

startled public opinion into unquestioning approbation. The result, however, has fully justified Mr. Cardwell's action, and General Sir Garnet Wolseley—soon to be, it is expected, Lord Wolseley of Coomassie—is the hero whose name is in every man's mouth.

HOW MR. PENLAKE EXERCISED A PROCTOR.

In the year of grace 18—, it pleased the ancient house of Congregation of the University of Oxford to enact in dog-Latin—which out of mercy to the scholastic instincts of our readers we forbear to quote—that, whereas candidates for "responsions" (vulgarily called "smalls," or the "little-go" examination) hitherto had paid a fee of one pound for the privilege of running their chance of being plucked, in future the University would charge one guinea to each undergraduate who should offer himself to "respond"—whatever "responding" may mean.

Shortly after the promulgation of this solemn decree, which, by the way, occupied half a column of the *Times*, a notice was issued to the effect that the Junior Proctor would attend in the hall of — College, between the hours of one and two on the following Friday, in order to receive the names of candidates for responsions, who were required to adduce certain papers as evidences of their identity, sanity, and membership of the University.

Obediently to this summons, some three hundred youths, attired in academicals, congregated in and about the hall aforesaid, wherein on the dais was seated the Junior Proctor, engaged in the thankless task of latinizing the homely *prænomina* of Joneses, Smiths, and Robinsons.

"Your name, sir, and college, sir?" snapped the officer at a tall stripling.

"Herbert Maurice Smith of Wadham," was the intelligible reply. Whereupon down went the young man's name as Herbertus Mauritius Smith à Collegio Wadhamsiensis. "Smith," you will remark, being incapable of latinization, was permitted to remain in all its native cacophony.

"A guinea, sir," observed the Proctor perfunctorily; and Mr. Smith, having come provided with a sovereign and a shilling, popped it down smilingly, and departed, devoutly hoping that the examiners would overlook his very Oxonian Euclid, and exceedingly gentlemanly arithmetic—his exercises in the latter science having hitherto been almost wholly confined to the study of "odds," and the mysteries of book-keeping in general.

To him succeeded a young gentleman, whose sporting costume contrasted most strangely with that curtailed caricature of the old Benedictine habit partially covering his shoulders. He announced himself briefly as Mr. Richard Penlake of Brazenose College; which respectable patronymic, after being duly amplified to suit the mediæval proclivities of the University, was written down carefully by the Proctor. Looking over the dignitary's shoulders to see that there was no mistake about it, and being satisfied with the accuracy of the entry, Mr. Penlake proceeded to pull carelessly a sovereign out of his trousers-pocket. Then he flung it magnificently on the table with the air of a man paying away money which was not of the slightest consequence.

"A guinea, if you please," remarked the Proctor, looking rather foolish at the sovereign, and perhaps a trifle angry with Mr. Penlake.

"The fee's a pound," replied that gentleman coolly. "The fee, sir," retorted the Proctor deliberately, "is a guinea."

"But," urged Mr. Penlake, appealing to his brother students, who were crowding round the table, "I've always been used to pay a pound."

At this sally there arose a complete roar of laughter. Mr. Penlake was well known as a gentleman who had made very heavy efforts to "respond" satisfactorily, but hitherto without success. In fact, he had already paid many pounds to an unkind University, which does not return fees to those whom the examiners in their discretion think fit to reject.

"Silence!" cried the Proctor, rising angrily from his seat. Then turning to Mr. Penlake, "A shilling if you please, or I shall erase your name from the list."

Mr. P. fumbled first in one pocket, then in the other; but, although he found several pipes handy, he did not seem to be possessed of either silver, gold, or notes. In his perplexity he faced right about, addressing himself incontinently to every one:

"Look here. This is my last chance for smalls. I wish one of you fellows would lend me a shilling."

In a trice a dozen hands proffered the needful coin. Whereupon Mr. Penlake, ejaculating "Thanks!" clutched at the nearest, and then with great gravity deposited it by the side of the sovereign on the table.

"Next time, sir," observed the Proctor sarcastically, "you will remember—a guinea."

"Next time, sir," rejoined Mr. Penlake, "I propose to give the University of Cambridge a turn."

Whereat the audience grinned—the general impression being that, unlike "Adolphus Smalls" of the famous ballad, he would be plucked again, even though he might "put on coaches three," and "read all night with towelled head." Mr. Penlake himself thought otherwise, and as he strolled back to his college, he registered a solemn vow that when he had secured his testamur, or certificate of having passed, he would take his revenge on that sharp-tongued Junior Proctor who had raised the laugh against him, not altogether unsuccessfully.

For Mr. Penlake, though exceedingly idle, and in debt, and impecunious, we must not regard as a dunce. The great Sir Robert Peel, the present Lord Chancellor, and a host of other celebrities have been ploughed for this same examination, and yet subsequently have attained to the most exalted academical distinction. A "pluck" often operates favourably in taking the conceit out of young persons, who at school have been so worshipped as paragons that they have already begun to defy their own very ordinary brains. Nor is a "pluck" in any case to be regarded as a disgrace. It remains on record that three undergraduates of one of our best colleges, all three being men of the highest social position, achieved no less than twenty-seven plucks between them. Each of these gentlemen is now a benefited clergyman, highly respected, and occupying a sphere of wide usefulness. In short, their early failures have not one whit impaired their subsequent well-

merited success in life. No doubt they often laugh over their hard-fought battles with the examiners. *Forsan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit.*

To return to Mr. Penlake. This little brush with proctorial authority put him on his mettle. Of course the story of how he had *always* been used to pay one pound spread like wildfire over the University, where men will subsidize you for any *bon mot*, which will serve to fire-off at a wine or a breakfast, provided that it be quite fresh, and safe to raise a laugh. In the merriment occasioned by his words no one joined more heartily than their author; but perhaps he felt all the more acutely that he would be singularly stultified if he missed his mark in the Schools. Hence he set to work with a will; to him Sunday was as a working day, night as morning. He cut all parties, eschewed liquors, from champagne down to small beer, and the outcome of such energy was, that he got his previous reading into ship-shape; and when once in the cockpit, and face to face with the string of ugly questions, so effectually flooded the papers, that he was left off with a minimum of *viâ-voce*, and departed from the Schools bespattered with the cold compliments of his ancient persecutors, who congratulated him both on the quantity and quality of his work most condescendingly.

"Now," said Mr. Penlake, as he accepted his testamur from Purdue, bearing the autographs of two individuals whom he had caused enough to abhor—"now, to serve out my friend the Junior Proctor."

About the date of this veracious history a certain M. Lecocq had just retired from the honourable office of cook of Boniface College. Whether he and the then Master agreed to differ, this deponent sayeth not; suffice it, that Mr. Lecocq transferred his artistic ability from Boniface kitchen to a restaurant in the High-street, which straightway became the place for the juvenile gourmets to eat, and learn what art can effect Mr. Lecocq found his enterprise rather more arduous than he had anticipated. The Vice-Chancellor of the period was a very stately courteous gentleman; but not at all disposed to relax academical discipline. He it was who, when Mr. Thackeray requested permission to deliver his lectures on "The Four Georges" within the precincts of the University, asked the great satirist, innocently enough, who he was, and what work he had written.

"I am the author of *Vanity Fair*," replied Thackeray. "*Vanity Fair*!" exclaimed the Vice-Chancellor; "a dissenting publication I presume."

The good man, not being a novel-reader, imagined that the grandest work of that period was a tract. However, if severe upon the guild of letters, the great don could also wield the rod of office against another branch of art with rigour. Gastronomy to him was as sinful as fiction. Hence, shortly after the institution of the Restaurant Lecocq, he was down upon its talented proprietor.

"I understand," said he, "that you have infringed the statute which provides that no person shall sell to any member of this University, being *in statu pupillari*, cooked meats."

"You would not have me serve *ze* gentlemen *vid raw*?" urged the monsieur, by way of defence.

Whereupon the Vice-Chancellor responded by inflicting a fine, called in University parlance "a scone," and M. Lecocq departed, as one may imagine, tolerably disgusted with this specimen of official tyranny.

Now it happened on the return of M. Lecocq from his interview with the Vice-Chancellor that he encountered Mr. Penlake, whose features were exuberant with joviality, waving in triumph his testamur.

"Look here, Lecocq," he cried; "look at these autographs—very rare. Talk about the autographs of Shakespeare, Milton, Guy Fawkes, Oliver Cromwell, and all those kind of people—they're nothing to these, simply nothing. Lecocq, I must dine—sumptuously, mind you—all the delicacies of the season—expense no object—seven o'clock—you understand."

Then, without waiting for the worthy Frenchman's reply, Mr. Penlake darted away, and was soon buried in the recesses of a hair-dresser's establishment, from whence he emerged, after a time, carrying a largish brown-paper parcel.

Next he wended his way towards the establishment of a well-known tailor, where he exchanged his commoner's for a scholar's gown, to the utter amazement of the honest tradesman, who, to use his own phraseology, "Allers guv Muster Penlake credit for being a gennelum, but not for being a schollard." The credit part of the business was, we fear, only too true, inasmuch as our hero occupied two pages and a half of a large ledger, the total being in three figures. A warm bath, a glass of bitters, a shampoo, and a game of billiards made up the time to seven o'clock, when Mr. Penlake duly presented himself at the door of M. Lecocq's establishment in the classic High-street.

"Dinner, sir?" said the waiter. "Yessir. Fust pair, left." Upstairs lumbered Mr. Penlake, very hungry indeed, and most anxious to do full justice to the best dinner in Oxford. He thought he heard a titter on the stairs, but it didn't disturb him. The room looked bright and cheerful, and his feelings were those of a man at peace with all the world except the Junior Proctor.

"What will you drink, sir?" asked the waiter, returning with something approaching a grin on his features.

"Sham, Charles, sham—dry—that'll do to begin with. And, I say, Charles, look sharp."

Again a titter. However, Charles rapidly reappeared with the seductive fluid, the cork of which he drew deliberately. Then he remarked with an effort at *sang froid*:

"M. Lecocq, sir, sorry, sir; no soup, sir. Will you have up the salmon, sir?"

An expletive was on the tip of Mr. Penlake's tongue, but he suppressed it, intimating that he didn't care what they brought him so long as they did not keep him waiting.

Clank, clank of the plates, and, presto! the salmon was on the table, and Charles out of the room, laughing as he went rather explosively.

"What the doose!" ejaculated Mr. Penlake, as he endeavoured to help himself with the fish-slice, which somehow would not penetrate. "What the doose! Why I'm dashed if it isn't raw!"

With a bound he rushed to the bell-ropes and pulled till it yielded with a crack. He was about to inflict summary chastisement on the luckless Charles, whose voice was heard outside the door, convulsed with merriment, when, with a serious countenance, entered no less a personage than M. Lecocq.

"*Plait-il, Monsieur?*" imperturbably.

"Look here—I say—this is some confounded practical joke of Charles's."

"Not so, sars I've been, as you say, sconzed by your

Vise-Chancellor. He say that I must not geef *ze* gentlemen *cooked* meads. Zo I obey *ze* statudes, and I geef them *raw*!" Zo!

"But I can't make myself into a cannibal or a German," exclaimed Mr. Penlake; "and I'm doosed hungry, upon my honour I am, Lecocq."

"You must obey *ze* statudes of *ze* Univralsité."

"Hang the statudes! I suppose my good friend, the Junior Proctor, has hauled you up before the Vice, eh?"

"Yace," answered Lecocq. "It vos 'im."

Whereupon Mr. Penlake took monsieur by the button-hole, and commenced confidences which caused much laughter to both speaker and listener. In fact he was revealing his project of playing a practical joke on this very Proctor whose officiousness had caused M. Lecocq to be mulcted.

"Goot, goot, vare goot!" shouted the Frenchman. "Yace, yace, you shall 'ave some cooked meads for dinner—in faive minits, Meester Penlake. Bud you must pay *ze* scone if you are caught in the act of eating *ze* mead which is not raw."

"That's a bargain," was the ready reply.

Accordingly, within the stated five minutes, Charles, with the humblest apologies, was engaged in serving Mr. Penlake with a delicious menu. The soup was discovered, salmon appeared done to a turn, *entrées* succeeded, and, in one word, repelition was attained within five-and-forty minutes after feeding commenced.

To champagne succeeded claret, curaçao, coffee, cigars. By the time that Great Tom of Christ Church was booming away his hundred-and-one discords, to announce that it was past nine o'clock, and the number of students on Wolsey's Foundation had not yet been altered by the authority of Parliament, Mr. Penlake was pleasant, jovial, perhaps larky, but certainly not inebriate. A soda-and-brandy caused him to rise just one degree further in the direction of liveliness, after which he declared himself as "altogether fit," and accordingly proceeded to prepare for action.

First, he took his innocent trencher-cap, and smashed it to a jelly.

Secondly, he slewed his tie round to the back of his ear.

Thirdly, he extracted from the before-mentioned brown-paper parcel a beard and moustache of copious dimensions, with which appendages he invested his own smooth downless countenance. Then he superimposed the battered cap, doffed the scholar's gown, and lighted a fresh cigar, carefully scenting himself by sprinkling brandy over his beard, linen, and clothes.

Having surveyed his appearance in the looking-glass, and being satisfied that he simulated intoxication successfully, he rang the bell and dispatched a messenger to inform him when the Junior Proctor was going his rounds.

We may inform the non-academical reader that Proctors are irresponsible magistrates, who, in our two University towns, can enter houses forcibly, dispense with *habeas corpus*, and commit people to prison without the formula of a trial. These privileges they exercise most freely after dark. Hence their habit of perambulating the town by gaslight, attended by a *posse comitatus* termed appropriately "bulldogs."

After waiting nearly an hour, Mr. Penlake's outpost advised him that the Proctor was sheering down the street, having just benevolently stepped into the Mitre to stop a quiet supper party.

On receipt of this intelligence, our hero staggered forth into the street and, affectionately embracing the nearest lamp-post, vociferated a popular melody, in order to secure attention.

Authority, thus challenged, hove down promptly upon him. Nothing daunted, Mr. Penlake continued his ditty in thorough maudlin fashion, stopping only to whiff his cigar, which, as all the world knows, is a luxury regarded by the University as somewhat more immoral than any of the mentioned sins in the Decalogue.

"Your name and college, sir?" asked the Proctor sternly.

Mr. Penlake muttered thickly and inaudibly, blowing the smoke in the inquirer's face.

"Your name, sir; and college, sir?"

"Ben'l—Wooshter," was the reply.

"Bennel of Worcester, do you say?"

"Schpel it with a P., old boy," answered the hardened Mr. Penlake.

"Bennel. Then, Mr. Bennel, what business have you to be in this disgusting state of intoxication? Go home to your college, sir, and call upon me at ten o'clock to-morrow morning."

"I think, sir," murmured the Marshal, as the chief bulldog is termed, "that the gentleman is—hum—ha—is unable to take care of himself."

This indeed seemed likely, as Mr. Penlake continued to cling incontinently to the lamp-post, as if he needed its support.

"We had better take him to Worcester," answered the Proctor, by no means in a tone as if he relished the march of a good half mile with an inebriate man. Accordingly, two of the bulldogs, advancing, seized Mr. Penlake's arms, and offered their assistance.

But Mr. Penlake was not going to be removed quietly. He struggled and lurched and tumbled into the gutter, until he had fairly got the Proctor into a towering passion.

"Carry him!" he shouted indignantly. And thus it came to pass that a procession was formed, and the word to march having been given, they bore the recumbent Mr. Penlake to Worcester and deposited him comfortably at the college gate. But the porter, on being summoned, disavowed all knowledge of Mr. Penlake. Nor was there, as it appeared, any undergraduate of the name of Bennel or Pennel on the college books.

"What is your college?" shouted the Proctor.

"Maudlin," grunted Mr. Penlake stupidly.

"Then why did you say Worcester?"

"I—I didn't shay Wooshter; I shed M-Maudlin."

There was nothing for it but to resume their march. To the reader unacquainted with the geography of Oxford, we may state that Worcester College is distant from Magdalen (or Maudlin) College about a mile and a quarter.

"Dear, dear," yawned the unlucky Proctor, "I'm tired to death as it is, and, besides, it's getting late. This is very, very unpleasant."

Tramp, tramp down Beaumont street, Broad street, Holywell, Long Wall. At length they arrived at Magdalen College, the bulldogs almost ready to drop from carrying some thirteen stone of inert humanity.

On summoning the janitor of Waynflete's Foundation, Mr. Bennel, or Pennel, was indignantly repudiated. What was to be done? The man seemed too idiotically intoxicated to be