

LADY MAUDE'S MANIA.

CHAPTER I.

A HIGH FAMILY.

"CON—FOUND those organs!" said the Earl of Bar-mouth.

"And frustrate their grinders," cried Viscount Diphoo.

"They are such a nuisance, my boy."

"True, oh sire," replied the viscount, who had the heels of his patent leather shoes on the library chimney-piece of the town mansion in Portland Place. He had reached that spot with difficulty, and was smoking a cigar, to calm his nerves for what he called the operation.

"Tom, my boy."

"Yes, gov'nor."

"If her ladyship faints——"

"If what?" cried the viscount, bringing his heels into the fender with a crash.

"If—if—don't speak so sharply, my dear Tom; it jars my back, and sets that confounded gout jigging and tearing at me all up my leg. I say, if her ladyship faints when we come back from the church, will