## SKETCHES BY BOZ.

THE STEAM EXCURSION.

Mr. Percy Noakes was a law-student, inhabiting a set of chambers on the fourth floor, in one of those houses in Gray's-innsquare, which command an extensive view of the gardens, and their usual adjunctsflaunting nursery-maids, and town-made children, with parenthetical legs. Mr. Percy Noakes was what is generally termed "a devilish good fellow." He had a large circle of acquaintance, and seldom dined at his own expense. He used to talks politics to papas, flatter the vanity of mammas, do the amiable to their daughters, make pleasure engagements with their sons, and romp with gons of perfection, advertising footmen out and we shall be able to dance quadrilles of place, he was always "willing to make himself generally useful." If any old lady, whose son was in India, gave a ball, Mr. the whole, I really hope we shall have a Percy Noakes was master of the ceremonies; glorious day, you know." selves useful and agreeable-and-upon if any young lady made a stolen match, Mr Percy Noakes gavs her away; if a juvenile wife presented her husband with a blooming cherub, Mr. Percy Noakes was either godfather, or deputy godfother; and, if any member of a friend's family died, Mr. Percy Noakes was invariably to be seen in the second mourning coach, with a white handkerchief to his eyes, sobbing, to use his own appropriate and expressive description-" like winkin!"

It may readily be imagined that these numerous avocations were rather calculated to interfere with Mr. Percy Noakes' professional studies. Mr. Percy Noakes was perfectly aware of the fact, and he had there fore, upon mature reflection, made up his mind not to study at all-a laudable determination, to which he adhered in the most praiseworthy manner. His sitting-room presented a strange chaos of dress-gloves, boxing-gloves, caricatures, albums, invitation cards, foils, cricket-bats, card-board drawings, paste, gum, and fifty other extraordidinary articles, heaped together in the strangest confusion. He was always making something for somebody, or planning some party of pleasure, which was his great forte. He invariably spoke with astonish ing rapidity; was smart, spoffish, and eight

and-twenty.
"Splendid idea, 'pon my life"-soliloquized Mr. Percy Nonkes, over his morning's coffee, as his mind reverted to a suggestion that had been thrown out the pre vious night, by a lady at whose house he had spent the evening. Glorious idea!— Mrs. Stubbs," cried the student, raising his

voice.
"Yes, sir," replied a dirty old woman, with an inflamed countenance, emerging from the bedroom, with a barrel of dirt and cinders. This was the laundress. "Did you call, sir?"

"Oh! Mrs. Stubbs, I'm going out; if that tailor should call again you'd better say—you'd better say, I'm out of town, and shan't be back for a fortnight; and, if that heating should going tall him I'm leat blat heating about again. bootman should come, tell him I've lost his address, or I'd have sent him that little amount; mind he writes it down; and if Mr. Hardy should call-you know Mr.

"The funny gentleman, sir?" Ah! the funny gentleman. If Mr. Hardy should call, say I've gone to Mrs. Taunton's about that water-party."

"And if any fellow calls, and says he's come about a steamer, tell him to be here at five o'clock this afternoon, Mrs. Stubbs."

"Very well, sir." Mr. Percy Noakes brushed his hat whisked the crumbs off his inexplicables with a silk handkerchief, gave the ends of his hair a persuasive roll round the forefinger, and sallied forth for Mrs. Taunton's domicile in Great Marlborough-street, where she and her daughters occupied the upper part of a house. She was a good looking widow of fifty, with the form of a giantes and the mind of a child. The pursuit of pleasure, and some means of killing time, appeared the sole end of her existence. She doted on her two daughters who were as frivolous as herself.

A general exclamation of satisfaction hailed the arrival of Mr. Percy Noakes, who went through the ordinary salutations, and gularly established friend of the family. Mrs. Taunton was busily engaged in planting immense bright bows on every part of a one; Miss Emily Taunton was making a watch-guard; and Miss Sophia was at the est, was under definite articles to his bropiano, practising a new song-poetry by the ther. They resided in Portland-street, young officer, or the police officer, or the Oxford-street, and moved in the same custom-house officer, or some equally interesting amateur.

"You good creature!" said Mrs. Taunton, addressing the gallant Percy. "You them with smarter. If Mrs. Taunton apreally are a good soul! You've come about peared in a cap of all the hues of the rainthe water-party, I know."

"I should rather suspect I had," replied Mr. Noakes, triumphantly. "Now come here, girls, and I'll tell you all about it." Miss Emily and Miss Sophia advanced to the table, with that ballet sort of step which some young ladies seem to think so fascinating-somewhat between a skip and a canter.

" Now," continued Mr. Percy Noakes, "it seems to me that the best way will be to have a committee of ten, to make all the arrangements, and manage the whole set out. Well, then I propose that the expenses shall

be paid by these ten fellows jointly."
"Excellent, indeed!' said Mrs. Taunton, who highly approved of this part of the ar-

Then my plan is, that each of these ten fellows shall have the power of asking five people. There must be a meeting of the arrangements, and these people shall be then hamed; every member of the committee passible; and, above all, to blackball the report by mover of black-balling any shall have the power of black-balling any one who is proposed, and one black ball shall having a pleasant party you know."

Mrs. Taunton again.
"Charming!" said the lovely Emily.
"I never did see the like!" ejaculated

"Yes, I think it'll do," replied Mr. Percy Noakes, who was now quite in his element, "I think it'll do. Well, then, you know we shall go down to the Nore and back, and have a regular capital cold dinner laid out in the cabin before we start, so that everything may be ready without any confusion; and we shall have the lunch laid out on deck in those tea-garden-looking concerns by the paddle-boxes-I don't know what you call 'em. Then we shall hire a steamer expressly for our party, and a band, you know, and have the deck chalk-

The announcement of these arrangements was received with the utmost enthusiasm. Mrs. Taunton, Emily, and Sophia,

musical, you know, why they'll make them-

were loud in their praises. "Well, but tell me, Percy," said Mrs. Taunton, "who, are the ten gentlemen to

"Oh! I know plenty of fellows who ll be delighted with the scheme," replied Percy Noakes;" of course we shall have

"Mr. Hardy," interrupted the servant, announcing a visiter. Miss Sophia and Miss Emily hastily assumed the most interesting attitudes that could be adopted on so short a notice.

"How are you?" said a stout gentleman of about forty, pausing at the door in the attitude of an awkward harlequin. This was Mr. Hardy, whom we have before described, on the authority of Mrs. Stubbs, as "the funny gentleman." He was an Astley-Cooperish Joe Miller—a practical joker, immensely popular with married ladies, and a general favourite with young men. He was always engaged in some pleasure excursion or other, and delighted in getting somebody into a scrape on such occasions. He could sing comic songs, imitate hackney-coachmen and fowls, play airs upon his chin, and execute concertos on the Jew's-harp. He always eat and drank most immoderately, and was the bosom friend of Mr. Percy Noakes. He had a red face, a somewhat husky voice,

and a tremendously loud laugh. "How are you?" said this worthy. laughing, as if it were the finest jole in the world to make a morning call, and shaking hands with the ladies with as much vehemence as if their arms were so many pump-

"You're just the very man I wanted,"

hearing the statement, and receiving a detailed account of the proposed excursion. 'Oh, capital! glorious! What a day it will be! what fun!—But, I say, when are you going to begin making the arrange-

"No time like the present—at once if you please.''

"Oh, charming!" cried the ladies. Pray, do.

Writing materials were laid before Mr. Percy Noakes, and the names of the different members of the committee were agreed on, after as much discussion between him and Mr. Hardy as if at least the fate of nations had depended on their appointment. It was then agreed that a meeting should take place at Mr. Percy Noakes' chambers on the ensuing Wednesday evening, at eight o'clock, and the visitors departed.

Wednesday evening arrived; eight o'clock

came, and eight members of the committee were punctual in their attendance. Mr. Loggins, the solicitor, of Boswell-court, sent an excuse, and Mr. Samuel Biggs, the ditto of Furnival's Inn, sent his brother, much to his (the brother's satisfaction, and greatly to the discomfiture of Mr. Percy Noakes. Between the Briggses and the Tauntons there existed a degree of implathrew himself into an easy chair, near the ladies' work table, with all the ease of a repulets was nothing to that which prevailed between these two illustrious houses. Mrs. Briggs was a widow, with three daughters smart cap on which it was possible to stick and two sons; Mr. Samuel the eldest. was an attorney, and Mr. Alexander, the youngorbit as the Tauntons-hence their mutal dislike. If the Miss Biggses appeared in smart bonnets, the Miss Taunton's eclipsed them with smarter. If Mrs. Taunton apbow, Mrs. Biggs forthwith mounted a toque, with all the patterns of a kaleidescope. If Miss Sophia Taunton learnt a new song, two of the Miss Biggses came out with a duet. The Tauntons had once gained a temporary trinmph with the assistance of a harp, but the Briggses brought three guitars into the field, and effectually

routed the enemy. Now, as Mr. Samuel Briggs was a mere machine, a sort of self acting legal walkingstick; and as the party was known to have originated, however remotely, with Mrs. Taunton, the female branches of the Briggs family had arranged that Mr. Alexander should attend instead of his brother; and as the said Mr. Alexander was deservedly celebrated for possessing all the pertinacity of a bankruptcy-court attorney, combined with the obstinacy of that pleasing animal which browses upon the thistle-he recommittee at my chambers, to make all the quired but little tuition. He was especially arrangements, and these people shall be then enjoined to make himself as disagreeable as

The procedings of the evening were exclude that person. This will ensure bur opened by Mr. Percy Noakes. After suc-

", What a manager you are!" interrupted sent the propriety of their mixing some brandy-and-water, he briefly stated the objects of the meeting, and concluded by observing that the first step must be the selection of a chairman, necessarily possesing some arbitrary-he trusted not unconstitutional-powers, to whom the personal direction of the whole of the arrangements (subject to the approval of the committee) should be confided. A pale young gen-tleman, in a green stock, and spectacles of the same, a member of the honourable society of the Inner Temple, immediately rose for the purpose of proposing Mr. Percy Noakes. He had known him long, and this he would say, that a more honourable, a more excellent, or better hearted fellow never existed-(hear, hear.) The young gentleman, who was a member of a debating society, took this opportunity of entering into an examination of the state of the English law, from the days of William the Conqueror down to the present period; he briefly adverted to the code established by the ancient Droids; slightly glanced at the principles laid down by the Athenian lawgivers; and concluded with a most glowing eulogium on pic-nics and constitutional

> Mr. Alexander Briggs opposed the motion. He had the highest esteem for Mr. Percy Noaks as an individual, but he did consider that he ought not to be intrusted with these immense powers-(oh, oh!)-He believed that in the proposed capacity, Mr. Percy Noakes would not act fairly, impartially, or honourably; but he begged it to be distinctly understood, that he said this without the slightest personal disrespect. Mr. Hardy defended this honourable friend, in a voice rendered partially unintelligibly by emotion and brand-and-water; the proposition was put to the vote, and there appearing to be only one dissentient voice, Mr. Percy Noakes was declared duly elected, and took the chair accordingly.

The business of the meeting now proceed with great rapidity. The chairman delivered in his estimate of the probable expense of the excursion, and every one present subscribed his proportion thereof. The question was put that "The Endeabe hired for the occasion; Mr. vonr" Alexander Briggs moved as an amendment, that the word "Fly" be substituted for the word "Endeavour;" but after some debate consented to withdraw his opposition. Tne important ceremony of balloting then commenced. A tea-caddy was placed on a table in a dark corner of the apartment, and every one was provided with two backgammon men, one black and one white.

The chairman with great solemnity then read the following list of the guests to whom he proposed to introduce :-- Mrs. Taunton and two daughters, Mr. Wizzle, Mr. Simpson. The names were respectively halloted for, and Mrs. Taunton and daughters were declared to be black-balled. Mr. Percy Noakes and Mr. Hardy exchanged glances.

" Is your list prepared, Mr. Briggs?" inquired the chairman, with all the dignity of minor Manners Sutton.

"It is," replied Alexander, delivering in the following:—" Mrs. Briggs and three daughters were declared to be black-balled. Mr. Alexander Briggs looked rather foolish, and the remainder of the company appeared somewhat overawed by the mysterious nature of the proceedings.

The balloting proceede circumstance which Mr. Percy Noakes had not originally foreseen, prevented the system working quite as well as he had anticipated—everybody was black-balled. Mr. Alexandes Briggs by way of retaliation exercised his power of exclusion in every instance, and the result was, that after three hours had been consumed in incessant balloting, the names of only three gentlemen were found to have been agreed to. In this dilemma what was to be done? either the whole plan must fall to the ground, or a compromise must be effected. The latter alternative was preferable: and Mr. Percy Noakes therefore proposed that the form of balloting should be dispensed with, and that every gentleman should merely be required to state whom he intended to bring. The proposal was readily acceded to; the Tauntons and the Briggses were reinstated, and

the party was formed. The next Wednesday was fixed for the eventful day, and it was unanimously resolve that every member of the committee should wear a piece of sarsenet ribbon round his left arm. It appeared from the state-ment of Mr. Percy Noakes that the boat belonged to the General Steam Navigation Company, and was then lying off the Cus. tom-house; and has he proposed that the dinner and wines should be provided by an eminent city purveyor, it was arranged that Mr. Percy Noakes should be on board by seven o'clock to superintend the arrangements, and that the remaining members of the committee, together with the company generally, should be expected to join her by nine o'clock. More brandy-and-water was despatched: several speeches were made by the different law students present; thanks were voted to the chairman, and the meeting separated.

The weather had been beautiful up to this period, and beautiful it continued to be. Sunday passed over, and Mr. Percy Noakes became unusually fidgety-rushing congreat emolument of the Holborn cab-men. fuesday arrived, and the anxiety of Mr. Percy Noakes knew no bounds: he was every instant running to the window to look out for clouds; and Mr. Hardy astonished the whole square by practicsing a new comic

Noakes that night; he tossed and tumbled | board, and so did the wine. about, and had confused dreams of steamers starting off, and gigantic clocks with the embarked in a body. There was Mr. Hardy hands pointing to a quarter past nine, and in a blue jacket and waistcoat, white trouthe ugly face of Mr. Alexander Briggs look- sers, silk stockings, and pumps; habited, sessfully urging upon the gentlemen pre- ing over the boat's side, and grinning as if in full aquatic costume, with a straw hat two small mottled legs was discernible. He

cheerfully into the bedroom, and Mr. Percy Noakes started up for his watch, in the expectation of finding his worst dreams re-

It was just five o'clock; he calculated the

time—he should be a good half-hour dressing himself; and as it was a lovely morning and the tide would be then running down, he would walk leisurely to Strand-line, and have a boat to the Custom-house. He dressed himself, took a hasty apology for a breakfast, and sallied forth. The streets looked as lonely and deserted as if they had been crowded overnight for the last time, Here and there an early apprentice, with quenched-looking, sleepy eyes, was taking down the shutters of the shop; and a police-man or milk-woman might occasionally be seen pacing slowly along; the servants had not yet began to clean the doors, or light the fires, and London looked the picture of desolation. At the corner of a bye-street, near Temple-bar was stationed a "street breakfast." The coffee was boil-ing over a charcoal fire, and large slices of bread-and butter were piled one upon the other, like deals in a timber-yard. The company were seated on a form, which with view both to security and comfort, was placed against a neighbouring wall. Two young men, whose uproarious mirth and disordered dress bespoke the conviviality of the preceding evening, were treating three ladies" and an Irish laborer. A little sweep was standing at a short distance, casting a longing eye at the tempting delicasies; A policeman was watching the group from the opposite side of the street. The wan looks, and gaudy finery of the wretched, thinly-clad females, contrasted as strangely with the gay sun-light, as did their forced merriment with the boisterous hilarity of the two young men, who now and then varied their amusements by "bonneting" the proprietor of this itinerant cof-

fee-house. Mr. Percy Noakes walked briskly by, and when he turned down Strand-lane, and caught a glimpse of the glistening water, he thought he had never felt so important or so happy in his life.

"Boat, sir!" cried one of the three watermen who were mopping out their boats, " Boat and all whistling different tunes.

"No," replied Mr. Percy Noakes, rather sition." sharply, for the enquiry was not made in a manner at all suitable to his dignity. "Would you prefer a vessel, sir?" in

quired another, to the infinate delight of the 'Jack-in-the-water.' Mr. Percy Noakes replied with a look o

the most supreme contempt,
"Did you want to be put on board a steam er, sir?" inquired an old fireman-waterman, very confidentially. He was dressed in a faded red suit, just the color of the cover of

a very old Court-guide,
"Yes, make haste—the Endeavour—off

the Custom-house." "Endeavour!" cried the man who had convulsed the 'Jack' before. "Vy, I see of his importance. the Endeavour go up half an hour ago."

" So did I," said another; "and I should gen'l'men."

Mr. Percy Noakes affected to disregard these representations, and stepped into the boat, which the old man, by dint of scrambling, and shoving and grating, had brought up to the causeway. "Shove her off," cried Mr. Percy Noakes, and away the boat glided down the river, Mr. Percy Noakes seated on the recently-mopped seat and the waterman at the stairs offering to bet him any reasonable sum that he'd never reach the "Custom-us."

"Here she is, by Jove!" said the delighted Percy, as they ran alongside the Endeavour.

"Hold hard!" cried the steward over the side, and Mr. Percy Noakes jumped

"Hope you'll find everything as you wished it, sir. She looks uncommon well this morning."

"She does, indeed," replied the manager, in a state of ecstacy which it is impossible to describe. The deck was scrubbed, and the seats were scrubbed, and there was a bench for the band, and a place for dancing, and a pile of camp stools, and an awning; and then Mr. Percy Noakes bustled down below, and there were the pastry-cook's men, and the steward's wife laying out the dinner on two tables the whole length of the cabin; and then Mr Percy Noakes took off his coat, and rushed backwards and forwards, doing nothing, but quite convinced he was assisting everybody; and the steward's wife laughed till she cried, Mr. Percy Nonkes panted with the violence of his exertions. And then the bell at London-bridge wharf rang, and | tease the children during the whole of the a Margate boat was just starting, and people shouted, and porters ran down the steps with luggage that would crush any men but porters; and sloping boards, with bits of wood nailed on them, were placed between the outside boat and the inside boat, and the passengers ran along them, and looked like so many fowls coming out of an area; and then the bell ceased, and attended with any great loss of human stantly to and from the Steam packet wharf | the whole scene was one of the most deto the astonishment of the clerks, and the lightful bustle and confusion that can be imagined.

The time wore on; half-past eight o'clock arrived; the pastrycook's men went on shore; the dinner was completely laid out and Mr. Percy Noakes locked the principal cabin, and put the key into his pocket, in song for the occasion in the chairman's order that it might be suddenly disclosed in all its magnificence to the eyes of the as-Uneasy were the slumbers of Mr. Percy tonished company. The band came on

Ten minutes to nine, and the committee

in derision of his fruitless attempts to move. on his head, and an immense telescope He made a violent effort to get on board, and a demp, piece of and awoke. The bright sun was shining gentleman with the green spectacles, in cheerfully into the bedroom, and Mr. Percy nankeen inexplicables with a ditto waist-slightly embossed his dear little countercoat and bright buttons, like the pictures of Paul—not the saint, but he of Virginia

ton party were pink; those of the Briggses, a light blue. The Tauntons had artificial flowers in their bonnets; here the Briggses gained a decided advantage-they wore feathers

"How d'ye do, dear?" said the Misses Briggs to the Misses Tauntons. (The word 'dear" among girls is frequently synonymous with " wretch."

"Quite well, thank you, dear," replied the Misses Taunton to the Misses Briggsand then there was such a kissing, congratulating, and shaking of hands, as would induce one to suppose the two families were the best friends in the world, instead of wishing the other overboard, as they assuredly did.

Mr. Percy Noakes received the visitors, and bowed to the strange gentleman, as if he should like to know who he was. This was just what Mrs. Taunton wanted. Here was an opportunity to astonish the Briggses.

"Oh! I beg your pardon," said the general of the Taunton party, with a careless air-" Captain Helves-Mr. Percy Noakes—Mrs. Briggs—Captain Helves."

Mr. Percy Noakes bowed very low; the gallant captain did the same with all due ferocity, and the Briggses were clearly over-"Our friend, Mr. Wizzle, being un-

fortunately prevented from coming, sumed Mrs. Taunton. "I did myself the pleasure of bringing the captain, whose musical talents I knew would be a great acqui-"In the name of the committee I have to

thank you for doing so, and to offer you a most sincere welcome, sir," replied Percy (here the scraping was renewed.) "But pray be seated-won't you walk aft? Captain, will you conduct Miss Taunton?—Miss Briggs, will you allow me?"

"Where could she have picked up that military man?" inquired Mrs. Briggs of Miss Kate Briggs, as they followed the lit-

tle party.
" Can't imagine," replied Kate, bursting with vexation; for the very fierce air with which the gallant captain regarded the company, had impressed her with a high sense

Boat after boat came alongside, and guest after guest arrived. The invites had been think she'd gone down by this time, for excellently arranged, Mr. Percy Noakes she's a precious sight too full of ladies and having considered it as important that the number of young men should exactly tally with that of the young ladies, as that the quantity of the knives on board should be in precise proportion to the

orks.

"Now is every one on board?" inquired for Percy Noakes. The committee (who ish their his of blue ribbon looked as if Mr. Percy Noakes. The committee (who with their bits of blue ribbon looked as if they were all going to be bled) bustled about to ascertain the fact, and reported that they might with safety start.

"Go on," cried the master of the boat from the top of one of the paddle-boxes.

"Go on," echoed the boy, who was staioned over the hatchway to pass the direcions down to the engineer—and away went the vessel with that agreeable noise which is peculiar to steamers, and which is composed of a pleasant mixture of cracking, gushing, clanging, and snorting.

"Hoi-oi-oi-oi-oi-oi-oi-o-ii," shouted half-a-dozen voices from a

boat about a quarter of a mile astern.

"Ease her," cried the captain; do these people belong to us, sir?"
"Noakes," exclaimed Hardy, who had

heen looking at every object, far and near, through a large telescope; "it's the Fleet-woods and the Wakefields--and two children with them by Jove!"

"What a shame to bring children!" said everybody, "how very inconsiderate!" "I say it would be a good joke to pretend not to see 'em, wouldn't it ?" suggested Hardy, to the immense delight of the company generally. A council of war was hastily held, and it was resolved that the new comers should be taken on hoard, on Mr. Hardy's solemnly pledging himself to

"Stop her!" cried the captain.

"Stop her!" repeated the boy; whiz went the steam, and all the young ladies, as in duty bound, screamed in concert. They were only appeased by the assurance of the martial Helves that the escape of steam consequent on stopping a vessel was seldom

Two men ran to the side, and after a good deal of shouting and swearing, and angling for the wherry with a boat-hook, Mr. Fleetwood, and Mrs. Fleetwood, and Master Fleetwood; and Mr. Wakefield, and Mrs. Wakefield, and Miss Wakefield were safely deposited on deck. The girl about six years old; the boy about four; the former was dressed in a white frock with a pink sash, and a dog's-eared looking little spencer, a straw bonnet, and green veil, six inches by three and a half: the latter was attired for the occasion in a nankeen frock, between the bottom of which and the top of his plaid socks a considerable portion of

had a light blue cap with a gold band and nance.

nankeen inexplicables with a ditto waistcoat and bright buttons, like the pictures
of Paul—not the saint, but he of Virginia
notoriety. The remainder of the committee dressed in white hats, light jockets,
waistcoats and trousers, looked between
waiters and West India Planters.

Nine o'clock struck, and the company
had arrived in shoals. Mr. Samuel Briggs,
Mrs. Briggs, and the Misses Briggs made
their appearance in a smart private wherry.
The three guitars, in their respective dark
green cases, were carefully stowed away in
the bottom of the boat, accompanied by two
immense port-folios of music, which it would
take at least a week's incessant playing to
get through. The Tauntons arrived at the
same moment with more music, and a lion—
a gentleman with a bass voice, and incipient
red moustaches. The colours of the Taunton party were pink; those of the Briggses,
Mrs. Taunton was in eestacies. The victory

The boat once more started off; the band
played. "Off she goes," the major part of the
company conversed cheerfully in groups, and the
old gentlemen walked up and down the deek in
pairs, as perseveringly and gravely as if they were
doing a match against time for an immense stake.
They ran briskly down the Pool. The gentlemen pointed out the Docks, the Thames Polite
Office, and the other elegant public edifices; and
the young ladies exhibited a proper display of
horror and bashfulness at the appearance of the
company conversed cheerfully in groups, and the
company conversed cheer fully
in groups, and the
company conversed cheerfully in Helves danced one set with Miss Emily Taunton, and another set with Miss Sophia Taunton. Mrs. Taunton was in ecstacies. The victory appeared to be complete; but alas! the inconstancy of man—having performed this necessary duty; he attached himself solely to Miss Julia Briggs, with whom he danced no less than three sets consecutively, and from whose side he evinced no intention of stirring for the remainder of the day.

evinced no intention of stirring for the remain-der of the day.

Mr. Hardy having played one or two very brilliant fantasies on the Jews' harp, and having frequently repeated the exquisitely amusing joke of slily chalking a large cross on the back of some member of the Committee, Mr. Perey Noakes expressed his hope that some of their musical friends would oblige the company by a display of their abilities.

display of their abilities.

"Perhaps," he said in a very insinuating man-"Perhaps," he said in a very insinuating manner, "Captain Helves will oblige us." Mrantain only sang duets, and couldn't sing them with anybody but one of her daughters.

"Really," said that warlike individual, "I should be very happy, but——"

"Oh! pray do, cried all the young ladies.

"Miss Sophia, have you any objection to join in a duet?"

in a duet?"

in a duet?"

"Oh! not the slightest," returned the young lady, in a tone which clearly shewed she had the greatess possible objection.

"Shall I accompany you, dear?" inquired one of the Miss Briggses, with the bland intention of

spoiling the effect.
"Very much obliged to you Miss Briggs,"

sharply retorted Mrs. Taunton, who saw through the manœuvre, "my daughters always sing with-out accompaniments." " And without voices," tittered Mrs. Briggs,

in a low tone.

in a low tone.

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Taunton, reddening, for she guessed the tenor of the observation, though she had not heard it clearly—"Perhaps it would be as well for some people if their voices were not quite so audible as they are to other people."

"And perhaps, if gentlemen, who are kidnapped to pay attention to some persons' daughters, had not sufficient discernment to pay attention to other person's daughters," returned Mrs. Briggs "some persons would not be so ready to display that ill-temper which, thank God, distinguishes them from other persons." them from other persons."

" Persons!" ejaculated Mrs. Taunton. Yes; persons, ma'am," replied Mrs. Briggs. "Insolence!"
"Creature!"

"Hush! hush!" interrupted Mr. Percy Noakes who was one of the very few by whom this dialogue had been overheard. "Hush!—pray silence for the duet."

lence for the duet."

After a great deal of preparatory crowing and humming, the Captain began the following duet from the opera of Paul and Virginia, in that grunting tone in which a man gets down, Heaven knows where, without the remotest chance of ever getting up again. This in private circles, is frequently disignated "a bass voice."

" See (sung the captain) from o—ce—an ri—sing Bright flames the or—b of d—ay. From you gro—ve, the varied so—ngs——"

Here the singer was interrupted by varied cries of the most dreadful description, proceeding some groove in the immediate vicinity of the star-board paddle box.

tlemen, here rushed to the quarter from whence the noise proceeded, and an exclamation of hor-ror burst from the company; the general impres-sion being, that the little innocent had either got his head in the water, or his legs in the ma-

chinery.

"What is the matter?" shouted the agonized father; as he returned with the child in his arms. "Oh! oh! oh!" screamed the small figure

again.
"What is the matter, dear?" inquired the father once more—hastily stripping off the nankeen frock, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the child had one bone which was not ther the child had one bone which was not smashed to pieces.

"Oh! oh!—I am so frightened."

"What at, my dear?"—what at?" said the mother, soothing the sweet infant.

"Oh! he's been making such dreadful faces at me," cried the boy, relapsing into convulsions at the bare recollection.

"He!-who?" cried every body, crowding

round him.
"Oh!—him," replied the child, pointing, at Hardy, who affected to be the most concerned o

That y, who anected to be the most concerned of the whole group.

The real state of the case at once flashed upon the minds of all present, with the exception of the Fleetwoods and the Wakefields. The facetious Hardy, in fulfilment of his promise, had watched the child to a remote part of the vessel, and, by suddenly appearing before him with the most annul contributors. the most awful confortions of visage, had pro-duced his paroxysm of terror. Of course, he now observed that it was hardly necessary for him to deny the accusation; and the unfortu-nate little victim was accordingly led below, after receiving sundry thumps on the head from both his parents, for having the wickedness to tell a story.

This little interruption having been adjusted, the captain resumed, and Miss Emily chimed in in due course. The duet was loudly applauded, and, certainly, the perfect independence of the parties deserved commendation. Miss Emily parties deserved commendation. Miss. Amily sung her part without the slightest reference to the captain, and the captain sang so loud that he had not the slightest idea of what was being done by his partner. After having gone through the last few eighteen or nineteen hars by himself, therefore, he acknowledged the plaudits of the circle with that air of self-denial which men always assume when they think they have done something to astonish the company, though they don't exactly know what.

(To be concluded in our next.)

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