

Come in fast and come in faster, quite as good as those of yore,—
 “Flattering tales of (Stan) Hope!” cried the bird, whose dismal dirges bore,
 One dark burden—“Nevermore!”

“Hang it, Raven, this is riling!” cried I. “Stop your rude reviling!
 Then I wheeled my office chair in front of bird and bust and door;
 And upon its cushion sinking, “I,” I said, “will smash like winking
 This impeachment you are bringing, O you ominous bird of yore,
 O you grim, ungainly, ghastly, grumbling, gruesome feathered bore!”
 Croaked the Raven, “You’ll floor.”

Then methought the bird looked denser, and his cheek became immenser,
 And he twaddled of VOX MOLTKE, and his German Army Corps;
 “Flattering the taxpayers’ vanity,” and such similar insanity,
 In a style that lacked urbanity, till the thing became a bore.
 “Oh, get out of it!” I cried; “our little Army yet will score.”
 Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore!”

“Prophet!” said I, “of all evil, that we’re ‘going to the devil’
 Has been the old croaker’s gospel for a century, and more.
 Red-gilled Colonels this have chaunted in BRITANNIA’S ears undaunted
 By their ghosts you must be haunted. Take a Blue-pill, I implore!
 When our Army meets the foe it’s bound to lick him as of yore!”
 Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore!”

“Prophet!” said I, “that’s unevil. You may go to—well, the devil!
 That Establishments are ‘short,’ and ‘standards’ lowered o’er and o’er.
 That mere ‘weels,’ with chests of maiden, cannot march with knap-
 sack laden;

That the heat of sultry Aden, or the cold of Labrador,
 Such can’t stand, may be the truth; but keep it dark, bird, I implore!
 Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore!”

“Then excuse me, we’ll be parting, doleful fowl,” I cried, upstarting;
 “Get thee back to—the Red River, or the Nile’s sand-cumbered shore!
 Leave me ‘Magazine’ as token of the twaddle you have spoken.
 What? BRITANNIA stoney-broken? Quit her bust above my door.
 Take thy hook from the War Office; take thy beak from off my door!”
 Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore!”

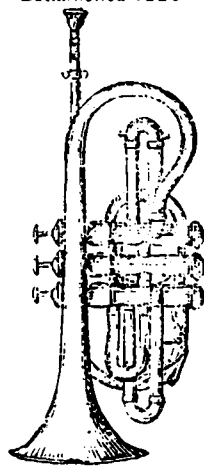
And the Raven still is sitting, croaking statements most unfitting,
 On BRITANNIA’S much peccol bust that’s placed above my Office door,
 And if Pangloss, e’en in seeming, lent an ear to his dark dreaming,
 Useless were official scheming, grants of millions by the score,
 For my soul were like the shadow that he casts up on the floor,
 Dark and dismal evermore!

--From Punch, 31st Oct.

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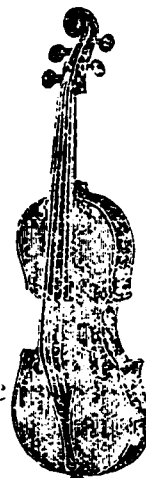
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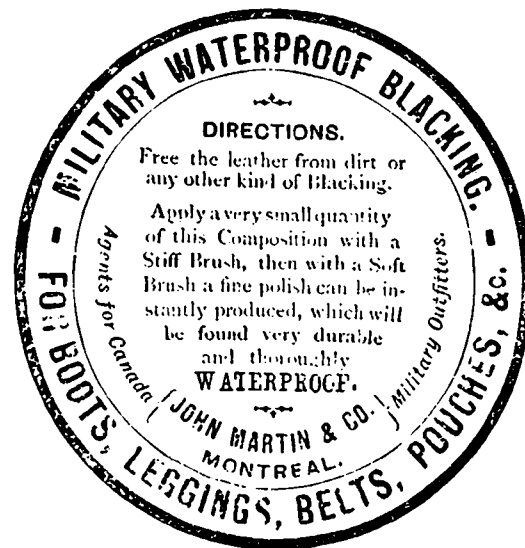
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