

WHAT BECOMES OF THE LOST LUGGAGE.



IN these high-pressure days, when the shortest as well as the longest journeys must be undertaken by the aid of the iron-horse, a railway station affords perhaps more opportunities of amusement and instruction in the study of our fellow-creatures than any other place of public resort. It has been said that you can only know a man in his own home; but, for the person who wishes to become more intimately acquainted with the peculiarities of the mass of his fellow-creatures, a London railway terminus offers the most varied field for observation. In the ever-changing, living panorama there exhibited, there is no more amusing scene than that which may be witnessed outside the Inquiry Office for Lost Luggage, almost at any time, but particularly in the height of the great summer tourist season, or, better still, on such occasions as the Christmas holidays afford. To take one's place, on Christmas Eve or Boxing-Day, beside the *queue* which forms outside the Lost Luggage Office, and listen to the entreaties and threats of the hapless ones, whose enjoyment is likely to be marred by the loss of some of their luggage, is as amusing an occupation as can well be imagined. "It's as good as a play," with the recommendation that there's "no charge for admission." The schoolboy who has lost his "two boxes and a rabbit-hutch;" the sailor in search of a "large chest, a canvas bag, a parrot, and a monkey;" the old lady in chintz, disconsolate for the loss of her band-box; the tall, pompous gentleman, who insists that "telegrams must be sent at once for his portman-teau;" the stout party in brown, who "wouldn't ha' had her box lost not for anything, and perhaps then porters a-prying into her garments;" the bashful young father, whose spouse, but recently a bride, insists upon his taking his turn in the crowd, and making minute inquiries for the baby's *berceaunette*; the confidential man, who makes no secret of his being in search of a brown paper parcel containing "my wife's new dress, you know: won't she be angry if it's really lost!" These, and many another, make up a group which a Hogarth or a Frith might well transfer to canvas, but that half the point of the fun would be lost in the impossibility of perpetuating, by that means, the various sayings of the crowd.

But if there is amusement outside, how much more of interest does a visit to the interior of the Lost Luggage Store afford! For variety of articles, no bazaar can equal the curious collection of property which the rooms appropriated to this purpose contain.

"Why, I should think you have everything here," said a wonder-struck searcher for lost property, while I was examining the heterogeneous concatenation at the Paddington Terminus, "from a baby's shoe to an

anchor." Whether those two articles represent the extremes of artificial manufactures, I cannot say, but the expression was literally accurate. "Yes," said the obliging porter, "I can show you both;" and, truly enough, there was a moderately heavy anchor—large enough for a twelve-ton yacht—while of babies' shoes there was no end. Boots, gloves, and hats were in sufficient number to stock a small shop. It is strange how a man can leave a pair of boots behind him in a railway-carriage: men don't generally carry these articles about loose in their hand, and if they took them off their feet while travelling, they would surely put them on again when they reached their destination. Yet this theory is hardly complete, as proved by the fact that a pair of crutches has often been found in a railway-carriage, taken to the office, and never inquired for. If a man can leave his crutches behind him without noticing the omission, there is no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that many of these boots—Bluchers, Wellingtons, patent-leathers, Balmorals, of every size and shape—must, many of them, have come off the feet of travellers during their journey. "We have crutches every year," said the porter, "at our annual sale, when we sell off the unclaimed goods. One year we had no crutches, but—a wooden leg!"

I measured one pair of boots, thirteen inches long, by four inches across the narrowest part of the sole. It seemed that if the owners came to claim their boots, and hats, and gloves from among the array that presented itself, they must have had some difficulty in identifying them, but the owner of this giant pair could have had no trouble. Probably they belonged to "Chang," alias Mons. Brice, the French giant. "And that reminds me of a tale," as President Lincoln used to say:—Mons. Brice was wont to take a ticket and a half when travelling by rail, to secure plenty of room. I once saw him take his seat in a second-class carriage, armed with his ticket and a half, when eleven people immediately followed him into the compartment, where there was room only for eight. A twelfth insinuated himself into the compartment through the window after the guard had locked the door. Probably the giant's feet got so swollen under the pressure of his thoughtless admirers, that he was obliged to take off his boots, and was afraid to claim them afterwards for fear of attracting further attention.

Pots of Devonshire cream, marked "To be left till called for," and actually left till they become so offensive as to compel their destruction; a coffee-pot; a bricklayer's hod; a speaking-trumpet; a scythe; a razor-grinder's barrow, gay in its blue paint, and the inscription, in letters afflicted with St. Vitus's dance, CUTLER TO HER MAJESTY; a purse containing eight pounds in gold, and numberless memoranda, "of no use to any one but the owner;" a Stilton cheese; a door-key; a barrel-organ; dolls innumerable; books without number; umbrellas with handles, umbrellas without handles, handles without umbrellas, and an army of walking-sticks, sufficient to set up all the lame

and the halt of the metropolis—these were among the articles gathered together in that weird assemblage of “lost luggage.” That bricklayer, that organ-grinder, that “working cutler,” must have been either *very* forgetful—so forgetful as to have forgotten that they *had* forgotten their stock-in-trade, their means of earning a living—or very Mark-Tapley-like in their constitution, never to have inquired for such out-of-the-way articles. The people who lose a hat or glove may be excused for not being very diligent in their search after commonplace property like this; but what shall we say of the party who left the speaking-trumpet behind?

The pile of boxes, portmanteaux, and bags was large enough for a Paris mob to build a formidable barricade with, and their various shapes were sufficiently grotesque to suggest the thought that they were never likely to be called for by their owners, who must have lived somewhere in the Middle Ages. And yet they were only the collection of a twelvemonth, for every year the railway companies sell all the unclaimed property in their possession.

The books were numerous enough to form a good library, and the range of subjects, from “Philosophical Essays” to “Artemus Ward, his Book,” was large enough to please the most fastidious tastes. If the officials ever had any leisure, which I don't believe is ever the case, the corner of the room in which the books are stored should be the redeeming feature in the worry of their occupation.

The quantity of articles peculiar to babies and children prompted me to make the, as I thought, rather foolish observation: “I suppose you never have any children left here?” “Oh, yes!” was the reply. “I've been in this office nineteen years, and in my time I've known three babies left here. Two were dead, but the last one began to cry, and after pulling open several hampers containing dogs and poultry, we at last found the poor little thing carefully tied up in a bundle amongst a lot of other things. We took it to

the workhouse close by, and now that baby is a boy seven or eight years old.” I forget the name by which it is called, but I relate the circumstance as it was told to me.

The numberless articles, some almost worthless, others of considerable value, but whose description would afford a very slight clue to their recovery, such as pencil-cases, penknives, coins, purses, &c., not to mention the umbrellas and other similar properties, which are daily brought to the office by the porters, proved the general honesty of the servants of the company, who might well imagine that many of the articles which they find, and send to the general repository, could hardly be recognised and would never be claimed, and might thus be tempted to appropriate them.

Still inquiries are made which, at first sight, would appear very futile. In the official record of inquiries for lost articles, I found such entries as “odd shoe, left in carriage;” “two hats, tied” (these are marked in another book as having been “found, badly crushed”); “one boot, elastic sides;” “one glove, black kid;” “spectacles in case;” “a half-sovereign;” “a very old silk bodice” (referred to as “found, in bad condition”); “a horse-collar.” The owners must have been very sanguine to have expected to recover articles with such slight characteristic peculiarities, but in very few cases did their confidence appear misplaced. Indeed, the officials complain that too many goods are left in their charge without ever being claimed, till they accumulate in such quantities that they become unmanageable; and every searcher insists on the whole stock being turned topsy-turvy, in the hope of discovering his particular property. Of the articles entered as “found,” and brought in by the porter, not one in five is inquired for or claimed, so that the public seems to be in fault both in the ease with which it loses its property on the rail, and the laxity it displays in claiming it at the recognised office for “Lost Luggage.”

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SOME CURIOSITIES OF MUSIC.



IF all the arts, music, it is said, is the one about which most nonsense is talked. Certainly it is one that has had to encounter a great deal of prejudice—and prejudice, too, of a sort which it is always difficult to dispel.

But the times are gradually changing, and people are beginning to see that music has a noble mission in the world, and is not merely intended to tickle our ears more or less with a combination of sounds. “No art,” remarks one writer, “is more closely connected with the inner life of man than music.

Its magic power steps in at precisely the point where the positive expression of language fails.”

One of the best friends that music ever had was Luther the reformer. He loved it passionately, and held it to be one of the most precious gifts of the Creator. He urged the practice of it in schools. “A schoolmaster,” he said, “must know how to sing, otherwise I do not respect him.” Those who remained unmoved by music were, in his estimation, like stocks and stones.

The highest form of any art is that which is dedicated to the service of Christianity. In it we are sure to find expressed men's deepest emotions and most sublime aspirations. The first bright light in the history of ecclesiastical music was St. Ambrose, in the fourth century. The next was St. Gregory the Great, who lived at the close of the sixth and beginning of the seventh centuries. St. Gregory was the regenerator