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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
SELECTIONS.— <i>Bob Burley</i> .....	257
<i>Mr. Chiniquy's Temperance Manual</i> .....	259
<i>Examine and Inquire</i> .....	260
PROGRESS.— <i>England—Holland—United States</i> .....	262
MISCELLANEOUS.....	263
POETRY.— <i>The Benighted Angel</i> .....	264
EDITORIAL.— <i>Total Abstinence and Health</i> .....	265
<i>A Plan to Re-organize our Temperance Societies</i> .....	"
<i>Anniversary Meetings at Glasgow</i> .....	266
<i>Equalization of Taxation</i> .....	267
<i>Delegates to the Convention</i> .....	269
<i>To Correspondents</i> .....	"
<i>Father Chiniquy</i> .....	"
EDUCATION.— <i>A Hint to Young Men</i> .....	270
<i>You will be Wanted</i> .....	"
AGRICULTURE.— <i>Pulverize the Soil</i> .....	"
<i>A Ready Rule for Farmers</i> .....	"
NEWS.— <i>Prices Current, &amp;c.</i> .....	271, 272

BOB BURLEY.

A TRUE STORY.

By the author of "Spring Leaves of Prose and Poetry."

We find, that some parties who are wishful to claim particular attention, from certain classes, have a method of adapting ways and means to attract the eye and ear in such a manner that the bait is generally successful. Look, for instance, at the display showered into one of our draper's windows—the women go, hot-foot, and are so delighted with the gaudy colours and rich fabric of this or that; who can wonder that, after they are thus wrought upon in a quarter where their vanities are so profusely administered to, they become frequent visitors, often at the cost of domestic economy, perhaps of honesty. Yet, we cannot blame the draper, he seeks out the very best means for insuring their notice and patronage.

The itinerant player, or sleight of hand juggler, owes a great portion of his success to the large and startling bills which he posts at every street corner, to fill with amazement and curiosity such portions of the community, as have nothing better to waste their time upon. He has a peculiar class to serve; we care little for his pretensions when he puffs about "the British public;" he owes his fluctuating prosperity to one portion only of the public. Who has not seen the tavern-keeper swelling in the sun like a June porpoise, with a few of his dirty slaves about him, hanging up the new bridle on his sign post, to gather the *swill-tubs* of the neighbourhood together to talk about the donkey race? Or, if he plays for higher game, we find him occasionally patronising a printer; he gets up a very

pretty looking bill, announcing "a splendid pic-nic party—a few tickets may yet be had by early application,"—for several days you may observe Boniface making himself busy in the neighbourhood, nodding and bowing to such of the middle classes as have yet money and precious time to spare for gluttony and folly, nor care for tampering with character and constitution. The landlord knows his dupes; he offers his spico for the full grown children,—he spreads his net, and the "pretty fly walks into his parlour."

It is not, however, to be doubted, that whatever his profession and character, every one who administers to the million, considers that he has a legitimate right to use every means within his limits to engage their attention. Now, we may fairly presume that it has often been a question of great importance to the author who seeks for genuine food for the mental table, to know the best and readiest way of claiming the attention of those for whom he feels interested.

Perhaps in our endeavour to awaken the notice of the *working classes*, to see their present position, we cannot present them with a picture more suited to their capacity, than one which we can draw from actual life, and where there is no need of fiction to give force and colouring to the delineation.

Let us then take our present sketch in the vicinity of the factory. Certain it is, that we have only to become intimately acquainted with the ingoings and the outgoings of those living masses, whose occupation is in the factory; and the various lights and shadows present themselves in truthful order, for the descriptive crayon of the painter. Then to our tale—

Everybody in our neighbourhood knew Bob Burley. In his boyhood he was the leader of a tear down, noisy, and mischievous tribe of youngsters, who after their day in the mill, spent their evenings in rioting at the street corners, and annoying every passer by. It is true that Bob had learned to read and write; at the Sunday School he had been considered a fine sharp boy; but it is a sad thing to know, that in too many instances, as in the case of Bob Burley, the knowledge so benevolently given is turned towards the debasement of themselves, and all within the sphere of their influence. Was there a song of odious or obscene character; our factory boy, Bob, was sure to know it. He delighted in torturing dumb animals; and, to their shame be it said, the *men* of the factory took occasional joy and fierce pleasure in seeing him maltreat, and mercilessly use, any strange boy that might pass the factory during a meal hour. Like many of the boys employed in mills, he soon began to presume upon the importance of his weekly earnings, his parents