

PRACTICAL JOKING.

One day a number of joiners engaged on some extensive alterations on Black Hall Castle, were sitting finishing up their dinner hour, when one of them, who went by the name of the 'camel,' from his efficiency under a load, began to boast of his great carrying powers. He might well have done so, for he was a tall man somewhere about six feet and a half in height, with an iron frame well knit together by hard work.

At a little distance sat a rather diminutive member of the fraternity listening eagerly to the bravado, and when it was his turn to lend in a word,—he said it was not after all the strongest looking people that were handiest at a lift. He was but a lithe lad himself, but for a dozen of porter, he would make a trial of strength on the spot with any of them.

There was a quantity of flooring at hand which would make a favorable test. He did not choose to say how many boards he could carry; but this he would say, that let Thomson—this was the camel's name—carry as many boards as he was able, he, Buchanan, would carry one more.

The eye of the camel flashed fire as he looked upon his little tormentor, and starting to his feet he asked two of the company to load him.

They did so to the number, I think, of nineteen flooring boards, a most enormous load for three men, yet he moved on slowly, groaning under the weight.

But judge of the amazement of the Judges, when the little man with a knowing look lifted up one board under his arm and marched away after Thomson with all the consequence he could assume.

He had won the wager, but it was at the expense of the friendship of his more powerful antagonist, who, for many years cherished the liveliest remembrance of the cruel deception.

A practical joke of a more harmless nature is said to have been played off at a hotel in the City of Notions. A member of one of the Legislatures, was very much in the habit of asking those around him at table to wait on him, instead of asking the waiter to do that duty, and one day while at dinner in the hotel, he asked Mac, the gentleman opposite:

"Can you reach the potatoes, Sir?"

Mac extended his arm towards the dish and satisfying himself that he *could* reach the potatoes, he answered—

"Yes, sir."

"And will you stick my fork into one of 'em?" asked the Representative.

"O, certainly," said Mac, as he took the fork, carefully stabbing it into the potato, where he left it."

At this the Representative was somewhat vexed, and asked, rather tartly—

"Will you pass me my fork?"

"Ah!—your fork!—yes—oh, yes, sir?"—and taking hold of the fork, he drew it from the potato and passed it back to the Representative, whose nerves seemed not a little shocked.

"Waiter!—waiter! I say!" cried the Representative, "will you pass the potatoes, I've been tryin' for half an hour to get one, and if you don't pass 'em along pretty soon, I'll vacate my seat, and report your conduct to my insulted constituents!"

This was about as close cutting as Horne Tooke, with his "rules, not reasons." I will not, how-

ever, vouch for the truth of the affair, although I believe there is nothing too strange for that distinguished City. P.

THE LONDON BILL BROKER.

In appearance humbly beneath all these, the bankers, but in truth familiarly amongst them, glide about the brokers, an altogether peculiar class of men, like Oliver to Dinan, Barber-Premier of Louis XI, caring more for the substance than the show of power. It is their business to know, and they do know everybody and everything which can have the remotest practical relation to money. They have the mesmeric faculty of thought-reading. The exact figures of a merchant's balance-sheet though a profound secret between him and his head-clerk, they know how to decipher in the quiver of his lip and the wrinkles of his eye. They can tell a bad bill by a feel; and if there be a taint of bankruptcy within miles, they sniff it in the air. These are the architects who build the most lofty and delicate portion of the edifice of credit; and, under their skillful hands, its fairy pinnacles shoot far into the clouds. Ever on those dizzy heights, where their work of doing and undoing is incessant, they tread, like Alpine goats, the edge of precipices and though it be but a hair between them and destruction, that hair is almost always sufficient.—*Money and Morals by John Laetler.*

THE SCOTCH BANKER.

Keen and alert, without the Lancashire hardihood; scientific, yet practical; valuing good theories, but yielding up no facts; able to sift the wheat from the chaff of the economists; and not afraid to cross swords with a Grote or a Baring before a Committee of the House of Commons; these men are the consummate masters of their craft, and they have reared up a system of banking which for its purpose and its place, stands unrivalled. It is a body from which every particle of loose flesh has been worked off, leaving nothing but the muscle and bones of solid utility. It was not unworthy of the genius of Scott to pause for a moment in his imperishable creations, in order to defend such a system from assault. But the thought of transplanting it elsewhere is vain. "It is racy of the soil." It must for ever remain as peculiarly and beautifully Scotch as the poems of Burns or the heath of Ben Lomond.—*Ibid.*

RECOVERY OF LOST MONEY.—A very curious case of recovery of money missing from the mail for several months has just been brought to notice. It was that of a letter put into the mail at Sharpsburg, Md., addressed to Mr. George Waters, flour commission merchant in Georgetown, D. C., enclosing one thousand dollars in bank notes of large or smaller amount. Of that letter nothing had been heard since its failure to arrive at its destination, until Wednesday morning last, when it arrived at its destination, (Mr. Waters's, in Georgetown,) from the Richmond Post office, with the endorsement of the Postmaster, of that city, that it had come in an envelope, without postmark or anything but the address. The package was addressed to Mr. Waters with a contrite letter purporting to be from a person concerned in taking it. The contents (the bank notes) had, by moisture of water, become so matted together, that it will be difficult to count and separate them; but with care we suppose it may be done.—*Baltimore Sun.*

The *Constitutional* has an article on the present state of the French steam navy, in which it assumes the possibility of a successful invasion of England.

Favourable replies have been received to the circular of the International Cheap Postage Association, from the Ministers at London, from the United States, Austria, Spain, Brazil, Sardinia and Portugal.

During the last six weeks 22 tons of fish and 9000 lbs. of meat have been destroyed, as unfit for human food, by the superintendent of St. John's market Liverpool.

A monument to Titian was inaugurated at Venice on the 17th. It represents Titian surrounded by the Fine Arts. It is from the chisel of the brothers Zandomenechi.

It is said to be in contemplation to erect a Masonic-hall, of extensive magnitude, at Liverpool, and that its style of architecture will be uniform with St. George's-hall.

SUPERPHOSPHATE OF LIME.—The *Carlou Sentinel* states, as the results of experiments, that the superphosphate of lime is more productive of vegetable growth than Peruvian guano.

Five of the Madrid papers have ceased to appear, their publishers being in prison. The *Giuro* announces that henceforth it will appear daily as a literary sheet. Nothing later regarding Cuba.

A Hamburg paper mentions that the cholera cases at Warsaw are always more numerous at the beginning of the week than towards its close; the increase being ascribed to the excess in which a great mass of the population indulge in drinking on Sunday.

THE FRENCH FÊTES.—A severe inquiry is going on as the cause of some of the failures at the late fete in Paris. Strange rumours are in circulation on this subject. Among other things, it is said that the small holes of the gas-pipes of the imperial crowns were filled with mastic in several places to prevent the flow of the gas.

Letters from Catania, of the 30th ult., describe the damage done by the eruption of Mount Etna. One stream of lava had flowed towards Zaffaroni, fifteen miles from the crater, and another towards Nula, devastating the vineyards in both directions. Prayers had been offered in all the churches.

Biographical Calendar.

	A. D.	
Oct. 10	1731	Henry Cavendish, born.
	1738	Benjamin West, born.
	1830	Isabella II., Queen of Spain, born.
" 11	1814	Admiral W. J. Napier, died.
" 12	1517	Edward VI., King of England, born.
	1843	Sarah Martin, died.
	1845	Mrs. Fry, died.
" 13	1815	Joachim Murat, shot.
" 14	1644	William Penn, born.
	1655	Pierre Cassendi, died.
	1781	Admiral Lord Hawke, died.
	1786	Louis Joseph Papineau, born.
" 15	1613	James II., of England, born.
	1817	Burckhardt, died.
	1845	William Motherwell, died.
	1838	Letitia F. Landon, died.
	1843	Rev. John Foster, died.
" 16	1535	Bishop Latimer, burned.
	1758	Noah Webster, born.
	1793	Mario Antoinette, beheaded.
	1817	Kosciusko, died.
	1821	John Kenneby, died.

Letitia Elizabeth Maclean, better known as Miss Landon, or L. E. L., was born in Hans Place, Chelsea, 1802. At a very early age, she attracted the notice of the reading public, by her spirited short poems, published in the *Literary Gazette*. The reputation she thus acquired was so great that rival publishers vied with each other in endeavoring to obtain her aid; and at one time the Annuals were scarcely thought complete if they did not contain a contribution from L. E. L. The temptation thus held out to compose hastily, however profitable, detracted from the power of the poetess and caused a good deal of sameness in her early compositions. But, her later writings (especially her novels) amply atoned for it, by showing a vigour, as well as a depth and clearness of thought, which showed that her early poetry was only preparatory for a more daring flight. Her shorter compositions, in the shape of contributions to the periodicals, are very numerous; in addition to these, she published "The Improvisatrice," "The Troubadour," "The Golden Violet," and "The Vow of the Peacock," all in verse; and three prose novels, "Romance and Reality," "Francesca Carrara," and "Ethel Churchill." In June, 1838, she was married to George Maclean, Esq., Governor of Cape Coast Castle, and proceeded thither, with him. Being much afflicted with spasms, she was in the habit of taking a powerful medicine, and her death is attributed to her having incautiously taken an overdose. She died October, 15, 1838.