

AFTER THE BALL.

The music has died away,
Its rhythm has ceased to thrill :
But echoing notes astray
Are loud in my fancy still.
The ring of that waltz-quadrille,
Like a lullaby song of old,
Is sounding afresh in my drowsy ear,
And wheeling before my eyes, appear,
With gracefulness timed to the haunting strain,
Gay ribbon, bright jewel and gorgeous train—
A vision of silk and gold.

Fair faces with joy replete
On muscular shoulders lean ;
Feet, daintily sandaled feet,
Coquettishly dart between ;
White skirts, but at moments seen,
Yet lavish in brief display,
Go saucily by with their wanton sweep
Like patches of foam on the stormy deep,
And fanciful columns retreat, advance
And mingle again in the fairy dance,
So wild in my brain to-day.

Stay, resonant music loud,
Yet sweet as a cradle-song ;
Nor vanish, O phantom crowd,
Who gracefully move along.
Still closer around me throng ;
Forever I fain would keep.
Your beauty to compass the mystic bed
Where reveries nestle and dreams are bred.
Draw nearer and enter my closing eyes,
That closed they may see you again arise
To dance in the halls of Sleep.

THE MIRTH-PROVOKING CLOWN.

What clowns and pantaloons do in the summer is popularly supposed to be a mystery as profound as the authorship of "Junius." With the approach of winter they blossom forth in big type, but where are they and what do they do in the off season if they have not a public house to keep or money enough put by to keep them?

Do clowns when they grow old become pantaloons? Not always. Men have often started as pantaloons and become clowns. There are several sorts of clowns: the legitimate stage clown, the canvas clown, the circus clown, the clown at a penny gaff, and the street clown. Life is none too rosy with some of these. "Most of the street clowns die in the workhouses," said one of them when interviewed by a reporter. "In their old age they are generally wretched and poverty-stricken. I can't say what I think will be the end of me. I daren't think of it, sir." And a few minutes afterwards the reporter saw him dancing and singing as though he were the lightest hearted fellow in all London.

Cheap pathos-mongers delight in representing a clown as the father or husband of some fair fragile girl who falls and breaks her bones, or in rescuing whom he breaks his own. That kind of nonsense is almost always sure to be popular. He is also very frequently depicted as a solemn long-faced man, moody and taciturn in private life. The clowns I have known have in society mostly been men of few words. But there seemed to be no secret sorrow gnawing at their hearts.

"Who wouldn't be a waggybone, it's such a jolly lark?" sings the poet, and a lark it must be to recompense the poor strolling Jack Pudding for all the hardships he is compelled to put up with, and the miserable pay so often doled out to him. Some may have their clownship thrust upon them, but not many, I should think.

How many boys, I wonder, have longed to be clowns? and for that matter, how many ladies, big and little, fallen in love with them? A carriage lady before now has married a clown.

What is the relationship between clown and columbine? The general impression is, I fancy, the columbine in private life is Mrs. Harlequin; but this is not always the case, and I have known a stepmother play columbine to her stepson's clown.

Does the clown make his own jokes as well as invent the comic business? I think, by the fine old crusty flavour, the verbal pleasantries have mostly been "handed down." A clown questioned on the subject said, "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 own jokes is through associating with other clowns."

A clown's life is at all times a hard one, and occasionally even a martyrdom, and it is a well known fact that a clown had his jaw broken by a blow with a property baby, and went on playing for four hours after the accident with the fragments of broken bone still in his face, to different audiences, each performance lasting a little over half an hour. His subsequent tortures in consequence of improper medical treatment are too dreadful to write down here. "Don't they hurt themselves?" I have often heard asked. *Rather, sometimes.*

"THE TERRIBLE CHILD."

SCENE—A Railway Carriage.

PERSONAGES—The Mother; the Child.

The Child.—What's making this noise?

The Mother.—The carriages, dear.

Child.—Why?

Mother.—Because they're moving.

Child.—How?

Mother.—It's the engine drawing them.

Child.—What engine?

Mother.—The one in front of the train.

Child.—Why's it in front of the train?

Mother.—To draw the train.

Child.—What train?

Mother.—The one we're in.

Child.—Why does the engine draw the train?

Mother.—Because the driver makes it.

Child.—What driver?

Mother.—The one on the locomotive.

Child.—What locomotive?

Mother.—The one in front of the train! I've just told you.

Child.—Told me what?

Mother.—Hold your tongue! You worry me!

Child.—Why do I worry you?

Mother.—Because you ask too many questions!

Child.—What questions?

Mother.—Oh, good Heavens! No wonder so many men won't marry!

TEACHER—"Miss Sinnico, please parse the sentence, 'Adolphus married Caroline.'" Miss S.—"Well, 'Adolphus' is a noun, because it is the name of a thing; 'married' is a conjunction, because it joins Adolphus and Caroline; and 'Caroline' is a verb, 'cause it governs the noun."