

to her dressing-room, and pushing open the door without even a knock, exclaimed, in a tone of tragic distress, "Meenie, we are lost."

"Goodness gracious! Jack! what on earth do you mean?"

"Why, who do you suppose is in the next box to the Prince?—the Chinese Ambassador with all his suite! We shall be exposed and ruined before the eyes of all London, and His Royal Highness as well."

Meenie burst away to the stage, with one half of her face as yet unpowdered, and took another peep from behind the curtain at the auditorium. True enough, it was just as Jack had said. There, in a private box, with smiling face and neat pigtail, sat His Excellency the Marquis Tseng in person, surrounded by half-a-dozen unquestionable Mongolians. Her first impulse was to shriek aloud, go into violent hysterics, and conclude with a fainting fit. But on second thoughts she decided to brazen it out. "Leave it to me, Jack," she said, with as much assurance as she could command. "We'll go through the first act as well as we can, and then see what the Ambassador thinks of it."

It was anxious work for Meenie, that evening's performance; but she pulled through with it somehow. She had no eyes for the audience, nor even for His Royal Highness; she played simply and solely to the Ambassador's box. Everybody in the theatre noticed the touching patriotism which made the popular actress pay far more attention to the mere diplomatic representative of her own beloved sovereign than to the heir-apparent of the British throne. "You know, these Chinese," said the Marchioness of Monopoly, "are so tenderly and sentimentally attached to the paternal rule of their amiable Emperors. They still retain that pleasing feudal devotion which has unfortunately died out in Europe through the foolish influence of misguided agrarian agitators." At any rate, Meenie hardly took her eyes off the Ambassador's face. But that impassive oriental sat through the five acts without a sign or a movement. Once he ate an *ice à la Napoléon*, and once he addressed a few remarks to an *attache*; but from beginning to end he watched the performance with a uniformly smiling face, unmoved by tears by the great *bastinado* scene, and utterly impervious even to the touching incidents of the love-making in the third act.

When the curtain fell at last, Meenie was fevered, excited, trembling from head to foot, but not hopeless. Calls of "Mee-Nee-Shang" resounded loudly from the whole house, and even dukes stood up enthusiastically to join in the clamour. When she went forward she noticed an ominous fact. The ambassador was still in his place, beaming as before, but the interpreter had quitted his seat and was moving in the direction of the manager's room.

Meenie curtsied and kow-towed in a sort of haze or swoon and managed to reel off the stage somehow with her burden of bouquets. She rushed eagerly to Jack's room, and as she reached the door she saw that her worst fears were realized. A celestial in pig-tail and tunic was standing at the door, engaged in low conversation with the manager.

Meenie entered with a swimming brain and sank into a chair. The interpreter shut the door softly, poured out a glass of sherry from Jack's decanter on the table, and held it gently to her lips. "Whisht," he said, beneath his breath, in the purest and most idiomatic Hibernian, "make yours! perfectly aisy, me dear, but don't spake too loud, if you please, for fear ye should ruin us both!"

There was something very familiar to Meenie in the voice, which made her start suddenly. She looked up in amazement. "What!" she cried, regardless of his warning, "it isn't you, Pat!"

"Todead an' it is, me darlin'!" Pat answered in a low tone: "but kape it dark, if ye don't want us all to be found out together."

"Not your long-lost brother?" said Jack, in hesitation. "You're not going to perform Box and Cox in private life before my very eyes, are you?"

"The precise thing, me boy," Pat replied, unabashed. "Her brother that was in trouble for the last Fayman business, and run away to Calcutta. There I got a passage to China, and took up at first with the Jesuit missionaries. But marrying a nice little Chinese girl, I thought I might as well turn Mandarin, so I passed their examinations, and was appointed interpreter to the embassy. An' now I'm in London I'm in deadly fear that Mike Flaherty, who's one of the chief detectives at Scotland Yard, will find me out and recognize me, the same as they recognised that poor cricketer fellow at Leicester."

A few minutes sufficed to clear up the business. Pat's features lent themselves as readily as Meenie's to the Chinese disguise; and he had cleverly intimated to the Ambassador that an additional interpreter in the national costume would prove more ornamental and effective than a recognised European like Dr. Macartney. Accordingly, he had assumed the style and title of the Mandarin Hwen Thsang, and had successfully passed himself off in London as a genuine Chinaman. Moreover, being gifted with Meenie's theatrical ability, he had learned to speak a certain broken English without the slightest Irish accent; and it was only in moments of emotion, like the present, that he burst out into his native dialect. He had recognized Meenie on the stage, partly by her voice and manner, but still more by some fragments of Irish nursery rhymes, which they had both learned as children, and which Meenie had boldly in-

terpolated into the text of the *Fantaisies de Canton*. So he had devoted all his energies to keeping up the hoax and deluding the Ambassador.

"And how did you manage to do it?" asked Jack.

"Sure I could him," Pat answered quietly, "that though ye were all Chinamen, ye were acting the play in English to suit your audience. And the old laythorn was perfectly content to believe it."

"But suppose he says anything about it to anybody?"

"Divil a word can he spake to anybody, except through me. Make yourselves aisy about it; the Ambassador thinks it's all as right as tinpence. The thing's a magnificent success. Ye'll jest coin money, and nobody'll ever find ye out. Sure there's nobody in London understands Chinese except us at the embassy, and I'll make it all straight for ye there."

Meenie rushed into his arms, and then into Jack's. "Pat," she said, with emotion, "allow me to present you my future husband."

"It's prond I am to make his acquaintance," Pat answered promptly; "and if he could lend me a tin-pound note for a day or two, it 'ud be a convenience."

Three days later, Meenie became Mrs. Jack Roberts; and it was privately whispered in well-informed circles that the manager of the Chinese play had married the popular actress Mee-Nee-Shang. At least, it was known that a member of the embassy had been present at a private meeting in a Roman Catholic Chapel in Finsbury, where a priest was seen to enter, and Jack and Meenie to emerge shortly afterwards.

Of course the hoax oozed out in time, and all London was in a state of rage and despair. But Jack coolly snapped his fingers at the metropolis, for he had made a small fortune over his season's entertainment, and had accepted an offer to undertake the management of a theatre at Chicago, where he is now doing remarkably well. Of course, too, his hoax was a most wicked and unprincipled adventure, which it has given the present writer deep moral pain to be compelled to chronicle. But then, if people will make such fools of themselves, what is a well-meaning but weak-minded theatrical purveyor to do?

J. ARBUTHNOT WILSON.

WHAT THE ZULUS THINK OF LONDON.

We must dismiss from our minds the idea that the Zulu chiefs now in London are "untutored savages." They seem to laugh and talk or sit silent, are amused or bored, pleased or put out, very much like any one else. The King himself is every inch a King (and there are a good many inches of kingship about him), and he has all the dignity and urbanity that become his position. He is said to be a very good fellow, and he bears the signs of good fellowship on his face. He is as much interested in solid talk as he seems displeased with frivolous chatter. But he is too much preoccupied. It is difficult to find out exactly what he thinks about things. He is wrapped up in a certain reserve, notwithstanding all his *bonté*. The chiefs are more approachable. They talk like intelligent men, and appear to be interested in everything going on around them. They do not dislike the people. They are pleased even with the little crowd that continually hangs about outside their drawing-room window, and when one of them moves, and the little crowd gives a little cheer, he waves his hat in friendly recognition to them. The Zulus are a little overcome by the enormous throngs of human beings in London. "More people in this one place than in all Zululand—men, women, and children—more than in Butaland, too; more than in all South Africa." One would say they would never think of fighting England again. To begin with, they like the English; but then also what is the use of fighting with such numbers? They would feel like the faithful sepoys at Lucknow, who, as he shot down the rebels storming up to the breach, was overheard saying "Fools!" (only his language was of Oriental strength). "If you had ever been at Lang's Hotel, Bond-street, Piccadilly, and seen the people pass by, you would not think you could fight the English." In the same way our visitors have a juster appreciation now of what the odds are: the more so, perhaps, as they are impressed by the mass rather than by the individuals. In the same way they can hardly distinguish the great buildings from the small. The Colonial Office is not a greater marvel than Kensington High-street. The wonder is not so much at the buildings as that all these buildings should be built "just by men." It would be well for the Zulus to have such buildings, but they cannot build them for themselves. "Houses would be very nice in summer during the hot weather, but in the winter they would be too cold. One could not keep warm in them. They would be too open. We could not gather round the fire. The fireplace, yes; but that would not be the same thing. No, they are nice in summer, but not for winter."

They have not been very much about yet. They went to the House of Commons. They did not understand what was said, but they were impressed by the order that prevailed, and by people sitting quiet to listen till their own turn came. The building was very magnificent. Again, they were much impressed by their visit to the docks—such numbers of ships; but they did not understand much. What struck them most was the way the gates were opened and the water let out and the ship went under the bridges.

The Zoological Gardens were a great marvel. They had seen the lions and other great beasts in the veldt, but they had to hurry home before nightfall, lest the beasts should eat them. That men should keep lions and hyenas in houses was such a complete turning of the tables on them that they would not have believed unless they had seen it.

Had they seen any soldiers? Yes, they had seen the guards, very fine troops, and had heard the band play. They thought it was pretty, but they did not understand it. There was not noise enough; but on the other hand, it was extraordinary that so few men should be able to make so much noise. In fact, the most prominent impression on their minds appears to be that of wonder that men should have been able to do all that they saw; that men should have built all these houses, have made all these docks; have shut up the wild beasts in cages; that men should make the trains go so quickly; that so few men should make so much music. Beyond that they are evidently overcome by the magnitude of everything. They are in a state of wonder at the miles of docks, the miles of houses, the millions of people. They do not understand the details, and they know that they do not understand them, but they marvel at the scale of everything. Probably their feelings are not very different from those that would be felt by Alfred and his thanes or Harold and his jarls, if they could revisit thus the glimpses of their once familiar land, and see the London of to-day. The Zulu view of London must be not unlike that of the Italian peasant in Virgil's *Eclogue*, who had been to Rome expecting to find it merely a larger version of the country town to which he was wont to drive his lambs to market, just as he knew that dogs were merely larger puppies and kids their duns; but when he got there he found that there was a difference in kind, and the city was as superior to all other towns as the cypress to the limbo-oser. Just such, we can imagine, is the difference between the Zulu kraal and the London house; and as great the difference between London and Cape Town. They are overwhelmed with wonder and they are delighted with their new impressions. But in spite of all the novelty and magnificence, in spite of the dread of the rough sea, which they evidently look forward to with civilized horror, their eyes brighten, and they lift up their hands and speak like an Attorney-General at the end of session and sittings when asked if they would like to go home again. Yes, indeed!—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

EMERSON HISSED BY HARVARD BOYS.

In all Emerson's experience as a lecturer there was only one occasion when he received that tribute to a radical orator's timely eloquence which is expressed in hisses. The passage of the Fugitive Slave Law stirred him into unwonted moral passion and righteous wrath. He accepted an invitation to deliver a lecture in Cambridgeport, called for the purpose of protesting against that infamous anomaly in jurisprudence and insult to justice which had the impudence to call itself a law. Those who sympathized with him were there in force; but a score or two of foolish Harvard students came down from the college to the hall where the lecture was delivered, determined to assert "the rights of the South," and to preserve the threatened Union of the States. They were the rowdiest, noisiest, most brainless set of young gentlemen that ever pretended to be engaged in studying "the humanities" at the chief university of the country. Their only arguments were hisses and groans whenever the most illustrious of American men of letters uttered an opinion which expressed the general opinion of the civilized world. If he quoted Coke, Holt, Blackstone, Mansfield, they hissed all these sages of the law because their judgments came from the illegal lips of Emerson. It was curious to watch him as, at each point he made, he paused to let the storm of hisses subside. The noise was something he had never heard before; there was a queer, quizzical squirrel-like or bird-like expression in his eye as he calmly looked round to see what strange human animals were present to make such sounds; and when he proceeded to utter another indisputable truth, and it was responded to by another chorus of hisses, he seemed absolutely to enjoy the new sensation he experienced, and waited for these signs of disapprobation to stop altogether before he resumed his discourse. The experience was novel; still there was not the slightest tremor in his voice, not even a trace of the passionate resentment which a speaker under such circumstances and impediments usually feels, and which urges him into the cheap retort about serpents, but a quiet waiting for the time when he should be allowed to go on with the next sentence. During the whole evening he never uttered a word which was not written down in the manuscript from which he read. Many of us at the time urged Emerson to publish the lecture; ten or fifteen years after, when he was selecting material for a new volume of essays, I entreated him to include in it the old lecture at Cambridgeport; but he, after deliberation, refused, feeling probably that being written under the impulse of the passion of the day, it was no fit and fair summary of the character of the statesmen he assailed. Of one passage in the lecture I preserve a vivid remembrance. After affirming that the eternal law of righteousness, which rules all created things, nullified the enactment of Congress, and after citing the opinions of

several magnates of jurisprudence, that immoral laws are void and of no effect, he slowly added, in a scorching and biting irony of tone which no words can describe "but still a little Episcopalian clergyman assured me yesterday that the Fugitive Slave Law must be obeyed and enforced." After the lapse of thirty years, the immense humor of bringing all the forces of nature, all the principles of religion, and all the decisions of jurists to bear with their Atlas weight on the shoulders of one poor little conceited clergyman to crush him to atoms, and he in his innocence not conscious of it, makes me laugh now as all the audience laughed then, the belligerent Harvard students included—E. P. WHIPPLE, in *Harper's*.

ECHOES FROM LONDON.

London, September 9.

It is stated that the Treasury have decided to secure the "H. B." caricatures for the British Museum for the sum of £1,000.

It is stated that Lady Molesworth has determined that all the public-houses on her property shall be closed on Sundays.

The cost of erecting the Novelty Theatre and making it thoroughly ready inside and outside for the first night is said to be £15,000.

On his way to England Cetewayo's luggage was labelled "ex-King Cetewayo," the returning luggage was labelled "King Cetewayo." Facts were dealt with with as little polish as Cetewayo himself may be supposed to possess.

MR. BOUCICAULT is kind enough to predict that Egypt will be England's tomb. He supports his dramatic notion from the historic evidence that other great ones found a tomb for their greatness in that land. What does Mr. Boucicault wish?

A WILD story is told of an engagement of the Great Sarah for South America. The wildness is that she is to have £5,000 a month and her expenses paid, which will come to £1,500 a month more. Does all the money now go into the pockets of artists?

THE *Times* has been guilty of a joke. Its Dublin correspondent, referring to the lock-out of the Dublin police, declares that "no more striking proof of the strange times in which we live could be given than the fact that for the first time in its history Dublin is without a police force." After that the *Times* may be expected to become humorous.

THE registration of limited liability companies last year enriched the Exchequer to the extent of £32,055. It is fortunate that the general public are able in a way to get something out of the company promoters, though it is scarcely consoling to a deluded shareholder mourning the collapse of his investment that the bubble which bequiled him added something to the national revenue.

A CORRESPONDENT has discovered that Mr. Gladstone, in carrying war into Egypt, is simply engaged in fulfilling the prophecies. "The Lord shall smite Egypt: he shall smite it and heal it." (See Isaiah x. x.) Verse 23 says that "In that day there shall be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria." Perhaps Sir Edward Watkin or some other railway magnate will project a new line of railway.

It is amusing to read what correspondents, who are not allowed to telegraph the story of what the army is doing in Egypt, manage to discover in the heavens. One of them paid one shilling and ninepence a word in order to let us know that he saw two white doves during a battle. Another describes how the British army was terribly alarmed by a noise which seemed to betoken the advance of the enemy, and was reassured only when the discovery had been made that it was only a flight of sea-gulls. The next telegrams, unless there is an advance, will relate that the Commander-in-Chief, dozing after tidin, awoke, believing himself to be in the presence of Arabi, and at whom, with great gallantry, he made a desperate stroke with his sword, to find afterwards that he had killed a mosquito.

FURTHER progress of the electric light is reported. It has extended beyond the limits of the Metropolis, and two of the suburbs are to be lit with it. More than that, one great trader is going to put it to a double purpose. The dyes are clear that by its light delicate hues can be matched as accurately as in the day time, and they have discovered that the electric current itself is of considerable use in the manufacture of dyes. Thus the machines can do duty day and night. This new use of electricity, whereby the same wire may give light and give color, opens up a fresh field for new inventions and extended use. Perhaps at a dinner party a humorist might be stimulated or a wit suppressed by the very current which threw light on the dinner table, the host using his discretion and not informing his guests. At a theatre supers might be made lively and a fatigued actor supported. Nothing, however, should be done to shock the audience.