

A PRECIPITATE LOVER.

Young, brave, intelligent, Ferreol lacked for nothing, was well off in the goods of the world, burned his candles from start to finish, joked at the past, laughed at the future.

At Paris he encountered Angele. Charming Angele! He loved her, and told her so. She listened. He pressed her. She resisted. He insisted. She mentioned marriage.

Logical even with himself, he was not astonished.

Angele was good as pretty. Why not marriage? "Have you a family?" said Ferreol to her.

"A father, yes."

"Where is he?"

"Brest."

"What doing?"

"Refitting vessels."

"I go at once, then," said Ferreol calmly.

"Wherefore?"

"To demand your hand of monsieur your father. It is thus with me always. For tomorrow, nothing. Consider, buy."

"I love you, you love me. You do love me?"

"Yes."

"Good! The train leaves at 8 this evening. At 11 tomorrow I land at Brest. Thirty minutes later arrive at the dock. See your father. Ask him the question, receive consent, at 3 p. m. resume the train, and day after tomorrow, at 7 in the evening, say to you, 'Angele, thou art mine!'"

She blushed, smiled coyly, and softly murmured:

"Go, then?"

Ferreol took a flask to more quickly reach the station. The driver was drunk. It did not astonish him.

In the waiting room his valise was stolen.

Nothing astonishing in that.

In the wagon of the train one Englishman alone occupied all the four corners—the first with his person, the second with his glass, the third with his umbrella, the fourth with his Baedeker.

Ferreol was not astonished at this, either.

Then the train ran off the track. Pooch! child's play.

Ferreol had his nose half broken. Bitchous obstacle!

Briefly, with missed connections and many hours' delay, it was not till the third day after his departure from Paris that Ferreol embarked at Brest, and swift as a startled zebra threaded his way through the Rue de Siam.

"The ship refitting shops?"

"Rue de Penfeld, third building to the left."

Ferreol was totally ignorant of the geographical identity of the Penfeld, but a man like him makes no demand for explanations. "Straight before him he plunged, as if he knew it like A B C, turned toward Saint Sauveur, struck the Gabon gate, rebounded upon the Madeleine, cannoned against the Chateau, saw on a street lamp "Quai de la Penfeld," and divining that he was on the right road at last took it.

Yes, took it at top speed to make up for lost time, scraping his shins on chains and tarred ropes, tripping himself up with links and anchors, receiving thumps and bumps from bales and boxes—to presently halt before a building on which, in black letters on a tobacco ground, was the magic word:

REFITTERS.

This chance astonished him no more than all the rest. Before him was a door. He knocked, entered, perceived a gloomy hall, a dingy camp bed, on that camp bed a sailor smoking a cob pipe. Hairy, turrey, weather-beaten—a type of the old sea wolf.

"Monsieur Kenezek?" said Ferreol civilly.

"Not in."

"Where is he, then?"

"At work, of course."

"Where, I say?"

"Yonder, or maybe below."

And the sailor designated with his thumb a vague topography some distance away.

"Ah, well! then I'll go and find him at work."

"Thou, my chicken?"

"Why not?"

"It would be!"

"Bah! no phrases! Speak to M. Kenezek I must, on business that admits of no delay, and I will speak to him at once if I have to go to the bottom to do it."

The sailor rose instantly, shifted pipe and quid from right to left, and cried out admiringly:

"Thou too, then, art of the craft, my chicken?"

Ferreol comprehended nothing, but his principles dictated his answer.

"Parbleu! yes," said he, turning with decision.

"Come on, then; I'll show you myself. Two steps away only, but you'll dress yourself here."

Dress himself, and here? Any one but Ferreol would have let escape him at least a gesture of surprise. But however! After all, to present himself to a future father-in-law, perhaps it was more expedient to assume a black coat.

"So be it!" replied he.

The sailor moved a step to the door, but stopped thoughtfully, turned, unhooked from the wall a greasy placard, and with a mumbled "No humbug this, you see?" began to read and to question Ferreol as follows:

"You are not in a state of intoxication, you?"

"If" said Ferreol indignantly; then restraining himself. "No, not even a glass of water in the stomach."

"And—more than an hour since you've eaten?"

"Three hours, precisely."

"You are not in a perspiration?"

"Dry as a fish bone."

"And your health is good?"

"Sound as cast iron."

"Nerves and temper calm and equilibriated?"

"As a clam at high water."

"Good! All as it should be!"

And replacing the placard on its nail, the sailor wheeled and threw open the door of a cell to the left.

"Hurry!" said he: "begin; undress yourself!"

Ferreol, up to this date, had asked no one in marriage, but sharp as he was, he had never supposed that this act—important, it was true—would be accompanied by such formalities. One of those, however, whom nothing amazed, he did not flinch, but proceeded to strip himself.

Decidedly obscure in this closet, Ferreol was reduced to conjectures, smell and feeling; still, it was distinctly an undervest, drawers and shoes that the sailor drew from a locker and laid before him.

"With these," said he, "you can defy the perspiration."

"In truth I can!" said Ferreol, covering himself with the articles, which exhaled a singular odor of mingled tar and salty grass wrack. Upon which the other added to the costume a vest and breeches with feet and jacket of thick waterproof stuff, and bidding him be seated, assisted him with the skill of a retired valet de chambre to lace the great shoes, put on the breeches, thrust his arms, one after the other, into the sleeves of the jacket, and to slip his neck into a leathern collar that exactly adapted itself to his shoulders.

On his back then he placed a cushion, and on that a metal pelierine that resembled a cuirass, reciting by rote meanwhile, after the fashion of the corporal's manual:

"Push each button of the pelierine into the corresponding hole of the collar-ette. Adjust the copper valves and turn the screw nuts. Close the latter till the joining of garments, pelierine," etc.

It was long, but Ferreol was patient and said only:

"You are sure I shall find M. Kenezek there?"

"Certain sure," responded the sailor with a grin: "he can't get away." Adding contentedly, "Nothing, but the helmet lacking now; that we'll put on yonder."

And, followed by Ferreol, he tucked under his arm a sort of elongated ball in a leather envelope, and took up the march for the front.

Ferreol's costume reminded him as he scanned it of the striped clothes used upon criminals. Never before, he told himself, had a condemned seen the headman bearing his head under his arm while leading a victim to the scaffold. A strange lover's travesty, which he must bear with patience.

Presently, turning to right and left, they reached a jetty advancing into the bay some ten to twenty meters. At the end of it the round crown of a building from which, at a shout from his conductor, came running a second sailor, who placed himself without a word behind Ferreol's back.

"All ready?" said the first.

"All ready," responded Ferreol.

"You see the slate and the pencil hung to your side?" queried the other again.

"Slate and pencil both," assented Ferreol amiably.

It was the last word he spoke. Click! click! rattle!

The helmet was over his head, bolted to his shoulders, the screw-nuts hard and fast.

Parbleu! At last a flash of enlightenment! Blinded, stifled, one single instant nature rebelled against his principles. Too late, however, and protestations inopportune.

For now he felt himself lifted, carried a pace, suspended in space; then a strange sensation of cold mounting from feet to waist and from waist to shoulders.

He opened wide his eyes, and through the helmet's "peepers" saw a fish flit past him.

Preliminaries decidedly not commonplace!

He continued to descend with relative rapidity. Soon the sandy bottom was underfoot, and there before him a monster with huge head and enormous eyes, who advanced to meet him, seized the slate at his belt and began to scratch upon it. Ferreol, whose head buzzed like a sawmill, stooped and read:

"I am Kenezek: who are you?"

The moment was solemn. Ferreol drew a long breath, to which the complainant pump above him lent itself willingly, then with full lungs and grateful soul reflected.

This was Kenezek! This toiler of the sea, upon whom depended the happiness of his life. They must come to an understanding somehow. A sea diver as a father-in-law was not inadmissible.

The situation had grown unique. He seized the pencil and took his turn at the slate, awkwardly at first, but still smoothly.

"I am Ferreol," responded he; "live at Paris; income, 10,000 livres; love Angele, your daughter, and have the honor to ask of you her hand in marriage!"

There was a growl under the father's helmet, and he wrote on the slate anew:

"Marry her if you like. I"—

"Consent!" cried Ferreol ardently, at once ravished and uneasy at the reply.

"Consent? Yes," pencilled Kenezek; "good riddance too. But quick begone—begone, I say; I've work to finish!"

Ferreol delightedly sought to kneel before the paternal scaphandrier, but his inflated clothes held him erect. That act of respectful homage was forbidden him.

Meanwhile, seeing him hesitate, Angele's father repeated his order, but Ferreol, not knowing what to do in order to mount, and not hurrying enough to suit his temper, he pulled five times, according to the rules, the cord of recall, and Ferreol shot aloft like a rocket through a company of scuttling dorades.

"If I'd been you," said the sailor, who received him, and to whom he benevolently proffered a glass of rum, "I'd have waited ten minutes. Kenezek quits work, you know, every day at 5 o'clock."

Ferreol looked at his watch. Ten minutes to 5.

"No," said he, "a man like me never waits a minute."

And he promptly returned to Paris—"To marry the charming Angele!"

No. Fifty odd hours late in returning, the charming but impatient Angele had married the other fellow.

And Ferreol was not surprised at that.

—Translated from *La Vie Moderne* by E. C. Waggoner for "Short Stories."

The Hot Water Fad.

The hot water cure for dyspepsia, indigestion and kindred ailments is by no means a novelty, but the manner in which it is habitually practiced at the country home of a wealthy New York business man is certainly out of the ordinary. The country home aforesaid is not more than half an hour's ride by rail from New York, and it is a very attractive resort for the young friends of the hospitable owner.

A few weeks ago a member of one of the athletic clubs in this city, a young giant in stature and a second Gladstone in physical health and vigor, received a cordial invitation to spend a few days at this country mansion. He accepted with alacrity, and presented himself before his host and hostess at the appointed time. He had a most agreeable time, but in narrating his experience to a chum a few days after his return to the city he said: "It was a jolly visit. Everybody there was as nice as could be, and Mr. M.'s hospitality is simply delicious. But there was one thing that staggered me at the outset—that was their custom of drinking clear hot water."

"Each night before the family and guests dispersed to their respective rooms a servant would appear in the drawing room with a pitcher of hot water and a lot of goblets. Everybody was expected to drink a gobletful of that exhilarating beverage, because the hot water cure is the special fad of the host. Well, of course I had no use for hot water taken internally, but I drank it, of course, as each of the others did. A second dose of the same liquid was served to us in our rooms, each morning while we were dressing for breakfast. A servant came around just after the rising bell was rung and left a small pitcher of hot water and a goblet at each room. I quietly poured my morning allowance down the waste pipe of the washstand."

—New York Times.

Combat of the Sea and Sun.

For miles stretches a floor of silver sand. The sun has bleached the whiteness on its face a deathly pallor.

The sun and the sea are foes and their battleground is that floor of silver sand—for when the mighty waves dashes in to cool the parched face and thirst of the sand how quickly the sun blows with force its heated breath and dries the moisture!

Then again for miles stretches a flow of silver sand.

The knotted old pines on the knoll turn their heads and bend their bodies from the sea, and the tall, thin, burned brown grasses lean inland and tremble at the cry of thirst from the burning sand they live in. But they are slaves, these trees and weeds—slaves to the sun. They dare not but vain rebellion for the sea.

It is only when the sun lowers its proud and cruel head that these trees and grasses raise their crooked forms and open their mouths for the moist kiss of night; only when the silver sand has slaked its thirst, and the rising tide, unchecked by the sun, has bathed it, is it these cowards turn their faces seaward.

What hypocrites, these slaves of the sun! For on the morrow, when the day awakes and the sun and the sea carry on their never ending combat they play again their part, with backs to the sea, while at their feet miles stretches a floor of silver sand.—New York Herald.

The Social Melon.

Very peculiar is the popular estimation of a watermelon. Apples, peaches, oranges we may carry in the street without causing people to make remarks about or to us. Not so with the watermelon. One day Judge Mack, of Kansas, said to his grocer:

"People in this town seem distant, unsocial."

"You don't understand human nature," said the grocer. "Take home this watermelon in the basket on your arm, and if people on the way don't speak to you, then you needn't pay for the melon."

The judge first met a dignified matron, who said with a faint smile:

"Ah, luxuries today, judge?"

At the next crossing a minister exclaimed:

"Am I invited to dine with you today?"

On Pine street a German said:

"Isb you going to be bolite already, judge, and divide mit me?"

On Elm street a Frenchman bowed gracefully. "Ah, ze melon!"

At the corner of Main and Jackson streets a loud voice called:

"Lor now, judge, doan' ye dose drop dat dar melon, hi, hi, ha, ha!"

The judge paid for the melon next day.—Youth's Companion.

If a poison has been accidentally swallowed, instantly drink a pint of warm water in which has been stirred a teaspoonful of salt and one or two of mustard. A half glass of sweet oil will render many poisons harmless.

WHEN THE CAPTAIN IS ANXIOUS.

Modern Steamships Have No Fear of Storms—It Is Fog That Alarms.

It is not when the seas come pounding over the bows that the captain's face lengthens. Even when it is necessary to keep the passengers below, and the spray is carried as high as the foretop, his confidence in his ship is unabated. His spirits do not fall with the barometer, and though the clouds hang low and the air is filled with stinging moisture flying like sleet from the hissing sea—even when boats are torn out of the davits, and iron bits and ventilators are snapped from their fastenings like pipe stems, he has no misgiving as to the ability of the ship to weather the gale or the fiercest hurricane that can blow.

Give him an open sea, without haze or fog or snow, and neither wind nor wave can alarm him. He knows very well, as all who are experienced in such matters do, that the modern steamers of the great Atlantic lines are so carefully constructed and of such strength that the foundering of one of them through stress of weather alone is well nigh inconceivable.

But when a fog descends, then it is that his face and manner change, and he who has been the most sociable and gayest of men suddenly becomes the most anxious and taciturn. His seat at the head of the table is vacant; look for him and you will not find him, as in fair weather, diverting groups of girls tucked up in steamer chairs on the promenade deck, but pacing the bridge and puffing a cigar which apparently has not been allowed to go out since it was lighted as the big ship backed from her wharf into the North river.

Wherever and whenever it occurs fog is a source of danger from which neither prudence nor skill can guarantee immunity, and whether the ship is slowed down or going at full speed there is cause for fear while this gray blindness baffles the eyes.

With plenty of sea room the danger is least, and it increases near land, especially where the coast is wild and broken, like that of Ireland and Wales, and where there are many vessels as well as rocks to be passed.—William H. Rideing in Scribner's.

How False Eyebrows Are Made.

At a certain factory a number of young women were working at small tables, each table covered with little instruments and odd things, which only those who knew the business could possibly understand. At one table two girls were threading needles with fine, silky hair, and sewing them in little squares on a thin, transparent gauze.

"Those girls," said the overseer, "are making some of those beautiful arched eyebrows you may sometimes see on the stage. They are frequently worn by both actors and actresses. These sewed on the net are the less expensive kind, and are only used on special occasions. The real brow is very expensive, and can only be made by a person of great skill."

"The patient sits here in his chair, which very much resembles a dentist's operating throne. In this cushion to my left are stuck a score or so of those needles you saw being threaded. Each stitch only leaving two strands of hair, to facilitate the operation a number of needles must be at hand. As each thread of hair is drawn through the skin over the eye, it is cut, so that when the first stage of the operation is over it leaves the hairs bristling out an inch or so, presenting a ragged, porcupine appearance. Now comes the artistic work. The brow must be arched and cut down with the utmost delicacy, and a number of hours is required to do it."

"Small as the eyebrows are, they are very important in the makeup of the face. You have no idea how old one looks when utterly denuded of hair over the eyes. The process I have described is painful, but it makes good eyebrows and adds 100 per cent. to the looks of a person who was without them. It is, too, much better than the blackening and cosmetics so many people use, especially people who have mere pretense of brows, comprising only a few hairs."—London Tit-Bits.

A Remarkable Canadian River.

The Saguenay, a large river in Canada, falling into the estuary of the St. Lawrence, on the north side, about 115 miles below Quebec, is rightly reckoned as being the deepest and most remarkable stream in the world. Excepting in a very few places, where great ranges of hills seem to cross its bed, the average depth is 900 feet, the bottom at the spot where it joins the St. Lawrence being over 600 feet below the bottom of the last named stream. Thus a low point of rocks at the shore, or an island, is really the top of a moderate sized mountain springing up from the mysterious depths of this deepest of all rivers. As the spring tides rise about eighteen feet, the currents of this river are violent and eccentric. In some places the ebb stream runs four to six miles an hour. The eddies along the shore are like those of a rapid, the undercurrent sometimes laying hold of a vessel to turn her about or to hold her in spite of all efforts to escape.

Before the use of towboats on the Saguenay, a vessel left helpless by a calm sometimes drifted against some submerged mountain peak, and, when the tide fell, capsize in deep water. An anchorage being very rarely found, large iron rings have been set in the rocks which show themselves above the water, and vessels often tie up to these "hitching posts" and await a fair wind. The tide of the Saguenay, for some unexplained reason, advances with extraordinary rapidity, thus, notwithstanding the fact that the ebb current very rarely ceases to flow out of the river, high tide arrives at Chicoutimi only forty-five minutes later than at Tadoussac, seventy miles away. On the St. Lawrence the tide advances in the same time only from Tadoussac to Murray Bay, thirty-five miles distant.—St. Louis Republic.

American Fruit in Great Britain.

It would seem, according to the opinion of Mr. White, of Covent Garden, that bananas are gradually becoming a popular fruit in this country, although the English are still far behind the Americans, whose partiality for the banana is such that in August alone they imported more than 1,500,000 bunches. We get our bananas from the Canary islands and Madeira, and very soon we shall have them from Sierra Leone.—London Telegraph.

"SAFETY" AGAINST "REGULAR."

The Squatty Bicycle Driving Out of Existence Its Graceful Rival.

The bicycle world has its two schools now, the old and the new, just like theology and other branches of learning. The conservative element is mounted on the old style machine, with one tall and one small wheel, while the "liberals" use the "safeties." The former kind was, and to some extent still is, known as the "ordinary," but an incident will show that this is a misnomer.

A man lately went to a big establishment near Central park which does a large business in renting bicycles to riders and asked for a machine. The day was such a fine one that there was a great demand for wheels, and the would be customer was told that there wasn't a bicycle in the place; all had been rented. The young man, much disappointed, asked if they didn't have any kind of an old machine, so that he could take a spin. Yes; if he was willing to take a high one he could have one of those. When he asked for a bicycle there a few years ago a tall one was invariably brought out unless he asked specifically for a "safety."

A visit to Central park on a pleasant day will show how much more popular the "safeties" are than the old kind. Often a dozen low machines will be seen to one tall one. From an aesthetic point of view there is no comparison between the two makes. The old kind is exceedingly graceful, and the rider seems to skim along on a single big wheel. The man on a squatty safety looks mean beside his brother, who is two feet above him. Beauty, however, is yielding to utility, for men who have ridden both kinds of wheels almost always pronounce the new kind by far the more satisfactory.

To begin with, learning to ride a tall bicycle means lots of bruises and torn clothing, not to mention the vexation of having people laugh at your mishap. The tyro on the safety runs much less risk of falls, although he is sometimes cautioned to be more careful by finding himself sprawling on the road. Even an expert rider on a tall wheel is likely to take a "header" at any time, for a small stone or gravel in his path often dismounts him. He must keep a sharp lookout on the road, while his companion on the lowly "safety" admires the landscape or watches the people whom they pass.

In rough places the man on the homely machine may rush, where the other has to dismount and push his machine like a baby carriage. Going down hill the new style of bicycle is also superior, the danger of a fall being so much less. It would be suicidal for the wheelman who is perched on a "regular" to put on his brake while coasting down hill, but the other man can do it with perfect safety.

In point of speed the advantage is also with the machine the wheels of which are of equal size. In fact the "safeties" have been barred out of the intercollegiate bicycle contests, as if it were as unfair to have the two kinds compete, as it would be to have a trotting and running horse race. Manufacturers are heading all their energies in improving the "safeties," and the graceful "regular" seems doomed to the fate of the buffalo—gradual extinction.—New York Tribune.

Placer's Big Cherry Trees.

In some remote age the deep, whirling waters of the American river at Monte Rio washed out the rock layers of long previous geological formation to the depth of probably 200 feet or more, and this excavation being filled to half its depth by alluvial material from the sides of adjacent hills, formed a deposit over sixty feet deep and some ten or twelve acres in present area.

The waters of the American now form only a small stream, the alluvial deposit that has made the giant cherry tree growth being ten or a dozen feet higher than the usual current of the deep river channel. The soil of Hector's cherry orchard has been bored to over sixty feet in depth without touching bed rock or rock of any kind, the alluvial quality continuing to this great depth. On about four acres of this soil black Tartarian cherry trees were set in 1893 or 1895 by ancestral relatives of the present owner, several smaller orchards or additions having been planted since.

There are 150 large trees that yield 40 boxes, or 400 pounds each, in alternate years. The trees are kept trimmed of all dead wood and lime washed every season, and are still making vigorous and healthy growth. The tallest tree is 63 feet high, with a head from 50 to 55 feet in width, and over a score more of the 150 large trees are from 40 to 50 feet tall, with corresponding width of top growth so that the excess in height of the tallest tree is not very conspicuous.—Country Gentleman.

The Story of a Suicide.

I remember being called a year or two ago, in my capacity as police reporter, to a tenement on the west side—I think it was in West Thirty-seventh street—where a painter had that day cut his throat. Standing there by the corpse I learned from the sobbing widow that the man was desperate for want of work. He had been on the streets for weeks, and his children were starving. It happened that I had been for just the same length of time looking for a man to paint my house out in the country, where painters were scarce and very busy. I had just made up my mind to advertise that day. There lay this painter dead because he could find no one to give him work, while I would have been glad to pay him more than the wages of his trade to get him to work for me.

Had there been any means of bringing us together to which we would both naturally have resorted, he would have been alive and his family self supporting. Now it seemed certain to become a burden upon the public.

It was not the only instance of that sort by very many I had come across.—Jacob A. Rills in Forum.