

Christmas Books, Tales and Sketches

Christmas Books, Tales and Sketches

by

W. M. Thackeray



Christmas Books, Tales and Sketches, by W. M. Thackeray

This book in its current typographical format first published 2008 by

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

The copyright in this publication is in the public domain

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-84718-815-X, ISBN (13): 9781847188151

CONTENTS

MRS. PERKINS'S BALL	1
<i>THE MULLIGAN (OF BALLYMULLIGAN), AND HOW WE WENT TO MRS. PERKINS'S BALL</i>	1
<i>MR. AND MRS. PERKINS, THEIR HOUSE, AND THEIR YOUNG PEOPLE</i>	4
<i>EVERYBODY BEGINS TO COME, BUT ESPECIALLY MR. MINCHIN</i>	6
<i>THE BALL-ROOM DOOR</i>	8
<i>LADY BACON, THE MISS BACONS, MR. FLAM</i>	9
<i>MR. LARKINS</i>	10
<i>MISS BUNION</i>	11
<i>MR. HICKS.</i>	12
<i>MISS MEGGOT</i>	13
<i>MISS RANVILLE, REV. MR. TOOP, MISS MULLINS, MR. WINTER</i>	14
<i>MISS JOY, MR. AND MRS. JOY, MR. BOTTER</i>	15
<i>MR. RANVILLE RANVILLE AND JACK HUBBARD</i>	16
<i>MRS. TROTTER, MISS TROTTER, MISS TOADY, LORD METHUSELAH</i>	17
<i>MR. BEAUMORIS, MR. GRIG, MR. FLYNDERS</i>	18
<i>CAVALIER SEUL</i>	19
<i>M. CANAILLARD, CHEVALIER OF THE LEGION OF HONOR</i>	20
<i>LIEUTENANT BARON DE BOBWITZ</i>	20
<i>THE BOUDOIR</i>	21
<i>MR. SMITH, MR. BROWN, MISS BUSTLETON</i>	21

<i>GRAND POLKA</i>	22
<i>THE SUPPER.</i>	23
<i>AFTER SUPPER.</i>	25
<i>THE MULLIGAN AND MR. PERKINS.</i>	26
OUR STREET	27
<i>OUR HOUSE IN OUR STREET</i>	29
<i>THE BUNGALOW—CAPTAIN AND MRS. BRAGG</i>	31
<i>LEVANT HOUSE CHAMBERS</i>	33
<i>MR. RUMBOLD, A.R.A., AND MISS RUMBOLD</i>	33
<i>SOME OF THE SERVANTS IN OUR STREET</i>	35
<i>WHAT SOMETIMES HAPPENS IN OUR STREET</i>	38
<i>SOMEBODY WHOM NOBODY KNOWS</i>	39
<i>THE MAN IN POSSESSION</i>	41
<i>THE LION OF THE STREET</i>	43
<i>THE DOVE OF OUR STREET</i>	45
<i>THE BUMPSHERS</i>	47
<i>JOLLY NEWBOY, ESQ., M.P.</i>	49
DOCTOR BIRCH AND HIS YOUNG FRIENDS	53
<i>THE DOCTOR AND HIS STAFF.</i>	53
<i>THE COCK OF THE SCHOOL</i>	55
<i>THE DEAR BROTHERS</i>	57
<i>THE LITTLE SCHOOL-ROOM</i>	58
<i>A HOPELESS CASE</i>	60

<i>A WORD ABOUT MISS BIRCH</i>	62
<i>A TRAGEDY</i>	64
<i>BRIGGS IN LUCK</i>	65
<i>A YOUNG FELLOW WHO IS PRETTY SURE TO SUCCEED</i>	67
<i>DUVAL THE PIRATE</i>	69
<i>THE DORMITORIES</i>	70
<i>A CAPTURE AND A RESCUE</i>	71
<i>THE GARDEN, WHERE THE PARLOR-BOARDERS GO</i>	72
<i>THE OLD PUPIL</i>	74
<i>EPILOGUE</i>	77
THE KICKLEBURYS ON THE RHINE	80
<i>PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION: BEING AN ESSAY ON THUNDER AND SMALL BEER</i>	80
<i>THE KICKLEBURYS ON THE RHINE</i>	87
THE ROSE AND THE RING: A FIRE-SIDE PANTOMIME FOR GREAT AND SMALL CHILDREN	123
<i>PRELUDE</i>	123
<i>I. SHOWS HOW THE ROYAL FAMILY SAT DOWN TO BREAKFAST</i>	125
<i>II. HOW KING VALOROSO GOT THE CROWN, AND PRINCE GIGLIO WENT WITHOUT.</i>	128
<i>III. TELLS WHO THE FAIRY BLACKSTICK WAS, AND WHO WERE EVER SO MANY GRAND PERSONAGES BESIDES.</i>	130
<i>IV. HOW BLACKSTICK WAS NOT ASKED TO THE PRINCESS ANGELICA'S CHRISTENING.</i>	133
<i>V. HOW PRINCESS ANGELICA TOOK A LITTLE MAID.</i>	135
<i>VI. HOW PRINCE GIGLIO BEHAVED HIMSELF.</i>	138

<i>VII. HOW GIGLIO AND ANGELICA HAD A QUARREL.</i>	142
<i>VIII. HOW GRUFFANUFF PICKED THE FAIRY RING UP, AND PRINCE BULBO CAME TO COURT.</i>	145
<i>IX. HOW BETSINDA GOT THE WARMING PAN.</i>	149
<i>X. HOW KING VALOROSO WAS IN A DREADFUL PASSION.</i>	153
<i>XI. WHAT GRUFFANUFF DID TO GIGLIO AND BETSINDA.</i>	155
<i>XII. HOW BETSINDA FLED, AND WHAT BECAME OF HER.</i>	161
<i>XIII. HOW QUEEN ROSALBA CAME TO THE CASTLE OF THE BOLD COUNT HOGGINARMO.</i>	164
<i>XIV. WHAT BECAME OF GIGLIO.</i>	167
<i>XV. WE RETURN TO ROSALBA.</i>	175
<i>XVI. HOW HEDZOFF RODE BACK AGAIN TO KING GIGLIO.</i>	179
<i>XVII. HOW A TREMENDOUS BATTLE TOOK PLACE, AND WHO WON IT.</i>	182
<i>XVIII. HOW THEY ALL JOURNEYED BACK TO THE CAPITAL.</i>	187
<i>XIX. AND NOW WE COME TO THE LAST SCENE IN THE PANTOMIME.</i>	191
REBECCA AND ROWENA	194
<i>CHAPTER I. The Overture—Commencement of the Business</i>	194
<i>CHAPTER II: the Last Days of the Lion</i>	204
<i>CHAPTER III: St. George for England</i>	211
<i>CHAPTER IV: Ivanhoe Redivivus</i>	217
<i>CHAPTER V: Ivanhoe to the Rescue</i>	223
<i>CHAPTER VI: Ivanhoe the Widower</i>	229
<i>CHAPTER VII: The End of the Performance</i>	235

CHARACTER SKETCHES	241
<i>CAPTAIN ROOK AND MR. PIGEON</i>	241
<i>THE FASHIONABLE AUTHORESS</i>	254
<i>THE ARTISTS</i>	264
MEN AND COATS	277
GREENWICH—WHITEBAIT	290
A LEAF OUT OF A SKETCH-BOOK	296
THE DIGNITY OF LITERATURE	300
MR. THACKERAY IN THE UNITED STATES	304
GOETHE IN HIS OLD AGE	309
TIMBUCTOO	312
GOING TO SEE A MAN HANGED	315
SULTAN STORK	327
<i>PART THE FIRST</i>	327
<i>PART THE SECOND</i>	334
READING A POEM	341
<i>PART I</i>	341
<i>PART II</i>	351
A ST. PHILIP'S DAY AT PARIS	358
<i>PART I</i>	358
<i>PART II</i>	367
SHROVE TUESDAY IN PARIS	370

x W. M. Thackeray

AN EASTERN ADVENTURE OF THE FAT CONTRIBUTOR

376

NOTES

383

MRS. PERKINS'S BALL

THE MULLIGAN (OF BALLYMULLIGAN), AND HOW WE WENT TO MRS. PERKINS'S BALL

I do not know where Ballymulligan is, and never knew anybody who did. Once I asked the Mulligan the question, when that chieftain assumed a look of dignity so ferocious, and spoke of "Saxon curiawsitee" in a tone of such evident displeasure, that, as after all it can matter very little to me whereabouts lies the Celtic principality in question, I have never pressed the inquiry any farther.

I don't know even the Mulligan's town residence. One night, as he bade us adieu in Oxford Street,—*"I live there,"* says he, pointing down towards Oxbridge, with the big stick he carries—so his abode is in that direction at any rate. He has his letters addressed to several of his friends' houses, and his parcels, &c. are left for him at various taverns which he frequents. That pair of checked trousers, in which you see him attired, he did me the favor of ordering from my own tailor, who is quite as anxious as anybody to know the address of the wearer. In like manner my hatter asked me, "Oo was the Hirish gent as 'ad ordered four 'ats and a sable boar to be sent to my lodgings?" As I did not know (however I might guess) the articles have never been sent, and the Mulligan has withdrawn his custom from the "infernal four-and-nine-penny scoundthrel," as he calls him. The hatter has not shut up shop in consequence.

I became acquainted with the Mulligan through a distinguished countryman of his, who, strange to say, did not know the chieftain himself. But dining with my friend Fred Clancy, of the Irish bar, at Greenwich, the Mulligan came up, "inthrojuced" himself to Clancy as he said, claimed relationship with him on the side of Brian Boroo, and drawing his chair to our table, quickly became intimate with us. He took a great liking to me, was good enough to find out my address and pay me a visit: since which period often and often on coming to breakfast in the morning I have found him in my sitting-room on the sofa engaged with the rolls and morning papers: and many a time, on returning home at night for an evening's quiet reading, I have discovered this honest fellow in the arm-chair before the fire, perfuming the apartment with my cigars and trying the quality of such liquors as might be found on the sideboard. The way in which he pokes fun at Betsy, the maid of the lodgings, is prodigious. She begins to laugh whenever he comes; if he calls her a duck, a divvle,

a darlin', it is all one. He is just as much a master of the premises as the individual who rents them at fifteen shillings a week; and as for handkerchiefs, shirt-collars, and the like articles of fugitive haberdashery, the loss since I have known him is unaccountable. I suspect he is like the cat in some houses: for, suppose the whiskey, the cigars, the sugar, the tea-caddy, the pickles, and other groceries disappear, all is laid upon that *edax-rerum* of a Mulligan.

The greatest offence that can be offered to him is to call him MR. Mulligan. "Would you deprive me, sir," says he, "of the title which was bawrun be me princelee ancestors in a hundred thousand battles? In our own green valleys and fawrests, in the American savannahs, in the sierras of Speen and the flats of Flandthers, the Saxon has quailed before me war-cry of *Mulligan aboo!* *Mr.* Mulligan! I'll pitch anybody out of the window who calls me *Mr.* Mulligan." He said this, and uttered the slogan of the Mulligans with a shriek so terrific, that my uncle (the Rev. W. Gruels, of the Independent Congregation, Bungay), who had happened to address him in the above obnoxious manner, while sitting at my apartments drinking tea after the May meetings, instantly quitted the room, and has never taken the least notice of me since, except to state to the rest of the family that I am doomed irrevocably to perdition.

Well, one day last season, I had received from my kind and most estimable friend, *Mrs. Perkins of Pocklington Square* (to whose amiable family I have had the honor of giving lessons in drawing, French, and the German flute), an invitation couched in the usual terms, on satin gilt-edged note-paper, to her evening-party; or, as I call it, "Ball."

Besides the engraved note sent to all her friends, my kind patroness had addressed me privately as follows:—

MY DEAR MR. TITMARSH,—If you know any *very* eligible young man, we give you leave to bring him. You *gentlemen* love your *clubs* so much now, and care so little for *dancing*, that it is really quite a *scandal*. Come early, and before *everybody*, and give us the benefit of all your taste and *continental skill*.

"Your sincere

"EMILY PERKINS."

"Whom shall I bring?" mused I, highly flattered by this mark of confidence; and I thought of Bob Trippett; and little Fred Spring, of the Navy Pay Office; Hulker, who is rich, and I knew took lessons in Paris; and a half-score of other bachelor friends, who might be considered as *very eligible*—when I was roused from my meditation by the slap of a hand on my shoulder; and looking up, there was the Mulligan, who began, as usual, reading the papers on my desk.

"Hwhat's this?" says he. "Who's Perkins? Is it a supper-ball, or only a tay-ball?"

"The Perkinses of Pocklington Square, Mulligan, are tiptop people," says I, with a tone of dignity. "Mr. Perkins's sister is married to a baronet, Sir Giles Bacon, of

Hogwash, Norfolk. Mr. Perkins's uncle was Lord Mayor of London; and he was himself in Parliament, and *may be* again any day. The family are my most particular friends. A tay-ball indeed! why, Gunter..." Here I stopped: I felt I was committing myself.

"Gunter!" says the Mulligan, with another confounded slap on the shoulder. "Don't say another word: *I'll* go widg you, my boy."

"*You* go, Mulligan?" says I: "why, really—I—it's not my party."

"Your hwhawt? hwhat's this letter? a'n't I an eligible young man?—Is the descendant of a thousand kings unfit company for a miserable tallow-chandthlering cockney? Are ye joking wid me? for, let me tell ye, I don't like them jokes. D'ye suppose I'm not as well bawrun and bred as yourself, or any Saxon friend ye ever had?"

"I never said you weren't, Mulligan," says I.

"Ye don't mean seriously that a Mulligan is not fit company for a Perkins?"

"My dear fellow, how could you think I could so far insult you?" says I. "Well, then," says he, "that's a matter settled, and we go."

What the deuce was I to do? I wrote to Mrs. Perkins; and that kind lady replied, that she would receive the Mulligan, or any other of my friends, with the greatest cordiality. "Fancy a party, all Mulligans!" thought I, with a secret terror.

MR. AND MRS. PERKINS, THEIR HOUSE, AND THEIR YOUNG PEOPLE

Following Mrs. Perkins's orders, the present writer made his appearance very early at Pocklington Square: where the tastiness of all the decorations elicited my warmest admiration. Supper of course was in the dining-loom, superbly arranged by Messrs. Grigs and Spooner, the confectioners of the neighborhood. I assisted my respected friend Mr. Perkins and his butler in decanting the sherry, and saw, not without satisfaction, a large bath for wine under the sideboard, in which were already placed very many bottles of champagne.

The *back dining-room*, Mr. P.'s study (where the venerable man goes to sleep after dinner), was arranged on this occasion as a tea-room, Mrs. Flouncey (Miss Fanny's maid) officiating in a cap and pink ribbons, which became her exceedingly. Long, long before the arrival of the company, I remarked Master Thomas Perkins and Master Giles Bacon, his cousin (son of Sir Giles Bacon, Bart.), in this apartment, busy among the macaroons.

Mr. Gregory the butler, besides John the footman and Sir Giles's large man in the Bacon livery, and honest Grundsell, carpet-beater and green-grocer, of Little Pocklington Buildings, had at least half a dozen of aides-de-camp in black with white neck-cloths, like doctors of divinity.

The *back drawing-room* door on the landing being taken off the hinges (and placed up stairs under Mr. Perkins's bed), the orifice was covered with muslin, and festooned with elegant wreaths of flowers. This was the Dancing Saloon. A linen was spread over the carpet; and a band—consisting of Mr. Clapperton, piano, Mr. Pinch, harp, and Herr Spoff, cornet-a-piston arrived at a pretty early hour, and were accommodated with some comfortable negus in the tea-room, previous to the commencement of their delightful labors. The boudoir to the left was fitted up as a card-room; the drawing-room was of course for the reception of the company,—the chandeliers and yellow damask being displayed this night in all their splendor; and the charming conservatory over the landing was ornamented by a few moon-like lamps, and the flowers arranged so that it had the appearance of a fairy bower. And Miss Perkins (as I took the liberty of stating to her mamma) looked like the fairy of that bower. It is this young creature's first year in *public life*: she has been educated, regardless of expense, at Hammersmith; and a simple white muslin dress and blue ceinture set off charms of which I beg to speak with respectful admiration.

My distinguished friend the Mulligan of Ballymulligan was good enough to come the very first of the party. By the way, how awkward it is to be the first of the party! and yet you know somebody must; but for my part, being timid, I always wait at the corner of the street in the cab, and watch until some other carriage comes up.

Well, as we were arranging the sherry in the decanters down the supper-tables, my friend arrived: "Hwhares me friend Mr. Titmarsh?" I heard him bawling out to Gregory in the passage, and presently he rushed into the supper-room, where Mr. and Mrs. Perkins and myself were, and as the waiter was announcing "Mr. Mulligan," "*The Mulligan of Ballymulligan, ye blackguard!*" roared he, and stalked into the apartment, "apologizing," as he said, for introducing himself.

Mr. and Mrs. Perkins did not perhaps wish to be seen in this room, which was for the present only lighted by a couple of candles; but *he* was not at all abashed by the circumstance, and grasping them both warmly by the hands, he instantly made himself at home. "As friends of my dear and talented friend Mick," so he is pleased to call me, "I'm deloighted, madam, to be made known to ye. Don't consider me in the light of a mere acquaintance! As for you, my dear madam, you put me so much in moind of my own blessed mother, now resoiding at Ballymulligan Castle, that I begin to love ye at first soight." At which speech Mr. Perkins getting rather alarmed, asked the Mulligan whether he would take some wine, or go up stairs.

"Faix," says Mulligan "it's never too soon for good dhrink." And (although he smelt very much of whiskey already) he drank a tumbler of wine "to the improvement of an acqueentence which comminces in a manner so deloightful."

"Let's go up stairs, Mulligan," says I, and led the noble Irishman to the upper apartments, which were in a profound gloom, the candles not being yet illuminated, and where we surprised Miss Fanny, seated in the twilight at the piano, timidly trying the tunes of the polka which she danced so exquisitely that evening. She did not perceive the stranger at first; but how she started when the Mulligan loomed upon her.

"Heavenlee enchanthress!" says Mulligan, "don't floy at the approach of the humblest of your sleeves! Reshewm your pleece at that instrumnt, which weeps harmonious, or smoils melojious, as you charrum it! Are you acqueented with the Oirish Melodies? Can ye play, 'Who fears to talk of Nointy-eight?' the 'Shan Van Voght?' or the 'Dirge of Ollam Fodhlah?'"

"Who's this mad chap that Titmarsh has brought?" I heard Master Bacon exclaim to Master Perkins. "Look! how frightened Fanny looks!"

"O poo! gals are *always* frightened," Fanny's brother replied; but Giles Bacon, more violent, said, "I'll tell you what, Tom: if this goes on, we must pitch into him." And so I have no doubt they would, when another thundering knock coming, Gregory rushed into the room and began lighting all the candles, so as to produce an amazing brilliancy, Miss Fanny sprang up and ran to her mamma, and the young gentlemen slid down the banisters to receive the company in the hall.

EVERYBODY BEGINS TO COME, BUT ESPECIALLY MR. MINCHIN

"It's only me and my sisters," Master Bacon said; though "only" meant eight in this instance. All the young ladies had fresh cheeks and purple elbows; all had white frocks, with hair more or less auburn: and so a party was already made of this blooming and numerous family, before the rest of the company began to arrive. The three Miss Meggots next came in their fly: Mr. Blades and his niece from 19 in the square: Captain and Mrs. Struther, and Miss Struther: Doctor Toddy's two daughters and their mamma: but where were the gentlemen? The Mulligan, great and active as he was, could not suffice among so many beauties. At last came a brisk neat little knock, and looking into the hall, I saw a gentleman taking off his clogs there, whilst Sir Giles Bacon's big footman was looking on with rather a contemptuous air.

"What name shall I enounce?" says he, with a wink at Gregory on the stair.

The gentleman in clogs said, with quiet dignity,—

MR. FREDERICK MINCHIN.

"Pump Court, Temple," is printed on his cards in very small type: and he is a rising barrister of the Western Circuit. He is to be found at home of mornings: afterwards "at Westminster," as you read on his back door. "Binks and Minchin's Reports" are probably known to my legal friends: this is the Minchin in question.

He is decidedly genteel, and is rather in request at the balls of the Judges' and Serjeants' ladies: for he dances irreproachably, and goes out to dinner as much as ever he can.

He mostly dines at the Oxford and Cambridge Club, of which you can easily see by his appearance that he is a member; he takes the joint and his half-pint of wine, for Minchin does everything like a gentleman. He is rather of a literary turn; still makes Latin verses with some neatness; and before he was called, was remarkably fond of the flute.

When Mr. Minchin goes out in the evening, his clerk brings his bag to the Club, to dress; and if it is at all muddy, he turns up his trousers, so that he may come in without a speck. For such a party as this, he will have new gloves; otherwise Frederick, his clerk, is chiefly employed in cleaning them with India-rubber.

He has a number of pleasant stories about the Circuit and the University, which he tells with a simper to his neighbor at dinner; and has always the last joke of Mr. Baron Maule. He has a private fortune of five thousand pounds; he is a dutiful son; he has a sister married, in Harley Street; and Lady Jane Ranville has the best opinion of him, and says he is a most excellent and highly principled young man.

Her ladyship and daughter arrived just as Mr. Minchin had popped his clogs into the umbrella-stand; and the rank of that respected person, and the dignified manner in which he led her up stairs, caused all sneering on the part of the domestics to disappear.

THE BALL-ROOM DOOR

A hundred of knocks follow Frederick Minchin's: in half an hour Messrs. Spoff, Pinch, and Clapperton have begun their music, and Mulligan, with one of the Miss Bacons, is dancing majestically in the first quadrille. My young friends Giles and Tom prefer the landing-place to the drawing-rooms, where they stop all night, robbing the refreshment-trays as they come up or down. Giles has eaten fourteen ices: he will have a dreadful stomach-ache to-morrow. Tom has eaten twelve, but he has had four more glasses of negus than Giles. Grundsell, the occasional waiter, from whom Master Tom buys quantities of ginger-beer, can of course deny him nothing. That is Grundsell, in the tights, with the tray. Meanwhile direct your attention to the three gentlemen at the door: they are conversing.

1st Gent.—Who's the man of the house—the bald man?

2nd Gent.—Of course. The man of the house is always bald. He's a stockbroker, I believe. Snooks brought me.

1st Gent.—Have you been to the tea-room? There's a pretty girl in the tea-room; blue eyes, pink ribbons, that kind of thing.

2nd Gent.—Who the deuce is that girl with those tremendous shoulders? Gad! I do wish somebody would smack 'em.

3rd Gent.—Sir—that young lady is my niece, sir,—my niece—my name is Blades, sir.

2nd Gent.—Well, Blades! smack your niece's shoulders: she deserves it, begad! she does. Come in, Jinks, present me to the Perkinses.—Hullo! here's an old country acquaintance—Lady Bacon, as I live! with all the piglings; she never goes out without the whole litter.

[Exeunt 1st and 2nd Gents.]

LADY BACON, THE MISS BACONS, MR. FLAM

Lady B.—Leonora! Maria! Amelia! here is the gentleman we met at Sir John Porkington's.

[The MISSES BACON, expecting to be asked to dance, smile simultaneously, and begin to smooth their tuckers.]

Mr. Flam.—Lady Bacon! I couldn't be mistaken in *you!* Won't you dance, Lady Bacon?

Lady B.—Go away, you droll creature!

Mr. Flam.—And these are your ladyship's seven lovely sisters, to judge from their likenesses to the charming Lady Bacon?

Lady B.—My sisters, he! he! my *daughters*, Mr. Flam, and *they* dance, don't you, girls?

The Misses Bacon.—O yes!

Mr. Flam.—Gad! how I wish I was a dancing man!

[Exit FLAM.]

MR. LARKINS

I have not been able to do justice (only a Lawrence could do that) to my respected friend Mrs. Perkins, in this picture; but Larkins's portrait is considered very like. Adolphus Larkins has been long connected with Mr. Perkins's City establishment, and is asked to dine twice or thrice per annum. Evening-parties are the great enjoyment of this simple youth, who, after he has walked from Kentish Town to Thames Street, and passed twelve hours in severe labor there, and walked back again to Kentish Town, finds no greater pleasure than to attire his lean person in that elegant evening costume which you see, to walk into town again, and to dance at anybody's house who will invite him. Islington, Pentonville, Somers Town, are the scenes of many of his exploits; and I have seen this good-natured fellow performing figure-dances at Notting-hill, at a house where I am ashamed to say there was no supper, no negus even to speak of, nothing but the bare merits of the polka in which Adolphus revels. To describe this gentleman's infatuation for dancing, let me say, in a word, that he will even frequent boarding-house hops, rather than not go.

He has clogs, too, like Minchin: but nobody laughs at *him*. He gives himself no airs; but walks into a house with a knock and a demeanor so tremulous and humble, that the servants rather patronize him. He does not speak, or have any particular opinions, but when the time comes, begins to dance. He bleats out a word or two to his partner during this operation, seems very weak and sad during the whole performance, and, of course, is set to dance with the ugliest women everywhere.

The gentle, kind spirit! when I think of him night after night, hopping and jigging, and trudging off to Kentish Town, so gently, through the fogs, and mud, and darkness: I do not know whether I ought to admire him, because his enjoyments are so simple, and his dispositions so kindly; or laugh at him, because he draws his life so exquisitely mild. Well, well, we can't be all roaring lions in this world; there must be *some* lambs, and harmless, kindly, gregarious creatures for eating and shearing. See! even good-natured Mrs. Perkins is leading up the trembling Larkins to the tremendous Miss Bunion!

MISS BUNION

The Poetess, author of "Heartstrings," "The Deadly Nightshade," "Passion Flowers," &c. Though her poems breathe only of love, Miss B. has never been married. She is nearly six feet high; she loves waltzing beyond even poesy; and I think lobster-salad as much as either. She confesses to twenty-eight; in which case her first volume, "The Orphan of Gozo," (cut up by Mr. Rigby, in the Quarterly, with his usual kindness,) must have been published when she was three years old.

For a woman all soul, she certainly eats as much as any woman I ever saw. The sufferings she has had to endure, are, she says, beyond compare; the poems which she writes breathe a withering passion, a smouldering despair, an agony of spirit that would melt the soul of a drayman, were he to read them. Well, it is a comfort to see that she can dance of nights, and to know (for the habits of illustrious literary persons are always worth knowing) that she eats a hot mutton-chop for breakfast every morning of her blighted existence.

She lives in a boardinghouse at Brompton, and comes to the party in a fly.

MR. HICKS.

It is worth twopence to see Miss Bunion and Poseidon Hicks, the great poet, conversing with one another, and to talk of one to the other afterwards. How they hate each other! I (in my wicked way) have sent Hicks almost raving mad, by praising Bunion to him in confidence; and you can drive Bunion out of the room by a few judicious panegyrics of Hicks.

Hicks first burst upon the astonished world with poems, in the Byronic manner: "The Death-Shriek," "The Bastard of Lara," "The Atabal," "The Fire-Ship of Botzaris," and other works. His "Love Lays," in Mr. Moore's early style, were pronounced to be wonderfully precocious for a young gentleman then only thirteen, and in a commercial academy, at Tooting.

Subsequently, this great bard became less passionate and more thoughtful; and, at the age of twenty, wrote "Idiosyncrasy" (in forty books, 4to.): "Ararat," "a stupendous epic," as the reviews said; and "The Megatheria," "a magnificent contribution to our pre-Adamite literature," according to the same authorities. Not having read these works, it would ill become me to judge them; but I know that poor Jingle, the publisher, always attributed his insolvency to the latter epic, which was magnificently printed in elephant folio.

Hicks has now taken a classical turn, and has brought out "Poseidon," "Iacchus," "Hephaestus," and I dare say is going through the mythology. But I should not like to try him at a passage of the Greek Delectus, any more than twenty thousand others of us who have had a "classical education."

Hicks was taken in an inspired attitude regarding the chandelier, and pretending he didn't know that Miss Pettifer was looking at him.

Her name is Anna Maria (daughter of Higgs and Pettifer, solicitors, Bedford Row); but Hicks calls her "Ianthé" in his album verses, and is himself an eminent drysalter in the city.

MISS MEGGOT

Poor Miss Meggot is not so lucky as Miss Bunion. Nobody comes to dance with *her*, though she has a new frock on, as she calls it, and rather a pretty foot, which she always manages to stick out.

She is forty-seven, the youngest of three sisters, who live in a mouldy old house, near Middlesex Hospital, where they have lived for I don't know how many score of years; but this is certain: the eldest Miss Meggot saw the Gordon Riots out of that same parlor window, and tells the story how her father (physician to George III.) was robbed of his queue in the streets on that occasion. The two old ladies have taken the brevet rank, and are addressed as Mrs. Jane and Mrs. Betsy: one of them is at whist in the back drawing-room. But the youngest is still called Miss Nancy, and is considered quite a baby by her sisters.

She was going to be married once to a brave young officer, Ensign Angus Macquirk, of the Whistlebinkie Fencibles; but he fell at Quatre Bras, by the side of the gallant Snuffinull, his commander. Deeply, deeply did Miss Nancy deplore him.

But time has cicatrized the wounded heart. She is gay now, and would sing or dance, ay, or marry if anybody asked her.

Do go, my dear friend—I don't mean to ask her to marry, but to ask her to dance.—Never mind the looks of the thing. It will make her happy; and what does it cost you? Ah, my dear fellow! take this counsel: always dance with the old ladies—always dance with the governesses. It is a comfort to the poor things when they get up in their garret that somebody has had mercy on them. And such a handsome fellow as *you* too!

**MISS RANVILLE, REV. MR. TOOP, MISS MULLINS, MR.
WINTER**

Mr. W.—Miss Mullins, look at Miss Ranville: what a picture of good humor.

Miss M.—Oh, you satirical creature!

Mr. W.—Do you know why she is so angry? she expected to dance with Captain Grig, and by some mistake, the Cambridge Professor got hold of her: isn't he a handsome man?

Miss M.—Oh, you droll wretch!

Mr. W.—Yes, he's a fellow of college—fellows mayn't marry, Miss Mullins—poor fellows, ay, Miss Mullins?

Miss M.—La!

Mr. W.—And Professor of Phlebotomy in the University. He flatters himself he is a man of the world, Miss Mullins, and always dances in the long vacation.

Miss M.—You malicious, wicked monster!

Mr. W.—Do you know Lady Jane Ranville? Miss Ranville's mamma. A ball once a year; footmen in canary-colored livery: Baker Street; six dinners in the season; starves all the year round; pride and poverty, you know; I've been to her ball *once*. Ranville Ranville's her brother, and between you and me—but this, dear Miss Mullins, is a profound secret,—I think he's a greater fool than his sister.

Miss M.—Oh, you satirical, droll, malicious, wicked thing you!

Mr. W.—You do me injustice, Miss Mullins, indeed you do.

[Chaine Anglaise.]

MISS JOY, MR. AND MRS. JOY, MR. BOTTER

Mr. B.—What spirits that girl has, Mrs. Joy!

Mr. J.—She's a sunshine in a house, Botter, a regular sunshine. When Mrs. J. here's in a bad humor, I . . .

Mrs. J.—Don't talk nonsense, Mr. Joy.

Mrs. B.—There's a hop, skip, and jump for you! Why, it beats Ellsler! Upon my conscience it does! It's her fourteenth quadrille too. There she goes! She's a jewel of a girl, though I say it that shouldn't.

Mrs. J. (laughing).—Why don't you marry her, Botter? Shall I speak to her? I dare say she'd have you. You're not so *very* old.

Mr. B.—Don't aggravate me, Mrs. J. You know when I lost my heart in the year 1817, at the opening of Waterloo Bridge, to a young lady who wouldn't have me, and left me to die in despair, and married Joy, of the Stock Exchange.

Mrs. J. Get away, you foolish old creature.

[MR. JOY looks on in ecstasies at Miss Joy's agility. LADY JANE RANVILLE, of Baker Street, pronounces her to be an exceedingly forward person. CAPTAIN DOBBS likes a girl who has plenty of go in her; and as for FRED SPARKS, he is over head and ears in love with her.]

MR. RANVILLE RANVILLE AND JACK HUBBARD

This is Miss Ranville Ranville's brother, Mr. Ranville Ranville, of the Foreign Office, faithfully designed as he was playing at whist in the card-room. Talleyrand used to play at whist at the "Travellers'," that is why Ranville Ranville indulges in that diplomatic recreation. It is not his fault if he be not the greatest man in the room.

If you speak to him, he smiles sternly, and answers in monosyllables he would rather die than commit himself. He never has committed himself in his life. He was the first at school, and distinguished at Oxford. He is growing prematurely bald now, like Canning, and is quite proud of it. He rides in St. James's Park of a morning before breakfast. He docketts his tailor's bills, and nicks off his dinner-notes in diplomatic paragraphs, and keeps *précis* of them all. If he ever makes a joke, it is a quotation from Horace, like Sir Robert Peel. The only relaxation he permits himself, is to read Thucydides in the holidays.

Everybody asks him out to dinner, on account of his brass-buttons with the Queen's cipher, and to have the air of being well with the Foreign Office. "Where I dine," he says solemnly, "I think it is my duty to go to evening-parties." That is why he is here. He never dances, never sups, never drinks. He has gruel when he goes home to bed. I think it is in his brains.

He is such an ass and so respectable, that one wonders he has not succeeded in the world; and yet somehow they laugh at him; and you and I shall be Ministers as soon as he will.

Yonder, making believe to look over the print-books, is that merry rogue, Jack Hubbard.

See how jovial he looks! He is the life and soul of every party, and his impromptu singing after supper will make you die of laughing. He is meditating an impromptu now, and at the same time thinking about a bill that is coming due next Thursday. Happy dog!

MRS. TROTTER, MISS TROTTER, MISS TOADY, LORD METHUSELAH

Dear Emma Trotter has been silent and rather ill-humored all the evening until now her pretty face lights up with smiles. Cannot you guess why? Pity the simple and affectionate creature! Lord Methuselah has not arrived until this moment: and see how the artless girl steps forward to greet him!

In the midst of all the selfishness and turmoil of the world, how charming it is to find virgin hearts quite unsullied, and to look on at little romantic pictures of mutual love! Lord Methuselah, though you know his age by the peerage—though he is old, wigged, gouty, rouged, wicked, has lighted up a pure flame in that gentle bosom. There was a talk about Tom Willoughby last year; and then, for a time, young Hawbuck (Sir John Hawbuck's youngest son) seemed the favored man; but Emma never knew her mind until she met the dear creature before you in a Rhine steamboat. "Why are you so late, Edward?" says she. Dear artless child!

Her mother looks on with tender satisfaction. One can appreciate the joys of such an admirable parent!

"Look at them!" says Miss Toady. "I vow and protest they're the handsomest couple in the room!"

Methuselah's grandchildren are rather jealous and angry, and Mademoiselle Ariane, of the French theatre, is furious. But there's no accounting for the mercenary envy of some people; and it is impossible to satisfy everybody.

MR. BEAUMORIS, MR. GRIG, MR. FLYNDERS

Those three young men are described in a twinkling: Captain Grig of the Heavies; Mr. Beaumoris, the handsome young man; Tom Flinders (Flynders Flynders he now calls himself), the fat gentleman who dresses after Beaumoris.

Beaumoris is in the Treasury: he has a salary of eighty pounds a year, on which he maintains the best cab and horses of the season; and out of which he pays seventy guineas merely for his subscriptions to clubs. He hunts in Leicestershire, where great men mount him; he is a prodigious favorite behind the scenes at the theatres; you may get glimpses of him at Richmond, with all sorts of pink bonnets; and he is the sworn friend of half the most famous *roués* about town, such as Old Methuselah, Lord Billygoat, Lord Tarquin, and the rest: a respectable race. It is to oblige the former that the good-natured young fellow is here to-night; though it must not be imagined that he gives himself any airs of superiority. Dandy as he is, he is quite affable, and would borrow ten guineas from any man in the room, in the most jovial way possible.

It is neither Beau's birth, which is doubtful; nor his money, which is entirely negative; nor his honesty, which goes along with his money-qualification; nor his wit, for he can barely spell,—which recommend him to the fashionable world: but a sort of Grand Seigneur splendor and dandified *je ne sais quoi*, which make the man he is of him. The way in which his boots and gloves fit him is a wonder which no other man can achieve; and though he has not an atom of principle, it must be confessed that he invented the Taglioni shirt.

When I see these magnificent dandies yawning out of "White's," or caracoling in the Park on shining chargers, I like to think that Brummell was the greatest of them all, and that Brummell's father was a footman.

Flynders is Beaumoris's toady: lends him money: buys horses through his recommendation; dresses after him; clings to him in Pall Mall, and on the steps of the club; and talks about 'Bo' in all societies. It is his drag which carries down Bo's friends to the Derby, and his cheques pay for dinners to the pink bonnets. I don't believe the Perkinses know what a rogue it is, but fancy him a decent, reputable City man, like his father before him.

As for Captain Grig, what is there to tell about him? He performs the duties of his calling with perfect gravity. He is faultless on parade; excellent across country; amiable when drunk, rather slow when sober. He has not two ideas, and is a most good-natured, irreproachable, gallant, and stupid young officer.

CAVALIER SEUL

This is my friend Bob Hely, performing the Cavalier seul in a quadrille. Remark the good-humored pleasure depicted in his countenance. Has he any secret grief? Has he a pain anywhere? No, dear Miss Jones, he is dancing like a true Briton, and with all the charming gayety and abandon of our race.

When Canaillard performs that Cavalier seul operation, does *he* flinch? No: he puts on his most *vainqueur* look, he sticks his thumbs into the armholes of his waistcoat, and advances, retreats, pirouettes, and otherwise gambadoes, as though to say, "Regarde moi, O monde! Venez, O femmes, venez voir danser Canaillard!"

When De Bobwitz executes the same measure, he does it with smiling agility, and graceful ease.

But poor Hely, if he were advancing to a dentist, his face would not be more cheerful. All the eyes of the room are upon him, he thinks; and he thinks he looks like a fool.

Upon my word, if you press the point with me, dear Miss Jones, I think he is not very far from right. I think that while Frenchmen and Germans may dance, as it is their nature to do, there is a natural dignity about us Britons, which debars us from that enjoyment. I am rather of the Turkish opinion, that this should be done for us. I think . . .

"Good-by, you envious old fox-and-the-grapes," says Miss Jones, and the next moment I see her whirling by in a polka with Tom Tozer, at a pace which makes me shrink back with terror into the little boudoir.

**M. CANAILLARD, CHEVALIER OF THE LEGION OF
HONOR**

LIEUTENANT BARON DE BOBWITZ

Canailard.—Oh, ces Anglais! quels hommes, mon Dieu! Comme ils sont habillés, comme ils dansent!

Bobwitz.—Ce sont de beaux hommes bourtant; point de tenue militaire, mais de grands gaillards; si je les avais dans ma compagnie de la Garde, j'en ferai de bons soldats.

Canailard.—Est-il bête, cet Allemand! Les grands hommes ne font pas toujours de bons soldats, Monsieur. Il me semble que les soldats de France qui sont de ma taille, Monsieur, valent un peu mieux...

Bobwitz.—Vous croyez?

Canailard.—Comment! je le crois, Monsieur? J'en suis sûr! Il me semble, Monsieur, que nous l'avons prouvé.

Bobwitz (impatiently).—Je m'en vais danser la Bolka. Serviteur, Monsieur.

Canailard.—Butor! (He goes and looks at himself in the glass, when he is seized by Mrs. Perkins for the Polka.)