

# CAPTAIN JIM'S COURTSHIP

By A. E. RICE, Portland.

(Continued from last week)

Gradually the "fit" moderated and she became herself again. The supposed fit was quite involuntary on her part. When Captain Jim said MacDonald took the brandy, a sudden desire to burst out laughing overpowered her, and her efforts to disguise it, caused the apparent fit.

"'Twas only a chill, Jim," said she in explanation, "it comes over me at times, especially when I hear that MacDonald mentioned."

"Annie, be you a-mindin' of how I offered to put up fer them divorce costs?" said Jim sympathetically.

"Indeed I do, Jim," replied Annie, as she wiped a laughing tear from her eye. "Your generosity is noble."

"Annie," exclaimed he, as he again placed his arm about her waist caressingly, "I'd wade through oceans of brimstone fer you."

"Whist," cautioned Annie, "some one is in the shed." She sprang to her feet. A moment of silence was followed by gentle knocks on the kitchen door.

"Who can it be?" said she, in an undertone.

Captain Jim immediately replied in a subdued voice, as he stood up, "I reckon it be thet Red MacDonald."

"Go into the front room. No, better go in the bedroom. He may go out the front door, and if it is MacDonald and he sees you here, he will kill you."

"All right," said Jim, as he moved toward the bedroom door, "jest as you say, Annie."

"Hurry, Jim," she urged, taking up his hat and following him, "he shall not stay long."

Captain Jim finally fetched up the pistol from his pocket, turned around to Annie, displayed it and said, "I bought thet fer self protection." Then he passed into the bedroom.

Annie flung his hat after him, and with the admonition, "keep quiet, Jim," closed the door.

The knocks again sounded gently on the kitchen door.

"Who's there?" inquired Annie, as she stood in the center of the room.

"Can I war-rum a bit, if ye please? It's very cold." These words were uttered in a rich Irish accent, by some one in the woodshed, and it was evident to Annie the voice was masculine.

After a brief silence, she said, "come in."

The door slowly opened and a short, thick set, elderly man entered and carefully closed the door behind him. He wore a grey mackintosh that had seen some wear, with the cape collar turned up about his ears. A dark cloth cap, pulled well down at the peak, left but a small part of his face visible. The identity of the visitor was thus practically concealed.

They stood looking at each other in silence.

Gradually a thrill of misgiving ran through Annie, and she half turned toward the bedroom, when the stranger again spoke.

"Shure," said he, in a soft appealing tone, "this do be Christmas Eve, and yees are not the daisy to turn me away, before I war-rum me hands. I do be could with the walk firninst the water." He slowly turned down the collar of his mackintosh, then bowed and took off his cap.

"Why Smith," exclaimed Annie in glad surprise, "you almost frightened me, why didn't you come in at the front door?"

"Didn't know me," said Smith, laughing. "Shure, an' it's the furst toime in twinty years," thrusting his cap in his coat pocket. "Do yees know me now, my dear? An' be the same token, will yees iver fergit me," he continued, as he familiarly patted her under the chin. "I just that I'd sthale in, an' take a look at yees an' the childer this eve."

"Fall'n well, eh," laughed he, as in great glee, he gently poked her on the side with his finger.

"Why Smith, you do act queer," said Annie smiling. "I thought you were chilled with the cold?"

"Not fer yees darlint an' the grand childer of yees father, God rest his soul, he was the best frint I iver hed. Just the tips ave me fingers Annie, were numb with the load an' the walk furninst the water, but me heart was war-rum fer yees, an' I didn't moind it at all, at all."

"What were you loaded with, Smith," said Annie, as she looked teasingly at him.

He leaned forward and said in a half whisper, "I've sane him."

"You have," she quickly replied, and burst into soft laughter.

Smith looked at her a moment in silence, as if affronted. Then he said seriously, "shure, didn't he come into the sthore an' buy things fer yees an' the childer's Christmas stockin's, an' says he, 'now, Smith, yees take thim up and lave thim in the shid, without her knowing it. It'll be a foine surprise this night," said he, "indade it will," said I. "God bless yees heart, a foine Christmas box, an' they made it too—so they do, yerself and childer. God bless yees for it," said I. "And do yees moind," said he, "do it quietly, Smith. Lave it in the shid, an' come away without seeing her." "I will, be me faith, I will do that same, said I, an' here I am, an' a merry Christmas to yees an' the childer; God bless yees."

When he concluded, she laughed and said, "just like you, you dear old duck. You promised him not to see me, or let me know, yet here you are, and telling me everything—but," she turned and flew to the kitchen door and opened it wide

"Be the Rock of Cashel, you now undo me. May it please ye darlint, don't look into it," said Smith, appealingly. "He didn't want me to let yees know at all, shure, an' I'm tellin' the truth, dear."

"Do let me," said she coaxingly, "just one little squint, now Smith, do." She laid her hand on his arm, and looked bewitchingly into his eyes.

"God loves yees, I'm always conquered by women. Don't sphake wan wur-rud to any wan." He went into the shed and brought a large parcel and laid it on the table. Annie closed the door and stood beside him, her eyes fairly dancing with pleasure.

Smith commenced to untie the parcel, at the same time saying, "not wan bit mane, the best of the kind," said he. "Shure," said I, "an' it'll be fittin' a quane."

At that moment distinct raps were heard on the front door.

"Good Father," exclaimed the startled Annie.

"Be the power av light, it is he, otherwise it's an off night for callers." More rapping on the door.

"I can't lave yees yet, darling. I must see the maatin'. I'll go into the shid an' wait." Smith hastily picked up the parcel and disappeared with it through the kitchen door.

Annie stood with a puzzled look on her face. At length she said, in an abstracted manner, "Old Captain Jim is not so miserly after all." She was stopped from further utterance, by more impatient raps on the door, and then it opened and in walked Captain Tom Webb. After slamming the door shut, he said, "Hello, Annie! It's a devilish cold night. Thought you were never goin' tew let a feller in."

"You did not give me time. Is this your first Christmas call?"

"Oh, Nan wud come over, but Kitty stepped in an' they talked an' laughed, them wimen air always talkin' an' laughin'." Aint they come yet?"

Annie smiled and replied, "not yet."

"I just sauntered on ahead, tew see Ole Cheesebro, 'bout thet grocer bill, afore I come on," said Captain Tom.

"He jest biled over 'bout it, but I squelched him with a promise tew 'squar up' right smart now. On my way up here I thought of thet Ole Jim Smeets' pile a-idlin' itself in thet First National."

"No doubt, some of us could use a little of it to advantage," said she.

"Annie," he exclaimed in a half whisper, "you jest hit him fer some. You kin git it easy."

She stood a pace or two from him, and looked at him in a puzzled, half angry, half amused manner. He did not give her time to think much about it either, for he grasped her left arm, drew her close to him, and in a subdued voice, almost a whisper, said, "it wud tickle him all over, tew be able tew say he was your benefactor. Shore, Annie! He tole me so. You kin git any amount from him to once't."

At this instant Captain Jim silently opened the bedroom door and looked at Captain Tom. Annie smiled and said, "well, if I had a hundred just now I should feel rich."

"Only a hundred. Oh, pshaw Annie!" exclaimed Tom, disusted.

"Five hundred Annie, shore. Nuthin' less 'nor five hundred. An' then you kin help me a leetle, eh." And under the impulse of his prospective good luck he seized her about the waist and gave her a whirl.

Captain Jim shook his fist at him.

"Why Captain Tom, what ails you?" asked Annie astonished. At the same moment Annie's brother Joe entered the front door and quietly tip-toed through the front room.

Captain Jim caught a glimpse of Joe, as he passed the kitchen threshold and promptly withdrew his head and silently closed the bedroom door.

Captain Tom's back was turned to Joe, and he was so interested with his subject and being a little "thick" also, was quite oblivious of the presence of a third person.

"Shore, Annie," said he, whispering in her ear, "you kin git it an' you'll help me out'n a hard fix tew."

Thinking the party whispering to his sister was Captain Jim Smeets, Joe at once proceeded to execute his purpose. Some three or four months past, Captain Jim had him put ashore near Oswego, because he was short his fare, and in anger and disgust he had to walk to his home in Portland. Now his opportunity to get even had come. He had determined to put a stop to any fooling around his sister by that old duffer. He did not see Captain Jim when he entered the room. The light was not strong and his impetuous nature would not permit him to wait long enough to discover his error.

"I'll run him out from that clover in no time," said he in an undertone. He then stepped noiselessly close to the unsuspecting Captain Tom, seized him firmly by the ear, turned him about and pushed him at arm's length toward the front door. "I've got you at last," said Joe, "right where I want you."

Captain Tom was greatly surprised and gave vent to his feelings, with the expressive exclamation, "Sufferin' Lazarus!"

Joe opened the door with his left hand, still holding the suffering captain's ear with his right, "you put foot inside this house again and I'll smash every bone in your body, and here's a taste of it. Go!" Joe applied his foot and Captain Tom cleared the threshold with a yell. It was a simple case of mistaken identity, common to

excitable people. Captain Tom and Joe were very good friends, and had been for some years past. Their natures were similar and each entertained the most kindly sentiment for the other, but in this instance Captain Tom had no chance to recognize Joe, and Joe did not recognize Captain Tom.

Slamming the door shut, Joe returned to his sister, who was convulsed with laughter. "Annie, you're quit of him now, that's certain," said he.

"I don't think so," replied she.

"You don't, eh?" said Joe. "Very well, we'll see. Let me lay my hands on him once more, and I'll fix him." Joe rushed out and pulled the front door shut after him.

Aware of Joe's mistake, Annie would have set matters right were it not that Captain Jim was then in her house. She knew right well the cause of Joe's antipathy to him and therefore discreetly let events shape their own course. It was the way Joe handled and mistook Captain Tom that amused her.

Captain Jim again cautiously opened the bedroom door, and seeing Annie alone went over to her. He did not forget to take his hat, which he gripped in his left hand.

"I was not afeered Annie," said he, "only of bein' ketched in thet bedroom."

"I know Jim, but I don't want to see you in trouble," which was literally true, for her opinion of Captain Jim had undergone quite a change, since she believed that he had made the purchase of Christmas presents which Smith was then guarding in the woodshed.

Captain Jim took a chair and sat beside her.

Smith felt the cold in the woodshed and having become impatient, peeped through the keyhole and partially saw a tall man holding Annie's head in a suspicious position. He saw Captain Tom.

"Oh, the villain!" exclaimed Smith under his breath. The circumstances was so interesting that Smith kept his eye at the keyhole, oblivious of comfort or temperature.

Captain Tom being of a combative disposition, on ejection from the house, at once sought a club. "No man can fire me out'n a friend's house," he inwardly exclaimed, "without a settlement." He proceeded around to the woodshed and found a billet of wood near the door. With a chuckle of satisfaction he grasped it, and the door being ajar he would "jest quietly slip in an' git a glimpse of his enemy through the keyhole." So he entered the woodshed and noiselessly closed the door. He groped his way slowly along step by step. Holding his club in front of him, as a sort of feeler, he struck it against the woodpile.

The noise attracted Smith's attention. Removing his eye from the keyhole, he looked straight back, into the darkness of the shed and exclaimed under his breath, "phwat the devil is thet?" Captain Tom, seeing the light suddenly flash through the keyhole, halted in a listening attitude.

Smith, however, became nervous and muttered, "thaves," and grasped the kitchen door knob.

Captain Tom, in his turn, became alarmed. He had seen the sudden gleam of light on some moving object and then heard a clicking sound. (The click of the door lock.) He stepped back to the shed door and took hold of its edge with his left hand and stood in a defensive attitude. "Blow my whistle," said he in a whisper, "if thet air ruffian aint a-layin' fer me in this shed."

Leaving Smith and Captain Tom straining their eyes at each other through the darkness of the woodshed and both on the alert, fearing some unforseen attack, especially Captain Tom, who beats the air with his club, we must return to Captain Jim and Annie.

When he sat beside her, it was with a determination to know his fate forthwith. He did not like these interruptions and he was beginning to think they were a little too many for a lone widder. However, it being Christmas Eve, may have accounted for so many callers, though he remembered Barbara's words at Nan's surprise party.

"Annie, darlin'," he began, "it's jest as you be a-sayin' now, you promise tew be my wife as soon as you kin git a divorce from Walker an' you kin have all the money you want. You kin go tew Sel-um, or anywhere you haf a mind tew an' stay thar, an' I'll jine you as soon as my contract with thet navigation company expires. Now, it be all a-restin' with you. Be you answerin' yes or no?"

"What shall I say to put him off," she thought, when, as if by some spiritual aid, she was relieved from immediately answering by several smart raps on the front door.

She sprang to her feet and exclaimed, "who can it be, now!"

Captain Jim also arose, evidently a bit frightened, for he again began to fumble in his pocket, at the same time nervously saying, "It be thet damned MacDonald, I'm sartin'."

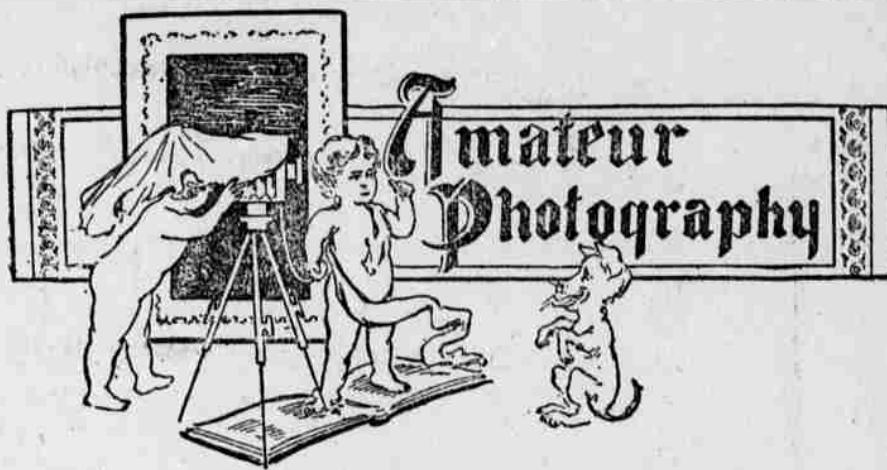
Annie turned her back to smother a laugh.

At that moment Captain Jim passed her, saying, "I'll jest wait in the shed 'till he be a-goin'." He hurriedly opened the kitchen door and as a consequence fell sprawling over Smith, who was at that moment directing his most earnest attention toward the shed door.

It occurred to Jim, as he unexpectedly fell over Smith, that he was being waylaid and he at once shouted, "robbers! help!"

Captain Tom was not prepared for anything so unlooked for either, and when Jim suddenly tumbled out over Smith it seemed that two men were after him, so he also set up a shout of "help! murder!" and instantly bolted through the shed door, out into the street.

(To be Continued.)



The yellow stain caused by removing the plate from the hypo too soon can be removed by placing the negative in the following solution: Alum, 50 parts; water, 1,000 parts; bichromate of potassium, 10 parts; hydrochloric acid, 10 parts. After several minutes the negative turns yellow. It is washed thoroughly, exposed to sunlight for several minutes and developed with the ordinary oxalate-and-iron developer.—Am. Photog.

In a recent lecture to amateurs Mr. George G. Rockwood, the well-known New York photographer, said: "There is no paper made on earth that will print with all kinds of negatives, and the converse of that proposition is true, that no negatives can be made that will print on all kinds of paper with satisfactory results. This is a preliminary statement of the fact that all developing papers require especially made negatives or negatives of a particular quality in order to get the best results. I have been making experiments with developing papers, the results of which lead me to say: Negatives for all developing papers should be full (not over) time, and developed with the utmost caution as not to in the slightest degree 'block' the high lights; in fact, a very thin but snappy negative is just the thing required—full of detail, but clear in shadows. There is no danger of carrying this caution to an extreme, for this particular paper will almost print from an ambrotype. It will be noticed that the very best results obtained from amateur films or negatives are produced on the various developing papers. It is because the amateur almost universally stops short of full development; hence, they have almost exactly the quality to produce the best results on this grade of paper. Negatives possessing this peculiarity will not make the best impressions on P. O. P. paper, but if care is taken in making, the negatives for the developing papers, it would be a skilled expert that would distinguish prints on such paper from the best platinum photographs."

## BULLS WITH BOXING GLOVES.

Bullfights in Portugal Not Dangerous, but Require Delicate Skill.

"Bulls in boxing gloves, toreadors with toy spears and lady-like little dandies in patent leather dancing shoes gracefully waving silken scarfs." This is the way an Englishman once described a Portuguese bull fight.

And the sketch is fairly correct. The bull fights in the realms of King Carlos are humanitarian contests, not more



BULL WITH BOXING GLOVES.

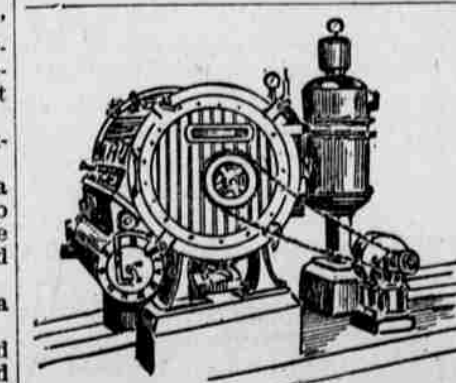
dangerous than a Rugby football match, but requiring almost as much delicate skill as a game of billiards.

The bull is never killed and rarely wounded. The bull fighter is mounted on a good horse, which he is careful to keep out of the way of attacking horns. Consequently there is nothing offensive in the sport, but plenty of excitement and amusement, and if he has the true sporting spirit the bull must enjoy the game as heartily as any one.

## CONVERTS MILK INTO POWDER.

Invention that May Do Away with Sale of Product in Liquid Form.

Soon you may have milk delivered to your home in a paper or cloth sack or in a package with a string around it. The grocer will scoop it up from a barrel as he does flour, meal or sugar. A new invention called the exsiccator transforms skimmed milk



MILK POWDER MACHINE.

into a highly soluble powder of flour, which can be transported for a long time without spoiling. The powder will readily dissolve in warm water, 60 to 70 degrees C., and the solution tastes, smells and looks just like fresh milk. The invention comes from Sweden and is the product of the brain of one Martin Eckenberg. A large exsiccator will evaporate 521 gallons of skimmed milk in ten hours and costs about \$1,200.

A man who can't keep his clothes clean has no business wearing a heavy mustache.

## WASTED NO WORDS.

Made His Communications with Small Expenditure of Breath.

"Speech with him," says a recent clever writer, "was a convenience, like a spoon; he did not use it oftener than was necessary." She was speaking of a taciturn Englishman. Yankees are usually readier with their tongues, yet once in a while there is a man among them of this same silent kind. Such a one was Reuben Jenks of Hentley.

One day, when he was passing the farmhouse of a neighbor, he saw smoke and sparks rolling upward in considerable volume. He knocked, and walking unhurriedly into the living-room, where the family were gathered, remarked, in his usual tranquil tone: "Fire."

They were rather flutter-brained people, and as soon as they realized that the alarm was genuine began to rush about, collecting both valuable and worthless objects with impartial haste. Only one of them thought to ask where the fire was.

"Chimney," said Reuben. "Roof." Just then the eldest son, a lanky lad, rushed by, carrying an armful of useless things. Reuben's hand shot out and seized the boy's collar. The trash was thrown on the sofa. "Bucket," said Reuben. Then he vanished.

The boy got a bucket and went up to the scuttle, where he found Reuben already on the ridge-pole with an ax. The girls passed up water, the mother continued to gather her treasures, and the father ran down the road to get help.

In a quarter of an hour he returned with a dozen zealous farm-hands, bearing pails; but as they reached the house a grimy figure slipped from the low eaves to the porch and thence to the ground, nodded, wiped the perspiration from his eyes with a scorched sleeve and remarked, briefly: "Out."

## A Disenchanted View.

It is unsafe to judge by appearances, even the most agreeable ones. The bachelor who is interested in the experiences of his married friends was in a car with a couple with whom he was acquainted. It was a rainy morning.

The young wife had her umbrella well out of the way of those who passed up and down the car, but a lumbering, overgrown boy, on his passage to the door, managed to hit it with one foot, fall over it, and break it before he regained his balance.

"Oh, I'm sorry I broke it!" stammered the unfortunate, with a scarlet face. "I—I'd like to pay—"

"Never mind. I'm sure it wasn't your fault," and the lady smiled up at him without a trace of anger or even irritation on her face.

"Well, I must say your wife is an angel!" exclaimed the bachelor, warmly. "Most women would have withered that clumsy boy with a look, if they hadn't scorched him with words."

"She is an angel," said the married man, as he picked up the pieces of the umbrella and smiled quizzically at his wife, "but—she's wanted a new umbrella for a month, and now she knows I'll get it for her. It's a sad world, isn't it? full of disappointments and disenchantments."

## Somebody Would Benefit.

"Yes," remarked the loud-voiced man with the diamond stud, "I am out of politics for good."

"Ah," murmured the sedate little fellow in the corner. "May I ask for whose good?"—Philadelphia Record.