

DIOGENES VISITS THE POLICE COURT.

DIOGENES does not often go to the Police Court, nor does he often read reports of the miserable business which occupies the unhappy administrators of the law in that semi-subterranean receptacle for the offscourings of society; yet, as he likes to see, and seeing, to comment upon all that passes in the city, he sometimes pays it a visit, takes a seat with Mr. Coursol or Mr. Brehaut, and thus lends the weight of his countenance to their decisions, while the awe of his presence adds to the dignity of the bench.

The other day a case was decided, by the advice of the Cynic, which has escaped the notice of the press; but that our decision may remain on record for the benefit of the public, we hasten to publish it.

John O'Donovan, a sergeant in the 150th Fusiliers, was brought before Mr. Brehaut, charged with assaulting Jean Bte. Grondin dit Picque-Pon, and causing, also, great damage to his clothes.

The accused is a tall, handsome Irishman, with a pleasant smile and a devil-may-care look about him, which set Court and constable equally at defiance:—just the sort of boy that could rob a church, at a pinch, and find his own tools. Beside him stood a brother sergeant and two neatly-dressed and modest-looking young women. O'Donovan was the *beau ideal* of a soldier. Five feet eleven in his stockings, clean, smart, and upright, ready for anything, and, evidently, "loved by all the ladies." The accuser was a long, loosely-put-together tailor, terribly dilapidated in his appearance, as though he had been on the deputation which accompanied Mr. Aubin the other day to offer Canada to Gen. Grant. He was out at elbows, his coat and trousers were threadbare; they had been green, but now bore marks of many dirty floors and much spilt beer. He was, in short, a most unwholesome-looking character, whom nothing but annexation to a hydrant, for at least an hour, could have made fit, even for the Recorder's Court.

In perfectly fluent English, of the *Rouge-Yankee* school, he complained that, on the previous afternoon, the sergeant, without any provocation, had attacked him in a tavern at Mile-End, had blackened both his eyes, and had torn his coat nearly off his back.

The sergeant, on being called on for his defence, saluted the bench, and, directing his eye and his voice, one half to his accuser and one half to DIOGENES, with an occasional look at the Beak, said, in his own hearty Doric:—

"Plase yer hanars—yesterday was as fine a day as ever was seen, and me and Sergeant Daly there, set off for a walk round the mountain with them two ladies:—one of them (turning round as he spoke) is my own wife—the other will be Mistress Daly whenever the Colonel will give his consint, which will be on the first vacancy among the women in the regiment, and that wout be long, neither, Mary, my dear—for the Quarter-Master-Sergeant's wife, Mrs. McSinclair, has taken so badly to the change from Scotch whiskey to Molson's Rye, that she's quite dropsical, and the water's rising in her chest, which must surprise her mightily, since she was never given to water at all, at all; at least she never takes it nate, anyhow —"

"Please come to the point, my man," said the magistrate; "we have nothing to do with Mrs. McSwiveler's dropsy."

"Sinclair, yer Hanar, McSinclair's her name, and a decent woman she is, if she could only get rid of the wather,"—"and Molson's blue ruin," added the Sergeant's wife.

"To the point—to the point," said Mr. Brehaut, trying to speak angrily, for anger is not in his genial soul.

"To the pint o' beer, sir? Yes, we had one glass of beer each, just about a pint amongst the four of us—more by token

that Miss Mary jist tasted her's, and left the rest to Daly; she'll know better when the Colonel gives his consint!"

"Go on—go on with your story, and be —, quick, I mean. Tell us about the assault; what did you do to the plaintiff?"

"Plaintiff, your Hanar! the devil a plaintiff he is at all at all; he is a tailor, and an Annexationer to the bargain!"

"Well, well, tell us what happened for any sake."

"Och! if yer Worship is so set upon hearing it, and av its agreeable to the old gentleman with the barnacles on his red nose beside yez, I'll tell yon the whole skrimmage. Well, we were sittin' quite comfortable in the 'Cat and the Fiddle' at the Mile-End, discoorsin' one another, more particularly Daly and Miss Mary. I was smoking my pipe,—for I have said a'most all my say to Mrs. Donovan, tho' she has still a deal to say to me, which I wonder where it all comes from—well, in comes this big omadown, sits himself down beside me—the dirty villain—and, before I could tell what he was up to, takes hold of my wife's glass, and sez he, "here's to ye red coats, and here's to annexation!" With that, begorra, he drank the beer clean out. Troth, then, gentleman, I am a little wake about the timper, at least so the wife says; so I winks to Sergeant Daly just to open the windy, and I tuk him by the cuff of the coat and the sate of his breeches, and pitched him—annexation and all,—out into the garden among the cabbages! He made a horrid hullabuloo, screeching in French and English all sorts of murder, tho' the devil a bit he was hurt, only his trousers were badly broke, by raison they were shoddy and rotten into the bargain. Well, the neighbours gathered round, and tould him to whisht, but the more they tried to pacify him the more he screeched. Wid dat, three or four of the boys got hold of him, and, in spite of him kicking like a cat under a harrow, they huddled him into the room, foreninst us and the ladies, hinder ind first, and, saving yer Hanar's prisence, quite ondacent, by raison of the hole in his unctionables. Of coorse, it was no ways fit that he should stay in the same room with us, so I opened the door this time, took him by the neck, seeing as how I could get no hold of his shoddy, and put him down stairs, quite aisy like, with the toe of my boot."

"Yes, Sarr," said Picque-Pon, "he throw me down stairs, my head first, and gave me these two marks on my face."

"Faix, then, yer Hanar," said the Sergeant, "its the only way he would go. I put him out at the windy, and its head first he went; they put him into the windy again the other ind first, and he was not fit to be seen; and when I put him out of the door, I left him to take 'is own way, and it's head first he went again. And that's the whole truth, plase the Court,—divil a lie from beginning to ind!"

The defendant's story was fully borne out by his comrade and Miss Mary. DIOGENES and the Magistrate whispered together for some minutes in consultation, when the Court decided that the plaintiff had got no more than he deserved, but that the defendant had no right to take the law into his own hands. That the Court was open to him for redress in all cases, and to the Court he should have applied. In view of the provocation, he would only be sentenced to pay a fine of one shilling and three pence.

The Sergeant put down a half-dollar, and asked if he could take the change out in the redress which his Honor said was sold there. That a quarter dollar was cheap, and he would fain have just one more free kick at the tailor.

Mr. Brehaut objected, and warned him, that if he came back on a similar charge, he would not get off so easily.

"Well, now," said the disappointed soldier, "this is hard; one more kick would be a great comfort to me, and I could take the punishment in advance!"