

"Pleasantry, sir!" exclaimed Pott, with a motion of the hand, indicative of a strong desire to hurl the Britannia metal teapot at the head of his visitor. "Pleasantry, sir!—but no, I will be calm; I will be calm, sir."

In proof of his calmness, Mr. Pott flung himself into a chair and foamed at the mouth. Mr. Winkle, thereupon, begged him to explain how he dared to look him in the face and style him a serpent. At this demand a malignant scowl passed over Pott's features. He did not answer, but threw the morning edition of the *Eatanswill Independent* at Mr. Winkle's feet. This gentleman took it up and read as follows:

Lines to a Brass Pot.

"Oh Pott! if you'd known
How false she'd have grown,
When you heard the marriage bells tinkle;
You'd have done then, I vow,
What you cannot help now,
And handed her over to W****."

"What," said Mr. Pott, solemnly; "what rhymes to 'tinkle,' villain?"

"What rhymes to 'tinkle'?" said Mrs. Pott, whose entrance at that moment forestalled a reply. "What rhymes to tinkle? Why Winkle, I should conceive."

Saying this, Mrs. Pott smiled sweetly on the disturbed Pickwickian and extended her hand towards him. Mr. Pott thereupon interposed and showed the above verses to his wife. Upon reading them, she immediately fell into hysterics, making, in her delirium, such sundry vows as that of "leaving Mr. Pott and marrying somebody else, whose name she would not mention." But she soon came back from her fainting fit, after having forced upon Mr. Pott the rash promise of horse-whipping the editor of the *Independent* before the day was out. Having totally recovered, she inquired, (anxiously, of course) of Mr. Winkle, if he would allow such newspaper slander to shorten his stay. Mr. Winkle expressed himself as sorry that he must go.

When he had departed Mr. Pott thus gave vent to his feelings:—

"If he ever comes back, I'll poison him."