

for the next dance, and to which, receiving a reply in the negative, he added, "may I have the felicity?" and a most bewitching smile informed him he would have the felicity.

Rapidly do the hours fly when we are comparatively happy; too rapidly even though it be made up of such trivial pleasures as a ball room affords, to allow us time to form more than an imperfect idea in what such happiness consists. Nor is the ball room exempt from its share of worldly troubles; here, too often, envy, detraction, and every other ill feeling arising from mortified vanity, or rebuffed self sufficiency, is generated and displayed with bitter animosity, and, but patience, readers, we have done, we had mistaken our humour; it is not to moralise.

Having danced with every lady present, a most important branch of the business of a ladies' gentleman, not even forgetting the corpulent Mrs. Figgins, who declared, "she never danced, but really Mr. Skeggs was such a funny man she couldnt help standing up." Mr. Skeggs rose and performed a tour round the room, halting opposite every lady, and in the most urgent manner requesting her to oblige the company with a song, and the more such lady assured Octavius she never sang, the more that gentleman endeavoured to persuade her, she did sing, and which is according to the style of the most fashionable society; but unable to prevail on the ladies, he quietly seated himself in the full expectation of what ensued, namely: "Do Mr. Skeggs oblige us with a song," said Mrs. Figgins; "oh, really Mrs. Figgins you know if I could sing how happy I should be, but,—" "Oh now Mr. Skeggs," interrupted Miss Arabella, "do sing"—"do sing Mr. Skeggs," exclaimed a dozen voices from as many sweet ladies all round him. "Do my ladies," replied the yielding Mr. Skeggs "I cant resist, if I never sang before, I couldnt help singing now," and having delivered himself of this speech, Mr. Skeggs rose, took a few strides to the top of the room, and after three or four preliminary coughs, and as many apologies, commenced a single song, bearing reference to a countryman called Giles, courting a young lady bearing the name of Sary, at which song the company appeared much tickled, and laughed heartily, until he came to a part wherein he described Giles as catching the young lady churning butter,

I drank some beer and then did steer,  
To seek for Sary, my heart in a flutter,  
When in the dairy, like a fairy,  
I seed my Sary a churning o' butter.

and which churning, Mr Skeggs endeavoured to illustrate by a corresponding movement of his arms, whereat the smile died off and the young ladies assumed a grave air, and coughed in their handkerchiefs, only to be accounted for by the supposition that some of the ladies present, accustomed to such exercise, considered it rather too personal, which

must have lowered Mr. S. fifty per cent in the estimation of the female portion of the company; but that Mr. Skeggs, not being a man easily disconcerted or taken aback, by some very opportune attentions, contrived to regain his place in their esteem.

"What a nice young man," whispered a little miss to a young gentleman by her side, the son of a fishmonger, whose complexion bore no unapt resemblance to a fried whetting; "isn't he?"

"Oh, I dont see nothin partikler in him," replied the fishmonger's son—which proved there was at least a difference of opinion.

"Oh dear, Mr. Skeggs, what odd things you do say," exclaimed a smiling country cousin of Miss Figgins, in reference to something very sublime Octavius had been pouring into her; "well I never, did you ever, Miss Figgins?" and immediately the country cousin and Miss Arabella were convulsed with laughter.

Supper being unfashionable, at least so said Mrs. Figgins, sandwiches were handed round to the company, consisting of some cold ham shaved into wafers, deposited between two small starved pieces of bread, which having duly disappeared, Mr. Skeggs challenged the ladies respectively in a glass of Barclay & Co.'s entire, and seeing a fitting opportunity, and fearful he might be anticipated, he rose slowly, with a calm and impressive air—

"Silence," exclaimed Mr. Figgins.

A pause ensued—Mr. Skeggs bowed to the company, swallowed a little more Barclay, wiped his mouth, coughed and spoke as follows:

"Gentlemen—hem—ladies and gentlemen; I had hoped some one possessed of greater abilities and more adequate to the task, would have prevented the occasion of my thus addressing you—but since it has developed on me, ladies and gentlemen, trusting to your kind generosity, and that you will pardon my humble speech, ('hear! hear!' shouted Mr. F. 'Hush, my dear,' exclaimed Mrs. Figgins, 'don't interrupt,') that you will pardon my humble speech. Hem! Having witnessed the efforts of our distinguished host and his amiable and accomplished lady, (Mrs. F. held down her head and tried to blush,) we should indeed be wanting in our duty did we not endeavour—did we not attempt—did we not—gentlemen, I say did we not endeavour to attempt, we should be wanting in our parts."

"Hear! hear!" resounded from the gentlemen. The fishmonger's son observed to his neighbour, a dresser of hair, that Mr. Skeggs appeared to be wanting in his part.

"I have," continued Mr. Skeggs, "been present at many," here he laid a stress on the word, "very many parties, but never do I remember one in which so much was done to distribute to the enjoyment of the company as I have witnessed this evening, by our distinguished host and his amiable and accomplished