

**THE BEST OF ALL GOOD
COMPANY; A
DAY WITH W. M.
THAKERAY; PP. 315-392**

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The Best of All Good Company; A Day with W. M. Thakeray; pp. 315-392 by Blanchard Jerrold

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BLANCHARD JERROLD

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BEST OF ALL GOOD COMPANY ADVERTISER.

THE BEST OF ALL GOOD COMPANY:

A SERIES OF DAILY COMPANIONS

FOR THE POCKET AND THE PORTMANTEAU, ASHORE AND AFLOAT, IN
TOWN AND OUT OF TOWN, AT HOME AND ABROAD.

EDITED BY BLANCHARD JERROLD.

PRICE ONE SHILLING EACH.

No. I.

A DAY WITH CHARLES DICKENS.

Includes Fac-simile of a MS. Letter to Blanchard Jerrold.

No. II.

A DAY WITH SIR WALTER SCOTT.

No. III.

A DAY WITH LORD LYTTON.

Includes a Fac-simile Page of his MS. of "King Arthur."

No. IV.

A DAY WITH DISRAELI.

*Includes two Fac-simile pages of his MS. of "Lothair," given by the Right
Hon. Gentleman to the Editor.*

No. V.

A DAY WITH THACKERAY.

Includes Fac-simile of Extract from MS. Letter.

IN PREPARATION:—

A DAY WITH DOUGLAS JERROLD.
A DAY WITH MACAULAY.
A DAY WITH LORD BROUGHAM.
A DAY WITH MILTON.
A DAY WITH THOMAS HOOD.
A DAY WITH PEPEYS.
A DAY WITH L. E. L.

A DAY WITH THE BROWNINGES.
A DAY WITH LEIGH HUNT.
A DAY WITH MICHAEL FARADAY.
A DAY WITH ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.
A DAY WITH ANTHONY TROLLOPE.
A DAY WITH DR. JOHNSON.

AND OTHERS; ALL OF

"THE BEST OF ALL GOOD COMPANY."

LONDON:

HOULSTON & SONS, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.;

AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for transparency and accountability, particularly in the context of public administration and financial management. The text notes that without reliable records, it is difficult to track the flow of funds and ensure that resources are being used as intended.

2. The second part of the document addresses the challenges associated with data collection and analysis. It highlights that gathering accurate and timely data can be a complex task, especially when dealing with large-scale operations or multiple stakeholders. The text suggests that investing in robust data management systems and training personnel in data analysis techniques can significantly improve the quality and reliability of the information used for decision-making.

3. The third part of the document focuses on the role of technology in enhancing operational efficiency. It discusses how digital tools and automation can streamline processes, reduce errors, and free up resources for more strategic tasks. The text mentions that while the initial investment in technology may be high, the long-term benefits in terms of cost savings and improved productivity are substantial.

4. The fourth part of the document explores the importance of stakeholder engagement and communication. It argues that successful implementation of any initiative requires the buy-in and active participation of all relevant parties. The text suggests that regular communication, clear communication of goals and objectives, and the establishment of feedback loops are crucial for ensuring that everyone is aligned and working towards the same objectives.

5. The fifth part of the document discusses the need for continuous monitoring and evaluation. It states that it is not enough to simply implement a plan; one must also track progress and assess the impact of the interventions. The text recommends that organizations should establish key performance indicators (KPIs) and conduct regular reviews to identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments to the strategy.

6. The sixth part of the document touches upon the importance of flexibility and adaptability. It notes that circumstances can change rapidly, and organizations must be prepared to adjust their plans and strategies accordingly. The text suggests that maintaining a flexible mindset and being open to new ideas and approaches can help organizations navigate uncertainty and achieve their goals more effectively.

7. The seventh part of the document discusses the role of leadership in driving change and innovation. It emphasizes that strong leadership is essential for setting a clear vision, inspiring the team, and providing the necessary support and resources. The text suggests that leaders should encourage a culture of innovation, where employees feel empowered to share their ideas and take initiative in solving problems.

8. The eighth part of the document discusses the importance of building a strong organizational culture. It argues that a positive and supportive culture is essential for attracting and retaining top talent, fostering collaboration, and driving high performance. The text suggests that organizations should invest in training and development programs, promote transparency, and encourage a sense of ownership and responsibility among employees.

9. The ninth part of the document discusses the importance of risk management. It notes that every organization faces various risks, and it is essential to identify these risks, assess their potential impact, and develop strategies to mitigate them. The text suggests that organizations should establish a risk management framework and regularly review and update their risk assessment to ensure they are prepared for any potential challenges.

10. The tenth part of the document discusses the importance of sustainability and long-term planning. It argues that organizations should not focus solely on short-term gains but should also consider the long-term impact of their actions. The text suggests that organizations should integrate sustainability into their core business strategy and invest in initiatives that promote environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

Extract from Letter of W. M. Thackeray.

Some critics have accused me of wishing to under-
value my profession, because I have spoken lightly
of certain ^(imaginary) practitioners of it: but it is because I honour
the calling, and hold it to be not better nor worse
than that pursued by any other body of educated
gentlemen, that I've written as I have done concerning
it. To write for bread can't be wrong: but to write
dishonestly or unjustly; or wilfully to impute bad motives
to one's opponents - it is that we lovers of our profession
I am hurrying into a letter, when I have
but to answer a note - and thanking you my thanks,
are more, remain, dear Sir Your very faithful Servant
W. M. Thackeray

THE
BEST OF ALL GOOD COMPANY.

BY
BLANCHARD JERROLD.

A DAY WITH W. M. THACKERAY.

“And there came up a lion out of Judah!”—
Charlotte Brontë's exclamation on first seeing Thackeray's Portrait.

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W. M. THACKERAY.

"AND SEE THE GREAT ACHILLES WHOM WE KNEW."

WHO that has seen will ever forget the commanding figure and the stately head? Sauntering—usually a solitary man—through the hall of the Reform Club, or in the quietudes of the Athenæum, making up his mind to find a corner to work for an hour or so on the small sheets of paper in his pocket, in a hand as neat as Peter Cunningham's or Leigh Hunt's;* gazing dreamily, and often with a sad and weary look, out of window; moving slowly westward home to dinner on a summer's evening; or making a strange presence, as obviously not belonging to the place, in Fleet Street on his way to Whitefriars or Cornhill; who, that knew him does not remember dear Old Thackeray, as his familiars lovingly called him, in some or all of these moods and places? In Thackeray, as in Dickens, there was a strong and impressive individuality. No two men could be less alike, in person or mind, than these two writers who shared the world's favour together; and yet there was an equality and identity in their impressiveness. Dickens' strength was quick, alert, and with the glow of health in it; it seemed to proceed like that of a mighty engine from an inward fire. Thackeray's was calm, majestic by its ease and extent, as the force of a splendid stream. Hawthorne's figure and air has been described as "modestly grand"; and the observation, it occurs to me, applies exactly to Thackeray. Indeed, I have often been struck with the idea that the two men must have affected society much in the same way, and by the same mental and physical qualities. Like Hawthorne, Thackeray

"Wandered lonely as a cloud,"

—a cloud, it should be noted and remembered, with a silver lining. In their solitude, when suddenly observed, both had a sad, a grave

* Shortly before his death he spent a morning in the reading-room of the British Museum, and there by accident left upon a table a page of the MS. of the story he had in hand. The paper being found, the clearness and roundness of the writing at once suggested the owner to the attendant, and the precious missing leaf was forwarded to Kensington.

aspect; and each was "marvellously moved to fun" on occasions. In both the boy appeared easily; and this was a quality of Dickens' genius, as it was of my father's. I should like to see pictures of Thackeray holding a skein of silk for a child upon his broad hands; of Dickens playing at leap-frog or rounders; of Hawthorne lying in the grass listening to the birds, and ducking lest the passers by should interrupt him; and of Douglas Jerrold taking part in basting the bear in his Kentish orchard. Mr. Field's description of Hawthorne's fun at sea, and of his grand solitary figure under the stars at night, might stand for portraiture of Thackeray.

"That is his face, looking out upon us, next to Pope's," says Mr. Field, in his "Yesterdays with Authors." "What a contrast in bodily appearance those two English men of genius present! Thackeray's great, burly figure, broad-chested and ample as the day, seems to overshadow and quite blot out of existence the author of 'The Essay on Man.' But what friends they would have been had they lived as contemporaries under Queen Anne or Queen Victoria! One can imagine the author of 'Pendennis' gently lifting poor little Alexander out of his 'chariot' into the club, and revelling in talk with him all night long. Pope's high-bred and gentlemanly manner, combined with his extraordinary sensibility and dread of ridicule, would have modified Thackeray's usual gigantic form and sometimes boisterous sarcasm into a rich and strange adaptability to his little guest. We can imagine them talking together now, with even a nobler wisdom and ampler charity than were ever vouchsafed to them when they were busy amid the turmoils of their crowded literary lives."

What Thackeray would have been had he lived the contemporary of Pope, is a speculation much lower in interest than any description of Thackeray as he lived and breathed and had his being—one of the lights and glories of the Victorian epoch. Mr. Hannay's portrait is worth a ny number or kind of poetic speculations: "In private this great satirist, whose aspect in a crowd was often one of austere politeness and reserve, unbent into a familiar *natvelf*, which somehow one seldom finds in the demonstratively genial. And this was the more charming and precious that it rested on a basis of severe and profound reflection, before the glance of which all that was dark and serious in man's life and prospects lay open. The gravity of that white head, with its noble brow and thoughtful face full of feeling and meaning, enhanced the piquancy of his playfulness, and of the little personal revelations which came with such a grace from the depths of his kindly nature. When we congratulated him, many years ago, on the touch in *Vanity Fair*, in which Becky 'admires' her husband, when he is giving Lord Steyne the chastisement which ruins *her* for life, 'Well,' he said, 'when I wrote the sentence, I slapped my fist on the table, and said 'that is a touch of genius.' The incident is a trifle, but it will reveal, we suspect, an element of fervour, as well as a heartiness of frankness in recording the fervour, both equally at variance with the vulgar conception of him. This frankness and *bonhomie* made him delightful in a *tte-a-tte*, and