

## DIOGENES AMONG THE CARMEN.

The decided opinion which we expressed on the "tin-badge" bye-law of the Corporation, greatly pleased the broken-hearted Peter, and threw Blucher into a perfect ecstacy of delight. The gratification of the former, burst out in one broad grin over his whole countenance. It is a countenance, too, very capable of shewing a grin, for the mouth is large, and garnished with just six teeth in the upper jaw and a like number in the lower; but the vacancies left by the absent ones, in place of corresponding with each other, are alternate. This arrangement, one might suppose, would interfere with the owner's comfort at feeding-time; but, so far as expression is concerned, the effect is striking. When the mouth is open, as it was on this occasion, it looked as though he had been supplying his long-lost ivories by a couple of broken garden rakes, between every tooth of which his good humour came forth in chuckles; on the other hand, when he spoke or thought of "Canada Plate," his jaws closed with a crack, and his teeth met like those of a rat-trap,—a rusty one we must add.

Peter then, was pleased at our hearty sympathy,—so his face was all smiles, with daylight shining through the grating in his mouth. As for Blucher, he planted his two fore paws on the ground, and twisted, and turned, and wriggled his hind-quarters till we feared he might dislocate his back-bone. Lying under his master's cab, he had often heard pretty strong expressions used, but the force thrown into our expletive by the combined action of the "only religious," and ourselves quite astonished him. He, at any rate, had never read *Tristram Shandy*.

It is time, however, to hear the views of the cab-drivers, and we would fain do so in "Plooky's" own words; but, though an honest and an earnest man, his style of speaking is discursive, and the liberties he takes with the Queen's English are too wild for our compositors; losing much, therefore, of his emphatic and Celtic imagery, we must be content to give the gist of his arguments in our own expressions. The Corporation, he maintains, has no right to single out any class of men in the community for the purpose of insult. Cain had a mark set upon him, but he deserved all he got. What have the cabmen done that they should wear ridiculous tin-plates on their breasts? How would the City Councillors like to be compelled to wear leather medals, so that whenever they passed along the streets they might be caught and abused for the abominable holes every where abounding?

The cabdriver is compelled to pay a license to entitle him to work for his bread. He must be on his stand at all hours and in all weathers. He is not at liberty to refuse a passenger, and no matter if he be as heavy as Daniel Lambert himself, he must ask no more for him than for the diminutive Baronet who yelps in the Ministerial kennel. He drives his customers to market, to 'Change, to the Ball, to the Theatre during the week, and to church on Sunday. He brings the lady from her evening party, after waiting in the cold till his fingers and feet are nearly frozen;—he brings husbands, carefully, from their Clubs, and delivers them safe at their own homes. He is at every body's service, and for very moderate fees, fixed by law; he is liable, if his fare should lose his hat from an unsteady head, or Miss Polly drop her fan while saying a too-tender good night to her last partner. He must be civil, patient, and honest. If he does take an extra shilling now and then, the doctor, the lawyer, the broker,—everyone does the same; only, while he does a shilling "chisel," others do it in pounds. Moreover, it is only Yankees he ever does "chisel," and only because they pay in green-backs, which are never worth the same amount two days running. Then the law numbers his cab, and makes him show his tariff whenever demanded; and now he must

lose his name, wear a tin dish on his bosom, and answer to a number!

Every man has a name, and he likes to be called by it. True, some men have nick-names, and in a good-humoured way they don't object to such. Peter himself is often enough called "Plooky,"—he does not mind it from a friend;—but it is different when a law is passed taking every man's name away, and numbering him like his own cab. "We can never stand it, Sir," said Peter, bringing the rat trap down as if he had an Alderman's head in it. "We never can stand it; our wives chaff at us about our numbers; even the children on the streets vex us about our 'tin plates.'" It is said that all this is in order that the public may be protected against the fraud and dishonesty of the cabman. There are rogues amongst them, no doubt,—are there no rogues in other trades? Bakers give us short weight,—why not give them badges? Doctors cheat us sometimes,—why not make them wear numbers on their breasts, cut out in Burgundy pitch plaster! Why not put brass numbers on the lawyers?—no one ever said they were honest.

Such are Peter's principal grievances. DIOGENES sympathises with him and his friends; and in giving full publicity to the case, brings public opinion to bear on the question. Moreover, we think that there is nothing in the Act of Incorporation which authorises the Mayor or Council to pass any law, the effect of which obviously is to make one class of the citizens either ridiculous or suspected. The auctioneers and the tavern-keepers are obliged to take out licences; we should like to see the result of any attempt to tally them off. What would Mr. L— or Mr. B— say if ordered to wear brass badges on their portly "buzzums"? DIOGENES thinks that every British subject has a right to carry on any legal trade or calling, dressed as he chooses, and free from the necessity of wearing any-insulting badge or number.

In the meantime, we advised our deputation, that, inasmuch as the By-law does not say how the plate is to be worn, the cabmen had better turn the figures upside down, so that when Mayor, Alderman or "Bobby," wishes to speak civilly to him, he can call him by name; and if he wants his number, he can take the trouble of casting a sommersault, and reading the figures when his head is down.

## THE BEST OF ALL.

Our "Note and Query" correspondents have been recently at work discussing Irish Bulls. DIOGENES defies them to produce a racier one than the following, which he has clipped from last week's *Herald*:—

"The Bishop of Exeter has resigned. (is since dead), but is so ill that it is doubtful if he will be able to complete the formalities of resignation."

One would think so.

## "L'HOMME QUI RIT."

Sir Francis Hincks has got his way,  
And, doubtless, he will make it pay;  
Yet, in his hour, of triumph gay,  
DIOGENES a word would say,  
And from his great proverbial store,  
Would just suggest one maxim more,  
Prized by wise men in ages past;—  
"He laughs the best, who laughs the last."

## ATROCIOUS!

Why is Nelson's Monument like a feather pillow?  
Because it would be better *down*.