

"Noah's Ark coat"—a long, straight-skirted gaberdine, reaching well-nigh down to the heels, and which was popular for a brief period about the time of the battle of Inkermann. In that coat he looked like Shem—if you can imagine Shem with a long, tawny moustache and his hair parted down the middle. He would wear a shooting-suit sometimes, rough and hairy, like a Scotch terrier's coat, and with buttons as large as cheeseplates. In evening dress even—the costume which in most cases obliterates a man's individuality for the nonce, and places a duke on the same level with a waiter—Lambswol was simply appalling. At balls he usually took up the position of a "wall-flower." He was too tremendous to join in anything less heroic than that Dance of the Heroes which Kaulbach has depicted in his *Homer in Griechenland*, and when he leant against a wall, calmly but superbly surveying the giddy whirling crowd, you could not help recalling that one of his names was Samson, and auguring shudderingly that in a minute or so he would pull down Willis's Rooms on the heads of the Philistine host bodily.

And yet he was not, in the main, half a bad fellow, for all his six-feet-two, his big blonde moustaches, and his generally overwhelming mien. Let it be first borne in mind that he was to all intents and purposes a "swell" of the swells. Poor Felix Whitehurst, who is dead, and was the best-abused man of his time—I can't help fancying that he was rather glad, poor fellow to know that he was going to a land where there was neither *Pall Mall Gazette* nor *Saturday Review*—used to divide the august race to which Lambswol belonged into three species:—Heavy Swells, Howling Swells, and Shady Swells. The Duke of Doncaster—everybody knows him, from M. Pellegrini's portrait—is a "Heavy Swell." He drives the twice-a-week coach to Coldwaltham in the season, the Duchess sometimes taking the box-seat. He owns a Scotch county and a half; and he owes thirty thousand pounds to his tailor. If he be not the heaviest of swells, I should like to know who can lay claim to that proud appellation. As a type of a Howling Swell, I cannot choose a better specimen than Captain Fitz Firefly, of the Twenty-fourth Hussars, who drives, hunts, fishes, rides steeplechases, backs up penniless managers when they open theatres with "plenty of leg" in the burlesques; is as well known at Newmarket as at the Bedford at Brighton, and at the Café Anglais in Paris as at the Junior Plungers' and Bangup's Billiard Club in Pall Mall. He plays deeply; his betting books, were they all collected, would fill a shelf as long as that devoted, in the Museum Reading-Room, to the Pantheon Littéraire; he is on friendly terms with several distinguished prize-fighters; in the days of public executions at the Old Bailey he was always ready to make one to hire the first-floor front of the King of Denmark tavern; he has been twice summoned for cock-fighting; it required all the influence of his uncle, the bishop, to dissuade the Bumbleshire magistrate from sending him to the tread-mill for beating the county constabulary at a race-meeting; he pays—at least he owes—for all Miss Fillybuster's pug-dogs, sealskin jackets, diamond bracelets, and piebald ponies; and he is a member of the "Rum. Pum. Pa." As for the Shady Swell, he can be very easily and briefly defined. He is Captain Ossidew (once a captain); but his commission was sold, and the proceeds "melted" long ago—late of the Twenty-fourth Hussars. You may see him swaggering down the Burlington Arcade arm-in-arm with Major Cockshy, late of the Venezuelan Cacadores, and Fred Frisker-till, late manager of the Royal Deficit Bank Limited. This is he, in smirched buckskin gloves—what a bill he had once at Ludlam's!—with patched boots, and an electro-gilt horse-shoe pin in his frayed scarf, sucking the butt of a cheap cigar, and ogling the girls in the bonnet-shops. This is he, in a shabby straw hat and a reefer jacket, white at the seams, and with a battered telescope under his arm, loafing on the pier at Ryde in the yachting season, and pretending that he is looking out for Jack Galesby, of the Andromeda. That may be; but Jack, otherwise the Right Honourable Viscount Galesby, is certainly not looking out for Captain Ossidew, late of the Twenty-fourth Hussars; and did he catch sight of that scapegrace would give him the cut direct. The Shady Swell is very well known in west-end bill-discounters' dens, and in the board-rooms of bubble companies. He always carries a pack of cards and a set of dice in his travelling-bag; he shuts his eyes, or pulls up the collar of his coat, when a cab bears him past Trimmer's Hotel, lest William the waiter, of whom he has borrowed enough money to set that poor fellow up in the greengrocery line, should spy him; and in sporting circles there runs a rumour that not later than last July, and at Diddlebury races, Captain Ossidew, late of the Twenty-fourth Hussars, was ducked as a "Welcher."

My own belief is that, in addition to the three types of sweldom just enumerated, there is another, the Awful Swell—the Lambswol Swell, in fine. Of shadiness there was not in his character one iota; but he was a little too dissipated to be styled, with strict propriety, "Heavy." The modern Heavy Swell goes in early for politics and the Commission of the Peace, writes letters to the papers about the Game Laws and the Incidence of Taxation, and is sometimes a member of the School Board. He was given, was Lambswol, so report said, to divers decidedly "tearing" practices; but, if he tore, it was always in an awful manner. "He is a wicked, wicked young man, my dear," old Lady Frumpleby (his aunt, indeed) was

wont to say to her three daughters. "But he has charming manners, mamma," Lady Fanny Frumpleby would plead. "He is very good-looking," Lady Mildred (a giddy, thoughtless thing) would giggle. "He is so delightfully naughty," Lady Eva would murmur. Wherein lay his wickedness? Whispers on the subject were many; but certainties were few. He had one of the neatest turn-outs in the way of a dark-green cabriolet, one of the largest thoroughbred cab horses, and one of the smallest tigers, in buckskins and topboots, to hang on behind, ever beheld; and there is no denying that, with the reins in his hand, and with one of Carrera's eighteenpenny regalias between his lips, he looked delightfully, but still awfully, wicked. His sealskin cigar-case; his lapiz-lazuli fusee-box; his betting-book bound in malachite; the shawl-pattern dressing-gown and scarlet morocco slippers he wore in chambers; the ragged Dandle Dimont that trotted at his heels; the Chubb-lock photograph album which reposed on his bedroom table; the picture in the Florentine frame, but closely veiled with a green-silk curtain, which hung over his bed-head—all these things were looked upon, somehow, as elements in his wickedness. Give a dog a bad name—the proverb is somewhat musty. "He is the soul of honour, mamma," his cousin and staunch ally, Lady Fanny Frumpleby, would cry. "*Mauvaise réputation* of his description generally are," the old lady would cynically reply. Brutus was an honourable man; so was the Cardinal de Richelieu. "How is it that his name never gets into the papers?" Sir Benjamin Backbite would sometimes charitably inquire. "It's always hushed up; it must be hushed up," that truly Christian woman, Mrs. Candour, would suggest. "He'll be found out some day; that's one consolation." Thus Lady Sneerwell, and thus, my brothers and sisters, they are talking about you at this very moment. My dear Mrs. Bountiful, you spent the whole of this afternoon at home, trimming a bonnet, in sheer kindness of heart, for your housemaid; but Mrs. Candour has told half a hundred people in Belgravia that at 2.30 p.m. you were seen at the Victoria Station, Pimlico, entering a first-class compartment of a train bound for the Crystal Palace, and in the company of young Shunter, the son of the well-known millionaire manufacturer of rolling stock. My dear Mr. Intiger, when Sir Benjamin Backbite met you coming out of Marlborough-street Police-court the other morning, whither you had gone to prosecute an extortionate cabman, he rushed down to the club (the Senior Theristes) and told Mawworm, the *Saturday Reviewer*; and Blackbille, the retired Q.C.; and old Dr. Belladonna, the late Grand-Duke of Tartarus' body-physician, that you had been locked up all night on a charge of being drunk and disorderly, and had got off in the morning (under the name of Highlow Jinks, medical student) with a fine of forty shillings. Some nice people I knew once circulated a report that I had gone raving mad, and was under the care of Dr. Douchewell, at Isleworth, until steps could be taken to get me into St. Luke's. They were not very far from the truth at the time, these nice people, for I had been in excruciating torture for nine days with the toothache.

There are two hundred and fifty thousand lies told every minute in London (I have the late Mr. Babbage's authority for this) about people's goings-on; and since the introduction of the post-card system the average is said to be rapidly increasing. If you tell your detractors they are liars, they bring actions for libel against you.

Captain Hercules Lambswol allowed the world to lie its very hardest—or to tell the truth; who shall say? He continued to be solemnly and equably awful, and to enjoy the reputation of being dreadfully wicked. It brought him a kind of celebrity—shocking, if you will, but undeniably sensational. The Russian Princess, Anna Commena Doselmooff—her husband died in the Caucasus, in command of his regiment; but *les mauvaises langues* whispered that strychnine administered by mistake in a *petit verre* of Chartreuse verte, by his fond spouse, had a good deal to do with his premature decease, and who was reported to be the wickedest woman in Europe—was anxious to see the Captain. Sir Benjamin avows that he saw them together three Sundays afterwards on the lawn of the Castle Hotel, Richmond. It is very certain that Spancarati, the Princess's music-master, secretary, and Head of the Poison Closet (so Mrs. Candour hints), dedicated his "Flowing Arno" waltzes to "Monseigneur Hercule Lambswol, Capitaine aux Gardes à cheval (Royal Horse-Guards Blue) de sa Majesté, la Reine d'Angleterre. Sir Benjamin had met Spancarati coming out of Lambswol's chambers in the Albany, and at 4 p.m. that day (teste Lady Sneerwell) the captain himself was seen, in the Grand Avenue of Covent-garden Market, emerging from the shop of Mrs. Buck, the florist, and bearing in one buckskin-gloved palm a bouquet pinned up in blue-tissue paper, and as big as a prize cauliflower. Lady Sneerwell did not precisely hear the captain tell his coachman (he was in his brougham that day, not in his cab nor in his mail Phaeton) to drive to Eaton-place, the abode of the wicked countess; but her ladyship read the direction in his eyes.

Of course, one year, when he dropped his subscription to the omnibus box at Covent-garden, and took a stall at her Majesty's (the burnt-down one) instead, people said that the reason for his secession was the migration (through a squabble with the stage-manager) of Mademoiselle Gambanuda, the famous *danseuse*, from Bow-street to the Haymarket. Equally, of course, when Roger the Monk made

a bad third instead of coming in a triumphant first at Goodwood, and it was commonly known at Tattersall's that Lambswol, who, in his calmly awful way, had backed the animal heavily, had lost fifteen thousand pounds, people said that he would never pay a farthing, and that on the eve of settling-day he would go off salmon-fishing to Norway. "Fellows who plunged," chuckled little Tom Sneak, in the smoking-room of the Ugly-Mug Club, "must expect spills. I always thought that long-legged conceited jackanapes would come down a whopper." Tom had a betting book of his own; and he begged so beautifully that he always told you that he "stood on velvet," and, come what might, stood to win three hundred and fifty pounds sure; all of which did not enable him to pay his last losses, amounting to twenty-seven pounds two-and-six-pence, on the Chester Cup. He is at present residing at Monaco, and backs the red.

The people at Tattersall's—in whose yard not half so many lies are told as in what is ordinarily termed "good society"—were, on the other hand, quite comfortable in their minds about the unlucky backer of Roger the Monk. "The capting's good for more than double of what he put the pot on for," Mr. Gumbles, a heavy creditor on the Goodwood course, observed to Josh Smoocher, an "Ebrew Jew, who once kept a hazard bank, of the kind known as a "Silver Hell," at a coffee-shop in a back-slum of Soho, but who now runs horses and is thinking some day of going into Parliament. "Good!" echoed Mr. Smoocher. "He's good for forty thou. He ain't got a inch o' parchment on his estates; and he's bound to come in to a lot more when the old lady dies. Bethides he don't sthpend eight hundred a year on himself, and he's awful honorable." Strange, that in one particular at least, Lady Fanny Frumpleby, that haughty beauty, and Mr. Jehoshaphat Smoocher, the betting man, should be of one mind.

The captain paid; and, oddly enough, did go salmon-fishing to Norway immediately afterwards. Then people said, of course, that he was fearfully shaken by his losses—that he was "dipped," heavily "dipped," my dear, and was mortgaging his patrimony right and left. Papillon, of the Coldstreams—Charley, otherwise "Baby" Papillon, one of the best-natural fellows about town—remarked to Lord McCraw, of the Scots Fusiliers, as the two stood together in the celebrated bow-window which overlooks Pall Mall, that he had heard poor old Lamb was "short"—which is Guardsmanesque for that which civilians term being "hard up"—and that, although he didn't, as a rule, like fellows in the Blues, he should be glad to lend the old fellow a "thou" if he wanted it. Lord McCraw concurred with him, judiciously adding that Lambswol had "fairish expatiancies."

Lambswol's aunt died soon afterwards of a surfeit of green tea, hydrate of chloral, *poté de foie gras*, and advanced ritualism at St. Celsus-on-sea. She was the "old lady" so touchingly alluded to by Mr. Jehoshaphat Smoocher in Tattersall's yard. Lambswol had been wealthy enough before; his father, the descendant of a long line of Yorkshire thanes, who had held their own for many generations before the coming of the Conqueror, and were, indeed, both astonished and indignant at the impudence of the Norman invader in coming over at all—Lambswol's papa, I say, a valiant Waterloo officer and K.C.B., had left our Hercules, his only son, a fair rant-roll, from which—that disastrous business of Roger the Monk notwithstanding—no snippings or clippings had been made to make mortgage-deeds withal. Lambswol's aunt, his father's sister, was the enormously rich Mrs. Huyghens, chief (albeit dormant) partner in the great Amsterdam house of Huyghens, Vanderboom, and Van Dam—that historical firm which has made so many millions by dealing in Dutch cheeses, European loans, quicksilver mines, curaçao, niggers, Dutch dolls, and other miscellaneous articles. It is unnecessary to particularise the precise augmentation of fortune accruing to Captain Lambswol by the decease of his Anglo-Batavian relative. Let it suffice to report verbatim a remark soon afterwards made by Mr. Gumble, meeting Mr. Jehoshaphat Smoocher, one sunny settling-day—Roger the Monk had come in first somewhere or another—that "the old girl had cut up very beefy, and had left the capting a pot of money;" to which Mr. Smoocher replied that he wished he had half his (the captain's) complaint; and that if he thought of getting married, and wanted any diamonds, he (Mr. Smoocher) knew a party who could accommodate him in a brace of shakes.

Words of wisdom were these uttered by the wary betting men, albeit couched in words which Dr. Latham might scruple about admitting into his dictionary. It happened that the captain a very few months after the death of Mrs. Huyghens, did begin to think about getting married, and that although the bounteous old lady left him plenty of jewelry, he wanted more diamonds. It must be regarded, I suppose, as a dispensation of Providence for the benefit of the Bond-street jewelers, that brides expectant are never satisfied with the trinkets of their great-grandmothers. Were it otherwise how would the Bond-street jewelers live—to say nothing of their acquiring gigantic fortunes, and purchasing magnificent estates in the Midland counties—I should like to know?

Captain Lambswol made a distinguished although not an aristocratic match. He married Georgiana, eldest daughter of Mr. Trolley, M.P., that famous and wealthy engineer and contractor, to whom modern civilization is indebted for the Squanderbury and Lavisham branch of the Grand Trunk Railway from Basinghall-

street to Babylon. It has been calculated by an eminent statistician that nine hundred and seven benefited clergymen were seriously involved; that fourteen hundred and twelve widows, with a small independence, were reduced to poverty and compelled to let out lodgings or to take in washing; that four hundred and fifty-three retired officers of the army and navy were forced to sell their half-pay; that two thousand highly-accomplished young ladies were fain to go out as governesses; and that ten per cent of the aggregate of sufferers cut their throats, drowned themselves in the Regent's Canal, or became inmates of Hanwell and Colney-Hatch Lunatic Asylums, solely in consequence of the Squanderbury and Lavisham branch of the Babylon and Basinghall-street line, in which they were original shareholders. Civilization, I need scarcely say, benefited splendidly by the undertaking, as it has likewise done by the Achenese Irrigation Works, the Great Desert of Sahara Oasis Company, the Sea-Coast of Bohemia Breakwater and Light-house Company, the Wan Isworth Pond Whale-fishing Adventure, and the Association for erecting Grand Hotels at Samarcoand, East Grinstead, and Pulo-Penang. In all of these undertakings Mr. Trolley, M.P., had a share, and from each he withdrew a very comfortable number of thousands of pounds—the original shareholders being, like Lord Ullin in the ballad, "left lamenting." It is fitting, nay, inevitable, that the few should be sacrificed for the benefit of the many. Let it be your constant endeavor, my Young Friend, to find yourself in the majority.

I deeply regret to record that the union of Captain Lambswol—he sold out on his marriage, but courtesy will continue to give him his military title—with Miss Trolley was not a happy one. It cannot precisely be said that the bride and bridegroom began to quarrel almost as soon as the nuptial knot was tied, because it takes two parties to make a quarrel, and Lambswol was the most placable and indulgent of husbands; still, it seems undeniable that ere the honeymoon was over, Mrs. Lambswol had been thrice in hysterics; and before they had been married six months, Sir Benjamin Backbite was ready to make an affidavit that Mrs. L. had thrown a teacup at her lord in a private room at the Grand Hotel, Paris; and that in the brougham which was conveying the happy pair to the Duchess of Diachylon's ball, in the season of 18—, the adored one of Lambswol's heart had twisted her jeweled fingers in his white neckcloth and manicle—a burning desire to choke him; and that Lambswol had privately and mysteriously asked Mr. Buddlecombe, of Bolus and Bublecombe, the eminent chemists and druggists of South Kensington, whether a tall lady dressed in black and closely veiled had been purchasing any of Batley's Solution of Opium at their establishment lately. As for Lady Sneerwell, she went about town with a circumstantial and detailed account of Mrs. Lambswol, at 11.30 one night, after a dinner-party which her husband had given in honor of the appointment of his friend Sir Xerxes Timmins, K.C.B., to the Governorship of the Cruel Islands, putting on her bonnet and shawl, and packing up her jewelry, a Maltese lace veil, and two Dresden china pug-dogs in a sealskin bag, with the avowed intention of going home to her mother.

For a wonder, the backbiters were this time not wholly drawing on imagination for their facts. I discard the Batley's Solution of Opium story, but as for the rest I gravely fear the bill of indictment must be a true one. There had been fearful goings-on at the gorgeous mansion in Bucephalus-gardens, S.W., where the Lambswols resided. Dark rumors were current among the servants as to master's "carrying-on," but what he carried and how he carried it nobody seemed precisely to know. Still it was agreed on all hands that he was wickeder than ever, and that Mrs. Lambswol was a "suffering angel." I have known a good many suffering angels in my time. One of them bit me in the hand rather badly; but then she was an angel with very highly-strung nerves, and could not bear the least excitement.

The end of it was a judicial separation; and the general conduct of Lambswol (the minutest details of his private life were not spared, I can assure you) formed the text for a good many leading articles of the description known as "spicy" in the penny papers. He went abroad after the termination of that ugly business in the Court for Divorce and Matrimonial Causes, and Lady Sneerwell, Mrs. Candour, Sir Benjamin Backbite, and the rest are unanimous in stating that the Captain (who has of course sold out from the Blues) is living at Damascus, where he dresses à la Turquie, and entertains a whole seraglio full of moon-faced hours. Is it all true I wonder, or a lie? *Qu'en savez-vous?* I am yet constrained to remember that when the Reverend Nepomucene Chrysostom, so long the deservedly popular incumbent of St. Philidor-the-Martyr South Albertopolis, preached his farewell sermon on being appointed to the Missionary Bishopric of the Cruel Islands, he dwelt with affectionate eloquence on the long and valuable services rendered to him as a lay-helper in parish work by Captain Lambswol. He knew, he said, for a certainty, that the Captain habitually gave away at least half of his income in charity, and that nearly every moment he could spare from his military duties was devoted to sedulous discharge of his labors as a district visitor. But Lady Sneerwell, Mrs. Candour, Sir Benjamin Backbite, and the rest were not to be convinced against their will, and, as regards that poor dear Captain Lambswol's wickedness, are of the same opinion still.