

LATIMER'S FLIRTATION.

Or the Duck Horse Sometimes Wins.

"Fred," said Tom Latimer to me as we sat over a late breakfast at the Moincan House, Spring Lake. "I met the most beautiful, delightful, superb girl on the beach to-day. She's with a tummy old woman in a wig, with false teeth and a painted face."

"And how did you get an introduction to the paragon?" I ventured to ask him. "Well, I was just going to tell you. I saw this divinity seated on the sand, reading a volume of poetry, as charming as you please. Near her was a very fat poodle, sulky-looking beast, with the asthma. Well, as soon as my setter, Jack, saw this canine monstrosity he made a break for it, and they had a catch-as-catch-can wrestling match right then and there on the sand. It would have been all up with that poodle in about a minute if I hadn't started in and separated them. All this time the angel was screaming at the top of her lungs and trying to get her dog away. I finally rescued the beggar and gave him to her, and so struck up an acquaintance. Her name is Bertha Selden and"

"And how about Goldie Haughton?" I asked referring to a young lady who had been paying marked attention to all summer, and whom it was commonly believed by the boarders in the hotel that he intended to marry. "From that time forth Tom Latimer was a constant attendant on Bertha Selden, and though I knew it too well that he was an arrant flirt, I looked at it this time he was hard hit."

"You see," he said to me, "though my father is too good enough to contemplate marrying again at his time of life, I'm quite independent, and as I'm tolerably sure she likes me, why, old boy, you may expect an invitation to my wedding before long," and he swaggered off looking like a handsome, confident puppy as he was.

There! the fellow provoked me, though I was glad he really intended marrying the pretty, blue-eyed child, and not hitting her, as he had had a score of others.

The very same day who should arrive at our hotel but Latimer pere—a hale, handsome man of middle age, and an old acquaintance of mine. We dined together in private, and while Tom sipped his wine in silence, we elders gossiped of the place, the people and the cooking, though more than once I fancied that cheerful Mr. Latimer was more distrustful than usual, and several times I noticed that he cast anxious glances at Tom's thoughtful countenance.

"By the way," he said, after the waiter had placed the dessert and finally withdrawn, "neither of you has inquired my business here."

He looked at Tom, and Tom, rousing himself, looked at him. "Well, sir," said that young gentleman, "people don't come to Newport on business, at least not generally, so it didn't strike me to inquire."

"Well, my boy," said the elder gentleman, laughing, "I'll give you the information gratuitously; I have come down for a day to see the lady I'm about to marry—Miss Selden—you have probably met her."

Tom and I stared at his father in unmitigated surprise, and Tom ejaculated: "I say, father, you're not in earnest, you know?"

"Of course I am," replied Mr. Latimer, rising and laughing, "and I'm off now to pay my respects. Come over in the course of the evening, both of you," and while Tom stared blankly after him he went away.

Tom looked at me, and I looked at him. Tom thrust his hands through his yellow curls, and then into his trousers pockets; he then whistled. I whistled.

"Such a man as that to marry a brown front and a set of false teeth," ejaculated Tom. "Jove! sir, I'm struck dumb!" in proof of which he became slightly profane.

I do not approve of strong language; I do of hock; so to imitate two birds with the same stone, I cried:

"In any case, let us drink her health," after which cheerful resignation came to Tom, and he was good enough to say:

"Well, after all, it will be pleasant for Bertha and myself than if the governor had had better taste. I wonder what enchantments the old Circe threw around him?"

"I'll tell you what," said Tom, as later in the evening we ascended to the drawing-room of the bride-elect and her lovely niece, "I'll get Bertha out for a stroll this lovely moonlight night, and as sure as fate I'll propose. It's just the evening for that kind of thing, especially with those tender, blue-eyed things. I say! hadn't we better knock, lest we might interrupt the love-making?"

But I had opened the door, and there was nothing for it but to advance.

The room was but dimly lighted, yet sufficiently to show Miss Selden, the aunt, seated in a distant armchair, spectacles on nose, the paper she had been perusing fallen on her lap, while a gentle sound, like the snore of a fop, proclaimed that she was wrapped in slumber, as was also the poodle lying by her feet.

Close to the piano stood Mr. Latimer, bending tenderly over a little sylph in white tulle, whose bright hair floated over his black coat-sleeve, and whose white fingers were shyly twisting one of the buttons of said coat—Bertha, in fact.

They started as the door opened, and Bertha would have sprung away, but his encircling arm detained her.

"Here, Tom!" he called out, "come and pay your respects to your future step-mother. She's but a little body but no doubt she'll make you a good one!"

"Good evening, Tom," said Bertha, smiling, half shyly. "Why didn't you tell me before you were going to be my stepson? You are so nice and kind, I love you already, and I'm sure we'll get on so well together!"

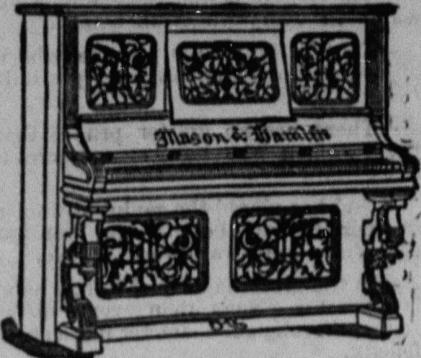
"Nice and kind! Oh, Tom! my poor friend!"

The last time I heard of Tom, he was safely landed by the skiff and indefatigable gondolier, and they were spending the honeymoon in Paris.

For Cheese Straws.

Four ounces of butter, four of Parmesan cheese grated, with half a teaspoonful of cayenne and four ounces of flour. Roll it out thin, and cut in strips of four inches in length and a quarter of an inch in breadth; bake lightly, and serve piled high in alternate rows on a dish.

Mason & Hamlin 1859-1887.

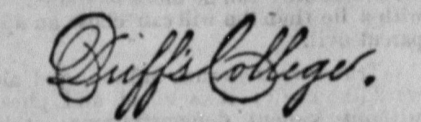


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BELLEFONTE & SNOW SHOE R. R.—Time Table in effect Nov. 15.

Table for BELLEFONTE & SNOW SHOE R. R. Leave Snow Shoe 6:45 a. m., arrive at Bellefonte 8:25 a. m., etc.

LEWISBURG & TYRONE R. R.—Time Table in effect Nov. 15.

Table for LEWISBURG & TYRONE R. R. WESTWARD. Mixed. Leave Scotia, 12:15 6:00, etc.

PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD.—(Phila. & Erie Division.)—On and after Nov. 15, 1886.

Table for PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD. WESTWARD. ERIE MAIL. Leaves Philadelphia, 11:20 p. m., etc.

LOCK HAVEN EXPRESS

Table for LOCK HAVEN EXPRESS. Leaves Lock Haven, 7:00 a. m., etc.

DAY EXPRESS

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Table for ERIE MAIL. Leaves Erie, 1:55 p. m., etc.

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