

A Capital Runaway Match.

A great many years since, when bright-eyed and fair-haired lasses were not so plenty in New England as they are now, there dwelt in the town of P—, distant some twenty miles from a market town, a peculiarly ugly and cross-grained, but wealthy old farmer.

Minnie was Danforth's only child, and report said truly she would be his only legatee. The old man was a sturdy farmer, and was estimated to be worth full ten thousand dollars, at that period a very handsome fortune indeed.

The sparkling eyes and winning manners of Minnie Danforth, had stirred up the fine feelings of the whole male portion of the village, and suitors were numerous, but her father was particular and none succeeded in making headway with either him or her.

In the meantime Minnie had a true and loyal lover in secret! Who would have supposed for a moment, that such a fellow would have dared to look on beauty and comparative refinement.

His name was Walker, but he was generally called "Joe Walker," and he was simply a farmer employed by old Danforth, who had entrusted Joe with the management of his large place two or three years.

But a very excellent farmer and a right good manager was this plain, unassuming, but good looking Joe Walker. He was young, too, only twenty-three; and he actually fell in love with the beautiful, pleasant and joyous Minnie Danforth, his employer's only daughter. But the strangest part of the occurrence was that Minnie returned his love earnestly; truly and frankly, and promised to wed him at a favorable moment.

Things went on merrily for a time, but old Danforth discovered certain glances and attentions between them which excited his early suspicions.

Very soon afterwards Joe learned the old man's mind, indirectly, with regard to the disposal of Minnie's hand, and he quickly saw that his case was a hopeless one, unless he resorted to stratagem, and so he put his wits to work at once.

By agreement, an apparently settled coldness and distance was observed by the lovers towards each other, and which led him to believe his suspicions had been groundless.

Then by agreement also between them, Joe absented himself from the house at evening, and might after night as his work was done, did he disappear to return home at a late bed time.

Joe frankly confessed that he was in love with a man's daughter, who resides less than five miles distant, but after a faithful attachment between them for several months, the old man had utterly refused to entertain his application for the young girl's hand.

This was capital, just what the man desired. This satisfied him that he had made a mistake in regard to his own child; and he would have Joe get married and stop all trouble and suspicion at once. So he said:

"Well, Joe, is she a buxom lass?" "Yes, yes," said Joe, "I'm not much of a judge myself."

"And you like her?" "Yes." "Then marry her."

"Elope?" "Elope?" "Yes, certainly; off with you at once. If the gal will join, all right. You shall have the little cottage at the foot of the lane; I will fix it up for you. Your wages shall be raised, and the old man may like it or not."

"But—" "No buts, Joe, but do as I bid you.—Go about it at once, and—" "You will stand by me?"

"Yes, to the very last. I know you, Joe; you are a good workman, and will make a good son or husband."

"The old fellow would be so mad, though."

"Who cares? Go quickly but quietly." "To-morrow night, then?" "Yes."

"I will hire Culver's horse." "I say no. Take my horse, the very best one, young Morgan. He will take you off in style in the p.m."

"Exactly." "And as soon as you are spiced, come right back here, and a jolly time we will have in the old house."

"Her father will kill me." "Hah, he's an old fool, whoever he is. He don't know your good qualities, Joe, as well as I do. Do not be afraid; faint heart, you know, never won fair lady."

"The old man will be astonished." "Never mind; we will turn the laugh on him. I will take care of your wife at any rate."

"You shall," said Joe, and they parted in the best of spirits.

An hour after dark on the following evening, Joe made his appearance, dressed in a new black suit, really looking very comely. The old man bustled out to the barn with him, helping to harness young Morgan to the photo, and leading the spirited animal himself to the road and away went Joe Walker in search of his bride.

A few rods distant from the house he found her, according to previous arrangements and repairing to the next village the person soon made them one in holy wedlock. Joe took his bride and soon dashed back to the town of P—, and halted at old Danforth's house, who was already looking for him, and who received him with open arms.

"Is it done?" "Yes," said Joe.

"Bring her in, bring her in," continued the old fellow in high glee. "Never

mind compliments; no matter about the dark entry; here Joe, to the right in the best parlor. We will have a good time of it now, sure! and the anxious farmer rushed away for lights, returning almost immediately.

"Here is the certificate," said Joe. "Yes, yes,—"

"And this is my wife," he added, as he passed up his beautiful bride, the bewitching Minnie Danforth!

"What!" roared the old fellow—"What did you say? So—you villain, you scamp, you audacious cheat you, you—"

"It is the truth, sir, we are lawfully married. You lent me your horse; you thought me worthy of any man's child. You encouraged me, you promised to stand by me, you offered me the cottage at the foot of the lane, and—"

"I did not, I deny it. You cannot prove it. You are a—"

"Calmly now," said Joe; and the entreaties of the happy couple was united to quell the old man's ire, and persuade him to acknowledge the union.

The father relented at last. It was a job of his own manufacture, and he saw finally how useless it would be to try to destroy it.

He gave in reluctantly, and the fair Minnie Danforth was overjoyed to be acknowledged as Mrs. Joe Walker.

The marriage proved a joyful one, and the assertion of Danforth proved true in every respect.

The cunning lover was a good father and husband, and lived many a year to enjoy the happiness which followed upon this runaway match, while the old man never cared to hear much about the details of the elopement, for he saw how he shot over the mark.

The "coming man" of all our military leaders with the people will be he who strikes the quickest and most effective blows at the enemy. Popular prejudice is just now unsettled, and ready to do homage to any military leader who has and gives us the talismanic word "success" for a motto. Him will we enshrine, and popular favor shall not be more fickle than his career.

"Who can paint like nature?" exclaimed a young lady, as she held a copy of "Thompson's Seasons" in one hand, while the other was clasped by her enraptured lover. "Ah! what soul there is in that passage! Who, indeed, can paint like nature?" "You can!" shouted her brother, who had been peeping in at the window; "you are painted like all nature now."

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