

TRAVELLING THIRD CLASS.



IN third-class travelling—when you are weary of contemplating the advertisements, and have ceased to find anything entertaining in the illustration of a gentleman decidedly out of sorts, who seems to have

caught up an opera-glass under the impression that it is a smelling-bottle, or of an old gentleman in an arm-chair and a good humour, who is insanely patting the head of a quatern loaf with the idea that it is one of his children, and when a general idea exists in your mind that Her Majesty the Queen takes snacks at the bar, and finds them of the greatest service in allaying all disorders of the head and throat, and that somebody's sewing-machines are the best because they are made by simply pouring on boiling water and stirring until the train stops—you may vary the monotony of the journey by turning your attention towards your companions.

Not that all noticeable points and eccentricities of travelling humanity are to be observed in third-class passengers, but it is amongst the mass of persons that amusing incidents are more marked and more varied, and "the people" having a strong partiality for travelling as cheaply as possible, much prefer the third class to any other at present existing. Our London railways too, bearing as they do such multitudes of people, who use the railway as they use the streets, without that preparation and travelling reserve which Englishmen assume on long journeys, present generally the most extensive field of observation.

For there is something amusing in the very crowding of the railway carriage if you only look at it in the right light, and do not happen to be the corner man when there are nineteen people in the same compartment. We are ten in, already, perhaps. Three men rush to the door, jump in, and finding no room to sit down, range themselves along the middle of the compartment. But two other baffled wanderers have seen them enter, and following the rule of the railway, which, on such occasions, seems to be "jump in where you see others jump in," they open the door, step in, and smilingly endeavour to climb up your shins, failing which, they trample heavily on your ankles and feet. They are in the midst of an apology when they are pushed along by a stout lady and her daughter, fol-

lowed by a gentleman, who would never get the whole of his body in if the guard did not at this moment shut the door forcibly on his back. We are now packed so tight that we can only hope the doors will not burst open, or we shall fall out on to the line like stones out of a cart when the tail-board is let down. The train starts. Instantly four people standing up fall into the laps of their fellow-passengers, and the train is well on its journey before they have managed to get up, and the laughter is over.

It is to be regretted that the intoxicated man should claim such a prominent notice here. But it is true that a vast number of that genus seem to avail themselves of railway services when the natural mode of progression fails them. We can recollect a white-headed old gentleman, quite tipsy, who fancied that he was the guard of the compartment, and accordingly stood by the door all the way, and fell out every time it was opened. This however did not abate his good humour, for he always jumped in again, and called out the name of the station we were approaching, which announcements might have been of some service had he not entirely omitted to mention the first part of the name, only shouting, "Street, street, street," "Road, road, road," "Cross, cross, cross," as we glided into the various stations.

A singular type to be met on railways is the "man who knows." It is he who possesses an acquaintance with the ramifications of the line by which you are travelling, which is fairly staggering. For ourselves we confess to a most unqualified ignorance of how we are going to get to any station on any line—the task of getting into the right train and changing at the right points being all we can encompass. But the "man who knows" understands the programme of the journey



TOO LATE!

better than the engine-driver, and the working of the line better than the superintendent.

When an average man travels with the "man who knows," conversation like this will often ensue :—



"THE FIRST NOTES OF 'MADAME ANGOT.'"

"This train is half-an-hour late," says the average man.

"It had to wait for the up-express," says the "man who knows."

"Oh, indeed! I thought there was no up-train after nine o'clock."

"Not on the main line. But this is worked in with the branch from Addleborough, and they shunt a carriage here, and then take us right up to London."

The average man, being tolerably bewildered, says he was not aware of that.

"Oh, yes," returns the "man who knows," "there are two of these trains a-day, worked by different engines, half-way with each. This isn't the engine that we had when we started. That's gone to Bristol. The company don't like it, but they can't help it, because this is a loop. That's the reason we had to change at Mumby. If we'd kept straight on, we should have been in the train we're waiting for now!"

And having aroused a suspicion in the minds of all his fellow-passengers that they are in the wrong train, he relapses into silence.

He is unsympathetic too, generally. It is he who tells you, when the stoppage of the train has made your backbone vibrate like a Jew's-harp, and has seemed to nearly shake your brains out, that "that's the hydraulic brake," and it is he who knows all the spots on the line where accidents have happened, and

he never fails to mention such occurrences when you are going past the place.

There is a lurking creature who prowls about the railway, who is much to be avoided. He enters quietly when the train is on the point of starting. He is ragged, dirty, and he wipes his face with his coat-sleeve. As the train moves off he glances furtively around, and commences to fumble in his breast for something which turns out to be a battered cornet. He places it to his lips, his eyes glare, his cheeks swell, apoplexy is imminent, when the first notes of "Madame Angot" issue from the instrument, and every one in the carriage assumes an abstracted air, as if they had been asked a particularly good riddle, which they had hopes of guessing after a little consideration.

We are earnest supporters of the practice of conversing on journeys, and regret in common with most people the reserve which is a natural characteristic of English people when travelling. But at the same time it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the Metropolitan Railway is not exactly the place for conversation, especially in the middle of the tunnels. Yet there is always some one who will insist on talking in these cases, and who consequently brings about the following painful state of circumstances:—You have a man opposite you violently moving his jaws, while a clear gong-like noise seems to come from the middle



"WE ARE NOW PACKED SO TIGHT."

of his head, and to go right into the middle of yours. When you see his lips at rest, you have to raise your eyebrows expressively or smile meaningly, or to adopt any neutral form of expression in order to keep up a pretence of interest, although you have not heard a word of what he has been saying. But do not be entrapped into anything more decided. It was once our misfortune to travel with a gentleman who, as the train was moving out of the station, commenced an anecdote of how he once saw a very respectable man—and here the progress of the story was rendered inaudible by the noise. When we drew up at the next station, the gentleman was still pursuing the same story, and was in the midst of a simile about swans when his voice was drowned in the roar and rattle again. He continued in this way for four stations, and as we approached the fifth, the anecdote came to an end, and as the *finis* was accompanied by some gesture and

a bump of the narrator's hand on the window-ledge, we thought it incumbent on us to pay him the tribute of a little interest, so said—

"Dear me! Well, I should really never have thought that. That's the most extraordinary part of all."

"Eh?" said he, rather abruptly, as the train drew up.

Being fairly in for it, we repeated that we thought that very odd indeed—in fact, the oddest part of the whole affair.

Upon which, after a gloomy silence, he said—

"I am sorry you have such a poor opinion of my honesty."

"Bless me! what gave you that idea?"

"Why, I tell you that after I found out who the purse belonged to, I gave it him back again, and you say that that was very odd indeed, and the oddest part of the whole affair!"

Picture my feelings!

A. H.

A FLOWER FROM THE SOUTH.



LITTLE maiden glad with sunny glow,
With warm-flushed features, and bright piercing eye,
And cherry-lips full ripe for smile or sigh,
O'er which the laughter-ripples come and go
Like merry wavelets dancing to and fro;
A face that's flooded over brilliantly
As when in summer all the rich fields lie

Gold-tinted where the ruddy sunbeams flow—
A little flow'ret this of no cold land,
No hot-house plant e'er needing watchful care;
A native rather of some sunnier strand,
Growing in wild untrained luxuriance there;
A sweet bud born beneath a Southern sky,
To blossom to perfection by-and-by.

G. W.

LADY CLERKS IN THE POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK.



THE question of the employment of educated women has for a long time assumed too grave a form to be lightly set aside; and the time has arrived when talk has resolved itself into action.

We are continually hearing now of new work for ladies, and it is a pretty certain proof of the greatness of the necessity, that there is never any lack of candidates when openings are offered for their employment.

A staff of female clerks has lately been appointed at the Post Office Savings Bank, and between sixty and seventy young ladies are now employed there.

The idea of the appointment of women to this work was doubtless suggested by their employment in the Telegraph Clearing House, although that of which we

are now speaking requires a better education than any which is open to women in the other departments of the Post Office.

Before the present staff in the Savings Bank was completed, there were two examinations, about one half of the number beginning work in the summer, and the other half only last autumn. The subjects of examination were, of course, the same in each case, consisting of six subjects:—Arithmetic (including vulgar and decimal fractions), handwriting, orthography, geography, grammar, and composition.

These subjects are evidently chosen in accordance with the requirements for the duties, a fact which, as it is not always the case, may be worthy of mention. The importance of arithmetic in a savings bank is self-evident, while the use of geography should not be under-estimated, since the Post Office Savings Bank, of course, has dealings with all parts of the United Kingdom, and occasionally with depositors abroad. In fact, a very little insight will serve to show that, from the most practical point of view, not one of the subjects could well be dispensed with.

The ages of the candidates were limited, none having been admitted to the examination under sixteen or over thirty.

Many ladies who cannot or who do not wish to be idle would gladly compete for a Government appointment where the hours are not heavy, and where there is not merely one settled duty and one fixed salary, but scope