

(ORIGINAL.)

OCTAVIUS SKEGGS, THE NICE 'YOUNG MAN.

BY E. L.

Mr. Octavius Apollo Skeggs

Was a bachelor bold, hale and hearty,
And what with his head and his beautiful legs,
Was a very nice man for a party.

SONG.

"ONLY think! Figgins," exclaimed Mrs. F. one evening to her husband, as he entered the shop with a chandler's wicker basket on his arm, having just delivered a quarter of a pound of eights, and half an ounce of the best gunpowder tea to the order of one of their principal customers; "only think! those Browns had a party last night, and we weren't asked. I suppose we're not good enough for them now, since they've left off the marine store and commenced in the cook-shop line. But people should'n't forget what they were once, and how they got their money; for my part, I've always had my suspicions. Thanks be, though we *do* keep a chandler's shop, our money's honest come by, and we dosent make sassengers out o' *any thing*. And let me tell you, Mr. Figgins, the next time they send their grease here for sale, you'll deduct two pence ha'penny for the pieces of brick and lumps o' tatoes found in the last, you were *wise* enough to allow them to cheat you in, more shame for you."

"My dear," attempted to remonstrate Mr. F. "you know I have told you twenty times——"

"Yes," interrupted his dominant lady; "I tell you sir, you are no man of business, or we should'n't be as we are now." Here the amiable lady drew a long sigh, and entered into a gloomy relation of what they might have been, had Mr. Figgins been like some *one* else; and concluded by endeavouring to convince him, that if he had in him the spirit of the Smiths, (her maiden name,) he'd give a party that would shew the Browns he wasn't to be outdone.

But Mr. Figgins, who did not see the matter exactly in the same point of view as his intelligent lady, attributable no doubt to his being less clear headed than the Smiths, appeared much inclined to contest the point with Mrs. F.

"My dear, we can't afford it—what signifies——"

"Yes, that's like you, just like you—whatever you think is likely to do me good, or make me happy, you always oppose, you do Figgins!" and here the injured lady, checked in her volubility by the strength of her feelings, applied the corner of her apron to her eye, breathed two or three deep sighs—they might have been intended for sobs—and exhibited sundry hysterical contortions of the countenance—alarining symptoms! It was too much, the

obdurate heart of the little tallow chandler was melted—he seized her hand—

"Jemmy, (a contraction of Jemima,) Jemmy my soul, compose yourself!"

"Fig—Fig—" was all the sensitive lady could reply.

"Compose yourself, my all, my loved—I consent to all—to every thing—I won't object to nothing at all, only don't faint."

After the lapse of a few minutes, during which the distressed Mr. Figgins never ceased to assure Mrs. F. of his determination to leave the party question entirely in her own hands, if she'd only "*come to*." That lady, by the judicious application of a blown out candle, the odour from which allowed to enter the nasal orifice, is an infallible restorative in such cases, *did* "*come to*," and, assisted in her plan of operations by her daughter, Miss Arabella Jemima Catherina Figgins, (the two ladies putting their heads *together*;) it was determined to give a set out the next evening, that should astonish the Browns, and procure them the enviable company of the charming Mr. Skeggs—the former the chief desire of the elder—the latter the sole wish of the younger lady.

In one of those numerous courts in the vicinity of Drury Lane, once the resort of the lowest and most degraded of both sexes inhabiting the great metropolis, but which, happily for the thickly populated neighbourhood around, and the community at large, has within the last two or three years, by the vigilance of the magistracy, been considerably purged of their wretched inmates, about half way up, was an old decayed building, which appeared to threaten the passer-by with immediate destruction—the windows were stuffed with filthy rags, and its whole appearance denoted the extreme of poverty. But as there was scarcely a house in the court which did not present the same repulsive appearance, it would have called for no particular notice, but that toward it the messenger, (Master Figgins) conveying the invitation to Mr. Skeggs, directed his steps. The door, as is usual in such purloins, was wide open, verifying the proverb "*there's honour among thieves*;" but arrived here, there being neither knocker nor bell, Master Figgins felt himself rather perplexed as to the course he should next pursue, but finally adopted the expedient of stamping on the floor, and after amusing himself in this manner for about ten minutes, a half naked, dirty, stunted urchin made his appearance from the basement. Eying him with some suspicion, Master Figgins enquired whether Mr. Skeggs lived there? The boy opened his mouth, closed it again, stared, and with a knowing wink shook his head. Master F. repeated his enquiry.

"Kegs?" at length replied the boy, with an apparent dubiousness, that evinced he was rather at a loss to know what kegs meant.