

A MATRIMONIAL ADVENTURE.

THE sensation for the season at Swell-cove was Miss Arabella Wyshbone, the rich heiress—such, at least, she passed for. A wealthy aunt, in infirm health, the story ran, had willed her immense fortune, of which, any day, she might become the mistress. Quoted at nineteen, she looked older; but such anachronisms are common in feminine chronology. Her figure was thinish, her hair reddish, her eyes grayish and not quite parallel. If you don't fancy the picture, we can only say you would have passed for no judge at Swell-cove.

Among the visitors at the "Cove" that season, was a nice young man from the city. We needn't describe him more particularly—to know one of these nice young men is to know all. His name was De Quincy Douthunter.

Mr. Douthunter's business was genteel idleness. By his own account, he was down on the right side of the books of a rich uncle, whom the life tables didn't give over five years to run, to say nothing of the family gout, and a hopeful contingency of apoplexy.

How in the world a young lady of Miss Wyshbone's cleverness could tolerate such a puppy as De Quincy Douthunter, was the oft expressed wonder of the crowd of envious competitors to whom it was obvious that the gentleman's attention was more favorably received than their own.

But women are a law unto themselves. The fact is—and we are content to state it, letting the reason go—that Miss Wyshbone exhibited no marked preference for Mr. Douthunter's society, that that gentleman as good as had the field to himself.

Both were too discreet to be precipitate. There was none of that headlong falling in love, which is never found in polite society. They had sat on the sand, and paddled in the surf together, many times, before anything which might be called of a tender nature passed between them. And when Mr. Douthunter did venture a hint at the state of his feelings, the lady at once cut him short.

"That is a matter first to be discussed between our relatives," she said.

"Certainly, but—"

"Come, I can't hear another word now. My aunt will be down here to-morrow, and if you uncle—"

Mr. Douthunter looked blank.

"My uncle," he said, with some confusion of voice and manner—"the fact is, my uncle is so chained down to business—his nose so kept to the mercantile grindstone—you know how it is with these old fellows—besides, he is a confirmed invalid, confined most of the time to his room."

"Very well, sir," replied the firm young lady; "till he and my aunt have talked the affair over, I can have nothing more to say."

"Mr. Douthunter's face brightened at length.

"What time could your aunt see my uncle?" he asked.

"Any time after to-morrow—say five o'clock."

"I will return to the city this evening," said Mr. Douthunter, "and make a personal appeal to my uncle."

Mr. Douthunter took his leave on the next train for the city.

At the time appointed, Mr. Douthunter's uncle, a spruce attired elderly gentleman, called at the principal Swellcove hotel, and having sent up his card, was duly ushered into the presence of a genteel looking elderly lady.

Bows and compliments exchanged, the business of the meeting was at once proceeded to.

"My nephew, madam," the gentleman began, "informs me that his happiness depends on the answer you shall give to the demand, which he has deputed me to make, of your niece's hand.

"This is too grave a matter to be decided hastily," she said. "Arabella, you see, is so very young—and then the fortune she will, at no distant day, inherit—" A hacking cough interrupted the sentence.

"And my nephew's prospects," warmly broke in the old gentleman, "most people would call inconsiderable. The house of Trett & Co., of which I have the honor to be the head, is not, I believe, unknown in commercial circles. My nephew will come in for all I have and very soon, too, I fear," Mr. Trett added, making a not very successful effort to look frail.

"The importance of such a union makes deliberation all the more necessary," replied the lady. "I would suggest at least a year's delay."

"A year!" Mr. Trett fairly bounded in his chair. Had he been himself the lover, his disappointment could scarcely have been more manifest. "Good Heavens! consider, madam! My nephew is of an impatient temper, and if your niece loves him as he loves her, they will certainly be driven to elope, and what would you do then, madam?"

"Of course I should forgive her poor dear—she is all I have left in the world; but then it would quite kill me if she acted so," said the old lady, crying and coughing together.

Mr. Trett's eyes glinted with pleasure. The answer to his last question, which he

had waited for with eagerness, was plainly satisfactory.

Finding the aunt's resolution inflexible, but expressing the hope she might yet be induced to alter it, Mr. Trett did not prolong his visit.

Next day Mr. Douthunter rushed wildly into Arabella's presence. On her cheeks were traces of recent tears.

"I know the worst!" he cried. "Fly with me dearest, beyond the reach of the cruelty that would defer our hopes?"

Sobbing she leaned her head upon his shoulder.

In a few hurried words he consoled her; and in less time than such an affair was ever planned before, a rendezvous was fixed, and before an hour had elapsed, the twain were one flesh.

What was to be done next?

"Go and ask your aunt's forgiveness," suggested the bridegroom.

"She left this morning."

"Well, we can go where she is."

"Alas! she will never forgive me," whimpered Arabella.

"Nonsense! I know she will."

"How do you know?"

"Why, she told me so herself, yesterday."

He could have bit his tongue off for making such a slip.

"Told you so herself! Why, you were not here yesterday, and you never saw my aunt. Wretch!" she exclaimed, a gleam of intelligence flashing over her countenance as she closely scanned her husband's features. "I see it all. Your uncle is a myth. It was yourself, in disguise, whom I saw yesterday," she added betraying herself in turn.

"Traitor!" he cried, catching at her last unguarded words. "It was you who were your aunt yesterday. I was a fool not to see it."

For an instant the eyes of the pair met in hate and scorn; then turning their backs upon each other they went their several ways—each, mayhap, to take counsel of one of those eminent legal gentlemen skilled in the procurement of "divorces without publicity."

A Sad and Curious Affair.

One afternoon, a fortnight ago, while a lady was walking through a leading thoroughfare in the West End of London, carrying her purse in her hand, a man suddenly snatched it from her and rushed off. A hue and cry was raised, but he got away and the lady never expected to hear more of the matter, but two days afterward a small packet was brought to her which had arrived by what is called "The Parcel Delivery Company," and on opening it she found her purse, accompanied by the following letter:

LONDON, October 1, 1872.—Madame: I hasten to offer the only reparation in my power for my conduct yesterday. I trust you will not regret the present loss of the small change, when I tell you that it afforded me the only meal I have had for ten days, as God is my judge—the only food of any kind which had passed my lips for fifty-eight hours! I was actually starving when the glitter of your purse caught my eyes. The Devil tempted me to take it, and I then committed my first and only offence against law and society."

Until I disgraced myself yesterday I deemed myself, both by birth and education a gentleman; not very long since in a very good position, but owing to a great loss, I within the last fortnight found myself in London destitute. I have striven in vain to get employment, but a man will, though he may be educated, find it difficult to get any not having a regular trade. The 5s. 6d. (\$1.35; the contents of the purse), which I retain, will keep me a few days. If I can procure work, I swear to send it to you at once; if I cannot, then—I will not be certain I will not again steal. There is a Saviour for all that suffer, though both the canon of God and man is set against it. I sincerely regret my conduct. God knows that cry of "stop thief!" rings in my ears still. Do not think that I have written this with the hope—that maudlin hope—of escaping punishment; not so.

"I do not wish to escape the consequences. If your husband or brother only makes the complaint before the magistrates, so that it will become public, I will at once attend."

"Asking your kind forgiveness for my dastardly conduct, I remain, madame, AN UNFORTUNATE!"

The lady's husband, deeming the letter to carry ample internal evidence of an "over true tale," waited upon the police magistrate and mentioned the circumstance adding that if the unfortunate writer would call at his office in the city he would help him to obtain employment.

How forcibly this letter points that moral which has repeatedly been impressed upon the rising generation, viz: Learn a trade.

A waggish farmer in Ohio killed forty black-snakes in one day recently and buried them in a sand pit. The next day he sent his hired man—a Swede—to dig the fish worms in the same place; and the size of the worms frightened the poor fellow nearly out of his senses, and he fled in terror from the scene.

The "Fighting Editor."

THE John Bull newspaper, edited by Theodore Hook, frequently indulged in offensive personalities, in remarking on the conduct and character of public men. A military hero, who would persist in placing himself conspicuously before the world's gaze, received a copious share of what he considered malignant and libellous abuse in the columns of the said newspaper. His soldier's spirit resolved on revenge. An officer and a gentleman could not demean himself by calling on a hireling scribbler for honorable satisfaction. No! he would horsewhip the miscreant in his own den—the Bull would be taken by the horn!

Donning his uniform and arming himself with a huge whip he called at the office of the paper, and scarcely concealing his agitation, inquired for the editor. He was invited by the clerk to take a seat in the room. He complied, and was kept waiting while the clerk, who recognized the visitor, ran up stairs and informed the editorial responsibility of his name and evident purpose. After an aggravating delay, which served considerably to increase the ill-temper of the officer, the door opened, and a coarse, rough-looking man, over six feet in height, with proportionate breadth of shoulder, and armed with a bludgeon, entered the room.

Walking up to the surprised and angry visitor, he said, in a voice of thunder:

"Are you the chap who wants to see me?"

"You! No, I wish to see the editor of the paper."

"That's me; I'm the worry man."

"There must be some mistake."

"Not a morsel! I'm the head hitter of this Bull," said the fellow, bringing the knobbed end of his bludgeon in fearful proximity to the officer's caput.

"You the editor? Impossible!"

"Do you mean to say I'm telling a lie?" roared the ruffian, as he again raised the knotty argument.

"Certainly not—by no means!" said the officer, rapidly cooling down, and dropping the whip and his wrath at the same time.

"Werry well, then! What are you wanting w' me?"

"A mistake, my dear sir; all a mistake. I expected to meet another person. I'll call some other day," and the complainant backed to the door, bowing to the drawn stick before him.

"And don't let me catch you coming again without knowing who and what you want. We're always ready here for all sorts of customers—army or naval, civil or military, horse, foot and dragoons."

The officer retired, resolving to undergo another going by the Bull before he again ventured to encounter the herculean proportions of the fighting editor.

When the clerk informed the occupants of the editorial sanctum of the visit of the irate Colonel, neither Hook nor the publishers cared to face the horsewhip. A well-known pugilist, the landlord of a tavern in the vicinity, was instantly sent for; a slight preparation fitted him for the part in which he acquitted himself with complete success. The story rapidly circulated and the reputation of the fighting editor of the John Bull prevented further remonstrances from persons who felt themselves aggrieved by the liberty of the press.

How the Sun Caught a Thief.

Five or six days ago, says a Paris paper, M. X—, a photographer, allured by the brightness of the sun and the softness of the air, provided himself with the necessary baggage and hastened to Fontainebleau to take views of the forest. He installed himself in a very picturesque quarter, erected his apparatus, prepared his plates, opened his object-glass, and enveloped at once his case and his head in a large, dark, and fluctuating veil, set himself to the task of seizing the objects in view. He had just taken out his proof from the dark chamber, and was subjecting it to the chemical reaction, when a strong hand was laid upon his shoulder. He turned around hastily and found himself in the presence of a species of giant, meanly attired, who, by gestures and voice demanded his purse. M. X— is not a Hercules, and from the first glance toward his adversary, he concluded that all resistance was useless. He therefore very politely offered his purse, which was accepted with seeming thankfulness. The robber bowed, and leaving him to resignation, went into the depth of the forest. Poor X—, meditating on his sad loss, remained for some time motionless. His looks were mechanically set on his photographic proof, and he mused upon it with a diverted and unconcerned eye. "What is this?" exclaimed he suddenly; "what is the human form in this copied under the shade of this oak?"—Heavens! Should I believe my eyes? It is he, it is my robber, perfectly delineated and very easy to be recognized. O, divine sun, my co-laborer, how well you do things!" On his return, he repaired to the police commissioner at Fontainebleau, and related his adventure, exhibiting his proof-plate and the robber's likeness. The next day, with the aid of this description, the robber was arrested.

The women vote in Kansas, at school meetings, and it is reported that "the men vote just as their wives do."

Nick's Story.

"My old man," said Nick, "as a general thing, was a pretty steady old gent; but once in a while he would get oblivious, and water was not the cause of it. I recollect a certain holiday was approaching, and I had been shinning around to get a little money to have a time with on that day; but the fates and purse were against me.

Two days prior to the anticipated holiday dawn I hadn't nary a cent. Remember this, boys, when I add that upon this same afternoon I came into the house, when lo! there upon the floor, totally overcome by his imbibations, lay my respected daddy, and besides him six shinning half-dollars, which had rolled from his pocket. Boys, I've been an honest man all my life, but once, when a boy, I committed a theft. Thinks I to myself, the old man's been on a jam-boree; won't know how much he's spent, and will never miss it. But mark you, the next morning I and my two brothers were summoned into our father's presence. The old man's face lowered. I thought of that half-dollar and knew that a storm was brewing. "Boys," said he, "last night I came home with six half-dollars. One of 'em's gone. Your mother didn't take it. There's been no one else in the house. Which of you took it?" We all protested our innocence. "Boys," said the old man, "that half-dollar never walked away, and I'm going to find out which one of you three boys took it." Turning round, he took from the wall an old flint-lock Queen Anne blunderbuss. This he deliberately loaded with powder and buck-shot in our presence; then, fastening it upon the table, he cocked it, tied a string to the trigger, took a seat behind it, holding the string in his hand, and in solemn tones addressed us thusly:

"Boys, I'm going to discover the thief, and punish him at the same time. You must each blow in the muzzle of that gun. When the guilty one blows, off goes his head. Now, then, you have a chance; will you own up, or blow? Not a word did either of us speak. "Ben" said the old man to my oldest brother, "have you got that half-dollar?"

"No, sir," "Blow in that muzzle." Ben did so, and the gun didn't go off—"Jack," to my next brother, "have you got that half-dollar?" "No, sir." "Take a blow." Jack did so in safety. "Nick," (eh, boys, I tell you the chills began to crawl down my back), "got that half-dollar?" said the old man. "No, sir," said I with a defiant swagger. "Blow in that gun." I walked up bravely, gave a blow, and—dodged. "Nick," said the old man, in a voice of thunder, "where is that half-dollar?" He had me. The truth dodged out of me. Said I, "Out in the barn, pop."

Queer way to Mend a Broken Leg.

This morning, writes a correspondent from Rome, Italy, on the 10th of August, an English gentleman, with a florid face and white whiskers was returning from Rome on his horse, after taking a ride in the neighborhood of the Porta Pia. In crossing the via Felice, the horse unfortunately stumbled and fell. The animal rose unhurt, but the gentleman had dislocated his knee by the fall. Several persons ran to his assistance and carried him to a house. The faces of the bystanders was full of alarm and pity, while that of the brave Englishman remained unmoved; his cheeks were as red and as calm as before the accident. As soon as they had seated him in an arm-chair, he began to feel his knee carefully. "Shall we send for a doctor?" they asked. "Oh! no, is there a carpenter near here?" he replied. "Yes, there is one close by." "Be so kind as to help me to go to him." Half laughing and half inclined to think he was insane, two young men took him to the joiners. Once more seated, he asked for a sheet and rolled it around his leg. Then after once more feeling the knee joint, he put it into the screw-vice and told the joiner to tighten it prudently. At first, with some hesitation, and afterwards encouraged by the composure and authoritative manner of the foreigner, the man did as he was told, and tightened the screw slowly, while the patient made the most singular grimace, till at last he called out: "Enough!" and tossing a crown to the carpenter got on his horse and galloped away, leaving the bystanders convulsed with laughter at this singular surgical operation.

A new danger is to be apprehended from watermelons, according to the following story, which comes from Santa Barbara, California. A farmer was working on a side hill, when a watermelon, weighing eighty-six pounds, broke loose from the vine and started for him. The farmer saw his danger and tried to run from it, but the vine treacherously caught his feet, and the ruffianly vegetable came thundering down upon him with terrible speed, striking him to the earth and rolling over his prostrate body.

A Brooklyn physician, gifted with a faculty for outspoken talk and plain English, reported the death of a patient as from "dyspepsia, caused by taking quack medicines for two years." Doubtless there was more truth in this than in half the long Latin obfuscations commonly made use of.

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