The Complete Works
Volume 20

The Memoirs of Mr. Charles J. Yellowplush
and other works

by

W. M. Thackeray
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THE MEMOIRS OF MR. CHARLES J.
YELLOWPLUSH

MISS SHUM'S HUSBAND.

CHAPTER I.

I was born in the year one, of the present or Christian hera, and am, in consquints, seven-and-thirty years old. My mamma called me Charles James Harrington Fitzroy Yellowplush, in compliment to several noble families, and to a sellybrated coachmin whom she knew, who wore a yellow livry, and drove the Lord Mayor of London.

Why she gev me this genlmn's name is a diffiklty, or rayther the name of a part of his dress; however, it's stuck to me through life, in which I was, as it were, a footman by buth.

Praps he was my father—though on this subjict I can't speak suttinly, for my ma wrapped up my buth in a mistry. I may be illygitmit, I may have been changed at nuss; but I've always had genlmnly tastes through life, and have no doubt that I come of a genlmnly origum.

The less I say about my parint the better, for the dear old creatur was very good to me, and, I fear, had very little other goodness in her. Why, I can't say; but I always passed as her nevyou. We led a strange life; sometimes ma was dressed in sattn and rooge, and sometimes in rags and dutt; sometimes I got kisses, and sometimes kix; sometimes gin, and sometimes sham Pang; law bless us! how she used to swear at me, and cuddle me; there we were, quarrelling and making up, sober and tipsy, starving and guttlng by turns, just as ma got money or spent it. But let me draw a vail over the seen, and speak of her no more—its 'sfishant for the public to know, that her name was Miss Montmorency, and we lived in the New Cut.

My poor mother died one morning, Hev'n bless her! and I was left alone in this wide wicked wuld, without so much money as would buy me a penny roal for my brexfast. But there was some amongst our naybors (and let me tell you there's more kindness among them poor disreppettable creaturs, than in half a dozen lords or barrynets) who took pity upon poor Sal's orfín (for they bust out laffín when I called her Miss Montmoreency), and gev me bred and shelter. I'm afraid, in spite of their kindness, that my morrils wouldn't have improved if I'd stayed long among
'em. But a benny-violent genlmn saw me, and put me to school. The academy which I went to was called the Free School of Saint Bartholomew's the Less—the young genlmn wore green baize coats, yellow leather whatsisnames, a tin plate on the left arm, and a cap about the size of a muffing. I stayed there sicks years; from sicks, that is to say, till my twelth year, during three years of witch I distinguished myself not a little in the musicle way, for I bloo the bellus of the church horgin, and very fine tunes we played too.

Well, it's not worth recounting my jewvenile follies (what trix we used to play the applewoman! and how we put snuff in the old clark's Prayer-book—my eye!); but one day, a genlmn entered the school-room—it was on the very day when I went to subtraxion—and asked the master for a young lad for a servant. They pitched upon me glad enough; and nex day found me sleeping in the sculry, close under the sink, at Mr. Bago's country-house at Pentonwille.

Bago kep a shop in Smithfield market, and drov a taring good trade in the hoil and Italian way. I've heard him say, that he cleared no less than fifty pounds every year by letting his front room at hanging time. His winders looked right opsit Newgit, and many and many dozen chaps has he seen hanging there. Laws was laws in the year ten, and they screwed chaps' nex for nex to nothink. But my bisniss was at his country-house, where I made my first ontray into fashnabl life. I was knife, errint, and stable-boy then, and an't ashamed to own it; for my merrits have raised me to what I am—two livries, forty pound a year, malt-licker, washin, silk-stocking, and wax candles—not countin wails, which is somethink pretty considerable at our house, I can tell you.

I didn't stay long here, for a suckmstance happened which got me a very different situation. A handsome young genlmn, who kep a tilbry and a ridin horse at livry, wanted a tiger. I bid at once for the place; and, being a neat tidy-looking lad, he took me. Bago gave me a character, and he my first livry; proud enough I was of it, as you may fancy.

My new master had some business in the city, for he went in every morning at ten, got out of his tilbry at the City Road, and had it waiting for him at six; when, if it was summer, he spanked round into the Park, and drove one of the neatest turnouts there. Wery proud I was in a gold-laced hat, a drab coat and a red weskit, to sit by his side, when he drove. I already began to ogle the gals in the carridges, and to feel that longing for fashionabl life which I've had ever since. When he was at the oppera, or the play, down I went to skittles, or to White Condick Gardens; and Mr. Frederic Altamont's young man was somebody, I warrant: to be sure there is very few man-servants at Pentonwille, the poppylation being mostly gals of all work; and so, though only fourteen, I was as much a man down there, as if I had been as old as Jerusalem.
But the most singular thing was, that my master, who was such a gay chap, should live in such a hole. He had only a ground-floor in John Street—a parlor and a bedroom. I slept over the way, and only came in with his boots and breakfast of a morning.

The house he lodged in belonged to Mr. and Mrs. Shum. They were a poor but profligate couple, who had rented the place for many years; and they and their family were squeezed in it pretty tight, I can tell you.

Shum said he had been a officer, and so he had. He had been a sub-deputy assistant vice-commissary, or some such think; and, as I heard afterwards, had been obliged to leave on account of his nervousness. He was such a coward, the fact is, that he was considered dangerous to the army, and sent home.

He had married a widow Buckmaster, who had been a Miss Slamcoe. She was a Bristol gal; and her father being a bankrupt in the tallow-chandlery way, left, in course, a pretty little sum of money. A thousand pound was settled on her; and she was as high and mighty as if it had been a millon.

Buckmaster died, leaving nothing; nothing except four ugly daughters by Miss Slamcoe: and her forty pound a year was rather a narrow income for one of her appetite and pretensions. In an unlucky hour for Shum she met him. He was a widower with a little daughter of three years old, a little house at Pentonwille, and a little income about as big as her own. I believe she bullied the poor creature into marriage; and it was agreed that he should let his ground-floor at John Street, and so add something to their means.

They married; and the widow Buckmaster was the gray mare, I can tell you. She was always talking and blustering about her family, the celebrity of the Buckmasters, and the antiquity of the Slamcoes. They had a six-roomed house (not counting kitching and scullery), and now twelve daughters in all; whizz.—4 Miss Buckmasters: Miss Betsy, Miss Dosy, Miss Biddy, and Miss Winny; 1 Miss Shum, Mary by name, Shum's daughter, and seven others, who shall be nameless. Mrs. Shum was a fat, red-haired woman, at least a foot taller than S.; who was but a yard and a half high, pale-faced, red-nosed, knock-kneed, bald-headed, his nose and shut-frill all brown with snuff.

Before the house was a little garden, where the washin of the family was always hanging. There was so many of 'em that it was obliged to be done by relays. There was six rails and a stocking on each, and four small goosing bushes, always covered with some bit of lining or other. The hall was a regular puddle: wet dabs of dishclouts flapped in your face; soapy smoking bits of flanning went nigh to choke you; and while you were looking up to prevent hanging yourself with the ropes which were strung across and about, slap came the hedge of a pail against
your shins, till one was like to be drove mad with hagony. The great slatt
ly Doddling girls was always on the stairs, poking about with nasty flower-pots, a-cooking something, or sprawling in the window-seats with greasy curl-papers, reading greasy novels. An infernal pianina was jingling from morning till night—two eldest Miss Buckmasters, "Battle of Prag"—six youngest Miss Shums, "In my Cottage," till I knew every note in the "Battle of Prag," and cussed the day when "In my Cottage" was rote. The younger girls, too, were always bouncing and thumping about the house, with torn pinnnyfores, and dogs-eard grammars, and large pieces of bread and treacle. I never see such a house.

As for Mrs. Shum, she was such a fine lady, that she did nothink but lay on the drawing-room sophy, read novels, drink, scold, scream, and go into hystarrix. Little Shum kep reading an old newspaper from weeks' end to weeks' end, when he was not engaged in teaching the children, or goin for the beer, or cleanin the shoes: for they kep no servant. This house in John Street was in short a regular Pandymony.

What could have brought Mr. Frederic Altamont to dwell in such a place? The reason is hovius: he adoared the fist Miss Shum.

And suttynly he did not show a bad taste; for though the other daughters were as ugly as their hideous ma, Mary Shum was a pretty little pink, modest creatur, with glossy black hair and tender blue eyes, and a neck as white as plaster of Parish. She wore a dismal old black gownd, which had grown too short for her, and too tight; but it only served to show her pretty angles and feet, and bewchus figger. Master, though he had looked rather low for the gal of his art, had certainly looked in the right place. Never was one more pretty or more hamiable. I gav her always the buttered toast left from our brexfust, and a cup of tea or chocklate, as Altamont might fancy: and the poor thing was glad enough of it, I can vouch; for they had precious short commons up stairs, and she the least of all.

For it seemed as if which of the Shum famly should try to snub the poor thing most. There was the four Buckmaster girls always at her. It was, Mary, git the coal-skittle; Mary, run down to the public-house for the beer; Mary, I intend to wear your clean stockens out walking, or your new bonnet to church. Only her poor father was kind to her; and he, poor old muff! his kindness was of no use. Mary bore all the scolding like a hangel, as she was: no, not if she had a pair of wings and a goold trumpet, could she have been a greater hangel.

I never shall forgit one seen that took place. It was when Master was in the city; and so, having nothink earthly to do, I happened to be listening on the stairs. The old scolding was a-going on, and the old tune of that hojus "Battle of Prag." Old Shum made some remark; and Miss Buckmaster cried out, "Law, pa! what a fool you are!" All the gals began laffin, and so did Mrs. Shum; all, that is, excep Mary,
who turned as red as flams, and going up to Miss Betsy Buckmaster, give her two such wax on her great red ears as made them tingle again.

Old Mrs. Shum screamed, and ran at her like a Bengal tiger. Her great arms vent veeling about like a vinmill, as she cushed and thumped poor Mary for taking her pa's part. Mary Shum, who was always a-crying before, didn't shed a tear now. "I will do it again," she said, "if Betsy insults my father." New thumps, new shreex; and the old horridan went on beatin the poor girl till she was quite exosted, and fell down on the sofy, puffin like a poppus.

"For shame, Mary," began old Shum; "for shame, you naughty gal, you! for hurting the feelings of your dear mamma, and beating your kind sister."

"Why, it was because she called you a—"

"If she did, you pert miss," said Shum, looking mighty dignitified, "I could correct her, and not you."

"You correct me, indeed!" said Miss Betsy, turning up her nose, if possible, higher than before; "I should like to see you erect me! Imperence!" and they all began laffin again.

By this time Mrs. S. had recovered from the effex of her exsize, and she began to pour in her wolly. Fust she called Mary names, then Shum.

"Oh, why," screeched she, "why did I ever leave a genteel famly, where I ad every ellygance and lucksry, to marry a creatur like this? He is unfit to be called a man, he is unworthy to marry a gentlewoman; and as for that hussy, I disown her. Thank heaven she an't a Slamcoe; she is only fit to be a Shum!"

"That's true, mamma," said all the gals; for their mother had taught them this pretty piece of manners, and they despised their father heartily: indeed, I have always remarked that, in famlies where the wife is internally talking about the merits of her branch, the husband is invariably a spooney.

Well, when she was exosted again, down she fell on the sofy, at her old trix—more screeching—more convulshuns: and she wouldn't stop, this time, till Shum had got her half a pint of her old remedy, from the "Blue Lion" over the way. She grew more easy as she finished the gin; but Mary was sent out of the room, and told not to come back agin all day.

"Miss Mary," says I,—for my heart yurned to the poor gal, as she came sobbing and miserable down stairs: "Miss Mary," says I, "if I might make so bold, here's master's room empty, and I know where the cold bif and pickles is." "Oh, Charles!" said she, nodding her head sadly, "I'm too retched to have any happytite." And she flung herself on a chair, and began to cry fit to bust.
At this moment who should come in but my master. I had taken hold of Miss Mary's hand, somehow, and do believe I should have kist it, when, as I said, Haltamont made his appearance. "What's this?" cries he, lookin at me as black as thunder, or as Mr. Phillips as Hickit, in the new tragedy of MacBuff.

"It's only Miss Mary, sir," answered I.

"Get out, sir," says he, as fierce as posbil; and I felt somethink (I think it was the tip of his to) touching me behind, and found myself, nex minit, sprawling among the wet flannings and buckets and things.

The people from up stairs came to see what was the matter, as I was cussin and crying out. "It's only Charles, ma," screamed out Miss Betsy.

"Where's Mary?" says Mrs. Shum, from the sofy.

"She's in Master's room, miss," said I.

"She's in the lodger's room, ma," cries Miss Shum, heckoing me.

"Very good; tell her to stay there till he comes back." And then Miss Shum went bouncing up the stairs again, little knowing of Haltamont's return.

* * * * *

I'd long before observed that my master had an anchoring after Mary Shum; indeed, as I have said, it was purely for her sake that he took and kep his lodgings at Pentonwille. Excep for the sake of love, which is above being mersnary, fourteen shillings a wick was a little too strong for two such rat-holes as he lived in. I do blieve the famly had nothing else but their lodger to live on: they brekfisted off his tea-leaves, they cut away pounds and pounds of meat from his jints (he always dined at home), and his baker's bill was at least enough for six. But that wasn't my business. I saw him grin, sometimes, when I laid down the cold bif of a morning, to see how little was left of yesterday's sirline; but he never said a syllabub: for true love don't mind a pound of meat or so hextra.

At first, he was very kind and attentive to all the gals; Miss Betsy, in particuler, grew mighty fond of him: they sat, for whole evenings, playing cribbitch, he taking his pipe and glas, she her tea and muffing; but as it was improper for her to come alone, she brought one of her sisters, and this was genrally Mary,—for he made a pint of asking her, too,—and one day, when one of the others came instead, he told her, very quitely, that he hadn't invited her; and Miss Buckmaster was too fond of muffings to try this game on again: besides, she was jealous of her three grown sisters, and considered Mary as only a child. Law bless us! how she used to ogle him, and quot bits of pottry, and play "Meet Me by Moonlike," on an old gitter: she
reglar flung herself at his head: but he wouldn't have it, bein better ockypied elsewhere.

One night, as genteel as possible, he brought home tickets for "Ashley's," and proposed to take the two young ladies—Miss Betsy and Miss Mary, in course. I recklect he called me aside that afternoon, assuming a solamon and misterus hare, "Charles," said he, "are you up to snuff?"

"Why sir," said I, "I'm genrally considered tolerably downy."

"Well," says he, "I'll give you half a suffering if you can manage this bisness for me; I've chose a rainy night on purpus. When the theatre is over, you must be waitin with two umbrellows; give me one, and hold the other over Miss Buckmaster: and, hark ye, sir, turn to the right when you leave the theater, and say the coach is ordered to stand a little way up the street, in order to get rid of the crowd."

We went (in a fly hired by Mr. A.), and never shall I forgit Cartliche's hacting on that memrable night. Talk of Kimble! talk of Magreedy! Ashley's for my money, with Cartlitch in the principal part. But this is nothink to the porpus. When the play was over, I was at the door with the umbrellos. It was raining cats and dogs, sure enough.

Mr. Altamont came out presently, Miss Mary under his arm, and Miss Betsy following behind, rayther sulky. "This way, sir," cries I, pushin forward; and I threw a great cloak over Miss Betsy, fit to smother her. Mr. A. and Miss Mary skipped on and was out of sight when Miss Betsy's cloak was settled, you may be sure.

"They're only gone to the fly, miss. It's a little way up the street, away from the crowd of carridges." And off we turned to the right, and no mistake.

After marchin a little through the plash and mud, "Has anybody seen Coxy's fly?" cries I, with the most innocent haxent in the world.

"Cox's fly!" hollows out one chap. "Is it the vaggin you want?" says another. "I see the blackin wan pass," giggles out another gentl'mn; and there was such a hinterchange of compliments as you never heerd. I pass them over though, because some of 'em were not wery genteel.

"Law, miss," said I, "what shall I do? My master will never forgive me; and I haven't a single sixpence to pay a coach." Miss Betsy was just going to call one when I said that; but the coachman wouldn't have it at that price, he said, and I knew very well that she hadn't four or five shillings to pay for a vehicle. So, in the midst of that tarin rain, at midnight, we had to walk four miles, from Westminster
Bridge to Pentonwille; and what was wuss, I didn't happen to know the way. A very nice walk it was, and no mistake.

At about half-past two, we got safe to John Street. My master was at the garden gate. Miss Mary flew into Miss Betsy's arms, while master begun cussin and swearing at me for disobeying his orders, and turning to the right instead of to the left! Law bless me! his hacting of hanger was very near as natral and as terrybl as Mr. Cartlich's in the play.

They had waited half an hour, he said, in the fly, in the little street at the left of the theater; they had drove up and down in the greatest fright possible; and at last came home, thinking it was in vain to wait any more. They gave her 'ot rum-and-water and roast oysters for supper, and this consoled her a little.

I hope nobody will cast an imputation on Miss Mary for her share in this adventer, for she was as honest a gal as ever lived, and I do believe is hignorant to this day of our little strattygim. Besides, all's fair in love; and, as my master could never get to see her alone, on account of her infernal eleven sisters and ma, he took this opportunity of expressin his attachment to her.

If he was in love with her before, you may be sure she paid it him back again now. Ever after the night at Ashley's, they were as tender as two tuttle-doves—which fully accounts for the axdent what happened to me, in being kicked out of the room: and in course I bore no mallis.

I don't know whether Miss Betsy still fancied that my master was in love with her, but she loved muffings and tea, and kem down to his parlor as much as ever.

Now comes the sing'lar part of my history.
CHAPTER II.

But who was this genl'n with a fine name—Mr. Frederic Altamont? or what was he? The most mysterus genl'n that ever I knew. Once I said to him on a very rainy day, "Sir, shall I bring the gig down to your office?" and he gave me one of his black looks and one of his loudest hoaths, and told me to mind my own bizziness, and attend to my orders. Another day,—it was on the day when Miss Mary slapped Miss Betsy's face,—Miss M., who adoared him, as I have said already, kep on asking him what was his buth, parentidg, and ediccation. "Dear Frederic," says she, "why this mistry about yourself and your hactions? why hide from your little Mary"—they were as tender as this, I can tell you—"your buth and your professin?"

I spose Mr. Frederic looked black, for I was only listening, and he said, in a voice hagitated by emotion, "Mary," said he, "if you love me, ask me this no more: let it be sfishnt for you to know that I am a honest man, and that a secret, what it would be misery for you to larn, must hang over all my actions—that is from ten o'clock till six."

They went on chaffin and talking in this melumcolly and mysterus way, and I didn't lose a word of what they said; for them houses in Pentonville have only walls made of pasteboard, and you hear rayther better outside the room than in. But, though he kep up his secret, he swore to her his affektion this day pint blank. Nothing should prevent him, he said, from leading her to the halter, from makin her his adoarable wife. After this was a slight silence. "Dearest Frederic," mummered out miss, speakin as if she was chokin, "I am yours—yours for ever." And then silence agen, and one or two smax, as if there was kissin going on. Here I thought it best to give a rattle at the door-lock; for, as I live, there was old Mrs. Shum a-walkin down the stairs!

It appears that one of the younger gals, a-looking out of the bed- rum window, had seen my master come in, and coming down to tea half an hour afterwards, said so in a cussary way. Old Mrs. Shum, who was a dragon of vertyou, cam bustling down the stairs, panting and frowning, as fat and as fierce as a old sow at feedin time.

"Where's the lodger, fellow?" says she to me.
I spoke loud enough to be heard down the street—"If you mean, ma'am, my master, Mr. Frederic Altamont, esquire, he's just stept in, and is puttin on clean shoes in his bedroom."

She said nothink in answer, but flumps past me, and opening the parlor-door, sees master looking very queer, and Miss Mary a-drooping down her head like a pale lily.

"Did you come into my famly," says she, "to corrupt my daughters, and to destroy the hinnocence of that infamous gal? Did you come here, sir, as a seducer, or only as a lodger? Speak, sir, speak!"—and she folded her arms quite fierce, and looked like Mrs. Siddums in the Tragic Mews.

"I came here, Mrs. Shum," said he, "because I loved your daughter, or I never would have condescended to live in such a beggarly hole. I have treated her in every respect like a genlmn, and she is as innocent now, ma'm, as she was when she was born. If she'll marry me, I am ready; if she'll leave you, she shall have a home where she shall be neither bullyd nor starved: no hangry frumps of sisters, no cross mother-in-law, only an affeckshnat husband, and all the pure pleasures of Hyming."

Mary flung herself into his arms—"Dear, dear Frederic," says she, "I'll never leave you."

"Miss," says Mrs. Shum, "you ain't a Slamcoe nor yet a Buckmaster, thank God. You may marry this person if your pa thinks proper, and he may insult me—brave me—trample on my feelinx in my own house—and there's no-o-o-obody by to defend me."

I knew what she was going to be at: on came her histarrix agen, and she began screechin and roaring like mad. Down comes of course the eleven gals and old Shum. There was a pretty row. "Look here, sir," says she, "at the condueck of your precious trull of a daughter—alone with this man, kissin and dandlin, and Lawd knows what besides."

"What, he?" cries Miss Betsy—"he in love with Mary. Oh, the wretch, the monster, the deceiver!"—and she falls down too, screeching away as loud as her mamma; for the silly creature fancied still that Altamont had a fondness for her.

"Silence these women!" shouts out Altamont, thundering loud. "I love your daughter, Mr. Shum. I will take her without a penny, and can afford to keep her. If you don't give her to me, she'll come of her own will. Is that enough?—may I have her?"
"We'll talk of this matter, sir," says Mr. Shum, looking as high and mighty as an alderman. "Gals, go up stairs with your dear mamma."—And they all trooped up again, and so the skrimmage ended.

You may be sure that old Shum was not very sorry to get a husband for his daughter Mary, for the old creatur loved her better than all the pack which had been brought him or born to him by Mrs. Buckmaster. But, strange to say, when he came to talk of settlements and so forth, not a word would my master answer. He said he made four hundred a year reglar—he wouldn't tell how—but Mary, if she married him, must share all that he had, and ask no questions; only this he would say, as he'd said before, that he was a honest man.

They were married in a few days, and took a very genteel house at Islington; but still my master went away to business, and nobody knew where. Who could he be?
CHAPTER III.

If ever a young kipple in the middlin classes began life with a chance of happiness, it was Mr. and Mrs. Frederic Altamont. There house at Cannon Row, Islington, was as comfortable as house could be. Carpited from top to to; pore's rates small; furnitur elegant; and three deomestix: of which I, in course, was one. My life wasn't so easy as in Mr. A.'s bachelor days; but, what then? The three W's is my maxum: plenty of work, plenty of wittles, and plenty of wages. Altamont kep his gig no longer, but went to the city in an omlibuster.

One would have thought, I say, that Mrs. A., with such an effeckshnut husband, might have been as happy as her blessid majisty. Nothing of the sort. For the fust six months it was all very well; but then she grew gloomier and gloomier, though A. did everythink in life to please her.

Old Shum used to come reglarly four times a wick to Cannon Row, where he lunched, and dined, and teed, and supd. The pore little man was a thought too fond of wine and spirits; and many and many's the night that I've had to support him home. And you may be sure that Miss Betsy did not now desert her sister: she was at our place mornink, noon, and night; not much to my mayster's liking, though he was too good-natured to wex his wife in trifles.

But Betsy never had forgotten the recollection of old days, and hated Altamont like the foul feind. She put all kind of bad things into the head of poor innocent missis; who, from being all gayety and cheerfulness, grew to be quite melumcolly and pale, and retchid, just as if she had been the most misrable woman in the world.

In three months more, a baby comes, in course, and with it old Mrs. Shum, who stuck to Mrs.' side as close as a wampire, and made her retchider and retchider. She used to bust into tears when Altamont came home: she used to sigh and wheep over the pore child, and say, "My child, my child, your father is false to me;" or, "your father deceives me;" or "what will you do when your pore mother is no more?" or such like sentimental stuff.

It all came from Mother Shum, and her old trix, as I soon found out. The fact is, when there is a mistry of this kind in the house, its a servant's duty to listen; and listen I did, one day when Mrs. was cryin as usual, and fat Mrs. Shum a sittin consolin her, as she called it: though, heaven knows, she only grew wuss and wuss for the consolation.

Well, I listened; Mrs. Shum was a-rockin the baby, and missis cryin as youusal.
"Pore dear innocint," says Mrs. S., heavin a great sigh, "you're the child of a unknown father and a misrable mother."

"Don't speak ill of Frederic, mamma," says missis; "he is all kindness to me."

"All kindness, indeed! yes, he gives you a fine house, and a fine gownd, and a ride in a fly whenever you please; but where does all his money come from? Who is he—what is he? Who knows that he mayn't be a murderer, or a housebreaker, or a utterer of forged notes? How can he make his money honestly, when he won't say where he gets it? Why does he leave you eight hours every blessid day, and won't say where he goes to? Oh, Mary, Mary, you are the most injured of women!"

And with this Mrs. Shum began sobbin; and Miss Betsy began yowling like a cat in a gitter; and pore missis cried, too—tears is so remarkable infeckshus.

"Perhaps, mamma," wimpered out she, "Frederic is a shop-boy, and don't like me to know that he is not a gentleman."

"A shopboy," says Betsy, "he a shopboy! O no, no, no! more likely a wretched willain of a murderer, stabbin and robing all day, and feedin you with the fruits of his ill-gotten games!"

More crying and screechin here took place, in which the baby joined; and made a very pretty consort, I can tell you.

"He can't be a robber," cries missis; "he's too good, too kind, for that: besides, murdering is done at night, and Frederic is always home at eight."

"But he can be a forger," says Betsy, "a wicked, wicked forger. Why does he go away every day? to forge notes, to be sure. Why does he go to the city? to be near banks and places, and so do it more at his convenience."

"But he brings home a sum of money every day—about thirty shillings—sometimes fifty: and then he smiles, and says it's a good day's work. This is not like a forger," said pore Mrs. A.

"I have it—I have it!" screams out Mrs. S. "The villain—the sneaking, double-faced Jonas! he's married to somebody else he is, and that's why he leaves you, the base biggymist!"

At this, Mrs. Altamont, struck all of a heap, fainted clean away. A dreadful business it was—hystarrix; then hystarrix, in course, from Mrs. Shum; bells ringin, child squalin, suvants tearin up and down stairs with hot water! If ever there is a noosance in the world, it's a house where faintain is always goin on. I wouldn't live in one,—no, not to be groom of the chambers, and git two hundred a year.
It was eight o'clock in the evenin when this row took place; and such a row it was, that nobody but me heard master's knock. He came in, and heard the hooping, and screeching, and roaring. He seemed very much frightened at first, and said, "What is it?"

"Mrs. Shum's here," says I, "and Mrs. in astarrix."

Altamont looked as black as thunder, and growled out a word which I don't like to name,—let it suffice that it begins with a d and ends with a nation; and he tore up stairs like mad.

He bust open the bedroom door; missis lay quite pale and stony on the sofy; the babby was screechin from the craddle; Miss Betsy was sprawlin over missis; and Mrs. Shum half on the bed and half on the ground: all howlin and squeelin, like so many dogs at the moond.

When A. came in, the mother and daughter stopped all of a sudding. There had been one or two tiffs before between them, and they feared him as if he had been a hogre.

"What's this infernal screeching and crying about?" says he. "Oh, Mr. Altamont," cries the old woman, "you know too well; it's about you that this darling child is misrabble!"

"And why about me, pray, madam?"

"Why, sir, dare you ask why? Because you deceive her, sir; because you are a false, cowardly traitor, sir; because you have a wife elsewhere, sir!" And the old lady and Miss Betsy began to roar again as loud as ever.

Altamont pawsed for a minnit, and then flung the door wide open; nex he seized Miss Betsy as if his hand were a vice, and he world her out of the room; then up he goes to Mrs. S. "Get up," says he, thundering loud, "you lazy, trolloping, mischief-making, lying old fool! Get up, and get out of this house. You have been the cuss and bain of my happyniss since you entered it. With your d——d lies, and novvle rending, and histerryx, you have perwerted Mary, and made her almost as mad as yourself."

"My child! my child!" shriex out Mrs. Shum, and clings round missis. But Altamont ran between them, and griping the old lady by her arm, dragged her to the door. "Follow your daughter, ma'm," says he, and down she went. "Chawls, see those ladies to the door," he hollows out, "and never let them pass it again." We walked down together, and off they went: and master locked and double-locked the bedroom door after him, intendin, of course, to have a tator-tator (as they say) with his wife. You may be sure that I followed up stairs again pretty quick, to hear the result of their confidence.
As they say at St. Stevenses, it was rayther a stormy debate. "Mary," says master, "you're no longer the merry greatful gal I knew and loved at Pentonwill: there's some secret a pressin on you—there's no smilin welcom for me now, as there used formly to be! Your mother and sister-in-law have perwerted you, Mary: and that's why I've drove them from this house, which they shall not re-enter in my life."

"O, Frederic! it's you is the cause, and not I. Why do you have any mistry from me? Where do you spend your days? Why did you leave me, even on the day of your marridge, for eight hours, and continue to do so every day?"

"Because," says he, "I makes my livelihood by it. I leave you, and don't tell you how I make it: for it would make you none the happier to know."

It was in this way the convysation ren on—more tears and questions on my missises part, more sturmness and silence on my master's: it ended for the first time since their marridge, in a reglar quarrel. Wery difrent, I can tell you, from all the hammerous billing and kewing which had proceeded their nupshuls.

Master went out, slamming the door in a fury; as well he might. Says he, "If I can't have a comforable life, I can have a jolly one;" and so he went off to the hed tavern, and came home that evening beesly intawsicated. When high words begin in a family drink generally follows on the genlman's side; and then, fearwell to all conjubial happyniss! These two pipple, so fond and loving, were now sirly, silent, and full of il wil. Master went out earlier, and came home later; missis cried more, and looked even paler than before.

Well, things went on in this uncomfortable way, master still in the mopes, missis tempted by the deamons of jellosy and curosity; until a singlar axident brought to light all the goings on of Mr. Altamont.

It was the tenth of January; I recklect the day, for old Shum gev me half a crownd (the fust and last of his money I ever see, by the way): he was dining along with master, and they were making merry together.

Master said, as he was mixing his fifth tumler of punch and little Shum his twelfth or so—master said, "I see you twice in the City to-day, Mr. Shum."

"Well, that's curous!" says Shum. "I was in the City. To-day's the day when the divvydins (God bless 'em) is paid; and me and Mrs. S. went for our half-year's inkem. But we only got out of the coach, crossed the street to the Bank, took our money, and got in agen. How could you see me twice?"

Altamont stuttered and stammered and hemd, and hawd. "O!" says he, "I was passing—passing as you went in and out." And he instantly turned the conversation, and began talking about pollytix, or the weather, or some such stuff.
"Yes, my dear," said my missis, "but how could you see papa TWICE?" Master didn't answer, but talked pollytix more than ever. Still she would continy on. "Where was you, my dear, when you saw pa? What were you doing, my love, to see pa twice?" and so forth. Master looked angrier and angrier, and his wife only pressed him wuss and wuss.

This was, as I said, little Shum's twelfth tumler; and I knew pritty well that he could git very little further; for, as reglar as the thirteenth came, Shum was drunk. The thirteenth did come, and its consquinzes. I was obliged to leed him home to John Street, where I left him in the hangry arms of Mrs. Shum.

"How the d—," sayd he all the way, "how the d-dd—the deddy—deddy—devil—could he have seen me twice?"
CHAPTER IV.

It was a sad slip on Altamont's part, for no sooner did he go out the next morning than missis went out too. She tor down the street, and never stopped till she came to her pa's house at Pentonwill. She was clositid for an hour with her ma, and when she left her she drove straight to the City. She walked before the Bank, and behind the Bank, and round the Bank: she came home disperryted, having learned nothink.

And it was now an extraordinary thing that from Shum's house for the next ten days there was nothing but expyditations into the city. Mrs. S., tho her dropsicle legs had never carred her half so fur before, was eternally on the key veve, as the French say. If she didn't go, Miss Betsy did, or misses did: they seemed to have an attrackshun to the Bank, and went there as natral as an omlibus.

At last one day, old Mrs. Shum comes to our house—(she wasn't admitted when master was there, but came still in his absints)—and she wore a hair of tryumph, as she entered. "Mary," says she, "where is the money your husbind brought to you yesterday?" My master used always to give it to missis when he returned.

"The money, ma!" says Mary. "Why here!" And pulling out her puss, she showed a sovrin, a good heap of silver, and an odd-looking little coin.

"That's it! that's it!" cried Mrs. S. "A Queene Anne's sixpence, isn't it, dear—dated seventeen hundred and three?"

It was so sure enough: a Queen Ans sixpence of that very date.

"Now, my love," says she, "I have found him! Come with me to- morrow, and you shall know all!"

And now comes the end of my story.

* * * * *

The ladies nex morning set out for the City, and I walked behind, doing the genteel thing, with a nosegy and a goold stick. We walked down the New Road—we walked down the City Road—we walked to the Bank. We were crossing from that heddyfiz to the other side of Cornhill, when all of a sudden missis shreeked, and fainted spontaceously away.

I rushed forrard, and raised her to my arms: spiling thereby a new weskit and a pair of crimson smalcloes. I rushed forrard. I say, very nearly knocking down the old
sweeper who was hobbling away as fast as posibil. We took her to Birch's; we provided her with a hackney-coach and every luxsury, and carried her home to Islington.

* * * * *

That night master never came home. Nor the nex night, nor the nex. On the fourth day an octimageer arrived; he took an infantry of the furnitur, and placed a bill in the window.

At the end of the wick Altamont made his appearance. He was haggard and pale; not so haggard, however, not so pale as his miserable wife.

He looked at her very tendrilly. I may say, it's from him that I coppied MY look to Miss ——. He looked at her very tendrilly and held out his arms. She gev a suffycating shreek, and rusht into his umbraces.

"Mary," says he, "you know all now. I have sold my place; I have got three thousand pounds for it, and saved two more. I've sold my house and furnitur, and that brings me another. We'll go abroad and love each other, has formly."

And now you ask me, Who he was? I shudder to relate.—Mr. Haltamont *sweep the crossing from the Bank to Cornhill*!!

Of cors, I left his servis. I met him, few years after, at Badden-Badden, where he and Mrs. A. were much respectid, and pass for pipple of propaty.
THE AMOURS OF MR. DEUCEACE.

DIMOND CUT DIMOND.

The name of my next master was, if possible, still more ellygant and youfonious than that of my first. I now found myself body servant to the Honrabble Halgernon Percy Deuceace, youngest and fifth son of the Earl of Crabs.

Halgernon was a barrystir—that is, he lived in Pump Court, Temple: a wulgar naybrood, witch praps my readers don't no. Suffiz to say, it's on the confines of the citty, and the choosen aboad of the lawyers of this metrappolish.

When I say that Mr. Deuceace was a barrystir, I don't mean that he went sesshums or surcoats (as they call 'em), but simply that he kep chambers, lived in Pump Court, and looked out for a commitionarship, or a revisinship, or any other place that the Wig guvyyment could give him. His father was a Wig pier (as the landriss told me), and had been a Toary pier. The fack is, his lordship was so poar, that he would be anythink or nothink, to get provisions for his sons and an inkum for himself.

I phansy that he aloud Halgernon two hundred a year; and it would have been a very comforable maintenants, only he knever paid him.

Owever, the young genlmn was a genlmn, and no mistake; he got his allowents of nothing a year, and spent it in the most honrabble and fashnabble manner. He kep a kab—he went to Holmax—and Crockfu'd's—he moved in the most xquizzit suckles and trubbld the law boox very little, I can tell you. Those fashnabble gents have ways of getten money, witch comman pipple doan't understand.

Though he only had a therd floar in Pump Cort, he lived as if he had the welth of Cresas. The tenpun notes floo abowt as common as haypince—clarrit and shampang was at his house as vulgar as gin; and verry glad I was, to be sure, to be a valley to a zion of the nobillaty.

Deuceace had, in his sittin-room, a large pictur on a sheet of paper. The names of his family was wrote on it; it was wrote in the shape of a tree, a-groin out of a man-in-armer's stomick, and the names were on little plates among the bows. The pictur said that the Deuceaces kem into England in the year 1066, along with William Conqueruns. My master called it his podygree. I do bleev it was because he had this pictur, and because he was the Honrabble Deuceace, that he mannitched to live as he did. If he had been a common man, you'd have said he was no better than
a swinler. It's only rank and buth that can warrant such singularities as my master show'd. For it's no use disgying it—the Honrabble Halgernon was a gambler. For a man of vulgar family, it's the wust trade that can be—for a man of common feelinx of honesty, this profession is quite imposbil; but for a real thoroughbread genlmn, it's the esiest and most prophetable line he can take.

It may praps appear curious that such a fashnabble man should live in the Temple; but it must be reckleted, that it's not only lawyers who live in what's called the Ins of Cort. Many batchylers, who have nothink to do with lor, have here their loginx; and many sham barrysters, who never put on a wig and gownd twise in their lives, kip apartments in the Temple, instead of Bon Street, Pickledilly, or other fashnabble places.

Frinstance, on our stairkis (so these houses are called), there was 8 sets of chamberses, and only 3 lawyers. These was bottom floar, Screwson, Hewson, and Jewson, attorneys; fust floar, Mr. Sergeant Flabber—opsite, Mr. Counslor Bruffy; and secknd pair, Mr. Haggerstony, an Irish counslor, praktising at the Old Baly, and lickwise what they call reporter to the Morning Post nyouspapper. Opsite him was wrote

MR. RICHARD BLEWITT;

and on the thud floar, with my master, lived one Mr. Dawkins.

This young fellow was a new come into the Temple, and unlucky it was for him too—he'd better have never been born; for it's my firm apinion that the Temple ruined him—that is, with the help of my master and Mr. Dick Blewitt: as you shall hear.

Mr. Dawkins, as I was gave to understand by his young man, had just left the Univerarsity of Oxford, and had a pretty little fortn of his own—six thousand pound, or so—in the stox. He was jest of age, an orfin who had lost his father and mother; and having distinkwished hisself at Collitch, where he gained seffral prices, was come to town to push his fortn, and study the barryster's bisness.

Not bein of a very high fammly hisself—indeed, I've heard say his father was a chismonger, or somethink of that lo sort—Dawkins was glad to find his old Oxford frend, Mr. Blewitt, yonger son to rich Squire Blewitt, of Listershire, and to take rooms so near him.

Now, tho' there was a considdrable intimacy between me and Mr. Blewitt's gentleman, there was scarcely any betwixt our masters,—mine being too much of the aristoxy to associate with one of Mr. Blewitt's sort. Blewitt was what they call a bettin man; he went reglar to Tattlesall's, kep a pony, wore a white hat, a blue berd's-eye handkercher, and a cut-away coat. In his manners he was the very
contrary of my master, who was a slim, ellygant man as ever I see—he had very white hands, rayther a sallow face, with sharp dark ise, and small wiskus neatly trimmed and as black as Warren's jet—he spoke very low and soft—he seemed to be watchin the person with whom he was in convysation, and always flatterd everybody. As for Blewitt, he was quite of another sort. He was always swearin, singing, and slappin people on the back, as hearty as posbill. He seemed a merry, careless, honest cretur, whom one would trust with life and soul. So thought Dawkins, at least; who, though a quiet young man, fond of his boox, novvles, Byron's poems, foot-playing, and such like scientafic amusemints, grew hand in glove with honest Dick Blewitt, and soon after with my master, the Honrabble Halgernon. Poor Daw! he thought he was makin good connexions and real frends—he had fallen in with a couple of the most etrocious swinlers that ever lived.

Before Mr. Dawkins's arrivial in our house, Mr. Deuceace had barely condysended to speak to Mr. Blewitt; it was only about a month after that suckumstance that my master, all of a sudding, grew very friendly with him. The reason was pretty clear,—Deuceace wanted him. Dawkins had not been an hour in master's company before he knew that he had a pidgin to pluck.

Blewitt knew this too: and bein very fond of pidgin, intended to keep this one entirely to himself. It was amusin to see the Honrabble Halgernon manuvring to get this poor bird out of Blewitt's clause, who thought he had it safe. In fact, he'd brought Dawkins to these chambers for that very porpos, thinking to have him under his eye, and strip him at leisure.

My master very soon found out what was Mr. Blewitt's game. Gamblers know gamblers, if not by instink, at least by reputation; and though Mr. Blewitt moved in a much lower speare than Mr. Deuceace, they knew each other's dealins and caracteres puffickly well.

"Charles you scoundrel," says Deuceace to me one day (he always spoak in that kind way), "who is this person that has taken the opsit chambers, and plays the flute so industrusly?"

"It's Mr. Dawkins, a rich young gentleman from Oxford, and a great friend of Mr. Blewittses, sir," says I; "they seem to live in each other's rooms."

Master said nothink, but he grin'd—my eye, how he did grin. Not the fowl find himself could snear more satannickly.

I knew what he meant:

Imprimish. A man who plays the floot is a simpleton.

Secknly. Mr. Blewitt is a raskle.
Thirdmo. When a raskle and a simpleton is always together, and when the simpleton is rich, one knows pretty well what will come of it.

I was but a lad in them days, but I knew what was what, as well as my master; it's not gentlemen only that's up to snough. Law bless us! there was four of us on this stairkes, four as nice young men as you ever see: Mr. Bruffy's young man, Mr. Dawkinses, Mr. Blewitt's, and me—and we knew what our masters was about as well as thay did theirselves. Frinstance, I can say this for myself, there wasn't a paper in Deuceace's desk or drawer, not a bill, a note, or mimerandum, which I hadn't read as well as he: with Blewitt's it was the same—me and his young man used to read 'em all. There wasn't a bottle of wine that we didn't get a glass out of, nor a pound of sugar that we didn't have some lumps of it. We had keys to all the cubbards—we pipped into all the letters that kem and went—we pored over all the bill-files—we'd the best pickens out of the dinners, the livvers of the fowls, the forcemit balls out of the soup, the egs from the sallit. As for the coals and candles, we left them to the landrisses. You may call this robry—nonsince—it's only our rights—a suvvant's purquizzits is as sacred as the laws of Hengland.

Well, the long and short of it is this. Richard Blewitt, esquire, was sityouated as follows: He'd an incum of three hundred a year from his father. Out of this he had to pay one hundred and ninety for money borrowed by him at collidge, seventy for chambers, seventy more for his hoss, aty for his suvvant on bord wagis, and about three hundred and fifty for a sepparat establishment in the Regency Park; besides this, his pockit-money, say a hunderd, his eatin, drinkin, and wine-marchant's bill, about two hunderd moar. So that you see he laid by a pretty handsome sum at the end of the year.

My master was diffrent; and being a more fashnable man than Mr. B., in course he owed a deal more mony. There was fust: