

**MR. PUNCH IN SOCIETY:
BEING THE HUMOURS
OF SOCIAL LIFE**

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Mr. Punch in society: being the humours of social life by Various

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VARIOUS

**MR. PUNCH IN SOCIETY:
BEING THE HUMOURS
OF SOCIAL LIFE**

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Edited by J. A. HAMMERTON

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MR. PUNCH IN SOCIETY





He. "By the bye, talking of old times, do you remember that occasion when I made such an awful ass of myself?"

She. "Which?"

MR. PUNCH IN SOCIETY

BEING THE HUMOURS OF
SOCIAL LIFE

*WITH 133
ILLUSTRATIONS*

BY

GEORGE DU MAURIER,
CHARLES KEENE, PHIL
MAY, L. RAVEN-HILL,
C. E. BROCK, J. BERNARD
PARTRIDGE, A. S. BOYD,
REGINALD CLEAVER,
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INTRODUCTION



It would be difficult to think of Mr. PUNCH's prototype of the immortal drama as "in Society"; but, however much our national jester may resemble in facial detail the somewhat rude and impulsive character from whom he took his name, he is in all his instincts a gentleman. In other words, it is just here that PUNCH has differed from most comic journals, being, if not absolutely from the first number, certainly from its early days, distinguished for refinement of taste and good manners, not less than for its wit and humour. "Mr. PUNCH in Society" is indeed Mr. PUNCH in his most congenial surroundings, as he has been above all else the untiring, irrepressible satirist of the social world.

If an analysis were made of all the drawings which have appeared in PUNCH from 1841 to the present day, we venture to think that those devoted to Society's ways, its foibles, its follies, would greatly outnumber the illustrations of any other phase of life. And was not the entire career of one of Mr. PUNCH's most celebrated artists devoted exclusively to social satire? The name of George du Maurier is pre-eminent in the history of modern humorous art. To an unerring instinct for character, shrewd but never unkindly satire, he united a profound sense of beauty which made his work unique and individual. It was thus that to a vast public, of which only a very small proportion could be expected to possess any art culture, Du Maurier's work appealed with irresistible force, his charming lightness of touch, his gaiety, which came no doubt from his Gallic origins, rendering

Mr. Punch in Society

everything from his pencil a source of delight to the general public, no less than to the students of draughtsmanship.

Du Maurier's connection with PUNCH began in 1860 and his earliest work displayed very little of that wonderful grace to which it attained before many years had passed, but Mr. Henry James, discussing his art so long ago as 1883, said that "since 1868, PUNCH has been, artistically speaking, George du Maurier," an opinion which would certainly be accepted in America, where for a generation the cultured classes looked to Du Maurier, as Mr. Spielman reminds us, "almost exclusively, not only for English fashions in male and female attire, the *dernière mode* in social etiquette, but for the truest reflection of English life and character."

When we consider that almost exclusively in the pages of MR. PUNCH is the artistic life-work of Du Maurier contained, we shall see how inexhaustible a treasury is there to be drawn upon for such a collection as the present. We have thought it wise, however, not to limit "MR. PUNCH in Society" to the work of any one humorist, but have sought to present a collection of Du Maurier's best social satires in company with those of many other artists who, in their individual ways, have also depicted the humours of social life.



MR. PUNCH IN SOCIETY

A SEASONABLE LETTER

Huntingthorpe Hall.



MY DEAR JACK,—I want you to come down on Monday and stay a couple of days with me. My wife will be delighted, as you can help her with a children's party, and also play Pantaloon in a little thing being got up by the young people. I will mount you on the Tuesday with our Stag-hounds, as I know you are fond of a day's hunting.

No, don't thank me, my dear chap—I shall be only too glad if you will go, as the horse I am intending