

the marvelous feats of the strong man had no interest for him. At last came the crowning feature of the evening—the great cannon act.

Chester watched from his perch the preparations with intense interest and saw a medium sized man in magnificent tights prance into the ring and by means of a suspended rope draw himself up to the highest part of the tent and seat himself lightly upon a trapeeze. Then a large cannon was rolled in and carefully aimed at him. All was ready. The band played a slow melody, while the whole audience held their breath expectantly. Suddenly there was a flash, a loud roar and out from the cannon's mouth shot the beautiful Madame Perique, straight at her awaiting husband. Frederick Chester saw her and in all her fine flummery he recognized his Maggie Murphy. Strange to say as she shot through the air she saw him; their eyes met in the longing glance and she knew all.

In the twentieth of a second her mind was made up—the next instant she reached the Monsieur, grasped his foot with one hand, the bar with the other, gave a sudden jerk, closed her eyes and at the next instant was wildly hanging to the trapeeze. At the same time a groan of horror issued from the audience for Monsieur Perique lay a lifeless mass in the sawdust below.

Frederick Chester had fallen from his seat onto the rocks beneath him and lay unconscious. For twenty-four hours he knew nothing. At length he awoke to find his Maggie watching longingly over him. Instantly he recovered his old *distingue* air.

"Madame Perique, what means this intrusion," he exclaimed.

"It means," she replied, "that I have come to you as a graduating present."

"Ah, Maggie," he said softened, "you are very nice."

But little remains to be told. Madame Perique explained that while in France she had in despair wed the great gymnast, and that for the last year they had been traveling in America in the cannon specialty. Six weeks later Frederick

Chester and his restored Miss Murphy stood before 'Squire T——, and were married. For years they lived happily and prosperously; he making his livelihood by teaching elocution, often giving recitals in the towns surrounding his home, his great piece being, "Alphonso's Last Waltz with Imogene," a graphic recital which never fails to bring down the house. Besides this he often takes trips as endman on some traveling minstrel troupe, and occasionally he and his wife perform for some large circus the great cannon act to which they owe their happiness.

H. H. H.

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### PECULIAR PEOPLE.

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"All the world is queer but thee and me, Rachel, and thee is a little peculiar," said an old Quaker to his wife. The good Friend, with the shrewdness of his sect, and in its quaint simplicity of diction, formulated a truth as universal as it is practically unacknowledged.

We all know peculiar people, and wonder at them, and in our own little private courts of judgment pronounce a verdict against them. There is the woman who, never having seen you before, gives you in five minutes after introduction a rapid and comprehensive sketch of her career, past and present, with future expectations and plans added thereto; and the man who airs his pet theories, rides his religious or political hobby, and dogmatically prescribes adhesion to his views as the one thing requisite to make all mankind perfect. Then there are those who are color-blind, mentally as well as physically, and whose inharmonious ideas are as discordant as the glaring incongruities of their attire.

But it is not those whom many join in condemning, not the truly eccentric, the grotesquely odd, of whom we are now speaking, but rather of those who differ from our preconceived notions of their characters, or from our own standards of propriety and conduct. Intimate friends and admired acquaintances often startle or wound us by