

GRIP.

EDITED BY MR. BARNABY RUDGE.

The grubest Beast is the Ass; the grubest Bird is the Owl;
The grubest Fish is the Oyster; the grubest Man is the Fool.

TORONTO, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1874.

The Blinker's Papers.

HIS FIRST DINNER PARTY.

ALGERNON BABINGTON BLINKERS had reached the age of 27, when his first and greatest misfortune befel him.

His maternal aunt, *nee* STUCCO, left him a fortune, and his cousin, on his father's side, Sir HERCULES HALIBUT, who up to the date of this too true history had resolutely ignored the existence of Mr. A. B. BLINKERS, Messrs. QUILL, DRIVER & Co.'s clerk, with the Christian grace characteristic of his high estate, hold out the right hand of fellowship to ALGERNON BABINGTON BLINKERS, Esquire, landed proprietor, promising him at the same time the *entree* to polite society.

Thus it came about that in fulfilment of this promise a document arrived by post one fine day which disturbed the peace of BLINKERS for a week that seemed an eternity. It was merely an invitation to a Christmas dinner party at Mrs. FOLLER ST. URBAIN's, of Fern Lodge, Poppleton, a snug little villa in the heart of Muttonshire; but to BLINKERS, who had never yet been "out," the "invite" came like the shock of an electric battery, or the unexpected advent of one's mother-in-law. There were various cogent reasons why ALGERNON felt that, however much he might prefer to decline the invitation, he had no alternative but to accept, and that day's post accordingly apprised Mrs. ST. URBAIN with the usual social verbiage, that Mr. BLINKERS had "much pleasure in accepting Mrs. ST. U's kind invitation," etc., etc. Alas! poor ALGERNON, had'st thou but known the dire denouement that Fate had in store for thee, sooner would'st thou have elected to be sunk "full forty fathoms deep" in mid-Atlantic.

Now, although ALGERNON had accepted, it was by no means certain that he would go, and, after a week of irresolution, Christmas Day, and four o'clock in the afternoon at that, dawned upon a still undecided BLINKERS. At 4.15 it permeated his inner consciousness that the last train for Poppleton left at 4.30. At 4.16 he proceeded in search of his carpet-bag and at 4.17 $\frac{1}{2}$ precisely, ALGERNON BABINGTON BLINKERS had decided the knotty question "To be or not to be" in the affirmative. Evolving his carpet-bag, therefore, from some domestic abyss, ALGERNON went through the form of packing. His brushes and pomatum, his boots and neck-tie, were thrown promiscuously together, and hastily donning his regulation swallow-tail and black unmentionables, he hailed a passing cab which landed him at the Central Depot as the hands of the clock indicated 4.28.

Now it had been raining for the day or two preceding, and the streets were, to say the least of it, muddy, nor was it until ALGERNON was fairly seated in the railway carriage, and was being whirled away at some thirty-five miles an hour towards his home, that he discovered the havoc a passing wheel had made of his shirt front. One big splash of mud where the middle stud should have sparkled, two larger ones tucked nicely under his chin; in fact, what twenty minutes before would have excited the envy of a Chinese laundryman was now as dissipated looking a shirt as ever graced the bosom of a Yankee politician.

All this ruin and disaster was born of a futile gallantry on the part of BLINKERS towards a young lady with a scarlet feather, whose unsuccessful attempts to thread a maze of vehicles at the depot had excited the compassion and elicited the assistance of the chivalric ALGERNON; to say nothing of her boots; for ALGERNON B. had an eye for beauty, and she was indeed excruciatingly *beau chaussee*.

Thoughts of what he should do in such a predicament contended for mastery in the mind of BLINKERS, with visions of that scarlet feather and those number two's, while dire spectres, as of a bashful man sitting down to his first dinner party in a mud-spangled shirt-bosom, kept BLINKERS reasoning powers in a state of most unenviable chaos.

Turning over the leaves of his time-table in mute despair, a happy thought struck BLINKERS; the Middletown Tunnel, one of the largest on the line, would soon be reached. Eureka! BLINKERS had it! Hastily selecting a spotless shirt from his valise, it took our traveller but a few minutes to insert studs, links and collar-button, and then unbuttoning his vest and unstrapping his suspenders, BLINKERS awaited in calmness the approach of congenial darkness.

With a scream and a rush the train is in the tunnel, and BLINKERS is in his—well—shirt; thirty seconds more, and the light again shines in upon the passengers and discovers a figure mysterious and embarrassed, as of a man with his head in a pillow case—in short shows BLINKERS struggling with his shirt, which, firmly buttoned at the neck,

resists all the efforts of its occupant to induce it to desbend over his shoulders:

With a wrench that sends the obstinate button like a shot through the glass of the opposite window, BLINKERS frees himself, and a face tinted like the autumnal sun beams out upon the fellow-passengers and rests with reproachful gaze upon—the young lady with the scarlet feather, the object of BLINKERS' gallantry at the station and the innocent cause of this dire dilemma.

It was the wrong tunnel!

Time, the great consoler, banished BLINKERS' blushes and brought him in due course to his journey's end where a mysterious Providence permitted him this time to finish his toilet. This completed, beset with doubts as to his neck-tie and hedged in with difficulties as to the whereabouts of his pocket handkerchief, ALGERNON presented himself in the drawing-room, where, safely moored to a chair, he felt as though he could defy fate.

Even as he enters dinner is announced, and our friend finds himself paired off with a damsel whose name he had not caught and whose face he dare not glance at, and he is in an agony of doubt, moreover, as to how he shall break the conversational ice.

Seated at the table the sherry somewhat reassures the timid ALGERNON and turning to his neighbour finds:—"By Heavens! it is indeed his travelling acquaintance! She of the No. 2 gaiters.

After this BLINKERS lapses into imbecility.

He felt the eye of the majestic personage in black who stood behind his chair fixed upon him with an ill-concealed scorn, and fishing for his napkin with his boots did woeful damage among adjacent corns.

He used his knife for the salmon, and being detected by the man in black, wiped it on the table-cloth, whereupon that stern and uncompromising man immediately changed it for a clean one.

He was in doubt as to whether to thank the waiter, when that functionary offered him another dish, and so, going to the other extreme, he assumed a most bloodthirsty and ferocious demeanour as he partook of everything that was handed to him, till his stomach rose in indignation at the indigestion he was putting upon it.

And last of all came the finger-glasses, of the contents of which poor BLINKERS in blissful ignorance imbibed, under the watchful eye of his foe, the waiter.

Then, indeed, BLINKERS felt the truth of the poet's words, "That it would have been money in his (BLINKERS) pocket had he never been born," nor were his feelings relieved till he had quaffed mighty potations of his host's "Peiper Heideek."

Years have passed over BLINKERS' head since his first dinner party, and he is not as sensitive as he was; but, hardened man of the world as he now is, the sight of a shirt that buttons at the back sends a colder thrill down BLINKERS' vertebrae than the CAUDLE-lectures which he nightly receives from his quondam fellow-traveller, once of the scarlet feather, but now by the grace of Canterbury and a special license, Mrs. ALGERNON BABINGTON BLINKERS.

Croaks and Pecks.

ADVOCATES of woman's rights may now rejoice. WIDDEFIELD has been nominated as the Reform candidate for the Provincial Legislature in North York.

A DISCUSSION has arisen as to whether the name of the Indian fiend is "Nana Sahib" or "Nena Sahib." This was answered by the prisoner himself, who when asked if he was the man he was taken for, replied, with a powerful Scotch accent: "Na, na, Sahib." He is, however, doubtful authority upon both the main and the indirect question.

VALENTINE, the Sculptor, has been ordered to make a bust of Washington. If he succeeds he will accomplish what the British failed to do in the Revolutionary War.

A POLICE Magistrate is needed among those (Bowman)villians.

THE Carlists are really acting rusty in Spain, having invested Iran.

A MARINE insurance agent sends us the following conundrum: "What harbor should high class vessels prefer? Answer: Darling-ton." GRIP fancies swells would there abound.

WE are informed that on the event of Mr. LAIRD declining the nomination to the parliamentary seat of Birkenhead, vacant by the death of his father, the Conservatives will probably support a Mr. STATT, the Liberal candidate. STATT is sure to stand; or there's nothing in a name.

THE Kingston News objects to WILLIAM ROBINSON, M. P. P., as a representative on the ground that he is uneducated. We fear if the test of education were applied there would be comparatively few unobjectionable members either in the Legislature or the House of Commons.