A POPULAR DEMONSTRATION.

BY OUR HOME CORRESPONDENT.

MONDAY, July 23d, was an eventful day; if not, as some contend, for the cause of liberty throughout the civilized world, at all events for Bayswater, W. Conformity to all custom, the omnibuses starting thence for the south-east, in the evening were fully loaded—not crowded, for there were few inside; but their roofs were lined with our bravest and our best (or at least our best-dressed), bound for the Marble Arch, Hyde Park, reputed to be the seat of Civil War. We have no amusement in Bayswater, besides Simplicity Lectures, Poetic Readings—everybody seems to try his virgin voice (if I may use the expression) at our local institution, before advertising himself as a public reader to the metropolis at large—and more rarely a gentleman Giant or Musical Dwarf; while the theatres, except the Marylebone, which is not to be thought of by our gift youth, are at an enormous distance. Anything, therefore, in the way of a spectacle, such as a fire or a fight, in our immediate vicinity, is looked upon as a godsend, and patronised accordingly by those gentlemen who have nothing to do with themselves in the evening, and whose digestions permit of their going out after dinner. It is unnecessary to state that your Home Correspondent, for his part, was actuated by no such idle impulse, when he mounted the knifeboard of the Citizen, bent upon a duty which by this time may surely almost be entitled National. However, in the very natural and appropriate phrase, used by novelists of the last generation but one, ‘A truce to egotism.’ (How I love all the charming expressions of those ancient fictionalists: ‘But we anticipate,’ ‘Pardon the digression,’ and ‘Now let us return for awhile to Sebastian and Leonora, whom we left in the subterranean chamber.’) My fellow-passengers, as I have hinted, wore a very different appearance from those prim, neatly-attired gentlemen who ride into the City every morning to read their newspapers in the privacy of their own office, undisturbed by domestic interruption. They were indeed the same individuals, but how changed. Attired in evening-dress, their shirt-studs flamed upon their embroidered fronts, their waistcoats bore in their embroidery the evidence of a female hand (if it was not done by the machine), and their polished leather boots, shone upon the setting sun, fringed the collar with flame. Instead of sucking the knobs of their umbrellas, they had cigars in their mouths; and instead of being contumeliously silent, they were all speaking at once. Your Correspondent looked and listened.

1st Citizen. Mark my words (I did); there’ll be a dooce of a row!


3d Citizen. By Jove! Think of the Horse Guards being called out; that’s what I call a Rum Start.

4th Citizen (not at all connected with the preceding speakers, serious, of riper years, and with an umbrella). Well, it’s what I call an Infernal Shame, sir. Why don’t they let em meet in Hyde Park? That’s what I want to know. Why, it’s because the Tory ministry is afraid of the people; that’s why.

2d Citizen (hilariously). Then you don’t want to know.

Immense applause from the majority of Citizens, and great stamping of feet.

Conductor of Citizen (with preternatural gravity and winking). I say, gents, here’s a wider lady inside, who is very nigh frightened to fits. She says the roof is a-givin’ way.

Redoubled enthusiasm, in which the polished leather boots take a still more prominent part. Amid the tumult, the 4th Citizen is heard to murmur: ‘Counter-jumpers—set of scoindleurs.’

5th Citizen (sympathiser with No. 4). They would be very well in the tread-mill; that is the proper place for fellows who can only use their legs.

1st Citizen (defiantly). I daresay your friends will find the use of their legs as soon as they see the Police.

4th Citizen. Oh, you’re one of the Hairyocracy; are you? Well, I will say this for you: you don’t look like it.

2d Citizen (convulsed with merriment). That was a good one.

Nobody speaks; such a silence ensues—broken only by the ‘Bank! Bank!’ of the crowd—as is only too likely to precede a storm. The Home Correspondent assumes an attitude of the strictest neutrality, and congratulates himself that he is next the steps. His grave demeanour misleads his neighbour, Citizen No. 1, to imagine him to be a person of information.

‘Do you think it is likely,’ he inquires, ‘that the troops will fire with ball?’

‘Very likely,’ interposes Citizen No. 4. ‘They have their orders to butcher the people. It’ll be another Peterloo; there isn’t a doubt of it.’

1st Citizen (with renewed anxiety for my opinion).

What do you say, sir?

‘Yes,’ exclaims 4th Citizen, suddenly resolved to make a friend of me, if possible; ‘what do you say? You look as if you weren’t all glitter and gewgaws, you do. [I study in my attire a severe simplicity.] Is it not ten to one that the troops will fire with ball?’

The position was embarrassing: I could sympathise with the members of the German Bund, compelled upon the instant to throw in their lot with either Austria or Prussia; but my natural intelligence, did not desert me.

‘Well,’ said I, ‘a conflict between the populace and the soldiery is always to be deplored.’

‘Pooh! pooh! shoot them down,’ exclaimed No. 7 Citizen, with irritation: he wore a moustache, and was altogether a most distinguished-looking person. ‘Against a mob, there’s nothing like a twenty-four-pounder.’

‘Except a thirty-six pounder and all the other pounders,’ muttered No. 2, purple with mirth, but a little awed by the superior appearance of the last speaker.

‘It is my opinion that a man who can talk of bringing twenty-four pounders to bear upon his fellow-countrymen, ought to be hung,’ observed Citizen No. 4, staring straight before him.

‘I would pull his legs with pleasure,’ added Citizen No. 5, buttoning his coat across his chest.

There was another dreadful pause, the sort of calm that precitates a thunder-storm, as it seemed to me, and then Citizen No. 1 recommenced his persecutions.
You have not yet given your opinion, sir, as to whether the troops will fire ball.

"Well," said I, with a smile that might have conciliated a regiment of Uhlan's, 'the Horse Guards, you know, as a general rule, do not fire ball, because they are armed with swords.'

'Ah! that's true,' observed No. 1, sagaciously.

'Very true indeed,' remarked No. 4, with equal seriousness.

By one judicious reply, I had established my respectability as the arbiter between the contending factions—the Napoleon of the knife-board. Some of my fellow-travellers would, I am confident, not have been surprised if I had turned out to be 'connected with government.' I saw, however, that the man with the moustache detested me, for he felt himself placed in the position of second-fiddle. However, he was at the other end of the 'bus.

'Talking of firing ball,' observed the conductor of the Citizen, 'I can tell you a good story— a story as will make you all split with laughing.'

The reward thus promised for listening was not attractive, and, besides, one is likely to be compromised by entering into conversation with this class of people; their ignorance is often as broad, and the tone in which they are delivered is the same by which they are accustomed to attract the attention of possible passengers on both sides of the way. I therefore refused him my countenance: an omnibus cad, however, has face enough (of his own) for anything, and he favoured us with his narrative notwithstanding. We had already reached the Edgeware Road, and my hope (on account of the widow lady inside) was that he would not approach his climax before we reached the Marble Arch.

'Well, you must know, my father,' he began, 'was a tremendous feller for standing upon his right foot. He thought he himself quite as good as a lord, or a bishop, or, for that matter, as the king upon his blessed throne; and the consequence was, he was again the millenary, he was, as at the Bristol riots; we used to live down that way in those days: I'm a Somersetshire man myself, though you mightn't think it— White Chapel, London Bridge. Well, he was down there, and there was the Mob, when the millenary was a-shooting over their heads with— Bank— Bank—blank cartridge; but presently the other man, he claps his hand behind 'im, and he cries out:— "Bill, they're a-firing ball!"

"How do you know that?" asks my father.

"Because," says he, very serious, "I've just got one in"."

'The Marble Arch!' cried I, interrupting the narrative. 'Stop, I am going to get down.' And, indeed, it was just as well, for there was here a crowd so dense, that the omnibus was brought to a complete standstill. The whole breadth of the Riverwater Road, and as far down Oxford Street as the eye could reach, was paved with heads. I might see the police in a double line, standing with their backs to the closed gates: three rows of vehicles, intermingled with persons en foot, formed an inextricable mass between them and the opposite manners, the lower windows of which were closed and shuttered, but the upper crowned with faces; may the roofs, and even the bases of the chimneys had their occupants. Every lamp-post bore its twin-fruit of streeturchins. The wheeled conveyances, too, had no intention of moving, even if movement had been practicable; they had come as to the inner ropes of the course at Epsom, for the purpose of adorning their tenants a good view. There were empty coach-carts, for a position in which a shilling head was eagerly given; there were cabs whose roof was hired by the square inch; there were omnibuses that had never gained half the sum by a city trip which they now realised by standing still; and there were even private carriages with ladies in them, apparently devoid of fear, and contemplating with the most unalike interest, the little they could see of the Civil War raging within the Park. It was to the Park, from which confused shouts and outcries were borne to us upon the darkening air, that every eye was turned.

My fellow-passengers, like myself, had all descended from their perches, the party of Order and the Malcontents alike pushing through the crowd for a spot where the iron railings had been thrown down for a length of about thirty yards; their stone foundations still held them in a slanting position, so that it was difficult to cross them; but in one place, one or two of the iron spears had been broken at the bottom, and through their yielding shafts, as I understood, a number of persons had got into the Lethe of the ground. It was at this spot that the great conflict, of which we have since heard so much, had taken place an hour or two before.

'A curious sight, sir,' observed an individual, gazing with awe upon the work of devastation, and whose appearance and apparel suggested one of those members of the Dissenting Body who assimilate very nearly to the High-Church party of the Church of England. He had the high rolling collar, and the high buttoned waistcoat, and the starched cravat of the divine, and yet with something wanting in the clerical tout ensemble which made me set him down as I have described. He had also called me 'Sir,' and clergymen rarely use that word, even when addressing a stranger. Yes, he was clearly a Dissenter; probably a Radical; possibly a sympathiser with these excesses. I make it a rule to ingratiate myself with every class, where I can do so without shocking my moral sense, and I thought I would sympathise with them a little too.

‘Curious indeed,' said I. ‘There is no knowing where these things will end. I am afraid a mistake has been committed by somebody.'

'Ah, you may say that,' answered he solemnly. 'A grave responsibility has been incurred.'

'Yes; I was right: His speech smacked of the Nonconformist pulpit.'

'You are come here,' said I, 'like myself, I do not doubt, to enter your protest against these proceedings; to bear witness, if necessary.'

Here I hesitated, for him to declare his views; but he only shook his head in a deprecatory manner, and observed: 'Just so.'

'To uphold the sacred right of Public Meeting,' remarked I boldly, 'is worth while to be misinterpreted in order to elicit the opinions of a man of this sort.'

'The sacred right of Public Meeting,' assented he, in the tone of one who is committing something to memory. 'Just so.'

This man was much admired by the young enthusiasts: his opinions were evidently the result of calm conviction. I wanted a companion, during the spectacle, who would unfold the motives of action of the Party of Disorder, and here he was.
A POPULAR DEMONSTRATION.

Chamber's Journal, Sept. 1, 1861.

'Ve can see nothing from here,' said I; 'if this hole in the railings was but a little bigger, one might creep through.'

'Just so,' replied he, with a manner so imperceptible that I quite irritated me.

While we talked, there were occasional 'Alarms and Excursions'—numbers of people within a fewing before the advance of the police or military, would return to their hole in the railing, the spikes of which were towards them, rendered exit exceedingly difficult. Only one at a time could pass through; there were dozens dashing of doing so at the same moment; and close behind them were supposed to be horse-soldiers at full speed. You may imagine the scene.

'If somebody was to pull out those two spikes,' remarked I reflectively, after a retreat of this description more disastrous than usual, they would not run in people's eyes when they did to get out.

Of those good-for-nothing, man-boys, who form such a large portion of a London crowd, happened to overhear this observation, and full of the spirit of mischief, at once proceeded to put my playful suggestion into effect. He pulled out the two iron staples in less time than it takes me to write it. Scandalised by his conduct, and overwrought lest I should be attributed to my directions, I cried out to him in a terrible voice to throw them among the trees, and fortunately he did so. Think of the remorse (independently of any term of imprisonment) which would have seized upon your Home Correspondent had the mob proceeded to arm themselves with iron javelins.

'An apt pupil,' observed my unknown friend, gravely; 'but a young gentleman likely to find himself in trouble.'

This I felt to be rather a personal observation, and one that needed a reply.

'Nay,' said I, 'he has really done no harm. Consider the danger of those spikes; and particularly in the case of these adventurous ladies.'

If it were possible that a gentleman of the ecclesiastical profession could so far forget himself as to wink with me, I should say that my companion here forgot himself to that extent; and yet there was a gravity about the action of the eye which rescued the movement from the imputation of mere caprice.

The crowd about us was almost wholly composed of respectable persons, attracted to the scene by curiosity; there were very few 'roughs' remaining on our side of the railings; and throughout that night I did not see half-a-dozen genuine 'workingmen,' the real political reformers having probably adjourned to Trafalgar Square, to hear the speeches.

The women, too, of whom there was a considerable number, were by no means of the lowest class; I should say the majority were domestic servants, who had asked leave to step out for an hour to see their cousin, and had come to see the excitement instead. There were, however, one or two old hags, who, thinking they scented blood in the air, expressed the most sanguinary wishes with respect to both the present and future of the police force, and reminded one very much of those terrible old women who used to sit and knit stockings in front of the guillotine, while aristocrats' heads were being chopped off.

'What are the men afraid of, old rot 'em!' observed one of these ladies. 'Why don't they cut all the Bobbies' throats; there's enough of ye, ain't there? added she, turning furiously upon your Home Correspondent.

A bow and a smile were all the adhesion I could find it in my conscience to give her.

'Come, the milantary won't hurt you, Susan,' cried a cherubic voice, as a stout middle-aged female passed me, accompanied by a florid, homely-looking girl, with cherry-coloured ribbons in her bonnet; 'you'll go right to their hearts for all their curious ears' (she meant their breasts); 'so who's afraid!' And I'm sure you needn't be afraid of the peril, Jemima,' retorted the girl, laughing, 'for I never saw a Bobby yet as you couldn't soften.'

If that fair pair were not respectably cook and housemaid, I am prepared to forfeit my situation upon this Journal. To see them squeeze themselves through the gap in the rails, was a spectacle not only diverting, but, especially in the case of the cook, prolonged; and if one of those peris to which I have alluded had taken place while that lady was in entire possession of the exit, the scene would have combined every element of interest—heroism and beauty, terror and a cul de sac.

'Really,' said I to my new acquaintance, 'I think we might venture where even the ladies go. There, now we have done it.' (We were both now on the forbidden ground.) 'The Rubicon of the Law is passed. We have thrown in our lot with the people: eh? Hurrah!'

'Just so,' replied my imperturbable acquaintance.

Throughout the shrubbery, there were knots of people—specks of light, for they were all smoking pipes—talking over what they had seen of the evening's proceedings, and exchanging the most exaggerated lists of killed and wounded; a few, as you could tell by the noise of breaking branches, were far more mischievously employed; these last, however, were, without exception, members of that dreadful race, the Man-boys. We pushed across the shruberies to the carriage-drive, and lo, a really pretty sight! the Horse Guards marching to and fro at a foot's pace in double line, with the moonbeams glinting on their naked swords and polished helmets; and the dark masses of people on both sides the way cheering them loudly. Then would follow a line of horse-policemen, whereupon the most hideous screeching and vituperation rent the air. 'Betchers! ah-h-h-h-h!' (a very expressive ejaculation of hatred.) 'Go home. Ah-h-h-h-h!!' These were the noises, the conflicting nature of which we could not understand, and had therefore so excited us when on the other side of the barrier. It was a very trying position for the gentlemen in blue, and I am afraid that the military—some of whom, perhaps, had their private reasons for not entirely sympathising with their allies—rather enjoyed it: at all events, many of the soldiers were grinning.

'I dare say these red-coated gentry,' observed I, in allusion to this circumstance, 'are not sorry to see their rivals in the affections of Susan and Jemima so unpopular.'

My companion was silent; surprised that he did not give utterance to his 'Just so,' I looked at him, and perceived his face to be convulsed with angry passion. He muttered something between his clenched teeth, and quickened his pace so as to get a few paces in front of me. It was evident that his feelings were stirred to their lowest depths; he was doubtless a physical-force Chartist; a Red Republican of the deepest dye. I was trying to recall some of the wilder doctrines of Ledru Rollin,
in order to keep him in good-humour, at all events, with me, when a hand lightly touched my sleeve, and a voice whispered a few rapid words into my ear. I knew the speaker: it was a policeman in whose Baywater beat my house was situated, and my wife had done some kindness to his wife, when she happened to stand in need of help.

I rejoined my companion with a heart that had almost stopped beating. His glance struck me, for the first time, as being singularly malevolent; his voice seemed to me to have grown gruff, and even discourteous, as he inquired: ‘What I thought of the sacred right of Public Meeting in Hyde Park now?’

‘A chimera,’ replied I eagerly. ‘It’s all nonsense. Why should Hyde Park be given up to such a rabble? Nay, why, indeed, should people wish to meet at all?’

My companion shot at me a terrible glance of suspicion, as he remarked: ‘And yet you sympathised with them, sir, an hour ago?’

‘I did,’ said I frankly. ‘But I honestly tell you I have been convinced of my error. People that hiss the police must be an abominable and wicked crew. I wonder for my part the civil force are so patient. [They really were wonderfully patient, so far as I saw.] Fortunately, however, these wrethes are not armed.’

‘No; no one thought of pulling up the iron spikes in the railings except you,’ answered the other in a tone which, combined with the pressure of the crowd, had all the effect upon me of a warm bath.

‘Yes,’ said I, ‘that idea of mine was an indiscretion, I own. In case of necessity, however, I should always range myself—I am sorry to differ from you, if your feelings are with the other side, but I must express my sentiments—along with the Party of Order. If the odds were forty to one, I should side with the civil force; that, as it seems to me, is the duty of every citizen.’

‘I am glad to hear you say so, for your sake,’ answered my mysterious acquaintance. ‘There, don’t ask any questions; but take my advice, young man, and go home to your family. There are some here who will pass the night much less comfortably, and you don’t know how near you have been to being one of them.’

‘Ha! ha!’ said I, with forced hilarity; ‘very good. But, indeed, I think you advise wisely. The tea, too, will be getting cold at home.’

With a short stern nod of farewell, my companion turned away, and as he did so, took out a leaf from a leather note-book, and tore it into fragments.

I hastened to the place of exit between the rails, scarcely precipitately than the victims of pusillanimous Panic, pushed my way through the foolish crowd that were still gazing longingly into the forbidden Eden, and leaped into a four-wheeled cab.

The words which the friendly Peeler had whispered into my ear, were these: ‘Take care what you say, sir; the man as has got hold of you [fancy!] is a detective in disguise; and if you’re not careful, he’ll have a case against you as sure as you’re alive.’

Had I been careful, and had he not got a case against me already? That was the question. If ever a man felt himself a Conservative from top to toe, it was your Home Correspondent for that last quarter of an hour. My conversation had been as genuine as it was rapid. No wonder that that Mysterious Myrmidon of the law had credited my assertions, and been mollified by those expressions of good-will: they had truly come from the heart—if, at least, the heart is the seat of prudent alarm. That judicious reference to the domestic ‘tea waiting for me at home’ was really, I think, very commendable, considering the tremendous nature of my situation, and a proof of great presence of mind. Your Home Correspondent, however, was never more convinced of the truth of that famous conundrum—Q. What is better than presence of mind in circumstances of personal peril? A. Absence of body—than when he found himself safe at his own house after attending that Popular Demonstration.

### THE DART

Flow onward, onward, onward flow
In stream and winding lake,
And change the shadows glassed below,
Of hill, and wood and brake.

Flow onward, onward, onward flow;
The deer is nought to thee:
Their rest, thine anchored lilies know,
But thou must always see.

Flow on, thou downward gliding water,
Through all the silent dark;
While sleep the fields, the reaper's daughter,
The partridge, and the lark.

Flow onward, onward, onward flow;
Dark hallowted towers
With crimson-curtained lights may glow;
Thou sharrest not their hours.

Flow onward, onward, onward flow,
The swift sea-billows call,
The snarling beach is crested with snow,
The hissing thunders fall;
The sea, the sea! the air of dawn!
The yellow morning-light!
Flow onward, onward, onward borne,
Broad river, to the fight.

Well done in all thou hast in to do!
Rest, rest within the sea;
How glorious spreads the sparkling blue,
A kindly pall for thee!

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