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Untching of the National Policy. The weather's too cold

And 'taint quite so easy A tariff to patch. "Have patience," says John,

Political thicken, "Look out for the birth Of the National chicken.

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Durham P. O. Rockville Mille,

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For the chickens to hatch,

"We are all busy scratching "Starve on! live in hope! The grand policy's hatching. "Ministerial hens

May be sometimes deluding, "But at present-depend on't-We are busily brooding. "Towards spring, while the rumour

"All industries then Will be duly disected, "By poverty-wealth Be increased and protected "The barbers will flourish As reformers look grave,

Fifteen cents for a shave. "When the faces of Grits, Now so lengthened and sallow, Shall attenuate more When our chicken they swallow."

EVE HARWOOD.

CHAPTER I.

As a rule railways prove-socially an. morally speaking-great revolutionisers the districts through which they pass. the time our story opens few places would have examplified this more markedly than the good old town of Kingsford, already losing its forme: suggestively characteristic appellation of "the good old," and coming to be spoken of as "the busy little," "the rising," or the "junction" town. was a country town certainly, but of the dullest of the dull order of country towns In the bad old times, when Englishmen were divided against themselves in civ strife and those who have been as brothers met in battle array on English soi Knightsford figured somewhat conspicu us ly, and as such things are estimated, ac quitted itself not ingloriously. But in th Custom Sawing of Lumber more peaceful and domesticated period immediately proceeding the railway era it had become a sort of English Sleepy Hollow, and any one with a tithe of imagination of a Washington Irvine might have easly fancied the whole body of its inhabitants having undergone the sleep of twenty years, judging them and their town in relation to their progress - or rather want of progress-in the march of modern improvement. The natives, how-

rarely entered within their gates, save as birds of passage in the race and assize From this continent of blissful ignorance English & Scotish there was, however, to be an awakening. More than once in the olden times the town had suffered storm and capture, and nov undergo invasion-but by a contingent of railway network gradually extended itself for the most part poor working people, weary, and after night-fall, made his way All right, old fellow," he went on, addres- to which observations he answered in the lover the country, it lec me obvious that among whom Reulen, "foreigner" though to the shed. By the good leave of Reuben, sing the dog, "we're with you; show the light, off-handed tone of a person explainthe situation of Knightsford made it he was, soon became a leading spirit, and as leading hand and the good-will of his way," and accompanied by most of the ing a matter scarcely calling for explanaspecially suitable for junction purposes, and occasional preacher. Finding that, though fellows, he was, on preferring his request others, he followed in the track of the the railway powers accordingly marked it there was a considerable amount of drunk- at once taken in and kindly entreated. animal, which darted eagerly forward, and work." And the tone taken certainly for their own, and made a junction station enness in the place, there was no organized The first meal of the night had been shared was let out again by the attentive "nipper." seemed justified, for soon color came back and town of it. The great main lines ran temprance association, and being a prac- with him, water had been brought for him Some fifty yards from the gates stood the to his cheeks, and the rather wild look in branch, local, and loop lines. It was an him to work to form a society, and to this him that the appliances of the establish-"all change here" station; a station end he would on Saturday afternoons, and ment afforded, and, though they now "let weight of "live" coal, to be used for start gave place to one of easy self-complacency. where trains were "made up," or divided other suitable occasions when he happened him sleep on," enough will be put aside to ing the fires in the engines. The glare of Before the quarter of an hour had passed off, where additional engines or carriages to have time at command, go out into the provide a substantial meal for him when the fire lighted up a considerable space he was joining freely in the chat and laughwere added or taken away; and tools and highways and byways and deliver open-air he awakens. It is the duty of the "nipper" around it in all directions, and on getting ter going on, and any one looking upon him patching to the scene of any accident of and being in a plain way, as we have said firing up so effectually that by this time if on guard within the belt of light on the nothing worse to forget or overcome than news might be telegraphed.

ever were quite content, and strangers

ininal station, after being enlarged from t me to time, until architectur lly it was thing of shroli and patches, was at length gulled down, and replaced by one of the "palatial" order; and this was naturally followed by the erection of hotels upon corresponding scale. Several of the companies had steam sheds in connection with the terminus, and at length one of them tablishing extensive locomotive and car- had been five years in Knightsford, and wards, so that altogether the spot on which riage works in the town.

tion into Kuightsford of bands of various in his habits and desires he considered of smoky blackness. descriptions of railway workman, to the himself fairly well-off with his wages of Even as we have already described it, met by a sight that instantly brought an hands picked it up, and, after looking at it number in the aggregate of thousands. thirty shillings per week, while his future the group was a tolerably striking and expression of astonishment into their for a moment, gave vent to what could Upon these foreigners, as they called them, prospects in this respect were also bright "mixed" one, but before the meal hour countenances. With the dog standing only be described as a roar of surprise. the primative inhabitants of Knightsforl as he stood well for early promotion from had expired it was destined, as we shall quietly watchful by its side, and the boy "Well, this is a startler he exclaimed. looked with but scant favor, regarding the shed to the foot-plate. them as a sort of invading army of occu- It was close upon midnight on a Christ- addition. Each man's knees served him in its face, lay a pretty infant warmly you, Reuben. There you are; see, it's pation; and the foreigners finding them- mas Eve that we have first to make his as a table, the newspaper or other wrap- wrapped and calmly sleeping on a mound addressed to you as plain as it can be selves so met, repaid the natives in kind. acquaintance. The holiday incidental to ping in which his food had been tied tak- of soft grey ash. They affected to consider the town outland- the season had already commenced, but ing the place of the usual cloth. As night "It's alive, you know," said the boy, who Reuben, with a bewildered look, and ish, and its inhabitants wanting in spirit; even at hohday times there must still be left work such as that incidental to a steam had probably himself, at a first glance, scarcely knowing whether the other spoke and esteemed it a fine touch of irony to a few working bees in the great human shed is found in practice to be a great mistaken the stillness of sleep for that of in jest or earnest, took the paper on which ask a native gravely if he could inform hive, and on this night Reuben and the appetiser, the display of eatables was of a death. them whether English money was taken "gang" of which he is leading hand were plentiful and substantial character, and in "Yes, it's alive," said Reuben Harwood, wood, from one who, knowing his goodthere? or if it was a fact that a Knights- among those whom the necessities of their more than one man's portion was to be bending over it, and addressing his adult mess, believes he will keep the helpless." ford man would sooner be hanged in that callings kept "bound to the wheel." Their seen a goodly sized mince pie or slice of companion, rather than directly answering The piece of paper had the appearance of town than die a natural death elsewhere? having to work, hovever, had not prevent- plum-pudding, ozother distinctively Christ- the "nipper;" "alive, and hearty enough having been the fly-leaf of a book, and the ly not as those of the natives, and so far the or being merry of mood; and to a stranger talk it could be called, when the parties to those who wish it wasn't." No Fines. Charges Low. foreigners. A good percentage of them were were entitled to the merit of being happy character, turning upon Christmas cheer, in one of the other men emphatically; "you Borrowers can, by special arrangement, have or the large manufacturing towns of shed is not a cheerful or comfortable-lookseen the world, and this, added to the fact running right through it, and the whole upon by some common impulse, all ceased minutes in the river with a fifty-six round \$6,000,000. Of thus, about \$700,000 probably accounted for their being dis- less fully open, it is always cold and which they announced the birth of another ed to cure, you know."

lignities, they treated them in what seem- plentifully be-dashed with the same black be born again.

one of the steam sheds. mon usage of the time and locality, he answered to the dinner of the day men, never heard before. when only about nine years of age. In half-hour to midnight, they began to the hymn was finished, as we are on the now." Though it was a cold night, per one respect, however, he had, up to that make their way to the well-heated stove, line of bringing in Christmas properly, sup- spiration was standing in great beads upon time, been more fortunate than many of his on top of which the shed boy, or "nipper," pose we open the door and let it in as we his brow, and when he rose to his feet kind. His parents, a sober, steady, God- had a few minutes previously placed their do New Year's day. Go on, 'nipper,' open again it was with the unsteady gait of one fearing couple had kept him regularly at coffee-cans to warm. Around the stove one of the gates." The "nipper," with struggling against physical faintness. He school, and being a quiet, studious, intel- forming three sides of a square, of which Duke following at his beels, proceeded to steadied himself by the side of the van for ligent child, he was, for his age, already it was the fourth, were three short "baulks" do as he was told, and after holding the a minute or two, evidently bracing himwell grounded in the three R's when he of timber, such as are used for "packing" gate for about a minute's space, he was self for an effort, and then mustering, entered the factory; and as afterwards engines when they are "lifted," and these, ordered to close it again, which he did, and "This won't do; I must be off while the he still continued to attend his Sunday- covered with loose sacking by way of returned to his place. He was scarcely coast is clear," he took a key from his school, and make good use of whatever cushions, served as seats for the hands seated, however, when Duke, who had pocket and let himself out. Moving little leisure his employment left him, fie who mustered fourteen all told. Duke, been shut out, was heard barking and noislessly and rapidly, he clambered over improved educationally as time went on the dog of the shed, a universal favourite pawing at the gate in a very peremptory three rows of waggons drawn up on as and by the time that he reached man's estate and common property among the men had fashion, and the "nipper" was again sent many sidings. This brought him to the was a valuable member of an a lult Bible- come forward on the first note of prepara. to the gate to re-admit the four-footed embankment of the line in the shaddow meetings of the connection to which he with an air of easy assurance for his share words to say of Duke that he was a re- of roughly-cut staps led up to a gate open

to whom he had been engaged before leav- claim, "Of all things else, I have avoided provided himself with the address of the He had worked on railways in his day, suggested one of the men. The result of all this was the introduc- years of age. Being homely and simple an oasis of light in the surrounding desert ing beside the dog, a very picture of amaze-

than that which characteried the towns. dim skylights, are thoroughly smoke has ever seen, the day whereon He was dering this little outburst had been regard. one o'm

men proper. If they did not speak evil of begrimmed, and the lower part of the walls born, through whom it is given to us ed, to native eyes, a very cavalier fashion; grease with which the work benches are Reuben Harwood was the first to break fire, however, a pair of eyes had been and they laughed to scorn the attempts permeated, the floors slippery, and the the silence. "Ay! ay!" he soliloquised in eagerly fixed upon the actors in it; a pair

to deal with them in the patriarchial, or faces as well as the clothes of the men ex- an under, but still an audible tone. "Ay ! of eyes set in a face that, though to judge patronising fashion, in which the "great tensively besmirched. As the engines ay !" ring out, ring out; publish the glad by the regular cut of the features, doubtfolk" of the town or county were wont to have to be "blown off," and their fires tidings the further the bett r. I only less handsome enough when in repose, rakel out before they are cleaned, the wish you could speak as surely to the soul was now distorted as well as deadly pale But, prejudice notwithstanding, it soon atmosphere of the shed is of a humid, as you do to the ear. Look here, lads," he from fear and excitement. It was the came to be admitted that the railway set steamy, sulphry character more or less went on, raising his head and changing his face of a well-dressed young man of some were, after all, "not a bad lot." It was difficult to breathe; and as the few gas. tone, "we all know the burden of the bel's two or three and twenty years of age. found that, if they were self-assertive, they lights scattered about only serve to make this time. We are fairly into Christmas His secret post of observation was a guard's were generally warm-hearted, and had darkness visible, an air of gloomy weird. Day, though it be but by a few minutes, van standing on a siding sufficiently distant among them the spirit that makes men ness overhangs all. To a stranger, such and what I say is that we are up and doing from the fire to be out of the range of its true to the death when duty calls, as was a place would seem fatal to anything like at this hour, don't let us let it go by as light, and at the same time sufficiently disexamplified by the quietly heroic con- merriment of spirit, even in the "festive though we were heathens, instead of being, tant from the fire to be out of its range of duct of some of those whose fate it be- season;" but there is a great deal of pith as I hope we are, Christians. Let us have light, and at the same time sufficiently near came to be involved in collisions or other in the saying often applied to some minor 'Christians awake.' Come on, lads, hats for one standing with his face against its lookrailway disasters. Soon, too, individuals evil of life, that "it is nothing when you off and strike up." Suiting the action to out glass to command a view of all that among them began to show themselves are used to it;" and Reuben and his the word himself, he uncovered, and was going on within the belt of light. men of mark, not only to the natives, but mates, being perfectly used to the envoirn- "struck up" in a good bass voice. This, When, on the return of the hands, the among their own set also; and most ments of steam-shed life, felt their holiday the most popular probably of all Christmas shed gates were closed again, the unseen prominent among these was one Reuben mood in no way damped by them on hymns, was well known to them all, but at watcher gave a heavy sigh of relief, and Harwood, a foreman of the night shift in this Christmas-eve. The arrangement of first only some two or three joined in with sinking on the seat of the van, as if in a the trains for the month was such as to Reuben. Before, however, the end of the collapse of reaction, muttered, "If he only Reuben was a native of Manchester, make the hour from half-past eleven to first verse, all lent their voices, and the does take to the child, it will be the best where his parents had been factory oper- half-past twelve the most convenient time blackened rafters of the shed echoed suck way out of a bad business for all parties. atives, and in accordance with the com. for the night hands to take the meal which words and such harmony as they had At any rate the other plan would most had himself been put to work in a factory and as the bells of the town chimed the "And now," said one of the men, when ving it - and, I'm committed to this

self' by taking the position of leading hand genuine working man, out of employment, old fellow; tramps eh?" said Reuben, pat of the ghost of the murdered Banquo,of a night set in one of the steam sheds and tramping in search of it, and earnestly ting its head, and looking towards the there. Finding, after a year's experience, hoping and endeavouring to obtain it; not sleeping man as he spoke, but Dake would

thee." This man had been a considerable On first coming to Knightsford, he had time "on the road," and was "hard up." among the waggons on the coal siding," of ladies and gentlemen, by whom he was

addresses to all who c u'd be got to hear. to see to the stove, and he has done his out the hands could see Duke standing as might have supposed that he had indeed an effective and racy speaker, and having, its sides and tops were red hot; and when side of the grate farthest from the shed. the effects of a winter night journey. moreover, a cause strong in itself he soon the door was opened a bright red glow The figure of the dog was the only one Meanwhile, among the workmen in the succeeded in attacting adherents and fel- shot out and played and flickered fantas- visible, however, and taking it from this shed wonders had increased and mystery low-workers, both native and t reign. tically upon the "smudged" faces of that any wanderers of the night who might been intensified. As the intent was still And it was in these respects that Reuben the men, so that a fanciful looker-on have come "for a warm" or been prowling slumbering soundly when Reuben carried Harwood was a noted man in Knightsford might have easily brought himself to sup- about for some less innocent purpose, had it into the shed, and as he in his own as a chapel-goer and temperance advocate, pose that he was gazing on the encamp- wisely fled the spot, the hands were turn- phrase, "couldn't a while" to nurse it now and ,, a gord fellow" generally, in a higher ment of a party of "braves," with their ing to enter the shed again, when they that the time for resuming work had arsense than that phrase in cust marily used war paint on. All the gas burners too, were brought to a halt by a loud cry of ived, a t lerably comfertable bed was in. At the time our story opens he was near enough to be of service, were hitch- surprise from the "nipper," who, with boy- extemperised for it by piling a number of some two or three and thirty years of age, el round so as to cast their full light stove. ish curiosity, had followed Duke closer and overcoats together. As Reuben was genthad by way of family a little son three the hands were assembled shone out like sound of his voice, they beheld him kneel- heavy shawl in which it was wrapped got see, most strangely to receive a strange kneeling at its feet and gazing wonderingly "It's a regular case of Christmas-box for

The manners of the invaders were certain- ed them from imbibing the holiday spirit, mas fare. The table- too, seemingly, though I suppose there are obtrusively school-boy-like hand in which latter were justified in regarding them as it would certainly have seemed that they it were table-less—was of a "seasonable" "You may stake your life on that," put used for purposes of disguise. Lancashire men, others were from London, under creditable circumstances. A steam Christmas holiday making, personal may depend upon it that those who could Yorkshire and Durham, and a fair sprinkl- ing place, even by day, while by night its Christmas customs and legends, and the under the dasies if they could have done so is so large that the product of wax is ing were canny Scots. They were men comfortlessness of appearance are of the like. In such conversation the first half without risking their necks. I wish I had stated to be 20,000,000 pounds annually, who, in their own way and degree, had most decided character. Lines of rails hour passed pleasantly, but as if acted the doctoring of them, that's all! Five and increasing—worth in money at least

ing the sleeping face with kindly attendve-

"Oh, yes, it's a girl, and a right prett one too," answered one of the men, who numbered two little girls among his own

"Perhaps its a Christmas fairy," sair another, laughing at his own small joke. "Well I suppose there's nothing for i but to take it into the shed till we can set tle what else is to be done," said Reuben, taking the infant gently in his arms as be spoke, and beginning to lead the way back, followed by the other hands, the "nipper," and Duke bringing up the rear.

On the discovery of the infant, some of the hands had looked searchingly about in every direction, but had failed to catch sight of any human being, or detect any to thing that might serve as a clue to the mystery. Throughout the scene around the likely only have ruined me, without se. class, and a frequent and attractive, if not tion for eating and, calculy taking up his member of the circle. The dog bounded of which he walked for a distance of about very eloquent or scholarly, speaker at the position in the centre of the square, waited in, evidently exited. It is no misuse of three hundred yards. At that p int a flight belonged, and also at temperance and of the meal. One more figure, and the markably intelligent dog. With that fine ing into the grounds of a large white-frontmutual improvement society gatherings. picture of this motly Christmas party is instinct, kin to reason, which characterises ed house, from the windows of which But while his intellectual powers were complete. Soundly sleeping on a bench the dog above all other animals, he lights were gleaming. Quickly ascending strengthening, his bodily health remained close to the stove, a pile of sacking serving had come to know as well as any of the the stops, he entered the grounds with an weak, and, concluding that the confine- him as a bed, and the overceats of some of men that Reuben Harwood was the "lead- assured step, and the air of a person ment of factory life did not agree with him, the men as coverlit, lies one to whom the ling hand," the man to be appealed to in familiar with the place. For the first he sought, and obtained employment in a hands are conjointly playing the part of any emergency. The dog had made time he seemed to breathe freely and held steam shed attached to one of the Man- good Samaritan. He is one of those com- straight to him, and by motions that his head erect, and altogether assumed a chester railways, and from there he had paratively rare, but still not altogether un- spoke as plainly as words could have done, bearing as of one mentally saying of some removed to Knightsford, to "better him- known personages, an honest tramp; a asked him to come outside. "What is it, horrid and haunting thought, as Macheth I am a man again!"

that, as he put it, "he suited the berth, like the professional cadging tramp, affect. not even follow his eyes, his only answer Quickening his pace, he passed the front of and the berth suited him," he ventured ing to look for what he would be very being to repeat the action of troting the house, and, taking a latch-key from upon the responsibilities of matrimony, sorry to find, and to which, were it forced | towards the gate, and then coming back his pocket let himself in by a side-door. A taking to wife a young Manchester woman, upon him, he might very truthfully ex- and barking on finding he was not follow- minute or two later he entered the wellappointed drawing room of the establish "I shouldn't wonder but what it's thieves ment in which were assembled a number received with a cherus of welcomes. These one pastor of his connection—the Primitive and knowing that it was no uncommon "Likely enough," said Reuben, "but first greetings over, however, more than Methodist-in that place, and, seeking him thing for the hands in a steam-shed to give anyway there is something unusual or one of those present remarked that he was out before a Sunday came round, immed- a night's shelter to one in his plight, he Duke here wouldn't be taking on so. not looking "the thing," that he looked iately joined his congregation-who were had, on reaching Knightsford, footsore and We'd better go out and have a look round. pale, jaded, "out of sorts," and so forth; into it, and were met there by innumerable tical enthusiast in such matters, he set to bathe his feet, the best bed made for large open-barred grate, in which night the eyes died out, and the generally har-

ment, and hastening forward they were paper fluttered to the ground. One of the

minrainr

TO BE CONTINUED.

that their wages were very much higher width of its ends, consisting of great gates speaking as on the last stroke of twelve their neck would be my perscription for worth is exported and \$1,200,000 worth than those prevailing among the natives, that have generally to be kept more or the bells of the town rang out the peals by their complaint; one application warrant- of honey also goes abroad. The total tinguised by a more self-assured bearing draughty. Its heavy raftered roof, and anniversary of the greatest day the world 'A girl, I think," said Reuben, who present in the United States nearly \$5.