

A WATER DUEL.

Near the border which divides Siberia from Russia lived Count Aradyevich, a country gentleman. His daughter, Marya Alexandrovna, an attractive girl of eighteen, was sought in marriage by many of the sons of the neighboring landed proprietors, but seemed to prefer Ivan Mikhailof, a lusty but heavy young fellow who had never been known to take an interest in but one thing—the town fire department, which he had organized and drilled.

A battalion of troops came to the town commanded by Major Nikolai Levin, a middle aged man whose private fortune was large. From childhood he had been accustomed to having his own way. He had studied and practiced the use of every known weapon, and when any man stood in his way he would insult him, challenge him and if necessary, kill him. All kinds of weapons had been tried against Levin, from a Turkish scimitar to a mountain howitzer, and he had handled every one with perfect skill. He had no soon set eyes on Marya than he fell violently in love with her. Marya, though she accepted his attentions, could not be completely won over from her athletic tutor Ivan. Levin at last concluded that with Ivan in the way he would never win the girl, so he made up his mind to kill him. He soon found a pretext for considering himself insulted by the young man and sent him a challenge.

Marya heard of the intended assassination and was much troubled in her extremity she sent for a former schoolmate, Kostia Sanin, in whose opinion she placed great confidence, and asked him to help her.

"Well, I will offer him my services, and if he accepts them I will see what I can do for him," said Sanin.

A few hours later Major Levin received a visit from Sanin. "I am to arrange this affair between you and your friend Mikhailof," he said, "and since he is the challenged party, choose for him the weapons, the time and the place of meeting."

"That is your right. It is immaterial to me with what weapon I fight, and I will choose that with which the young man is most skillful."

"You show a magnanimous spirit, Major, and I shall meet your wishes. The only weapon with which Ivan Mikhailof has any skill whatever is the handle of a hose. I therefore choose this weapon."

"If you think you can turn the water into a jet you are mistaken."

"I propose no jet. The terms are that you and your adversary are to go into an unheated room, wearing no clothing whatever, each furnished with a hose, and play upon each other till you are satisfied."

"What an absurdity!"

"Nothing of the kind. You know that the temperature here at this season is never above zero, and the water is cold. Neither of you will be able to endure the torture more than half an hour, without dying a terrible death, and in any event there is great probability of pneumonia setting in after the combat."

Sanin then named the time and place and took his departure.

The major submitted the case to the officers of his battalion, who, after long deliberation, decided that he must accept the terms. At the appointed time he and his antagonist stood stark naked in a large room, each armed with a half inch nozzle. At a given signal the water was turned on by the seconds and the contest began. Ivan had always lived in that northern region, while the major had been born in the south. Ivan was hardy, while the major was delicate and sensitive, from having led a luxurious life. At the first stroke of the icy water he was shaken by a terrific chill, while the sturdy Ivan, who had bathed in water as cold as that very morning, braced himself against the shock and stood upright and firm as a rock. One of the seconds stood with a watch in his hand, while the other kept a hand on the water cock.

At the end of two minutes time was called and the water turned off. The principals were permitted to move about for two minutes to recoup and break the ice forming on their bodies, when they were required to take their positions and the water was turned on. At the end of the next round Levin was shivering terribly, his skin was livid, and his lips were blue, while his opponent had readily restored circulation. At the end of the next round the major was informed by those of his officers who were present that he might give up the unequal contest without sacrificing his honor, and he declared that he was satisfied. He was taken into a warm room, dozed with hot liquor, rubbed and put between blankets. Nevertheless he was stricken with pneumonia, from which he nearly died. Ivan polished himself with a crash towel, put on his clothes and took a brisk walk.

Kostia Sanin went to Marya and gave her an account of what had occurred. "You are now free to marry either of the men you choose. I presume from your interest in Ivan that your choice will fall on him."

"No! He will not fall on Ivan."

"Then it is the major."

"No, not the major."

"Well, then, I should like to know what all this trouble has been about."

"To change the subject, how shall I reward you for helping us out of this difficulty?"

"Well, you might let me kiss your hand."

"What do you say to my lips?"

A light broke in upon Kostia. He went to Marya, took her in his arms and kissed her, but when he had kissed her once there was no stopping.

Mis Discipline.

"Pop, you must take this child in hand I have had about all that I can stand. She has no notion of mischief, it is time you took her across your knee."

"Send her to me," said Pop, with a frown. "It won't take me long to tone her down."

But how could he punish her, she was so good, when she looked at him with her eyes of blue? Looked at him in the same glad way that her mother did, sweetheart and he her beau. How could he strike her? He'd like to know. But still he took her upon his knee and at once was lost in a reverie that carried him back to a shady street and a little maid whom he used to meet, a blue eyed maid whose countenance was as bright as the sun and whose eyes were as blue as the sky. He was waiting for her to get those days and punish her for her wilful ways.

Mom peeped in through the half closed door. They were playing cards on the parlor floor playing cards and quarreling too. Just as two children are apt to do. She frowned. It was more than half a century. I will have to punish them both. I guess. —Chicago Record Herald

Origin of Confetti.

The history of confetti is rather curious. Several years ago a large printing works in Paris was turning out immense quantities of calendars through which a small round hole had been punched to receive an eyelet for binding the sheets together. A heap of the little circular scraps of paper came by the punch accumulated on a table, and one of the machine men amused himself by scattering a handful of them over a working girl's hair. She immediately snatched up a handful and threw them in his face. Other girls followed her example, and the first confetti battle began. The head of the establishment came in when it was at its height, and being what the Americans call a "smart man," he at once realized that there was "money in it." He ordered special machinery placed large quantities of the new article on the market, made a fortune and created a new industry.

The Ways of Measles.

Among common animals few have been less studied in their life history than the measles. An English naturalist, Mr. Lionel B. Adams, says that under the "fortress" which the mole constructs above the surface of the ground will always be found a series of tunnels running out beneath the adjacent soil. A curious feature at most invariably found is a perpendicular run penetrating about a foot below the bottom of the nest and then turning upward to meet another run. A mole is never found in his nest, although it may be yet warm from his body when opened. Guided by smell and hearing, a mole frequently reaches the best of a partridge or pheasant above his run and penetrating it from below eats the eggs. The adult mole is practically blind, but there are embryonic indications that the power of sight in the mole has deteriorated.

An Arab Legend.

"There is none so poor but there is one poorer."

A poor Arab spent his last bars on a handful of dates and went up on a high cliff to eat them and die. As he threw the stones over a lean hand shot out below and caught them.

"Ho!" said he. "Why do you catch my date stones?"

"Because O brother," answered a weak voice, "I have not eaten these three days, and Allah has sent these stones to save my life."

"Praise be to Allah," answered the first man, "for he has saved me also, for here is one poorer than I."

And both men went into the city.

First Test of the Air Pump.

The first public test of the air pump was in 1604 by its inventor, Otto von Guericke, in the presence of Emperor Ferdinand of Germany. Guericke applied the carefully ground edges of metallic hemispheres, two feet in diameter, to each other. After exhausting the air by his apparatus he attached fifteen horses to each hemisphere. In vain did they attempt to separate them because of the enormous pressure of the atmosphere. The experiment was a great success.

Schoolboy Definitions.

Here are some definitions from the schoolroom: "A Jacobite is a man descended from Jacob." "Snoring is our breath meeting the air which is coming in our mouth." "Sneezing is a kind of 'rolling' in the throat." Another boy writes: "When you are cold the inside of your body rumbles and then it makes a noise which is called sneezing." "A telephone is a kind of long wire with a spout at each end." —Westminster Gazette.

A Good Opportunity.

"Your pa's coming down on Saturday. I wonder if that would be a good time to speak to him?"

"Yes. When he tells him what she's spent down here he'll be glad to get rid of the lot of us!" —Comic Cuts.

Unfortunately Expressed.

Violinist (one of a trio of amateurs who have just obliged with a rather lengthy performance)—Well, we've left off at last!

Hoffens—Thank you so much!

On the Line.

"The artist over the way was boasting to me that his work is being hung on the line."

"Humph! So is his wife's."

Fame is the perfume of heroic deeds.—Socrates.

Raising a False Issue.

A story well known to lawyers of the last generation is about the "umbrella case." A man was charged with stealing an umbrella, and a number of witnesses went into the box to testify to the offense. The counsel for the defendant noted that each witness carried an umbrella (the time of year was midsummer, which explains the necessity for these impediments). As a matter of fact, the prisoner had no defense to make. The barrister, thrown on his wits, exclaimed: "Gentlemen of the jury, did you not notice that each of the witnesses carried an umbrella into the box? Why is this, gentlemen? It is done in order to infect your minds with the idea of an umbrella, to prejudice the prisoner in your eyes, to raise a false issue, and I appeal to you to signify your detestation of this concerted action by bringing in a verdict of not guilty." The judge who intimated that little attention would be paid to such a plea took little time and less pains to sum up the case. The jury nevertheless brought in a verdict in accordance with the resourceful barrister's wishes.—London News.

Hat Air.

The steered blows but from the high lands of north Africa and falls on the Mediterranean as far as Malta. The same jumps like a windy desert from the heat of the Sahara desert and lands fastfooted in Spain. The hammattan blows hot Sahara dust far into the Atlantic and gives umbrellas and makes skin and lips parch and crack, while furniture and ship timbers groan and crack and scream in a agony of droughty despair. The khamsin blows Sahara's ancient dust into Egyptian eyes every fifty days. The pamperos periodically blow down into Buenos Aires out of the unexplored desert highlands of Brazil, and the blowing causes suicides and murders to be more common and wounds to break out afresh, with a heavy death rate. Pamperos pass away in a second, leaving the air fine.—Essex.

The Bulldog.

The bulldog, unlike the majority of dogs, very seldom barks. In fact, owing to the construction of his throat, his attempts at barking are more like a burr of the real thing. He wastes into a fight without any vocal warning, and the only sound he emits is his heavy breathing. His courage is astonishing and the largeness of his opponent never acts as a deterrent when hostilities are imminent. Still, he is not a quarrelsome dog, he rarely indulges in street brawls, and as he is exceedingly good natured, it takes a lot to rouse him.

The modern bulldog is undoubtedly a different animal from his bulldog fighting ancestor. The most conspicuous improvements introduced by the present day "fancy" are largeness of head with of chest beatness of bone and more typical tail.

Why She Was Pleased.

"Do you mean to tell me that you actually overcame that ancient antiquity of yours for Mrs. Muggaby and called on her this afternoon?" said his wife's husband.

"That's about the size of it," replied her husband's wife.

"And she was glad to see you?"

"There isn't any doubt about it."

"Why do you think that?"

"Well, I had on that old dress I've worn three seasons and a hat that is entitled to a prominent place in some museum for antiquity, while she had on a new gown just from Paris. Oh yes, I'm sure she was tickled to death, figuratively speaking when I called!" —Chicago News.

A Sample of Suggestion.

A popular comedian and playwright was raising the humorous value of suggestions.

"It is funnier to suggest a thing," he said, "than to say it out plain." The comedian should remember this. Suggestion, pregnant suggestion, is what makes really funny the little boy's remark to his father:

"Pa, if you help me with my arithmetic lesson tonight I'll tell you where my ma hid your trousers." —New York Sun.

The "Best Girl" Habit.

"Why," asked her anxious and excited mother, "do you think he is coming to the point at last?"

"Well," the maiden replied, looking demurely down at the rug, "when he took me in his arms and kissed me last night he said he'd got so used to me he didn't believe he could ever break himself of the habit."

Fellow Professionals.

Phrenologist (to fellow passenger)—Excuse me, but am I right in taking you for a professional man? Fellow Passenger—Yes, sir, Phrenologist. Thanks! It's not often that I make a mistake in judging my fellow men. Er—lawyer? Fellow Passenger—No, sir, barber!

The Main Point.

"I am glad to say that I bear no malice."

"But the point is this: Are you of sufficient importance to make any man care whether you bear him a grudge or not?" —Chicago Record-Herald.

The Other Things.

"Remember, my boy, there are other things worth while in college besides athletics."

"I know. The mandolin and glee clubs aren't half bad." —Louisville Courier-Journal.

He that is ungrateful has no guilt but one. All other crimes may pass for virtues in him.

TRANSLATED

By HARRY VAN AMBERG.
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From the date of the first settlement of America there was warfare with the Indians, and during the war of the Revolution there was also war with the British. But by that time the Indian fighting had retreated westward in 1777 Harrodsburg, Ky. was surrounded by red men, and the people, not daring to go out to hunt for game were often in great straits for food. The settlement was protected by one of those stockade forts used at that time for keeping off savages and when they were hostile the inhabitants of the place were obliged to keep within its inclosure.

During this Indian hostility and consequent lack of food a youth of sixteen made himself invaluable by leaving the fort before dawn, hunting all day and returning after nightfall with the game he had shot. James Ray was the name of this brave boy, and he afterward became a general officer in the United States army.

One day Ray and a companion were outside the fort shooting at a mark. Suddenly Ray heard the report of a rifle and his friend fell dead. It did not require a process of reasoning for Ray to know that the shot had come from an Indian. Looking about him he saw the redskin who had killed his friend and raising his rifle was about to shoot him when there was a whoop from another quarter. Then Ray took to his heels and ran like a deer toward the fort a few yards distant.

Ray was a very quick runner. The Indians could not catch him, but they followed him with a brisk fire. He reached the fort without having been hit, but found the gates closed. Those within had heard the firing had shut themselves in and were too terrified to open the gates. Ray called upon them to let him in, but fearing that if they did the savages would follow him and massacre the garrison they refused to do so.

Ray threw himself flat on the ground, a stump covering him from the fire of the enemy. That is the Indians couldn't hit him, though they bullets sang in his proximity, his ears as to make him think that the next would cut off one of them, or perhaps tear a strip out of his side or go through his foot. He was but half a dozen steps from the fort, within which he would be safe if he could only get there.

But this was impossible so long as the Indians were threatening him. Near enough to see those in the fort looking through the loop holes he talked with them about ways to extricate him from his position. While the bullets were singing on either side of him he was conversing with his mother. There seemed no way to relieve him except to open the gates, and by doing this many lives might be sacrificed in an ineffectual attempt to save one.

There was one in the fort who suffered as much doubtless far more than Ray himself. That was his mother. She looked through a loophole where she could see him lying in his perilous position and she could see each spurt of smoke as it left an Indian rifle knowing that it marked the sending of a bullet to kill her boy. And Ray could not only hear the bullet sing by him and feel the dust springing over him, but saw his danger reflected in his mother's face.

Hour after hour passed without any change in the situation. When it seemed impossible for him to lie any longer in one position and he attempted to change it, the consequent exposure of some portion of his body would draw more fire, admonishing him to endure the constrained attitude rather than risk a wound by trying to relieve it. The ground on each side of him was torn up in furrows by the bullets that had been shot through it, and he was covered by dust they had thrown upon him.

Night was coming on and the Indians were drawing nearer. When it became dark there could be nothing to prevent the savages from coming near enough to take him or to shoot him from a position where the stump would not protect him. For four hours he had laid in view of those in the fort, his mother trying to encourage him, yet herself needing encouragement, when a sudden thought occurred to him.

"For heaven's sake," he cried, "dig a hole under the cabin wall and take me in."

All wondered why they hadn't thought of the plan before. Pick and spade were brought, and a hole was sunk in the ground. Then when it was of a depth sufficient to excavate under the wall, a channel was run out to the young hunter and he was drawn with in the fort.

Ray had no sooner emerged from the hole than he found himself hugged in his mother's arms, and the others crowded round to congratulate him. The redskins heard the shout of triumph that was raised in the fort and knew that the man they were firing at had escaped. But how? It was still light enough for them to keep in view the stump behind which he had taken refuge, and had he got up and been assisted over the stockade he would have been in their full view. The gate had not been opened. Surely the paleface had been translated into the fort by the Great Spirit.

Peer Pickings.

The new boarder had never been on a farm before. She was filled with interest and delight in everything she saw. On the morning after her arrival she saw Mrs. Howe apparently picking berries from some pretty green plants beyond the wall as she strolled in the road.

"Those are charming little plants," she said, pausing with her eyes fixed on a pail which hung on Mrs. Howe's arm. "What kind of berries grow of them? Does it take long to fill a pail like that?"

Mrs. Howe looked down into the pail with a meditative air and answered the second question.

"I should hope 'twould," she replied. "What kind of berries are they?" persisted the young woman. "I can't quite see. What are you picking?"

"Tater bugs," said Mrs. Howe as she made another contribution to the depths of the pail.—Youth's Companion

Public Speaking Explained.

The Japanese visitor to the city was asked to make an after dinner speech. He arose and began quietly.

"I often wonder," he said, "why it is you Americans will hinder your digestion by making these after dinner speeches. We Japanese eat after our meals. It is much better. I know that I traveled with a Japanese legation over the United States, and every where the Americans would make us dine, then ask us for speeches afterward. We would much rather have dined at our hotels and retired afterward to rest for the following day. I asked some one why it was, this universal after dinner speechmaking among the American men at public dinners, and he replied that the American man never had a chance to say anything at home and that was why." —New York Press.

Had a Good Reason.

Dan, a colored man, was employed as porter in a mercantile establishment in a town in Florida, and his duties required him to have the store swept by 7 o'clock in the morning. He had been late for many mornings, and on the sixteenth consecutive time his employer remonstrated with him thus:

"Dan, why can't you get here on time?"

"Well, Mr. L.," said Dan, "yer see, I live the other side of Mount Hermon cemetery and can't always get here on time."

"Why in the world do you live so far from your work?" said his employer.

Without a moment's hesitation Dan responded:

"Yer see it's dis yere way, Mr. L. I'll be honest wid yer—I wants a home beyond the grave."

Testing His Bosles.

"Thank heaven James has quit callin' me Baby," said the woman who weighs over 200 pounds. "A strange butcher shamed him out of it. It was done unobtrusively too. That is why it was so effective. Since I began to diet I have been weighed often. The other day when James was buying liver for the cat he remarked that he wished there were reliable scales in the neighborhood to weigh Baby on."

Said the butcher: "Bring her down here."

"Thanks," said James. I will.

James told me the butcher was expecting us, so we went. He was ready for us. He had rigged up a nice little shawl arrangement suspended from the hanging scales to put baby in, and then he was introduced to me. James hasn't called me Baby since." —New York Times.

Curious Old English Law.

It is interesting to recall in connection with railway accidents that only a few years back any instrument which by accident was the immediate cause of loss of human life became in English law "deadend"—that is, became forfeit to the crown, to be devoted to pious purposes. This law applies to locomotives, but in course of time coroners' juries, instead of claiming the forfeit, inflicted a fine. In the year 1838 a locomotive on the Liverpool and Manchester line which by exploding caused the death of its engineer and fireman was fined £20, while the following year another engine on the same line was fined £1,400.

Making Sure.

"Johnnie!"

"Yes'm?"

"Why are you sitting on that boy's face?"

"Why, I—"

"Did I not tell you to always count a hundred before you gave way to passion and struck another boy?"

"Yes'm, and I'm doin' it. I'm just sittin' on his face so he'll be here when I'm done countin' the hundred." —Houston Post.

Napoleon's English.

Napoleon I began to learn English at St. Helena, and there is a letter extant from him which begins: "Since six weeks I learn the English and I do not any progress. Six weeks do forty and two days. If might have learn fifty word for day I could know it two thousands and two hundred."

Lucky Dog.

"My wife is excessively fond of her poodle. Actually, I'm beginning to look on it as a sort of rival to me."

"Say, you're lucky. I'm only a sort of rival to my wife's poodle." —Kansas City Times.

Her Excuse.

Widow (to dressmaker)—You must really wait awhile for payment for the mourning dress. We are still too sorrowful to consider financial matters.

"Black Bart," Road Agent.

Charles E. Hollen, known to fame as "Black Bart," was incomparably the most conspicuous character in the history of western stage robbers. From 1875 to 1883 "Black Bart" is known to have committed twenty-seven stage robberies single handed. Northern California stage drivers stood in constant fear of this unique desperado. On various occasions the drivers were able to give a good description of his figure, hair, feet and hands, yet no clew to his actual identity was gained during the eight years of his stage robbing career. He was finally betrayed by a laundry mark on a cuff which had dropped from his wrist when opening a treasure box which he had taken from a Wells Fargo stage in San Joaquin valley. When he was finally captured in San Francisco the detectives were amazed to find the famous "Black Bart," a slight, quiet man of fifty-five, familiar in face to all the San Francisco detectives. He had for years frequented a little restaurant near police headquarters where many of the detectives dined.—W. C. Jenkins in National Magazine.

Got It at Last.

It is told of a distinguished professor of history that in an address before a woman's club on "Obscure Heroes of the French Revolution," he had reached the point where one of them, nobly resolved to essay the rescue of a friend doomed to the guillotine, sought a parting interview with his sweetheart before making the almost hopeless attempt. The professor had a moving voice and was eloquent. The assembly of women, many of them already near tears, hung breathless upon his words.

"Biddy biddy," said he pathetically, then coughed slightly and went back. "Biddy biddy"—Something was evidently amiss. He tried again.

"Biddy biddy biddy doo."

By this time the ladies looked puzzled and the orator desperate. Drawing a long breath and speaking with painful deliberation, he at length conquered the elusive syllables and said: "Did he bid adieu?"—Youth's Companion

Unconscious Humor.

Mark Twain, as an example of unconscious humor, used to quote a Hartford woman who said one day in the late spring:

"My husband is the dearest fellow Jim. I said to him this morning, 'are you very hard up just now?'"

"I certainly am hard up," he replied soberly. "This high cost of living is terrible. I don't know what I'm going to do."

"Then, Jim," said I, "I'll give up all thought of going to the country for July and August this year."

"But the dear fellow's face changed, and he said:

"Indeed then you won't, darling. I thought you wanted to buy a hat with an egret or some such foolishness. No no, my darling! Jim can always find the money to let his dear little wife go to the country." —Washington Star.

Looking For "the Crazy One."

A woman got off a Dury car at Thirty-fourth street and Woodland avenue the other day entered the university campus and started toward College ball walking with brisk determination, yet looking wonderingly about her the while.

In front of the library a university youth met her, and she accosted him quickly.

"Young man," she said, "will you please tell me where they keep the crazy ones?"

"Wh what?" stammered the college man.

She repeated her question in somewhat different form.

"I want the insane department," she said. "I have a friend who is a nurse there. I thought I'd make her a little visit. Isn't this the Philadelphia hospital?" —Philadelphia Times.

The New Page.

"Look here, Wilkins," said a doctor to his boy in buttons, whom he had occasion to reprimand. "I can't stand any more of this nonsense. You'll have to turn over a fresh leaf."

"All right, sir," was the witty response; "you shan't complain of me again, sir. I'll be an entirely new page." —London Opinion.

All on One Side.

"I am told your bride is very pretty," said Miss Peppery.

"Yes, indeed," replied Mr. Conroy. "Several of the guests at the ceremony were pleased to call it a wedding of beauty and brains."

"Well, well! She must be a remarkable woman! That's an unusual combination in one person."

In the Stilly Night.

"What is it?" the druggist sleepily inquired from his bedroom window.

"This ink drag store, sir?" asked the man who had rung the night bell.

"Yes, what do you want?"

"Want to look in your city directory minute an' see where I live." —Philadelphia Ledger.

Expanding.

The Old Friend—I understand that your practice is getting bigger. The Young Doctor—That's true. My patient has gained nearly two pounds in the last month.

Wanted Help.

Wife (crying in a troubled dream)—"Help! Help! Hub—Poor dear! Worried about the servant problem even to her sleep." —Boston Transcript.

The secret of success is constancy to purpose.—Baconsfield.

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