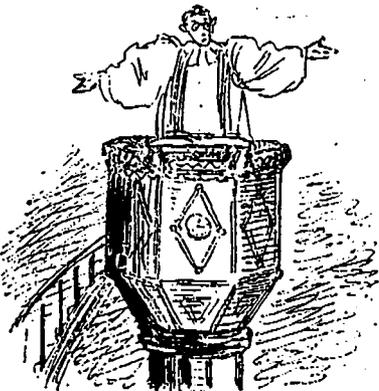
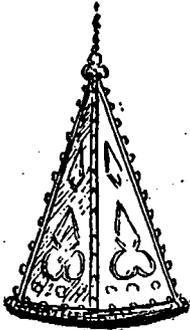
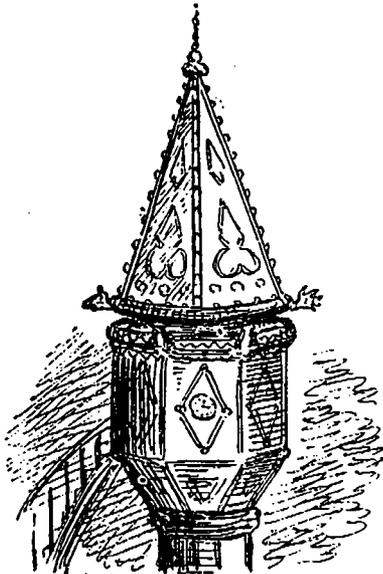


looked like, I should say,—before last Sunday, for the rector has had the top removed. You know there was a great high wooden affair, like a carved oak dunce's cap, or rather, a dunce's cap made of carved oak, only about ten feet high and the width of the pulpit at the base, hanging right over the pulpit, suspended by a chain. I fancy the ancients imagined it influenced the acoustic business, and gave the parson's voice power. Well, Jinks preached twice since that "man's widow sermon" of his, and we found out that he was a holy terror for long-windedness. Kept straight on for an hour as he'd heard 'em do in that place in Wales, Crmyllowl, he comes from. You know we've only been accustomed to twenty minutes at the outside, and we, that is Bender, our bass, and the rest of the choir, determined to give his reverence a hint that a little curtailment would be acceptable. Well, after practice on Saturday night, we told old Jowls that we would put out the lights and look up and so forth, and sent him away: then we got the ladder the painters had left after touching up the ceilings, and unhooked the great oaken arrangement over the pulpit, but left it hanging in the same place attached to a cord, which we carried along the ceiling, down behind one of the pillars and brought the other end into the choir, see? Nobody could see any change and we kept the cord pretty well out of sight, though of course it was as plain as a pikestaff along the ceiling if anyone had thought of looking. By this arrangement we could lower the cover, or whatever you call it,—it resembles an old fashioned bed-room candle-extinguisher on a gigantic scale as much as anything,—just as we pleased; and so we left it for the night. Well, next morning, Sunday, Mr. Jinks mounted the pulpit, sermon in hand, just as the hands of the clock in front of the pulpit pointed to twenty-five minutes past twelve, and we agreed among ourselves to let him preach till one, sharp, but if he showed no signs of stopping then to—well, just what we did.



He's got over a good deal of his nervousness now and he was getting along at a great rate, but as the hands of the clock drew near to one

another, he didn't show the least signs of letting up; in fact he'd divided his discourse into nine heads—regular old style—and at five minutes to one he had only drawn the cork out of fourthly, so we knew what was in store for us unless we gave him a reminder. I looked at Bender, and I saw he was fumbling with the end of the cord, and by Jingo! I began to feel rather queer, and as if I wanted to go back on the whole scheme: but Miss Highsee and the whole crowd in the choir knew about the affair and I didn't want to be weak-kneed at the last moment, so I got hold of the rope too, and just as the reverend gentleman was in the midst of a burst of eloquence—for him—the clock struck one, and we let the rope slip pretty quickly through our hands,—quicker than we intended, for we were mighty nervous,—and down came that extinguisher with a run: well, I tell you, it cut off that stream of eloquence like a shot; the rector sprang up from his seat in the chancel like a flash, at the sudden disappearance of his clerical assistant, for all you could see of Jinks was his two arms from the elbows down stuck out on each side of the pulpit, like two bits of cold tallow when a candle's put out.



Old Jowls came rushing out of the vestry on hearing the clash, and the rector tore away up the pulpit stairs, and two of the churchwardens scampered up the aisle, a couple of ladies fainted, and Bender and I felt suddenly indisposed and slunk out of church, but I hear it took 'em nearly ten minutes to extricate his reverence, the curate, and when he did emerge, he was nearly suffocated from fright and want of air. "Well, I tell you," remarked, when Polliwog finished his recital, "that's a pretty serious thing. What are you going to do about it?" "I dunno, I'm sure," answered the tenor, "I'm afraid it'll bust up the choir at St. Judas', and that'll be too bad, just as we're getting along so well." "So well!" I repeated, "if there ever was a scandalous piece of business that choir at St. Jud—hold on, Polliwog," but he was off, and I saw the rector and Mr. Jinks pass half a minute later engaged in a very serious conversation which I surmised to bode no good for Messrs. Polliwog, Bender and the choir of St. Judas'.

The "course of true love" traced by letters in a breach of promise suit in New York ran in this manner: "My Darling Benny," "My own darling Benny," "My own dearest darling," "My own darling Love," "My darling Ben," "Friend Ben." And all was over.—*Ex.*

TWO DIARIES.

THE DOOK AND THE PEASANT.

No. I.

That of a very exalted personage—a dook or something.

Feb. 23.—Sprained my knee. Called in Dr. Mollycoddle, F.R.C.P. etc., etc. Shook his head gravely. "Ligamentum patelle seriously strained," he said, "danger of fluor underneath the patella."

Feb. 24.—Mollycoddle telegraphed for Sir James Flute, M.D., etc., etc. "Your Grace will be laid up for several weeks. We must be careful." Leeches, blisters, low diet.

Feb. 25.—More leeches, blisters, and diet still further lowered. Sir James and Mollycoddle thought it might be prudent to call in M. le docteur Tibbe de Fibule, the eminent French surgeon, for consultation. Three learned heads gravely shaken. "Be confined to his bed for six weeks at least." Poultices, hot fomentations, low diet.

Feb. 26 to March 15.—Getting worse. Can't walk. Physicians and surgeons talk of amputation at hip joint. "Operation magnifique," says M. le docteur de Fibule, extending his hands and shrugging his shoulders. Diet a little more generous to get me in trim for operation.

March 16.—Happened to hear that Giles, my under gardener, sprained his knee a week ago sent for him. He came. Asked him what he did for his sprained knee; said his missus had kep' a dairy of the treatment for futur' reference. Ordered him to fetch it. Here it is

No. II.

That of Giles, under gardener to the Dook, or something.

March 10.—My old man sprained his knee. Held un under poop for an hour. Made un lie quiet all day.

March 11.—pumped on t'old man's knee for a hour. nigh well. let un walk wiv a stick. give un a kowlin draff.

March 12.—old man's knee wel and he a workin'.

No. I again.

The Dook's, continued.

March 17.—Tried Giles' plan. Sat with leg under spout for an hour. Swelling going down. Hurrah!

March 18.—Told Drs. Mollycoddle, Flute and de Fibule to go to where the fire is not quenched. They went—somewhere, but sent in their bills. Total, £4,025. Stuck to the cold water.

March 19.—Well, but weak. Wish I wasn't a Dook.



Mr. and Mrs. Florence form the attraction at the Grand just now, appearing in "The Mighty Dollar," "Dombey and Son," and "Ticket-of-Leave Man." Florence's "Bardwell Slote" is one of the best things on the stage as a specimen of American comedy, and the same may be said of Mrs. Florence's "Mrs. Giffory." Don't miss the chance of seeing these great artists

A lad crawled into a sugar hogshead, and the first exclamation was, "Oh, for a thousand tongues." —*Ex.*