

A KENTUCKY RABBIT HUNT.

All Sorts of Costumes and Horses Are Used.

A Sturdy Disregard of All Considerations of Form—Mating Crops Are Never Used, But Whips Are Carried.

The men are dressed as they please, the ladies as they please. English blood gets expression, as usual, in independence absolute. There is a sturdy disregard of all considerations of form. Some men wear leggings, some high boots; a few have brown shooting-coats. Most of them ride with the heel low and the toes turned according to temperament. The southern woman's long riding-skirt has happily been laid aside. These young Dianas wear the usual habit; only the hat is a derby, a cap, sometimes a beaver with a white veil, or a tango-hunter that has slurred down behind and left a frank bare head of shining hair. They hold the reins in either hand, and not a crop is to be seen. There are plenty of riding-whips, however, and sometimes one runs up the back of some girl's right arm; for that is the old-fashioned position for the whip when riding in form. On a trip like this, however, everybody rides to please his fancy, and rides anywhere but off his horse.

The men are sturdy country youths, who in a few years will make good types of the beef-eating young English squire—sunburned fellows with big frames, open faces, fearless eyes, and a manner that is easy, cordial, kindly, independent. The girls are midway between the types of brunette and blond, with a leaning towards the latter type. The extreme brunette is as rare as the lovely blond, whom Oliver Wendell Holmes differentiates from her dazzling sister with locks that have caught the light of the sun. Radiant with freshness these girls are, and with good health and strength: round of figure, clear of eye and skin, spirited, soft of voice and slow of speech.

There is one man on a sorrel mule. He is the host back at the big farmhouse, and he has given up every horse he has to guests. One of the girls has a broad white girth running all the way around both horse and saddle. Her habit is the most stylish in the field; she has lived a year in Washington, perhaps, and has had a finishing touch at a fashionable school in New York. Near her is a young fellow on a black thoroughbred—a graduate, perhaps, of Yale or Princeton. They rarely put on airs, couples like these, when they come back home, but drop quietly into their old places with friends and kindred. From respect to local prejudices, which has a hearty contempt for anything that is not carried for actual use, she has left her riding-crop at home. He has let his crinkled black hair grow rather long, and has covered it with a black slouch hat.

Contact with the outer world has made a difference, however, and it is enough to create a strong bond of sympathy between these two, and to cause trouble between country-bred Phyllis, a plump, dark-eyed, bare-headed girl, who rides a pony that is trained to the hunt, as many of the horses are, and young Farmer Corydon, who is near her on an iron-gray. Indeed, mischief is brewing among those four. At a brisk walk the line moves across the field, the captain at each end yelling to the men-only the men, for no woman is ever anywhere but where she ought to be in a southern hunting-field—to keep it straight.

"Billy!" shouts the captain with the mighty voice, "I fine you ten dollars." The slouch hat and the white girth are lagging behind. It is a lovers' quarrel, and the girl looks a little flushed, while Phyllis watches, smiling. "But you can compromise with me," adds the captain, and a jolly laugh runs down the line. Now comes a "rebel yell." Somewhere along the line a horse leaps forward. Other horses jump too; everybody yells; and everybody's eye is on a little bunch of cotton that is being whirled with astonishing speed through the brown weeds. There is a massing of horses close behind it; the white girth flashes in the midst of the melee, and the slouch hat is just behind. The bunch of cotton turns suddenly, and doubles back between the horses' feet. There is a great crash, and much turning, twisting and saving of bits. Then the crowd dashes the other way, with Corydon and Phyllis in the lead. The fun has just begun.—John Fox, Jr., in Century.

Drinking Rain Drops.

The interesting doings and peculiarities of the young king-bird, kept a captive, are thus described: The king-bird lives on insects, which it generally captures on the wing, and the young bird that Mr. Bumpus experimented with caught falling drops of water by striking at them with its beak, but could not be induced to drink from a dish after the manner of a chicken. This leads Mr. Bumpus to suggest that king-birds may be in the habit of quenching their thirst by seizing falling drops of rain.—Science.

Mexican Burials.

The Mexicans have a queer way of burying the dead. The corpse is tightly wrapped in century-plant matting and is placed in a coffin lined for about a shilling. One or two natives, as the case may be, place the coffin on their heads and go to a tract to the grave, where the body is interred, and the coffin is then returned. The wealthy class use the tram cars as hearses, and the friends follow beside the car on foot.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Building Made of Ashes.

A building has recently been erected by Herr Wagner, an architect in Limburg, solely of mat trials formed of ashes, without any admixture of sand. It is claimed that hard, natural stones of almost every variety have been successfully imitated with this very cheap material.—Manchester Enquirer.

THE ACTOR'S DOUBLE.

We were talking about spirit manifestations at the Thirty-nine club, and recalling the usual second or third hand accounts of deceased ladies and gentlemen showing themselves to their sorrowing relatives.

"It is strange the tricks which our brains will sometimes play us," said Dr. Macpherson. "I remember once seeing a ghost myself, and I can tell you that the sensation is a very curious one. It was a good many years ago, in my examination days, and I had been sitting up until the early hours 'examining.' Everybody in the house had long since gone to bed, where I ought to have been myself, so I was rather surprised when I glanced up from my book to see somebody sitting at the table where I myself had been a few moments before writing. I felt quite startled for an instant, until I recognized the intruder. He was a little hazy, but I could see plainly enough who it was."

"A dead relative?" asked Maj. Dennett, who was a firm believer in the good old-fashioned ghost.

Macpherson answered in his peculiarly quiet way: "No, it was myself. The experience of seeing one's own ghost is not altogether unusual, I believe."

"Now, I do not think your experience was half so remarkable as one of mine," said Gilbert Dane, the well-known actor and manager of the Howard theater, who happened to be there that night. Dane is not a member of the Thirty-nine, but had come with Macpherson. Most of the brain specialists' friends are in the profession, a fact which is perhaps due to the year which he himself spent on the stage as a young man.

"My story begins prosaically," said the actor, when he begged to hear it. "I lost the latchkey with which I let myself into the theater, and took somebody else's to the locksmith's to have a duplicate made. I agreed to call for it the following morning as I was going up to town for rehearsal. I was living at Putney then, and we were actively preparing a play which deserved a better fate than it received, if thought and preparation go for anything, for I came near making myself ill over it. I was feeling out of sorts on the morning that I called for the latchkey, and when the locksmith swore positively that he had given me the thing already—that less than ten minutes previously I had come in for the key, paid for it, and taken it away with me—I will confess that I lost my temper, and stormed at the fellow; but I could not get him to budge a line from his story. He seemed to have an idea that I was playing a practical joke, and the only result of my talking was that I nearly lost my train to Waterloo. It was moving when I reached the platform, and I had to run for the only compartment of which the door was open, near the end of the train.

"The compartment contained two other passengers, but if I glanced at them at all, I noticed nothing except that each was pretty well hidden behind a daily paper. I had fortunately bought my own paper before calling at the locksmith's, and I speedily followed their example. So far the story is painfully commonplace. Now comes the truly remarkable experience which has stamped the doings of that day indelibly on my memory."

The actor paused to strike a match and relight a cheroot, which he had allowed to go out, and we all watched him in silence, wondering what was coming. Macpherson only had the air of a man who had heard the story before.

"I had become rather interested in my paper," Dane went on, when the cigar was lighted again, "and did not notice my companions talking until one of them started telling an anecdote. The story and voice startled me, but it is difficult to describe my feelings when I put down my paper to glance at the narrator."

"It was yourself?" asked Maj. Dennett, excitedly, as the actor paused, and Dane nodded.

"Yes, gentlemen, I saw seated at the other end of the compartment by the window, opposite his companion, a figure that was an exact fac-simile of the reflection which I see in my glass every day when I have dressed for the part of a respectable citizen. It was myself complete in every detail of face and attire."

"An optical delusion, I suppose?" I suggested; and the actor shook his head.

"No; that was the first idea that occurred to me—that I had been working and worrying too much over the new play, and my brain had played me a trick. The unaccounted way in which the third man glanced at me encouraged me in the belief, for the likeness, unless I was imagining it, was enough to attract instant attention. I wondered whether there was actually a man sitting and talking where I had seen and heard my fac-simile; for the third man, an ordinary, everyday individual, had not spoken a word to him, and might from his expression have been listening to his anecdote or simply thinking. I was relieved when he laughed at the point when 'my double,' as I began to call his companion, came to the joke of the story, but when he opened his mouth it was only to increase the mystery of the affair, for it showed me that 'my double' possessed my name, as well as my voice, my dress, my face, my figure.

"I began to wonder then, not whether the man at the window was a reality, but whether I was reality myself, and it certainly would not have surprised me if I had looked in a mirror and found it reflect back a face that was unfamiliar to me. It is strange how quickly a single phenomenon will sometimes change all one's fixed opinions on a subject of the supernatural. I felt I must speak to the man if only to prove whether I was awake or dreaming, and

I seized the opportunity of introducing myself offered by hearing 'my double' called by name.

"Excuse me," I said, addressing him, "but I heard your friend just call you 'Mr. Dane.' I wonder whether we are related at all, for that happens to be my name, and we seem to bear a striking similarity to one another."

"My double" turned and surveyed me through a single eyeglass in exactly the same manner as that with which I should have surveyed a stranger who addressed me in the train.

"I really do not know whether we are related or not," he said, in the voice I use when I wish to be slightly patronizing. "I am Gilbert Dane, of the Howard theater, and he actually handed me one of my own cards."

"There was something in the substantial nature of the familiar bit of pasteboard that brought back a little of my common sense, and relieved me from the state of stupefaction into which the phenomenon had driven me."

"Come, this is a very clever trick," I said, with a smile, which I am afraid was rather feeble. "You have certainly succeeded in startling me. Now I should like your own card, so that I may know whom to congratulate on a very clever performance."

"And what did the Mystery do?" I inquired, with interest, when the actor paused.

"He did exactly what I should have done, if a stranger addressed me in the same manner. He became angry, and asked me what I meant, and whom I called myself."

"Well, until to-day I have been in the habit of calling myself Gilbert Dane, of the Howard theater—I was beginning, keeping as cool as I could, when 'my double' interrupted me in a tone which I still recognized perfectly as my own."

"Well! you had better not do so any more," he said sharply, "or you will find yourself in the hands of the police. I see that you have been imitating my dress, too, which I cannot help, but the use of my name is another thing."

"We had just reached Vauxhall, our first stopping place, as he spoke, and a ticket collector who knows me by sight came to the door. My double caught his eye first."

"I wish you would tell this gentleman who I am," he said, and the man answered promptly:

"Certainly, sir, you are Mr. Dane, the actor."

"He looked startled when I asked him the same question."

"I should call you a very good imitation," he said, when he had recovered from his surprise.

"This was becoming decidedly uncomfortable, and I began to wonder how I could prove to anybody that I was not a good imitation of myself. The ticket collector's ready acceptance of my double as the real 'Mr. Dane' showed how helpless I should be in an appeal to anyone who did not know me well. But I felt that it would not do for two Gilbert Danes to remain at large; the question which one was to surrender the title must be settled at once. It struck me that the easiest way to do it would be to go together to the theater, and submit the question to the company assembled for the rehearsal. I suggested this course to my fac-simile, and he surprised me by accepting it readily."

"I warn you that I shall detain you when it is settled, and send for the police," he said, in my haughtiest voice.

"It was what I was intending to do with him."

The actor paused to light another cheroot.

"And did you both go back?" somebody asked.

Dane nodded.

"Yes, together. The third man left us at Waterloo," he said. "You may not believe it, but I felt rather uneasy as I approached the stage door, and the fact that I had no latchkey to open it for myself seemed a calamity. My double calmly produced his, and marched me into my own theater with the air of a proprietor. Then he closed the door behind him, and changing his voice and manner, suddenly turned quietly: 'And now, Mr. Dane, I will puzzle you no more, but apologize for giving you so much trouble, which I hope you will think repaid by the enjoyment of a unique sensation. The fact is that I am very anxious to go on the stage under your auspices, and I thought that this would be the best way to obtain an introduction to you, and at the same time show you a specimen of my acting in the part of your understudy. You will admit at least that I understand the art of making up. Now are you going to give me an engagement—or send for the police?'"

"And you gave him the engagement, I suppose?" I asked.

"Yes; I have always regretted that he threw it up before the year was out, and returned to his former profession, that of a medical man."

"It was he, of course, who called for the latchkey in the morning?"

"Yes; he had been in the shop when I ordered it, and the fact finally determined him to carry out the affair, which he had been pondering for some time."

"But he must have haunted you in a shadow beforehand," put in Maj. Dennett, "to learn all your gestures and that. I should hardly think the result was worth the trouble."

Macpherson, who had been sitting quietly in the background, surprised us by replying for his friend.

"Excuse me, major," he said, in his usual quiet way, "but you make a mistake there. Any man would have been glad to give £100 down for the engagement which Dane offered me straightway. It cost me less than £10 for clothes, and about a month of study, and my time was not worth £90 a month then, or I should not have thought of giving up medicine and taking up the stage."—Tit-Bits.

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