

missary was not only a person of official importance, but also of wealth.

Some time after his decease, his son, John George, proceeded from England to take possession of his rightful inheritance, and he managed, as we have seen, to make such good use of his property that he died a millionaire some fifty-three years later.

Madame Tomsett, Vocalist.

MADAME TOMSETT, a well-known Tyneside soprano, is a native of Sunderland. At an early age she was found to possess a phenomenally full and round voice. Before reaching her teens she was taken in hand by Canon Bamber for his choir at the Catholic Church, Bridge Street, Sunderland, where she was a leading singer for some years. She first took lessons with the late Mr. Robert Ferry, a prominent local basso, who subsequently engaged her to lead the chorus of the Sunderland Philharmonic Society. On the occasion of that body giving a performance of Handel's



MADAME TOMSETT.

"Alexander's Feast," the solo soprano from London became indisposed before the concert commenced, and, at a moment's notice, Miss Tomsett was called upon to take her place, which she did with the greatest credit and to the satisfaction of the audience.

After remaining with Mr. Ferry for some time, it was decided to send the youthful vocalist to London to acquire a thorough musical training. She was placed under the late Dr. Wylde, principal of the London Academy of Music, where she also received lessons in singing from Signor Lablache, who entertained a high opinion of her vocal powers. After barely nine months tuition, she was entered as a candidate to compete for the Crystal Palace prizes at the National musical meetings, among other competitors at that time being Miss Leonora Braham, Miss Bolingbroke, Miss Adeline Paget, Miss Jessie Jones, Mr. Leslie Crotty, and Mr. Herbert Thorndike. Notwithstanding that she had had much less experience than the other competitors, she managed not only to sing into the first half-dozen who were selected for final adjudication, but carried off the certificate for "excellence in singing, voice, and expression" (similar to that won by Mr. Crotty in the baritone class), which certificate was signed by the judges, Sir

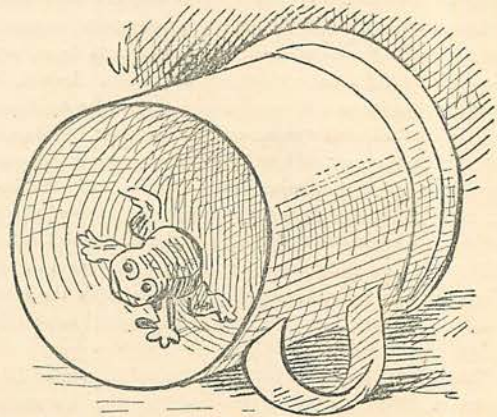
Julius Benedict, Luigi Arditi, and Wilhelm Ganz. The London papers were very lavish in their praise of the wonderful progress the Sunderland soprano had made in so short a time. The *Standard* said:—"Miss Tomsett was nervous, but the resonant qualities of her beautiful ringing voice completely filled the Crystal Hall. This young lady is a student of the London Academy, and her progress is nothing short of marvellous, considering that she has received scarcely a year's tuition. A brilliant future is before this vocalist if she but husbands the splendid resources at her command."

Miss Tomsett afterwards sang with great acceptance at Gresham College for Dr. Wylde; at the St. James's Hall and Crystal Palace concerts with Mr. Mann's orchestra (notably on the occasion of the first visit of the Shah of Persia); at operatic recitals with Madame Elena Corani and Mr. J. W. Turner; at Signor Arditi's, and elsewhere. Instead of remaining in London, however, she returned home, and her services have since been much in request for oratorios and concerts in the North of England and in Scotland. For some years she has been principal soprano at St. Michael's Catholic Church, Newcastle. She married a local journalist, Mr. William Heenan, and has a daughter who is already a talented pianist.

The accompanying portrait is from a photograph by Mr. James Bacon, of Northumberland Street, Newcastle.

Toad Mugs.

PRACTICAL jokes in pottery, known as toad mugs, were familiar to our grandfathers. But they are now mere curiosities, preserved here and there by old people among other relics of the past. Two facts seem to be certain about them—first, that they were largely manufactured in the North of England, chiefly in Newcastle; and, second,



that they were generally decorated with rough drawings illustrative of the naval prowess of Great Britain.

The sketch here given shows the interior construction

of the toad mug. A moulded figure of a toad was attached to the side of the vessel, so that the drinker as he drained the contents of the mug only became aware that his friends were having a joke at his expense when he had nearly finished his draught. The earthenware reptile, it will be seen, was sufficiently natural to startle and disgust the unhappy person upon whom the hoax had been played. The drawing here given was made from a mug which was lent to us by Mr. R. Sheel, of Low Fell, Gateshead.

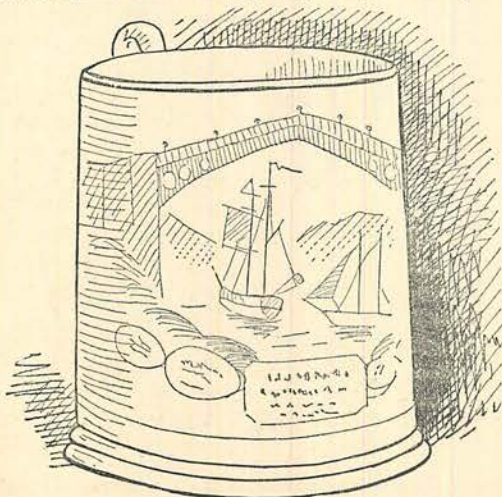
As to the exterior decorations of these singular mugs, the following extract may be quoted from an article on "Curious Old China" which appeared in *All the Year Round* for 1875:—

In a pint mug of coarse ware, coated outside with orange-coloured enamel, appeared two full-length portraits of Lord Rodney, and an oval medallion, with a ship laid on in cream-coloured paste, tinted green. The vessel represented is De Grasse's flagship, *Ville de Paris*, taken by Rodney in 1782. The famous "Rodney jug," made at Derby, is richly ornamented, and, by a quaint fancy, the head of the hero, topped by a mighty three-cocked hat, is made to form the spout. Liverpool, Newcastle, and other English potteries never tired of doing homage to Britannia, the Wave Ruler. Punch bowls were painted with a ship in full sail, and, above it, the rather mildly punning motto, "Success to Friend"; and quart mugs were painted in black, with Duncan's ship, the *Venerable*, towing De Winter's ship, *Vryheid*, and inscribed with the following verse:—

Vain are the Boasts of Belgick's sons,
When faced by British ships and guns—
Tho' de Winter does in Autumn come,
Brave *Duncan* brings his harvest home.

As might have been expected, the gallant Nelson figured on pint and quart mugs, with "Victory," and other mottoes. His glory was also set forth in those curious mixtures of sentiment and fancy, called "frog mugs." The exterior of the Nelson "frog mug" is painted black, with monument and trophies in honour of Lord Nelson, while in the inside lurks a roughly-modelled frog-coloured "proper." The reptile is represented climbing up the inside of the vessel, so that as the liquid is drunk the creature appears to be leaping into the drinker's mouth.

Jokes against tithe-collecting clergymen, Scotchmen, and

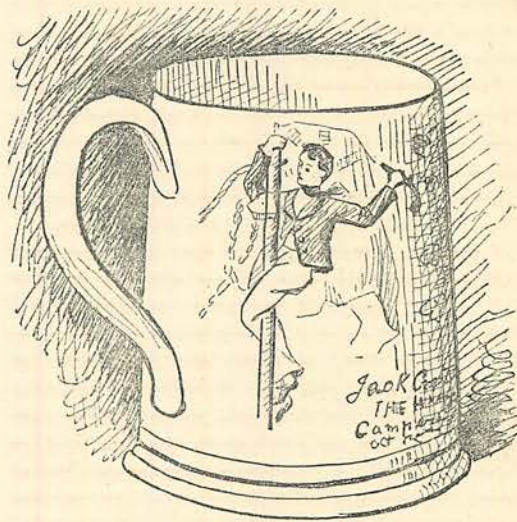


others, were embodied in china and pottery. "Here's to the Maiden of Bashful Fifteen," was straightway

printed on a barrel-shaped pint mug; the construction of the bridge over the Wear at Sunderland was also celebrated in poetry and pottery; the life of the sailor and eke that of the farmer were extolled in the like fashion. But the happiest efforts of the potter were dedicated to events of great national importance. A quart jug in white ware is decorated on one side with a haymaking scene; on the other side is John Bull seated on a column inscribed "The British Constitution," and looking across the Channel at Napoleon weeping at the loss of the flotilla by the aid of which he hoped to invade England. The Emperor cries, "Oh, my poor, crazy gunboats! why did I venture so far from home?" and John Bull replies, "I told you they would be all swamp'd, but you would be so d—d obstinate." The whole is inscribed "Patience on a Monument Smiling at Grief," with the following distich:—

The mighty chief, with fifty thousand men,
March'd to the coast, and march'd back again.
Ha! ha! ha!

The mug figured in our third illustration was manufac-



tured to commemorate the gallant exploit of Jack Crawford, the Sunderland sailor, in nailing the colours to the mast at the Battle of Camperdown.

Pack Horses in the North.

IN the northern parts of Lancashire and Yorkshire, pack horses (galloways) were used as a means of conveying merchandise, such as coal, wool, lime, malt, and corn, until about 1840, when the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway was opened. A "gang of galloways" consisted of twelve or fourteen horses. They always walked in single file, the first horse wearing a collar of bells, and being known as the "bell horse." They would start on a journey at four o'clock in the morning, each horse with a pack upon its back, secured there by a "wanta"—a broad webbing belt, with ropes and hooks at both ends. First the webbing went under the horse, for ease; then the ropes went over the