

can serve also constitutional chiefs. M. Grévy lost caste with the crowd by never dazzling it. Bellacoscia, the Corsican brigand, and his brother, who from their Rob Roy eyrie defy the law and police since thirty years, have promised to come and lay their vendetta carabines at the feet of President Carnot, if he promises to annul their outlawry.

Up to the present when Portugal was in need of money she demanded it from England. Now that she is in sore need of cash to whip Britannia, why not apply, it is asked, to English capitalists? A correspondent informs me that in Portugal no one likes to be a soldier; that if the army be increased agriculture and commerce will be ruined; or the Portuguese will emigrate—not to Makololand—but to Brazil. Judge of the Lusitanian army. At a recent inspection of the cavalry, the colonel pointed to his "full regiment of ten horses." This beats the Four Sons of Aymon. The military service in Portugal is three years, but the conscripts only give four out of thirty-six months' real service. There is no limit to age, so that there are "boys" who are eighty years of age. Some even have been engaged since 1817!

The popular play at present all over Portugal is "Turpitude." The cast comprises *John Bull* represented as a drunken sailor, an English missionary and an English old maid selling calicoes. Scene, Makololand, time 1890. A temperance lecturer is thrown in, drinking port wine. The three last characters stagger off the stage, and *John Bull* left alone falls into a profound bacchic sleep. A large figure symbolising "History" rises up and reproaches him with the infamous conduct of his nation in appropriating the Shiré, etc. The muse next calls the nations—America excepted, doubtless on account of the Delagoa Bay affair—before her tribunal, Livingstone and other African explorers—even Napoleon I. himself—who attest that Makololand, etc., belongs to Portugal as truly as do Lisbon and Oporto. Jack gives a "shiver my timbers" lurch, takes in a horn-pipe wreath about the waist band of his inexpressibles; scraps a salute with his right foot, twists his pan-cake cap, and removing his quid—for he is always polite—disappears in a "Hurrah for Serpa Pinto!"

Stanley was never in the odour of sanctity with the French, so the resolution of the French Geographical Society, not to gold medal him a second time, cannot provoke surprise. M. de Bizemont, the president, explains, unwittingly, the cause of this hostility, when he says: "Stanley never in his addresses alludes to France, though he does to other nations." Further he has "spoken disrespectfully of Queen Elizabeth," that is, of M. de Brazza, who expended half his fortune in discovering and securing a region of the Congo for France. It will be new to many to learn, that de Brazza had a fortune to expend. M. de Bizemont hopes that he may not be in Paris when the Americans and English give their contemplated hero-worship banquet to Stanley; for he sees in the latter not an explorer or scientist, but a simple adventurer of the very "smart order."

Very few explorers but "trek" in the name of the Prophet Figs! They will have cotton pocket handkerchiefs in one pocket, and territory absorption or trade treaties ready for signing, in the other. In the wake of the missionary follows the fire-water and gun powder dealer, and next the soldier to protect the bargains. Captain Binger has returned from exploring the Upper Niger and West Soudan, with as many treaties in his haversack as Guzman Blanco has of Venezuelan concessions in his valise. To extinguish Tippoos-Tibism, or to open a trade-route for elephants' tusks, medicinal gum, gold dust, and rubber, are as good reasons for "protecting" a territory, as chastising invisible Kroumirs. The world has not two Stanleys, and the only one is an Anglo-Saxon.

Z.

A FAËRY TALE.

A WELL-APPOINTED travelling carriage was proceeding at a very leisurely rate along one of the smoothest highways of the prettiest of Midland counties. As fairies have never emigrated it was, of course, in England. The coachman had orders to drive carefully and avoid all bumps. Inside the vehicle were a celebrated physician and his patient, the former a florid, pursey little man with straggling brown hair carefully combed over his shining bald crown, the latter a tall young fellow with a good face, long tawny moustache, languid grey eyes and a general appearance of being used up and sickly. And so indeed he was. The physician was bringing the patient home to Du Bourg castle to place him under the care of a resident medical attendant with strict orders to enjoy absolute rest and fresh air. "Ozone and indolence, my dear Lord," said this high authority, "are the only exhibitions that will bring us round."

The history of this young fellow is instructive as a warning not to go and do likewise. His full name was Algernon John Lancelot de Beauregard du Bourg, in the peerage of the United Kingdom viscount, Baron du Bourg in the peerage of Ireland and Clachmacuddy, Scotland, a baronet, but for some reason, or no reason, at Eton he was always called "Keb!" The pet name of school did not stick to him at College. There he fell into a bad gambling set and on coming of age devoted himself single-mindedly to ruining his estate. Horse-racing had no attraction for him. Beyond losing a pony or two with great regularity on the favourite, he regarded a horse as a quadruped and not as a facile instrument of squandering. Cards were his speciality. They were more easily carried about and

would run through a fortune as fast. He plunged heavily and played badly. Therefore he cursed his luck. His name became unduly prominent as a reckless gamester. He had even played with the Prince of Shriek. His misdoings reached the ear of his sovereign who directed the Lord Chamberlain to strike his name off the reception list. The children of Israel, to whom he had been as a golden calf, became less obsequious and added sixty per cent. Thereafter he went rapidly to the bad. His health broke down as well as his estate and his affairs were given up for settlement. A terrible muddle they were when put into the family lawyers' hands for adjustment.

By paying off usurious claims here and clapping on an extra mortgage or so there, and patching and paring all round, matters were so far reformed as to leave him in nominal possession of the estate. For some years he would necessarily be poor for his station, but would eventually work through provided he refrained from extravagance. Old Mr. Deeds, the hereditary solicitor of the du Bourgs, talked very seriously to the young man, who, to do him justice, felt ashamed of himself and made a half-hearted resolution (although he did not tell Deeds so) that he would not again be tempted into the execrable vice of gaming, to which indeed he had been attracted by the fierce excitement of the thing and not from any real pleasure it afforded. And now he had been brought home broken down in body and estate.

A bullet-headed servant named James, who had been born on the place and retained because he was so densely stolid and had been born there, was selected to wheel his lord in an invalid chair about the grounds. James pushed him along here and there for a week or two, until, with returning strength, the last representative of hard-hitting Rollo du Bourg, the Conqueror's companion, was able to walk feebly about by himself with the aid of a stick.

On one of the occasions when James was wheeling they came upon the land-steward and a party of labourers with levers and hoes on their shoulders, about to commence some sort of levelling operation at the entrance of a glade in a little wood. It was a grassy cove in a coppice, a kind of small amphitheatre of green. In the centre of an isolated patch of old beeches, of no great extent, was a circle devoid of undergrowth, but with a fringe of young trees or saplings that shot up and mingled their feathery tops with the older foliage, forming, in fact, a treillage of leafy sprays that threw cool shadows over the clearing. Birds were singing among the boughs, and squirrels ran out on the limbs and chattered. The short, springy turf with which the alcove was paved was of that light creamy-olive tint that is so pleasant in shadow, and on its surface was perceptible a well-defined wheel or ring of dark-green grass of some twenty yards in diameter. James paused that his master might look at it, which he did, and spoke:

"Jackson."

"Yes, m'lud."

"A pretty place this, Jackson."

"Yes, m'lud."

My lord contemplated the scene through his eyeglass, and resumed:

"What is that green circle on the grass for?"

"Fairy ring, m'lud—fairies dance there—not lucky to have 'em about—bewitch cattle and so on."

"And they dance there?"

"Yes, m'lud."

"And what are you going to do?"

"Break it up, m'lud."

"Ah!" (A long pause.) "Well—no—better leave the poor deyvils their rink."

"Very well, m'lud."

So the steward withdrew his iconoclasts, and the lord was wheeled away.

As Lord du Bourg grew stronger, he took longer walks. On the first day of the month (the date is important) he set out for a constitutional, and his steps strayed to the fairies' ring. Seeing a cool spot where the exposed roots of a great birch tree formed, as it were, two armchairs lined with the driest and softest moss, and with another broad limb of root representing a serviceable table between them, he sat down in one of the armchairs, and pulling a pack of cards from his pocket proceeded to go over the particular cards by which a sharper had mulcted him in four figures. He was absorbed in this occupation when a voice from the other armchair put the question, "What's trumps?"

"Clubs," replied his lordship courteously, and looking up saw Tumblebug seated opposite to him, in the grey cloak he usually wears and with a modern felt hat on his head.

"Excuse me," said his lordship, "know I've met you, —Eryctheum perhaps,—Mr.—? Mr.—?"

"Tumblebug," said that personage.

"Ah, of course,—memory treacherous. Will you take a hand?"

"With pleasure," said Tumblebug. As he shuffled the cards said his lordship: "You live near?" "Close at hand," responded the other, producing from under his cloak a leathern bag from which clanked the pleasant chink of money.

They played for the greater part of the day, and du Bourg won largely. Tumblebug paid cash down. His lordship noticed that the gold was of very remote coinage but gave the matter no attention, or, if he did, thought his opponent had possibly dug up a pot of money on his estate in the neighbourhood.

"You will give me my revenge? Shall we play here every day for a month, and settle up on the 30th?" questioned Tumblebug, to which his lordship replied, "O,

certainly!" "Honour?" asked Tumblebug. "Upon my honour," said Lord du Bourg.

Thus, it happened that these two for a month of days, day by day, sat at the fairies' ring playing *ecarté*.

It was the morning of the thirtieth day. Fortune had gone against Lord du Bourg. How much he could not say, but it was a fearfully large amount. True, he had several bags of Tumblebug's gold in his escritoire, but, then, Tumblebug held a sheaf of his lordship's I.O.U.s. He took a pen and began to cypher. Arithmetic had always been his weak point, so he soon gave up the calculation, satisfied that his liability reached a sum that he never by any possibility could pay. Then he took a duelling pistol from its case, scratched the letter B on a bullet, loaded carefully, put the weapon in his pocket and walked to the place of appointment.

They played all day, his lordship getting deeper and deeper and deeper. Fortune was very adverse. Towards sunset Tumblebug remarked: "The time has nearly come to finish our pleasant game. Let us make a coup du Bourg castle against your I.O.U.s."

"Couldn't do that, you know," said the descendant of Rollo du Bourg, "old family and all that—blank in the peerage. I really could not entertain the proposition."

"Then, my lord, I hope you are prepared to redeem your engagements. The thirtieth of the month was to be settling day you remember."

"Yes, I remember."

Algernon John Lancelot de Beauregard du Bourg fell into a profound reverie, muttering "last of my race—nobody miss me—Ann might a little—" then raised his eyes and with steady hand set his ancestral inheritance on the turn of a card.

Luck was against him. The estate had changed hands and the I.O.U.s. were still outstanding.

"Sir," said he, "the place is yours. Keep on all the old servants."

His lordship rose, yawned and stretched himself.

"Bye bye, Tumblebug," said he, "I've put the pot on too heavily." Then he put the pistol to his forehead and pulled the trigger. No flash followed the fall of the hammer.

There was good pluck in the du Bourgs. He proceeded calmly to reload, but in doing so ran the ramrod down the barrel and found the weapon was empty. He turned hastily to Tumblebug but that worthy had disappeared.

At that moment arose peal upon prolonged peal of invisible silvery laughter and the clapping of unseen hands. The marked bullet that he had destined as the instrument of his own destruction dropped from a tree and rebounded with a sounding plump from the crown of his hat, while a perfect snowstorm of paper torn into small shreds came showering around. He picked up some fragments and found they were his I.O.U.s.—which a passing gust caught and whirled away forever.

Lord du Bourg walked home very gravely. He did not sleep well that night.

Next day he sent for his land steward, who entered, and the following colloquy took place:

"Jackson."

"M'lud."

"Direct Deeds and Doquet to prepare a rent charge or mortgage forever or something, of the Fern Spinney."

"Yes, m'lud."

"In favour of a gentleman of the name of Tumblebug. Leave a blank for his Christian name."

"Yes, m'lud."

"And—Jackson."

"M'lud."

"Tell them to insert a clause that the ground shall never be broken up."

"Yes, m'lud—never broken up."

"And, by the way, Jackson, you had better have the place enclosed with a light wire fence and keep it so in perpetuity."

"Yes, m'lud—perpetuity."

"And Jackson. If the deer or poachers or people go inside the ring, the keepers shoot them."

"Certainly, m'lud."

"O by the by, Jackson, as you go tell Binns to send me up a glass of claret and some chicken. I feel actually robust. Hungry in fact."

From that hour Lord du Bourg improved in health, happiness and estate. He never played again except for love.

H. D.

Alberton, P.E.I.

GENERAL GORDON said:—

I have often executed men, but never without the direct sanction of the Almighty. I placed the Bible on my knees, and I prayed that if He saw fit to reverse my decision he would signify it to me . . . On no single occasion was my decision reversed.

And Mr. Stanley recounts:—

We were without food, starvation stared us in the face, and I said, "The Israelites were starving, and Moses struck the rock and it poured forth water, and the heavens rained manna; Elijah was starving, and he was fed by ravens; Christ was ministered to by angels, but what angel will minister unto us?" At that moment a guinea fowl rushed across the path at my feet; my dog caught it, and we all ate flesh.

Mr. Stanley's Providence satisfies his material wants; General Gordon's Providence satisfies his conscience.