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HILLINGDON HALL;

OR,

THE COCKNEY SQUIRE;

A TALE OF COUNTRY LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"HANDLEY CROSS," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO

THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

OF ENGLAND,

THESE VOLUMES ARE INSCRIBED,

BY THEIR

OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

The Author of this work will not trespass on the indulgence of the reader, in the way of preface, further than to say that the agricultural portion of it is not meant to discourage improvement, but to repress the wild schemes of theoretical men, who attend farmers' meetings for the pleasure of hearing themselves talk, and do more harm than good by the promulgation of their visionary views.

Hoddesdon, Herts,
October, 1844.

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HILLINGDON HALL;

OR,

THE COCKNEY SQUIRE.

A TALE OF COUNTRY LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

"O, knew he but his happiness, of men
The happiest he who, far from public rage,
Deep in the vale, with a choice few retired,
Drinks the pure pleasure of the rural life."

HILLINGDON Hall was one of those nice old-fashioned, patchy, up stairs and down stairs sort of houses, that either return to their primitive smallness, or are swept away for stately mansions with well-arranged suites of company rooms, leav-

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ing perhaps the entrance, or a room or two to disfigure the rest, and show what the edifice originally was. This at least is the fate of most of them. As soon as the last addition or improvement is completed, down comes the whole; and a plausible architect so confuses the owner with indispensables—things without which "no house can be perfect"—that when at length the masons and joiners and painters and plasterers and plumbers have taken their departure, he finds himself the master of quite a different sort of house to what he wanted, and begins to think the old patched house would have served his purpose very well, and been much more comfortable.

Hillingdon Hall was quite a specimen of the old-fashioned manor house. Driving through the neat little village, with its pretty white-washed, rose-covered cottages, a simple portico projecting a little into the street, was all that denoted a mansion of pretension; but when the door was opened, and the stranger ushered along a wide but low passage, into a fair-sized hall, with a billiard table in the centre, the numerous carved black oak doors and passages branching off, increased its importance as he proceeded. The old

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rooms, consisting of a dining and drawing room on either side of the entrance, were of fair dimensions, oak-wainscoted, with deep recesses at either end, closed by sliding shutters, but these had long been converted into a housekeeper's and "master's room," and first one and then another had been added, until a handsome dining, drawing room, and library ranged along the new front. Still there was no attempt at architectural symmetry or display. Each room had been added separately, and stuck in, as it were, so as not to interfere with its neighbours; and a verandah accommodating itself to the various angles of the house, and encompassing three sides of it, was the only piece of uniformity about the place; all the lower windows opened into this, and under its fragrant shade a tolerable share of exercise might be obtained on a wet day. The view from it was beautiful.

Beyond an undulating lawn profusely studded with gigantic oaks and ground-sweeping pines, the land stretched away to a high promontory, whose rocky peak was washed by the clear waters of the rapid Dart, which girded the two sides of the angular estate. The fields were large and

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well divided, and being of that table land frequently found on river margins, showed to the eye as large again as they were. The village with its hall stood about the centre of the angle's base, and diverging from the road, about a mile on the east, there was a sweet saunter along flowery meads up the river's course, until the gradually narrowing hills changed into craggy heights—wild and magnificent grandeur—with drooping, dark green yews, and brighter broom, or gayer gorse, or mountain ash, springing from the interstices of the unscaleable rocks and craggy steeps.

Between these lofty cliffs the rapid river flowed in noisy haste; now foaming and rushing through water-worn chasms in the massive rock, now pouring in regular flood over some breast-high barrier, now dashing and dividing into a hundred channels, against the fragments of a scattered rock, and now gliding noiselessly away into the tranquillity of deeper water.

From the giddy heights of the crag-head, the eye roved over a vast expanse of mountainous wood-clothed country.

Following up the water's course, the rocks and banks again gradually receded; the land drooped

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towards the river, whose gurgling stream sounded soothingly through the spaces between sweeping spruce, whose lofty and luxuriant forms lined either side of a well-kept grassy ride. Here pheasants fed and loitered in the tameness of tranquil security, squirrels spurted up the trees, wood-pigeons cooed wooingly in the branches, blackbirds and thrushes and nightingales, all the feathered tribe, in short, joined in the minstrelsy of the waters: and as the wanderer pursued his way amid the music of nature and the perfume of wild flowers, a sudden turn brought him again in sight of grass fields beyond the road on the other side of the angle's base from whence he had set out.

This was its out-of-door or walking aspect. From the windows, though the acclivities of the crag were lost, there were two peeps of the silvery water at the extreme sides of the angle where the banks were lowest, and an immense tract of forest scenery extending from the opposite hill, and stretching quite over the mountain's brow, broke the sky line with the spiral tops of pines and larches, commingled with grey rocks and pointed cliffs, scattered in irregular confusion over the

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wild surface. No sign of habitation appeared, save the clear white curl of smoke from the woodmen's cottages scattered at wide intervals in the deep bosom of the forest. The animation of village life was all behind the hall.

This terrestrial paradise had long been the blissful retreat of Mr. Westbury, a man of infinite talent and learning, and about one of the last of the old-fashioned race of country gentlemen who lived all the year round on their estates. The beauty of the spot might indeed plead in excuse for so uncivilized a proceeding, for Mr. Westbury had ample means of partaking of London pleasures in the unostentatious style of personal comfort, which after all is the truest way of enjoying them. But year after year rolled on, season succeeded season, without the vacuum occurring that required the filling up of London life.

Happy in the tranquillity of the country, happy in the companionship of a sympathizing wife, happy in the society of congenial friends, happy in the seclusion of the woods that his hands had planted, or in wandering over the fields and meadows that his skill had fertilized, age succeeded youth,

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"And all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commenced ere the world was past."

He was the patriarch of the district—the man to whom all disputes were referred, all plans submitted—the man by whom all charities were promoted—the petty king in fact. The humble inhabitants of the little village looked up to him, the wealthier neighbours were always anxious to consult him; and when death closed the eyes of the amiable owner of Hillingdon Hall, and his comfortable mansion, with its rich and picturesque domain, its woods and waterfalls, varied and romantic scenery became the subject of newspaper advertisements, people far and wide regretted the loss, and the inhabitants of the pretty little village felt that the sun of Hillingdon's glory had set for ever.

Some time elapsed after the sale before it became known who was the purchaser of the Hillingdon estate; some gave it to one person, some to another; the lawyers, as usual, were "mum."

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CHAPTER II.

"———— O most delicate fiend!
Who is't can read a woman?"
SHAKSPEARE.

MRS. FLATHER and Mrs. Trotter, who had long battled for the honour of being second to the Hall people, and who had only being restrained from downright acts of hostility by the amiable intervention of Mr. and Mrs. Westbury, seemed to have entered into a sort of truce in case the new comer should require their united opposition.

Mrs. Flather was a simple, apparently open-hearted, but in reality double-dealing, half-cunning sort of woman, extremely candid and straightforward when it suited her convenience, and extremely stupid and dull of comprehension when the reverse was the case. She was the undespairing widow of a clergyman, an old friend of Mr. Westbury's, like him then recently gone to his last home.

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Mrs. Flather was a capital figure for a gossip—short and dumpy, with a mild, placid, unmeaning sort of countenance, that banished all fear as to what one might say before her. Moreover, by assuming her late husband's undisguised detestation of gossip and twaddle, she rather inveigled people into communicativeness—"Oh, don't tell me any secrets, pray!" she would exclaim—or, "Don't tell me anything that doesn't concern myself. I never meddle with other people's affairs," and so on; by which means she often got possession of secrets that would otherwise never have been entrusted to her.

Mrs. Trotter was of the masculine order: a great, tall, stout, upstanding, black-eyed, black-haired woman, with a strong, unturnable resolution; and a poor, little, hen-pecked, Jerry Sneak of a husband, who was of no more account in the house than if no such being existed. He was a kind, mild-dispositioned man, who might have been a useful and amiable member of society, had not his wife's magnificent proportions captivated him at the outset of life, and merged his insignificance in herself. Mrs. Trotter was a busy, bustling woman, with such a strong sense of "duty" as

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frequently caused her to say and do things that most people would have been glad to leave alone.

If she saw an incipient flirtation, she always thought it her "duty" to caution the parties or their friends; if Mr. Brown called on Mrs. Green oftener than she thought right, she would think it her duty to inform Mrs. Green's husband; if Doctor Bolus hinted that he thought Miss Martin in a delicate way, she would bundle on her bonnet and shawl, and forthwith assure Miss Martin that she thought it her duty to tell her she was going to die, and advise her to prepare accordingly.

It would never answer the purpose of any author to allow two such ladies as these to be without the essential requisites of daughters, and we are happy to say that in this instance there is no need of fiction, for Mrs. Flather had her most interesting, well-blown Emma, coming after a couple of sons—one at sea, the other ashore, whom we only introduce to dismiss as perfectly intractable in our hands; while Mrs. Trotter had her Eliza at the head of a graduating scale of little Trotters, ranging from sixteen years to six. Some links had been broken in the chain, but at the

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time of which we are writing Mrs. Trotter had her six little followers. As, however, there is no occasion to load the reader's mind with people as an omnibus cad does his vehicle, we may here state that Eliza is the only one of the young ones we mean to deal with.

Emma Flather was of the middle stature, what would be called a good-sized girl, neither too big nor too little, too fat nor too thin, with well-rounded limbs, and altogether a good armfullish sort of figure. She had a fair, clear, alabasterlike complexion, full oval face, pale and yet not sickly, with light brown hair, well-pencilled eye-brows, darkly-fringed, blueish-greyish eyes, rosy lips, and regular, pearly teeth. Perhaps we have hardly done justice to her eyes. In repose they were mild and passionless, lighting up however, when animated, into a radiance that imparted life and intelligence to a countenance that at other times some perhaps might not have called pretty. Still Emma was never worked into anything like glow or excitement. As some one said of Talleyrand, that you might kick him behind without his countenance betraying a change, so a man might have kissed Emma Flather for half

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an hour, without raising a blush on her cheeks. Indeed, she was a fine piece of animated statuary—and as cold withal. A provoking sort of girl. Not exactly pretty enough to fall in love with for her looks, and yet dangerous with her looks and blandishments combined. She was desperately enthusiastic; could assume raptures at the sight of a daisy, or weep o'er the fate of a fly in a slop bason. Moreover, she had a smattering of accomplishments—could sing, and play, embroider, work worsteds, murder French and Italian, and had a knack of talking and pretending to a great deal more talent than she possessed. This taste for exaggeration she carried into other matters; she had a fine fertile imagination—frequently fancied herself a great heiress—talked of the beauty of her aunt's place in Dorsetshire—insinuated that she was to inherit it, with a vast number of other little self-enhancements, plainly showing that her *education* had not been neglected.

Emma was a curious mixture of high-mindedness and meanness—of feeling and insensibility. Full of enthusiasm and lofty sentiments—compassionate and tender beyond expression when it

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suited her purpose; she was, nevertheless, selfish and insensible to the last degree. Cold, calculating, and cunning, she had all the wordly-mindedness of a well hacknied woman of fifty—in short, of her mother. As the Frenchman said of his dog, "she was well down to charge," and thoroughly appreciated the difference between an elder son and a younger. She would dismiss the latter at any moment that her mother hinted the probability of anything better. All this told in her favour, she acquired the character of a model of propriety, and Emma Flather was held up as a pattern girl for all young ladies to imitate. Of course, old mother Flather was extremely anxious to get her married; but not having fallen in with anything exactly to her mind, she had just flown her at minor game, and checked her off, under pretence of not being able to part with the dear girl.

Eliza Trotter was of a different nature. She was warmhearted, but shy and reserved, and so humble-minded as to be always most anxious to give way to any one that would have the kindness to take it of her. And yet she was a beauty—tall, slight, and graceful, with a clear olive com-

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plexion, and the brightest black eyes and hair imaginable. Emma Flather was not to be compared to her in point of looks; and yet, by sheer assumption, she always passed for something infinitely superior. Age, perhaps, might have something to do with this, aided by a certain patronizing air that the model of propriety invariably indulged in to those whom she condescended to notice. She set up for something out of the common way, and assumption does a great deal.

We trust the reader comprehends these characters.

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CHAPTER III.

"Ecce iterum Crispinus."
Here's old Jorrocks again, as we live!
Free Translation.

The sun had sunk behind the distant hills, the whistling ploughman was watering his horses, and washing their legs in the pond at the end of the village, and the tired labourers were knocking the clay from their clogs at their rose-entwined porches, preparatory to entering their cottages, when the jingling rattle of a hack chaise drew all heads to the street. The cobbler dropped his last, the publican his pipe, the basket-maker his willows, and the sempstress her needle-work, to look at the destination of so unusual a sound.

Amid the chalky dust raised by a pair of lumbering jaded posters, appeared the outline of a yellow po'-chay, so enveloped in packages as to leave little but the side pannels visible. A well-matted package of apple trees covered the roof, a

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desperately-dusted boy in a glazed hat clutched the pot of a huge scarlet geranium in one arm, and with difficulty kept himself on the cross-bar with the other; while the pockets of the carriage were occupied with bundles of carnations, convolvuluses, caper-bushes, and cornelian cherry trees, completely screening the passengers from view.

Thus it rolled up the street of Hillingdon, like Birnam Wood on its way to Dunsinane, at the best pace the postboy could muster, to dash up to the Hall door.

* * * * * .

"Vell, thank God, ve're 'ere at last!" exclaimed a fat, full-limbed, ruddy-faced man, in a nut-brown wig, bounding out of the chaise as soon as the door was opened, cutting off the heads of a whole bunch of roses that had been riding most uncomfortably in the back pocket of his grey zephyr.

"Oh, Jun, you've done for the roses!" exclaimed a female voice from the depths of the chaise.

"Cuss the roses!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, giving the fallen flowers a kick with his foot. "Votever you do, *come out o' the chay!* for I'm

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sick o' the werry sight on it. Here, Batsay, come out, and then your missis 'ill get turned round—for vot vith her bastle, and vot vith her flounce, she really is as big as an 'ouse."

Out then came Batsay, stern foremost, exhibiting the dimensions of a well-turned foot and ancle, and altogether a large, stout, well-proportioned figure. Mr. Jorrocks having eased her of her flower-pot on landing, Batsay gave her dusty, bunchy, black ringlets a shake, and then proceeded to help out her Mistress.

"Now, Binjimin, vot are you a sittin perched up there for like a squirrel in an acorn tree?" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks to the hero in the glazed hat with the geranium pot in his arm, who still kept his place on the cross-bar. "Don't you see ve're at 'ome, man?" Benjamin would have been very clever if he had, for he had never seen the place before. The boy then descended, and Mrs. Jorrocks, in a stiff, rustling, amber-coloured brocade pelisse, with a crimson velvet bonnet, and black feathers, having been baled out, the old deaf man who had been left in charge of the Hall having fumbled the chain off the door, and got it unlocked, stood, hat in hand, while the party

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proceeded to unpack the chaise, and carry the luggage into the house.

"Now, gently with them happle trees!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, as the post-boy prepared to roll them off the roof; "and have a care of the lumbagos (plumbagos) and stockleaved 'ounds tongue, for them are exotics, vot don't grow in this country. Paid no end of money for them," added he in a mutter.

Out then came box, and bundle, and parcel, and bunches of flowers and moss-tied roots without end; and all having been carried into the house, Mr. Jorrocks paid the post-boy, and closed the door upon the curiosity of the inhabitants of the village of Hillingdon.

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CHAPTER IV.

"Oh, what a tangled web we weave
When first we practise to deceive!"

So the new Squire's come at last!" exclaimed Mrs. Flather, bursting into the room the next morning, where Emma sat patching and torturing a piece of muslin under the pretence of embroidering a collar. Confound those collars! If women only knew how little men appreciate those flimsy, fluttering, butterfly articles of dress, they would surely betake themselves to some more profitable employment. Embroidering a collar! Spoiling a good piece of muslin, we should say! We never see what is called a "richly worked collar" without thinking how much better it would have been to have got a new one, instead of hiding the blemishes of the old one with wreathes, flowers, spots, dots, caterpillars, and other curiosities.

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But to Mrs. Flather and the Squire.

"So the new Squire's come at last," was the exclamation of Mrs. Flather, bursting into the room to her daughter; and as this is to be a regular orderly three volume work, we may as well describe the locality before we proceed.

Mrs. Flather's husband, as we have said before, had held the living of Hillingdon, the next presentation to which had been purchased for a youth not yet fully japanned, and by a hokus pokus sort of conjuration, it was now held by another; and Mrs. Flather occupied the manse until the new owner, James Blake, was ready to take possession. The manse did not stand in "Neighbour-row," in the village of Hillingdon, but occupied a slightly elevated position about a mile off, giving the occupant a view of the beautifully proportioned church, and spire rising amid the foliage of gigantic trees, without the addition to the prospect of the village. The house itself was of the patchworky order of Hillingdon Hall (of course, on a much smaller scale), for it is observable that the same style of architecture pervades certain districts; and the manse was partly stone, partly stucco, partly covered with slate, partly

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with pantile, though the latter was of the diamond pattern, and subdued colour of the new national duck-house in St. James's Park. Still it was very pretty, particularly at the season we are now describing, when gay party coloured roses bedecked the lower parts, covering the bare stems and stalks of the more aspiring vines, and fragrant honeysuckle, or commingling with the large-leafed ivy or perfumed jessamine, showing every bright variety of hue, and every tint of sober green.

Altogether, it was a pretty, sentimental-looking spot, interesting in itself, but doubly interesting as containing the pattern young lady of the place. It combined all the poetry, without the inconvenience, of love in a cottage.

Now, a third time, we will surely get under weigh.

"So the new Squire's come at last!" exclaimed Mrs. Flather to her daughter.

"Indeed!" replied Emma, with equal excitement. "How do you know?" inquired she, laying down her collar, and looking anxiously in her mamma's stupid face.

"I have it from very good authority," said Mrs. Flather, with an important nod of the head

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as she advanced into the room. Fools are always mysterious.

"Well, but you surely can tell *me*," observed Emma, pettishly.

"Well, I had it from Jane, who's been down for the milk," said Mrs. Flather, after such a pause as she thought would be a sufficient punishment for her daughter's impetuosity.

"And who told her?" asked Emma, after a similar pause, during which she resumed her stitching as though she did not care to hear anything about them.

"She saw them," replied Mrs. Flather.

"*Them!*" observed Emma; "I thought you said, The Squire."

"And his wife," added Mrs. Flather.

"Oh, he's married, is he?" observed Emma, with a sneer. "What lies people do tell," added she angrily, after a pause. "Every person has been declaring for the last three weeks that he was a smart, handsome, young London gentleman, and half the girls in the country are ready to set their caps at him."

"They may save themselves the trouble," observed Mrs. Flather. "He's a regular, steady,

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old gentleman, in Hessian boots and a brown wig."

"*So*," observed Emma, with a look of disappointment, "perhaps he'll have some daughters," added she, thinking to vex her mamma with a little mistimed propriety.

"*Sons* would be more to the purpose, I think," replied Mrs. Flather, eyeing her daughter with a half angry glance.

Emma worked away without the slightest change coming over her alabaster countenance.

"If there are sons, there'll be no harm in seeing what they are like, you know, Emma, my dear," continued the old lady coaxingly.

"What, and throw James over?" inquired Emma, looking up.

James Blake was the third and present ring in Emma's matrimonial ladder.

"Ay, but get on well with the new one *first*, you know; but I'm sure, my dear, you've so much discretion, that there is no need for me to point out what is right and proper on such an occasion."

"Poor James!" observed Emma, looking intently at an ink-spot she had just discovered on

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her white muslin frock. Emma dressed plainly. Her mother prided herself on her daughter having no taste for finery, declaring she never was so happy as when in her little muslin frocks. A very convenient doctrine for mammas, and very taking with the men.

"James will soon get over it," continued the affectionate parent; "but that is very careless of you to ink your frock in that way—clean on to-day, too—got to serve till Saturday; but what I was saying was, that no man ever died of love—at the same time, I don't wish you to do anything hasty or unfeeling—James you know can always be had—keep him in reserve—just as you did little Meadows—nothing could be more delicate or lady-like than the way you dropped him. James, no doubt, was a change for the better—just as Meadows was better than Upton. If you can get one with double James's fortune, why drop him, and so on, always changing for the better if you can, and taking care always to have one to fall back upon. Men are easily managed. They believe things said to themselves that they would laugh to scorn in the case of another. None of them ever suppose any girl can prefer another to

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themselves; and if the point of fortune touches them—ridicule riches, say you would rather live with a man you love upon hundreds than be the mistress of thousands without the endearments of the heart; in short, my dear, I am sure your fine feelings and sense of duty will prompt you to do what is right."

"Oh, I'm sure they will, my own dear mamma!" exclaimed Emma, rising and throwing her arms round her mother's neck, and kissing her profusely, thinking all the time of half a strawberry tart she had left in the dining-room closet, for, oh reader, if the model of propriety had a passion, we blush (which is more than she would do) to say it was—*for eating*.

This scene of domestic life was suddenly interrupted by the creaking of the green gate as it swung back on its hinges, causing an involuntary exclamation from Mrs. Flather of—"Oh dear, here's that horrid Mrs. Trotter! run, Emma, and put on your canary-bird collar."

"Odious woman, what can she want?" muttered Mrs. Flather to herself, bustling into the drawing-room, and seating herself on the centre

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of the ottoman, as though she had been using her best room all the morning.

"Mrs. Trotter, *marm*," announced the man boy in buttons, and immediately Mrs. Trotter's majestic figure occupied the portal.

"My dear Mrs. Trotter, I am *so* delighted to see you!" exclaimed Mrs. Flather, jumping up and saluting her with all the *empressement* in her power. "I hope you leave all at home well."

"Quite well, thank you," was Mrs. Trotter's comprehensive reply, as she threw a rich black lace veil over her drawn silk bonnet, and displayed the healthy glow of her fine features, and the lustre of her large black eyes.

"And Emma?" added Mrs. Trotter, looking inquiringly round the room, "how is she?"

"Emma's just stepped into the garden to water her flowers," observed Mrs. Flather, casting an eye towards the garden as she spoke.

"Dear child," said Mrs. Trotter, "she's so fond of her flowers, its quite a treat to see her among them," thinking it would be, for she knew Emma cared nothing about them.

After a few common places about the weather,

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the cleanliness of the roads, and the dirtiness of the lanes, Emma entered, watering-pot in hand as usual, and Mrs. Flather having arranged her collar behind (which the rose bushes had somewhat deranged), Emma pretending great impatience all the time, she burst into most energetic inquiries after all her sweet young friends at Hillingdon, Eliza in particular. Mrs. Trotter answered in the usual full-measure strain, and then, after a little repetition about the weather and a hit at the rose bushes, conversation came up short.

"And have you heard of the new comers at the Hall?" at length interrogated Mrs. Trotter.

"No, indeed!" replied Mrs. Flather; "you know we never hear anything—shut up in this little quiet retreat, we feel as if the world was bounded within our gates. Nobody ever tells us anything, and I'm sure I never trouble myself to inquire. It can make little difference to us who comes."

"Nay, then!" exclaimed Mrs. Trotter—"I'm sure now I'd have thought you'd have liked to have known. However, never mind—I dare say you're right, only it would have looked neighbourly to have given them an early welcome."

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"What, they've come then, have they?" exclaimed Mrs. Flather, with well-feigned surprise.

"*Come*, yes—surely!—bag and baggage—and I've made it my business to ferret out all about them."

"And what have you learned?" inquired Mrs. Flather, merging her indifference in her curiosity.

"Why, I've had a good deal of trouble to make out anything, to tell you the truth, for the post-boy that drove them put me on the wrong scent—at least so it would seem from the information our Thomas got of their servant, whom he met at the public-house, though his story doesn't exactly tally with what our Jane got from their lady's-maid—however, I gleaned enough to satisfy myself that their name is Jorrocks, and that they have no family."

"What, just a couple by themselves?" asked Mrs. Flather, with as much indifference as she could muster. "Are they young?"

"No—oldish, I should think—at least their man says his master's been Lord Mayor, and they don't make Lord Mayors of boys. The maid says her mistress is a Lady Patroness of Almacks, and

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that they've a grand house in the city—Great Lombard Street, I think—and I can tell Miss Emma they are great florists," added Mrs. Trotter, turning to the model of propriety, who sat admiring her fine collar.

"Florists, are they!" repeated Emma, looking up. "I am so glad of that. Oh, how I *dote* on flowers!" added she, clasping her hands, and turning her fine eyes up to the ceiling.

"Yes, they brought a great cargo of flowers and trees, and the man-servant says his master is enormously rich, and kept a pack of hounds, and altogether I think we may congratulate ourselves upon the acquisition—not that they may perhaps supply the place of poor dear Mr. and Mrs. Westbury, but still we might have done a great deal worse, and altogether I think it is a very nice thing, and I shall consider it my duty to pay my respects to them as soon as ever I hear they are in a situation to receive company, and of course you will do the same."

"O, I shall call, of course," replied Mrs. Flather; "but not in such a violent hurry;" inwardly resolving to be beforehand with Mrs. Trotter if she

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could—adding, "in a week or ten days' time, perhaps."

"Well, just as you please about that," replied Mrs. Trotter; "in the meantime if you have any acquaintance in London, perhaps you may as well write to them, and see if you can get any further information. I consider it the duty of us mothers to be circumspect."

"Not for the world!" exclaimed Mrs. Flather; "I have no curiosity of that sort. It's enough for me to take care of myself and my poor, dear child here, without troubling myself about other people's affairs."

"Well, just as you think right about that; I like always to know who people are; indeed I consider it my duty; not that I suppose the Jorrocks's are other than highly respectable, but still as a general rule I mean. But, I must be off, for I've got to attend a meeting of the Ladies' Anti-Corn-Law Association, and must pop into Mrs. Barber's, to give her a hint that her daughter was walking rather late with young Dodd, the blacksmith, last night; and that reminds me that our Book Club meeting is to-

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morrow evening, and I've to distribute the prizes at the Sunday School after that, and write to the Secretary of the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society into the bargain; so now, my dearest Mrs. Flather, good bye. Emma, my sweetest, good day."

Thereupon the ladies kissed with all the smackyness of affection.

* * * * *

"It wouldn't be a bad plan for you and I to pop down to the Hall while that tiresome woman is on her rambles," observed Mrs. Flather to Emma, as soon as she saw Mrs. Trotter clear of the gate. "You could take your watering-pot in your hand, you know, and say, that hearing they have a taste for flowers, you came to offer them the loan of it till their own arrives, or something of that sort."

"Well, mamma, whatever you think right," replied the willing daughter; "only let me finish my tart before I go, for I'm very hungry."

"Certainly, my dear, it's always well to eat before you go out, for young ladies should never be seen to indulge; at least not to eat as if they were enjoying it. Indeed, that is the only thing

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I have to find fault with you about: you always eat heartily, as it were, instead of picking and playing with what is set before you. It's all very well at home to stuff and eat, but nothing digusts men so much as a guzzling girl; so now eat your tart and get a good slice of bread—buttered if you like—and then wash your mouth out, and we will set off."

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CHAPTER V.

"Down with the bread tax!"
COBDEN'S CRY.

"But times are altered; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land and dispossess the swain."
GOLDSMITH.

IT was a fortunate day which secured to the Anti-Corn-Law League the services of Mr. William Bowker—fortunate to the League, for they gained an able and most unscrupulous coadjutor; and fortunate to Mr William Bowker, for he had just lost the best part of his income by the demise of his old master, the celebrated Mr. Snarle, the great conveyancer of Lincoln's Inn.

Mr. William Bowker, or Bill, as he was familiarly called, was one of a large class of men about town, who make a very great show upon very slender means. Not that he made any equestrian or vehicular display, but in his person he was a

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most uncommon swell — gay and gaudy in his colours, glittering in his jewelry (or make believes), faultless in his hat, costly in his linen (or apologies), expensive in his gloves, and shining in his boots. Many a country cousin, and many a one again, has anxiously inquired of his London *cicerone* "who that smart gentleman was," as Bill has strutted consequentially through the park on a Sunday, swinging his cane, with the tassels of his hessian boots tapping the signal of his approach.

Many a time Mr. Jorrocks and him have passed for lords as they rolled arm and arm through the Zoological or Kensington Gardens, *haw, haw, hawing* at each other's jokes, looking about at the girls, and criticising their feet and ankles. This latter, however, was in short petticoat times.

Mr. Bowker was an extraordinary fellow; over head and ears in debt and difficulties, he was as light and gay as if he hadn't a care in the world. Not a new fashion came out but Bill immediately had it. If a flight of extraordinary neckcloths alighted in the mercer's windows, the next time you met Bill he was sure to have one on. All the rumbustical apologies for great coats that have

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inundated the town of late years had their turns on Bill's back. You seldom saw him twice in the same waistcoat. Variable as D'Orsay, and as gay in his colours. Moreover there was a certain easy *nonchalance* about Bill, far different to the anxious eyeings and watchings of the generality of "would-be" swells. He would salute a man immeasurably his superior, with perfect familiarity; offer his richly-ornamented gilt snuff-box, or poke him in the ribs with a smile and a wink, that plainly said "you and I have a secret between us." His looks were in his favour—rosy and healthy, as though he had never known care or confinement; with wavy yellow locks, slightly streaked with grey, giving him the licence of age over youngsters; while his jolly corpulency and plummy legs, filling his bright hessian boots, had the appearance of belonging to some swell fox-hunter up at Long's or Limmer's, or some of the tiger traps, for what they call a spree—rouge et noir, feathers, hot port, Clarence Gardens, and the Quadrant.

In the language of the sect, Bill had some breeding in him—by a lord, out of a lady's-maid—and blood will tell in men as well as horses.

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Hence, whatever his difficulties, or whatever his situation, Bill always retained the easy composure of a well-bred man. His address was good, his manner easy, and his language pure. If fortune had neglected to supply him with the essentials, at all events it had not deprived him of the advantages of birth. He was about the gamest cock with the fewest feathers that ever flew.

Hundreds will exclaim, on reading this sketch, "Lord, I know that man as well as can be! Have seen him in the park a thousand times;" and perhaps no one has caused more "Who's that?" than our friend Mr. Bowker. Indeed he was a sort of person that you couldn't overlook, any more than you could a peacock in a poultry yard, for there was a strut and a dazzle about him that almost provoked criticism. Of course Bowker was well known to his own set, but what's a man's own set in the great ocean of London society? Moreover, even in his own set he was an object of admiration, for he was friendly and jocose, and we don't believe there was a man among them but would rather have enhanced Bill's consequence, than attempted to lower him by proclaiming him the clerk to a conveyancer,

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and keeper of a miserable tobacco shop in the miserable purlieus of Red Lion Square. Our readers, we dare say, will be anxious to know how Bill managed matters. We will tell them. *He lived by his wits.*

When old Snarle was in full practice, Bill's fees were considerable, and in those days he was nothing but the "thorough varmint and the real swell." As soon as Chambers closed, he repaired, full dress, to a theatre, attended a "free and easy," or some convivial society. Here his jolly good humour ensured him a hearty reception, and the landlords of the houses were too happy to hand him anything he called for in return for the amusement he afforded to his customers. He could sing, or he could talk, or he could dance, or he could conjure, lie through thick and thin—in short, do every thing that's wanted at this sort of place. He was in with the players too, and had the *entrée* of most of the minor theatres about London. At these he might be seen in the front row of the stage boxes, dressed out in imitation of some of the fat swells in the "Omnibus," his elbow resting on a huge bamboo, with a large dolland in his primrose-

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kidded hand. There he was the critic. Not the noisy, boisterous, self-proclaiming *claquer,* but the gentle irresistible leader, whose soft plaudits brought forth the thunder of the pit and gallery. He had some taste for acting, and we have read some neatish *critiques* attributed to him in the Morning Herald and Advertiser. This sort of society brought him, of course, a good deal among actresses, and we have heard that several of his "*How d'ye do?*" great acquaintance arose out of little delicate arrangements that he had the felicity of bringing about. This, however, we don't vouch for; we will therefore thank our readers not to "quote us" on this point.

But to the "baccy" shop.

As fees fell off, Bill set up a snuff and cigar shop, and he who had amused so many, sought for the favours of the fumigating public. But Bill had a great mind. He did not stoop to the humble-mindedness of appearing as a little tobacconist, but leapt all at once into the station of a merchant, and advertised his miserable domicile as BOWKER AND CO.'S WHOLESALE SNUFF AND TOBACCO WAREHOUSE.—THE TRADE SUPPLIED. Whether this latter announcement had the effect

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of keeping off customers—people, perhaps, supposing they could not get less than a waggon-load of baccy at a time—or whether Eagle Street is too little of a thoroughfare, or not sufficiently inviting in its appearance, or whether there were too many Bowker and Co.'s in the trade already, we know not; but certain it is no wholesale customer ever cast up, and most of the retail ones were what Bill touted himself, or were brought by his friends. The situation, we take it, must have been the thing: not that we mean to say anything unhandsome of Eagle Street, but we cannot account for the bad success of Bowker and Co.'s establishment upon any other grounds than that the neighbouring shops were not attractive, and a good deal of a tobacconist's trade consists of what is called "chance custom." Doors with half a dozen bell-pulls in each post, denoting half a dozen families in the house, coal and cabbage sheds united, those mysterious, police-inviting bazaars, denominated "marine stores," with milk shops, corn chandlers, furniture warehouses, and pawnbrokers commingled, do not add much to the appearance of any street, and certainly Eagle

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Street has nothing to lose in the way of attraction.

Yes, the situation must have been the thing, for if any one will take the trouble of walking through the thoroughfares, and casting their eyes into the brilliantly-illumined "divans," they will see men, without a tithe part of Mr. Bowker's ready wit and humour, handing the cigars over the counter as fast as they can fumble them, with women immeasurably Mrs. Bowker's inferior, riveting men with their charms, and sending them away by the score every night with the full conviction that they are desperately in love with them all, and only wanting to get rid of the other chaps to tell them so. *That*, we take it, is the grand secret of a baccy shop. Keep up the delusion and you keep up your customers, but then you must have a bumper at starting. There's the advantage of a thoroughfare. Fool No. 2 sees fool 1 smoking and making eyes at a woman, and in he goes to see what she's like. She's equally affable with him, and while both are striving to do the agreeable, in comes No. 3 on a like errand—4, 5, 6, 7, 8,

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9, 10—legion, in fact, quickly follow, and they all go on eyeing and fumigating, as jealous of each other as ever they can be, until the smoke obscures their vision, and they leave, each with the determination of seeing what they can do single-handed next night. The shop is then established.

Mrs. Bowker, when Bill set up, was a fine big dashing woman, with as good a foot and ankle as any in London. She was then on the stage at the Coburg, but marrying Bill for the purpose of getting off it, he found to his sorrow that she was likely to be a dead weight, instead of an assistance in housekeeping and theatrical society, which it was then his ambition to enter. Still there were her looks—a clear Italian complexion, large richly-fringed dark eyes, cork-screwy ringlets, swan-like neck and ample bust; and what with gas-light, and the tinsel of a theatrical wardrobe, Bill hoped to turn his better half to some account in the way of decoy duck at a cigar shop. Mrs. Bowker, however, took badly to it. She was above it in fact, and instead of sitting to display her charms in the gas light, she was generally sipping brandy-and-water, and reading greasy novels on a sofa in the back shop. Miss Susan Slummers, her sister,

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also an actress, and a fine handsome girl too, was shortly afterwards added to the family circle; and certainly, if wit and beauty can command success in the baccy line, Mr. Bowker had every reason to expect it. Still, as we said before, we grieve to say, it did not come; and debt, and duns, and difficulties soon beset Bill's path of life in most alarming profusion.

Our old friend, Mr. Jorrocks, as kind-hearted and liberal a man as ever stuffed big calves into top-boots, long stood his friend—so long, indeed, that the worthy old gentleman had ceased entering Bill's obligations in his books—and many people trusted Bill on the strength of the intimacy, who would never have let him into their debt upon the faith of any of his own palaverments. Not that he was a bad hand in that line, but they had had too much of it. In short, Bill was better known than trusted.

Thus then matters stood at the time of Bill's enlistment in the League. Old Snarle was dead. The dwindling fees were done. To begin brushing coats and cleaning boots for a new man, in hopes of seeing him rise in the profession, was out of the question to a man with Bill's ideas, and at

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his time of life. The cigar shop did nothing. Mrs. Bowker did a good deal in the brandy-and-water way. House rent was due—their first-floor lodger had left them. Gas rent was in arrear—water ditto—and poors' rate collecting. Income tax, we needn't say, he was exempt from.

Mr. Jorrocks had retired into the country, and though he had never turned a deaf ear to any of Bill's representations or petitions, still our worthy tobacconist could not help feeling that without the aid of the emollient blarney wherewith to pave the way in jolly half-seas-over intimacy, the ominous "no effects" might some day be returned to his epistolatory requisitions, and then what *was* to become of him?

—The law and Mr. Commissioner Fonblanque only knew!

Having now introduced Mr. Bowker, we will let his correspondence with Mr. Jorrocks speak for his situation and arrangements.

"*Eagle Street, Red Lion Square.*

"Honoured Sir,

"You'll be glad to hear that your old friend Bill has lit on his legs at last. High time he did,

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for I really think I was never so nearly stumpt in my life. Old Snarle, as you'll have heard, has cut his stick. Poor old bitch! Yet let it not be as our great master says—

> " '———the evil that men do lives after them;
> The good is oft buried with their bones.'

" Snarle had his faults, and so have we all, but for 'parties in a hurry' there never was a quicker hand at a settlement. May his new settlement be to his liking!

" T'other night, as I was sitting in my back shop uncommonly spooney, reflecting on the uncertainty of life, and the certainty of the tax-gatherer calling in the morning, a mysterious big black-whiskered beetle-browed stranger entered the shop, and asked to have a word with me in private. As soon as we had coalesced behind the scenes, 'Mr. Bowker,' said he, taking off his broad-brimmed hat and gloves, laying them on the table, and sitting down on the sofa, as if he meant to be comfortable.

" 'You don't know me?'

" 'Why, you have the advantage of me,' said I.

" 'Well,' said he, 'I come to advantage you.'

" 'Glad of it,' said I, adding aside, 'wonder if it's Joseph Ady?'

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"'You are to be depended upon?' said he, after a pause.

"'Close as wax,' said I.

"'Well, then,' said he, 'you have heard of the great National Anti-Corn-Law League?'"

"'I have seen their advertising machine,' said I, 'but I never thought more of it than I should of Tosspot's crockery cart, or Warren's matchless blacking van.'

"'I could let you in for a good thing,' observed the stranger musingly.

"'Haste me to know it, that I with wings as swift as meditation or the thoughts of love, may—*jump at it*,' exclaimed I.

"'I find thee apt,' rejoined the stranger, rising and extending his right arm, saying—

> "'And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed
> That roots itself in ease on Lethe's wharf,
> Would'st thou not stir in this.'

"'Oh, my prophetic soul! my uncle!' exclaimed I, interrupting him; 'if it wasn't for that black pow, and those d—d heavy brows, I'd swear you were my old friend, Jack Rafferty, late of the Adelphi Theatre.'

"'You *have me!*' said he, pulling off the wig

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and appurts with one hand, and grasping my hand with the other. Sure enough, there stood old bald-headed Jack, with his little ferrety eyes peering at me with the great black brows still above them. Having taken these off, and put them carefully in his pocket-book, he again shook hands, and asking for a squeeze of the old comforter, we stirred the fire, put on the kettle, and prepared for hot stopping.

"'Bill,' said he, as soon as he had got the brew to his liking, and one of my best Woodvilles in his mouth, 'one good turn deserves another.'

"'Undoubtedly,' said I, 'as the tailor observed when he turned the old trousers a second time.'

"'Ah!' said he, 'you're just the same old cove that ever you were. How are you off for blunt?'

"'D—d badly,' said I; 'should be glad to join you in raising a mortgage on our joint industry.'

"'Well, never mind,' said he, chuckling, 'you did me a good turn when that wicked bailiff, Levy Solomons, came to take me for the butter bill, and I haven't forgotten it. By Jove! I fancy

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I hear him blobbing into the rain-water tub at this moment. I've seen queer days since then,' added he thoughtfully; 'been all through the Disunited States, Canada, Columbia, and I don't know where; shipwrecked twice, gaoled thrice, tarred and feathered besides. Hard life a player's, forced to appear merry when we're fit to cry; however, that's all done—I've turned over a new leaf—I'm in the respectable line now, and hearing that your occupation in Lincoln's Inn's gone, why I've just stepped in, as Paul Pry would say, to see if I could do anything for you in the respectable line too. You see,' said he, 'the way for talented men like us to prosper is to take the folly of the day and work it. I saw this in the nigger times. Lord, if the compensation money had been taken direct from the pockets of the people, instead of passing through the filtering bag of parliament, it would have been a good workable subject to this day. John Bull is a great jackass—a thick-headed fool. Unless you empty his breeches pocket before his face, and say, 'Now, John, I take this shilling for the window tax, this for the dog tax, this for gig tax, and this for the nigger tax,' you can't make

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the great muddle-headed beast believe he pays anything for the nigger tax, and so by making it a parliamentary grant, opposition was lost, and with it as fine a field for enterprise as ever was seen. However, it's no use crying for spilt milk. 'Go a-head's' my motto, as they say in the Disunited States. But to business.

"'The new light is the Corn Laws. There's more sense in this than there was in the nigger question, because if you can persuade a man he'll get a fourpenny loaf for twopence, you show him something to benefit himself, which you couldn't do in the case of the great Bull niggers, that he had never seen or cared to set eyes on. Still John shows his stubbornness, and hangs back as if he thought the Repealers were the only people that would get the fourpenny loaf for twopence. It is to rouse the animal, and convince him that for once there is such a thing as pure disinterestedness in the world, that the League is bestirring itself; and now, my old friend, Bill,' continued he, 'for the service you did me, by popping the bailiff over head in the tub, I've come to offer to recommend you, as a man of very great talent, eloquence, experience, and I don't know what;

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in fact, to supply the vacuum there must necessarily be in the heads of men who are fools enough to subscribe their money to force a benefit on people that they don't want.

" 'The League is about to enlighten the country—north, south, east, and west—from the Orkneys to Portsmouth, from Solway Frith to Flamborough Head—all are to be visited by men of mettle like ourselves, and if we don't astonish the natives, why my name is not Jack Rafferty.'

" 'Faith,' said I, 'Jack, I'm not nasty particular, and never was about making money, especially at the present time, for to tell you the truth, I'm as near in Short's Gardens as ever I was in all my life; but the devil and all is, I know nothing about either corn or the corn laws, and hardly know wheat when I see it.'

" 'That's nothing,' said Jack, 'you've a quick apprehension and a ready tongue—lots of jaw—and *that's* what the League want. You'll have plenty of time to study your part and rehearsals over and over again. Zounds, man, it's the easiest thing in life! Instead of appearing in one character on Monday, another on Tuesday, a

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third on Wednesday, a fourth on Friday, and a fifth on Saturday, and having to study and cram and rehearse for them all, here you have nothing to do but repeat the same old story over and over again, which comes as pat off the lips as a child's church catechism. 'Infamous aristocracy'—'iniquitous, ruinous starvation'—'landlord-supporting tax'—'blasted Quarterly'—and all that sort of thing. Whatever is wrong, lay it to the corn tax. If a man can't pay his Christmas bills, attribute it to the bread tax; say the landlords have grabbed a third of his income. Tell the shipowners their interest is ruined by the monopolists—nay, you may even try it on with the farmers, and say you verily believe they would be benefited by the abolition of the corn laws; that you really think our climate and system so superior, that they would drive foreign grain out of the market just as our fat Durhams and Devonshires beat Sir Robert's Tariff fat cattle out of the shambles. In fact, you may say almost anything you like; and should any one oppose you, you will always be ready with a cut and dried answer, which, with an easy delivery, will put your cleverest unprepared arguer quite in the back ground.

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"Just then, in came Mrs. B. 'Cleopatra, my dear, here's our old friend, Rafferty,' said I.

"'What, Jack!' exclaimed she, 'that robbed the treasury at the Adelphi?'

"'*Hush!*' cried I, 'Jack's respectable.' *Encore* the brandy.

"Well, the upshot of it was, that the next day I attended a meeting of the League at the British Hotel, in the best apparel I could muster—light blue, buff vest, drab tights, best hessians, tartan cravat. Joey Hume was in the chair, and as soon as ever I saw that, I determined to be stiff.

"'Who have you there, Mr. St. Julien Sinclair?" (for that is the name Jack goes by)—asked Joe as we advanced to the table.

"'Mr. William Bowker,' replied he.

"'The same of whom you spoke at our last meeting?' inquired Joe.

"'The same,' answered Mr. St. Julien Sinclair.

"Jack had primed me pretty well on the road what I should say, in case they examined me, but I suppose, being well recommended, or knowing it must come to that at last, they thought it better to dispense with all humbug, and having

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ascertained that I was perfectly disengaged, and ready to embark in the cause, they said that the Council of the League had determined to sectionize the kingdom, to enlighten the lower orders on the monstrous iniquity of the bread tax, and the great advantages of a free trade in corn. That they had been at it for some time without producing much effect, but they had now got a new dodge which they thought would tell. This was, that instead of single-handed lecturers, like Jack Rafferty, going about doing as they liked, and reporting what they pleased, that the leaders of the League should take the thing in hand, distribute themselves over the land along with ladies and lecturers, and make a regular crusade against the monopolists. Lecturers, it seems, they had not had much difficulty in getting, indeed I should wonder if they had, for eight guineas a week and one's travelling expenses are not picked up every day—but the ladies there had been some trouble about. However, as they thought they could not dispense with the influence of the fair sex, they have accommodated matters by hiring a certain number of females who are to take superior characters, just as Jack Rafferty took the part of

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Mr. St. Julien Sinclair. To each lecturer, therefore, there is to be attached a leader and a lady; and the company are building a lot of Whitechapels, capable of carrying three with their luggage, and we are to be allowed ten shillings a day for a horse to pull them about. There will be suitable devices, with mottoes, such as 'DOWN WITH THE BREAD TAX!'—'FOOD FOR THE MILLION!' &c. &c., along the sides of the vehicles, which are to be painted sky blue, with red wheels, picked out with green. They will be labelled behind, in statuteable letters,

'GREAT NATIONAL ANTI-CORN LAW ENLIGHTMENT CART.'

'FORMS FOR PETITIONS SUPPLIED!'

"I think that is all I've got to say, except that I hope your new purchase is to your liking, and that Mrs. Jorrocks approves of the house as much as she did of her mother's at Tooting. Should there be anything I can do for you in town, pray let me know; and after I leave, Cleopatra or Susan will be glad to do their best for either Mrs. Jorrocks or you, to whom we all

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beg to present our most respectful compliments, and I have the honour to subscribe myself,

"Dear Sir,

"Your humble and obedient servant,

"Wm. Bowker, L.G.A.C.L.L.A.

"Lecturer to the Grand Anti-Corn-Law League Association."

Mr. Jorrocks, it seems, had commenced a letter to Mr. Bowker, before the receipt of the foregoing. We give it entire, throwing as it does some light upon his opinions and movements.

"*Hillingdon Hall.*

"Dear Bill,

"We've got here at last, and precious glad I was on it. Tiresome work riding three in a chay—two fat women, and one's fat self. Not that Batsay's werry crummy; but there's a good lot on her, and we had sich a lot o' poleyanthus's a-board, that I was forced either to squeeze her, or squeeze them.

"The country is werry different to London. Lord bless ye! 'ow small everything looks. Afore we stopped at the first station, I felt I was gettin'

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out o' my element; but afore we arrived at the end of the rail, I felt quite flummoxed—all bedevilled. Thinks I to myself, 'Now John, you old jack-ass, what are you a goin' out o' your own line o' life for, into a land of strangers, with never an acquaintance, and all to begin afresh? Couldn't you have stayed quiet in Great Coram Street, with the run o' the world before you? Then, a little somethin' within, whispered, 'But you loved the country, John. 'Ampstead 'eath has always had great attractions for you—you love the hair of Greenwich, and Shooter's 'ill is dear to your recollection.' 'True,' said I, 'my frind; and I minds when I started in my prentice prime I loved figs, but I soon found there was sich a thing as getting a surfeit on them.' Howsomever, never mind—the country has its charms—cheapness for one. Fowls, three shillins a couple: a goose with his gizzard and all complete, four and sixpence. But to proceed with our journey.

"The further we went, the stupider people got; and when we were done with the rail and got into a country inn, I think I never saw such a set of stupexes. Instead of half a little finger fatching one a coach, it took me ten minutes to drum into

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an ostler's 'ead that I wanted a po-chay and pair. O dear, then came sixteen miles of dusty roads, sultry weather, and fat women. I shall never forget it. Howsomever, we got here at last; and certainly, though frightfully retired, the place is pretty. It will take us some time to get all square, for most of the furniture was sold, and there's nothin' in two rooms but images—men with beards—men without beards—some without neckcloths—and two naked Wenuses. Folks about are monstrous purlite — will lend us anything from a warmin' pan to a waterin' pot. We've had some callers—women folk chiefly, who seem to be monstrous taken with us. They are a goodish breed o' women hereabouts—large, well-grown 'uns, and werry agreeable. Altogether things are better than they threatened to be, but there's a deal o' sameness, and the evenins are long. Howsomever, I s'pose we shall get used to it, and when I get started farmin' I shall have more to do. I means to take a hundred or a hundred and fifty acres in hand, and try all the new experiments on a liberal scale—guano, nitrate o' soder, bone manure, hashes and manure mexed, soot, salt, sand, everything in fact; shall lector on

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agricultur, and correspond with the Royal Society, and so on—Mr. Jorrocks on buck wheat—Mr. Jorrocks on clover—Mr. Jorrocks on long 'orns—Mr. Jorrocks on short 'orns.

"I had written this far when your agreeable favour came to hand, and werry 'appy I am to hear of your luck. If the leaguers have wot they say (£50,000), you are in for a good thing, but I don't believe it—I think it will prove like a lady's fortin', or the dirty dandy's shirts, who began to count at twelve and went up to fourteen—they may have £5,000, or £6,000, and an 0 is soon added. I've lived a long time in the world—a liberal sixty let us say—and I never found money to be had for axin'—certainly not from *our* party, though I believe the Tory calves bleed sometimes. Howsomever, never mind, £5,000, or £6,000 will take a deal o' spendin', and if you manage matters well, you'll get them to make another whip when that's gone. The question is better nor the nigger one in some respects, and worser in others.—It is better for the subscribers, because they are adwenturin' their money for summut that may profit themselves; but then, on the other hand, it choaks off

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the whole host of grievance 'unters who are only to be moved by imaginary and inwizible wrongs.

"In the language of botoney to which Mrs. Jorrocks is now dewotin' herself, pure philanthrophy is a bush of curious growth. Its tender leaves expand at the pictor of a great naked nigger claspin' his 'ands with 'am not I your brodder?' comin' out of a scroll in his mouth, and yet close at the sight of a needy relation comin' to ax for a little golden hointment. Old women, love-sick damsels, and ringey, ringlety, guitar-playin' youths, are the great supporters of umbuggeries of all sorts; but then it must be a real useless object to enlist their sympathies—a subscription for a Sunday school on the ivory coast, or a communion service for a chapel among the Copper Indians. Bread is too homely a subject. Wot sentiment is there in a great barley loaf? My maid Batsay would be shamed to be seen givin' a yard o' bread to a beggar if there wasn't a great slice o' beef below. There's where I think the Leaguers will be leaked. They can't show a clear case of sheer uselessness; but, on the contrary, there are some strong symptoms of utilitarian self interest. Who's to be benefited?

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The Leaguers themselves.—There's the rub! Will you get Mrs. Sympathizer Green or Miss Puritana Brown to come down with the mopusses to benefit Cobden and Co.? I think not. P'raps you'll say the Leaguers don't want their mopusses—only their tears. Who are they to be shed for? The labourin' classes? Not they! The labourin' classes don't want them. Bull, as you say, is a great hobstinate beast, but he has some gumption notwithstandin'. This mornin' I walked up the street of our town, dressin'-gowned and slipper'd *à la Margate,* just to appetise a bit afore breakfast, and there I fell in with a man called 'Ercules Strong, a shovlin' on stones with a spade and a barrow. 'Mornin', 'Ercules,' said I. 'Mornin', squire,' said he. 'Hardish work that,' said I,—'Middlin', said he, diggin' the pickaxe into the heap. 'Vot do ye get a day?' said I. 'Half a crown,' said he. 'That's a good deal,' said I. 'Had three shillin' last year,' said he. 'How came they to reduce ye?' axed I. 'Things fell in price,' said he, 'and half-a-crown goes as far this year as three shillin' did last.' 'Then the price of labour's regulated by the price o' wittles, is it?' axed I. 'Undoubtedly,' said he.

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"Now, supposin' Cobden (who keeps a print mill, or print works, or somethin' o' that sort) employs two or three 'undred 'Ercules Strongs, its clearly his interest (on the 'grab-all-I-can' system), to get the price o' wittles reduced, because then he can get his 'Ercules Strongs so much cheaper, and pocket the difference. Time was when the motto of an English merchant was, 'Live and let live,' but them was antiquated days. These are the 'get rich in a hurry' times.

"P'raps Cob will say, 'O, but then if I get my 'Ercules Strongs at sixpence a day less, I shall be able to let you have my devil's dust goods, or *bads*, cheaper.'

"I doesn't believe that either. I mind when the leather tax was taken off, sayin' to my bootmaker, 'Now, I 'spose I shall get shod cheaper.'

"'Why, sir,' said he, 'the fact is, I was jest a-goin' to raise the price o' my boots, so this reduction will enable me to keep them as they were.'

"Cob would jest be a-goin' to do the same with his devil's dust bads, I guess.

"I don't think you can bam the lower orders about bread. The Bull niggers with nothin' but

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a bishop's apron on, supplicatin' for mercy with chained and uplifted 'ands, aided by Mrs. Sympathizer Green and Miss Puritana Brown, was a fine subject, because there was summut left to the imagination; and as Tommy Moore or some other popular and poetical gentleman says:—'Disguise thyself as thou wilt, still, slavery! still thou art a bitter draught! and though thousands in all ages have been made to drink o' thee, thou art no less bitter on that account.' But a fourpenny loaf sets Apollo and the muses to flight, jest as Binjimin has set a flock o' crows off my front field.

"'Disguise thyself as thou wilt, still Cobden,' say I, 'still thou art a great 'umbug: and though thousands may roll into your beggin' bag, the poor will never eat cheaper on that account.'

"It arn't a bad dodge, but I don't think it'll do. There is no elbow room for the imagination, and the purpose o' the promoters is too apparent on the face on it. It will require a deal o' sleight o' tongue to make Bully believe you're a workin' for his good. If I was to adwise the workin' classes, I'd say, Don't you sign no petition nor nothin' o' the sort, unless your masters will hire

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you for sivin years sartin at present wages. Ay, Cobden, wot say ye to that? In short, this is not a good genuine 'ome-brewed grivance, frothin' up at the bung-'ole of discontent, but a sort of sea-kaley, hothouse, forced thing; a thing that requires mexin' and stirrin' about with a *spoon* like a seidlitz pooder. No offence to the lectorers in course, who I'm sure are anything but spoons.

"But I'm a deviatin' from my text, which ought to be congratilations to you for bein' taken up by the League, instead of denouncin' the 'umbuggery of its ways. In course *you*, as a traveller o' the concern, will do your best to further its interests — and feather your own nest.

"So shall you better yourself, and secure the everlastin' esteem of

"Yours to serve,

"JOHN JORROCKS."

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CHAPTER VI.

"There shall the flocks on thymy pasture stray,
And shepherds dance at summer's op'ning day."
PLEASURES OF HOPE.

SMALL as Hillingdon appeared after London, and insignificant as were the shops, Mr. Jorrocks soon found that he could get most things he wanted. There were two tailors', three shoemakers', a milliner's, a straw-bonnet maker's, two inns', or public houses, where they sold grocery, woollen and linen drapery, hats and hardware, or exchanged them with the farmers for poultry, butter, and eggs; also, a beggarly beer shop, a butcher's, and a bull's eye or lolly-pop confectioner's. Besides these, of course there was the doctor's—doctor Claudius Sacker—with his white house and green rails, and name properly emblazoned on a bright brass plate, with a "night bell" pull in the door post. Most of the cottage pro-

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perty belonged to Mr. Jorrocks; indeed, the extreme neatness of the buildings, with their old gables, and rose trees, woodbine, or ivy, creeping up the thatches or stone roofs, or apricot or pear trees nailed against the fronts, plainly bespoke which were included in his purchase, and which were the property of other individuals. There was an air of substantiality about all the Westbury—now the Jorrocks property.

Of course it was the interest of the new landlord to encourage his own people, and accordingly Mr. Jorrocks set about giving an order to each. His swell London clothes he soon found to be inconvenient, and unsuited to the country; and in lieu of his fine blue coat and brass buttons, and buff-waistcoat, he devised, in conjunction with Tommy Rumfit, *his* tailor, a new article of dress, which he purposed calling the Jorrockian Jacket.

John Brick, one of the mercantile publicans aforesaid, having imported a piece of the queer figured cotton velvety* looking stuff that we see ladies making gowns of, Mr. Jorrocks determined to adopt it as the material for his dress, and ac-

* "Peel" or Ancoat Vale velvet.

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cordingly had the requisite quantity, with trimmings, cut off, and sent to old Rumfit's. The colour, we should observe, was brightish brown, with a fine light sea-weedy sort of pattern shot through—indeed, we are not sure but it might have been meant to represent wheat-ears—like Sir Robert Peel's present — though the word "free" was not apparent in any part of it.

Well, this was cut and contrived into something between a jacket of modern, and a jerkin of olden times. The collar was a mere hem—turned up, it did not half cover the nape of his great bull neck.—Mr. J. was terribly thick about the throat—a sad sign of want of breeding. The jacket, or garment, was double-breasted, with slanting pockets on each breast, with very full straight laps meeting, or rather folding over in front, and reaching about half way down his thighs. A row of buttons enabled him to fasten them in front. In each lap front were two tiers of diagonal pockets—the pocket mouths—for holes would ill describe their proportions, being edged with nut-brown velvet, and the upper story ones a size or two smaller than the lower. In these he purposed carrying his hands, halfpence, and trifles of that sort; while

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the lower ones were for his handkerchief, handsaw, books, and other bulky articles. The back of the garment presented a most extraordinary aspect. There were no buttons at the waist, nor indeed anything to denote where the small of his back would have been—if *small* he had had any—but just about his girth, the garment swelled out as if inflated. Two downward folds indeed there were, and a line of buttons up the middle, as if the laps were buttoned together, but this was all deception—or rather attempt at deception—for it was apparent to the commonest observer that the garment was of a piece all round. Such it was, however, and being made entirely out of Mr. Jorrocks's own head, of course let him have the credit of it; and such of our readers as think it becoming, we dare say are at liberty to copy it—as he has not yet gone to the expense of a patent. The waistcoat was of the same material, with large flaps without *any* pockets; and his lower man was clad in drab stockingnette tights, and Hessian boots. A green neckcloth, a woolly white hat, turned up with green, and a knotty little dog whip, completed his costume. Rumfit and he thought it extremely fine, and altogether a very good job.

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Thus attired, Mr. Jorrocks mounted a most imperturbable old roman-nosed, dock-tailed black cob that he had picked up cheap in the village, and rode about surveying his estate—looking at pigs, and cows, and sheep—asking foolish questions, and talking a great deal of nonsense about farming. Thanks, however, to the veneration in which town's-people, above all, Londoners, are held in the country, the rustics thought some new lights must be breaking in the husbandry horizon—never imagining for a moment that the owner of so fine an estate, with such a fine open countenance of his own, knew nothing whatever of what he was talking about.

Among the cottagers he did well enough, for he had plenty of small talk for the old women; how many daughters they had? who they married? how many children each had? how many were boys, and how many gals? where they got their cat? whether she was a good mouser? how the oven baked? if their water tubs were full, how much they held? what they gave for their pig? how they were off for soap? and other little family inquiries.

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Never was such an estate as Mr. Jorrocks expected he had taken possession of, for in addition to all the tenants being described as most opulent and respectable, Mark Heavytail, the largest, who farmed what was called the "pet farm," was stated by the rural Robins who "did" the printed particulars, to be a man of such *respectability* and independence of character, as to be above asking or accepting a reduction of rent. Glorious man! There was a tenant! Mark was a fine specimen of an English yeoman, six feet high, large and stout in proportion, with a great, round, nearly bald head, grey eyes, snub nose, and ample chin. His usual costume was a snuff-brown coat—at least when he sported any coat—for it was oftener on a hedge than on his back, a striped toilenette waistcoat, broad patent cords, and grey-worsted stockings, and thick shoes. The pet farm lying round a hill side, and the house being on the top of it, Mark had the wind first hand; and, either from that cause, or from having a voice a size too large for his body, Mark always roared as if he was holloaing to a man at the mainmast of a man-of-war in a gale of wind. One of Mr. Jor-

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rocks's earliest visits was to the pet farm, and though he might not, like Miss Waithman,* expect to find all the shepherds with pipes and crooks, or smartly clad dairy maids with cows and syllabubs under the trees, he certainly expected a different reception to what he met with from Mark. Having kicked his pursy pony up the hill, he sat mopping the perspiration from his brow, and looking down upon the village of Hillingdon, with the silvery Dart winding its tortuous course through a wide expanse of rugged picturesque country, when Mark, who was busy cutting hay in his stack-yard, seeing a stranger who he concluded was the "squire," put on his coat and proceeded to meet him.

* * * * *

"GOOD MORNIN', SIR," roared Mark, as soon as he got within fifty yards of Mr. Jorrocks;

* Theodore Hook used to take great liberties with this lady in the "John Bull." Transplanting her into Hertfordshire from the shawl shop in Fleet Street, he represented her as encountering a shepherd with his crook, and saying in exultation at the realization of her dreams of rural felicity, "But, shepherd, where's your pipe?"

"Please marm, I har'nt got no baccy," was the reply.

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"STOP, LET ME OPEN THE GATE FOR YOU," and Mr. Jorrocks, thinking Mark was deaf, pitched his voice in the same key. The following dialogue then took place, each bellowing as loud as he possibly could.

"GLAD TO SEE YE AMONG US," roared Mark, taking off his hat as Mr. Jorrocks neared the gate.

"THANK YE, MY GOOD FRIND," replied Mr. Jorrocks; "WERRY 'APPY TO MAKE YOUR PERSONAL ACQUAINTANCE. YOU'VE A WERRY NICE FARM HERE; DOIN' WELL I 'OPES."

"WANTS A DEAL OF DOIN' TO," replied Mark.

"THEN VY DON'T YOU DO IT?" inquired Mr. Jorrocks.

"BECAUSE IT ARN'T MINE," responded Mark.

"THEN WHO'S TO DO IT?" inquired Mr. Jorrocks.

"YOU, TO BE SURE!" replied Mark, louder than ever.

"ME!" responded Mr. Jorrocks. "MY VIG—WHY THEY TOLD ME THE FARM WAS PERFECTION;" adding aloud to himself, "There must be some mistake here; this can't be the 'pet farm.'"

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"PRAY MY GOOD MAN VERE DOES MR. 'EAVY-TAIL LIVE? — MR. JORROCKS'S 'EAVYTAIL, IN FACT?" inquired he, after a moment's reflection.

"HERE," roared Mark; "MY NAME'S HEAVY-TAIL."

"Indeed! vell I thought so, but some 'ow your account don't tally with the auctioneer's description of the pet farm."

"I KNOW NOTHIN' ABOUT AUCTIONEERS," roared Mark, "BUT I KNOW OUR BACK KITCHEN 'ILL BE DOWN THIS BACK END, IF THERE ISN'T SOMETHIN' DONE TO HER; AND THERE'S NO KEEPIN' THE CATTLE STRAIGHT FOR WANT OF A NEW BIER."

"Vell, but I'm a buyer," replied Mr. Jorrocks; "vot is it you've got to sell?"

"SELL! WHY THERE'S NO PRICES TO GET FOR NOTHIN'. DOWN CORN, DOWN HORN! WE'RE ALL BEGGAR'D; NOTHIN' FOR US BUT THE ONION (UNION); YE CAN NEVER KEEP UP YOUR RENTS."

"My vig!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, adding aloud to himself, "if this is the crack tenant, I vonder wot the rest 'ill be like."

"THE VEAT'S A LOOKIN' WELL," observed Mr. Jorrocks, after a pause, anxious to get Mark off the grievances. Mr. J., looking back on a field he had passed in coming up the hill—

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"THAT'S BARLEY," roared Mark, "I WISHES THE WHEAT WAS LOOKIN' WELL. PRAY JUST RIDE THIS WAY, AND SEE IT, AND THEN SAY IF IT'S POSSIBLE AT PRESENT PRICES TO KEEP UP PRESENT RENTS."

"Vell, but the clover's a good crop," observed Mr. Jorrocks, not noticing Mark's invitation.

"The old land hasn't a ton an acre on it. The land's all sour—wants draining."

"Faith, I thinks the land's not the only *sour* thing on the premises," observed Mr. Jorrocks, aloud to himself.

"WILL YE BE PLEASED TO STEP THIS WAY, AND LOOK AT OUR BACK KITCHEN?" bellow'd Mark, after a pause; "AND REALLY I THINK THE DAIRY 'LL HAVE TO BE BUILT NEW FROM THE GROUND, FOR THE WET COMES TUMBLIN' IN BY BUCKET-FULLS FROM ALL QUARTERS."

"So much the better," roared Mr. Jorrocks, "it 'll save you the trouble of pampin' into the milk. The Islinton folks always say the *black* cow is the best."

"AY, THAT'S VARRY TRUE," rejoined Mark, "OUR PUMP'S ALL GONE WRONG, TOO—NOT BEEN A DROP OF WATER COME FROM HER THIS FORTNIGHT."

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"Oh dear! oh dear!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, "you seem to be all gone wrong together—a bundle o' grivances. If grumblin' makes a good farmer, you certainlie ought to be classed A. 1. Good mornin'! good mornin'!" added he, turning his sluggish cob's head downwards as he spoke, and giving it a good double-thonging as he went.

"BUT YE'LL SURELY COME AND SEE THE BACK KITCHEN!" roared Mark, "I DECLARE ITS NEVER NO USE—"

"IT'S NEVER NO USE BOTHERIN' ME!" screamed Mr. Jorrocks, kicking the cob, and double-thonging the harder to get out of hearing, adding to himself as he went—"I'm dashed if ever I see'd sich a perfect 'urricane of a man. Pet farm, indeed! my vig! reg'lar spoilt child, I declare! 'Come hup, you hugly beast,' to the cob, 'come up, and get me out o' hearin.'"

And with the word away they went down the hill, a deal faster than they came up, the whip, and the cob's nose being turned towards home, giving an additional impetus to his movements.

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CHAPTER VII.

"Neighbour, you are tedious."
SHAKESPEARE.

CRUELLY disturbed as Mr. Jorrocks had been by his interview with Mark Heavytail, he had scarcely recovered his usual equanimity before he encountered another tenant, who again upset his philosophy. This was Johnny Wopstraw, a civil but very concise man; and if there is one more provoking thing than another, it is encountering a slow pragmatical matter-of-fact man when one is in a regular state of combustion. Wopstraw was a big, broad-shouldered, broad-faced, sensible, respectable man; but slow in his judgment, and cautious in his utterance. Moreover, he had a provoking way of lengthening each sentence by the unnecessary introduction of the phrase of

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"upon the whole"—the word whole being pronounced as if there were a couple of "h's" and two or three "o's" in it. He was busy in the field, but seeing the new squire he left his work, and introduced himself in the usual way by opening a gate.

"Thank ye, my frind," said Mr. Jorrocks as he approached; adding, as he looked over the hedge into the next field, "you've a fine crop o' barley there."

"That's wheat," replied Wopstraw, taking off his hat, "upon the *who-ole* its tolerable fair. The low end isn't so good as the high though."

"Humph," grunted Mr. Jorrocks, "these corn crops rather bother my vig; and vot do you think o' things in general?" asked he.

This was a fine comprehensive question, and just the last one that ought to have been hazarded to Wopstraw, for it was sure to last him till night-fall.

"Why, upon the who-ole," he began, "things are down, and I fear they'll keep so. Upon the who-ole I think Sir Robert was wrong in meddlin' with us farmers. We were doin' pretty well

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upon the who-ole—just managin' to scratch on at least—and then he came and knocked the very wind out of our bodies. Upon the who-ole I—"

"Vell, but 'ave you got ever a bal (bull) to sell?" interrupted Mr. Jorrocks, anxious to turn the conversation, and save himself a political lecture. "I vant's a bal, o' the pure Devonshire sort, to give these foreignerin' chaps a quiltin'. It be'oves us to be awake—*wide* awake I may say, sharp as Durham mustard—and to drain and dust our land with hashes and bone manure, nitrate o' sober, and all that sort o' stuff. The farmers here seem a long way behind the hintelligence o' the day."

"Why, now," replied Wopstraw, scratching his head, and reconsidering all Mr. Jorrocks had said, so as to begin answering at the right end: "Why, now, as to a bull I doesn't know of one that upon the who-ole I can recommend. Dick Grumbleton, at Hawkstone, has one, but he's of the Herefordshire sort; besides which, upon the who-ole, I don't suppose Dick wants to part with him."

"Vell, never mind then," said Mr. Jorrocks, anxious to be off.

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"As to drainin'," continued Wopstraw, without noticing Mr. Jorrocks's interruption, "upon the who-ole, I should say it's the foundation of all agricultural improvement. It's like the foundation of a house, and unless that's sound it's no use."

"Then you don't know of a *bal* to suit me," rejoined Mr. Jorrocks, catching impatiently at the cob's head, double-thonging and digging his heel into its side, riding off, and muttering something about "tiresome chap—slow coach—bothersome beggar," and other little censurable epithets.

In truth, Mr. Jorrocks found a great difference between London and country people. Bred in City, where his life had been passed, and where "time is money," the contrast between its quickness and the slowness of the country was strikingly visible. No smartness, no quickness, no question answered before asked, everything seemed to lag and drag its weary way on; to-day the same as yesterday, to-morrow as the day before. Ever-varying nature supplies the charms of artificial change; but he that cannot read that book, had better remain behind the counter. Yet how many are there panting to repeat Mr. Jorrocks's mistake!

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"Hacknied in business, wearied at that oar,
Which thousands, once fast chained to, quit no more,
But which, when life at ebb runs weak and low,
All wish, or seem to wish, they could forego;
The statesman, lawyer, merchant, man of trade,
Pants for the refuge of some rural shade."

Mr. Jorrocks soon found he was more at home at the Shades at London Bridge or Leicester Square, than in the shades of Hillingdon. It was clear he had a deal to learn. Impressed with the conviction that he was too shrewd to be cheated, and country people too honest to attempt it, he made several very moderate bargains both in the matter of cattle and corn; though the prices were so much lower than in London, that he prided himself upon being very clever. Just as Englishmen think they "do" the French, when they get five-and-twenty francs some odd sous for a sovereign.

Mr. Jorrocks's jobbing and dealing brought him acquainted with another gentleman, whom we will at once introduce to the reader.

Joshua Sneakington was a sort of man to be found in most places—a country mischief-maker, a kind of village lawyer—a better hand at talking than working. Tall in person, with long thinish grey locks scattered over a finely-shaped head,

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with a marked and expressive countenance—high forehead, grey eyes, roman nose, slightly-compressed mouth, and trimly-kept whiskers and chin. There was an air of respectability about Joshua, which, aided by a low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat, a well-brushed coat, and the unusual appendage of a pair of gloves, bespoke him a remove or so from the common herd. Gloves are very unusual wear in the country—the Exciseman and Joshua were about the only people that sported them, except on a Sunday; and even on a Sunday they were rare—country people don't feel at home in them. Joshua was precise and methodical in his manner, thoughtful in his looks, puritanical in his conversation, and apparently profound in his calculations. He was a native of Hillingdon—a mason by trade, and his misfortune was having been cast in so contracted a circle, for he had all the ingredients of a great rogue, and only wanted room to exercise his talents. As it was, he had cheated every body, and set the whole parish by the ears, long before he had reached the age of fifty. Joshua was in very bad odour among his own craft, for though a neat workman, and also

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a good judge of work, he always preferred picking holes in other people's to doing any himself. He was plausible and subtle, and his communications were always so close and confidential that they were of little use to his employers, and only served the purpose of transferring his own delinquencies to the shoulders of other people. All this comes out in time in the country, where a bad name is a serious inconvenience to the bearer.

The appearance of a fresh fly in the spider's web at a time it was almost deserted, was as great a godsend to Joshua, as the Anti-Corn-Law League summons was to Mr. William Bowker. Not that we mean to compare Joshua to Bill in point of respectability, for Bill was immeasurably Joshua's superior, inasmuch as he would have been honest if he could; while Joshua's natural inclinations were for roguery and underhandedness. Bill was a fine, bold, daring, dashing sort of fellow; while the other was a mean circumventing animal, that would rather carry his points by stealth and undermining, than by honesty and straightforwardness.

Knowing the advantage of early applications—

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as well for the purpose of securing success, as of warding off hostile admonition, Joshua very soon contrived to come in contact with Mr. Jorrocks. He knew everything Mr. J. would want, and by anticipating this, pointing out that, and recommending t'other, he soon convinced our worthy friend that he was a "monstrous clever fellow," and might be extremely useful to him. Indeed, an honest man of this description would have been very much so, for Mr. Jorrocks, as we have already said, was superlatively ignorant of country affairs, and landed property is not quite so manageable as money in the funds. But the worst of Joshua was, he persuaded Mr. Jorrocks that all the people about him were rogues. This even he didn't do openly. He looked grave and solemn, and shook his head, when Mr. Jorrocks talked of employing any one he didn't approve of—hinted they were not quite the thing—that he knew some one much better suited—or that they were not first-rate workmen. Among the villagers Joshua announced himself as Mr. Jorrocks's confidential adviser—hinted that Mr. J. would not do anything without his advice, and told them they had better make all their applications through him. Joshua jumped

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all at once into a great man, and paraded Mr. Jorrocks about the town just as a young lady does a newly caught lover. Then it was, "Sneak" this, and "Sneak" that, and "You must talk to Sneak about it," until Joshua seemed likely to eclipse even the renowned Benjamin Brady himself.

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CHAPTER VIII.

" What! is the jay more precious than the lark,
Because his feathers are more beautiful?
Or is the adder better than the eel,
Because his painted skin contents the eye?"

TAMING OF THE SHREW.

ODD as it may seem, Mrs. Jorrocks got on better at first in the country than her husband. Whether this was attributable to her earlier rural recreations at her mother's at Tooting—who occupied one of those summaries of London felicity—a paled box containing a pond, a weeping willow, a row of liburnums and lilacs scattered about—or that she found herself of more consequence in the village " hall" than she did in Great Coram Street, we know not; but certain it is, she took to it much more naturally than our worthy ex-grocer himself, who made a very bungling piece of business of the early days of his 'squireship.

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To be sure, Mrs. Jorrocks jumped all at once into active pursuits—furnishing and arranging her house—the like by the garden and green-house. She was at it all day—pulling about carpets, wheeling sofas, doing the becoming by tables and chairs, smelling and tying up geraniums, rowing the gardener, and nailing and training up rose trees, woodbine, and ivy. Weeds too were plentiful, and Emma Flather and she always had their hands full of something. Mrs. Flather, though she could not exactly reconcile the Jorrocks's manners and ideas with those of their predecessors, saw, nevertheless, that they were very monied people, and coming from London—the place in her mystified imagination of universal gentility—she was inclined to think the Jorrocks's must be the newest fashion, and that the Westbury's belonged to a somewhat antiquated day. At all events, she had no doubt the Jorrocks's were a desirable acquaintance, and day after day the model of propriety was seen wending her way, watering-pot in hand, to the village hall.

Mrs. Flather thought it "so nice" that there was no young man in the way, so that their disinterested attentions could not be misconstrued,

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charging Emma all the time to find out whether there were any nephews, or who the money was likely to go to. Emma was an apt scholar, and even began clipping the queen's English, and taking liberties with her vowels, either from contagion, or for the sake of flattering her new friends.—" Imitation," says Lacon, " is the sincerest flattery."

Joshua Sneakington, too, set up a somewhat similar dialect, and talked to Jorrocks about 'osses, and 'edges, and 'eifers (heifers), and 'ouses, and 'arrowing, and 'oeing, and all sorts of 'usbandry.

Indeed, if it had'nt been that Joshua was *ray*ther too keen, having laid so long out of a victim, he would have been quite an acquisition to Mr. Jorrocks at this period, for he knew all the ins and outs of the country, and where to lay hands on everything Mr. Jorrocks wanted.

The hundred, or hundred and fifty acres, that Mr. Jorrocks threatened taking in hand, of course was not yet available, the tedious process of half-yearly noticing and out-going cropping having to be gone through with a greater part of it. This, perhaps, was what made Mr. Jorrocks settle less

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readily than his amiable and accomplished spouse.

One of the old-wainscoted rooms, that we described as the parlour of the original old house, was taken by Mrs. Jorrocks for her *boudoir*. Not that it came up to her idea of what a boudoir ought to be, but it was conveniently situated for the kitchen; added to which, she had an eye to the other for a store-room. Neither were its fittings-up at all to her taste, but these she thought she could rectify. She had the old richly-carved stone mantel-piece painted black and yellow, in imitation of marble. The sun, the moon, and all the stars were made to accommodate themselves in the various compartments of the deeply mullioned, richly corniced ceiling, the ground of which was done cerulean blue; and the gloominess of one side of the oak-wainscoted walls she purposed relieving by all the prints out of "Jun's" Sporting Magazines, while the other was to exhibit a triumph of industry in the shape of a papering of old postage stamps, done in stripes of twopenny blues and penny reds. This of course was to be a work of time, the completion of which

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depended a good deal upon the kindness of her friends, to whom she applied most assiduously for contributions. Many of them wondered what she meant by writing to ask them to "save their old heads for her." The gothic oak door, with its massive wrought-iron bands and knocker, did not please her either. She had the bands and knocker taken off; invisible hinges supplied the place of the former; and a smart brass bell-pull appeared in the door post instead of the noisy old knocker. The door itself also underwent two or three coats of paint, and shone forth in highly varnished imitation of either mahogany or rosewood: altogether, the old girl made quite a revolution. Out of doors she was equally energetic. The village school, which so long had prospered under the fostering care of the late owners of the hall, came in for a large share of her attentions. This, however, was not conducted in accordance with her ideas of how things should be; the mop caps and russet brown stuffs of the girls did not meet her approbation, anymore than did the corduroys and woollen caps of the boys meet Mr. Jorrocks's. Mr. J. had an idea that the dress had a good deal to do with their learning, and always con-

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tended that there were no bo*uys* half so *cute* as those of the red jackets and leather breeches of Islington. It was there we believe he got his treasure, the renowned "Binjamin" Brady.

Mrs. Jorrocks's chief objection to the girl's dresses was the dowdyness of them. "No style, no smartness, you see," said she to Mrs. Trimmer, the mistress, after she had got her first visit or two over; "it costs nothin' more havin' them a good colour, and the clothes decently made, than these queer flat trollopy lookin' things," running her parasol down a girl's back as she spoke—"nothin' personal in course," added she, "to the lady wot does the genteel novels, but a little smartness and fillin' out doesn't do young folks no harm—sky blue now, I should say, would be werry neat, with plenty of flowers—or sea green, or laylack, or lavender, or red, anything in fact better than these dismal-lookin' browns. And as to their learnin'—spellin', and cypherin', and sewin' is all werry well; but I'd teach them a little of the genteels — braidin' and ornamental sewin'—satin stitch; worsted work too is werry much in wogue."

Poor Mrs. Trimmer didn't know what to make

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of it all; but of course she concluded the fine London lady knew what was right.

Mrs. Jorrocks was very much bothered about the girls' dresses, and many were the consultations Emma Flather and she held on the subject. Emma, however, had had no experience in these matters, never having seen any other school of the sort, and her taste for clothes not descending below silks, satins, and muslins. In this emergency, Mrs. Jorrocks bethought of applying to Mr. Bowker's sister-in-law, Susan, whose theatrical knowledge and taste combined had aided her on former emergencies, and she thought would help her to something smart. Accordingly she wrote her the following epistle.

"Mrs. Jorrocks's complaments Miss Slummers, and mam, I'll thank you to see what you can do for me in the way of dressin' my school girls, as they have at present a very flat, trollopey, dowdey sort of look; Mrs. Jorrocks does not approve of too much finery for girls, thinkin' it likely to lead their minds astray from the cultiwation of intelligent vays, particular from their reverence and

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duty to their superiors in every station of life; but I think, without goin' to any great expense, somethin' smart might be hit upon; that would be neat and not costly or gaudy, and set off their figures a little better to adwantage.

"Mrs. Jorrocks will, therefore, thank you to see what you can do for her.

"*Hillingdon Hall, Hillingdon.*"

Susan and Mrs. Bowker had a long consultation on the subject of this letter; both had a taste for finery, but how to apply it to the exigencies of a country school was rather beyond their ingenuity, besides which they knew Mrs. Jorrocks wanted to cut a cheap dash. All the charity schools in London and the environs were examined for ideas, but they were all more in the check, than in the fan, vanity style. Susan's attention was then turned to stage costume; all the characters she had appeared in were canvassed, and at length, all things considered, she determined upon recommending a Swiss costume. Her reasons will be best gathered by a perusal of her letter.

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"Respected Madam,

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and, in conjunction with my sister, have given your wants my best consideration. I have inspected the dresses of all, or nearly all the scholastic establishments in London and the neighbourhood, but find they all have a tendency to the disfigurement, rather than a development of the person. The colours vary greatly, and the articles of dress slightly differ, but in no one that I have seen is there the slightest attempt at fashion or elegance. At Kensal Green, they have sky-blue gowns, white caps, capes and sleeves, with yellow stockings; but the girls are one uniform breadth from the shoulders to the heels. At Clapham Rise, they have Lincoln green, with blue stockings; at Peckham, tartans, with tartan stockings; at Balham Hill, scarlet, with green stockings, and yellow worsted shawls; at Pimlico, orange, with orange stockings; at Parson's Green they are red all over; and at Turnham Green, all grey.

"The result of my examinations and inquiries has been, that though there is a great deal of strong showy material used for dresses at some of

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these schools, they all seem to have been chosen with a view to extraordinary and incongruous effect—something to startle and surprise, rather than to please and allure. It may have been the taste of the day in which they were founded, but they have certainly outlived the fashion very considerably. Under these circumstances I turned my attention to other countries, first and foremost among which stand the Swiss for originality and variety of female costume. They are an out-of-door people, and though cleanliness and sewing is very properly inculcated in schools, yet the main object in patronizing them being to make a show through streets up to church, I conceived we could not do better than attempt a modification of a becoming Swiss dress. These, as you doubtless know—(having seen many on the stage)—are various, particularly the head dress. In one Canton (Appenzell) they wear black caps like butterfly's wings stuck on their heads, while the rest of the dress partakes a good deal of that of an English housemaid — short sleeves and long petticoats—bodice lacing in front. The Lucernoise are richer and more foreign—large flat hats, hair in two long plaits

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down the back, white collars, with large frills, purple dresses, trimmed with orange, with a square of orange and red let in at the back of the waist, white stockings, and an infinity of chains, beads, and crosses, on a richly-embroidered waist of purple velvet and black. This, however, I think, would hardly do, save for the monitors or head girls of the school, besides which it has the fault—which all Swiss dresses have indeed—of extreme flatness and want of *tornure*. I therefore merely describe this dress in case richness and costliness should be what you want. What I would respectfully recommend, would be the costume of the Canton d'Ury. This is a large flat-crowned straw hat, with a wreath of ribbon round the crown, the bonnet placed becomingly on the back of the head. A white sort of bed gown, well open at the bosom, reaching a little below the waist, with a scarlet petticoat and pink stockings. This, confined at the waist, and well set off with horse hair petticoats, or even bustles, would have a very stylish dashing effect, and should you ever think of giving a fête champêtre, or any little rural entertainment of that sort, girls dressed in that way might be exceedingly

useful and ornamental to the scene. A few lessons in dancing would enable them to go through a figure or two while the servants were laying the table; or if the entertainment wanted varying after dinner, you might have them in to perform. Again, they might be useful in handing about tea or cakes; and altogether the appearance of so many retainers would have the effect of adding consequence to the mansion, and, of course, to the mistress.

"Should this suggestion meet your approbation, it will afford me very sincere pleasure to assist in carrying it into effect, and your instructions shall be promptly attended to. My brother and sister unite with me in most respectful compliments to Mr. Jorrocks and yourself, and I have the honour to remain, madam,

"Your most obedient

"And very humble Servant,

"Susan Slummers.

"*Eagle Street,*

"*Red Lion Square, London.*"

Mrs. Jorrocks was charmed at the idea. She thought it was "the werry cleverest hit that ever

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was made, combinin' the ornamental with the useful;" and she wrote to Susan Slummers to get her estimates and proposals for furnishing the requisite quantity of stuff and stockings, also for finding and upholding for twelve months a certain number of horse hair bustles. The latter was put in competition through the medium of the advertising columns of the *Times* newspaper in the shape of the following announcement.

HORSE-HAIR BUSTLES.

To be let, the finding, maintaining, and repairing for twelve months certain, five dozen best horse-hair bustles of different sizes, which, with all other particulars, may be had on application to Miss Clarissa Howard, at BOWKER AND Co.'s wholesale and retail snuff and tobacco warehouse, Eagle Street, Red Lion Square.

N.B.—Just arrived, a large consignment of real havannahs. Tobacco and fancy snuffs in the greatest variety. The trade supplied.

The school-house underwent an alteration, as well as the inmates. This was a modern building of the lattice-window cottage order, entered by a

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porch, leading into a passage, on one side of which was the school room, and on the other the master and mistress's apartment. Its outward appearance bespoke what it was; and as there was no fear of the little girls getting to the wrong house by mistake, the owner had never thought it necessary to put up an inscription either stating that it was a school, or that it was meant to educate so many children, or even that it was built by so and so in such a year. Things were now about to be done as they ought. Under the auspices of Joshua Sneakington, a tablet was prepared for erection over the door, stating that Mrs. Jorrocks was the foundress, &c. &c., and in order that all things might start together, it was arranged that the tablet should be put up on the Saturday night preceding the Sunday on which the "merry Swiss girls" were to parade for the first time in long drawn line up to church. Then, as the village bells rang gaily on a balmy summer's morning, Mr. and Mrs. Jorrocks were seen repairing arm in arm "full fig" with Binjimin with his hands full of prayer books behind them, to see the grand effect of the new dresses and inscriptions, and walk along-side the children to church;

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out the children came hand in hand, the little ones first, with their great umbrella hats and enormous bustles, each couple laughing at those on before, Mrs. Jorrocks admiring the effect of the scarlet and white, and Mr. Jorrocks spelling aloud to himself the over-true inscription Joshua Sneakington's hurry had caused to be stuck over the door.

THIS
SCHOOL WAS FOUNDER'D
BY
JULIA JORROCKS,
THE TRULY PIOUS AND BENEVOLENT
LADY
OF THIS MANOR.
ANNO DOMINI 184--.

CHAPTER IX.

Some country girl, scarce to a curt'sey bred,
Would I much rather than Cornelia wed;
If supercilious, haughty, proud, and vain,
She brought her father's triumphs in her train.

Our hero's shire, like most counties and shires, was divided into Whig and Tory, whereof the Whigs had rather the advantage, owing, perhaps, to the influence of the lord lieutenant, who favoured the former politics, and had the usual making of great men, in the shape of magistrates, deputy-lieutenants, and, perhaps, excisemen. Still the Tories ran them close, and every vote was of importance. The late Mr. Westbury, like most right thinking men, was a Whig, and great anxiety was felt in high quarters as to what the politics of his successor might be. The lord lieutenant aforesaid—to wit, the Duke of Donkeyton, was a muddle-headed, garrulous old

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Whig—liberal, levelling, and mankind-loving out of doors—exclusive, and a bit of a bashaw within. "The greatest good for the greatest number! civil and religious liberty! equality! freedom of the press!" and all that sort of thing sort of man.

The period of which we are now writing was one of great importance to his grace, inasmuch as the hope of his house—the young Marquis of Bray—had just attained his majority, and parliament had shown certain unhealthy symptoms, indicating, in the opinion of the physicians (Peel, Goss, and Co.), no distant dissolution. These considerations made the Duke come down a peg or two in his greatness, and mix rather more with the commonalty, not but that he knew of all that was going on in the country, for every great man has his Toady—his Joshua Sneakington—to supply him with tittle-tattle and gossip; but the Duke thought it prudent to unbend a little. Accordingly, the Duchess began carding, and the Duke began dining, all the likely birds in the district. Of course, the Tory party turned up their noses, wondered "that so and so would let themselves be made cats' paws of"—observ-

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ing, that "it was quite evident what the Duke and Duchess were after;" "*they* wouldn't allow themselves to be made a convenience of," and with such like declarations, patiently waited to be called upon by the leaders of their own party.

It was with great pleasure the Duke heard that Mr. Jorrocks was a Whig, for what with his farms and what with his shops, he could carry as many as fifteen or sixteen votes to the poll. The consequence was, that not many weeks after Mr. and Mrs. Jorrocks's arrival, a dark claret coach, the wheels picked out in red, with four horses, and postilions in scarlet, and two outriders in dark grey, drew up at the old porch of Hillingdon Hall, much to the astonishment of Binjimin and Batsay, who stood staring at two richly embossed and glazed cards, one bearing the title of "The Duke of Donkeyton, Donkeyton Castle," the other that of "The Duchess of Donkeyton, Donkeyton Castle," until the coroneted coach and its contents had whisked clean out of sight. It so happened that Mr. Jorrocks, on that day, had gone with Joshua Sneakington to look at a "b*a*l," about ten miles off, and Mrs. Jorrocks and Emma had been sent for suddenly, to quell

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an insurrection in the school, arising out of the unpopularity of the new costume. Mrs. Jorrock was sadly distressed at being out, for in addition to natural curiosity, Mrs. Trotter had the impudence to assert that the coach contained his grace's gentleman and her grace's maid; but Mrs. Trotter having once mistaken these personages for the Duke and Duchess, it was just as likely she might mistake the Duke and Duchess for these personages, especially in a large family coach with the windows up. Be that as it may, however, the coach had been there, as the cards could testify.

Great was Mr. Jorrocks's astonishment when he saw them. "Vell, he thought he never know'd sich a thing in his life—called on by a duke! wonders would never cease." Then he summoned Binjimin to know how it all was. "Vell, Binjimin," said he, jingling a load of keys and halfpence in the upper story of the Jorrockian jacket, "tell us all about it now—vot did you see?"

"Vy," said Binjimin, wiping his nose across the back of his hand, "I vas a scrubbin' and pollishin' for 'ard life at your Sunday 'essians,

ven all of a sudden there came such a peal at the bell that I thought some waggabone had run away with our new pull; accordin' I throws down the boot, and, seizin' the big vip, ran as 'ard as ever I could, 'oping for to catch them. Vell, I opens the door, and crikey, there stood a man, for all the world, like Jack the Giant-killer, dressed in a short coat, leather breeches, and top boots, with a cockade in his 'at, and a precious long vip in his 'and—just like one of them great, long, lazy, 'ulking London Johnnies, wot we used to see about the warst end, only a *deal* bigger, and a coach with sich a sight of 'osses in it, that I think the leaders' 'eads were at the far end of our town. Just like the Lord Mayor's state boobey hutch, only there wasn't no men in harmour about it, or fools in wigs inside. Vell I was so flummox'd at comin' out with a vip to sich an assortment, that I dare say the Johnny might have been 'ollerin' to me till now to know if you were at 'ome, if Batsay hadn't come and explained that you were away lookin' arter a bull, but her missis was up at the seminary, and she would run for her; whereupon the great sarcy Johnny, with his up-turned nose, jest shoved the two cards into her

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'and, and the coach and all the party were off and bowlin' away out of sight afore one could say—Jack Robinson."

"My vig!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks in astonishment at the honour.

The first blow was speedily followed up by another.

Ere the Jorrocks's had fully digested the compliment, and settled the order of march for returning the visit, an enormous card — larger than one of these pages—arrived, done up in a richly gilt and figured cover, sealed with a prodigious seal containing the coronet, crests, arms, and supporters of the Donkeyton family.

The card was not less gorgeous. Under a canopy formed by a ducal coronet, surrounded by a glittering halo, a richly coloured royal party sat at a sumptuously spread table; stars and feathers and orders abounding, while the word "BANQUET," in gilt letters below, denoted the nature of the entertainment, and prepared the receiver for the invitation which followed. Thus it ran, or rather thus it was filled up, the names of the inviters and words, of course, being printed in gilt letters.

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"The Duke and Duchess of Donkeyton request the honour of *Mr. and Mrs. Jorrocks's* company to dine *and stay all night,* on *Tuesday,* the 21*st of July.* "R. S. V. P.

"Donkeyton Castle."

There was a go!

Mr. Jorrocks was staggered, and Mrs. Jorrocks dumb-founded. They thought it must be a hoax. The idea of them, whose most aristocratic acquaintance was old Lady Jingle, at Margate, jumping all at once over the heads of baronets, baron lords (as the late lamented Sam Spring used to call them), earls, and marquises, and arriving by one flying leap at a dukedom, was altogether incredible. Couldn't be the case. Must be some mistake. Perhaps a trick of the boys at Dr. Rodwell's academy, who had always been a nuisance to the neighbourhood, as Joshua Sneakington avowed. But then the coach and horses and cards; there was no hoax in them, for both Batsay and Binjimin saw them, as well as every man, woman, and child in the village. No, it must be right. The Duke was a farmer, and had

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heard of Mr. Jorrocks's fame; the Duchess was a florist, and had heard of Mrs. J.'s garden. Thus each settled the matter to their own satisfaction.

"*Honour* too!" observed Mrs. Jorrocks, looking again at the card, "calling it an *honour*—The Duke and Duchess of Donkeyton requesting the honour of Mr. and Mrs. Jorrocks's company."

"R. S. We. P. too," observed Mr. Jorrocks, taking the glittering pasteboard out of the mistress's hand. "Wot can that mean I wonder? R. S. We. P.—I have it! Remember six werry punctual. So ve vill! Six o'clock, and no waitin'—I hates waitin' for my dinner."

Mr. Jorrocks, being the penman of the house, having deliberately unlocked his great brass-bound mahogany writing-desk, and drawn forth a sheet of the best superfine double-wove satin post, thus proceeded to answer the invitation in a good round old-fashioned hand.

"Mr. and Mrs. Jorrocks have the honour of accepting the Duke and Duchess of Donkeyton's inwitation to dinner at six o'clock on Tu—"

"Ah but Jun," said Mrs. J., when he had got

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thus far, "are you sure you're right about the hour?"

"No doubt!" grunted Mr. Jorrocks; "vot else can it mean?"

"Vy S. may stand for seven," replied Mrs. Jorrocks, "as well as six. Remember seven werry punctual."

"So it may!" exclaimed Mr. J., throwing down his pen and sticking out his legs like a man regularly floor'd. "Confound these hieroglyphicks. Shall be makin' a hass of myself. Jest like my friend Christopher's clerk, who, when the chap left his P.P.C. card for his master, would have it was a horder for wine, and forthwith dispatched a cart with a pipe o' port and claret. Vell it's one thing to be *green,* and another to show it," so saying, Mr. Jorrocks tore up the note and wrote another, saying, "Mr. and Mrs. Jorrocks would do themselves the honour of dining and staying all night at Donkeyton Castle," and let the R. S. V. P. part alone.

News of this sort doesn't keep. In less than an hour after receipt of the card, Mrs. Jorrocks was seen turning out of the hall in her Sunday

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hat and shawl, and wending her way "up street," taking the chance of who she might fall in with. As luck would have it, Mrs. Trotter was coming "down," and they met opposite the pond.

"Ow dey do's? charmin' weather, &c.," being exchanged, and Mrs. J. having no place in particular to go to, joined Mrs. Trotter, who was on her way to a district meeting of the Samaritan Society, just for the pleasure of a little of her company that fine day. Mrs. J. very soon broached the subject of the invitation. "Could Mrs. Trotter tell her 'ow far it was to Donkeyton Castle?"

"That she could, for she had been there once, and hoped never to be again: it was just fourteen miles."

Mrs. Jorrocks was rather dumbfounded, for she had never met any one high enough up the ladder to be able to sneer at a lord—let alone a duke.

Mrs. Trotter, seeing Mrs. Jorrocks's embarrassment, kindly undertook to raise her, that she might have the pleasure of knocking her down again. "And so they were going to Donkeyton Castle, were they? She had heard the Duke's break had been in the town a few days back."

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"It was the Duke's coach and six," observed Mrs. Jorrocks—"the Duke and Duchess were callin' on Mr. Jorrocks and me; and now they've sent to ax us to stay."

"Sooner you than me," observed Mrs. Trotter. —"I always pity anybody I hear going there—but, however, don't let me prejudice you against it"—so saying, having reached the door of the meeting house, Mrs. Trotter bid Mrs. J. a good morning, and turned in.

"Jealous, I guess!" muttered Mrs. J. to herself—"howsomever, she'll not put me out o' conceit on't—sour grapes, I guess, as Jun would say."

Nothing daunted by Mrs. Trotter's snarlishness, Mrs. Jorrocks wended her way to the Manse, where she found the model of propriety and her mamma in full conclave on the very subject that caused them the honour of her visit. On the parlour table lay a duplicate "banquet card;" and Miss Emma and her mamma were in full discussion as "to what it *meant*," not that they were puzzled about the R. S. V. P. or any thing of that sort, but in the enlarged womanish sense of the term, they wanted to know what it

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"*meant.*" And here we may observe that we believe it to be a well-established fact that every young lady, and many young ladies' mammas, consider at the outset of life that they are destined for duchesses. The model of propriety and the model's mamma were discussing the meaning of the card at the moment. Their argument was this—the Duke of Donkeyton and Mr. Flather were intimate, because Mr. Flather was a Whig, and Whig parsons are scarce. Moreover, a parson, Whig or Tory, is a sort of a necessary appendage at a great man's table. Then, in addition, Mr. Flather was a man whose judgment was looked up to, and even dukes are sometimes better for a little guidance. Mrs. Flather therefore satisfactorily settled why Mr. Flather and she had been guests at Donkeyton Castle, but then came the question why her daughter and she should be invited now that there were neither politics nor guidance to get in the way of return. The thought seemed to strike them simultaneously. "My *dear, dear* child!" exclaimed Mrs. Flather, kissing her daughter profusely. "Oh! mamma, *if I should!*" exclaimed Emma, as a slight tinge of pink passed across her ala-

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baster countenance, like a fleeting cloud before the moon.

Just then in came Mrs. Jorrocks.

It were needless following these old girls through their open congratulations and hidden disappointments at finding each other invited, for, of course, each expected to have the "crow:" suffice it to say, they thought it prudent to coalesce, and see what could be done in the way of mutual accommodation.

As to rivalry, Mrs. Flather had nothing to fear from the Jorrocks's being invited—indeed, she told Emma, all things considered, she didn't know but it was better that they should, for it looked less marked and particular than asking them alone; and if the Marquis's attentions were not palateable to her, it would prevent his feelings being hurt by its bruiting abroad; an overture of that sort being a thing no woman ever *thinks* of mentioning.

Fully impressed with the conviction that the Duke and Duchess of Donkeyton had determined on perpetuating their line through the medium of some artless, guileless, unsophisticated country nymph—such a one as described in our motto—

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after the manner of divers well-authenticated greasy novel couples, Mrs. Flather (who was obliging enough to believe us ladies and gentlemen who lie upon paper—called authors) most magnanimously ordered her daughter such a rig out as she thought becoming for the next taker of the title. Not that she went to Vouillon and Lawrie, or any of the accredited dispensers of fashionable feathers and furbelows, but she expended some pounds in the purchase of a piece of uncommonly good blue silk for a morning dress; which, with the aid of Mrs. Smith, the village sempstress, was made to display the fine swelling figure of the new marchioness to great advantage. Nay, more, it imparted a shade of colouring to her eyes, and made them quite blue. A Leghorn bonnet, lined with blue crape, and a white feather tipped with the same colour, did the business, and made the model perfectly killing. Give Emma her due, she was a fine girl—straight as a milk-maid, fine drooping shoulders (which she exposed so much when dressed, as to make bystanders fear she might be enacting Mrs. Eve), splendid bust, tolerably small waist, and good feet and ancles.

Before starting with Emma Flather on her new

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matrimonial speculation, it may be well "to advertise the reader," as the old writers used to say, as to her past and present position. We have already intimated that she was then in the third step of her matrimonial ladder, in the person of James Blake. The previous ones it is immaterial to mention, further than to say, that Mrs. Flather had made each believe her daughter was desperately smitten with them both, but that a sudden reaction had taken place on finding that neither had anything to live upon. It is wonderful how many people achieve the feat of living upon nothing. James Blake was differently situated, for Mrs. Flather had the advantage of knowing the exact minimum at all events of his fortune. He had been in the dangerous position of a pupil to Mrs. Flather, who had been in the habit of putting the finishing touch to young gentlemen before going to College, and Emma and James had been sort of schoolfellow playfellows—dangerous situation for a young man, especially an orphan as he was. Well, on Mr. Westbury's death, as we said before, the next presentation of the living had been purchased for James; and the period of his taking possession drawing nigh, and

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nothing better having presented itself, Mrs. Flather had fully settled in her own mind that it would be much better both for him and her daughter to marry, and then they could all live together, and she could keep things in order, and save them and herself a world of trouble.

In this arrangement Mrs. Flather did not contemplate any difficulty, for James had lived with them long enough for her to know that he was easily led, especially by such a charming conductress as her daughter. Indeed, wiser men than he might have willingly surrendered themselves to such prepossessing guidance. James was not very bright, however, partaking rather of the nature of what is called *soft*. Just the sort of youth for Mrs. Flather to have to deal with, she being what the Yorkshire people call both *soft* and *hard*. Few are so stupid as not to know their own interest. To look at James, though, you would have thought he was wise—he was a good looking young man—tallish, with a lofty forehead, bright brown eyes, roman nose, and altogether with what ought to have been an expressive sort of countenance—only it had no exact expression. Still he was what would be called a gentlemanly-

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looking young fellow; particularly in the country, where the half-buck, half hawbuck order preponderate.

Our readers perhaps will say, "why you make both James and Emma rather of the negative order." Perhaps we do—however, we can't help it, so there's an end of the chapter.

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CHAPTER X.

" Thou know'st how guileless first I met thy flame,
When Love approached me under Friendship's name;
My fancy formed thee of angelic kind,
Some emanation of the ' All-beauteous Mind,'
Those smiling eyes, attempering every ray,
Shone sweetly lambent with celestial day.
Guiltless I gazed; Heaven listen'd while you sung;
And truths divine came mended from that tongue.
From lips like those what precept fail'd to move?
Too soon they taught me 'twas no sin to love:
Back through the paths of pleasing sense I ran,
Nor wish'd an angel whom I lov'd a man."

THE preparations for the visit to Donkeyton Castle occupied the attention of Mrs. Jorrocks and Mrs. Flather most uninterruptedly. The rose bushes and flowers were left to train and look after themselves, and the household department received little attention. Silks, satins, and sarcenets usurped the place of card tables, carpets, and counterpanes. Mrs. Jorrocks had a new

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dress made for the occasion—an amber-coloured brocade, with large bunches of scarlet geraniums scattered about, and flounces three quarters of the way up her middle. Her bonnet was white chip, with an amber-coloured feather tipped with scarlet, above a madonna-shaped front plastered down each side of her forehead—"Mutton, dressed lamb fashion," as Mr. Jorrocks observed.

Mrs. Flather was equally assiduous—more so if possible — having higher and more important objects in view. Many were the tryings on, and alterings of, Emma's dress—a little fullness here, a little tightness there, a little pinching in the arm, and a little puffing elsewhere. She was regularly fitted out for conquest. Many were the confidential dialogues held between mother and daughter, as to Emma's proceedings after she had captured the Coronet. How she should ride in a coach and six, how she should call on Mrs. Trotter, how she should appear at Court, and how condescending she should be. Poor James Blake was shelved, or seldom mentioned, save as a *dernier resort*.

Emma's appetite was the only thing Mrs. Flather feared. Men she knew—marquises she imagined

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in particular—disliked guzzling girls; and she was most anxious that Emma should appear a pure ethereal being—a sort of compound of love, sentiment, and omelette souffleé.

"I think, my dear, it will be well to take a little bit of somethink to eat with you," observed Mrs. Flather to the model of propriety as they sat in solemn conclave on the oft-discussed and all-important visit, "and then you can trifle and play with your dinner, and be able to give your undivided attention to——whoever happens to sit next you. A great deal may be done at a dinner table—especially when people are hungry. Suppose we tell Jane to bake you a few buns, and then you can eat some before breakfast as well?"

"O yes, mamma, and let her put some currants in them," replied the embrio Marchioness.

"*Pshaw*, you and your currants," observed Mrs. Flather snappishly, "I wish for once you'd give up thinking of eating, and turn your attention to something else—consider what a prospect you have before you:" with which admonition Mrs. Flather left the room to look after buns and other matters.

The getting to Donkeyton was the next consideration. Mr. Jorrocks swore no power on

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airth should induce him to ride three in a pochay again; and having imported his valuable old rattle-trap fire-engine vehicle, he settled in his own mind that the old roman-nosed cob should go in it, and convey Mrs. Jorrocks and himself in front, with Binjimin and Batsay stuck up behind. The weather was fine; the roads were good; the cob was strong, and what was to hinder them? Mrs. Jorrocks, however, was the one to hinder them. "She'd jest as soon think o' flyin' as goin' to Donkeyton Castle in a hamber-coloured dress in a one-'oss chay. Wot! when the Duke and Duchess had come in a chaise and six! She'd rather not go at all, than not go as she *ought*." Mr. J. was quite willing to let her stay at home. However, there were two to one against Mr. J. there; three indeed, Mrs. J., Mrs. Flather, and Emma. These cases generally end in a compromise, and so did this.

Mrs. Jorrocks, of course, wanted to get herself there in good order—without the derangement to dress and complexion consequent upon sultry weather and dusty roads. Mrs. Flather wanted to get Emma there in like manner, and, moreover, would rather ride with Mr. Jorrocks than

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his wife, so they arranged to hire one of those forlorn attempts at gentility — a coachmaker's job carriage—with a "neat and careful driver," from the neighbouring town of Sellborough, to which we shall by and bye have the pleasure of introducing our readers. Between this and the old fire-engine the following distribution of parties was made:—Mrs. Jorrocks and Emma inside, with Batsay and Mrs. Flather's boy in buttons on the box, and Mr. Jorrocks, Mrs. Flather, and Binjimin in Mr. Jorrocks's old rattle-trap. Mr. J. wanted to argue that there would be too many for the cob, and thought it would look better for Batsay to go inside, and Binjimin and the boy in buttons to occupy the box of the job chaise; but Mrs. Jorrocks indignantly spurned the idea, and stopped the argument by asking how he could have the impereence to say *that*, when he had proposed taking her, Batsay, Binjimin and all. Poor Mr. J. was posed.

The important morn dawned a lovely summer's day. The sun rose clear and bright. The sky was of azure blue, scarce a cloud obscured the heavens, nor did a breath of wind disturb the

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leaves. But for the bustle of packing and arranging, with the fear of forgetting, it would have been a day of enjoyment. Mrs. Jorrocks's knuckles got sadly reddened before she had done.

Mr. Jorrocks took it "werry easy." The Jorrockian jacket being still in high favour, of course he sported that, with drab tights and Hessian boots. His shave had been accomplished with extra care, and a neat sea-green cravat supported his jolly chin. He got a little help from Binjimin that morning, and the old cob would have gone without his corn but for the timely services of Mr. J. Tiresome work these sort of "jaunts," what with preparing, lounging about waiting for the right time, so as to nick the proper hour for arriving, and, above all, getting a lot of women with their goods under weigh—there is no doing anything; and, unless a man has a letter back, or something in his pocket whereon to vent his mind in the shape of an article for a paper or magazine, he's sure to blow up his wife, or the maid. "Now, *are* you ready? *Con*-found it, you're *always* late! Didn't I tell you so? Lauk, what a woman you are! Now, where's your bag? D—n the bags! *Do* come away. We shall never

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get there. Wish I'd refused the invitation. Never go again, however."

The job-chaise—a terribly dirty drab-lined old green, with greasy red leather cushions and back—was dispatched to the Manse to import Emma and her mamma, and after keeping Mr. Jorrocks dancing about at the door with the white reins of the old cob in his hand a good half hour, it at last hove in sight—buns and all—and Mr. Jorrocks having moved the fire-engine on a pace or two, it presently drew up at the door. The model of propriety really looked beautiful. It's wonderful what miracles dress accomplishes! We have seen girls who were really quite plain, expand into beauties under the hands of a good milliner. "*Expand*" we may well say, for they generally make them look about half as big again as they are. Emma, as the reader may remember, did not want any filling up—fining down would have been more to the purpose with her. However, that is matter of taste, there being, fortunately admirers of women in all shapes. Indeed, if it would not shock the delicacy of our male readers, we might mention that Emma had had an extra tug at her stays, and reduced her waist by an inch

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and a half or so. Emma had a good foot and ankle, pulled her stockings well up, and didn't mind showing her legs a little. Indeed, pulling up their stockings is a great thing with girls. The finest satin dress that ever was worn, will not compensate for untidy ankles. It is not the value of the article, but the fit and style of the thing that does a man's business. A cotton gown has proved many a man's "fix," as the Americans say. Still when one's been used to a girl in cotton, the emergence into the radiance of silks has frequently a very favourable effect. So it was with Emma. Mr. Jorrocks—a great admirer of beauty, and an excellent judge of the points of a woman—albeit he hadn't shown any great taste in his selection of Mrs. J.,—was struck "all of a heap," as the saying is, with the elegance of Emma's appearance, and could he have been sure that Mrs. J. would have let Emma sit in the middle, he wouldn't have minded riding "three in a chay" again. Nothing would satisfy the old cock but Emma should get out and show herself, an invitation she readily complied with, and having praised the tightness of the sleeve, the breadth of the flounces, and the curl of the

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feather, Mr. Jorrocks handed her back again, and shoved Mrs. Jorrocks in after.

Mrs. Flather and he then mounted the front seat of the fire engine, Benjamin left the old cob's stupid head to jump in behind, and yielding the *pas* to the chaise, they fell in behind just at a sufficient distance to avoid the dust. At the first turn of the road they met Mrs. Trotter; glorious encounter, Mrs. Jorrocks kissed her hand at her, as if she would never see her more. Mr. Jorrocks pulled up for the double purpose of a little chat, and of letting the chaise get out of sight, for he had a wholesome dread of those little nasty back windows, that coachmakers will stick in behind.

"Vell, Mrs. Trotter," said he, after mutual salutations were over, "this *is* summut like summer—the real unadulterated article I guess—and where are you a travellin' to?"

Mrs. Trotter was bustling about trying for subscriptions for the "Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariner's Benevolent Society; annual subscription, two and sixpence—donations *ad libitum;*" and liking Mrs. Flather as little as Mrs. Flather liked her, and, moreover, objecting to let her "Donkeyton Castle" her, she hurried away, vowing she

hadn't a minute to spare, commenting in her own mind on the abandonment of Mrs. Flather in riding about publicly with another woman's husband.

Mr. Jorrocks, who always did everything like a workman—or at least what he thought like one—having folded a natty new zephyr across his thighs, so as to leave the upper part of his well-filled drab stockingnette pantaloons visible between the laps of the Jorrockian jacket, turned a little to his left, and commenced a voluble battery—not to say love-making—with his fair friend. Our young readers, we dare say, will turn up their noses at this, just as the boarding school Miss did, when she begged her mamma not to marry her to an old man of thirty; but as we get older we get wonderfully lenient in the matter of age, and see no reason why two old fools should not amuse themselves as well as two young ones. Besides, if our accommodating friends will refer to the first portion of this tale, or whatever they please to call it, they will find that we expressly stated, that Mrs. Flather was an undespairing widow — as indeed all widows are, that have anything—so there is nothing improbable, though it may be a little improper, in a steady old gentleman, like Mr.

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J., doing as we have described. Well, right or wrong, J. did it, and but for the encumbrance of Benjamin, we fear he would have been far worse. First he flopped the nag—"There was a goer, neat, clean, straightforward, dartin' action, none o' your lumberin', rollin', dishin' beggars, wot go like crabs, all vays at once, and none in particklar. Took to his collar like a tramp (trump), didn't run arter it all day, never tryin' for to ketch it." Then he gave old roman nose another flop—"Nice nag! all over right he did believe. He called him Dickey Cobden, not out o' compliment to him o' the League, but simply because he was wot is called a cob 'oss—a useful, underbred nag. If he'd been a dun'un now, he'd ha' called him Tom Duncombe, but he should have had a trifle more breedin'. Finsbury's pride was werry well bred. Howsomever, all things considered, Dickey did werry well. Some might think him a trifle too old; but he thought nothin' o' that, age was nothin' either in 'osses or women. Fat, fair, and forty, wos his motto. Binjimin!" exclaimed he, turning short round as he heard the boy snicker at hearing this

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oft repeated assertion, "take the drivin' seat out from an under me, and make me a comfey place for my back. I'm far too 'igh; nothin' to rest again—there, take cushion and all out, and I shall get a nice nest."

This arrangement had the desired effect. It brought Mr. Jorrocks a few inches below the level of Mrs. Flather, and enabled his lower notes to ascend to her bonnet without travelling over the back to Benjamin. At least so Mr. J. thought. He then began afresh—"Nice day for a drive," observed he aloud, flourishing his whip over his head like a French postilion; adding, in an under tone, "and rare weather for billin' and cooin'. I'm dashed if a day o' this sort don't rejuvenate one—knocks full five-and-twenty per cent. off one's age. I feels like a four-year-old. Binjimin!" exclaimed he, "jamp out and see if Dickey hasn't picked up a stone."

On Mr. J. drove, keepin' the boy runnin' after the carriage, vociferating that Dickey "hadn't done nothin' o' the sort." Mr. J. availing himself of the opportunity to sweetheart Mrs. Flather. "Stones," said he, casually, as if he

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really thought the cob had taken up one, "are bad for the feet—and talkin' o' feet," continued he, "wot beautiful feet and ankles your daughter 'as. Now, if I was a young 'un—that's to say, a little younger than I am——."

"*There ain't no stone in his foot!*" roared Benjamin.

"Five-and-thirty or so," continued Mr. Jorrocks without noticing the interruption, "I'd have a shy at her. She's jest the sort o' figure I fancy—clean, full limb'd, up-standin' sort o' gal; with as fine a figur 'ead as ever I——."

"*I tells you there ain't no stone in his foot!*" screamed Benjamin, toiling after the dust-raising vehicle. Mr. Jorrocks jerking the old cob's mouth to keep him going, and prevent Benjamin overtaking them.

"Your boy's left behind," observed Mrs. Flather, not exactly comprehending Mr. Jorrocks's manœuvre.

"O! never mind the bouy," replied Mr. J., "he finds his own shoes."

"It's the *'ind* foot, Binjimin, I think, the stone's in," holloaed Mr. Jorrocks over his left

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shoulder; adding to Mrs. Flather with a wink, a nod, and an emphasis, "Emma's her mother's own child, I calculate—like as two peas."

"*I tells you there ain't no stone in his foot!*" screamed Benjamin again, relaxing from his run into a walk; and Mr. Jorrocks, guessing he had had about enough, pulled up under the shade of a roadside tree to wait his coming. Meanwhile he busied himself tucking Mrs. Flather into her cloak, and arranging the rug for her feet.

"Dear me!" said he, lifting her gown a little, "them's Emma's feet all over. Werry rum," continued he, half to himself and half to the tree, "but 'oss maxims often 'old good with women too. No fut no 'oss, no fut no ankle. Never troubles to look at a woman's face if she's clumsey and beefey about the pins. *Con*-found them long pettikits! There's never no sayin' wots an under them. I wonders G——y B——y, or some o' them '*emollit mores*' ladylike legislators, don't bring in a bill to make draggle-tails felony. I declares they drives me p*a*rfectly mad. Unless a man spends 'alf his time at 'Owell and James's, or Swan and Hedgar's, or some o' them man-mil-

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liner sort o' shop doors, waitin' for to see the gals get into their chays, he has no possible chance o' knowin' wot sort o' understandin's they have.

"Come up, Dickey!" said he to the cob, as Benjamin soused himself sulkily into his seat, and leaned forward to hear what was going forward.

On they went.

Women in general have no idea about roads, or distances, or places, and will travel the same way over and over again, without making an observation or a landmark of any description on the line. Indeed, some men—fox-hunters too—are not much better; and will ride over a country, season after season, without getting a bit better acquainted with it. No wonder Mrs. Flather was not of much assistance in directing the route or timing the journey, when the natural indifference of the sex on these matters, and the exciting nature of her companion's conversation, are taken into consideration. The day was fine and pleasant, and the road picturesque. Not that the latter was any great recommendation, for Mrs. Flather was own cousin to the ladies Lord Byron met sleeping in the Char-a-banc between Porte St.

Martin and Chillon, while Mr. Jorrocks's eye for a country, was chiefly directed to the nature of the soil, the quality of the crops, and the advantages it exhibited, either in an agricultural or fox-hunting point of view. "That's nice turnip land!" he would exclaim in a loud voice for Benjamin to hear, pointing to a field on the right, after indulging in a long murmur of amatory sentiments; or observing on looking at another, that he'd "be bund with a good dustin' o' nitrate o' sober to make it grow ten quarters a hacre. There's a Balfinch!" he would say, pointing to a high quickset fence next the road. "Stop Hashton Smith and Craven Smith, and all the Smiths wotever were foal'd. Lord! 'ow I used to show them the way with the immortal old Surrey. Would lip anything a'most—anything that my 'oss could lay his nose on." Then in an under tone he would indulge in a strong panegyric on fox-'unters, ascribing to them every desirable matrimonial quality under the sun, which, by a dexterous adaptation of his subject, he contrived to bend into an exemplification of himself—Mr. J. was tolerably vain. "There's lazy farmin'!" then he would exclaim—"See 'ow the beggar's

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shirked the fences, as if he thought they'd set fire to the plough. Be bund I'd grow as much grain on the land he's wasted, as would pay a quarter the rint o' the farm. My vig, but that chap wants a lector on agricultur."

* * * * *

"That's Donkeyton Castle!" at length exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, breaking off in a long tirade about lady's legs and the advantages of lime as a manure.

"Good!" we fancy we hear some cavilling critic, who has dogged us thus far on our path, exclaim, "Mr. Jorrocks, who has never seen Donkeyton Castle, pointing it out to Mrs. Flather who has."

It *was* so nevertheless, for no sooner did his eye catch the flag floating on the keep, rising above the octagonal towers among the trees in the distance, as a sudden Derbyshire or Dorsetshire twist of the road brought them full on the valley of Borrowdale, with the broad Dart swelling in the middle, than he immediately pointed with his whip, and exclaimed, "That's Donkeyton Castle!" as aforesaid; Mrs. Flather thought it was too, and, looking at her watch, expressed her sur-

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prise at the hour—and astonishment, mingled with something like regret, at the apparent shortness of the distance.

Mr. Jorrocks, ever "wide awake," gave her a gentle nudge with his elbow, and pretending to arrange the apron strap on the splash board, whispered, "*sotto voce*," "*You and I'll ride 'ome together.*"

A change now came over the spirit of their dream.

Their minds became occupied with anticipations about their visit, the ceremony of presentation, and the necessary palaverment. The vision of the ducal coronet gracing Emma's brow again returned in full force, as Mrs. Flather looked with an eye of ownership on the proud scarlet flag floating lazily on the evening's breeze. It was a lovely scene. The road wound gently round the lofty river banks, fringed with stately trees in all the luxuriance of full summer foliage, reflecting their gigantic shapes in the chrystal-like clearness of the water; while Donkeyton Castle rose tower above tower in the distance, in all the massive grandeur of feudal pomp and unconquerable strength.

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The road now bent into the valley, and it required all Mr. Jorrocks's coachmanship to prevent the fire engine running the old cob off his legs, which began to fail just at the time the hill was steepest. At length they accomplished the descent, and a short piece of level road brought them to the massive, deeply-ribbed, many-arched bridge across the smoothly gliding Dart; and a few paces further on and they were at the castellated gates, forming a triumphal arch into Donkeyton Castle Park. The great black-nailed oak doors were closed, and the rattle and jingle of the fire-engine died out on the pavement, without procuring the attendance of any one.

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"*Now then!*" cried Mr. Jorrocks, in the orthodox London twang, putting his whip in the case, preparatory to making his final arrangements.

"*Come Mr. Slowman!*" squeaked Benjamin, as he stood up behind, with all the importance of a grenadier; "*look alive!*" added he, without moving his station.

"Jest get out, Binjimin," said Mr. Jorrocks quietly, "and give a leetle '*tinctum nabulum sonat*' to that ere bell I see's perched i' the corner."

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Out Benjamin got, and seizing the chain, rung a peal that made the old entrance echo, and scared the owls out of the ivied battlements.

* * * * *

"*What's happen'd now?*" inquired a big-bellied, brandy-nosed porter, bustling out of a side door, dressed in green plush, with a yellow waistcoat, and lace-bedaub'd hat; "no one's allowed to pass through *our* park."

"Pass through our park!" repeated Mr. Jorrocks, "vy I'm a goin' to dine with the Duke—I'm Mr. Jorrocks, the grocer—Mr. Jorrocks, of Hillingdon 'All, that's to say ——."

"Beg pardon, sir," replied the porter all humility, taking off his laced hat and throwing back the massive doors with an ease non-comportant with their heavy appearance.

Mr. Jorrocks then passed on a few paces, and drew up under the arch.

"Fatch me a lookin' glass," said he, pulling off his gloves and putting them into his hat, at the same time diving into one of the lower Jorrockian jacket pockets, and pulling out a hair-brush and comb.

Mr. Jorrocks then made a formal arrangement

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of his wig and whiskers; and having, by the aid of the glass, wiped the dust from his face and green tye, he handed it to Mrs. Flather, who made a hasty review of her features, while Mr. J. flopped the dust off his Hessians with his handkerchief.

"There, old bouy," said Mr. Jorrocks, handing back the looking-glass to the owner, "there's your mirror, and see you learn to know a genl'man agein I come this way again;" so saying, he put Dickey Cobden in motion, and commenced the ascent to the castle.

It was a noble place. On a lofty hill in the centre of a large, well-stocked deer-park, exhibiting almost every variety of grass on its undulating surface, and profusely dotted with gigantic trees, stood the moss-grey towers and terraces of the ancient castle, forming a feature in the country for many miles around. The clustering trees around its base seemed unable to cope with the towering altitude of the castle. Centuries upon centuries had rolled on since the first part of it was built, but succeeding additions had adhered to the Gothic architecture of the original.

"*I do believe* Dicky Cobden's agoin' to knock

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up," observed Mr. Jorrocks, with a shake of the head, as the old nag relaxed into a walk on feeling the collar against the now approaching hill. "Binjimin, jemp out and ease the beggar a bit, or we shall be planted, and then there'll be a pretty kettle o' fish."

"That's the worst o' these under-bred beggars," observed Mr. Jorrocks confidentially to Mrs. Flather, "they're all werry well so long as the road's 'ard and smooth, but, *con*found them, as soon as ever they get into a difficulty, or the collar begins to pinch, they shut up. Come, Dickey, old bo*uy*," continued Mr. Jorrocks, rubbing the cob's back with the crop of the whip, "be o' good cheer, and sink the old Sussex ploughman for once."

Dickey stood still.

"Nay, then!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, "it's all U P with us. Ease his bearin' rein, Binjimin —ease his bearin' rein, or loose it altogether, and turn his 'ead to the hair—block the wheel, or he'll run back with us, and we'll lose wot he's done."

* * * * *

"Come, old bouy," resumed Mr. Jorrocks, after

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a few seconds' pause, during which he sat eyeing the old nag intently, "I vouldn't expose myself afore all these deer, and other signs o' genteelety;" Mr. J. looking at a herd of deer watching them from a neighbouring clump of trees on a gently swelling hill on the right; "rouse the spirit o' the cobs, and *at* it like a man."

Dickey shook his head.

"Vell, it arnt no use argufyin' with such a muff," observed Mr. Jorrocks, throwing the reins to Benjamin, and sticking the whip in the case; "he's jest von o' your—if he *vill*, he *vill*, and if he *von't*, he *von't*—sort o' beggars, and he played me jest the same trick a goin' up the 'ill to Mr. 'Eavytail's pet farm t'other day, and neither coaxin' nor quiltin' had the slightest effect upon him—so vot do you say, my dear Mrs. Flather; s'pose you and I get out and valk, and leave Binjimin to follow ven he gets his quadruped out o' the sulks?"

Mrs. Flather readily assented, and divesting themselves of cloaks, shawls, and outer habiliments, Mr. J. handed her out of the fire engine, and off they set arm in arm for the castle.

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"It's a deal plisanter walkin' nor ridin'," observed Mr. Jorrocks, kicking his legs out before him on the grass—"at least plisanter nor ridin' curled up like a cod fish as I was. Not but the hutch is a good 'un, comfey hutch I may say, but it don't do, when a lady and gen'lman want to be a *leetle* confidential, to have a servant stuck in behind, listenin' to all what they say. Lord, I should like nothin' better than to be cast on a barren land, a sort o' Heel-pie island on a large scale, with an agreeable companion—*female one*, in course," added Mr. Jorrocks in an undertone, squeezing Mrs. Flather's arm, "with no bother o' servants, or nothin' o' that sort. Jest a maid to milk the cows, and another to make the beds and lay the cloth, with a silvery sailin' boat, with a blue streamer at its mast 'ead, to come every Saturday night, with poultry, and pastry, and preserved fruit, and bottled stout, hoysters, marmeylad, eggs, and wermacelli, and may be a few yards o' bombazeen; not that dress would be any object, for beauty, says I, when unadorned's adorn'd the most," Mr. J. giving Mrs. Flather's arm another hearty squeeze; "but I'm sick o' the hartificial state o' society—the cards, and the compliments, the *so* glads, and *so*

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sorrys, the grinnin', and the gammon and spinnage o' the thing, and my wiggorous 'eart yearns for natur' unalloy'd, and the habolition o' bustles and 'oss air pettikits. Cuss me if here arn't Dickey Cobden a comin' again!"

* * * * *

Sure enough there was Dickey—Dickey in a canter too, for Benjamin, by the aid of what the old "stage coachmen" called a "short tommy,"* had succeeded in getting Dickey into motion, who, with the now much lightened vehicle, came jingling along at a sort of donkey's canter, with Benjamin grinning in the driving seat.

* * * * *

"*Cut along, Binjimin! cut along!*" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, waving his arm onwards towards the castle; but Dickey was one of your regular marplots, and came to a standstill immediately opposite his master and fair friend.

"O, but you're a beast!" grinned Mr. Jorrocks with vexation, "*do* get him out o' the way, Binjimin, for the dust he raises is quite obfuscatin', and Mrs. Flather here's got her Sunday

* A short, heavy, knotty whip.

gown on, and not never no cloak, nor nothin' to protect it."

Benjamin didn't like showing the short tommy to his master, so he hit on another expedient for making Dickey go. Leaning over the splash board, he took off his hat, and rattling his hand in it, produced a noise like distant thunder at Dickey's tail, who, cocking his ears, set off at a canter which very soon bore him out of sight.

"Cute bouy that Binjimin," said Mr. Jorrocks, eying the receding vehicle with delight, "he's up to snaff. Nice wehicle, too," continued he; following it with his eye. "Had it a long time—done me a deal o' work. Charley Stubbs, wot married my niece Belinda—as neat a little trout as ever you set eyes on, christen'd it the fire engine; or, raythor, one of them sarcy toll-takers on Vaterloo Bridge christen'd it so; but, howsomever, they never could put me out o' conceit on it, and there it is, and there it isn't," concluded he, as it passed out of sight, where the road wound round a clump of trees.

"I reckons the coachmaker's trade's a particklar good 'un," observed Mr. Jorrocks, thoughtfully; "almost equal to the possession o' the

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philosopher's stone, for they certain*lie* do conwert wood and iron into gold in a most *mi*rakilous manner. Nothin' under a hundred and thirty-eight guineas for elliptics, and a hundred and eighty-five for C springs; and yet if you takes them a boobey hutch back, they'll hardly give you thirteen for it: offer you ten p'raps. I gave eight for that; you couldn't have a nicer one for sweet-'eartin' in, or no manner o' purpose, though it has neither ornamented lamps, nor a double compass'd dashin' iron. Crickey vot a shop!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, breaking off in his discourse, as the whole castle front, with its terraces and towers stood full before them. "Vot *can* a man do with so much 'ouse room as all that: I wonder now if he pays winder tax on all them funny little pigeon 'oles, and crosses, and things wot are stuck all about the towers. I reckon the Lumber Troop, or even the City Light 'Oss, would look uncommon blue if they'd been order'd to 'take' that castle! Fancy a pan-ful 'o 'ot lead comin' down on one's cocoa nut, from one of them 'igh places, such as one reads of in Clarendon's 'istory of the Rebellion, or Marryatt's Jacob

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Faithful, I doesn't mind whether." Mr. Jorrocks stood staring.

"O! but the hart o' love's far afore the hart o' war, isn't it, my little dack?" continued he, moving on again, with a squeeze of the arm of Mrs. Flather.

"Them 'ill be the gardens to the left, where I sees all the glass a glitterin' through the trees," observed Mr. Jorrocks, pointing them out to his fair friend. "It don't seem much out of our way now to take them as we go to the castle, and if there's a short cut, I'll be bound to say I find it. Let's see 'ow the enemy goes."

Having pulled out his great ticker and forgot to look at it, he felt a sudden conviction that a few gusberries before dinner would do them both an infinite deal of good, especially himself, having, as he said, a slight tendency to head-ache, from having incautiously taken a thimble-full of indifferent brandy the previous evening; that's to say, from having had a glass too much.

His company was so agreeable that Mrs. Flather could not refuse, so leaving the carriage-road, they struck up a path across the park to the

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left, leading apparently in the direction of the garden.

"Nothin' like fox-'unting," observed Mr. Jorrocks, "for makin' chaps cunnin' about country. Now your reg'lar Cockney chaps never think there's a shorter way than by the road, and go trudgin' jest the same way as they go on 'oss-back. James Green, now, for instance, though he saw the glass a glitterin', would have gone to the castle, knocked at the door, and axed which was the way to the garden, instead of settin' off on a woyage of discovery like you and I are a doin'. To be sure an agreeable companion makes any place plisant, and I never thinks o' poor Hadam alone in his beautiful garden and plisure grounds, without feelin' a sort o' compassion for him. To be sure he lived in good times, no income tax—no 'oss 'air pettikits; but then, on the other 'and, he had no 'unting. When you marry again, Mrs. Flather, marry a fox-'unter," said he.

"O my dear Mr. Jorrocks, I've given up all idea of anything of that sort," replied Mrs. Flather, who at length got a word in sideways, "my poor dear children occupy my only thoughts in this world."

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"*Fiddle-de-dee!*" replied Mr. Jorrocks, squeezing her arm more violently than before—"never say *that*—a nice comely little woman like you—*for shame* of yourself—your any man's money—any man's at least wot knows the good pints of a woman."

"O Mr. Jorrocks, you flatter!"

"Never such a thing! never such a thing!" retorted our gallant squire waxing warm, "*I wow*"—

"*There ain't no road this way, my old covey,*" roared a green and yellow watcher (who, unseen to our friends, had dodged them for some time), right into Mr. Jorrocks's ear.

"B— your impercence!" screamed Mr. Jorrocks, doubling his fists, and putting himself into an attitude of defence before his trembling friend. "B— your impercence, I say! you confounded rebellious looking ruffian, I'll knock you neck and croup into the middle o' the week after next, and spit you like a sparrow afore the fire. Vot do you take me for?"

"Take you for!" repeated the man, "why, a trespasser to be sure—may be a poacher, looking after *our* leverets. A regular snaring-looking

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chap," continued the man, eyeing the Jorrockian jacket-pockets.

"I'll snarin'-lookin' chap you," roared Mr. Jorrocks, "stop till I gets to the Castle, and I'll let you see who you've been insultin' of"——

The man looked foolish, and thinking he might have made a mistake, pretended to be taken by the sight of some one else in the distance, and hurried away, with a view of watching their manœuvres again. Mr. Jorrocks's equanimity was soon restored, and before the keeper was out of sight, his feathers were down, and he was arm-in-arming it with Mrs. Flather over the green sward as before.

The sombre tint of a massive yew-tree-lined walk led the eye onwards to the garden, which they entered by a triumphal arch through the gardener's house. The garden was an immense place, five or six acres at least within the walls, with forcing and succession houses of every sort and kind. Vineries, pineries, peach-houses, melon frames, and cucumber beds, without end. A dozen gardeners were lounging about, some with watering-pots, some with spades, some with fruit,

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some with vegetables, some with their hands in their pockets.

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"They must be werry fond o' fruit," observed Mr. Jorrocks, as, Mrs. Flather on arm, he stood eyeing the premises and retinue. "Wegetable diet altogether, one would think, judging by the quantity they grow. S'pose we have a bunch o' grapes," added he, advancing towards a glass house. "O! I declare its a pinery! real pines a growin' quite nattural, instead of perched on plates, as one sees them in Common Garden, or Bond Street. Sarcy meat there, I guess—a guinea at least—howsomever, we'll have our rewenge here, and get one for nothin'." Thereupon our worthy friend opened the door, and having selected an exceedingly fine pine, rejoined Mrs. Flather, who waited his return outside. "Where there's ceremony, there's no friendship, I always says," observed he, diving into the lower pocket of the Jorrockian jacket, and producing a large pruning knife, wherewith he cut off the bottom of the pine as he held it by the top in the other hand. "There now," said he, paring and presenting Mrs. Flather

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with a most liberal slice, "eat that, and then we'll take a turn at the *gus*berries.

Mr. Jorrocks then cut and commenced eating a similar slice himself.

"Werry good," said he, munching and eating away. "Werry good indeed — fine flavoured—ripe—juicy—declare the juice's a runnin' down my chin."

A very important-looking personage, who, but for the attendance of a couple of followers with flower sticks and bass matting, Mr. Jorrocks might have taken for the Duke of Donkeyton himself, now bore upon them right up the centre of the walk. "This is Mr. Tuliptree, the head gardener," whispered Mrs. Flather, seeing her companion was rather puzzled.

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, resuming his wonted gaiety, and staring most unceremoniously—a feat that Mr. Tuliptree was perfectly equal to; for, making a dead halt before them, he stood making an apparent mental calculation, whether the rum-looking figures he saw could possibly be Castle company or not.

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"Vell, old Cabbage-stalk!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks as they met, "'ow are you, this fine weather?—'ow's Mrs. Stalk, and all the little Sprouts?"

Mr. Tuliptree stared.

"You grow grand pines," continued he, holding the half finished one up to Mr. Tuliptree's nose.

"Excellent, I may say; but there's an old sayin', and it's a werry true 'un, too much puddin' 'ill choke a dog, and too much pine 'ill do the same by a gen'lman, so now show us the way to your best gusberry bushes—not your great overgrown prize sorts, all skin and seeds, what have no more flavour nor a turnip, but some o' the nice little prickly old-fashioned sort, scarlet or green—you know wot I mean old buoy."

"Pray, sir, may I ask if you're staying at the Castle?" inquired Mr. Tuliptree.

"*Goin' to*," replied Mr. Jorrocks, taking another cut at the pine; "but first," said he, "give me a bit o' that bass mattin', and get me a cabbage leaf, for I really think I shall be makin' myself sick with this pine, and that would have a werry nasty appearance you know, old Cabbage-stalk,

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not to say, ungenteel; there now," said he, when he had got what he wanted, " we'll tie it up, and so keep it fresh, and may be i' the mornin', I may like to take another cut at it;" so saying, Mr. Jorrocks popped the remainder of the pine into the lower Jorrockian jacket-pocket, leaving the top of it sticking above the diagonal pocket hole.

Mr. Tuliptree was posed; but having seen some queer-looking customers at the Castle, who afterwards turned out to be lords, he thought he had best put on his servitude manners, which he immediately did, and most obsequiously led the way to the gooseberry bushes.

Mr. Jorrocks then fell to.

* * * * *

" Our old gal 'ill be a wonderin' wot's got me," observed Mr. Jorrocks, at length, gathering a parting handful of gooseberries, and thinking what a wigging he was running the risk of. " 'Ark! there's the clock—one—two—three—four—five—six—*six* as I live—my vig—there's a go—they'll be a sittin' down to dinner without us—tempus fuggit, money flies certainly."

" O, they don't dine till seven," observed Mrs. Flather, " and I think the Castle's not far off—

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there used to be a bridge somewhere about here, between it and the garden, I think, over a brook, if I recollect right."

"Ah, yon 'ill be it!" replied Mr. Jorrocks, pointing to a bridge a little way off, nearly obscured by foliage—"the Castle can't be werry far off, or that clock must be own brother to the one at Saint Paul's. Well, I'd a deal rayther walk in these nice shady humbrageous walks with sich a sweet hen-angel as you, nor go and stuff wenison and fizzy with my Lord Dukeship up there—deary me now, it's been jest these sort o' summer, sun-shiny valks that Dean Swift meant when he talked 'bout the greenest spot on memory's waste. Ah! it must be a plisant waste wots a covered with sich spots. There's a deal o' plisant sentiment I always thinks in them nice lines o' Peter Pindar's:

> 'And say, without our 'opes, without our fears,
> Without the joy wot plighted love endears,
> Without the smile from partial beauty won,
> O vot were man? a vorld without a sun!'

"Ain't there, my darlin'?" asked Mr. Jorrocks, looking under Mrs. Flather's bonnet, and squeezing her hand as it rested on his arm, a

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pressure, we are shocked to say, Mrs. Flather slightly returned.

Mr. J. then kissed her.

* * * * *

"*You and I'll ride 'ome together*," said the steady old gentleman, beginning to puff as the ascent of the hill announced their approach to the Castle. Presently they were on the terrace.

Those who have stood on the ramparts of the City of Bearn—the Aare at their feet—and the setting sun shedding a roseate hue over the snow-clad encircling Alps, can form an idea of the splendour of the scene from the terrace of Donkeyton Castle, inferior of course in magnificence, but wonderful when found in our not over picturesque country of England. Mr. Jorrocks, however, was not much of a man for scenery, and Mrs. Flather was too busy thinking of her reception from the Duchess, and other things, to give it a thought, so they turned to the massive richly-carved portico of the Castle to await the answer to the summons of the bell.

"The chap must have had a wast o' grandfathers, as D——è R——e would say," observed Mr. Jorrocks, eyeing the many time-worn shields

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studding the walls of the centre tower, the arms on some of which were mouldering into decay.

"I'd take them old things down if I was the Duke, and put up some pretty images—shepherds and shepherdesses, Wenuses, or Diannas, or things o' that sort, summut more in the taste of the times — might have them in wood or Mulgrave cement, if he didn't like to go to the expense o' carvin' in marble or stone."

A fat porter in state livery—his pea-green coat and yellow waistcoat almost concealed with gold lace, and a court bag to his collar, opened the massive door to admit our guests into the hall. Here they were met by two gigantic footmen similarly attired, and the groom of the chamber in full dress.

"You cut it fat here, old bouy," observed Mr. Jorrocks, handing his hat to the porter, and a glove to each footman, "'ope you don't injure yourselves with work. These chaps," observed Mr. Jorrocks to Mrs. Flather, "are jest like wot the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs o' London ave."

"What name shall I say, sir?" asked the groom of the chamber in the politest manner possible, motioning them across the lofty baronial

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hall, the stained glass of the deeply-mullioned windows casting a variety of shades over the armour, and banner-displaying rafters of the oak ceiling and walls.

"Mr. Jorrocks! to be sure," exclaimed our hero, "who else should it be? Mr. Jorrocks and Mrs. Flather, in fact."

Passing onwards into what would be a large room for a house, though a small one for a castle, the groom of the chamber opened a lofty door on the right, and ushered them into a sixty by thirty feet library, fitted up in the extreme of gothic style; old oak chairs, old oak tables, old oak sofas, old oak screens, old oak wainscoting half up the walls—at least half up those that were not covered with old oak book-cases.

"Mr. and Mrs. Jorrocks, your Grace," whispered the well-trained menial in the low funereal sort of voice that distinguishes the servants of the nobility from the name-mangling brawlers of High Life Below Stairs, as his Grace reclined in a luxuriously-cushioned, richly-carved black oak chair, taking a skim of the *Morning Chronicle*.

Down went the paper, and up got his Grace. He was a fine, tall, noble-looking man, quite bald,

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with a little snow-white hair behind, and full whiskers, and beard under his chin. Indeed, he looked as though the hair had been scraped off his head, and made into a fringe for his face. There was a glow of health upon his countenance and a straightness in his gait, that took considerably from his age, which (on the wrong side of sixty) might, with the aid of Persian dye to his "snow wreaths," have passed for five-and-forty or fifty. He was dressed in a black frock coat and waistcoat, with drab trousers, and wore eye-glasses affixed to a massive gold chain across his waistcoat.

"How do you do, Mr. Jorrocks? I'm very happy to see you," said his Grace, offering his hand, and bowing very low.

"How do you do, Mrs. Jorrocks? I'm monstrous happy to make your acquaintance," continued his Grace, extending a hand of fellowship to her, his naturally misty memory making him forget that he had greeted Mrs. Jorrocks not very long before, who was since gone with the Duchess to her bed-room.

"This is *Mrs. Flather*, your Grace," observed Mr. Jorrocks, after their hands were released,

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"she's comed with me"—adding, with a sly look and shake of his head, "nothin' *wrong* though, I assure you."

"Ah, true!" exclaimed his Grace, pretending the evening shades had dimmed his vision, and seizing Mrs. Flather again by the hand, "My old friend, Mrs. Flather, to be sure, I'm very glad *indeed* to see you;" adding "and where's my old friend, your husband, he's coming I hope?"

"*I raythur think not,*" replied Mr. Jorrocks, with a grin and a wink, pointing downwards with his fore-finger."

"Ah, *true!*" replied his Grace with a shrug and solemn look—"I remember now he died of the ———"

Just then the Duchess, who had piloted Mrs. Jorrocks and Emma to their rooms, returned to see if any more of their dear friends had arrived, and relieved the trio from their embarrassment.

"Susan, my dear, here are our good friends, the Jorrockses," exclaimed the Duke, seeing the Duchess making her way up behind them.

"Mr. Jorrocks and *Mrs. Flather,*" observed Mr. Jorrocks with an emphasis, turning short round and making a very low bow—"nothin'

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wrong, my lady, I assure you, only Mrs. Flather likes an open chay, and Mrs. J. don't—a little *stommach,* you understand," added Mr. Jorrocks, tapping his own with his fore-finger.

Her Grace was delighted to see them of course, and, after a few common places, proposed showing Mrs. Flather her room. The Duke volunteered the same office by Mr. Jorrocks, notwithstanding his assertion that if Mrs. Jorrocks "wasn't long gone he be bund to say he'd run her to ground by her scent, she musked herself so uncommon 'igh when she went to fine places."

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CHAPTER XI.

" I'll make my heaven in a lady's lap,
And deck my body in gay ornaments,
And witch sweet ladies with my words and looks."

SHAKSPEARE.

BATSAY, Binjimin, and Mrs. Flather's boy in buttons, not being much used to company-making, thought the visit to Donkeyton was quite as much for their amusement as for that of their master and mistresses; accordingly, instead of unpacking and laying out the things for the latters' dressing, they contented themselves with carrying the boxes up stairs, and leaving the parties who were to wear the clothes to unpack and sort them out at their leasure, while they, trustworthy individuals, underwent the ceremony of introduction and acquaintance-making among the servants of the castle. The consequence was, that what with the time consumed in pulling at bells—the con-

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fusion attendant upon the influx of a houseful of strangers, and the difficulty of appropriating each peal to the proper servant, our fair friends were hard run in the matter of dressing. Mrs. Flather was in a desperate state of excitement, for independently of only having Batsay's services at second hand, that rascal Binjimin had smelt the buns, and carried them away bodily; and the model of propriety, whose naturally good appetite was greatly heightened by the ride, was really ravenous for want of food. Like many home-made arm-chair projects, the possibility of accomplishing the coronet seemed suddenly to dissolve as they came within sight of it. Still, like a man with a middling race-horse, Mrs. Flather determined to run, and take the chances of luck in the tussle; she had paid her stakes, in fact, in the shape of dresses. The buns, however, were a desperate blow, and the worst of it was, Mrs. Flather durst not ask point blank about them for fear of exciting Mrs. Jorrocks's curiosity, and much time was consumed in Batsay's running between Mrs. Jorrocks's room and Mrs. Flather's, inquiring for a "brown paper parcel, tied up with blue ribbon."

"No, there was nothing of the sort."

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"Then, perhaps, the blue ribbon had slipped off, and it would just be a brown paper parcel."

"No, there was no such thing."

Binjimin had taken better care of them than that. The buns were under the cushion of the carriage, and bag in the harness-room fire.

The Duke and Duchess of Donkeyton had had weary work all the morning of this important day marshalling the order of their guests according to their ideas of each visitor's importance, and the service they could be of in the event of a contested election. As usual on such occasions, their Graces' ideas, and the ideas of the parties themselves, were greatly at variance; and the more trouble they gave themselves to please everybody, the further they were from attaining their object. Each guest had an accurate idea of his own consequence, but unfortunately no two tables of ideas tallied.

The ingredients of an electioneering Whig party of this description are rather curious. The "don" Whigs, of course, are not asked; or, at all events, only those who from similar necessities are able to tolerate the nuisance of such gatherings. The guests are generally the exception to

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the general order of guests.. The politics of middle life are chiefly personal. The first great man that is civil to a person generally gets his interest, and Whig or Tory is just a toss up which comes first. We admit, however, there has been a change within these twenty years—we might almost say within the last dozen—since the passing of "the Bill" in fact. Men that never thought of anything but their shops, now talk of their *pol'tics* just as their fathers used to talk of their wives, their horses, or their watches. Times are changed indeed! Whether for the better is another matter not important to this dinner. We leave it to Young England.

The guests mustered strong. Their Graces had taken a pair of compasses and drawn a circle of seven miles round the castle, within which radius the parties were only asked to dine, while those beyond were accommodated with beds. The consequence was, that great anxiety had prevailed relative to the accuracy of the different village clocks and hall timepieces, so as to nick the *juste milieu* of time, each visitor being duly impressed with the conviction that the eyes of that inquisitive and observant gentleman "all

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England," were turned upon him; and that upon his individual accuracy depended the success or failure of this great party. Indeed, though there was scarcely an appetite amongst them, and though they were all most horribly frightened, there wasn't one who would not have taken it seriously amiss if he or she had been omitted. It is wonderful what pain people will undergo for pride or (what ought to be) pleasure. A tight boot is nothing to it. There was a great stir of one-horse chaises within the seven miles circle towards the hour of six.

Of course the host and hostess were anxious to show every honour to their guests—make *real* company of them in short; and the best of everything was put in requisition—state liveries, first class china and plate in profusion; the whole brilliantly illumined with wax and oil. His Grace didn't use gas—the only piece of sense he was known to be guilty of.

A little before seven the Duke and Duchess of Donkeyton had planted themselves on a sumptuous rug, before a brightly burning wood fire, in a glittering, profusely-mirrored drawing room, fitted up with fawn-coloured satin, with gold

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coronets worked on the chairs, sofa-cushions, ottomans, screens, and so on. His Grace was in full dress. His star glittered on a richly-buttoned blue coat with velvet collar; waistcoat and cravat vying with the whiteness of his hair and whiskers; the broad blue ribbon of "his order" crossing gracefully over his chest; the garter relieving the monotony of his breeches and black silk stockings.

The visitors then began to arrive. Those who were all nighting in the castle, walked into the drawing-room with an "at-home" sort of air; while the dinner guests passed into the presence with an anxious, hurried, side-long-glance-sort of walk, that looked very like wishing themselves back again. Each looked as if he were playing a part. The Duke—who was a very loquacious old gentleman, though terribly given to making mistakes—received his guests with the easy dignity of high life, and asked each a question or two that he thought would show a familiarity with the parties, and an interest in their concerns;—just as he asked Mrs. Flather after his "good friend, Flather," who had been dead some years. For instance, Mr. Tugwell and the Rev. Mr.

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Webb having come together, and his Grace recollecting that one was a great farmer, shook hands with Mr. Tugwell, observing it was delightful weather; and hurriedly turning to the parson said, "Well, Webb, how are you? How's your bull?"

"Please your Grace, the bull belongs to—"

"*Ah! dead!* I suppose," replied his Grace, shaking his head with a look of concern—"Sorry for it, indeed; *very* sorry—excellent man."

"By the way, how's your daughter, Mr. Tomkins?" he asked another almost in the same breath.

Mr. Tomkins stared.

"Dangerous attack, I heard?" observed the Duke, shaking his head.

"Beg pardon, your Greece; it was the other Mr. Tomkins's daughter"—at length replied Mr. Tomkins—"Mr. Tommy Tomkins's."

"Ah, true! you are Mr. Jeems Tomkins—glad to hear she's better—fine girl!—*monstrous* fine girl!" and so he turned away to say something civil to some one else.

Our Hillingdon friends having been nearly the last in arriving at the castle, and having had the

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difficulties we mentioned to contend with, were the latest of the late, and the Duke had twice taken his repeater out of his waistcoat pocket to compare it with the French clock on the mantel-piece, when Mr. and Mrs. Jorrocks made their appearance. Mrs. Jorrocks was magnificent. On her head she wore a yellow and gold turban, with a full plume of black ostrich feathers, such as one sees on a mute's head before a great funeral, while long full ringlets (false, of course) streamed down the sides of her fat red cheeks, and rested on her shoulders. Her gown was crimson brocade, stiff and rustling, with many flounces of black lace; and her arms and neck were decorated with a profusion of mosaic jewellery in the shape of bracelets, armlets, chains, brooches, and lockets.

Our "Cockney Squire" was in the full dress uniform of the Handley Cross Hunt—sky blue coat, lined with pink silk; canary-coloured shorts, and white silk stockings. A good large frill protruded through the stand-up collar of a white waistcoat, and a roll puddingy white neckcloth replaced the sea-green silk one of the morning. Altogether they were a most striking couple. Mr.

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Jorrocks's big-calved, well-shaped legs—the feet encased in large gold-buckled, patent leather pumps—and the general brightness of his colours, rendered him quite the object of attraction in the room, and threw the "star and garter" of the Duke rather into the shade—moreover, most of the guests had seen the "star and garter" before, but they had only heard of Mr. and Mrs. Jorrocks, the new opulent owners of Hillingdon Hall. Accordingly, there was a grand stare and nudging as they made their way up the spacious drawing room, Mr. Jorrocks strutting with his usual bantam-cock air, as much as to say, "There's a pair o' legs for you—find fault with them if you can."

"Well, Mr. Jorrocks," said his Grace, not exactly knowing what question to hazard to him, "I hope you feel hungry after your ride?"

"Tol—lol—thank ye, your Greece," replied Mr. Jorrocks, squaring himself before the fire, taking a coat lap over each arm, and turning full upon the company—"feedin' time's near at 'and I s'pose—wot o'clock may it be by your Greece's gold watch?" continued he, eyeing the awe-struck company around—"you're uncommon well

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lodged here," continued Mr. Jorrocks, staring about without waiting for an answer—"*excellently*, I may say—dare say this room is fefty feet if it's a hinch—doors o' hoggany too," added he, looking at them. "Put up afore Bob Peel's new Tariff came in, I guess. Gilt cornices! superb mirrors! and satin damask I s'pose," added Mr. J., stooping down and nipping one of the sofa cushions. "I likes this room a deal better nor the first one I was in—more glitter, more sparkle about it. If I was you now, I'd furnish t'other same way—that's to say if you have the tin—but don't go tick whatever you do; things cost jest double when you buy on credit. Tick's the werry divil certainlie," continued Mr. Jorrocks, turning his eyes up to the splendid cut-glass chandelier sparkling from the centre of the ceiling, and jingling a handful of half-crowns in his breeches pocket. "I minds, my Lord Duke, when I was in the tea trade—indeed I'm in it still, only I doesn't attend the shop—when your swell 'ouse stewards or powder-monkey Peters used to come axing the price o' tea, pekoe, hyson-skin, twankay, gunpooder, and so on; I always used to ax whether they were purchasers or buyers. *Purchasers*, you see,

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my Lord Dukeship, are chalkers *up: buyers* are money *down* and discount coves. Well, if they were purchasers I jest doubled the price—to cover long credit and the risk o' not gettin' the money at all; besides which, these confounded fine gen'lemen always expect a compliment for the horder, and a compliment when they pay the tin, that's to say, if the 'appy day occurs in their reign, for great folks in general don't keep their flunkies long; but, howsomever, never mind," added Mr. Jorrocks, eyeing the opening-door at the end of the room.

Mrs. Flather and Emma then enter'd; Emma in a well-fitting, pale pink satin, made drapée at the breast. She was a decidedly fine looking girl, held herself up, and walked with an air. The composition of the party was in her favour, there being nothing but country dowdies; no London-milliner-turned-out lady to eclipse her, as we have seen too many country belles eclipsed in London. Lord, what a place London is! How it takes the shine out of the country conceit—girls, horses, equipages, *men*, and all. We met a friend t'other day at a country fair, who didn't seem much in his element; accordingly, we asked him what brought him there. "I've got a pony to sell,"

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said he—"and by the way," now added he, "as you understand these sort of things, I should like you to see it, for it is, *without exception*, the neatest and most perfect animal I ever set eyes on —*a perfect model.* If you had it in London now, and rode it up and down the park, every dealer in the town would be after it. There it comes!" cried he, pointing to a shuffling, ginger-coloured, chesnut (of all colours the most detestable) looking thing, with a full tail and a hog mane, and a great white ratch down its face—a sort of animal that none but Van Butchel, Claudius Hunter, or some such appearance-defying genius, would be guilty of riding. So it is with girls. If a girl has a tolerable figure, and a face not amiss, they immediately set her down for London—for the Duke of Devonshire, in fact. "Indeed, Mister Brown," says his amiable spouse, "I don't consider we should be doing Jemima justice if we didn't give her a season in London."

"Nonsense, my dear, you know I can't afford it—can hardly pay my way as it is."

"Then you must just give up your hunters, *Mister* Brown."

"*I'll be d—d if I do, though,*" says *Mister* Brown.

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But suppose Mister Brown is of the "genus Jerry," as Linnæus would say, and gives in (poor Brown), what does he see when he gets to London? Why that every other girl he meets with is quite as good, and many a deuced deal better looking than Jemima.

Take an author's advice, Brown, and stay at home.

But let us on to the Duke of Donkeyton's dinner.

"Now, Bray, don't you make yourself such a swell," said young Lord Aubrey, entering the Marquis's room, who, with the aid of his valet, was settling himself into one of Jackson's particulars, blue coat, velvet collar and cuffs, silk facings and linings, with Windsor buttons. Nature meant the Marquis for a girl, and a very pretty one he would have made. He had a beautiful pink and white complexion, hair parted down the middle of his head, and falling in ringlets about his ears, blue eyes, Grecian nose, simpering mouth, with a dimple on each side, very regular pearly teeth, and incipient moustache on his upper lip, and a very incipient imperial on a very pretty, unshaved chin. In stature he was about the middle height,

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five feet ten or so, thin, with a deal of action in his legs and back-bone; indeed, he had a considerable cross of the dancing-master in him, and was considered one of the best "goers" at Almack's or the Palace. In short, he was a pretty Jemmy Jessamy sort of fellow.

Now, this sort of man is generally desperately disliked by their own sex, particularly by the hirsute, rasping, bullfinching breed of fox-hunters; and just in proportion as men are abused by each other, they are petted and praised by the women—particularly if they are marquises, and *in the market*.

Accordingly, our hero stood as an "A 1" lady-killer in London; and that being the case, our readers may imagine what a desperate man he would be in the country. Indeed, these sort of fellows ought not to be allowed to go about unmuzzled (that is to say, without a wife), for country girls are monstrous inflammatory, and having little choice beyond the curate and the apothecary's apprentice, are ready to worry anything in the shape of a man—to say nothing of a lord—a handsome marquis beyond all conception. Then the greasy novels put such notions into

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their heads. We really believe they think the great people go into the country for wives, just as the Cockneys go to Kensington for strawberries and cabbages; and that there is nothing of the sort to be had in London. Unfortunately for rural belles, London beaux look upon them in quite a different light. They consider them a sort of strop to keep the razor of their palaverment fresh against the return of another London season, and think they may go any length short of absolutely offering; and that the girls wash the slates of their memories just as they wash their own on passing Hyde Park, down Portland Place, or by the Elephant and Castle, on their way back to town. The Marquis of Bray was just one of this sort. He knew perfectly well the Duke would no more think of letting him marry anything below a Duke's daughter, than he would think of sending him off for a trip in one of Mr. Henson's air carriages; and being well assured of that fact, he thought the girls must know it also, and would just take his small talk for what it was meant. Moreover, the Marquis having had the unspeakable misfortune of being brought up at home, had conceived the not at all unnatural idea that the

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world was chiefly made for him, and that he might do whatever he liked with impunity. No greater misfortune surely can befal a young man than such an education; and lucky it is that so few of them get it. Eton knocks and Eton kicks save many a "terrible high-bred" lad (as the Epsom race-list sellers describe the horses) from ruin.

But we must get the Marquis down stairs. Behold him, then, in his blue coat aforesaid, with a delicate bouquet in the button-hole—a most elaborately-tied white cravat, the folds of the tie nestling among six small point-lace frills of an exquisitely embroidered lawn shirt front over a pink silk under-waistcoat, and diamond studs of immense value, chained with Lilliputian chains—his waistcoat of cerulean blue satin, worked with hearts-ease, buttoned with buttons of enormous blood stones, the surface of the waistcoat traversed with Venetian chains and diminutive seals—pink silk stockings, and pumps—gliding into the drawing-room, with an airy noiseless tread, and a highly-scented, much-embroidered, lace-trimmed handkerchief in his hand. How he bowed! how he smiled! how he showed his teeth! He was so d—d polite, you'd have thought he'd got among

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a party of emperors, instead of among all the John Browns of the neighbourhood. Then the old Duke, like all blunder-headed men, being monstrously afraid lest his son should make mistakes, must needs take him in hand, and introduce him to those he didn't know. "Jeems, my dear!" cried he, as the elastic back began to slacken in its salaams round the awe-stricken circle, "come here, and let me introduce you to our excellent friend, Mr. Jorrocks, who's been kind enough to come all the way from — from — from—to dine with us."

"To dine and *stay all night*, your Greece," observed Mr. Jorrocks to the Duke, letting fall his coat laps, preparatory to offering his hand to the Marquis.

The Marquis bowed and grinned, and laid his hand upon his heart, as if perfectly overcome by the honour—proudest moment of his life!

"Where I dine I sleep, and where I sleep I breakfast, your Greece," observed Mr. Jorrocks, resuming his position, finding it impossible to compete with the Marquis in bows.

"Let me introduce you to Mrs. Jorrocks," said

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the Duke, taking his son by the arm, and leading him up to the plume, the bearer of which rose and bobbed and curtsied till the Duke and Marquis passed on to Emma, whom the Duke introduced as Miss Jorrocks; and the Marquis thinking she seemed more like the thing than any one else in the room, continued to bow and simper and shuffle before her, leaving the Duke to finish the circuit alone, and bear up before the now triumphant and all gratified Mrs. Flather—who was listening to the painful recital of how Mrs. Smith's little girl had got two double teeth, and how her brother George had gone through the whole of—

"Whene'er I take my walks abroad,
How many poor I see!"

without a single mistake or wrong pronunciation.

The author of Cecil, we think, says there is nothing so difficult of settlement (except a pipe of port) as a peer's eldest son; and some other conjurer says, it is less difficult to arrange a party of duchesses than a string of justices' wives. On this occasion it certainly was so. Notwithstanding the Duchess had done all she could to drum into the

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Duke's dull head how they were to go, his natural obtuseness and self-sufficiency made him confound them all together; and at the moment that the folding doors were thrown open, and dinner announced, he knew no more than the man in the moon whether Mrs. Hamilton Dobbin's husband, or Mrs. Grumbleton's, were first on the commission, or whether Jorrocks or Jenkins had most votes at command. Indeed, he forgot which was Mrs. Jorrocks; at all events, he went bolt up to Mrs. Flather, who could by no possibility do them any good; and the Marquis having reconnoitred the room, and satisfied himself that Miss Hamilton Dobbin and all the Miss Smiths were infinitely inferior to the model of propriety, offered her his arm in the most supplicating manner, and tripped through the now greatly agitated group with an air as though he were leading her out to a dance instead of a dinner.

Mr. Jorrocks thinking there seemed likely to be a good deal of bother in the arrangement of couples, very considerately tendered his arm to the Duchess, to the exclusion of Lord Aubrey, and a couple of Honourables; and the two having got in the rear of the flock, drove them "pell

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mell" before them, some with their neighbours' wives, some with their own, some without any body's wives at all.

The Marquis being much out of practice, was glad of an opportunity of rubbing up his small talk, especially with a girl who did not look sheepish, and be-lord and be-lordship him as country dowdies are in the habit of doing. Indeed, before he had got through his soup, he found that Emma was quite a "half-way meet" sort of girl; and looking upon everything below a nobleman's daughter as fair game, he began to make play very strong.

Of course the conversation began about flowers. Flowers in the country, fancy balls in London. Fancy balls are safe specs: they are within the reach of every one.

"Was she fond of a garden?" Oh Emma doated upon a garden! Nothing she liked so much as running about with her watering-pot, picking up daisies, pulling up weeds, tying up roses. "Was the Marquis fond of flowers?"

"He adored them!" at the same time diving his nose into his bouquet.

Emma admired them.

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"Would she allow him to present her with one?"

Emma pressed it to her lips, and put it into her bosom. We forgot to say that the pink satin was made with a peak.

Then they talked about horses. Was Emma fond of riding? O nothing she liked so much! just riding about the country alone, wherever fancy led her.

"*Alone!*" rejoined the Marquis; "you should always have a gentleman with you." He liked sauntering along a green lane, with a pretty girl in a nice tight fitting habit, and a well set-on hat—not those confounded butter-and-eggs-poke sort of bonnets country misses rode the family horse about in. Then he asked Emma to take wine, and gave her a look as he bowed, that as much as said, "you are the girl for me."

Meanwhile the Duke having exhausted his small talk with Mrs. Flather, and made as many blunders as he could during the time they had been together, began to look up the table to see whom he should inflict his politeness upon. Mr. Jorrocks's sky-blue coat and rubicund visage forming an attractive feature at the top of the

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table, procured the honour of a holloa from the Duke's voice, who had good lungs, and made free use of them.

"Pray, Mr. Jorrocks," roared he, "how old are you?"

"Please your Greece, I'm fefty-five," replied Mr. Jorrocks, knocking half a dozen years off at a blow.

"Indeed!" exclaimed the Duke, "quite a young man! may live these twenty years yet!"

"I intend so, your Greece!" replied Mr. Jorrocks.

"Take a glass of wine, Mr. Jorrocks!"

"With all my 'eart, your Greece—Champagne if you please."

* * * * *

"Pray, Mr. Jorrocks, who was your mother?" inquired his Grace, after he had bowed and drank off his wine.

"Please your Greece, my mother was a washerwoman."

"*A washerwoman, indeed!*" exclaimed his Grace—that's very odd — I like washerwomen—nice clean wholesome people—I wish my mother had been a washerwoman."

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"I vish mine had been a duchess," replied Mr. Jorrocks.

Mrs. Flather, who sat on the Duke's right, on the opposite side of the table to that at which Emma and the Marquis were planted, was in ecstacies at the apparent prosperity of the scheme. Scheme indeed, she thought, it could hardly be called, seeing it was a mutual arrangement—the Duke taking her, the Marquis taking Emma, and so on. The consequence was, Mrs. Flather felt far more at ease, and underwent far less trepidation than her opposite neighbour, Mrs. Thomas Chambers, who would have given anything to have been restoring her old spangled turban to the band-box, for another twelvemonth's slumber. A country turban lasts for ever. Meanwhile the Duke chattered, and talked, and eat, and drank, and called people by their wrong names; and as the wine began to operate, confidence began to creep in, and before the sweets commenced their circuits, neighbours began plucking up courage sufficient to ask each other to wine; and the popping of champagne corks formed a pleasing variety to the chatter and clatter of the table.

So the dinner progressed.

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The Marquis's left-hand neighbour, Mrs. Tomkins, having at length found her tongue, and got into the midst of a most interesting, oft-repeated ramble, about a ragged-coated man, who had knocked at their door and asked for some cold chicken and punch, the Marquis and Emma went at it harder than ever, a listener always acting as a clog on the free vent of conversation, as Mr. Jorrocks and Mrs. Flather had found in the morning.

"Have you much gaiety in your part of the world?" asked the Marquis, "many balls, many parties?"

"O dear no," replied Emma, "we are shockingly dull."

"Short of beaux, perhaps?" observed the Marquis.

"Indeed, we hav'nt such a thing in our part of the country: there are only five young men at Sellborough, and four of them are engaged."

"And you have bespoken the fifth, I suppose."

"*Not I, indeed,*" replied Emma, with a toss of the head.

"But are there no officers? surely it's a garrison town."

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"It's a new regiment," observed Emma; "besides, you know, we are a good way from the town. We never see such a thing as a red coat in our little village, except perhaps a stray fox-hunter, now and then asking his way. Do you hunt?"

"*God forbid!*" replied the Marquis, with a shake of his head and shrug of his shoulders, for he had gone out once, and soon found himself in a wet ditch, with his horse on the top of him.

"I hate fox-hunters," observed Emma, half to herself and half to the Marquis.

"Horrid fellows!" ejaculated the dandy. "It seems a sort of uncivilized process, fit only for heavy dragoons, and flying artillery men. By the way, though, your pa' is a fox-hunter, is not he?" continued the Marquis, looking significantly at Mr. Jorrocks.

"He's not my pa'," observed Emma, somewhat disconcerted, more at the unfavourable aspect it threw on affairs than any shock the insinuation occasioned her feelings.

"But didn't my pa' introduce you as Miss Jorrocks?" inquired the Marquis.

"It's not the case for all that," observed

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Emma, tartly, "my name is Flather; that is my mamma sitting beside the Duke."

"True!" observed the Marquis, "how stoopid I am. Lor' I know your ma' as well as I know myself. Your pa', too, I knew, poor man. Well, but tell me now about the old boy in the sky-blue and yellow shorts—the fireman's or Thames Waterman's uniform, in fact. Isn't he some relation? Your uncle, or something?"

"Mr. Jorrocks, allow me the honour of taking wine with you," continued he, seeing his eyeing had attracted our hero's attention.

"Champagne, if you please!" replied Mr. Jorrocks.

"No, he's no relation whatever," replied Emma, "only a neighbour."

"He seems a desperate old quiz," observed the Marquis, putting down his glass, after touching his lips with it. "I wonder what he'd take for his wig."

"Vulgar old man," said Emma, "but country life makes us acquainted with strange companions."

"You are a great fox-hunter, I understand, Mr. Jorrocks," screamed his Grace, down the

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table. "Have you killed many foxes this summer?"

"No your Greece, we don't 'unt in the summer," replied Mr. Jorrocks, with a slight curl of his upper lip—"*farm* i' the summer, fox i' the winter, that's the ticket."

"True!" rejoined his Grace, "I'm glad you're a farmer—am a great one myself—prize bull, prize pig, prize ram, prize turnip, prize spade—should like to talk to you about farming."

"Nitrate o' sober! guano! sub-soilin'! Smith o' Deanston! top dressin' wi' soot, and all that sort o' thing!" added Mr. Jorrocks. "Shall be 'appy to take wine with your Greece."

"With all my heart," replied the Duke. "What shall we have?"

"Champagne, if you please," said Mr. Jorrocks; adding, in an audible whisper to himself, "can get sherry at 'ome."

"The Duke don't 'unt, I think," observed Mr. Jorrocks to the Duchess, setting down his glass with a thump that almost broke the slender stalk. —"Wish he'd got some 'ounds; winter 'll be dull without them—knows a man with five-and-twenty couple to dispose on—fifteen couple o' dogs, and

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ten couple o' betches—no offence, my lady," added he, with a bow and shake of the head, "*betch* is female dog."

The sweets were now in full swing. Mrs. Flather sat on thorns as the dishes were taken to Emma; and she helped herself in succession to pastry, jellies, creams, tipsey cakes, and all sorts of trash.

Oh, how she grieved for the loss of the buns, and dreaded the effect on the complexion in the morning! In vain she tried to catch the model's eye—she either would not see her, or was too absorbed with the sweets on her plate, or the sweet things the Marquis was saying to her, and eat and crammed away in a most determined way. Fortunately the Marquis was a spoon-food man, and having been laying back for the sweets, was too busy "dieting" himself, as the Poor-Law people call it, to pay much attention to his neighbour. At length both Emma and the Marquis got surfeited, and the latter having let off the old piece of sentiment about "sweets to the sweet" as Emma magnanimously declined a third offer of Maraingues, again took wine with her; and laying his napkin across his legs, turned slightly

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in his chair, and began whispering soft nothings in her ear—

"Was she fond of dancing?"

"O! she delighted in dancing!"

"Would she be in London next spring?"

Emma feared not—Oh! she should like it so much—but she had nobody to take her.

She should get her ma—everybody should go to London in the spring—Paris in the autumn—Italy in the winter. Almacks was not what it was—still the rooms were good, and the floor excellent. The little ante room was so nice for platonics—his ma was a patroness. Did she know the Princess of Quackenbruck?

(How could the poor girl? But these London chaps always fancy that everybody knows whom they do.) Well, the Princess Orel Quackenbruck was going to be married to Lord Plantagenet Hay, the Duke of Drossington's son. Did she know Taget Hay?

(How the devil should she?)

Well, he understood it was all settled. Indeed he *knew* it was; for he had it from Storr and Mortimer, who had been sending him down some pattern wristband studs that morning, and the

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diamonds were ordered there—fifteen thousand pounds worth—no great quantity, to be sure, but then she would come in for the family ones at last. His ma's diamonds were worth forty thousand.

Emma wondered when they would be hers.

* * * * *

"Matrimony seems all the rage just now," observed the Marquis, breaking off in the middle of his strawberry ice, "Lord George Noodleton wants to marry Miss Dumps, the banker's daughter, but his pa won't hear of it unless old Dumps will come down with a hundred thousand pounds."

"Mercenary creature!" exclaimed Emma, stuffing her mouth as full as ever it would hold.

The Marquis then rehearsed several weddings that had taken place among his friends during the previous year, to all of which Emma listened with the greatest interest; for though she had never heard the names before, still there is a something about weddings, high or low, that all women like to listen to, and the Marquis having about exhausted his stock of matrimonial reminiscences, observed casually, as he drank off his

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glass of sherry, that all the world seemed marrying mad, and he supposed it would be "their turn next."

Just then the Duchess gave the signal, and Emma rose with a maiden blush upon her maiden cheeks, having, as she considered, *all but* captured the coronet.

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CHAPTER XII.

"Look on this picture and on that."

A RATHER difficult passage in our history now draws near—namely, what the ladies did when they got back to the drawing-room at Donkeyton Castle. In these points authors disclose their sex. A lady would be *great* here, whereas we of the breeches, at least *legitimately* of the breeches, are "quite out." In this dilemma we inquired of a female friend who happened to be teaing with our grandmamma, (a most remarkable old lady of eighty-three, who reads without specs,) what ladies did when they retired from the dining-room? "Oh," said she, "they generally go to the fire, dawdle and stand about a little, and then sit down and talk scandal."

We will then, gentle reader, with your permission, suppose the fire and standing about part

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done, and that the ladies are pairing off, or grouping for the scandal stakes. Emma, who could hardly contain herself, and had given sundry nods, and made several significant grimaces at her mamma, all indicative of "*I've done it,*" now got to her, and giving her a most loving squeeze of the elbow, whispered in her ear, "*All right.*"

"*All right, my dear!* what d'you mean?" inquired Mrs. Flather.

"*All right,*" repeated Emma, with a most triumphant smile.

"*You don't say so!*" exclaimed Mrs. Flather, in a somewhat louder tone. "*Has he offered?*"

"Have you seen these beautiful views of Copley Fielding's," inquired the Duchess, with one of those bugbears of company-making, a portfolio of drawings. What iniquitous work that is. The Duchess had set three groups to their books, just as a jailor would set his prisoners to their task work. Indeed, we think the prisoners have the best of it, for they see what they have to do; while, in a case of this sort, you must reckon on having to run the gauntlet of all the portfolios in circulation, without knowing how many more there may be in reserve.

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O Emma, was "*so obliged*"—"there was nothing she liked so much as drawings—scenery of all things." So the Duchess having pushed her into a chair, and placed her mother beside her, went and got Mrs. Hamilton Dobbin to join the party to make up the trio, and left them to the enjoyment of their intellectual treat. How Mrs. Flather wished Mrs. Hamilton Dobbin at home. Here let us leave them for a time.

The ladies being comfortably swept out, and the champagne having supplied a certain degree of animation and confidence, the gentlemen drew towards the Duke with less apparent embarrassment than had marked their approaches during the earlier part of the evening. Mr. Jorrocks, whose maxim of "Perfect ease being perfect gentility," never allowed him to feel out of his element, having got rid of the Duchess, took his napkin and large wine-glass (very large it was too), and strutting to the other end of the room, planted himself most consequentially on the right of the Duke, to the great relief of Mr. Thomas Chambers, who, but for him, would have been driven into that dangerous position on the retirement of Mrs. Flather.

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"Vell, your Greece, and 'ow d'ye feel arter your feed?" inquired Mr. Jorrocks, sousing himself into one of the soft capacious arm chairs with which the table was encircled. "I reckon I've had an unkimmon good tuck out."

"Ah! I'm glad to hear you say so, Mr.—Mr.—Mr.—Jorrocks; very glad to hear you say so," replied the Duke. "Nice dinner—good dinner—very good dinner—*monstrous* good dinner, indeed."

"And good eatin' requires good drinkin', I always says, your Greece," observed Mr. Jorrocks, jingling his wine-glass against his buttons.

"Ah, true!" exclaimed his Grace, laughing at the hint, and throwing back his white head, "good eating *does* require good drinking,"—so saying, he helped himself to a bumper of claret, and passed the bottles. "Here's your good health, Mr. Jorrocks, I'm very happy to see you—*monstrous* happy to see you. And so you are a great fox-hunter? Glad of that—fine amusement fox-hunting—monstrous fine amusement. I remember Burke saying he would willingly bring in a bill to make poaching felony, another to en-

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courage the breed of foxes—that he would make, in short, any sacrifice to the humour and prejudices of the country gentlemen in their most extraordinary form, provided he could only prevail upon them to live at home. Fine speech of Burke's; monstrous fine speech."

"He was 'ung for all that," observed Mr. Jorrocks to himself, with a knowing shake of the head, as he availed himself of the opportunity of the bottles coming round again to take a "back-hand" at the port.

His Grace then had a word or two with Mr. Tugwell and afterwards with Mr. Grumbleton, but being unable to get more than "Yes, my Lord Duke," and "No, my Lord Duke," out of either of them, he soon returned to his voluble neighbour, Mr. Jorrocks.

"You're a great farmer, ar'nt you, Mr. Jorrocks?" asked the Duke—"tell me now, have you an Agricultural Association at your place? Prize for the best bull, best cow, best ram, best two-year-old tup?"

"Vy, no, I doesn't think we 'ave, your Greece," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "and I think if we had,

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they'd a been *at* me for a subscription—town and country's werry much alike in that respect—never lose nothin' for want of axin'—I minds——."

"Well, but you should get up an Agricultural Association," interrupted the Duke. "Independently of the good it does in promoting neat and scientific farming, it's a good thing for getting acquainted with the farmers—keeping your interest together—*you understand.* Good thing, indeed — capital good thing — *monstrous* good thing," added the Duke, rubbing his hands, and laughing at his own cunning.

"*I twig!*" replied Mr. Jorrocks with a wink. "*True blue!* Please yourselves, genl'men, but if you don't please me, I'll *make* you—haw, haw, haw. Rum world this we live in, your Greece—werry rum world, indeed. I'll have a Hagricultural Sociation though. President, Mr. Jorrocks—or say, President, Duke o' Donkeyton. Wice-President, Mr. Jorrocks."

"Very proud of the honour, I'm sure," replied the Duke, bowing very low, and shaking his head over his plate as though he were quite overcome —"*monstrous* proud, indeed. But I'm getting

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old, Mr. Jorrocks, I'm getting old—suppose you take Jeems—it's more in his way."

"With all my 'eart," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "he don't look much like a farmer, though. President, the Markiss o' Bray—Wice-President, Mr. Jorrocks—that'll sound well, and look well in the papers too; call it the 'Illingdon Sociation, and have it at our place—dine in a tent—dance in a barn—band in open hair—school gals to skip. Or sheep-shearin' i' the mornin', tea i' the evenin' —ball for the ladies—'ands across and back again, down the middle and hup again." Mr. Jorrocks suiting the action to the word, bumping about on his chair and crossing his arms as if he were at work.

"Very good!" exclaimed the Duke; "extremely good! *monstrous* good, indeed—but you must instruct as well as amuse—encourage science, experiments, chemistry; teach them the virtue and use of manures."

"Guano! nitrate o' sober! soot! and all that sort o' thing," interrupted Mr. Jorrocks.

"Farmers are a long way behind the intelligence of the day; a *monstrous* long way," con-

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tinued the Duke, "too much of what 'my father did, I'll do' style about them. They want brushing up. You take yours in hand, Mr. Jorrocks —make them drain."

"Smith o' Deanston! Tweeddale tile! furrow drainin'!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks.

"Apply their land to proper purposes," continued his Grace, "don't force it to grow crops that it has no taste for—much may be done in the way of judicious management. For instance, where land won't grow corn, try trees—much of the land in this county is too poor for agricultural purposes—would grow wood well. All the pine tribe flourish in this country and pay well for planting; very well indeed; monstrous well."

"Grand things they are too!" observed Mr. Jorrocks aloud to himself, thinking of the pine-apple he'd had before dinner, "I'll teach them a trick or two;" added he, "pine dodge in particklar — address them — 'Frinds and fellow-countrymen!'" throwing out his arm and hitting Mr. Thomas Chambers a crack in the eye, and so closing the conversation for the moment.

The Marquis of Bray, not being a great man for his liquor, took advantage of the commotion

to throw up his napkin and steal out of the room to the ladies. These he found in full employment: three groups of three, looking at pictures; the Duchess knitting a purse and superintending the portfolios, occasionally addressing a word to her toady, or "companion," as the poor devils are called, in derision one would think, for they are generally less thought of than the lapdog; while Mrs. Smith inflicted a recital of how her little boy had gone through

> "Whene'er I take my walks abroad,
> How many poor I see!"

without a single error or wrong pronunciation, upon Mrs. Somebody, whom she had inveigled into a corner for the purpose.

The butterfly Marquis having saluted the Duchess with a kiss, fluttered away to chatter to the ladies; who all thought it "so nice" of him coming in so soon. The first group was a turbaned one, busy with Colonel Batty's Swiss Views. The Marquis didn't stay long with it, but glided into the middle of the room where Emma sat between her mamma and Mrs. Hamilton Dobbin, turning over a portfolio of water-colour sketches,

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mother and daughter most heartily wishing Mrs. Hamilton Dobbin *further*. Nor did the Marquis's approach at all disconcert Mrs. Dobbin, for she had known him from a boy, and perhaps had not established to her own satisfaction that he was anything else yet. Living near the castle, and knowing the awe in which the neighbourhood held the family, the idea of such a thing as the Marquis marrying a girl like Emma Flather never entered her head, or, indeed, the idea of any girl being foolish enough to think of such a thing; consequently, instead of drawing out her chair to let him into the centre, she merely moved a little nearer Emma, and kept the Marquis outside. Mrs. Flather immediately counteracted the movement by rising and joining another group, and the Marquis presently sidled into her seat. The imperturbable Mrs. Hamilton Dobbin remained rooted to her chair. The Marquis then began chattering, and turning over the drawings. "Was Emma a painter?"

"Only a *very middling* one — she doted on pictures though."

The Marquis dared say she was a very good one.

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"O no, she wasn't! Nobody about them cared for drawing but her."

"O, that was a pity," replied the Marquis. His pa and his ma were both great artists. "My *pa* did *that*," continued he, holding up a picture.

"O! how beautiful!" exclaimed Emma.

"My *ma* did *that*," added he, producing another.

"O! how beautiful!" repeated Emma.

"My *pa* and *ma* did that between them," continued he, producing a third.

"O! how beautiful!" reiterated Emma.

Meanwhile the guests came dropping in from the dining-room, each with considerably more confidence than he felt on arriving, and Mr. Jorrocks and the Duke at length were the only two that remained—still they talked about farming, until a stranger would have thought they were the only two people that knew anything about the matter, instead of one being a mere theorist and the other a mere fool —we beg pardon—we mean *in farming*. Indeed, the Duke of Donkeyton might be called more than a theorist, for he had some most extraordinary notions about farming and the management of property—a system so peculiar

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that it generally ended in beggaring the tenants and impoverishing his estates. Still he chattered and talked so glibly, that poor Mr. Jorrocks was thoroughly convinced he was a most "wide awake" farmer; and what with the wine and what with the twaddle, he got a brainful of most confused ideas. The dominant idea, however, was that farmers were all asleep, and scientific farming was the only thing to make money of.

"Allow me to give you a toast, your Greece?" inquired Mr. Jorrocks every time the decanters came to a stand, and his Grace dabbled in his finger glass, or applied the napkin to his lips, symptomatic of going.

"With all my heart," Mr. Jorrocks.

"I'll give The 'Illingdon 'Sociation and the 'ealth o' the Markiss o' Bray, again!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks. (This was the third time he had given it.)

"Thank ye, Mr. Jorrocks, most kindly—Jeems I'm sure will be most flattered when I tell him of this repeated mark of your attachment."

"Not at all," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "not at all—werry fine young man—werry fine young man indeed—werry like my frind, James Green,

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of Tooley Street. Perhaps your Greece doesn't know Green o' Tooley Street."

His Grace did not.

* * * * *

"Allow me to give your Greece another toast?"

"With great pleasure, Mr. Jorrocks."

"It must be a bamper," observed Mr. Jorrocks, drinking off his heel taps, and filling his goblet as full as it would hold.

His Grace did the like.

"I'll give you the 'ealth o' the Duchess o' Donkeyton," observed Mr. Jorrocks. "Her Greece has given us a most capital dinner, and your Greece has given us a most excellent drink:" so saying, Mr. Jorrocks quaffed off his tumbler.

"Thank ye (hiccup) Mr. Jorrocks," replied his Grace. "The (hiccup) Duchess I am sure will be (hiccup) most proud of the (hiccup) honour which I'll tell her (hiccup) directly when—"

"But drink off your lush," observed Mr. Jorrocks, seeing his Grace sat with the bumper before him—"wine first—speech arterwards"—added he as if in explanation.

"True!" observed his Grace laughing—"thank ye, Mr. (hiccup) Jorrocks for the hint—capital

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(hiccup) hint—monstrous (hiccup) good (hiccup) hint." So saying, his Grace drained off the glass, and set it down with the face of a man who has taken a black draught.

"Now, if your (hiccup) Greece has anything to (hiccup) say, we shall be 'appy to 'car it (hiccup)," observed Mr. Jorrocks.

"Thank you, Mr. (hiccup) Jorrocks," replied his Grace. "I can't (hiccup) express the (hiccup) obligation I'm (hiccup) under to you (hiccup). —Shall we (hiccup) have a little (hiccup) coffee?"

"Jest (hiccup) bazz the bottle (hiccup)!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, holding it up to the light, "there's (hiccup) only jest a glass a-picce (hiccup)." So saying, Mr. Jorrocks helped himself and then the Duke, measuring the quantity out most equitably. "There's (hiccup) honesty!" hiccuped Mr. Jorrocks, banging the decanter down in the stand. "No (hiccup) drucken man (hiccup) could do that (hiccup) I guess."

The Duke looked at his glass as if it contained poison, and turned very green.

Mr. Jorrocks having drunk his wine off, washed his mouth out, and ran the pocket comb through

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his whiskers, set off for the drawing-room, leaving the Duke, as he said, to "put the bottle ends away if he liked."

"*Holloa* (hiccup), *Mister Jorrocks!*" hiccuped our hero, finding his legs didn't carry him as straight as they ought, and he bumped with his shoulder against the door-post. "*Holloa there!*" Mr. Jorrocks then got his land legs and proceeded.

* * * * *

Towards ten o'clock the groom of the chamber whispered a reprieve in the ears of divers of the male guests, who were all suddenly seized with a desire of looking at their watches, and wondering what sort of a night it was. This is a question that great people do not understand, thinking (like the little Princess who wondered that people should starve when there were such nice buns to be had for a penny) that every one keeps a close carriage.

If the Duke had gone to the door, he would have seen a curious *melée* of half drunken, three-quarters drunken, whole drunken servants and post-boys, exchanging compliments and civilities with his accomplished domestics. Great men's great men, butlers, and so on, being equal to the

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conveyance of any *given* quantity of liquor, measure the capacities of their rural brethren by their own, and without intending to make them drunk—or even *perhaps thinking* of doing so, generally give them what makes them very nearly so. This is a serious inconvenience to those outside the ring—or who do not, like Mr. Jorrocks, sleep where they dine, and breakfast where they sleep.

There were such cuttings in and jostlings out, such threats of running the shafts into each other's "chays," and such exchange of country jokes among country Johns. Of all abominations, save us from the impertinence of servants! the *open* impertinence at least, for few are totally free from it, and talk of their masters and mistresses as though they were something inferior to themselves. The drink frequently brings it out. At Donkeyton Castle there was a grand display. If a master had availed himself of the sombre castle shadow reflected in the moonlight for diving into the carriage ring, he might have heard his own character, and perhaps that of his wife, sketched with all the fidelity of a Daguerrotype portrait.

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Then, when the Jehus got their masters and mistresses cooped into their melon frames and leathern inconveniences, they began putting their boastings of the merits of their respective steeds to the test, by setting off at a pace down hill that perfectly terrified the inmates, and drove all the observations they had made as to how things were done at the castle, clean out of their heads. Mr. Tugwell had been charged by Mrs. Tugwell (who had got the influenza, and could not come,) to mind and see whether the butler handed the wine about with a napkin or not; Mr. Webb had been especially ordered to see whether the footmen took off the bread with a fork or a spoon, also how they got rid of the crumbs; and divers others had made knots in their minds to pay particular attention to certain points, all of which vanished as the jingling of the rattletraps, and the darting disappearance of roadside objects, convinced them they were getting run away with; and the horrors of drowning, and quarry tumbling, and dashing to pieces, with sundry acts of omission and commission, darted across their minds, with a velocity equalled only by their movements. Horrible work getting run away with! There is

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something humiliating in the idea of getting into a one-horse booby hutch (booby hutches they are well called, for a man *does* feel like a fool riding in one), and committing oneself, and three per cent. consols, to the rash indiscretion of a half-fledged three-quarters-drunken yokel, in black velveteens and baggy Berlins. Talk of the jurisdiction of magistrates over husbandry servants! What is the jurisdiction of magistrates over husbandry servants, compared to what it would be if they had it over their own! Every large house would have a treadmill, and the parson, the lawyer, and the apothecary, would club for one among them. On this night it would have been in requisition, for Mr. Tugwell's boy, having set down Mr. Webb, very coolly deposited his sleeping master in the coach house, where he remained till the morning.

There had been fine doings in the servants' hall and housekeeper's room at Donkeyton Castle. Betsey, whose propriety—at least sobriety—of conduct had never before been impeached, evinced the hospitality of the establishment, by a very confused statement of what a delightful evening she had spent, and how the Markiss's gentleman

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had shown her great attention, and asked her to wine twice during the supper; and how the servants—*upper* servants at least—had wine twice a day, and how Benjamin had insisted upon being among the upper servants—swearing he was a "walet at 'ome;" and how he had rooked them of their money at cards, and won two pounds nine and sixpence. Indeed, the wine being in, and the wit being out, Benjamin, contrary to his usual custom, could not contain himself for his exploits, and let out all to his master, he (Benjamin) having, in order to sustain his character of valet, gone up to Mr. Jorrocks's dressing-room at the time the other valets went to their master's, under pretence of helping Mr. Jorrocks out of his clothes. Lucky it was that he did so, for Mr. Jorrocks, having soused himself on to a sumptuous sofa, had fallen fast asleep when his trustworthy domestic entered and discovered him.

"Vell (hiccup), Binjimin," said Mr. Jorrocks, opening one eye and cocking up a leg, "vot are you arter now? (hiccup) Marmeylad, I dare say."

"Please, sir, did you ring?" inquired Benjamin.

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"Vy, no, (hiccup) Binjimin—I didn't (hiccup) ring—at least not that I minds (hiccup)—but here, turn (hiccup) about, and let's have my (hiccup) tops off; for this 'ere one's a pinchin' o' my (hiccup) corn." Mr. Jorrocks, raising a leg for a lever, and lifting the other to put between Benjamin's legs, to make what sportsmen call a new-fashioned boot-jack of the boy.

"Pleaz, sur, you har'nt got your tops on," replied Benjamin, knowing it was only a hunting day practice.

"Ah, (hiccup) vell, never mind! (hiccup)" replied Mr. Jorrocks, starting up, thinking he was falling from the sofa. "They're my pamps are they? I thought I'd been out an 'unting. Vell left me up, I s'pose (hiccup) it's about (hiccup) bed time (hiccup).

"Nigh *von!*" replied Benjamin.

"Nigh *von?*" hiccuped Mr. Jorrocks; "impossible, (hiccup) Binjimin! I've only jest (hiccup) come up stairs (hiccup)."

"Nigh *von* for all that," replied Benjamin. "They keep rum hours at these great shops. Never goes to bed afore midnight."

"Queer coves," hiccuped Mr. Jorrocks, sitting up on the sofa.

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"Deed are they!" replied Benjamin, "but I've put the leak into some o' them great long lazy London Johnnies. Won a 'atful o' money of them!"

"'Atful o' money 'ave you (hiccup), Binjimin?" hiccuped Mr. Jorrocks, "that was (hiccup) werry clever (hiccup) o' you—you'll be a (hiccup) great man, Binjimin (hiccup)."

"Yes, sir," said Benjamin.

"A *werry* (hiccup) great man," hiccuped Mr. Jorrocks; "(hiccup) sobriety and (hiccup) cleanliness are (hiccup) great things in the world. Never (hiccup) degrade yourself, Binjimin, to the (hiccup) level of a (hiccup) beast by intemperance (hiccup). Drunkenness is a shockin' (hiccup) sin. Drink (hiccup) will do nothin' (hiccup) for no man."

"Yes, sir," replied Benjamin, looking at his master.

"Where (hiccup) moderation dwells (hiccup), the mind (hiccup) expands with mutual (hiccup) ardour (hiccup), and all that sort o' thing (hiccup)."

"Yes, sir," said Benjamin.

"Then (hiccup), Binjimin, 'elp me out o' my

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(hiccup) coat," rejoined Mr. Jorrocks, rising and extending an arm to the boy.

Benjamin took hold of the sleeve, and in the jerk to disengage himself of the garment, Mr. Jorrocks lost his balance, and fell souse on the floor with Benjamin a top of him.

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CHAPTER XIII.

" O that men should put an enemy into their mouths
To steal away their brains ! "

SHAKSPEARE.

THE Duke of Donkeyton had a very bad headache the next day, and could not come down to breakfast.

Mrs. Flather was sorely disappointed at this, for she got down early in hopes of a kiss from his Grace, by way of sealing the bargain. This, we believe, is the usual form in such matters. The young people kiss as a matter of course, and the old ones do ditto, at least when both parties are pleased with the match—a thing of such unusual occurrence, as not to have happened in our recollection. Emma had detailed to her mamma, with such few additions as her fertile imagination supplied, all that had passed between the Marquis and herself, particularly the tone and manner in

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which he made the observation or declaration, and, above all, the exact degree of warmth with which he squeezed her hand at bed time. Young ladies, and young gentlemen too, should be cautious in these matters — young gentlemen not to give utterance to ambiguous expressions— young ladies not to put interpretations upon words they are not meant to convey. Had it not been that Emma, and Emma's "ma," to whom Emma attributed superior sagacity when it suited her convenience, had gone to Donkeyton Castle, with the full conviction that the Duke and Duchess wanted Emma for the Marquis, there would have been something ridiculous in their taking hold of such a common-place observation as "it will be our turn next," and construing it into an offer of marriage; but when that impression, together with the rusticity, and the "greasy novelling" of the parties, is taken into consideration, we think our indulgent readers will acquit us of taxing their credulity beyond the stretch of literary latitudinarianship in stating such to have been the case.

Moreover, there is another observation we wish to make on the subject. Young ladies and

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mammas who have only been accustomed to the jog-trot day-book and ledger courtship of common life, cannot imagine that all the *empressements* and soft nothings of high life are in fact "*nothings*," but are apt to take them as the pure current coin of courtship, and contrasting the earnestness of the one with the snoring sleepy-headedness of the other, fall into a very excusable error in supposing a great deal more meant than is really intended.

Fair ladies; beware of the small talk of young gentlemen in cerulean blue satin waistcoats worked with heart's-ease, and pink pantaloons.

Mrs. Flather and Emma had little sleep that night. Everything was talked over three or four times, and the darting rays of the morning's sun found them talking still. Mrs. Flather rose, and drawing the costly curtains, looked out on the lovely landscape, wood and water, hill and dale, with an eye of ownership. What a conquest! Mrs. Trotter would die of envy. Then Emma talked of the diamonds. Told how the Marquis had said they cost fifty thousand pounds. Then Mrs. Flather wondered how old the Duchess was. If she could get into the library before breakfast

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she would have a look in the peerage. Already the Duke and Duchess began to be looked upon in the light of incumbrances.

Mr. Jorrocks, who had one of those remarkable heads that take very little harm from drink, came strutting into the breakfast-room with his hands in the upper tier of the diagonal Jorrockian jacket pockets, and the massive silk tassels of his Hessian boots tapping against the leather as he went, and found Mrs. Flather, bag in hand, pacing up and down pretending to look at the pictures, but in reality waiting for the arrival of the Duke. Mr. J. "was so glad to see her! Now that was werry kind of her," and thereupon he gave her such a smack, as caused the footman, who was coming in with the urn, to start and snicker outright. Mrs. Flather looked very black, inwardly resolving to put the steady old gentleman to rights as soon as ever she became a Marchioness's mother.

The guests then came dropping in, and presently the Duchess and Jeems arrived, when salutations became general, together with inquiries after the health of his Greece—how each had slept, and unanimous approval of the appearance of the day—"splendid weather!"

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The guests again ranged themselves to the now much shortened table, each with a new neighbour, like the survivors of a regiment after a battle, and tea and toast, coffee and eggs, became the order of the day.

As the breakfast party were in full cry, the Duke of Donkeyton made his appearance, looking very seedy, and having made his circuit of politeness, drew up beside Mr. Jorrocks, who was sitting next the Duchess, giving her a lecture on the varieties of tea and the usual modes of adulterating them, much to Mrs. Jorrocks's annoyance, who sat looking as if she would eat him.

"Ah, Mr. Jorrocks, and how do you do?" inquired his Grace, stopping short at his over-night friend, who had a plateful of cold meat, with a circle of muffin plates, toast racks, sweet cakes, and eggshells before him.

"Tol lol, thank your Greece; 'ow are you off for 'calth?" replied Mr. Jorrocks, adding "That *last* glass was *ray*ther too much for me; howsomever, never mind—I carried it up stairs—had a Seidlitz pooder this mornin', and am all right again now. 'Ows your Greece, I says?"

"Thenk'ee, Mr. Jorrocks, thenkee; I'm mid-

dling—pretty well, I thenk you—I was imprudent enough to eat a little lobster paté, which I think has rather disagreed with me."

"That's a bad job, your Greece," observed Mr. Jorrocks, diving his fork into three or four slices of cold ham, as the footman brought the plate past him. "That's a werry bad job," added he—"I s'pose it's a complaint peculiar to 'igh life though, for I see Cockle has almost every great name in the kingdom down as patrons of his antibilious pills—I doesn't place much faith i' pills and physic. My frind, Roger Swizzle, says, eatin' does far more 'arm nor drinkin'. Roger tries the drink at 'igh pressure too—howsomever you'll be better when you mend, as the nusses say to the children. Here's a werry fine mornin', your Greece—one ought to have been among the dandylions these two hours—us farmers should be early."

"Ah! by the way, you're a great farmer," observed his Grace, pricking his ears—"delightful occupation, farming—monstrous nice occupation—wish I'd been born a farmer."

"Wish I'd been born a duke," grunted Mr.

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Jorrocks, as he stuffed a large piece of tongue into his mouth.

"Tell me now," continued his Grace, without noticing Mr. Jorrocks's observation, "have you an agricultural society about you? society for promoting science, agricultural chemistry, improved farming? Best cow, best bull, best two-year-old horse?"

"No, but I intend *to*, your Greece," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "shall teach them a thing or two—farmers are a long way behind the intelligence o' the age, your Greece."

"That's just what *I* say, Mr. Jorrocks!" replied his Grace, "that's just what *I* say!" repeated he. "Too much of 'what my father did I do' style about them—want brushing up: you take yours in hand, Mr. Jorrocks—make them drain."

"Drainin's a grand diskivery, your Greece. It's the foundation of all agricultural improvement." (Mr. J. borrowed that idea from Johnny Wopstraw).

"That's what *I* say, Mr. Jorrocks," replied his Grace.

"Vell, and I say it *too*," rejoined Mr. Jorrocks,

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with a jerk of his head, as much as to say he would not be done out of his idea. He then began his third egg.

"Smith o' Deanston should be knighted," observed Mr. Jorrocks, as he put in the salt.

"A *baronetcy* wouldn't be too much," replied his Grace; "greatest benefactor the world ever saw—makes two blades grow where one grew before—*monstrous* benefactor."

"Guano! nitrate o' sober! gipsey* manure!" continued Mr. Jorrocks.

"I see you understand it all!" observed his Grace.

"Trust me for that," replied Mr. Jorrocks, diving deep into the egg.

"We'll have sich a Hagricultural 'Sociation. President, John Jorrocks, Esq. Dine in a tent—dance in a barn—cuss it, there goes the hegg all over my chin. But stop," added Mr. Jorrocks, wiping it off—"Didn't we say—'President, the Markiss o' Bray? Wice-president, Mr. J.?' I think that was the way."

"Jeems I am sure will be *most happy*," replied his Grace, who now began to recollect something

* Query Gypsum.

of the overnight conversation. "Jeems, my dear!" exclaimed he to young hopeful, who was just cutting Emma a fourth slice of white bread, to the indescribable horror of Mrs. Flather. "Jeems, my dear! Mr. Jorrocks does you the honour of proposing you for president of his Agricultural Association."

"Mr. Jorrocks does me great honour I'm sure," replied Jeems, almost bowing his face into his plate; adding to Emma, "what a curious old man he is!"

"He'll be rather young in the business you know, Mr. Jorrocks," observed his Grace *sotto voce.*

"O, I'll put him up to it all!" rejoined Mr. Jorrocks with a knowing wink, and a dig of his elbow into the Duke's ribs; "give him a lector aforehand—South Downs—'Erefords—Durhams—subsoil plough—liquid manure—Deanstonizing, and all that sort o' thing. We'll inwent a manure together. The Donkeyton dung—or may be a drainin' tile—Mr. Jorrocks's tile. We'll be werry famous. Write in Stephens's Book o' the Farm. Mr. Jorrocks on balls. The Markiss on milch cows. We'll make the grass grow, the

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grass grow, the grass grow, as my 'untsman James Pigg used to sing about his coal-barge."

If ever there was a man Mrs. Flather more heartily wished *further* (as people delicately say, when they consign another to the devil), it surely was this loquacious old man, Mr. Jorrocks. Fancy the stupid old fellow intruding in the morning at a time he was never wanted, and then monopolizing the Duke and Duchess in this scandalous manner! This most delicate and important transaction kept open by the ill-placed garrulity of the old grocer. Never was anything so provoking. Never was a woman so thwarted as Mrs. Flather was—*did it on purpose too.* We certainly must admit it was very trying; but these sort of interruptions frequently occur just at the critical moment either of an offer or a declaration. The footman with the coal-skuttle, or a carriage full of company, grinning and kissing their hands through the window with delight at finding you at home, and the anticipations of spending a long day. From all "long-day spenders, good Lord deliver us!"

At length Mr. Jorrocks's appetite was appeased,

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and pulling out his watch, he discovered that it wanted but ten minutes to eleven. "Tempus fuggit," said he, putting it up to his ear to ascertain that it had not stopped at that hour over night. "We must be mizzlin'. Don't do for us farmers to be away too much. Old saying, when the cat's away the mice will play. Dare say your Greece finds it true."

"Well, but there's no great hurry, my good friend," observed his Grace — "sorry you're obleged to go. Should like to show you my farm —the Duchess's dairy — my bull—Jeems' rabbits."

"Oh, vy you know I'm not *forced* to go; only I har'nt brought another shirt—clean shirt, clean shave, and a guinea in one's pocket, is wot constitutes a gen'leman in my mind. Howsomever, I'll ride over again some day, jest in a friendly pot luck sort o' way; meanwhile," added he in a low tone in his Grace's ear, "Mrs. Flather and I are engaged to ride 'ome together, and ven a lady's in the case, your Greece *knows the rest.*"

"Well then, Mrs. Flather, you and I ride 'ome together," observed Mr. Jorrocks, strutting down the table to where Mrs. Flather sat in agony,

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twisting the cord of her bag into a thousand different forms under cover of the table.

Mrs. Flather looked very black.

"S'pose we order the hutch round in ten minutes, or a quarter of an hour. It von't take you long to put on your bonnet, and," added he, in an under tone, "if we start afore the chay, we shall 'scape all the dust. *You twig!*" added he, with a wink.

"*Say half an hour,*" whispered Mrs. Flather, in agony.

"Sorry your obleged to go, Mrs. Flather," observed the Duke, rising and passing down the table to where Mrs. Flather sat. An example immediately followed by the company, who were now all on their legs together.

"I'm sure we are extremely obliged to your Grace ——."

"Not at all," interrupted his Grace, "not at all; nothing can give us greater pleasure than ——."

"Your Greece's partiality—*preference,*" faltered Mrs. Flather—"for my daughter is most flattering, and ——."

"Not at all, Mrs. Flather—not at all; she's an

extremely fine girl—very fine girl indeed—*monstrous* fine girl! Your husband and I are very old friends, Mrs. Flather—most gratifying to the Duchess and myself to renew our intimacy in such a satisfactory way."

"I'm sure you do us infinite honour. It is what I never could have expected. I trust my poor child will show herself worthy of the high honour."

"No fear of that, Mrs. Flather—none whatever. The Duchess likes her amazingly—*monstrous* fond of her," saying which the Duke shuffled on to Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton Dobbin, to express his regret that they too were obleged to go."

"Now then!" said Mr. Jorrocks, touching Mrs. Flather's elbow, "let's be startin', they're all a goin', and we shall get into the ruck if we don't mind, and ketch all the dust."

"Don't be in such a hurry, *pray*," said Mrs. Flather peevishly.

"My vig!" said Mr. Jorrocks aloud to himself, drawing back, "shows a little wice I think."

"Your carriage is at the door, sir," and "Please to order my carriage round," now be-

came general, and the headachy Duke and complaisant Duchess began hugging their departing friends, most heartily glad to get rid of them.

"The Markiss and I must have a talk about this 'Sociation some day," observed Mr. Jorrocks to the Duke.

"True!" exclaimed his Grace, who had gumption enough to keep the main chance in view, "Jeems!" holloaed he to young Hopeful, who was pinning a bouquet into Emma's breast, "come here, my dear! Mr. Jorrocks wants to speak to you."

"You and I must have a talk together about this 'ere 'Sociation," observed Mr. Jorrocks, eyeing the butterfly figure before him. Pink-striped shirt, tied with a blue ribbon for a neckcloth, pea-green duck-hunter, pitch-plaister-coloured waistcoat, white jean trousers, pink-striped silk stockings, pumps and buckles.

"Ah! the farming thing!" replied the Marquis, "true—I suppose we must say something to the people."

"You had better drive over to Mr. Jorrocks's, Jeems, and talk it all over," observed the Duke.

"Do," replied Mr. Jorrocks; "and bring your

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nightcap with you—you mustn't come in the coach-and-six though, for I can't put up sich a sight of 'osses."

"Whereabouts do you live?" inquired the Marquis, who had as much idea about the country as a cow.

"Oh, twelve or fourteen miles from here," observed Mr. Jorrocks—"nothin' of a ride."

"This hot weather though, it would, I think," replied the Marquis, with a shake of the head—"however, I should like to pay you a visit" (the Marquis meant Emma), "and I dare say my ma will lend me her Brougham; however, I'll write you word, Mr. Jorrocks:" so saying, he whisked away to jabber and prattle with the ladies.

Mrs. Jorrocks having got herself into her bonnet and shawl, the Duke offered his arm to conduct her to her carriage, while the Marquis followed with Emma, telling her how soon he would be over to see her, and kissing her fair hand, as she ascended the steps of the carriage, with all the devotion of a lover, sent her away as happy as a duchess.

Mr. Jorrocks stuck so close to Mrs. Flather that she could not get a word in sideways, either

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with the Duke or Duchess—at length she yielded to the teasing importunities of the tiresome old man, and resumed her yesterday's place in the fire engine, without the anticipated salute from the Duke, and greatly incensed at Mr. Jorrocks for his untimely persecution.

How they "rode 'ome together" the reader can guess, nor will it be supposed that Binjimin had any trouble in looking for stones in Dickey Cobden's feet.

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CHAPTER XIV.

"Abused by some most villanous knave!
Some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow!—
O, heaven, that such companions thou'dst unfold;
And put in every honest hand a whip
To lash the rascal naked through the world!"

SHAKSPEARE.

THE first person Mr. Jorrocks met on his return to Hillingdon Hall was Joshua Sneakington. Joshua was prowling about on his travels, back-biting and making mischief, and occasionally displaying his newly-acquired importance by bullying some unfortunate cottage tenant. Mr. Jorrocks was full of the farming project, and Joshua was just the man he wanted to see.

"Vell, Sneak," said Mr. Jorrocks in his usual free and easy style, when Joshua's broad-brimmed hat regained his finely-shaped head after the salute it gave the squire; "vell, Sneak, 'ow are you gettin' on here?"

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"Why, middling, I think, Mr. Jorrocks—can't expect perfection all at once—but I strive all I can to keep things right and comfortable. It's really an unpleasant office looking after a great estate like this, one gets a deal of ill will—many mischievous ill-disposed people about."

"I thought all the ill-disposed people had been in London," observed Mr. Jorrocks.

"O no, sir," replied Sneakington, with a shake of the head, "town and country's pretty much alike for that, I dare say."

"The farmers are a long way behind the intelligence o' the day," observed Mr. Jorrocks, after a pause.

"O, a long way," replied Mr. Sneakington.

"What my father-did-I'll-do style about them," said Mr. Jorrocks.

"Just so," rejoined Joshua. "They have no life about them—no energy."

"No taste for nitrate o' sober, subsoil, Smith o' Deanston—Smith's the greatest benefactor the world ever saw."

"Indeed!" replied Joshua Sneakington, an answer that may mean anything.

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"I'm a thinkin'," said Mr. Jorrocks after a pause, during which he kept diggin' a Suffolk weed-spud into the ground in a fanciful sort of way, "it would be a good thing to get up a Hagricultural 'Sociation here — *monstrous* good thing, I think."

"No doubt," replied Joshua.

"Put a little life into the farmers," said Mr. Jorrocks. "Teach 'em the use o' manures—book keepin' by double entry—rural economy—meadow fox-tail grass. Fine thing fox-tail grass—'unters should be fed on it."

"Indeed!" replied Joshua.

"You are an intelligent man, Sneak, and enjoy the confidence of the country in a remarkable degree, I wish you would take the thing in hand, and talk to some o' the farmers, and let us get the thing started."

"Why, sir, I shall be very happy to do anything to serve you," replied Mr. Sneakington, "and agriculture is a thing I have given my mind to very particularly; but the world's ill-natured, Mr. Jorrocks, and perhaps some of the people might think I was taking too much upon me."

"Never sich a thing! never sich a thing!"

replied Mr. Jorrocks, "you are jest the man—Hillingdon 'Sociation—President, the Markiss o' Bray; Wice President, Mr. Jorrocks; Secretary, Mr. Sneakington—I tells you, you *shall*."

"Well, sir, what you please," replied Joshua; "only my time is precious just now, for I have an application from a gentleman in North Wales to build him a castle, and in course if I take the secretaryship I can't build the castle."

"Never mind the castle," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "never mind the castle—dare say he never meant to pay you for it—castle builders seldom do; you stir your stumps, and go among the farmers—tell them they are all benighted—that we want to enlighten them; give them premiums — gold medals! — silver medals! —lectors!—frinds and fellow countrymen! walk in procession! band o' music! flags flyin'! dine in a tent, dance in a barn, tickets for tea, all that sort o' thing in fact."

"Well sir, what you please sir," replied Mr. Sneakington, who was now about to undertake the character of agriculturist at short notice. "What *you* please sir. There is no doubt such a society would be a great benefit—encourage activity—early rising. Your tenants, Mr. Jorrocks,

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though I shouldn't like it to go further, are a very indolent set of men. Mr. Westbury let them their farms too easy, dare say they would stand raising ten or fifteen per cent. some of them. But then you know it's not my business to interfere, and I shouldn't like to make mischief; but you may rely upon it, your estate should produce a deal more than it does."

"Vy," said Mr. Jorrocks, "that's all werry well, I'm glad to hear it. Ven we've stuck the new lights into their candlesticks, may be it'll produce twice as much, and then we may get a leetle more tin. Smith o' Deanston should be knighted —baronet'd indeed! greatest benefactor the world ever saw; makes four blades grow where one grew before. You go, brush up my tenants, tell them to drain, subsoil, guano, nitrate o' sober, and gipsey manure."

"If I had a horse," observed Mr. Sneakington, "I should be able to make a survey of each farm, so as to judge of its capabilities, and talk to the tenant at the same time. It doesn't look well to see the agent of a great man going about on foot," added he, seeing Mr. Jorrocks did not exactly relish the proposal.

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"Vy, as to an oss you know, Sneak, it would only be a bother to you; for instance, if you came to a field with a large stone wall, and never a way out, you wouldn't know what to do with the nag while you was over a lookin' at the crop; and as to leapin'! vy, you *know* you'd tumble off!"

"Oh, but the tenant would be there to hold the horse you know. There's work enough, I assure you, for a horse to look after all your concerns, and keep things square; farmers want a deal of looking after. It would be a saving in the end."

"Vy, time's tin in the City certainly," replied Mr. Jorrocks, tinkling his silver in his breeches pocket; "it's all 'ow d'ye do? and off again—state your case and away you go; but some'ow the day seems a many 'ours longer i' the country. No one's ever in a hurry here. Howsomever, I've no objection to lend you Dickey Cobden now and then; only you must mind and not over mark him, for he's only one o' the buttery sort—werry soft—can stand a deal o' rest—you twig."

"Thank you sir," replied Sneakington, who thought riding the Squire's cob would have a

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grand effect—"then if I go to your stable, perhaps you'll tell Mr. Benjamin to let me have it to-morrow. Your rent-day's coming on, and I should like to go my rounds before, so as to make a proper report of the state in which every thing is at present."

"Jest so," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "and then we shall see what improvement is made. Farmers should keep journals, write down every thing they see and do, make observations on the weather, and so on—signs o' the sky; be philosophers as well as farmers in fact."

The next morning Joshua was seen riding Dickey Cobden slowly up the village of Hillingdon, with an armful of plans and a green gingham umbrella for a whip. His low-crowned broad-brimmed Sunday hat was well brushed, he had a clean white neckcloth, and his second-best black coat and waistcoat, and every-day trousers and gaiters on; also a pair of gloves, an appendage denoting that the wearer is going "from home." The cottagers eyed Joshua with suspicion and astonishment, and Beckey Brown ran into Polly Jones's to ask where Jos could be going to; while sundry of the "betterly people" who kept

servants were sorely annoyed at the grievous length of time they stayed at the "well"—a sort of rural parliament, where Janes and Marys talk over their masters and mistresses, and tell all the secrets of the house. A little thing makes a great talk in the country.

Never did a Lord Mayor ride through Cheapside in his gingerbread coach and six, on his way (like his web-footed brethren the geese) to "take water" to be sworn in at our Lady the Queen's Exchequer, with a more inflated mind than Joshua Sneakington possessed as he rode through the village of Hillingdon on that important morning. Twice he was for turning back under pretence of having forgotten something, but Dickey Cobden had a will of his own, and feeling Joshua had a loose seat, he gave certain indications of dissent, that caused Joshua to alter his resolutions and proceed on his journey rejoicing.

It was a fine day, clear and sunshiny, and Joshua's mind partook of the apparent happiness of nature.

Firfield—Johnny Wopstraw's farm—was the first in Joshua Sneakington's circuit, and he timed his visit so as to arrive as Johnny was

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sitting down to his twelve o'clock dinner, with his wife, children, and servants. Potatoes and bacon, and gooseberry dumplings. Jos, like most lazy dogs, was a good eater, and didn't require a second invitation to induce him to sit down and partake of the frugal meal.

After it was over, and the party were dispersing to their respective occupations, Joshua began broaching the subject of his mission.

"Well, and how are you getting on in the farming way?" inquired he.

"O, why upon the wh*oo*le, middling well; times are bad, but the land's pretty good, and the situation not amiss, and I hope the Squire will not be over hard with us."

"The Squire's a thinking," observed Joshua, with a hem and a stroke of his puritanical chin, "of having a fresh survey made of his estate, and letting the farms according to the times."

"*So-o-o,*" replied Wopstraw, wondering how that would cut.

"The farmers in this country, he thinks, are a long way behind the intelligence of the day—too much of what-my-father-did-I-do style about them."

"Just so," observed Johnny Wopstraw.

"The Squire you see's a very clever man—and has been used to first rate farming—patent ploughs—gipsey manure—fox-tail grass—and he wants to encourage activity and emulation among his tenants. There's a grand discovery just made, for making eight blades grow where one grew before."

"*So-o-o-o!*" ejaculated Johnny Wopstraw.

"And the Squire thinks if he can get the farmers to adopt it, there will be like two-pence gained to them and a penny to him."

"Just so," observed Johnny Wopstraw; "upon the wh*oo*le, I should think it must be a grand discovery."

"The man should be made a lord," replied Joshua, rubbing his chin and looking very sagacious — as much as to say that he had had a hand in the pie.

"Upon the wh*oo*le, I think he should," replied Wopstraw.

"If you'll bring me out my horse I'll just ride over your farm, now that I have got the plan in my pocket, and then we'll be better able to talk the matter over at our rent day," observed

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Joshua, drawing on his gloves most consequentially.

Wopstraw, somewhat astonished at the sudden elevation of the scamp, though not at all surprised at his airs, brought out the nag, and Joshua mounting, desired Wopstraw to take him such a circuit as would lead him on to the next tenant's farm, so that he might not lose time by going over the same ground twice. Off then they set, Joshua on Dickey Cobden, and Wopstraw walking alongside, opening gates, handing up specimens of soil, and replying to Joshua's interrogatories.

"Give me a piece of that!" Joshua would exclaim on entering a fallow; then he would break the clod, and eye it, just as Master Horner eyed his Christmas pye, to see how much fruit there was in it. "Ah, I see," Joshua would observe thoughtfully, as if to himself, but in reality to Wopstraw—"Silicious sand—clay—calcareous sand—carbonate of lime—humus"—and thereupon he would make a memorandum, as if he was entering the quality in his book.

Having played at this game over a few fields and glanced at the crops generally, during which operation he imparted no small degree of astonish-

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ment to Johnny Wopstraw's simple mind, he at length observed he had no doubt the farm was capable of very great improvement, particularly if this new system of making ten blades grow where only one grew at present, was introduced; and that he thought it would be well for Mr. Wopstraw to secure a lease, intimating at the same time that the usual custom in farming was to make the steward a present in proportion to the rent and length of the term.

A word here to landowners.

It has long been remarked that whatever becomes of the owner of an estate, the steward invariably thrives, and we have often heard wonder expressed how this happens. Having made, what to us was a discovery, the other day, on this head, we will here impart it to you in case you may be ignorant of it also.

We were fishing in the neighbourhood of a water corn-mill, and the trout not being inclined to be taken, we were about shutting up shop, with some half dozen in our creel, when we encountered an old farmer riding on his cart for a sack of flour. The usual country courtesies, "What sport have you had?" and "How are you getting

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on?" having been exchanged, a conversation sprung up about the farmer's landlord (who was an absentee) and his agent, Mr. Jeremiah Jumps. Jumps was a new broom, and, of course, sweeping clean—we don't mean to say he was racking the land, but he was displaying a little unusual activity on behalf of an absentee landlord—well, the present Jumps brought up the previous Jumps, or whatever his name was, and the present Jumps' activity was contrasted with the indolence of the former, and then the former Jumps' riches came to be talked of.

"Ah, he had a grand time of it;" said the farmer, "no trouble—no one to check him—just did what he liked—granted leases to whom he pleased, and every tenant down with his five or ten pounds on each letting, as regular as could be."

"The agent got *that*, then, did he?" asked we.

"O, to be sure—that's the *custom*, you know—always make the steward a compliment on taking."

"Indeed," said we, "that's a wrinkle we were'nt up to—do us the pleasure to accept these trout—two and two's four—five, and one's six—

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there you are—and good morning to you—good morning — knowledge should not be had for nothing."

Reader ! take care your " Jumps" isn't playing you that trick.

Willey Goodheart was the next tenant in Joshua's route. Willey was one of the very old fashioned, tarry at home, school of farmers—neat, careful, prudent, honest, and cheerful. He had been on the estate " man and boy," as the saying is, for sixty years, and his little farm was a perfect model of neatness and productiveness. Age had now bowed a once upright manly form, and time had strongly marked the handsome features of his face; but there was a mild, gentlemanly, patriarchal air about old Willey, corresponding with his manners; and his venerable grey hair fell in curly locks on the upright collar of his straight-cut single-breasted, large-buttoned blue coat. On Sundays, his costume partook still more of the character of bygone days, by the addition of a pair of nearly sky-blue worsted stockings, and square-toed shoes, with large silver buckles — shoes that must either have been much better than they make them at

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the present day, or been devoted exclusively to Sunday wear, for they had seen "square toes" in and out three times since they were bought. Willey seldom went from home except to church. Markets even he did not trouble. His corn was sold to a neighbouring miller; his daughter carried his butter and eggs to the truck shop at Hillingdon, from whence his few wants were also supplied. He was one of the draining, manuring, land working breed of farmers—always some little improvement in hand or in view—some hedge to run straight—some land to lay better away—some slack to fill up—or some gate to remove to a more convenient position; but he knew nothing of "guano, nitrate o' sober, or gypsey manure," as Mr. Jorrocks would say. Having in early life been in a gentleman's service at Grampound (Cornwall), an intimacy he had then contracted with a fellow servant had continued, and showed itself by his sending Willey the county papers; but the friend most likely being one of Willey's breed, instead of availing himself of Her Majesty's post for the conveyance of each paper, hoarded them up till he got a year or two's papers in hand, when he transmitted

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them to Willey per waggon. The consequence was, that Willey read the papers like history, and was generally a year or two behind hand—sometimes more, in the harvest time. Farmers and fox-hunters are not great readers in a general way. We knew a fox-hunter, who borrowed the first volume of one of Scott's novels, and, having kept it a long time, his friend asked him if he would not like to have another. "O no thank you," said he, "that does very well. By the time I get to the end, I've forgot the beginning, so I just begin over again, and it serves my purpose quite as well as a new one."

Willey was rather better than this, for he studied the "Grampound Gun and Tregony Times," as the paper was called, with a patient and persevering assiduity, beginning with the title, and ending with the printer's name of each number, and remembered what he had read, for he could refer to the file of his authority with great accuracy whenever a difficulty arose in his mind. Indeed his Bible and the Grampound Gun were the only two works that Willey considered worth having; and, in his younger days, when he mixed

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more among the farmers, he had acquired the *sobriquet* of the "Grampound Gun," from generally prefacing his stories or observations with—"I see by the Grampound Gun and Tregony Times that" so and so has taken place.

Well, on this particular day Willey had been taking a suck at his old friend after his frugal dinner, and the last bundle of Guns was on the table before him, as Joshua's dry cough and the tread of Dickey Cobden's feet arrested Willey's attention. Taking off his tortoise-shell-rimmed spectacles, he hurried to the woodbined porch of his door to greet the visitor.

There sat Joshua, looking as consequential as could be, with a supercilious smile on his hypocritical countenance, that as much as said, "I'll astonish the old man."

"Well, Mr. Goodheart," said he, "how do *you* do to-day?"

"Why middling, thank ye, Mr. Sneakington," replied Willey, for he didn't like Joshua a bit—"middling thank you—mustn't complain—cannot work as I used though—and I'm nabbut seventy-two. A-dear—but this is a bad job in Lunnun,

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Mr. Sneakington — shocking bad job. Do you think he'll be hung?" inquired Willey, with anxiety depicted on his fine expressive face.

"What's the matter now?" inquired Joshua, who felt himself in a manner connected with London from his master having come from there.

"A-dear, havn't you heard," replied Willey, "of this tarrible rascal shooting at the queen? A-dear, Lunnun must be a tarrible place—lucky our Squire's got away from it, I'm sure."

"Well, but who's been shooting at the queen now?" inquired Sneakington.

"A villain, called Oxford! 'ord rot him; but if I had him I'd strangle him—I'd knock the very soul out of him, spiflicate him," replied Willey, his still bright eyes sparkling as he spoke. "The idea of shooting at a beautiful young lady like that—a queen too! But won't you alight and come in, Mr. Sneakington, and I'll show you all about it?"

"*Stuff and nonsense!*" exclaimed Joshua Sneakington with a sneer and an indignant curl of the lip—"that's as old as the hills—you're always finding a mare's nest. Good day, old boy! good day!" adding to himself as he kicked Dickey

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Cobden along, "no use bothering with such an old fool as that. He's too far behind the intelligence of the day for me. Leave him for the Squire."

Willey then, somewhat shocked at Joshua's want of loyalty, re-entered his house, and resuming the tortoise-shell-rimmed spectacles, returned to his reading of Oxford's attempt on the life of the queen.

Before Joshua Sneakington had accomplished the hill leading up to Mr. Mark Heavytail's farm, Mark having returned from his dinner, had stripped off his coat, and was working away in the fields. Josh owed Heavytail a grudge, and he was a great man for paying his debts—debts of honour at least. He had done some very indifferent mason's work for Mark, and had charged about double what he ought, which of course made him owe Heavytail a *good* turn—as people say when they mean the contrary, for resisting the imposition.

Seeing a horse and a low-crowned hat on the sky line of the hill, Mark hurried from his work to greet the Squire as he thought. When he got within hail, and saw it was Josh, he was for turning back.

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"HOLLOA THERE!" exclaimed Joshua, waving his arm for Heavytail to come to him.

"WHAT DO YOU WANT?" roared Heavytail at the extremity of his voice.

"Come and open this gate!" cried he; "I want to speak to you."

"OPEN IT YOURSELF! YOU CANNOT HAVE A BETTER SARVANT," roared Heavytail.

"CONFOUND YOUR IMPITTANCE!" bellowed Josh, "I've come with a messuage from the Squire."

"WELL, AND WHAT DOES THE SQUIRE WANT, THAT HE'S SENT AN 'ARD BRICKLAYER LIKE YE TO TELL?"

"You had better sink all *that*," replied Josh, with an emphasis and look of authority. "The Squire wishes me to look over his estate preparatory to his rent day, to see that the rotation of crops is properly kept, and give him a report as to——."

"YE!" roared Heavytail pointing at Josh, and then holding his sides as though he would split with laughter—"YE!" repeated he, "an 'ard bricklayer like ye! I'd as soon think of setting my 'ard sow to survey an estate—haw! haw! haw!—he! he! he!—haw! haw! haw!"

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Heavytail's unwonted mirth roused the ire of his dog, who, not exactly understanding matters, but seeing his master was not pleased, at this juncture jumped over the wall with his bristles up, when Dickey Cobden shyed off at an angle, and, finding his head loose, set off down hill as hard as ever he could lay legs to the ground, with the Colley dog at his heels.

Josh lost his umbrella, and scattered his plans as he went, and the impetus gained sent Dickey and his rider clean through the gate at the bottom of the hill with a most terrible crash of the timber.

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CHAPTER XV.

"We think our fathers fools, so wise we grow;
Our wiser sons, no doubt, will think us so."

GREAT anxiety prevailed among the farmers to hear the grand discovery the "greatest benefactor the world ever saw," had made for making "two blades grow where one grew before;" a number that increased in the telling till they got it up as high as sixteen—sixteen blades, where only one grew before. As Mr. Jorrocks's rent-day approached, anxiety became quickened, and Joshua Sneakington's importance increased, by the mysterious gravity he observed in his rounds among the farmers, and the obscure hints he dropped, that he was at the bottom of the secret.

Meanwhile, Mr. Jorrocks busied himself reading up anything he could lay hold of upon farming, for the purpose of making them a grand

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oration on the importance of establishing an Agricultural Association, and of the virtue of scientific farming in general. And here let us observe, that many people talk as if they imagined theoretical—that is to say, book farming—is a thing of modern introduction—that our fathers had no "Books of the Farm," no "Quarterly Journals," or other experimental trying works in their times. It is quite a mistake—our forefathers were quite as well off as ourselves in that respect. We have whole book shelves loaded with farming lore of former times, the property of our grandfather, the husband of the old lady we mentioned before, who, at the age of eighty-three, reads without specs. Indeed, we may add, that the old lady herself thinks very lightly of the virtues of what is called scientific farming.

"Such farming, indeed!" she exclaims, whenever we pump her on the past; "why, a hind now-a-days is as good as a farmer used to be in your poor grandfather's time—driving about in their gigs, with their names painted up behind; and writing nonsense to the papers instead of ploughing their land." But the wives are what anger her most. "Silks, ay, and *satins*, and

sofas every day; and pianneys skelping at night. Lauk! we never heard of such things as pianneys in my time!" she says. "The churn was the farmer's daughter's instrument, and a precious sight better wives they made, than the fine gad-about be-feathered breed we see now-a-days." So much for our granny. But, as we said before, we have yards upon yards of books on every possible subject relating to land, leaving after-comers the chance of starting anything new apparently out of the question. One consolation, however, is, that there are always new farmers coming on—to whom the old theories are new—as our friend B—— says, when we tax him with riding the same joke rather often.

We have just run our eye along our book-case, and see what a haul we have made in the way of farming literature. Alongside some twenty vols. of the Farmers' Magazine, we have Mills's Husbandry (1762).—Du Hamel's ditto.—Hunter's Georgical Essays, in numberless volumes.—Pott's Farmer's Cyclopædia or Agricultural Dictionary of improved Modern Husbandry, in one large quarto.—Anderson's Essays.—Farmer's Letters

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to the People of England, containing the sentiments of a Practical Husbandman, on various subjects of great importance (1768).—The Farmer's Guide in Hiring and Stocking Farms (1770).—The Farmer's Instructor, or the Husbandman and Gardener's useful and necessary Companion, being a new treatise of Husbandry, Gardening, and other matters relating to Country Affairs, by Samuel Trowell, Gentleman (1747).—A Philosophical Account of the Works of Nature, printed for J. Hodges, at the Looking-glass, over against Magnus Church, on London Bridge.—The New Farmer's Calendar, or Monthly Remembrancer of all kinds of Country Business, in the New Husbandry, with the Management of Live Stock, inscribed to the Farmers of Great Britain, by a Farmer and Breeder (1802).—Marshall's Agriculture of the Southern Counties, with a Sketch of the Vale of London (1799).—Curwen, on Feeding Stock.—Cully, on Live Stock.—Davis, on Land Surveying.—Bailey's Agricultural Survey.—Rennie's Essays on Peat Moss.—Practical Husbandry, or the Art of Farming with a certainty of Gain, by Dr. John Trusler, of Cobham, Surrey;

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together with Directions for Measuring Timber (1780),—and no end of pamphlets and letters, and "observations on similar subjects."

Let us not, however, be supposed to decry agricultural improvement. Far from it. We are quite sensible of the many defects in our present system, which we believe chiefly arise from the want of capital, energy, and observation; but we wish to counteract the evil people in high stations frequently do by talking wildly at agricultural meetings, for the mere purpose of astonishing the farmers, without really knowing or caring anything about what they say. They do far more harm than good, for farmers get confused; and frightened at their own ignorance, despair of coming up to the mark, and so remain as they were; or else attempt fanciful experiments, which, after endless expense, they find unsuited to their climate or soil, or unproductive of the anticipated ends. The great difficulty under which farming labours, however, is want of capital; and so long as people look upon it as an exception to all other trades, and requiring no capital to set up with, so long we fear will be the want of energy and taste for improvement. But to our tale.

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Mr. Jorrocks having determined that his "let off," should be one of great magnitude, resolved upon inviting the principal neighbours to dinner, and winding up the evening with a ball to their wives and daughters. Accordingly Mr. Jorrocks and Joshua Sneakington went about beating up for recruits, and, as usual on such occasions, were very successful. Indeed, one of the grand differences between town and country is this—that invitations cannot be refused without offence. By town and country, of course we mean any place out of London for the latter. Now, in London, Mr. and Mrs. Brown request the honour of Mr. and Mrs. Green's company to dinner, on Tuesday the 26th of June, at half-past six; and if Mr. and Mrs. Green either don't like Mr. and Mrs. Brown, or have reason to think that they may get a pleasanter invitation elsewhere, Mr. and Mrs. Green make no bones whatever of saying they are sorry that a prior engagement prevents them the honour of accepting Mr. and Mrs. Brown's kind invitation for Tuesday, June the 26th; and Mr. and Mrs. Brown never trouble their heads to inquire whether there was any truth in the story or not: but in the country it is quite another

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thing. Take a small town for instance. Every small town has a "professed cook," a sort of brandy-bibbing body, who can cook a little when she's sober, but who has not what servants call conduct enough to keep in place, consequently she confines herself to making "blows out" for the party givers, among whom a few days' work will furnish several days' drink, and victuals too, if she is skilful, which most of them are, in carrying away. Well, these sort of people know every movement and every party in the town—know exactly beforehand who will be at each feed; and if Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so are not there, they immediately set to work to ferret out what's happened that Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so are not asked—that they never cooked a dinner there before without Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so being there—wonder what can have happened that Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so are not there—think Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so must have fallen out; for when people of this sort get a thing on their tongues, there is no end to the repetitions they indulge in. If the servants can't solve the mystery among them, cookey most likely performs the same office of blow-out maker for Mr. and

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Mrs. So-and-so that she is performing for the present party givers, consequently she can drop in the next day (if she's sober enough to walk) and inquire of their every day cook, if they had had anybody dining the day before, or if their "people" dined out, and so the story gets afloat, and truth is drawn out of the well.

However, this is a capital world for lending or giving things away in, and people need not be much put to, who only want to give others a treat. Mrs. Flather and Emma were the only persons who refused Mr. and Mrs. Jorrocks's invitation. They were sorry that they had a previous engagement. Our readers will perhaps remember that Mrs. Flather had been sadly disconcerted by Mr. Jorrocks's attentions at Donkeyton Castle, when she wanted to bring the Marquis "to book," and her anger had not yet subsided. She determined to snub him. Well, as luck would have it, just as her boy in buttons delivered her answer at Hillingdon Hall, a messenger arrived from Donkeyton Castle with a note from the Marquis.

Jeems had taken it into his head that he would like to see Emma, and under pretence of paying

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Mr. Jorrocks a farming-electioneering visit, he thought to accomplish that object, and either by accident or design had pitched upon the very day our Cockney Squire had fixed for his party.

This was the letter.

Donkeyton Castle.

Dear Mr. Jorrocks,

My papa and you had some conversation about a farming thing that you thought would further our interest in your neighbourhood, and my mamma thinks I had better go over to Hillingdon Park, and see you about it. If it will be convenient to Mrs. Jorrocks and you to receive me, I shall be very happy to dine and stay all night with you on Thursday next. Pray write me an answer by the bearer, and with compliments to Mrs. Jorrocks, believe me to remain, dear Mr. Jorrocks,

Yours very truly,

BRAY.

To James Jorrocks, Esq.,
Hillingdon Park.

Of course Mr. Jorrocks was too happy to see

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the Marquis, and he wrote him to that effect, adding that he had better come early, in order that they might talk matters over, as he would have some friends to meet him, and they kept early hours in the country. There was also this portscript. "P.S.—My name's JOHN, not James. My place is a Hall, not a Park. If you want wenison, you'd better bring it with you."

Mrs. Flather's boy in buttons having gone into the kitchen to have a game of cribbage with Binjimin, made himself sufficiently acquainted with the "ins and outs," to be able to tell their cook that Jorrocks was either going to Donkeyton Castle again, or that Donkeyton Castle was coming to Jorrocks. This news soon found its way into the parlour, and mother and daughter were uncommonly struck and hurt at the intelligence. Mrs. Flather was sure it would be that the Marquis was coming to the Hall, for she had overheard some of the conversation between the Duke and Mr. Jorrocks at Donkeyton, and she thought she never could sufficiently censure herself for refusing the invitation. How to repair the error was now the consideration. Emma should step down with a bouquet, and see if she could

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not put matters right. Accordingly, having selected a smart one, she set out on her errand. Mrs. Jorrocks was delighted to see her, and was werry sorry she was not to have that pleasure on Thursday. Emma was very much obliged for their kindness in asking them, so was mamma—the latter rather expected an old friend of dear papa's calling that day, and if he did call he might stay dinner; but—

Oh, Mrs. Jorrocks "wouldn't wish to interfere in such a case—of course, an old friend o' the family must take precedence of them."

"If, however, their friend did not come," resumed Emma.

"O think no more about it," interrupted Mrs. Jorrocks, "any other time would be equally agreeable to Mr. Jorrocks and her; indeed, here was Mr. Jorrocks himself," added she, as our hero emerged from a laurelled walk, and came suddenly upon them.

Mr. Jorrocks would fain have forgiven the poor girl, but Mrs. J. stood up stoutly, and gave Mr. J. a look that plainly told him he had better be quiet; so as our farmer friend did not care much

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about the matter, he left them, and went away to stare at some sheep.

We will not trouble our readers with a recital of the preparations, the borrowing, and joining, and contriving, and managing, nor will we give a programme of the entertainment, but let the thing speak for itself.

The great, the important day at length arrived—clear, bright, sunshiny and cloudless—a real summer's day—one that English people appreciate most thoroughly from the circumstance of their coming so seldom. Mr. Jorrocks bustled about, in a terrible stew, reciting his speech, and bothering and running against everybody.

Towards two o'clock, a claret-coloured Brougham, with red picked wheels, and a ducal coronet on the panel, drove down the village of Hillingdon, to the astonishment of the natives, who had never seen anything of the sort before. The noble, lofty-actioned iron grey stepped and carried himself with becoming dignity, champing the richly-chased bit, and throwing his head about as though he had a bowing acquaintance with all

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the people in the street. In fact, he went just as he may be seen any day of the season going up and down St. James's Street. Horses, unlike dandies, have only one action. Beside the driver, for we believe, "one oss guiders" are not admitted among the fraternity of coachmen, sat the Marquis's French valet — a profusely-whiskered much-bejewelled individual; and an imperial, containing his lordship's clothes, covered the roof of the carriage.

Mr. Jorrocks, who had begun to wax uneasy, and had stopped the recital of his speech for some time, listening for the noise of approaching wheels, no sooner heard the sound drum-like roll of the well-built London carriage, than he shoved his notes into his pocket, and ran to the entrance to greet his guest. The Marquis alighted just as Mr. Jorrocks got to the door. He was dressed in the extreme of the London fashion. A gold-laced, gold-tasselled, blue foraging cap sat jauntily on his well-waxed light brown ringlets; the ample tie of his rich blue and gold satin cravat, secured with enormous pearl pins, covered the wide opening made by a very broad, roll-collared white waistcoat, loose down to the two bottom buttons;

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while the narrow hem of a collar to his blue coat barely came up to the nape of his neck, and the nippy waist began considerably higher up than nature had put his own. His trousers of lavender-coloured Merino were shaped over the instep, and buttoned under a pair of laced lavender-coloured boots, which would have been stockings but for a morsel of patent leather over the toe and round the soles. He carried a gold-headed cane and a richly-embroidered lace-fringed handkerchief in his hand.

"I'm werry 'appy to see you," exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, greeting his unagricultural-looking guest; "werry 'appy indeed — thought you weren't comin'—howsomever you're in plenty of time—only I wanted to have a little talk with you afore'and you know—as to what you shall say to the chaps. We must be werry knowin'—scientific in fact."

"True," replied the Marquis, "I've got off part of an agricultural article in the Encyclopædia by heart, and—"

"Ah, but they want facts," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "*drainin'*, science, and steam's the ticket—howsomever, come into my sanctum, and I'll talk it all over with you."

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"Couldn't we walk, and call on Mrs. Flather and talk it over as we go?" inquired the Marquis.

"No, no," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "no time to look arter the pettikits. Let's to business—this way—mind the step—now take a chair, sit down, and I'll tell you all about it."

The Marquis having complied with Mr. Jorrocks's request, our friend soused himself into his red-morocco hunting-chair, and folding one leg over the other, turned to the Marquis, and began talking with his fingers and tongue. "You see," said he, pressing his fore fingers together, "we're come to enlighten these muffs, and a pretty benighted, bewildered, bedevilled lot they are; and the first thing is to conwince them they are all wrong, and the next to instruct them wot is right. Farmin' in fact 's in a benighted sort o' state, and we must break the shell o' their ignorance and set the boobies at liberty. Now I've got a werry fine composition in my 'ead, if I can only draw it out when the time comes—for that's the deuce and all in oratory—one's so werry apt to lose the thread, and get carried right up among the clouds, just like a chap on a wet mornin' on the top of Mount Riega; howsomever, I expect I've got it

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pretty pat, and, with the aid of cheers, and referrin' to my notes, I dare say I shall get through with it; and in course, arter I've lathered and soaped the chaps well, I shall want some one to shave them, and there's when I want you to come in. I shall start by busin' of them, then do a little instructin', and finally finish by flatterin' of them, and proposin 'a 'Sociation for the encouragement of everything relating to farmin'—with you for the president, and all that sort o' thing—with your health—three times three—one cheer more, and all that sort o' thing. Then in course you'll get up and make them a werry hoiley oration, say whatever you think will be most palatable, pay them all sorts of compliments, and all that sort o' thing." Mr. Jorrocks finished this long sentence by releasing his hands and flourishing the right one about in the air.

"But that won't suit the speech I've got by heart, Mr. Jorrocks," replied the Marquis, in a state of perturbation at his friend supposing he could take a part at short notice.

"Vell, but vot's your speech about?" inquired Mr. Jorrocks, "it 'll surely be about farmin'."

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"Oh, yes, I begin with the antiquity of the thing, showing that the greatest poets and generals and statesmen of all countries and times have encouraged agriculture."

"Werry good," said Mr. Jorrocks.

"Then I take a look at the beautiful harmless simplicity of life it engenders, contrast the robust farmer with the pallid artisan, and their beautiful and rosy offspring with the children of town-bred parents; talk of the importance of a 'bold peasantry' to a country's welfare, and finish with the advantages of improving the farmers' condition by putting them in possession of the newest fashions, or whatever you call the things in farming, and express the great interest I take in this district, and the pleasure I experience in becoming the president of a society of such praiseworthy people, or something of that sort," concluded the Marquis.

"Werry good," said Mr. Jorrocks; "werry good indeed—capital I may say; nothin' can be better. Folks have a wonderful likin' for what they don't understand, and if you finish by a little that they do understand, they'll take all the rest for granted, and say you are a *tre-men-dous*

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clever feller! I'm a goin' to do a bit of antiquity myself—cribbed of course, but that's nothin'. But *con*found it, I'm forgetting the werry pint wot I wanted to talk to you about. Drainin's the ticket, as I told you before. Stick *that* into them. Let drainin' be the great gun of your discourse. Nothing like drainin'; say it's the grandest diskivery wotever was made—that the inwentor, Smith o' Deanston's, the greatest benefactor the world ever saw; and finish off by tellin' them 'ow you've turned your attention very extensively to the subject, as applied to this part of the country, and with the aid of a certain degree of geological knowledge you have inwented a tile that you have no manner of doubt ——."

"But I've done nothin' of the sort!" exclaimed the Marquis, throwing up his hands in alarm, his ma' having taught him never to tell fibs.

"Never mind that," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "never mind that; I've done it for you—I've done it for you—and it's as old as the 'ills, that wot you do by another you do by yourself. Here, see," said he, pulling an old letter back out of his pocket, "here are the component parts of the

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tile; and whether they adopt it or not, it will show your great interest in agricultural concerns, and make you poppilar with the farmers; but I think comin' from you they *will* adopt it, for it's extonishin' how even the commonest people are led away by great people and great names. Well, howsomever, never mind, this is it (reading). Take of stiff, strong clay two stun (stone) four punds, add to this two stun of fine river or sea gravel, and one stun three punds of finely sifted lime, mex them well together, by stirrin' for a couple hours, and when of a proper consistency add one stun of coarse brown or Muscovado sugar, sluice the whole with 'ot water, and then pour it into the tile shapes, and you will have for, for, for—you may say—werry little tin, one 'undred werry good tiles. In course," added Mr. Jorrocks, "this calkilation is not quite perfect; indeed I've not had time to work the thing out properly, but you can give it as a werry promisin' experiment, and one that will amply repay further inwestigation."

"But I'm afraid I don't sufficiently understand the thing myself, Mr.—Mr.—Mr. Jorrocks, to be able to explain it to the farmers."

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"O, never mind that," replied our worthy friend, "never mind that. No questions axed on these occasions: state broadly and confidently, and unless they've tried the experiment themselves they can't contradict you. In this case I'm sure they haven't tried it."

"But the sugar rather puzzles me," observed the Marquis.

"Not at all," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "not at all; at all ewents it only shows you don't rightly understand the natur' o' sugar — nothin' so glutinacious as sugar—sugar is of four kinds, brown or Muscovado, refined or loaf, sugar-candy, and clayed sugar; *clayed* sugar of itself would bespeak a connection with drainin' tiles. The old ancients used to think it was a gum collected from the canes, strong as glue."

"But why not use the *clayed* sugar, instead of the Muscovado?" inquired the Marquis.

"Jest as you please," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "jest as you please;" adding aloud to himself—"only there must *be* sugar in the concern, or it won't suit my book botherin' my 'ead about it."

"Vell then, now you understand," resumed our grocer-farmer squire; "you can let off wot

you like at startin'—talk about Julius Cæsar, Romeo Coates, or any of them old codgers, but you must lower your steam down to ordinary levels; and when you talk about the newest fashions in farmin', you can introduce that tile as one of the newest fashions you have heard of, if you don't like to say it's your own. When you've done that, you can finish with my werry good 'ealth, and refer with satisfaction to the adwantage of your appearin' before a body o' farmers under the auspices of a gen'leman so distinguished in the annals o' agricultur' as myself—you twig? *Sugar* again, in fact!"

Just as our farmer friends had got thus far in their arrangements, the "clatter versus patter" of Batsay's tongue and dishes in the kitchen, together with certain savoury smells, caught Mr. Jorrocks's nose and ear, and raising his hand as if in the act of tallyhoing a fox, he exclaimed, "'Ark! there's the joyful sound—feedin' time's at 'and."

"What time is your breakfast?" inquired the Marquis.

"*Breakfast! it's dinner!*" replied Mr. Jorrocks.

"What dinner at *three!*" rejoined the Marquis, taking the most diminutive Geneva watch out of his waistcoat pocket.

"You surely wouldn't *breakfast* at three!" observed Mr. Jorrocks.

"Why no; but I thought it was what London people call a breakfast—soups, poultry, venison, pastry, everything except fish—something between three and seven you know."

"Call it vot you like," said Mr. Jorrocks, "I means to make it *my* dinner—and precious 'ungry I am too; been up since six—'mong the dandylions—only had four heggs, two chops, and a kidney: don't do for us farmers to lie long in bed."

"I had better be dressing then," said the Marquis.

"Dressin'! vy you're smart enough I'm sure."

"Oh, but I can't appear in public in these travelling things; must be got up properly—dress you know is half the battle in speaking. My governess used to tell me that if Tully himself had pronounced one of his orations with a blanket about his shoulders, more people would have laughed at his dress than admired his eloquence."

"'Ang Tully," replied Mr. Jorrocks in a fidget,

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lest the Marquis should keep his entertainment waiting; "you can jest wesh your 'ands, and put your fine clothes on arterwards; I'll bring you a basin and *towl* in here, and save you the trouble of goin' up stairs."

"O, but I want Adolphe!"

"Adolphe! who the devil's Adolphe?"

"My valet."

"Your walet! surely your walet don't wash you, does he?"

"No, but he arranges my hair—it's all out of curl—helps me on with my clothes, and saves me a world of trouble; I'll ring for him, if you please." So saying the Marquis gave the bell a pull; and Mr. Jorrocks, seeing there was no alternative, conducted him up to his room, charging him over and over again not to be above five minutes at most.

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CHAPTER XVI.

——— "When we have stuff'd
These pipes and these conveyances of our blood
With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls
Than in our priest-like fasts."

SHAKSPEARE.

JOSHUA Sneakington having persuaded Mr. Jorrocks that he had better leave the receipt of rents, and putting off requests and complaints, to him, had taken his seat in great form in Mrs. Jorrocks's postage-stamped boudoir, with a portfolio, inkstand, cash-box, and other paraphernalia of money-taking before him. He had each tenant ushered in separately, and was uncommonly pompous and precise with them all. Joshua, like most country people, had just a sufficient knowledge of farming to be able to put proper questions, and of course he was at home when discussing the state of farmhouses and buildings; moreover, there was a certain solemn thoughtful manner about

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Joshua that looked like wisdom and calculation. He would place his elbows on the table, and rest his chin upon his hand, and draw a loquacious tenant on by means of little coughs and monosyllabic responses until he had got everything out of him. His main object was to sift whether they were desirous of leases—on the usual terms, of course — a handsome douceur to the steward. Joshua having at length dismissed the last tenant, old Willey Goodheart, and replied to a strong expression of fear he had charged his mind with from the "Grampound Gun and Tregony Times" relative to the injury the importation of foreign cattle was likely to do farmers, by assuring Willey that his fears were past date, for the cattle had come in and injured none but the importers, and the teeth of those who had tried them; and having counted the money and found it all right, and put everything away in a style becoming a scientific stone mason, went to join Mr. Jorrocks, who was now receiving his farmer friends, who were fast assembling with enormous appetites. Mr. Jorrocks was coming the agriculturist in costume—the Jorrockian jacket, with a wheat ear and two or three heads of oats in his button hole,

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a bright buff waistcoat and gilt buttons, patent cord shorts and rather baggy drab gaiters, showing the whiteness of his stockings and the jolly rotundity of his calves. He received his friends in his usual "hale fellow well met" style, asked after the farmers' wives and daughters, talked of turnips, aftermaths, and potato prospects, wishing all the time the Marquis would come down. At length he appeared; not with a coronet on his head as some of them expected to see him, but clad in the height of ball-room fashion, affording a striking contrast to the rural attire of the company around.

Dinner, as the country servants say, was then "sarved." It was in the usual style of Jorrockian liberality—rounds of beef and saddles of mutton, fillets of veal and sucking pigs, with puddings, pies, custards, jellies, tarts, all crammed on together. There was a novelty in the centre of the table, in the shape of a new horse pail for an epergne. This was intended to serve a double purpose, an epergne at dinner and a punch-bowl after. It was painted white within and pea green without, with a plough on each side, and the mottoes, "Speed the plough" and "Live and

let live," above and below, while tasteful garlands of real flowers encircled the parts where the hoops came round. Altogether it was a splendid affair and quite novel—Mr. Jorrocks is a great man for novelty. The Marquis, of course, was on the host's right, Mr. Trotter was on his left, and down the long table were ranged tenants and neighbours—higgledy piggledy, just as they came. The Marquis, who had been the object of attention, was now deserted for the substantial viands heaped before them. At them each man went, with a vigour known only to rural appetites whetted by a long fast. Jorrocks commenced by helping the Marquis to a piece of beef that perfectly astounded him. Then there was such ladling in with knives, such calling for ale, such smacking of lips, such runs upon favourite dishes, until at length the human voice divine, rising above the clatter of knives and plates, announced that nature was knocking under, and in due time the decks began to be cleared. The horse-pail, with a soup ladle for a spoon, having resumed its position on the middle of the table all smoking and reeking with rum punch, and such of the company as were too genteel to drink "grog"

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being supplied with wine, Mr. Jorrocks ran through the usual loyal and patriotic toasts, as the newspapers phrase them, at a brisk pace, in his usual felicitous manner, and then gathered himself together for his great let off of the day. Having called upon Joshua Sneakington, the vice, and Mr. Heavytail, who sat in charge of the horse-pail, to see that their neighbours charged their glasses, he gave a substantial *hem* and thus began:—

"Frinds and fellow-farmers! lend me your ears! that's to say, listen to wot I've got to say to ye. O my beloved 'earers I've come to teach you a thing or two—a thing or two wot 'ill make men instead o' mice on ye if you will but follow my adwice (applause). Believe me, I'm so chock full o' knowledge that I can hardly get it out o' the bung'ole o' my 'ead — knowledge o' the purest kind, cull'd in the fairest fields o' farmin' science (applause). Ah, my beloved 'earers, that's to the pint, and your intelligent minds cap forrard to the find. The first step towards knowledge is to be satisfied of your ignorance!—there then you must all join!—write yourselves down jackasses, and John Jorrocks will put you on your

legs again. Lord, wot a set o' benighted-lookin' cocks you all are," added Mr. Jorrocks, casting his eye up and down the lines of bald heads all turned towards him. "I dare say there isn't a man among ye wot ever heard o' Columella, or o' Cato, or o' Mr. Warro (Varro), three o' the greatest farmers whatever were foal'd; Wirgil, too, I dare say you are ignorant on, and Smith o' Deanston, the greatest benefactor the world ever saw—monstrous benefactor!"

Here Mr. Jorrocks swigged off his punch, and from a bundle of papers before him having selected one, he resumed—

"Having," said he, "introduced you to Columella, who I take it was a sort o' Roman Smith o' Deanston, I will read you wot he said about this all-important subject.

*"'Many people imagine,' says Columella, 'that the sterility of our lands, which are much less fertile than in times past, proceeds from the intemperance o' the hair, the inclemency o' the seasons, or the alteration o' the lands themselves,

* This is part of Mr. Jorrocks's prigging. It will be found nearly word for word in one of Nimrod's agricultural articles, in the "New Sporting Magazine."

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that weakened and exhausted by long and continual labour, they are at length incapable of producing their fruits with the same wigour, and in the same abundance as they were wont to do afore. But this is all an error.'

"There, frinds and fellow farmers," said Mr. Jorrocks, "is the self-same story that we have now-a-days. 'The seasons are changed!' says each lazy 'ound, throwin' himself on his bed, or bustin' into tears in a fit o' despair. 'The intemperance o' the hair destroys all one's efforts,' says another, as he sneaks off to the publick 'ouse. 'The land's worked out!' says another, slopin' off* in the night without payin' his rent.

"That's all my eye!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks. "I minds the fable o' the dyin' man and his sons, who he summoned about him. 'My sons,' said he, 'I'm a goin' to cut my stick, wot I leaves behind you'll find buried a foot and a 'alf under ground.' Well, the old gen'l'man was as good as his word, and went; and after they'd got his remainders interred, they set about lookin' for the silver, each with a spade, a diggin' for 'ard

* Sloping off, was a new term to us for the old trick of bolting without paying the rent, and perhaps it may be so to the reader.

life a foot and an 'alf under ground. Howsomever, nothin' wotever turned up, and in all 'umane probability the old gen'l'man was jest a 'oaxin' on 'em to make 'em work the land well, for the consequence of all this diggin' was that they got sich amazin' crops as proved a treasure of themselves. That was werry well done," observed Mr. Jorrocks, handing his glass up for some more punch. "Believe me, beloved frinds and fellow-countrymen, the intemperance o' man has much more to do with the misfortins o' the land, than the intemperance o' the hair. The intemperance o' the hair is a mere matter o' inexpensive moisture, but the intemperance o' man is a double drain, a drain on his self and a drain on the soil. Not that J. J. would deny a farmer a cheerful glass, or conwert a

"Bold peasantry, a country's pride,"

into a lot o' cantin', lily-livered, water-drinkin' 'umbugs; but drunkenness and farmin' cannot thrive together, and the sooner a man wot opens a reglar account with the lush crib shuts up shop, the better.

"Then as to the land bein' weaken'd and

exhausted by continual labour, that too is all my eye. If men, from want o' farmin' knowledge, will force crops upon the soil wot it has no taste for, no doubt you may make the land sick, jest as you might make yourselves so by eatin' figs if you don't like them, or have served an apprenticeship to a grocer. It's jest the same thing. A grocer surfeits his 'prentices with figs at startin', and the youth never wants none after: so if you surfeit your land with wot we Frenchmen called '*toujours perdrix*,' goose every day, you can't be surprised if it at length refuse to grow wheats.

"Farmers are a long way behind the intelligence o' the day—a monstrous long way. They seem to me to travel by the 'eavy Falmouth, instead o' the dartin' rally. By and bye, when Mr. 'Enson accomplishes flyin', p'raps they'll take to steam. You all go too much in the old track; wot your fathers did, you do; confound your stupidity! I want to put some new skylights into your 'cads. There was a great man, his name was Bacon—he wore a conical pointed hat, with a frill round his neck, and wrote a book which they call Bacon's Essays, and among other

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sensible things he put in it was one about peoplin' a country; says he, 'in a new country, first look about what kind o' wittle the country yields of itself to 'and, as chesnuts, walnuts, pine-apples, and make use on 'em.' That, gen'l'men, is wot I adwises you to do. If your land won't grow barley, try summut else, pine apples* for instance. Nothin' pays better nor pine-apples, nor can anything be finer eatin'. Byron, I think, said that 'critics *alone* are ready made;' but there he was wrong, for farmers are also 'eaven born, thick 'ead and thick shoes seems all that is wanted to make one. There was a gen'l'man called Smith, in all 'umane probability he was the father of that now werry numerous family, for his christian name was Hadam. Hadam Smith, I say, wrote a book, and among other intelligent things he put in it, was the following, which I cut out for the purpose of stickin' into my speech.

"'No 'prenticeship has ever been thought

* The Duke of Donkeyton, if our readers remember, observed to Mr. Jorrocks, that farmers tried crops that the soil had no taste for; adding, "that corn did not grow well in their country, but wood throve, the pine tribe in particular." Our worthy friend seems to have mistaken pine trees for pine *apples*.

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necessary to qualify for 'usbandry, *the great trade o' the country;* but after what are called the fine arts, and the liberal professions, there is no trade which requires so great a wariety of knowledge and experience.'

"Werry true," observed Mr. Jorrocks, swigging off his punch. "Farmin', my frinds, is in its infancy, nay, hardly that. You've all seen a butterfly afore it is hatch'd, when in its chrysillis state, dead and inanimate. You are jest like them, and I'm agoin' to break the shell o' your ignorance, and start you into life! set you on your legs! make men instead o' mice o' you! so give me some more punch.

"No one knows what human skill may accomplish," continued he, as soon as his glass was returned. "I've lived a liberal allowance: not that I'm old, far from it; but I've seen summut o' life, and not gone through the world with my eyes shut; indeed a man can't travel that way in the city, and I minds the time when steam and gas were thought all my eye and Miss Elizabeth Martin, and coachin' was looked upon as the perfection o' travellin'. A hunt in Surrey was all a cockney could aspire; now Mr. Lockhart,

that great man wot does the Quarterly Review, says that they can take the cream o' Leicestershire for their day. 'Stonishin' work! But that's beside the question; another pair o' shoes, as we say in France. Farmin' is the subject o' this discourse. There's no sayin' what skilful farmin' may do. Science, machinery, and the use o' manures. Folks talk o' Peel, but I thinks nothin' o' Peel; Graham neither. Smith o' Deanston's the man! the greatest benefactor the world ever saw—*monstrous* benefactor! Who ever 'eard o' drainin' afore Smith o' Deanston inwented it?"

Something like murmurs of dissent follow this inquiry.

"It is a mistake to suppose that any fool will make a farmer. A farmer should be a philosopher, an astrologer, a chemist, an engineer, a harchitect, a doctor, I don't know what else.

"This werry mornin' I made a remark that may be the foundation of a most important diskivery. As I was a shavin', I looked out o' the window, and there I saw Mrs. J.'s 'ens a scratchin' and scatterin' the new mown grass with all the regularity of 'ay makers. Who knows but by the application of—of—of—application of somethin',

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those useful birds may be made still more serviceable by conwertin' them into 'ay makers. Turnin' a whole drove into a field, and making them do on a great scale wot I saw them this morning doin' on a small one. Why shouldn't the cold water cure be successful in stables, and the homeopath be tried among cows?

"But them are twopenny affairs compared with the great golden sovereign pound-cake of steam and engineerin' skill. I've got an inwention in my 'ead—in course I tells you this in *strict* confidence, lest some unprincipled waggabone should filch me of it. But I've got an inwention in my 'ead—at all ewents, the notion of an inwention, that I wentures to say will work wonders in the terrestial globe—flabbergaster the world! It's a steam happaratus or hengine that will do at one "go," wot now takes I doesn't know how many 'ands, and how many 'osses, or how many hours to accomplish. It is, I say, an inwention so complicated in its detail, and yet so simple in its performance, that unless I am half asleep on my pillow o' repose, I am sometimes bother'd myself to compass its extraordinary capabilities.

"Then, as I lay all at ease, 'alf sleepin', or 'alf

seas over, I see's its every part working away with all the ease imaginable, jest like a thing I've been used to all my life.

" O, Mrs. Ceres and Mr. Morpheus," continued Mr. Jorrocks, casting his eyes with supplicating air up at the ceiling, " look benignantly down and grant your worshipful admirer power to describe to these enduring boobies all wot I have seen in balmy somnifulo, somnifulorum. And you, Mr. Bacchus, or, at all ewents, Mr. Brandy and Waterus, give us a left in this most *mo-men-tous* crisis, to explain this most laudable but werry complicated affair! I've caught the idea," continued Mr. Jorrocks, " and thinks I can go on. In my mind's eye, I see a ten hacre wheat field, yellow as gold, and level as a die, and my monster reaper a snortin' at the gate. The gate hopens, the steam's hup, and in he comes. Forrod he moves straight up the rig, and, as he goes, the yellow grain is cut by the ground—not a hinch o' stubble left—and falls upon plates like the receiving plates of a paper mill—then it turns suddenly round and ascends the second floor, where the heat o' the biler seasons the grain, and a wop of a flail sends

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it bang out of the hear. Again, it takes another turn, and behold it's landed on the third floor, all dry and mellow for Teddy the grinder—round go the stones, crush goes the grain, and in the twinklin' of an eye, the waving wheat is turned into flour, jest as one sees an old coat in a paper mill go in at one end and come out a sheet o' paper at t'other. Wondrous miracle! but still more wondrous yet is Mr. Jorrocks's miracle, for the same monster engine wot does all this up stairs, ploughs the land by machinery down in the area, so that reapin' and sowin' go 'and in 'and, like the Siamese twins, or a lady and gen'l'man advancin' in a quadrille, or the poker.*

"O, but science is the ticket; neat genuine unadulterated science. Everything now should be done by science. The world's on the wing, and why shouldn't farmers take flight? Look at Mr. 'Enson! There's a man o' pith for you. If I had 'ounds, I'd take a great hair ship, and fly to 'Merica, to Jones of Faire Knowe, and give him a good quiltin' for his imperance to me in Jona-

* "La Polka," we presume.
PRINTERS' GENTLEMAN.

than's Magazine; then I'd 'unt the " red and grey," and fly back to my farm surrounded with brushes, all in three days—" three glorious days," as Monsieur Frog-eater Frenchman would say. Flyin' and farmin' may seem ill assorted, and certainlie you don't look like likely birds; but there's a deal in 'Enson that may be useful to agriculture. Had he got his machine under way, we should have heard nothin' o' Rebecca and her darters, for farmers would have put their corn, and their pigs, and their poultry, and their charmin' wives and accomplished darters into their flyin' machines, and bilked all the pikes in the land (loud cheers). Ah, my frinds and fellow farmers, I see you're awakin' from your long trance of indolence to the day dawn of intellect and sunshiny times. Look again, I say, at science and Mr. 'Enson! Suppose you alighted at your accustom'd country town, and found the market glutted, and prices fallin', wot would you have to do, but bundle up your traps, take wing again, and cut to other places (renewed cheers).

" No pikes, no tickets, no tolls, no market dues, no mayors, no corporations, no inns, no ostlers, no 'orrid exactions.

"Corn, by the h'air, at sight o' uman ties
Cuts its light stick, and in Mr. 'Enson flies."

(Repeated cheers).

"There, gen'lmen—frinds and fellow farmers, I should say," continued Mr. Jorrocks, as the applause subsided, "I've got your steam up, by the hargumentum ad pocketum. Let us now take a good swig o' punch."

The punch having been liberally dealt out, and the bottles having made their movements, our worthy squire resumed his legs, and again proceeded to address the company. "Having now, my beloved 'earers," said he, "given you an insight into the deplorable state of puppy-like blindness in which you've been livin', I now come to the means of improvin' the light wot has bust upon you, and overtakin' science afore it runs clean away from farmin' altogether. You have all doubtless heard of Agricultural 'Sociations, and 'Sociations for the encouragement of Long 'Orns and Short 'Orns, and all that sort o' thing; and though it would ill become us to follow in the beaten track of seven pund for the best tup, three pund for the biggest pig, or five pund for the man wot has the biggest family of little 'uns; still we

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may learn something from the 'sociations in existence, and take their plans for our outline. Poor example, as we say in France, I would elect a President, a Wice-president, a Sec, and a Committee of white wands; and I would also have shows, and give premiums for best balls, best boars, best black-faced gimmers, with in course dinners for gen'lmen to butter each other at: but I'd extend the scheme, and have punishments as well as prizes.

"I knows in these 'umanity, ante 'angin times, punishment is quite out o' fashion, and everything must be done by the noble spirit o' emulation, jest as if you could make a string o' donkeys race like Newmarket 'osses. I heard tell of one o' them peripetetic 'umbugs, wot all administrations spawn on the public, called a commissioner, or Paul Pryer, who was a goin' about, enquirin' into the management of those modern palaces called gaols, and he stopped at our's to pour his quart of ignorance on the gaoler; well, he went his rounds —into this cell, out o' that cell, up to this apartment, down to that apartment, and wonderful to relate, he hadn't a hole to pick. 'Werry well manish'd,' said he, takin' a consequential pinch o'

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snuff, 'werry well manish'd indeed—does your beaks great credit—werry quiet—werry orderly—the ladies and gen'lmen whom you 'ave in charge seem werry 'ealthy—werry 'appy—werry comfey—pray wot's your system?' 'O, the system's simple enough,' replied the gaoler, 'when they don't be'ave we trounce 'em well.' 'All wrong!' exclaimed the commissioner, throwin' up his hands in 'orror, '*all wrong together!* reward should be the incentive o' wirtue, and not the fear of punishment.'

"'That may do werry well in ladies' seminaries,' replied the gaoler, 'but it vont act here.'

"So much for 'umanity and 'umbug. I really believes much o' this nonsense has been engender'd by the poppilar melody,

> 'If I had a donkey vot vouldn't go,
> Do you think I'd wollop him? oh, no, no!'

and the hauthor has much to answer for.

"It's all my eye applyin' the same rule to everything—some may be led, but others must be driven. My friend Willy Goodheart, there, for instance, wants no tellin', he sees all wot's wanted, and does it of himself; but old Tommy Sloggers

waits and waits to see if the thing won't do itself, and at length, findin' it doesn't, he either leaves it alone altogether, or does it at the wrong time. Wotever may be the season, whatever crops may fail, Tommy Sloggers is sure of one thing, a good crop o' weeds. I found a thistle at his back door t'other day, carryin' its wood from the ground like a hoak, and branchin' out like the genealogical tree of a ducal family. It was a superb specimen o' the genus—it must have grown and flourished for weeks; for it had flowers, and it had seeds, and as many 'eads as a hydra—it was well calculated to stock ten hacres o' land, and yet Tommy Sloggers had passed that werry thistle mornin', noon, and night, and had never taken the trouble to give it a back 'ander with his stick. Few men perhaps, have magnanimity enough to knock thistles off their neighbour's edges, but surely one would think they would do so off their own. Not so my frind Sloggers; he would see them spring, and flower, and seed, and droop, afore he'd be at the trouble of raisin' his 'and. Wot can one do with sich slugs? Will the brightest medal o' the purest gold, with the most flowering superscription wotever was wrote, put life and activity into sich

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lubbers? Assuredly not. Then, I say, let us try wot the rewerse will do. Let us add to our premiums and prizes a distinguishin' emblem for the greatest lout in the country. In addition to five or ten sovs. for the best managed farm, let us give somethin' to the worst. Let us strike a medal with the evil gen'lman on one side, and a big thistle on t'other, to be worn round the neck of the fortinate obtainer for one whole year, so that, wherever he goes, to church, or to market, or to the public, where he is most likely to be found, people may pint and say, 'There goes the most slovenly farmer in the county;' and let us show to England—to Europe—show to Europe, Hasia, Hafrica, and Merica, that while we foster talent, encourage hemulation and industry, we put our big toe of detestation and obbrobium on slovenliness, hignorance, and sloth."

Mr. Jorrocks sat down amidst loud and long-continued cheering.

When the applause had subsided, and our friend had quaffed off a large glass of punch that had been cooling before him, he again rose and said—"Gen'lmen, I sat down because I wished to finish my speech with a splash, and hear what quantity

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of applause my eloquence would obtain. I have now ascertained that; and I'm bund to say, you have done the genteel by me. I am quite content; and I now come to wot I should have finished the speech with if I hadn't been desirous of keepin' the two accounts separate. We are honoured this day, as you doubtless all know, with the presence of the distinguished scion of the most noble 'ouse in this county—a nobleman young in 'ears, but old in 'usbandry—one who, while cultivatin' the classics, has also had an eye to the clay—one who looks proudly forward to protectin' your interests in that august assembly called the 'ouse o' Commons (cheers)—one who, moreover, takes sich delight and interest in our doin's as to have signified his intention of becomin' the President of our 'Sociation (loud cheers.) Need I after sich an announcement entertain a doubt as to its success? O, surely not! The sun of science has bust upon us from the portals of Donkeyton Castle, and though no President likes to hear another more loudly cheered than himself, I do assure you from the bottom of my breeches pocket, that I shall not take it the least amiss if you wisit the name o' the Markis o'

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Bray with the heaviest round o' Kentish fire wotever was issued. Gen'lmen, I beg to propose, with all imaginable 'onours, the health o' the Marquis o' Bray, the noble President of our 'Sociation."

The toast was drunk with tremendous applause, Mr. Jorrocks acting as fugleman—"but as we musn't over-egg the pudding," as the Yorkshire farmers say, we will reserve the other proceedings of the evening for another chapter.

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CHAPTER XVII.

"We see no difficulty in organizing a College of Agriculture, and we can suggest a few of the probable professorships. Of course there will be a chair of new laid eggs, which the professor of poultry would be well qualified to occupy. Degrees will be conferred in guano; and a series of lectures on the philosophy of making hay when the sun shines would, no doubt, be exceedingly popular. We should propose that, previous to matriculation, every student should be required to undergo an examination on moral philosophy in connexion with chaff, and the efficacy of thrashing by hand when the ears are unusually lengthy. Corresponding with the university Masters of Arts, there could be Bachelors of Barley; and the undergraduates might be brought direct to the Agricultural College from plough, as they are now brought to the universities immediately from Harrow."

PUNCH.

THE last chapter left Mr. Jorrocks and friends at the critical point of drinking and applauding the Marquis's health. When the cheering had subsided, our butterfly friend rose, and with one hand resting on the table, and the other stuck in his side, thus proceeded to address the meeting:—

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"Mr. Jorrocks and Gentlemen,—I do not know that I can adequately express the very great pleasure and satisfaction I experience at the flattering manner in which my health has been proposed by my valuable friend," turning to Mr. Jorrocks, with, "if he will allow me to call him so."

"*Certainly,*" replied our worthy host, "certainly;" adding aloud to himself, "wonders who wouldn't."

"And," continued the Marquis, "received by this great and enlightened assembly (loud cheers)—an assembly composed of a class of men second to none in loyalty, attachment to the constitution and the crown, and renowned for their intelligence, independence, and spirit."

Renewed cheers, increased perhaps from the sentence being so unlike the style in which Mr. Jorrocks had addressed them, and the description he had given of them.

"Gentlemen, in all times, in all ages, the science of agriculture has been fostered and encouraged by the greatest of men—by all whom the page of history records as famous in the annals of countries (cheers). The greatest states-

men—the greatest scholars—the greatest generals —have each found, in turning from their schemes of government, their studies or the toils of warfare, solace and enjoyment in the harmless simplicity and the interesting relaxation it affords. Every man whose opinion is valuable—every man whose breast glows with a genuine feeling of patriotism—joins in testifying the importance of agriculture. Columella, the author so happily referred to by our classical and distinguished host, wrote ably and ardently on this interesting point. He insisted on the importance of agricultural training and scientific improvement. 'I see at Rome,' says he, 'schools of philosophy, rhetoric, geometry, music, and, what is more astonishing, of people not solely employed in the arts of luxury—some in preparing dishes, intended to sharpen the appetite and excite gluttony, and others in making artificial curls for adorning the head; *but not one for agriculture.* The rest,' he adds, 'might well be spared; and the republic have flourished long without any of these frivolous arts; but it is impossible to dispense with that of husbandry, because upon that life itself depends (applause). Besides,' asks this enlightened man,

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'is there a more honest or legal method of increasing a patrimony than by good cultivation of it? Is the profession of arms of this kind? Is the acquisition of spoils, dyed with human blood, and amassed by the ruin of our fellow-creatures? Or can commerce be compared with it, which, tearing citizens from their native country, exposes them to the fury of the winds and seas, dragging them into unknown worlds in pursuit of wealth? Is the trade of *usury* more laudable—odious and fatal as it is, even to those whom it seems to relieve? Are any of these occupations to be compared with wise and innocent agriculture, which the depravity of our notions alone can render contemptible, and, consequently, unprofitable and useless?' We read," continued his Lordship, "that Numa Pompilius, one of the wisest of kings, divided the whole Roman territory into cantons, and had an exact return made of the manner in which each department was cultivated, and the names of the most scientific farmers of that day. Ancus Martius, the fourth king of the Romans, trod in the steps of Numa; and Hiero the Second wrote a work on agriculture, as did Attilus, king of Pergamus; whilst Mago, the Carthaginian

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general, wrote no less than twenty-eight volumes upon farming, which were preserved by Scipio at the taking of Carthage, and presented as a treasure to the Roman senate. Attilus was found sowing corn when ambassadors from Rome came to invite him to the consulship; and the story of Cincinnatus being taken from the plough to the dictatorship is doubtless familiar to you all."—Cheers followed this piece of confidence in their knowledge.

Mr. Jorrocks hemmed and stroked his chin.

"If we look at home, who can for a moment doubt the advantages the virtuous simplicity of a country life possesses over the confinement of cities? Look at the robust offspring of country parents, and compare them with the squalid objects in town streets. Who would barter the wild freedom of *rural* life for the impure and pent up atmosphere of the crowded city?"

"It's not so *bad*, nouther," remarked Mr. Jorrocks aloud, with a shake of his head, thinking of the salubrity of St. Botolph's Lane, where the greater part of his days had been passed.

"Gentlemen," continued the Marquis, "can I, with all the bright examples of antiquity before

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me—with all the noble emulation of modern times around me—can I remain insensible to the paramount importance of agricultural energy and improvement? Can I see the tenfold return of other parts, and not wish to witness the same efforts and the same success at home?"

"Mind the *shug*," whispered Mr. Jorrocks, in one of his audible whispers.

"And, gentlemen, how is it that so desirable a consummation is to be obtained? By the co-operation of parties and the communication of ideas! By Agricultural Associations in fact!" (cheers.)

"*Shug*," repeated Mr. Jorrocks.

"My noble friend—that is to say, my excellent friend on my left—with his all-powerful and comprehensive mind, has imparted a discovery to this meeting of which I really am at a loss to say whether the originality of the conception or the boldness of the execution is the most astonishing. My noble friend—that is to say, my learned friend—that is to say, my excellent friend, is indeed a man to whom a country—nay, an universe—may well look up with the all-inspiring confidence of perfect security. I know no man

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so qualified to lead the sons of darkness into the lights of science as our excellent and most distinguished host" (loud applause).

"Werry good," said Mr. Jorrocks; "werry good—mind the *shug*—"

"His monster reaper will make the name of Jorrocks famous wherever farming science spreads, and English honesty is respected. It is by the interchange of ideas such as these that science is promoted, and farming flourishes. Instead of keeping the noble invention to himself and astonishing the country with its performances on his own property—instead of amassing wealth—as wealth most assuredly must be amassed by such an admirable contrivance—my noble friend—that is to say, my agricultural friend, with all the generous openness of confiding liberality, assembles his friends and fellow farmers here this evening, in all the bounty of old English hospitality, and frankly tells them the discovery he has made. And in what a fine vein of poetic spirit did he make the announcement! Instead of saying, 'I've got a machine that will cut your corn and grind it at the same time'—"

"*And plough the land!*" roared Mr. Jorrocks.

"Instead, I say, gentlemen, of saying, 'I've got

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a machine that will cut your corn and plough your land at the same time'—"

"*And grind your corn!*" screamed Mr. Jorrocks.

"Instead, I say, my lords, of saying, 'I've got a machine that will cut and grind your corn and plough the land at the same time'—he invokes the aid of the heathen mythology to describe its performances. And here it is where all after speakers must feel the feebleness of their own resources (applause and cries of no, no); at all events, other discoveries or other communications must sink into insignificance by the side of our excellent host's. His monster reaper swallows all up! Yet, my lords and gentlemen, there are matters connected with farming, though apparently trifling compared with the topics on which our noble—that is to say, our scientific host, has touched with such a master hand, that nevertheless may not be wholly beneath your consideration and attention. Our noble host—that is to say, our hospitable host, has glanced with prophetic spirit at the flights by air and steam, farming may yet undergo. But leaving those lofty altitudes, so well befitting the soaring genius of his capacious mind, I will venture to request your attention for a few moments while we look at the humbler prepara-

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tions for calling that noble and comprehensive engine into play, or freighting the car of the aërial ship. It is too trite a truism perhaps to observe, that without proper preparation of the ground, monster engines will have little to reap; and there is one subject connected with the preparation of the ground for productive sowing, that at the present day occupies no small portion of public attention—I allude of course to the grand discovery of draining. Draining, gentlemen, I believe, may be looked upon as one of the greatest discoveries of modern times. Moreover, it is not included in the comprehensive performances of our host's monster reaper. Had our forefathers been acquainted with the merits of draining, I think I may venture to say, the land would have been doubly productive at the present day. That operation may be carried on in a variety of ways; but as there are constantly improvements turning up in this very important branch of domestic industry, if I may so call it, I think it is very important that farmers should be in possession of the latest and most improved invention, because the saying is as old as the hills, that whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well; and it would be

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very provoking to find, after you had gone to a certain degree of trouble and expense about a thing, that if you had made inquiry, you would have found there was a process both cheaper and better. The invention, gentlemen, to which I allude, I understand is allowed to sepersede all others, by reason of an extraordinary ingredient that would never enter the head of any but a most scientific and practical chemist to add—namely the glutinacious, saccharine matter, called clayed sugar."

"Werry good," observed Mr. Jorrocks, tapping his fork against the table to raise applause and suppress a slight disposition to titter; "*werry good*, I say!"

"The recipe, with that exception, gentlemen, is very simple, the ingredients being generally come-at-able—clay, river-sand, and gravel, lime, well mixed and stirred up together, and then poured into the shapes, when, for a very trifling expense, you have some very capital tiles."

"*Werry durable*," whispered Mr. Jorrocks.

"And very durable also," continued the Marquis; "no small recommendation, I imagine, to any invention."

"Werry good," observed Mr. Jorrocks, adding aloud to himself, with a jerk of the head, "the chap has summut in him."

"Having now, my lords and gentlemen," continued the Marquis, "trespassed, I fear, already too lengthily on your valuable time, in glancing at the importance of agricultural science, little remains for me to say but to repeat to you my most cordial and heartfelt thanks for the kind and enthusiastic manner in which the toast of my health has been proposed and received; and allow me to assure the meeting that the cause of agriculture and the farming interest is deeply engraved on my heart's core; and in whatever situation of life I may be placed, the honour you have conferred upon me, in electing me president of your agricultural association, will ever remain the proudest—the most gratifying recollection of my existence, and the farmer's interest and my own will henceforth remain irretrievably interwoven together."

His lordship resumed his seat amidst loud and long-continued applause.

The punch and bottles again began to circulate, and the usual criticism of Mr. Jorrocks's speech,

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that had been averted by the immediate rising of the Marquis, now began to flow, each man turning to his neighbour, or groups of three or four laying their heads together, and discussing what they had heard.

"A but he has a grand tongue!" exclaimed old Willey Goodheart, as he ceased rapping the table with his fork, in mute astonishment. "A but he *has* a grand tongue!" repeated he to his neighbour, Johnny Wopstraw.

"Why, now upon the *who-o-ole*, I should say our Squire's full as fine a talker as him," replied Wopstraw.

"A the Squire's a grand tongue too," exclaimed Willey; "I'll lay he'd make a grand speech about anything."

"What sort o' things are these pine-apples our Squire talked about?" asked another of his neighbour. "I never see them mentioned in the papers."

"He's all wrong about draining," whispered another to his neighbour; "its nothing new—my grandfather drained—I'd have had all the wet off my farm before now, if I had had the money."

"I wish these genl'men mayn't be o'er wise for

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the country," observed Mr. Heavytail, in his usual loud and audible voice, to his opposite neighbour, as he ladled him a bumper of punch; "I've been a farmer, man and boy, these fifty years, and heard a vast of fine speeches, but I never heard nothing to ekle this about the air carriages. What will my old girl say when I bid her spread her wings, and fly to market instead of riding old Dobbin or Smiler?"

"A but the engine 's the thing!" interposed another; "there'll be no use for horses at all, if we're to plough by steam, and fly to market. I wish I was well shot o' mine, for when this gets wind, no body will take a horse in a gift."

"Dear, what would old Squire Westbury say, if he could rise from his grave, and see all this, poor man?" observed another. "I'm sure when they got the railway made, I thought that was a wonder that never could be beat; but now down comes a new Squire with new wonders that quite beat the old wonders out of sight."

"These Lunnuners are terrible wise people. I'm sure I don't know how I shall carry all home what they've said," observed another, turning a

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tumbler of punch down his throat, as if to keep the knowledge safe.

A loud knocking at the top of the table arrested the noise and conversation; and Mr. Jorrocks having obtained silence for his noble guest, the latter again rose and addressed the company.

"Mr. Vice-Chairman and Gentlemen," said he, "with the permission of the chair, I rise to propose a toast that I feel well assured will meet the enthusiastic approbation of this meeting—a meeting composed of friends and neighbours, who must as thoroughly appreciate the amiable, hospitable, and truly patriotic character of which it is the subject—a character, permit me to observe, gentlemen, known only in this highly-favoured kingdom, and one which, when it shines forth in its brightest purest light, as in the present instance, needs fear no comparison with coroneted, or even with crowned, heads—the character of an English gentleman"—(loud cheers).

"Quite true," observed Mr. Jorrocks aloud to himself; "*quite true*," repeated he with an emphasis.

"I know no more delightful sight," continued

the Marquis, "than to see an English gentleman surrounded by his friends and tenantry—dispensing with liberal hand that generous hospitality of which we have all partaken so largely this day, and radiating the minds of all with the lights and erudition that his well-applied means, leisure, and genius enable him to glean and cull, in every field of science and information—(loud cheers). No one, I feel assured, could have listened to the eloquent language of my noble friend, that is to say, of my honourable friend, without being struck with the perfect mastery he exhibited of his subject—a mastery acquired by clear-headed judgment and observation, combined with long experience and practical husbandry. I cannot sufficiently felicitate this country on the acquisition of so truly valuable an ornament—(cheers). I feel that under his fostering care, prosperity, bright unequalled prosperity, will reign triumphant throughout this vale, and that all eyes will be turned to a man who promises such miracles to farmers. Without trespassing further on your attention, I beg to propose, with all the honours, the health of our excellent host, Mr. Jorrocks."

The toast being received with most uproarious

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applause, amid the bountiful replenishment of the horse pail, considerable time elapsed ere silence was sufficiently restored to enable our worthy Squire to make his acknowledgments. At length he began.

"My Lord Markis and gen'lmen," said he, sticking a hand into each breeches pocket, "you have certain*lie* served me out a considerable deal o' butter and applause, which I feels considerably your debtors for. My Lord Markis has one advantage over me in the way of talk; he has his jawin' tackle much handier nor I have, for though I can make you a werry hoiley, beautiful oration when I've time to consider my subject, I'm not quite so good a 'and at reply; runnin' heel as it were, and observin' on another gen'l'man's discourse—at least, not unless he's told me afore'and wot he's a goin' to say, which is not the case on the present occasion. Howsomever, it's a deal plisanter to be praised nor abused, and I'm sure I may say I'm always ready for praise, because I thinks I deserves it; I feels extremely grateful for all the fine things the Markis has said on me. I'm sure he thinks what he says. There's no manner of doubt at all whatsomever, that between

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us we shall make farmin' a werry different thing to what it has been. The diskivery my noble friend has communicated respecting the drainin' tiles, is worthy the serious consideration and trial of every man. Bein' particular well acquainted with the wirtues o' sugar, I can take upon me to say that it is wonderful well calkilated to accomplish what my noble frind has suggested. It sticks things together uncommon. Howsomever, upon that pint perhaps my Lord Markis and I have said enough. The proof o' the puddin' is in the eatin'; and talkin' of eatin' reminds me o' drinkin'. W'ere a goin' to have a little ballet dance this evening—'ands across and back again, down the middle and hup again; and I think we cannot do better than propose the 'ealth of the ladies (applause); there'll be sich a bevy o' beauties—Mrs. J. in her best bib and tucker, surrounded by her school girls in their bran new bustles, and I doesn't know what else besides; so without further palaver, let us drink their good 'ealths, and when you've all had as much lush as you can carry, we'll adjourn the meeting and go and help them to foot it."

"Will Miss Flather be here?" whispered the

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Marquis in Mr. Jorrocks's ear, as the latter sat down after his speech.

"Miss Flather—Emma! let us see—yes—no no she won't; got a tooth-ache or summit o' that sort; werry sorry previous engagement—red nose p'raps, or summit o' that sort."

"O dear, I'm sorry for that," whispered the Marquis.

"Fine gal, Emma," observed Mr. Jorrocks confidentially, "werry fine gal—good figure—good figure-'ead too, as the sailors say—but there'll be quite as cliver a one as her here to-night, darter o' this rum-lookin' little fish on my right," whispered he; "howsomever, she hasn't taken arter her dad, but arter her dam, who's a real strappin' huzzey—great hupstandin', black-'air'd, black-eyed, clean-limb'd wench, *nous verrons*, as we say in France; meanwhile I must be giving them another toast." Mr. Jorrocks then proposed, "Honest men and bonny lasses," then "Live and let live," "Speed the plough;" after that "Guano," "Nitrate o' sober," "Smith o' Deanston," "Soot," and a variety of local and agricultural toasts.

"How far does Miss Flather live from here?"

inquired the Marquis of his host, as soon as he could get a word in sideways.

"O, close at 'and," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "mile—'alf a mile p'r'aps; wot are you a wantin' with her?"

This question was rather a poser, and the Marquis's countenance showed it.

"Nothin' wrong in course," continued our friend, "only you know she ha'nt got no dad, and it's my duty as Lord o' the Manor to see that all's on the square—*you twig*. If you wants to marry her, in course that's another thing."

The Marquis thought he had better not.

The parting rays of the setting sun now shot into the room, imparting an additional glow to the heated faces of the punch-drinkers, while the bright red sky tinged the landscape with its hue, chiding, as it were, the sitters for their depravity. Added to this the sound of music was borne ever and anon on the gentle evening breeze, and sundry smart boddices had been seen flitting past the windows, diving among the shrubberies and gay flower beds, betokening the mustering of the dancers. The heat of the room, the smell of the punch, and the feeling of repletion, made even

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the most inveterate toper wish for fresh air. At length the host rose, and the folding windows opening from the ground being thrown open, the party streamed out on to the close-shaven lawn, and inhaled the fresh air in deep-drawn hearty gulphs. How different from the tainted atmosphere they had just been breathing !

END OF VOL. I.



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