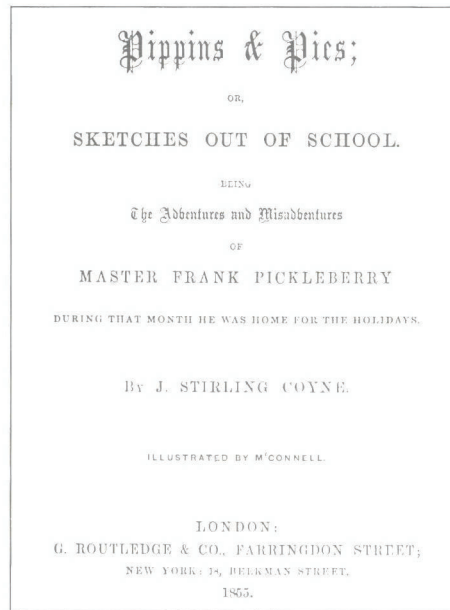


# PIPPINS & PIES

J. STIRLING COYNE

Immense was the sensation produced amongst the party by the arrival of Captain Folkard and his magic lantern, about nine o'clock. The mysterious instrument was carried behind the Captain in a square deal box, by Tunks, who placed it carefully on a table in the centre of the room, where it was viewed with intense interest, not unmixed with awe, by the juvenile assemblage, amongst whom a rumour had circulated that it contained a fearful collection of ghosts, goblins, and dancing skeletons—to say nothing of a curious illustration of the popular legend of "The Devil flying away with the little tailor, with the broad-cloth under his arm." While the Captain was unpacking his apparatus, Theodore Tunks was nailing a large tablecloth against the wall, and the Misses Flathers and myself arranging the chairs and rousseats on the opposite side of the room, for the accommodation of the spectators. All being seated, and the candles put out, Miss Flathers commenced the entertainment by playing a medley overture on the piano, composed impromptu for the occasion. Then Captain Folkard announced that he was going to open his comic budget, with the celebrated "Plum-Pudding Hunt;" and after some shuffling and a few total eclipses of the intensely bright disc thrown by the lantern on the white cloth, there rose before us an apparition of a magnificent plum-pudding, furnished with a couple of spoons for legs, and a knife and fork for arms. A crown of green leaves, amidst which glowed the scarlet berries of the holly, shadowed his brown features, upon which a smile of hearty good humour seemed to play continually. A general cheer burst from the audience on recognizing their old Christmas friend, who suddenly started off, pursued by a lord mayor in his robes, and close on his heels a beadle in his cocked hat; then a tall Quaker; after him a lawyer, and behind the lawyer a hen-pecked husband carrying his termagant wife astride on his shoulders; next a drunken cobbler; then a wooden-legged Greenwich pensioner; a Welshman mounted on a goat, and sweep on a donkey, at whose tail half a dozen policemen were pulling. The merriment caused by the chase was immense, but no melodrama at the Adelphi theatre, with O. Smith in a favourite part, ever produced such a thrilling sensation as did the next "tableau" as the Captain called it, of a terrible ogre, named Hurlo Thrumbo, well known in fairy history, whose great goggle eyes rolled fearfully from side to side, — sitting opposite a huge pie, composed of little boys and girls, whom he transferred by twos and threes on an enormous fork to his gaping mouth. I felt Arabella and Maria crouching and clinging to me in trembling terror, and glad enough I was when Miss Flathers struck up a lively air, and the Captain commenced John Gilpin's ride to York, or Dick Turpin's ride to Ware, — I don't exactly remember which, but I know it was one or the other, — and very amusing it was. But I cannot describe all the droll things we saw; how we



laughed at the two bulls tossing a corpulent alderman like a shuttlecock from one to another, and how we applauded the pretty picture of Cupid issuing out of the heart of a rose.

The great feature of the exhibition was, however, a panoramic illustration of the battle of Waterloo, with an explanatory lecture by the exhibitor, from which it would seem that it was the gallant Captain, and not the Duke of Wellington, who actually won that celebrated battle. It was something in this way:— "He, hem!—My dear young friends—the picture now before you represents the ever memorable and glorious battle of Waterloo—at which I had the honour to be present. Of course, ladies, you have heard of Waterloo—and Napoleon—and the Duke—that's the Duke there on horseback, on the right, under the lofty oak-tree, amongst whose branches the French shot rattled like hailstones in a storm. You perceive he's talking to a handsome young officer—hem! that's your humble servant—he—hem! I was thought rather a good-looking young fellow then by the ladies. The Duke is saying to me—'Fred, my boy!' —the Duke always called me Fred, — 'these French balls are not so pleasant as the ambassador's ball, at Brussels, last night.' It is a remarkable fact, that this was the only pun the Duke was ever known to make, and this is the first time I ever mentioned it. You observe that cloud of smoke in the centre, proceeding from the French artillery, under cover of which three French columns, commanded by Marshal Ney, are advancing to attack

Mont St. Jean. Our fellows received them in hollow squares, like masses of granite; but the fire was tremendous, and matters were beginning to look serious with us, by Jove! when we heard a distant cannonade. You should have seen the Duke's iron features relaxing into a grim smile, as he slapped his thigh, exclaiming—

"The Prussians, by—!' I beg your pardon, ladies, the Duke did *not* swear.

"It may be Grouchy," said Lord Hill.

"I'll bet a rump and dozen it's Bulow," replied the Duke; 'I know the Prussian cannon. Fred, my boy, let's have a weed!'

"I handed the Duke a cigar from my case.

"I'd give half my dukedom," said he, 'to have a despatch conveyed instantly to Bulow.'

"I'll do it, your grace," said I; 'but I must have a fresh horse, for mine's done up.'

"You shall have mine, my boy," he replied, beckoning to an orderly in the rear, who held a beautiful Arabian charger, which he told me to mount, and, scribbling a few words with a pencil on a scrap of paper, placed it in my hands with this brief order:—

"For Bulow!" pointing his sword towards the Prussians, who had begun to show themselves on the crest of the hills. I understood all he would have said; and, laying my hand impressively on my heart, I exclaimed:—

"In fifteen minutes Bulow shall have it, if Folkard lives.'

"Pluck to the back-bone!" observed the Duke to Lord Hill.

"There are moments in our lives, ladies, when, seized by an uncontrollable ardour, a man feels within himself that he is a hero. I clapped spurs to my charger, who, maddened by the thunder of the cannon, the roll of the drums, the braying of the trumpets, and the shrieks and shouts of the combatants, dashed down the steep like a whirlwind, and, taking the bridle bit between his teeth, plunged across the muddy field right for the French lines; while, scarcely less excited than my horse, I gave him spur and rein, and in a few minutes, by Jove! we were within pistol-range of them. The enemy—struck, perhaps, with admiration at my temerity—opened their ranks, and honoured me, as I dashed through, with a hearty cheer instead of a volley, which I returned by the politest bow I could command under such extraordinary circumstances. In one minute and a half less than the time I had promised, the despatch was in Bulow's hand. I need scarcely add, ladies, that it was to this unrecorded incident the victory was owing; for if Bulow had not received the despatch from the Duke he would never have made the manoeuvre that gained the day. In fact, I may say, with becoming modesty, that Folkard won the battle of Waterloo, though Wellington got all the credit.'

