

The incidents recorded in the succeeding Legend were communicated to a dear friend of our family by the late lamented Sir Walter Scott. The names and localities have been scrupulously retained, as she is ready to testify. The proceedings in this case are, I believe, recorded in some of our law reports, though I have never been able to lay my hand upon them.

THE DEAD DRUMMER: A LEGEND OF SALISBURY PLAIN

Oh, Salisbury Plain is bleak and bare, —
At least so I've heard many people declare,
For I fairly confess I never was there; —
Not a shrub nor a tree,
Nor a bush can you see;
No hedges, no ditches, no gates, no stiles,
Much less a house, or a cottage for miles; —
— It's a very sad thing to be caught in the rain
When night's coming on upon Salisbury Plain.

Now, I'd have you to know
That, a great while ago,
The best part of a century, may be, or so,
Across this same plain, so dull and so dreary,
A couple of Travellers, wayworn and weary,
Were making their way;
Their profession, you'd say,
At a single glance did not admit of a query;
The pump-handled pig-tail, and whiskers, worn then,
With scarce an exception by seafaring men,
The jacket, — the loose trousers "bows'd up together" — all
Guiltless of braces, as those of Charles Wetherall, —
The pigeon-toed step, and the rollicking motion,
Bespoke them two genuine sons of the Ocean,
And shew'd in a moment their real characters,
(The accent's so placed on this word by our Jack Tars.)

The one in advance was sturdy and strong,
With arms uncommonly bony and long,
And his Guernsey shirt
Was all pitch and dirt,
Which sailors don't think inconvenient or wrong.
He was very broad-breasted,
And very deep-chested;
His sinewy frame correspond with the rest did,
Except as to height, for he could not be more
At the most, you would say, than some five feet four,
And if measured, perhaps had been found a thought lower.
Dame Nature, in fact, — whom some person or other,
— A Poet, — has call'd a "capricious step-mother," —

You saw, when beside him,
Had somehow denied him
In longitude what she had granted in latitude,
A trifling defect
You'd the sooner detect
From his having contracted a stoop in his attitude.
Square-built and broad-shoulder'd, good-humoured and gay,
With his collar and countenance open as day,
The latter — 'twas mark'd with small-pox, by the way, —
Had a sort of expression good will to bespeak;
He'd a smile in his eye, and a quid in his cheek!
And, in short, notwithstanding his failure in height,
He was just such a man as you'd say, at first sight,
You would much rather dine, or shake hands, with than fight!

The other, his friend and companion, was taller
By five or six inches, at least, than the smaller;—
From his air and his mien
It was plain to be seen,
That he was, or had been,
A something between
The real "Jack Tar" and the "Jolly Marine."
For, though he would give an occasional hitch,
Sailor-like to his "slops," there was something, the which,
On the whole savoured more of the pipe-clay than pitch. —
Such were now the two men who appeared on the hill,
Harry Waters the tall one, the short "Spanking Bill."
To be caught in the rain,
I repeat it again,
Is extremely unpleasant on Salisbury Plain;
And when with a good soaking shower there are blended
Blue lightnings and thunder, the matter's not mended;
Such was the case In this wild dreary place,
On the day that I'm speaking of now, when the brace
Of trav'lers alluded to quickened their pace,
Till a good steady walk became more like a race,
To get quit of the tempest which held them in chase.

Louder, and louder
Than mortal gunpowder,
The heav'nly artill'ry kept crashing and roaring,
The lightning kept flashing, the rain too kept pouring,
While they, helter-skelter,
In vain sought for shelter
From, what I have heard term'd, "a regular pelter;"
But the deuce of a screen
Could be anywhere seen,
Or an object except that on one of the rises,
An old way-post show'd

Where the Lavington road
 Branch'd off to the left from the one to Devizes;
 And thither the footsteps of Waters seem'd tending,
 Though a doubt might exist of the course he was bending,
 To a landsman, at least, who, wherever he goes,
 Is content, for the most part, to follow his nose;—
 While Harry kept “backing
 And filling,” — and “tacking,” —
 Two nautical terms which, I'll wager a guinea, are
 Meant to imply
 What you, Reader, and I
 Would call going zig-zag, and not rectilinear.

But here, once for all, let me beg you'll excuse
 All mistakes I may make in the words sailors use
 'Mongst themselves, on a cruise,
 Or ashore with the Jews,
 Or in making their court to their Polls and their Sues,
 Or addressing those slop-selling females afloat — women
 Known in our navy as oddly-named boat-women.
 The fact is, I can't say I'm vers'd in the school
 So ably conducted by Marryat and Poole;
 (See the last-mentioned gentleman's “Admiral's Daughter,”)
 The grand *vade mecum*
 For all who to sea come,
 And get, the first time in their lives, in blue water;
 Of course in the use of sea terms you'll not wonder
 If I now and then should fall into some blunder,
 For which Captain Chamier, or Mr. T. P. Cooke
 Would call me a “Lubber,” and “Son of a Sea-cook.”

To return to our muttons — This mode of progression
 At length upon Spanking Bill made some impression.
 — “Hillo, messmate, what cheer?
 How queer you *do* steer!”
 Cried Bill, whose short legs kept him still in the rear.
 “Why, what's in the wind, Bo? — what is it you fear?”
 For he saw in a moment that something was frightening
 His shipmate much more than the thunder and lightning.

— “Fear?” stammer'd out Waters, “why, HIM! — don't you see
 What faces that Drummer-boy's making at me! —
 — How he dodges me so Wherever I go? —
 What is it he wants with me, Bill, — do you know?”

— “What Drummer-boy, Harry?” cries Bill, in surprise,
 (With a brief explanation, that ended in “eyes,”)
 “What Drummer-boy, Waters? — the coast is all clear,
 We haven't got never no Drummer-boy here!”

— “Why, there! — don’t you see
How he’s following me?
Now this way, now that way, and won’t let me be!
Keep him off, Bill — look here —
Don’t let him come near!
Only see how the blood-drops his features besmear!
What, the dead come to life again! — Bless me! — Oh dear!”

Bill remarked in reply, “This is all very queer—
What, a Drummer-boy — bloody, too — eh! — well, I never —
I can’t see no Drummer-boy here whatsumdever!”
“Not see him! — why there; — look! — he’s close by the post —
Hark! — hark! — how he drums at me now! — he’s a Ghost!”

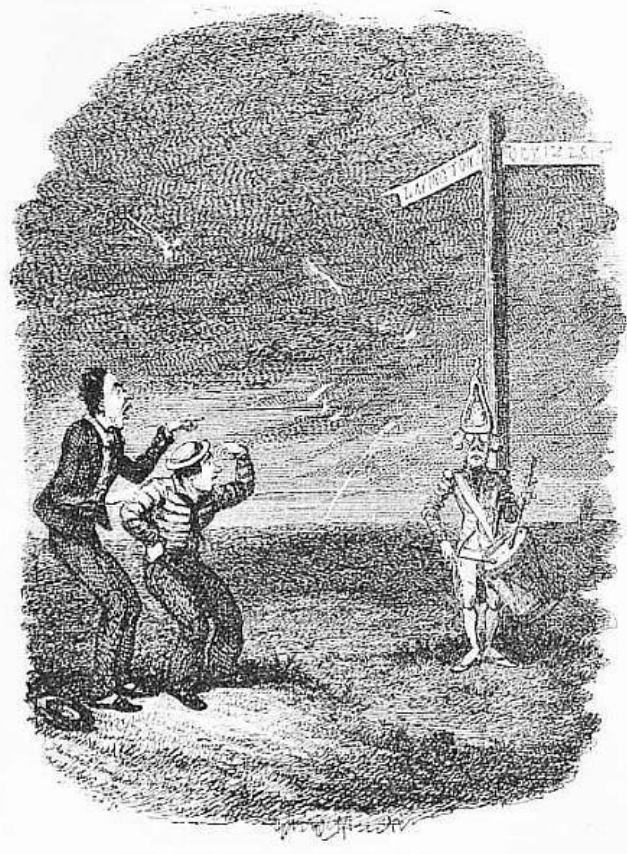
“A what?” return’d Bill, — at that moment a flash
More than commonly awful preceded a crash
Like what’s call’d in Kentucky “an Almighty Smash.” —
And down Harry Waters went plump on his knees,
While the sound, though prolong’d, died away by degrees;
In its last sinking echoes, however, were some
Which, Bill could not help thinking, resembled a drum!

“Hollo! Waters! — I says,”
Quoth he in amaze,
“Why, I never see’d *nuffin* in all my born days
Half so queer
As this here,
And I’m not very clear
But that one of us two has good reason for fear —
You to jaw about drummers, with nobody near us! —
I must say as how that I thinks it’s mysterus.”

“Oh, mercy!” roared Waters, “do keep him off, Bill,
And, Andrew, forgive! — I’ll confess all! — I will!

I’ll make a clean breast,
And as for the rest,
You may do with me just what the lawyers think best;
But haunt me not thus! — let these visitings cease,
And, your vengeance accomplish’d,
Boy, leave me in peace!”
— Harry paused for a moment, — then turning to Bill,
Who stood with his mouth open, steady and still,
Began “spinning” what nauticals term “a tough yarn,”
Viz.: his tale of what Bill call’d “this precious *consarn*.”

* * * * *



“It was in such an hour as this,
On such a wild and wint’ry day,
The forked lightning seemed to hiss,
As now, athwart our lonely way,
When first these dubious paths I tried —
Yon livid form was by my side! —

“Not livid then — the ruddy glow
Of life, and youth, and health it bore!
And bloodless was that gory brow,
And cheerful was the smile it wore,
And mildly then those eyes did shine —
— Those eyes which now are blasting mine!!

“They beamed with confidence and love
Upon my face, — and Andrew Brand
Had sooner fear’d yon frighten’d dove
Than harm from Gervase Matcham’s hand!
— I am no Harry Waters — men
Did call me Gervase Matcham then.

“And Matcham, though a humble name,
Was stainless as the feathery flake
From Heaven, whose virgin whiteness came
Upon the newly-frozen lake;

Commander, comrade, all began
To laud the Soldier, — like the Man.

“Nay, muse not, William, — I have said
I was a soldier — staunch and true
As any he above whose head
Old England’s lion banner flew;
And, duty done, — her claims apart,—
'Twas said I had a kindly heart.

“And years roll’d on, — and with them came
Promotion — Corporal — Sergeant — all
In turn — I kept mine honest fame —
Our Colonel’s self, — whom men did call
The veriest Martinet — ev’n he,
Though cold to most, was kind to me! —

“One morn—oh! may that morning stand
Accursed in the rolls of fate
Till latest time! — there came command
To carry forth a charge of weight
To a detachment far away, —
— It was their regimental pay! —

“And who so fit for such a task
As trusty Matcham, true and tried,
Who spurn’d the inebriating flask,
With honour for his constant guide? —
On Matcham fell their choice — and HE, —
‘Young Drum,’—should bear him company!

“And grateful was that sound to hear,
For he was full of life and joy,
The mess-room pet — to each one dear
Was that kind, gay, light-hearted boy.
— The veriest churl in all our band
Had aye a smile for Andrew Brand. —

“— Nay, glare not as I name thy name!
That threat’ning hand, that fearful brow
Relax — avert that glance of flame!
Thou seest I do thy bidding now!
Vex’d Spirit, rest! — ’twill soon be o’er, —
Thy blood shall cry to Heaven no more!

“Enough — we journey’d on — the walk
Was long, — and dull and dark the day, —
And still young Andrew’s cheerful talk
And merry laugh beguiled the way;

Noon came — a sheltering bank was there, —
We paused our frugal meal to share.

“Then ‘twas, with cautious hand, I sought
To prove my charge secure, — and drew
The packet from my vest, and brought
The glittering mischief forth to view,
And Andrew cried, — No! — ’twas not He! —
It was THE TEMPTER spoke to me!

“But it was Andrew’s laughing voice
That sounded in my tingling ear,
‘Now, Gervase Matcham, at thy choice,’
It seem’d to say, ‘are gawds and gear,
And all that wealth can buy or bring,
Ease, — wassail, — worship, — every thing!

“No tedious drill, no long parade,
No bugle call at early dawn;—
For guard-room bench, or barrack bed,
The downy couch, the sheets of lawn
And I thy Page, — thy steps to tend,
Thy sworn companion, — servant, — friend!

— “He ceased — that is, I heard no more,
Though other words pass’d idly by,
And Andrew chatter’d as before,
And laugh’d — I mark’d him not — not I.
‘’Tis at thy choice!’ that sound alone
Rang in mine ear — voice else was none.

“I could not eat, — the untasted flask
Mocked my parch’d lip, — I passed it by.
‘What ails thee, man?’ he seem’d to ask. —
I *felt*, but could not *meet* his eye. —
‘’Tis at thy choice!’ — it sounded yet, —
A sound I never may forget.

— “Haste! haste! the day draws on,’ I cried,
‘And, Andrew, thou hast far to go!’ —
‘*Hast far to go!*’ the Fiend replied
Within me, — ’twas *not* Andrew — no!
’Twas Andrew’s voice no more — ’twas HE
Whose then I was, and aye must be!

— “On, on we went; — the dreary plain
Was all around us — we were *Here!*
Then came the storm, — the lightning, — rain, —
No earthly living thing was near,

Save one wild Raven on the wing,
— If that, indeed, were earthly thing!

“I heard its hoarse and screaming voice
High hovering o’er my frenzied head,
‘*Tis, Gervase Matcham, at thy choice!*
But he — the Boy!’ methought it said.
— Nay, Andrew, check that vengeful frown, —
I lov’d thee when I struck thee down!

* * * * *

“’Twas done! — the deed that damns me — done
I know not how — I never knew; —
And *Here* I stood — but not alone, —
The prostrate Boy my madness slew,
Was by my side — limb, feature, name,
’Twas HE!! — another — yet the same!

* * * * *

“Away! away! in frantic haste
Throughout that live-long night I flew —
Away! away! — across the waste, —
I know not how — I never knew, —
My mind was one wild blank — and I
Had but one thought, — one hope — to fly!

“And still the lightning ploughed the ground,
The thunder roared — and there would come
Amidst its loudest bursts a sound,
Familiar once — it was — A DRUM! —
Then came the morn, — and light, — and then
Streets, — houses, — spires, — the hum of men.

“And Ocean roll’d before me — fain
Would I have whelm’d me in its tide,
At once beneath the billowy main
My shame, my guilt, my crime to hide;
But HE was there! — HE cross’d my track, —
I dared not pass — HE waved me back!

“And then rude hands detained me — sure
Justice had grasp’d her victim — no!
Though powerless, hopeless, bound, secure,
A captive thrall, it was not so;
They cry ‘The Frenchman’s on the wave!’
The press was hot — and I a slave.

“They dragg’d me o’er the vessel’s side;
The world of waters roll’d below;
The gallant ship, in all her pride
Of dreadful beauty, sought her foe;
— Thou saw’st me, William, in the strife —
Alack! I bore a charmed life;

“In vain the bullets round me fly,
In vain mine eager breast I bare;
Death shuns the wretch who longs to die,
And every sword falls edgeless there!
Still HE is near! — and seems to cry,
‘Not *here*, nor *thus*, may Matcham die!’ —

“Thou saw’st me, on that fearful day,
When, fruitless all attempts to save,
Our pinnacle foundering in the bay,
The boat’s-crew met a watery grave, —
All, all — save ONE — the ravenous sea
That swallow’d all — rejected ME!

“And now, when fifteen suns have each
Fulfilled in turn its circling year,
Thrown back again on England’s beach,
Our bark paid off — HE drives me *Here*!
I could not die in flood or fight —
HE drives me *HERE!!*” —
“And sarve you right!

“What! bilk your Commander! — desert — and then rob!
And go scuttling a poor little Drummer-boy’s nob!
Why, my precious eyes! what a bloodthirsty swab! —
There’s old Davy Jones,
Who cracks Sailors’ bones
For his jaw-work would never, I’m sure, s’elp me Bob,
Have come for to go for to do sich a job!
Hark ye, Waters, — or Matcham, — whichever’s your purser-name,
—T’other, your own, is, I’m sartain, the worser name, —
Twelve years have we lived on like brother and brother! —
Now — your course lays one way, and mine lays another!”

“No, William, it may not be so;
Blood calls for blood! — ’tis Heaven’s decree!
And thou with me this night must go,
And give me to the gallows-tree!
Ha! — see — HE smiles — HE points the way!
On, William, on! no more delay!”

Now Bill, — so the story, as told to me, goes,

And who, as his last speech sufficiently shows,
Was a “regular trump,” — did not like to “turn Nose;”
But then came a thunder-clap louder than any
Of those that preceded, though they were so many;
And hark! — as its rumblings subside in a hum,
What sound mingles too? — “By the hokey — A DRUM!!”

* * * * *

I remember I once heard my Grandfather say,
That some sixty years since he was going that way,
When they shew'd him the spot
Where the gibbet — was not —
On which Matcham's corse had been hung up to rot;
It had fall'n down — but how long before, he'd forgot;
And they told him, I think, at the Bear in Devizes,
The town where the Sessions are held, — or the 'Sizes,
That Matcham confess'd,
And made a clean breast
To the May'r; but that, after he'd had a night's rest,
And the storm had subsided, he “pooh-pooh'd” his friend,
Swearing all was a lie from beginning to end;
Said “he'd only been drunk —
That his spirits had sunk
At the thunder — the storm put him into a funk, —
That, in fact, he had nothing at all on his conscience,
And found out, in short, he'd been talking great nonsense.”—

But now one Mr. Jones
Comes forth and depones
That, fifteen years since, he had heard certain groans
On his way to Stone Henge (to examine the stones
Described in a work of the late Sir John Soane's,
That he'd followed the moans,
And, led by their tones,
Found a Raven a-picking a Drummer-boy's bones! —
— Then the Colonel wrote word
From the King's Forty-third,
That the story was certainly true which they'd heard,
For, that one of their drummers, and one Sergeant Matcham,
Had “brushed with the dibs,” and they never could catch 'em.

So Justice was sure, though a long time she'd lagg'd,
And the Sergeant, in spite of his “Gammon,” got “scragg'd;”
And people averred
That an ugly black bird,
The Raven, 'twas hinted, of whom we have heard,
Though the story, I own, appears rather absurd,
Was seen (Gervase Matcham not being interr'd),

To roost all that night on the murderer's gibbet;
An odd thing, if so, and it may be a fib — it,
However, 's a thing Nature's laws don't prohibit.
— Next morning, they add, that "black gentleman" flies out,
Having picked Matcham's nose off, and gobbled his eyes out!

MORAL

Avis au Voyageur

Imprimis

If you contemplate walking o'er Salisbury Plain,
Consult Mr. Murphy, or Moore, and refrain
From selecting a day when it's likely to rain!

2°

When trav'ling, don't "flash"
Your notes or your cash
Before other people — it's foolish and rash!

3°

At dinner be cautious, and note well your party; —
There's little to dread where the appetite's hearty, —
But mind and look well to your purse and your throttle
When you see a man shirking, and passing his bottle!

4°

If you chance to be needy,
Your coat and hat seedy,
In war-time especially, never go out
When you've reason to think there's a press-gang about!

5°

Don't chatter, nor tell people all that you think,
Nor blab secrets, — especially when you're in drink, —
But keep your own counsel in all that you do!
— Or a Counsel may, some day or other, keep you.

6°

Discard superstition! — and don't take a post,
If you happen to see one at night, for a Ghost!
— Last of all, if by choice, or convenience, you're led,
To cut a man's throat, or demolish his head,
Don't do't in a thunderstorm — wait for the summer!
And mind, above all things, the MAN'S NOT A DRUMMER!!

* * * * *

Among a bundle of letters I find one from Sucklethumbkin, dated from London, and containing his version of perhaps the greatest theatrical Civil War since the celebrated "O. P. row." As the circumstances are now become matter of history, and poor Doldrum himself has been, alas! for some time the denizen of a far different "House," I have ventured to preserve it. Perhaps it may be unnecessary to add, that my Honourable friend has of late taken to Poetry, and goes without his cravat.

A ROW IN AN OMNIBUS (BOX): A LEGEND OF THE HAYMARKET

Omnibus hoc vitium cantoribus.—HOR.

Dol-drum the Manager sits in his chair,
With a gloomy brow and dissatisfied air,
And he says as he slaps his hands on his knee,
"I'll have nothing to do with Fiddle-de-dee!"

— "But Fiddle-de-dee sings clear and loud,
And his trills and his quavers astonish the crowd;
Such a singer as he
You'll nowhere see;
They'll all be screaming for Fiddle-de-dee!" — "Though
Fiddle-de-dee sings loud and clear,
And his tones are sweet, yet his terms are dear!
The 'glove won't fit!'
The deuce a bit.
I shall give an engagement to Fal-de-ral-tit!"

The Prompter bow'd, and he went to his stall,
And the green-baize rose at the Prompter's call,
And Fal-de-ral-tit sang fol-de-rol-lol;
But, scarce had he done
When a row begun,
Such a noise was never heard under the sun.
"Fiddle-de-dee! —
— Where is he?
He's the *Artiste* whom we all want to see! —
Dol-drum! — Dol-drum! —
Bid the Manager come!
It's a scandalous thing to exact such a sum
For boxes and gallery, stalls and pit,
And then fob us off with a Fal-de-ral-tit! —
Deuce a bit!
We'll never submit!
Vive Fiddle-de-dee! *à bas* Fal-de-ral-tit!"

Dol-drum the Manager rose from his chair,

With a gloomy brow and dissatisfied air;
But he smooth'd his brow,
As he well knew how,
And he walk'd on, and made a most elegant bow,
And he paused, and he smiled, and advanced to the lights,
In his opera-hat, and his opera-tights;
“Ladies and Gentlemen,” then said he,
“Pray what may you please to want with me?”

“Fiddle-de-dee! — Fiddle-de-dee!”
Folks of all sorts and of every degree,
Snob, and Snip, and haughty Grandee,
Duchesses, Countesses, fresh from their tea,
And Shopmen, who'd only come there for a spree,
Halloo'd, and hooted, and roar'd with glee
“Fiddle-de-dee! —
— None but He! —
Subscribe to his terms, whatever they be! —
Agree, agree, or you'll very soon see
In a brace of shakes we'll get up an O.P.!”

Dol-drum the Manager, full of care,
With a gloomy brow and dissatisfied air,
Looks distrest,
And he bows his best,
And he puts his right hand on the side of his breast,
And he says, — says he,
“We *can't* agree;
His terms are a vast deal too high for me. —
There's the rent, and the rates, and the sesses, and taxes —
I can't afford Fiddle-de-dee what he *axes*.
If you'll only permit
Fal-de-ral-tit ——”

The “Generous Public” cried, “Deuce a bit!
Dol-drum! — Dol-drum! —
We'll none of us come.
It's ‘No Go!’ — it's ‘Gammon!’ — it's ‘all a Hum:’ —
You're a miserly Jew! —
‘Cock-a-doodle-do!’
He *don't* ask too much, as you know — so you do —
It's a shame — it's a sin — it's really too bad —
You ought to be ‘shamed of yourself — so you had!”

Dol-drum the Manager never before
In his life-time had heard such a wild uproar.
Dol-drum the Manager turn'd to flee;
But he says — says he,
“*Mort de ma vie!*”

I shall *nevare* engage vid dat Fiddle-de-dee!”
Then all the gentlefolks flew in a rage,
And they jump’d from the Omnibus on to the Stage,
Lords, Squires, and Knights, they came down to the lights,
In their opera-hats, and their opera-tights.
Ma’am’selle Cherrytoes
Shook to her very toes,
She couldn’t hop on, so hopped off on her merry toes.
And the “evening concluded” with “Three times three!”
“Hip! — hip! — hurrah! for Fiddle-de-dee!”

Dol-drum the Manager, full of care,
With a troubled brow and dissatisfied air,
Saddest of men,
Sat down, and then
Took from his table a Perryan pen,
And he wrote to the “News,”
How MacFuze, and Tregooze,
Lord Tomnoddy, Sir Carnaby Jenks of the Blues,
And the whole of their tail, and the separate crews
Of the Tags and the Rags, and the No-one-knows-whos,
Had combined Monsieur Fal-de-ral-tit to abuse,
And make Dol-drum agree
With Fiddle-de-dee,
Who was not a bit better singer than he.
— Dol-drum declared “he never could see,
For the life of him, yet, why Fiddle-de-dee,
Who, in B flat, or C,
Or whatever the key,
Could never at any time get below G,
Should expect a fee the same in degree
As the great Burlybumbo who sings double D.”
Then slyly he added a little N.B.
“If they’d have him in Paris he’d not come to me!”

The Manager rings,
And the Prompter springs
To his side in a jiffy, and with him he brings
A set of those odd-looking envelope things,
Where Britannia (who seems to be crucified,) flings
To her right and her left funny people with wings,
Amongst Elephants, Quakers, and Catabaw Kings;
And a taper and wax,
And small Queen’s heads in packs,
Which, when notes are too big, you’re to stick on their backs.
Dol-drum the Manager sealed with care
The letter and copies he’d written so fair,
And sat himself down with a satisfied air;
Without delay

He sent them away,
In time to appear in “our columns” next day!

Dol-drum the Manager, full of care,
Walk’d on to the stage with an anxious air,
And peep’d through the curtain to see who were there.
There was MacFuze,
And Lieutenant Tregooze,
And there was Sir Carnaby Jenks of the Blues,
And the Tags, and the Rags, and the No-one-knows-whos;
And the green-baize rose at the Prompter’s call,
And they all began to hoot, bellow, and bawl,
And cry “Cock-a-doodle,” and scream, and squall
“Dol-drum!—Dol-drum!
Bid the Manager come!”
You’d have thought from the tones
Of their hisses and groans,
They were bent upon breaking his (Opera) bones.
And Dol-drum comes, and he says — says he,
“Pray what may you please to want with me?” —
“Fiddle-de-dee! — Fiddle-de-dee! —
We’ll have nobody give us *sol fa* but He!
For he’s the *Artiste* whom we all want to see.”

—Manager Dol-drum says — says he —
(And he looks like an Owl in “a hollow beech-tree,”)
“Well, since I see
The thing must be,
I’ll sign an agreement with Fiddle-de-dee!”
Then MacFuze, and Tregooze,
And Jenks of the Blues,
And the Tags, and the Rags, and the No-one-knows-whos,
Extremely delighted to hear such good news,
Desist from their shrill “Cock-a-doodle-does.”
“*Vive* Fiddle-de-dee! Dol-drum, and He!
They are jolly good fellows as ever need be!
And so’s Burlybumbo, who sings double D!
And whenever they sing, why, we’ll all come and see!”

So, after all
This terrible squall,
Fiddle-de-dee ‘s at the top of the tree,
And Dol-drum and Fal-de-ral-tit sing small!
Now Fiddle-de-dee sings loud and clear
At I can’t tell you how many thousands a year,
And Fal-de-ral-tit is considered “Small Beer;”
And Ma’am’selle Cherrytoes
Sports her merry toes.
Dancing away to the fiddles and flutes,

The Ingoldsby Legends

In what the folks call a “Lithuanian” in boots.

So here’s an end to my one, two, and three;
And bless the Queen — and long live She!
And grant that there never again may be
Such a halliballoo as we’ve happened to see
About nothing on earth but “Fiddle-de-dee!”

* * * * *

To whom is the name of Cornelius Agrippa otherwise than familiar, since “a Magician,” of renown not inferior to his own, has brought him and his terrible “Black Book” again before the World? — That he was celebrated, among other exploits, for raising the Devil, we are all well aware; — how he performed this feat, — at least one, and that, perhaps, the most certain method, by which he did it — is thus described.

RAISING THE DEVIL: A LEGEND OF CORNELIUS AGRIPPA

And hast thou nerve enough?” he said,
That grey Old Man, above whose head
Unnumber’d years had roll’d, —
“And hast thou nerve to view,” he cried,
“The incarnate Fiend that Heaven defied? —
— Art thou indeed so bold?

“Say, canst thou, with unshrinking gaze,
Sustain, rash youth, the withering blaze
Of that unearthly eye,
That blasts where’er it lights, — the breath
That, like the Simoom, scatters death
On all that yet *can* die!

— “Darest thou confront that fearful form,
That rides the whirlwind, and the storm,
In wild unholy revel? —
The terrors of that blasted brow,
Archangel’s once, — though ruin’d now —
— Ay, — dar’st thou face THE DEVIL?” —

“I dare!” the desperate Youth replied,
And placed him by that Old Man’s side,
In fierce and frantic glee,
Unblenched his cheek, and firm his limb;
— “No paltry juggling Fiend, but HIM!
— THE DEVIL! — I fain would see! —

“In all his Gorgon terrors clad,
His worst, his fellest shape!” the Lad
Rejoined in reckless tone. —
— “Have then thy wish!” Agrippa said,
And sigh’d, and shook his hoary head,
With many a bitter groan.

He drew the mystic circle’s bound,
With skull and cross-bones fenc’d around;

The Ingoldsby Legends

He traced full many a sigil there;
He mutter'd many a backward pray'r,
That sounded like a curse —
“He comes!” — he cried, with wild grimace,
“The fellest of Apollyon's race!” —
— Then in his startled pupil's face
He dash'd an EMPTY PURSE!!

* * * * *

We come now to the rummaging of Father John's stores. The extracts which I shall submit from them are of the same character as those formerly derived from the same source, and may be considered as theologico-historical, or Tracts for his times.

With respect to the first legend on this list, I have to remark that, though the good Father is silent on the subject, there is every reason to believe that the "little curly-wigged" gentleman, who plays, though passively, so prominent a part in it, had Ingoldsby blood in his veins. This conjecture is supported by the fact of the arms of Scroope, impaling Ingoldsby, being found, as in the Bray case, in one of the windows, and by a very old marriage settlement, nearly, or quite, illegible, a facsimile of the seal affixed to which is appended to this true history.

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT OR THE DEVIL'S DINNER-PARTY: A LEGEND OF THE NORTH COUNTRIE

Nobilis quidam, cui nomen *Monsr. Lescrop, Chivaler*, cum invitasset convivas, et, hora convivii jam instante et apparatu facto, spe frustratus esset, excusantibus se convivis cur non compararent, prorupit iratus in hæc verba: "*Veniant igitur omnes dæmones, si nullus hominum mecum esse potest!*"

* * * * *

Quod cum fieret, et Dominus, et famuli, et ancillæ, a domo properantes, forte obliti, infantem in cunis jacentem secum non auferunt. Dæmones incipiunt comessari et vociferari, prospicereque per fenestras formis ursorum, luporum, felium, et monstrare pocula vino repleta. Ah, inquit pater, *ubi infans meus?* Vix cum hæc dixisset, unus ex Dæmonibus ulnis suis infantem ad fenestram gestat, &c.

Chronicon de Bolton.

It's in Bolton Hall, and the Clock strikes One,
And the roast meat's brown, and the boil'd meat's done
And the barbecu'd sucking-pig's crisp'd to a turn,
And the pancakes are fried, and beginning to burn;
The fat stubble-goose
Swims in gravy and juice
With the mustard and apple-sauce ready for use;
Fish, flesh, and fowl, and all of the best,
Want nothing but eating — they're all ready drest.
But where is the Host, and where is the Guest?

Pantler and serving-man, henchman and page,
Stand sniffing the duck-stuffing (onion and sage),
And the scullions and cooks,
With fidgetty looks,

Are grumbling, and mutt'ring, and scowling as black
As cooks always do when the dinner's put back;
For though the board's deckt, and the napery, fair
As the unsunn'd snow-flake, is spread out with care,
And the Dais is furnish'd with stool and with chair,
And plate of *orfèvrerie* costly and rare,
Apostle-spoons, salt-cellar, all are there,
And Mess John in his place,
With his rubicund face,
And his hands ready folded, prepared to say Grace.
Yet where is the Host? — and his convives — where?

The Scroope sits lonely in Bolton Hall,
And he watches the dial that hangs by the wall,
He watches the large hand, he watches the small,
And he fidgets, and looks
As cross as the cooks,
And he utters — a word which we'll soften to "Zooks!"
As he cries, "What on earth has become of them all? —
What can delay
De Vaux and De Saye?
What makes Sir Gilbert de Umfraville stay?
What's gone with Poyntz, and Sir Reginald Braye?
Why are Ralph Ufford and Marny away?
And De Nokes, and De Stiles, and Lord Marmaduke Grey?
And De Roe?
And De Doe? —
Poynings, and Vavasour — where be they?
Fitz-Walter, Fitz-Osbert, Fitz-Hugh, and Fitz-John,
And the Mandevilles, *père et filz* (father and son)?
Their cards said 'Dinner precisely at One!'
There's nothing I hate, in
The world, like waiting!
It's a monstrous great bore, when a Gentleman feels
A good appetite, thus to be kept from his meals!"

It's in Bolton Hall, and the clock strikes Two!
And the scullions and cooks are themselves in "a stew,"
And the kitchen-maids stand, and don't know what to do,
For the rich plum-puddings are bursting their bags,
And the mutton and turnips are boiling to rags,
And the fish is all spoil'd
And the butter's all oil'd,
And the soup's got cold in the silver tureen,
And there's nothing, in short, that is fit to be seen!
While Sir Guy Le Scroope continues to fume,
And to fret by himself in the tapestried room,
And still fidgets, and looks
More cross than the cooks,

And repeats that bad word, which we've soften'd to "Zooks!"

Two o'clock's come, and Two o'clock's gone,
And the large and the small hands move steadily on,
Still nobody's there,
No De Roos, or De Clare,
To taste of the Scroope's most delicate fare,
Or to quaff off a health unto Bolton's Heir,
That nice little boy who sits there in his chair,
Some four years old, and a few months to spare,
With his laughing blue eyes, and his long curly hair,
Now sucking his thumb, and now munching his pear.

Again, Sir Guy the silence broke,
"It's hard upon Three! — it's just on the stroke!
Come, serve up the dinner! — A joke is a joke!" —
Little he deems that Stephen de Hoagues,
Who "his fun," as the Yankees say, everywhere "pokes,"
And is always a great deal too fond of his jokes,
Has written a circular note to De Nokes,
And De Stiles, and De Roe, and the rest of the folks,
One and all,
Great and small,
Who were asked to the Hall
To dine there, and sup, and wind up with a ball,
And had told all the party a great bouncing lie he
Cook'd up, that "the *fête* was postponed *sine die*,
The dear little curly-wig'd heir of Le Scroope
Being taken alarmingly ill with the croup!"

When the clock struck Three,
And the Page on his knee
Said, "An't please you, Sir Guy Le Scroope, *On a servi!*"
And the Knight found the banquet-hall empty and clear,
With nobody near
To partake of his cheer,
He stamp'd, and he storm'd — then his language! — Oh dear!
'Twas awful to see, and 'twas awful to hear!
And he cried to the button-deck'd Page at his knee,
Who had told him so civilly "*On a servi,*"
"Ten thousand fiends seize them, wherever they be!
— The Devil take *them!* and the Devil take *thee!*
And the DEVIL MAY EAT UP THE DINNER FOR ME!!"

In a terrible fume
He bounced out of the room,
He bounced out of the house — and page, footman, and groom
Bounced after their master; for scarce had they heard
Of this left-handed Grace the last finishing word,

Ere the horn, at the gate of the Barbican tower,
Was blown with a loud twenty-trumpeter power,
And in rush'd a troop Of strange guests! — such a group
As had ne'er before darkened the doors of the Scroope!

This looks like De Saye — yet — it is not De Saye —
And this is — no, 'tis not — Sir Reginald Braye —
This has somewhat the favour of Marmaduke Grey —
But stay! — *Where on earth did he get those long nails?*
Why, they're *claws!* — then, Good Gracious! — they've all of them *tails!*
That can't be De Vaux — why, his nose is a bill,
Or, I would say, a beak! — and he can't keep it still! —
Is that Poynings? — Oh Gemini! — look at his feet!!
Why, they're absolute *hoofs!* — is it gout or his corns
That have crumpled them up so? — by Jingo, he's *horns!*
Run! run! — There's Fitz-Walter, Fitz-Hugh, and Fitz-John,
And the Mandevilles, *père et filz* (father and son),
And Fitz-Osbert, and Ufford — *they've all got them on!*
Then their great saucer eyes —
It's the Father of lies
And his Imps — run! run! run! — they're all fiends in disguise,
Who've partly assumed, with more sombre complexions,
The forms of Sir Guy Le Scroope's friends and connexions,
And He — at the top there — that grim-looking elf —
Run! run! — that's the “muckle-horned Cloutie” himself!

And now what a din Without and within!
For the court-yard is full of them. — How they begin
To mop, and to mowe, and make faces, and grin!
Cock their tails up together,
Like cows in hot weather,
And butt at each other, all eating and drinking,
The viands and wine disappearing like winking.
And then such a lot
As together had got!
Master Cabbage, the steward, who'd made a machine
To calculate with, and count noses, — I ween
The cleverest thing of the kind ever seen, —
Declared, when he'd made,
By the said machine's aid,
Up, what's now called, the “tottle” of those he survey'd,
There were just — how he proved it I cannot divine, —
Nine thousand, nine hundred, and ninety, and nine,
Exclusive of Him,
Who, giant in limb,
And black as the crow they denominate *Jim*,
With a tail like a bull, and a head like a bear,
Stands forth at the window, — and what holds he there,
Which he hugs with such care,

And pokes out in the air,
 And grasps as its limbs from each other he'd tear?
 Oh! grief and despair!
 I vow and declare
 It's Le Scroope's poor, dear, sweet, little, curly-wig'd Heir!
 Whom the nurse had forgot, and left there in his chair,
 Alternately sucking his thumb and his pear!

What words can express
 The dismay and distress
 Of Sir Guy, when he found what a terrible mess
 His cursing and banning had now got him into?
 That words, which to use are a shame and a sin too,
 Had thus on their speaker recoiled, and his malison
 Placed in the hands of the Devil's own "pal" his son! —
 He sobb'd, and he sigh'd,
 And he scream'd, and he cried,
 And behaved like a man that is mad, or in liquor, — he
 Tore his peaked beard, and he dashed off his "Vicary,"
 Stamped on the jasey,
 As though he were crazy,
 And staggering about just as if he were "hazy,"
 Exclaimed, "Fifty pounds!" (a large sum in those times,)
 "To the person, whoever he may be, that climbs
 To that window above there, *en ogive*, and painted,
 And brings down my curly-wi'——" here Sir Guy fainted!

With many a moan
 And many a groan,
 What with tweaks of the nose, and some *eau de Cologne*,
 He revived, — Reason once more remounted her throne,
 Or rather the instinct of Nature, — 'twere treason
 To Her, in the Scroope's case, perhaps, to say Reason, —
 But what saw he then? — Oh! my goodness! a sight
 Enough to have banished his reason outright!
 In that broad banquet hall The fiends, one and all,
 Regardless of shriek, and of squeak, and of squall,
 From one to another were tossing that small,
 Pretty, curly-wig'd boy, as if playing at ball:
 Yet none of his friends or his vassals might dare
 To fly to the rescue, or rush up the stair,
 And bring down in safety his curly-wig'd Heir!

Well a day! Well a day! All he can say
 Is but just so much trouble and time thrown away;
 Not a man can be tempted to join the *mélée*,
 E'en those words cabalistic, "I promise to pay
 Fifty pounds on demand," have, for once, lost their sway,
 And there the Knight stands,

Wringing his hands
In his agony — when, on a sudden, one ray
Of hope darts through his midriff! — His Saint! — Oh, it's funny,
And almost absurd,
That it never occur'd!—
“Ay! the Scroope's Patron Saint! — he's the man for my money!
Saint — who is it? — really I'm sadly to blame, —
On my word I'm afraid, — I confess it with shame, —
That I've almost forgot the good Gentleman's name, —
Cut — let me see — Cutbeard? — no! — CUTHBERT! —egad
St. Cuthbert of Bolton! — I'm right — he's the lad!
Oh! holy St. Cuthbert, if forbears of mine —
Of myself I say little, — have knelt at your shrine,
And have lash'd their bare backs, and — no matter — with twine,
Oh! list to the vow
Which I make to you now,
Only snatch my poor little boy out of the row
Which that Imp's kicking up with his fiendish bow-wow,
And his head like a bear, and his tail like a cow!
Bring him back here in safety! — perform but this task,
And I'll give! — Oh! — I'll give you whatever you ask! —
There is not a shrine
In the County shall shine
With a brilliancy half so resplendent as thine,
Or have so many candles, or look half so fine! —
Haste, holy St. Cuthbert, then, — hasten in pity!” —
— Conceive his surprise
When a strange voice replies,
“It's a bargain! — but, mind, sir, THE BEST SPERMACETI!” —



Say, whose that voice? — whose that form by his side,
 That old, old grey man, with his beard long and wide,
 In his coarse Palmer's weeds,
 And his cockle and beads?—
 And, how did he come? — did he walk? — did he ride? —
 Oh! none could determine, — oh! none could decide, —
 The fact is, I don't believe any one tried,
 For while ev'ry one stared, with a dignified stride,
 And without a word more,
 He march'd on before,
 Up a flight of stone steps, and so through the front door,
 To the banqueting-hall, that was on the first floor,
 While the fiendish assembly were making a rare
 Little shuttlecock there of the curly-wig'd Heir. —
 — I wish, gentle Reader, that you could have seen
 The pause that ensued when he stepp'd in between,
 With his resolute air, and his dignified mien,
 And said, in a tone most decided, though mild,
 "Come! — I'll trouble you just to hand over that child!"

The Demoniac crowd
 In an instant seem'd cowed;
 Not one of the crew volunteer'd a reply,
 All shrunk from the glance of that keen-flashing eye,
 Save one horrid Humgruffin, who seem'd by his talk,
 And the airs he assumed, to be Cock of the walk,
 He quailed not before it, but saucily met it,
 And as saucily said, "Don't you wish you may get it?"

My goodness! — the look that the old Palmer gave!
 And his frown! — 'twas quite dreadful to witness — "Why, slave!
 You rascal!" quoth he, "This language to ME!!
 — At once, Mr. Nicholas! down on your knee,
 And hand me that curly-wig'd boy! — I command it —
 Come! — none of your nonsense! — you know I won't stand it."

Old Nicholas trembled, — he shook in his shoes,
 And seem'd half inclined, but afraid, to refuse.
 "Well, Cuthbert," said he,
 "If so it must be,
 — For you've had your own way from the first time I knew ye;—
 Take your curly-wig'd brat, and much good may he do ye!
 But I'll have in exchange —" — here his eye flash'd with rage —
 "That chap with the buttons — he *gave me* the Page!"

"Come, come," the Saint answer'd, "you very well know
 The young man's no more his than your own to bestow —"

Touch one button of his if you dare, Nick — no! no!
Cut your stick, sir — come, mizzle! — be off with you! — go!” —
The Devil grew hot —
“If I do I’ll be shot!
An you come to that, Cuthbert, I’ll tell you what’s what;
He has *asked* us to *dine here*, and go we will not!
Why, you Skinflint, — at least
You may leave us the feast!
Here we’ve come all that way from our brimstone abode,
Ten million good leagues, Sir, as ever you strode,
And the deuce of a luncheon we’ve had on the road —
— ‘Go!’ — ‘Mizzle!’ indeed — Mr. Saint, who are you,
I should like to know? — ‘Go!’ — I’ll be hang’d if I do!
He invited us all — we’ve a right here — it’s known
That a Baron may do what he likes with his own —
Here, Asmodeus — a slice of that beef! — now the mustard! —
What have *you* got? — oh, apple-pie — try it with custard!”

The Saint made a pause
As uncertain, because
He knew Nick is pretty well “up” in the laws,
And they *might* be on *his* side — and then, he’d such claws!
On the whole, it was better, he thought, to retire
With the curly-wig’d boy he’d pick’d out of the fire,
And give up the victuals — to retrace his path,
And to compromise — (spite of the Member for Bath).
So to Old Nick’s appeal,
As he turn’d on his heel,
He replied, “Well, I’ll leave you the mutton and veal.
And the soup *à la Reine*, and the sauce *Bechamel*.
As The Scroope *did* invite you to dinner, I feel
I can’t well turn you out — ’twould be hardly genteel —
But be moderate, pray, — and remember thus much,
Since you’re treated as Gentlemen, shew yourselves such,
And don’t make it late,
But mind and go straight
Home to bed when you’ve finish’d — and don’t steal the plate!
Nor wrench off the knocker — or bell from the gate.
Walk away, like respectable Devils, in peace,
And don’t ‘lark’ with the watch, or annoy the police!”

Having thus said his say,
That Palmer grey
Took up little Le Scroope, and walk’d coolly away,
While the Demons all set up a “Hip! hip! hurray!”
Then fell, tooth and claw, on the victuals, as they
Had been guests at Guildhall upon Lord Mayor’s day,
All scrambling and scuffling for what was before ‘em,
No care for precedence or common decorum.

Few ate more hearty
 Than Madame Astarte,
 And Hecate, — considered the Belles of the party,
 Between them was seated Leviathan, eager
 To “do the polite,” and take wine with Belphegor;
 Here was *Morbleu* (a French devil), supping soup-meagre,
 And there, munching leeks, Davy Jones of Tredegar
 (A Welsh one), who’d left the domains of Ap Morgan,
 To “follow the sea,” — and next him Demogorgon, —
 Then Pan with his pipes, and Fauns grinding the organ
 To Mammon and Belial, and half a score dancers.
 Who’d joined with Medusa to get up “the Lancers;”
 — Here’s Lucifer lying blind drunk with Scotch ale,
 While Beëlzebub’s tying huge knots in his tail.
 There’s Setebos, storming because Mephistopheles
 Gave him the lie,
 Said he’d “blacken his eye,”
 And dash’d in his face a whole cup of hot coffee-lees; —
 Ramping, and roaring,
 Hiccoughing, snoring,—
 Never was seen such a riot before in
 A gentleman’s house, or such profligate revelling
 At any *soirée* —where they don’t let the Devil in.

Hark! — as sure as fate
 The clock’s striking Eight!
 (An hour which our ancestors called “getting late,”)
 When Nick, who by this time was rather elate,
 Rose up and addressed them.
 “’Tis full time,” he said,
 “For all elderly Devils to be in their bed;
 For my own part I mean to be jogging, because
 I don’t find myself now quite so young as I was;
 But, Gentlemen, ere I depart from my post,
 I must call on you all for one bumper — the toast
 Which I have to propose is, — OUR EXCELLENT HOST!
 — Many thanks for his kind hospitality — may
 We also be able
 To see at *our* table
 Himself, and enjoy, in a family way,
 His good company *down stairs* at no distant day!
 You’d,
 I’m sure, think me rude
 If I did not include
 In the toast my young friend there, the curly-wig’d Heir.
 He’s in very good hands, for you’re all well aware
 That St. Cuthbert has taken him under his care;
 Though I must not say ‘bless,’ —
 — Why, you’ll easily guess, —

May our Curly-wig'd Friend's shadow never be less!"
Nick took off his heel-taps — bow'd — smiled — with an air
Most graciously grim, — and vacated the chair, —
Of course the *elite*
Rose at once on their feet,
And followed their leader, and beat a retreat;
When a sky-larking Imp took the President's seat,
And, requesting that each would replenish his cup,
Said, "Where we have dined, my boys, there let us sup!" —
— It was three in the morning before they broke up!!!

* * * * *

I scarcely need say Sir Guy didn't delay
To fulfil his vow made to St. Cuthbert, or pay
For the candles he'd promised, or make light as day
The shrine he assured him he'd render so gay.
In fact, when the votaries came there to pray,
All said there was nought to compare with it — nay,
For fear that the Abbey
Might think he was shabby,
Four Brethren thenceforward, two cleric, two lay,
He ordained should take charge of a new-founded chantry,
With six marcs apiece, and some claims on the pantry;
In short, the whole County
Declared, through his bounty,
The Abbey of Bolton exhibited fresh scenes
From any displayed since Sir William de Meschines,
And Cecily Roumeli came to this nation
With William the Norman, and laid its foundation.

For the rest, it is said,
And I know I have read
In some Chronicle — whose, has gone out of my head —
That, what with these candles, and other expenses,
Which no man would go to if quite in his senses,
He reduced, and brought low
His property so,
That, at last, he'd not much of it left to bestow;
And that, many years after that terrible feast,
Sir Guy in the Abbey was living a Priest;
And there, in one thousand and — something, — deceased.
(It's supposed by this trick
He bamboozled Old Nick,
And slipped through his fingers remarkably "slick"),
While, as to young Curly-wig, — dear little Soul,
Would you know more of him, you must look at "The Roll,"
Which records the dispute,
And the subsequent suit,

Commenced in "Thirteen sev'nty-five," — which took root
In Le Grosvenor's assuming the arms Le Scroope swore
That none but *his* ancestors, ever before,
In foray, joust, battle, or tournament wore,
To wit, "*On a Prussian-blue Field a Bend Or;*" —
While the Grosvenor averred that *his* ancestors bore
The same, and Scroope lied like a — somebody tore
Off the simile, — so I can tell you no more,
Till some A double S shall the fragment restore.†

MORAL

This Legend sound maxims exemplifies — e.g. —

1mo.

Should anything tease you,
Annoy, or displease you,
Remember what Lilly says, "*Animum rege!*"
And as for that shocking bad habit of swearing, —
In all good society voted past bearing, —
Eschew it! — and leave it to dust-men and mobs,
Nor commit yourself much beyond "Zooks!" or "Odsbobs!"

2do.

When asked out to dine by a Person of Quality,
Mind, and observe the most strict punctuality! —
For should you come late,
And make dinner wait,
And the victuals get cold, you'll incur, sure as fate,
The Master's displeasure, the Mistress's hate —
And — though both may, perhaps, be too well bred to swear,
They'll heartily *wish* you — I need not say *Where*.

3tio.

Look well to your Maid-servants! — say you expect them
To see to the children, and not to neglect them! —
And if you're a widower, just throw a cursory
Glance in, at times, when you go near the Nursery! —
— Perhaps it's as well to keep children from plums,
And from pears in the season, — and sucking their thumbs!

† It is with the greatest satisfaction that I learn from Mr. Simpkinson this consummation, so devoutly to be wished, is about to be realized, and that the remainder of this most interesting document, containing the whole of the defendant's evidence, will appear in the course of the ensuing summer, under the same auspices as the former portion. We shall look with eagerness for the identification of "Curly-wig."

The Ingoldsby Legends

4^{to}.

To sum up the whole with a “Saw” of much use,
Be *just*, and be *generous* — don’t be *profuse*! —
Pay the debts that you owe, — keep your word to your friends,
But — DON’T SET YOUR CANDLES ALIGHT AT BOTH ENDS!! —
For of this be assured, if you “go it” too fast,
You’ll be “dish’d” like Sir Guy,
And like him, perhaps, die
A poor, old, half-starved Country Parson at last!



From a seal attached to an ancient deed *penes* THOMAS INGOLDSBY, Esq.,
preserved in the archives at Tappington Everard.

* * * * *