



THE DUEL ON THE MOUNTAIN.

DURING a visit to Ireland, I was one of a very jovial party at the hunting lodge of my cousin, Mr. Farrel, whose generous and social disposition was well known in the neighborhood of "Hollow Glen."

It was in September; the shooting season had just set in, and the entire party, with a single exception, and that myself, was composed of Irish gentlemen devoted to the gun.

Among those assembled was Capt. Conan, who, I learned during the conversation of the evening, was about leaving in a few days to join his wife and daughter, then at Castlerock.

Unrestrained by the society of the fair sex, we enjoyed ourselves exceedingly, and indulged rather freely in the contents of our host's wine cellar.

The last thing I remember of that night is my making an effort to respond to "our visitor." The next I knew was, when aroused by the cheery voice of Jemmy O'Neill, my cousin's man-of-all-work, I found myself on the sofa in the smoking-room, whither I had been carried some hours before.

"Here's a letter for ye, sir," said Jemmy.

"All right," I replied, reaching my hand for it.

He gave me the letter, then left the room.

I felt I must have slept a long time, as the sun was streaming in at the windows; and, as the light seemed to aggravate my headache, I merely glanced at the superscription, and, laying the letter on a chair, proceeded to draw down the blind. My next thought was to take a bath; but, seeing the letter as I turned from the window, I concluded I would read it first.

I sank into a chair and tore it open, throwing the envelope on the table. What was my surprise on seeing it begin:

"My Beloved Husband—"

The next instant Capt. Conan walked in and passed me in the direction of the fireplace. As he did so, his eye caught the letter.

"You miserable, ill-bred puppy!" he exclaimed. "How dare you have the impudence to open my letters?" snatching it rudely from my hand as he spoke.

Smarting under his insulting words, I sprang up and replied:

"In justice to myself, I deny having opened your letter intentionally. Further," continued I, trembling with passion, "you prove yourself ill-bred and no gentleman by your vile language."

"What!" he screamed; "no gentleman, do you say?" Retract instantly, sir! Refuse at your peril!" and he advanced with uplifted arm.

"I never retract," cried I; "but I repeat—no gentleman would speak as you do."

"I say you shall, though, else I'll choke the life out of you!" springing toward me as he spoke.

How this would have terminated I know not, for at this moment Mr. Farrel rushed into the room in time to catch him ere he reached me.

"Hold, Capt. Conan!" cried Mr. Farrel. "Mr. Morton is here as my guest, and as such I consider it my duty to protect him from violence."

The captain seemed to see the justice of this observation, but his fury was not abated. Turning to my cousin, he said:

"Perhaps you will also consider it your duty to teach him some manners. He had the impudence to open a letter addressed to me, and instead of offering an apology, added to his misbehavior by saying I was no gentleman. Here is the envelope," taking it from the table, "plainly addressed to me, and I caught him in the act of reading its contents."

"However that may be," replied my cousin, "as a relative and friend of mine, I demand that you treat him as a gentleman."

"Out of respect to you and as your relative, he shall be treated as a gentleman," replied the captain, hotly. "So I will begin by demanding an apology from him for opening my letter; also for saying I was no gentleman, and that he shall retract that remark."

"Regarding the letter," said I, "I will say I opened it by mistake for my own. Regarding the remark, I shall not retract it, and repeat—no gentleman would use your language, and not apologize for so doing. It is from you an apology is due, and, if given, will be accepted."

"Enough," said he. "Mr. Farrel says you are a gentleman. I will soon prove him either right or wrong, by treating you as one. You will hear from me during the day," and he strode from the house without another word.

"A duel without doubt," said my cousin; "nothing less will satisfy him. How did this all happen?"

I then told my cousin how the mistake had taken place. I left my letter on the chair and had taken up the captain's, which Jemmy had left there for him, believing it to be my own.

On learning what the captain had said to me, he thought me very moderate in my resentment of the insult, and agreed with me that it was from the captain an apology was due.

"The devil of it is," said he, "the captain is such a good shot he generally pops his man every time."

"Pops his man!" said I. "What do you mean?"

"I mean that he will challenge you to a duel, and if you do not accept it I must, for I demanded that you be treated as a gentleman. But come," he continued, "and see what John has in the dining-room for us; for my part, I feel as though a dozen of port would not quench my thirst."

While discussing our wine, a messenger came with a note addressed to me.

"From the captain, I'll bet!" said my cousin. "You must go it, my boy."

I opened the seal and read as follows: "Horace Morton, Esq.—Sir: Capt. Conan has selected me to arrange a meeting between you and him, that the affair of this morning may be honorably settled. Have a friend, for you, to communicate with me during the day. Yours respectfully,

"Robert Sinclair."

"Sinclair, as I live!" said my cousin, when I showed him the note. "Just as

hot-headed as the captain himself. What are you going to do, Horace?"

"Do?" said I. "What can I do?"

"Why, fight or apologize."

"Fight by all means, then," said I.

"I'll never retract."

"Who will act as your friend in this matter?"

"You, I hope. I know no one else I could ask."

"Very well. I shall proceed direct to Mr. Sinclair. Have you any instructions?"

"None whatever, except the request that you will arrange the affair to come off soon; to-morrow, if you possibly can."

My cousin departed on his mission, while I, to calm the turbulent feelings of my mind, took a walk along the base of the mountain. My mind was filled with the most gloomy forebodings, nor could I banish the thought of my lamentable fate—coming to Ireland on a visit of pleasure, to be shot down by an angry gentleman.

I was roused from these gloomy reflections by the sound of a rapidly approaching carriage. I looked up and saw a horse and carriage come tearing at breakneck speed down the mountain road.

"What reckless driving!" thought I.

The only occupant of the carriage was a young and beautiful girl, clutching wildly the seat in front of her, not knowing the moment she might be dashed down one of the chasms of the mountain side. The anguish depicted on her sweet countenance went directly to my heart, and I resolved to make an effort to save her.

"Why should I hesitate," thought I, "when to-morrow I may fall a prey to the captain's bullet?"

On came the frightened horse, and when within a few yards of me I instinctively felt a desire to get out of the way; but a glance at the fair being in danger nerved me to the effort, and I threw myself with all my strength on the bride's rein. But what was my strength compared with the force that resisted it? I was off my feet in an instant, but clung to the bridle with the tenacity of despair, for I well knew



"HEAVENS!" SAID I, "WHY DON'T HE FIRE?"

that to relinquish my hold would add to my danger, as the carriage would certainly crush me beneath it.

While I did not succeed in stopping the horse, I somewhat lessened its impetuosity, and was at length conscious of others coming to my assistance, and knew we were saved. I fainted from exhaustion. When I recovered I found myself at my cousin's house, my nerves badly shattered by the excitement, and my body considerably bruised; but beyond this no material injury had been received.

During the evening my cousin informed me that he had seen Mr. Sinclair, and had arranged a meeting between the captain and me the following morning at 8 o'clock on the mountain, where we were to fight with pistols, at thirty paces apart, one shot only to be exchanged.

"Under the circumstances, though," said he, "I am justified in having the matter postponed until you are better prepared, and will see Mr. Sinclair tonight for that purpose."

"Not at all," cried I; "that would be ascribed to cowardice. Anyhow, I will be all right to-morrow."

The morrow came, and, true to our appointment, Mr. Farrel and I proceeded to the spot indicated on the mountain. We were accompanied by a doctor, in case his services might be needed, and Jemmy O'Neill, who drove the car.

Though not yet 8 o'clock, we found the captain and Mr. Sinclair awaiting us. I noticed that the captain was exceedingly pale, and regarded me closely as I approached.

The preliminaries were soon over, and each of us took our stand, and had the pistol given us. No effort at conciliation was made.

The signal for firing was to be the discharge of a pistol by Mr. Sinclair. Mr. Farrel stood to my right, encouraging me, Mr. Sinclair about midway between us, to my left, while the captain and I, with arms elevated, and pistols presented at each other, awaited the signal.

Bang went the pistol, and the next instant, though scarcely conscious of it myself, I discharged mine.

As the smoke cleared away I beheld the captain standing just as he was before I fired, and still holding his pistol presented at me.

"Heavens!" said I, "what suspense is this? Why don't he fire?"

He did not do so, however, but, throwing his pistol to Mr. Sinclair, approached me and extended his hand.

"Mr. Morton," said he, "as it was I who challenged you to this meeting, I would say nothing to interrupt the duel; but now that you have had your shot, I will say I could not bring myself to shoot at the man who had done me such an invaluable service as to save the life of my beloved daughter."

"Your daughter!" said I, in astonishment.

"Yes," said he; "it was my daughter whose life you saved yesterday, so today I withheld my fire on that account. Besides, I apologize for my rude words of yesterday morning, and admit I was wrong in using them. For preserving my beloved child, I thank you from my heart, and she herself will thank you in person ere long."

As I write these lines now, a familiar form hangs over my chair, and, looking up, I see the same sweet countenance I beheld in the carriage on the eve of the duel on the mountain.—Chicago Journal.

Riley's Jokes on Halford.

J. Whitcomb Riley did his first literary work, in the early '70s, for the Indianapolis Journal, under an assumed name. The first pay he ever received for a poem was a suit of clothes from the late George Harding, of the Indianapolis Herald. About 1876 Riley went East and was welcomed by Holmes, Whittier and Longfellow. The New England newspapers made much of his visit, and when he returned he was a hero.

"I can remember," said an old Journal man the other day, "when Riley, with his smooth, boyish face, slender figure, clad in sacerdotal garb, used to come around the office and sit on my desk and dash off nonsense verses in that same copper-plate, microscopic handwriting that he uses to-day, 'Lige Halford, now a major in the United States army and President Harrison's private secretary, was the editor, and it used to be Riley's chief delight to submit some of his most meaningless jingles to Halford for the editorial page. The Major, who never had the slightest sense of humor, spent many a weary hour trying to comprehend them."

"You'd better draw a diagram to go with this," he would say. Then a shout of laughter from the boys would show him that there was a joke loose somewhere, and he would retire into his office to avoid it."—Saturday Evening Post.

Getting Rid of a Splinter.

When a splinter has been driven deeply into the hand it can be extracted by steam. Nearly fill a wide-mouthed bottle with very hot water, place the injured part over the mouth and press it slightly. The suction thus produced will draw the flesh down, and in a minute or two the steam will extract splinter and inflammation together.

FIGHT WITH SPIDERS

ATTACKED BY AN ARMY OF TARANTULAS.

Two Stowaways in the Hold of a Banana-Carrying Vessel from Havana Have a Battle for Their Lives—Rescued Just in Time.

Joseph Mabry, of St. Louis, tells the most remarkable tarantula story that has come to light for several months. Mabry has papers to show that he was a member of a Georgia company during the Spanish war, and that he was in Cuba. If only one other man in the world were living, and lived in Havana, Mabry says, he would die before going to see him. He is now in Denison, Texas. Speaking to a newspaper man of that town, he said:

"My home is in St. Louis. Last winter I left home and came south, passing through Texas and finally going to Georgia. I worked wherever I could get employment, that being my mission down this way. I was out of work in St. Louis and was discouraged there. In Georgia I got work for a while, but in the spring my employment gave out. Companies were being organized to go to the war and I offered myself as a volunteer. I joined a company of Georgia volunteers and went off to camp. We did not get to the front, and after the protocol was signed I and a friend of mine decided we would get out of the service. My friend was from Kentucky. I was a machinist and my friend a stenographer. We decided that if we could get over to Havana, we would probably be able to get in on the ground floor. We applied to a Congressman who was a friend to my friend, and our discharges finally came and we went to the coast, taking a boat for Havana. We wore our army uniforms, not thinking that they would make any difference after we were discharged, but they did. Our desire to save money and not buy any citizen clothing got us into serious trouble.

"As soon as we reached Havana we were told that we must leave. We were laboring under a grave mistake, thinking that the United States had some authority there in the fall before the peace treaty was signed. We were put under a guard and ordered to leave on the first boat, as our presence in Havana might be dangerous to the peace and safety of the community. All we could do was to wait our time. A British boat touched at Havana, bound for New Orleans with a load of tropical fruit. We tried to get passage on the boat and were refused point blank, as the boat did not carry passengers. Our guards gave us up to understand, as we thought, that we must leave or go to jail. We decided to leave. Before the boat sailed we managed to slip aboard by bribing a couple of sailors. We were told that we could climb into the bins where bananas were stored and that the sail would be a short one to New Orleans. The sailor promised to smuggle food to us on the journey and they fastened us up in the bins of bananas, closing the hatchway. We had not had any sleep for forty-eight hours and were dead on our feet. We turned in on a pile of straw and slept soundly until nearly morning of the following day, when I was awakened by my friend calling to me.

"What is that?" I heard him ask.

"The light was very dim and I could barely see the outline of his form near me."

"I don't see anything," I replied.

"I thought you were tickling me with a bundle of straw," said he.

"I did not waken till you called to me," was my reply.

"I guess it was a rat," said he, and we both dozed off.

"Shortly I was awakened by a shriek from my friend. He had jumped up and was staring at a black, fuzzy object in the straw. I recognized it at once as a tarantula. The light was not good, but that much was plain. Soon it was joined by another and another, and in a few hours it looked like we were surrounded with tarantulas. The big spiders regarded us as impostors, for they seemed bent on attacking us. We stamped them, killing many, and fought them with all our might.

"Did you ever see an angry tarantula? If you never did, don't go looking for one, and if you find one, don't look for a hundred. I suppose it is no exaggeration to say that we were faced by a hundred of these angry insects. They spring like rats or frogs, and all of a sudden a black object would come whirling through the air, and in blue cases out of ten it would strike some unguarded spot and inject its venom. I was bitten in half a dozen places on the face, and as many more on the hands and arms, and the insects would crawl up the legs of our pantaloons to bite us. Both of us were horribly bitten all over our persons. The fight with the insects lasted all day long, and, though we were both strong, sound men when we went on the boat, by evening we were almost too exhausted to stand up. We called for help, shrieked, yelled and cried, but no help came. We were faint for want of food and dying from thirst. It was a day of horrors for both of us. Our wounds were swelling and our throats

were parching for water. After continuing to fight the tarantulas shrieking for help, we finally attracted attention and some of the sailors came to our rescue. Whether it was the sailors who bribed who came to help or whether it was someone attracted by our cries I don't know. I was in delirium and my eyes were swollen closed."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

WHERE GOLD GROWS.

Fresh Deposits of the Precious Metal Every Year.

There are localities where gold may be said to grow every year, or, in other words, where fresh deposits of the precious metal are to be found annually, says Answers.

One such district is in the Edmonton country, in the Canadian Northwest, where, after the spring floods from the same banks and "benches" of the Saskatchewan River, there are taken every year considerable quantities of gold by a few diggers, who make their living out of the business.

But the most conspicuous and interesting case of this sort is to be found near Ichang, in the province of Hopei in China. For many centuries past every year gold has been washed from the banks of coarse gravel on both sides of the River Han, and in the midst of the auriferous district there is an ancient town called Likutien, which means "Gold Diggers' Inn." Its inhabitants subdivide the gold-bearing ground among themselves annually, staking out their claims with partitions, and pay no royalty and appear to earn more than a bare subsistence, but this may be doubted, as John Chinaman is an adept at "layin' low and makin' muffs."

The annual river floods bring down millions of tons of mud and sand from the mountains, and this mud and sand, which is charged with gold, both "free" and in flakes, is deposited to a depth of six inches or more on the banks of gravel. It is in the winter that the gold is washed, and it is said that seven men work about twenty tons of the "pay dirt" in a day.



When the planet Mars is nearest the earth it is 35,000,000 miles away.

An Italian inventor has invented a boat with steel fins, which is propelled solely by the motion of the sea water. It goes best in rough weather.

Sufferers from neuralgia are warned by a medical writer not to drink tea, but to partake freely of coffee, in which the juice of a lemon has been squeezed.

It is probably not a matter of general knowledge that all the varieties of grapes cultivated in the vineyards of Europe and Asia have sprung from but one recognized species, whose cultivation began in the East; while, on the other hand, there are twenty or thirty native species of grapes in this country, and the 800 domestic varieties have been produced by American cultivators, from the commingling of several of the native species.

At a recent meeting of the Linnean Society in London specimens of a new oil producing plant from Venezuela were exhibited. The oil resembles that of sandalwood, and is already known in commerce, but the plant has hitherto remained undescribed. It proves to be a new genus of the rue family, to which the common prickly ash belongs, and it has been named Schimmelia, after a German botanist who first distilled the aromatic oil from its wood.

A recent meeting of the Biological Society in Washington was devoted to the great Dismal Swamp, and the fact was brought out that, at present, the area of the swamp is slowly sinking and Lake Drummond, in its center, is growing larger. Similar changes have occurred in the past, periods of elevation and subsidence gradually succeeding one another. The average elevation above sea level is so slight that natural drainage is insufficient to remove the rainfall. The swamp is a kind of frontier station where northern and southern plants meet, many northern species having their southern limit here, and several southern types their most northerly abiding place. It contains many birds and mammals which show distinct characters.

Truant Laws Enforced.

The absence of a child from school in Switzerland, unless in case of illness, is punishable by a fine, the amount of which is daily increased. If it is suspected that the child's illness is shammed a doctor is sent by the school authorities, and, when he is convinced that the suspicion is correct, the parents have to pay his fee.

After a girl passes 25, if a serenading party stops at her house, she is concealed if she doesn't decide that the young men have made a mistake in the house.

When a man is noted as a bore, other men try to get by him without being seen.