

man whose family is increasing at the rate mine is cannot afford himself such luxuries ; come along, you are not sugar or salt."

Burgoyne feels that at this moment he can at all events conscientiously disclaim affinity with the first of the two.

It is indeed a wet night, wet as the one immortalized by Browning in "Christmas Eve and Easter Day;" and who ever brought a wet night and wet umbrellas "wry and flapping" so piercingly home to us as he? The talk so cheerfully promised by Burgoyne's sanguine friend is rendered absolutely impossible by the riot of the elements. It is a good step from the suburban villa, which is the scene of Brown's married joys, to the room in the heart of the town where the Provident Matrons hold their *sabbat*; and by the time that the two men have reached that room there is, despite his mackintosh, little of Burgoyne left dry except his speech. They are under shelter at last, however, have entered the building, added their umbrellas to many other streaming wrecks of whalebone huddled in a corner, and exchanged the dark blustering drench for a flare of gas, a reek of tea, and a sultry stream of wet clothes and humanity. The tea, indeed, is a thing of the past—all its apparatus has been removed. The rows of chairs are all set to face the platform, and on those chairs the Provident Women sit, smiling, if damp, with here and there a little boy, evidently too wicked to be left at home, comfortably wedged between a couple of matronly figures.

The entertainment has already begun, and an undergraduate—damp, like everyone else—is singing, in a booming bass voice, something of a vaguely boastful nature about what he once did "In Bilboa's Bay." Burgoyne has for the moment lost sight of his chaperon, and remains standing near the door, looking upon the scene around him with an