

THE FELLOW WHO FIGHTS ALONE.

The fellow who fights the fight alone, With never a word of cheer...

Ah, bitter enough the combat is, With every help at hand...

THE RING AND THE LADY.

It was certainly rather rough on the Rev. Reginald Bisgood that by an act of the purest good nature...

You were seen to go into the house of that bad woman yesterday, and to remain with her for an hour and 16 minutes?

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"Don't pretend ignorance, sir. You know very well," retorted the vicar, witheringly.

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Mr. Jenkins, the patron of the living, although given up to social life in London, had always shown a laudable disposition to fall in with the wishes of the parishioners.

"I did happen to go and see a Mrs. Robinson yesterday, under rather peculiar circumstances—" he answered.

The new curate was strolling one morning down one of the residential streets in the town when he saw a very small boy making heroic but vain attempts to reach the big brass handle of a front door bell.

"A very unfortunate mistake, Mr. Priggleswade, as you are now to learn. Had you behaved differently, and as a minister of the gospel ought, I should probably have presented you to the benefice. But, as it is, I have decided to present your late curate, the Rev. Reginald Bisgood."

"Hallo, my little fellow! Can't reach it, eh? Well, let me ring the bell for you." And he gave the handle a mighty tug, which set the bell clanging loudly.

"Do you mean to say you don't believe me?" demanded the curate, beginning to grow hated.

A smile of huge gratification expanded the chubby face of the gracelessurchin. "Now, we must cut and run," he hissed. And he was off, leaving the astonished curate alone upon the doorstep.

"The vicar laughed, and I wasn't born yesterday," he said "and even if I had been, I should still have thought your story rather thin—especially your hitting on the woman's name accidentally, without any previous knowledge of her."

"I—I—ahem! Does—does—Mrs.—Mrs. Robinson live here?" he stammered, mentioning the first name that came into his head, as the best way out of the embarrassing situation.

"Robinson is a common enough name. And, likely, or not, it is precisely what happened," answered the curate.

"The curate stammered out his name; some plausible explanation of his visit. If the house had been in St. Matthew's parish, he might have pretended that he had called in the ordinary course of his professional ministrations. But the house was in the parish of St. Peter's."

"Again the vicar laughed his scoffing laugh. "You must have heard of so notorious a person," he said. "A woman who is constantly visited on Sundays by flashy acquaintances—mostly men—in motor cars, and who entertains them in the small hours with music and feasting and reveling. Why, sir, the goings on are the talk of the town. And you expect me to believe that you had never heard of her. No! No! Mr. Bisgood. Try that story on somebody a few years younger than I am."

"The lady was youngish, and decidedly pretty and attractive, though somewhat over-dressed. "Mrs. Robinson?" he murmured, awkwardly.

"The curate was by this time in a white heat of passion. "You're the first man who has ever dared to call me a liar; and I've a good mind to thrash you for the insult, you—you—smug Pharisee!" he cried, in a voice that trembled with rage.

"She smiled and nodded. "I'm the—the—new curate," he began, and I thought that as I was passing—" "Quite so. Pray be seated," interposed the lady. "Very kind of you to call, I'm sure. Do you know, I've been here three months, and you are the first clergyman who has been to see me?"

"The vicar slipped hastily round to the other side of his study table. He was not a warrior, except linguistically. "You are not improving your position by insolence, Mr. Bisgood. Had you been penitent and contrite, I might have given you another chance. But the sooner you leave Tootham, the better."

"I don't know how it is," continued Mrs. Robinson, candidly, "but I'm afraid I can't be exactly persona grata in Tootham. Everybody seems to fight shy of me. I'm not aware of having done anything to offend the worthy denizens of this highly respectable place. But such is the fact. I seem to be regarded as a sort of social leper. However, we won't talk about that. Let's talk about something pleasanter and more interesting."

"The vicar lost no time in writing to say that he would, with pleasure, run up to London and see Mr. de Bracey, as requested. He saw himself already rector of Tootham. When he arrived next afternoon at 1001 Eaton square, he asked the butler whether Mr. de Bracey was at home.

"Come in here, if you please, Mr. Bisgood," said the vicar, leading the way to his study. "I have something very unpleasant to discuss with you." The curate wondered. "Be good enough to explain to me," demanded the vicar, "how it is that

"Mrs. de Bracey, sir," the butler corrected him. "There is no Mr. de Bracey; my master has been dead some years. Yes, sir, the mistress is at home. She is expecting you. I

think, Mr. Priggleswade, is it not Will you walk in, please?"

The vicar started. He turned pale. In the pretty woman who stood confronting him he recognized that depraved person, Mrs. Robinson.

"I—I—came to see Mrs. de Bracey," he stammered. "And I am Mrs. de Bracey," she smiled. "You are surprised, eh?—because you have known me in another name. Well, the fact is this: When I purchased the advowson of Tootham with the knowledge that the late rector contemplated resigning at an early date, the idea struck me that I would go down and live there awhile, in an assumed name, so that I might have a good opportunity of studying the local clergy, to see whether any were deserving to be appointed to the benefice, when it fell vacant."

She paused. The vicar looked rather blank. He wished now that he had not been quite so hasty in his judgment of Mrs. Robinson's character. Further, he hoped with all his heart, that she had not heard of that little row he had had with his curate in connection with the latter's visit to her house.

The lady went on: "My rather Bohemian way of life appears to have shocked all the good people of Tootham immensely; and I won't deny that when I saw that I took a malicious pleasure in even going out of my way to shock them further. Still, I hardly think that they—least of all you clergy, who are supposed to be especially endowed with the virtue of Christian charity—need have jumped to the conclusion that I was a bad character."

"Oh, I never thought that—" began the vicar, in obsequious deprecation. "No?" she ejaculated, with a slight lift of her shapely shoulders. "Then I wonder why you dismissed that nice curate of yours for the iniquity of merely called to see me."

"Oh, that was a mistake—an unfortunate mistake—" "A very unfortunate mistake, Mr. Priggleswade, as you are now to learn. Had you behaved differently, and as a minister of the gospel ought, I should probably have presented you to the benefice. But, as it is, I have decided to present your late curate, the Rev. Reginald Bisgood."

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QUAINT AND CURIOUS. A five hundred mile canal, projected to drain the great swamps of Florida, would reclaim 6,500,000 acres of land.

By ignoring fractional parts of a penny in paying dividends on government stocks the British government saves annually \$7500.

The pearl mentioned by Tavernier as belonging to the emperor of Persia, was purchased of an Arab in 1633, and is valued at \$550,000.

Swedish railway waiting rooms are provided with couches, and porters come around and wake slumbers 10 minutes before the train is to start.

Hat shops are opened on all the Hamburg-American liners. The stock will include all the best English, French, German and American makes.

Three good washes are received by an Abyssinian during his career—at his birth, on his marriage morn and at his death. At all other times he shuns soap and water.

Maurice Maeterlinck, the Belgian author, has bought Wandrinne abbey, the old monastery on the banks of the Seine and, although it is 1300 years old, will try to restore it to a habitable condition.

In the Neuchatel (Switzerland) courts the speeches of lawyers will in future be limited to 10 minutes, five minutes being allowed for cross-examinations. An official time keeper will see that the regulation is observed.

The smallest railroad in England is the Garstang and Knott End (Lancashire) railway, which in the last six months earned a net revenue of \$2480. The half-yearly meeting of proprietors was attended by one person, the secretary.

John Marshall's house in Richmond, Va., in which he lived for 40 years, has been bought by the city and is in danger of destruction. An effort to preserve it as a memorial of the great interpreter of the constitution has been suggested.

Mail Carrier Unable to Read or Write. Reno has a mail carrier who can neither read nor write, but because the Government desires this sort of clerk in the service, but because the postmaster cannot secure applicants for the position from the ranks of those who are making more money in other lines. The cost of living is so high in Reno that no one wishes to try his luck with the chance of promotion in the civil service. John Duvrey, recently over from France, has started to serve as mail carrier, and although he can neither read nor write he compares the numbers on the houses with the address and manages to hold down the job.—Reno correspondence San Francisco Chronicle.

Painless Cancer. There is a prevailing opinion that cancer is always painful from the beginning, whereas it is really painless in the majority of cases. It is desirable to ascertain how far the public ought to be instructed in the early signs of cancer, with a view to the adoption of earlier diagnosis, and consequently earlier operation.—Hospital.

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA. Latest News Gleaned From Various Parts.

Patrick J. Friel, a mine foreman at Buck Run Colliery, was the only one to successfully pass the recent examination for mine inspector held at Pottsville, and he is sure of a \$3,000 place.

Joseph Boner, residing in the Nipponese Valley, Clinton County, killed two of the largest black snakes ever seen in the valley. They measured six feet nine inches and seven feet six inches respectively.

Wilson Redheffer, of Springfield Township, Delaware County, died in a hospital in Washington, D. C., from injuries received in being thrown to the ground while engaged in superintending the erection of a building for his father-in-law, J. Holcher, in Washington.

The York Lodge, No. 266, Free and Accepted Masons, have purchased two valuable properties on South George Street, near the central part of the city, and will erect handsome quarters costing approximately \$200,000.

The Wilkes-Barre Lace Mills on May 20 will give a ten per cent. increase in wages to its 1100 employees. The advance was unqualified.

A quantity of dynamite was found by Robert Drums, a 14-year-old boy, concealed in the brush in close proximity to the Lehigh Valley Railroad near Hazleton. Detectives believe the dynamite was stolen from one of the strippings, by tramps with the intention of blowing up the Valley pay car.

Mrs. Hugh Campbell has received word from Paisley, Scotland, that her brother John Taylor, who two months ago disappeared from his home in Chester and whom the police all over the United States had been searching for, had arrived there. Taylor left Chester two months ago to go to Philadelphia to purchase some goods and nothing was heard from him until the letter came from Scotland.

The report of the Department of Mines of Pennsylvania for 1906 shows that during that period the total graduation of anthracite coal in gross tons was 64,410,277. There were 557 fatal and 1212 non-fatal accidents; 1,614,083 kegs of powder and 7,980,733 pounds of dynamite were used. If the Howard bill, which passed the House but failed to get through the Senate, imposing a tax on anthracite coal, had become a law the annual revenue from this source would have been \$1,932,108.21. The total production of bituminous coal was 129,532,989 tons, which would have produced a revenue of \$1,295,329.98 from the bituminous operators. There were 177 fatal and 1160 non-fatal accidents in this district in 1906, and 32,786 kegs of powder and 2,425,173 pounds of dynamite were used.

Edwin, the 18-month-old child of Edwin Schaeffer, of Copley, died in terrible agony as the result of eating several nerve tonic tablets which had been prescribed for Mrs. Schaeffer and which an older child led to the baby, mistaking them for candy.

William H. Walker wanted to shake hands with a bear in an animal show at Altoona, and extended his hand into the cage. This angered the bear and it struck at the hand, a claw tearing off the end of one of Walker's fingers.

In Northumberland the time-worn theme of a troublesome bull in china shop was given a unique illustration when farmers were driving the animal down main street. At Miss McVaugh's millinery shop the bull cast a glance toward the window and there spied ribbons and hats of varied and gaudy hues, among which red predominated. That sight was sufficient for with a bellowing charge he made for it full tilt. First he bucked and wrecked the window and then he bolted for the door. There he met his doom, as the jam was so narrow it held him fast, until backed out with a pitchfork.

Nineteen-year-old John McCausland was instantly killed at Hicks Run, near Dubois. While standing on a pile of logs they started to roll and one of the big pieces of timber struck him on the head, crushing it.

The extensive forest fires which have been raging in President and Pine Grove Townships, Venango County, covering an area of ten square miles, since Sunday are believed to be under control. Gas and all pumping stations in the path of the flames were saved by enveloping them in wet blankets.

The Natalie Colliery, of Shamokin, idle for several years, will soon be put in operation again, it is said.

Engineer Harry M. Isenberg was caught in the wreck of his engine, which jumped the track near Alexandria, and was scalded so badly with the steam and boiling water that he died a few hours later.

Charged with forging the name of his father, J. C. Ervin, to several notes, Walter W. Ervin, of Furlong was committed to the county jail at Doylestown by Justice Wall in default of \$500 bail.

John Estes, age 19, and the only support of a widowed mother, fell from a freight train at Union City and was instantly killed. His head was severed.

The taxpayers of Upper Mt. Bethel Township are opposing a proposition to build a high school building that would cost \$16,000. The members of the School Board by a vote of 3 to 2 decided to erect such a structure at a point locally known to Allegheny.

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WISE WORDS. Some men look as helpless as a lost dog. The paperhanger expects pay for putting up at a hotel. Anticipation is more fun than realization—sometimes. Everything in the way of trouble comes to those who mate. Clothes do not make the man—especially the self-made man. A kiss on the cheek may not be as cheeky as a kiss on the lips. No, Cordelia, temperance drinks are not in the dry goods class. Fools stumble around in the dark, but the wise man carries a lantern. Money may not purchase love and happiness, but it will buy foreign titles. No, Alonzo, a man isn't necessarily simple because he leads the simple life. Shortly after love begins to wag logical it proceeds to bump the bumps. Money talks—and a few pennies make more noise than a hundred-dollar bill. Money makes the mare go—but she doesn't always travel in the right direction. A girl seldom falls in love with a man unless there is some reason why she shouldn't. And a wise man never tells a woman with a baby how pretty some other woman's baby is. Nothing short of a full grown earthquake could jolt a political grafter loose from his job. A woman invariably tells a small boy to hurry back when she sends him on an errand—but what's the use? No, Cordelia, a married woman isn't necessarily up to date because her husband happens to be the latest thing out. It's an undisputed fact that some men do not have any more sense when they get married than they did when they were born.—From "Pointed Paragraphs," in the Chicago News.

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