

For the Torch.
A RHYME FOR THE TIME.

God pity the poor, on land and sea!
God pity the poor wherever they be!
For nobody cares for the poor, said he,
And therefore nobody cares for me!

His hair was white as the falling snow!
His form was bent and his step was slow!
He wandered listlessly to and fro!
And these were the words that he murmured! Oh!

God pity the poor, on land and sea!
God pity the poor wherever they be!
For nobody cares for the poor, said he,
And therefore nobody cares for me!

Through drier-drier wind-was he saw the light!
To his ear came music entrancing quite!
(For this you must know was New Year's night!)
But the old man turned away in fright!

God pity the poor, on land and sea!
God pity the poor wherever they be!
For nobody cares for the poor, said he,
And therefore nobody cares for me!

"We'll build our church on a gorgeous plan!"
"We'll christenize the African!"
"Send bibles and tracts to the Tartar Khan!"
(That is the way the chitter ran!)

God pity the poor, on land and sea!
God pity the poor wherever they be!
For nobody cares for the poor, said he,
And therefore nobody cares for me!

He wandered on by the convent wall!
By rich men's mansions, stately and tall!
And God looked down and saw him fall!
Verdict—"Found Dead"—(and that was all!)

MATRICE O'QUELL.

COMIC JOURNALISM.

(Continued.)

The fact is, that at no one time, nor in any country, do there ever exist more than a very few writers and artists capable of stamping a comic paper with wit and humor of the sharpest, and yet most refined quality. Thackeray, Gilbert a Beckett, Douglas Jerrold, and others whom it would be needless to name here, have not been equalled by later members of the "Punch" staff,—neither has John Leech's place been yet acceptably filled. Of artists, more especially, the remark made is true. I have at hand a letter received years ago from a humorous *littérateur*, then of much mark in the London circles, and of yet more promise, but who has since passed away. Speaking of the difficulty of establishing a good comic paper, even in London, he said: "Comic power is the thing wanted. Of artists—considered as artists—we have a terrible surplus; but humor is a much rarer commodity." What was true in this respect a dozen years ago is no less so now. There are not, at the present time, in England, six artists gifted with humor in the highest degree; nor does France appear to be a whit more productive of the genuine material. Social caricatures, or, rather, views of real life and character seen through the medium of an eccentric fancy, are the very spinal column of a humorous paper, which in these days, it may be assumed, would be nothing if not illustrated. But something more than humorous fancy is necessary to absolute success. In the texture of a first-rate comic artist, dramatic power is not to be dispensed with. His faculty of observation must be acute and untiring, and he must be able to seize upon incidents and situations as they pass before him, and out of these to construct, without undue exaggeration, scenes of the sparkling comedy sort, with epigrammatic legends attached to them to give the point of the story. Then, in addition to this, he must have a falcon eye for the subtleties of individual character, and the power of expressing this upon the boxwood block with the same

freedom and dash with which he would throw off a pen-and-ink sketch upon paper. Execution has been a great snare to most artists engaged upon the best comic papers that have run their brief and checkered careers in this country, mere prettiness of drawing being too often looked upon as compensation for poverty of idea in the design. The kind of humor generally characterized as American, and of which "Artemus Ward" must be considered as the most successful exponent at the present time, is not of a quality practicable for the pencil; neither is it, whatever its originality and greatness, fitted, in any sense, to be the staple of a comic journal. A spice of it is a capital thing to have, though, and such, it seems, is the opinion to-day of the heads that inspire the "London Charivari."

Taking it altogether, the pictorial department of a comic paper is the most difficult one with which the editor has to deal. The "cartoon," a large illustration embodying some leading topic of the day, is a feature now considered indispensable to a publication of the kind. Those who have not tried can hardly imagine the difficulty of hitting on, at certain times, a smart idea for this hebdomadal clincher of current events. A "congress of heads," is the only means by which the thing can be managed with certainty and success. It is at the weekly dinner of "Punch" that the important matter of the cartoon is discussed and decided upon; and few will be so uncandid as to deny that good cheer is an efficient prompter to wit. But comic papers have, ere now, been driven over stony roads, without ever a chance of pulling up to seek for inspiration at the festive board. Midsummer is usually a dreary time for the few brains that are left to invent the mirthful cartoon. Nobody who can help it, remains in town during the dog-days. The suggestive contributor—and an invaluable functionary is he—is fishing for trout and blaspheming black-flies by the margin of some highland stream. The brilliant paragraphist is usually too much straightened, financially, to fly to the rural districts, but his town engagements with Bacchus, Silenus, and company are of a pressing and imperative kind, and he cannot be relied upon in the hour of need. Under these circumstances feebler spirits have to be conferred with; but the brunt of the situation has generally to be borne by the editor, at last.

The effects of comic journalism upon the editorial mind offer a nice little subject for analysis and dissection. I was acquainted once with one who had had experiences in the conduct of such vehicles for pleasantries as those under notice, and he used to relate harrowing things about the visions that disturbed his slumbers on the nights preceding the days for "making up." Box-wood had become a deadly opus for him. What the red-cedar is to the moth, what the black-ash is said to be to the rattlesnake, such was the yellowbox to him. His dreams were horrible illustrations of demon life and character, drawn upon box. His phantasms would loom up as a sordid funeral pile, composed of layers of boxwood blocks, of all sizes, from the large one—used for cartoons to the smallest, upon which initial fancies are usually cut. These were pencilled all over with grotesque figures of things hideous beyond human conception; and the originals of the portraits were there, too, moaning and mowing about the prece upon which they were preparing to immolate the supine dreamer of the dream.

(Conclusion in our next.)

Tom Thumb never used to hang up his stockings on Christmas eve. He would tie a string around the bottom of each pantaloen leg, and hang them up; and then he would growl the next morning because his little brother's stocking held the most.

FASHION FLAMBEAUX.

The Princess dress has been dethroned at last, become as it were a dowager, and now the Empress reigns in its stead. This, latter is another of Worth's numerous creations and, we suppose, the fact of its parentage makes it unnecessary to add that it is the very perfection of grace and elegance.

The vexed question whether a frock coat or a dress coat is most suitable for a bridegroom, has been in a measure settled by the Duke of Norfolk giving himself away in the former. The precedent is high-toned enough, no doubt, and yet can even a noble duke make the combination of lavender pants, blue neck-tie and frock-coat, exactly tasteful?

The newest dictum as to ladies' watches is that the open-faced style are more strictly a *la mode* than hunting cases. Also, that plain figures be used instead of the Roman characters, and that watches of a good, honest sensible size be preferred to the toy affairs which have been popular so long. As to the figures and open faces, we are inclined to think most ladies will please themselves, but the size is arbitrary and will therefore prevail.

Ribbons are not only seeming to grow more popular, but are becoming handsomer as season succeeds season. In New York plush ribbons, or those braided with gold and silver thread are equally the first choice, and the various shades such as prune, color, olive, bordeaux, bottle-green, etc., are all represented. In St. John *blue ribbon* was the most popular a few weeks ago, but the fashion seems either to have subsided, or else travelled on to Fred-ericton, where it is most emphatically 'all the rage.'

Bows are yet, another trimming which seems to grow rather than diminish in favor. The newest are further ornamented with tassels, and for adorning evening dresses are often composed of two colors such as vulcan-red with pale blue or mandarin. Whatever the color or texture however, most fashionable ladies insist upon a plenitude of them, perhaps with the idea that it is impossible to have *too many bows*.

Very few, in fact none of the sacques made this winter are finished with a watch-pocket on the outside, and this is an improvement worthy of notice. A watch-chain worn on the outside of a thick winter wrap, can hardly fail to look splashy and out of place, while, at the same time, it is dangerously tempting and suggestive to fingers larcenously inclined.

It is said very emphatically now, that "pull-backs" have had their day, and that that day is over. Next "on the carpet" are full skirts, but in the meantime, as a sort of preparatory measure, skirts with three widths laid in loose, gracefully secured upright folds are very warmly advocated by fashionable dress-makers who, no doubt, have grown weary of the *strangled* pattern used for the past few years. In New York, dresses made in this style are known as *La Religieuse*, being copied, or we should say, modified from those worn by women who belong to two or three monastic orders. It is a problem worthy of consideration to wonder who fashion will next think fit to set up as a model?

It is no longer fashionable to offer wine to New Year's day callers. We do not know whether expediency or conscientiousness has most to do in determining that it should be so, but apart from the question of being stylish or unstylish, most people will regard it as an amendment in society's bye-laws.

Last winter bonnets composed entirely of feathers were considered the *ne plus ultra* of style for full dress, but this season crownless floral bonnets seem to gain the preference. These are very elegant and *recherche*, but they absolutely need the accompaniment of a pretty face, an ugly or a wintry visage surmounted by a small garden full of flowers, being one of the most incongruous things conceivable.