

Thomas Hood (the Elder).

Cooper
 As soon as they were gone, Mrs Peck, having made up the fire, washed her hands & arms very clean, and then seating herself at the deal table, with her elbows on the board, & her chin between her palms, began to calculate her chances of success. The flour, provided Mrs Stone was in the shop, & not his wife, she made sure of. The fruit was certain - the suet was very possible, the eggs probable - the same as good as in her own hand - in short, being of a sanguine temperament, she dreamed till she saw before her a smoking hot plum pudding, of respectable size, & dappled with dark spots, big & little, like a Dalmatian dog.

In the meantime, Charley, hawking all the way on his Jew's harp, arrived at the Butcher's, who was standing before the shop, with his back to the road, admiring, as only Butchers can admire, the rows of both carcasses & prime joints on the counter looking before him. Could that meat have known his sentiments, concerning it, what proud flesh it would have been! Hearing a step behind him, & anticipating a customer, he turned round with the usual "What d'ye buy?"

"I haven't got no money to buy with," said Charley "or else" looking round for the desired object, he pointed to it with his finger, "I'd buy that ere lump of suet."

"And what do you want with suet," asked the Butcher.
 "If you please, sir," replied Charley, "it's for our pudding. But Mother is out of money; so if you don't let her have that bit of suet either on credit or for charity -"

"Well what then?" said the Butcher.
 "Why then," said Charley, "it will be the first time in our lives that we've gone without plum pudding on this blessed festival."
 The butcher was a big florid man, bloated & reddened, as persons of his trade are said to be, by constantly imbibing invisible beef tea & mutton broth, or as it is called the smell of the meat. But although this ~~constant~~ appropriating by minute particles the flesh & fat of sheep, oxen, & pigs, he was far from becoming a brute. He cast a kindly glance at the poor boy, who looked sickly & ill fed, & then a triumphant one at his halves & quarters, glorious with Nature's red & white, & gay with sprigs of holly, suggesting the opportune reflection that Christmas comes but once a year.

"There - take it boy - you're welcome to it, gratis, by way of a Christmas box - and my compliments of the season to your Mother." So saying, he tossed the suet to Charley who, forgetting in his joy to thank his benefactor, ran straight home with the treasure, as delighted as if he had just won the Prize Ox, in a Beef-Union lottery.

Baron Duddleston.



33 Wimpole St

May 13. 1886

My dear Gales

Thanks for
your very kind letter,
it is so pleasant to receive
sympathy from so old a
friend as yourself at
such a moment - he can
recall scenes of former
days when we were thrown
together under very different

Baron Duddleston.

behaved very badly to me in
 Bell's case but that in the
 Court of Appeal was complete
 vindication by Lord Sandbach
 from the other day perhaps
 the best case ^{ever met by any} ~~one~~ ^{justice}
 I ever met.

John W. Gates is in
 good health for my present
 & his own limited age,
 with kind remembrance from
 my wife believe me

Very Dear Gates

Ever very sincerely

J. W. Duddleston