

Poetry.

From the London Punch.

To the Noble Airl at the Head of Her Majesty's Government.

BY A COUNTRYMAN OF HIS.

Hey, Aberdeen, are ye wakin' yet,
And are our drums a beatin' yet,
The journals lee,
Or fra' aw' we see,
The Russians are no' retreatin' yet.

Hey, Aberdeen, are ye writin' yet,
In hollow phrases delighin' yet,
While on Danube's banks
The hostile ranks
Are makin' ready for fightin' yet.

Hey, Aberdeen, are ye prosin' yet,
On your Council sofas a dozin' yet,
To the old world's sneers,
And the new world's jeers,
Your Country's honor exposin' yet?

Hey, Aberdeen, are ye twaddlin' yet,
And ower yet red tape dawdlin' yet,
About Nick's good faith,
And his power, and baith,
To your weary colleagues a maudlin' yet?

Hey, Aberdeen, are ye Premier yet?
We must have some cleverer schemer yet,
Or the Russian cat,
Whom ye love to pat,
Will be ower to lick up her cream here yet.

Literary Selections.

THE RACE.

An Incident of the Late War.

A tender in the Downs, and a well-manned boat approaching the shore. What a curious and engaging motley of character do their crews present to us! I remember a story of some man-of-war's men, which will fairly describe them, though I think even I a landsman, can see the difference a long peace and more domesticated habits have produced in their natures.

It was near the end of the last long and exciting war, when two frigates which had long been rivals and emulous of one another, though alike distinguished and successful, were in harbor at Portsmouth together to refit. They watched one another's progress, and tried to surpass one another, and were well understood to be running a race once more, to prepare their ships for active service, when a little band of sailor friends, five or six from each ship, had obtained leave of absence to go to London at the same time; and as they were "flush," as it is called, with money, they resolved each to take a coach for themselves, or a coach for each ship, and thus to keep up their old emulation, by running a race together to London.

Luckily for them, there were two coaches in the town—rivals like their ships—the one leaving the George, the other the Fountain, at about the same time. Accordingly, the whole coach, inside and outside, was taken at the George by the men of the Impetueuse—that of the Fountain in the same way, by the celebrated Amazons.

As the morning of the departure approached, much bustle occurred at the coach office, with some noise and altercation, and soon the four horses were being put to, but no luggage was seen on the coach roof; when a party consisting of two well-dressed men, and three still smarter females, probably ladies, arrived in a hurry, as though fearing they were too late, and the following scene ensued at the Amazon: The voice of one of the gentlemen who had gone for places, was heard aloud to say:

"There are no seats; they are all taken."

"All taken? are you sure?"

"Yes, a party of sailors have taken the whole coach."

At this moment, five fine looking fellows with low hats, long queues, large whiskers, open necks, pipes in their mouths, and huge sack trousers, swung alongside the office, hallooing out,

"Ah! that's right; Blue Peter up, short stay a-peak, eh? Man the capstan, coachee, and make sail before t'other chap; come, bear a hand."

Up jumped one to the box, having thrown his bundle on board, while two others clambered up behind.

"Bill," said the man on the box, "put Jim down in the cabin; he's fresh this morning, and better not come aloft, because if the craft rolls, he'll be overboard."

But this was not listened to, and up got the others in front. All this took place within a few minutes, when those who desired to be passengers were heard to say,

"But there's plenty of room for us; are there no more? Porter, put up our luggage."

"Now, Sarah, jump in," added one of the gentlemen, as he opened the coach door.

"Avast, there," said one of the sailors, with a good natured voice; "the berths are all taken."

"What insolence!", exclaimed the angry man; "what right have you to keep people out where the places are not filled! Get in, Sarah."

"Avast there!" was again shouted from the top, and down came all the Jacks with a leap, and stood at the coach door.

An appeal, with gestures and fury, was made both by the male and female disappointed passengers, to the office keeper, coachman, and guard.

"But the places are all taken and paid for, gentlemen; we can do nothing; you must apply to the sailors themselves."

"Not we, indeed; we insist on their giving up the vacant seat—ill behaved, drunken fellows!"

"Why, Jack," said one to the other coolly, "here's a squall; mind your helm, my lad."

Here the clerk interposed.

"But, my men, it is hard that you should keep all the coach to yourselves, when these gentlemen are so anxious to go, and they will pay your passage money back; and they will want only five places."

"Only five places! there's a land lubber for you, Tom," said one to the other, "as if they five would not bring her down by the stern and spoil her trim! 'Sir,' he added to one of the angry men, 'do you see, we've a match with the Impetueuse, and if we take in more ballast they'll beat us.'"

The horn of the other coach blew.

"Up, aloft, make sail," cried one of them; and they were springing up, when one of the fine gentlemen took one of the five fellows by the collar and held him down. The tar shook him off with great indignity, and drawing himself up, said to the crowd and the clerk,

"Sir, do you see, we took this coach for a sail to London with the Imperueuse, and we wished to have her in the right trim; howsom-ever, if these fine folks had spoken to us civilly, and said, 'My men, we know the craft is yours, but won't you give us a passage?' we should have given them a birth, and a pike apiece, and taken our chance with our comrade yonder."

But to be boarded in this fashion by a parcel of privateers, I'm blowed if I stand it!" and then turning to his comrades, he added, "Messmates all's free here, and no favor: there's no pennant up, so I say let's fight it out. These land lubbers must not weather us; nobody shall go but Jim Travers and Bill Roberts. They shall have charge; let them stay aloft, and we'll send our bundles in the cabin, and then she'll be lightened a good deal, and be able to spare them top-gallant sails."

Accordingly the two men staid on the top; the others put their bundles and sticks inside, just then the other coach trotted fast by; the spokesman gave the coachman and guard a shilling apiece for each bundle and stick, as for themselves, and away went the otherwise empty coach, with the cheers of the men and their companions, the ill-suppressed anger of their outwitted and foiled opponents, and the shouts of laughter of at least a hundred people, who lingered at the coach office to see what was going on.

In the meantime, a similar, yet very different scene had occurred at the other hotel, the Fountain, round the rival coach, called, for the occasion, the Imperueuse.

A clergyman, with his wife and two daughters, had gone with their luggage to take their places for London, where they had been hurriedly called to see a dying son, in some government office. But all the places were taken, and nothing could be done for them. All taken?—and would none give up their places, for at least the father and the mother?

"We don't know; five sailors of the Impetueuse have taken them all the way to London."

They were at the moment seen approaching, rolling along, and alive for any mad frolic.—The poor lady burst into tears, and her husband tried to console her.

"We can take a post chaise, my dear, and post to London; I will see," and then added, "but alas! I fear I cannot afford it; no, we must give this up."

Come, hoist jib, my fine fellows, and fire a gun and make sail," said the foremost of the tars, as he sprang upon the top of the coach, and then down he came again and said, "No, I'll go in the cabin, it's more ship shape, and we shall steady the craft more," and he opened the coach door, and sprang in with his bundle, upon which the other four followed, and they all got inside with their sticks, pipes, &c.—one of them thrust out his head and hallooed:

"On deck, there, see that you keep a sharp look out, and tell us when those rascals are in sight," meaning their friends on the other coach.

At this moment, the poor clergyman, with his family by his side, said to the office keeper:

"Won't these fine fellows allow us to take the outside places, if we pay for them?"—and turning to them said,

"My men, we hear that you have taken all this coach, but if you would be kind enough to allow us to share it with you—"

"Why, sir, you see," said a noble looking tar putting his head out of the window, "we have hired the craft on a sailing match to London, with these Amazons, and if there are too many on deck, may be she'll roll when before the wind, and they'll beat us."

"Well," said the poor clergyman, with great courtesy, "I really should not think of intruding on your pleasure, but that we are in distress. We have heard of the, we fear, fatal sickness of my only boy, and we are hastening to see him before he dies."

Here his voice faltered, and his dignified wife and the poor, timid young girls by his side, burst into tears. The coach was moving off, and the horn blew—

"Avast there, shorten sail, let go the anchor again," said one of them; "I can't stand that blabbering; it has made me feel I don't know how."

"What's the matter?" said the guard.

"What's that to you, you lubber? Why, there are signals of distress here," and open flew the coach door and two of them jumped out, and the tall one, taking off his low hat, with his pipe in it, stood before the clergyman and said—

"The craft is at your service, sir, and these poor things here, shaking in the wind. Isn't she, Jack—Tom? Eh! my lads! Come, clear the cabin, it's a cold day; come out, Bill, and give your birth to the ladies; who are you to be there, when your betters ain't served?"

The clergyman was beginning to thank them and say they could all go outside. "On deck—not they—what, this cold and squally day? No, the cabin was the place for those who were not brought up before the mast."

And with inimitable, though rough grace, and with their hats off and queues sticking out behind, they handed in the wife, the two girls and then the clergyman, in spite of his remonstrances to the contrary. The young women, overcome with the change, cried rather hysterically, when one sailor turning to another said, "Jack, these poor things are low, and so am I—quite squeamish and odd, as though a puff would capsize me; let's have some grog, and give the ladies some."

In a moment they had got their glasses, and presented them with great importunity at the coach door. In the meantime, the luggage was put up, and no small quantity, for there were three ladies, and the coachman being in a hurry, up they all sprang, and stuck one of their sticks with a large blue handkerchief, on the top of one of the boxes.

The clergyman called the office keeper to pay their fare, and so to refund the sailors.—They heard this, and one said, "What's that boat doing alongside? that lubber is wanting more money from the cabin passengers. But, on understanding the nature of the parley, they said, "No, hold your tongue, you scribbler; no

one ever pays in king's ships; the poor things shall have a free passage, and so all mess with us besides; it shan't be said that the Imperueuse ever saw signals of distress, and did not bear down to lend a hand. Cheer up, sir, money'll help the lad to London, and you'll have to pay a bill as long as a boat-hook, depend upon it; those doctor's are great thieves. If there is any trouble below, halloo out and we shall hear on deck; keep the poor things that are crying, warm. And now blow your music my lad their abaft, and clap all sail on her," and off went the coach, amid the shouts of some and the whimpers of others.

"Fine fellows, those tars," said some.

"Poor fellows, what fools they are not to take the gentleman's money," were the muttered, half-ashamed words of others.

With an occasional glimpse of one another as the almost empty coach reached the crest of a hill, and the other heavy laden one dipped into a valley far behind, and which, for a moment, awakened a feeble cheer from the little craft, as they called the other, the coaches hastened on in the order that might have been expected, and never stopped without an offering of hot grog being made to the cabin passengers. About sunset, they took in their top-gallant sails and royals in the crowded streets of London, and at last let go their anchors, one in the court-yard of the Belle Sauvage in Ludgate Hill, and the other one at the Saracen's Head.

The two men who had alone taken their passage, as they said, in the first, sprang down and hurried round the point, and then came round, head to the wind, and let go her anchor in the aforesaid well-known court-yard.

Cheers from the victors were answered by jovial counter cheers from the beaten, and down the last all sprang, clean off the top to the ground, and gathered round the coach to lift the cabin passengers out, pushing aside first the porter and then the waiter, making as they said clear decks: and then opening the coach door with inimitable but most unpolished courtesy; with their round hats off one side, and huge quids in their mouths; they handed out the clergyman, and his wife and daughters, and hoped they had not been tossed about by the rolling and pitching of that ere heavy merchantman! She was no man-of-war at all—they could not get nine knots an hour out of her; the other might have spared her royals and studding sails, and they were fairly beat. But as for that it was all one, the dibs would have gone in some way, if not in that, and they hoped the parson and the young ladies would find all well after all. During all this, the other two sailors looked on with droll surprise, and then broke out with vociferous questions, and some technical sarcasms, when the spokesman of the vanquished party said, "Why, do you see, Jim, and you Amazons, just as we were off, light and well trimmed, his honor there with a grey head and kind face, and parson's rigging, and his convoy, that ere mother and two pretty young uns, that have never seen a gale or a banyan day, asked for a passage because their boy was sick and dying up in London here, and they could not get to him if we did not consent. And when we said 'no,' for we were going to try the rate of sailing with you, the old man (I beg your honor's pardon) held down his head and the galls blubbered out, and so Jim we hauled down our colors and struck outright, and gave them a passage, lumber and all, and a good cargo it is; and so, you see we were down in the watersome inches more by this, and it was no use, we could not come up with you. And here's the money, hold out your fists, you've—"

Jim, with an appalled look and tone, exclaimed, "Money! sheer off; don't come alongside me my hearty; if that's the cause on't I won't touch a single copper, nor Bill either, I know, there's nothing even or above board in it; we threw so much cargo overboard and lightened the craft and left Jack and the rest, because of those landsharks. And if you hove to and took those poor things in tow, why then it was not fair sailing, and we'll share alike for this ere cruise, won't we Bill?"

Bill's reply was stopt by the clergyman, who after having listened with an interest that apparently absorbed him, and touched him and