

Up at the Schatze Alp.

Flutterby told me this; he had, as you will see no earthly right to have known anything about it, but he must be forgiven for the sake of what he did afterward.

Of course, all Davos knew about the letter, for it went the round of the hotels, and was at last returned to whoever the Swiss call their Post-Whisperer. It bore the local post-mark, and was addressed to:

R. (?) WHITE, Esq.,
Hotel Alexandra,
Davos Platz.

As no "White" was staying at the Alexandra that season, it was sent to the Bella Vista, and there given to old Ray-White, who read it and passed it to his son, who handed it to Capt. Whyte in the smoking room, with the remark that his lady friend evidently hadn't heard he had been promoted. He then explained the joke to the company. Capt. Whyte told young Bertie he ought to be kicked, but disclaimed the letter, which ran thus:

I saw you to-day opposite the Kurverin (the writer stated, without any conventional beginning). But I think you did not see me. Didn't want to, I wonder, or would you like to renew our old acquaintance?

Men are so fickle, though—perhaps you have forgotten even my name! Well, I will not remind you of it by signing this, for unless you remember as I do, I could not bear to meet you again; but, if you still think of those old days, meet me tomorrow evening at the old place.

The writing was so ordinary that it seemed as if all flourishes, thick strokes, and ornamental capitals and such like marks of individuality had been purposely omitted, lest they should betray the writer's identity. There was no address, only the date—December 28th.

It was next given to Bim White, of the Britannique, but his reputation as an extremely quiet, sober fellow gave credence to his denial, and the letter was passed on to a common little man on the next floor. By the evening of that same day it had reached the Digma Post, and Dr. White was being unmercifully dragged in consequence of his embarrassment on being confronted with such a missive.

He was the sort of elderly young man who would have been a dowdy prude if he had been a woman; and the disreputable youth of the hotel found an unalloyed joy in the opportunity to taunt "Old Jane" with a petticoat "past." Of course, no one really believed the letter was meant for him.

The matter was discussed that evening in smoking room and salon, and the general conclusion was that either there was a mistake in the name, or that the letter was meant for some White who was not "out" that winter. But Flutterby, who was sleeping badly just then, pondered the matter in the night season, and evolved another theory.

First, the woman had said plainly, "I saw you to-day." Secondly, though her ignorance of the right initial was easily accounted for by the prevalence of nicknames in Davos (he remembered that he himself could not have given a Christian name to either Bim or "Jane") it was almost impossible that she should not know the surname.

His conviction was that one of the men that had disowned the letter had lied. They had all been in Davos before, but Bim, Jane and the little bouncer he dismissed as unlikely characters of a fond adventure. There was no earthly reason why old Ray-White should have given up the letter if it had been meant for him, nor was it likely that Bertie would publish his own billet-doux.

On the other hand, if Capt. Whyte had claimed it in the smoking room, he would have never heard the end of it.

So, next day, when every one else forgot the affair in the excitement of the bob races, Flutterby bore in mind that it was the "to-morrow" when "R. (?) White, Esq." was to meet the nameless lady. He had a reprehensible intimate knowledge of the possibilities of Davos as the background for a flirtation, and instantly concluded that "the old place" was inevitably the Schatze Alp.

Now the Schatze Alp is fundamentally a common or Swiss Alp, but the word may be used to express divers meanings. But "meet me up at the Schatze Alp" means at the restaurant adjoining the little railway terminus just at the head of the toboggan run, and within a stone's throw of the Sanatorium, which clings to the mountain side eight hundred feet above Davos.

Soon after four, when the sun slid behind the Tinsenhorn and evening began, Flutterby leaned over his balcony and looked down on the road, for he reckoned that his man would go up by the 4.30 train. He watched the "little bouncer" go by, saw old Ray-White pass, and caught sight of "Jane" slouching down the Platz.

Then he scanned the skating rinks and the curling rink, where Bim was dancing about with a broom, and vaguely wondered why every other White but the one he wanted should turn up at this particular time. He determined to run along to the station and see for himself if Whyte did leave by the 4.30. He arrived, exactly as the little train was gliding out of the station, but he had just time to glance into each compartment. Capt. Whyte was not there, but old Ray-White, the Bouncer, and Jane were.

Flutterby whistled, thought hard, then a swift conjecture darted across his brain, and his shoulders shook with silent laughter. "Seen any thing of Cap. Whyte?" he called out to a girl on a toboggan who had evidently just come down.

"Yes," was the reply. "I passed him walking up the toboggan run. He must be nearly at the top by now."

Flutterby began to think that it might be worth his while to indulge in a franc trip up the Schatze Alp. A few minutes later he received a new assurance that his ticket money would not be wasted, for Bertie Ray-White walked in, and swore abruptly when he found that he had missed the train.

"Where's your toboggan?" asked Flutterby, artlessly.

Bertie kicked an unoffending automatic machine.

"I haven't brought it," he confessed, ingenuously. "I say—er—Flutterby, you won't breathe a word?"

"Not a syllable."

"Er—you know that letter?"

"Well?"

"Well, I thought afterward—fool that I am—that there was a girl who might have written it; I used to meet her up at the restaurant, so—er—"

"I see," said Flutterby. And he did.

They travelled up together, and I fear that Flutterby gave Bertie to understand that he was going to see a friend at the Sanatorium.

Once arrived Bertie hurried into the restaurant, and thence out on to the wide balcony which overhangs the mountain on two sides of the chalet. Flutterby was hard on his heels, and through the window he saw four men look up nervously as Bertie's footsteps sounded on the bare boards. He said it was quite a pity that the expressions on the faces of Bertie and his father were thrown away on three men so entirely preoccupied and embarrassed as their namesakes. I fancy they had been uneasy and suspicious ever since Capt. Whyte had appeared on the scene, but now the full significance of the situation positively obtruded itself on their notice.

Capt. Whyte grinned nervously. "I presume, gentlemen, we are all under the impression that we disowned the letter too hastily, and on second thoughts hoped—"

"By Jove!" exclaimed Bertie, "we're all on the same errand," and he burst into a schoolboy roar of laughter.

"I should suggest," remarked the father with a stately glance at his exuberant offspring, "that some of us might retire."

"Which?" asked Capt. Whyte trenchantly.

No one answered his question, but each man's face showed that whoever else went he meant to stay. "Gentlemen," said old Ray-White, in his grand manner, "in order to spare the lady's feelings I think we should withdraw to the farther balcony and wait till she appears, then whichever one of us recognizes her can go to meet her, while the rest go back by train."

Everyone agreed to this reasonable and delicate proposal, and they walked together round the corner of the house or to the other balcony. There they waited till the primrose glow faded in the west, and the clear sky deepened from azure to the tenderest wood-violet blue.

"Suppose," burst out Bertie, "that it's a beastly hoax?"

"I shouldn't wonder," said the soldier, shortly, and the common little man grunted his assent.

"Now you come to think of it," argued the doctor, "no sane woman would have written such an idiotically vague letter."

"That's just the sort of letter they do write," objected old Ray-White, who had had considerable experience. But I agree with you, sir, it's a hoax, an uncommonly clever hoax, and it's the first time I've ever known a practical joker dot to overreach himself by being too smart. I'd give \$5 to know who did it."

His son, who was doing a shuffling dance, suddenly stopped and cried, "I say! Where's Bim? I know the fellow that never met a lady here, or is he at the bottom of it?"

The absence of Bim struck the five as being most suspicious. Flutterby had grasped the fact some time ago, and suspected that quiet gentleman of being, at least, "in the know" of a practical joke.

"Well, gentlemen," said Capt. Whyte, "I think we had better go quietly back and say nothing of our adventure. A hoax that fails makes the joker feel the biggest fool I know."

They were all speaking, more or less, at once, as they strolled back to the other balcony. Then, when they had just turned the corner of the house again, each man stopped, abruptly, stared, and held his breath, for a woman was approaching hurriedly, along the hard snow track. They could see that she was small and slight, even though her figure was concealed by the sleeveless fur cloak she was wearing, but her face and hair were covered with a slimy, gauzy veil. She went up to Capt. Whyte, touched him on the arm, and said with trembling gladness:

"So you've come!"

The other four stared with intense interest, but none of them knew her voice. The officer faced round, and the woman pushed back her veil and gazed hungrily at him, while they all looked at her. For a moment they saw a girl's face, rosy, and radiantly young, with sparkling eyes and smile parted lips—but, when the glow died out, they saw she was a frail looking woman of thirty, whose willow green eyes were weary and gray.

shadowed, and whose thin mouth dropped pitifully.

She looked and looked into the captain's face, as though she hoped that, if she looked long enough, she would see what she sought for, then she gave a little low, hurt cry, and hid her face in her hands. The sound filled every fiber of chivalry that was in Flutterby, and he came forward to the open window involuntarily, as if his nearness might shield her. No one quite understood what had happened, but they felt that the screaming farce had become a tragedy.

At last the woman looked up. "Who are you?" she demanded helplessly. "Why are you here? What have you to do with me?"

Old White made his most courtly bow.

"Madam," he said, "we all bear the name of White, and the letter—your letter—came to each of us in its turn. It was not signed and we all hoped to meet here a lady—er—"

But the woman cared nothing for that.

"Are you the only Whites in Davos?" she asked sharply. "I thought—I thought there was another. I don't know his name. They call him Bim. I think he's at the Alexandra."

"He's at the Britannique," blurted Bertie.

Then they all looked at the captain, and noticed for the first time that he was of the same height and build as the man who was not there. Bim White was indeed at the bottom of it.

"Did he get the letter?"

No one dared speak, no one dared lie, but there was no need—the woman knew. She gave a dragging, heartbroken little laugh.

"You care still," she said, "and there is no one to meet you. He doesn't care—and I am here. That's life!"

Then she turned on them fiercely: "Promise," she cried, "promise that he shall never know." Then, broken and ashamed, she would have hurried away, but Flutterby stepped out of the French window.

"And what happened?" I asked him.

"I don't exactly know," said Flutterby. "I think I glared at them first—brutes! Standing watching her; I could have killed them for being there!"

"Well?"

"Oh, then I tried to make her understand what I felt—that we were just cakes of mud—and that I was sorry—oh, hang it all, you know."

"Did you say it?"

"No. I looked at her."

"And?"

"She let me take her away, and I slammed the door on them, and told 'em to go to the devil—and I—I comforted her. Brute!"

Mme. Patti's Rain Baths. Mme. Patti, although over sixty-three years of age, still enjoys the best of health and good looks. "Fresh air and careful dieting," is her recipe for lasting youth. She considers that every woman ought to spend at least three hours daily in the open air—if possible, walking—and nothing but fog should, she says, keep a person indoors, provided only that suitable dress be worn.

The complexion improves wonderfully under the influence of frequent rain baths. "By all means," says Mme. Patti, "let the rain beat against your face as often as you have a chance. Only take care that your body is properly protected, and the elements should have no terrors at all for anybody."

Mrs. Langtry also confesses that she owes her continued good looks to very frequent baths, and the seizing of every opportunity to get into the fresh air.

Cats as Food.

According to the Boston Transcript, the cat is rapidly becoming a favorite article of food in certain parts of Italy, particularly in Venice and Verona. In these and some other cities also, the butchers sell dressed cats under the name of rabbits. There is a law against eating cats, but, notwithstanding a large business is done in raising cats for the market. The cat is usually cooked by roasting in the oven until brown, along with onions, garlic, parsley, bay leaves, and other herbs. "There seems to be no good reason," says Good Health "why there should be a prejudice against cats. Squirrels are very commonly eaten. The squirrel eats nuts ordinarily, but it eats birds also when it does not find a good supply of its natural foods. Cats are in every way as wholesome as fish. Nearly all fish are strictly carnivorous, while cats take readily to a diet of bread and milk."

Barefoot Maids in Japan.

Unless there are ladies among the guests the wife and daughters of the host do not appear at dinner in Japan. Before the meal begins it is customary for them to bring in small cups of tea and dainty confectionery, when they take their conveyance to the party.

If gentlemen only are present, the Japanese hostess disappears after the greeting is over, and does not return until the guests are taking their departure.

At a signal from the host, barefooted waiting maids, dressed in graceful and prettily tinted kimono, bring in lacquer tray bearing tiny covered bowls. Before setting the trays on the tables the maids sink gracefully to their knees and bend forward till their foreheads touch the floor. Then they serve dinner, which is of several courses.

The population of Jerusalem numbers about 60,000, of whom 7,000 are Moslems, 41,000 Jews and 12,000 Christians.

A LA DANSE

