

bitter words about her escort. Nor did he again think of them, for at that moment the Banjo Club burst forth in the opening piece of the program and his attention was entirely engrossed in the performance, though he managed to steal many a covert glance at Miss Chester.

The last selection was a tenor solo, and by none other than Theo. Hammond. But to him it all passed as a dream, from which he awoke when the curtain fell to hear the last echoes of applause dying away, while his friends crowded around him with many words of praise and congratulation.

At the hotel Fred. Monkton came up, and clapping him on the shoulder, exclaimed,—

“Theo., old man, I'm proud of you. You did nobly tonight. I know why it was, too. All those smiles didn't 'waste their sweetness on the desert air.' ”

At these words Theo. flushed guiltily and then, smiling, turned away and went to his room. But that smile concealed a great deal. In his heart Theo. was insanely jealous of the young fellow with Miss Chester. Little wonder, then, that his slumbers should be disturbed by dreams of his supposed rival.

He has gone to call on Miss Chester, and has just fallen upon his knees before her with lover-like devotion when a third person enters, who proves to be his rival. A wordy war ensues, in which insults are freely given and received. Theo. demands satisfaction of the other, and together they repair to a field on the outskirts of the town. The distance is quickly measured off and the duellists take their stations, awaiting the signal.

It comes. “One,—two,—three.—fire!”

Two sharp reports, blended into one by their simultaneity, ring out harshly on the crisp, frosty air. Theo. feels a sharp twinge of pain in his left shoulder and—awakes to find himself sitting bolt upright in bed, while Fred. Monkton stands in the middle of the room, holding his sides and laughing uproariously.

“What's the matter, Hammond? I hit you a light tap to waken you, and you jumped as though you had been shot.”

“I was,” replied Theo., but he gave no explanation.

“Do you know that we're snowed up?” next inquired Fred.

“Snowed up?” repeated Hammond, incredulously.

“Yes,” answered Monkton. “Last night's snowstorm drifted all the mountain passes full, and all railway traffic is blocked. It is very doubtful whether we shall get out of this hole today.”