

All these strange elements are cleverly blended together. Mr. King evidently knows Boston pretty thoroughly, and in that town many of the scenes are laid. Harry Vassall, the New England Puritan, and Petrina, the New England Pagan, are excellent character sketches. The dialogue is very bright at times, and

the book is undeniably readable. Petrina literally wallows in modern thinking and Bohemian living, and yet at the last she comes back tremblingly to the man who represents that which is clean and wholesome and well worth while.

F. M. Mandeville.

## LONDON'S HA'PENNY COMICS

The lower-class Briton takes his humour as sadly as all other forms of pleasure. His wit, like his love, is grim and deliberate. There are few Nonconformists to the doctrine of the Metempsychosis of the Joke. The same "funny" situation, hall-marked and stereotyped, whether it be the slap-stick of the music-hall stage or an orange-peel disaster in his comic paper, will always provoke a dutiful snigger. Unless some jest is stolen from a foreign periodical, you will find scarcely any variation from one week to another in any of the lower-class humorous weeklies.

I speak, be it understood, particularly of the lower classes. A comparison of British and American wit upon higher planes might not redound indubitably to the credit of our own humorists. We are too bored by the ubiquitous tramp with his tomato can, the coloured poacher of chicken-coops, the Hebrew clothier and the Irish hod-carrier with his goat, to indulge in much patronising comment upon the jokes in *Punch*. We are newly afflicted with a recrudescence of the "catastrophe" form of wit in the Katzen-

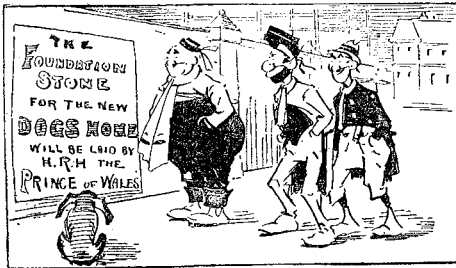
jammer Kids of the yellow supplements to the Sunday papers, and that perversion has all but spoiled for us the old delight in their prototypes, "Max und Moritz." We have created our own lower-class humour, and fed it upon pictures where the somersault is represented by dotted whirls, and visible stars proceeding from a cracked head gives artistic verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative. And, may Heaven forgive him, even Gus Dirks himself, the Moses who might have led the comic drawing into the clean, fresh domain of fancy, has succumbed to the demand for a cataclysmic *dénouement*.

This inevitable mishap is the *sine qua non* of the British "Ha'penny Comic," usually exploited in a "series" describing in successive pictures the discomfiture of a grotesque hero. Week by week one may, if one can, follow the career of Ally Sloper or any one of his numberless imitators through his wit-stupid misadventures.

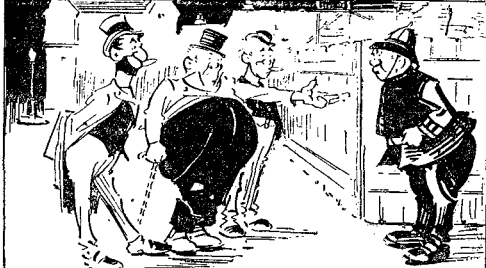
Upon the order list of Toler Brothers, who supply the newspaper shops, one finds over a dozen "Ha'penny Comics"



# THE THREE BEERY BOUNDERS INTERVIEW THE PRINCE OF WALES.



1.—"A xoo dog's 'ome," says Fat Felix, when he saw the poster on the wall, "jess tner sort o' crib as would suit me—nuffin' ter sink about an' yer grub served hup reglar, an' wot's this? foundation-stone laid by ther Prince o' Wales. Wot of me pippins, we'll av ter be on that job."



2.—A high hat and a collar makes a difference; you wouldn't have thought it was the Beery One at first glance, but so it were. They looked so aristocratic that they quite took the fat peeler's breath away, and when Fatty presented an old pawn-ticket for a card, he said "Paroo hon, me lad," without looking at it.

published weekly in London. Fathering these broods of humorous papers are several syndicates, each of which sends out from two to five "comics," one hardly distinguishable from another in shape, size, price or quality. The Harmsworth Brothers, for instance, publish *Chips*, *Comic Cuts*, the *Comic Home Journal* and the *Funny Wonder*. The heroes of their "adventure series" are:

"Chokee Bill and the Area Sneaker," "Weary Willie and Tired Tim," and other unmentionables.

These sheets affect pink paper, and run "bloods" of the most sanguinary character. A "blood," like a "series," is a technical term in the trade. A blood is the first cousin to the American half-dime novel, a lurid, melodramatic romance.

The Trapps-Holmes syndicate own and issue the *World's Comic*, the *Coloured Comic*, *Larks* and *Funny Cuts*. Here we find the caricatures and exploits of

"Frog-Faced Ferdinand and Wooly-Whiskered Watts,"

"Bat Eared Bill and Mooching Mike,"

"The Three Beery Bounders, Fat Felix, Nosey and Fly Flipper," etc., etc.

The Pearson Brothers are responsible for *Dan Leno's Comic* and the *Big Budget*, the latter consisting of four papers in one, with its comic, adventure, blood and editorial departments complete.

Most of the illustrations are too unspeakably vulgar for reproduction, but my diatribe would not be credible did I not quote from the texts, and submit in proof a few of the "cuts" that delight the cockney coster and giggling housemaid. Under each drawing in the series is a slangy explanation of these wretched attempts at fun, as stupid as they are coarse. Such are the purloins of British literature.

I have exhausted my adjectives in this presentment, and if any one desires to investigate further, the illustrations I annex must speak for themselves. To an American, the only amusement the "Ha'-penny Comics" can afford is that gained from a view of the inside workings of the editorial offices. It is not, however, often so amusing for the impecunious artist, for he is dependent upon the caprice of the editor, and even if a sketch is accepted, he must often wait weeks

## BAT-EARED BILL AND MOOCHING MIKE EMBARK IN THE WILD BEAST BIS'NESS.



1.—"Bis'sness hev got a bit slack in the ole country, matey," growled Mike, "but we're goin' to make our fortunes as wild lion' hunters." "Anyting for a change wot scoops in ther canaries," responded Bill.



2.—Our bold hunters had got an A1 copper idea for crossing the desert. It made the wild beasts a bit wilder. "Come along, chaplins," chirruped Bill, "you can all come later ool!"

# WEARY WILLY AND TIRED TIM SCORE ONCE MORE.



1. Willy and Tim are once more on the wander. This time they've put up at the Wobbly-winkle Islands, and weren't the natives flummoxed, that's all! "Tim," gurgled Willy, "this tangle has caught on a bit—they think we're the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs out on the tizzles." "Don't be frivolous," gurgled Tim: "tend to business, can't yer?"



2. Presently they came to a curious looking show. "This is the object of me search!" yowled Tim. "Ser-ave, hopen up the Perlace of Mystery!" The serave didn't quite see it at first. "Bunkwankum!" quoth he postically. And when Willy looked up the native dictionary, he found this meant, "Blowed if I will." But—

before it is paid for, if, indeed, he ever receives the paltry sum that is due him.

A majority of the editors have the appearance of boys of eighteen who have been trained to stand warming their coat-tails at the fire and say pompously, "No, Mr. Joker, your work is hardly up to our standard; you'd better try it again. I'll be glad to look at any drawings you bring in any time, you know!" Often the editor drives a hard bargain at wholesale, and I have known of one who bought forty pen-and-ink drawings for a pound, cash down. A few fortunate artists, friends of those in authority, get steady employment, doing four series regularly each Wednesday night, and living riotously upon the proceeds for the rest of the week. One syndicate has an organised staff and pays two pounds a week, their slaves grinding out "comics" from 9 till 6 every day, jokes provided.

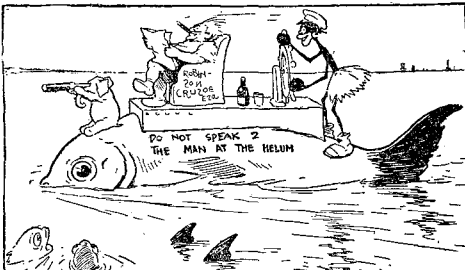
Monday morning at the office of the *Big Budget* discovers a row of artists lined up in front of the counter of the cashier's office. It is pay day, and each contributor, provided with a copy of the paper, takes his place in the queue and

points out his drawing on the broadside, is paid his eighteen pence per sketch, signs his receipt, and gives place to the next in the row. If the pay is somewhat small, here at least it is sure and prompt; at other offices he may have to come and go for weeks, implore, threaten, and even run the risk of personal violence, before he collects his half-crown.

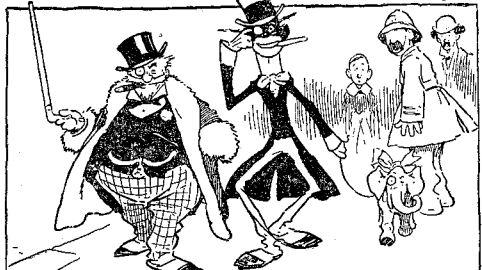
There are many such struggling Bohemians in London, happy-go-lucky prodigals, now with gold in their pockets and silk hats on their heads, then chewing their pencils in their "bed-sitting-room, back," waiting for some ignoble inspiration. Some draw fashion-plates for the ladies' weeklies and are visited by stylish, but headless women, gowned in the latest mode. Some sell their drawings through the agency of a pretty girl, who "has a way" with the susceptible editors.

But the most interesting clan of all to me was a trio of artists with whom I became fast friends in Chelsea. They had all studied art in Paris, and had transplanted their Bohemia from the Quartier Latin to the Old Queen's Road. They painted when they could spare the time,

THE COMIC ADVENTURES OF ROBINSON CRUSOE, ESQUIRE, AND HIS MAN FRIDAY.  
In accordance with the wishes of numerous readers, we have raised Mr. Crusoe's salary to 9d. per week.



1. I'd made a bit of a pile, one way and another, among the niggers, so I thought I'd give Friday a treat and take him to Barnum's—yes, Barnum's. I meant to go to London on board the fish I'd caught, and show the nigger around. We had a happy voyage, and fairly quick, too, 'cos our cruiser made about three hundred knots an hour, which was pretty fair for a small craft.



2. And when we got to London I rigged Friday up on end of a toff. People thought he was Ransy in disguise—but he wasn't. "We'll make a bit if we stay here long enough," I said to Friday. "How do you feel in your new togs?" "A bit squered—like the Frenchies in Africa!" chorled Friday. "Or the Boer people down South," I murmured.

but their rent was paid, when it *was* paid, by comic "cuts." The firm name was Etienne St. Michel Du Prix, and no matter which one was responsible for joke or rendition, that glorious pseudonym adorned the lower right-hand corner of the drawing. The boldest of the three made periodical trips to the city to dispose of the work and to bully editors into acceptance and payment. I dropped in on them one night at seven, and found them rather dubious.

"Come out to dinner at Mac's!" I said.

"No, thanks; we're not going to dine to-night!"

"Why not?" I inquired, as I helped myself thoughtlessly to one of the three biscuits on the mantel. They regarded me wistfully.

"Oh, we're not eating dinners," said one Du Prix, and he went to the window and gazed out as anxiously as Sister Anne on the tower of Bluebeard's castle.

"What time is it?" he asked, fingering an empty pocket. There was, at least, nothing there but a pawn ticket.

"Mont ought to be here by this time," said the other Du Prix, taking one of the two remaining biscuits.

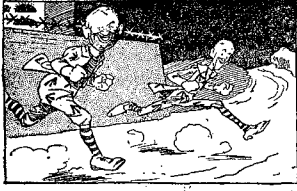
Suddenly there was a whistle below. The two Du Prix almost fell out of the window. Some one came up, three stairs at a time. It was Mont, *alias* Du Prix, 3d. He waved a bit of orange-coloured paper over his head, but his coat was a sight for a seamstress.

"I got it!" he cried. "I had an hour's beef with the editor of the *Joker*, and he promised to run the drawings next week. I told him they had already appeared. He said the cashier was out. I said I'd wait till he came back. Then he tried to put me out, and we broke two chairs and tipped over a table in the scrimmage. Then I sat down and waited four hours. Then, let's see—three of 'em and the office-boy rushed me. I caught hold of



A PURVEYOR OF "HA'PENNY" HUMOUR AT WORK.





1. Dear Mister Edditer,—We've had a rummy lack this week, an' no error; in fact, won of the rummiest as 'as ever bin had by yores truly. You see, mean' Area had just done a gay out of gool—



2. An' half way home we come across a small boy carryin' a barzket. Well, as we was in a bit of a hurry-like, I was for goin' on, but Area stops to examine the barzket. And it was lucky 'e did so.



3. 'Oos there was two pritty ladies costoomes in 'em, and in about 'arf a tick we was dressed as abuv, strollin' about the place as proud as two queens. Area was me daughter an' I was his mamin.

the lintels of the door and laughed at them. Finally he sat down and wrote out a cheque for seven-and-six. I told him the bill was fifteen bob. He swore, and I sat down again. Then he wrote another cheque, and I left with all of my coat I could find, and I put my shoulder through a window on the way, to even things up. Let's come up to the 'Six Bells' and cash it. I'm hungry."

"So am I!" confessed the other Du Prix. They had eaten nothing but "Petit

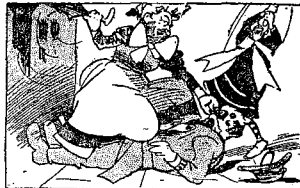
Beurres" all day. Then we all proceeded gloriously up Cheyne Walk in the direction of the "Six Bells."

This is a true story, but I must not tell you the names, for two of the Du Prix have since become famous. One attained distinction as a field artist in South Africa; the other became the "Latest Literary Success." But I believe poor old Mont is still holding up the *Big Budget!*

*Gelett Burgess.*



4. Well, we wasn't none too soon changin', for in half a jiffy, round the corner, comes Fairyfoot after us. An' bein' in sich a hurry, 'e couldn't stop hisself, an' 'e cum whack into Area—every pound of him



5. It was a joyful measin', Mister Edditer, 'cos there was no wan else about, an' so Area an' me took him in hand, so to speak, an' giv' him a gentle torkin' to, like as abuv. It was very joyful.



6. Then, wen he couldn't speak, we took him to the police station, an' giv' him in charge for attackin' two unprotected females. The inspector was such a nice man, too! Yer humble, CHOOKEE.

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## THE HOLY PLACE

At silver of grey leaves; at look of lace  
About a woman's throat; at little feet,  
Curled close in hand that clings; at stir of sweet  
Old gardens; at the flow and dip and grace  
Of sweeping fabric; at the phantom race  
Of shadow ripples in the tides of wheat,  
Where great, still spirits murmur as they meet—  
Souls see their God as in a holy place.

What of the wrinkled face, the poor, coarse hand,  
Dead leaves and ruined walls, and fields that stand,  
Rattling stark husks? Of little feet that stray  
From clinging hands, and never find the way?  
He knows no holy place for whom the clod  
Stands not an altar to the living God.

*Zona Gale.*