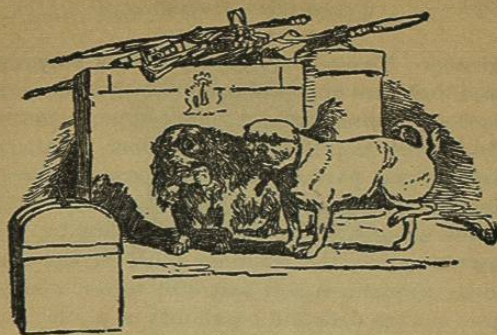


it, sir? I see none. I see no reason any one has to complain. Take my word for it, sir, this talk about public distress is all humbug?"



### THE WIDOW'S RETINUE.

Little dogs and all!—LEAR.

IN giving an account of the arrival of Lady Lillycraft at the Hall, I ought to have mentioned the entertainment which I derived from witnessing the unpacking of her carriage, and the disposing of her retinue. There is something extremely amusing to me in the number of factitious wants, the loads of imaginary conveniences, but real incumbrances, with which the luxurious are apt to burthen themselves. I like to watch the whimsical stir and display about one of these petty pro-



gresses. The number of robustious footmen and retainers of all kinds bustling about, with looks of infinite gravity and importance, to do almost nothing. The number of heavy trunks and parcels, and handboxes, belonging to my lady ; and the solicitude exhibited about some humble, odd-looking box by my lady's maid ; the cushions piled in the carriage to make a soft seat still softer, and to prevent the dreadful possibility of a jolt ; the smelling-bottles, the cordials, the baskets of biscuit and fruit ; the new publications ; all provided to guard against hunger, fatigue, or ennui ; the led horses to vary the mode of travelling ; and all this preparation and parade to move, perhaps, some very good-for-nothing personage about a little space of earth !

I do not mean to apply the latter part of these observations to Lady Lillycraft, for whose simple kindheartedness I have a very great respect, and who is really a most amiable and worthy being. I cannot refrain, however, from mentioning some of the motley retinue she has brought with her ; and which, indeed, bespeak the overflowing kindness of her nature, which requires her to be surrounded with objects on which to lavish it.



In the first place, her ladyship has a pampered coachman, with a red face, and cheeks that hang down like dewlaps. He evidently domineers over her a little with respect to the fat horses ; and only drives out when he thinks proper, and when he thinks it will be good for the "cattle."

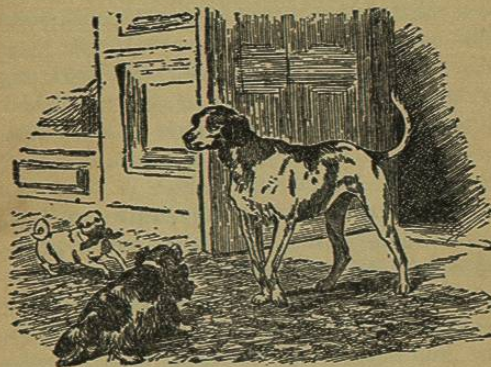
She has a favorite page to attend upon her person ; a handsome boy of about twelve years of age, but a mischievous varlet, very much spoiled, and in a fair way to be good for nothing. He is dressed in green, with a profusion of gold cord and gilt buttons about his clothes. She always has one or two attendants of the kind, who are replaced by others as soon as they grow to fourteen years of age. She has brought two dogs with her also, out of a number of pets which



she maintains at home. One is a fat spaniel, called Zephyr—though heaven defend me from such a zephyr! He is fed out of all shape and comfort; his eyes are nearly strained out of his head; he wheezes with corpulency, and cannot walk without great difficulty. The other is a little, old, gray-muzzled curmudgeon, with an unhappy eye, that kindles like a coal if you only look at him; his nose turns up; his mouth is drawn into wrinkles, so as to show his teeth; in short, he has altogether the look of a dog far gone in misanthropy, and totally sick of the world. When he walks, he has his tail curled up so tight that it seems to lift his feet from the ground; and he seldom makes use of more than three legs at a time, keeping the other drawn up as a reserve. This last wretch is called Beauty.

These dogs are full of elegant ailments unknown to vulgar dogs; and are petted and nursed by Lady Lillycraft with the tenderest kindness. They are pampered and fed with delicacies by their fellow-minion, the page; but their stomachs are often weak and out of order, so that they cannot eat; though I have now and then seen the page give them a mischievous pinch, or thwack over the head,

when his mistress was not by. They have cushions for their express use, on which they lie before the fire, and yet are apt to shiver and moan if there is the least draught of air. When any one enters the room, they make a



most tyrannical barking, that is absolutely deafening. They are insolent to all the other dogs of the establishment. There is a noble staghound, a great favorite of the Squire's, who is a privileged visitor to the parlor; but the moment he makes his appearance, these intruders fly at him with furious rage; and I have admired the sovereign indifference and



contempt with which he seems to look down upon his puny assailants. When her ladyship drives out, these dogs are generally carried with her to take the air ; when they look out of each window of the carriage, and bark at all vulgar pedestrian dogs. These dogs are a continual source of misery to the household : as they are always in the way, they every now and then get their toes trod on, and then there is a yelping on their part, and a loud lamentation on the part of their mistress, that fills the room with clamor and confusion.

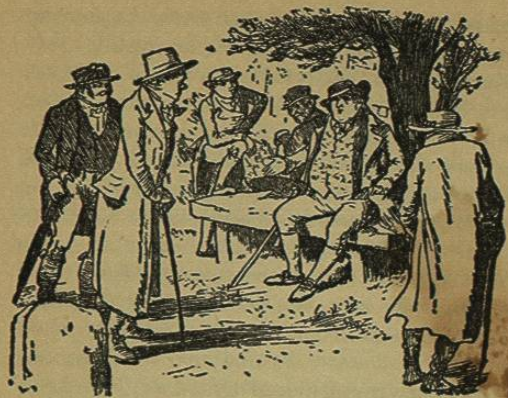
Lastly, there is her ladyship's waiting-gentlewoman, Mrs. Hannah, a prim, pragmatical old maid ; one of the most intolerable and intolerant virgins that ever lived. She has kept her virtue by her until it has turned sour, and now every word and look smacks of verjuice. She is the very opposite to her mistress, for one hates, and the other loves, all mankind. How they first came together I cannot imagine, but they have lived together for many years ; and the abigail's temper being tart and encroaching, and her ladyship's easy and yielding, the former has got the complete upper hand, and tyrannizes over the good lady in secret.

Lady Lillycraft now and then complains of it, in great confidence, to her friends, but hushes up the subject immediately, if Mrs. Hannah makes her appearance. Indeed, she has been so accustomed to be attended by her, that she thinks she could not do without her ; though one great study of her life is to keep Mrs. Hannah in good humor, by little presents and kindnesses.

Master Simon has a most devout abhorrence, mingled with awe, for this ancient spinster. He told me the other day, in a whisper, that she was a cursed brimstone—in fact, he added another epithet, which I would not repeat for the world. I have remarked, however, that he is always extremely civil to her when they meet.







### READY-MONEY JACK.

My purse, it is my privy wyfe,  
This song I dare both syng and say,  
It keepeth men from grievous stryfe,  
When every man for hymself shall pay.  
As I ryde in ryche array  
For gold and sylver men wyll me floryshe ;  
By thys matter I dare well saye,  
Ever gramercy myne owne purse.

BOOK OF HUNTING.

On the skirts of the neighboring village  
there lives a kind of small potentate, who, for

ought I know, is a representative of one of the most ancient legitimate lines of the present day ; for the empire over which he reigns has belonged to his family time out of mind. His territories comprise a considerable number of good fat acres ; and his seat of power is an old farm-house, where he enjoys, unmolested, the stout oaken chair of his ancestors. The personage to whom I allude is a sturdy old yeoman of the name of John Tibbets, or rather Ready-Money Jack Tibbets, as he is called throughout the neighborhood.

The first place where he attracted my attention was in the churchyard on Sunday ; where he sat on a tombstone after service, with his hat a little on one side, holding forth to a small circle of auditors, and, as I presumed, expounding the law and the prophets, until, on drawing a little nearer, I found he was only expatiating on the merits of a brown horse. He presented so faithful a picture of a substantial English yeoman, such as he is often described in books, heightened, indeed, by some little finery peculiar to himself, that I could not but take note of his whole appearance.

He was between fifty and sixty, of a strong muscular frame, and at least six feet high,



with a physiognomy as grave as a lion's and set off with short, curling, iron-gray locks. His shirt-collar was turned down, and displayed a neck covered with the same short, curling, gray hair; and he wore a colored silk neckcloth, tied very loosely, and tucked in at the bosom, with a green paste brooch on the knot. His coat was of dark-green cloth, with silver buttons, on each of which was engraved a stag, with his own name, John Tibbets, underneath. He had an inner waistcoat of figured chintz, between which and his coat was another of scarlet cloth unbuttoned. His breeches were also left unbuttoned at the knees, not from any slovenliness, but to show a broad pair of scarlet garters. His stockings were blue, with white clocks; he wore large silver shoe-buckles; a broad paste buckle in his hatband; his sleeves buttons were gold seven-shilling pieces; and he had two or three guineas hanging as ornaments to his watch-chain.

On making some inquiries about him, I gathered that he was descended from a line of farmers that had always lived on the same spot, and owned the same property; and that half of the churchyard was taken up with the tombstones of his race. He has all

his life been an important character in the place. When a youngster, he was one of the most roaring blades of the neighborhood. No one could match him at wrestling, pitching the bar, cudgel play, and other athletic exercises. Like the renowned Pinner of Wakefield, he was the village champion; carried off the prize at all the fairs, and threw his gauntlet at the country round. Even to this day the old people talk of his prowess, and undervalue, in comparison, all heroes of the green that have succeeded him; nay, they say that if Ready-Money Jack were to take the field even now, there is no one could stand before him.

When Jack's father died, the neighbors shook their heads, and predicted that young Hopeful would soon make way with the old homestead; but Jack falsified all their predictions. The moment he succeeded to the paternal farm he assumed a new character; took a wife; attended resolutely to his affairs, and became an industrious, thrifty farmer. With the family property he inherited a set of old family maxims, to which he steadily adhered. He saw to everything himself; put his own hand to the plough; worked hard; ate heartily; slept soundly;



paid for everything in cash down ; and never danced except he could do it to the music of his own money in both pockets. He has never been without a hundred or two pounds in gold by him, and never allows a debt to stand unpaid. This has gained him his current name, of which, by the by, he is a little proud ; and has caused him to be looked upon as a very wealthy man by all the village.



Notwithstanding his thrift, however, he has never denied himself the amusements of life, but has taken a share in every passing pleasure. It is his maxim, that "he that works hard can afford to play." He is, therefore, an attendant at all the country fairs and wakes, and has signalized himself by feats of strength and prowess on every village green

in the shire. He often makes his appearance at horse-races, and sports his half-guinea and even his guinea at a time ; keeps a good horse for his own riding, and to this day is fond of following the hounds, and is generally in at the death.

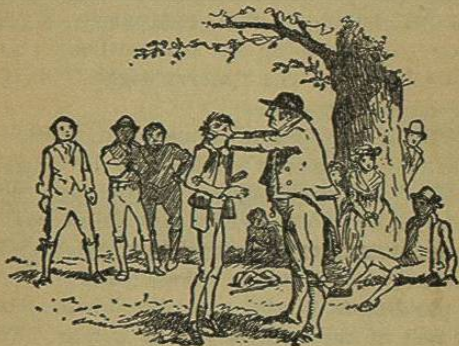
He keeps up the rustic revels, and hospitalities too, for which his paternal farm-house has always been noted ; has plenty of good cheer and dancing at harvest-home, and above all, keeps the "merry night,"\* as it is termed, at Christmas.

With all his love of amusement, however, Jack is by no means a boisterous jovial companion. He is seldom known to laugh even in the midst of his gayety ; but maintains the same grave, lion-like demeanor. He is very slow at comprehending a joke ; and is apt to sit puzzling at it, with a perplexed look, while the rest of the company is in a roar. This gravity has, perhaps, grown on him with the growing weight of his character ; for he is

\*MERRY NIGHT ; a rustic merry-making in a farm-house about Christmas, common in some parts of Yorkshire. There is abundance of homely fare, tea, cakes, fruit, and ale ; various feats of agility, amusing games, romping, dancing, and kissing withal. They commonly break up at midnight.



gradually rising into patriarchal dignity in his native place. Though he no longer takes an active part in athletic sports, yet he always presides at them, and is appealed to on all occasions as umpire. He maintains the peace on the village-green at holiday games, and quells all brawls and quarrels by



collaring the parties and shaking them heartily, if refractory. No one ever pretends to raise a hand against him, or to contend against his decisions; the young men having grown up in habitual awe of his prowess, and in implicit deference to him as the champion and lord of the green.

He is a regular frequenter of the village inn, the landlady having been a sweetheart of his in early life, and he having always continued on kind terms with her. He seldom, however, drinks anything but a draught of ale; smokes his pipe, and pays his reckoning before leaving the tap-room. Here he "gives his little senate laws;" decides bets, which are very generally referred to him; determines upon the characters and qualities of horses; and indeed plays now and then the part of a judge, in settling petty disputes between neighbors, which otherwise might have been nursed by country attorneys into tolerable lawsuits. Jack is very candid and impartial in his decisions, but he has not a head to carry a long argument, and is very apt to get preplexed and out of patience if there is much pleading. He generally breaks through the argument with a strong voice, and brings matters to a summary conclusion, by pronouncing what he calls the "upshot of the business," or, in other words, "the long and short of the matter."

Jack once made a journey to London, a great many years since, which has furnished him with topics of conversation ever since. He saw the old king on the terrace at Wind-



sor, who stopped, and pointed him out to one of the princesses, being probably struck with Jack's truly yeoman-like appearance. This is a favorite anecdote with him, and has no doubt had a great effect in making him a most loyal subject ever since, in spite of taxes and poor's rates. He was also at Bartholomew-fair, where he had half the buttons cut off his coat; and a gang of pick-pockets, attracted by his external show of gold and silver, made a regular attempt to hustle him as he was gazing at a show; but for once they found that they had caught a tartar, for Jack enacted as great wonders among the gang as Samson did among the Philistines. One of his neighbors, who had accompanied him to town, and was with him at the fair, brought back an account of his exploits, which raised the pride of the whole village; who considered their champion as having subdued all London, and eclipsed the achievements of Friar Tuck, or even the renowned Robin Hood himself.

Of late years the old fellow has begun to take the world easily; he works less, and indulges in greater leisure, his son having grown up, and succeeded to him both in the labors of the farm and the exploits of the

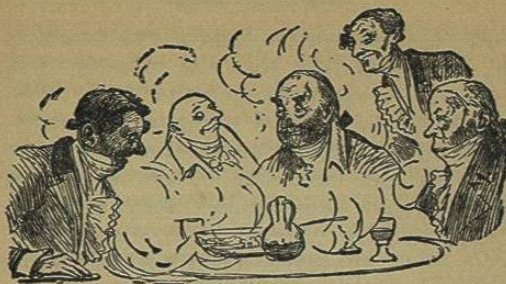
green. Like all sons of distinguished men, however, his father's renown is a disadvantage to him, for he can never come up to public expectation. Though a fine, active fellow of three-and-twenty, and quite the "cock of the walk," yet the old people declare he is nothing like what Ready-Money Jack was at his time of life. The youngster himself acknowledges his inferiority, and has a wonderful opinion of the old man, who indeed taught him all his athletic accomplishments, and holds such a sway over him, that I am told, even to this day, he would have no hesitation to take him in hands, if he rebelled against paternal government.

The Squire holds Jack in very high esteem, and shows him to all his visitors as a specimen of old English "heart of oak." He frequently calls at his house, and tastes some of his home-brewed, which is excellent. He made Jack a present of old Tusser's Hundred Points of good Husbandrie, which has furnished him in reading ever since, and is his text-book and manual in all agricultural and domestic concerns. He has made dog's ears at the most favorite passages, and knows many of the poetical maxims by heart.

Tibbets, though not a man to be daunted



or fluttered by high acquaintances; and though he cherishes a sturdy independence of mind and manner, yet is evidently gratified by the attentions of the squire, whom he has known from boyhood, and pronounces "a true gentleman every inch of him." He is also on excellent terms with Master Simon, who is a kind of privy councillor to the family; but his great favorite is the Oxonian, whom he taught to wrestle and play at quarter-staff when a boy, and considers the most promising young gentleman in the whole county.



### BACHELORS.

The Bachelor most joyfully  
 In pleasant plight doth pass his daies,  
 Good fellowship and companie  
 He doth maintain and kepe alwaies.

EVANS'S OLD BALLADS.

THERE is no character in the comedy of human life that is more difficult to play well than that of an old bachelor. When a single gentleman, therefore, arrives at that critical period when he begins to consider it an impertinent question to be asked his age, I would advise him to look well to his ways. This period, it is true, is much later with some men than with others; I have witnessed