CHRISTMAS EVE IN A GREAT CITY.

VIEW OF THE LONDON MARKETS.

"Amateur Casual" Among his Friends.

BY JAMES GREENWOOD, THE "YOUNG DICKERS," AUTHOR OF "A NIGHT IN A WORKHOUSE," ETC.

Close observers of the habits and customs of the lower order of English workmen have recorded the singular fact that, as a rule, the Sunday is by them regarded, not as an entire, but as a half-holiday. Nay, cleaniness being a kindred virtue with godliness, it is indisputable that, as regards the forepart of Sunday, he is guilty of desecration, not out of neglect and care-lessness, but deliberately and by design; for, whereas all the working days of the week he sits down to breakfast with a visage the brighter for acquaintance with soap and water, and a head of hair reclaimed from nocturnal tangle, the Sabbath breaktast-time finds him at his own hearth grimy and unkempt. He can afford to be unting. His time is his own, and he may do just what he pleases with it. Not that it pleases him to wear a dirty face (no man can accuse him of that; he washes his face, and arms, and hands every day, his feet once a lorinight, or oftener, if a cold necessitates their immersion in hot water, and never a summer passes but he has a dip in the Serpentine or the fourpenny swimming baths); but, the fact is, his every-day maturinal ablutions are in a degree compulsory. It is one amongst the "shop" rules, and an intringement of it is visited by a fine of twopence; and yesterday's smut on his nose, and yesterday's stubble still adorning his chin, are indubitable symptoms that to-day he calls no man his master. Through the Sunday forenoon—although, his every-day employer was to say, "Jones you like to bring that parcel up to the there's balt a crown for your trouble,' he would reject it with scorn—he employs himself domestically, and works like a nigger. He will sole-and-heel Polly's boots, put in broken windows, make good defective drainage in the rear of his premises, "set" a copper, or dig whole rods and perches of garden ground until his blue-ribbed shirt recks with perspira-tion, and all with the completest cheerfulness, and until it is notided to him that dinner will be ready in twenty minutes.

From that moment he is a changed man. In that announcement breaks on him the first glim-mering of Sunday dawning. With a face growing each moment more sober, he puts away his tools, and straight retires to the privacy his chamber, from which he emerges just in time to sharpen the carving knife for an attack on the shoulder of mutton that Joe, the eldest born, has fetched from the bakehouse. But how changed a man is he from the cobbler, or the digger, or the copper-setter of half an nour ago! His blue-ribued shirt is exchanged for a white one with a rigorous stand-up collar; his face is clean and shiny, his chin is a 'tmooth as a baby's; and he has oil on his bair. The time of day has begun when he should "bring up his children in the way they should go," and he sets about it with an uncompromising air that would have won for him a name in the bygone times of Praise-God-Bare-bones. With strictest impartiality, as regards crackling and gravy, he charges the seven plates ranged on either side of the table, and behind each of which appears a wistful face and a pan of eyes that by anticipation have already eaten up every scrap of the snoking ration, and then he-father Jones, that is-raps the table with the bucklorn haft of the carving-knife, and seriously commands Joe to say grace; and gubly as one who has it already at his tongue's tip, and whose mouth waters for what is to follow, Joe complies. His ejaculation of the last syllable of the word "thankful," that concludes the prayer, is like the application of the match to the touch-holes of a row of cannon as regards the dumo watters behind the charged plates, and instantly they fire away. Father, too, he area away, but still preserves a severe eye for the proprieties of the Sunday dinner-table. "Is it proper to eat your Sunday dinner-table. "Is it proper to eat your Sunday dinner with your fork wrong side uplards, Maria?" "Is that the manners they learn you at Sunday School, John? Keep your elbows of the table, sir," "It I have to tell you about that chawing noise again, Amelia Mary, it is hack kitchen miss. go tuto the back kitchen, must send to your Sanday School, and tell 'em to set you a text to learn against such awful manners." Dinner over, Joe, the grace-ayer, returns thanks. The children go Sunday School, and father, turning down his shirt-sleeves (which have been tutily tucked back behind his elbows during the carving proces), buts on his Sanday black coat. charges his sunday long pipe, and composes himself clean and Christianly to smoke, while Joe rends the latest marders, forgonies, and

bigamies out of Lloyd's Penny Weekly. The Jones above quoted, who is but a type of ten thou and, is equally eccentric in his observance of other high colidays and lestivities. Christmas eve, for instance. His Christmas purchases must be sanctified by season in the extremest sense of the term. It is idle your preaching to Jones that daylight is the time for marketing that cheats throughly lamelight. marketing, that cheats thrive by lamplight, that hurrying and crowding and squeezing are fatat to bargaining, that yellow cowment looks ruddy and fair as the best, seen by the light of flaming gas. He is ready enough believe it on ordinary occasions, but on this special occasion he turns a deaf ear. It may be endeavored to explain this apparent eccentricity of Jones' by the fact that Christmas eve is, as a rule, a wages-receiving time, and that it is really dusk and "eve" before Jones reaches home This is true as far as it goes, but really it applies scarcely at all to the case. Jones does not depend on the earnings of the previous few days for his annual banquet or banquets. He "saves up" for it by means of a shop money club, or otherwise, and has the cash in hand in good time to mak: his purchase the days previous to Christmas, if he had a mind,

But he has no mind; Christmas day falling on a Tuesday, he would no more think of laying in his stock of Christmas-dinner provision on previous Saturday, than he would of retiring to rest on Christmas eve without having a lusty "stir" at the pudding stuff in the pan. Beef so bought would not be "Christmas" beef. He knows as well as any man that the poultry for Christmas consumption are immolated and exposed for sale several days before the festival, and he cannot be blind to the fact that if he took a quiet stroll to the rendezvous of the goose and turkey merchants on the evening before Christmas eye, his opportunities of choice would be more extended, and as likely as not be would save a shilling in purchase-money; nevertheless, be would scorn to avail himself of such advantages. He has friends coming to dinner, and he is the last man in the world to treat them shab With what countenance could he reply to the inquiry of a guest who, with the privileged familiarity of an old acquaintance, might require to know when and where the bird was purchased?

It would scarcely be worth his while to tell a falsehood about it; but how could be find words confess that it was not a Christmas goose at all, having been bought "last week?" His character for joviality and hospitality would suffer from that moment. A suspicion would creep into the breast of each guest that the dinner was one contrived on economical principles, Whether it were true or no, when the minceples appeared, the pie-shop in the High street would be privately assigned as their birthplace, and the berry brownness of the hostess's pur ding, while it was audibly commended and its complexion ascribed to natural richness, in secret would be attributed to some of the pennya-packet coloring trash manufactured by that great coampion of the washing-tub and deatly enemy of pulex irritans, Fiddler Dozensticks. It wouldn't do at all. Very possibly evidence of their dissatisfaction might not be found in a falling off of the appente of the guests, but it would be talked of afterwards, undoubtedly.

And, in case that Jones, reading these lines should imagine that I am holding up this weak-pess of his to ridicule, let me hasten to set my-self right in his eyes. Your weakness, Jones, is landable, proper, and I have a great mind to say

Christian. You act on the simple beliefof yours, you are contented to enjoy it in your heart's warm depths, and without declaring it rom the summit of an upturned tub-that the season of Christmas eve is a sanctifying season and that to buy and prepare for the feast during the hallowed time, is like asking a blessing on it. You don't think of this, Jones, as you are cheapening a turkey or investing twopence in horseradish as a garnish for your roast beef (how is it that you never eat horseradish at any other time of year, Jones?), but reverence for the glad season is in you, and you are governed by it in all your actions. The you are governed by it in all your actions. The good influence shines in your face, Jones, as you may convince yourself if you will take a peep at it in the draper's plate-glass, as you wait outside for your good lady who is proudly within the shop investing that unexpected three-and-sixpence of yours in a new cap with cherry bows. Nay, Mr. Cynic, you are quite wrong when you cry, "Bosh! twaddle! cant!" You never will convert me to your opinion that the absorptile scenario of the provided and the chartyle scenario. he cheerful screnity of Jones' countenance on this particular evening is due, not to any sort of "mystle influence," but simply to Jones' rare prospect of a feed off turkey and rich pudding. and a merry evening of pipes and grog to fol-low. I don't deny that Jones is a man with an animal appetite, and with a hankering after the deshpots, and that the weight of the viants with which his basket is crammed is considerably mitigated by the buoyant properties of much of his soul there too.

But you must know that Jones has bought

r goods than will come to the spit or the He has the worth of threepence in holly d the same in mistletoe. You may see that has, for there it dangles by the side of his sket. And there, I am landed high and dry again on the ground on which I take my stand, Mr. Cynic, when you broke in with your unpleasant observations. How is it that Jones meomodes himself by carrying home that bulky, prickly bush, when he has so much else to carry? You know, I know, everybody knows, that holly and mistletoe have been seen banging the shops of the greenerocers for a week past; has been hawked and bawled about the streets costermongers ever since last Wednesday. Why then did not Jones, since he must spend his money in such nonsense—why didn't he nake his holly purchase any day as he came bome to dinner or returned at night any time during the past week? Why! for the best of all reasons—he didn't believe in holly or mistletoe till this evening. He has seen lots of it about, but he had no mind for it—no more than he would for pincking green apples growing within He is glad to see so fair a prospect, but ripe fruit for his money. Holly, with him, is not ripe until this "eye," The riddy berries have now an interest for him they possessed not in the morning. Had he then, by accident, pricked his band with the holly thorns, he protably have exclaimed "blow" or "bother" it, or may be tor he is a basty man and not over choice of words when put out—he would have used a stronger expletive than either; but should such a calamity betall him now, I'd wager as much spirits as would serve to make Jones's snapdragon to-morrow, that he bears the scratch without the use of any naughty words whatever. You may laugh, Mr. Cynic; perhaps I know Jones better than you.

If any one doubts whether Christmas eve narketing is an institution amongst the poorer sort of people, let him go to Leadenhall, or New-gate, or Newport, or Spitabelds, especially the two former, at the time in question. Take Newgate Market. One night a week—on a Saturday night—some business is done by gashight, but by comparison not more than a penny to a pound with the amount of trade done there on Christmas eve. Barter is not at a standstill all through the day, but it is strictly coulined to big and little meat merchants. Ordinarily betwist these two classes—the consignees and sales-men, and the shopkeeper who comes there for his goods—there exists a comfortable amount of cordiality; money and meat changed hands smoothly, and all is harmony and content. But on the day before Caristmas day it is slightly different. Once a year the wholesale ones of the market find it profitable to go into the retail trace, and the regular retailer very naturally does not like it. He sulks and grumbles at the wholesale one's prices. The wholesale one, however, takes his unkind remarks in perfect good humor. "Never mind about ave and eight pence being a cruci price," he says; "if you don't like to give it, you may leave it—that's the figure; it'll fetch it, and a good deal more for the trouble of cutting up between this and

twelve o'clock. They'll be swarming here like flies soon as the gas is lit." By "they" he means the Christmas-eve marketers, and he is quite correct in his prognostication. By the time the gas is lit the market is "laid out;" the covered ways are roofe I and arched with meat, the narrow lanes are with it; there are groves of pork, thickets of mutton, and, allowing four of the hage quarters to every bullock—an ordinary and reible allowance-more animals of that kind than in life could have found browsing on Mitcham Common. All cuts of prime parts too. At ordinary times are freely exposed for sale every part of a besst, from his tail to bis shout; you may see the heads of sheep and sheep's "trotters," and heels of the bovine species in heaps hip high, the tails of oxon in hunches, and the intestinal parts of sheep, pigo, oxen, and calves burdening by the hindred-weight mighty hooks screwed into posts and beams. There is none of this on Christmas eve; all is cleanliness and propriety. There is saw-dust on the market stones and white c oths on the butchers' boards, and cican aprons and sleeves on the botchers' selves, and the butchers are rosy and the meat is rosy, and the gas spouts out with a joily hum.

There are three or four hole-and-corner taverns attached to the market. One of them, a low-crowned looking editice, the red-curtained doors of which are approached by three down ward steps, a greasy, murky-looking hotel enough in general, but this evening all alive and beaming with extra gasjets, and holly testooning the trowsy ceiling, and a big banch of mistletoe, impuled to the middle post behind the bar to which the "Old Tom" tan is attached, and against which the bar-maid leans and chats with the customers in the intervals of business, "Egg-hot from five to twelve" is the legend on the wall, and it being now five and past, frequently the red-curramed door swings to and fro, and with watering mouths sly b utcher men slip in, and with satisfied mouths sty burcher-men slip out, brushing their lips with their blue sleeves, and hurrying back to their stalls. They'll nap it if their masters caught them at it, only the best of it is, the masters take care not to catch'em at it, so long as they take no more than is good for them, knowing the sort of evening's work they have before them.

And now the trade begins. Swarming in at the lanes and alleys come the buyers, in some lew cases singly, but in pairs, as a rule, man and wife; and the number of their children may estimated with tolerably accuracy from the ize of the market-basket the latter carrieshundreds of them, thousands of them, until there is scarcely elbow-room, and for safety the butcher-men carry their knives, when not in use, in their mouths.

All very well, but it must be confessed that wgate Market or Leadenhall are not, undoubteoly, the best places to purchase the primest and cheapest. Jones is in this respect no weaker than his well-to-do brother; we are all alike, all anxious to fill our little tin pots at Niagara. I want a pen'oth of plums I prefer them out of a sushel: if I have fifty pounds to bank, I lodge it the Grand Westminster and Middlesex, capital seventeen millions. So it is with Jones and his wife. They have ten shillings to spend in butchers' meat, and they must needs banker after the "wholesale," Any well-conditioned bullock is capable of supplying four times me sirioin than they are likely to want, but they prefer to pick their sirioin out of the produce of a hundred and fifty bullocks. There is no denying, Mrs. Jones, that you are a tolerable judge of meat, and may save a penny a pound by coming here, perhaps three half-pence; and ought, considering that you have trudged a mile and a half, had the crown of your bonnet stove in by collision with a meattray, and suffered agonies from the trampling of nobhailed boots on your corns. How much better now it would have been to have gone

juietly to Wiggins, who is not extensive in trade, but invariably civil and obliging, and given him your Christmas custom. It would

have been better for various reasons. In the first place, you are well acquainted with Wiggins, and stand in no awe of him. If he asked you teapence a pound for sirloin, and you thought that ninepetice was a plenty for it, you would have no scruples about telling him so to his head, and declining to purchase unless he bated; but would you date to do as much by Suverside The meat merchants who are in such tremendous way of business, make no more your purchase of sixteen pounds of beef than Wiggins would of your demand for two penforth of suet. That in the first place; and then, pray, how about your knowledge of the arithmetic of wholesic meat-dealing? You may readily enough comprehend what a joint will cost, the price per pound of which is ninepence or ninepence haltpenny; but when the talk is of "six and four" and "five and eight," it is question-able if you are not somewhat abroad. You may have some inkling of the fact that the may have some inking of the fact that the figures mentioned represent the price required for a stone of eight pounds of the joint you have fixed on; athly your bating tactics are thrown altogether out of gear; and whether to bid "five and sevenpence" or "five and two-pence," you have not the least idea. The properties that you will yield without a grant of the properties of the propertie bability is that you will yield without a struggle, or allow the bargain to escape you, while you turn away to reckon bow many eightpences there are in the five and fourpence.

But flatter not thyself, good Jones, because of your scholarship in figures, that it only requires you to undertake the meat buying, and all will go well. You know all about "six and eight" and "ave and lour," but you don't know everything. Pardon me, Jones, if I tell you that your great weakness lies in your producious confidence in your strength of mind, in your sound and cool judgment, and your complete invincibility to trade tricks and dodges of every manner and kind. "I know, every one knows," say you, "how women are gammoned and wheedled by shopkeepers; they should have men to deal with; I'd like to see the butcher who would come the old soldier over me!"

Take the market-basket, Jones, mix in the crowd this blessed Christmas eve, and you shall see all that you ask. You silly fellow! do you imagine that you are the first Jones that ever came to Newgate Market? As there is one but for roach, and another for chub, and a third for gudgeon, so are there ways of angling for customers. The butcher before whose shop you pause, my good Jones, has already "taken your measure," as

is, and the determination not to be imposed on or wheedled visible in every line of your expressive countenance, and so far from being intimidated thereat, he regards you as one of the easiest of victims. rather deal with three of your sort than with one of your good lady's any day in the week, but on a Christmas eve especially. With the air of a man who knows what meat should be, on cast your eye along the rows of ribs and strioins, and presently he catches your eye. He doesn't rush out on you, however; he preserves his calmness, and nods towards you as recognizing in you an old and worthy customer. That is your impression, and meanly availing yourself of his apparent mistake—he is in an stensive way and highly respectable-you nod affably in return. He comes forward in a triendly way, and says, "Good evening, sir; selecting your Christmas roast?" just as though a was a matter of course that you should come to his highly respectable establishment to

Butcher," says you, in patronizing sort of way.

"Let us see, then; you don't like it over fat, if I recollect, sir" (as though you had dealt with him for years). "What do you say to that it, now?" 'How much?"

Oh, well, we won't have a dozen words about rice; say six and four. Weigh this, Jim, care-"One of the best butchers in England, Sarah," you remark to Mrs. J—, as, having paid for your eighteen pounds of beef, you walk off with it. "Very gentlemanly tellow, too, as you must have observed."

"There's a good bit of bone in it, Joe, isn't "Of course there is; you can't have good meat without; and this is first-class

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the saying is.

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"Well, yes, I was thinking about it, Mr.

Let us hope so, Jones; for truly Mr. Butcher has "come the old soldier" over you, making you pay for "solt soap" at the rate of a penny a pound in that two stone two pounds of sirloin.

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Seated Proposals, endorsed "Proposals for Fresh
Bed and Veretables," will be received at the Bureau
until 2 o'clock P. M., on the 3d day of January, 1867,
for the supply of
100,000 POUNDS OF FRESH BEEF

100 000 POUNDS OF FRESH VEGETABLES.

at the Philadelphia Navy Yard and Station, as required, the Beef and Vogerables must be of good quality. and the best the market affords, and each article must be offered for by the pound. The Beef to be in equal proportions, rore and hind quarters. Bonds, with approved security, will be required in one-nail the estimated amount of the contract, and twenty per cent in addition will be withheld from

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Every offer made must be accompanied by a written guarantee, signed by one or more resonsible persons, that the bidder or bidders will, if his or

their bid be accepted, enter into an obligation within five days, with good and sufficient sureties, to furnish the articles pre-posed.

No proposal will be considered unless accompanied by such guarantee, and by satisfactory evidence that the bidder is a regular dealer in the articles proposed for, and has the treense required by act of

The Department reserves the right to reject any proposal not considered advantageous to the Gov-It is to be understood that, in case the stimulated quantity of either article shall be delivered, leaving a balance due on the other article, the contract may be considered as completed in full at the option of the Department.

12 19 21 26 28 4t

DROPOSALS FOR CAVALRY AND ARTIL-9 PRINCESS IMOGEN: OR, THE TRIUMPH OF DEPOT QUARTERMASTER'S OFFICE, BALTIMORE, Md., December 15, 1866 Sealed Proposals are invited and will be received at time flice until FRIDAY, 12 o'clock M., December 28, 1866, for the delivery in the city of Baltimore 10. THE SLEEPY OLD TOWN OF BRUGES. With

13. SOME WHITE MICE AT HOME. Illustrated by of One Hundred and Twenty-aix (126) Cavalry Horses, and Twelve (12) Artiflery Horses. 14. THE NEIGHBORS. By Horace E. Scudder. Illus-The Horses will be subjected to careful inspection be one being accepted. The Cavalry Horses must be sound in all respects, well broken, in full fieth and good condition, from lifteen to sixteen hands high, itom five to nine years o.d, well adapted in every way for cavalry purposes. The Artillery Horses must be of dark colors,

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