

Like angels' visits, or plums in a poor's-house contract pudding, however, such exceptions are few and far between, and are generally elbowed into the mud by the votaries of that potent idol, the all-absorbing NUMBER ONE!

But I must turn over a new leaf in my log! The sweltering temperature of a Canadian July is ill-adapted for the discussion of such fever-engendering topics. I do this the more readily because a purser is *ex officio* a non-politician! Like his vice-regal betters, he is bound to preserve a "dignified neutrality," and smile equally upon Conservative and Clear Grit, provided always, that the dollars are forthcoming!

About a fortnight ago, my attention was arrested by the appearance of one of our deck passengers, who was making an aquatic pilgrimage from Hamilton to Montreal. There was something in the cut of the gent's garments, and the Silvester Daggerwood disposition of his "unlovely love locks" (as the old king-killers of Cromwell's time would say), which convinced me that he had "faced the music" in his day and generation. This impression was strengthened by the manner in which he received my demand for the honorarium exigible for the conveyance of his person. Opening his purse, he drew forth the requisite number of bills, exclaiming, with a ten-horse sigh, as he placed them in my hands, "Farewell! a long farewell! Ye come like shadows, and ye so depart!"

Being myself a waif and stray of society, I have always cherished a kindly feeling towards that hair-brained tribe who are "vagabonds by Act of Parliament!" Consequently, having cortiorated myself that my customer was a son of Thespis, I requested him to keep his money in his purse, and to visit my pursorial domain when the hurry of business was over. The invitation was accepted with a profusion of thanks, and after the —— had cleared out from Browne's wharf, Mr Alonzo Fitz Mortimer, for so did my guest designate himself, made his "first appearance" in the "Purser's Cabin."

The heart of Alonzo being warmed by a cigar, and some kindred accessories which it is not essential to specify, he, like the jealous Moor of Venice, recounted "all his story's history." That story I do not intend inflicting upon my readers. It was the "thrice told tale" of life's gay morn dissipated in dreamy idleness, followed by the scorching meridian of disappointment, and the cold, grey afternoon of poverty and carking care!

Having waxed stale as a third-rate provincial actor in the mother country, Fitz Mortimer had found his way to New York, and meeting there no encouragement, was now proceeding to Montreal, in the hope of securing an engagement from the manager of a troupe performing in that city.

During the voyage my new acquaintance recounted to me sundry of his "experiences," a few of which I have jotted down for the entertainment of the perusers of these pages.

In order to avoid the irksomeness and confusion of *inverted commas*, the reader will be so good as imagine that instead of Deuis Lynch Stobo, it is Alonzo Fitz Mortimer who is now holding forth.

REMINISCENCES OF A POOR PLATER.

James Sheridan Knowles! How my heart warms at the name of that single-minded and enthusiastic son of genius! For more than two years I was a member of his elocution class in Glasgow, and I look backward to the days which I spent under his tuition as amongst the brightest and most genial of my life.

To become a pupil of Knowles was to become, in a great measure, his adopted child. He loved his "boys" with an affection greatly analogous to that of a father, nor was the kindness ever thrown away. We never looked upon him in the light of a task-exacting pedagogue. There was not one of us that would not have gone through fire and water for "Old Knowles" or "Paddy Knowles," as in kindly familiarity we called him, almost to his face! The severest chastisement which he could inflict upon offenders was to debar them from the school-room for a certain number of days. In other seminaries holidays are the reward of merit and diligence, with us they were regarded as penitential penalties!

Though in the receipt of a considerable income from class fees, Knowles, in process of time, degenerated into poverty. This untoward state of things was not attributable either to extravagance or dissipation. In the words of a kindred spirit—

"Even his failings leaned to virtue's side."

Never could he hear unmoved the tale of sorrow, or the supplication of penury. His last shilling was always at the service of the man who could make out a plausible case of hardship or want.

Unfortunately the designing and fraudulent took advantage of this generally known temper-