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THE GRUMBLER

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THE GRUMBLER.

"If there's a hole in 'y' coat,
I reele you t'out it;
A chif's among you taking notes,
And, faith, he'll peit it."

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 1865.

Songs for the Sentimental.

Of't have I fondly heard thee pour
Love's incense in my ear!
Of't, bade thy lips repeat once more
The words I deemed sincere!
But—though the truth this heart may break,
I know thee false and no mistake!
My fancy, pictured to my heart
Thy boasted passion, pure;
Dreamed, thy affections void of art,
For ever would endure.
Alas! in vain my woe I smother!
I find thee very much more other!
Twas sweet to hear you sing of love,
But, when you talk of gold,
Your sordid—base design you prove,
And—for it must be told—
Slace from my soul the truth you drag—
"You let the cat out of the bag!"

A Lecture on Morality by Mr. Grumbler to the crowd outside the Sanctum Window.

Moral philosophers are the greatest fools in the world. I am a moral philosopher; I am no fool though. Who contradicts me? If any, speak, and come within reach of my shillelah! I am a moral philosopher of a new school. The schoolmaster is abroad and I am the schoolmaster; but if anybody says that I am abroad, I will knock him down. I am at home.

And now, good people, attend to me and you will hear something worth learning. The reason why I call all moral philosophers fools, is, because they have not gone properly to work. Each has given his own peculiar notions, merely, to this world. Now, different people have different opin-

ions; some like apples, and others prefer another sort of fruit, with which, no doubt, many of you are familiar. "Who shall decide when doctors disagree?"

My system of morality is the work of induction. I am very fond of Bacon—I mean the Bacon recommended to you by "the Society for the diffusion of useful knowledge"—Lord Bacon. I therefore study the actions of mankind, and draw my inferences accordingly. The people whose conduct I attend to are those who get on best in the world; for the object of all morality is to make ourselves happy, and so long as we are so, what, my good friends, does it signify?

The first thing that you must do in the study of morals is to get rid of all prejudices. Bacon and I quite agree on this point. By prejudices I mean your previous notions of right and wrong.

Dr. Johnson calls morality "the doctrine of the duties of life." In fair definition I agree. The doctor was a clever man. I admire the knock-down arguments he was so fond of; it is the way in which I usually reason myself. Now, the duties of life are two-fold—our duty to others and to ourselves. Our duty to ourselves is to be as comfortable as possible; our duty to others is, to make them assist us to the best of their ability in so doing. This is the plan on which all respectable persons act, and it is one which I have always followed myself. What are the consequences? See how popular I am; and what is more, observe how fat I have got! Here is a corporation for you! Here is a leg! what think you of such a cap as this? and of this stylish coat? Who says that I am not a fine fellow, and that my system is not almost as fine? Let him argue the point with me, if he dare!

Happiness consists in pursuing our inclinations without disturbance and without getting into trouble. Make it then, your first rule of conduct to do exactly as you please; that is, if you can. I am not like other moralists who talk one way and act in another. What I advise you to do is nothing more than what I practice myself, as you have very often observed, I dare say.

Be careful, to show invariably, a proper respect for the laws; that is to say, when you do anything illegal, take all the precautions that you can against being found out. Here, perhaps, my example is somewhat at variance with my doctrine; but I am stronger you know than the executive, and therefore, instead of my respecting it—it ought to respect me!

Be sure to keep a quiet conscience. In order that you may secure this greatest of blessings, never allow yourselves to regret any part of your past behaviour; and whenever you feel tempted to

do so, take the readiest means that you can think of to banish reflection, or, as Lord Byron very properly terms it—

"The blight of life, the demon Thought!"

You have observed that after having knocked any body on the head, I generally begin to dance and sing. This I do, not because I am troubled with any such weakness as remorse, but in order to instruct you. I do not mean to say that you are to conduct yourselves precisely in the same manner under similar circumstances; a pipe, or a glass, or a pinch of snuff—in short any means of diversion—will answer your purpose equally as well.

Adhere strictly to truth—whenever there is no occasion for lying. Be careful to conceal no one circumstance likely to redound to your credit. But when two principles clash, the weaker, my good people, must, as the saying is, go to the wall. If, therefore, it be to your interest to lie, do so, and do it boldly. No one would wear false hair who had hair of his own; and he who has none, must of course, wear a wig. Do not see any difference between false hair and false assertions; and I think a lie a very useful invention. It is like a coat or a pair of breeches—it serves to clothe the naked! But do not throw your falsifications away like a proper economy.

My friends, if you were to act in this way, in what department of commerce could you succeed? How could you get on in the world? What vagabond would employ you to defend his cause? What practice do you think you would be likely to procure as a physician, if you were to tell every old woman who fancied herself ill, that there was nothing the matter with her, or to prescribe abstinence to an alderman as a cure for indigestion? What would be your prospect in the church, where, not to mention a few other trifles, you would have, when you come to be a bishop, to say that you did not wish to be any such thing? No, my friends, truth is all very well where the telling of it is convenient; but when it is not, give me a bouncing lie. But that one lie, object the advocates of uniform veracity will require twenty more make it good; very well, then, tell them.

Ever have a due regard to the sanctity of oaths; this you will evince by never using them to support a fiction, except on high and solemn occasions, such as when you are about to be invested with some public dignity! But avoid any approach to a superstitious veneration for them; it is to keep those thin-skinned and impracticable individuals who are infected by this falling from the management of public affairs, that they have been in a great measure, devised.

Never break a promise, unless bound to do so by a previous one; and promise, from this time