

THE FOLIO CLUB

*There is a Machiavelian plot
Though every nare olfact it not
Butler*

THE Folio Club is, I am sorry to say, a mere Junto of *Dunderheadism*. I think too the members are quite as ill-looking as they are stupid. I also believe it their settled intention to abolish Literature, subvert the Press, and overturn the Government of Nouns and Pronouns. These are my private opinions which I now take the liberty of making public.

Yet when, about a week ago, I first became one of this diabolical association, no person could have entertained for it more profound sentiments of admiration and respect. Why my feelings in this matter have undergone a change will appear, very obviously, in the sequel. In the meantime I shall vindicate my own character, and the dignity of Letters.

I find, upon reference to the records, that the Folio Club was organized as such on the —— day of —— in the year ——. I like to begin with the beginnings and have a partiality for dates. A clause in the Constitution then adopted forbade the members to be other wise than erudite and witty: and the avowed objects of the Confederation were ‘the instruction of society, and the amusement of themselves.’ For the latter purpose a meeting is held monthly at the house of some one of the associational when each individual is expected to come prepared with a ‘Short Prose Tale’ of his own composition. Each article thus produced is read by its [[here Poe has struck out the word “respectively”]] author to the company assembled over a glass of wine at [[here Poe has struck out the words “a very late”]] dinner. Much rivalry will of course ensue — more particularly as the writer of the ‘Best Thing’ is appointed President of the Club *pro tem.*; an office endowed with many dignities and little experience, and which endures until its occupant is dispossessed by a superior *morceau*. The father of the Tale held, on the contrary, to be the least meritorious, is bound to furnish the dinner and wine at the next similar meeting of the Society. This is found an excellent method of occasionally supplying the body with a new member, in the place of some unfortunate who, forfeiting two or three entertainments in succession, will naturally decline, at the same time, the ‘supreme honour’ and the association. The number of the Club is limited to eleven. For this there are many good reasons which it is unnecessary to mention, but which will of course suggest themselves to every person of reflection. One of them, however, is that on the first of April, in the year three hundred and fifty before the Deluge, there are said to have been just eleven spots upon the sun. It will be seen that, in giving these rapid outlines of the Society, I have so far restrained my indignation as to speak with unusual candour and liberality. The *expose* which it is my intention to make will be sufficiently effected by a mere detail of the Club’s proceedings on the evening of Tuesday last, when I made my *debut* as a member of that body, having been only chosen in place of the Honourable Augustus Scratchaway, resigned.

At five P.M. I went by appointment to the house of Mr. Rouge-et-Noir who admires Lady Morgan, and whose Tale was condemned at the previous monthly meeting. I found the company already assembled in the dining-room, and must confess that the brilliancy of the fire, the comfortable appearance of the apartment, and the excellent equipments of the table, as well as a due confidence in my own abilities, contributed to inspire me, for the time, with many pleasant meditations. I was welcomed with great show of cordiality, and dined with much self-congratulation at becoming one of so wise a Society.

The members, generally, were most remarkable men. There was, first of all, Mr. Snap, the President, who is a very lank man with a hawk nose, and was formerly in the service of the Down-East Review.

Then there was Mr. Convolvulus Gondola, a young gentleman who had travelled a good deal.

Then there was De Rerum Natura, Esqr., who wore a very singular pair of green spectacles.

Then there was a very little man in a black coat with very black eyes.

Then there was Mr. Solomon Seadrift who had every appearance of a fish.

Then there was Mr. Horribile Dictu, with white eyelashes, who had graduated at Gottingen.

Then there was Mr. Blackwood Blackwood who had written certain articles for foreign Magazines.

Then there was the host, Mr. Rouge-et-Noir, who admired Lady Morgan.

Then there was a stout gentleman who admired Sir Walter Scott.

Then there was Chronologos Chronology who admired Horace Smith, and had a very big nose which had been in Asia Minor.

Upon the removal of the cloth Mr. Snap said to me 'I believe there is little need of my giving you any information, Sir, in regard to the regulations of our Club. I think you know we intend to instruct society, and amuse ourselves. To nights however we propose doing the latter solely, and shall call upon you in turn to contribute your quota. In the meantime I will commence operations.' Here Mr. Snap, having pushed the bottle, produced a M.S. and read as, follows.