

'I may grow rich!' repeated Nicholas, with a mournful smile, 'ay, and I may grow old. But rich or poor, or old or young, we shall ever be the same to each other, and in that our comfort lies. What if we have but one home? It can never be a solitary one to you and me. What if we were to remain so true to these first impressions as to form no others? It is but one more link to the strong chain that binds us together. It seems but yesterday that we were playfellows, Kate, and it will seem but to-morrow that we are staid old people, looking back then to these cares as we look back now to those of our childish days, and recollecting with a melancholy pleasure that the time was when they could move us. Perhaps then, when we are quaint old folks and talk of the times when our step was lighter and our hair not grey, we may be even thankful for the trials that so endeared us to each other, and turned our lives into that current down which we shall have glided so peacefully and calmly. And having caught some inkling of our story, the young people about us—as young as you and I are now, Kate—shall come to us for sympathy, and pour distresses which hope and inexperience could scarcely feel enough for, into the compassionate ears of the old bachelor brother and his maiden sister.'

Kate smiled through her tears as Nicholas drew this picture, but they were not tears of sorrow, although they continued to fall when he had ceased to speak.

'Am I not right, Kate?' he said, after a short silence.

'Quite, quite, dear brother; and I cannot tell you how happy I am that I have acted as you would have had me.'

To be continued.

"HEADS OF THE PEOPLE."

This extraordinary, and very English periodical, has completed one volume, in its 13th No. The first No. of a new volume is to be issued in December. It consists of sketches of English classes and characters from a variety of hands. These are sketched with the utmost freedom and many of them with exquisite tact. The work shews John Bull's character in a favorable point of view. It does not exhibit any of that feverish fastidiousness which has occasionally made people of other countries so ridiculous,—ready to fight, en masse, with any individual, who dared to laugh at any part of the whole,—as if their character was such a band-box commodity, that free handling would be its ruin, and as if it had no real sterling points, which could afford some drawbacks on other particulars. John laughs louder than any one else, at caricatures of himself, and at his portraits, though the pimples and freckles which mark his expressive front may be by no means smoothed over. We make some extracts from the number before us. "The Cabinet Minister" is a cleverly conceived and executed sketch. The writer, in his first paragraph, sets out the genius, rank, and power, of the Minister; in his second, he elaborately proves, the meanness, degradation, and contemptible position, of the same subject;—in the third paragraph, his business habits, eloquence, and varied parts, are dwelt on;—in the fourth, he is a goose, a drivell, a dunce;—in the fifth, his motives are eulogized, as something supernatural in their purity;—in the seventh it is demonstrated that moral corruption is the breath of his nostrils;—then he is shown to be, at least, a good private character, and again "condemning proofs" are adduced that his worst points are seen at home. Thus, in a strain of fine satire, the Cabinet Minister is drawn by the painter, not indeed as he, or any body else, is,—but as *different partisans at different sides represent every such public personage*. We copy a couple of paragraphs.

THE CABINET MINISTER.

According to Parties.—"It follows as a matter of course, that, under the guidance of such a minister, "ships, colonies, and commerce," should go to rack—that foreign nations should deride the land they once feared—that the army and navy should degenerate into mere militia-men and Margatehoys—that the church should be undermined, the state undone—and that "finance" should be the plain English for the last word "*finis*." It also follows, as a necessary consequence, that, under such a government, the real glories of the country should be advanced to the highest pitch—that what far-seeing writers call the "political horizon," should exhibit no spot of cloud, whether bigger or less than a man's hand—the neighbouring countries should look with envy and admiration upon that happy land that preserves the rest of the world in profound peace, and enjoys unexampled prosperity itself—that everything should be going on from good to better, both at home and abroad—and thus, that the Millennium is no joke after all!

These things follow as matters of course; for what follows not from a character so contradictory as that we have thus impartially portrayed? A character, which, with no immodesty, we may say is now outlined for the first time; all previous attempts (and they are as many as the minutes in each session of parliament) having egregiously failed—for this reason, that they were founded only on a side view of the Cabinet Minister; the portrait was taken from the treasury benches, or from the opposition benches, or from the cross-benches, instead of being taken from all these at once, and painted, as the great original naturally appears to the

eye of impartiality, in all these different points of view united. A mere bird's-eye view won't do—unless it happens to be the Irish bird that is in two places at once. To survey the subject on both sides, it is necessary to take up a position in at least two counties, and stand like the giant, whom we saw in our youth, "with one foot in Shropshire and the other in Lancashire." This done, all that was obscure becomes clear, all that was unfinished becomes complete, and we obtain the several parts of character that are necessary to make up the whole. We thus discover that the object of our curiosity is not only a sage, but an idiot—not merely a traitor, but a patriot; that he is a saint, an infidel, a deliverer, a betrayer, an enthusiast, a trifler, a moralist, a sensualist, a genius, a blockhead; that he is an abandoned profligate, and a paragon of virtue; a systematic oppressor, and a redresser of wrongs; a forger of chains, and a friend to liberty; the creature of the court, and the champion of the whole world's cause; the most incompetent of all the noodles, and the most venerated of the tribe of Nestors; that he is at once magnanimous and mean; profound and shallow; hypocritical and honest; noble and contemptible; all that he should be, all that he should not be."

Efforts private and public.—"This, finally, may be remarked, that if Cabinet Ministers appear, in too many instances, to have been appointed for the express purpose of shewing us "with how little wisdom the world is governed," few among the governed know how immense is the amount of talent—of sagacity, vigilance, zeal, forethought, invention, and rare power in infinite shapes—hourly and momentarily exercised within the Downing Streets of mighty empires, for the purpose of sustaining Cabinet Ministers in the stations where wisdom is so often done without. Happy would it be for nations, if but a thousandth part of the enthusiasm that is exhibited in a party cause, were now and then—for eccentricity's sake—manifested in the cause of a people. It would suffice to redeem whole empires, and regenerate the world. Ministers ere now have owed their elevation to a red-heeled boot; been wafted to power by the force of a feather waving courtierly; been beckoned to a "more removed ground" by a frail lady's fan; elbowed their way in gallant impudence to glory, or crawled to eminence (the favourite plan) by any path, or through any loophole; but when there, how prodigious the aggregate of the power set in action to support them—in diplomacy, intrigue, plot, counter-plot, cajolery, intimidation, temptation, equivocation, snare, falsehood, flattery and manœuvre, unknown on earth until the advent of the first Cabinet Minister! How vast the genius secretly employed, and how insignificant the open and avowed result! Spirit of the Back Stairs, if thou wouldst but come to the Front Stairs, thou, who sleepest not at all, shouldst slumber half thy time—or all day long, with one eye open. A comparatively idle life—a semi-sinecure should be thine, and yet the nations should be saved! What a deal of trouble and talent honesty renders needless. It is easy for a Cabinet Minister to serve his country and himself, but what pains it costs him to serve himself only!"

The next article in the number is entitled The Hangman, and the sentiment placed under this functionary's engraved portrait,— "A Ridiculous Superfluity," gives the key note to the piece. As a matter of necessity, of example, and of punishment, the writer is against capital executions.

The Exciseman is the next subject,—there is not much in this fit for extract for a colonial public. Happily, the perplexities of the Chancellor have not driven him to cater in these far-away dependencies, and the few tax-gatherers we have, instead of being looked on as monsters, are demi-citizens, at least. One extract will afford a view of the Exciseman as he was, and as he is.

THE EXCISEMAN.

"A century ago, when education was much more sparingly scattered than at present, the Exciseman bore a widely different relation to society than he now does. Of some consequence from the king's commission, and perhaps rendered agreeable by the extent [comparatively speaking] of his information, or a reputation for the humorous, he was then the companion of the village clergyman and apothecary, and not unfrequently honoured by the squire himself—to whose family, perhaps, he might be tutor in writing and figures. But that day—his golden age—has long since passed away, most probably for ever: and the respective curates of spiritual and corporeal health, refusing to recognise him as an associate, superciliously pass him by; while even the landlord of the village alehouse, who of yore delighted to hold the Exciseman's stirrup, and bowed obsequiously as he rode away, no longer pays this tribute of respect.

Since that period, the exigencies of the state have brought taxation to a height unprecedented in the history of nations, and such as none but a country possessing within herself the most stupendous physical and moral resources could possibly have sustained. And it was at that time, when a minister of the crown, from his place in parliament, tauntingly defied his political antagonist to name a single article whereon to impose a new duty, that the Exciseman was looked upon with the greatest jealousy, and had, amid the arduous duties of a laborious life, to struggle energetical-

ly with the angry buffetings of popular antipathy. But the rapid diffusion of useful knowledge—that bright and beautiful feature of the present day!—by reducing the monstrous load of taxes, after years of patient endurance, and removing the veil of prejudice through which the public had so long been accustomed to view the revenue officer, has at length manifested his utility; and the friendly hand of justice points, even yet, to the ameliorated condition which awaits him."

From a delightful article, by William Howitt, entitled *The Farmer's Daughter*, we take some passages.

THE FARMER'S DAUGHTER.

Anne Field.—"How sweet that farm-house *does* look! What fine old trees those *are* about it! And that dear little window in the gable, with its open casement and its diamond panes. And, oh! surely! yes—that is Anne herself, and I think she is looking this way!"

Then follow the sweetest walks down by the mill; the sweetest moonlight leaps over the sunk fence at the bottom of the garden; the most heavenly wanderings along that old quince walk—such walks! such vows! such poetry of passion! such promises of felicity; and then the old farmer looks over the hedge, and says, "Who's there?" There, this is a pretty go! Off goes Anne like the spirit of a young lamplighter up the garden, through the house, up the stairs at three strides, and there she is, locked and bolted in that dear little chamber, with the little diamond window in the old gable. She has snuk into a chair [it is a very soft one, cushioned comfortably all round, seat, back, and elbows], and very wet is that white cambric handkerchief which she holds to her eyes.

But where is Captain Jenkinson? Oh! he's there!—and he's too bold and too true a lover to fly or sneak. There they stand, face to face, in the moonlight, the tall, slim Captain Jenkinson, and the tall stout Farmer Field, with his huge striped waistcoat, ready to burst with hurry and indignation, and his great stick in his hand. "What, is that you, captain! My eye! What! was that you a talking to our Anne?" "Yes, friend Field, it is I; it is the Captain, that was talking to your adorable Anne; and here I am ready to marry her with your consent, for never shall woman be my wife but your charming Anne!"

How that great elephant of a farmer stands lifting up his face, and laughing in the moonlight! How that "fair round corporation, with good capon-lined" [good Shakespere, pardon our verbal variation in this quotation, in courtesy to the delicacy of modern phrases]—how those herculean limbs do shake with laughter! But, now, as the tears stream down his face, he squeezes the youth's hand, and says, "Who could have thought it, captain—eh? Ha! ha! Well, we're all young and foolish once in our lives—but come! no more on't—it won't do, captain, it won't do!"

"Won't do! won't do! why shouldn't it do, farmer, why shouldn't it do?" "Why, becoss it won't, and that's why—a captain and old Farmer Field's lass—ha! ha! What will Lady Jenkinson say—eh? What 'ull that half-a-dozen of old guardians say—eh? The Honourable Captain Jenkinson and the daughter of old Farmer Field! What 'ull they say—eh? Say I'm a cunning old codger; say I've trapped you, belike. No, no—they shan't say so, not a man-jack of 'em. Not one of the breed, seed, and generation of 'em, shall say old Farmer Field palmed his daughter on a gentleman for his houses and his lands. No, Anne's a tight lass, and John Wright will come at the right time; and when you're married to my lady Fitz-somebody, and Anne's got the right man, come down, captain, and kill us a pheasant, and set up your horses and your dogs here, and we'll have a regular merry do, and another good laugh at our youthful follies!"

But all won't do. The captain vows he'll shoot all the old guardians of a row, and tell his mother to shoot him, if they make any opposition; and the very same night he sticks a note on the top of his fishing-rod, and taps with it at Anne's little window, with the diamond panes, in the old gable; and Anne, jumping from the easy chair, looks out, seizes the paper, clasps her hands, casts down a most affectionate but inconsolable look, and sighs an eternal adieu!—then flying to read the note, finds the captain vowing that "she may cheer up, all shall go right, or that he will manfully drown himself in the mill-dam."

Now, there is a pretty situation of affairs! and all that through incautiously wandering into the country, of a summer's evening, and getting into one of these old-fashioned farm-houses. It would serve them all right to leave them in their trouble. It might act as a warning to others, and place the dangers of the country in their genuine light. But as the captain would be almost certain to drown himself, he is so desperate (and then there must be a coroner's inquest, and we might, at a very inconvenient moment, be called up to serve upon it) we will for this once let things pass—all shall be right. The guardians relent, because they can't help themselves. Lady Jenkinson bounces a good bit, but like all bodies of a considerable specific gravity, she comes down again. The adorable Anne is not drowned in her own pocket-handkerchief, though she has been very near it; and "The Times" announces, that the Honourable Charles Jenkinson, of the Light Dragoons, was married on the 7th instant, to Anne Louisa, the only daughter of Burley Field, Esq., of Sycamore Grange, Salop.

(To be continued.)