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H. B. MAPLETON, M.D.
UNCLE TWEAZY

AND HIS

QUIZZICAL NEIGHBOURS.
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UNCLE TWEAZY

AND HIS

QUIZZICAL NEIGHBOURS:

A COMI-SATIRIC NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY

The Author of the "Observant Pedestrian;" &c. &c. &c.

"Holds to the world a picture of itself,
"And raises sly the fair impartial laugh."

Thomson's Winter.

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UNCLE TWEAZY.

CHAP. I.

The next morning, as soon as we had finished breakfast, my uncle proposed a visit to the Rectory, to take a peep at the paragon Doctor Tonic was so lavish in praise of, and to pass our respective judgment on his perspicuity.

It was a delightful walk to the Rectory, which stood most romantically at the end of a beautiful shrubbery, shaded by the light foliage of a double row of limes; the mansion
was a low white building, luxuriantly encircled by honeysuckles and roses, subjoined to a highly cultivated vine, whose abundant clusters hung in rich purple fringe against the Gothic windows, whose octagon panes gave it the appearance of some venerable structure, while the beautiful surrounding prospect of richly fertilized and diversified wood and water rendered it a little Elysian.

As we approached, we distinctly perceived the sylph-like form of a female figure, who, with a basket of roses in one hand, was reclining on the arm of the venerable pastor, exactly bringing to my remembrance the entree of Sterne and Maria to Moulins.

Dr. Markwell perceiving our approach, politely advanced to open the gate and welcomed us in.

“Miss Fitzclarence,” said he, in-
Introducing the lady, who gracefully curtsied, but the obtruding shade of a straw hat totally precluded my curiosity, and compelled me to pass on the other side and offer my services to carry the basket—but such roses as struck my view out of the basket, might have dazzled the eye of a basilisk; for in the countenance of the lovely object who stood by my side, I beheld not only the beautiful girl described by Dr. Tonic, but the chief-d'ouvre of nature.

My uncle, who had merely stolen a side-long glance, preceded us into the house, whither we immediately followed; but never shall I forget his expressive countenance as Miss Fitzclarence took her seat on an opposite chair, his eyes were rivetted on her features, and he seemed lost in astonishment, till roused by Dr. Markwell's observing
what a charming proficient Miss Fitzclarence was on the harp.

"Rosa, if you please, my dear Sir," replied the blooming angel; "by that familiar title I shall feel myself completely at home."

"Well, then, my charming, my amiable Rosa," continued the Rector (charmed with her affability) "will you treat my friends with the dulcet sonnet you played this morning?"

Rosa caught up her harp, and, like a second Cecilia, all was silent rapture; but, when her heavenly voice subjoined, my uncle melted into tears, exclaiming, "I can't bear it, sweet young lady: in compassion to an old man's feelings, pause one moment."

The beauteous minstrel ceased, and the Rector, unperceived by my uncle, gave her a significant wink not to continue the song; whilst I,
lost in amazement at my uncle's conduct, replaced the harp in silence, and various topics of conversation ensued; yet still his scrutinizing eye was fixed on Rosa till the moment of our departure, when pressing her beautiful hand respectfully to his lip, "young lady," said he, "this is a liberty I have not assumed these thirty years—accept it as the sacred incense due only to yourself."

"Sir, sir," said I. "am I unprivileged to follow your example? surely your gallantry ought not to eclipse mine, and, with Miss Fitzclarence's leave, thus I avail myself."

One fervent kiss I pressed upon that hand, which, in the purest marble, chiselled by a Tumerelli, never in symmetry was equalled; ask not, then, gentle reader, when St. Albans left the Rectory, if he was victor—No! he was the captive of love, in-
dissolubly bound in the chains of Rosa Fitzclarence.

She escorted us to the gate, over which she reclined till we were out of sight; but how many times my head mechanically turned to catch a last glimpse, I won't say.

"Victor!" cried my uncle, "where is your heart? the moment of trial is arrived: be candid, be noble, where is your heart?"

"Gone!" exclaimed I, "irrecoverably, for ever; I adore Miss Fitzclarence; and, if there is perfection in woman, 'tis combined in her, for I never saw her equal."

My uncle's eyeglanced fire, and he quickly replied, "But I have seen her model, her most perfect image; her every feature, and her voice—Oh, Victor, 'twas daggers to my soul."

"As how, dear Sir?" I asked with much impatience
“You shall know that to-night; at present I must drop a subject I feel myself incapable to enlarge upon.”

We now strolled home, arm-in-arm. “You have done for me, Sir,” said I, “completely.”

“And, indeed, Victor, I’ve done for myself,” replied he, as we ascended the hall steps, when my uncle retired to his study, as was his constant custom when his mind was ruffled or oppressed, and I threw my listless form upon the sofa in all the tortures of love, hope, and despair, and in this commixed rumination I lay, till roused by Geoffry coming in to lay the cloth.

“Lack-a-daisey, Sir,” cried the garulous old fellow, “have you and master called at the Rectory this morning? and did you see Miss Fitzclarence? of all God’s creatures she’s the beautifulest. I’ve seen a many
fine girls in my days, but nobody never see nothing like she I'll swear; I happened this morning to go up with a drop of cream, one of their keows being dry, and who should I pop upon but an angel, as I thought, for I declare I stood putrifited and stagnated at her uncommon beauty: I dare say she's got a thousand sweethearts."

Had Geoffry stuck the carving knife he was so dexterously handling into the centre of my heart, I could not have leaped more precipitately from my recumbent posture.

"Laws, Sir, how you made I jump," exclaimed he; "I hope you beant affronted at my boldness in axing you such a question?"

"Not at all, good fellow," said I, recovering myself from that lacerating word sweetheart.
"But don't you think her handsome, Sir?" enquired Geoffry.

"Yes, very handsome," replied I cautiously.

"She clipses all the ladies in the village, however," said Geoffry, "and if I was a rich handsome young gentleman, I know I should go mad after her."

At this moment my uncle opened the door, and his presence always being the signal of taciturnity to Geoffry, he withdrew to serve up dinner; doing which, little passed on either side; and, when the wine was placed on the table by the side of a plate of beautiful peaches, my uncle, examining them severally, declared there was not one with the cheek of a Rosa; he then drew his chair close to mine, and, laying his hand on my arm, to enforce attention, thus addressed me:—
"Victor, my dear boy, I am in few words going to explain the mystery of my conduct this morning at the Rectory, which was to you, of course, enigmatical; but the moment my eye fixed on Rosa Fitzclarence, I beheld the polygraph of Cecilia Delmond——

I started.

"Nay, start not," continued my uncle, "my assertion is fact; for were it even possible she was her own child, so strong a resemblance could scarcely exist; I surely, then, need not repeat what sort of woman she was whom I so fervently adored, for you have already her portrait subjoined to every quality the human heart was capable of possessing; we met by accident at an assembly, and one hour's pleasure rendered us reciprocally dear to each other. But, alas! the disparity of fortunes pre-
cluded all hopes of our union, till time or circumstances should ameliorate the rigid temper of her father; for she was an only child, most duteous and obedient to his stern command; thus situated, our only resource of correspondence or intercourse rested entirely on the basis of juvenile duplicity, as occasion presented itself; but both young and unpractised in the wiles of dissimulation, our bosoms were the mansions of love, honour, and fidelity."
CHAP. II.

At this important moment, in popped our perpetual interrupter, Dr. Tonic.

"Psha, d—n it," said my uncle, as he opened the door.

"How d'ye do, Sir, have you heard of the female levee at the Rectory this morning?"

"Not I," answered my uncle, peevishly, "nor do I want to know anything about it."

"Oh, but I must tell you," continued the doctor, "Mrs. Tonic, my
daughters, the widow Quiz, Mrs. Prolix, Mrs. Fungus, and Mrs. Deposit, have all been up in a possee to pay their compliments."

"And I dare say they passed a great many," replied my uncle, snappingly, the thread of his interesting theme having been so unexpectedly broke.

"Why, Mrs. Tonic, and the girls, and Mrs. Prolix, think her very handsome.'

"And pray who says otherwise?" interrupted my uncle.

"Why, Mrs. Fungus, and Mrs. Deposit, oppose the pretension."

"I thought so," rejoined my uncle; "I wish either of them would tell me so, that's all; I'll bet her little finger against the sense of the whole parish; and, pray, what may their scandalous audacious tongues take the liberty of saying."
"Why, Mrs. Deposit calls her a little milk and water wax doll, who strums the harp with just taste enough to please the old Rector."

"S'death," exclaimed my uncle, "she's the female Weippart of the age; her skill and taste are exquisite."

"Well, I don't know how it was," continued the Doctor, "but Mrs. Fungus could not allow her a single perfection, and declared she was never more disappointed; she thought her just fit for the celebrated heroine of a romance; a little insipid soul, a wild flower of nature, that required the hand of touch cultivation to bring into perfection."

"And if it flourishes in proportion to the weeds of their own notoriety, sprung from dunghill consequence, it will soon overspread the village, and
you may go back and tell them I say so," said my uncle.

"Hey dey," exclaimed the Doctor, "you're warm—you've seen this little paragon, then?"

"Yes, Sir, I am warm, and I have seen more than a paragon," replied my uncle.

"Why, why, you hav'nt fell in love; sure she ee'nt to be Mrs. Tweazy, is she?" asked the Doctor, blinking his squiney eye, and bursting into a laugh.

"What an old fool you must be," cried my irritated uncle, "to talk such idle jargon; are you going to carry that pretty idea over the village? egad you'd better set the cryer to work; do step to Ladies Deposit and Fungus, and give them the nut to crack, and I'll take care of the shell, I warrant me."

The Doctor now began to draw in
his horns, observing, he had merely repeated what he had heard.

"Then don't believe it," continued my uncle, "it's all lies and envy; what the d—l, can't you analyze woman?"

"No," said the Doctor, "it is not possible in some cases."

"I'll bet a guinea, though I'm no physician," replied my uncle, "that I analyze both Mrs. Fungus and Mrs. Deposit, from the crowns of their head to the soles of their feet."

"You're a clever man, we all know," answered the Doctor, "I dare say you could analyze the brain, now I should only attempt the corporeal system, according to my own discretionary powers."

"You'll pardon me, Doctor," resumed my uncle, "when I say that my opinion of your discretion does
not extend beyond a dose of physic, and a game at cribbage."

"Hey! what," cried the Doctor, "you've a high opinion of my abilities at that rate, Squire; why, now, my son Bob entertains a very great opinion of Mrs. Deposit."

"Like enough," resumed my uncle, "she may be one of his sort of favourites; and I'll be sworn there is not a man in the parish would contend rivalship with him; God help his fancy: his own little wife's worth a hundred such."

"There are more tempting trees than one in an orchard," said the Doctor.

"There are," reiterated my uncle, "and the finest tree in the Rectory orchard is the new planted nonpariel."

"There you go again," cried the Doctor; "pray, Mr. Victor, what
say you of the charms of Miss Fitzclarence?"

I replied, "from what little I had seen of the young lady, she appeared extremely sensible and agreeable; but, in regard to her musical talents, I considered myself quite sufficient judge of the science to know that there were few, very few, (if any) private performers, could excel her abilities."

"Indeed!" cried the doctor, "egad, if that's the case, I must make my girls scrape acquaintance, and try what they can do; my Elizetta is reckoned a tight hand at the piano, I assure you: there are few girls in the village rattle the keys like her: she's got the knack of it; don't you think so?"

Disgusted with his odious comparison, I merely observed, "the instruments were so different, as well
as the performance, that I could not pass my judgment at present."

"Well, well," said my uncle, (willing to abolish the subject, lest the crafty old fox should extract my sentiments, as he did his chemicals) "now, pray let this parley cease, for as we don't agree, we'll adjourn the subject, because I have some agricultural business demands attention this morning; and, therefore, my moments are too precious to waste in nonsense, and I'm sure many of your patients, Doctor, must be anxiously waiting for your visits, and so for the present you'll excuse me."

"Certainly, certainly," hemm'd the Doctor, who, having no alternative but to take his departure, brushed off, half grumpy, leaving my uncle to laugh in his sleeve at his agricultural judge, by which means he had
completely got rid of the Doctor; and thus again re-seating ourselves, he continued the sequel of his story.
"THREE months had flown on airy wing, and neither our interviews, or correspondence, had been discovered, which, through the medium of a bosom friend, we had mutually enjoyed; when, one morning, by mere chance, in conversation with the father of Cecilia, he learnt, that he meant to take immediately his passage in the first ship that sailed for——, in Italy, where, having an extensive magazine that required his inspection, he had apprised his
partner of his intention, and also that he meant to bring over his daughter with him as a companion to himself, and to improve her for one twelve-months in the language and musical science of that inimitable country.

"This intelligence, as my friend well knew, was instant annihilation to our hopes and happiness, to lose her beloved society for so tedious a period was distraction; and, when I reflected on the probability of an Italian lover superceding my humble pretension, the world had no longer any charms for me; this, Victor, I mused to madness, for I, like you, was young, was gay, was happy; the impregnate cloud of sorrow had never veiled the sun-shine of my heart, and I dreamed but of bliss, nor knew it was a vision, till I grasped the airy shade that flitted from my touch.
"I sought Cecilia—we met: her beauteous eyes, suffused in sparkling tears, proclaimed the fact; mutual we wept: we swore eternal constancy. Alas! poor idle children of delusion, we little knew how inefficient were our weak resolves opposed to wealth and power; to have declared my sentiments to her inexorable father, would have made her a perpetual exile; again, I suggested assuming the habit of a domestic, sailing in the same vessel, and obtaining, on my arrival, a capacity in her father's household; but there, again, the negative predominated; and, to be as brief possible in my relation, within ten days from the first intelligence of the voyage, I saw the vessel recede from shore, which contained my soul's best treasure—yes, Victor, I kissed, I blessed her; and, on my bended knee, invoked
the blessings of heaven for her safety and protection. She promised a regular correspondence by every post; and, compelled to be satisfied with this mutual alleviation of our sorrows, involved in all the agonies of love, we parted—*never to meet again*. I saw her faint upon the deck—I saw her borne in the rude arms of sailors to the cabin—but I saw no more: a temporary stupor seized my brain, and I found myself waked from a la\-thergic dream, and surrounded by officious strangers, one of whom calling a coach, conveyed me to my father's house, where a violent illness ensued, which lasted many weeks, and caused me to explain to my parents the cause of my disorder. My mother, all meekness and gentleness, soothed my perturbed mind with the angelic balm of every comfort she could invent; but my father ridiculed
my boyish folly, laughed me to scorn, and reprobated my daring presumption in fixing my ideas on an object so eminently my superior.

I sighed from the bottom of my soul—my uncle paused—looked steadfastly in my face to perceive the effect of his narrative—shook his head—wiped an intruding tear of recollection, and thus continued:

"The lingering day rolled on in solemn sadness, and the only consolation I possessed, was in the valuable society and endearing communion of heart, that reciprocally passed between me and my ever lamented friend Victor Montalbert: 'twas to him, my noble boy, I consecrated your name, and may you ever be like him in benevolence, friendship, and virtue; for his soul was the mansion of honour, and his heart the realm of fidelity; but fate snatched him.
like every other blessing, from my embrace; and in his loss I never risked a substitute: one sincere friend is all a man can ever dare expect; his loss was another dagger to my soul, but I had yet an embryo grief in store.

"I had received only four faithful and affectionate letters from my lovely exile, when, lo! the next packet from Italy brought me a letter from the pen, the direful pen, of her exasperated father, informing me he had discovered my audacious correspondence with his daughter, by means of an Italian servant, on whose probity Cecilia had confided, and dared me ever to address another to his daughter on peril of immediate punishment to both parties; and concluded by asserting, he had engaged her hand, not to a pitiful penniless puppy, but a man of honour and for-
tune suitable to her own rank in life, which nuptials he should instantly enforce her obedience to celebrate.

"Distracted by this unexpected stroke of misfortune, I again relapsed into a paroxysm of despair. No letter arrived from Cecilia, by which I concluded she was deprived of every resource of future correspondence, well knowing the austere tyrant she had to deal with.

"Six months elapsed in the torments of cruel suspense, when one day I met, by chance, the identical captain of the vessel in which Cecilia left England; of him I enquired intelligence of the Delmond family—but what words can express my horror and astonishment, when I learned that my beloved Cecilia had been inhumanly sacrificed by her barbarian parent, in a compulsory marriage with an opulent merchant residing
at Florence, whose name was Lau-
sanne. Thus ended my hopes and
happiness; for in vain my friends di-
verted my mind—in vain their help-
less pity soothed my grief, or roused
my energies: all, all, were dormant;
and, though I was lead in the unceas-
ing round of common-place amuse-
ments, though I was introduced to
the most accomplished and lovely
women, not one had power to extract
a smile, or warm this icy heart, for I
had sworn I had abjured all women;
and from that hour my character and
manner grew so misanthropical, that
even time, that leveller of good and
evil, will ne'er irradiate the poison-
ous root that still entwines the fibres
of my heart; and so perfectly have I
cherished her image in my remem-
brance, that every feature of Cecilia
Delmond burst like a beam of sun-
shine on my soul, when first that an-
gelic girl, that Rosa Fitzclarence, met my eye. Do you now wonder, Victor, at my agitation? can you pity an old man's sorrows, and not indicate feelings that ought perhaps to be extinct, after being a pupil in the school of experience to the present age."

He ceased; and, as he reclined back in his chair, I caught his hand, "My dear, my revered uncle," exclaimed I, "I never till this moment knew the virtues of your heart—Why, ah! why have you concealed from the world those principles which so justly ennoble the human heart; was love a crime on your part! No, 'twas the voluntary effusions of a soul replete with virtue, and crowned with honour, that bowed in silent submission to the decree of fate.—Alas! good sir, while contemplating your sorrows of the heart, how much..."
may I one day experience of my own; ah! should my destiny be consonant with your's, where shall I find an antidote?"

"Victor," resumed my uncle, "heaven avert it—why look so serious? why speak with so much energy, my boy?"

"Oh, sir," replied I, "I cannot explain; make but Rosa Fitzclarence, Cecilia Delmond, and search no farther the lacerated heart of St. Alban: your own feelings must tell you what mine are at this moment, equally, alas! hopeless as sincere."

"My uncle started forward on his seat, "hopeless," ejaculated he, "Oh! heaven forbid; if my most sanguine wishes and endeavours can constitute your felicity: but crush, I conjure crush, the impetuous flame, nor let false hope, in cob-web guise, flit her visionary form before your love-film-
ed eye to lead you to destruction. Rosa Fitzclarence is an orphan heir-
ess, in which case she is left in the power of her guardians till she be-
comes of age, which I understand a few months will complete; should the sentiments of those guardians be rigidly enforced, contrary to the inclination and future happiness of their ward, its more than probable she will adopt the system her own good judgment impels, and give her hand where love and prudence best direct it, for she has no stern father to oppose her happiness like her dear hapless polygraph: but be very cautious how you proceed—you have won my heart by your candour, and it shall not go unrewarded."

He wept like an infant; I forced a glass of Madeira through his trem-
bling lips—nature wanted its revival.
"One word more," continued he, 
"do not, I conjure you, drop the slightest hint of your prepossession to Dr. Tonic; the mischief-making imp would be a living chronicle of vexation: and, if a shade could cross your interest, in his own behalf, depend upon it you would rue the result of such communication."

I promised peculiar attention to his desire. "But, sir," observed I, "e'er the subject drops, did you never receive any further intelligence of the fate, fortune, or family, of Madame Lausanne?"

"I learnt," replied my uncle, "that she sunk into a state of apathy almost immediately after her marriage, in which she ever expressed herself extremely unhappy, and great doubts were entertained of her life, for several years after, from the delicacy and impaired state of her constitution,"
subjoined to the morose behaviour of her husband, villain as he was; but thank heaven she was relieved from her persecution five years after her marriage by the death of her hymenial tyrant, soon after she had given birth to a daughter, a circumstance wholly unexpected, after so long a series of indisposition acting on a frame of such delicate texture, and I have been informed she quitted Florence immediately, retired to the recluse shades of Italy, where she soon after died a martyr to a broken heart, but whether her child is yet living, I know not."
GEOFFRY now entered, informing us Lady Lustre's butler had just left a basket of grapes, and a bottle of tokay, of which she requested my uncle's opinion next morning, being a present from London lately received from a connoisseur in that article, who had imported it in its native bag, considering it a choice present.

"And here, sir," continued Geoffry, producing a most flourishing envelope, emblazoned with a seal *three inches sexagon*, "here's a large sort of
a letter Mrs. Fungus's boy brought, but I thought you and Mr. Victor seemed busy in conversation, and so I would not disturb you to bring it in."

Geoffry now laid his commissions on the table, and was leaving the room, when my uncle re-called him to draw the tokay cork, whilst I sat contemplating the enormous cachet, on which was inscribed, "for particulars enquire within," a motto much exciting my curiosity, as I handed it to my uncle, who, pouting his under lip, observed, it was no bad inscription for a lodging-house window, and supposed it a pawnbroker's relic that had escaped redemption.

"Sir," said I, "are you not playing the severity a little too sharp?"

"Not at all," replied my uncle, "it may be an instrument hired for
the purpose of consummate notoriety, a sort of stop trinket belonging to neighbour Deposit's sanctorum."

Geoffry had by this time bounced the tokay cork, declaring, "never nothing smelt so fine, and it sparkled like Miss Fitzclarence's eyes, God bless her pretty beads."

"Heyday!" exclaimed my uncle, "who made you a judge? who asked your opinion?"

"I have been asked it all over the willage," replied the honest menial, "and nobody dares contradict me, big or little: I would not give up my opinion to a king."

"Do you understand the qualities of that wine?" said my uncle.

Geoffry shook his bald pate, poured out two glasses, and withdrew, without daring to offer any further comment.
My uncle now broke the seal of Mrs. Fungus's envelope, which con-
tained, what appeared to him, a painted and gold emblazoned valen-
tine, so strongly impregnated with musk, that extending it at arm's
length, while he pinched his nostrils with the other finger and thumb, he
requested me to peruse the contents, which ran as follows:

"Mrs. Fungus at home, at a fete champetre, given next Thursday in
celebration of Miss Fungus's birthday to a select party of masked
friends."

"And how many does the foolish women expect to find unmasked?" ex-
claimed my uncle; "to be sure, when she expresses, "Mrs. Fungus at
home," she is exactly telling us where she ought to be, but is seldom found;
however, we'll go, Victor—and, avail-
ing ourselves of the proposed disguise, I'll adopt a magician's dress, and you may do as you like."

To this proposal I readily assented, and we sipped Lady Lustre's liquor, the flavour of which we found peculiarly fine.

"It's like herself: it can't be better," said my uncle, "and it's as bright and sparkling as Rosa's pretty beads, as master Geoffry familiarly styled them just now: it's well I was not in one of my crabbish moods, or he'd have said less upon that subject, I assure him."

"I believe the honest creature would die to serve her," replied I, "he thinks her the perfection of nature."

"And so do I," rejoined my uncle: "but we'll quit the subject, and advert to one less painful."
We now strolled through the grounds, to enjoy the delightful breezes of evening, and had just passed through a small private gate which led into a green lane, when the mill cart of Cloddy Strut came rattling along the road, drove by a plain masculine woman, of truly vulgar appearance, supported in character by a birch broom on one side, with a mop, pail, door-mat, and sundry turnery utensils, subjoined to a leg of mutton, and a basket of fish, just landed from the London coach.

"Your most humble, sir," said the female Jehu, with the gruff voice of a boatswain, "I suppose you didn’t know me, clodhopping along in this pretty trim: but I’ve been to market, you see, I don’t mind trifles, I’m none of your fine London ladies, I’m
Joan Blunt, I care for nobody's sneers."

"Very true," replied my uncle, "you're the *plain* domestic miller's wife, in every sense of the word, there's nothing like buckling to one's station in life."

"Aye; Lord, well, I did not always ride in a cart: I've been the gayest of the gay in my time, till my *Cymon* made a convert of me, somehow, and metamorphosed me from the fine lady to poor humble *Nell*; well, it can't be helped: I'm contented while my *lump* uses me kindly; the brats are my greatest plague; I never loved children."

"Why, then, did you marry?" asked my uncle.

Mrs. Strut attempted to blush, but it was only a sham tinge, the practice or theory of which she had ne-
ver practised, nor had she any incitement in the obscure retreat of a water mill to call that power into action.

My uncle, who only viewed women of that description in the most odious light, had passed her with a silent inclination of the head, if her loquacious tongue had not arrested his footstep, wished her good evening, and closing the gate, left her to bump along, in full riggle, with her cottage equipage of mops, brooms, and brushes.

Our walk was delightful; we marked the evening primrose close its sombre leaf; the rose was weighed with diamond dew-drops—anon we listened to the high poised sky-lark’s evening carol; and again, a secreted nightingale, in a hawthorn hedge, delighted us with the exquisite me-
lody of her vesper hymn; and, as the refulgent moon stole through the branches of the elegant acacia, all nature seemed to say, good night, the pillow of repose is sweet.
CHAP. VI.

WE now returned to the saloon, partook our evening sandwich, expatiated on the qualities of Lady Lustre's tokay, proposed visiting her next morning, and then retired very early to rest; but, e'er the village clock told seven, I left my sleepless pillow, and strolled the grounds for two hours in converse with old Geoffry, who was arranging the hot-house, and furnished me full exercise and employment, which being quite novel to me, afforded a pleasant amuse-
ment, till my uncle's velvet night-cap made its appearance at the hall door, and his jocularity whew! hollo! summoned me to breakfast.

"Recollect we dine at Mrs. Henpeck's to-day, Victor," said he, "and there again we shall meet a fresh squad of comicals, to whom you have not been in introduced; but we shall find no Lady Lustres, or Fitzclarences there; yet we shall meet with diversion and good cheer, to pass the hour."

"To-morrow, Sir," said I, "I presume we shall attend church."

"To be sure we shall; aye, and walk home with Rosa to the Rectory afterwards," replied my uncle smilingly.

"Ye Gods!" exclaimed I, leaping from my chair in a rhapsody of thought most enchanting, "who would not go to church!"
“Not you, I fear, without the stimulus of Rosa’s presence—hey, Victor,” cried my uncle.

I felt the truth flash my convictive cheek, but I made no reply, and after our repast was finished, we set off for a gentle saunter through the village to Lady Lustre’s; here, trotting along, smothered in dust, we met the Doctor upon his old docked mare, returning from a distant visit, puffing and foaming like a lime-kiln, enquiring where we took our mutton, because, if at home, he’d help to play a knife and fork with us, but my uncle assuring him we were engaged at Mrs. Henpeck’s, silenced his self-in-vitation.

“Ho! ho!” cried he, “what, you dine at Henpeck’s, do you? very odd! very odd! they should not have invited me and my family—drank tea there last night—never
heard a syllable mentioned—d—d sly—can’t make it out. Well, I wish you merry—it’s much if I don’t drop in in the evening.”

“Like enough,” replied my uncle, nodding his head, “your can play Harlequin, and introduce yourself any and everywhere; you’ve the happy knack.”

“My profession authorizes me, in a great measure,” replied the Doctor.

“You mean to say, you are a sort of being one must be cautious how one quarrels with,” answered my uncle, “because it’s as much as one’s life’s worth to bear enmity with a Doctor—for we all know you are the necessary village evil.”

“Evil! evil!” muttered the Doctor, “I don’t comprehend you.”

“Well, well, we’ll explain it over a game at cribbage next time we meet:
good morning—I can't stand broiling in the heat and dust any longer," said my uncle, and off we walked till we came in sight of a small dwelling in the shape of a baker's shop, into which my uncle mechanically walked, to order some corn; and, as I stood tat-tooing my cane upon the threshold, I espied the name of Sponge on the door-post; oh! thought I, as the little bell tingled behind the shop-door to announce us, as sure as I live this is the identical house my uncle promised to shew me the master of, and e'er I had formed the idea, out popped one of the fat girls I had met in the chaise, not a baker's daughter as I expected to have seen, but a half-naked girl, whose brawny limbs protruded through a dress something similar to a miller's bolting-bag, her hair was twisted and plaited after the simi-
tude of her father's twopenny loaves that lay scattered on the counter, and her tout-en-ensemble gave her the appearance of a puppet-shew cumbine.

She requested I would walk into the parlour while she went in search of her father, whom, I presumed was, as my uncle observed, most probably to be found in his drawing-room, but we were mistaken; for, at the instant of our conjecture, in he came from the piggery, where he had been butchering a porker: a red worsted nightcap adorned his bald head, while the sleeves of a dirty greasy shirt were tucked up under his shoulder, exhibiting to the eye of horror, a pair of sinewy arms covered in smeary gore, and round his waist was tied a flour sack, drenched in blood, which, with the addition of an old blue pocket handkerchief, bound round the grizzled
chin of a week's beard, and a mouth crammed with tobacco, the essence of which distilled from each corner, completed Mister Sponge's portrait, father to the young lady aforesaid, who came flying into the room with a clean white apron, which she insisted her par should tie on, "for he was quite a fright."

"What's the use on't," said he.—"The pig beant cut up yet; mayhap Mister Tweazy may like a joint," and up he twitched his greasy leather breeches with a carpenter's shrug.

"Oh, by no means," replied my uncle, "if I had not seen you in this dreadful condition, I might have been tempted; but, to tell you the truth, my appetite is mighty delicate, and I could not touch it now."

"Eh, you're mighty nice indeed," replied the gruffy boor, whose innate manners never exceeded the bounds
of his piggery, nor was it possible ever to rub off the incrustation even with his own rasp.

"I thought you had given up pig-killing," said my uncle, "since you got your unexpected fortune."

"Nah!" exclaimed he, (smearing a nasal chrysal on the back of his gorey paw, for it bore at the best of times very little similitude to a hand; in fact it was merely a grasping hook, with five claws at the end, moulded into a sort of clutch, wherewith to handle the loaves of his own family, and the fishes of others), "Nah," repeated he, "I likes the job and the profit too well."

"I don't doubt that," replied my uncle.

"My pigs ain't like most other people's," cried the baker.

"True," said my uncle, "your's are pye-house pigs, that's the reason."

Master Sponge not understanding
the exact inuendo of my uncle, snappishly replied, "As to their being pious pigs, he did not understand that there sort of language: it mought be high church manners, but he recollected it was not the first time as Mister Tweazy had called his'n presbyterian pigs, but that made no odds to a religious man like hiself."

"Aye! aye! practice what you preach, Master Sponge, there's nothing like honor and honesty—we all know your kind of people talk enough about both, but I'm for actions" said my uncle, "actions want no trumpeter whether they are good or bad."

The angry man of slaughter turned upon his heel, his fat fantastic daughter tossed up her head, and we marched out of the shop, pursuing our way to Lady Lustre's.

"Did you ever see such a disgusting object?" cried my uncle.
"Never in my life," said I.

"Then what would you think to see such a man making love to a genteel well-educated woman, with a peel full of 'toad's-in-a-hole,' and 'veal triangles,' smoking hot, balancing over his night-cap in the consonant trim, (the bloody sack excepted) which we have beheld him this day, and yet he had charms."

"They must be hidden charms of the mind, or heart, I presume," replied I.

"Oh, you must ask his wife that question," answered my uncle, "or enquire at the Golden Lion tap, where old smoakey, as they call him, lights the first pipe every evening since he pocketted his wife's bundle of soft rags, and there he harangues and boasts his mushroom consequence to the diversion of his neighbours; drinks his best services to the miller,
who swallows them in a cup of credulity, and after traducing the characters of his best friends, who snatched him from the fangs of poverty, and the horrors of a jail, out of compassion to his family, he struts to meetings where, under the imperious cloak of fell hypocrisy, no dying magpie turns his eyes up more completely sanctified, as the tip of his snub grinds in close contact with the sacred white wall, against which he grunts out his self-made ejaculations."

"Don't say another word about him, Sir," replied I, "the portrait in propria persona, and its attached explanation, have been sufficient for me."

My uncle smiled—I shrugged my shoulders, and we now found ourselves in view of Lady Lustre's park.
gate, which soon after gave us admission to her presence.

"I have obeyed your ladyship's injunction," said my uncle, as he took his seat, "and am come to tell you there is nothing in the village to compare with your tokay."

"I must beg leave to differ," replied her ladyship, smiling.

"Indeed!" cried my uncle musing on his cane, "then I'm no judge, I suppose."

"Yes, yes, you are," answered her ladyship, "what think you of our Rectory nonpareil?"

"Ah, hah!" said my uncle, "there I yield the palm of decision."

"Oh, Mr. Tweazy," continued Lady Lustre, "what a charming angelic young creature is that Miss Fitzclarence; oh, how I envy Dr. Markwell such a treasure as her society; they both called on me last
night, and had you seen her bewitching form, and heard, her edifying scientific language on every subject, you would have been in raptures; for, though I'm an old woman, I must confess she has made a complete conquest of my heart: I am no novice in the school of science, but I feel I am only a mere pupil in the hands of an inimitable tutor; she possesses the abilities of the sage philosopher, and the juvenile Terpsichore; in short, she is human perfection, and Dr. Markwell whispers me, her principles of religion are no less eminent and admirable, and would do honour to the head and heart of an arch-bishop."

"I have seen her but once," said my uncle.

"Then, Sir," resumed her ladyship, "will you and Mr. St. Alban
meet her here on Monday, to tea, with a small select party?"

"With much pleasure," answered my uncle, and the topic dropped, to make way for others, amongst which her ladyship proposed accompanying us over her grounds, to inspect some improvement lately arranged: and here we found ourselves in Elysium; the grotto was beautiful, the music rotunda superbly decorated with busts, bronzes, and stained glass: the cascade was an enchanting production of art and nature, that appeared a combination of magic, while various Gothic arches, of exquisite sculpture, subjoined to Chinese bridges thrown geometrically across the various canals, heightened the beauties of the surrounding scenery, and beguiled our footsteps almost beyond the limited hour of our return to dress for Mrs. Henpeck's
dinner, which was to be set on table precisely at four o'clock, with the exactitude of the polar needle, as Mrs. Henpeck never delayed her grace one moment to please any body—punctuality was her table motto—and her rule was law.
AT ten minutes, therefore, before the appointed time, my uncle and I found ourselves ushered into Mrs. Henpeck's drawing-room, where all was gaudy and profuse, while the ruddy mistress of the feast introduced us to her guests already arrived; but to give you her portrait as she met our view, I must describe her dress, which consisted of a cambric bolster-case bedizened with lace, into which she had crammed her uncouth, ill-shaped figure, a la swab;
her copper-coloured neck was adorned with an enormous necklace of barley-sugar appearance; and her trout skin, morphew-wrinkled unprepossessing visage, was encircled by the straggling ringlets of a black wig, which ever and anon tormented her gooseberry-coloured crowfooted blinkers.

Mr. Henpeck was as clean scraped up and powdered as lovey could make him appear: she had plaited his frill and tied his neckcloth as nice as a new pin, and no doubt deputed his seat behind the door, where he seemed fixed like one of Punch's puppets, till the word of command from his wife twitched the wire of liberty, and set the poor automaton in motion.

"Mr. Henpeck!" shrieked his lady, "how you sit glued to your chair, my love; why don't you introduce
the company: pray, who so proper as the master of the house.”

The placid man obeyed the mandate, and thus announced the group: “Mr. and Mrs. Coniac; Major Pea-Chick; Mr. Munchausen; Mrs. Wau-Wau; Miss Bleary Wau-Wau; Lady Flam;” he then continued—“Ladies and gentlemen, this is Mr. Tweazy, this Mr. Victor St. Alban: now, my love, I’ve done my duty,” and down he sat.

“Lord! Mr. Henpeck,” exclaimed his wife, “you’ll never be Sir Clement the Second—but what, in the name of wonder, my dear, have you resumed your seat for? why don’t you ring the bell for dinner?”

Mr. Henpeck obeyed: but somehow stumbled, and his glossy shoe, of Fawcett brilliance, coming in contact with the ankle of his clean silk stocking, left an indelible mark, and
highly provoked the lady of the house.

"My God, Mr. Henpeck, you're worse than a child: see what a condition your stocking is in, and you know I always wash them myself— I'm the most particular nice woman living—you know I am."

"Well, well, my love, never mind," said the timid man.

"But I do mind," rejoined Mrs. Henpeck, "I hate to be put out of temper when I've my friends about me, I love peace and mildness;" then elevating her voice to a pitch of violence, "ring the bell again, Mr. Henpeck: if the servants don't answer, ring it down, and don't sit like a statue."

Again Mr. Henpeck agitated the wire, and the servant appeared.

"Is dinner served?" asked Mrs. Henpeck with visible impatience.
"No, Ma'am," said the foot-boy, "cook's had an accidenty with the fish sarse, and its like to have set the chimbley on fire,"

"What!" exclaimed Mrs. Henpeck, "all my rich lobster sauce wasted—a nasty careless hussy!" and up she jumped, like an enraged tygress, to bolt off to the scene of action.

"You can't get into the kitchen, ma'am," continued the boy, "its all of a swim of water in trying to put the fire out, and cook's washing the soot off the ducks."

"Gracious heaven! I shall run mad," cried Mrs. Henpeck, darting out of the room, without any interruption from her quiet husband, who knew he did not dare interfere in kitchen fracas, till his wife's sonorous squall from the bottom of the stairs roused his obedience in the following words:
"Mr. Henpeck! Mr. Henpeck! put on my pattens, and come down into the floating kitchen, this moment."

"Dear me," said Lady Flam, "I hope the chimney is not on fire: the very idea makes me tremble."

"Never fear, madam," replied Mr. Munchausen, "there's plenty of us to put it out; now I entertain no fears of conflagration, for I have very often a fire in every room in the house at my Staffordshire villa, and I think we compute fifteen rooms, en suite, three stories high—for its a d—d cold place, I do assure you, in the hunting season; why, would your ladyship believe it, that the poultry and spring chickens in my hennery, to the tune of about 750 of them, were actually so cramped with cold, that I was compelled to erect a Buzaglo stove in the centre, guard-
ed with gold wire work to prevent accident, and have a large *turkey carpet* to cover the floor, so that you'll observe, they could use exercise over their woollen parterre, or huddle round the fire at pleasure; and then as to my pigs, no man so particular! why it cost me 75 guineas in *chestnuts* for them last winter, beside a hundred weight of *Pistachio nuts!* I assure you my expenses are not trifling."

"Bless me," said Lady Flam, "I'm astonished—I really never heard of such things as *carpets* in a *henmery*, and *pigs* fed on a *Pistachio nuts.*"

"My dear lady," resumed Mr. Munchausen, "perhaps you have never visited Italy?"

"Never," replied her ladyship.

"Ah! then I don't wonder at your surprise; because its a very common thing with people of distinction in
Italy to give their choice pigs Pista-
chio's," replied the bombastic narra-
tor; "my sow, for instance, was a
present to me from the emperor of
China, for some trivial services I had
rendered myself conspicuous in at.
his court, and a most valuable beau-
tiful creature she is—she was one of
five and thirty at a litter! and, there-
fore, as I before said, no man in Eng-
land possessing such a sow as my-
self, I don't mind what expense I in-
cur to maintain her."

"What a shame, Mr. Munchau-
sen," cried Miss Bleary Wau Wau,
(hanging her head on one shoulder,
and leering her non-descript eye in
every direction of vacancy towards
the object addressed) "what an ex-
travagant creature to feed pigs with
such delicious rarities—'pon honour,
I don't believe it."

"'Pon honor, Miss Bleary," re-
plied he, turning his eye in the exact direction of her's, "you really, my dear young lady, expose your want of knowledge very much; I, who have visited the Continent, and been in most parts of the known world, must know what I'm talking about; as well you might deny, that when I was in France, the dog that was made me a present at the Palais Royale, didn't have a dish of Ortolans every day provided for his dinner."

"Oh, monstrous!" exclaimed the ladies.

"Pray, Sir," said Major Pea-Chick (with his white pig-tail, and his scarlet rimmed eyes, who wished to play off a little of his witty artillery), "pray, Sir, where may this famous sow of yours be? I should like mightily to see her munch the Pistachio's: I suppose she has a peculiar
method of cracking them—or do you crack for her?"

Mr. Munchausen aware of the little military punster's sarcasm, replied, "he occasionally employed an old disabled soldier to crack them."—This silenced the witticism which no one could parry more adroitly than Munchausen, the pupil of effrontery, who secretly determined to retaliate on the Major the first opportunity.

"What colour is your famous sow, Mr. Munchausen?" drawled Mrs. Wau Wau, through her nose.

"Its brindle, ma'am," replied he, "with a short curly white tail, about the length of Major Pea-Chick's queue."

"I should rather have expected to hear it was nine yards long, like the Bengal tyger's that attacked a friend of mine, who positively swore to the
dimension," cried the Major, bursting into a teh he!

"I presume," said my uncle, very gravely, "your friend stretched it to that length in his way home—it was an elastic tail, I imagine."

"Exactly so," replied the Major, "for after we had roasted it well, it shrunk to a common size."

"Do you keep pigeons, Sir?" resumed Miss Bleary.

"No, ma'am, not always—I occasionally make them keep me."

"What, you make them into pies," I suppose, snuffled Mrs. Wau-Wau; "we are very fond of pigeons at our house."

"So am I, ma'am," replied Mr. Munchausen, with a very serious face, "I generally pot all pigeons—its an excellent way, I assure you."

"You've a peculiar receipt, perhaps, for the article," cried Major Pea-Chick, "though potted pigeons
are no great rarity now, as they used to be."

"When you was in the Turkey-line, you mean," replied Munchausen; "d—me how you cropped and scragged them; I remember it well, though I was but a lad—aye! aye! you've been the sort, Major, you tamed your pigeons into goldfinches, netted them snug, and then turned over a new leaf."

"Where, I believe, you'll find few blots," interrupted the little Major, reddening with passion, till his ears looked like the scarlet wattles of a dung-hill cock; at which moment of snip-snap, Mr. Henpeck re-entered the room, announcing dinner on the table, which quietly ended the controversy.

Here we found Mrs. Henpeck seated, with a face like scarlet, with passion and culinary exertions, apolo-
gizing to her company for the carelessness of her cook in destroying the fish sauce, and spoiling the delicious ducks—add to which, the baker had broke her a fine pigeon pye, which from its mutilated state could not make its appearance, and the fruit tarts were scorched to a cinder; "but here does not end my perplexity," continued the auditress (who looked the picture of Medusa, with black snakes hanging over her fiery cheek) "for my beautiful blamange swan has entirely melted into a mass of cream owing to the heat of the weather."

"Never mind, madam, here's a very good dinner still left to gratify our appetites," said Munchausen.

"I think so, too," cried little Mr. Coniac, leering his _sneaking eyes_ all round the table, and biting his _spite-
puckered lips, "we'd a pig of the same sow at our house the other day."

"No such a thing, Mr. Coniac," replied his contradicting wife, "you know nothing of the matter; I beg you'll never trouble your head with my domestic concerns for the pleasure of retailing them in company; I want no mol-codling husband at my heels—I always chose to be directress of my own house, from the garret to the cellar."

"No, my dear, no;" replied Mr. Coniac, "not directress of the cellar neither, that is my department, Mrs. Coniac, women have no business in cellars for fear of———" and he winked his eye at Mr. Henpeck.

"Aye, for fear of the rats," interrupted Mr. Munchausen, "d—n the rats—I had one in my cellar the other day as big as a rabbit, gnawed me a dozen of Madeira corks; but, as luck
would have it, never touched those of a pipe of port I had just bottled and laid down."

"Aye, well," continued Mr. Coniac, "I don't know how it is, but I'd rather have four-legged rats than two-legged ones; there's no vermin in our cellars, but a devilish lot of spirits, that vanish whenever the door opens; it matters not who turns the key, for when you come to look, egad they are all off."

"Lord! Mr. Coniac," exclaimed his wife, foaming at the mouth with anchovy froth, "your disagreeable conversation is quite brutal and disgusting."

"Don't quarrel with fish-bones in your mouth, Mrs. Coniac," replied her aggravating husband, "take a little drop of brandy, my dear, or you'll be sick presently."
"Not I, indeed," replied Mrs. Coniac, tossing her head in a terrible rage.

"Aye, do, madam," cried Mr. Henpeck, and I'll pledge you—fish is very apt to rise in my stomach."

"Then I'm sure fish is likely to fall in your stomach," replied Mrs. Henpeck—"Good God, Mr. Henpeck, touch a drop of brandy if you dare—what would Dr. Tonic say? hemph, brandy indeed! I'll take some with Mrs. Coniac, with pleasure; but as to you, its out of the question."

She then ordered the servant to fill out four thimbles full, one of which was handed to Lady Flam, another to Mrs. Wau Wau (who always sat with her mouth open for the ready convenience of any consequences that might arise from a surcharge) a third to Mrs. Coniac, (who never
used such small glasses at home), and the remaining one she tossed off herself.

"What a pretty dance, 'Drops of Brandy is," said Miss Bleary Wau Wau.

"Yes," replied the Baron's great-grandson, alias Mr. Munchausen, "I have seen many capital reels danced to that tune."

"Ma'r and I are very fond of reels," continued Miss Bleary.

"Not brandy reels, I hope," whispered Munchausen.

"O you brute! no, to be sure;" answered she, "I mean Scotch reels, danced with skipping-ropes; you should see my Ma'r skip: Commodore Grapple, Captain Flash pan, and Lieutenant Powder-proof; all India folks of our acquaintance, declared she skipped scientifically, about two
or three years ago, when it was such a fashionable amusement."

"Nar, now, Bleary; now! you make a body blush; consider I'm an old dummy, you should not talk about such nonsense now," drawled the lady mother, grinning like a turnip-ghost upon the head of a mischievous school-boy's crab stick, decked in the Eastern presents of Messrs. Grapple, Flash-pan, and Powder-proof, ornamented by Indian pigeon feathers, highly perfumed: while Miss Bleary, a mere composition of musk and otto, was the quintessence of affectation.

"Pray," said Mr. Coniac, sneeringly, "who might be the upholsterer that furnished your Staffordshire villa?"

"Who," replied Munchausen, "why that stilish dog George Oakley to be sure, one of the most tasty fellows in
England; I left it all to his management: even the carpet and curtain of the buttery were his choice; every suite of rooms carries you into a different country, we have the Chinese, the Grecian, the Parisian, and the Russian costume, with transparent blinds attached, to correspond, with the scenery of the various countries; so that I can breakfast in China, dine at Paris, and drink tea in Russia, every day of my life; and then there's the grounds, the successive houses, the forcing tables for my nectarine and peaches, where you may sit round, and by taking the trouble to raise the leaf, every person has the pleasure to pluck his own fruit. I mean to take Mrs. Munchausen, and my family, down, in the course of a fortnight, with a few select friends; for, to say the truth, I can't well go earlier on account of my new lan-
dau-barouche, the springs of which are so infernal stiff, that I have lent it to a friend to give it a fortnight's rattle; but, observe you, I don't lend him my set of greys—no, no, they are training in high condition—cost me a cool five hundred, and four more for the barouche—I'm a sad extravagant dog, but I can't help it: its a knack I was born with."

"Well," cried the Major, "I can content myself with my humble marine cottage."

"Its according to the taste you possess, or was bred up in, probably," replied Munchausen, "for my part, a Pleb cottage would have nothing but the horrors for me; I should imagine myself transported to a Dyot-street attic, where the pigs, poultry, jack-asses, family and Co. independent of the live-stock they enjoy gratis, all exist in the same enclo-
sure, graced with a garden of wall-flowers, stuck in a broken tea-pot to conceal the ventilator of the shattered crockey casement, and make it look rural: or, what think you, by way of a cooler prospect, of a canal in a red dish full of tittle-bats.

The company set up a loud laugh; but Mr. Munchausen did not smile: it was no laughing matter, in his opinion, for he had visited such scenes, and coloured them to the life.

"Talking of fish-ponds," resumed he, "I have some of the first in England: I sent down three waggons of Portland stone to dam the banks with—one I have fitted up in a peculiar style of elegance for gold-fish, where, by this time, I suppose I have about five hundred brace under the good management of my steward, who has stocked two extensive canals with every description of cu-
rious and delicious fish, reserving a certain snug corner for the accommodation of a pair of turtles during their appropriate residence in this country, according to the statute of their existence, that they may enjoy their lives, and I their deaths, devoting an elegy to their perfection from the pen of the jaw-worker's company, some men of taste belonging to which I should invite for the express purpose."

"What a funny man you are," exclaimed Miss Bleary; "is it possible you can ever be grave, blessed with such a share of spirits as you possess."

"Indeed," replied Munchausen, "I should have no objection to become possessor of a much more eminent share of spirits, and make you my pretty bar-maid, the cordial drops you would retail would revive every
expiring cockle in a poissard's basket, and then the world would be justified in calling me a rum fellow, while your situation would be constituted the mart of universal comfort, supported by men and women of taste."

"But I should not be thought a girl of taste—I thank you kindly, Sir," answered Miss Bleary with much resentment, "I'd have you to know, Sir, my ideas soar to a palanquin."

"Oh! the sweetest lounge upon earth—don't mention such an uncomatable luxury: I've been carried in the most superb stile in one the emperor lent me, covered with musical bells, that played fifty different successive tunes; the mattrass was eider down, covered with pink embroidered silk, and the curtains were fringed with gold—and, egad, the
slaves scampered along with me at the rate of ten miles an hour!"

"Delightful," exclaimed Lady Flam, "how I should like a trip to the East, to be waited on by slaves, and actually lulled to repose in the cradle of luxury, if my time was to come over again."

"Aye, madam," replied Major Pea-Chick, "but you and I e'ent chick-a-biddies now."

"D—n it," said Munchausen, "you can't forget trade, the old Guinea-hen concern seems to stick in your stomach; I'll thank you to amputate me a limb of that duck—ah, if you could see my Staffordshire duckery, you'd say they exceeded all the 'Change-alley waddlers, for we hatch them in such abundance, that half an acre which I ordered to be sowed with onions and sage, is not
sufficient to season them with, so that my cottagers and menials are literally *gorged* with them."

"I wish I was your neighbour," cried Mr. Henpeck, "for ducks are a terrible price in London."

"Pray, Mr. Henpeck, hold your tongue; you've no business, my dear, to trouble yourself with market expenses; we a'nt going to exact so much a-head from our friends after dinner, as to explain the various prizes like an inn-keeper," said the indignant Mrs. Henpeck, seizing a beautiful bowl of sallad, which she unmereisifully devoured before any of the company had partaken of it; and after having half bolted it down, observing it to be an article in much requisition, she actually re-called the servant, and returned the remaining particles off her plate into
the bowl, *pro bono publico*, which vegetable was not again demanded at table, for Mr. Munchausen observing the circumstance, immediately enlarged on the qualities of his spring cucumbers.

"My gardiner," said he, "cut me *six brace* of patagonian cucumbers last Valentine's day."

"*Natives of Brodinag, I presume,*" replied Major Pea-Chick, "for I'll be bound they were the *only* ones in England at that *period* of the season."

My uncle, who had been a mere eating automaton during the retaliating snip-snap of Messrs. Munchausen and Pea-Chick, and who well knew the rhodomontade principles of the former, proposed a general bumper of Madeira, to wash down the patagonian cucumbers,
which caused another laugh at the expense of the credulous.

"You shall not drink Madeira, Mr. Henpeck, I assure you," exclaimed his observant wife, just as he had raised the bewitching glass to his lips, the contents of which he, with a brisk mechanical chuck, gulped down, before the sentence of forbearance reached his ears, the lady not having been quick enough in her commands, which were never delivered in the mildest terms.

This breach of non-conformity increased Mrs. Henpeck's anger. "If you choose to kill yourself, Mr. Henpeck, I have no fears of getting a third husband, depend upon it—there are men who would take my advice, and value it too: so play your own game, and see who'll suffer for it in the end."
Madam," cried Mr. Munchausen, "it was only an accidental slip over the tongue, ; I declare Mr. Henpeck was making full charge, when your mandate to halt vibrated on his ear, and had he stopped at the moment, strangulation had made you a widow in the midst of your gala."

"Aye, you're a good hand to help a lame dog over a stile, we well know," replied Mrs. Henpeck, helping the floating remains of her vanished blamange swan, which so reminded Lady Flam of a dish of cream, that she asked Mr. Munchausen if he kept cows?

"O, yes, ma'am," replied he, "and some extraordinary bulls of my own breed; I have likewise half a score choice buffalos, about five and twenty couple of deer, and three score of
Merino sheep, all the children of liberty in my park."

"Oh, the lovely brebi's," exclaimed Lady Flam; then turning to Mrs. Coniac, "Oh how I doat on the brebi's."

"The what?" enquired Mrs. Coniac, to whom Mrs. Flam might as well have talked Greek or French: "the what, did your ladyship say?"

"The brebi's, the petite agneau's." Mrs. Coniac shook her head in non-comprehension.

"What, don't you know what I mean?" resumed her pedantic ladyship.

"No," said Mrs. Coniac, very ignorantly.

Lady Flam, astonished, drew up her lips to the dimension of a button-hole, exclaiming, "impossible!" then dilating them on equal stretch,
and curving her arched eye brows into a frown of incredulity, "incroyable," continued she, staring Mrs. Coniac from head to foot.

He! he! he! sniggered Mr. Coniac, "my wife don't understand the parley-woo's—she don't understand French but when I order soup and bully of a washing-day. Mrs. Coniac never loved school, though she was at it the first twenty years of her life, but somehow she could never learn French."

"No, not I," answered Mrs. Coniac (with cheek of scarlet indignation, who, well knowing the origin of Lady Flam was no other than an Abcedarian at a London school, from whence she eloped in the character of chere amie to Lord Flam, who afterwards married her). As I was neither bred, or intended for
a teacher, it was a science of no consequence where my livelihood was not dependant upon my abilities."

Lady Flam, who felt the retort uncourteous, instantly replied, "it was very fortunate where people's bread was ready buttered to their appetites, particularly if they were deficient in ability to earn it."

"Aye, aye," replied little Coniac, "We've plenty of bread well buttered in my wife's family cupboard: but the lock's rusty at present, and the hinges are creaky, so you see we only take a peep through the key-hole."

"Yes, yes," cried the vulgar pleb Major, "we all know you fell with your nose in a butter-tub when you married."

"To be sure I did," replied Mr.
Coniac, "but I took care not to butter my fingers as some folks do."

The Major coloured from the effect of his private feelings on that score, but made no reply.

"Egad," said Munchausen, "I should have no objection to fall with my nose into a tub of tallow, but the chance is gone by I believe; I've played many harlequin manoeuvres in my time, skipped out of the frying-pan into the fire, leaped from thence on to the grid-iron, and been soaked in boiling-water, by way of stewing out my troubles, have been roasted like a red-herring on a fork, and picked to pieces, so that all the grease I ever possessed, melted away in torrents like a pound of rush-lights in the dog-days, and now the sweat of my brow must make up for't, that's all I
know—I must look sharp after my Staffordshire tenantry, and save my bacon—yes, yes, they sha'nt gammon me."

"Do you play back gammon?" asked Lady Flam.

"Oh, yes, frequently," replied Munchausen:

"He is an adept, madam, I assure you," said the Major, "and more particularly in the science of face gammon: may be that's a game you never heard of, if you are not very intimate with Mr. Munchausen."

"La! what is face gammon?" cried Miss Bleary.

"A very deep game, I assure you," replied Munchausen; "extremely difficult to attain, because there are one hundred different ways of playing it, there being no established rule
or prescription, so that each party plays it according to his own judgment and benefit."

"Is it played with cards or dice?" enquired Mrs. Coniac, (whose husband was a dab at back gammon in more senses of the word than one.)

"Madam," replied Munchausen gravely, "it is played only with brass instruments, such as arrows, lancets, shuttlecocks, &c.; in short, it's by no means a lady's game, tho' I have seen some attempt it."

"Well, I can't comprehend it," replied Mrs. Coniac.

"I can only say, it's a pity you should, madam—it ill suits your sex," answered Munchausen, laughing in her face.

"Come, come," cried Mrs. Henpeck, "you gentlemen seem to be at cross purposes—pray don't measure
swords, while we ladies adjourn to make your coffee. Mr. Henpeck, my dear, remember your restrictions: help your friends liberally, but don't exceed three glasses yourself—now mind what I say, don't play the baby in my absence—we shall expect you in the drawing-room to cards in half an hour;" so saying, the ladies following in train, withdrew.

Mr. Henpeck assumed his wife's chair, requesting Mr. Munchausen to officiate as vice-president: no one better calculated to push the bottle, fabricate a story, or confound an argument as long as a Chancery suit; and, suffice it to say, he completely kept the company in a roar, till Mrs. Henpeck's patience being quite exhausted, her card table all arranged, and her coffee cold, rushed into the room like an unexpected
hurricane, insisting Mr. Henpeck was an invalid, and should drink no longer.

"Mr. Vice," cried she, "pray oblige me by doing the duties of the chair, and supplying every gentleman's glass—but as to my dear Mr. Henpeck, he shall not take poison before my face—he must and shall retire with me to the drawing-room," saying which, she linked her arm within his, and led the placid soul out of the room in triumph, thereby setting an example we all felt compelled to follow; and, therefore, as he had marched off under the flying colours of petticoat government, we had only to bring up the rear, which we immediately did, each digesting his own opinion upon the transaction.

Coffee having been cleared away,
Mrs. Henpeck arranged us at the card-table, as follows:

My uncle and Lady Flam, with Mrs. Coniac and Munchausen; Mr. Coniac and Mrs. Wau-Wau, versus Major Pea Chick and Mrs. Henpeck. Miss Bleary and Mr. Henpeck, and myself, were seated at three-handed cribbage.
NO sooner had the whist group taken their seats than an exclamation from Mr. Munchausen roused every body’s attention.

"D—n it," said he, "I’m neatly dished:" searching his pocket nearly as low as his knees, "changed my small clothes before I came out, and egad the d—l a sous have have I got. Who’ll be so kind to lend me half a guinea, or five shillings? I’ll give it them again to-morrow."
Mr. Tweazy, Sir, may I beg the favour of you?"

"Sir," said my uncle, very deliberately, "I have no more in my pocket than the exigencies of my own game may demand, neither has my nephew, for we were obliged to have recourse to the housekeeper's purse for all the silver we could collect."

This was a glorious hint to me, which, from my uncle's manner, I plainly perceived had some peculiar inuendo inexplicable at the moment, or I had most readily complied with Mr. Munchausen's request.

He next applied to Major Pea-Chick, who declared he had only a solitary seven shilling piece and a five pounder in his pocket.

Well, that wouldn't do, and Munchausen bit his nails.

"Coniac, my dear fellow, can you assist me?" continued he; but Coniac
too was poor, and must take care of himself, so what was to be done.

"Why give your draft," said the Major, "it will be honour, at the pump."

"What by washing away his debts of honour, I suppose you mean," cried Mr. Coniac.

"True," replied Munchausen, nothing daunted, "I can give my note."

"Ah, you're a noted dog we all know," said Mr. Henpeck. "Here I'll lend you five shillings."

Mrs. Henpeck looked unutterable things, but for once she did not reprove, and in the sequel of the game Mr. Munchausen left off half a crown winner; and, gentleman-like, politely returned Mr. Henpeck's loan.

Sandwiches and fruit succeeded; and at twelve we took our respective leaves: Miss Wau-Wau and her mama were escorted home by Major
Pea-Chick: Mrs. Coniac sailed out of the house like a full *furled man of war*, and her husband learing under his deep slouched beaver, sneaked after, while Lady Flam, to mortify Mrs. Coniac, offered my uncle and self seats in her chariot, the acceptance of which she would take no denial to; which, though extremely averse to the principles of my uncle, politeness compelled him to comply with, and we actually drove off before Mrs. Coniac could make the *clogs fit* at all, while a carriage stood at the door, to her a convenience at all times most desirable; and of which she still anticipated the possession when her old rich aunt resigned it for one of Jarvis's *patent* accommodations.

Thus ended our medley visit, and much rejoiced was I to press my pillow, and dream of meeting Rosa
at the sacred fane of piety next morning.

My uncle's hour of breakfast on the Sabbath was nine precisely, that he might have time to dress for church without hurrying himself, for no man alive was more punctual to religious duties; and as the church tinkled its triple chime, off we set, followed by Geoffry with the books, who escorted Mrs. Esther Rebecca Susanna Rangewell, the house-keeper, on his arm, dressed in rich brocade lutestring, and her stiff starched book-muslin apron and handkerchief, bedecked with her master's old point ruffles—oh, what a swell she cut as she waggled out of the gate, full dressed, to see old Geoffry's village angel, alias Miss Fitzclarence, on whose beauty and accomplishments Geoffry had rung such a peal in Mrs. Esther Rebecca Susanna's ears, that
the antiquated dame was absolutely half *jealous* to think he could prefer any body to herself, after living together, as they had done, in love and harmony for thirty years. But Geoffrey was a man of *taste*, superior to a *French cook*—and though his knowledge did not extend much beyond the best peach, or the finest rose in the garden, he had perspicuity to discern, that neither excelled the *cheek* of Miss Fitzclarence.

Arrived at the pew-door, we reverently took our seats, amidst the assembly of the whole village, for curiosity, like a summer sun, had drawn every snail from its shell, and even Messrs. Fungus and Deposit, had supported the fatigue of a fag, in the broiling heat, above a mile, *to see* this divine creature.

My uncle nudged my elbow, and by the direction of his intelligent eye,
directed mine to the opposite pew, where sat the amiable Mrs. Markwell and her lovely protegee—a reciprocal bow passed between us—but such a radiance of sublimity as illuminated the countenance of Rosa, I never beheld—her devotion was fervent, her eye never wandered; Eloise in her confessional was not more recluse from the incitement of public gaze, unconscious that every eye benignant, or malicious, levelled its scrutiny on her most minute action.

There was no organ—an uncouth rustic sounded the pitch-pipe, and Rosa's seraph voice caught every ear—'twas melody extatic—'twas harmony divine—I could have leaped the pew and pressed her to my heart.

Five different times had Mrs. Deposit changed her seat from one cor-
ner to the other, but still a protruding pillar precluded a full view, and a sidelong glance was the most she could possibly obtain.

The service ended, the congregation (peasantry excepted) drew up in the church porch to make their reverent obeisances to the Rector, and enjoy a full stare at Rosa, who stood by his side, whilst my uncle and I remained silent spectators in the back-ground, to avoid the malevolence of satirical observers; and thanks to heaven, the worthy rector, aware of the impertinent curiosity her reported beauty had excited, led her from the rude gaze of her surrounding complimentors.

The throng dispersing, we followed, unnoticed, to the Rectory, where the smiles of benignity welcomed us in every countenance.
I took my seat beside Rosa—I gazed in rapture, and my uncle's eyes glistened in tears, as he thanked the good Rector for his excellent sermon, observing, he had never favoured his congregation with it before.

"Dont thank me, my dear Sir," replied Dr. Markwell, "it is Miss Fitzclarence who selected it from her library, as the composition of the celebrated Blair—'tis therefore to her taste and judgment your thanks are due."

"I then fervently acknowledge the favour and satisfaction I have received from hearing so excellent a discourse," replied my uncle, "though I much fear," continued he, "it made very little impression on Mrs. Fungus, or Mrs. Deposit, their curiosity seemed to me to be more prevalent than their devotion."
"We received a visit from them very unexpected—and, I must say, unwished," answered the Rector, "my sweet Rosa contributed every thing in her power to entertain them, but their flippant mock consequence was so evident and disgusting, that necessity compelled me to ask them if they eat nettles, as I had been told there was a species of them that envenomed the tongue, but that Miss Fitzclarence had favoured my family with an antidote superior to my recipe in the Pharmacopia: and should such an effect ever attack them, she would administer it with pleasure; they burst into an effected laugh—and when they did us the favour to take their departure, I believe Rosa did not regret it."

Rosa nodded assent; but as calumny had never parched her coral
lip, she would not contaminate it now."

"My dear, Sir" said she, "strangers are not prepossessing; and though I had the happiness to captivate you at first sight (when your extended arm clasped me to your bosom, and your benignant voice hailed me as your child); those ladies might consider me in a very different point of view—young and unpractised as I am in the school of modern life, I am, I hope, the harmless child of nature."

"And they are the vile pupils of art," exclaimed the Rector, interrupting her, "the corruption of the village—and glad shall I be when the voluptuous scenes of London recalls their hateful company from our valley of peace and contentment; and I don't doubt but Mrs. Deposit's Loo club will, in the course of next win-
ter be established every Sunday evening, where their adoration will be paid at the shrine of Pam."

"Sir, sir, you make me tremble," exclaimed Rosa; "is it possible such conduct can be countenanced or suffered in a Christian country."

"Alas! my child, too possible—'tis even in some instances become habitual, though I grieve to acknowledge it even in my closet, that the infection may never produce the direful contagion in any circle of my connexion."

"My father, alas! was too much addicted to its baneful influence, I have heard say," sighed the beauteous Rosa, "and caused my beloved and excellent mother much grief on the occasion, but all her prudential remonstrances were vain, he played deep, but in general very successful. Yet, with all his excess of fol-
ly he never profaned the sabbath with that dreadful innovation of its laws, though many other vices were attached to the unhappy principles he possessed."

The soft tear of sensibility fell from the eye of Rosa—it flowed from the spring of nature, and in its fall rested on the string of coral suspended round her alabaster bosom."

"My sweet Rosa," observed Dr. Markwell, who had so unknowingly touched the chord of sympathy in her susceptible heart. "If I have roused a dormant and unpleasing recollection in your bosom, banish it at the shrine of my contrition, resume your charming wonted gaiety of heart, and by way of diverting the subject, will you shew Mr. St. Alban my prize carnation bed."

Rosa instantly caught up her parasol, and I followed her, like a se-
cond Adam; for, blessed with her society, that little spot of ground was paradise, and never shall I forget the combination and excess of feeling I at that moment experienced, as taking her soft hand, I pressed it to my lip, and drew it with familiar fond and timid perturbation through my proffered arm.

Rosa led me to the blooming parterre, and here I soon discovered she was mistress of botany, while I in return would have given worlds to convince her I was an equal adept in the science of love. Her expatiation, which would have charmed a naturalist, was to me logic, whilst my head and heart were replete with a subject so different.

I admired the carnations—but I admired the fair narratress of their beauties much more.

"Those flowers are beautiful,"
said I, pointing (I confess with a roguish intent) to a bed of heart’s-ease, one of which my innocent, my unsuspecting, companion stooped to gather and present me with.

"Examine minutely the brilliant velvet of that purple leaf, Mr. St. Alban," said she, "it’s a simple little flower, but it ranks high in my estimation."

"What, then, must it do in mine, charming Rosa, as a present from you?" replied I.

"Oh, if you really admire them," resumed the innocent Rosa, unconscious of my fallacious metaphor, "I’ll have a plot dug up, and send them you to-morrow morning, with pleasure."

At this portentous moment, a vagrant rose bush caught the robe of Rosa, and made her its momentary prisoner.
"You are caught, Miss Fitz Clarence," said I, laughingly, "give me leave to extricate you, and I'll punish the offender by divesting it of part of its beauty;" saying which, I cropped a beautiful rose, and placed it in her bosom.

This badinage d'amour had, perchance, explained all I wished, if the appearance of my uncle, and the Rector, had not interfered.

"Come, come, are you taking lessons on botany from your fair tutorress?" said my uncle, "if so, you may resume your studies at tea-time, as we shall pass our evening here by Dr. Markwell's kind invitation—at present we'll walk home."

"Adieu, Miss Fitz Clarence," said I, "we shall meet again e'er sun-set, and renew our pleasing and instructive theme."
"Come early," said the soft voice of Rosa, as she closed the gate after us: nor was her look less inviting than her words, "come early, that we may renew our botanical researches e'er the shades of evening closes the flowers, if my worthy monitor does not deem it an improper amusement: for sure in contemplating the sublimity of nature, we must at the same moment adore the Creator of it."

"What sentiments that lovely girl possesses," exclaimed my uncle, "she not only steals my heart, but my very soul—I love her already as a darling child, and I begin to feel every hour languid that is not passed in her company."

"Hold, Sir," cried I, "don't make me more enthusiastic than I am. If
you behold her with admiration, what must I do?"

"Why, love her most sincerely, no doubt," said my uncle, "what more would you do?"

"And what less can any mortal do who beholds her?" replied I, "but what will Dr. Markwell say?"

"What will your father say, more likely," answered my uncle.

"Ah, my God," cried I, "in consulting my own choice, I never thought of his dissent."

"But you don't know he will dissent," continued my uncle.

"Alas! I fear it—and then again my prescribed fortune, subjoined to his caprice, makes me shudder at the reflection of my temerity—Rosa, too, an heiress, rich, beautiful, accomplished: may not her ideas soar to equal, or superior, possessions?"
she who might command a coronet—she, whom eastern idolators might worship, will she prefer and accept the humble St. Alban! No, no, there's folly in the thought; I have no pretension—I feel I have none—nor dare I reveal them to my father, who would instantly crush my presumptive hopes."

"He shan't crush them, by G—d," said my uncle, vehemently, striking his stick against a cottage paling with such force, that a little yelping dog flew furiously to the gate, followed by a pretty little girl, who endeavoured to pacify the animal.

"Fury! Fury!" cried she, "how dare you bark at his honour," and she dropped a low curtsey.

"What's that you, Cicely?" said my uncle, "how is your mother, and the twins?"
"Brave and charming, please your honour."

"And have you been to church?"

"Yes, your honour."

"And where was the text?"

Cicely repeated it fluently.

"Good girl," said I, giving her a shilling; the child's bright eyes glinted, and she dropped me half a dozen curtseys. My uncle gave her something for her mother, with which Cicely and Fury re-entered the cottage.

"Mark the effects of fidelity, civility, and truth, how each attain their own reward... The fidelity of the dog in retaliating the noise I made, thereby to preserve the property of which he knew himself guardian, caused the civil interference of Cicely, who by demonstrating the truth, in repeating the text, was rewarded by
you, and thus,” continued my uncle, “out of evil cometh good, sure enough.”

We soon after reached home, where Alice opened the hall-door to us, Geoffry being in the garden gathering our desert.

“Lack-a-daisey! stars alive!” cried she, “Sir, what a heavenly-looking young lady Miss Fitzthingembo is, surely: I knows no more about the sermon then if I’d been at Jericho, for I could attend to nothing, God forgive me—I never was so onpious in my life; but Geoffrey says I have committed no sin, for looking at, and admiring, a godly person is like unto being in an angel’s company, and that’s no harm.”

“Alice,” cried my uncle, “you’re a woman of discernment: and I can tell you Miss Fitzclarence is as good
as she is handsome; but don't let the contemplation of her virtues make you forget your own—therefore, go and inspect my dinner concerns."

Alice withdrew.

"The whole village is infected with the mania of admiration: men, women, and children," said my uncle, "and as to you and I, I believe we are incurables."

"It's a complaint that will bring few grist to Dr. Tonic's mill, though," replied I.

"I shall banter him, however, upon it, you may depend," said my uncle.

Dinner was now served up; during which, it was a constant rule of my uncle's never to enlarge on family topics, politics, or any private conversation, before servants, whom he always styled "telegraphs of mis-
chief;" our topics, therefore, were confined to common occurrences, such as the wind and weather.
AS soon as our desert was placed on table, Dr. Tonic, the formidable, rang at the gate: and, as usual, stalked into the room.

"Fine day! hem—hem—how dy'e do?" and down he sat, wiping his bronze countenance.

"Its excessive hot," continued he; "I called to look at your barometer—mine's up to ninety-two—how stands your's, eh, squire, eh?"
"It hangs in the corner, I have not consulted it to-day, I have had better amusement," replied my uncle; "what think you of our sermon this morning?"

"Oh, very fair! very fair!—long enough, in all conscience."

"But not so long as your conscience, Mr. Doctor," said my uncle, "it was one of Miss Fitzclarence's I understand."

"Hey! what! hem, hem—one of Miss Fitzclarence's making, did you say?" asked the Doctor, eagerly.

"No," replied my uncle, in the key F sharp, "I did not say any such thing: I said it was one of her sermons—but it does not follow that she composed it; why, you're mad: I only meant to observe, it was one of her choosing, and a finer or more sublime discourse, to the heart, I never
heard: I won't pretend to say how you might feel it."

"Well, I hope he won't tip us such a long one next Sunday: for I can assure you my beef was boiled to rags in consequence of it."

"Then I hope as you fasted you prayed," said my uncle.

"I did," replied the doctor, "for the end of the sermon, but it did not avail."

"I don't wonder at that," said my uncle, "you know the adage without explanation, I'm sure."

"How demure our new visitor sat, and how loud she sung," continued the doctor; "did you see Mrs. Deposit laughing behind her? for, egad, she's kicked the skin off my wife's shin, she was so diverted with the little girl's piety.

"Poor idiot!" exclaimed my uncle.
taking a pinch of snuff, "unhappy lunatic!"

"Idiot! lunatic!" repeated Dr. Tonic with astonishment, "who dy'e mean? what dy'e mean? how dy'e mean?"

"I mean," answered my uncle fiercely, "that Mrs. Deposit is an idiot to ridicule the pious deportment of the exemplary Miss Fitzclarence; and a lunatic to expose her impious folly by laughing in a church: I'll tell you what, Doctor, if you don't blister her distemper, I shall turn physician extraordinary, without fee, and apply one myself the first time I see occasion."

"Hah! hah! hah!" chuckled the Doctor, "will you accept of a pot of my Spanish flies?"

"No, thank you, I am already provided," answered my uncle, looking very grave, "you may have oc-
occasion for all your stock to counteract the epidemic fever that reigns so contagious in the village."


"Poh!" cried my uncle, "how you attend to business: if you send your son Bob to feel Mrs. Deposit and Mrs. Fungus's pulse, he'll find them scorching alive with the fever of envy—they'll be good customers for your saline mixtures. Then there's Mrs. Coniac, and Mrs. Henpeck, they must have extra draughts: likewise Mrs. Windfall, Mrs. Wau-Wau, Lady Flam, Widow Quiz, and Mrs. Dashwell, must all go on the yellow sick list—aye, and even your daughters, Miss Wau-Wau, and Miss Macfriz, will be obliged to swallow pills in consequence of the infection; for, depend upon it, they've all caught the distemper—I give you
joy, you'll have a long job of it, for its a devilish incurable complaint.—
Now, as to Lady Lustre, Mrs. Downright, Mrs. Prolix, Mrs. Markwell, the Rector, myself, Victor, Alice, Rangewell, Geoffry, and all the villagers, must have a different remedy, for the whole squad are affected with an extreme opposite attack, stiled a sort of love fever, no ways prejudicial to the female sex, but very curable in most males. Now, Doctor, if you can exert your skill by curing these yellow fever gentry, you'll establish your celebrity for ever."

The Doctor could only laugh, for he had no words to invalidate the argument.

"I'll tell you what, said my uncle, filling the Doctor a bumper of bucelis, "if Miss Fitzclarence could but inoculate us all with her virtues, as you vaccinate the parish, what a new
and happy set of beings we should appear—come, drink her health, "Fitzclarence for ever!"

"Oh, Lord no," said the Doctor, "Fitzclarence as long as she pleases, but not for ever—consider she's a d—d fine girl, she must not die an old maid."

"Not for the world," replied my uncle, "though sometimes there's little difference between a woman's driving monkies, or leading apes."

"You're satirical, Sir—you're too severe, upon my soul," cried the Doctor.

"England's motto for that, Doctor," replied my uncle, "I said no harm—I aimed no arrow, fly as it might; you grow touchy in your old age, high mettled chicks have quick pulses, they tell me."

"Yes," said the Doctor," and old game cocks have spurs, I'll assure
you, that can strike pretty home occasionally; talking of game cocks, by the bye, puts me in mind of that old game dorking mother Henpeck—you passed the day there, I heard, yesterday—you was well entertained, no doubt; mice don't starve in that cupboard, hem! hem! I'm going up to the Rectory this afternoon, with my daughter Elizetta, just by way of introduction, so as to establish an intimate footing between her and Miss Fitzclarence, charming clever girl—an acquaintance worth cultivating—gain something by it, perhaps."

"Why, you're sure you can lose nothing," cried my uncle, peevishly, and much vexed to hear of his intended visit to the Rectory. "I dare say," continued he, "Dr. Markwell and the ladies will be out: we were
to have taken tea, and a walk together."

"What, here! taken tea here?" enquired the Doctor.

"Here, or there, no matter which," replied my uncle, "but at all events it was a reciprocal engagement, which makes me say I think you'll not find them at home."

"Well, we can but go and see," said the Doctor, nothing dismayed, "if we don't find them at home, we shall conclude they are here, and we can join your walk in the evening, you know."

"No: I don't know any such thing," answered my uncle, "its an equal chance we don't walk at all; I may not be inclined, perhaps: and they, I'm sure, will have too much good manners to leave me at home alone."

"Of course, of course," rejoined
the Doctor, looking very foolish at not receiving an expected invitation to join the tea party, as he imagined, and rising precipitately from his chair, "we'll set off and try our luck, however," cried he, "so, good day, gentlemen," and away he went.

"Deuce take the man," exclaimed my uncle, "how he perplexes and counteracts all my plans: now I won't go to Markwell's: I'll send Geoffry to say so: all the delightful and edifying converse I anticipated will be marred by his scandalous babbling larum, and before breakfast to-morrow the whole village will know what we all said, did, and even thought, with a correct catalogue of how many pieces of bread and butter each person eat, and the precise attitude in which Miss Fitzclarence sipped her tea: therefore, I won't go,

6 4
Victor—I can't bear it—I shall be out of temper all night."

"I shall be greatly disappointed, Sir," said I—"don't send Geoffry: let us take a walk up, at all risks."

"Well! well! have your own way," replied my uncle, "but as Tonic and his chit are gone off, full tilt, I shan't stir this hour to come."

"Rosa will expect to see us, at all events," said I in the mildest, humblest, tone I could assume.

"Most likely," rejoined my uncle, "and you expect to see Rosa—yes, yes—I comprehend."

I now dared not say another word about it, and different topics took their turn, till the irksome hour had elapsed; and, as I began to fidget on my chair, and draw my watch, my uncle caught the hint of my impatience, and calling for his hat and cane, instantly set off for the Rectory,
where we expected to find the Tonics, but to our great satisfaction Dr. Markwell informed us, they had called and left their card in the absence of the family; for, as there was no afternoon service, they had strolled with Rosa to shew her the adjacent prospects that bounded the village, and make some calls of cottage benevolence, in the Rector's usual way; and in one of these visits the Tonics missed them, and no doubt returned very sullenly home again, keeping an Argus's eye on my uncle's gate, to see the expected tea-visitors, while we were most happily employed in the romantic seclusion of the Rectory: my uncle and Dr. Markwell commenting over Macklin's superb bible, with which a certain bishop had presented him, and Rosa and I botanizing till the evening dews
compelled us to decline our amusement, and commence another theme.

As we approached the parlour-window, we distinctly heard the gentlemen in earnest conversation; and, in order not to interrupt them, we returned to a little romantic sort of hermitage, on which the resplendent moon-beams played in full lustre through the acacia boughs, lightly waving in the evening breeze, as the dulcet nightingale twitted her sombre lullaby, in cadence broken, or irregularly sinking to repose within her foilaged nest.

The hour, the scene, the opportunity, was most auspicious; we took a seat—my arm encircled the waist of Rosa, whose soft blue eyes were fixed upon the beauteous evening star.

"Behold," cried she, "yon glo-
rious planet—lovely resplendent gem of heaven—'tis Venus."

"Queen of love," answered I, abruptly, "whose celestial shadow I there behold, whilst I here clasp the terrestrial substance"—and what effervescent rhapsody followed, I shall suppress, and leave to the reader's imagination, merely observing, before Rosa Fitzclarence, and Victor St. Alban, quitted the hermitage, he had sworn eternal love by the light of the moon, and sacred fidelity, pure as the lustre of the evening star, the celestial witnesses of his fervent vows scarce breathed in whisper, e'er the voice of Dr. Markwell broke upon our ear, and hastening from the seat, the beauteous Rosa, whose trembling hand rested on my arm, close to her palpitating heart, entered the room, suffused in blushes, to which I rapturously felt I had given birth, as the
candles beamed full upon her face, where love's temerity did not permit him to discern a frown of disapproval.

Dr. Markwell now requested Rosa to favour us with some of the exquisite airs from the Messiah, which she executed on the piano in such masterly style, that Handel might have stood entranced with admiration.

"Rosa makes her piano talk, positively," said the amiable and charming Mrs. Markwell.

"Yes, indeed, it speaks to the heart pretty eloquently," replied my uncle: "I'll tell you what, young lady," continued he, "you have a great deal to answer for; it is not clear to me, but all the epidemics in the village will be laid to your charge: you are a very dangerous young lady—you rob us of our
hearts"—my uncle paused, leered at me, and Rosa's cheek was scarlet with hermitage conviction, as he thus continued: "Yes, you make us invalidate our understanding, by your superior knowledge and perfections; you kill all the women with envy, and you deal daggers among the men;" then, turning jocosely to myself, and looking earnestly at Dr. Markwell, "guilty, or not guilty, what say you both? behold the culprit smiling at her crimes."

"Guilty! guilty!" replied I, emphatically.

"And am I not allowed to make my defence?" asked Rosa, "unconscious as I am of conviction."

"Your condemnation is general—your actions speak for themselves," cried my uncle, who had fixed himself at her elbow, and was enthusias-
tically pressing her hand between his.

"Then I must bow to the decision of my jurors," continued Rosa, "but I hope, if I should hereafter be accused of that heinous crime called vanity, I shall find friends in court to allow every lenity for the offence, when they reflect on the source from whence it could alone originate: I have never been used to adulation from my birth, and its a science I cannot inculcate."

"Pardon me, my child, its a baneful weed that does not grow in our village," said the Rector, "suffer me, for the first time, to correct your opinion on that head as erroneous, for I am bold to say, those friends you now behold are no adulators."

"No, by heavens," replied my uncle, "and I trust time and circum-
stance will convince Miss Fitzclarence of it."

"Its in vain to contend the point," answered Rosa, extending a lilly hand to my uncle and the Rector, "thus, thus, accept my grateful thanks for your good opinion, which I shall hope ever to cherish and deserve in a still more eminent degree."

"And won't you subjoin mine, Miss Fitzclarence?" asked I, extending my hand.

"Could Mr. St. Alban suppose himself excluded in those sentiments of gratitude? ah, if he did, he little knew the heart of Rosa."

At this unguarded moment I seized her hand, I pressed it to my daring lip, but Rosa gently withdrawing it, awaked my reverie, as did the reprehension of my uncle, who observed I was a more gallant fellow than he supposed me to be.
We soon after partook sandwiches, and at the sober hour of ten left Rosa, and the worthy family, to their private and regular system of evening prayer.
"YOU had a fine long chat with Rosa, in the garden," said my uncle, as we walked home.

"Yes," replied I, "such a one as will never be forgotten by me."

"That's a mighty emphatical never," repeated my uncle.

"It is, however, a reality," said I.

"Why, what conversation can have made so deep an impression on your mind?" continued he.
"The language of the heart, the extacies of the soul, which in the moment of impulse, I revealed to Rosa."

"You have?" said my uncle, grasping my arm tighter.

"Yes, Sir, most solemnly, I swear it—and never will I for a moment be guilty of duplicity to you—by your counsel I will ever abide; and, if I attain the accomplishment of my hopes, 'tis to you only I shall be indebted for the earthly bliss I may enjoy."

"Noble boy," exclaimed my uncle; "I blame no part of your conduct but the precipitancy of your explanation."

"But do you reflect on the torments of suspense, to counterbalance that precipitancy? do you consider the priority of rivalship? do you think it possible any man can behold Rosa Fitzclarence with a heart
of indifference? and may not that heart be devoted in a moment, whilst I, through the idle prepossession of diffidence, became its unalterable victim, and lead a life of despair."

My uncle uttered one of his deepest groans, but made no reply—and by this time we reached home.

"Success and happiness attend you, my boy," said my uncle, as he closed the door of his apartment, with his eyes suffused in tears. "Don't be too sanguine, I'll make a point of conversing with Dr. Markwell on the subject, from whom I shall gain much information, as he is the intimate friend of the guardian who consigned Rosa to his protection, at the period of whose return from the continent all her concerns will be settled, and she becomes her own mistress, if with a disengaged heart, vive l'amour, and Victor St. Alban, if———"
"For heaven's sake, not another word, that if is dagger sufficient," cried I, closing my door to press my pillow, and ruminate on hopes and fears, for certainty of her sentiments I had none; Dr. Markwell's interruption had precluded even the most falttering syllable from escaping her lips—time, and patience, were the only alternatives, and I was compelled to abide by them.

With sleepless eyes, and feverish anxiety, I left my thorny restless pillow the moment I heard the domestics arranging the house, and without knowing why, directed my wandering footsteps to the Rectory, without reflecting on the impropriety of such an early intrusion—but rosy-footed love would not be checked in his career, though the path had been strewn with thorns, and I found my-
self at the gate before I knew I was half way there.

I gazed earnestly around: Rosa's chamber-window was thrown open, but the closed shutters of the good Rector denoted he was still in the embraces of Morpheus. My heart beat high—no Rosa made her appearance. A cow-boy advanced towards the spot—'twas little Peter, the gardner's son, who worked for Dr. Markwell: the boy was alternately whistling the cows along, and munching a handful of cold suet pudding.

"Do you know Miss Rosa?" asked I.

"Ees, Sir."

"Have you seen her this morning?"

"Ees, Sir," and he took another mouthful of pudding.

"Can you tell where she is?"

"Noa, Sir."
"How long ago did you see her?"

"A main good bit,"—and down went another piece of pudding, which Peter regarded more than my enquiry.

"Tell me," continued I, taking out all the halfpence I had, and putting them in his spare hand, "tell me where to find her."

Peter stuffed the last morsel of pudding into his mouth, eyed the halfpence, which he pocketted, and half choking, with a variety of faces to clear his mouth, and pointing with his smutty finger down the opposite lane, exclaimed, "yonder be'es leady a-coming."

Away I flew, and met her in a moment; she had been herberising on the heath that bounded one extremity of the village, and had collected in a little willow basket, a variety of wild blossoms, which she smilingly
told me were for her pupil, St. Alban's edification.

We soon entered into a more interesting conversation, for I persuaded her to return to the heath, where, unheard and unseen, our intercourse was sacred, and in this sequestered spot I again renewed the subject of my thoughts.

Rosa heard me with attention: her ingenuous lip avowed her heart had no prior prepossession, neither had her guardian any dominion over her at the moment of her coming of age, but that the high estimation in which he held Dr. Markwell, from the character represented of him by her guardian, would never permit her to dispose of her hand without his approbation, as she beheld him with parental love and reverence.

"Allow me time," said she, with one of her angelic smiles, "to learn
the virtues of St. Alban, that I may assure myself my heart is no truant to his precepts, and by that means experience, in various shapes, will convince him if the bauble he seeks is worthy his acceptance."

I was now the happiest of human beings, and when I parted with Rosa, at the Rectory gate, I learned with rapture we were to meet again at Lady Lustre's in the evening, where Rosa extorted a faithful promise I would not render myself particular, as the embarrassment would cause her much displeasure, for the observant eye of my uncle, on such occasion, would expose what she most wished to conceal, "for I know not why," said she, "but whenever he looks at me my heart trembles, and my burning cheek seems to indicate some unfathomable reason."

"And is it not equally strange,"
said I, "that the sight of you always creates similar sensations in him; but I can in some measure account for his perturbation, by your similitude to a lady to whom he once paid his addresses in the early part of life, and whom he loved with that degree of fervour, that he never suffered any other women to supplant her: thus, when he gazes on your polygraphic form, wonder no longer at his starting tear, his heart-felt sigh, for he loves you as his child."

"Good heavens," said Rosa, "how singular; I almost wish you had'nt told me, I shall now feel doubly embarrassed—good old gentleman, how much I pity him; his sensibility must be exquisite, and I am the unfortunate cause of perpetually rousing its dormant tranquillity."

The village clock struck nine—we bade each other a hasty adieu—
and in a few minutes I reached home, just as my uncle had descended to breakfast, who, like myself, had passed a sleepless night. Disdaining an iota of duplicity towards my uncle, I frankly told him where, and with whom, I had been; the topic of our conversation, the surprise of Rosa at the explanation of her resemblance; and, in short, all that had past, soliciting his advice how to proceed towards the attainment of my hopes, as I felt as much awe in the presence of Dr. Markwell, as Rosa did in that of my uncle; he, however assured me, I had nothing to fear, if the worthy Rector was the only impediment: "but I advise you to write to your father," continued he, "explain the affair, dutifully implore his consent to your happiness, and tell him, if liberality has not power to draw his purse-strings, love and nature have sufficient influence with
your churlish old misanthropical uncle, to induce him to reward virtue, and constitute happiness, with the contents of his, even to his last shilling; or, though he died a bankrupt, you now know my sentiments Victor, therefore express your own to your father in what terms you think proper, and if he disproves your choice, lay the blame at my door."

"My gratitude, Sir," replied I—but my voice faultered, I felt the momentary sensation of strangulation seize my throat—I burst into tears like an infant—nor could I have finished the sentence for worlds, had even the loss of Rosa, at that moment, been the consequence of my silence.

"Keep your gratitude, my boy, till it is more requisite—its always a current coin in every country, and when you forget to enrich yourself by its possession, you will be por
indeed; liberally disburse what you can spare, but reserve a portion for the hour of exigence; retire after breakfast to my study, and dispatch your letter to London."

"Not till you have perused its contents, Sir," replied I.

"That as you please," answered he, "but here comes Mr. Prolix, on some tenantry business, I will give him audience while you retire."

Away I brushed, and never pen glided smoother on such a subject. My uncle highly approved its effusions, and the portentous letter was dispatched two hours after in the postman's bag, much to my joy and anticipated hope.
WE had scarce sat half an hour talking over the pleasure we expected in our afternoon visit, when Dr. Tonic called to inform us his family had received an invitation from Lady Lustre, to meet Miss Fitzclarence, assuring us Mr. Earwig, and Mr. Munchausen were to be of the party.

"Humph!" ejaculated my uncle, "I hope Mrs. Deposit won't be there also."
"Oh, no, Lady Lustre and her don't set their horses," replied the Doctor.

"I should think not," said my uncle; "sin and innocence, black and white, snow and sunshine, are not more opposite."

"Mrs. Deposit's a devilish clever woman, though," continued Dr. Tonic.

"Devilish enough, I'll allow," rejoined my uncle; "but if, like Sir Andrew Analize, you search your dictionary for the explanation of the word clever, you'll trace no analogy to Mrs. Deposit's perfections; but, if you look to the word craft, there you have it in full force."

"Oh! oh!" said the Doctor, "she must not come here for a character, I find."

"O, yes, she may," answered my
uncle, "I'd give her a just one at any time."

"Well," continued the Doctor, "I can only say, your nephew ranks high in her estimation—she talks of nobody else, calls him the Apollo Belvidere in every company, and makes him the constant theme of her discourse, and is to my knowledge now filling up her cards of invitation for a grand route, on purpose to sport your paragonized nephew."

"She may spare herself that trouble," replied my uncle, "my nephew won't sport himself in the Calypsian grotto, you may depend upon it."

"What, not go?" fiercely answered the Doctor, "Oh, fie! fie! you can't refuse—consider your nephew is on his preferment."

"No such thing," said my uncle, "he's already preferred.

"What?" resumed the Doctor,
sharply, "you don't presume to tell us, Mr. Victor bids defiance to the fascinating charms of all our village belles, and has brought down a heart in chains?"

"Yes, I do," cried my uncle, "I pronounce it a captive; tell the girls from me, though Victor St. Alban's form is free, his heart is fettered, in indissoluble links, which even the all powerful charms of Miss Fitzclare-rence can never break."

"Ah! ah! say you so—hem, hem! I have my doubts you're playing the rogue with us," said the Doctor, visibly chagrined; "at that rate my daughters have no hopes, and I promise he's no small favourite of Elizetta's: I'm afraid we shall have a sad female contest when this comes to be known; you'll have much to answer for, squire, by introducing such a dangerous object."
"Like enough," cried my uncle, "if girls will build castles in the air, and grasp at shadows, they must thank themselves for their disappointment.

"Well, but at all events, you will certainly go to Deposit's gala?" said the Doctor.

"I pledge you my word I will not," resumed my uncle, "I'll pawn my honour, unredeemable, if you catch me there; and as those are very comprehensive expressions to the lady in question, you may make the town larum of your tongue, if you like it, and disburse the news wholesale, retail, or for exportation.

"Hah! hah! hah!" cried the Doctor, "I can win a high bet at the Three Pigeons to-night, if I choose to take in the knowing ones: what dy'e think, now, was the odds at the Dolphin on Saturday night, that your
nephew was in love with Miss Fitz-clarence? egad, Sir, I was laid twenty guineas to five—but dam’me I had my doubts, I little thought how the game stood."

"Aye, aye! you’re gammoned, sure enough, Doctor—e’ent he, Victor?—have I not spoke the truth?"

"You certainly have, Sir," replied I.

"Then I’m dumb: I have not a word to offer; but I suppose I may advance what I’ve heard, from such undoubted authority?" said the Doctor.

"O yes, you may advance it on full speed round the village, we shan’t retreat, depend upon it," replied my uncle; "you may administer it as you please to the men, and make it into boluses for the ladies."

"Uncle," said I, laughing, "why,
at that rate, you'll physic the whole parish."

"So much the better for the Doctor, he knows how to dose'em: it's an ill wind that blows nobody good; and I'll bet a hundred, that in consequence of this unexpected gust, Mrs. Deposit's weathercock principles will shift completely opposite, and the Apollo of Belvidere be transformed, in a twinkling, to a daemon of abhorrence."

"Never talk of the devil with a doctor at your elbow," exclaimed Tonic, rising from his chair.

"You're right, Tonic! you're right!" said my uncle, "I forgot myself at the moment; I did not intend it as a lancet touch, I assure you, so if it made an incision, it must have been on your conscience."

The Doctor forced a hah, hah!
and, wishing us a good morning, bundled off with his budget of news.

"Now, where's your flying colours, Victor?" asked my uncle, "now, what's the price of gudgeons? who says an old sportsman can’t net game?"

"And not only net, but dexterously make game that nets itself," replied I.

"Yes," said my uncle, "I'm mistaken if my opthalmic invention has not blinded the whole parish, and annihilated all suspicion from your attentions to Rosa, which was the baneful village hydra I wanted to crush, and I think my plan will now repel all the arrows of sarcasm, that were flying against you: so that you'll neither be plagued by the women, nor bantered by the men."

I confessed myself highly indebted to his ingenuity, and the remain-
der of the day passed on without any peculiar occurrence, till the appointed hour of Lady Lustre's engagement called our most willing attendance, save the mortifying idea of meeting the Tonic family.

"Be cautious, Victor," said my uncle, as we entered the park gate, "be cautious and reserved—remember 'tis the request of Rosa—yonder, I descry, the Tonic's watching our approach from the window."

My heart bounded as we entered the drawing-room—but the Rector's family were not arrived; Munchausen was playing off his artillery with Misses Tonic's and Lady Lustre, who had never been in his company but once, and was not aware of his rhodomontade; thought him a pleasant, entertaining, well-read man, and in consequence of her encouraging politeness, subjoined to his own
brazen effrontery, he was now paying his adulative respects, *self-invited* by an accidental call of convalescent enquiry; king of the company, and carbonading the poor doctor into a stew, one moment while he wound him round his little finger the next, in the most ludicrous style; and Mr. Earwig was buzzing in Lady Lustre's ear an account of the successful progress of a certain charity, to which most respectable institution he had the honour to belong, and on which establishment he was setting down her ladyship's name as a new member of that laudable society—"charity covereth a multitude of sins," exclaimed he, putting his tablet and pencil into his pocket.

"The mantle of charity ought to be elastic, in my opinion," said Munchausen, "for if it was as large as the flag of Victory, that reached
from the Old Bailey to St. Paul’s, as the covering of Lord Nelson’s virtues, it would not be half big enough to cover some folk’s sins.”

“Probably you mean your own,” said the pedantic man of charity, “shall I lend you my Dutch wrapper, as an additional covering? he! he! he!”

“No, thank you! thank you! you want it yourself,” replied Munchausen; “beside, to tell you the truth, I don’t like the lining, its too light and flimsey, the outside is a specious sample, but the inside part won’t answer my purposes—seem warm, and be warm, I don’t admire gauze blankets—its also got a double facing, and that I dislike.”

“That is the very reason why I offered it,” answered Mr. Earwig, “I thought it would suit you exactly.”

At this moment of controversy,
Rosa and Mrs. Markwell, on the arm of the Rector, approached through the elm vista.

Munchausen, rushing to the window, on the intelligence, and applying his glass to his quizzical eye, exclaimed, "there comes beauty, and divinity—ye Gods preserve me from corruption! what a charming girl."

"What a speech from a married man," observed the Doctor.

"Poh," replied Munchausen, "it was a public invocation to the gods: if any married man makes no worse speech in private, than I have done publicly, he need not ask you to blush for him, Doctor."

By this time Rosa entered the room, and the exercise of walking had suffused such a roseate blush on her angelic countenance, I never saw her look so enchanting.

Lady Lustre received her with her
usual engaging urbanity, and placed her by her side on the same sopha. Oh, how I contemplated her lovely form, reclining its elegant symmetry full on my opposite gaze, one blooming rose adorned (if possible) her beauteous bosom, whilst another was pinned into a chip hat that shaded one of the finest faces nature ever moulded; her robe was the vesture of simplicity, formed of plain white sarsnet.

"Damme," exclaimed Munchausen, in a whisper to me, "I can't sit it, by G—d—I never saw such a d—d fine girl in my life—what a dog-day picture of contemplation—are you, for God's sake, transfixed in silent adoration? or are you an inhabitant of Mont-Blanc, whom nothing but a salamander could melt into feeling? Zounds, man, the famous Mirza Abdallah has not such
a woman in his Haram; look how the old Doctor screws his funny eye at her: do also observe the swelling envy of the daughters, Tonics, versus Hygiæ—hey, my good fellow, did you ever see such an angel?—I'm sure I, who am in the constant habits in London of seeing and gallanting thousands at your ram-cram city balls, never! no, never! saw her equal!"

"She is extremely handsome," replied I, non-chalantly, "and I dare say you will presently be as much charmed with her conversation as her person."

"Oh! that I was five and twenty," exclaimed Munchausen.

"Why, then," replied Mr. Earwig (who had stuck himself by the side of Rosa, peering close in her face, and offering her his mocuba tabatiere) "you would be just half your age."
"Is there any occasion to remind a man of his most formidable enemy? the personal innovation of that hoary monarch, *Mister Time,* are quite mortifying enough, without talking of *winter* while the tree is in *bloom,*" said Munchausen.

"I say, Earwig," cried the witty Doctor, "Munchausen's a pretty *full grown blossom,* methinks; I suppose he's German cousin to the *evergreen* family—hah! hah! hah!"

"No, no, he is the *genuine hereditary* great-great-great grandson to the celebrated Baron Munchausen—an absolute descendant, in every sense of the word, his matchless polygraph in thought, *word,* and deed."

"Pray, Sir, who might furnish you with my pedigree?" asked Munchausen.

"Yourself, Sir—you explore it to every body."
Lady Lustre smiled, and so did Rosa, but Munchausen remained silent.

"I had a visit from Mr. Faddle this morning," observed her ladyship.

"What," interrupted the Doctor, "did he bring your ladyship a receipt to make a plumb-pudding?—hem! hem! hem!"

"No, indeed, he did not," replied Lady Lustre, "he called only with a polite enquiry after my health—I invited him to join our party, and meet Miss FitzclarencG, but he's so wonderfully bashful, he declined."

"I don't wonder he's a coward, where there's such an object of danger," said Munchausen; "what think you, Mr. Victor?

"Oh," rejoined the Doctor, "I won't allow Mr. Victor any judgement in the business; Mr. Faddle
might feel himself in eminent danger; Munchausen has a heart to lose, but Mr. Victor has ne'er a one to lose or find in this village—he is no longer the ladies' Apollo Belvidere, but their invulnerable Achilles; some London elegante has purloined the treasure, it seems, and sent us the casket."

At this speech, Rosa, whose eyes had been fixed on Dr. Tonic, reverted them on me, with such a glance of enquiry, as I would have given worlds to explain, as the Doctor thus continued his ill-timed aggravating discourse.

"Yes, yes, Mr. Victor, we shall be aware how you play the rogue amongst us—shield your hearts, ladies—beware of the archer—I'm not in joke—Nunkey will vouch for the truth—won't you Mr. Tweazy?"

"I never suffer any body to catechise me but the parson," replied my
uncle, "if Dr. Markwell asks me that question to-morrow morning, I shall reveal the truth: but as private concerns should be privately discussed, we'll drop the subject, as I'm no pupil of buffoonery, and I presume my nephew does not mean to obtain a wife by public election—but in case it should be necessary, you'll give him your vote, and canvass for him, into the bargain, won't you, Doctor?"

"It depends upon the object in view," replied Tonic (leering at Rosa, whose cheek had actually lost its roseate tint, and appeared much embarrassed) "if Miss Fitzclarence was the point of contention, I'd hold up both hands."

"Oh, Miss Fitzclarence's charms will canvass for her, without your assistance," replied Mr. Earwig; "when she stands candidate, it will
be a hollow election, without bribery or corruption, depend upon it.”

"Oh, don't turn match-maker, Doctor Tonic, its a very unthankful office," said Lady Lustre; "I dare say," continued she, "if Mr. St. Alban has lost his heart, those who possess it will guard it with great care and fidelity."

"Of that your ladyship, I am well convinced," replied I, fixing my stedfast eye on that of Rosa, which at the instant meeting, spoke eloquent for the beauteous blush remantled on her cheek."

"Come, come, gentleman, a truce to what don't concern the moment; general love is as nauseating as an emetic, while mutual love belongs only to the disquisition of two, and is a palatable potion of syrup of roses mixed with extract of thorns," said Lady Lustre.
"I wish to my soul, parson Faddle was here to pop down that receipt," cried Munchausen, "I'll invent a few non-fong-pow dishes the next time I see him; I'll furnish him with a natty collection, I warrant me, if he loves receipts: pray, what sort of a sermon does he dish up as he's so clever at cooking?"

"Oh, a very digestable one," replied Dr. Markwell, "but, my dear Sir, no reflections on the cloth, I can't allow that, we must call another topic."

"We have discussed the two most divine upon earth, viz. Love and Religion," answered Munchausen.

"Suppose we drop both, and call another," said Lady Lustre, "satirical subjects are always dangerous."
A WALK round the grounds was now proposed, and most readily as-
serted to by me, who longed to speak to Rosa; but having no hopes of ac-
complishing it, evasive of the argus eyes of the Misses Tonics, I remain-
ed in the rear of the pedestrian group, and hastily scribbling the following lines with my pencil, I determined giving them to her as the moment of opportunity served: the billet run
thus:—“Doubt all you hear from Tonic relative to St. Alban’s engaged heart—’tis only Rosa’s, imperturbably veiled to mislead the babbler, by the ingenuity of my uncle; meet me at the Rectory gate, to-morrow morning, at seven, where I will explain all.” I now mixed with the group, and crossing one of the Chinese bridges, over which a willow hung in rich profusion, and occasioned us to pass singly, I slipped it into her hand, and she as dexterously consigned it to her pocket.

Willing to unfold the secret to her inspection, I turned the conversation on epigrams, charades, enigmas, &c. observing I was certain Miss Fitzclarence could favour the company with some, either of her own production or selection. This roused the mettle of Miss Tonic, who drew out her pocket-book, and read several.
I touched the elbow of Rosa, requesting her to search her's.

"As a proof I have no such thing," replied she, "here's my repository, you're welcome to convince yourself, it retains no secrets."

"But some scrap of paper, in your pocket, may contain a thing of the kind?" and I looked so earnestly in her face, that she instantly comprehended me, and taking the arm of Miss Tonic, I lead her away for a moment, to facilitate the inspection of Rosa, whose eye glanced over the contents of the billet in a moment, and she joined us instantly, enquiring if I had solved the enigma.

"Have you?" said I, "as you stood musing under that tulip tree?"

"O, yes," replied she smiling, "I think I have—but if Miss Tonic will
favour we with another sight of it, I shall be more competent."

I was now satisfied the telegraph had answered in unison, and all was right—Rosa gave the proper solution to Miss Tonic, who declared she was a witch.

Munchausen had by this time arrived at the famous tulip tree, (under which Rosa had perused my billet), on the curious shaped leaf of which, he was holding an elaborate argument, observing, that those leaves he saw in Italy were so large, that he always made use of them for saddle-cloths, being a cool and elegant ornament for his thorough-bred filly; he had also, in very hot weather, caused some of them to be sown together with vine tendrils, to form him a counterpane, which had a very novel effect."
"Novel enough:—hem!—hem!" cried the Doctor.

"It was an invention of my own," resumed Munchausen.

"Nobody doubts it," said Mr. Earwig, "you're one of the unaccountables."

"Oh, hang the fool who has no invention," replied Munchausen, "I would not give a farthing for a man who could not hoax a whole parish—aye, and make them treat him with a rump, and dozen, for his ingenuity afterwards, without finding it out."

"That must be no easy task," observed Dr. Markwell:

"Nothing more easy, begging your reverence's pardon, than to take in the flats," answered Munchausen: "its nothing, when you're used to it, it really becomes natural, and familiar."
"To constant practitioners it may," assumed Dr. Markwell, who began to suspect he had an adept at his elbow, towards whom it would be necessary to keep a very reserved conduct, to prevent those glaring impositions on his understanding, which he perceived Munchausen was practising on the credulity of others.

Munchausen next peeped into the music rotunda, a most spacious and elegant structure lately finished, and here he sued, Miss Fitzclarence, on bended knee, in the whimsical attitude of an imploring statue, to favour the company with a song, with which the dulcet warbler instantly complied, diffusing universal admiration, and throwing Munchausen into extatics; he swore by every heathen divinity, that the Mara, the Billington, the Catalani, were a trio of ravens, compared to her melody; that she lived upon nightingale's eggs, and
that Apollo only could have been her music-master.

Rosa laughed at his panegyric, and we strolled on to the Gothic arch, which Munchausen pretending to measure with his cane, pronounced the one lately erected in his park to be five feet higher, supporting on its summit a colossal statue, in highly preserved bronze.

"Why, not your own image executed in brass?" asked Mr. Earwig.

"Ah, why not, indeed," said the Doctor.

"Because that would be no novelty—but if either of you gentlemen will sit to my statuary, for a cast, the composition may be brass, or bronze, which ever best suits your complexions, I care not which, for whether its Colossus, Dr. Tonic, or a Colossial Earwig—an object's an object."
This speech, uttered with the most sanctified appearance of reality, caused a hearty laugh between Lady Lustre, Rosa, and Dr. Markwell, while Dr. Tonic, and Mr. Earwig, completely caught in their own net, walked silently on towards the cascade.

"Ah, ha!" exclaimed the ever-ready Munchausen, "here we are at Tivoli, sure enough; now, I'll tell you how I have arranged my Staffordshire grotto, exact in the Tivoli-an similitude, observe, because I have added a transparent painting of Macenae's villa, upon a curious construction, so as pleasingly to delude the senses of the spectator, and make him imagine himself actually at the extreme of that beautiful perspective ruin."

"Who the d—l is to imagine what they never saw?" cried the Doctor,
"I know nothing about Miss Senna's villa, not I."
"Then you've no concepitive ideas beyond senna tea," said Munchausen, laughing at the Doctor's stupidity; "who the d—l is Miss Senna, as you call her, I never heard of her at Tivoli?"
"Nor I, neither" said Rosa, smiling, "but I have contemplated with rapture the picturesque scenery of the celebrated ruins and cascade—indeed I have a sketch I made on the spot, in my portfolio."
"Now are you satisfied, Doctor," exclaimed Munchausen.
"Not perfectly," replied old Tonic; "you learned people are too refined in your ideas, to be at all times comprehensible."
"But there are enlightened beings—there are souls of congenial sentiment—heaven forbid we should
all be the offspring of the Dunderhead family, though its an immense numerous one, I allow,” cried Munchausen,

“Your birth-day's the fourth of November, I presume,” said Mr. Earwig.

“Therabouts, I believe,” “replied Munchausen, “I know you and I both came into the world time enough for a Guildhall dinner, on the ninth—you for the toast, and I for the crumbs.”

Having now strolled over the principal part of the grounds that excited admiration, we returned to the house, where tea awaited our arrival, which was succeeded by a merry game at loo, and a whist table, till the hour of ten, when a genteel and elegant little cold collation completed our evening's hospitable entertainment, and treated me with a moon-
light walk home, by the side of Rosa, to whom, in a whisper, I related the substance of Dr. Tonic's conversation, by repeating the excellent expedient my uncle had used, to promote his taciturnity, and quell suspicion."
IT now wanted but three days to Mrs. Fungus's fete champetre, to which the Markwell family had received individual cards of invitation; but as it was a species of amusement dissonant to the principles of Dr. Markwell, and not agreeable to his wife, it was agreed Rosa should return an excuse, to elude suspicion, and go incog, under the protection of my uncle and self; but what charac-
ter to assume was the puzzle, for either as ballad-singer, or minstrel, she would instantly be discovered; it was therefore agreed, after much discussion, she and my uncle should go as "Sterne and Maria," precisely habited in costume, whilst I dressed in Alice's old clothes, determined to enjoy a little sport as an old gypsy fortune-teller, my uncle having promised to furnish me with a private tablet of the dresses of each parties I most wished to torment, which by going half an hour previous to my entrance, and enclosing the list in a small purse, as a reward for my occult abilities, would have it amply in his power to accomplish; and further to carry on the joke, I proposed sending to London for false noses, to wear during supper.

This was a scheme highly approved by my uncle; Rosa and Mrs. Mark-
well undertook the superintendence of my habitulement, and her own, while the Rector furnished my uncle with a bushy white wig, cocked hat, and cane, which was all the character required, subjoined to a black suit.

On the evening preceding the fete, while Alice and the house-keeper were patching and gypsyeizing a ragged gown and petticoat, to render me appropriate, in bounced Dr. Tonic, red hot with village news of the intended characters he had been able to collect, a piece of intelligence very acceptable to me.

"So," cried he, the whole village is in a bustle; I understand there won't be an unmasked face at the supper, except the hostess, and her daughter; its a d—d good plan; we shall have rare fun, my girls are half mad—Mrs. Tonic goes as a blind woman, and my son Bob's wife is to
lead her as a beggar-girl—Elizetta a ballad-singer—Georgiana a flower-girl—Bob, as a noisy watchman, for its easy enough to cry the hour."

"Yes," replied my uncle, "he can't have any great task in doing that."

"Why, you know, squire," rejoined the Doctor, "we country Puts don't understand masquerading like you Londoners; we have therefore but little inclination to expose our deficiencies on the score of witticism: for my part, I have not fixed upon any character yet—how do you mean to go?"

"Perhaps as Dr. Slop," answered my uncle.

"Egad!" exclaimed Tonic, "that character will exactly suit me—I'll go home and study it directly—it's the very thing—but have you heard of Lady Lustre's intention? she means to go as Charity, with Dame Mar-
gery's three little brats, on a plan of beneficence; she's a wonderful strange woman; then, again, let me consider; I can tell you half the characters in the parish; Major Pea-Chick goes as a sultan; Mrs. Deposit, a sultana; Lady Flam, a virgin of the sun; Mrs. Macfriz, a chair-woman; Mr. Windfall, a sweep; Mr. Prolix, the devil on two sticks; his wife, a quaker; Mr. Deposit, an old clothes man; Mr. Faddle, a tiddy-dol, with hot plumb-pudding; widow Quiz, a cabbage-woman; Mr. Undermine, a moleskin dress; and, his son Simon, a Patagonian goose; Mr. Consequence, a common-councilman; Mrs. Coniac, a bar-maid; Mr. Coniac, Jerry Sneak; Mrs. Downright, a landlady; Mr. Strut, two faces under one hat, and his coat turned wrongside outwards; Mr. Downright, an old woman; Mrs. Wau-Wau, a
house-maid, with mop and pail; Miss Bleary, a lady doll-snip; Mrs. Henpeck, in male attire, as a slave driver with her husband in chains; Mrs. Dashwell, as nobody; Mr. Dashwell, as a dust-man.”

"Are you correct in your information?" asked my uncle.

"O yes, perfectly," answered the Doctor; "there are various other characters which I don’t immediately recollect—but of these I am positive: but for the soul of me I can’t find out Munchausen, though I hear he has sent to London for some particular habit; he’ll be the life of the cause—but how shall you go, hey, Mr. Victor? every body’s dying to know your character.

"Then, tell them I go an Achilles in complete armour."

"But where did you get it from?" asked the credulous Doctor.
"A friend has furnished me."

"The Markwells are not to be there, I understand," resumed old Tonic; "every body thought Miss Fitzclarenee would at least have represented Venus—by the bye, its a bit of a hoax upon us, for she was fully expected—its a devilish disappointment to Mrs. Fungus—I wonder what's the reason—some say she didn't choose to *hide* her pretty face, others assert she was not *competent* to support a character."

"And I'll bet a wager both suggestions are erroneous," cried my uncle, "particularly the latter."

"You are partial," answered the Doctor; "we make no phenomenon of her in our family, as you do—you absolutely magnify the very atoms of merit into enormous objects of admiration."

"And you, by peering at them
through the diminishing optics of envy, imagine them lessened in proportion to your wishes; but, recollect, Doctor, it is not every body sees with the black eyes you do," replied my uncle.

"Poh!" cried Tonic, "I allow her to be a very fine girl, handsome, accomplished, rich, and so forth: but, like most people, possessed of those endowments, she knows it, for she carries her head high enough to my daughters; she's not familiar enough to please them."

"Over familiarity is truly contemptuous," said my uncle; "a modest, elegant, degree of reserve is so much more fascinating, that I don't wonder a young lady brought up in the refined style Miss Fitzclarence has been educated, should not suit your daughters' ideas; a common village education, and a continental one in
the bosom of science, and the school of genius, must form pupils of as different a class as St. Giles's and St. James's."

"I don't see that," returned the Doctor, highly piqued—"good day, good day, Mr. Achilles, we shall look sharp for you to-morrow."

"Aye, look sharp, and be sharp, is the order of masquerading, and Victor won't be deficient, I'm sure," said my uncle.

Away went the Doctor; and highly elate at the discovery I had made of the various characters, we augured much amusement from our intended quiz, not doubting we should hear a pretty budget of village skits, at the expense of Rosa and ourselves, which was, in fact, the sole motive of our attendance, as my uncle most heartily despised Mrs. Fungus's prin-
ciples, which he was now willing to put to the test, as the only opportunity of obtaining their genuine knowledge.
NOW as it was totally impossible Rosa could dress at the Rectory without detection, the village not affording a supply of carriages to accommodate one quarter part, it was agreed Lady Lustre should be informed of the scheme, and fetch her privately in her carriage from the Rectory to our house, from whence she would be escorted by my uncle.

At nine o’clock therefore on the following evening Rosa alighted from
the carriage of Lady Lustre, the most perfect "Mouline's Maria" possible; for Yorick might have mistaken the original and admired the polygraph. Her luxuriant ringlets were confined by a green silk net, and braided with a wreath of olive; a flageolet was depended across her shoulder by a pale green ribbon, over a white jacket, and the symmetry of her elegant shape was displayed by another fastened round her waist, at the end of which, a little spaniel, she had procured of a cottager, was made prisoner, and completed the costume; my uncle, though not so tall or thin as Yorick, looked the respectable representative of that celebrated character, and Rosa was so completely at home in recital and circumstance, as actually to have placed Sterne's handkerchief in her bosom, wrapped and tied in the vine leaves, "But with which I shall not
part till I find the owner you may depend," said she smiling, "for not knowing how I may be attacked I was determined to be armed at all points."

I had not yet equipped myself and therefore left her tete-à-tete with my uncle, whilst the housekeeper slipped on my ragged black petticoat, old brown stuff gown, and a shabby red cloak, well patched, which, with a tattered blue pocket handkerchief, tied over the mutilated rim of a dirty straw hat, completed my metamorphose, at which Rosa actually started as I entered the room.

"What an Apollo Belvidere," said she laughing.

"Rather what an Achilles," replied I, placing myself before the looking glass, by which means I discovered I was incompleat, my arms being naked; I therefore begged
Alice to supply me with the legs of a pair of black worsted stockings, which made me a pair of gypsy mitts, and after presenting a few bob curtseys, we jumped into a post chaise, we had previously ordered, and off we set.

The distance was about a mile, which brought us to the romantic cottage of Mrs. Fungus (who seated in the drawing room beside her little daughter Miss Minerva, mama's darling image), was receiving the company as they entered, who respectively paid their birth-day compliments to the fairy queen of the gala, who was enquiring of her Lady mother who everybody was, and receiving the constant negative "I don't know."

The room was decorated most fantastically with artificial flowers, coloured lamps, and a chalked floor,
which the scientific skill of Mama and Miss Minerva had scrawled over in nondescript emblems of nothing.

The lawn at the back of the cottage was appropriated for dancing, the music was placed in the shrubbery, and a platform erected for the "fantastic toe" was shaded by a famous Chinese awning, lined with rose-colour calico, and decorated with bunches of palm and laurel, intermixed with a numerous blaze of lamps, many of which encircled the trees in a stile of magic brilliance, such as Mrs. Fungus had read of in her favourite novels, and from which she had copied the present display.

A numerous assemblage was crowding in, which compelled as many to throng out, for better accommodation on the lawn, but willing to remain as long as possible in the receiving room, to reconnoitre my game, we took our
seats near the throne of audience, where a general buzz was in circulation to discover who Rosa could possibly be.

We had not stood long (for to sit was impossible), when in sailed Mrs. Deposit as a sultana, loaded with all the jewels her apprentice could spare from the fangs of *redemption*, and one of the richest dresses the *repository* could furnish, that had not yet come under the *hammer*. Most unmercifully did she quiz, through an enormous glass set with brilliants, the form of our Mouline's Maria.

"I can't trace who she can be for the soul of me," cried she, lolling on the arm of Major Pea-Chick, who, audaciously snatching the handkerchief from her bosom, told her if she would give it him he'd *throw* her a better in exchange.
That's impossible," said Rosa, angrily snatching it from his rude grasp, "for its consecrated with the tear of sensibility, and as it belongs to a wise man I shall never part with it to a fool."

"'Pon honour, that's a dashy little mad speech," resumed the Major; then turning on his heel "the girl don't want wit, we'll teaze her again bye and bye," and off he strutted with his sultana.

Mr. Undermine, in his mole-skin dress, next approached to pay his respects, followed by his Patagonian goose, who, after making a reverential bend of his long neck, set up three loud quacks, much to the diversion of the company.

"If that young goose has not learnt how to hiss yet, send him to me for a few lessons," said a city alderman, who was regaling himself with a large
cheesecake, which he carried in his hand, a bite of which he offered a flower girl for old acquaintance-sake.

The devil upon two sticks now attacked the virgin of the sun, declaring he remembered the time when he was her greatest favourite, which so perplexed her purity that she dashed out of the room without giving him an answer.

Farmer Strut with his two faces was very busy looking about for his old friends, but nobody knew him from having turned his coat, he had therefore nothing to amuse and comfort him but a feast upon his nails, which he trimmed unmercifully.

“Sweep! sweep! sweep!” bawled Mr. Windfall in the ear of the widow Quiz, who was wheeling a barrow of cabbages.

“Lard, dont make such a noise,
we all know you are a sweeper," exclaimed the cabbage woman.

"And the best trade going," replied he; "you ought to know that, you served three apprenticeships to it, though you haven't sacked the soot out of the last old family chimney yet."

"Past twelve o'clock," yelped Bob Tonic, tossing the cabbages over, "you'd better shut shop and go home mistress."

"What and leave such a noisy fellow as you heir to my cabbages? No! no! I'll make you a present of one for your little family, but the young caterpillars of my own must divide the remainder."

"Any thing to be given away here?" asked old Tonic, in the character of a fisherman, with a net of gudgeons.

"Yes," answered Jerry Sneak,
"a cabbage as hard-hearted as yourself."

"I suppose if it had been a sop in the pan you'd have seized it," replied the doctor.

"Oh I'll make him a present of one as well as his son, for the trouble of distributing my remaining stock," said the cabbage woman; during which speech Mr. Prolix at her elbow exclaimed, "Don't forget a few leaves for me."

"You need not tell me, lawyers can look as sharp for a cabbage as a tailor; you'll take care of yourself no doubt, only mind the caterpillars don't blight your share of the pickings," resumed the widow, and away she trundled.

"Any old cloaths! cloaths! cloaths!" cried Mr. Deposit, catching hold of Mr. Undermine's mole-skin domino,
"any common counshil men's couws to shell?"

"No," replied Undermine, surlily, "don't bother me, I never traffic with Jews, I like open dealing."

"Ah, but you tont teal open wit you neighbours, you trick dem in de dark; haf you cot any quantity of mole's skins in you pack crownd, I'll puy dem all, I vont some for a pair of couty shoes for an owlt frint vot can pay you vell."

"Sirrah, begone!" exclaimed Mr. Simon, who was waddling behind his par forgetting he was a goose.

"Oh, my cot vat you talk; vel I vos never! no never, hear de like; how much you ax for your feathers? come, I make a pargain wit you."

"Hiss him! hiss him!" exclaimed Alderman Cheescake, en passant.

"Vell! vell! I'll go tell all my peoplish apout de wonderful coose vat I
heard talk; I tink now you vould look very stilish wit a sage nosegay. and a necklace of onions hung round your neck."

"You deserve a d—d good thrashing for making me the sport of the company," replied the goose.

Hah! hah! hah! laughed the jew, most immoderately, "You make de sport not me. Shall I treat you wit a slish of hot plum-pudding? Titly Tol, where are you, here's de talking coose in a passion for her suppper," and off he slipped in search of the walking cupboard.

A huge bear now rushed in, who throwing his paws round Mrs. Deposits's neck, moosled her most violently, and caused her to utter a loud shriek for the assistance of the watchman to take the Bear into custody before the sitting Alderman, who jo-cosely replied he was not sitting, nor
was he in office. Bob Tonic took aim at the bear with his staff, and the shaggy animal, in revenge, served Bob's wife the same trick; which in fact he practised on every female not excepting Rosa, whom it was remarked he sniffed at and surveyed with seeming sagacity, and saluted as politely as any bear could possibly do.

He next seized hold of Mrs. Henpeck's cat-o-ninetails and rearing himself on his hind legs gave her a sharp lash over the shoulders and threw it down; he then seized Lady Dol-snip, encircling her waist with one paw and escorting her with the other all round the room for a promenade, to the terror of some and diversion of others; for little Miss Minerva was so frightened that the bear should touch her, that her mama had much trouble to convince her it was not a real animal, and when he approached to pay his
quadrupedical respects Mrs. Fungus assured Mr. Bruin she should feel herself much obliged if he would lay aside or exchange his dress, as it much annoyed her company, and she was astonished any gentleman should assume so unprepossessing a character.

This rebuff in some measure restricted the liberties of the bear, who paced off to the dancers, where he caused much confusion by chiming in between every couple and turning every body the wrong way, and in going hand across with the goose caught him fast by the beak and set the whole group in a roar of laughter.

He next upset the devil-upon-two sticks; by resuming his quadrupedical march twitched off Mrs. Coniac's shoe, by which he discovered a large hole in her stocking, which he took great pains to display to the
company, by griping her foot fast in his paw and growling fiercely over it to cause attention, much to the dismay of the lady; and poor Tiddy Tol's plum pudding basket was overturned with as little ceremony, a slice from which he snatched away and walked off with it in his mouth towards charity and her three children, to whom he dropped the piece of pudding as his mite, much to her ladyship's amusement, for in this well assumed character Lady Lustre collected near ten pounds for dame Margery's twins.

Having now practised innumerable antics, and tormented the people almost beyond bearing, bruin was retiring from the busy scene to re-dress when he accidentally popped upon Major Pea-Chick, the sultan, to whom giving a cornish brotherly hug till the little man cried for mercy, he hoist-
ed him dexterously upon his back and returned with him mounted à la Mamoset, into the drawing room, where at the feet of the terrified Miss Minerva he shook off his burthen, by tipping the Major heels over head; he vowed to be revenged on the audacious brute, be who he would; but his ursine majesty could make no reply, he growled ludicrously and made a precipitate retreat out of the house into a little back cottage, where he had previously conveyed a change of dress to avoid detection, and returned to the company e'er he was well missed, as Captain Allclack, equipped in costume, with an immense snuff box, the macaba of which he had plentifully impregnated with Cayenne, this in the quickest succession he presented to every body, enlarging with rapid volubility on its excellent properties, protesting "It
would rouse their energies, clear their understanding, &c, &c. the unwary of this scheme to the tune of nine out of ten, became instant victims of credulity, and the whole room was in one incessant sneeze, some stamping with the agony of their noses, others compelled to unmask to wipe the involuntary tears that flowed from their eyes and half blinded them, during which tumult Captain Allclack had found his way into the garden and well plied the musicians, who dropping their instruments sneezed a complete concerto, while the captain still dexterously employed in the circulation of his "Tabac Mystique" was execrating them as a set of hoaxing rascals, who did not choose to play; by which confusion and stoppage of the music, the dance was totally interrupted for near half an hour.
This stratagem having had the desired effect (particularly on Major Pea-Chick, who was nearly strangled) Captain Allclack suddenly dissappeared and retiring again to his rustic toilet, equipped himself in a long flannel dressing gown and cap, and supporting the character of a pantaloon most ably, he kicked, boxed, hissed, danced, and hoaxed everybody the remainder of the evening.

END OF VOL. II.