

ON POLITICAL MORALITY.

Moral politicians are the greatest fools in the world. Punch is a moral politician. But Punch is no fool. The schoolmaster is abroad, and Punch is the schoolmaster. But if anybody says that Punch is abroad, Punch will knock him down. Punch is at home.

The reason why Punch calls moral politicians fools, is because they speak the truth, and the truth is not at all times to be spoken.

Punch's system of politics is the result of induction. He studies the actions of politicians, and draws his inferences. The politicians whose conduct he attends to, are those who get on best in the world; for the object of all is to put money in their purses; and as long as they do that, what, my dear people, does it signify?

The first thing to be done in the study of politics, is to get rid of all prejudices. By prejudices I mean your previous notions concerning right and wrong.

Dr. Johnson calls morality "the doctrine of the duties of life." The doctor was a clever man. Punch admires the knock-down arguments that he was so fond of—it is the way he usually reasons himself. Now, the duties of moral politicians are two-fold—their duties to the people, and their duties to themselves. Their duty to themselves is, to get as much as possible out of the people; and the duty of the people is, to assist them in so doing.

To all moral politicians, then, Punch would say, do the best you can for yourselves. Punch is unlike other moralists, who talk in one way and act in another. What he advises you to do, is nothing more than what he practises himself.

Be careful to show a proper respect for the law; that is to say, act as illegally as you please—but take precautions against being found out.

Be sure to stick to your principles; and that you may do this, never remember what your principles are, or, better still, have no principles—you will then stick at nothing. Never allow yourselves to remember your past promises; and whenever you feel tempted to do so, take the readiest means in your power to banish reflection; or, as Lord Byron terms it—

"The blight of life, the demon thought!"

Adhere strictly to truth—whenver there is no occasion for lying. Conceal no circumstance likely to redound to your credit. When two interests clash, the weaker must go to the wall. Of course your own interest is ever the strongest; if, therefore, it be to your interest to lie, do so, and do it boldly. Punch thinks a lie a very useful invention. It is like a coat or a pair of breeches—it helps to clothe the naked. If you invariably spoke the truth, in what department of life could you succeed? How could you get on in the law?—what scoundrel would ever employ you to defend his cause?—and lawyers live by scoundrels. What would be your prospect in the church, where, not to mention a few other little trifles, you would have, when you came to be made a bishop, to say that you did not wish to be any such thing? Truth is all very well when the telling of it is convenient; but when it is not, commend me to a bouncing lie. But that lie will require twenty more to make it good. Very well, what of it? Ever have a due regard to the sanctity of oaths: this you will evince by never using them to support a fiction, except on high and solemn occasions, such as when you are about to be invested with some public dignity. But have no superstitious reverence for them; it is to keep thin-skinned and impracticable individuals, who are infected by this failing, from the management of public affairs, that they have been, in great measure, devised.

Should any unfortunate suitor remind you of a promise, remind him of an ancient adage respecting piecrusts.

Never take what does not belong to you. But what is it that does not belong to you? Punch answers, whatever you cannot take with impunity. Never fail, however, to appropriate what the law does not protect; and in order that you may thoroughly carry out this principle, procure a legal education; because a knowledge of law will often enable you to lay hands upon various kinds of property, to which at first sight you might appear to have no claim.

Speak evil of no one behind his back, unless you are likely to get something by so doing. On the contrary, have a good word to say, if you can, of everybody, provided that the person who is praised by you is likely to hear of it; and, the more to display

the generosity of your disposition, never hesitate, on convenient occasions, to bestow the highest eulogies on those who do not deserve them.

Let your behaviour be always distinguished by modesty. Never boast or brag when you are likely to be disbelieved; and do not contradict your superiors—that is to say, when you are in the presence of people who can help you to office, or keep you in when there; never express an opinion of your own; try to discover what they think, and think like them.

Be firm, but not obstinate. Never change your mind when the result would be detrimental to your interest, but do not maintain an inconvenient inflexibility of purpose.

And now, before he concludes, let Punch beg of you, my dear moral politicians, not to allow yourselves to be diverted from the right path by a parcel of cant. You will hear this system—Punch's system—stigmatized as selfish; and Punch advises you, whenever you have occasion to speak of it in general society, to call it so too. You will then obtain a character for generosity, a very valuable thing to have, when you can get it cheap. Selfish, indeed! The fact is, that just as notions the opposite of truth have prevailed in matters of science, so have they, likewise, in those of morals. A set of impracticable doctrines, under the name of virtue, have been preached up by your teachers; and it is only fortunate that they have been practised by so few—those few having been, for the most part, poisoned, strangled, burnt, or worse treated, for their pains.

Farewell, my dear disciples!—and whenever you are disposed for additional instructions, Punch can only say it is yours at 4d. a lesson, or fifty-two lessons for fifteen shillings.

DROPS OF COMFORT.

Having your health proposed, at the age of forty, as a "promising young man."

Reading a newspaper, on a railway, containing an account of "five and twenty lives lost" only the day before.

Losing a heavy sum at "Bluff," and all your friends wondering how you could have been "such a fool."

Putting on a white neckcloth, which you fancy becomes you, and being hailed all the evening as "waiter."

Breaking down before ladies in the middle of a song, and a wag calling out "encore."

Losing your latch-key, and both wife and mother-in-law sitting up for you.

Having your cutter upset by a carter, and being abused for not seeing "vere ye're going to."

CURIOSITIES OF LITERATURE.

In the *New York Herald*, we are told there may be had "an airy bed-room for a gentleman twenty-two feet long by fourteen feet wide." The bed-room ought indeed to be airy to accommodate a gentleman of such dimensions.

Again, we read of "a house for a family in good repair," which is advertised to be let, with immediate possession. A family in good repair means, without doubt, one in which none of the members are at all cracked.

EXTRAORDINARY OPERATION.

MONTREAL INSTITUTION FOR DISEASES OF THE EAR.

Our esteemed friend David Kinnear, of the *Montreal Herald*, has lately, in the most heroic manner, submitted to an unprecedented and wonderfully successful operation. Our learned friend was suffering from a severe elongation of the auricular organs—amputation was proposed, and submitted to with most heroic patience. Punch is happy to state that the only inconvenience resulting from the operation—which was performed by the skilful Dr. Howard—is the establishment of a new Yankee hat block, and a slight difficulty of recognition on the part of some of his oldest friends.

Why are the political parties in Canada like the small-pox and the measles? Because there is no telling which is the worst.