

Bumble, making a quicker motion towards the door. "I did n't intend to—I'm going, my dear—you are so very violent, that really I—"

At this instant Mrs. Bumble stepped hastily forward to replace the carpet, which had been kicked up in the scuffle, and Mr. Bumble immediately darted out of the room, without bestowing another thought on his unfinished sentence, leaving the late Mrs. Corney in full possession of the field.

Mr. Bumble was fairly taken by surprise, and fairly beaten. He had a decided bullying propensity, derived no inconsiderable pleasure from the exercise of petty cruelty, and consequently was (it is needless to say) a coward. This is by no means a disparagement to his character; for many official personages, who are held in high respect and admiration, are the victims of similar infirmities. The remark is made, indeed, rather in his favour than otherwise, and with the view of impressing the reader with a just sense of his qualifications for office.

But the measure of his degradation was not yet full. After making a tour of the house, and thinking for the first time that the poor laws were really too hard upon people, and that men who ran away from their wives, leaving them chargeable to the parish, ought in justice to be visited with no punishment at all, but rather rewarded as meritorious individuals who had suffered much, Mr. Bumble came to a room where some of the female paupers were usually employed in washing the parish linen, and whence the sound of voices in conversation now proceeded.

"Hem!" said Mr. Bumble, summoning up all his native dignity. "These women at least shall continue to respect the prerogative. Hallo! hallo there!—what do you mean by this noise, you hus-sies?"

With these words Mr. Bumble opened the door, and walked in with a very fierce and angry manner, which was at once exchanged for a most humiliated and cowering air as his eyes unexpectedly rested on the form of his lady wife.

"My dear," said Mr. Bumble, "I didn't know you were here."

"Did n't know I was here!" repeated Mrs. Bumble. "What do you do here?"

"I thought they were talking rather too much to be doing their work properly, my dear," replied Mr. Bumble, glancing distractedly at a couple of old women at the wash-tub, who were comparing notes of admiration at the workhouse-master's humility.

"You thought they were talking too much?" said Mrs. Bumble. "What business is it of yours?"

"Why, my dear—" urged Mr. Bumble submissively.

"What business is it of yours?" demanded Mrs. Bumble again.

"It's very true you're matron here, my dear," submitted Mr. Bumble, "but I thought you mightn't be in the way just then."

"I'll tell you what, Mr. Bumble," returned his lady, "we don't want any of your interference, and you're a great deal too fond of poking your nose into things that don't concern you, making every body in the house laugh the moment your back is turned, and making yourself look like a fool every hour in the day. Be off; come!"

Mr. Bumble, seeing with excruciating feelings the delight of the two old paupers, who were tittering together most rapturously, hesitated for an instant. Mrs. Bumble, whose patience brooked no delay, caught up and bowl of soap-suds, and motioning him towards the door, ordered him instantly to depart, on pain of receiving the contents on his portly person.

What could Mr. Bumble do? He looked dejectedly round, and slunk away; and as he reached the door, the titterings of the paupers broke into a shrill chuckle of irrepressible delight. It wanted but this. He was degraded in their eyes; he had lost caste and station before the very paupers; he had fallen from all the height and pomp of beadleship to the lowest depth of the most snubbed henpeckery.

"All in two months!" said Mr. Bumble, filled with dismal thoughts. "Two months—not more than two months ago I was not only my own master, but every body else's, so far as the parochial workhouse was concerned, and now!—"

It was too much. Mr. Bumble boxed the ears of the boy who opened the gate for him, (for he had reached the portal in his reverie,) and walked distractedly into the street.

(ORIGINAL.)

ISAAC AND REBEKAH.

Slow o'er Canaan's lovely, vine-clad hills,
The sun declined, pillow'd on gorgeous clouds,
Which hung their folds, like silken drapery
From Tyrian looms, around each verdant height,
And wrapt the world beneath in twilight's shade,
Waking that gentle hour of eventide,
Sweet in all lands—but in that orient clime,
Most full of pure delight, to sense and soul.
There, where the skies drop balm, where spices
breathe,
Where the young olive buds, and where the grape
Puts forth her delicate blossom, like the threads
Of fairy frost-work, wrought by unseen hands,
Yet, from each tiny cup, shedding perfume:
There, where the stars, which Chaldean shepherd's
watch'd,
Look brightly forth, from out their azure depths,
Through the clear ambient air—where, too, night's
bird,
The tuneful nightingale, pours forth her song,
While safe she sits within her leafy nest,
Hid by the clustering roses that she loves,