

The Agent of the Tagblatt Property

(Original.)

Old Steiger, who had charge of the Tagblatt house and grounds, was probably the worst landlord that has ever been seen on the face of the globe. When Tagblatt died, Steiger was appointed custodian of his property by the court, and Steiger was then a young man. The conditions of the will had excited a great deal of comment at the time of Tagblatt's death, but that had been so long ago that no one living seemed to know anything about it. Many persons had rented the property, but no one could be found who could get on with the landlord or agent, or whatever he was, and not a tenant had remained a year.

The place was situated near the foot of the Haz mountains, on the outskirts of a village. The village had grown to be a city, and having enveloped the property, old Tagblatt's bequest had grown very valuable—that is, the land had, for the house was almost uninhabitable from age.

If Steiger was the worst landlord in the world, Chris and Gretchen Rheinheart were the best tenants. The rental of the Tagblatt property had never been high, and when Chris and Gretchen were married they decided to take it. This they did with open eyes, for they knew all about old Steiger and his ways. Hans was a carpenter and could make repairs himself. So the young couple decided to take the place at the low rental and not trouble the landlord to do anything for them. By this means they hoped to be let alone and not have any trouble.

Chris spent a good deal of time when he first went into the house endeavoring to make it habitable. Steiger came along while he was at work and with the usual abuse and oaths threatened if he made any changes in the house he would prosecute him under the law. Chris desisted for the time being, but when Steiger went away he proceeded with his repairs.

However, it was plain that there would be no peace in the house, and the couple talked over the matter of leaving it. They finally decided to stay, Chris for the reason that he was too determined to be driven out and Gretchen because she was of such a sweet disposition that she was fitted to get on with Satan himself. But Steiger seemed determined to drive them out. They made it difficult for him by denying him pretexts. The rent they invariably paid before it was due. They never asked for anything to be done to the property. Indeed, whatever patching they did was for its improvement, as any court would have decided. Notwithstanding all this Chris Steiger made it so hot for them that Chris at last gave out and told Gretchen that he must either give up their lease or go into a lunatic asylum. Gretchen's lovable disposition seemed not a whit shaken, and they decided that thereafter Chris should keep out of Steiger's way and she would receive the abuse.

There came a tussle between good and evil. When Steiger was seen coming down the street Chris would escape by a back door, and when the old man stopped to abuse his tenants Gretchen would meekly submit to the lashings of his tongue. Gretchen took it into her lovely stupid head that if Steiger had a little pity he would not be so unreasoning, so one day when the door opened and he stood glaring at her she took a crucifix off the mantel, intending to tell him the story of the Saviour. What was her surprise to see him the moment he saw it turn away and hurry on down the street sending back volleys of execrations. Just as retreating soldiers will turn and fire at an enemy.

But Gretchen had found an expedient. After that Steiger let them alone for a long while. Indeed, he did not call again till just before the expiration of the lease, when he made a fierce onslaught, accusing Gretchen of having been trying to burn the house. She covered before him for a moment, for he looked more terrible than ever she had seen him; then, taking up the crucifix, she was beginning to tell him of the example and sacrifice of the figure on the cross when with a howl he made off again, just as he had done before.

Having found a way to protect themselves, they decided to renew their lease, but Steiger did not appear, and the tenants submitted the matter to the court of wills.

One day the judge sent for the tenants, and they went to him together. "You have accepted the Tagblatt property for a year?" he asked. "One year. Here is the lease. It expired a month ago. To whom shall we pay rent?"

"Steiger has disappeared. After discovering this I looked up the will, which is on record. It seems that Tagblatt had a shrew for a wife, and they were always quarreling. Mrs. Tagblatt died first, and when her husband followed her he left her home to the devil."

"To the devil!" exclaimed Chris and Gretchen, the women crossing herself. "Yes, to the devil, with the provision that if any couple could be found to live in it one year they were to be its owners."

"Gott in himmel!" exclaimed Gretchen. "Where this agent named Steiger came from and where he got his authority no one seems to know. He got hold of the property before I came on the bench. But that is now of no importance. I will have the property made over to you jointly."

"Jesu Maria! We have been paying rent to the devil!"

F. A. MITCHELL.

Not His Style. "I just won't wear them, and that's all there is to it," said Farmer Dogwood, blustering furiously. "Now, paw!" broke in his wife. "You needn't paw me. I ain't a-going to wear them."

"But they would be so nice and warm."

"Yes, and they'd scare the horses." "But they're the latest style." "Style nothing! Do you think I am going to be the laughingstock of the hull townshipp wearing Henry's cast

NEWSPAPER LAWS.

For the benefit of all persons concerned, and there are many, we give the following United States Postal Laws relating to newspapers and subscribers:

THE SALE OF A TITLE

(Original.)

There are many strange customs in Russia. Among the strangest is one wherein a man of noble birth for a consideration will marry a woman and give her his name and her freedom at the same time, leaving her at the moment they are pronounced man and wife.

One winter's day in St. Petersburg the beauty and fashion of the capital were skating on the Neva. Among the throng were two ladies skating together. A tall, handsome man of aristocratic mien was regarding one of them with admiring glances as they skated by him and asked a friend who she was.

"I was told just now," replied the friend, "that one of them was Miss Mikhailof, the daughter of one of the new civil appointees, but I am not sure which one she is. I think she is the brunette."

Later the man who was interested noticed the lady he had admired—the brunette—skating alone. She tripped and fell. Darting toward her, he raised her. She was not hurt, but he was loath to leave her.

"Permit me to introduce myself," he said. "I am Count Akadyevitch."

"Count Akadyevitch, the emperor's aid-de-camp, needs no introduction." "I have been sufficiently interested in you to inquire your name, Miss Mikhailof."

The lady turned her eyes upon the count, but said nothing. Count Akadyevitch received permission to call on the lady that evening. She left the city next day, but not before inviting him to visit her at her home in Kostroma. The invitation was accepted punctually on the day it was given. The count found that his new acquaintance, with whom he had fallen desperately in love—a case of love at first sight—lived a sort of queen among her tenants. It was Miss Mikhailof, will you have this? or "Miss Mikhailof, will you have that?" every one being punctilious in addressing her by name when speaking to her.

From the first the count received especial encouragement. A week passed, and when he proposed to return his intention was gently opposed. Two more weeks he remained, and yet the lady did not signify a wish that he should go. Nevertheless the count was melancholy. A secret seemed to be gnawing at his heart. The more he became interested in the lady the more depressed he became. Finally she asked him the cause.

"I dare not tell you," he said. "You will despise me."

"Indeed," replied the lady, "I insist. Have I been unwise in trusting you on so short an acquaintance?"

The count was silent for a time, during which it was evident his sufferings were great. At last he said: "I was forced some years ago to do a thing I am greatly ashamed of and which now stands in the way of a possible happiness. When I came into my title and estate the latter was incumbered with debt. Twenty thousand rubles were necessary to clear it. I was about to lose it when I received through a medium an offer of the amount for my name by a woman who wished to be noble. I consented on condition that the marriage should take place by proxy. The condition was accepted, and I was married. I am wedded, but I have never met my wife."

The count bowed his head. "You are no more to blame than the woman who bought your name."

"Leaving blame out of the question, I am prevented from yielding to the dictates of my heart. I cannot even honorably tell you that I love you."

Notwithstanding the confession of the sale, the confession of love evidently was a delight to the lady. A rose color appeared at her throat and spread rapidly over her face. Presently she spoke again: "I, too, have a confession to make. I am not Miss Mikhailof."

"You are mistaken in my name when you first met me, and I permitted you to remain mistaken. Miss Mikhailof was a friend who skated with me. Before your arrival here I gave instructions that every one should address me when you were present as Miss Mikhailof."

"And your real name is?" "I have more to confess. When I came into these estates every one told me that I should marry a noble. After waiting a long while to meet one that I could love, having failed, I resolved to buy a title in the same manner as you sold yours."

"You—you bought a title by marriage?" "I did. I heard of a man who needed money. I gave it for his name. Strange to say, I was married, as you were, by proxy."

"The barriers that keep us apart are double," moaned the count. "What is marriage? A ceremony. Did not you and I not go through this ceremony for a consideration? Why should such a ceremony be necessary to our union?"

The count was silent for a moment and then said, with a voice full of grief: "No, I love you too well to degrade you."

A new evidence of happiness appeared in her face, especially on her lips, on which was a happy smile. "You have not asked me my real name," she said. "I ask it now."

"I am the Countess Akadyevitch." ELINOR T. BOYD.

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"Success Magazine" for February contains Robert Mackay's account of the struggle between the two great Open Houses of New York City. The workings of Galveston's new form of government are described by H. S. Cooper. Frank Fayant continues to lay bare the stock operations of Thomas W. Lawson, and Samuel Morvin, the opium curse in China. "From the Press Gallery," by J. O. Stealey, contains anecdotes of well-known men at Washington.

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FROM THE ANTILLES. Chamberlain's Cough Remedy Benefits a City Councilman at Kingston, Jamaica. Mr. W. O'Reilly Fogarty, who is a member of the city council at Kingston, Jamaica, West Indies, writes as follows: "One bottle of Chamberlain's Cough Remedy had good effect on a cough that was giving me trouble and I think I should have been more quickly relieved if I had continued the remedy. That it was beneficial and quick in relieving me there is no doubt, and it is my intention to obtain another bottle. For sale by Belt & Cherrington."

IT IS SERIOUS. Some Dallas People Fail to Realize the Seriousness. The constant aching of a bad back, the weariness, the tired feeling, the pains and aches of kidney illness are serious if neglected. Dangerous urinary troubles follow. F. A. Sutton, of 1125 Waller Street, Salem, Oregon, says: "For ten or twelve years rheumatism and kidney trouble was the scourge of my life and two or three times I was completely laid up. I had to leave my farm and come into the city to doctor for the trouble but nothing brought me more than temporary relief. My limbs would scarcely support me and I could only get around at times with the greatest difficulty. Doan's Kidney Pills benefited me at once and when I had used the contents of one three boxes I was absolutely free from every symptom of my old trouble and my health was better than it had been for fourteen years. I can conscientiously say that Doan's Kidney Pills are the best remedy I ever used."

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HIS LOGIC. How John's Father Made a Test Case of It. The old couple were eating their first meal with their son after his return from college. "Tell us, John," said the father, "what have you learned at college?" "Oh, lots of things," said the son as he recited his course of studies. "Then," he concluded, "I also studied logic." "Logic," said the old man—"what is that?" "It's the art of reasoning," said the son. "The art of reasoning," said the father—"what is that, my boy?" "Well," replied the son, "let me give you a demonstration. How many chickens are on that dish, father?" "Two," said the old man. "Well," said John, "I can prove there are three." Then he stuck his fork in one and said, "That is one, isn't it?" "Yes," said the father. "And this is two?" sticking his fork in the second. "Yes," replied the father again. "Well, don't one and two make three?" replied John triumphantly. "Well, I declare," said the father, "you have learned things at college. Well, mother," continued the old man to his wife, "I will give you one of the chickens to eat, and I'll take the other, and John can have the third. How is that, John?"—Judge's Library.

Humor and Philosophy BY DUNCAN M. SMITH PERT PARAGRAPHS. Sometimes matrimony is a game of chance, but more frequently it is a sure thing. It takes a woman of courage or a big wardrobe to say she doesn't care a rap what kind of a winter we have. It takes lots of courage not to be a coward. Some women hate to be contrary because it is so masculine. It is good to laugh, but it is better to feel like laughing. There is always a sermon ready for the man who is ready for it. You are foolish to let people take you in after you have found them out. If the jobs some men do aren't odd before they do them, they certainly are afterward. The only time to do a thing is when it is convenient. If the ancestors of some of our friends came over in the Mayflower they went back again. The opinion of the man who argues with his fist is apt to be respected.

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