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MR. PUNCH.

Etched by George Cruikshank.

From the original Miniature in the possession of the Publisher.

London Pub^d by S. Prowett, 55 Pall Mall.

✓

S.H. 1878

PUNCH AND JUDY,

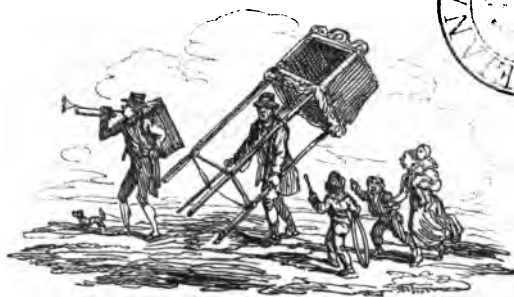
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

DESIGNED AND ENGRAVED

BY

GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

ACCOMPANIED BY THE DIALOGUE OF THE PUPPET-SHOW,
AN ACCOUNT OF ITS ORIGIN, AND OF PUPPET-PLAYS
IN ENGLAND.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR S. PROWETT, 55, PALL MALL.

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LONDON :

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INTRODUCTION.

WITH the assistance of our friend Mr. GEORGE CRUIKSHANK, we are about to fill up a *hiatus* in theatrical history.

It is singular, that, up to the present day, no attempt has been made to illustrate the origin, biography, and character of a person so distinguished and notorious as Mr. PUNCH. His name and his performances are familiar to all ranks and ages; yet nobody has hitherto taken the trouble, in this country or abroad, to make any inquiries regarding himself, his family, or connections. The "studious Bayle" is recorded to have repeatedly sallied from his retreat, at the sound of the cracked trumpet, announcing his arrival in Rotterdam; and we ourselves, who have often hunted our favourite performer from street to street, saw the late Mr.

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Windham, then one of the Secretaries of State, on his way from Downing Street to the House of Commons, on a night of important debate, pause like a truant boy, until the whole performance was concluded, to enjoy a hearty laugh at the whimsicalities of "the motley hero." But it is needless to particularise:—Punch has

"made our youth to laugh,
Until they scarcely could look on for tears;"

while the old have stood by, "delighted with delight" of others, and themselves, too, enjoying the ludicrous representation. Why the interest has hitherto been limited to the period of representation, and whether it has not in part arisen from inability to satisfy it, is not for us to explain. We confine ourselves to an endeavour, in some degree, to supply the deficiency.

The contrast between the neglect Mr. Punch has experienced, and the industry employed in collecting particulars relating to other performers of far less reputation, is remarkable. If an actor, on any of our public stages, attain only a moderate degree of eminence, hundreds are on the alert to glean the minutest particulars of his "birth, parentage,

and education, life, character, and behaviour ;” and thousands look out for them with eagerness in all the newspapers and periodicals of the day. Punch has never been *famæ petitor* :

“That last distemper of the sober brain,”

as Marvell calls it, has never been one of his weaknesses ; but, nevertheless, it is undeniable, that his fame has spread, “without his stirring,” over all the kingdoms of the civilized world. To use the wordy periphrasis of Dr. Johnson,

“Let observation, with extensive view,
Survey mankind from China to Peru ;”

if it can, and it will every where behold Punch dispensing “the luxury of a laugh.” It is literally true, that, some years ago, he found his way to Canton ; and that, since the South American Revolution, he has been seen even on the western side of the Andes. He is, perhaps, himself in part to blame for the neglect we have noticed. Several of the principal supporters of our theatres, in our own day, have given their memoirs to the world, either by writing them with their own hands, or by furnishing the materials to others ; and the works of this kind by dead actors, “the forgotten of the stage,” consist

of many volumes. Whether it has arisen from an absence of that vanity (may we call it?) which has at times influenced his histrionic rivals, or from a somewhat haughty reluctance, on his part, to gratify public curiosity, we know not; but whatever injury it may do the sale of our volume, it ought not in fairness to be concealed, that, towards us, the object and subject of the appended inquiry has preserved an obstinate silence which, in any other individual, we should say amounted to incivility. Even when informed that his portrait was to be drawn by Mr. George Cruikshank, it did not at all change his deportment. This circumstance is certainly to be regretted; but we flatter ourselves that our own unaided resources have furnished much curious and interesting information: and if, by its publication, we give offence, we must "abey the event," knowing that, as Mr. Punch was deaf to our request, he will not listen to our apology.

Another remark may not here be out of its place: Poetry is unquestionably out of fashion; and because it was not "set by," as perhaps it ought to have been, the greatest (in every sense of the word) author of our day turned his attention to a different and more popular mode of writing. His astonish-

ing success induced others to follow his example : they, too, tried their hands at historical novels; but, wanting the genius of their original, they endeavoured to keep up the interest of their narratives by the introduction of biographical matter. Still they found they were not read, and their next step was to make the dead the means of satirising and censuring the living ; until, in a short time, this thin disguise was thrown aside, and novels became the vehicles of private anecdotes and malicious disclosures. Such is now the characteristic of our literature, excepting in as far as it is corrected by the “Colossus” aforesaid ; and we appeal to all the puffs in all the papers within the last four or five years, for the proof, that fashionable slander, and the exposure of secret intrigues of persons in high life, have been made the chief recommendation and attraction of such productions. The course has been, to assign the work of a “scribbling garretteer” to some Lord or Lady of distinguished connections, and to represent, that, for the sake of gratifying a mania for the consumption of pen, ink, and paper, he or she has condescended, first to play the spy, and afterwards the traitor, to friends and acquaintances.

Nothing of this kind will be found in the volume

now in the reader's hands ; and although the biography of the Punch family is, necessarily, partially included in our plan, those who expect that we shall detail particulars of his private amours and failings will be disappointed. Ariosto tells such, as may not like certain parts of his gay poem, to turn over so many of its leaves :* we advise those, who feel vexation at the preceding statement, to shut our book altogether ; or, at least, not to do more than cast their eyes upon the plates : since they know by whom the drawings were made, it would, perhaps, be too much to suppose they could consent to relinquish that gratification. Those incidents of his life which our hero has chosen to make known, are of course not omitted ; but, in our details and observations, we have spoken of him only in his public capacity,—as an actor of first-rate talents and of the most extensive celebrity.

* See the introductory stanzas to Book xxviii. of the *Orl. Fur.*

CHAP. I.

ORIGIN OF PUNCH IN ITALY.

MR. PUNCH, (whose original family name was probably *Pulcinella*,) first came into existence at Acerra, an ancient city at a short distance from Naples. The date of this event is differently stated by authors who have incidently mentioned him ; Riccoboni* fixing it before the year 1600, and Gimma† and Signorelli‡ after the commencement of the seventeenth century. The words of Gimma are very precise, and as he enters

* He uses general terms, and his authority is not much to be relied on : *Histoire du Théâtre Italien depuis la Decadence de la Comedie Latine*, &c.

† *Italia Letterata*, vol. i. p. 196.

‡ *Storia Critica de' Teatri antiche e moderne*.—Nap. 1777. It is to be observed, however, that the Dottore Pietro Napoli Signorelli relies for his assertion on the statement of Gimma in his *Italia Letterata*.

into particulars, it seems safe to rely upon his authority for this important fact: he says, "Silvio Fiorillo, comedian, who procured himself to be called the Captain Matamoros, invented the Neapolitan Pulcinella; to which Andrea Calcese, who had the surname of Ciuccio, by study and natural grace added much. Calcese was a tailor, and died in the plague of the year 1656: he imitated the peasants of Acerra, a very ancient city of Terra di Lavoro, not far from Naples." Signorelli expressly calls Punch, *un buffone* dell' Acerra*; and of the Neapolitans in general, he remarks (p. 231,) that, "from a certain national vivacity and disposition, they have been at all times distinguished for their talent in imitating the ridiculous on their stages."† Hence several of the amusing person-

* Voltaire, in his *Questions sur L'Encyclopedie*, thus speaks of the etymology of the Italian word *buffone*, after ridiculing the classical derivation pedantically assigned to it—"Ce mot de *boufon* est reçu depuis longtems chez les Italiens et chez les Espagnols: il signifiait *mimus*, *scurra*, *joculator*, mime, farceur, jongleur. Ménage après Saumaise le dérive de *bocca inflata*, boursofflé; et en effet on veut dans un boufon un visage rond et la joue rebondie. Les Italiens disent *bufo magro*, maigre boufon, pour exprimer un mauvais plaisant qui ne vous fait pas rire."

† As one proof, that Pulcinella was not known before 1600, it may be noticed that he is not mentioned by one of the burlesque Poets of Italy, who flourished anterior to that date.

ages in their impromptu comedies, or *commedie à soggetto*, inserted by Riccoboni among the plates attached to his work, have had their origin in that lively and luxurious capital.*

In order to give a notion of the species of dramatic entertainment in which these various characters, and among them Pulcinella, were engaged, a further short quotation from Signorelli's work will be useful: he is referring to the state of the Italian comedy in the beginning of the seventeenth century. "In general (he says,) the public comedians travelled over Italy, representing certain theatrical performances, called comedies of *art*, in contradistinction to comedies of *learning*, recited in the academies and in private dwellings by well-bred actors for their pleasure and exercise. The plan or plot of the fable, as they call it, *à soggetto*, was noted down, as well as the substance and distribution of each scene, while the dialogue was left to the will of the representers. Such histrionic farces contained various trivial buffooneries, and different masks were employed in them."

* They are the ancient and modern Harlequin—the ancient and modern Pantaloon—the ancient and modern Doctor—Beltrame di Milano—Scapin—the Italian Captain—the Spanish Captain—the Neapolitan Scaramouche—Calabrian Gurgolo—Mezzettin—Tartaglia—the Neapolitan Pulcinella, and Narcisin of Malabergo.

to the old Clown or Fool, not only in England but abroad. Rabelais, speaking of certain presents made by Panurge to the fool Triboulet, says, *Panurge à sa venue luy donna une vessie de porc, bien enflée et resonnante, à cause des poys qui dedans estoient: plus, une espée de boys bien dorée: plus, une petite gibessiere faicte d'une coque de Tortue:** which we thus translate for the benefit of such as may not understand the antiquated French,—“Panurge, on his arrival, gave him a pig’s bladder well inflated, and resounding by reason of the peas that were within it: moreover, a wooden sword well gilt: moreover, a small pouch, made of a shell of a tortoise.” Those who consult Mr. Douce’s “Illustrations,” and particularly his essay on the “Clowns and Fools of Shakspeare,” will find that the bladder at the end of a stick, the gilt wooden sword, and the pouch or budget, formed part of the equipments of that personage in this country. The wooden sword directly connects Harlequin with the ancient Vice, and more modern Fool,† although we have now enjoined him to silence, and have converted

* Chap. 42, edit. 1553.

† If this coincidence had occurred to Mr. D’Israeli, he would not have said (Cur. Lit. iii. 10, note) that “the light lath-sword of Harlequin had hitherto baffled his most painful researches.”

the instrument, with which of old he cudgelled the Devil, into a talisman to raise him.

The dress too, of Harlequin, corresponds very much with the *motley* or parti-coloured habit of the clowns of our old dramatic poets. It is true, that the different hues have been arranged with greater regularity, and the patches are of smaller size. The ordinary habiliments of Punch at the present day, preserved by ancient usage, with his pointed fool's-cap, bear a much nearer resemblance; and this is one circumstance that evidences the strong family-resemblance between the Vice, Harlequin, and Pulcinella.* Riccoboni represents the *ancient* Harlequin in a dress composed of patches, as if his ragged clothes had been often mended, and Goldoni speaks of him as originally a poor foolish dolt. There can be little doubt that this was the real origin of the *motley* of the dramatic and domestic fools in former times. They were retained, or were supposed to be retained, by the nobility, commonly out of charity, and one of their ordinary appellations was *Patch*. Cardinal Wolsey had a fool whose

* Dr. Johnson, in a note on Hamlet, (act iii. scene 4.) asserts positively, that, "the modern Punch is descended from the ancient Vice," but see this opinion disputed by Mr. Douce, "Illustrations of Shakspeare," ii. 251.

parental name has been lost, and he is now only known by the nick-name belonging to his profession. .

Upon the continent to this day Harlequin is as talkative as ever, even if his jokes are a little less coarse, and his satire kept within narrower bounds. Voltaire, in his *Encyclopedie** and elsewhere, quotes several capital sayings and aphorisms by Harlequin; but the account that Addison gives of him would hardly lead us to suppose that in his time he possessed so much wit and acuteness. He tells us, that in Italy, "Harlequin's part is made up of blunders and absurdities: he is to mistake one name for another, to forget his errands, to stumble over queens, and to run his head against every post that comes in his way. This is all attended with something so comical in the voice and gestures, that a man who is sensible of the folly of the part can hardly forbear to be pleased with it."† Much of this character has been transferred to the clowns of our pantomimes, since Harlequin was elevated in station and degraded in understanding.‡

* Vol. iv. p. 427, edit. 1775.

† Travels, p. 77, edit. 1718.

‡ A good deal has been written on the etymology of the word Harlequin: it is very clear that the fanciful derivations from Francis the First's ridicule of *Charles quint*, and from M. de *Harlay-quint*, in the reign of Henry III. of France, are unfounded. The Rev. Mr. Todd quotes a letter of M. Raulin,

Concluding, then, that Punch is one of the *familia Harlequini*, and that their common parent was the Vice of the old Moralities, the question arises, to what circumstance he owes the deformity of his figure, and why his nose, by its length, is rendered so obtrusive a feature? We can only answer, that it pleased his inventor, Silvio Fiorillo, to make him so; and, perhaps, he did it in some degree with a view of rendering him more ridiculous, and to distinguish him more effectually from other characters of not dissimilar habits and propensities in the impromptu comedies: hence too, probably, the peculiar quality of his voice, to which Addison alludes. One striking characteristic of Punch is his amorous inclination; and it is generally supposed that individuals with the personal defect for which he is remarkable, are peculiarly "given to the females;" and the Italian proverb relating to the length of nose needs

dated 1521, which affords clear evidence that the "*familiam Harlequini*" was even then *antiquam*; and as early as the time of Odericus Vitalis, A. D. 1143, the same family is mentioned as the *familia Herlechini*. This decisive authority for its high antiquity was not known to Mr. Todd. Whether *Harlequinus*, or *Herlechinus*, were really the name of any family, or whether it was a corruption of the old French *arlot*, a cheat, must still, and perhaps will ever, remain a matter of dispute among the learned.

not, if it could, be repeated. Among Riccoboni's plates is one of Giangurgolo of Calabria, and he is represented with a much larger nose than that of Pulcinella.* In the time of Shakspeare, it seems to have been the custom for usurers on the stage to wear large false noses; but, perhaps, it was intended thus to indicate that they were generally of the Jewish persuasion.†

According to Quadrio, in his *Storia d'ogni Poesia*; the name of our hero has relation to the length of his nose: he would spell it Pullicinello from *Pulliceno*, which Mr. D'Israeli translates "turkey-cock," in allusion to the beak of that bird. Baretti has it Pulcinella, because that word in Italian means a hen-chicken, whose cry the voice of Punch is said to resemble.—Pollicenello, as it has also been written, in its etymology from *pollice*, "the thumb," goes upon the mistaken presumption that his size was always diminutive, like that of our English worthy, of cow-swallowing memory. The French *Ponche* has been fancifully derived from no less a personage than Pontius Pilate, whom, in barbarous times, the Christians wished to

* And with good reason, if we confide in the statement of Voltaire in his *Encycl. Art. Bouc*.

† See note 21 to the Jew of Malta, in *Dodsley's Old Plays*, new edition, vol. viii. p. 279. Also vol. xii. p. 396.

abuse and ridicule.* If we cannot settle the disputed point, it is very evident, that in future ingenuity and learning will be thrown away in attempting further elucidation.

At what time and in what country Punch became a mere puppet as well as a living performer, we have no distinct information ; but it is to be inferred, perhaps, that the transmigration first took place in the land of his birth, and after his popularity had been fully established. The pleasure derived by the lower orders from his performances might lead to the imitation of his manners and actions in little ; in the same way, as will be hereafter seen, that the most applauded representations of our own stage, in the reigns of Elizabeth and James, were very soon made the subjects of "motions," or puppet-plays. One man could thus, by a little ingenuity, and at a very cheap rate, represent half a dozen or more characters, and the delusion

* Some have supposed that the English name of Punch was a corruption of *paunch*, from the large protuberance in front with which this personage is provided. This is alluded to by Tom Brown, in his "Common Place Book," where he is adverting to Dunton's *Athenians*. "As for their skill in etymology (he says—vol. iii. p. 283, edit. 1744,) I shall instance in two, viz. *surplice*, from *super* and *plico* ; and *Punch*, quasi *paunch*," &c.

was again aided by the peculiar voice given to Punch by artificial means. Ere long he became the hero of the exhibition ; and other characters, such as Harlequin* and Scaramouch, by degrees sunk into insignificance. The last, as well as the Doctor, is still preserved in some of the performances in this country, and we are assured by those who have recently travelled, that the Spanish Captain, the Calabrian with a huge nose, and some others of the personages enumerated by Riccoboni, yet figure in the Italian puppet-shows. In Holland, about ten years ago, we were present at one of the performances of Punch, (there called *Tooneelgek*, "stage-fool" or "buffoon,") in which a number of other characters peculiar to the country, and among them a burgomaster and a Friesland peasant, were introduced.†

* Swift, in a poem regarding the Bishop of Rochester's Dog, supplies evidence of the great popularity which Harlequin still preserved at that time.

" His name is Harlequin, I wot,
And that's a name in every plot," &c.

He was not superseded until many years afterwards.

† In Germany he is known by the name of *Hans Wurst* among the lower orders ; the literal translation of which is our Jack Pudding, *Hans* being John or Jack, and *Wurst* a sausage or pudding.

CHAP. II.

ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF PUPPET-PLAYS IN ENGLAND.

BEFORE we proceed farther, it will be necessary to consider, briefly, the antiquity and nature of puppet-plays in this country. It is the more proper to do so, because they form a branch of our drama which has never been examined by the historians of our stage with as much interest and industry as the subject deserves. When we mention that no less a man than Dr. Johnson was of opinion, that puppets were so capable of representing even the plays of Shakspeare, that Macbeth might be performed by them as well as by living actors ;* it will be evident, from such a fact only, that the inquiry is far from unimportant. In connection with this opinion, and con-

* See Malene's Shakspeare by Boswell, xi. p. 301.

firmatory of it, we may add, that a person of the name of Henry Rowe, shortly before the year 1797, did actually, by wooden figures, for a series of years, go through the action of the whole of that tragedy, while he himself repeated the dialogue which belonged to each of the characters.*

Puppet-plays are of very ancient date in England ; and, if they were not contemporary with our Mysteries, they immediately succeeded them. There is reason to think that they were coeval, at least, with our Mo-

* He was also called the York Trumpeter, having been born in that city, and having "blown a battle-blast" at Cullo-den. He was born in 1726, and after the rebellion he retired to his native place ; where, for about fifty years, he graced with his instrument the entrance of the Judges twice a year into York. He was a very well known character, and for a long time before his death, in 1800, was master of a puppet-show. In 1797, he published his edition of *Macbeth*, with new notes and various emendations. At his decease, the following lines were written upon him :

" When the great Angel blows the judgment trump,
He also must give Harry Rowe a thump :
If not, poor Harry never will awake,
But think it is his own trumpet, by mistake.
He blew it all his life, with greatest skill,
And but for want of breath had blown it still."

ralities; and, in Catholic times, it is not a very violent supposition, to conclude that even the Priests themselves made use of the images of the Saints and Martyrs, perhaps, for this very purpose: it is well ascertained, not only that they did not scruple to employ the churches, but that those sacred edifices were considered the fittest places for our earliest dramatic representations.*

"Motions" is the most general term by which they are mentioned by our ancient authors, and especially by our dramatists: thus Shakspeare, in the *Winter's Tale*, (Act iv. Scene 2,) makes Autolycus say: "Then he compassed a *motion* of the Prodigal Son, and married a tinker's wife within a mile of where my land and living lies." It would be easy to multiply quotations to the same point from nearly all his contemporaries, but one is as good as a thousand. The nature and method of their representation at that period, and doubtless long before, may be seen at the close of Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*. He there makes Lantern Leatherhead convert the story of Hero and Leander, (then very popular from Marlow's and Chapman's translation, or rather paraphrase of it)

* See the new edition of Dodsley's Old Plays, vol. i. p. xliii. *et seq.*

into a "motion," or puppet-play, and he combines with it the well known friendship of Damon and Pythias. The exhibitor, standing above and working the figures, "interprets" for them, and delivers the laughable and burlesque dialogue he supposes to pass between the characters. In the same poet's *Tale of a Tub*, (Act v.) In-and-in Medlay presents a "motion" for the amusement of the company, connecting it with the plot of the comedy itself. Here he explains the scenes as he proceeds, something in the manner of the ancient Dumb-Shews before the different acts of *Ferrex and Porrex*, the *Misfortunes of Arthur*, and other old tragedies, but the puppets are not represented as speaking among themselves. Ben Jonson may always be relied on in matters relating to the customs and amusements of our ancestors, as he was a very minute observer of them; and from his evidence, we may infer, that there were, at least, two varieties in the puppet-plays of his time,—one with the dialogue, as in *Bartholomew Fair*; and the other without it, as in the *Tale of a Tub*.

It is evident, from many passages in our old writers, that might be adduced if necessary, that "motions" were very popular with the lower orders: they frequently rivalled and imitated the performers on the regular stages. Hence, perhaps, a portion of the abuse

with which they were commonly assailed by some of our dramatic poets, who were, of course, anxious to bring them as much as possible into contempt. It is established, on the authority of Dekker, and other pamphleteers and play-writers of about the same period, that the subjects of the "villainous motions" were often borrowed from the most successful dramatic entertainments. Shakspeare's *Julius Cæsar* was performed by "mammets," (another term in use for the wooden representatives of heroes,) as well as the *Duke of Guise*, a name that was perhaps given to Marlow's *Massacre of Paris*,* or it may refer to a tragedy by Webster under that title.† If inference were not sufficient, testimony might be adduced, to shew that the puppets were clothed as nearly as possible like the actors, at the regular theatres in those plays, which were thought fit subjects for the "motions." The minute fidelity of Ben Jonson to the manners of his day, in depicting the "humours" of his characters, has led him in several places to introduce the name of a principal proprietor of puppet-shows, who was known by the title of Captain Pod. He mentions

* Henslowe probably refers to this play, as "the tragedy of the Guyes," in his papers. See *Mal. Sh.* by Boswell, iii. 299.

† See the Dedication to Webster's *White Devil*, as quoted in note ‡ in the new edition of *Dodsley's Old Plays*, vol. vi. 207.

him in his *Every Man out of his Humour*, as well as in his Epigrams, from which last it also appears that the word "motion," which properly means the representation by puppets, was, also, sometimes applied to the figures employed in the performance.*

The formidable rivalship of puppet-plays to the regular drama at a later date is established by the fact, that the proprietors of the theatres in Drury Lane and near Lincoln's Inn Fields, formally petitioned Charles II. that a puppet-show stationed on the present site of Cecil Street, in the Strand, might not be allowed to exhibit, or might be removed to a greater distance, as its attractiveness materially interfered with the prosperity of their concerns. It is not unlikely that burlesque and ridicule were sometimes aimed at the productions of the stage by the exhibitors of "motions."

There is little doubt that the most ancient puppet-shows, like the Mysteries, dealt in stories taken from the Old and New Testament, or from the lives and legends of Saints. Towards the end of the reign of Elizabeth, as we have seen, historical and other fables began to be treated by them; but still scriptural

* Thus also "Speed," in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, exclaims, "O excellent *motion*! O exceeding *puppet*! now will he *interpret* to her." (Act ii. Scene 1.)

subjects were commonly exhibited, and Shakspeare, in the quotation we have made from his *Winter's Tale*, mentions that of the "Prodigal Son." Perhaps, none was more popular than "Nineveh with Jonas and the Whale:" it is noticed by Ben Jonson twice in the same play, (*Every Man out of his Humour*,) and not less than twenty other authors speak of it. From a passage in Cowley's *Cutter of Coleman Street*, (Act v. Sc. ii.) we collect that even the puritans, with all their zealous hatred of the "profane stages," did not object to be present at its "holy performance." The motion of "Babylon" is also frequently noticed; but "London" and "Rome" likewise figured in the metropolis at the same time. Fleet Street and Holborn Bridge, both great thoroughfares, were the usual places where puppet-plays were exhibited in the reign of Elizabeth; and the authority of Butler has been quoted by Mr. Gifford (Ben Jonson ii. 66, note) to shew that Fleet Street continued to be infested by "motions" and "monsters" at least down to the Restoration.* Scriptural motions were not wholly laid aside within the last fifty or sixty years; and Goldsmith in his comedy

* Somerville, in his "Happy Disappointment," speaks of Masquerades and Puppet-shows in the same line, and as if equally popular.

She Stoops to Conquer, refers to the display of Solomon's Temple in a puppet-show. The current joke (at what date it originated seems uncertain) of Punch popping his head from behind the side curtain, and addressing the Patriarch in his ark, while the floods were pouring down, with "hazy weather, master Noah," proves that, at one period, the adventures of the hero of comparatively modern exhibitions of the kind were combined with stories selected from the Bible.

The late Mr. Joseph Strutt, in his "Sports and Pastimes of the People of England," thus speaks of the puppet-shows in his time. "In my memory these shows consisted of a wretched display of wooden figures; barbarously formed and decorated, without the least degree of taste or propriety: the wires that communicated the motion to them appeared at the top of their heads, and the manner in which they were made to move evinced the ignorance and inattention of the managers. The dialogues were mere jumbles of absurdities and nonsense, intermixed with low immoral discourses, passing between Punch and the fiddler, for the orchestra rarely admitted of more than one minstrel; and these flashes of merriment were made offensive to decency by the actions of the puppet."*

From whatever cause the change may have arisen, certain it is, that, at present, in the ordinary exhibitions of "Punch and Judy," the breaches of decorum complained of by Mr. Strutt are rare and slight. He afterwards proceeds as follows: "In the present day, the puppet-show man travels about the streets, when the weather will permit, and carries the motions, with the theatre itself, upon his back. The exhibition takes place in the open air, and the precarious income of the miserable itinerant depends entirely on the voluntary contribution of the spectators, which, as far as one may judge from the squalid appearance he usually makes, is very trifling."

We have never seen less than two men concerned in these ambulatory exhibitions: one to carry the theatre and use Punch's tin whistle, and the other to bear the box of puppets and blow the trumpet. During the performance the money is collected from the bystanders; and, far from agreeing with Strutt that the contributions are "very trifling," we have seen, for we have taken pains to ascertain it, two or three and four shillings obtained at each repetition; so that supposing only ten performances take place in a summer's day, the reward to the two men on an average might

• Page 152, edit. 1810.

be about fifteen shillings each. On one occasion, we remember to have seen three different spectators each give sixpence, besides the halfpence elsewhere contributed; on which the collector went back to the theatre and whispered the exhibitor, who immediately made Punch thus address the crowd, "Ladies and Gentlemen, I never yet played for sevenpence halfpenny, and I never will; so good morning." He then "struck his tent" and departed.



CHAP. III.

ARRIVAL OF PUNCH IN ENGLAND.

WE now come to a point of great national importance —when Punch made his *début*, or first appearance, in England. Great events are usually recorded on the page of history, but this is one, that, by some strange fatality, has escaped all notice ; and, after the lapse of more than a century, we have been called upon to examine forgotten records, and to furnish detailed information. The documents in the State Paper Office, the Records in the Tower, the Rolls of Parliament, and the MSS. in the British Museum, and in the Libraries of the Universities, we are sorry to observe, have supplied us with no intelligence regarding Mr. Punch, Mrs. Judy, or any other member of his family. We have also patiently gone through Evelyn's and Pepys's Diaries, with many other works of the same kind in print and out of print ; but though they dwell on

the fire of London, the plague, declarations of war, treaties of peace, the reception of ambassadors, and other trifles of that sort, they are quite silent regarding the arrival of this illustrious foreigner.

Dr. Drake (and a great many writers before him) has called the reign of Queen Anne "the Augustan Age of Literature" in England.* Its claim to this proud distinction has been disputed, and certain admirers of old prose and poetry have set up the reign of Elizabeth in opposition to it. Now, we can clearly establish, that the puppet-shew of "Punch and Judy" was well known and much admired,

"while

Our gracious Anne was Queen of Britain's Isle;"

and if he reached this country a little before that period, and if the refined theatrical entertainment he offered, so well suited to a highly polished and enlightened nation, were then popular, it will, we think, turn the scale at once, and settle the question for ever.

We find frequent mention of him in the *Tatler*; and even the classical Addison does not scruple, in the *Spectator*, to introduce a regular criticism upon one

* See his "Essays illustrative of the *Tatler*, *Spectator*, and *Guardian*," i. p. 32.

of the performances of Punch. As the Tatler was published earlier in point of date,* we will begin by referring to the notices of the same notorious and amusing actor by Sir Richard Steele. Dr. Johnson was one of the first, if not the very first, to broach the notion that his age had become too wise for the periodicals of Queen Anne's time;† as if, supposing the fact to be so, there was nothing else to be gained from the lucubrations of the wittiest and ablest men of that day, but their out-of-date learning! The effect has been, with the co-operation of no small share of self-conceit in the present generation, to throw the best of our essayists far into the shade; and the Tatler, Spectator, and Guardian, are now considered works very well for the period at which they were written, but far behind the rapid "march of intellect" during the last forty or fifty years. On this account we shall not content ourselves with bare references, because we are aware, that many of those who read our pages will not have the condemned productions we have named within their reach.

The great exhibitor of Punch immortalized, we

* The first number is dated April 12, 1709: the first number of the Spectator is dated March 1, 1710-11.

† See Dr. Johnson's Life of Addison.

will say, by Steele, notwithstanding the disesteem into which that delightful writer has fallen, is Mr. Powell; and in No. 44 of the *Tatler*, Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq. complains that he had been abused by Punch in a Prologue, supposed to be spoken by him, but really delivered by his master, who stood behind, "worked the wires," and, by "a thread in one of Punch's chops," gave to him the appearance of enunciation. These expressions are important, inasmuch as they shew a method of performance and a degree of intricacy in the machinery not now known. At present the puppets are played only by putting the hand under the dress, and making the middle finger and thumb serve for the arms, while the fore-finger works the head. The opening and shutting of the mouth is a refinement which does not seem to be practised in Italy. No. 50 of the same work contains a real or supposed letter from the showman himself, insisting upon his right of controul over his own puppets, and denying all knowledge of "the original of puppet-shews; and the several changes and revolutions that have happened in them since *Thespis*." A subsequent number (115,) is curious, as it shews that such was the rivalry of Punch in point of attractiveness, particularly with the ladies, that the Opera and the celebrated singer Nicolini were almost deserted in his

favour. Here also we learn that then, as now, Punchinello (for he is so designated and dignified) had "a scolding wife," and that he was attended, besides, by a number of courtiers and nobles.

Powell's show was set up in Covent Garden, opposite to St. Paul's Church, as we learn from the letter of the sexton, in the *Spectator* (No. 14,)* who complained that the performances of Punch thinned the congregation in the church, and that, as Powell exhibited during the time of prayers, the tolling of the bell was taken by all who heard it, for notice of the intended commencement of the exhibition. The writer of the paper then proceeds, in another epistle, to establish that the puppet-show was much superior to the opera of *Rinaldo and Armida*, represented at the Haymarket, and to observe, that "too much encouragement could not be given to Mr. Powell's skill in *motions*." A regular parallel is drawn between the two, which ends most decidedly in favour of Powell in every respect but the inferior point of the nature of the moral enforced by the two performances.†

* By some also attributed to Steele.

† Penkethman, an actor, and the head of a strolling company, often praised for his low humour in the reign of Anne, seems also at one time to have been master of a puppet-show of some kind; but as so remarkable a personage as Punch is

Hence we collect, most distinctly, that the popularity of Punch was, in the year 1711-12, completely established, and that he triumphed over all his rivals, materially lessening the receipts at least at the opera, if not at the regular national theatres ; thus accomplishing, at that period, by his greater attractiveness, what Dennis, by his " Essay on Operas after the Italian manner," and other *critiques de profession*, had been unable to effect. He could hardly have taken such firm possession of the public mind if he had only recently emigrated from his native country ; and no writer of the reign of Queen Anne, who notices him at all, speaks of him as a novelty. This may be established from poetry as well as prose. Gay, in his " Shepherd's Week—Saturday," distinguishes between the tricks of " Jack Pudding in his parti-coloured jacket," and " Punch's feats," and tells us that they were both well known at rustic wakes and fairs : but perhaps the most remarkable account of our hero is to be found among Swift's humorous political pieces, in " A Dialogue between mad Mullinix and Timothy ;" regarding which personages, it is not necessary for us to insert explanations, which may easily be found elsewhere. A description

not mentioned, it is supposed that it was confined to an exhibition of the " heathen gods," as noticed in No. 31 of the Spectator.

of a puppet-show, as it then was exhibited, is introduced by way of illustration ; and from our extract, (with one omission, only, for the sake of decorum,) it will be seen that it possessed the recommendation of extraordinary variety.

“ Observe, the audience is in pain
While Punch is hid behind the scene,
But when they hear his rusty voice,
With what impatience they rejoice !
And then they value not two straws
How Solomon decides the cause ;
Which the true mother,—which pretender,
Nor listen to the witch of Endor.
Should Faustus, with the Devil behind him,
Enter the stage, they never mind him ;
If Punch, to stir their fancy, shews
In at the door his monstrous nose,
Then sudden draws it back again,
Oh ! what a pleasure mix'd with pain !
You every moment think an age,
Till he appears upon the stage :
And first himself you see him clap
Upon the Queen of Sheba's lap.
The Duke of Lorraine drew his sword :
Punch roaring ran, and running roar'd,
Reviles all people in his jargon,
And sells the King of Spain a bargain :
St. George himself he plays the wag on,
And mounts astride upon the dragon :

He gets a thousand thumps and kicks,
 Yet cannot leave his roguish tricks ;
 In every action thrusts his nose,—
 The reason why no mortal knows.
 There's not a puppet made of wood
 But what would hang him, if they could ;
 While, teasing all, by all he's teas'd,
 How well are the spectators pleas'd ;
 Who in the *motion* have no share,
 But purely come to hear and stare ;
 Have no concern for Sabra's sake
 Which gets the better, saint or snake,
 Provided Punch, for there's the jest,
 Be soundly maul'd and plague the rest."*

How Punch, King Solomon, Dr. Faustus, † the Queen of Sheba, the Duke of Lorraine, St. George, and the rest of the characters, were brought together, we have no precise knowledge ; but "time and space" were evidently "annihilated, to make *spectators* happy." No wonder that such exhibitions thinned the theatres, and kept the churches empty.

* If the curious reader wishes for it, he will find a history of this poem in the eighth number of the "Intelligencer."

† Many authorities might be adduced to shew that Dr. Faustus often formed a member of the puppet company. See Pope's "Dunciad," III. l. 307 ; C. Pitt's "Prologue to the Strollers ;" A. Hill's "Answer to an Epistle from Mrs. Robinson ;" &c.

Although our information may be considered complete, as to the high favor in which Punch was then held by the multitude, we are still, and shall probably remain, without any positive intelligence regarding the exact date when he arrived in England. We think, nevertheless, that we may conclude from all the premises, with tolerable safety, that he and King William came in together, and that the Revolution is to be looked upon as the era of the introduction of the illustrious Family of Punch, and of the "glorious House of Orange."*

That the dress and appearance of Punch, in 1731, were as nearly as possible like what they now are, will be seen by the following popular song, extracted from Vol. vi. of "the Musical Miscellany," printed in that year. In other respects it is a curious production, and, perhaps, was sung by Punch himself, in one of his

* There is, however, a passage in Grainger's Biogr. Hist. IV. 350, which, if taken literally, as perhaps it is not meant to be, would shew that Punch was known in England before the abdication of James II. He is speaking of a notorious Merry-Andrew, of the name of Phillips, who, he says, "was some time fiddler to a puppet-show, in which capacity he held many a dialogue with *Punch*, in much the same strain as he did afterwards with the mountebank Doctor, his master, on the stage. This Zany being regularly educated, had confessedly the advantage of his brethren."

entertainments. It is inserted under the title of,

PUNCHINELLO.

Trade's awry, so am I,
 As well as some folks that are greater;
 But by the peace we at present enjoy
 We hope to be richer and straighter.
 Bribery must be laid aside,
 To somebody's mortification :
 He that is guilty, Oh, let him be tried,
 And expos'd for a rogue to the nation.
 I'm that little fellow
 Call'd Punchinello,
 Much beauty I carry about me ;
 I'm witty and pretty,
 And come to delight ye ;
 You cannot be merry without me.

My cap is like a sugar-loaf,
 And round my collar I wear a ruff ;
 I'd strip and shew you my shape in buff,
 But fear the ladies would flout me.
 My rising back and distorted breast,
 Whene'er I shew 'em, become a jest ;
 And, all in all, I am one of the best,
 So nobody need doubt me.

Æsop was a monstrous slave,
 And waited at Xanthus's table ;
 Yet he was always a comical knave,
 And an excellent dab at a fable.

So when I presume to shew
My shape, I am just such another ;
By my sweet looks and good humour, I know,
You must take me for him or his brother.
The fair and the comely
May think me but homely,
Because I am tawney and crooked ;
But he that by nature
Is taller and straighter,
May happen to prove a blockhead.

But I, fair ladies, am full as wise,
As he that tickles your ears with lies,
And thinks he pleases your charming eyes
With a rat-tail wig and a cockade :
I mean the bully that never fought,
Yet dresses himself in a scarlet coat,
Without a commission—not worth a groat,—
But struts with an empty pocket.

It deserves remark, that Punch has not always been a mere puppet in the British empire ; for in the *Biographia Dramatica* there is an entry of a farce called *Punch turned Schoolmaster*, which we have not been able to obtain, and therefore cannot speak of the nature or conduct of it. The date of its representation is not ascertained, but a prologue for it was written by Sheridan, and printed in 1724. The performances of M. Mazurier in 1825, in the “Shipwreck of Pulcinella, or

the Neapolitan Nuptials," are so well remembered, that it is needless to do more than allude to them.

With the introduction and performances of the *Fantocini*, the *Ombres Chinoises*, and other exhibitions of that kind, Punch has no necessary connection, (although his shade has sometimes appeared in them,) so that they have been entirely excluded from our inquiry. Those who wish for it may find some information on the subject in Strutt's "Sports and Pastimes," 153, and the following pages.



CHAP. IV.

NATURE OF PUNCH'S PERFORMANCES.

WHAT was the fable of any of the pieces in which Pulcinella originally performed, soon after his invention, cannot now be ascertained. We have already seen that they were called *commedie à soggetto* and *commedie all'improvviso*, or *impromptu* and *extempore* comedies, the plot and arrangement of which were first communicated to the actors, who afterwards filled up the dialogue, according to their own notions, as their wit or invention might serve them.* The

* The Reader who wishes for further knowledge upon this subject may either consult D'Israeli's *Cur. Lit.* iii. 25, or the authorities from which he derived his statements, Gimma's *Italia Letterata*, Signorelli's *Storia Critica de' Teatri*, &c. and Riccoboni.

schemes, or, as the Italians call them, *scenarie*, of some pieces of this description were printed in 1661; but not a syllable of what passed between any of the characters is supplied. Hence almost everything must depend upon conjecture; but the probability certainly is, that actors of this class, accustomed repeatedly to perform together, would, ere long, come to a perfect understanding with each other, and, in time, the dialogue thus acquire a certain degree of permanence, until some change took place in the company. At different places, the same plot would be represented, and, of course, the same dialogue would be sufficient, as far as it could be remembered. No doubt, the dramas consisted of "gross buffooneries," because the actors were *buffone*; but there was room for the display of ready talent; and if a few of them had been left upon record, we should most likely have found that they had something else to recommend them besides the coarseness of their jokes, delivered in the dialect of Italy peculiar to each of the characters.*

Neither in England have we the means of knowing,

* The actors, whether representing the Neapolitan *Pulcinella*, the Calabrian *Giangurgolo*, or the Milanese *Beltrame*, preserved the dialect of their respective countries. The Spanish Captain spoke a language compounded of Italian and Spanish.

with any precision, the nature of the earlier exhibitions of "Punch and his merry family." How the stories of Mr. Powell were compounded must remain a mystery, as the writers of his day never enter into this interesting point; but many of the incongruous materials, as we have already seen, are detailed by Swift. It appears also from the *Spectator*, (No. 14,) that under the little Piazza, in Covent Garden,* Mr. Powell's hero danced a minuet with "a well-disciplined pig;" and, in the same show, "King Harry (probably the Eighth) laid his leg upon the Queen's lap in too ludicrous a manner." We likewise learn on this authority, as well as from Swift, that, at that time, Punch possessed the same animating voice which, when heard in our streets, still lights up the eyes of the rising generation.

The *Spectator* may, further, be brought forward, to prove that "Whittington and his Cat"† was one of

* When Steele wrote in July, 1709, Powell was at Bath, and no doubt he travelled about to different large towns with his puppets and machinery.

† It has, we believe, been hitherto thought that the story of "Whittington, thrice Lord Mayor of London," was exclusively national; but supposing the notion to be well founded, what we are about to mention affords one more proof, to those already furnished of late years, that, in time, tales of the kind

the subjects, if not chosen, likely to be selected by Mr. Powell for the display of his talents. We take it for granted, that in all these cases, as at the present moment, the dialogue was extemporaneous, excepting in so far as it became habitual and mechanical by frequent repetition. That singing then formed part of the entertainment, is a mere matter of inference, but we know that it did so in the time of Strutt, who also speaks of a fiddler, now discontinued: many living can remember the introduction of "snatches of old songs," and parodies of popular ballads by Punch. Steele makes mention of Powell's "books;" but, in all likelihood, they were not books of his performances, which in our day would be great curiosities.

At all events, there is certain ground for concluding that the adventures of Punch, as represented in this country, did not by any means always consist of that series in which they are now usually performed; and

become the common property of other countries. It is found among the *Facerie, Motti, Buffonerie, et Burle* of the Piovano Arlotto, which were originally printed very early in the 16th century, and subsequently were re-issued from the celebrated press of the Giunti, at Florence, in 1565. The title it there bears is this: *Il Piovano, à un prete che fece mercantia di palle, dice la novella delle gatte.* With a change of persons and places, it is the same story as our own "Whittington and his Cat."

although we are not in a condition to adduce distinct proof upon the point, we cannot help thinking that the introduction and popularity of "Don Juan" contributed mainly to the arrangement of the performance as it is now daily exhibited.* We have consulted some persons, whose age is sufficiently advanced to enable them to supply the information, and they agree that, about that period, the character of Punch certainly underwent a material change. Although we are inclined to favour this hypothesis, we must allow that the story, as displayed on some parts of the continent at the present moment, bears many features of strong resemblance to the fable of the piece as shewn in Great Britain. We here advert to Punch in the puppet-show, and not on the stage in Italy.

The original of "Don Juan" is generally allowed to be Spanish : in that language, it is called *Il Convidado di Pietra*, and its author was Triso de Molina. It was played in Paris by the Italian company first; and to rival them an actor of the name of Villiers brought it out in French verse, at another theatre, while the bio-

* Hone, in his account of the "Mysteries," &c., draws a parallel between the two; but, in order to render it more obvious, he a little perverts the story of Punch, particularly in the catastrophe.

graphers of Moliere inform us that he wrote his *Festin de Pierre* in prose, because he was in such haste to anticipate Villiers. T. Corneille added rhimes to it on the death of Moliere. Three years afterwards, viz. in 1676, it first appeared on the English stage, from the pen of Shadwell; but Punch was, probably, then unknown here, at least by that appellation, and the change, to which we have referred, was occasioned, if at all, long afterwards, by the extreme popularity of the pantomime-ballets at the Royalty, and subsequently at Drury Lane Theatre, about forty years ago.*

The ensuing ballad was written very nearly about that date, being extracted from a curious collection of comic and serious pieces of the kind, in print and manuscript, with the figures 1791, 1792, and 1793, in various parts of it, as the times, probably, when the individual who made it obtained the copies he transcribed, or inserted in their original shape. It certainly affords evidence of the connection between the stories of Punch and Don Juan; and (like the old ballads of "King Lear and his Three Daughters," "The Spanish Tragedy, or the lamentable murder

* "Don Juan" was acted at the Royalty Theatre in 1787, and at Drury Lane in 1790. They were played many nights in succession, and are hardly yet laid aside.

of Horatio and Bellimperia," &c.) was perhaps founded upon the performance, by one who had witnessed and was highly gratified by it. It is called,

PUNCH'S PRANKS.

Oh ! harken now to me awhile,
A story I will tell you
Of Mr. Punch, who was a vile
Deceitful murderous fellow :
Who had a wife, a child also,—
And both of matchless beauty ;
The infant's name I do not know,
Its mother's name was Judy.
Right tol de rol lol, &c.

But not so handsome Mr. Punch,
Who had a monstrous nose, Sir ;
And on his back there grew a hunch,
That to his head arose, Sir :
But then, they say, that he could speak
As winning as a Mermaid,
And by his voice—a treble squeak,—
He Judy won, that fair maid.

But he was cruel as a Turk,
Like Turk, was discontented,
To have one wife—'twas poorish work—
But still the law prevented

His having two, or twenty-two,
Tho' he for all was ready ;
So what did he in that case do ?
Oh ! sad !—he kept a lady.

Now Mrs. Judy found it out,
And being very jealous,
She pull'd her husband by the snout,
His lady gay as well as.
Then Punch he in a passion flew,
And took it so in dudgeon,
He fairly split her head in two,
Oh ! monster !—with a bludgeon.

And next he took his little heir,
A most unnat'ral father,
And flung it out of a two pair
Window ; for he'd rather
Possess the lady of his love,
Than lady of the law, Sir,
And car'd not for his child above
A pinch of Maccabau, Sir.

His wife's relations came to town
To ask of him the cause, Sir :
He took his stick and knock'd 'em down,
And serv'd 'em the same sauce, Sir :
And said, the law was not *his* law,
He car'd not for a letter ;
And if on him it laid its claw,
He'd teach it to know better.

Then took to travel o'er each land,
So loving and seductive,
Three ladies only could withstand
His lessons most instructive.
The first, a simple rustic maid;
The next, a pious abbess;
The third I'd call, but I'm afraid,
The tabblest of tabbies.*

* In this stanza, the writer (we regret that so pleasant an effusion should be anonymous) seems to have had in his mind Spenser's Squire of Dames, (Fairy Queen, B. iii. canto 7,) who had been commanded by his mistress to go forth "a colonelling," against the virtue of the female sex. He returned in less than a year, with tokens of three hundred conquests; and she then set him a penance to bring testimonies of as many women who had resisted his arts and entreaties. In three years, he had only found three.

"The first which then refused me," said he,
"Certes was but a common courtesane,
Yet, flat refus'd to have a-do with me,
Because I could not give her many a Jane."
(Thereat full heartily laugh'd Satyrane.)

"The second was an holy nun to chose,
Which would not let me be her chapelaine,
Because she knew, she said, I would disclose
Her counsel if she should her trust in me repose.

The third a damsel was of low degree,
Whom I in country cottage found by chance," &c.

F

In Italy, the dames were worst ;
In France, they were too clamorous ;
In England, altho' coy at first,
Yet after quite as amorous.
In Spain, they all were proud, yet frail ;
In Germany, but coolish ;
But further north he did not sail,
To do so had been foolish.

In all his course he scrupled not
To make a jest of murder,
So fathers, brothers, went to pot :—
It really makes one shudder
To think upon the horrid track
Of blood he shed on system ;
And, though with hump upon his back,
The dames could not resist him.

'Tis said, that he a compact sign'd
With one they call " Old Nich'las ;"
But if I knew them, I've no mind
To go into partic'lars.
To it, perhaps, he ow'd success
Wherever he might go, Sir ;
But I believe we must confess,
The ladies were so so, Sir.

At last he back to England came,
A jolly rake and rover,
And pass'd him by another name,
An *alias*, when at Dover.

But soon the police laid a scheme,
To clap him into prison :
They took him, when he least could dream
Of such a fate as his'n.*

And now the day was drawing near,
The day of retribution ;
The trial o'er, he felt but queer
At thought of execution.
But when the hangman, all so grim,
Declar'd that all was ready,
Punch only tipp'd the wink at him,
And ask'd after his lady.

Pretending he knew not the use
Of rope he saw from tree, Sir,
The hangman's head into the noose
He got, while he got free, Sir.
At last, the Devil came to claim
His own ; but Punch what *he* meant
Demanded, and denied the same ;
He knew no such agreement !

"You don't ! (the Devil cried :) 'tis well ;
I'll quickly let you know it :"
And so to furious work they fell,
As hard as they could go it.

* This sounds like an ignorant vulgarism, but it is, in fact,
only an abbreviation, *per ellipsin*, of *his own*.

The Devil with his pitch-fork fought,
 While Punch had but a stick, Sir,
 But kill'd the Devil,* as he ought.
 Huzza! there's no Old Nick, Sir.
 Right tol de roll loll, &c.

In a previous part of this chapter, we have established, on the authority of Sir R. Steele, and others, that Dr. Faustus was one of the characters in puppet-shows of that date; and every body knows from Goethe's Drama, if not from Marlow's tragedy, that that renowned conjuror had entered into a similar bond with the potentate of the infernal regions. There may be, therefore, some link of connection between Powell's performance and that upon which the preceding ballad has been framed, which in the lapse of a century has been lost. In our day, we hear nothing of such a compact; but the Devil is brought in to carry away the

* "To kill the Devil," and "to drive the Devil into his own dominions," *cacciar il Diavolo nell' inferno*, meant the same thing in Italian, as is fully explained in Boccacio, as well as Sacchetti, (Nov. 101,) and in Bandello, (Nov. 9, Vol. i. Edit. Ven. 1566.) It is only used in English in its literal sense, and it is, of course, so to be understood in this ballad. In its figurative application, perhaps no hero, not even Don Juan himself, oftener was the death of his Satanic Majesty than Punch. More we cannot say.

hero to the punishment merited by his boasted crimes. In this respect, we should rather have taken Punch for a Frenchman than an Italian, according to the opinion of old Heylin; who, speaking of our near neighbours, and that vanity which, when he wrote, made them vaunt of their vices, exclaims, in a sort of rapture; "foolish and most perishing wretches, by whom each several wickedness is twice committed; first in the act, and secondly in the boast!"*

* "France painted to the Life"—London, 1656, p. 53.



CHAP. V.

THE MORAL OF PUNCH'S PERFORMANCES, &c.

POETICAL justice is a matter upon which the most sagacious critics have insisted; and it cannot be denied that, in the ordinary exhibitions, which go by the vulgar name of "Punch and Judy," it is decidedly violated. One great object, as they contend, of dramatic poetry ought to be to enforce a moral; and, if we try the species of scenic representation now under our view by that test, we shall find it unquestionably deficient. It is nevertheless a point capable of dispute, whether people were ever made better or worse by theatrical performances; for instance, whether a single apprentice was ever deterred or reclaimed from vice by all the sombre repetitions of George Barnwell, at Easter and Christmas. The old lawyer, who used to send his clerks to witness every execution, with the admonition,

"There, you rogues, go to school and improve!"* took a course which, from the reality of the sight, was likely to be beneficial: but every body is aware that what is shewn at the theatres is nothing but an attempt to impose; and the audience rather sets itself against the endeavour, than is impressed and corrected by the moral. What, in the cant of the profession, is called "illusion," we are satisfied, never exists, and the actors are no more believed to be the characters they represent, than the painted trees and castles of the scenery are supposed to consist of rustling foliage and substantial stone. We admire a landscape for its truth as a copy from nature, not because we ever imagine that it is the actual view itself, compressed into the compass of some three feet of gilded frame: what we see on the stage is but a succession of views with moving figures, and we like them little or much in proportion as they approach our notions of reality; but always keeping the imitation perfectly distinct from the thing imitated, and approving the former only because it is an imitation.

"Live o'er each scene, and be what we behold;"

is a very good line of Pope, but if there be any "Roman virtue" in the British character, it does not

* Tom Br wn's Works, vol. iv. 116.

owe it to "Cato ;" and it is remarkable, that it never was less apparent than at the time when that tragedy was oftenest represented : the littleness of party spirit was never more despicable, or more despicably displayed, than when it was first produced upon the stage.

As for the puppet-show of "Punch and Judy," it never is looked at, by the lowest of the populace, but as a mere joke ; and a most effective part of that joke is the ultimate triumph of the hero : without it, the representation would be not only "flat and stale," but "unprofitable." We have seen it so ; for we remember a showman, on one occasion, not merely receiving little or no money, but getting lamentably pelted with mud, because, from some scruple or other, he refused to allow the victory over the Devil to Punch.

We have before lamented that, as the performances of Punch in this country very much resemble the impromptu comedies of the Italians, no record exists of the dialogue, and scarcely of the course and series of the scenery ; the fact, most likely, being, that both the one and the other were often altered to suit the convenience of the manager, or the temper and wishes of his auditory. We shall speak of some of these variations presently, and in the mean time, and before we lose sight of the connection between Don Juan and the personage, who may be justly called the Don

Juan of the multitude, we wish to add in this place the only printed account we ever saw of the plot of one of Punch's exhibitions, and which differs from the story of any of the numerous shows we have witnessed. It is given as a sort of theatrical criticism in a letter from a watering-place, and was published in the Morning Chronicle of 22nd September, 1813. The narrative is as follows :

" Mr. Punch, a gentleman of great personal attraction, is married to Mrs. Judy, by whom he has a lovely daughter, but to whom no name is given in this piece, the infant being too young to be christened. In a fit of horrid and demoniac jealousy, Mr. Punch, like a second Zeluco, strangles his beauteous offspring. Just as he has completed his dreadful purpose, Mrs. Judy enters, witnesses the brutal havoc, and *exit* screaming ; she soon returns, however, armed with a bludgeon, and applies it to her husband's head, "which to the wood returns a wooden sound." Exasperated by jealousy and rage, Mr. Punch, at length, seizes another bludgeon, soon vanquishes his already weakened foe, and lays her prostrate at his feet ; then, seizing the murdered infant and the expiring mother, he flings them both out of the window into the street. The dead bodies having been found, police officers enter the dwelling of Mr. Punch, who flies for his life,

mounts his steed, and the author, neglecting, like other great poets, the confining unities of time and place, conveys his hero into Spain, where, however, he is arrested by an officer of the terrible Inquisition. After enduring the most cruel tortures with incredible fortitude, Mr. Punch, by means of a golden key, (a beautiful and novel allegory,) opens his prison door and escapes. The conclusion of the affecting story is satirical, allegorical, and poetical. The hero is first overtaken by weariness and laziness, in the shape of a black dog, whom he fights and conquers; disease, in the disguise of a physician, next arrests him; but Punch "sees through the thin pretence," and dismisses the doctor with a few derogatory kicks. Death at length visits the fugitive, but Punch lays about his skeleton carcase so lustily, and makes the bones of his antagonist rattle so musically with a *bastinado*, that "Death his death's blow then received." Last of all comes the Devil; first, under the appearance of a lovely female, but afterwards in his own natural shape, to drag the offender to the infernal regions, in purgatory to expiate his dreadful crimes. Even this attempt fails, and Punch is left triumphant over Doctors, Death, and the Devil. The curtain falls amid the shouts of the Conqueror, who on his victorious staff lifts on high his vanquished foe."

We do not see, exactly, how the whole of such a plot could have been made out in a puppet-show, and we cannot avoid thinking, that this critic, like many others, has here found out "meanings never meant," and which could never have entered the head of any ordinary exhibitor.* With the exception of the skeleton, all the other characters are familiar; and only supposing that the writer has a little disturbed the ordinary course of the events for his own purpose, of making out "more than meets the ear" in an allegory, the whole is very easily explained and understood.

The disregard of the unities of time and place is common to all the exhibitions of Punch we ever saw or have heard of, in this or any other country; and it may be the boast of Italy, that, while her regular drama wore these burdensome and useless fetters,

* Casti, in his tale *La Pace di Pasquale*, (Nov. xliii. Vol. iii. Edit. 1804,) mentions a friar who had *per le buffonerie raro talento*, and who was able, especially, *fare a maraviglia il Pulcinella*. Mr. D'Israeli also speaks of "a philosopher and a man of fortune," of his acquaintance, who delighted in performing "Punchinello's little comedy." We know several instances of fathers, who, for the amusement of their families, go through the part of the puppet-show-man. These individuals might have sufficient invention for such a fable, but still it would not be easy to represent it intelligibly by puppets.

under the patronage of the higher classes and the learned, they were thrown off in her *commedie à soggetto*, under the patronage of the lower classes and the unlearned. It is not to be supposed, however, that in Italy the impromptu comedies, filled by the various characters of Pulcinella, Harlequin, Scaramouch, the Doctor, and others, were exhibited only before the rabble of the community: the contrary might be satisfactorily established. The most dignified and the gravest not unfrequently laid aside their dignity and their gravity; and Dr. Moore, who wrote his "View of Italy," nearly fifty years ago, confesses that he and the Duke of Hamilton, going to the performance with all possible prejudices against it, were delighted: he especially dwells upon a most ludicrous scene, in which Harlequin made a stammerer bring out a word which had been sticking in his throat for a quarter of an hour, by striking him on the back, as nurses strike a choking infant.* Recently, we have seen a refined French auditory laugh heartily at the very same incident, the only difference being, that Potier was not dressed as Harlequin, nor Brunet as Pulcinella.

At various periods, the adventures of Punch have been differently represented and misrepresented, and

* Vol. i. p. 258.

innovations have been introduced, to suit the taste and to meet the events of the day. One attempt of this sort was made in Fielding's time, in consequence of the extreme popularity of "the Provoked Husband." He complains ("Tom Jones," Book xii. chap. 5,) that a puppet-show, witnessed by his hero, included "the fine and serious part" of the comedy we have named. He then proceeds, from the mouth of Jones, to shew its inferiority to the old exhibition of Punch and his wife, (whom he miscalls *Joan*, by some strange forgetfulness, although her name has been *Judy*, as the lawyers say, "from time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary,") which gives some offence to "the dancer of wires," who fancied, as he might do very reasonably, that "people rose from his little drama as much improved as they could do from the great."

Of later years, we have witnessed several singular interpolations. After the battle of the Nile, Lord Nelson figured on one of the street-stages, and held a dialogue with Punch, in which he endeavoured to persuade him, as a brave fellow, to go on board his ship, and assist in fighting the French: "Come, Punch, my boy, (said the naval hero,) I'll make you a captain or a commodore, if you like it."—But I don't like it, (replied the puppet-show hero;) I shall be drowned."—"Never

fear that, (answered Nelson;) he that is born to be hanged, you know, is sure not to be drowned." During one of the Elections for Westminster, Sir F. Burdett received equal honour, and was represented kissing Judy and the child, and soliciting Mr. Punch for his vote. At a country fair, we once saw a donkey-race represented by puppets with a great deal of spirit, and we need hardly add, that Mr. Punch (though not always the most expert horse-man) rode the winner, but was cheated out of the prize.—Within the last twenty years, at various times, we have observed characters inserted from popular performances at our theatres: some of our readers may recollect a conference between Blue Beard and Punch, on the mutually interesting topic of a plurality of wives; and Morgiana from *The Forty Thieves*, and Grimaldi from *Mother Goose*, have danced together before us. While this work has been in a course of preparation, we had the satisfaction of being present at an interview between Punch and a person no less distinguished than Paul Pry, in which the latter received severe chastisement for "intruding," while the former was enjoying the delightful converse of one of his female acquaintances.

CHAP. VI.

ON THE CHARACTER OF PUNCH.

PROFESSOR Richardson, of Glasgow, as every body knows, wrote a series of "Essays on Shakspeare's Dramatic characters," in which he entered at length into the design of the author, and the manner in which he had accomplished it. Other admirers of the works of the same poet have published separate dissertations on particular personages in his plays, such as Falstaff, Hamlet, &c. It seems to us that Punch, although not drawn by the same "master-hand," merits a similar distinction; and we shall accordingly proceed to offer a few remarks upon his character, as it is displayed in the most approved representations of the present day. Professor Richardson declared, even in his "fifth edition,"* that his work was "unworthy of

* Published in 1797. We believe, there are several later impressions.

the public notice," (rather a bad compliment to his many readers,) while we, on the contrary, in our first impression, contend that our remarks well deserve attention; and we shall "be of the same opinion still," even if "convinced, against our will," that our work will never arrive at an equal degree of popularity.

We are more disposed to offer a few observations on the character of Punch, because upon none of the *dramatis personæ* of Shakspeare's plays has Professor Richardson bestowed a larger space or a greater degree of labour than on Richard III, and Sir John Falstaff: to both of these is Punch, in disposition and talents, akin; and he, besides, combines in his own person the deformity of the one* and the obesity

* As he was to have "a spice or somewhat more" of Don Juan about him, and as we are told

"A decent leg is what all ladies like,"

it was not thought expedient, by the inventor or inventors of Punch, to represent him with Richard's tibial disfigurement. Punch's legs are not "legs for boots," but legs fit "to make legs with," and to make legs by. We never saw him at any exhibition without a pair, models of their kind, and in shewing which he evinced no slight degree of vanity. There is not, at present, such a thing as a good male leg on the stage; so that Punch may be excused if he is a little ostentatious. Lord Byron calls a delicate hand and a good leg the

of the other. He is, as it were, a combination and concentration of two of the most prominent and original delineations on the stage : as if

“ The force of nature could no farther go :
To make a third, she join’d the other two.”

The similarity between Richard and Falstaff, though not very obvious, has been fully established ; and it consists in the intellectual superiority they both possess, and with the exercise of which the first gratifies his ambition, and the last his appetites. It is the possession of the same high talents (in the last instance applied very much to the attainment of the same ends,) which constitutes Punch’s chief moral resemblance. The high authority to which we have just alluded lays it down, and, we may say, proves that “ the pleasure we receive from the character of Richard is produced by those emotions which arise in the mind, on beholding great intellectual ability employed for inhuman and perfidious purposes.”* If we try the character of Punch by this test, shall

criterion of good blood : Punch’s leg is not so remarkable for “ a vulgar quantity of calf” as for the fineness of its ankle, and the general symmetry of its proportions.

* Edit. 1797, p. 204.

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we not arrive at the identical conclusion? Like, the "crook-back prodigy," he is not "shaped for sportive tricks," and

"wants love's majesty,
To strut before a wanton, ambling nymph:"

but, to compensate for these personal defects, Punch, like Richard, has "a tongue shall wheedle with the Devil," and he does, in fact, "wheedle with the Devil," to some purpose. His wit, his ingenuity, his rapid invention of expedients, or, in two words, his "intellectual ability," is employed for "inhuman and perfidious purposes," and hence the delight we experience during the representation of those scenes in which his genius is displayed. We freely admit that, as far as the moral is concerned, Shakspeare has the advantage of the author of "Punch and Judy," in both instances: Richard is slain, and Falstaff dismissed with contempt; but to this point we have already adverted in the preceding chapter.

"The desire of gratifying the grosser and lower appetites is the ruling and strongest principle in the mind of Falstaff."* Only substitute the name of Punch

* Richardson's Essays, 1797, p. 249.

for that of the fat, witty, and luxurious knight, and every syllable is equally applicable. A great deal has been written *pro* and *con*, on the question of Falstaff's cowardice, and it now seems agreed by the learned, not "the commentators on Shakspeare,"

"Deep-vers'd in books and shallow in themselves;
Crude and intoxicate, collecting toys
And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge:"

but, by those who have some knowledge of the human mind and its operations, that Falstaff is no coward: while he avows "discretion to be the better part of valour," he only avoids situations of danger, not from constitutional fear of them, but because his strong sense revolts at incurring peril where it is needless. As one of our old translators of Horace shrewdly says, in reference to that poet's disappearance at the battle of Philippi, "a soldier is no more bound to fight when he is out of his humour, than an orator to speak when he is out of his wits; nor is it prudent for a man of wit and learning to have his brains beaten out by one that has none."* Such is precisely the

* Alexander Broome's "Life of Horace," prefixed to "The Poems of Horace," &c. "by several hands." London, 1666.

"discretion," which Falstaff commends. Punch, however, is less prudent than Falstaff, and in some instances, may, perhaps, be almost charged with being a little fool-hardy. He is also more amorous, and in seeking to gratify this propensity, he must, of course, be sometimes prepared, like Don Juan, (whom in this respect he resembles,) "to run upon the very edge of hazard." If, in the course of his adventures, Punch be now and then guilty of ridiculous extravagancies, apparently inconsistent with part of the character we have drawn of him, let it be remembered in the words of Pascal, *l'extreme esprit est accusée de la folie, comme l'extreme défaut.*"

We have it, upon very high and ancient authority, that "no bad man can be happy,"* and, if this maxim be true, the character of Punch is so far out of nature: he hardly knows a moment's unhappiness, from the beginning to the end of his career, scarcely excepting even the period of his confinement before he is led out to execution. His good spirits, his self-possession, and presence of mind, never desert him; and these qualities, combined with his personal, but prudent, courage, carry him through every difficulty, and enable him to triumph over every adversary. The

* Nemo malus fœlix, &c. Juv. Sat. iv.

great French satirist severely lashes those writers, who "make vice amiable ;"* and of this charge, we cannot acquit the author or authors of "Punch and Judy." In the person of the hero, and in the success of his criminal attempts, vice is most assuredly rendered too attractive, if we suppose that his example can have any effect upon those who witness his amusing performances.

Such is the character of Punch, as he is represented in this country, but in Italy he still preserves most of the qualities for which he was originally notorious. Barretti tells us, that his part is that of a "timid weak fellow, who is always thrashed by the other actors, and always boasts of victory after they are gone ;"† and the author of a modern work, upon the manners and amusements of the Italians, thus speaks of the exhibitions in which Punch is engaged and of the figure he cuts in them.

"Two inferior theatres, La Fenice and San Carli-

* Je ne puis estimer ces dangereux auteurs
Qui, de l' honneur en vers infames déserteurs,
Trahissent la vertu sur un papier coupable,
Aux yeux de leurs lecteurs rendent le vice aimable.

Boileau Art. Poet. ch. iv.

† Tolondron, p. 324.

no, both in the Largo del Castello, are chiefly devoted to farces and pantomines. There you see Policinella in his genuine colours. Policinella is represented as a servant of Acerra,* a village in the neighbourhood of Naples, and he is so highly gifted by nature and accomplished by education, that he is at once a thief, a liar, a coward, a braggart, and a debauchee : still the facetious way in which he relates his various feats, enraptures the grovelling countrymen. He delights in licentious *double entendre*, gross jokes, and dirty tricks ; there is not a single good quality in him : his cunning is very low, and he is always outwitted when he meets with any person of sense, so that in the end he is generally discovered, imprisoned, whipped, and hanged. Such is the celebrated Policinella. There are many houses for puppet-shows, where, at any time of the day, one may go in for a few *grains*, provided one's olfactory nerves are not too keen for the smell produced by the crowd of dirty fellows who resort to them. There are also ambulatory puppet-shows in the streets."†

It has been said, that "in England every thing intellectual advances by rapid strides;" and no more

* See chap. i. p. 7, of this work.

† Italy, and the Italians in the nineteenth century, chap. i.

striking or convincing proof can be given of its truth than the change, especially of late years, which has occurred in the character of Punch. In Italy, he has remained stationary: he is there now, what he was two-hundred years ago; but here, he is no longer the blunt-headed booby, "always outwitted," represented in the preceding extract, but a personage in general far too clever for any of those with whom he has to deal: instead of being "discovered" and "hanged," he contrives, to have his executioner "trussed up" in his place, and finally, by the happy union of intellect and corporeal strength, defeats and destroys "man's greatest enemy," and becomes "the devil's butcher," when the fiend hoped to have had him "in fee simple, with fine and recovery."

Having thus traced the history of Mr. Punch,* we shall proceed, we believe, for the first time in this or

* In reference to the origin of his family name, we may add, that some have erroneously derived it from the liquor *punch*, (which itself comes from the Indian *Palepunta* or *Palepunsche*,) on the same principle that the Italian character Macaroni is said to have been taken from the approved dish of that name and as our Jack Pudding and the German *Hanns Wurst*, (before mentioned,) from the attachment of the mob to puddings or sausages. The fact is, that *Punch* is only a familiar abbreviation of *Punchinello*, which is itself corrupted from *Pulcinella*.

any other country, to put his performances upon record. We have been obliged to soften down certain parts of the representation, and to exclude some of the jokes, in compliance with the refined taste of the present age. It is time to give something like a permanent form to the exhibition, for the benefit of posterity ; lest, as society gradually acquires a more superfine polish than it even now possesses, it should be impossible, hereafter, to print what is fortunately yet considered innocent and harmless. Addison tells us, that "the merry people of the world are the amiable," and to those, in the language of "a man forbid," we address ourselves :

à voi,
*Che amate, senza smorfia e ipocrisia,
Gl' innocenti piaceri e l' allegria.*



THE
TRAGICAL COMEDY, OR COMICAL TRAGEDY,
OF
PUNCH AND JUDY.

The following drama (in the present state of theatrical literature it has a right to be so designated,) is founded chiefly upon the performance of a very old Italian way-faring puppet-show-man, of the name of Piccini, who has perambulated the town and country for the last forty or fifty years. It has been compared with, and amended by, the representations of other artists, and especially one which was extremely popular about thirty years ago, into which, as into others, some amusing songs and parodies were introduced, with the manuscript of which we have been favoured. Piccini's exhibition was, in the first instance, purely Italian ; but he soon found it necessary to make a few changes, adapting it to this country, and sometimes to public events, as they occurred, which will account for various anachronisms. Of course, he still delivers the whole in broken English ; but, time out of mind, Punch has spoken a foreign dialect, which we have in a degree preserved.

We have made no material variations in the dialogue, excepting by the omission of certain coarse practical jokes. The dignity of puppet-shows will receive a considerable accession from the fact, that the great German poet, Goethe, did not scruple to employ himself in the composition of them : *Hanns Wurst* figures in his *Moralisch-politisches Puppenspiel*, on the story of Esther and Ahasuerus.

THE
TRAGICAL COMEDY, OR COMICAL TRAGEDY,
OF
PUNCH AND JUDY.

ENTER PUNCH.

After a few preliminary squeaks, he bows three times to the spectators; once in the centre, and once at each side of the stage, and then speaks the following

PROLOGUE.

Ladies and Gentlemen, pray how you do ?
If you all happy, me all happy too.
Stop and hear my merry littel play ;
If me make you laugh, me need not make you pay.*
[Exit.

* This rivals in brevity, and exceeds in point, the Player's Prologue in *Hamlet*. It is not the only instance in the following pages, in which Shakspeare has been out-done.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

Punch is heard behind the scene, squeaking the tune of *Malbroug s'en vat en guerre* :* he then makes his appearance and dances about the stage, while he sings to the same air,

Mr. Punch is one jolly good fellow,
His dress is all scarlet and yellow,
And if now and then he gets mellow,
It's only among his good friends.
His money most freely he spends ;
To laugh and grow fat he intends :
With the girls he's a rogue and a rover ;
He lives, while he can, upon clover ;
When he dies—it is only all over ;
And there Punch's comedy ends.

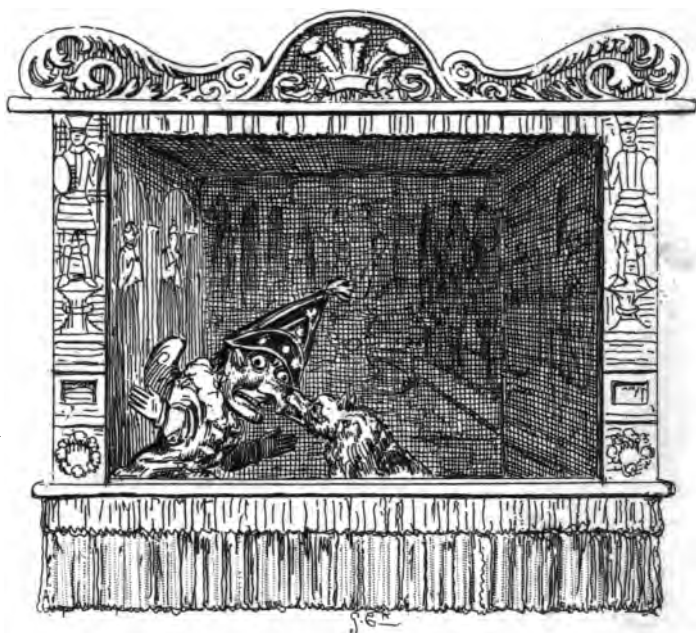
He continues to dance and sing, and then calls "Judy, my dear ! Judy !"

ENTER THE DOG TOBY.

Punch. Hollo, Toby ! who call'd you ? How you do,
Mr. Toby ? Hope you very well, *Mr. Toby.*

Toby. Bow, wow, wow !

* This air and the Marseilles March, afterwards spoken of, were popular more than thirty years ago, and doubtless were then first introduced.



Punch. How do my good friend, your master, Mr. Toby? How do Mr. Scaramouch?*

Toby. Bow, wow, wow.!

Punch. I'm glad to hear it.—Poor Toby! What a nice good-temper'd dog it is! No wonder his master is so fond of him.

Toby [Snarls.] Arr! Arr!†

Punch. What! Toby! you cross this morning? You get out of bed the wrong way upwards?

Toby. [Snarls again.] Arr! Arr!

Punch. Poor Toby. [Putting his hand out cautiously, and trying to coax the dog, who snaps at it.] Toby, you're one nasty cross dog: get away with you! [Strikes at him.]

Toby. Bow, wow, wow! [Seizing Punch by the nose.]

Punch. Oh dear! Oh dear! My nose! my poor nose! my beautiful nose! Get away! get away, you

* The Italian character in the impromptu comedies, called *Scaramouchi*, was known in England before *Pulcinella* made his appearance. In Dufey's *Madame Fickle*, licenced in 1676, Toby, the son of Mr. Tilbery, is made to employ it as a fashionable term of abuse, *Scaramouchi*, Rascal, Poltron, Popinjay!—Son of twenty fathers!" &c. Act. ii.

† In reference to this sound, Shakspeare tells us that "R is the dog's letter." *Rom. and Jul.* Act ii. Scene 5.

nasty dog—I tell your master. Oh dear! dear!—
Judy! Judy!

[Punch shakes his nose, but cannot shake off the dog, who follows him as he retreats round the stage. He continues to call “Judy! Judy, my dear!” until the dog quits its hold, and *exit*.]

Punch. [*Solus*, and rubbing his nose with both hands.]
Oh my nose! my pretty littel nose! Judy! Judy!
You nasty, nasty, brute, I will tell you master of you
Mr. Scaramouch! [*Calls*.] My good friend, Mr. Scaramouch! Look what you nasty brute dog have done!

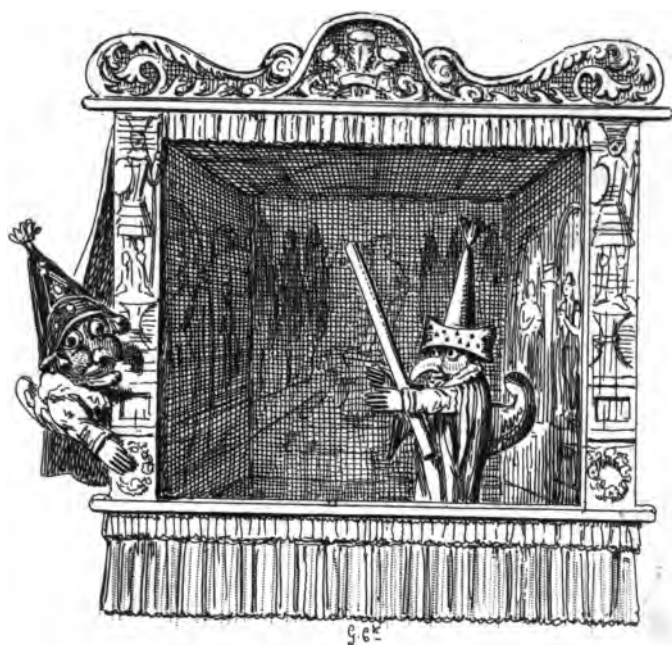
SCENE II.

ENTER SCARAMOUCHE—*with a stick*.

Scaramouch. Hollo! Mr. Punch! What have you been doing to my poor dog?

Punch. [*Retreating behind the side scene, on observing the stick, and peeping round the corner*.]
Ha! my good friend! how you do? glad to see you look so well. [*Aside*.] I wish you were further with your nasty great stick.

Scaramouch. You have been beating and ill-using my poor dog, Mr. Punch.



Punch. He has been biting my poor nose.—What have you got there, sir

Scaramouch. Where?

Punch. In your hand?

Scaramouch. A fiddle.

Punch. A fiddel! what a pretty thing is a fiddel! Can you play upon that fiddel?

Scaramouch. Come here and I'll try.

Punch. No, thank you—I can hear the music here, very well.

Scaramouch. Then you shall try yourself. Can you play?

Punch. [Coming in.] I do not know; I never tried. Let me see! [Takes the stick and moves slowly about, singing the tune of the *Marche des Marseillois*. He hits Scaramouch a slight blow on his high cap, as if by accident.]

Scaramouch. You play very well, Mr. Punch. Now, let me try. I will give you a lesson how to play the fiddle. [Takes the stick, and dances to the same tune, hitting Punch a hard blow on the back of his head.]

Punch.—I no like you playing so well as my own. Let me try again. [Takes the stick, and dances as before: in the course of his dance he gets behind Scaramouch, and, with a violent blow, knocks his head clean

off his shoulders.] How you like that tune, my good friend? He! he! he! [Laughing, and throwing away the stick.] You'll never hear such another tune, so long as you live, my boy. [Sings the tune of "*Malbroug*," and dances to it.] Judy! Judy, my dear! Judy! can't you answer, my dear?

Judy. [Within.] Well! what do you want, Mr. Punch?

Punch. Come up stairs: I want you.

Judy. Then want must be your master. I'm busy.

Punch. [Singing, tune "*Malbroug*."]

Her answer genteel is and civil!

No wonder, you think, if we live ill,

And I wish her sometimes at the Devil,

Since that's all the answer I get.

Yet, why must I grumble and fret,

Because she's sometimes in a pet?

Though I really am sorry to say, Sirs,

That that is too often her way, Sirs.

For this, by and by, she shall pay, Sirs.

Oh, wives are an obstinate set!

Judy, my dear! [Calling.] *Judy, my love!* pretty *Judy!* come up stairs.

SCENE III.

ENTER JUDY.

Judy. Well, here I am! what do you want, now I'm come?



Punch. [Aside.] What a pretty creature ! An't she one beauty ?

Judy. What do you want, I say ?

Punch. A kiss ! a pretty kiss ! [Kisses her, while she hits him a slap on the face.]

Judy. Take that then : how do you like my kisses ? Will you have another ?

Punch. No ; one at a time, one at a time, my sweet pretty wife. [Aside.] She always is so playful.—Where's the child ? Fetch me the child, Judy, my dear.

[Exit Judy.]

Punch. [Solus.] There's one wife for you ! What a precious darling creature ! She go to fetch our child.

RE-ENTER JUDY WITH THE CHILD.

Judy. Here's the child. Pretty dear ! It knows its papa. Take the child.

Punch. [Holding out his hands.] Give it me—pretty little thing ! How like its sweet mamma !

Judy. How awkward you are !

Punch. Give it me : I know how to nurse it so well as you do. [She gives it him.] Get away ! [Exit Judy. Punch nursing the child in his arms.] What a

G

pretty baby it is ! was it sleepy then ? Hush-a-by, by, by. [Sings to the tune of "*Rest thee, babe*."*]

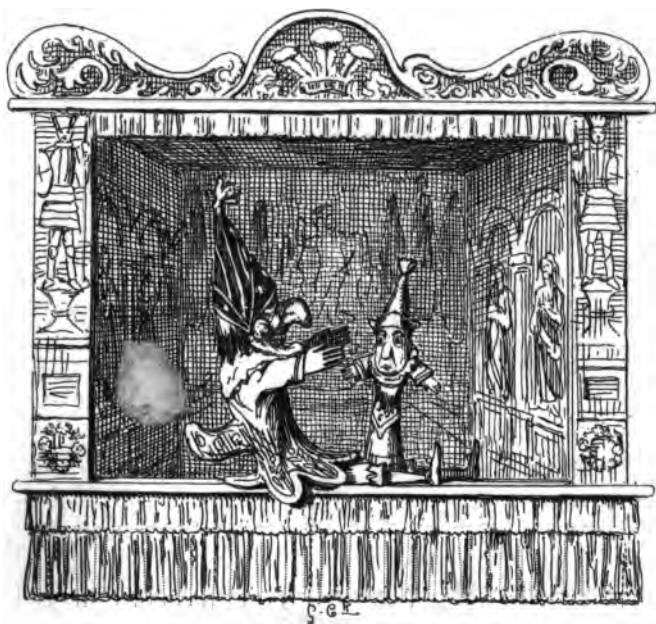
Oh, rest thee, my baby,
 Thy daddy is here :
 Thy mammy's a gaby,
 And that is quite clear.
 Oh rest thee, my darling,
 Thy mother will come,
 With voice like a starling ;—
 I wish she was dumb !

Poor dear littel thing ! it cannot get to sleep, by, by ;
 by, by, hush-a-by. Well, then, it sha'nt. [Dances the
 child, and then sets it on his lap, between his knees,
 and sings the common nursery ditty,

Dancy baby diddy ;
 What shall daddy do widdy ?
 Sit on his lap,
 Give it some pap ;
 Dancy baby diddy.

[After nursing it upon his lap, Punch sticks the child
 against the side of the stage, on the platform, and
 going himself, to the opposite side, runs up to it,
 clapping his hands, and crying, " Catchee, catchee,

* Evidently an interpolation since *Guy Mannering* was
 brought upon the stage. For what song this parody was sub-
 stituted, cannot now be ascertained.





catchee!" He then takes it up again, and it begins to cry.]

What is the matter with it. Poor thing! It has got the stomach-ache, I dare say. [Child cries.] Hush-a-by, hush-a-by! [Sitting down, and rolling it on his knees.] Naughty child!—Judy! [Calling.] the child has got the stomach-ache. Pheu! Nasty child! Judy, I say! [Child continues to cry.] Keep quiet, can't you? [Hits it a box on the ear.] Oh you filthy child! What have you done? I won't keep such a nasty child. Hold you tongue! [Strikes the child's head several times against the side of the stage.] There!—there!—there! How you like that? I thought I stop your squalling. Get along with you, nasty, naughty, crying child. [Throws it over the front of the stage among the spectators.]—He! he! he! [Laughing and singing to the same tune as before.]

Get away, nasty baby;
There it goes over:
Thy mammy's a gaby,
Thy daddy's a rover.

RE-ENTER JUDY.

Judy. Where is the child?

Punch. Gone,—gone to sleep.

Judy. What have you done with the child, I say?

Punch. Gone to sleep, I say.

Judy. What have you done with it?

Punch. What have I done with it?

Judy. Ay; done with it!* I heard it crying just now. Where is it?

Punch. How should I know?

Judy. I heard you make the pretty darling cry.

Punch. I threw it out at window.

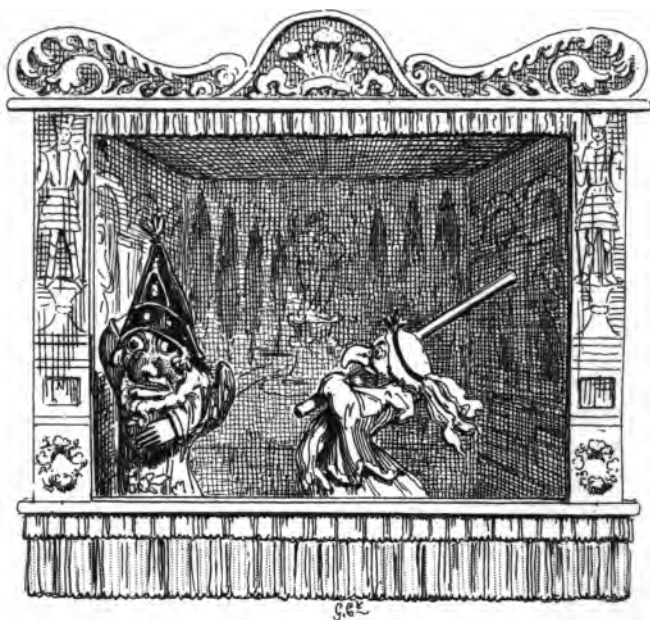
Judy. Oh you cruel horrid wretch, to throw the pretty baby out at window. Oh! [Cries and wipes her eyes with the corner of her white apron.] You barbarous man. Oh!

Punch. You shall have one other soon, Judy, my dear. More where that come from.†

* Judy might say with the Moor—

“Done with it?—By heaven, he echoes me,
As if there were some monster in his thought
Too hideous to be shewn.” *Othello*, Act iii. Sc. 3.

† This may remind the reader of a story in Machiavelli's *Historie Fiorentine*, where a heroine, whose sons had been slaughtered in some of the bloody warfares of the petty Italian states, thus consoled herself for their loss; and not very decorously, and in the presence of the enemy, shewed her satisfaction, that she had one resource yet left. We have forgotten the particular reference, and we do not suppose that Piccini went there for his allusion.



Judy. I'll make you pay for this, depend upon it.

[*Exit in haste.*]

Punch. There she goes. What a piece of work about nothing! [Dances about and sings, beating time with his head as he turns round, on the front of the stage.]

RE-ENTER JUDY, with a stick. She comes in behind, and hits Punch a sounding blow on the back of the head, before he is aware.

Judy. I'll teach you to throw my child out at window.

Punch. So-o-oftly, Judy, so-o-oftly! Rubbing the back of his head with his hand.] Don't be a fool now. What you at?

Judy. What! you'll throw my poor baby out at window again, will you? [Hitting him continually on the head.]

Punch. No, I never will again. [She still hits him.] Softly, I say, softly. A joke's a joke!

Judy. Oh you nasty cruel brute! [Hitting him again.] I'll teach you.

Punch. But me no like such teaching. What! you're in earnest, are you?

Judy. Yes, [hit,] I [hit,] am [hit.]

Punch. I'm glad of it: me no like such jokes.* [She hits him again.] Leave off, I say. What! you won't, won't you?

Judy. No, I won't. [Hits him.]

Punch. Very well: then now come my turn to teach you. [He snatches at, and struggles with her for the stick, which he wrenches from her, and strikes her with it on the head, while she runs about to different parts of the stage to get out of his way.]

Punch. How you like my teaching, Judy, my dear? [Hitting her.]

Judy. Oh pray, Mr. Punch. No more!

Punch. Yes, one littel more lesson. [Hits her again.] There, there, there! [She falls down with her head over the platform of the stage; and, as he continues to hit at her, she puts up her hand to guard her head.] Aay more?

Judy. No, no, no more! [Lifting up her head.]

Punch. [Knocking down her head.] I thought I should soon make you quiet.

Judy. [Again raising her head.] No.

Punch. [Again knocking it down, and following up his blows until she is lifeless.] Now if you're satis-

* This is a jest in almost every language, but it is particularly common in Italy. It is inserted in Domenichi's Collection of *Motti Burle e Facetie*: Venice, 1565.



SC 11

fied, I am. [Perceiving that she does not move.]
 There, get up, Judy, my dear; I won't hit you any
 more. None of your sham-Abram.* This is only
 your fun. Have you got the head-ache? Why, you're
 only asleep. Get up, I say.—Well, then, get down.
 [Tosses the body down with the end of his stick.]
 He, he, he! [Laughing.] To lose a wife is to get a
 fortune.† [Sings.

“Who'd be plagued with a wife
 That could set himself free
 With a rope or a knife,
 Or a good stick, like me?”

* This is a very old English word; not, however, inserted and explained by the Reverend H. J. Todd. *Sham* is said to be derived from the Welsh, and *Abram* is from what were formerly called “Abram,” or “Abraham men,” who pretended to be poor and sick, and therefore objects of charity. (See *Doddsley's Old Plays*, new edition, vol. ii., page 4, note 2.) To sham-Abram is a term in daily use:

“*Sham-Abram* you may
 In any fair way,
 But you must not sham Abraham Newland.”

T. Dibdin's Song.

† The English proverb is, “He that loses his wife and sixpence, loses a tester.” It is put into the mouth of Sancho, in Act ii. of Duffey's *Don Quixote*, Part. i.

SCENE IV.

ENTER PRETTY POLLY.

Punch. [Seeing her, and singing out of "*The Beggar's Opera*,"* while she dances,]

When the heart of a man is oppress'd with cares,
The clouds are dispelled when a woman appears,
Like the notes of a fiddle
She sweetly, sweetly,

Raises his spirits and charms his ears.
Roses and lilies her cheeks disclose,
But her ripe lips are more sweet than those :

Press her, caress her,
While kisses and blisses

Dissolve us in pleasure and soft repose.

Punch. [Aside.] What a beauty ! What a pretty creature ! [Extending his arms, and then clasping his hands in admiration. She continues to dance, and dances round him, while he surveys her in silent delight. He then begins to sing a slow tune and foots it with her ; and, as the music quickens, they jig it backwards, and forwards, and sideways, to all parts of the stage. At last, Punch catches the lady in his arms and kisses her most audibly, while she appears "nothing loth." After waltzing, they dance to the

* This song was probably first introduced into a puppet-show, at the time when Gay's work was so extravagantly popular ; but not more popular than it deserved to be.



tune of "*The White Cockade*," and Punch sings as follows :

I love you so, I love you so,
I never will leave you ; no, no, no :
If I had all the wives of wise King Sol,
I would kill them all for my Pretty Poll.
[*Exeunt dancing.*]

ACT II.—SCENE I.

[Enter a figure dressed like a courtier, who sings a slow air, and moves to it with great gravity and solemnity. He first takes off his hat on the right of the theatre, and then on the left, and carries it in his hand. He then stops in the centre : the music ceases, and suddenly his throat begins to elongate, and his head gradually rises until his neck is taller than all the rest of his body. After pausing for some time, the head sinks again ; and, as soon as it has descended to its natural place, the figure *exit*.*]

* This scene is peculiar to Piccini, and he defies all the other exhibitors of Puppet-shows in England to make the figure take off the hat with one hand. This is the true reason for its introduction ; and it is not easy to see in what way it relates to Mr. Punch and his adventures, unless, as he is now in the midst of his career of vice and crime, the stretching of the neck is to be taken as an awful forewarning of the danger of the same kind the hero is likely to incur under the hands of Jack Ketch.

SCENE II.

ENTER PUNCH from behind the curtain, where he had been watching the manœuvres of the figure.

Punch. Who the devil are you, me should like to know, with your long neck ? You may get it stretched long enough for you, one of these days, by somebody else. It's a very fine day, [Peeping out, and looking up at the sky.] I'll go fetch my horse, and take a ride to visit my pretty Poll. [He sings to the tune of "*Sally in our Alley.*"]

Of all the girls that are so smart,
There's none like pretty Polly :
She is the darling of my heart,
She is so plump and jolly.

[*Exit* singing.]

RE-ENTER PUNCH, leading his horse by the bridle over his arm. It prances about, and seems very unruly.

Punch. Wo, ho ! my fine fellow, Wo ! ho ! Hector.*

* The horses of the ancient heroes of romance, especially in Italy, (the birth-place of our hero,) had all their names, sometimes descriptive of their qualifications, or of peculiar marks, or ornaments : that of Orlando, as every body knows, was *Baiardo* ; that of Aglante, *Rabicano*, and that of the Cid, *Balisco*, &c. For this reason, too, Don Quixote gives his steed the style and title of *Rosinante*, "as it was not fit that so famous a knight's



Stand still, can't you, and let me get my foot up to the stirrup.

[While Punch is trying to mount, the horse runs away round the stage, and Punch sets off after him, catches him by the tail, and so stops him. Punch then mounts, by sitting on the front of the stage, and with both his hands lifting one of his legs over the animal's back. At first, it goes pretty steadily, but soon quickens its pace; while Punch, who does not keep his seat very well, cries, "Wo, ho! Hector, wo, ho!" but to no purpose, for the horse sets off at full gallop, jerking Punch at every stride with great violence. Punch lays hold round the neck, but is ultimately thrown upon the platform.]

Punch. Oh, dear! Oh, Lord! Help! help! I am murdered! I'm a dead man! Will nobody save my life? Doctor! Doctor! Come, and bring me to life again. I'm a dead man. Doctor! Doctor! Doctor!

SCENE III.

ENTER THE DOCTOR.

Doctor. Who calls so loud?*

horse, and chiefly being so good a beast, should want a known name." *Shelton's Don Quixotte*, Edit. 1652, fol. 2.

* So the Apothecary, in *Romeo and Juliet*, enters at the

Punch. Oh, dear ! Oh, lord ! Murder !

Doctor. What is the matter ? Bless me, who is this ? My good friend, Mr. Punch ? Have you had an accident, or are you only taking a nap on the grass after dinner ?

Punch. Oh, Doctor ! Doctor ! I have been thrown : I have been killed.

Doctor. No, no, Mr. Punch ; not so bad as that, sir : you are not killed.

Punch. Not killed, but speechless. Oh, Doctor, Doctor !

Doctor. Where are you hurt ? Is it here ? [Touching his head.]

Punch. No ; lower.

Doctor. Here ? [Touching his breast.]

Punch. No ; lower, lower.

Doctor. Here, then ? [Going downwards.]

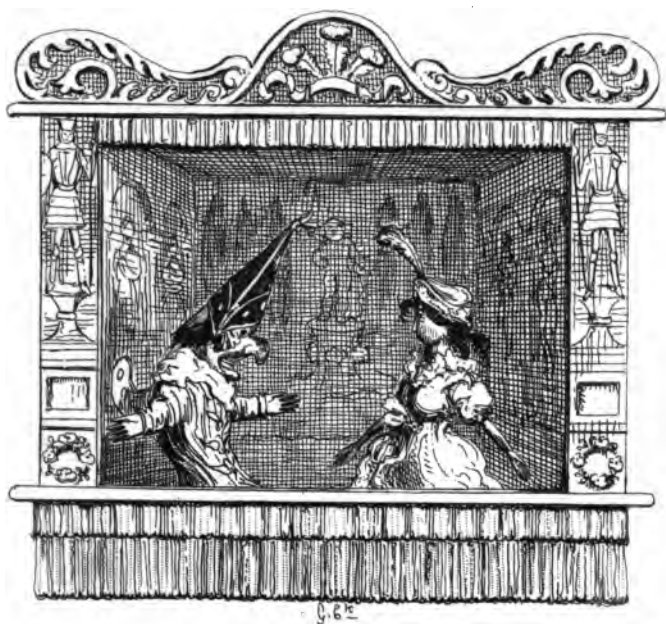
Punch. No ; lower still.

Doctor. Then, is your handsome leg broken ?

Punch. No ; higher. [As the Doctor leans over Punch's legs, to examine them, Punch kicks him in the eye.]

Doctor. Oh, my eye ! my eye ! [Exit.

exclamation of the hero, with " Who calls so loud ?" Punch's Doctor is quite " another guess sort of a gentleman : " he is " fat with fine fees and no physic."







Punch. [*Solus.*] Aye, you're right enough : it is my eye, and Betty Martin too.* [Jumping up and dancing and singing, tune "*Malbroug.*"]

The Doctor is surely an ass, sirs,
To think I'm as brittle as glass, sirs ;
But I only fell down on the grass, sirs,
And my hurt,—it is all my eye.

[While Punch is singing and dancing, the Doctor enters behind, and hits Punch several times on the head. Punch shakes his ears.]

Punch. Hollo ! hollo ! Doctor, what game you up to now ? Have done ! What you got there ?

Doctor. Physic, Mr. Punch. [Hits him.] Physic for your hurt.

Punch. Me no like physic : it give me one head-ache.

Doctor. That's because you do not take enough of it. [Hits him again.] The more you take, the more good it will do you. [Hits him.

* This joke is much more proper, in some respects, in Catholic Italy, than in Protestant England, where we have left off praying to Saints. The saying is, however, as is well known, derived from times prior to the Reformation, when *Mihi, beate Martine* was the commencement of an address to St. Martin.

Punch. So you Doctors always say. Try how you like it yourself.

Doctor. We never take our own physic, if we can help it. [Hits him.] A little more, Mr. Punch, and you will soon be well. [Hits him. During this part of the dialogue, the Doctor hunts Punch to different parts of the stage, and at last gets him into a corner, and belabours him until Punch seems almost stunned.]

Punch. Oh, Doctor ! Doctor ! no more, no more ! Enough physic for me ! I am quite well now.

Doctor. Only another dose. [Hits him.]

Punch. No more !—Turn and turn about, is all fair, you know. [Punch makes a desperate effort, closes with the Doctor, and after a struggle succeeds in getting the stick from him.]

Punch. Now, Doctor, your turn to be physicked.

[Beating the Doctor.]

Doctor. Hold, Mr. Punch ! I don't want any physic, my good sir.

Punch. Oh, yes, you do ; you very bad : you must take it. [Hits him.] How do you like physic ? [Hits.] It will do you good. [Hits.] This will soon cure you. [Hits.] Physic ! [Hits.] Physic ! [Hits.] Physic ! [Hits.]

Doctor. Oh, pray, Mr. Punch, no more ! One pill of that physic is a dose.





panying the music with his voice ; tune "*Morgiana in Ireland.*"

Mr. Punch is a very gay man,
He is the fellow the ladies for winning oh ;
Let them do whatever they can,
They never can stand his talking and grinning oh.

ENTER A SERVANT, in a foreign livery.

Servant. Mr. Punch, my master, he say he no like dat noise.

Punch. [With surprise and mocking him.] Your master, he say he no like dat noise ! What noise ?

Servant. Dat nasty noise.

Punch. Do you call music a noise.*

Servant. My master he no lika de music, Mr. Punch.

Punch. He don't, don't he ? Very well. [Punch runs about the stage ringing his bell as loudly as he can.]

Servant. Get away, I say wid dat nasty bell.

Punch. What bell ?

Servant. That bell. [Striking it with his hand.]

* Our less refined ancestors used to do so. "A noise of fiddlers," "a noise of flutes," &c. are common expressions in old plays of the reigns of Elizabeth and James I.



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Punch. That's a good one. Do you call this a bell?
[Patting it.] It is an organ.

Servant. I say it is a bell.

Punch. I say it is an organ. [Striking him with it.]
What you say it is now?

Servant. An organ, Mr. Punch.

Punch. An organ? I say it is a fiddel. Can't you
see? [Offers to strike him again.]

Servant. It is a fiddel.

Punch. I say it is a drum.

Servant. It is a drum, Mr. Punch.

Punch. I say it is a trumpet.

Servant. Well, so it is a trumpet. But bell, organ,
fiddel, drum, or trumpet, my master he say he no lika
de music.

Punch. Then bell, organ, fiddel, drum, or trumpet,
Mr. Punch he say your master is a fool.

Servant. And he say, too, he will not have it near
his house.

Punch. He's a fool, I say, not to like my sweet mu-
sic. Tell him so: be off. [Hits him with the bell.]
Get along. [Driving the servant round the stage,
backwards, and striking him often with the bell.] Be
off, be off. [Knocking him off the stage. *Exit* Servant.
Punch continues to ring the bell as loudly as before,
while he sings and dances.]

H

RE-ENTER SERVANT, slyly, with a stick.

[Punch, perceiving him, retreats behind the side curtain, and remains upon the watch. The Servant does the same, but leaves the end of his stick visible. Punch again comes forward, sets down his bell very gently, and creeps across the stage, (marking his steps with his hands upon the platform,) to ascertain whereabouts his enemy is. He then returns to his bell, takes it up, and, going quietly over the stage, hits the Servant a heavy blow through the curtain, and *exit*, ringing his bell on the opposite side.]

Servant. You one nasty, noisy, impudent blackguard. Me catch you yet. [Hides again as before.]

[Enter Punch, and strikes him as before with the bell. The Servant pops out, and aims a blow, but not quickly enough to hit Punch, who *exit*.]

Servant. You dirty scoundrel, rascal, thief, vagabond, blackguard, and liar, you shall pay for this, depend upon it.

[He stands back. Enter Punch, with his bell, who, seeing the Servant with his stick, retreats instantly, and returns, also armed with a bludgeon, which he does not at first shew. The Servant comes forward and strikes Punch on the head, so hard a blow, that it seems to confuse him.]





Servant. Me teach you how to ring you nasty noisy bell near de gentil-mens houses.

Punch. [Recovering.] Two can play at that. [Hits the *Servant* with his stick. A conflict :—after a long struggle, during which the combatants exchange staves, and perform various manœuvres, *Punch* gains the victory, and knocks his antagonist down on the platform, by repeated blows on the head.]

Servant. Oh, dear ! Oh, my head !

Punch. And oh, your tail, too. [Hitting him there.] How do you like that, and that, and that ? [Hitting him each time.] Do you like that music better than the other ?—This is my bell, [Hits.] this my organ, [Hits.] this my fiddel, [Hits.] this my drum, [Hits.] and this my trumpet, [Hits.] there ! a whole concert for you.

Servant. No more ! me dead.

Punch. Quite dead ?

Servant. Yes, quite.

Punch. Then there's the last for luck. [Hits him and kills him. He then takes hold of the body by its legs, swings it round, two or three times, and throws it away.]

ACT III.—SCENE I.

ENTER AN OLD BLIND MAN, feeling his way with a staff. He goes to the opposite side, where he knocks.

Blind Man. Poor blind man, Mr. Punch; I hope you'll bestow your charity. I hear that you are very good and kind to the poor, Mr. Punch. Pray have pity upon me, and may you never know the loss of your tender eyes! [Listens, putting his ear to the side, and, hearing nobody coming knocks again.] I lost my sight by the sands in Egypt,* poor blind man. Pray, Mr. Punch, have compassion upon the poor stone blind. [Coughs and spits over the side.] Only a half-penny to buy something for my bad cough. Only one half-penny. [Knocks again.]

ENTER PUNCH, and receives one of the knocks, intended for the door, upon his head.

Punch. Hollo! you old blind blackguard, can't you see?

* Of course, this explanation of the cause of blindness was inserted after Sir R. Abercrombie's expedition to Egypt, when many beggars were seen about the streets asking alms, on the same score. Before that date, some other popular cause was, no doubt, assigned.



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Blind Man. No, Mr. Punch. Pray, sir, bestow your charity upon a poor blind man, with a bad cough, [Coughs.]

Punch. Get along, get along ; don't trouble me :— nothing for you.

Blind Man. Only a halfpenny ! Oh, dear ! my cough is so bad ! [Coughs, and spits in Punch's face.]

Punch. Hollo ! Was my face the dirtiest place you could find to spit in ?* Get away ! you nasty old blackguard ! Get away ! [Seizes the blind man's staff and knocks him off the stage.—Punch hums a tune, and dances to it ; and then begins to sing, in the mock Italian style, the following words, pretending to play the fiddle on his arm, with the stick.]

When I think on you, my jewel,†
Wonder not my heart is sad ;
You're so fair, and yet so cruel,
You're enough to drive me mad.

* This joke is of Italian origin. *Bandello* (Part iii. Nov. 42.) makes the Spanish Ambassador spit in the face of one of the servants of the famous Roman courtesan *Imperia*, whose house was most splendidly furnished. It is, however, older than *Bandello's* time ; and it is also found in the Italian jest book, before quoted, collected by *Domenichi* in 1565.

† A real Italian air and song, introduced by *Piccini*, of which this is a translation : the first words of the original are—

Quando pens' io à la mia bella.

On thy lover take some pity :
Do not break his doating heart.
Think you Heaven has made you pretty,
But to make your lover smart ?

SCENE II.

ENTER A CONSTABLE.

Constable. Leave off your singing, Mr. Punch, for I'm come to make you sing on the wrong side of your mouth.

Punch. Why, who the devil are you ?

Constable. Don't you know me ?

Punch. No, and don't want to know you.

Constable. Oh, but you must: I am the constable.

Punch. And who sent for you ?

Constable. I'm sent for you.

Punch. I don't want constable. I can settle my own business without constable, I thank you. I don't want constable.

Constable. But the constable wants you.

Punch. The devil he does ! What for, pray ?

Constable. You killed Mr. Scaramouch. You knocked his head off his shoulders.

Punch. What's that to you ? If you stay here much longer, I'll serve you the same.

Constable. Don't tell me. You have committed murder, and I've a warrant for you.

Punch. And I've a warrant for you. [Punch knocks him down, and dances and sings about the stage to the tune of "*Green grow the rushes, O.*"]

ENTER AN OFFICER, in a cocked hat with a cockade, and a long pigtail.*

Officer. Stop your noise, my fine fellow.

Punch. Shan't.

Officer. I'm an officer.

Punch. Very well. Did I say you were not?

Officer. You must go with me. You killed your wife and child.

Punch. They were my own, I suppose; and I had a right to do what I liked with them.

Officer. We shall see that. I'm come to take you up.

Punch. And I'm come to take you down. [Punch knocks him down, and sings and dances as before.]

ENTER JACK KETCH, in a fur-cap. Punch, while dancing, runs up against him without seeing him.

Punch. [With some symptoms of alarm.] My dear Sir,—I beg you one thousand pardon: very sorry.

* The ordinary performers of puppet-shows do not seem clearly to understand the distinction between an officer of the army and an officer of the police.

J. Ketch. Aye, you'll be sorry enough before I've done with you. Don't you know me?

Punch. Oh, sir, I know you very well, and I hope you very well, and Mrs. Ketch very well.

J. Ketch. Mr. Punch, you're a very bad man. Why did you kill the Doctor?

Punch. In self defence.

J. Ketch. That won't do.

Punch. He wanted to kill me.

J. Ketch. How?

Punch. With his d——d physic.

J. Ketch. That's all gammon. You must come to prison, as sure as my name's Ketch.

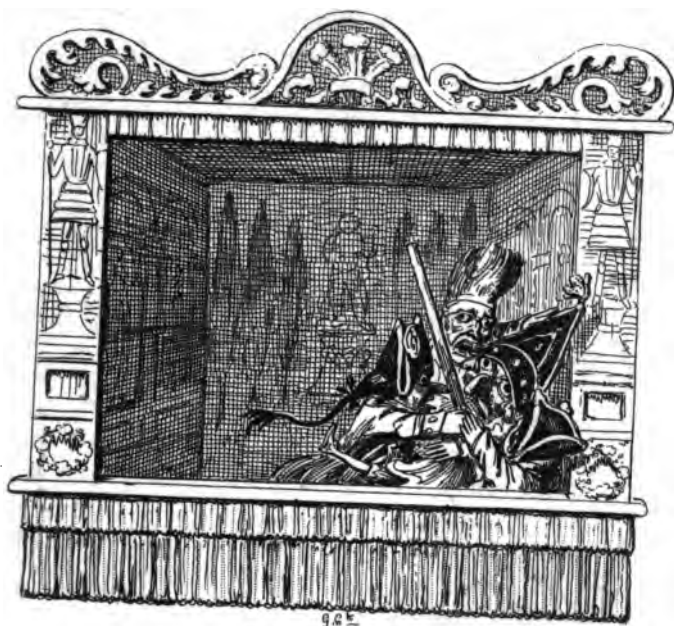
Punch. *Ketch* that then. [*Punch* knocks down *Jack Ketch*, and continues to dance and sing.]

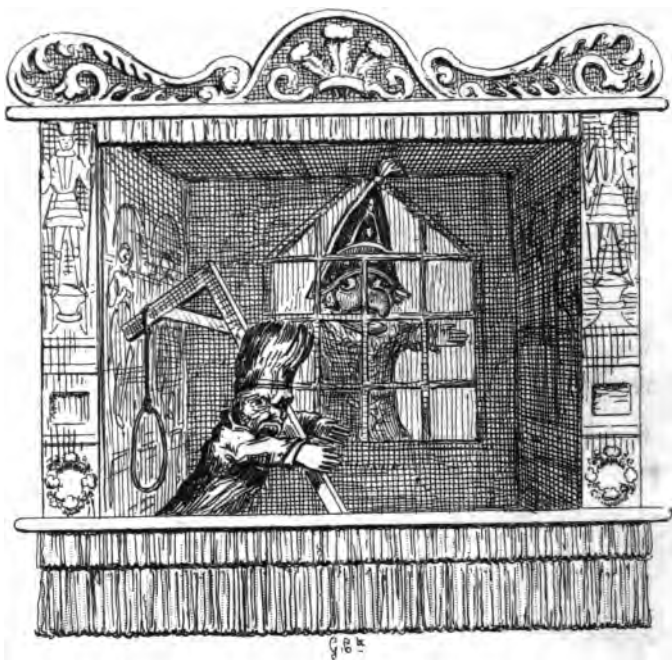
[Enter behind, one after the other, the Constable, the Officer, and *Jack Ketch*. They fall upon *Punch* in the order in which they enter, and, after a noisy struggle, they pin him in a corner, and finally carry him off, while he lustily calls out "Help! murder!" &c.]

SCENE III.

[The curtain at the back of the stage rises, and discovers *Punch* in prison, rubbing his nose against the bars and poking it through them.]

Punch. Oh dear! Oh dear! what will become of





poor pill-garlick now. My pretty Poll, when shall I see you again? [Sings to the air of "*Water parted from the sea.*"]

Punch, when parted from his dear,
Still must sing in doleful tune.
I wish I had those rascals here,
I'd settle all their hashes soon!

ENTER JACK KETCH. He fixes a gibbet on the platform of the stage and *exit*.

Punch. Well, I declare now, that very pretty! That must be a gardener. What a handsome tree he has planted just opposite the window, for a prospect!

ENTER THE CONSTABLE. He places a ladder against the gibbet, and *exit*.

Punch. Stop thief! stop thief! There's one pretty rascal for you. He come back again and get up the ladder to steal the fruit out of the tree.

ENTER TWO MEN with a coffin. They set it down on the platform, and *exeunt*.

Punch. What that for, I wonder? Oh dear, I see now: what fool I was! That is a large basket for the fruit be put into.

RE-ENTER JACK KETCH.

J. Ketch. Now, Mr. Punch, you may come out, if you like it.

Punch. Thank you, kindly ; but me very well where I am.

J. Ketch. What, won't you come out and have a good dinner ?

Punch. Much obliged, Mr. Ketch, but I have no appetite for my dinner.

J. Ketch. Then a good supper ?

Punch. I never eat suppers : they are not wholesome.

J. Ketch. But you must come out. Come out and be hanged.*

Punch. You would not be so cruel.

J. Ketch. Why were you so cruel as to commit so many murders ?

Punch. But that's no reason why you should be cruel, too, and murder me.†

* A direct plagiarism from Shakspeare, "Master Barnardine, you must rise and be hanged." *Measure for Measure*.

† An instance how Punch's self-possession never forsakes him. In a single sentence he confutes all who contend that man by law should have power over the life of his fellow man.

J. Ketch. Come, directly.

Punch. I can't; I got one bone in my leg.

J. Ketch. And you've got one bone in your neck, but that shall be soon broken.—Then I must fetch you. [He goes to the prison, and after a struggle, in which Punch calls out, "Mercy! mercy! I'll never do so again!" Jack Ketch brings him out to the front of the stage.]

Punch. Oh dear! Oh dear! Be quiet—can't you let me be?

J. Ketch. Now, Mr. Punch, no more delay. Put your head through this loop.

Punch. Through there! What for?

J. Ketch. Aye, through there.

Punch. What for?—I don't know how.

J. Ketch. It is very easy: only put your head through here.

Punch. What, so? [Poking his head on one side of the noose.]

J. Ketch. No, no, here!

Punch. So, then? [Poking his head on the other side.]

J. Ketch. Not so, you fool.

Punch. Mind how you call fool: try if you can do it yourself. Only shew me how, and I do it directly.

J. Ketch. Very well; I will. There, you see my head,

and you see this loop : put it in, so. [Putting his head through the noose.]

Punch. And pull it tight, so ! [He pulls the body forcibly down, and hangs Jack Ketch.] Huzza ! Huzza ! —[Punch takes down the corpse, and places it in the coffin : he then stands back. Enter two, who remove the gibbet, and placing the coffin upon it, dance with it on their shoulders grotesquely, and *exeunt*.]

Punch. There they go. They think they have got Mr. Punch safe enough. [Sings.]

They're out ! they're out ! I've done the trick !
Jack Ketch is dead—I'm free ;
I do not care, now, if Old Nick
Himself should come for me.

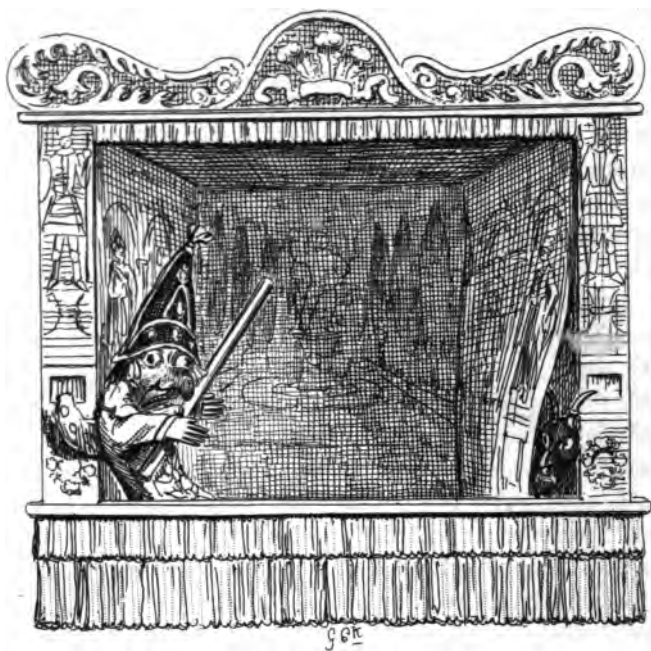
[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

ENTER PUNCH with a stick. He dances about, beating time on the front of the stage, and singing to the tune of "*Green grow the rushes, O.*"

Right foll de riddle loll,
I'm the boy to do 'em all.
Here's a stick
To thump Old Nick,
If he by chance upon me call.





ENTER THE DEVIL. He just peeps in at the corner of the stage, and *exit*.

Punch. [Much frightened, and retreating as far as he can.] Oh dear! Oh Lord! Talk of the devil, and he pop up his horns. There the old gentleman is, sure enough. [A pause and dead silence, while Punch continues to gaze at the spot where the Devil appeared. The Devil comes forward.] Good, kind Mr. Devil, I never did you any harm, but all the good in my power.—There, don't come any nearer. How you do, Sir? [Collecting courage.] I hope you and all your respectable family well? Much obliged for this visit—Good morning—should be sorry to keep you, for I know you have a great deal of business when you come to London. [The Devil advances.] Oh dear! What will become of me? [The Devil darts at Punch, who escapes, and aims a blow at his enemy: the Devil eludes it, as well as many others, laying his head on the platform, and slipping it rapidly backwards and forwards, so that Punch, instead of striking him, only repeatedly hits the boards. *[Exit Devil.*

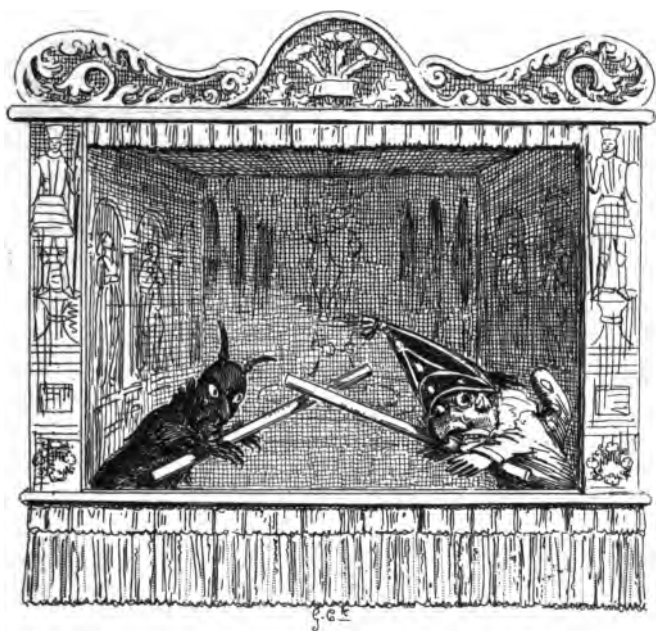
Punch. He, he, he! [Laughing.] He's off: he knew which side his bread butter'd on. He one deep, cunning devil. [Punch is alarmed by hearing a strange

supernatural whirring noise, something like the rapid motion of a spinning-wheel, and again retreats to the corner, fearfully waiting the event.]

RE-ENTER THE DEVIL, with a stick. [He makes up to Punch, who retreats round the back of the stage, and they stand eyeing one another and fencing at opposite sides. At last, the Devil makes a blow at Punch, which tells on the back of his head.]

Punch. Oh, my head ! What is that for ? Pray, Mr. Devil, let us be friends. [The Devil hits him again, and Punch begins to take it in dudgeon, and to grow angry.] Why, you must be one very stupid Devil not to know your best friend when you see him." [The Devil hits him again.] Be quiet, I say, you hurt me ! Well, if you won't, we must try which is best man,—Punch or the Devil.

[Here commences a terrific combat between the Devil and Punch : in the beginning, the latter has much the worst of it, being hit by his black adversary when and where he pleases. At last, the Devil seems to grow weary, and Punch succeeds in planting several heavy blows. The balance being restored, the fight is kept up for some time, and towards the conclusion Punch has the decided advantage, and drives his ene-





my before him. The Devil is stunned by repeated blows on the head and horns, and falls forward on the platform, where Punch completes his victory, and knocks the breath out of his body. Punch then puts his staff up the Devil's black clothes, and whirls him round in the air, exclaiming, "Huzza! huzza! the Devil's dead!"]

The Curtain falls.

FINIS.



