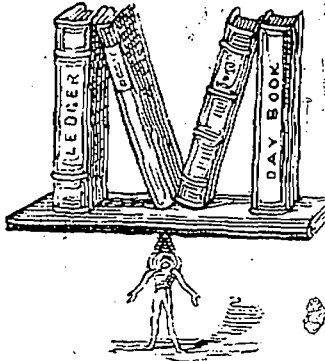


THE PEPPERBURY FAMILY.

OF MR. PETER PEPPERBURY, SENIOR, AND HIS DEALINGS IN GENERAL AND PARTICULAR; OF HIS COACH, COACHMAN, AND HORSES; FAMILY HERALDRY; OF MR. PETER PEPPERBURY, JUNIOR, HIS ENTRANCE INTO THE WORLD OF BUSINESS, AND HIS EXIT THEREFROM.

CHAPTER I.



R. PETER PEPPERBURY'S family history was involved in considerable obscurity. All that was positively known of him was that he came to the place of his present residence when a mere boy; was employed for some years as a clerk, in the firm of "TRICKLERISH & Co." wholesale merchants; gradually worked his way up; saved a little money; in due process of time set up on his own account, and in further process of time married a wife, having previously settled on her a large

sum of money.

Our friend, PETER, was a man of no education himself; he despised it in others; he talked bad English and wrote worse.— Though not celebrated for the accuracy of his figures of speech, he was pretty well versed in the figures of Arithmetic; in his day-book—cash book, and ledger,—and was wonderfully successful in making up a balance sheet for the information, though we are sorry to say not to the satisfaction of his numerous creditors, on numerous occasions. A respect for truth compels us to add that when MR. PETER PEPPERBURY betook himself to the study of Political Economy and became a Free Trader, his statistical calculations and deductions, put forth with no small amount of self-complacent composure, were still less satisfactory than the calculations and results of his balance sheets.

MR. PETER PEPPERBURY was a gentleman of a very speculative turn of mind. He dealt in everything, and dabbled in everything. Flour and Pork, Ashes and Lumber, as articles of exportation, Mining Stock and Bank Stock, he had a slap at each by turns. The warehouse in the dirty lane was a perfect emporium of sundries, the sweepings out of all the warehouses of Glasgow, Manchester, London and Liverpool, periodically consigned to Mr. Peter Pepperbury. The amount of adulterated gallons, questionable broad-cloths, sour wines, mouldy pickles, rusted cutlery, half-baked earthenware, moth-eaten furs, damaged teas, rancid oils, decayed fruits, that MR. PETER PEPPERBURY contrived to disseminate through the country in a year, was perfectly astounding. It was a marvel how one man could pick up such a quantity of rubbish; it was a still greater marvel where the fools came from who purchased such worthless trash. Whether consignments, worthless as they were, proved a profitable speculation to the consignees, is quite another matter. We have strong doubts on the subject, inasmuch as MR. PETER PEPPERBURY was continually in the Gazette. Ill-natured people, and the world is full of them used to accuse MR. PETER PEPPERBURY of "failing" to make money, and, to a certain extent, appearances justified the accusation; the warehouse in the dirty lane was never closed; the "smash" over, and the "certificate" in his pocket, MR. PETER PEPPERBURY was again ready for action. He evidently took care to have a *corps de reserve*, something to fall back upon; though often beaten, he was never utterly vanquished.

MR. PETER PEPPERBURY lived in style. He had a handsome house, fine furniture, and a first-rate cook, for he had a great affection for his inner man. We cannot say so much for the out-of-doors establishment of the "wholesale merchant." MR. PETER PEPPERBURY kept a carriage and a pair of horses, and such a carriage and such a pair of horses were never seen before. The carriage was an ancient coach—an oblong yellow box, big enough to carry eight inside, with dull, black leather sides and top, perfectly unconscious of varnish—it was sombre enough to suit the taste of a

Quaker, and the very sight of it would have set on edge every tooth in Longacre. And it was well matched by the horses; a pair of ewe-necked, thick-legged, hollow-backed brutes, in bad condition, and with staring, ill-groomed coats. If horses were given to fainting, either of MR. PETER PEPPERBURY'S unhappy quadrupeds would have certainly swooned away at the very shaking of oats in a sieve. In order to give them an appearance of spirit, the noses of the miserable beasts were pulled so tightly into their chests by a strong bearing rein, that if they had wished it ever so much, it would have been morally impossible for them to have lifted their legs high enough for a trot. So they shuffled along with the uncouth, lumbering old rattletrap, rolling and swinging behind them, at a pace which suited exactly the tremulous nerves and fine lady affliction of Mrs. PETER PEPPERBURY and her daughter PAMELA.

The coachman and his cattle were capitally matched, and it was perhaps as well for the safety of his life and limbs that it was so. A horse of any spirit would have kicked him to death in disgust at being handled by such an uncouth bog-trotter, as soon as he made his appearance within the stable door. A coachman, that is a coachman, should be a stout, ruddy-cheeked, full-whiskered piece of humanity; smart in his apparel, well fed, and portly in his appearance; he is of the *genus homo*, but of a distinct and peculiar species; MR. PETER PEPPERBURY'S John was of the species bog-trotter; he looked as if he had been suddenly plucked from the wheel-barrow, thrust into a livery, and crammed upon a coach box! And such a livery! A huge coat with many capes of alternate colors, red and green, under which the poor man sweated in the dog days, and shivered in January's frosts. And the coachman invariably invested his nether in a pair of trowsers! Punch can hardly bring himself to write the word, in connection with the subject. His idea of a coachman is something in boots and breeches; white tops and buckskins! He does not recognise anything else; a man may drive horses in trowsers, but a coachman, gosh!! Some one once observed to MR. PETER PEPPERBURY that his was a very ugly livery; upon which PETER replied, that if it was, he could change it! MR. PETER evidently thought that a man might change his family livery as he pleased, just as he did his own boots! On the buttons of the coachman were the Crest and Motto of the PEPPERBURY family. The Crest was a Kite's claw, erect, coupi; the Motto, "*Rapax et tenax.*"—Such being freely rendered in MR. PETER PEPPERBURY'S English, may stand thus; "What I gets, and I ain't particular how I gets it, that I sticks to." How MR. PEPPERBURY ever came by a Crest and Motto, is more than we can account for, and would puzzle the Herald's college most alarmingly. We have gone all through the Peerage, Baronetage, and Commonalty, without discovering the name. Smith is an ancient family; the world owes it something, for the Smiths have certainly more than any other family in the world, obeyed the Divine command to increase and multiply; we can understand the possession of a Crest and Motto, and a Coat of Arms too, when we see it in the hands of Mr. Smith's Britscha, Jones, too, is a time-honored name, particularly in Wales, (there are a hundred or two of Joneses in the Welch Fusiliers, on half-pay and full,) but no one, before PUNCH in his researches into men and things, ever heard of a PEPPERBURY, or saw his Coat of Arms on a carriage or a fish-slice. Who can MR. PETER PEPPERBURY be?

TRUTH IS MIGHTY.

Oh! Hincks, Oh! Hincks, thou perfect Sphinx!
How could-est thou a big-man,
Such courses take, and strive to make
A cats paw of poor Hig-man.

Though not leastly, tell me lastly,
Had it not been better vastly,
More worthy of thy high-lot,
To speak the truth if e'er you can
And own yourself to be the man—
The Cove wo't does the Pilot.

Jurors are not paid, and "come to Court with sugar on their backs to pay expenses (vide Wilson's speech)." Of course this sugar is to sweeten their bitter lot.