

OUR TABLE.

DEALINGS WITH THE FIRM OF DOMBEY & SON.

The accounts of this celebrated firm, it is evident, will be soon wound up—at least, as far as those of the senior partner are concerned—and a severe account he has had to render. Mr. Dickens has been even more than usually successful in this work, which has for a long time been looked for eagerly, and read greedily in England and America. It contains some of the best and most striking pictures which even Dickens has ever traced—some of them indeed startlingly beautiful—and some as startlingly terrible and hideous. The death of Carker, the pliant hypocrite and fawning tyrant—the betrayer of his master, and the disappointed sensualist, is graphically drawn: it is besides, a sketch in the style of Dickens, of what, in any other hands than his, would be rather unpoetical—the passing and repassing of railway trains! and we transfer it to our pages:—

The ground shook, the house rattled, the fierce impetuous rush was in the air! He felt it come up, and go darting by; and even when he had hurried to the window, and saw what it was, he stood, shrinking from it, as if it were not safe to look.

A curse upon the fiery devil, thundering along so smoothly, tracked through the distant valley by a glare of light and lurid smoke, and gone! He felt as if he had been plucked out of his path, and saved from being torn asunder. It made him shrink and shudder even now, when its faintest hum was hushed, and when the lines of iron road he could trace in the moonlight, running to a point, were as empty and as silent as a desert.

Unable to rest, and irresistibly attracted—or he thought so—to this road, he went out, and lounged on the brink of it, marking the way the train had gone, by the yet smoking cinders that were lying in its track. After a lounge of some half-hour in the direction by which it had disappeared, he turned and walked the other way—still keeping to the brink of the road—past the inn garden, and a long way down; looking curiously at the bridges, signals, humps, and wondering when another Devil would come by.

A trembling of the ground, and quick vibration in his ears; a distant shriek; a dull light advancing, quickly changed to two red eyes, and a fierce fire, dropping glowing coals; an irresistible bearing on of a great roaring and dilating mass; a high wind, and a rattle—another come and gone, and he holding to a gate as if to save himself!

He waited for another, and for another. He walked back to his former point, and back again to that, and still, through the wearisome vision of his journey, looked for these approaching monsters. He loitered about the station, waiting until one should stay to call there; and when one did, and was detached for water, he stood parallel with it, watching its heavy wheels and brazen front, and thinking what a cruel power and might it had. Ugh! To see the great wheels slowly turning, and to think of being run down and crushed!

He paid the money for his journey to the country place he had thought of; and was walking to and fro, alone, looking along the lines of iron, across the valley in one direction, and towards a dark bridge near at hand in the other; when, turning in his walk, where it was bounded by one end of the wooden stage on which he paced up and down, he saw the man from whom he had fled, emerging from the door by which he himself had entered there. And their eyes met.

In the quick unsteadiness of the surprise, he staggered, and slipped on the road below him. But recovering his feet immediately, he stepped back a pace or two upon that road, to interpose some wider space between them, and looked at his pursuer, breathing short and quick.

He heard a shout—another—saw the face change from its vindictive passion to a faint sickness and terror—felt

the earth tremble—knew in a moment that the rush was, come—uttered a shriek—looked round—saw the red eyes bleared and dim, in the daylight, close upon him—was beaten down, caught up, and whirled away upon a jagged mill, that spun him round and round, and struck him limb from limb, and licked his stream of life up with its fiery heat, and cast his mutilated fragments in the air.

When the traveller who had been recognised, recovered from a swoon, he saw them bringing from a distance something covered, that lay heavy and still, upon a board between four men, and saw that others drove some dogs away that sniffed upon the road, and soaked his blood up, with a train of ashes.

The favorite characters are being disposed of according to the true rules of poetical justice, and with another number or two we may expect the curtain to drop upon the whole scene.

THE BACHELOR OF THE ALBANY; BY THE AUTHOR OF THE "FALCON FAMILY."*

THIS Book is hardly so much a novel, as a collection of sketches and characters—the men and women are cleverly hit off, and the follies of the time have found another satirist, in whom sharpness and good humor are fully combined. The story opens in the house of a Liverpool merchant, Mr. Spread, and the reader is speedily introduced to the various members of his family, in all of whom there is much to admire, from the beautiful specimen of the English Matron, Mrs. Spread, down to the juveniles—not the least amusing, at all events, being Mrs. Martin the governess, in whose character the author very humourously caricatures a popular authoress of the day.

The heartiness of the Spread family is very powerfully brought out in contrast with that of Mr. Narrowsmith, a mercantile partner of Spread's; and as the story opens at that open-hearted time, Christmas, it leaves the reader only one regret, that he was not of the party. It is, however, determined to ask an old family friend, Mr. Barker, the Bachelor of the Albany, and as Mr. Spread has business to take him to London, he resolves to bring the Bachelor along with him. He accordingly ferrets him out in his den, and here we are let into more secrets than we would wish our fair readers to be acquainted with. But after sundry snappings and snarlings, the Bachelor is induced to visit his old friend.

Did our space permit, we would have much pleasure in giving a few extracts from this most attractive book, more especially that part where the flirtation commences with the "Smiley girls," but we would only thereby mar the pleasure of our readers, to whom we have no hesitation in recommending the Bachelor, as the best, the wittiest and most readable book we have had for many a day.

* R. & C. Chalmers, Montreal.