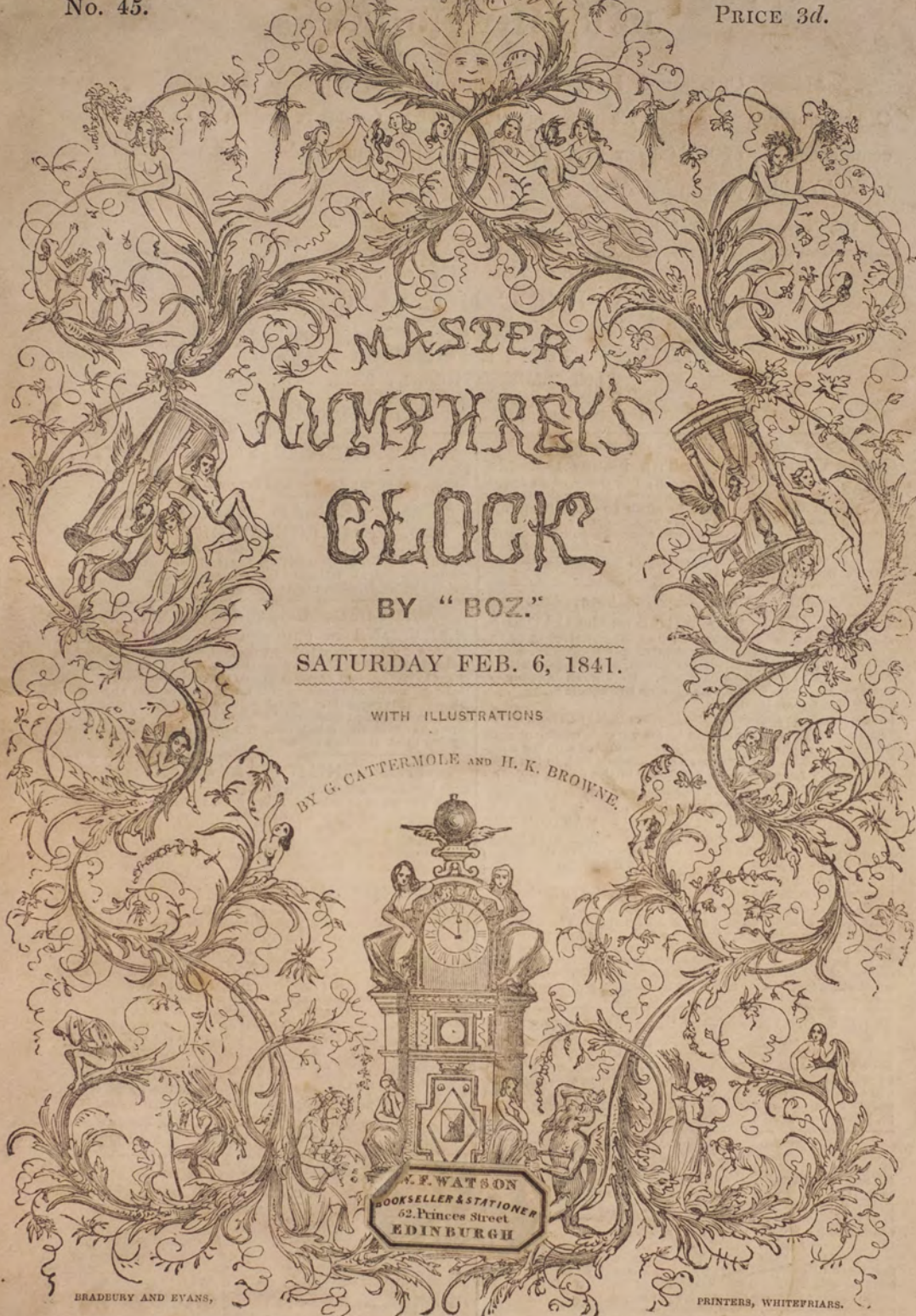


Thomas Lewis Gift Magazine

No. 45.

PRICE 3d.



MASTER HUMPHREY'S CLOCK

BY "BOZ."

SATURDAY FEB. 6, 1841.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

BY G. CATTERMOLLE AND H. K. BROWNE.



W. F. WATSON
BOOKSELLER & STATIONER
62, PRINCES STREET
EDINBURGH

BRADBURY AND EVANS,

PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

LONDON: CHAPMAN AND HALL, 186, STRAND;

J. MENZIES, Edinburgh; J. FINLAY & Co., Glasgow; L. SMITH, Aberdeen; S. J. MACHEN & Co., Dublin; SIMMS & DINHAM, Manchester; WARKING WEBB, Liverpool; WRIGHTSON & WEBB, Birmingham; S. SIMMS & SON, Bath; LIGHT & RIDLER, Bristol; T. N. MORTON, Boston; H. S. KING, Brighton; G. THOMPSON, Bury; E. JOHNSON, Cambridge; C. THURNAM, Carlisle; J. LEE, Cheltenham; EVANS & DUCKER, Chester; W. EDWARDS, Coventry; W. ROWBOTTOM, Derby; W. BYERS, Devonport; W. T. ROBERTS, Exeter; T. DAVIES, Gloucester; R. CUSSENS, Hull; HENRY SHALDERS, Ipswich; W. REEVE, Leamington; T. HARRISON, Leeds; J. R. SMITH, Lynn; J. SMITH, Maidstone; FINLAY & CHARLTON, Newcastle-on-Tyne; JARROLD & SON, Norwich; R. MERCER, Nottingham; H. SLATTER, Oxford; P. R. DRUMMOND, Perth; E. NETTLETON, Plymouth; BRODIE & Co., Salisbury; JOHN INNOCENT, Sheffield; W. SHARLAND, Southampton; F. MAY, Taunton; A. DEIGHTON, Worcester; W. ALEXANDER, Yarmouth; J. SHILLITO, York; J. B. BROWN, Windsor; and sold by all Booksellers and Newsmen.

BARNABY RUDGE.

MESSRS. CHAPMAN & HALL beg to announce that No. 45 of MASTER HUMPHREY'S Clock contains the last Chapter of "THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP;" and that the commencement of "BARNABY RUDGE" (which will be published continuously, from week to week) will appear in No. 46.

186, STRAND, January 1841.

Price Three Shillings each,

SKETCHES OF YOUNG LADIES. | YOUNG GENTLEMEN. | YOUNG COUPLES. WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY PHIZ.

LONDON: CHAPMAN AND HALL, 186, STRAND.

FOUR COMPLETE WORKS FOR TENPENCE.

MAY MARTIN, or THE MONEY DIGGERS, by the Hon. Judge Thompson; **THE GIPSY OF ABRUZZO,** by TYRONE POWER; **THE DEER STALKERS,** by Andrew Picken; and **MY UNCLE'S GARRET WINDOW,** by Monk Lewis. The whole of the above works in the ROMANICIST and NOVELIST LIBRARY for February. London: John Clements, 21 and 22, Pall-mall; Simpkin and Marshall, Sherwood, and Strange, Paternoster-row; Smith, Liverpool; Hayward, Manchester; Tait, Edinburgh; and Machen, Dublin.

Amesbury on Deformities, &c.

PRACTICAL REMARKS on the CAUSES, NATURE, and TREATMENT of DEFORMITIES of the SPINE, CHEST, and LIMBS, MUSCULAR WEAKNESS, WEAK JOINTS, MUSCULAR CONTRACTIONS, and STIFF JOINTS. With Illustrative Plates and Cases. By JOSEPH AMESBURY, Surgeon, M.R.C.S., &c., late Lecturer on Orthopedic Surgery, &c. First vol. 4to, price 1*l.* 11*s.* 6*d.*

Longman & Co., Paternoster-row, London. Sold by all Booksellers.

The beneficial effects produced by the author's treatment upon the health, strength, and figure of persons afflicted with the maladies treated of in this Work may be authenticated, in the cases which he has reported, by the testimony of the friends and relatives of the Patients.—59, Burton Crescent, 1840.

By the same Author,

PRACTICAL REMARKS on the NATURE and TREATMENT of FRACTURES of the TRUNK and EXTREMITIES; containing the Author's Improvements in this department of Surgery. Illustrated by Plates, Woodcuts, and Cases. In 2 vols. 8vo, price 1*l.* 5*s.*

Longman & Co., Paternoster-row, London. Sold by all Booksellers.

The Author shows in this Work that the causes of deformity and want of bony union, after fracture, are attributable to the inadequacy of the ordinary modes of treatment, and that these evils might be prevented by the judicious employment of the means which he has introduced. These facts are illustrated by a large number of recent fractures, and of fractures of long standing, of which the Author has had the management in public and private practice.

NEW SONGS.—"MERRILY GOES THE MILL," an admirable song, both words and music—it was well sung by Mr. Frazer, and deserved the *encore* it obtained. "I LOVE THEE TO THE LAST,"—Last night Frazer sang a new ballad, by Montgomery, which was listened to with breathless attention, and demanded a second time; we can recommend it as one of the sweetest compositions published for years."—Jefferys and Nelson, 21, Soho-square.

Having completed their extensive alterations,

ROSS & SONS,

119 and 120, BISHOPSGATE STREET, beg to call public attention to their Establishment, where, in rooms fitted up in the most elegant manner, and on the ground-floor, Ladies' and Gentlemen's Hair is arranged in the most fashionable or simplest manner, according to the taste of the wearer. To insure the utmost competition among their artists, they every fortnight give a Prize to the best Dresser in their establishment; and admit the Public, the first week in every month, to inspect the different styles of the competitors. Their Ornamental Hair and Perfumery Departments are the most extensive and unique in London.

PHANTASMAGORIA!!!

A New improved large PHANTASMAGORIA LANTERN, with Twelve Slides, in box complete, showing the figures with astonishing effect, price 2*l.* 15*s.*, to be had only at DAVIS BROTHERS, Opticians, inventors of Prince Albert's Walking stick, 33, New Bond-street, London, where plans of the Stick may be obtained. (See other side.)

TRY THE OLD ENGLISH INK, admired for its intense blackness, and valued for its durability. May be had of any Stationer, at the usual price.

P. & A. GERMAN UMBRELLAS. A LARGE ASSORTMENT of this much-admired article, with Ivory and Horn Mountings, is now on sale at W. & J. SANGSTER'S, 140, Regent-street, and 91, Fleet-street. SILK UMBRELLAS of every description from Two Guineas to Six Shillings each.

WRITING, BOOK-KEEPING, &c.

PERSONS of any age, however bad their WRITING, may, in Eight Lessons, for One Guinea, acquire permanently an elegant and flowing style of Penmanship, adapted either to professional pursuits or private correspondence. Arithmetic on a method requiring only one-third the time and mental labour usually requisite. Book-keeping as practised in the government, banking, and merchants' offices. Short-hand, &c. Apply to Mr. SMART, at the Institution, 7, New Street, Covent Garden, leading to St. Martin's Lane.

THE CHINA TEA COMPANY

Cede to the Public the full benefit of the late decline in prices. Fine Black Tea, 4*s.* 10*d.* per lb.; best imported, 5*s.* 6*d.* per lb. Unlike all other establishments, no inferior Teas are kept. Experienced purchasers know well, that the lowest priced article is seldom the cheapest, and when found not to please, a higher price is invariably recommended by the dealer. 105, Newgate-street. West-end Branch, 135, Oxford-street. Country Agents appointed.—Direct post-paid.

MATTHISON & CO., 71, Edgbaston-street, Birmingham, beg to announce to the Trade and the Public, that they are appointed Wholesale Agents for the sale of MASTER HUMPHREY'S PENS, and also, THE SHAKESPERE PEN, both of first quality.

COFFEE.—PLATOW'S PATENT AUTOMATON COFFEE URN.—by its amusing self-action a lady may make Coffee of the finest flavour, as easily and as soon as Tea. Described in the *Mech. Mag.* for 14th March, 1840; *Inventors' Advocate, Temperance Journal,* &c. Automaton Pots for the fire, from 6*s.* upwards. Urns, with lamps of every variety of price and size, in Silver, Bronze, Tin, and Japan.



GAS.—PLATOW'S PATENT GAS MODERATOR and BURNER, keep the lights at one height, and prevent glare, smoke, and waste. Used at the Stamp Office. Sold at 40, Hatton Garden, Described in *Mech. Mag.* for 16th Nov., 1839.

A. JOHNSTON & CO.'S VICTORIA STOVE,

ON DR. ARNOTT'S PRINCIPLE,

With improved self-regulating Air-valve. This Stove, elegant in appearance, simple and accurate in construction, combined with perfect security in use, is confidently offered to the Public as capable of maintaining a uniform and healthful temperature during the whole season, at a cost of from 1*d.* to 2*d.* per day.

PARKER'S PATENT ECONOMIC HOT-OIL LAMP.

This Lamp burns the common Southern Whale Oil at 3*s.* 6*d.* per gallon, affording the light of nine candles at a cost of less than one halfpenny per hour, can be regulated at pleasure to give any intermediate degree of light, and will burn for 10 hours without requiring attention. From the peculiarity of its paper shade, it is particularly recommended to parties constantly engaged in reading or writing, as affording great relief to the eyes.—4, Moorgate-st.

The Old Curiosity Shop.

CHAPTER THE LAST.

THE magic reel, which, rolling on before, has led the chronicler thus far, now slackens in its pace, and stops. It lies before the goal; the pursuit is at an end.

It remains but to dismiss the leaders of the little crowd who have borne us company upon the road, and so to close the journey.

Foremost among them, smooth Sampson Brass and Sally, arm in arm, claim our polite attention.

Mr. Sampson, then, being detained, as already has been shown, by the justice upon whom he called, and being so strongly pressed to protract his stay that he could by no means refuse, remained under his protection for a considerable time, during which the great attention of his entertainer kept him so extremely close, that he was quite lost to society, and never even went abroad for exercise saving into a small paved yard. So well, indeed, was his modest and retiring temper understood by those with whom he had to deal, and so jealous were they of his absence, that they required a kind of friendly bond to be entered into by two substantial housekeepers, in the sum of fifteen hundred pounds a-piece, before they would suffer him to quit their hospitable roof—doubting it appeared, that he would return, if once let loose, on any other terms. Mr. Brass, struck with the humour of this jest, and carrying out its spirit to the utmost, sought from his wide connexion a pair of friends whose joint possessions fell some halfpence short of fifteen pence, and proffered them as bail—for that was the merry word agreed upon on both sides. These gentlemen being rejected after twenty-four hours' pleasantry, Mr. Brass consented to remain, and did remain, until a club of choice spirits called a Grand Jury (who were in the joke) summoned him to a trial before twelve other wags for perjury and fraud, who in their turn found him guilty with a most facetious joy,—nay, the very populace entered into the whim, and when Mr. Brass was moving in a hackney-coach towards the building where these wags assembled, saluted him with rotten eggs and carcasses of kittens, and feigned to wish to tear him into shreds, which greatly increased the comicality of the thing, and made him relish it the more, no doubt.

To work this sportive vein still further, Mr. Brass, by his counsel, moved in arrest of judgment that he had been led to criminate himself, by assurances of safety and promises of pardon, and claimed the leniency which the law extends to such confiding natures as are thus deluded. After solemn argument, this point (with others of a technical nature, whose humorous extravagance it would be difficult to exaggerate) was referred to the judges for their decision, Sampson being meantime removed to his former quarters. Finally, some of the points were given in Sampson's favour, and some against him; and the

upshot was that, instead of being desired to travel for a time in foreign parts, he was permitted to grace the mother country under certain insignificant restrictions.

These were that he should, for a term of years, reside in a spacious mansion where several other gentlemen were lodged and boarded at the public charge, who went clad in a sober uniform of grey turned up with yellow, had their hair cut extremely short, and chiefly lived on gruel and light soup. It was also required of him that he should partake their exercise of constantly ascending an endless flight of stairs; and lest his legs, unused to such exertion, should be weakened by it, that he should wear upon one ankle an amulet or charm of iron. These conditions being arranged, he was removed one evening to his new abode, and enjoyed, in common with nine other gentlemen and two ladies, the privilege of being taken to his place of retirement in one of Royalty's own carriages.

Over and above these trifling penalties, his name was erased and blotted out from the roll of attorneys; which erasure has been always held in these latter times to be a great degradation and reproach, and to imply the commission of some amazing villany—as indeed would seem to be the case, when so many worthless names remain among its better records, unmolested.

Of Sally Brass, conflicting rumours went abroad. Some said with confidence that she had gone down to the docks in male attire, and had become a female sailor; others darkly whispered that she had enlisted as a private in the second regiment of Foot Guards, and had been seen in uniform and on duty, to wit, leaning on her musket and looking out of a sentry-box in St. James's Park, one evening. There were many such whispers as these in circulation; but the truth appears to be that, after a lapse of some five years (during which there is no direct evidence of her having been seen at all), two wretched people were more than once observed to crawl at dusk from the inmost recesses of St. Giles's, and to take their way along the streets, with shuffling steps and cowering shivering forms, looking into the roads and kennels as they went in search of refuse food or disregarded offal. These forms were never beheld but in those nights of cold and gloom, when the terrible spectres, who lie at all other times in the obscene hiding-places of London, in archways, dark vaults and cellars, venture to creep into the streets; the embodied spirits of Disease, and Vice, and Famine. It was whispered by those who should have known, that these were Sampson and his sister Sally; and to this day, it is said, they sometimes pass, on bad nights, in the same loathsome guise, close at the elbow of the shrinking passenger.

The body of Quilp being found—though not until some days had elapsed—an inquest was held on it near the spot where it had been washed ashore. The general supposition was that he had committed suicide, and, this appearing to be favoured by all the circumstances of his death, the verdict was to that effect. He was left to be buried with a stake through his heart in the centre of four lonely roads.

It was rumoured afterwards that this horrible and barbarous ceremony had

been dispensed with, and that the remains had been secretly given up to Tom Scott. But even here, opinion was divided; for some said Tom had dug them up at midnight, and carried them to a place indicated to him by the widow. It is probable that both these stories may have had their origin in the simple fact of Tom's shedding tears upon the inquest—which he certainly did, extraordinary as it may appear. He manifested, besides, a strong desire to assault the jury; and being restrained and conducted out of court, darkened its only window by standing on his head upon the sill, until he was dexterously tilted upon his feet again by a cautious beadle.

Being cast upon the world by his master's death, he determined to go through it upon his head and hands, and accordingly began to tumble for his bread. Finding, however, his English birth an insurmountable obstacle to his advancement in this pursuit (notwithstanding that his art was in high repute and favour), he assumed the name of an Italian image lad, with whom he had become acquainted; and afterwards tumbled with extraordinary success, and to overflowing audiences.

Little Mrs. Quilp never quite forgave herself the one deceit that lay so heavy on her conscience, and never spoke or thought of it but with bitter tears. Her husband had no relations, and she was rich. He had made no will, or she would probably have been poor. Having married the first time at her mother's instigation, she consulted in her second choice nobody but herself. It fell upon a smart young fellow enough; and as he made it a preliminary condition that Mrs. Jiniwin should be thenceforth an out-pensioner, they lived together after marriage with no more than the average amount of quarrelling, and led a merry life upon the dead dwarf's money.

Mr. and Mrs. Gariand, and Mr. Abel, went on as usual (except that there was a change in their household, as will be seen presently), and in due time the latter went into partnership with his friend the notary, on which occasion there was a dinner, and a ball, and great extent of dissipation. Unto this ball there happened to be invited the most bashful young lady that was ever seen, with whom Mr. Abel happened to fall in love. *How* it happened, or how they found it out, or which of them first communicated the discovery to the other, nobody knows. But certain it is that in course of time they were married; and equally certain it is that they were the happiest of the happy; and no less certain it is that they deserved to be so. And it is pleasant to write down that they reared a family; because any propagation of goodness and benevolence is no small addition to the aristocracy of nature, and no small subject of rejoicing for mankind at large.

The pony preserved his character for independence and principle down to the last moment of his life; which was an unusually long one, and caused him to be looked upon, indeed, as the very Old Parr of ponies. He often went to and fro with the little phaeton between Mr. Garland's and his son's, and, as the old people and the young were frequently together, had a stable of his own at the new establishment, into which he would walk of himself with surprising dignity. He condescended to play with the children, as they grew old

enough to cultivate his friendship, and would run up and down the little paddock with them like a dog; but though he relaxed so far, and allowed them such small freedoms as caresses, or even to look at his shoes or hang on by his tail, he never permitted any one among them to mount his back or drive him; thus showing that even their familiarity must have its limits, and that there were points between them far too serious for trifling.

He was not unsusceptible of warm attachments in his later life, for when the good bachelor came to live with Mr. Garland upon the clergyman's decease, he conceived a great friendship for him, and amiably submitted to be driven by his hands without the least resistance. He did no work for two or three years before he died, but lived in clover; and his last act (like a choleric old gentleman) was to kick his doctor.

Mr. Swiveller, recovering very slowly from his illness, and entering into the receipt of his annuity, bought for the Marchioness a handsome stock of clothes, and put her to school forthwith, in redemption of the vow he had made upon his fevered bed. After casting about for some time for a name which should be worthy of her, he decided in favour of Sophronia Sphynx, as being euphonious and genteel, and furthermore indicative of mystery. Under this title the Marchioness repaired, in tears, to the school of his selection, from which, as she soon distanced all competitors, she was removed before the lapse of many quarters to one of a higher grade. It is but bare justice to Mr. Swiveller to say, that, although the expenses of her education kept him in straitened circumstances for half a dozen years, he never slackened in his zeal, and always held himself sufficiently repaid by the accounts he heard (with great gravity) of her advancement, on his monthly visits to the governess, who looked upon him as a literary gentleman of eccentric habits, and of a most prodigious talent in quotation.

In a word, Mr. Swiveller kept the Marchioness at this establishment until she was, at a moderate guess, full nineteen years of age—good-looking, clever, and good-humoured; when he began to consider seriously what was to be done next. On one of his periodical visits, while he was revolving this question in his mind, the Marchioness came down to him, alone, looking more smiling and more fresh than ever. Then it occurred to him, but not for the first time, that if she would marry him, how comfortable they might be! So Richard asked her; whatever she said, it wasn't No; and they were married in good earnest that day week, which gave Mr. Swiveller frequent occasion to remark at divers subsequent periods that there had been a young lady saving up for him after all.

A little cottage at Hampstead being to let, which had in its garden a smoking-box, the envy of the civilised world, they agreed to become its tenants; and when the honey-moon was over, entered upon its occupation. To this retreat Mr. Chuckster repaired regularly every Sunday to spend the day—usually beginning with breakfast; and here he was the great purveyor of general news and fashionable intelligence. For some years he continued a deadly foe to Kit, protesting that he had a better opinion of him when he was

supposed to have stolen the five-pound note, than when he was shown to be perfectly free of the crime; inasmuch as his guilt would have had in it something daring and bold, whereas his innocence was but another proof of a sneaking and crafty disposition. By slow degrees, however, he was reconciled to him in the end; and even went so far as to honour him with his patronage, as one who had in some measure reformed, and was therefore to be forgiven. But he never forgot or pardoned that circumstance of the shilling; holding that if he had come back to get another he would have done well enough, but that his returning to work out the former gift was a stain upon his moral character which no penitence or contrition could ever wash away.

Mr. Swiveller, having always been in some measure of a philosophic and reflective turn, grew immensely contemplative, at times, in the smoking-box, and was accustomed at such periods to debate in his own mind the mysterious question of Sophronia's parentage. Sophronia herself supposed she was an orphan; but Mr. Swiveller, putting various slight circumstances together, often thought Miss Brass must know better than that; and, having heard from his wife of her strange interview with Quilp, entertained sundry misgivings whether that person, in his lifetime, might not also have been able to solve the riddle, had he chosen. These speculations, however, gave him no uneasiness; for Sophronia was ever a most cheerful, affectionate, and provident wife to him; and Dick (excepting for an occasional outbreak with Mr. Chuckster, which she had the good sense rather to encourage than oppose) was to her an attached and domesticated husband. And they played many hundred thousand games of cribbage together. And let it be added, to Dick's honour, that, though we have called her Sophronia, he called her the Marchioness from first to last; and that upon every anniversary of the day on which he found her in his sick room, Mr. Chuckster came to dinner, and there was great glorification.

The gamblers, Isaac List and Jowl, with their trusty confederate Mr. James Groves of unimpeachable memory, pursued their course with varying success, until the failure of a spirited enterprise in the way of their profession, dispersed them in different directions, and caused their career to receive a sudden check from the long and strong arm of the law. This defeat had its origin in the untoward detection of a new associate—young Frederick Trent—who thus became the unconscious instrument of their punishment and his own.

For the young man himself, he rioted abroad for a brief term, living by his wits—which means by the abuse of every faculty that worthily employed raises man above the beasts, and so degraded, sinks him far below them. It was not long before his body was recognised by a stranger, who chanced to visit that hospital in Paris where the drowned are laid out to be owned; despite the bruises and disfigurements which were said to have been occasioned by some previous scuffle. But the stranger kept his own counsel until he returned home, and it was never claimed or cared for.

The younger brother, or the single gentleman, for that designation is more familiar, would have drawn the poor schoolmaster from his lone retreat, and

made him his companion and friend. But the humble village teacher was timid of venturing into the noisy world, and had become fond of his dwelling in the old churchyard. Calmly happy in his school, and in the spot, and in the attachment of Her little mourner, he pursued his quiet course in peace; and was, through the righteous gratitude of his friend—let this brief mention suffice for that—a *poor* schoolmaster no more.

That friend—single gentleman, or younger brother, which you will—had at his heart a heavy sorrow; but it bred in him no misanthropy or monastic gloom. He went forth into the world, a lover of his kind. For a long, long time, it was his chief delight to travel in the steps of the old man and the child, (so far as he could trace them from her last narrative), to halt where they had halted, sympathise where they had suffered, and rejoice where they had been made glad. Those who had been kind to them, did not escape his search. The sisters at the school—they who were her friends, because themselves so friendless—Mrs. Jarley of the wax-work, Codlin, Short—he found them all; and trust me that the man who fed the furnace fire was not forgotten.

Kit's story having got abroad, raised him up a host of friends, and many offers of provision for his future life. He had no idea at first of ever quitting Mr. Garland's service; but, after serious remonstrance and advice from that gentleman, began to contemplate the possibility of such a change being brought about in time. A good post was procured for him, with a rapidity which took away his breath, by some of the gentlemen who had believed him guilty of the offence laid to his charge, and who had acted upon that belief. Through the same kind agency, his mother was secured from want, and made quite happy. Thus, as Kit often said, his great misfortune turned out to be the source of all his subsequent prosperity.

Did Kit live a single man all his days, or did he marry? Of course he married, and who should be his wife but Barbara? And the best of it was, he married so soon that little Jacob was an uncle, before the calves of his legs, already mentioned in this history, had ever been encased in broadcloth pantaloons,—though that was not quite the best either, for of necessity the baby was an uncle too. The delight of Kit's mother and of Barbara's mother upon the great occasion is past all telling; finding they agreed so well on that, and on all other subjects, they took up their abode together, and were a most harmonious pair of friends from that time forth. And hadn't Astley's cause to bless itself for their all going together once a quarter—to the pit—and didn't Kit's mother always say, when they painted the outside, that Kit's last treat had helped to that, and wonder what the manager would feel if he but knew it as they passed his house!

When Kit had children six and seven years old, there was a Barbara among them, and a pretty Barbara she was. Nor was there wanting an exact facsimile and copy of little Jacob as he appeared in those remote times when they taught him what oysters meant. Of course there was an Abel, own godson to the Mr. Garland of that name; and there was a Dick, whom Mr. Swiveller did especially favour. The little group would often gather round him of a

night and beg him to tell again that story of good Miss Nell who died. This, Kit would do; and when they cried to hear it, wishing it longer too, he would teach them how she had gone to Heaven, as all good people did; and how, if they were good like her, they might hope to be there too one day, and to see and know her as he had done when he was quite a boy. Then he would relate to them how needy he used to be, and how she had taught him what he was otherwise too poor to learn, and how the old man had been used to say "she always laughs at Kit;" at which they would brush away their tears, and laugh themselves to think that she had done so, and be again quite merry.

He sometimes took them to the street where she had lived; but new improvements had altered it so much, it was not like the same. The old house had been long ago pulled down, and a fine broad road was in its place. At first he would draw with his stick a square upon the ground to show them where it used to stand. But he soon became uncertain of the spot, and could only say it was thereabouts, he thought, and that these alterations were confusing.

Such are the changes which a few years bring about, and so do things pass away, like a tale that is told!

END OF "THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP."



MASTER HUMPHREY FROM HIS CLOCK SIDE IN THE CHIMNEY-CORNER.

I WAS musing the other evening upon the characters and incidents with which I had been so long engaged; wondering how I could ever have looked forward with pleasure to the completion of my tale, and reproaching myself for having done so, as if it were a kind of cruelty to those companions of my solitude whom I had now dismissed, and could never again recall; when my clock struck ten. Punctual to the hour, my friends appeared.

On our last night of meeting, we had finished the story which the reader has just concluded. Our conversation took the same current as the meditations which the entrance of my friends had interrupted, and the Old Curiosity Shop was the staple of our discourse.

I may confide to the reader now, that in connexion with this little history I had something upon my mind—something to communicate which I had all along with difficulty repressed—something I had deemed it, during the progress of the story, necessary to its interest to disguise, and which, now that it was over, I wished, and was yet reluctant to disclose.

To conceal anything from those to whom I am attached, is not in my nature. I can never close my lips where I have opened my heart. This temper and the consciousness of having done some violence to it in my narrative, laid me under a restraint which I should have had great difficulty in overcoming, but for a timely remark from Mr. Miles, who, as I hinted in a former paper, is a gentleman of business habits, and of great exactness and propriety in all his transactions.

“I could have wished,” my friend objected; “that we had been made acquainted with the single gentleman’s name. I don’t like his withholding his name. It made me look upon him at first with suspicion, and caused me to doubt his moral character, I assure you. I am fully satisfied by this time of his being a worthy creature, but in this respect he certainly would not appear to have acted at all like a man of business.”

“My friends,” said I, drawing to the table at which they were by this time seated in their usual chairs, “do you remember that this story bore another title besides that one we have so often heard of late?”

Mr. Miles had his pocket-book out in an instant, and referring to an entry therein, rejoined “Certainly. Personal adventures of Master Humphrey. Here it is. I made a note of it at the time.”

I was about to resume what I had to tell them, when the same Mr. Miles again interrupted me, observing that the narrative originated in a personal adventure of my own, and that was no doubt the reason for its being thus designated.

This led me to the point at once.

“You will one and all forgive me,” I returned, “if, for the greater convenience of the story, and for its better introduction, that adventure was fictitious. I had my share indeed—no light or trivial one—in the pages we

have read, but it was not the share I feigned to have at first. The younger brother, the single gentleman, the nameless actor in this little drama, stands before you now."

It was easy to see they had not expected this disclosure.

"Yes," I pursued. "I can look back upon my part in it with a calm, half-smiling pity for myself as for some other man. But I am he indeed; and now the chief sorrows of my life are yours."

I need not say what true gratification I derived from the sympathy and kindness with which this acknowledgment was received; nor how often it had risen to my lips before; nor how difficult I had found it—how impossible, when I came to those passages which touched me most, and most nearly concerned me—to sustain the character I had assumed. It is enough to say that I replaced in the clock-case the record of so many trials—sorrowfully, it is true, but with a softened sorrow which was almost pleasure; and felt that in living through the past again, and communicating to others the lesson it had helped to teach me, I had been a happier man.

We lingered so long over the leaves from which I had read, that as I consigned them to their former resting-place, the hand of my trusty clock pointed to twelve, and there came towards us upon the wind the voice of the deep and distant bell of St. Paul's as it struck the hour of midnight.

"This," said I, returning with a manuscript I had taken, at the moment, from the same repository, "to be opened to such music, should be a tale where London's face by night is darkly seen, and where some deed of such a time as this is dimly shadowed out. Which of us here has seen the working of that great machine whose voice has just now ceased?"

Mr. Pickwick had, of course, and so had Mr. Miles. Jack and my deaf friend were in the minority.

I had seen it but a few days before, and could not help telling them of the fancy I had had about it.

I paid my fee of twopence upon entering, to one of the money-changers who sit within the Temple; and falling, after a few turns up and down, into the quiet train of thought which such a place awakens, paced the echoing stones like some old monk whose present world lay all within its walls. As I looked afar up into the lofty dome, I could not help wondering what were his reflections whose genius reared that mighty pile, when, the last small wedge of timber fixed, the last nail driven into its home for many centuries, the clang of hammers, and the hum of busy voices, gone, and the Great Silence whole years of noise had helped to make, reigning undisturbed around, he mused as I did now, upon his work, and lost himself amid its vast extent. I could not quite determine whether the contemplation of it would impress him with a sense of greatness or of insignificance; but when I remembered how long a time it had taken to erect, in how short a space it might be traversed even to its remotest parts, for how brief a term he, or any of those who cared to bear his name, would live to see it, or know of its existence, I imagined him far more melancholy than proud, and looking with regret upon his labour done.

With these thoughts in my mind, I began to ascend, almost unconsciously, the flight of steps leading to the several wonders of the building, and found myself before a barrier where another money-taker sat, who demanded which among them I would choose to see. There were the stone-gallery, he said, and the whispering gallery, the geometrical staircase, the room of models, the clock—the clock being quite in my way, I stopped him there, and chose that sight from all the rest.

I groped my way into the Turret which it occupies, and saw before me, in a kind of loft, what seemed to be a great, old, oaken press with folding doors. These being thrown back by the attendant (who was sleeping when I came upon him, and looked a drowsy fellow, as though his close companionship with Time had made him quite indifferent to it) disclosed a complicated crowd of wheels and chains in iron and brass—great, sturdy, rattling engines—suggestive of breaking a finger put in here or there, and grinding the bone to powder—and these were the Clock! Its very pulse, if I may use the word, was like no other clock. It did not mark the flight of every moment with a gentle second stroke as though it would check old Time, and have him stay his pace in pity, but measured it with one sledge-hammer beat, as if its business were to crush the seconds as they came trooping on, and remorselessly to clear a path before the Day of Judgment.

I sat down opposite to it, and hearing its regular and never-changing voice, that one deep constant note, uppermost amongst all the noise and clatter in the streets below—marking that, let that tumult rise or fall, go on or stop—let it be night or noon, to-morrow or to-day, this year or next—it still performed its functions with the same dull constancy, and regulated the progress of the life around, the fancy came upon me that this was London's Heart, and that when it should cease to beat, the City would be no more.

It is night. Calm and unmoved amidst the scenes that darkness favours, the great heart of London throbs in its Giant breast. Wealth and beggary, vice and virtue, guilt and innocence, repletion and the direst hunger, all treading on each other and crowding together, are gathered round it. Draw but a little circle above the clustering house-tops, and you shall have within its space, everything with its opposite extreme and contradiction, close beside. Where yonder feeble light is shining, a man is but this moment dead. The taper at a few yards' distance, is seen by eyes that have this instant opened on the world. There are two houses separated by but an inch or two of wall. In one, there are quiet minds at rest; in the other a waking conscience that one might think would trouble the very air. In that close corner where the roofs shrink down and cower together as if to hide their secrets from the handsome street hard by, there are such dark crimes, such miseries and horrors, as could be hardly told in whispers. In the handsome street, there are folks asleep who have dwelt there all their lives, and have no more knowledge of these things than if they had never been, or were transacted at the remotest limits of the world—who, if they were hinted at, would shake their heads, look wise, and frown, and say they were impossible, and out of Nature—

as if all great towns were not. Does not this Heart of London, that nothing moves, nor stops, nor quickens—that goes on the same, let what will be done—does it not express the city's character well?

The day begins to break, and soon there is the hum and noise of life. Those who have spent the night on door-steps and cold stones, crawl off to beg; they who have slept in beds, come forth to their occupation too, and business is astir. The fog of sleep rolls slowly off, and London shines awake. The streets are filled with carriages, and people gaily clad. The jails are full, too, to the throat, nor have the workhouses or hospitals much room to spare. The courts of law are crowded. Taverns have their regular frequenters by this time, and every mart of traffic has its throng. Each of these places is a world, and has its own inhabitants; each is distinct from, and almost unconscious of the existence of any other. There are some few people well to do, who remember to have heard it said, that numbers of men and women—thousands they think it was—get up in London every day, unknowing where to lay their heads at night; and that there are quarters of the town where misery and famine always are. They don't believe it quite—there may be some truth in it, but it is exaggerated of course. So, each of these thousand worlds goes on, intent upon itself, until night comes again—first with its lights and pleasures, and its cheerful streets; then with its guilt and darkness.

Heart of London, there is a moral in thy every stroke! as I look on at thy indomitable working, which neither death, nor press of life, nor grief, nor gladness out of doors will influence one jot, I seem to hear a voice within thee which sinks into my heart, bidding me, as I elbow my way among the crowd, have some thought for the meanest wretch that passes, and, being a man, to turn away with scorn and pride from none that bear the human shape.

I am by no means sure that I might not have been tempted to enlarge upon this subject, had not the papers that lay before me on the table, been a silent reproach for even this digression. I took them up again when I had got thus far, and seriously prepared to read.

The hand-writing was strange to me, for the manuscript had been fairly copied. As it is against our rules in such a case to inquire into the authorship until the reading is concluded, I could only glance at the different faces round me, in search of some expression which should betray the writer. Whoever he might be, he was prepared for this, and gave no sign for my enlightenment.

I had the papers in my hand, when my deaf friend interposed with a suggestion.

"It has occurred to me," he said, "bearing in mind your sequel to the tale we have finished, that if such of us as have anything to relate of our own lives, could interweave it with our contribution to the Clock, it would be well to do so. This need be no restraint upon us, either as to time, or place, or incident, since any real passage of this kind may be surrounded by fictitious circumstances, and represented by fictitious characters. What if we made this, an article of agreement among ourselves?"

The proposition was cordially received, but the difficulty appeared to be that here was a long story written before we had thought of it.

"Unless," said I, "it should have happened that the writer of this tale—which is not impossible, for men are apt to do so when they write—has actually mingled with it something of his own endurance and experience."

Nobody spoke, but I thought I detected in one quarter that this was really the case.

"If I have no assurance to the contrary," I added therefore, "I shall take it for granted that he has done so, and that even these papers come within our new agreement. Everybody being mute, we hold that understanding if you please."

And here I was about to begin again, when Jack informed us softly, that during the progress of our last narrative, Mr. Weller's Watch had adjourned its sittings from the kitchen, and regularly met outside our door, where he had no doubt that august body would be found at the present moment. As this was for the convenience of listening to our stories, he submitted that they might be suffered to come in, and hear them more pleasantly.

To this we one and all yielded a ready assent, and the party being discovered as Jack had supposed, and invited to walk in, entered (though not without great confusion at having been detected) and were accommodated with chairs at a little distance.

Then, the lamp being trimmed, the fire well-stirred and burning brightly, the hearth clean swept, the curtains closely drawn, the clock wound up, we entered on our new story—BARNABY RUDGE.



ADVERTISEMENTS.

THE AGRICULTURAL AND GENERAL LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY,
29, NEW BRIDGE STREET, BLACKFRIARS, LONDON.

WESTERN BRANCH—26, SUFFOLK STREET, PALL MALL, EAST.

HONORARY DIRECTORS AND TRUSTEES.

GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR ALEXANDER DUFF, K.C.H.

MAJOR-GENERAL ALEXANDER, H. E. I. C. S.

JAMES DUFF, Esq., M.P.

ALEXANDER GRANT OF CARNOUSIE, Esq.

MAJOR-GENERAL LINDSAY, C.B., H. E. I. C. S.

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT.

Sir James Broun, of Coulston, Bart.
William Bell, of Princes-street, Hanover-square, Esq.
Richard Bradley, of Grantham, Esq.
Richard Broun, of Wigmore-street, Cavendish-square, Esq.
George Basham, of Bedford-place, Russell-square, Esq.
Joshua Carter, of Hereford-street, Esq.
Alexander Gordon, of Fludyer-street, Westminster, Esq.
Henry Kerr, of 25, Upper Southwick-street, Esq.

Alfred George Kerr, of Westbourne-green, Esq.
Harman Lewis, of the College of Engineers, M.A.
Duncan Forbes Mitchell, of Thainstone, Esq.
George Robinson, Stone-buildings, Lincoln's Inn, Esq.
Thomas Rolph, of St. James's-square, Esq., & Toronto, M.D.
Nicholas Charles Radiger, of Wyndham-place, Esq.
James Warly Smith, of Clapham, Esq.
Alexander Francis Taylor, of Rothiemy House, Banffshire, Esq.

With liberty to add to their number.

AUDITORS.

Robert B. Pollard, of Blemell House, Middlesex, Esq.
Charles Hutton Gregory, of Croydon, Esq.

MEDICAL OFFICERS.

W. R. Basham, of Chester-street, Grosvenor-place, M.D. | Edward W. Pollard, of Brompton-square, Esq.

ADVANTAGES OFFERED BY THIS COMPANY.

Protective Securities for the benefit of the Assured, not presented by any other institution—the most economical rates of Premium consistent with safety, adapted to Europe, our East Indian and Colonial possessions. An increasing Table for securing Loans on Debts, requiring a less immediate payment for the whole term of Life than usually demanded. Premiums payable annually, half-yearly, or monthly. Age admitted in the Policy—Policies granted from £10 to £5000—claims payable in one month after proof of death, and £10 per cent. immediately after satisfactory proof thereof whenever desired. Policies effected in Ireland or Scotland recoverable in the Courts of that country. Endowments and Annuities, immediate and deferred, on advantageous terms. A Board of Management in attendance daily. Medical men remunerated for their reports.

C. F. KIRKMAN, RESIDENT MANAGER.

A liberal Commission allowed to Solicitors and Agents.

Applications for the office of Agent to the Institution in the different Towns of the Kingdom are invited, addressed to the Resident Manager, at the house of the Company.

CELEBRATED FOR BOYS' CLOTHING.

DOUDNEY and SON, 49, Lombard-street.—Established 1784.—Hussar suits, 24s., Best Cloth, 31s.; Camlet Cloaks, 8s. 6d.; Cloth ditto, 15s.

GENTLEMEN'S

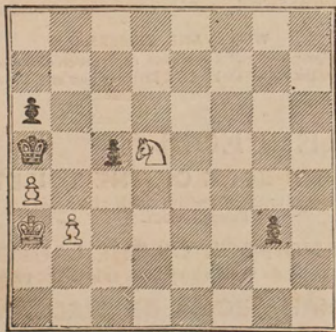
Taglions & great coats	£1 1 0	Buckskin trousers	£1 1 0
Army cloth Spanish cloaks,		Winter waistcoats	0 10 6
9½ yards round	2 10 0	Morning dressing gowns	0 15 0
Opera cloaks	1 10 0	Superfine dress coat	2 7 6
Camlet cloaks, lined	1 1 0	Do., frock do., silk facings	2 10 0
Ladies' riding habits	4 4 0	Scarlet hunting coats	3 3 0

EUROPEAN CIGAR DIVAN AND CHESS ROOMS,

39, LUDGATE HILL.

Two doors from the Belle Sauvage Hotel.

Subscribers One Guinea Annually.

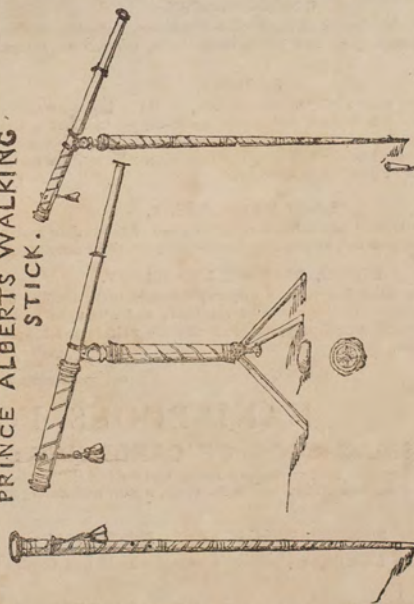


A Splendid new Slate Billiard Table.

W. GOODE begs to inform the Nobility, Gentry, and inhabitants of the Metropolis, that he has furnished the above establishment in a novel and superior style, and flatters himself he has succeeded in combining elegance, comfort, and economy, in a manner that cannot fail to secure the patronage and support of his friends and the public generally.

The Rooms are supplied with the Morning, Evening, and French Papers, Periodical Publications, and New Works of interest. Gratuities to Servants strictly prohibited.

PRINCE ALBERTS WALKING STICK.



UNDER THE IMMEDIATE PATRONAGE OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, AND MOST OF THE NOBILITY AND GENTRY.

It is very small and light, being an inch at top, decreasing to a quarter of an inch, and weighing about twenty ounces; it also contains a mariner's compass. The price is £5. 5s., which is less than a Stand Telescope of equal power, packed in a case.

The Inventors are Messrs. DAVIS, (brothers,) Opticians and Mathematical Instrument Makers to H. R. H. PRINCE ALBERT, 33, New Bond-Street, London.

Spectacles, Telescopes, Operas, and every description of Instruments, made on the premises under the immediate superintendence of Messrs. DAVIS, at prices equally moderate.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

MAGAZINE OF DOMESTIC ECONOMY,

PUBLISHING MONTHLY, PRICE SIXPENCE,

And in Volumes containing Twelve Numbers, bound in cloth, price 6s. 6d.

THIS Magazine was commenced Five Years ago, having for its object the dissemination of sound practical and useful information on domestic subjects, and its success has been such as to warrant its continuation through the long period that has elapsed.

Five Volumes are now completed, and some idea may be formed of their practical utility and the great information they furnish, from the following brief summary of their contents. It is believed that no work in the language contains so large a mass of useful domestic information.

As the work has been stereotyped from the first, a single volume, number, or complete sets, may be had by order through any Bookseller in the United Kingdom; and all letters to the Editor are requested to be sent to the Publishers, Messrs. Orr and Co., Amen-corner, Paternoster-row, on or before the 15th of the Month. A very complete analytical Index, wherein the most prominent subjects are classed, so as to afford a ready reference, may be had by application through any Bookseller.

AGRICULTURE, OUT-DOOR ECONOMY, AND FARM OPERATIONS;

Including economical treatment of horses, and directions for stall-feeding cows; the management of bees, poultry, rabbits, &c. &c.

ARTS, MANUFACTURES, AND SCIENCE,

Comprising much and varied information upon objects daily seen and used, but little understood.

BAKING

At home fully described, and directions respecting every variety of bread, substitutions for flour, yeast, &c., &c.

BATHS AND BATHING.

The advantages of baths fully discussed, and ample directions for using them.

BREWING.

Plain directions for brewing sound wholesome beer, and also for making cordials, and other compounds.

CHILDREN.

A series of articles on nursery management, and on the modes of treatment, education, and amusement proper for children.

CONFECTIONERY.

Directions for making all kinds of confectionery, including creams, essences, pastes, jams and jellies, marmalades, sweetmeats, syrups, &c. &c.

COOKERY,

A complete system of, on economical principles, including soups, broths, &c., fish, poultry and game, made-dishes, vegetables, and cookery for the sick room; comprising many hundred recipes, particularly adapted for the middle classes; and a valuable addition under the title of "POOR MAN'S COOKERY."

DAIRY MANAGEMENT,

Very fully treated, and a full description given of the various modes of making cheese, as practised in different parts of the country.

ESSAYS, ORIGINAL AND SELECT.

Comprising many Essays upon subjects, the right understanding of which influences the happiness of mankind; and also upon many which are more immediately connected with the welfare and happiness of home.

GARDENING, FLORICULTURE, & HORTICULTURE.

Monthly instructions for the management of the garden, greenhouse, &c.; especially addressed to those who are their own gardeners, and obliged to be economical in the pursuit.

HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY

In all its branches; embracing a great variety of topics, and a vast fund of information, the result of long experience and observation.

MEDICAL TREATISES,

Written in a familiar and common-sense style, more with a view to prevention than cure.

METEOROLOGICAL REMARKS FOR EVERY MONTH.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Under this and other heads are comprised many hundred recipes; for the most part original.

NATURAL HISTORY.

Particularly of such substances as are in frequent domestic use.

NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

Under this head is a series of articles written for the purpose of explaining the various phenomena which are constantly before us; but which few are able to account for.

PERFUMES, COSMETICS, OILS, CREAM, SOAPS, &c.

Directions for manufacturing all kinds of perfumes, &c., and remarks upon the proper treatment of the hair.

PICKLING, PRESERVING, POTTING, &c.

Ample directions for making all kinds of preserves, pickles, and for potting game, and all sorts of meat, fish, &c.

READING SOCIETIES,

Instructions for the formation of, and rules for their guidance.

SAUCES AND CONDIMENTS.

Ample directions for making all kinds of sauces and condiments.

WINES AND SPIRITS.

History of foreign wines, and a complete explanation of the manufacture and treatment of all kinds of British wines and liqueurs.

HAND-BOOKS FOR THE PEOPLE.

THE HAND-BOOK OF GARDENING;

Expressly intended for Persons possessing and fond of cultivating a Garden of moderate size. Price 2s. cloth, a New and Enlarged Edition.

THE HAND-BOOK OF BOTANY;

Or, Linnæan Lessons on Common Plants, for Field and Garden Practice. Price 2s.

THE HAND-BOOK OF AGRICULTURE;

Chiefly for the use of those interested in the Allotment System. Price 1s. 3d.

THE HAND-BOOK OF COOKERY;

Intended for the use of the Middle Classes. Price 2s. cloth.

THE HAND-BOOK OF THE TOILETTE;

Having in view the union of Bodily Health with Beauty of Person. Price 2s. cloth.

THE HAND-BOOK OF THE LAUNDRY;

Expressly intended for those who "wash at home." Price 1s. 9d.

THE HAND-BOOK OF MEDICINE;

Forming a Useful Manual in time of Need, when Professional Aid cannot readily be procured. Price 2s. cloth.

THE HAND-BOOK OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

Price 1s. 9d.

London: Published by W. S. ORR and CO.; and W. and R. CHAMBERS, Edinburgh.