

The Dilapidated Gentleman Talks

Visits an Ohio Village and Tells How He Came to Take Up Tramping.

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ONE evening in the outskirts of an Ohio village, began the dilapidated gentleman as he was asked for a reminiscence of the road, "I knocked at a comfortable looking house to ask for a bite to eat and leave to make my bed under the currant bushes. The door was opened by a woman weighing about 200 pounds and having a motherly look all over her. Just let me tell you something right here. If it wasn't for the fact women of America the tramp would soon be an unknown quantity. They are as big hearted as—well, as big bodied. Not once in a hundred times have I appealed to them in vain. On this occasion I hadn't got my mouth open before the good woman saluted me with:

"You poor fellow! But come right in and get something to eat. I don't



"THE DOOR WAS OPENED BY A WOMAN WEIGHING ABOUT 200 POUNDS."

believe you have had a full meal in a week. Helen, help me to set out the cold victuals."

"Helen was her niece. She was an old maid. She had a turn up nose and wore glasses, and she looked upon me as dirt beneath her feet. She assisted her aunt, but very reluctantly, and I overheard her talking against me. If it had been left to her I should have got the bones instead of a good supper. I knew that some sort of a story would be expected of me when I had eaten, and it occurred to me to heap coals of fire on the old maid's head in revenge. Sure enough, as I shoved back from the table the fat woman settled herself in a rocking chair and said:

"You must have had some adventures while tramping over the country?"

"Yes; a few."

"What started you on the tramp?"

"Now, auntie, what do we care? put in the old maid. 'He's a tramp, and that's enough. He is probably anxious to be on his way.'"

"And I'm anxious to hear him talk. Why did you take up tramping?"

"It is a story that I seldom tell," I replied, with a choke in my throat, "but you have been so kind to me that I would be selfish in me to withhold it. You may at some time have read or heard of Chief Justice Rathskaller of Washington. Well, he is my father."

"You don't say?" gasped the widow, while the old maid pricked up her ears and grew interested at once.

"Ten years ago, when I left college, my father wanted me to follow in his footsteps, or at least to become a lawyer. That was also my ambition, and perhaps I should have been on the bench today but for a trifling incident. One day my mother sent me to the laundry to say that the towels sent home were short by one."

"Yes; I've heard how them city laundries keep back things," replied the widow.

"At the laundry I could get no satisfaction about the missing towel, but the girl who was running the mangle instantly attracted my attention. She was as handsome and had about such a figure as this young lady here. Her bearing was proud and aristocratic, as Miss Helen's is."

"Thank you," whispered the old maid as she hitched her chair a foot nearer and began to snigger.

"That mangle girl captured my admiration in a moment and my heart within five. Twice again during the day I returned to the laundry to speak with her, and within two days I had told her that I could not live without her. I loved the strong man loves. Had oceans rolled between us I would have drunk them dry to kneel at her feet."

"Gracious, but you must have had it hard!" exclaimed the widow.

"I have always wanted to be loved that way," added Miss Helen as she gave me a tender look.

"Within a week I had proposed and been accepted. Then I found that Jeannette was the daughter of a millionaire who had put all his money into a flying machine and it had flown away from him. She had sold her clothes and jewels and come to work in the laundry to help him get a new start. We had been engaged two weeks when my father told me one evening that I must marry a girl named Aramantia Schermerhorn. His mind had been made up for some time, but he had taken his time about informing me."

"And you refused?" queried the old maid. "Oh, do not tell me that you flitted the other!"

"I refused, of course. For the first time in my life I defied my father. Aramantia's papa owned a theater, and had I wed her we would have all had free passes and I could have gone behind the scenes and then, but no amount could make me give up my Jeannette of the mangle."

"Good for you!" said the widow as she slapped the arm of the rocking chair.

"There was true nobility in your action," added the old maid.

"When my father found that he could not prevail upon me to carry out his wishes he rose up with fierce mien and a voice shaking with emotion and said that he would mangle the girl of the mangle before she should bring disgrace upon his house. I paid no attention to his words, but walked off. Alas, I did not know my own father! The very next night as Jeannette ceased to mangle the collars and cuffs and walked homeward thinking of me some one told her that there was a dog fight around the corner. She hastened her steps to see, and it was her undoing. Some one came up behind her and hit her with a crowbar and broke her neck. She called my name and then expired. Excuse me if I—I—"

"Poor man!" sighed the widow as I turned my face away.

"What a romance! What nobility of character!" mused the old maid.

"It was never ascertained who killed Jeannette," I continued after a proper interval, "but I have every reason to believe my own father to be the guilty party. In fact, when I charged him with it he simply grinned sardonically. I called him her murderer and cursed him and fled from his presence. In another day I was a wanderer, and I am a wanderer still."

"But why don't you go home sometimes?" asked the widow as she wiped her tears of sympathy away.

"Can't you understand, auntie," replied the other, "that he no longer cares to mingle with life? He has received a great shock. His heart has been broken. As he wanders over the face of the earth he thinks of his dead Jeannette. Down in his heart there is the hope that some day—some day he may meet up with some young lady—some young lady who will remind him of the loved and lost—so strongly remind him that he will cease to sorrow and—"

"She halted there, and I nodded my head; but the widow blurted out:

"And marry her and be happy again! Well, maybe he will. I'm sure I hope so. Helen, what are you blushing and hitching around so for?"

"It was mean of me," smiled the dilapidated gentleman, "but it had begun to rain, and it was dark as far outdoors. I couldn't help but sigh and wipe my eyes. When I had finished sighing and wiping I couldn't help but look lovingly at both these women. I couldn't help but see that I had found a substitute for my lost Jeannette, but which one it was was what puzzled them. I had the parlor bedroom that night and a staving good breakfast in the morning, and I could have hung around there for a week and had the best in the land, but I overheard some conversation that made me anxious to strike the road again."

"Why, auntie, you surely don't think of marrying again? I heard the splinter ask."

"Never you mind what I'm thinking of, Helen Smithers," was the reply. "I've heard of women throwing themselves at men's heads, but I never saw it done till last night." M. QUAD.

The Bridegroom's Question.

Clergyman—With all my worldly goods I thee endow.

Prospective Bridegroom—Say, parson, isn't this rather early to award alimony?—New York Press.

Out of Danger.

Dusky Visitor (who has never seen a hot water bottle before)—I done kill dat beast any way.—Sketch.

From Skates to Bumps.

Sing hey for the ring of the crisp, cold steel.

And ho for the winds that carry! (Are you sure of that fastening on the heel?)

By Jove, but this ice looks scary!

Then it's vo and ho and eke folded!

For the motion so near to flying!

(This doesn't look good to me at all. But here goes if I die a-trying!)

Oh, it's nonny nonny and iddy de tum.

As all slaters sing so mellow!

(Don't shove me out that way! Now, come.)

Don't go and desert a fellow!

Sing tra-la-lala and tididley ump.

As I fly to my love, who is waiting!

(I knew it would happen! I'm down now—bump!)

I'm through with this sport of skating! —Denver Republican.

Spots on Leather.

Oxalic acid in weak solutions is the best thing to use when removing spots from leather. Two or three crystals of oxalic dissolved in warm water, then applied with a bit of cloth to the spots, will do the work. Watch closely, and when the spots begin to disappear apply clear water to overcome the acid, which is a powerful bleacher. Dry the leather with a clean cloth. For bright leather make the solution weaker.—Philadelphia North American.

Right in His Line.

Irate Father—I'm getting tired of this nonsense. You've been engaged to that young man for six months. Does he ever intend to marry you? Daughter—You must have patience, papa. Remember, he's an actor. Irate Father—What has that to do with it? Daughter—He's fond of long engagements.

He Made Them Read It.

Daughter—Have you found out yet what it was that papa cut out of the paper? Mother—Yes, I bought a copy. I've read it all through, but to save my life I can't see anything wrong in it. It's an article on the vulgarity and silliness of buying gowns that are beyond one's means.

The Truly Beautiful.

There is, it has been said, no fixed standard of art criticism. What is lauded today is discarded tomorrow, and even connoisseurs disagree bewilderingly; but, glancing back over the ages, it will be found that the discord has been caused by technical divergence and that in every land and among all peoples the truly beautiful has been generally recognized and correctly esteemed. No one questions today the beauty of the Greek temple or the charm of the Babylonian pottery. It does not require trained eyes to recognize the merit of an oriental flower painting or to find delight in one of Whistler's nocturnes. The fundamentals in each instance are the same—rhythmical line, fair proportions and harmonious coloring. We have to be led oftentimes up the ascent of art, and there is much discussion concerning the byways, but once on the height all discussion ends, and we no longer need a guide.—Lella Mecklin in Century.

Dryden's Rage.

The story is told that Dryden, finishing his translation of "Virgil," sent it to Jacob Tonsen for publication for a sum specified upon the manuscript. Tonsen was desirous of obtaining the book, but determined to take advantage of Dryden's need of money. He therefore informed the poet that he could not pay the sum Dryden asked. In reply Dryden sent the following lines in description of the publisher:

With leering look, bull faced and freckled fair,

With two left legs, with Judas colored hair,

And frowzy pores that taint the ambient air.

When this was delivered to Tonsen he asked if Dryden had said anything more. "Yes," replied the publisher, "he said tell the dog that he who wrote these lines could write more like them." Tonsen sent the money at once.

Crocodiles and the Cure.

One does not usually connect crocodiles with a health resort—rather the reverse—but the creatures are quite a feature of the Indian bathing place of Manghapur, about nine miles from Karachi. This town is a place of pilgrimage for phlegm Hindus, but it is chiefly famous for the value of its waters in the cure of the dread scourge of leprosy. The waters are hot, and more than 60 per cent of the sufferers who bathe there annually, it is said, are cured. The crocodiles are rather noteworthy in that they live in the hot water, apparently suffering no inconvenience from its temperature or medicinal qualities.—Wide World Magazine.

Terror Blanches Hair.

It has been repeatedly affirmed that Queen Marie Antoinette's auburn hair turned white in the days of the reign of terror, says the Caledonian, and an English surgeon named Parry states that just after the Italian mutiny he actually saw the jet black hair of a rebel Sepoy, who was under examination and feared a dreadful death, turn white in the course of half an hour. In the time of the commune in Paris the dark hair of Baron Alphonse de Rothschild was blanched in a few hours.

Holding Him Off.

"The head of the firm," said the superintendent, "insists upon our employing his son in this department, and it's as much as we can do to keep him idle."

"Idle! You mean busy, don't you?"

"No, I don't. If we kept him busy it would keep three or four other men busy correcting his mistakes."—Philadelphia Press.

Why He Quit.

"For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty," I figured out years ago," said a prosperous farmer, "that with very moderate drinking I'd drink an acre of good land every year. So I quit."—Central Christian Advocate.

A Strong Man.

Daughter—Wasn't Julius Caesar one of the strongest men that ever lived, pa? Father—What makes you ask that question, my little girl? Daughter—I was just reading that he threw a bridge over the Rhine.

Related Testimonials.

If the testimonials of love and faith on our tombstones were uttered in our daily life, how often would they have helped us over the briery fields and rocky roads of existence!—Baltimore American.

Afflicted With Rheumatism.

"I was and am yet afflicted with rheumatism," says Mr. J. C. Bayne, editor of the Herald, Addington, Indiana Territory, "but thanks to Chamberlain's Pain Balm am able once more to attend to business. It is the best of liniments." If troubled with rheumatism give Pain Balm a trial and you are certain to be more than pleased with the prompt relief which it affords. One application relieves the pain. For sale by Kelt & Cass.

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No. 6. 110 acres six miles from White Salmon, 100 acres nice smooth land, 10 acres under fence, 25 acres in cultivation, 200 fruit trees, 54 Spitzenburgs, 60 Yuccas, 10 Johnstons, all 4 years old, balance family orchard now bearing. Five acres timothy, 11 acres clover, 1 acre alfalfa, two good springs, can irrigate 10 acres. Price \$1,500.

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