

Old Nasty Particular.

By GEORGE B. BURGIN,
Author of "The Judge of The Four Corners."
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"Attention! Rear-rank man, dress up!" Said old Captain Doubleday, rapping severely on the gravel with his stick.

"Ee, you a meaning me, master, or 'other man?" inquired Gubbins, as he permitted his spade to drop on the ground and descended from his majestic stiffness from military bearing to an agricultural attitude more expressive of everyday life.

"How often am I to tell you?" snapped the captain. "It is a soldier's duty to obey, not to ask questions."

"Well, I baint a 'komin' soldier," grimly snorted Gubbins. "My name's Gubbins. A plain, blunt, self-made man I am."

"And very badly put together, too," cried the captain, with a chuckle. "Your remarks, Gubbins, are totally subversive of discipline. When you entered my

service as gardener, surely I had a right to presume you would obey my commands without argument."

"What's the good of being a man if I baint to argue?" he inquired. "When you says, 'Rear-rank man dress up,' I baint going to dress up. My working clothes is good enough for me any week-day."

Overcome by such crass ignorance, Captain Doubleday became purple with apoplectic rage, but the sight of Miss Priscilla's curls at the door of the semi-detached cottage calmed him at once. He bowed gallantly in her direction and turned towards Gubbins and the boy.

"Attention! Stand at ease! Break up, and mow the lawn," he shouted. Gubbins interpreted the command literally, and began to break up the lawn until somewhat roughly restrained by the captain, when he grudgingly went away to his tool shed breathing threats of sanguinary vengeance on "Old Nasty Particular."

a sweet-tempered, middle-aged spinster, with a beautiful and benevolent face, had been a little overwhelmed at the thought of having such a noisy neighbor as the captain, but on the very first day of taking possession, had accosted her with such extreme courtesy that she soon began to feel a new interest in existence.

"You must permit me, my dear madam," he said, "to constitute myself the nominal master of the garden. As your earthworks (it afterwards dawned upon the wondering Miss Priscilla that "Old Nasty Particular" alluded to the moss-covered bank at the bottom of both gardens) make one line with my own, it will be to our mutual advantage to organize some simple system of defense. Thus, if I see any of the marauding village boys stealing your fruit I will force them back to their main line; and if you should see them in my garden and warn me, I should esteem it a great favor."

Miss Priscilla had replied that nothing would give her greater pleasure; and the friendship was auspiciously commenced as still further cemented by an invitation to the captain to partake of a "dish of tea" with her and the vicar's wife.

The captain, who had received the message from the hands of pretty little Thyra, Miss Priscilla's maid, regarded that damsel with marked approval. There was a suggestion of lavender about Thyra's white cap and apron which strongly appealed to the captain's sense of the poetic. He concluded that so neat a maid could only be the result of patient training on the part of her mistress, thus making a most egregious mistake, for Thyra's neatness was mainly due to an innate coquetry. Miss Priscilla having a most bewildering habit of never remembering where she had put anything.

But the manner in which the captain gained Miss Priscilla's perpetual gratitude yet remains to be told.

In an ill-advised moment, some four years ago, Miss Priscilla had commenced to keep fowls. Being too gentle to kill them, every year she had given away the chickens to friends, and now the original old rooster, the head and front of the family, had become so fierce and pugnacious that she was afraid to approach the henhouse at all.

"Gen. Crook," for so this ungainly Cochon China was called in the peddler which he had brought with him from the poultry show, had a knack of vacating his own premises whenever he felt particularly vindictive. In order to fall over into the garden, catch Miss Priscilla's gown in his beak, and be dragged across the lawn until either her gown gave way or the general lost his breath. Miss Priscilla patiently endured this indignity, and never went into the garden without providing herself with an already open umbrella, with which to baffle the general's charge. As his invariable method was to spread his wings wide out, put his head low down, and rush at the open umbrella, with the speed of an arrow frequently carried his head and neck through the alpaca into the framework. Miss Priscilla would then abandon the umbrella and seek refuge in flight, leaving the general to extricate himself as best he could, and crow derisively from the middle of her favorite flower bed, as if challenging the whole world to mortal combat.

Now the captain was a careful observer of men and things, and, as time hung somewhat heavily on his hands, the one desire of his life grew into an overwhelming passion for the subjugation of the general, who, in addition to his many other misdeeds, had lately developed a habit of crowing at one in the morning and maliciously keeping on until eight. As the general's voice, though raucous and rough, possessed a peculiar carrying power, the captain had an additional motive for avenging his sleepless nights. On the occasion of the tea party gathered that Miss Priscilla and the vicar's wife were ready to adopt any plan which might involve the moral conquest of the general without inflicting serious bodily damage or depreciating his market value. With the wisdom of an experienced reconnaissance in force on the henhouse, he found that in a particular corner, in which there was just room enough for him to flap his wings whist crowing.

"Be I to take my orders from you?" grumpily asked Gubbins, as he concluded his task. "You be, angrammatically growled the captain; and when I give an order and it isn't obeyed, somebody suffers. If you presume to annoy Miss Priscilla again, I'll make a rack myself and stretch you on it."

which nearly proved fatal. Even Miss Priscilla faced his advance with equanimity and "a-as-shed" and drove him back in disgrace to his own domain.

Having overcome Gen. Crook, the captain's next feat was the faithless serpent he had cherished in his own heart, to wit, Gubbins.

Three days a week Gubbins "did for" the captain, and three days a week for Miss Greene. On the days when he toiled under the captain's eye, Gubbins was respectful, almost reverent, and even adopted his master's views with approval, or professed to do so; but with the appearance of Thursday morning Gubbins was a totally different man. He regarded the captain from Miss Greene's garden with an air which was extremely exasperating to that choleric individual. It seemed to say: "You can order me about on your own side of the railings; here I can do as I like, and I mean to. Then Gubbins would toss things around in reckless



"NOW YOU DASHED DONKEY, TAKE OUT THOSE DAHLIAS."

confusion, and leave them so until it was with difficulty that the captain could restrain himself from jumping over the low iron rail. However, the captain's opportunity came when it occurred to Miss Priscilla that if he was not afraid of Gen. Crook he certainly could not fear Gubbins. There was something in the orderly array of the captain's garden which appealed to her very strongly. She was not methodical herself, but explained to the captain that although she had not had the advantages of military training she could properly appreciate them in others. In fact, the poor lady dwelt upon her own deficiencies until she aroused a feeling of ardent chivalry in the captain's sympathetic bosom.

"I think, Captain Doubleday," she remarked, "I would do Gubbins good if you were kind enough to gently reason with him as to his obstinacy. For instance, I preferred to have a rose bush in that center bed; Gubbins replaced it with dahlias. When I requested him to renew the parterre, he grunted and planted onions."

"Now, Captain Doubleday," continued poor Miss Priscilla, "I don't think that onions are either a becoming or ladylike vegetable, and I should be so much obliged to you if you could convince Gubbins that they are far more appropriate in his parish allotment than in my garden."

The captain kissed Miss Priscilla's hand. "Say the word, my dear madam," he replied, "and I'll run Gubbins through the body and fling him to the dogs, although I don't believe a self-respecting dog would have anything to do with him."

Womanlike, Miss Priscilla was frightened by the temper she had awakened. "I think I had rather go out," she said, "while you argue with Gubbins."

"It would be better," said the captain, with a smile which meant mischief, although Miss Priscilla did not guess it. As soon as Miss Priscilla was well out of sight the captain bounded over the railing with the agility of a grayhound. His method of arguing with Gubbins consisted in grasping him by the neckcloth until the gardener became purple.

"Now you dashed donkey, take out those dahlias." Frantic with fear, Gubbins took out the dahlias. "Now," said the captain, "plant the rose bush in the same bed." With a celerity not to be expected from his years, Gubbins dug up the rose bush and placed it in the middle bed, although it was not the right season to move it.

"Now," said the captain, "to the onion bed, you muddle-headed, dahlia-digging, public house haunting, slinking-seeking scoundrel." Gubbins' mode of progression to the profaned parterre bed could hardly be called a triumphant one inasmuch as it consisted of a startled shuffle thither. He did not even wait for an order to destroy the onions, but dug them up with a willingness he had not displayed for years. The captain stood over him until the parterre blossomed in the wilderness, as it were.

abruptness about the flavor which failed to recommend it to her taste; and in the second, it scarcely seemed right to be seen in the captain's garden about the presence of the vicar's wife to lend an air of staid propriety to the proceedings. But the vicar's wife was not available every afternoon, and so, as a matter of course, at four o'clock the captain would vault over the iron rail and drink six or seven cups of tea in the fiercely aggressive manner which always betokened how profoundly he was enjoying himself.

On this particular occasion, the captain alarmed Miss Priscilla by taking four cups of tea only, and then coughing violently, as if about to break a blood vessel. He was on the eve of a declaration of marriage, but, old campaigner though he was, nervously refrained from making it. He put down his tea cup, dusted a crumb off his coat, pulled up his collar, and coughed impressively.

"I assure you, madame," he said, "after hurrying about from place to place all my life, this village seems a haven of peace."

"As a matter of fact, ever since putting it on me, the captain had set everything and everybody by the ears," Miss Priscilla felt flattered. "I hope we have done our best to make it pleasant for you."

Beneath the gaze of her limpid blue eyes the captain grew still more confused. "Madame," he said, "I thought I had settled down here to end my days, but fear it is a mistake and that I must go." Then he strove to be pathetic, but, as he was as strong as a bull, only partially succeeded.

Miss Priscilla's heart sank within her at the thought of the captain's departure. She had slept more peacefully ever since the knowledge that his strong arm would be raised in her defense at a woman's notice. Now if he went away again she would be left to endure all the terrors of loneliness. The mere sight of his aggressive presence in the garden, the sound of his loud laughter, thrilled her with delight. No one had ever taken such an interest in her doings as this ferocious captain; no one had ever fought so fiercely in her defense; no one had ever bullied Gubbins before; and, worst of all, if the captain went away Gubbins would again revolt and be rougher than ever. Her blue eyes brimmed with tears; had the captain been an observant man, he would have noticed the nervous tinkling of her spoon against the saucer. But he was occupied in thinking how to storm and carry the citadel. He was anxious, too, that the vicar's remarks should not reach Priscilla, lest she should be overwhelmed with shame, and also leave the village.

"I'm a man of few words," said the captain, telling one of the greatest untruths he had ever uttered; "I'm a man of few words, Miss Priscilla, and dislike thinking that divisions should exist between us." He glanced at the rail.

Miss Priscilla hastened to assure the captain that she esteemed and respected him highly. "You see, my dear madame," continued the captain, "it's a man's nature to be envious and greedy. Not content with my own half of this garden and little home (he was accustomed to call it his 'country box,' when writing to friends) I want your half, too. It would be perfect if the rail were taken away. You may remember that you permitted me to restore one rose to your garden; will you give me one to wear on my heart forever?"

Miss Priscilla's answer may be guessed from the fact that when Gubbins arrived next day he discovered the captain busily engaged in pulling down the divisions between the two gardens. "Well, I'm gormed!" ejaculated Gubbins.

"Possibly," said the captain, "although I'm not in a position to know whether you are gormed or not, as you are here. 'D'you think you can realize one fact?" "I baint sure." "Baint't you. Well, in future, remember that you will obey my orders for six days in the week instead of three. You may also convey this information to Gen. Crook; if he doesn't turn over a new leaf he'll be stewed."

Hours after Gubbins was found in the fowl-yard by his deputy, feebly regarding the general. "Old Nasty Particular wants you," said the deputy. The general looked at Gubbins; the general crawled dejectedly into the fowlhouse, and Gubbins went back to his work. The general did not wait until the wedding, and then died. Gubbins' private opinion is that it broke his heart.

And that night, as Bill Jones looked longingly up at the window of the room where he knew his fair one was confined, he bitterly reproached himself for his foolishness in thinking that a single wheel could get away from a tandem, and he swore softly to himself that when next he tried to take the maid away he would have a sextuplet, fully manned, and with an auxiliary gas engine attachment.

SUMNER'S FUTILE VIGIL.

Scared by a Practical Joke Played by a Party of Humorous Southerners. The Doom Which Never Came.

Ex-Senator Dawes, of Massachusetts, being in a reminiscent mood the other evening, related an anecdote of Charles Sumner that has never found its way into print, but illustrated a remarkable characteristic of that great statesman. After he recovered from the effects of the attack of Preston Brooks Mr. Sumner went to Europe and remained for several months. Many people predicted that he would not dare return to the senate chamber, and almost everybody was willing to concede that if he did he would make no more speeches on the slave question, for several southern fire-eaters had threatened to kill him if he did. Mr. Sumner's intimate friends were well aware that he, like many other men of great intellect, was born a physical coward, and the assault of Brooks had upset his nerves completely that he would jump whenever he was startled by an unexpected sound.

But Mr. Sumner came back to Washington at the beginning of the next session, resumed his seat in the senate, and although it was notorious that several ruffians intended to attack him if he did not flee, he was against the slave power, and at the first opportunity delivered a speech that was even more radical and merciless than that which provoked the anger of Preston Brooks.

DAWES SENT FOR. The night after the delivery of that speech Mr. Dawes, who was a representative from Massachusetts, was just going to bed when Mr. Sumner's waiter rushed into his room at his boarding house, breathless with excitement, and said that Mr. Sumner wanted to see him immediately. Mr. Dawes put on his clothes again, and taking a stout hickory which he always carried, went to Mr. Sumner's residence, which was then on F street between Fourteenth and Fifteenth, and only a few steps from the treasury. He found the great man in his library drawing up a memorandum of instructions to his friends in case he should be killed, and he coolly informed Mr. Dawes that he expected to die that night. He had been visited, he said, by a committee of three, representing the slave-holding element in the south, who warned him that his hour was fast approaching, and that the penalty of his last speech was likely to be visited upon him at any time.

"I sent for you, Mr. Dawes," he continued, "with the hope and expectation that you will summon the representatives from Massachusetts and remain with me through the night. Your society will be a consolation, and I should like to have you witness my death if I am attacked in such a manner that it will be impossible for you to defend and protect me."

Mr. Dawes returned with Mr. Sumner while the servants of the household were sent for the other members of the delegation. When they arrived Mr. Sumner repeated to them what he had said to Mr. Dawes about the warning he had received, and his expectation of an early death by violence. Then going to his library he took from the shelves a history of Rome, turned to the pages which relate the story of the assassination of Caius and Tiberius Gracchus, the Roman tribunes, who were assassinated because of their efforts in behalf of the peasantry of Italy, and solemnly announced his intention to die as they had died, with the same composure and the same resignation, which he said was justified by his confidence that his fate, like theirs, was the penalty of his devotion to the poor and the oppressed. Mr. Sumner put a mark in the book in order that the delegation might refer to it after the expected deed of blood was accomplished, laid it away on the shelf in its proper place, and then sat down calmly to await the end.

ONLY A JOKE. The Massachusetts members remained with him through the night. One of them had a revolver; the remainder had no better arms than walking sticks, but Mr. Sumner refused to allow them to go after guns and ammunition, and seemed rather to covet martyrdom than to avoid it. The night was long and nothing occurred to disturb its solemnity. At daylight it was decided that the guard should be continued, but that the delegation might go to their homes by instalments to advise their families of their safety and change their linen.

One of the first to leave boarded at Willard's hotel, which was merely across the street, and he had not been gone more than fifteen or twenty minutes when he returned with an astonishing story he had heard in the office of the hotel about three young southern bloods who had called upon Mr. Sumner the evening before and nearly frightened him to death with a story that his assassination was intended. They had conceived this idea of a practical joke over their cups, and after their return from Mr. Sumner's house had made the hotel merry with descriptions of the manner in which he received their warning. The delegation shook hands with each other, and congratulated Mr. Sumner that the danger was not serious, but that they were never able to convince him that he was the victim of a jest.

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