

BENTLEY'S  
MISCELLANY.

VOL. VII.

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## THE PORTFOLIO OF MR. PETER POPKIN, (DECEASED.)

RECENTLY-DISCOVERED.

WE are indebted for these peculiar papers to no less celebrated a personage than the late—lamented Mrs. Butler. It must be in the recollection of many of our more elderly readers (male) that *our* Mrs. Butler was for many years a distinguished person in Covent-Garden. Mrs. Butler was one of the *warmest* supporters of Richard Brinsley Sheridan in the various Westminster elections. Her eloquence was so powerful that it is said that one remonstrance she uttered to Mr. Paull, M.P., and tailor, caused the unhappy gentleman to put an end to his existence. We are not aware that this was the positive fact; but we remember hearing Mrs. Butler record it. But to our immediate object. Mrs. Butler, it is well known, kept a hospitable house of entertainment in the neighbourhood of Covent-Garden. Sign it had not, until lately, when it began to exhibit a sign of decay. This tavern, in the days of hard-drinking bloods, (who never met convivially but they must make confusion worse confounded by ending their evening at four o'clock in the morning,) was denominated "*The Finish*." Some sneaking-cigar-smoking-wishy-washy-would-be-late-sitters endeavoured to alter the name of the house, and called it "*The Conclusion*," but the innovation did not answer. "*The Finish*" was the veritable word, and many a bold fellow-frequenter gradually dropped off to his final resting-place, in compliment to the house.

It is imagined, and probably with some reason, that the above-named gentleman, Mr. Peter Popkin, was an occasional visiter at this tavern; and our motive for saying so is, that Mrs. Butler one night found under the stuffed horse-hair cushion of a favourite elbow chair, a black portfolio, which was the property of Mr. Peter Popkin: though we must acquit Mrs. B. of a knowledge of that circumstance.

Popkin was a bachelor, and had lived for years in an ancient set of chambers in Clifford's Inn, in perfect quietude, over the heads of Marshalsea attorneys, — a more agreeable situation, we may reasonably conclude, than under their hands. He had on the eventful night that he disappeared from the stage of life, carried his portfolio first to George's coffee-house, near Temple-Bar, to read some of the anecdotes contained therein to his dinner associates, having made up his mind to try for the first time their effect, but the various bottles of *port* gave him no opportunity of achieving fame by the produce of his *portfolio*! Rather disappointed, he then wandered to the Burton ale-house in Henrietta Street, to discover some literary admirers in that emporium of tobacco-smoke and poached eggs; but every soul was too misty for him to venture on the subject: so, after several moody potations, and sitting until it was the customary time of night to close the tavern, he musingly sauntered to "*The Finish*;" and that he might not lose his favourite lucubrations in that somewhat disorderly house, he placed the portfolio under the cushion of the arm-chair; and, alas! to relate, he was suddenly seized with a fit of apoplexy, and shortly afterwards "*died by the visitation of a physician*."

We shall not fatigue our readers with describing the way in which

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this portfolio fell into our hands, we content ourselves by merely echoing the remark of the late Mrs. Butler, "*That it's not no business of nobody's to ax.*" But, on a careful perusal of the anecdotes detailed in the hand-writing of Mr. Popkin, we, in the end, came to the conclusion that Mr. Peter Popkin must have been an acute observer of life, and that he also could claim much praise as a patient listener, with a tolerable memory, for he had diligently transcribed the stories he nightly heard. These we have now extracted, and present from his

### Portfolio.

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#### MATHEWS AND THE SILVER SPOON.

Amongst Mathews's pranks of younger days, that is to say, when he first came from York to the Haymarket theatre, he was invited with F—— and some other performers to dine with Mr. A——, now an eminent silversmith, but who at that period followed the business of a pawnbroker. It so happened that A—— was called out of the parlour at the back of the shop during dinner. Mathews, with wonderful celerity altering his hair, countenance, hat, &c. took a large gravy-spoon off the dinner-table, ran instantly into the street, entered one of the little dark doors leading to the pawnbroker's counter, and actually pledged to the unconscious A—— his own gravy-spoon. Mathews contrived with equal rapidity to return and seat himself (having left the street-door open) before A—— re-appeared at the dinner-table. As a matter of course, this was made the subject of a wager. An *eclaircissement* took place before the party broke up, to the infinite astonishment of A——. Rabelais never accomplished a neater practical joke than this.

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A person once inquired in a court of justice, why witnesses, on being sworn, were obliged to kiss the cover of the book? To make the oath *binding*, was the reply.

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#### SIR RICHARD BIRNIE.

George the Fourth knighted Birnie, the active police magistrate, at one of his Majesty's levees. Sir Richard, delighted with the honour, invited his old friend, Mr. Day (of the Home Department office) to dine with him. After dinner they walked into the green-room of the English Opera House; where Sir Richard announced the event that had taken place at the levee. On the treasurer of the theatre hearing it, he gravely exclaimed,

"Oh, *Day and Knight!* but this is wondrous strange!"

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#### DICKY SUETT.

This eccentric genius was attached to field-sports, and he occasionally paid a visit to a relative in Surrey who could give him a

day's shooting. Arrived at Drury-Lane theatre, one evening, to perform, Suett went up to the dressing-room, which was also used by Bannister and S. Russell, "My boys," he said to them, "O Lord! such capital sport! O la! but I've only brought one brace of birds to town; left the rest with my cousin at Tooting. Come and sup with me to-night,—brace of partridges,—nothing else, but some bread-sauce. O la! here, Aberdeen,—where's the dresser? You, sir, feel in my greatcoat pocket, and carry that brace of birds home to Miss Wood, my housekeeper. Tell her that Mr. Bannister and Mr. Russell are coming to supper."

At this moment Suett and Bannister were called to go on the stage. Russell, always *au fait* at a practical joke, sent the dresser away on a pretended errand, locked the door of the room, rapidly went to a poulterer's, in Covent-Garden market, and bought two white pigeons. With these he returned to the dressing-room, took the partridges out of Suett's pocket, and replaced them with the pigeons.

The dresser came back to execute Mr. Suett's orders, and carried the pigeons home from the great-coat pocket to the housekeeper; Russell concealing the partridges for his own use.

Supper-time arrived. Suett, Russell, and Bannister were seated. On the cover being taken off, Suett said,

"O la! not quite so large as I expected out of their feathers,—fine brace of birds, too, in the morning, when I killed 'em."

"Why, they look to me like pigeons," Russell said very innocently.

"Pigeons, you succubus! ha! O la!" exclaimed Suett. "They were partridges at Tooting at half after ten this forenoon. What do you know about game?"

Suett then cut the birds up. Bannister was helped first. Russell on tasting, asking him if they were pigeons or partridges? Confounded with the bread sauce, Bannister could not immediately decide, but from the size, as well as the flavour, he thought that they were pigeons.

Suett, upon this, grew energetic, and assured his friends that he had shot that brace of birds with his own individual fowling-piece. "They were partridges, and nobody but a couple of d—d fools, could imagine for one moment that they were anything else."

Russell then said, that he did not like his taste to be disputed. He had no intention to give offence, but, might he ask a question of Miss Lucy Wood, Mr. Suett's housekeeper, who had picked and dressed the birds?

"Oh, yes! O la! certainly," replied Suett triumphantly. Here Lucy, my dear—my dovey!"

"Dovey," said Russell, and winked to Bannister,—"*pigeons!* Pray, Miss Wood, may I inquire of what colour were the feathers of the birds that were brought by Aberdeen, the dresser, this evening?"

"White, sir."

Suett stared, "Impossible! O la!"

Russell said, "I was sure of it,—there are no white partridges. To be sure, there's the ptarmigan, a sort of white grouse."

"Ptarmigan be d—d! Hells bells!" exclaimed Suett, enraged. He then recapitulated how, where, and when he had killed the birds, and ended by abusing his housekeeper, who, rather offended, said,

"If you will not believe me, Mr. Suett, Aberdeen is below, sir; he brought the birds from the theatre."

Suett ordered him up; and Aberdeen very gravely and minutely entered into an explanation, that he had by Mr. Suett's direction taken the birds with his own hands from Mr. Suett's great-coat pocket."

"And of what colour were they?"

"White."

The redoubtable Dicky was utterly mystified, nor was the imposture ever discovered.

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#### THE ECCENTRIC MAJOR DOWNS.

Downs, commonly called Billy Downs, was a corpulent major of the St. James's corps of Loyal Volunteers. From his size he was denominated the *major* part of the regiment. He was on a visit at the country residence of Mr. Grubb, (then one of the partners of Drury-Lane theatre,) situated at Horsendon, near Prince's Risborough, Bucks.

The Major had gone down without his servant, and sometimes from a nervous affection was unable to perform the very necessary operation of shaving himself. The barber of Risborough, a Methodist of the most rigid sect,—a long, sallow, melancholy, wild-looking being, dealt in religious tracts, and would not condescend to leave his shop. Downs had been apprized at the manor-house that this person was an enthusiast, and conjectured to be slightly deranged; but the Major had no alternative, so he marched over to the village, entered the shop, and commanded himself to be shaved. Wrapped in a striped cloth, tied up to the throat, over his obesity, and lathered, (by the way, one of the most interesting positions for *effect* in which a gentleman can possibly be placed,) Major Downs glanced at the evangelical tracts in the window, and in very bad taste, it must be acknowledged, said to the melancholy operator,

"D—me! my good fellow, why do you put all those infernal things there in your shop? Enough to poison the whole neighbourhood."

N.B.—The Major's principles were "Church and King! King and Constitution!"

The tonsor did not deign to answer so improper a remark, but with a penetrating, yet restless eye, he rapidly passed his keen razor up and down a huge thong of leather, which was nailed to the top frame of the chair, close to Downs's ear.

The Major perceived that he had given deep offence by his question. A dead silence ensued. Downs winced, and began to think of the barber's supposed derangement. He was tied up,—in his power; but he was too proud, or too brave, to recant. As the razor approached his face, something moving attracted his attention outside the shop-window, and at that critical moment the Major saw two little rogues of boys peeping through, who were passing their hands across their necks, imitating the action of throat-cutting, and pointing to the melancholy tonsor.

This was too much for the valiant Major, in the state of nervous excitement into which he had worked himself. In a twinkling, therefore, up he jumped, tore off the striped cloth, and without even

waiting to wipe the soap from his face, he threw down a shilling to the astonished Wesleyan barber for *not* being shaved, and hastily made a judicious retreat from the shop.

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THEATRICAL ALARM.

The original Lyceum theatre was surrounded by very ancient buildings, untenanted and dilapidated portions of which would sometimes fall down while the performances were going on, and cause alarm to the audience. One night, when the performances were for the benefit of Mr. T. P——, the singer, and when a very full house had assembled in compliment to that popular vocalist, a loud crash was suddenly heard, and the people in the front of the theatre in dismay rose in all directions. P——, who was on the stage, came forward, and entreated "the ladies and gentlemen" to be *perfectly calm*, as he was convinced "*it was only something that had given way.*" This, of course, only increased the consternation. Whereupon P——s, perceiving B——y, the architect, at the side-scene, adroitly persuaded him to come on the stage to assure the audience as to the perfect safety of the building.

Mr. B——y accordingly made his first appearance, and bowing gracefully, he said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I am the surveyor to this theatre, and I beg to assure you that "*there is no foundation whatever*——"—(loud uproar). He meant to have continued "*for the cause of your present apprehensions,*" but the noise and alarm prevented him from becoming more elucidatory.

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A PAIR OF BULLS.

S—— K—— was one evening behind the scenes of Covent Garden theatre, when he observed a remarkable-looking person at the side-scene. "Who 's that?" inquired K—— of Farley. "That is O. Smith," replied Farley. "I thought everybody knew him."—"Introduce me," said K——. The introduction immediately took place, when K——, with great warmth of feeling, said, "Mr. O. Smith, I have long wished to be introduced to you as a man of talent. I have the pleasure to be very intimate with your *namesake*, Mr. T. P. Cooke."

At the conclusion of an engagement at the Victoria theatre, when Abbott was the lessee, K—— said, "My dear Abbott, I am off to the country: *can I carry any letters for you?*" Abbott thanked him, and inquired to what part of the country K—— was going. "Faith, *I have not yet made up my mind,*" answered K——.

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D'EGVILLE AND POOLE.

Mathews being invited by D'Egville to dine one day with him at Brighton, D'Egville inquired what was Mathews's favourite dish? "A roasted leg of pork, with sage and onions." This was provided; and D'Egville carving, swore that he could not find the stuffing. He turned the joint all over, but in vain. Poole was at table, and in his quiet way said, "Don't make yourself unhappy, D'Egville; *perhaps it is in the other leg.*"

## CHURCH LEARNING IN 1560.

The Bishop of Dunkelden, in Scotland, thanked God that he never knew what the Old or New Testament was, and yet had prospered well enough all his days.

## GEORGE COLMAN, THE LICENSER.

When George Colman was appointed reader of plays to the Licenser, he became (though an old offender) extremely punctilious about the introduction of oaths in the manuscript of a drama, and invariably erased them. A party dining one day at his agreeable table at Brompton, some very fine *Hollands* was presented as *liqueur*. Colman's son Edmund recommended it. "Taste this admirable *Schie*," said he.—"*Schie*?" says Colman. "Why do you call it *Schie*, sir?"—"Because, father, you know you always *cut out the d—n*."

## NEW ADAPTATION OF "GOD SAVE THE KING."

Immediately after the marriage of the Duke and Duchess of Kent, the royal pair visited the theatres publicly. It was notified that they were to honour the performances at the English Opera-house. Mr. A——, the proprietor, felt it to be his duty on this auspicious occasion to add some complimentary stanzas to the national anthem, "God save the King." Being, however, much occupied with perplexing business, he left this task until the last moment. It should be stated that the notice of the royal visit had been sent to Mr. A——'s house in Golden Square. Mr. A—— was all bustle at the theatre for the reception of his royal visitors, but sat down to write his verses. He had concluded one to his satisfaction, and had arrived at the middle of another, when his muse forsook him. He there stuck, pen in hand, at

"So may the royal pair,  
Joy of the nation, share—  
Joy of the nation, share—"

P—— came into the room at this moment, and A—— put him in requisition to furnish the absent line, singing,

(*singing*) "So may the royal pair,  
Joy of the nation, share—  
P—— (*sung*) Thirty-one Golden Square,  
God save the King."

## POPES, AND THEIR ASSUMED NAMES.

Sergius the Second was the first Pope that ever changed his name; for his name being before *Bocca di Porco*, he thought that title beneath his dignity, so caused himself to be called Sergius. His successors, it appears, followed precedents; so that if one Pope be a coward, he is called *Leo*,—if a tyrant, *Clement*,—if an atheist, *Pius*,—if unjust, *Innocent*,—if a rustic, *Urbanus*.

## JOHN TAYLOR.

John Taylor was asked if he was a descendant of Taylor the water-poet? He shook his thin white head, and said, "No; I believe I am Taylor the *milk-and-water* poet."

## NATIONAL SYMBOLS.

The new Covent Garden theatre had received a splendid embellishment to the fronts of the boxes, proscenium, &c. consisting of modelled roses, shamrocks, and thistles, while the old Lyceum experienced frequently the inconvenience of the rain coming through the roof in various places. Some one praising the beauty of this decoration as the national symbols of England, Ireland, and Scotland, "Well," said the Lyceum proprietor, "my theatre has got the national symbol of the other part of the island, which they have omitted,—Wales. Observe the *leaks!*"

## MATHEWS'S YORKSHIRE SERVANT.

Soon after Mathews had married the present Mrs. Mathews, he paid a visit to his mother, who was in an infirm state of health. Mathews had brought a bumpkin of a servant lad from York, who frequently formed a capital model for many of his master's admirable representations of rustic ignorance. This fellow was always in error. One day, Mrs. Lichfield sent with her compliments to inquire how old Mrs. Mathews was. The York lad went up stairs to Mrs. Mathews, Junior, and delivered the message thus: "Missus Lichfield's compliments, marm, and wants to know *how old you be?*"

## A WATCHMAKER'S RUSE.

A poor devil of a watchmaker came down to settle at \*\*\*\*\*. The village was populous. This person was utterly unknown; but he rather ingeniously hit on a project to procure employ. He contrived, when the church door was opened daily, to send up his son (a lad of address) to the church tower unseen, and to alter the clock. This the boy was enabled to do by a slight knowledge of his father's business. This measure, of course, made all the watches in the neighbourhood wrong so repeatedly, (and every one swears by his church-clock,) that the owners sent them to the new comer to be cleaned and repaired. This *ruse* established the artisan.

## SHERIDAN, AND HIS SON TOM.

Tom Sheridan, when a lad, was one day asking his father (the celebrated Richard Brinsley) for a small sum of money. Sheridan tried to avoid giving any, and said, "Tom, you ought to be doing something to get your living. At your age my father made me work. My father always—"—"I beg your pardon, sir," interrupted Tom: "I will not hear *your* father compared with *mine*."



## LUDICROUS MISTAKE OF MATHEWS.

During the height of the popularity of his celebrated entertainment "At Home," Mathews, walking down the Strand, observed, or thought he observed, his old acquaintance, Lee the actor, looking into the windows of a print-shop. Mathews came behind Lee, and putting one hand on each side of his head, blindfolded him, and concluded by rubbing his ears heartily, and beating his hat over his head. The person so treated struggled, and turned very indignantly, when, to the inexpressible horror of Mathews, he saw in an instant that it was not Mr. Lee, but an utter stranger, with whom he had taken this familiar liberty. "What do you mean, you scoundrel?" said the old gentleman. Mathews attempted an apology and explanation, but nothing would satisfy the affront. A crowd gathered round; most of the spectators knew Mathews by sight, and were laughing at the untoward event. On hearing the name of Mathews mentioned, the old gentleman became doubly incensed, and would not be convinced that he had not been grossly and wantonly insulted. He commenced such a torrent of abuse, that Mathews was at last obliged to walk off. Any one acquainted with the nervous temperament of Mathews, will imagine the ludicrous distress of the scene.

## TOM DIBDIN AND THE LOZENGE.

Tom Dibdin had a cottage near Box Hill, to which, after his theatrical labours, he was delighted to retire. One stormy night, after Mr. and Mrs. Dibdin had been in bed some time, Mrs. D. being kept awake by the violence of the weather, aroused her husband, exclaiming, "Tom, Tom, get up!"—"What for?" said he.—"Don't you hear how very bad the wind is?"—"Is it?" replied Dibdin, half asleep, but could not help punning. "Put a peppermint lozenge out of the window, my dear. It is the best thing in the world for the wind."

## NO WHISTLING!

Mrs. M—— was taking a walk one Sunday in Edinburgh. She had a favourite little dog with her, which frisked away round the corner of the street. A respectable-looking person passing, and Mrs. M—— fearing to lose the dog, addressed him, saying, "Would you be so obliging, sir, as to whistle my dog back?" The reply was, "I canna whistle on the Sabbath."

## THE BOTTOMLESS PIT.

One night at Covent Garden, where there was a very scanty audience, the benches of the pit being visible in all directions: a grave-looking person, peeping over the boxes, audibly exclaimed, "Well! I have often heard of the *bottomless* pit, but I never before saw it."

THE PORTFOLIO OF MR. PETER POPKIN  
(DECEASED).

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HARLEY, Wilkinson, and J. Russell all started off from various callings to become comedians at one time. After certain vicissitudes, they all three found themselves established at the theatre at Gravesend. Here then they were performing perfectly to their hearts' content; but it was a matter of doubt whether the manager could congratulate himself on a successful speculation with their united talents.

The following incident will give some idea of the then state of the *Theatre Rural*, Gravesend.

The play was "The Castle Spectre;" after which, songs by Mr. Harley, with all the *et ceteras* of a country play-bill; the whole to conclude with the romantic drama of "Blue Beard,"—*Abomelique*, Mr. Wilkinson, his first appearance in that character. This combination of unrivalled novelty was expected to draw a tolerable house. The curtain went up—boxes, *nobody*,—pit, *nobody*,—gallery, two old women, and a little boy in a white hat, with a bit of black crape round it. When Harley as *Motley*, and Wilkinson as *Father Philip*, entered on the stage, and seeing the state of the house, Harley, raising his staff, deliberately placed it to his shoulder, and pointing it up to the gallery, exclaimed, "*Booh!*"

One of the old women indignantly got up and said,

"Come away, my dears; let's go down stairs. Them fools are making game of us."

Thus ended the performances of the evening.

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MAKING THE BEST OF IT.

"Well, Norah, is your husband at home?"

"No, sir; he has gone to court."

"Gone to court!"

"Yes, sir; he is summoned to the Court of Requests."

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H\*\*\*, a young dramatic author (who had sent pieces to most of the theatres, but could not get them produced), one day met my friend Barnaby, who perceiving H\*\*\*'s face tied up, inquired the reason. H\*\*\* replied, that he had just had a tooth extracted. "Fortunate fellow!" said Barnaby; "*you have got something out at last.*"

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My friend Barnaby was journeying to Hastings outside the coach, which stopped to change horses at Riverhead. A heavy shower fell, wetting the passengers thoroughly. "What is the use of proceeding to Hastings?" said Barnaby to his dripping companions; "this is the watering-place."

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John Reeve always insisted that his father was a government contractor. If pressed to state in what department, he said, "My father was a hosier in Milk Street, Cheapside, and supplied all the white night-caps for the Old Bailey."

John Reeve saw in the Strand one of the Bavarian broom-women, whose formation of spine was remarkably crooked,—he said, “Pray, madam, did you come *straight* from Germany?”

Tom C—— was eating oysters; he took one into his mouth that was not quite fresh, but not liking to eject it, he resolved to swallow it. On taking another in its shell, a by-stander remarked, “Tom, that is a *fine native*.” C—— said, “I’m mighty glad of it; for the last was a *settler*.”

Charles Lamb was very fond of a rubber of whist. He sat down one night at the house of a friend, to which Elliston had also been invited. Elliston arrived late, had evidently taken too much wine, and was, as usual on such an occasion, extremely grand. It chanced, in cutting, that Lamb and Elliston became partners. Elliston’s play was, under the circumstances, of course very bad, which, joined to his affected *hauteur*, raised the ire of Lamb, who at the end of a game suddenly exclaimed, in his stuttering manner, “If *dirt* was trumps, what fine hands you would have, Mr. Elliston.”

OPENING OF A MELO-DRAMA.

GASPER. The morn is breaking.

NICHOLAS. Let it break and be d—d! It owes me nothing.

On the English translation of the card of a French inn, between Boulogne and Abbeville, these words are printed, “*The wines are of that quality, they will leave you nothing to hope for.*”

Miss B—— (the Danseuse and Columbine) was married to a Mr. S——. My friend Barnaby inquired the profession of Mr. S——, and was informed that he was an eminent butcher. “That accounts for it,” said Barnaby; “he fell in love with *her calf*.”

An Irish captain, on hearing that the lady of a brother officer had been giving herself some airs, said with *naïveté*, “Och, Brownlow wants only a little resolution. I never will allow my wife to wear the *petticoats*.”

It has been remarked, that there is no man of talent without a certain portion of eccentricity; and it frequently occurs, that the higher the grade of talent, the more *outré* is the species of eccentricity. Where was there a stranger being than Richard Brinsley Sheridan? Dr. Johnson had his whims, Dean Swift his peculiar oddities; but the present anecdote relates to a renowned person in the histrionic art, John Phillip Kemble.

Mr. Kemble had been dining with a noble duke of high convivial habits, and on this particular occasion the libations to Bacchus were so frequent, and of so long a continuance, that the party did not wend homewards until four o’clock in the morning.

At a quarter past four Mr. Kemble (who insisted on walking) found himself alone in the Strand, opposite Exeter ‘Change, in the upper apartments of which was exhibited the menagerie of the celebrated Polito. The “*matins*” roar of a lion called forth Mr. Kemble’s attention; he paused—and, with the fumes of the wine floating on

his brain, he was seized at the moment with a most peculiar whim, and uttered to himself,

“To be, or not to be, that is the question.”

“It shall be!—no man ever attempted it. In any book of natural history—nay, in all the voyages and travels I ever perused, no man ever did it. I—I will do it!—the world shall say, *alone* I did it. I WILL HAVE A RIDE ON A RHINOCEROS!” He here took a pinch of snuff, and exclaimed, “What ho! Exeter ‘Change! Nobody stirring?” He then made a staggering effort to pull the bell. After he had rung the bell several times with tipsy vehemence, one of the keepers of the wild beasts, who slept in their apartment as a sort of groom of the chamber, made his appearance in an ancient *beef-eater’s* dress, and a Welsh wig.

KEMBLE. Sir, are you Mr. Polito?

KEEPER. No, sir. Master’s a-bed, and asleep.

KEMBLE. You must wake him, good fellow.

KEEPER. I daren’t sir, unless it’s *merry pertikler*.

KEMBLE. Next time say “*very particular*.” Hark you, *it is* very particular. You have up stairs, if I remember rightly, an animal denominated a rhinoceros.

KEEPER. We’ve got a rhinoceros, and a fine *feller* she is.

KEMBLE. Introduce me to him. You object. Go call Mr. Polito, your very noble and approved good master.

On the arrival of Mr. Polito, Kemble addressed him. “Mr. Polito, I presume?” Polito bowed.

KEMBLE. You know me, I suppose?

POLITO. Very well, sir. You are Mr. Kemble, of Drury Lane Theatre.

KEMBLE. Right, good Polito! Sir, I am seized with an unaccountable, an uncontrollable fancy. You have a rhinoceros?

POLITO. Yes, sir.

KEMBLE. My desire is to have a ride upon his back.

POLITO. Mr. Kemble, you astonish me!

KEMBLE (*elated*). I mean to astonish the whole world. I intend to ride your rhinoceros up Southampton Street to Covent Garden Market.

POLITO. It is next to an impossibility, Mr. Kemble.

KEMBLE. Talk not to me of impossibility. Were it an impossibility, I would do it.

POLITO. Suppose any accident should happen—the beast is valuable. I would not permit him to be led down into the street under the sum of ten guineas.

KEMBLE. Here are ten guineas, Mr. Polito—a bargain. Lead forth my charger—Speed! speed!”

Polito finding that he could not get rid of the extraordinary application, pocketed the ten guineas, and told the keeper, (who was on intimate terms with the rhinoceros,) to bring the animal out, with the proviso that it was to go no further than Covent Garden. When in the street, ridiculous as it may appear, the grave John Kemble actually mounted on the back of the beast, who hardly knew what to make of it, but, led in a strap by its feeder, went quietly enough, until Mr. Kemble, highly elated by the achievement of his whim, thought it necessary to spur with his heels.

KEEPER. Gently, sir. Let *vel* alone. This is *rayther* a crusty buffer; if you makes him unruly he'll pitch you off, and rip you up.

KEMBLE. Rip *me* up! Ha! ha! ha! What would they do at Drury?

It was daylight; and, of course, a mob was collected from Covent Garden market. At this moment Emery, who was also returning from a late party, saw the extraordinary cavalcade. Emery, somewhat startled at the situation of Mr. Kemble, went up to him.

KEMBLE. Ah! Emery, how are you?

EMERY. Pretty well, thank ye, sur. Why, bless my heart, sur, let me give you a hand off that what-d'ye-call-'em-brute.

KEMBLE. It is a rhinoceros, Emery.

EMERY. Lauk, sur! pray come down.

KEMBLE. Not until I have reached my goal.

"By goles!" exclaimed Emery, as he walked by his side to the top of Southampton Street, when Kemble deliberately dismounted, gave a crown to the keeper, patted the rhinoceros, saying, "Farewell, poor beast!" and, holding Emery's arm, uttered, "Mr. Emery, I have, doubtless, committed a very silly action; but, after imbibing a certain quantity of wine, no man's deeds are under control; but, nevertheless, I have done that which no living being can say he ever accomplished.

'What man dare, I dare.

Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,  
The arm'd rhinoceros—'

"Bless my soul, I am getting on the rhinoceros again. Mr. Emery, will you have the goodness to see me as far as Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury."

A friend had in his service a cook that could neither read nor write. One day, coming to his door, he perceived the cook taking in from an itinerant bookvender, some monthly numbers of a work. Curiosity was excited to know what could possibly be the subject of the cook's erudition, so her master carelessly asked her to let him look at the publication. Mary, blushing, said that she wished to improve in her kitchen business, and she had been taking in for nearly three months, in parts, "*Cook's Voyages!*"

An amateur medical adviser at Boulogne has lately discovered an ingenious method of causing physic to remain on the stomach of a patient. His direction is, that when pills are making up, the chemist is to put a small fish-hook into each pill!

At a pleasant dinner-party, Mrs. Mountain, the vocalist, (who was a very lively person,) asked Mr. David Grove, who had been invited, "Whether he was any relation to the GROVES of *Blarney?*" Grove gravely replied that he had but one relation, and that was his brother John.

## SMASHING.

A beefsteak club was established in Drury-Lane theatre, and its meetings were held in a temporary apartment, fitted up in the painting room. Mr. John H—— was appointed secretary. Amongst the by-laws of this convivial society, a small fine was inflicted on every member who did not pass the bottle in a certain period, and there were other fines for petty offences against the regulations. H—— had the collection of these profits, which were to be applied to a fund for an annual white-bait dinner at Greenwich.

H——, on one particular meeting, was somewhat surprised at the number of fines incurred (particularly from several of the members who were never in the habit of stopping the bottle); in fact, he had that evening collected about three pounds five shillings *in silver*.

But this was the effect of a waggish conspiracy against the poor little secretary. The manager laid the plan. There were several confederates; and the quiet treasurer supplied the parties with bad half-crowns, shillings, and sixpences (which in a number of seasons had been taken at the doors of the theatre, and laid aside). With this base money the fines were, with small exception, paid to the secretary. About ten o'clock Mr. H—— was enquired for at the stage-door. He left the pleasant table; and, on going down, was accosted by Leadbitter, a Bow Street officer, who requested to speak to him *privately*.

H——, rather astonished at this, conducted the officer into a room, when Leadbitter told him, "He was very sorry to say, that he had a warrant against Mr. H——."

"A warrant!" exclaimed H——; and the officer produced a printed paper, and said, "that he had authority to take Mr. H—— in custody for passing a bad half-crown in Covent Garden market, that afternoon."

H—— was surprised, and said he had certainly "purchased some fruit and vegetables there, as, indeed, he did daily;" but utterly disclaimed paying with a halfcrown.

Leadbitter (who had received his infernal instruction from the hoaxers above,) respectfully told poor H—— that it was his painful duty—with a man of his standing in the world—to search his person. H—— very indignantly said, "Search me directly." Leadbitter proceeded in his task, and found all the quantity of base coin in the pockets of H——. The affair now assumed a serious aspect, when Leadbitter told H—— that "he must accompany him." The party upstairs was sent to; but not one of the conspirators would come down. Some, who were not in the secret, and foremost amongst them, was Mr. William L——, were descending, quitting the club for the evening. H—— appealed to them, and the charge was received by the benevolent L—— with utter astonishment. Another gentleman, thinking that a practical joke might be carried too far, interfered, and at last induced the Bow Street officer to confess that he had been employed with a fictitious warrant, to consummate this hoaxing attack on the harmless and good-natured little secretary.

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Fat and facetious Major Downs, W——, D——, and others, went on an angling party to Hampton. Downs had conceived a joke against D——, and procured a red herring, which he concealed in

his basket. The party were in punts, and were successful. They, however, ceased from their sport to partake of some luncheon on the water, and Downs requested D—— to draw the cork of a bottle of sherry. D—— left his line in the water; and, while his back was turned, the Major rapidly drew up the float, hooked the red-herring, and threw it quietly into the river. He then accepted of some sandwiches; and whilst D—— was pouring out a glass of wine, he said, "See—see, you have got a bite there!"

D—— as quickly as he could pulled up the line, and was utterly astounded at *the fish he had caught!*

Mr. D—— is now a first-rate disciple of Izaak Walton.

In writing about Poland, if an author is at a loss for surnames, all he has to do is, to sneeze, and add the syllable SKI afterwards. For instance, in the various strange sounds of a sneeze,—Athishah-SKI; araposh-SKI; sbldsph-SKI; stchar-SKI; tishoo-SKI;—all excellent Polish names!

Robert William Elliston was at Croydon fair, and, having rather exceeded his customary potation after dinner, he staggered and fell down. Two respectable persons immediately lifted him up on his legs. He gazed for an instant at them alternately, and drawled out gravely, "You will rob me, of course; but for God's sake do not otherwise ill-treat me!"

Mr. A—— was at a pleasant convivial party, and, having done something contrary to the rules of the society, he was called to order by the chairman, who jocosely reprimanded him at some length, and concluded by observing, that he feared the exhortation had produced very little effect on the person addressed; in fact, it was "*casting pearls before swine.*" A—— rose with an humble demeanour, modestly apologized for his misbehaviour, and, perfectly agreeing with the chairman in his last line, begged leave most respectfully "*to cast HIMSELF before THE SOCIETY.*"

## 'TIS HE!

BY CAPTAIN MEDWIN.

As I was walking one day last May in the Tuileries Gardens, arm-in-arm with a French gentleman, a stranger *en passant*, remarked, pointing to another, "Tis he!" My friend, who overheard the words as well as myself, suddenly turned pale, and became so seriously indisposed that he alarmed me.

I led him to a bench, fortunately at hand, and asked him the cause of his emotion. When he had sufficiently recovered he said, with a deep sigh,

"Those horrible words! I have the greatest possible antipathy to them; and, when you have heard my story, you will think with reason,—almost as great an objection to them as Lara had.

"No one can read that tale, and entertain a doubt that it is a sequel to the Corsair,—that, in fact, Conrad and Lara are the same person.