I believe. At the Highway, when the ships are up and the sailors ashore, business is very brisk, and they are admitted to the rooms gratuitously; and a fine thing they make of them, for they are good-hearted fellows and don't mind what money they spend. I've known one who was a little way gone to chuck half-a-crown on the stage to some actor, and I've known others to spend a pound at one bit,—standing to all round! One night, when I

was performing ballets at the Rising Sun, Knightsbridge, Mr. Hill, the Queen's coachman, threw me two half-crowns on to the stage. We had been supposed to be fighting,—I and my mate,—and to have got so exhausted we fell down, and Mr. Hill came and poured three glasses of port-wine negus down our throats as we laid. I've repeatedly had 1s. and 6s. thrown to me by the grooms of the different people of nobility, such as the Russells and various other families.

"A good ballet performer will get averaging from a pound to 35s. a-week. They call Paul Herring a star, and he is one, for he always draws wherever he goes. I generally get my 25s., that's my running price, though I try for my 30s.; but 25s. is about my mark. I have always made Paul Herring my study, and I try to get to perform with him, for he's the best clown of the day, and a credit to work with.

"It's impossible to say how many ballet performers there are. There are such a host of them it's impossible to state that, for they change so. Then a great many are out of employment until Christmas, for that generally fills the vacancies up. My wife does a little in ballets, though she is principally a poses plastic girl. I married my wife off the table.

"One of the most successful ballets is the Statue Blanche. It has been performed at every theatre in London, both the cheap and the regular. The Surrey is an enormous place for it. It came out, I believe, in Grimaldi's time. It was played a fortnight ago at the Bower, and I took the part of the old man, and I was very successful; so far so, that I got a situation for Christmas. It's an excellent plot, and runs an hour and a quarter to play.

"It begins with a romantic view, with a cottage on the right hand, and white palings round it, and a quantity of straw laying on the stage. The villagers and the lover come on. Lover goes to cottage door and knocks three times, when lady appears at window. He ballets to her, 'Will you come down here and dance?' She comes, and they all do a country dance. At the end of the dance the old man is heard to cough inside cottage. He opens the window and sees the girl outside, and shakes his fist at her. The lover hides behind the lady. He comes out and sends his daughter into cottage, and sends the lover off about his business. He refuses to do so. The old man makes a blow at him with his stick; he makes another, when lover bobs down and stick strikes Pierrot in the face, and knocks him down. This Pierrot is the Simpkin of the ballet, and he's dressed in white, with long sleeves, and a white face, and white scalp on his head. The ballet is from the French, and its real title is 'La Statue Blanche,' though we call it 'The Statue Blanche.'

"Lover is driven off stage, and old man picks up Simpkin, and ballets to him that he's very sorry but he thought it was the lover, and

tells him to hide under the straw which is on the stage, and that if the lover comes again to lay hold of him, to call assistance. He hides, and old man goes into cottage.

"Lover comes again with villagers carrying flails, and they begin to thresh this straw with Simpkin under it. They thresh him round stage. He knocks at door three times, and the third blow knocks old man in the face. Out he comes staggering. The old man threatens to sack lover. He goes into cottage and brings out lover's bundle, and throws it to lover, and sends him away. The lover appeals to old man, but all to no use. The lover then ballets to him that he has got no money, so the old man hands his purse, which Simpkin takes and carries up stage. The lover still asks for money, and the old man is astonished, and then turns round and sees Simpkin, and makes him return it. Exit old man and Simpkin into cottage, leaving lover on stage. He leans against wing very disconsolate, when an artist comes on with a scrap-book to sketch the scene. He asks the lover what is the matter, and then he tells him he has a plan if lover will become a sketcher; and if he likes to do so, he will make a statue of him and sell him to the old man, as he deals in antiquities, and by that plan he will be able to gain the girl. They go off, and another old man comes on and knocks at door, which old father opens, and thinking it is lover tumbles him over. He then says he's very sorry for mistaking him for the lover. They make it up, and the old man says he has plenty of money, and has come to marry the daughter. They embrace, and old father invites old man to step inside and have something to drink. As the second old man is going in, the Simpkin jumps over his head and hides; and old man swears it is the lover, and hunts for him, but can't find him, and enters cottage. The second scene has got the tea business in it, and the blacking of the old lover's face. The comic business here is, they are having tea, and Simpkin is waiting on them, and does every thing very clumsy. He carries on the old business of stirring the tea up with a candle, and then he puts the dirty kettle on the cloth and makes a mark; so he thinks for a minute, and then wipes the bottom of the kettle with the old lover's handkerchief when he is not looking. Then Simpkin steals the milk-jug, and as he is drinking the old father hits him on the stomach, and makes him sputter in old lover's face, who instantly snatches up the dirty handkerchief to wipe his face, and blacks it all over with the soot from the bottom of the kettle. Then there is some comic business about Simpkin breaking the tea-things, and bursting a coat in two; and then scene changes to a romantic view, with a pedestal in the centre, and statue on it. The old father comes on with the girl and Simpkin, and the villagers, who have all come to view the statue. The old man then calls the artist, and tells him

to wind up the statue that he may see how it works. The statue does several positions, and the old man buys it. They all go off but Simpkin, the lady, and the old man. (The statue is still on the pedestal, you know.) The old man cautions Simpkin not to touch the statue, for he's going away. As soon as he is gone, Simpkin goes and winds it up until he breaks the spring. Then in comes the old man again, and the fool goes to a corner and pretends to be asleep. He is pulled up by the ear and shown what he has done, and is about to be beaten, when girl intercedes and puts the statue to rights. They go off, leaving Simpkin with the statue. Lady returns, and statue jumps down and embraces her. The statue then takes off his helmet and wig, and chucks it at Simpkin, and rushes off with girl, and the clown mounts the pedestal. Enter old man, who ballets that he'll have a turn as nobody is there. He goes and looks at statue, and perceives that he is in a different position. He turns the handle and Simpkin jumps about, burlesquing what the lover has done. Then Simpkin jumps down, and pushes the old man round stage with a club in his hand. Old man sings out 'Murder!' when lover returns with girl and stops Simpkin from knocking him down. They tell the old man they are married, and he joins their hands, and a general dance winds up the performance.

"That's one of the most successful ballets ever imagined, and in its time has drawn thousands and thousands to see it. I don't know who wrote the ballet, but I should imagine it was the property of Grimaldi's father, who was a great pantomimist.

"There's a new ballet, called 'The Dream before the Wedding, or the Ploughboy turned Sailor.' That one depends more upon the lover than the comic man. There's another, called 'The Boatman of the Ohio.' That's a comic nigger ballet, in which the banjo and bones are introduced; and there's a very funny duet song, to the tune of 'Roley poley.' They both hide in a clock-case to hide from the old man, and they frighten each other, for they put their ugly black faces out and take each other for the devil. Then there's 'The Barber and the Beadle.' The barber is one of Paul Herring's favourite characters. I've done the beadle to his barber. There's a very first-rate scene in it with the fop,—Jemmy Green he's called, a cockney sort of a fellow,—and this barber has to shave him, and cuts his nose, and ties him in a chair, and shoves the soap-suds in his mouth. This fop is arranging with the father about the daughter, and the barber ties a line to a pole and fishes off the old man's wig. The beadle is the father of the girl. It goes immense. I've played in it during my time more than 400 times.

"Another famous ballet is 'The Cobbler and the Tailor.' There's a celebrated fight in that, between the tailor with his sleeve-board and goose, and the cobbler with his clam and

his awl. The tailor tries to burn me with the goose, and he hunts me all about. We are about twenty minutes fighting. It's a never-failing fight, that is. The sleeve-boards are split to make a noise at each knock, and so is the clam. There's one, two, three, four, and a crack on the nob. We keep it up till both are supposed to fall down exhausted. Then there's crowing 'Cock-a-doodle-doo' at each other. We enjoy it just as much as the audience do, for it's very funny. Although the shirt is sticking to our backs with perspiration, we enter into the sport quite like them in front. We generally prefer winter for this ballet, for it's hot work; or if it's in the open air, like in gardens, then it's very delightful.

"One of the principal things in ballet performing is to be able to do the raps, or slaps, well and quickly. A fellow gives me a clap on the face in the piece, then I have to slap my hands together, and make a noise as if he had given me a tremendous knock down. Of course, the closer the sound is to the blow, the better is the effect; and the art is to do it close. That's what we call good working. The people, of course, follow with their eye the fist of the striker, and the one struck has his arms down in front, and claps them together. It is the same work as they do in the pantomimes. Another trick is hitting the knuckles when fighting, also striking on the head. That's done by holding the stick close to the pate, and that takes the blow. On the knuckles the striker aims just above the fingers. It wants a quick eye. A fellow caught me on the nose, at the Bower, the other night, and took the skin off the tip; and there's the mark now, you see. The principal distinction between pantomimes and ballets is that there are more cascades, and trips, and valleys in pantomimes, and none in ballets.

"A trip is a dance between Harlequin and the Columbine; and cascades and valleys are trundling and gymnastic performances, such as tumbling across the stage on wheels, and catching hold of hands and twirling round.

"We have done a kind of speaking ballet, where there is a little singing and talking just to help out the plot. It is a kind of pantomime sketch. It is entitled, 'The Magic Mirror, or how to reclaim a drunken servant.' I was the author of it, for I'm generally engaged expressly to get up ballets, and occasionally they expect me to do a new one for them. I get from 25s. to 30s. a-week for such an engagement. The scene opens with a chamber in the front of the stage, with a candle on the table nearly burnt out. The clock strikes four. A servant in livery is waiting up for his other servant. He yawns and does the sleepy business. Then he says, 'Whenever it is Thomas's day out he stops so very late; master has threatened to discharge him, and he will get the sack. Would that I could reclaim him! I will endeavour to do so. I wish he would return.' And that's the cue for

the other one off the stage to begin singing 'I've been roving, I've been roving,' &c. Then the honest servant says, 'He comes! Now then to form a magic looking-glass, wherein he can see his errors. Now to procure four pieces of timber.' He does so, and makes a square frame or strainer. 'Now for a few tacks.' He gets them, and then takes a gauze curtain down from the window, and places it on the back of the frame, which forms a looking-glass. Then lights is turned down on stage, and he puts a candle behind the mirror, which illuminates this gauze, you see. He then hides behind the glass.

"Thomas comes in very tipsy. He does the drunken business, and then says, 'I've had the best of cheer. I've been down to farmer Cheer's, and had the best of ale, and some good gin, and better brandy;' at which the man behind the frame echoes, 'Better brandy.' Thomas is alarmed. He looks around and says, 'That was the echo.' To which the voice replies, 'That was the echo.' Then they repeat this business; Thomas getting still more nervous. He says, 'Well, I declare, I'm getting quite melancholy. I'll see what singing can do to rouse me a little.' He then begins,—

'Tis love that rules the courts and the city,
It rules both the high and the low;
But sometimes—the more is the pity—
Young Cupid won't rosin his bow.
Won't rosin his bow.'

"The glass takes up 'Rosin his bo-o-o-o-w.' The time this is going on, the other servant is dressing himself to represent the other; combing his hair, and painting his face, and everything. Thomas gets quite I don't know how; and he says, 'I wonder if I look frightened?' And he goes to the glass, and the other appears at the same time, and it looks like the reflection in the glass. I've had some fools imagine it was the reflection. Thomas says 'Oh, I look very nice!' and as he speaks the other opens his mouth too. Then Thomas says, 'Why I've got some black on my nose!' and he goes to wipe it, and the form behind imitates him.

"He then goes down the stage and returns to glass again. There's a deal of business carried on. At last Thomas sees the figure turn round whilst he's looking in front, and then he exclaims, 'That's not me! My waistcoat ain't split up the back! I'll smash the glass.' He knocks down the gauze, and out pops the figure, yelling 'Ah! I'm the glass imp!' Thomas falls down on the stage, and as the imp walks about, one off the side at the wing thumps the ground at each step with a piece of wood, to mark the steps. Then the servant says, 'Fe fi fo fum, I smell the blood of an Englishman;' and Thomas answers, 'Oh no, Mr. Ghost, I ain't an Englishman; I'm a Irish woman;' and there's a shout at that, of course. The servant continues,—

'Let him be alive, let him be dead,—and Thomas says 'I'm as dead as a red herring!' and there's another shout. The fellow-servant then catches hold of Thomas by the hair of the head, and tells him to follow him below. Thomas replies 'Oh don't! please, don't, Mr. Ghost! I'll do anything but follow you below, though you are so good-looking.' 'Will you promise to come home early for the future?' 'I will.' 'And never drink no more brandy nor stout?' 'I will.' The fellow-servant shouts in a hoarse voice, 'Nay, Slave! not I will, but I will not.' 'Not.' 'Enough! rise and look at me.' 'Oh, I wouldn't for the world.' 'Don't you know me?' 'Oh no! no! no! I never saw you before.' 'It's all right, I'm your friend James: your fellow-servant!' Then Thomas gets up and sees him, and begins laughing. 'Oh, I wasn't frightened: I knew you all the time.' The other cove then shouts, 'Fe fi fo fum;' and down goes Thomas on his face and screams 'Murder! murder!' Then James says, 'Oh, it's only me; look!' Then Thomas looks and says, 'Well, I declare I thought you was the glass imp.' 'No, I only played this prank to reclaim you. Has it had its effect?' 'It has.' 'Then I have gained my end, since you are reformed; and I hope you are reformed.' 'I am; and I hope it will be a lesson to my friends in front, and that they will never take a drop too much.' Then they sing together—

'Troubles all, great and small,
You must think not of the past;
For life is short, and mirth and sport
Cannot ever last.
Cannot ever last.
Cannot ever last.'

"That pantomimic farce always goes down with wonderful success. It has a regular round of applause, which is everybody clapping as hard as they can. Some of the tavern-keepers, in whose concert-rooms we done this ballet pantomime, don't much like the wind-up to this piece,—about hoping our friends will take a lesson, and not drink too much. At one place the landlord happened to come just as that line was spoke, and he told me he'd fine me sixpence if I done it again. 'Why, I ain't sold a dozen pots of beer through it,' he says. So I agreed with him to alter the tag to this,— 'and not drink no more than you can carry, for that never did any one any harm, but more is injurious.' At some of these rooms, if a song is going too long and no drinking, the landlord will come in, and hold his hand up, as a cue for us to leave off and let the drinking begin again. Then the waiters looks the audience up again with their 'Give your orders, gentlemen; give your orders.'

"This ballet pantomime was quite an innovation, and isn't strictly ballet, but in the same line.

"Of all ballets, the one that has found the longest run is the 'Statue Blanche.' I've

known it to go a month. All the young ladies in these pieces are regular ballet-girls, and all 'turned out;' that is, taught to stand with their dancing position. You know all of them is supposed to be able to kick their nose with their knees. You know they crick them when young, the same as a contortionist or acrobat. They are always practising. You see them in the green-room kicking their legs about. The men have to do the same, except the comic characters that don't dance. Paul Herring is very clever at these things, and don't want no practising. He can scratch his head with his foot. He's the finest clown that ever trod in shoe-leather.

"The green-rooms at the concert-rooms are very tidy. Even at the penny gaffs the men and women have separate rooms. The women there have got their decency the same as at a theatre, and they wouldn't go there if there wasn't separate dressing-rooms. In fact, they keep themselves more from the men than the men from them, for they are all madames; and though they only keep a wheelbarrow, they carry themselves as if they had a coach.

"At the concert-rooms they have always a useful set of scenery, about similar to that at the penny gaffs. At some of them you don't get so good scenery as at the gaffs. There's in general a romantic scene, and a cottage, and so forth, and that's all that's wanted. There's a regular proscenium to the theatres, with lights in front and all. The most usual manner is to have a couple of figures at the sides holding lights, and curtains behind them, because it answers for the ballets and also for the singing. At some of the concert-rooms there's no side-entrance to the stage, and then you have to go across the audience dressed in your costume, before you can get on to the stage. It's horrid, that is. I've done it many and many a time at Knightsbridge. It's very bad, for everything depends upon being discovered when the curtain draws up. Some of the people will say, 'Oh, that's nothing; I've seen him before.'

"I have repeatedly seen people in front go to the stage and offer their glass to the actor to drink. We are forbid to receive them, because it interferes with business; but we do take it. I've seen drink handed on to the stage from three to four times a-night.

"Sometimes, when a dance has pleased the audience, or an acrobat, or a bottle equilibrist, they'll throw halfpence on to the stage, to reward the performer. We sometimes do this for one another, so as to give the collection a start. We are forbidden to take money when it is thrown on to us, but we do. If a sixpence comes, we in general clap our foot on to it, and then your mate gives you a rap on the face, and we tumble down and put it in our mouth, so that the proprietor shan't see us. If he saw it done, and he could find it, he'd take it away if he could. I have known a man pick up as much as 3s. after a dance. Then there are generally some one who is not en-

gaged on the establishment, and he comes for what we term 'the nobbings,' that's what is throw'd to him. I've known a clog-dancer, of the name of Thompson, to earn as much as 10s. of a night at the various concert-rooms. He's very clever, and may be seen any night at the Hoop and Grapes, Ratcliffe-highway. He does 108 different steps, and 51 of them are on his toes.

"There's in general from five to six people engaged in a concert-room performances, and for professionals alone that'll come to from 30s. to 2l. a-night for expenses for actors and singers. That's putting down nothing for the conductor, or musicians, or gas. Some of them charge 2d. or 1d. admission, but then there's something extra put on to the drink. Porter is 5d. a pot, and fourpenny ale is charged 6d.; besides, you can't have less than 6d. worth of gin-and-water. At such a room as the Nag's Head in Oxford-street, I've known as many as from 200 to 300 go there in the evening; and the Standard, Pimlico, will hold from 400 to 450 people, and I've seen that full for nights together. There they only have merely a platform, and seldom do ballets, or Grecian statues, dancing, gymnastics, and various other entertainments, such as ventriloquism. There the admission is 4d., and on benefit occasions 6d."

THE TIGHT-ROPE DANCERS AND STILT-VAULTERS.

"I AM the father of two little girls who perform on the tight-rope and on stilts. My wife also performs, so that the family by itself can give an entertainment that lasts an hour and a half altogether. I don't perform myself, but I go about making the arrangements and engagements for them. Managers write to me from the country to get up entertainments for them, and to undertake the speculation at so much. Indeed I am a manager. I hire a place of amusement, and hire it at so much; or if they won't let it, then I take an engagement for the family. I never fancied any professional work myself, except, perhaps, a bit of sculpture. I am rather partial to the poses plastiques, but that's all.

"Both my little girls are under eight years of age, and they do the stilt-waltzing, and the eldest does the tight-rope business as well. Their mother is a tight-rope dancer, and does the same business as Madame Sayin used to appear in, such as the ascension on the rope in the midst of fireworks. We had men in England who had done the ascension before Madame Sayin came out at Vauxhall, but I think she was the first woman that ever did it in this country. I remember her well. She lodged at a relation of mine during her engagement at the Gardens. She was a ugly little woman, very diminutive, and tremendously pitted with the small-pox. She was what may be called a horny woman, very tough and bony. I've heard my father and mother

say she had 20l. a-night at Vauxhall, and she did it three times a-week; but I can't vouch for this, as it was only hearsay.

"My eldest little girl first began doing the stilts in public when she was three-and-a-half years old. I don't suppose she was much more than two-and-a-half years old when I first put her on the stilts. They were particularly short, was about four foot from the ground, so that she came to about as high as my arms. It was the funniest thing in the world to see her. She hadn't got sufficient strength in her knees to keep her legs stiff, and she used to wobble about just like a fellow drunk, and lost the use of his limbs. The object of beginning so soon was to accustom it, and she was only on for a few minutes once or twice a-day. She liked this very much, in fact so much, that the other little ones used to cry like blazes because I wouldn't let them have a turn at them. I used to make my girl do it, just like a bit of fun. She'd be laughing fit to crack her sides, and we'd be laughing to see her little legs bending about. I had a new dress made for her, with a spangled bodice and gauze skirt, and she always put that on when she was practising, and that used to induce her to the exercise. She was pleased as Punch when she had her fine clothes on. When she wasn't good, I'd say to her, 'Very well, miss, since you're so naughty, you shan't go out with us to perform; we'll teach your little sister, and take her with us, and leave you at home.' That used to settle her in a moment, for she didn't like the idea of having the other one take her place.

"Some people, when they teach their children for any entertainment, torture the little things most dreadful. There is a great deal of barbarity practised in teaching children for the various lines. It's very silly, because it only frightens the little things, and some children often will do much more by kindness than ill-usage. Now there are several children that I know of that have been severely injured whilst being trained for the Risley business. Why, bless your soul, a little thing coming down on it's head, is done for the remainder of it's life. I've seen them crying on the stage, publicly, from being sworn at and bullied, where they would have gone to it laughing, if they had only been coaxed and persuaded.

"Now my little things took to it almost naturally. It was bred and born in them, for my father was in the profession before me, and my wife's parents were also performers. We had both my little girls on the stilts before they were three years old. It's astonishing how soon the leg gets accustomed to the stilts, for in less than three months they can walk alone. Of course, for the first six weeks that they are put on we never leave go of their hands. The knees, which at first is weak and wabby, gets strong, and when once that is used to the pad and stump (for the

stilts are fastened on to just where the garter would come), then the child is all right. It does not enlarge the knee at all, and instead of crooking the leg, it acts in a similar way to what we see in a child born with the cricks, with irons on. I should say, that if any of my children have been born knock-kneed, or bow-legged, the stilts have been the means of making their legs straight. It does not fatigue their ankles at all, but the principal strain is on the hollow in the palm of the foot, where it fits into the tread of the still, for that's the thing that bears the whole weight. If you keep a child on too long, it will complain of pain there; but mine were never on for more than twenty minutes at a time, and that's not long enough to tire the foot. But one gets over this feeling.

"I've had my young ones on the stilts amusing themselves in my back-yard for a whole afternoon. They'll have them on and off three or four times in a hour, for it don't take a minute or two to put them on. They would put them on for play. I've often had them asking me to let them stop away from school, so as to have them on.

"My wife is very clever on the stilts. She does the routine of military exercise with them on. It's the gun exercise. She takes one stilt off herself, and remains on the other, and then shoulders the stilt she has taken off, and shows the gun practice. She's the only female stilt-dancer in England now. Those that were with her when she was a girl are all old women now. All of my family waltz and polka on stilts, and play tamborines whilst they dance. The little girls dance with their mother.

"It took longer to teach the children to do the tight-rope. They were five years old before I first began to teach them. The first thing I taught them to walk upon was on a pole passed through the rails at the back of two chairs. When you're teaching a child, you have not got time to go driving stakes into the ground to fix a rope upon. My pole was a bit of one of my wife's broken balance-poles. It was as thick as a broom handle, and not much longer. I had to lay hold of the little things' hands at first. They had no balance-pole to hold, not for some months afterwards. My young ones liked it very much; I don't know how other persons may. It was bred in them. They couldn't stand even upright when first they tried it, but after three months they could just walk across it by themselves. I exercised them once every day, for I had other business to attend to, and I'd give them a lesson for just, perhaps, half an hour at dinner time, or of an evening a bit after I came home. My wife never would teach them herself. I taught my wife rope-dancing, and yet I could not do it; but I understood it by theory, though not by experience. I never chalked my young ones' feet, but I put them on a little pair of canvas

pumps, to get the feet properly formed to grasp the rope, and to bend round. My wife's feet, when she is on the rope, bend round from continual use, so that they form a hollow in the palm of the foot, or the waist of the foot as some call it. My girls' feet soon took the form. The foot is a little bit tender at first, not to the pole, because that is round and smooth, but the strands of the rope would, until the person has had some practice, blister the foot if kept too long on it. I never kept my young ones on the pole more than twenty minutes at a time, for it tired me more than them, and my arms used to ache with supporting them. Just when they got into the knack and habit of walking on the pole, then I shifted them to a rope, which I fixed up in my back-yard. The rope has to be a good cable size, about one-and-a-half inches in diameter. I always chalked the rope; chalk is of a very rough nature, and prevents slipping. The sole of the pump is always more or less hard and greasy. We don't rough the soles of the pumps, for the rope itself will soon make them rough, no matter how bright they may have been. My rope was three feet six inches from the ground, which was a comfortable height for me to go alongside of the children. I didn't give them the balance-pole till they were pretty perfect without it. It is a great help, is the pole. The one my wife takes on the rope with her is eighteen feet long. Some of the poles are weighted at both ends, but ours are not. My young ones were able to dance on the rope in a twelve-month's time. They weren't a bit nervous when I highered the rope in my yard. I was underneath to catch them. They seemed to like it.

"They appeared in public on the tight-rope in less than a twelvemonth from their first lesson on the broom-stick on the backs of the chairs. My girl had done the stilts in public when she was only three years and six months old, so she was accustomed to an audience. It was in a garden she made her first performance on the rope, and I was under her in case she fell. I always do that to this day.

"Whenever I go to fairs to fulfil engagements, I always take all my own apparatus with me. There is the rope some twenty yards long, and then there's the pulley-blocks for tightening it, and the cross-poles for fixing it up, and the balance-poles. I'm obliged to have a cart to take them along. I always make engagements, and never go in shares, for I don't like that game. I could have lots of jobs at that game if I liked. There's no hold on the proprietor of the show. There's a share taken for this, and a share for this, so that before the company come to touch any money, twenty shares are gone out of thirty, and only ten left for the performers. I have had a pound a-day for myself and family at a fair. At the last one I went to, a week ago,

we took somewhere about 25s. a-day. When it isn't too far from London, we generally come home at night, but otherwise we go to a tavern, and put up there.

"I only go to circuses when we are at fairs. I never had a booth of my own. The young ones and my wife walk about the parade to make a show of the entire company, but unless business is very bad, and a draw is wanted, my little ones don't appear on the stilts. They have done so, of course, but I don't like them to do so, unless as a favour.

"In the ring, their general performance is the rope one time, and then reverse it and do the stilts. My wife and the girls all have their turns at the rope, following each other in their performances. The band generally plays quadrilles, or a waltz, or anything; it don't matter what it is, so long as it is the proper time. They dance and do the springs in the air, and they also perform with chairs, seating themselves on it whilst on the rope, and also standing up on the chair. They also have a pair of ladders, and mount them. Then again they dance in fetters. I am there underneath, in evening costume, looking after them. They generally wind up their tight-rope performance by flinging away the balance-pole, and dancing without it to quick measure.

"One of my little girls slipped off once, but I caught her directly as she came down, and she wasn't in the least frightened, and went on again. I put her down, and she curtsied, and ran up again. Did she scream? Of course not. You can't help having a slip off occasionally.

"When they do the stilts, the young ones only dance waltzes and polkas, and so on. They have to use their hands for doing the graceful attitudes. My wife, as I said before, does the gun exercise besides dancing, and it's always very successful with the audience, and goes down tremendously. The performances of the three takes about twenty minutes, I think, for I never timed it exactly. I've been at some fairs when we have done our performances eighteen times a-day, and I've been at some where I've only done it four or six, for it always depends upon what business is being done. That's the truth. When the booth is full, then the inside performance begins, and until it is, the parade work is done. There are generally persons engaged expressly to do the parade business.

"I never knew my girls catch cold at a fair, for they are generally held in hot weather, and the heat is rather more complained of than the cold. My young ones put on three or four different dresses during a fair—at least mine do. I don't know what others do. Each dress is a different colour. There is a regular dressing-room for the ladies under the parade carriages, and their mother attends to them.

"Very often after their performances they get fruit and money thrown to them into the

ring. I've known seven or eight shillings to be thrown to them in coppers and silver, but it's seldom they get more than a shilling or so. I've known ladies and gentlemen wait for them when they went to take off their dresses after they have done, and give them five or six shillings.

"When we go to fairs, I always pack the young ones off to bed about nine, and never later than ten. They don't seem tired, and would like to stop up all night, I should think. I don't know how it is with other kids.

"I send my young ones to school every day when there is no business on, and they are getting on well with their schooling. When we go to a country engagement, then I send them to a school in the town if we stop any time.

"Ours is, I think, the only family doing the rope-dancing and stilt-vaulting. I don't know of any others, nor yet of any other children at all who do it.

"Stilt-vaulting is dying out. You never see any children going about the streets as you did formerly. There never was so much money got as at that stilt-vaulting in the streets. My wife's family, when she was young, thought nothing of going out of an afternoon, after dinner, and taking their three or four pounds. They used to be as tall up as the first-floor windows of some of the houses. It must be very nearly twenty years since I remember the last that appeared. It isn't that the police would stop it, but there's nobody to do it. It's a very difficult thing to do, is walking about at that tremendous height. If you fall you're done for. One of my little ones fell once—it was on some grass, I think—but she escaped without any hurt, for she was light, and gathered herself up in a heap somehow.

"There used to be a celebrated Jellini family, with a similar entertainment to what I give. They were at the theatres mostly, and at public gardens, and so on. They used to do ballets on stilts, and had great success. That must be forty years ago. There used to be the Chaff's family too, who went about the streets on stilts. They had music with them, and danced in the public thoroughfares. Now there is nothing of the kind going on, and it's out of date.

"I have been abroad, in Holland, travelling with a circus company. I've also visited Belgium. The children and my wife were very much liked wherever they went. I was on an engagement then, and we had 11l. a-week, and I was with them seven weeks. They paid our travelling expenses there, and we paid them home."

STREET RECITER.

STREET reciters are somewhat scarce now-a-days, and I was a long time before meeting with

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one; for though I could always trace them through their wanderings about the streets, and learn where they had been seen the night before, still I could never find one myself. I believe there are not more than ten lads in London,—for they seem to be all lads,—who are earning a livelihood by street-reciting.

At length I heard that some street actors, as they call themselves, lived in a court in the City. There were two of them—one a lad, who was dressed in a man's ragged coat and burst boots, and tucked-up trowsers, and seemingly in a state of great want; and the other decently enough attired in a black paletot with a flash white-and-red handkerchief, or "fogle," as the costermongers call it, jauntily arranged so as to bulge over the closely-buttoned collar of his coat. There was a priggish look about the latter lad, while his manner was "cute," and smacked of Petticoat-lane; and though the other one seemed to slink back, he pushed himself saucily forward, and at once informed me that he belonged "to the profession" of street declaimer. "I and this other boy goes out together," he said, as he took a short pipe from his mouth; and in proof of his assertion, he volunteered that they should on the spot give me a specimen of their histrionic powers.

I preferred listening to the modest boy. He was an extremely good-looking lad, and spoke in a soft voice, almost like a girl's. He had a bright, cheerful face, and a skin so transparent and healthy, and altogether appeared so different from the generality of street lads, that I felt convinced that he had not long led a wandering life, and that there was some mystery connected with his present pursuits. He blushed when spoken to, and his answers were nervously civil.

When I had the better-natured boy alone with me, I found that he had been well educated; and his statement will show that he was born of respectable parents, and the reason why he took to his present course of life. At first he seemed to be nervous, and little inclined to talk; but as we became better acquainted, he chatted on even faster than my pen could follow. He had picked up several of the set phrases of theatrical parlance, such as, "But my dream has vanished in air;" or, "I felt that a blight was on my happiness;" and delivered his words in a romantic tone, as though he fancied he was acting on a stage. He volunteered to show me his declamatory powers, and selected "Othello's Apology." He went to the back of the room, and after throwing his arms about him for a few seconds, and looking at the ceiling as if to inspire himself, he started off.

Whilst he had been chatting to us his voice was—as I said before—like a girl's; but no sooner did he deliver his, "Most potent, grave, and reverend Signiors," than I was surprised to hear him assume a deep stomachic voice—a style evidently founded upon the melo-dramatic models at minor theatres. His good-looking

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face, however, became flushed and excited during the delivery of the speech, his eyes rolled about, and he passed his hands through his hair, combing it with his fingers till it fell wildly about his neck like a mane.

When he had finished the speech he again relapsed into his quiet ways, and resuming his former tone of voice, seemed to think that an apology was requisite for the wildness of his acting, for he said, "When I act Shakspeare I cannot restrain myself,—it seems to master my very soul."

He had some little talent as an actor, but was possessed of more memory than knowledge of the use of words. Like other performers, he endeavoured to make his "points" by dropping his voice to almost a whisper when he came to the passage, "I'faith 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange."

In answer to my questions he gave me the following statement:—

"I am a street reciter, that is, I go about the streets and play Shakspeare's tragedies, and selections from poets. The boys in the streets call me Shakspeare. The first time they called me so I smiled at them, and was honoured by the name, though it's only passing! it's only fleet!

"I was born in Dublin, and my father was in the army, and my mother was a lady's nurse and midwife, and used to go out on urgent business, but only to ladies of the higher classes. My mother died in Dublin, and my father left the army and became a turnkey in Dublin prison. Father left Dublin when I was about ten years of age, and went to Manchester. Then I went into an office—a herring-store, which had agents at Yarmouth and other fishing-ports; and there I had to do writing. Summer-time was our busiest time, for we used to have to sit up at night waiting for the trains to come in with the fish. I used to get 3d. an hour for every hour we worked over, and 6d. in the morning for coffee, and 8s. 6d. standing wages, whether I worked or played. I know all about herrings and herring-packing, for I was two years there, and the master was like a father to me, and would give me money many times, Christmas-boxes, and new-years' gifts, and such-like. I might have been there now, and foreman by this time, in the Isle of Man, where we had a house, only I was too foolish—going to theatres and such-like.

"You see, I used, before I went out as clerk, to go to a school in Manchester, where the master taught recitation. We used to speak pieces from Uwin's 'Elocution,' and we had to get a piece off to elocution, and attitude, and position; indeed, elocution may be said to be position and attitude. We used to do 'The Downfall of Poland,' and 'Lord Ullen's Daughter,' and 'My name is Norval,' and several others—'Rolla,' and all them. Then we used to speak them one at a time, and occasionally we would take different parts, such as the

'Quarrel of Brutus,' and 'Cassius,' and 'Rolla,' and the 'American Patriot,' and such-like. I will not boast of myself, but I was one of the best in the class, though since I have gone out in the streets it has spoiled my voice and my inclinations, for the people likes shouting. I have had as many as 500 persons round me in the Walworth-road at one time, and we got 4s. between us; and then we lost several halfpence, for it was night, and we could not see the money that was thrown into the ring. We did the 'Gipsy's Revenge,' and 'Othello's Apology.'

"Whilst I was at the herring-stores I used to be very fond of the theatre, and I'd go there every night if I could, and I did nearly manage to be there every evening. I'd save up my money, and if I'd none I'd go to my master and ask him to let me have a few halfpence; and I've even wanted to go to the play so much that, when I couldn't get any money, I'd sell my clothes to go. Master used to caution me, and say that the theatre would ruin me, and I'm sure it has. When my master would tell me to stop and do the books, I'd only just run them over at night and cast them up as quickly as I could, and then I'd run out and go to the twopenny theatre on the Victoria-bridge, Manchester. Sometimes I used to perform there for Mr. Row, who was the proprietor. It was what is called a travelling 'slang,' a booth erected temporarily. I did William Tell's son, and I've also done the 'Bloody Child' in Macbeth, and go on with the witches. It was a very little stage, but with very nice scenery, and shift-scenes and all, the same as any other theatre. On a Saturday night he used to have as many as six houses; start off at three o'clock, after the factory hands had been paid off. I never had any money for acting, for though he offered me half-a-sovereign a-week to come and take a part, yet I wouldn't accept of it, for I only did it for my own amusement like. They used to call me King Dick.

"My master knew I went to the theatre to act, for he sent one of the boys to follow me, and he went in front and saw me acting in Macbeth, and he went and told master, because, just as the second act was over, he came right behind the scenes and ordered me out, and told me I'd have to get another situation if I went there any more. He took me home and finished the books, and the next morning I told him I'd leave, for I felt as if it was my sole ambition to get on to the stage, or even put my foot on it; I was so enamoured of it. And it is the same now, for I'd do anything to get engaged—it's as if a spell was on me. Just before I left he besought me to remain with him, and said that I was a useful hand to him, and a good boy when I liked, and that he wanted to make a gentleman of me. He was so fond of me that he often gave me money himself to go to a theatre; but he said too much of it was bad.

"After I left him I went with another boy to go to sea. I forgot all about the theatre, for it agitated my feelings when I left him, and I wished I had been back, for I'd been with him eighteen months, and he'd been like a father to me; but I was too ashamed to see him again. This boy and me started for Scarborough, and he had no money, and I had 5s., that was all between us; but I had a black suit of clothes cost 2l. 10s., which my master had made me a present of, for excelling the foreman in making up the books—for the foreman was 208 hands of herrings (five herrings make a hand) short in one week; and then I took the books the next week, and I was only four herrings short, and master was so pleased that he bestowed upon me a present of a new suit of clothes.

"I parted with my companion for this reason. One day, after we had been walking, we were so hungry we could eat anything, and I had been accustomed to never being hungry, so that I was very much exhausted from fatigue, for we had walked thirty miles that day, only eating one piece of bread, which I got at a public-house where I gave a recitation. We came to a farm-house at a place called Bishop Wilton, in Yorkshire, and he went inside the door to beg for something to eat. There was a young lady came out and talked to him and gave him some bread, and then she saw me and had compassion on me, because I looked respectable and was so miserable. We told her we were cousins, and had left our fathers and mothers (for we didn't like to say we had left our masters), and she said, 'Poor boys! your parents will be fretting after you; I'd go back, if I was you.' She gave him a large bit of bread, and then she gave me a big bit of cold plum-pudding. My companion wanted half my pudding besides his own bread, and I preferred to give him part of the pudding and not have any bread; but he wouldn't, and struck out at me. I returned it, and then we fought, and an old woman came out with a stick and beat us both, and said we were incorrigible young beggars, and couldn't be very hungry or we shouldn't fight that way. Then I parted from my companion, and he took the direct road to Scarborough, and I went to York. I saw him afterwards when I returned to Manchester. His father left him 200l., and he's doing very well in a good situation in a commercial office.

"I got bound for six years to sea to a ship-owner at Scarborough, but the mate behaved very bad to me and used me brutally. I couldn't use the ropes as well as he thought I might, although I learned the compass and all the ropes very soon. The captain was a very good man, but I daren't tell him for fear of the mate. He used to beat me with the rope's end—sometimes the lead-rope—that was his usual weapon, and he used to leave marks on me. I took the part of Hamlet, and,

instead of complaining, I thought of that part where he says,

'And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of.'

That's the best play of Shakspeare; he outdoes himself there.

"When the brig got to Scheidam, in Holland, five miles off Rotterdam, I ran away. The vessel was a collier, and whilst they were doing the one, two, three, and pulling up the coals, I slipped over the side and got to shore. I walked to Rotterdam, and there I met an Irish sailor and told him all, and he told me to apply to the British Consul and say that I had been left ashore by a Dutch galliot, which had sailed the day before for Jersey. The Consul put me in a boarding-house—a splendid place, with servants to wait on you, where they gave me everything, cigars and all, for everybody smokes there—little boys scarce higher than the table—and cigars are only a cent each—and five cents make a penny. I was like a gentleman then, and then they put me in the screw steamer, the Irwell, and sent me back to Hull.

"When I got to Manchester again, I went in my sailor-clothes to see my old master. He was very glad to see me, and asked me if I wanted anything to eat, and sent out for ale for me, and was so glad to see me that he gave me money. He took me back again at higher wages, 10s.—which was 1s. 6d. over—and I stopped there eight months, until they wrote to me from Dublin that father was very ill, and that I was to come over directly. So I went, and was by him when he died. He was sixty-two years of age, and left 400l. to my sister, which she is to have when she comes of age. He quarrelled with me because he was a Catholic, and I didn't follow that persuasion, and he disowned me; but, just before he died, he blessed me, and looked as if he wanted to say something to me, but he couldn't, for the breath was leaving him.

"When I returned to Manchester I found my master had taken another servant, as he expected I should stop in Dublin, and there was no vacancy; but he recommended me to another merchant, and there I was put in the yard to work among the herrings, as he didn't know my capabilities; but, in a short time I was put in the shop as boy, and then I was very much in favour with the master and the missus, and the son, and he used to bring me to concerts and balls, and was very partial to me; and I used to eat and drink with them at their own table. I've been foolish, and never a friend to myself, for I ran away from them. A lad told me that London was such a fine place, and induced me to sell my clothes and take the train; and here I've been for about eight months knocking about.

"As long as my money lasted I used to go to the theatre every night—to the Standard,

and the City-road, and the Britannia; but when it was gone I looked then to see what I might do. At first I tried for a situation, but they wouldn't take me, because I couldn't get a recommendation in London. Then I formed a resolution of giving recitations from Shakspeare and the other poets in public-houses, and getting a living that way.

"I had learned a good deal of Shakspeare at school; and besides, when I was with my master I had often bought penny copies of Shakspeare, and I used to study it in the office, hiding it under the book I was writing in; and, when nobody was looking, studying the speeches. I used to go and recite before the men in the yard, and they liked it.

"The first night I went out I earned 4s., and that was a great cheer to my spirits. It was at a public-house in Fashion-street. I went into the tap-room and asked the gentlemen if they would wish to hear a recitation from Shakspeare, and they said, 'Proceed.' The first part I gave them was from Richard the Third: 'Now is the winter of our discontent;' and then they clapped me and made me do it over again. Then I performed Hamlet's 'Soliloquy on the Immortality of the Soul,' and they threw down 2s. in coppers, and one gentleman gave me sixpence.

"I've continued giving recitations from Shakspeare and selections from the poets ever since, and done very well, until I became ill with a cold, which made my voice bad, so that I was unable to speak. I've been ill now a fortnight, and I went out last night for the first time, along with another young fellow who recites, and we got 1s. 6d. between us in the 'Gipsy's Revenge.' We went to a public-house where they were having 'a lead,' that is a collection for a friend who is ill, and the company throw down what they can for a subscription, and they have in a fiddle and make it social. But it was not a good 'lead,' and poorly attended, so we did not make much out of the company.

"When I go out to recite, I generally go with another boy, and we take parts. The pieces that draw best with the public are, 'The Gipsy's Revenge,' 'The Gold Digger's Revenge,' 'The Miser,' 'The Robber,' 'The Felon,' and 'The Highwayman.' We take parts in these, and he always performs the villain, and I take the noble characters. He always dies, because he can do a splendid back-fall, and he looks so wicked when he's got the moustaches on. I generally draws the company by giving two or three recitations, and then we perform a piece; and whilst he goes round with the hat, I recite again. My favourite recitations are, 'Othello's Apology,' beginning with 'Most potent, grave, and reverend Signiors,' and those from Hamlet, Richard III., and Macbeth. Of the recitations I think the people prefer that from Othello, for the ladies have often asked me to give them that from Othello (they like to hear about Desdemona),

but the gentlemen ask for that from Hamlet, 'To be, or not to be?'

"My principal place for giving performances is the Commercial-road, near Limehouse, but the most theatrically inclined neighbourhood is the Walworth-road. The most money I ever took at one time in the streets was 4s. in the Walworth-road.

"The best receipts I ever had was got in a public-house near Brick-lane, for I took 12s., and I was alone. There was a 'lead' up there for a friend, and I knew of it, and I had my hair curled and got myself decently habited, I was there for about three or four hours, and in the intervals between the dances I used to recite. There were girls there, and they took my part, though they made me drink so much I was nearly tipsy.

"The only theatrical costume I put on is moustachios, and I take a stick to use as a sword. I put myself into attitudes, and look as fierce as I can. When first the people came to hear me they laughed, and then they became quiet; and sometimes you could hear a pin drop.

"When I am at work regularly—that's when I am in voice and will—I make about 10s. a-week, if there's not much rain. If it's wet, people don't go to the public-houses, and they are my best paying audiences. The least I have ever taken in a week is about 6s.

"There isn't many going about London reciting. It is a very rare class to be found; I only know about four who live that way, and I have heard of the others from hearsay—not that I have seen them myself.

"I'm very fond of music, and know most of the opera. That organ's playing something by Verdi; I heard it at the theatre at Dublin. I amuse them sometimes in the kitchen at my lodgings by playing on a penny tin whistle. I can do 'Still, so gently,' from 'La Sonnambula,' and hornpipes, and jigs, and Scotch airs, as well as 'Cheer boys, cheer,' and 'To the West,' and many others. They get me to play when they want to dance, and they pay me for them. They call me Shakspeare by name."

BLIND READER.

AN intelligent man gave me the following account of his experience as a blind reader. He was poorly dressed, but clean, and had not a vulgar look.

"My father died when I was ten years old, and my mother in the coronation year, 1838. I am now in my thirty-eighth year. I was a clerk in various offices. I was not born blind, but lost my sight four years ago, in consequence of aneurism. I was a fortnight in the Ophthalmic Hospital, and was an out-patient for three months. I am a married man, with one child, and we did as well as we could, but that was very badly, until every bit of furniture (and I had a house full of good furniture up to that time) went. At last I thought I

might earn a little by reading in the street. The Society for the Indigent Blind gave me the Gospel of St. John, after Mr. Freer's system, the price being 8s.; and a brother-in-law supplied me with the Gospel of St. Luke, which cost 9s. In Mr. Freer's system the regular alphabet letters are not used, but there are raised characters, thirty-four in number, including long and short vowels; and these characters express sounds, and a sound may comprise a short syllable. I learned to read by this system in four lessons. I first read in public in Mornington-crescent. For the first fortnight or three weeks I took from 2s. 6d. to 2s. 9d. a-day—one day I took 3s. My receipts than fell to something less than 18d. a-day, and have been gradually falling ever since. Since the 1st of January, this year, I haven't averaged more than 2s. 6d. a-week by my street reading and writing. My wife earns 3s. or 4s. a-week with her needle, slaving with a 'sweater' to a shirtmaker. I have never read anywhere but in Euston-square and Mornington-crescent. On Whit-Monday I made 2s. 0½d., and that, I assure you, I reckon real good holiday earnings; and I read until I was hoarse with it. Once I counted at Mornington-crescent, as closely as I could, just out of curiosity and to wile away the time, above 2000 persons, who passed and re-passed without giving me a halfpenny. The working people are my best friends, most decidedly. I am tired of the streets; besides, being half-starved. There are now five or six blind men about London, who read in the streets. We can read nothing but the Scriptures, as 'blind printing,'—so it's sometimes called—has only been used in the Scriptures. I write also in the streets, as well as read. I use Wedgwood's manifold writer. I write verses from Scripture. There was no teaching necessary for this. I trace the letters from my knowledge of them when I could see. I believe I am the only blind man who writes in the streets."

GUN-EXERCISE EXHIBITOR—ONE-LEGGED ITALIAN.

"I AM an Italian, domiciled at Genoa, and I speak very little French, only just enough to ask for things—to get my life with, you know. Genoa is the most rich town of Piedmont, but it is not the most jolite. Oh no! no! no! Turin is the most beautiful, oh yes! It is a long street of palaces. You know Turin is where the King of Sardinia, with the long moustaches, lives. Has Monsieur been to Turin? No! Ah, it is a great sight! Perhaps Monsieur has seen Genoa? No! Ah you have a great pleasure to come. Genoa is very rich, but Turin is very beautiful. I prefer Turin.

"I was a soldier in my country. Oh, not an officer. I was in the 2nd battalion of the Bassolein, nearly the same as the Chasseurs

de Vincennes in France. It is the first regiment in Piedmont. We had a green uniform with a roll collar, and a belt round one shoulder, and a short rifle. We had a feather one side of our hats, which are of felt. Ah, c'était bien joli ça! We use long bullets, Minié ones. All the army in my country are under four brothers, who are all generals, and Ferdinando Marmora is the commander-in-chief—the same that was in the Crimea. Nearly all my companions in the Bassolein regiment were from the Tyrol. Ah, they shoot well! They never miss. They always kill. Sacré Dieu!

"I was wounded at the bataille de Pescare, against the Austrians. We gained the battle and entered the town. The General Radetzky was against us. He is a good general, but Ferdinando Marmora beat him. Ferdinando was wounded by a ball in the cheek. It passed from left to right. He has the mark now. Ah, he is a good general. I was wounded. Pardon! I cannot say if it was a bal de canon or a bal de fusil. I was on the ground like one dead. I fell with my leg bent behind me, because they found me so. They tell me, that as I fell I cried, 'My God! my God!' but that is not in my memory. After they had finished the battle they took up the wounded. Perhaps I was on the ground twelve hours, but I do not know exactly. I was picked up with others and taken to the hospital, and then one day after my leg decomposed, and it was cut directly. All the bone was fracassé, vairy beaucoup. I was in the hospital for forty days. Ah! it was terrible. To cut the nerves was terrible. They correspond with the head. Ah, horrible! They gave me no chloroform. Rien! rien! No, nor any dormitore, as we call it in Italian, you know,—something in a glass to drink and make you sleep. Rien! rien! If I had gone into the Hôpital des Invalides, I should have had 20 sous a-day; but I would not, and now my pension is 12 sous a-day. I am paid that now; whether I am here or there, it is the same. My wife receives the 12 sous whilst I am here. I shall not stop here long. The langue is too difficult. No, I shall not learn it, because at the house where I lodge we speak Italian, and in the streets I speak to no one.

"I have been to France, but there the policemen were against me. They are bêtes, the policemen français. The gentlemen and ladies all all good. As I walked in the streets with my crutch, one would say, 'Here, poor fellow, are two sous;' or, 'Come with me and have some wine.' They are good hearts there. Whilst I was going to Paris I walk on my leg. I also even now and then find good occasions for mounting in a voiture. I say to them, 'Monsieur, accord me the relief of a ride?' and they say, 'Yes, come, come.'

"In England no police interfere with me. Here it is good. If the police say to me 'Go on, go on,' I say, 'Pardon, Monsieur,' and move

away. I never ask any body for money. I work in the streets, and do my gun exercise, and then I leave it to the Bon Dieu to make them give me something. I never ask.

"I have been very unfortunate. I have a tumour come under the arm where I rest on my crutch. It is a tumour, as they call it in France, but I do not know what it is named in English. I went to the hospital of San Bartolommeo and they cut it for me. Then I have hurt my stomach, from the force of calling out the differing orders of commanding, whilst I am doing my gun exercises in the streets. I was two months in my bed with my arm and my stomach being bad. Some days I cannot go out, I am so ill. I cannot drink beer, it is too hot for me, and gets to my head, and it is bad for my stomach. I eat fish: that is good for the voice and the stomach. Now I am better, and my side does not hurt me when I cry out my commanding orders. If I do it for a long time it is painful.

"Ah, pauvre diable! to stop two months in my bed, June, August! The most beautiful months. It was ruin to me.

"After I have gone out for one day, I am forced to rest for the next one. Monday I go out, because I repose on the Sunday. Then all goes well, I am strong in my voice. But I cannot travailler two days following. It is not my leg, that is strong. It is my stomach, and the pains in my side from crying out my commandements. When I go out I make about 10s. a-week. Yes, it comes to that. It is more than 1s. a-day.

"I have a cold. I go out one day when it blew from the north, and the next day I was ill. It makes more cold here than at Genoa, but at Turin in the winter it is more cold than here. It is terrible, terrible. A servant brings in a jug of water, and by-and-by it has ice on its top. I find the bourgeois and not the militaires give the most money. All the persons who have voyagé in France and Italy will give me money—not much, you know, but to me fortune, fortune! If I see a foreigner in the crowd I speak to him. I know the face of an étranger tout-de-suite. Some say to me, 'Vous parlez Français?' 'Oui Monsieur.' Others ask me, 'You speak Italian?' 'Si, Signor.' I never, when I go through my exercise, begin by addressing the people. If I told them I had been a soldier in the army of Sardinia, they would not understand me. Yes, some of the words sound the same in French and English, such as army and soldat, but I have not the heart to beg. I have been soldier, and I cannot take off my cap and beg. I work for what they give me. They give me money and I give them my exercise. I sometimes have done my exercise before a great crowd of people, and when it is done nobody will give me money, and my heart sinks within me. I stand there honteux. One will then in pity throw a sou, but I cannot pick it up, for I will not sell my pride for a

penny. If they hand it to me, then I take it, and am pleased with their kindness. But I have only one leg, and to throw the penny on the ground is cruel, for I cannot bend down, and it hurts my pride to put such money in my pocket.

"The little children do not annoy me in the streets, because I never do my exercise until they are at school. Between one and two I never do my exercise, because the little children they are going to their lessons. They never mock me in the streets, for I have been unfortunate to lose my legs, and nobody will mock a miserable infortuné. The carts of the butchers and the bakers, which carry the meat and the bread, and go so fast in the streets, they frighten me when I do my exercises. They nearly écrasé the gens. Tenez! Yesterday I go to the chemin de fer de Birmingham, to the open space before the station, and then I do my exercise. All the people come to their windows and collect about to see me. I walk about like a soldier—but only on my one leg, you know, hopping—and I do my exercise with my crutch for my gun. I stand very steady on one leg. There was a coachman of a cab, and he continued to drive his horse at me, and say, 'Go on! go on!' There was no policeman, or he would not have dared to do it, for the policemen protect me. Le bête! I turn upon him, and cry, 'Bête! take care, bête!' But he still say, 'Get on.' The cheval come close to my back whilst I hop on my one leg to avoid him. At last I was very tired, and he cried out always, 'Get on! get on!' So I cried out for help, and all the ladies run out from their houses and protect me. They said, 'Poor fellow! poor fellow!' and all gave me a half sou. If I had had five shillings in my pocket, I would have gone to a journal and reported that bête, and had the fellow exposed; but I had not five shillings, so I could not go to a journal.

"When I do my exercise, this what I do. I first of all stand still on one leg, in the position of a militaire, with my crutch shouldered like a gun. That is how I accumulate the persons. Then I have to do all. It makes me laugh, for I have to be the general, the capitaines, the drums, the soldiers, and all. Pauvre diable! I must live. It is curious, and makes me laugh.

"I first begin my exercises by doing the drums. I beat my hands together, and make a noise like this—'hum, hum! hum, hum, hum! hum, hum! hum, hum! hu-u-u-m!' and then the drums go away and I do them in the distance. You see I am the drummers then. Next I become the army, and make a noise with my foot, resembling soldiers on a march, and I go from side to side to imitate an army marching. Then I become the trumpeters, but instead of doing the trumpets I whistle their music, and the sound comes nearer and nearer, and gets louder and louder, and then gradually dies away in the distance,

as if a bataillon was marching in front of its general. I make a stamping with my foot, like men marching past. After that I become the officers, the capitaines and the lieutenants, as if the general was passing before them, and my crutch becomes my sword instead of my gun. Then I draw it from my side, and present it with the handle pointed to my breast. Then I become the general, and I gives this order: 'Separate bataillons three steps behind—un, deux, trois!' and I instantly turn to the army again and give three hops to the side, so that the general may walk up and down before me and see how the soldiers are looking. Then I in turn become the officer who gives the commands, and the soldiers who execute them. It hurts my voice when I cry out these commands. They must be very loud, or all the army would not hear them. I can be heard a long way off when I call them out. I begin with 'PORTEZ AR-R-R-MES!' that is, 'Carry arms,' in England. Then I lift my crutch up on my left side and hold it there. Then comes 'PRESENT AR-R-R-MES!' and then I hold the gun—my crutch, you know—in front of me, straight up. The next is, 'REPOSE AR-R-R-MES!' and I put to my hip, with the barrel leaning forwards. When I say, barrel, it's only my crutch, you understand. Then I shout, 'Un, deux, trois! GROUND AR-R-RMS!' and let the top of my crutch slide on to the road, and I stamp with my toes to resemble the noise. Afterwards I give the command, 'PORTEZ AR-R-R-MES!' and then I carry my arms again in my left hand, and slap my other hand hard down by my right side, like a véritable soldier, and stand upright in position. Whilst I am so I shout, 'SEPARATE THE COLUMNS! UN, DEUX, TR-R-ROIS!' and instantly I hop on my one leg three times backwards, so as to let the general once more walk down the ranks and inspect the men. As soon as he is supposed to be near to me, I shout 'PRÉSENT AR-R-R-MES!' and then I hold my gun—the crutch, you comprehend—in front of me. Then, as soon as the general is supposed to have passed, I shout out, 'REPOSE AR-R-R-MES!' and I let the crutch slant from the right hip, waiting until I cry again 'GROUND AR-R-R-RMS! UN, DEUX, TR-R-ROIS!' and then down slides the crutch to the ground.

"Next I do the other part of the review. I do the firing now, only, you comprehend, I don't fire, but only imitate it with my crutch. I call out 'GROUND AR-R-RMS!' and let the top of my crutch fall to the earth. After that I shout, 'LOAD AR-R-RMS! UN, DEUX, TR-R-ROIS!' and I pretend to take a cartridge from my side, and bite off the end, and slip it down the barrel of my crutch. Next I give the command, 'DRAW RAM-RODS! UN, DEUX, TR-R-ROIS!' and then I begin to ram the cartridge home to the breech of the barrel. Afterwards I give the com-

mand, 'COCK AR-R-RMS!' and then I pretend to take a percussion cap from my side-pocket, and I place it on the nipple and draw back the hammer. Afterwards I shout, 'POINT AR-R-RMS!' and I pretend to take aim. Next I shout, 'RECOVER AR-R-RMS!' that is, to hold the gun up in the air, and not to fire. Then I give orders, such as 'POINT TO THE LEFT,' or 'Point to the right,' and whichever way it is, I have to twist myself round on my one leg, and take an aim that way. Then I give myself the order to 'FIRE!' and I imitate it by a loud shout, and then rattling my tongue as if the whole line was firing. As quickly as I can call out I shout, 'RECOVER AR-R-RMS!' and I put up my gun before me to resist with my bayonet any charge that may be made. Then I shout out, 'DRAW UP THE RANKS AND RECEIVE THE CAVALRY!' and then I work myself along on my one foot, but not by hopping; and there I am waiting for the enemy's horse, and ready to receive them. Often, after I have fired, I call out 'CHAR-R-RGE!' and then I hop forwards as fast as I can, as if I was rushing down upon the enemy, like this. Ah! I was nearly charging through your window; I only stopped in time, or I should have broken the squares in reality. Such a victory would have cost me too dear. After I have charged the enemy and put them to flight, then I draw myself up again, and give the order to 'FORM COLUMNS!' And next I 'CARRY AR-R-RMS,' and then 'PRESENT AR-R-RMS,' and finish by 'GROUNDING AR-R-RMS, UN, DEUX, TR-R-ROIS.'

"Oh, I have forgotten one part. I do it after the charging. When I have returned from putting the enemy to flight, I become the general calling his troops together. I shout, 'AR-R-RMS ON THE SHOULDER!' and then I become the soldier, and let my gun rest on my shoulder, the same as when I am marching. Then I shout, 'MARCH!' and I hop round on my poor leg, for I cannot march, you comprehend, and I suppose myself to be defiling before the general. Next comes the order 'Halt!' and I stop still.

"It does not fatigue me to hop about on one leg. It is strong as iron. It is never fatigued. I have walked miles on it with my crutch. It only hurts my chest to holloa out the commands, for if I do not do it with all my force it is not heard far off. Besides, I am supposed to be ordering an army, and you must shout out to be heard by all the men; and although I am the only one, to be sure, still I wish to make the audience believe I am an army.

"One day I was up where there is the Palace of the Regina, by the park, with the trees—a very pretty spot, with a park corner, you know. I was there, and I go by a street where the man marks the omnibus which pass, and I go down a short street, and I come to a large place where I do my exercises. A gentleman say to me, 'Come, my friend,' and

I go into his house, and he give me some bread, and some meat, and some beer, and a shilling, and I do my exercises for him. That is the only house where I was called to perform inside. He spoke Italian, and French, and English, so that I not know which country he belongs to. Another day I was doing my exercises and some little children called to their mamma, 'Oh, look! look! come here! the soldier! the soldier!' and the dame said to me, 'Come here and perform to my little boys;' and she gave me sixpence. Those are my fortunes, for to-day I may take two or three shillings, and to-morrow nothing but a few miserable sous; or perhaps I am ill in my stomach with shouting, and I cannot come out to work for my living.

"When it is cold it makes the end of my leg, where it's cut off, begin to tremble, and then it almost shakes me with its shivering, and I am forced to go home, for it is painful.

"I have been about fourteen months. They wanted 4s. to bring me from Boulogne to London; but I had no money, so at the bureau office they gave me a ticket for nothing. Then I came straight to London. When I came to London I couldn't speak English, and I knew no one; had no money, and didn't know where to lodge. That is hard—bien dur. I bought some bread and eat it, and then in the evening I met an Italian, who plays on the organ, you know; and he said, 'Come with me;' and he took me to his lodgings, and there I found Italians and Frenchmen, and I was happy. I began to work the next day at my exercises.

"One day I was in the quarter of the palaces, by the park, you know, and I began my exercises. I could not speak English, and a policeman came to me and said, 'Go on!' What's that? I thought. He said, 'Go on!' again, and I couldn't comprehend, and asked him, 'Parlate Italiano?' and he kept on saying, 'Go on!' This is drôle, I thought; so I said, 'Vous parlez Français?' and he still said, 'Go on!' What he meant I couldn't make out, for I didn't know English, and I had only been here a week. I thought he wanted to see my exercises, so I began, 'Portez ar-r-r-mes!' and he still said, 'Go on!' Then I laughed, and made some signs to follow him. Oh, I thought, it is some one else who wants to see my exercises; and I followed him, enchanted with my good fortune. But, alas! he took me to a police office. There I had an interpreter, and I was told I must not do my exercises in the street. When I told them I was a soldier in the army of the ally of England, and that I had been wounded in battle, and lost my leg fighting for my country, they let me go; and since the policemen are very kind to me, and always say, 'Go on,' with much politeness. I told the magistrate in Italian, 'How can England, so rich and so powerful, object to a pauvre diable like me earning a sou, by showing the exercises of

the army of its ally?' The magistrate laughed, and so did the people, and I said, 'Good day,' and made my reverence and left. I have never been in a prison. Oh, no! no! no! no! no! What harm could I do? I have not the power to be a criminal, and I have the heart to be an honest man, and live by my exercises.

"I have travelled in the country. I went to Cheltenham and Bristol. I walked very little of the way. I did my exercises at one place, and then I got enough to go to another town. Ah, it is beautiful country out there. I went to Bristol. I made 7s. in two days there. But I don't like the country. It does not suit me. I prefer London.

"I one day did my exercises by—what do you call it? where the people go up—high, high—no, not St. Paul's—no, by a bridge, where there is an open space. Yes, the monument of Nelson; and then, O! what a crowd! To the right and the left, and to the front and behind, an immense crowd to see my exercises. I made a good deal of money that day. A great deal. The most that I ever did.

"I make about 8s. a-week regularly; I make more than that some weeks, but I often don't go out for a week, because in the rain nobody will come to see my exercises. Some weeks I make 15s., but others not 5s. But I must make 8s. to be able to pay for lodgings, and food, and washing, and clothes, and for my shoe; for I only want one. I give 3d. a-day for my lodgings; but then we have a kitchen, and a fire in it, where we go and sit. There are a great many paysans there, a great many boys, where I lodge, and that gives me pain to see them; for they have been brought over from their country, and here they are miserable, and cannot speak a word of English, and are made to work for their master, who takes the money. Oh! it's make me much pain.

"I cannot say if there are any others who do their exercises in the streets; but I have never seen any. I am, I think, the only stranger who does his exercises. It was my own idea. I did it in France whilst I was travelling; but it was only once or twice, for it was défendu to do it; and the policemen are very severe. Ils sont bêtes, les policemen en France. The gentlemen and ladies very good heart, and give a poor diable des sous, or offer wine to pauvre diable qui a perdu sa jambe en combattant pour sa patrie; mais les policemen sont bêtes. Ah, bêtes! so bêtes I can't tell you."

II.—STREET MUSICIANS.

CONCERNING street musicians, they are of multifarious classes. As a general rule, they may almost be divided into the tolerable and the intolerable performers, some of them trust-

ing to their skill in music for the reward for their exertions, others only making a noise, so that whatever money they obtain is given them merely as an inducement for them to depart. The well-known engraving by Hogarth, of "the enraged musician," is an illustration of the persecutions inflicted in olden times by this class of street performers; and in the illustrations by modern caricaturists we have had numerous proofs, that up to the present time the nuisance has not abated. Indeed, many of these people carry with them musical instruments, merely as a means of avoiding the officers of the Mendicity Society, or in some few cases as a signal of their coming to the persons in the neighbourhood, who are in the habit of giving them a small weekly pension.

These are a more numerous class than any other of the street performers I have yet dealt with. The musicians are estimated at 1000, and the ballad singers at 250.

The street musicians are of two kinds, the skilful and the blind. The former obtain their money by the agreeableness of their performance, and the latter, in pity for their affliction rather than admiration of their harmony. The blind street musicians, it must be confessed, belong generally to the rudest class of performers. Music is not used by them as a means of pleasing, but rather as a mode of soliciting attention. Such individuals are known in the "profession" by the name of "pensioners;" they have their regular rounds to make, and particular houses at which to call on certain days of the week, and from which they generally obtain a "small trifle." They form, however, a most peculiar class of individuals. They are mostly well-known characters, and many of them have been performing in the streets of London for many years. They are also remarkable for the religious cast of their thoughts, and the comparative refinement of their tastes and feelings.

"OLD SARAH."

One of the most deserving and peculiar of the street musicians was an old lady who played upon a hurdy-gurdy. She had been about the streets of London for upwards of forty years, and being blind, had had during that period four guides, and worn out three instruments. Her cheerfulness, considering her privation and precarious mode of life, was extraordinary. Her love of truth, and the extreme simplicity of her nature, were almost childlike. Like the generality of blind people, she had a deep sense of religion, and her charity for a woman in her station of life was something marvellous; for, though living on alms, she herself had, I was told, two or three little pensioners. When questioned on this subject, she laughed the matter off as a jest, though I was assured of the truth of the fact. Her attention to her guide was most marked. If a cup of tea was given to her after her

day's rounds, she would be sure to turn to the poor creature who led her about, and ask, "You comfortable, Liza?" or "Is your tea to your liking, Liza?"

When conveyed to Mr. Beard's establishment to have her daguerreotype taken, she for the first time in her life rode in a cab; and then her fear at being pulled "back'ards" as she termed it (for she sat with her back to the horse), was almost painful. She felt about for something to lay hold of, and did not appear comfortable until she had a firm grasp of the pocket. After her alarm had in a measure subsided, she turned to her guide and said, "We must put up with those trials, Liza." In a short time, however, she began to find the ride pleasant enough. "Very nice, ain't it Liza?" she said; "but I shouldn't like to ride on them steamboats, they say they're shocking dangerous; and as for them railways, I've heard tell they're dreadful; but these cabs, Liza, is very nice." On the road she was continually asking "Liza" where they were, and wondering at the rapidity at which they travelled. "Ah!" she said, laughing, "if I had one of these here cabs, my 'rounds' would soon be over." Whilst ascending the high flight of stairs that led to the portrait-rooms, she laughed at every proposal made to her to rest. "There's twice as many stairs as these to our church, ain't there, Liza?" she replied when pressed. When the portrait was finished she expressed a wish to feel it.

The following is the history of her life, as she herself related it, answering to the variety of questions put to her on the subject:—

"I was born the 4th April, 1786 (it was Good Friday that year), at a small chandler's shop, facing the White Horse, Stuart's-rents, Drury-lane. Father was a hatter, and mother an artificial-flower maker and feather finisher. When I was but a day old, the nurse took me out of the warm bed and carried me to the window, to show some people how like I was to father. The cold flew to my eyes and I caught inflammation in them. Owing to mother being forced to be from home all day at her work, I was put out to dry-nurse when I was three weeks old. My eyes were then very bad, by all accounts, and some neighbours told the woman I was with, that Turner's cerate would do them good. She got some and put it on my eyes, and when poor mother came to suckle me at her dinner-hour, my eyes was all 'a gore of blood.' From that time I never see afterwards. She did it, poor woman, for the best; it was no fault of her'n, and I'm sure I bears her no malice for it. I stayed at home with mother until I was thirteen, when I was put to the Blind-school, but I only kept there nine months; they turned me out because I was not clever with my hands, and I could not learn to spin or make sash-lines: my hands was ocker'd like. I had not been used at home to do anything for myself—not even to dress myself. Mother was always out