

# THE COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man.—Thomas Jefferson

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## MISCELLANEOUS.

From the Lady's Book, for August  
**CHARITY OF THE WORLD.**  
BY LOUIS FITZGERALD TASISTRO.

A brilliant society was assembled in the drawing-room of the famous banker Fitz Harding, one of the fortunate millionaires of Belgrave Square. Seven had struck, and a servant in gorgeous livery had uttered those words so sweet to the ear of the impatient gastronome, 'dinner is on the table.'

I shall not describe the dining-room of a millionaire—the sanctuary within which are labored out so many conceptions and projects, so many revolutionists, financial and political. Neither will I describe the royal magnificence of a feast which might have shamed those of Lucullus. Let it suffice to state, that Fitz Harding, on that day, did the honors of his table to a foreign diplomatist, whose protection he sought for the conclusion of a loan to the secretary general of a ministerial department, whose position enabled him to facilitate the adjudication of a great enterprise; and to provincial members of parliament, whose vote might have the effect of enriching his native country with a canal, which should pour abundance and fertility into the coffers of the insatiable contractor. And this short enumeration of the principal guests is equivalent to the bill of fare.

Lady Emily Fitz Harding, blazing with diamonds, and brilliant in youth and beauty presided with grace and liveliness. Amiable and smiling, she replied with equal address to the flatteries of the secretary general, and the madrigals of the foreign diplomatist. Every one was in the happiest vein. Sallies of fancy flew about with champagne cues, the provincial members were as noisy as during one of O'Connell's speeches; and the banker himself was almost a wit.

All things had been discussed, and all subjects exhausted, from Bulwer's last novel to Mrs. Trollope's amusing impertinences, (in addition to those of the loan, the contract and the canal,) when the conversation fell on the subject of benevolence, connected with a charitable ball; a fancy ball which was to collect together the flower of London society. Lady Fitz Harding was one of the lady patronesses of this great ball which was to take place within a fortnight. Many sayings were uttered, wise and foolish, on the subject of charity, of the poor, of dancing philanthropy, and benevolence in *entrechats*—that great invention of modern times. The tear stood in Fitz Harding's eye as he spoke of the families of the destitute, who had no prop and no provision but the sensibility of the rich. As for Lady Emily, she was sublime. 'Of what value was opulence but to soothe distress!' Between the second course and the dessert, she had got rid of forty tickets. 'She only wished she could dispose of two hundred: not from vanity, thank heaven; that was a feeling which she had never known; but from pity to the unfortunate orphans, who she loved to call her children,—her family.'

'Dear Emily!' said the banker, 'it is so rich a pleasure to her to succour the wretched. It is her only joy!'

'Ah! you flatter me,' quoth Lady Emily, 'I do it for your pleasure; for you are happy only when you are doing good!'

At this moment, a servant entered, and announced to Fitz Harding that some one wished to speak to him.

'At this hour!' said the banker angrily.—'You know well John, that I see no one while I am engaged at table.'

The servant drew nearer to his master, and whispered, 'It is Mr. Hopkins.'

At that name Fitz Harding rose, begged his guests to excuse him, and passed into his study.

A little man dressed in black, there await-

ed the banker. Beneath his arm he carried a huge bundle of papers.

'Excuse me if I disturb you,' said Mr. Hopkins, 'but I can only come at this hour, or early in the morning, which would disturb you still more; and as you will not admit of any intermediary in the little matter which you have intrusted to me—' 'To the point, to the point, Mr. Hopkins!'

'Would you believe Mr. Fitz Harding, that I left my office this morning at seven o'clock, and that I have not yet dined? I have made fifteen seizures to-day.'

'To the point, I beg of you. I am engaged. Have you at length brought me some money? Shall I obtain my rights from these insolvent debtors?'

'I fear not, sir, at least unless you proceed to extremities—the sale of their goods, or capture of their bodies. But your sensibility—'

'You know very well, sir, that there is no such thing in matters of business. Besides I have not had recourse to your agency but because I had to deal with dishonest persons, who are able to pay.'

'They say not.'

'So you have got nothing? Nothing from Mrs. Higgins the milliner? She has owed me eighteen pounds for this year past.'

'Nothing.'

'What is the state of the affair?'

'We have got judgment and execution; the sale is for Wednesday, but I wished to see you before issuing bills.'

'The sale must proceed.'

'She asks three months forbearance. She is wholly without resources, and will be compelled to abandon her business. Her husband, who held a small situation in the bank, is dead of cholera; and she is left destitute, with three young children.'

'Oh! she says her husband is dead of cholera? I can ascertain that, through my wife, who is a member of the committee of orphans. In the mean time, issue the bills at any rate.'

'Very well, sir.'

'And that young man, M'Farlane—he who reads memoirs to the Mechanics' In-

struments?'

'Alas! sir, the purse must be but poorly furnished, if I may judge by his goods.'

'Nevertheless, he must pay the forty pounds.'

'Forty pounds! My goods sir, the debt is now sixty five pounds thirteen shillings, including interest and cost. The poor young man never will be able to pay.'

'He must however. I don't understand being trifled with thus. Besides, Mr. M'Farlane has a place.'

'He had one; a situation of eighty pounds a year in the custom-house.'

'What! he has it no longer?'

'You ordered me to attach his salary, and he has consequently been deprived of his—'

'So I have no longer any security!' cried the banker. 'Mr. Hopkins, you will proceed in this matter with the utmost rigor.—I know that M'Farlane has resources—he has talents.'

'Unproductive talents.'

'I cannot help that. They who have unproductive talents should incur debts. Mr. Hopkins, you will proceed.'

'Everything has been done; there remains nothing but the seizure.'

'That you will make then.'

'To frighten him?'

'No! To sell.'

'His fortune is not worth more than ten pounds.'

'Mr. Hopkins, I have duties to fulfil.—In this matter I act not for myself alone.—M'Farlane is indebted to the heirs of my father-in-law. If it affected no other than my wife I would wait—you know me sufficiently to be convinced of that. But this debt interests equally my brother-in-law, the Earl of Richdale, and my sister-in-law, the wife of General Huntingdon. You will proceed.'

'As you desire sir.'

'You know very well, Mr. Hopkins,' added the banker, as he let out the officer, 'that I am not a mercenary man. I have waited long for these debts; but there is an end to all things. Besides, I tell you in confidence that I have promised the little sums whose collection I have entrusted to you, to my wife, who wishes to contribute them to the benevolent institution of our county, for she is a lady of charity. Good day Mr. Hopkins.'

At this instant the noise of the dance reached them, and the melodious orchestra of Willis flung its joyous harmonies into the banker's study. Fitz Harding hastily regained his rich saloons.

It was a delicious fete—an intoxicating route—a true millionaire's ball. The leaders of finance, the lords of diplomacy, all the world of fashion, were met together in this brilliant assemblage. A thousand lust-

res shed their dazzling light on women sparkling with the ornaments of dress and loveliness. The crowded masses of the happy and the powerful moved, to the sound of harmonious music, through chambers embellished with all the appliances of luxury and all the wonders of art. At two o'clock a magnificent repast varied the pleasure of the night, and astonished, by its tasteful magnificence, guests accustomed to the prodigal splendor of ministerial tables.—The day had dimmed the brilliancy of the lamps, while yet the dance continued,—while a magic and seducing galopade swept in its whirling course that gilded and smiling crowd, and offered to the charming eyes a moving circle of women, of diamonds and of flowers. I forgot to mention that at the close of the supper, Lady Emily Fitz Harding had already disposed of her two hundred tickets for the charity ball.

Let us leave this scene of happiness and of pleasure, and transport ourselves to the fourth story of a dismal abode in one of the obscure streets adjoining Belgrave Square. After a night of watching and labor, a young man seated before a small deal table, covered with papers, books, and mathematical instruments, rear a fire-place, in which a few miserable embers yet glowed, had yielded to fatigue, and fallen asleep with his head drooped upon his breast. An almost expiring lamp cast a dim light upon the pallid and melancholy face of the student. An open door presented to view within another chamber, a wretched bed, on which lay an elderly lady, whose thin and wrung features spoke of sickness and pain. The poverty of the humble dwelling was slightly disguised by its exceeding cleanliness. A few old articles of furniture, the broken relics of former independence, saddened the eye by their ruined elegance. A dog extended at his master's feet; had just awakened at the first ray of the sun, and looked up at the sleeping youth with an earnest and protecting look. Suddenly the door-bell rang; the dog sprang hastily up and uttered a low bark, which he at once stifled as he looked towards the bed of the old woman. 'Silence Blucher,' said the young man, waking up and rubbing his eyes, 'what is the matter? he proceeded to open it.'

It was Mr. Hopkins—the man in black, with the bundle of papers, and the gentle manner and mien. But Mr. Hopkins, this time, was not alone. He was accompanied by two other men, in one of whom M'Farlane recognized the porter of a neighboring house.

'I beg pardon, sir,' said Hopkins, bowing. 'You do not recognize me, though I have already had the honor of speaking with you several times. I come for payment of the forty pounds (exclusive of costs) which you owe the Richdale estate.'

M'Farlane started.

'And unless I am paid this morning, I shall be under the painful necessity, according to my orders from Mr. Fitz Harding, to proceed to execution.'

M'Farlane felt his heart cease to beat.—He thought of his old mother, who lay sick before him, and now slept quietly on the bed—high they were about to sell. His step staggered, and he stood on his brow.

Before proceeding, and during the time that Hopkins makes the inventory, let me explain the origin of this debt, and inform the reader how the poor youth became indebted to the heirs of the Earl of Richdale, for forty pounds.

In the Earl of Richdale, the father of Lady Emily, scientific acquirements of the first order, enhanced the lustre of titles and wealth. In few words, he was one of the distinguished men of his day, the most, and the most deservedly honored.

An important work published by M'Farlane, and some remarkable memoirs read by him to the Mechanics' Institute, had attracted towards this youth the attention of the distinguished old man, and an acquaintance, sought by the earl, had risen between them.

In a short time, an actual benefit conferred, brought, if possible, increased claims upon the gratitude of M'Farlane. An office became vacant in the custom-house, and the Earl of Richdale procured it for his *protege*. The income was small, but the appointment honorable; and it yielded enough, with the produce of some literary compositions, to put M'Farlane in a position to provide for his aged mother a quiet subsistence, and to continue in peace the profound labors to which he had dedicated his future life.

Arrived at the accomplishment of his wishes, M'Farlane had now scarcely any thing to desire, when an unfortunate circumstance arose to trouble the calm of his life, and surrender him a prey to the deepest anxiety. Security, imprudently given, for an unworthy friend, who deceived him, placed him in the most harassing position, and threatened even his personal liberty.

At this painful moment a letter was

brought him. He recognized the hand writing of the Earl of Richdale as he broke the seal; but who shall express the feelings with which he found, within the envelope, a check for forty pounds, accompanied by the following lines:—

A common friend has informed me of the difficulty in which your too confiding generosity has involved you. Your repose must not be broken, nor the labors, which are of equal importance to your own renown and to the interest of science, interrupted, for a miserable sum like this. Accept the enclosed. It is the amount which you require. I am happy to have the opportunity of serving you: Consider it but as a loan; you shall repay it when you are able. Take it if you wish that I should pardon your not having confided your difficulty to me.'

Who shall tell that which passed in the soul of M'Farlane, as he read this note? Filled with the warmest gratitude, but resolved on refusing the obligation, he hastened to the mansion of the earl. He thanked him with tears, while he urged him to receive back the generous subsidy, but the earl pressed him with such earnest friendship, and contrived so well to overcome the delicate scruples of the young man, that M'Farlane yielded at length to his entreaties, stipulating only that he should sign a receipt for the sum, and an engagement to repay it in a year.

'With all my heart,' said the noble old man, with a smile.

The year passed. M'Farlane had reckoned for the discharge of his obligation, upon the sale of a treatise on geometry; but circumstances appeared unfavorable to the publisher who was to purchase it. On the day when his engagement fell due, M'Farlane presented himself timidly, with his apologies, before the earl of Richdale.

'What!' said the old man, 'thinking still of that trifle? Mr. M'Farlane, if you speak of it again to me, it must be a quarrel between us.'

Three more years passed, during which M'Farlane, more favored of fame than of fortune, gained distinction as an author.

Earl of Richdale, who ceased not to honor him with his confidence and friendship. But the poor young man could not pay the money, and dared not again speak of the debt to his benefactor.

At the end of these three years, the earl died suddenly, leaving an immense fortune to his son and his two daughters, the eldest of whom had recently married the banker, Fitz Harding, and the youngest the General Huntingdon. Unhappily, amongst the thousands that he left to his heirs, was found the obligation for forty pounds sterling, signed by the poor mathematician.

We left Mr. Hopkins making his inventory in the little chamber of M'Farlane. The unfortunate student, standing in the recess of his window, locked on with folded arms, an unnatural calm, a sort of convulsive resignation had stolen over him; and on his impressive face, no sign betrayed the tempest of his thoughts, yet bitter were his reflections. Ah! exclaimed he, mentally 'you who feel tempted to accept succor from a generous hand, beware, lest your bene-

law, to inherit his property, or sons-in-law, to draw you into a trap, after the benefit. If you have a name that you thought to honor amongst men, by the labors of usefulness, they will record that name in a process! They will have it called over by a sheriff. They will make it the property of a scribe, who shall speculate upon the number of its letters! They will put up your poverty in the marketplace! They will print in the journals and on your gate, the description of your miserable movable! they will sell them in the public square, and in the evening go to a ball, where they will institute a raffle for the benefit of the poor!'

Still there was a consolation that mingled with the bitter thoughts of M'Farlane—something that whispered to him, that if there was a name tarnished in the affair, it was happily, not his, but that of the millionaire banker, those of the vain and titled men, the idle and gilded women who had taken from him his poor table, his chair and his bed; from him; the child of indigence and toil, although he had been the friend of their father, and because a few piles more of crowns were wanting to swell a heritage of millions.

Hopkins and his clerk had now completed their inventory of the young student's room, and a small kitchen adjoining, and the officer was about to enter into the old lady's chamber, when M'Farlane sprang forward and seized his arm.

'Sir,' said he, calmly, 'I entreat you not to go in there; mother is ill, and just now sleeps.'

The officer paused upon the threshold of the chamber, around which he cast his

searching looks, and in a low voice dictated his inventory, while Blucher looked at him with a flashing eye ready to dart upon him, if he should invade the apartment of the invalid.

The old lady had, however, awaked, and from the foot of her bed, which was surrounded by old chintz curtains, she heard the whispering. 'My poor Frederick, muttered she to herself already at his work & reading over his labors! But soon she recognised that it was not the voice of her son, and caught the words, 'an old mahogany chest of drawers, with marble head; a pendule, in sculptured brass; two old arm chairs covered with silk.'

A cry burst from the lips of the invalid—for she guessed the truth. M'Farlane sprang towards her, and strove to soothe her, while Hopkins finished his inventory.

Two days after, M'Farlane, accompanied by his dog, followed a hearse, which took the road to the public burying ground.

It was a great night for the poor, the night of the first of March, 1833! The spacious apartments of that splendid building, which is at once the pride and an ornament to the city of London, known as Guild Hall, had been decorated with great magnificence for the great philanthropic ball of which I have already spoken, and which had Lady Emily Fitz Harding for one of its lady patronesses. A long string of carriages brought to this enchanted spot, all that London contained of brilliant women and *comme il faut*. The aristocracy of birth, joined hands with the aristocracy of wealth, in this truly fraternal assemblage, where the sentiments of benevolence and philanthropy expanded all hearts. The richness and variety of the costumes, the profusion of flowers of lamps, and of gold, gave the fete the aspect of a fairy scene. All nations and all epochs were there mingled and confounded. Marchionesses of the eighteenth century, abbes, pilgrims, pachas, chevaliers, Swiss peasants, French guardsmen, boatmen and chieftains were crowded together, and wavered to and fro, amidst the confusion of a scene that there were such people as the poor.

Lady Emily Fitz Harding, by her beauty, her diamonds and the splendor of her oriental costume, would have attracted all eyes even if the rose-colored knot, the distinctive sign of her function as lady patroness, had not fixed attention upon her. She was the queen of this fete, where also shone her husband, in the guise of a troubadour; her brother, the young Earl of Richdale, in the rich costume of a courtier of Henry the Second's time; and his sister Lady Cecilia Huntingdon, habited as a Chinese, and leaning on the arm of a mandarin, General Huntingdon. These two dresses, which had been expressly procured from China, and were of incredible magnificence, had cost over a thousand pounds sterling. But can one make sacrifices, when a fete for the benefit of the poor is in question?

All at once, a movement was observed at one of the doors of the hall, & a mask entered, round whom the crowd gathered, attracted by the singularity of his costume. It was a man clothed in the garb of a beggar, carrying a wallet, and on whose garments were

scattered papers of legal processes were covered with them; Mr. and Lady Emily Fitz Harding were among the first to approach this mysterious personage, and read on a large sheet of stamped paper, which covered his breast, exact copies of the different instruments of legal process on the part of the heirs of the Earl of Richdale, all whose names and descriptions were set out at full length, against the poor student including the inventory, and ending with the advertisement of sale, which, as I have said before, covered the different parts of the body of the man. On his hat, which was surrounded with a black crape, was a written paper, with these words, in large characters—

'THE CHARITY OF THE MEN OF THE WORLD.'

The following toasts were recently given at Hodsburg, New York.

'Woman.—As a mother she cherishes and corrects us; as a sister, she consults and counsels us; as a sweetheart, she conquers and conquers us; as a wife, she comforts and confides us; without her what would become of us?'

AMENDATION BY A BACHELOR.

A mother, she scolds and sparks us; a sister she tells of and pinches us; a sweetheart, she coquets and jilts us; a wife, she frowns, pouts, frets, cries, and torments us; without her what would there be to trouble us?'

Work of Mercy.—Unhooking a young lady's frock to enable her to sneeze.