

grubby face that Clo's carriage stopped for in the street. Just eighteen years ago, dear!"

"The best years of my life, Constantia, the best years of my life! Well—they think a good deal of that boy at the Foreign Office, and it isn't only because he's a *protégé* of Tim's. He'll make his mark in the world. You'll see if he doesn't. Do you know?—that boy . . ."

"Suppose you give these crumbs to the Hippopotamus! I've been saving them for him."

The gentleman looked disparagingly in the bag the lady handed to him. "Wouldn't he prefer something more tangible?" said he. "Less subdivided, I should say."

"My dear, he's grateful for absolutely anything. Look at him standing there with his mouth wide open. He's been there for hours, and I know he expects something from me, and I've got nothing else. Throw them well into his mouth, and don't waste any getting them through the railings."

"Easier said than done! However, there's nothing like trying." The gentleman contrived a favourable arrangement of sundry scorise of buns and biscuits in his palms, arranged cupwise, and cautiously approaching the most favourable interstice of the iron railings, took aim at the powerful yawn beyond them.

"Good shot!" said he. "Only the best bit's hit his nose and fallen in the mud!"

"There now, Percy, you've choked him, poor darling! How awkward you are!" It was, alas, true! For the indiscriminate shower of crumbs made straight, as is the instinct of crumbs, for the larynx as well as the oesophagus of the hippo, and some of them probably reached his windpipe. At any rate, he coughed violently, and when the larger mammals cough it's a serious matter. The earth shook. He turned away, hurt, and went deliberately into his puddle, reappearing a moment after as an island, but evidently disgusted with Man, and over for the day. "You may as well go on with what you were saying," said Mrs. Pellew.

"Wonder what it was! That fillah's mouth's put it all out of my head. What *was* I saying?"

"Something about David Wardle."

"Yes. Him and that old uncle of his—the fighting man. The boy can hardly talk about him now, and he wasn't eight when the old chap died. Touchin' story! He *has* told me all he recollects—more than once—but it only upsets the poor boy.