

HOW OWER  
VILLAGE WUR UPZET  
BE A  
ZELECT  
INVITATION BALL



Aelthough I da zay it mezelf, ower village is one a tha purtyest plazin in tha waste country. It da stan cloas to tha junction a two valleys, down ache a wich da vlow two purty leetle babblin streams a pure water, vull a trout besides other zart a vish, an wich gennelmin vrum Lunnen da come down ta ketch in tha sazon ! on tha bainks, bouth zides, be purty medders an pastures, an here an there a vew archets, beyond wich is tha cospes, an tother zide a thay be tha girt broad Wiltsheer downs stretchen away var miles an miles. Tha voke in ower village da number about two underd an vorty people, we've got a main purty Church, an a down rite good woold Passen in charge on un too, we

da look on un as tha fiather a tha parish, var whatever is wanted he's tha man ta goo to, ar ta zettle up any leetle dispute if arn shood arise, wich I'm thankvul ta zay yeant very offen; he's on capital terms wie Squire up at tha girt house, an can get un ta do anything inamwoast var tha good a tha parish.

He's a Passen any village med be proud o I can tell ee, a plain, honest, straight vorred man, nar bit a pride, or bigetory, a respects tha vew chaple voke livin here, as well as a do thay as gooes ta church, people zaays, tood be a badish job vor tha meetin voke, if ael tha church clargy wur like ourn, he deals we em ael alike, an dwoant zen his custem away to tha girt stores in Lunnen; Var as I have offen yeard un zaay, how can I get up in pulpit, an ax my people ta gie ta this, an ta gie ta that, an then zen me own money out a tha parish. No, no, a zaays, I'll spen it amang em as longs I can, an if tha hant a got things I da want, I'll tell em wur ta get it, an a did too; As I zed avore he an ower Squire be main girt vrens, an every zummer, he gets un ta gie ael tha parish a proper good trate out in his park ; an every winter, Passen hissself do gie a zupper an dance about Crismis time in tha village school room, to every biddy in tha parish as can come, high ar low, rich ar poor, no biddy is left out! Well, thease yer zupper an dance is looked vorred to every Crismis we a main deal a plecture, specially wie tha youngish voke, everybiddy is there in amwoast vrim tha Squire an his Leady, to tha unblest leabourer as wirks on his varm, jist like one vamily thay be, en everybiddy za plazed an zatisvied, be tha way in wich ael o't is car'd out, nar bit a pride is zeed, nar neet na biddy stannen on ther digity be keepin aloof ; Squire an Passen's daaters dances wie tha young men a tha parish, an thay an ther zons, we

tha village maidens, eece, an many a good hearty smack you cood hear, wur printed on zombiddy's cheek, zomewhere handy to wur tha misseltoe bough did aelwys hang.

Well, ael this had gone on var years an years, an nuthen ta mar ar upset it, till Nicklis Humby, ower carbinder an wheelwright, an a leaden man a tha village married his second wife, a reglar upstart zart of a ooman who thought everybiddy else in tha village beneath her. Nicklis wur churchwarden, an a good zart of a man a wur too, who everybiddy liked an spoke well o, twur a baddish job varn when his vust wife died ael on tha suddent like, an laved un we dree leetle childern, var it putt un about mainly, ta look atter thay an his business bezide, an you med well gace what a bodder, an trouble, it wur to tha poor man ; Ower school-measter, Mr Bunker, who wur a girt vren a his'n, persuaded un ta get married agean, an zed as ow he know'd a nice comley ooman, who hood be jist tha help meat varn, an it turned out ta be tha school measter's wife's sister. Zoo one Zundy, a nice leetle tay pearty wur planned at tha school house, an Nicklis wur invited ta zee, an be interduced ta Miss Hemmer Marchmint, wich wur her neam, she wur a tarblish looken ooman enuff, an about thirty-vive years woold, an head missus at Zaint Giles's, Walsbury, bit it seems, she wur getting a bit tired a school life, an hood be heartily glad of a chance ta gie it up, an zettle down in life, as you med be zure she had titivated herself up an put on her baste winnin ways and smiles var ta tempt Nicklis Humby ; zo poor feller he wur car'd right away we her looks, manners, am convisation, an vill auver yeard an ears we her, there an then, an zo gone on her wur un, that nuthen hooden do, bit what he mist putt

his own hoss into his trap, an drave her ael tha way into Walsbury thic very zeam Zundy nite, when you med be zure, Nicklis wur meller enuff, not only ta pawer out his love to her we ael his might, but to tell her ael about his business, an prospects var tha future. Well, thay zeemed to av kotch on an understood one anodder za well, that tha very next market day, Nicklis went into tha head jewler's shop at Walsbury, an brought a fifty shillin geagement ring, an atter school wur auver, went ta Miss Hemmer's rooms, presented thic ring, put un on her vingar, an no doubt sealed tha job we a good smack of a kiss accorden to custom, an wich things Miss Hemmer hadden got no jection to. Twur purty zoon noticed that Nicklis Humby didn get wom vrim Walsbury market till howers atter he used to. Well, atter zix months coortin, ta meak a long starry short, thay got married, bit there wur plenty a voke, as didn mince tha matter in zayin, that Nicklis hood zoon repent of his bargin, an twur true too, var two ar dree months thngs went purty smooth an tidy we tha new married voke, bit atter a time she began ta let tha villagers know she wur zombiddy a consequence. She had Nicklis's house turned topsy turvey, an had un ael new peapered an painted, tha vrunt dooer grained an varnished wie a girt brass knocker on un, jist like tha one on Passen's dooer, an a bran new letter box. Nicklis's harnymoneum wur put out in kitchen, ta meak room var her thirty guinea pianny, and as var tha dree leetle childern, they wur turned out every marnen as tho they jist com vrim a landry, an tha poor leetle dears had strict harders, not ta play, ar even spake to tha poor labourin vokes childern, tha poor leetle mites zeem'd vrited out a their wits, an twur like purgatory to em not var ta spake an play about we their vormer playmates, and ya med be zure what a rage their fiathers an

mothers got into, wen thay yeard as their childern wurden good enuff ta mix we Mrs Nicklis Humbys; as ta poor Nicklis hisself a diden look tha seam man, a zeam'd quite cowed like, she insisted on his drowen off his carderoy wirkin suit, wich she zed wur ony vit var varm laberers ta wear, an mead un av a suit a light tweed, we a clane collar, an shined boots every marnen, and she ordered his men an prentice bwoys to call un zur, an she mam; as var tha poor villagers she diden even condecend ta notice em at all, not even gwain to, ar commin vrim church; well, you mid be zure ael this diden suit our villagers very well, an they diden varget ta let out about her every time they met her, or her neam wur mentioned, “drat tha ooman,” zaays Betty Bouncer, “who's she, I wonder, ta gie herself zich airs?” “Ah, bigger than ower squire's leady,” zaays Zally Slinger, “I do veel var poor Nicklis, that I do,” zaays Lucy Lumpkin, “an his vust wife zich a umble veelin ooman,” zaays Caroline Crouder, “not a bit like thease un,” zaays Polly Painter, “a reglar mother stuckup I da call her ; I wonder who she is, an where Nicklis picked up we her?” “What, dwoant ee know, Polly,” zaays Jarge Gabbet, tha Blacksmith's son, who wur listened to their taak, “why she wur schoolmisses at Zaint Giles's, Walsbury, avore Nicklis run agean her, and I've a yeard, as ow she's sister to Misses Bunker, ower schoolmeaster's wife,” “O, well that accounts vor it,” zaays Car'line Crouder, “thame purty starchy ael thic vamly.” Well zich conversation as this, you cood hear nearly every day, in zom part a tha village or tha tother, in vact she wur ael tha taak.

Well Crismis wur draain on, an voke wur wonderen if Passens zupper an dance hood be good

enuff var Missus Nicklis Stuckup, as thay nicknamed her, bit a coose, as her usbind wur churchwarden, an a leaden man a tha village, she cooden very well get out on't even if she velt inclined. She'd a bin twould purty well, what zart of a start twur, be her zister. Zoo tha nite a tha pearty, an when every biddy wur got there an jist ready ta begin tha vust dance, in come Nicklis Humby we his new wife hangin on his yarm, she'd got on a girt long shiny dress, as show'd a goodish peart of her neck an buzzom, an a wur draggin on tha vloer behine her nearly a voot I warn, on her hans wur a pair a white gloves, as rach'd nearly up ta her elbers, we zeven ar haight buttens ta vasten em we, on her brist, wur a bunch a blue violets, an her hair wur ael of a frizzle like, jist as tho she'd a bin droo copse an got cotch'd in a tharn bush, a vine van wur hangen be her zide, an a goold chain roun her neck, Nicklis wur ael in black, wie a bit of a weastcwoat as show'd up nearly ael tha vront of his shirt, he had on a girt high stan-up collar, we a leetle tie about tha size of a boot leace, his cwoat wur jist tha sheap of a claa hammer, we no zides to un, an his white cuffs nearly covered his hans, a ardly know'd how ta use em, tha voke in tha room nearly steered their eyes out looken at em, as there wur no biddy there dressed like em, not even tha Squire, neet narn a tha young varmers, who begun ta giggle mainly ta zee Nicklis Humby an his new wife in vull blowed evenin dress. The Squire looked a bit interested like, as var ower Passen, a coose, he bein a man a tha cloth, cooden do no less than goo up to em, sheak hans, an gie em a smile an word a welcome.

Tha band then het up, an tha vust dance begun, Squire leaden off tha Passen's leady, an Passen tha Squire's, as var tha young varmers, thay cotch'd hold a tha purtyest girls thay cood vind, seam's they aelways

do. Nicklis, a coose, had ta stick to his wife, an swing she an her vine long dress about as baste a cood, poor feller, he too, mid as well bin in pugatory; var every now an then, she kep zayin, not ony ta he, bit ta any a tha chaps as got handy to her, mind my dress, mind my dress, zoo I leave ee ta guess what a lot a gigglin it caused; while they wur playin a poker, an she wur dancin we her brother in laa tha school measter, young Jarge Gabbet, tha blacksmith's son, in swingin roun he's young ooman, happen'd ta hatch his voot in tha tail a Mrs Humby's dress, auver he went ael a sprawl on tha vloor, we his voot right droo, an a coose, as he vill down, drag'd a girt piece right out a gathers, an tha mwore a tried ta get his voot out tha wuss twur, an bim by, the whole piece gied way, her sister, tha school measter's wife, rushed off into tha school house var a needle an drid, an manag'd ta run it together jist var a time ; bit my cracky, jist wurden she in a stew ta be sure; “A arkurd clown,” zaays she, “he yeant vit ta dance we pigs, let aloone we dacent society,” an she gied un sich a look, I wonders a wurden vrose, there an then. Tha young varmers who zeed tha haccident, “as Jarge declared twur,” wur vit ta bust out we laffen, bit tha Passen, who wur chatten wie tha Squire tother end tha room, zeein tha steat of affairs caaled on tha choir ta zing a glee, an while twur on, Misses Nicklis Humby an her sister left tha room an wurden zeed there no mwore thic nite; poor Nicklis cooden goo, as bein churchwarden, a had ta carve one a tha jints a mate at zupper. Zoo atter a vew mwore dances an glees, tha teables wur got out an zupper laid, Passen in tha cheer, zapourted be tha Squire an his vamly, while Nicklis wur in tha vice-cheer, an zapourted be zom a tha young varmers; his wife vowed, when he zent var her, that she hooden show her yeard in tha room no mwore thic

nite; an Nicklis had ta meak up a scuse var her, be zayin she'd a bad head yeak; You mid be sure, poor Nicklis had ta put up we a goodish bit a chaff at thic ar zupper teable. "Mr Humby," zaays one a tha varmers, "You'm zit on yer picked tail cwoat, I think." Anodder zays, "how handy thic claa hammer ull be, var ta pull out tha nails when you'm up to varm ta wirk." Poor Nicklis gun ta wish he'd never zeed a dress cwoat, let aloane wearin one at a village dance; what a vool a wur, ta lissen to his new wife wie her high notions.

Nex day, twur tha taak a tha village, especilly as Missus Bunker had let out, as how her sister's dress wur completely spwiled; an thay verily believed Jarge Gabbet ad done it on purpose; a coose, Missus Humby wur in a towerin rage, an zed as how tha dance wur mwore like a bear gierden; "bit what cood one expect," zaays she, "vrim zich a lot a outlandish people that never have a bin anywhere ta zee nuthen." She vow'd she'd av a ball of her own an invite a zelect pearty as know'd how to dance an behave therzelves; bit Nicklis hooden hear on't, "till upzet all tha village," a zed; "never you mind that, Humby," she zaays, "I shill carry out my intention, an give a zelect invitation ball on my birthdy, February tha vust next; twill all be paid var out a my own money, so you will have nuthen ta do we it, other than attend, as is yer duty to yer wife; I'll let these poor benighted village people know how things shoud be done." Poor Nicklis vound twur no good tryin to persuade her out on it, var as she'd a got money of her own, a wur bound ta gie in; zoo she writes to tha Passen to know if she cood have tha use a tha school rooms on February tha vust, var a leetle zelect birthday pearty. A coose ower Passen wur too goodhearted to refuse her or in vact anybidy else in



tha parish, as wanted em var a laavul purpose; zo she zent ta Walsbury an had zim gran cards printed on scented peaper, we goolden edge rims to em, an on em wur printed tha vollern -- "Mr and Mrs Humby request the pleasure of your company at a Zelect Invitation Ball, at the Schoolrooms, Hamwell, on Thursday next, Feb 1<sup>st</sup>, 189-. - Dancing to commence at 8 o'clock. Evening Dress. RSVP."

Well, tha pwestman brought tha cards one marnen jist as Nicklis an his wife wur havin brekfist, "What's in tha package?" a zaays, "the invitation cards," she zaays, "what, beant ee gwain roun an invite em yezelf seam as tha Rector da do?" "not likely," zaays she, "they will ael be sent be pwest to tha ladies an gennelmen I intend to be there." "an who med they be?" zaays Nicklis, getting a bit warm, "there's tha list," she zaays, takin a peaper out of her desk an drowen down avore un; "kindly rade out tha neames an tell me who an what they be," a zaay. "Vust," zays she, "the squire, his wife an vamily," "be drat if thay'll come," zaays Nicklis getting a bit excited, "wuntem," zaays his bride, "ony too plazed, var Miss Muriel an her sister was in yesterday; I told them my intentions an they bouth zed Pa and Ma hood be delighted;" "well we shall zee," zed Nicklis, draain a longish breadth; "then ther's the Rector, his Wife an two zons who are not gwain back ta college till tha day atter tha ball, zo thats very lucky," "very," zays Nicklis, "as praps they may gie ee a look in as I'm churchwarden;" "then ther's my sister an her husbind, Mister and Missus Bunker; young varmer Stokes and his cuzzen who's here on a visit vrom Lunnen, thay've twold me they will be delighted to accept." "No doubt," zaays Nicklis, "they'll goo anywhere, a

anywhen ta zee a purty girl ar two,” “thats a dozen,” zaays she, “an thats ael I intend ta axe in thase yer village,” “What,” zays her usbind, jumping up vrom tha teable in girt ameazement, “Beant ee gwain ta axe Tom Tug an his vamly at tha Blue Lion?” “no I am not, Mister Humby, do you think I and my friends from Walsbury could endure such people, who say offen for often, grow'd for grown, and who drop their H's mwoast dreadfully.” “dang ther H's,” zes Nicklis; “is vokes spectability ta be judg'd be their taak! thay'd much better drop their H's, ta my thinkin, then their manners, ar honest principles; then ther's Mister and Missus Jones, tha grocer and dreaper, she've had a college eddication ya know; aelthough Tom Jones yeant partickler about his H's;” “I've ascertained, thay'll be in Lunnen that day,” zaays she, “an a good thing var em too,” zaays Nicklis; “how bout thic new ooman at tha pwost office?” “What, that Miss Prim? no indeed. I've not vargotten her sly giggle when my silk dress was spwiled by that villan Gabbet, at your village dance ar rather romp;” “how bout tha two leady pupil teachers at yer brother in laas then?” “Well, yes,” zaays she, “I'd vargotten them, thay might be included;” “that ull meak fourteen, an tha raste about two dozen ar zo;” “I intend to have vrom my professional vrens at Walsbury; wich will also include a vew of tha baste men zingers vrim tha Cathedral there;” “Till be a dade vailure,” zaays Nicklis, jumpin up, “an I'll av nuthen to do we't, var I veels zartin sure till upset tha whole a tha villagers!” “Humby,” zaays she, draain herself up to her vull hite, an lookin as vearce as her eyes hood let her; “Its my pearty; Its my frens I'm going to have, an bear in mind, its my money as is gwain ta pay var it all; I've honouored you by lettin your neam appear on these cards, zo do as you

plase;” “And you can do as you plase,” zed Nicklis, as a went out an slamm'd tha door behine un. Poor feller, things went terrible wry we un ael thic ar day, var a thought many times upon his poor dear vust wife, who like hissself, wur za caam an umble in her manner; we no voolish notions a apin rich voke, be keepin up apperances, bit wur aelwys striven to do ael tha good she cood to tha poor voke around her; an to think now, he'd a bin car'd away, an married to a ooman, who's zole aim zeem'd ta be ta cut out her nayburs in every possible way; Bit what cood ee do poor feller, twer her money, an he spoosed he mis grin an beare it.

Well tha invitation cairds wur duly pwosted; the band, two viddles, a cornet, and bease viol were engaged, an Missus Nicklis Stuckup's ball tha taak a tha village. Ya cood skiercly waak along tha street, bit what you'd hear tha voke on about it: “Hast a got ar a invite ta Mother Stuckup's ball?” zaays Zal Zannett to Jarge Gabbet, tha blacksmith's son. “No I hant, Zal, nar beant likely too; an if I had, be drat if I'd mix up we zich a starchy ooman as that.” “Dang her pride an high notions, I da zaay, I spoose ther yeant na biddy good enuff in ower village, var her blessed kick up;” “Poor Nicklis, I da pity un that I do. If ever there wur a hinpicked usbind I'm drat if teant he.” An down in tha smoken room a tha Blue Lion “twur ael tha taak”; “Well,” zaays Tom Tug, tha lanlard, “she needen think that I, ar any a me vamly, da want ar a invite to her precious kick up. Who's she, I wonder, ta put on zich hayers? as tho she wur a duchess, instead a Nicklis Humby's wife, tho he, poor feller, is as honest a tradesman as ther is in thase yer country;” “Odd dang ee, measter, she yeant much I can tell ee,” zaays Jim Jinks, the brewer's man vrom Walsbury, who'd jist

drap'd in, ta av his glass a beer an bit a zammet, while his hosses wur baiten at tha door. "You'm taakin about Nicklis Humby's new wife, beant eee?" "Eece," zaays Tug; "Why dang ee, measter," zaays Jim, "her woold fiather wirk'd on tha town in Walsbury ael his life, an her mother, poor body, used ta goo charrin, roun ta tha nob's houssen; an thease yer ooman you'm taakin about, I've a know'd vrim a leetle child; twur like this, dwoant ee zee, gennelmen, she wur a shearp, clever leetle thing, an rin away vrim ael tha tother school childern in tha matter a larnin; zoo tha rector a Zaint Giles's took her in han an had her zent ta college, atter which she wur school missus at his, Zaint Giles's Schools, var years an years, an thats wur Nicklis Humby picked up we her, zoo I da know ael about her broughtens up, ya zee." "Well," zaays woold Gabbet, tha blacksmith, "I hant a got nuthen ta zaay ageanst her fiather nar mother; if thay wur poor hard wirkin voke, an paid ther way. Voke cant help bein barn'd in umble circumstances; bit what I da vairly hate ta zee, is ther childern who mid a got on a bit in life, put on zich hayers, an look down on everybidy else amwoast as beneath em; an trate ther poor relayshins we scarn." "That's jist what I da zaay, Jan," zed Ben Binks, the village cobbler, "bit I dwoant know how tis, goo wur ya will tis tha seam complaint we thease yer school missesy people, bein za starchy an stuck up, an looken down on other voke we contempt." "Why, bless ee, ther wur my daater Bess, who's now a school misses tother zide a Lunnen. Atter she'd a come wom vrim college declared she cooden stummick nuthen nar neet no nibby in tha village; an pertended too, not var ta unnerstan our country lingo; nar neet even ta know tha neams a different things. She actly one day out in gierden, axed tha neam of a rake as wur layen about on

tha voot path, I diden perseen ta hear her, bim bye, she happen'd ta tread on tha teeth on un; an a coose tha handle sprung up, an gied her a tarblish good whack in tha veace, she zoon vound out twur a rake then. A coose her mother an I gied her a good taakin to on tha volly a acten zo, an it done her a dale a good, var she dwoant pile on zich nonsense now.” “Well, tis like this here gennelmin,” zays Bob Beaker, ower carrier, “mwoast on em in tha nater a ther wirk, av got a bit mwore eddication then tha main on ess, an a coose at school, thay be so used to command, an be obeyed be tha young uns it da zart a grow upon em, an thay expects tha seam vrim grow'd up people, an ta be mead a lot on as well. I da knaa a goodish bit about it var I da offen hear em on about this, that, an tother in my van.” “Well, there med be zummat in that,” zaays Tom Tug, “bit this here stinkin pride zeems to be epperdemic amang em, bit be drat if Missus Nicklis Humby wunt vind out her mistake, if she thinks she's a gwain ta snub tha voke in thease yer village I can tell her.” Jist then, in came young Varmer Stokes, we his cuzzen vrom Lunnen. “Two drees a Scotch an a biscuit,” zaays Stokes, an as Tug brought it in, a zaays, “gwain ta tha ball, Tom?” “no,” zaays Tug, “got ar invite?” zaays Stokes, “no,” zaays Tug, “nar neet want narn nither, av you?” “oh eece,” zaays Stokes, takin out his pocket book, an drowen down tha invitation caird on tha teable. “That's up agean ee, an vore yer time naybur Tommas,” zaays tha young varmer. Tug picked un up, steered at un, we ael his eyes, and exclaims! “Well, I'm jigger'd, if that yeant good ; Zelect Invitation Ball, Evenin Dress, R.S.V.P., var God's zeak whatever do that mane?” “Oh that's a leetle bit a Vrench, zo my cuzzen here da zaay, an manes, 'a early reply will oblige',” “well,” zaays Tug, “it ought

ta mane Rale Stuckup Vokes Pearty,” “that hood be mwore like it, be drat if tooden,” zaays tha blacksmith at wich thay ael burst out laffen a good un; “a coose ya'll goo?” zaays Tug, “trust me, I'm on anywhere, if ther's a jig an zim purty girls about. Dwoant matter ta I where tis, at Mother Stuckups, ar down at tha Blue Lion.” “Ah, lucky thought,” zaays Tom Tug ael at once, an slappen his knee, “I'm drat if we dwoant av a ball here, thic very seam nite, when is it?” “February the vust,” zaays Stokes, “aelright I'm on, now mind that's vixed, an mind varmer, you an yer cuzzen here, gie ess a look in; you'll zoon av enuff on't up yander I'm thinkin, an ull be glad ta goo somewhere wur you can enjoy yerselves;” Zo this very zeam nite, a lot a tha young fellers of tha village, got together at tha Blue Lion, an greed ta av a ball, open to any of tha villagers an ther vrens, up in tha big club room. Tha band wur engaged, an Tom Tug, agreed ta gie every biddy as come, a nayshun good zupper var nuthen; Well, twur zoon zet about, an in amwoast ael tha young voke of tha parish, an lots outzide bought tickets, zixpence a piece, jist var to pay tha band we.

Zoo as tha day wur draaen on, tha pwoastmin wur main busy, laven letters at Nicklis Humby's house, vrom voke acceptin ther kine invitation to thase zelect ball. “We shall av an excellent pearty,” zaays she, to her usbind one marnin, “as nearly all of them have accepted, so I shall order everything var tha refreshments an zupper, vrom a pastrycook vren a mine at Walsbury, who'll undertake tha whole, an carry it out in a proper manner too;” “And you, Humby, ael that I want you, an your men ta do, is jist to erect tha side teable var it to be laid out on; the rector's gierdener an my brother in law, Mr Bunker, will see to tha

deckerations of the rooms.” In tha mane time things wur getting purty vorred, var tha oppersition ball as well; Tom Tug's wife ad a cook'd a ham, an a whoppen piece a beef; an he an zom a tha club chaps, had a deckerated up tha club room we evergreens, holly, an mizzeltoe ta rights, an in tha middle a girt bough on't hung down as bigs a goosberry bush, purty nigh. Well, tha very marnen a tha day as thease yer two balls wur ta come off, pwestmen agean dropped a main vew letters into Nicklis Humby's letter box; his wife cooden stop ta vinish her brekvist, vore she wur up, tearin em open; an hagerly raden tha contents; tha vust on em, wur vrom her dear an very great vrens, Measter an Missus Noggs, zayin as how, thay wur very zorry, bit missus Noggs wur jist took be tha hinflewenzer, an be tha doctor's strict orders mussin lave her room. The next wur vrom Miss Zally Slatter, baggin ta be excused, as her dressmaker, cooden manidge ta get her ball dress done in time, an she hooden insult her good vren Missus Humby be appearin there in one of her woold dresses, specily as zo many zwell people wur expected. Mister Zam Slaisher, tha principal tenor zinger at tha Cathedral, wrote ta zaay as how he an his young ooman had mead up ther minds ta goo an zee tha Drury Lean Pantomime thic day, as ther wur a chep excursion train up vrim Walsbury on purpose. “How dredvully provoken,” zaays Missus Humby, “the very man I wanted above ael others, var his lovely voice, jist as tho thay cooden a putt off tha pantomime to another time.” The two Miss Tribles begged to be excused, as thay'd zim vrens a commin ael on tha zuddent an thay cooden lave wom; in vact ther wur quite a dozen who had accepted, droo one caas ar anodder, wur gwain ta back out; “Ah,” zaays Nicklis, “Jist like as tha scripiter da zaay,

'they ael begins ta meak excuses';" "Eecee," zaays his wife, "an I'll do as tha scripiter da zaay, too. I'll zend out inta tha villages an invite em ta come in, var I'm determined ta av tha number I've provided var." Zoo, as ael tha cairds wur used up, she zat down an rote zeven ar haight, polite notes to zim people a tha village, an near to, an she had tha audacity ta zaay, that droo inadvertins she'd a quite vargotten em bevore, an hoped thay'd vargie her negligence be commin. Misses Zimpkins, tha varm bailee's wife, purty zoon answered tha note, be zayin, "much abliged var yer zecond-hand invite, bit me an me usbind av got other engeagements." Young varmer Zimmonds an his sister, wrote back to zaay, "notice too short." As var Mister Bob Bains, tha Squire's coachmin, he called roun ta zaay as how he an he's wife had accepted a invitation vrom Tom Tug at tha "Blue Lion Hotel." Tha rest on em, done seam as tha Squire, trated she an her letter we zilence.

A coose ael this, put Misses Humby in a terryable rage, she ardly know'd how ta keep her zelf vrom bustin out in tears, var now it begun ta dawn upon her, that her grand zelect invitation ball wur gwain ta be a grand vailure; an what mead it wuss, about vower a clock thic atternoon, a reglar vull blow'd snow starm zet in, an diden gie auver till tween haight an nine a clock thic nite. Well, at haight a clock, tha school rooms wur ael ablaze we light, an poor Nicklis in his drase suit, wur shiverin at tha door, waiten to receive tha guests when thay come in; his wife an her sister, in ther low bodied trailin dresses, wur at tha class room dooers waiten to receive tha ladies. Bout quarter atter haight in comes young varmer Stokes an his cuzzen vrim Lunnen; zoon vollied be tha two



young woman pupil teachers, who the two young men soon seemed to get on good terms with; because there were no bidders else, about quarter to nine, the Rector, his Lady and his two sons looked in as they went, to congratulate Missus Nicklis Humby on her birthday; before nine o'clock, just a dozen and a half voices had turned up, continuing the musickers. Missus Humby went to look terribly white and agitated, and whispers to her sister "whatever detains the people from Walsbury," "They must be crazy mad," says Nicklis, "to come seven miles a night like this, for a bit of a dance," soon after a carriage drove up to the door, and out got two of Missus Humby's school pupil teachers from Walsbury; as soon as they'd done hugging and kissing one another she heard a sign that the musickers were to begin, and they soon set up a country dance, after which the Rector and his Lady wished them good night and a pleasant evening, and soon heard themselves skierce, but allowed their two sons to stop a little bit longer, at Missus Humby's earnest request. Well, things went terribly slow all the evening, everybody there thinking there must be something wrong somewhere, and to relieve the monotony, supper was announced a little before twelve intended, and at which only sixteen people sat down, when room and grub enough had been provided for fifty voices. After twelve over, young farmer Stokes had up a terrible cracker; begging to be excused from being longer, as his cousin had to start very early next morning for Lunenburg, and he had to be up to see him off. They were both mainly sorry they went to leave such a nice party, but that fact notwithstanding, both of them were got terribly sick on't and wanted to be off. Well, they'd no sooner got outside, than they took to their heels all through the snow, and heard for the Blue Lion as fast as they could carry them, and here in the club room was as merry a

pearty a zixty people as you'd wish ta zee; they wur ael jist zittin down ta zupper, as tha young varmer an his cuzzin got in, every eye wur turned to em in a moment. "Hel oh!" zaays Tom Tug, the cheerman, "What, had enuff on't then? ah, I thought tood be a bit too starchy even var you, come along bouth on ee, jist in time var a leetle snack." "Well, " zaays Stokes, "'tis tha vust time as ever I bin to a zelect invitation ball, an I'm thinkin till be tha last in thase yer village at least. Why drat it, twur mwore like a vuneral veast than a merry Birthday Pearty; cooden abide it longer var tha life oance. I be sorry var poor Nicklis, that I be."

"Well, vrens," zaays Tom Tug, when zupper wur auver, "I, an me vamly, be terrible glad ta welcome ee ael here, an ta zit down we ess ta thease yer bit of a spread; an wich I hopes as how every one on ee av done justice to, an enjoyed, as ye ael da know, I've liv'd in thease yer village ael me life, an at thease very house, the 'Blue Lion,' wur I wur barn'd, an which I've a bin lanlard o' ever zunce me fiather died, an that's nigh on vive an twenty years. Well, as you da ael know, nuthen bit good will an vrenship, have existed amangst ess, ael that ar time, dwoant matter, wither tis high ar low, rich ar poor, Tom Tug an his vamly is tha zeam ta ael, an on tha baste a terms we em too, an now ta think me vrens, that atter ael thase years, a proud, haughty, stuckup zart of a ooman, shid come an upzet ee, be getting up what she caals a zelect invitation ball in ower school room, an which, accordin to ower two good vrens jist com in, av a turned out to be a leetle too zelect." "An zarves her right," zed a chorus a voices, "'tis to be hoped she'll larn a lesson, var if village voke be poor an umble, an hant a got tha benefit a much eddication, thay beant a gwain ta be snub'd we town

skippin school missessy voke, I can tell em,” zaays Car'line Crowder. “Now then, vrens, clare tha teables, an we'll continny tha dancin; an whatever ya avs ta drink Tom Tug is a gwain ta pay vor't. Bit, be zure an mind me vrens, that I dwoant want ta hear ta marrer marnen that the 'Blue Lion' Ball wur disgraced be any rowdyisim, ar drunkenness, we've a got ower good neam to keep up, an we'll let em zee we intends dooen on it too.” Zoo tha band het up, an tha dancin went on till nearly vawer a clock nex marnen, then at a zignal vrim Tom Tug, God seave tha Queen wur zung, an then they ael crossed hans an zung Woold Lang Syne we ael their might an main; an then gied dree hearty cheers var Tom Tug an his vamly, an dree cheers var tha Blue Lion Ball, an I'm sure thay mist a bin yeard ael auver tha parish purty ni. Well, I can assure ee, an ower pleecemin ull back it up that everybidy went to their woms as quiet an steady as if thay'd jist a come vrim church. As ta Missus Humby's grand zelect ball, everything at tha schoolroom wur as quiets tha dade be twelve a clock, var zom how or other, ael tha voke present wur glad ta get away vrum it as zoon as thay cood. As you mid gace, Missus Humby wur in a dredvul pelt at tha vailure of her grand ball, an poor Nicklis had a baddish time on it var zom vew weeks atterwirds; However, as time went on, it wore off, an I'm plazed ta zaay, in a year ar two she got rid of her high notions an proud sperrit, an zettled herself down ta yearn tha good wishes as respect of her poorer nayburs, zeam as poor Nicklis's vust wife. Ower people zoon noticed what a alter'd ooman she'd become an zoon vargot ael about her grand zelect invitation ball, aelthough tha young varmers did offen chaff Nicklis, an ax un when his wife wur gwain ta get up anodder, bit she never attempted it agean.