

North Seas,' was the interpretation given out from the back of the head.

'I suppose you are a great traveller, Bruin?' demanded another querist.

'Wur bur ough hur.'

'He accompanied Sir John Ross in his polar expeditions,' was the response.

By this time every one enjoyed the humor of the conceit; and when Bruin placed the garland of flowers on the brow of Anita Mendoza, the belle of the ball room, it was not ungraciously received by the blushing beauty, and raptures of applause approved the selection.

'You show a very fair taste, Mr. Bruin,' said the smiling landlady.

'We represent beauty and the Beast in the nursely tale,' was the meaning of the bur wur of the response.

'Can I offer you anything to eat or drink?' demanded the landlady.

'Mr. Bruin will trouble you for an ice, and a young sea unicorn,' replied the transposed conductor.

'I hope you wont eat any of us, Mr. Bruin,' said one of the ring.

'He would rather hug his partner, than worry puppies,' was the ready rejoinder.

'When did you meet your great father in law, Dr. Johnson, ursa major?' asked a would-be wit.

'Mr. Bruin desires me to give you a pot of his grease to make your whiskers grow,' said the conductor, handing an elegant little bear's grease pot out of the pouch that hung by Bruin's side.

'Give me one! give me one!' shouted a number of ladies, at the same time.

'For a hug a piece,' shouted the bear in 'propria persona,' forgetting his disguise.

'It is Tom Thorne! 'tis Mr. Thorne!' shouted out a number of voices; and the bear was soon patted, caressed, and rifled of all the contents of his pouch, by the fair rifiers, no longer afraid of a hug from a bear like Tom Thorne.

Amid the fun and merriment created by this incident a smart explosion was heard, followed by wreaths of aromatic smoke from pastiles ignited by the explosion, caused by opening the elegant little grease pot given to the beardless youth. The proprietress of every one of Bruin's little presents now became a heroine.

Great was the curiosity displayed to know the contents, and great was the glee and satisfaction as curious little devices or bonbons, wrapped up in love verses, were extracted from the elegant little receptacles; and not till the music struck up, and Bruin led Anita Mendoza as his partner to the head of the country dance, was the usual routine of the ball-room resumed. All pretensions to etiquette had vanished; and good humour, mirth and jollity reigned triumphant throughout the evening. Many thought Bruin's lot not only bearable, but even enviable, judging from the easy and smiling reception with which his attentions were welcomed by court lady and stately dame. The supper that followed was as merry as the dance; and our hero, divesting himself of his bearish accoutrements, was as much the source of amusement in the supper room by his jokes, as in the ball room by his tricks. Refreshing himself with copious draughts of champagne, he appeared to find no difficulty whatever in allaying hunger in the absence of young unicorns.

But the merriest night must have a close, and the clearest head will get dizzy under the influence of champagne; and Tom finding himself unusually excited, and unwilling to detract from the eclat of his previous debut, slid unperceived out of the room.

(To be continued.)

AN AFRICAN OPHELIA.

Quite an amusing case lately took place before Recorder Genois. An old negro woman, as black as the ace of spades, by the name of Letty, about a year ago became desperately enamored of a young man some thirty years her junior. Some few months ago her Adonis married a blooming bride, and the black skinned, grey-haired Ophelia has ever since been, on the verge of distraction. Niobe could not hold a candle to her in the way of grief—she wept tears enough to have filled a foot-path, and her sighs almost wore out her lungs. Like Ophelia, she tried to drown herself; but fortunately for the cause of true love, the water wasn't deep enough, and shaking her draggled plumage like an excited black duck, she determined not to kill herself, but to have revenge. It seems that the heart of this sable maiden, who numbered some fifty or more summers, had been won whilst she was milking 'cow with a crumpled horn' on the Bayou Road. Her lover swore eternal fidelity, so she told the Recorder, and she surrendered her virgin heart. When she found out that he was untrue, and that he had resolved to take unto himself a wife, she was almost crazy. Anger, however, got the better of passion, and night before last she left her master's premises in order to make a descent on the abode of her 'false lover.' Armed by the consciousness of her own wrongs and a tall candle, she gained ingress and commenced cutting up all sorts of antics. After every thing in the persuasive line had been exhausted, she finally had to be ejected forcibly from the premises. But her determination was not quenched—she returned again with an apron full of stones, and opened a regular mural cannonade on the house. The door was almost battered down, the window sashes were broken, and many pieces of furniture severely bruised. The upshot of the matter was that this ancient African Venus was taken into

custody by two burley policemen and conveyed to the watch house. On being examined yesterday as to the mad pranks occasioned by the darts of the boy-god Cupid, she was asked by the Recorder 'If she loved her betrayer still!'

Placing her arms akimbo, she turned up the whites of her eyes and answered—'Does I lub him? Yes, an' no one kin refrain me from lubbin' him. He was mine, and de ambition of my heart got de upper holt of my feelings, an' I couldn't milk de cows any more! I went to de house, an' I smashed de winders, an' I'd smashed him ef I could cotched hold of him. I can't live without him—but I beleeves I'd forgib him if he'd come back.'

The Recorder finding that Letty was determined to do more mischief, intimated that he thought some fifteen or twenty lashes would cure her love fever, and she was taken off to get the dose.

THE ORIGIN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

There is a remarkable document of the time of Athelstane which possibly may be considered as the first authentic indication of the interference of the Commons in matters of legislation as a body distinct from the proceres who composed the council or curia of the king.—It seems that Athelstane set commissioners or royal missi, as such functionaries were then denominated among the Franks, requiring or authorizing the inhabitants of the county of Kent, and of other counties, to meet and resolve upon such amendments in the laws as they deemed expedient to be adopted. All the inhabitants, bishops, earls, thanes, *ceorls* or *villani* of Kent, accordingly met; and they resolved upon a petition or address to the king, in which they stated that they agreed upon eight several capitula, which they presented, and prayed that the king in his mercy would point out whether they had exceeded or fallen short of what he desired; adding, that they would implicitly conform to his wishes. The *Decretum Sapientium Anglie*, agreed to, first at Exeter, then at Feversham, then at Thunderfield in Surry, and the *Judicate Civitatis Landonie*, agreed upon by the earls and ceors (*comites et villani*) of London, are of a similar character. It will be seen in a subsequent chapter, in which the rise of the English House of Commons to its present state is shortly traced, that it was always *by way of petition* that the commons interfered, even when they became by their representatives a distinct and recognised branch of the legislature; sometimes the lords joining them in the petition, at other times the petition being addressed by them alone to the king, or to the king and the lords, or sometimes to the lords alone. It is from this circumstance, and from the totally different character of the commons' branch of the legislature to that of the lords, I have been induced to think that the house of commons must have originated as a distinct institution, not as a constituent part of the great council. The documents above referred to appear to me to point out the germs from which it sprung. The very learned and intelligent compilers of the Ancient Laws of the Anglo-Saxons have not offered any explanation of these documents; indeed, before I ventured to put the above interpretation upon them, I looked in vain for any explanation as to their character in the works of our most celebrated antiquaries and historians. In former times, it would have been too bold a flight even to hint that the legislative authority of the house of commons might in any the slightest degree be traced to an institution which had prevailed in the Roman provinces; yet, considering the weight that imperial sanction must have had in recommending any institution to the Anglo-Saxon sovereigns, whose prerogatives, as we have seen, were chiefly founded on imperial doctrines, it seems to me not unworthy of attention, that the Theodosian Gods would have informed the king and the legislators of the time, that under the authority of the imperial constitutions, regular assemblies of the provincials were held throughout the empire, at which petitions were agreed upon for the reform of abuses, and the adoption of such measures as were considered necessary for the public benefit, and for the amendment of the law.—*Spence's Equitable Jurisdiction of the Court of Chancery.*

LORD BACON.

Patted on the head by Queen Elizabeth—mocking the worshippers of Aristotle at Cambridge—catching the first glimpses of his great discoveries, and yet uncertain whether the light was from heaven—associating with the learned and gay at the court of France—devoting himself to Bracton and the Year Books in Gray's Inn—throwing aside the dusty folios of the law to write a moral essay, to make an experiment in natural philosophy, or to detect the fallacies which had hitherto obstructed the progress of useful truth—contented for a time with taking 'all knowledge for his province'—roused from these speculations by the stings of vulgar ambition—plying all the arts of flattery to gain official advancement by royal and courtly favour—entering the House of Commons, and displaying powers of oratory of which he had been unconscious—being seduced by the love of popular applause, for a space becoming a patriot—making amends by defending all the worst accessions of prerogative—publishing to the world lucubrations on morals, which show the nicest perception of what is honourable and beautiful, as well as prudent, in the conduct of life—yet, the son of a lord keeper, the nephew of the prime minister, a queen's counsel, with the first practice at the bar, arrested for debt, and langu-

ishing in a sponging-house—tired with vain solicitations to his own kindred for promotion, joining the party of their opponents, and, after experiencing the most generous kindness from the young and chivalrous head of it, assisting to bring him to the scaffold, and to blacken his memory—seeking, by a mercenary marriage, to repair his broken fortunes—on the accession of a new sovereign, offering up the most servile adulation to a pedant whom he utterly despised—infinately gratified by being permitted to kneel down, with 230 others, to receive the honour of knighthood—tracking to a worthless favourite with the most slavish subservience, that he might be appointed a law officer of the crown—then giving the most admirable advice for the compilation and emendation of the laws of England, and helping to inflict torture on a poor parson, whom he wished to hang as a traitor for writing an unpublished and unpreached sermon—attracting the notice of all Europe by his philosophical works, which established a new era in the mode of investigating the phenomena both of matter and mind—basely intriguing in the meanwhile for further promotion, and writing secret letters to his sovereign to discharge his rivals—riding proudly between the lord high treasurer and lord privy seal, preceded by his mace bearer and purse bearer, and followed by a long line of nobles and judges, to be installed in the office of lord high chancellor—by and bye, settling with his servants the account of the bribes they had received for him—a little embarrassed by being obliged, out of decency, the case being so clear, to decide against the party whose money he had pocketed, but stifling the misgivings of conscience by the splendour and flattery which he now commanded—struck to the earth by the discovery of his corruption—taking to his bed, and refusing sustenance—confessing the truth of the charges brought against him, and abjectly imploring mercy—nobly rallying from his disgrace, and engaging in new literary undertakings, which have added to the splendour of his name—still exhibiting a touch of his ancient vanity, and, in the midst of pecuniary embarrassment, refusing to be 'stripped of his feathers.'—*Lord Campbell's Lives of Chancellors.*

POLITICS AND NEWS.

News by the last English Mail.

From the "News of the World," Nov. 28.

COMMERCIAL FAILURES.

The drafts of the West India Bank were on Monday refused acceptance by their agents, the Union Bank of London, the reason being that the West India Bank had, against the repeated and emphatic warnings of the manager of the Union Bank, continued to make purchases of the bills of Higginson, Dean, and Stott, of Barbadoes, on Barton, Irlam, and Higginson, of Liverpool, to an extent that was certain to prove dangerous. The capital of the concern, which was established about two years back, is only £120,000; but its liabilities are very large, and wholly disproportioned to this amount. Exchange operations constitute one extensive feature of the business carried on, and the bank is said to hold no less than 80,000*l.* of the paper of Barton, Irlam, & Co. Its cash deposits held on interest are very large, and it also issues notes.—The suspension of Messrs. J. and H. Reay, an old and respectable house in the wine trade, was announced on Monday. The actual debts of the firm are said to be small, the amount being about 20,000*l.*, but from the extent of their dealings, their liabilities in the shape of endorsements on bills are considerable; and it is from the default of the parties primarily responsible upon these that the necessity for stoppage is understood to have arisen.—The assets of Messrs. Lackertsen and Co., East India merchants, whose acceptances were temporarily dishonoured on the 23d ult., but who have since been making every effort to sustain themselves, were compelled on Monday, on the arrival of the Indian mail, to make a definite announcement of their stoppage. The acceptances of the firm are stated at a little above 100,000*l.*—The Countess of Lansdale steamer, from Hamburg, has brought between 15,000*l.* and 16,000*l.* in gold.

THE GREAT FAILURES ON THURSDAY.

Four failures in the Stock-Exchange occurred on Thursday. They were Mr. Henry Whitmore, a broker, Messrs. Secretan and Capper, brokers, who have been sacrificed by a principal; Mr. William Abbott, a jobber; and Mr. William Eykyn, a broker. Of these failures the largest was that of Mr. Whitmore, whose differences are to the extent of 12,000*l.*, and whose assets are estimated at 6*s.* 8*d.* in the pound. The failure of Messrs. Tanner and Ward, leather factors, was also announced on Thursday. Their liabilities are 55,000*l.*, of which 25,000*l.* consist of acceptances. For some time they have been struggling with a declining trade, and it is not expected that their assets will yield more than 10*s.* in the pound. The connexions of the firm are said to be weakly. Letters from Glasgow announce the suspension of Messrs. A. and J. Downie, with liabilities ranging from 150,000*l.* to 170,000*l.* The firm were drysalters, but they are said lately to have embarked largely in the Mediterranean trade. From Liverpool we have the failure of Mr. Ashburner, a leather factor. His liabilities are between 30,000*l.* and 40,000*l.*, and the assets are stated to be rather more than 10*s.* in the pound.