

Nabob to pot-luck, and I take up the narrative at the point, when Gray communicates the "astounding information to" to his better half:—

"My love," says Mrs. GRAY, in a tremor, "how could you be so cruel? Why, the dining-room won't hold Mrs. GOLDMORÉ?"

Make your mind easy, Mrs. GRAY; her ladyship is in Paris. It is only Cæsar's that's coming, and we are going to the play afterwards—to Sadler's Wells. GOLDMORÉ said at the Club that he thought SHAKESPEARE was a great dramatic poet, and ought to be patronised; whereupon, fired with enthusiasm, I invited him to our banquet."

"Goodness gracious! what can we give him for dinner? He has two French cooks; you know Mrs. GOLDMORÉ is always telling us about them; and he dines with Aldermen every day."

"A plain leg of mutton my LUCY,
I prythee get ready at three;
Have it tender, and smoking, and juicy,
And what better meat can there be?"

says GRAY, quoting my favorite poet.

"But the cook is ill; and you know that horrible PATTYPAN, the pastrycook's" * * *

"Silence, Frau!" says Gray, in a deep tragedy voice. "I will have the ordering of this repast. Do all things as I bid thee. Invite our friend SNOB here to partake of the feast. Be mine the task of procuring it."

"Don't be expensive, RAYMOND," says his wife.

"Peace, thou timid partner of the briefless one. GOLDMORÉ's dinner shall be suited to our narrow means. Only thou do in all things my commands." And seeing by the peculiar expression of the rogue's countenance, that some mad waggonery was in preparation, I awaited the morrow with anxiety.

Punctual to the hour—(By the way, I cannot omit here to mark down my hatred, scorn, and indignation, towards those miserable Snobs who come to dinner at nine, when they are asked at eight, in order to make a sensation in the company. May the loathing of honest folks, the back-biting of others, the curses of cooks, pursue these wretches, and avenge 'he society on which they trample!)—Punctual, I say to the hour of five, which Mr. and Mrs. RAYMOND GRAY had appointed, a youth of an elegant appearance, in a neat evening dress, whose trim whiskers indicated neatness, whose light step denoted activity, (for in sooth he was hungry, and always is at the dinner hour, whatsoever that hour may be,) whose rich golden hair, curling down his shoulders, was set off by a perfectly new four-and-ninepenny silk hat, was seen wending his way down Bittlestone Street, Bittlestone Square, Gray's Inn. The person in question, I need not say, was Mr. SNOB. He is never late when invited to dine. But to proceed with my narrative:—

Although Mr. SNOB may have flattered himself that he made a sensation as he strutted down Bittlestone Street with his richly gilt-knobbed cane, (and indeed I vow I saw heads looking at me from Miss SQUILSBY's, the brass-plated milliner opposite RAYMOND GRAY's, who has three silver-paper bonnets, and two fly-blown French prints of fashion in the window,) yet what was the emotion produced by my arrival, compared to that with which the little street thrilled, when at five minutes past five

the floss-wigged coachman, the yellow hammer-cloth and flunkies, the black horses and blazing silver harness of Mr. GOLDMORÉ whirled down the street! It is a very little street of very little houses, most of them with very large brass plates like Miss SQUILSBY's. Coal-merchants, architects, and surveyors, two surgeons, a solicitor, a dancing master, and of course several house-agents, occupy the houses—little two-storied edifices with stucco porticoes. GOLDMORÉ's carriage overtopped the roofs almost; the first floors might shake hands with CÆSAR as he lolled inside; all the windows of those first floors thronged with children and women in a twinkling. There was Mrs. HAMMERLY in curling papers; Mrs. SASSY with her front awry; Mr. WHIGGLES peering through the gauze curtains, holding the while his hot glass of rum-and-water—in fine, a tremendous commotion in Bittlestone Street, as the GOLDMORÉ carriage drove up to Mr. RAYMOND GRAY's door.

"How kind it is of him to come with both the footmen!" says little Mrs. GRAY, peeping at the vehicle too. The hugest domestic, descending from his perch, gave a rap at the door which almost drove in the building. All the heads were out; the sun was shining; the very organ-boy paused; the footman, the coach, and GOLDMORÉ's red face were blazing in splendour. The herculean plushed one went back to open the carriage-door.

RAYMOND GRAY opened his—in his shirt-sleeves.

He ran up to the carriage. "Come in, GOLDMORÉ," says he. "Just in time, my boy. Open the door, WHATDYECALLUM, and let your master out,"—and WHATDYECALLUM, obeyed mechanically, with a face of wonder and horror, only to be equalled by the look of stupefied astonishment which ornamented the purple countenance of his master.

"Wawt taim will you please have the cage, Sir," says WHATDYECALLUM, in that peculiar unspellable, inimitable, flunkified pronunciation which forms one of the chief charms of existence.

"Best have it to the theatre, at night," GRAY exclaims; "it is but a step from here to the Wells, and we can walk there. I've got tickets for all. Be at Sadler's Wells at eleven."

"Yes, at eleven," exclaims GOLDMORÉ perturbedly, and walks with a flurried step into the house, as if he were going to execution (as indeed he was, with that wicked GRAY as a JACK KETCH over him). The carriage drove away, followed by numberless eyes from door-steps and balconies; its appearance is still a wonder in Bittlestone Street.

"Go in there, and amuse yourself with SNOB," says GRAY, opening the little drawing-room door.

"I'll call out when the chops are ready. FANSY below, seeing to the pudding."

"Gracious mercy!" says GOLDMORÉ to me, quite confidentially, "How could he ask us? I really had no idea of this—this utter destitution."

"Dinner, dinner!" roars out GRAY, from the dining-room, whence issued a great smoking and frying; and entering that apartment we find Mrs. GRAY ready to receive us, and looking perfectly like a princess who by some accident, had a bowl of potatoes in her hand, which vegetables she placed on the table. Her husband was meanwhile cooking mutton-chops on a gridiron over the fire.