

He Was Taught A Lesson

By F. TOWNSEND SMITH.

When Helen Armby and I were but ten years old we were great chums. At dancing school Helen was my favorite partner, and when we were failing off for the cotillon the other boys steered clear of her, knowing that she would be engaged to dance it with me.

Our intimacy continued through youth, and when it came time for me to choose a profession Helen objected to my choice. At school, instead of studying my lessons, I devoted my time covering the blank leaves and margins of my textbooks with little pictures. The fancy grew upon me, and the profession I selected was that of an artist. Helen was my opposite, a practical girl, not given to floating in the clouds, but walking right down on the face of the earth.

I didn't then suspect the truth. Helen had been looking forward to a union with me and realized that if I spent my time dabbling on canvas marriage with me was impracticable. She had a little money of her own, but not enough to admit of her husband sitting on a three-legged stool copying clouds and waterfalls. However, I started in, studied awhile in an art school, then set about practicing on the beautiful landscapes about the village in which Helen and I lived. One day while I was thus engaged she came along and stood behind me, looking at the picture on my easel.

"Very pretty," she remarked in that tone which damns with faint praise. I asked her what she especially admired in the painting.

"Well, in the first place, that machine for gathering grain is excellent."

"That isn't a grain gathering machine, it's a windmill."

"There isn't any windmill about here," she said.

"No, I am using the scene before me for a study. Putting in what occurs to me would make it more attractive."

"You mean improving on it?"

"Only a woman could give the cold tone to produce perfect irony."

I didn't ask her to point out any more beauties, but she did so of her own accord.

"Did you put that balloon in for an improvement?" she asked.

"You mean that tree on the hilltop?"

No, I copied that. You can see it in the natural landscape."

"Oh?"

There was an embarrassing silence. I dared not speak for fear I should say something I would be sorry for. Helen didn't seem afraid to speak and made another criticism.

"What kind of trees are those surmounting the tree on the hilltop?"

I made no reply. She referred to clouds covering the sky.

"You're cross today," she added and proceeded on her way.

Not long after this I took a studio in the city. No one ever came there to buy pictures, and it was very lonesome. One day a dealer came in and said he did a great deal for beginners by buying their pictures and selling them to persons who wished them to help furnish their homes. He looked over mine and selected the painting that Helen had so richly used offering me the enormous sum of \$100 for it. I was the more delighted because I could tell her that the picture had been sold and the price paid for it showed plainly that her criticism was unjust and absurd.

Well, I had a new interest in life. I was absorbed in the fate of the one picture I had sold. One day I sauntered into the shop of the man who had bought it and looked for it among his stock. I did not find it. Then I asked the dealer if he remembered buying a picture from me and what had become of it. He said he remembered me and the picture very well. He had sold it at a profit.

This ended my connection with that particular picture. I went on painting, but since I sold nothing I soon found myself in a state bordering on starvation. Then another dealer came to my studio and asked me if I could duplicate the landscape I had sold. I did so and he paid me the same price as I had received for the other. After that, about once in three months I sold a copy of that picture for exactly the same amount a hundred dollars. Since I had been improving in my work I could not understand why my clientele should all want that same picture.

I grew suspicious. The next time a dealer came to my studio to buy one of these paintings he paid me for it less than he had for the one I had sold him. I was much impressed, not only with Helen's method of teaching me a lesson, but with the tenderness for me she displayed in doing so. I went to see her the same evening and told her that I had discovered that she had been supporting me until I should recover from my delusion.

I accepted a position and went to work at that which was in my own something practical. I have long ago recovered from my artistic fever and am content in a more matter of fact kind

The Allspice Tree

The pimento tree, from which is derived the West Indian seasoning, is a beautiful tree usually growing to a height of about thirty feet. It has a straight trunk, much branched above and covered with a very smooth brown bark. The leaves vary in size and shape, but are always of a dark, shining green color. During the months of July and August the tree is in full bloom, the blossoms consisting of very fragrant small white flowers. In favorable seasons the pimento crop is enormous, a single tree often yielding a hundred or more pounds of the dried spice. The berries are picked while green, because if left on the tree until ripe they lose their pungent taste and are valueless. The green berries are exposed to the sun for a week or ten days, when they are put in bags and taken for exportation. The odor and taste of the pimento berries are thought to resemble a combination of those of cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves; hence the familiar name "allspice."

A Queer Fact About Vision

In the eye itself certain things may go on which give us wrong sensations, which, although not truly illusions, are very much like them. Thus when we suddenly strike our heads or faces against something in the dark we see "stars" or bright sparks, which we know are not real lights, though they are quite as bright and sparkling as if they were. When we close our eyes and look straight ahead at some word or letter in the middle of this page, for example, we seem to see not only the thing we are looking at, but everything else immediately about it and for a long way on each side. But the truth is there is a large round spot somewhere near the point at which we are looking in which we see nothing. Curiously enough, the existence of this blind spot was not discovered by accident, and nobody ever suspected it until Mariotte reasoned from the construction of the eyeball that it must exist and proceeded to find it.

He Would Push Too

A gentleman with a well fed appearance who motored over from the nearest town to deliver his lecture, "The Art of Getting On," in the village schoolroom, concluded with a fine burst. "The successful man is the man who strives persistently. His motto is 'Push, and keep pushing,' by that and that alone he reaches his goal." Before the audience made much headway with their clapping a small man at the back got in a laugh that might have come from a megaphone. The lecturer held up his hand for silence.

"You, too, my friend, will have to push," he commenced.

"So will you, I reckon," interrupted the small man. "There is half a dozen kids pinching the gasoline out of your motorcar to light a bonfire."—New York Telegraph.

An Awed Hunter

A Maine hunter who is a crack shot tells a curious story about himself. While hunting one day he came upon a fine large deer not more than two rods away. He attempted to raise his rifle to his shoulder, but his arm became suddenly paralyzed. All he could do was to stand there and watch the deer disappear in the distance. Then his arm resumed its normal condition, and he started on the trail once more. After awhile he came upon the deer a second time, and again the hunter tried to raise his rifle, and again his arm refused to serve him. Then he gave it up and went home. Impressed with a sense of awe and a conviction that he had better leave that particular deer alone.

The Regret of His Life

Sir William Grove, the eminent scientist and jurist, never forgave himself for not discovering the spectroscopic. "I had often observed," he said, "that there were different lines exhibited in the spectra of different metals ignited in the voltaic arc, and if I had had any reasonable amount of wit I ought to have seen the converse—viz. that by ignition different bodies show in their spectral lines the materials of which they are composed."

Repertea

Upon Fenelon telling Richelieu that he had seen the portrait of his eminence at the palace the cardinal merrily asked, "Did you ask it for a subscription for some poor friend of yours?"

"No. The picture was too much like you."

Rather Desirable

"I hope your father does not object to my staying so late," said Mr. Stay put as the clock struck 12.

"Oh, dear, no!" replied Miss Dabs with difficulty suppressing a yawn.

"He says you save him the expense of a night watchman."—Harper's.

Like Cures Like

Mrs. Kelly—This neighborhood seems a bit noisy, Mrs. Flynn. Mrs. Flynn—Yes, th' only time it's quiet here is when th' elevated train goes by and drowns th' noise.—Puck.

Exciting

Percy—I am tired of this life of ease. I want a life of toil, danger, excitement and adventure! Mammy—Oh, this is so sudden! But you may ask papa.—Life.

Couldn't Escape

"Light travels faster than sound." "But you might light out and still not be able to get away from that loud tuit of yours."—New York Press.

A PICTURE FIND

By CORA HATHORNE SYKES.

I manifested a taste for art when I was a little boy, taking more comfort in drawing pictures on my slate than doing sums on it. As I grew older I became ambitious to do something better, and asked my father to allow me a few drawing lessons. He refused, saying he would not encourage me in a task that would wreck my future if I gave way to it.

When it became time for me to choose an occupation I wished to become an artist, but my parents made such an ado over the matter that I abandoned the plan and accepted a clerkship in a grocery house. But if I couldn't make pictures I could at least look at pictures. And it so happened that I lived in a metropolis where the best works of art are to be seen. I read the art journals and was on the lookout for any announcements of the changing hands of the great pictures of the world, especially those coming to America.

I made no progress at business. All I did in a business way bored me. It was simple drudgery, and drudgery is incompatible with an artistic temperament. Instead of doing my work I sketched the office boys, the cat, anything that was sketchable. After awhile I was informed by my employers that they had no further need for my services.

My father, after a scene, secured another place for me and on entering upon it I promised to try to do better. But my heart was not in my work, and I have no faith in people being able to do continuously what they take no interest in. If they succeed in doing it they will not do it well. I believe that persons only do well what they like and are fitted to do; that eminently successful persons are successful in doing that which other people cannot do, or do as well.

One day after getting away from the work I hated after business hours I was passing a building that was being torn down. A workman had taken a roll of canvas from an old bricked up chimney and was unrolling it. I stopped and saw him reveal a dirty painting. I stepped up to where he stood and looked over his shoulder. I was astonished to see a work which, though dingy in the extreme, reminded me of the work of one of the great masters who flourished in the latter part of the fifteenth century. I looked in the corner where the name should be, but the dirt was too thick; no name was visible.

"What will you take for your find?" I asked the workman.

"Oh, I don't suppose it is worth anything," he said. "Any loose change you have in your pocket."

"I'm as poor as you are," I said, "but I know some picture dealers, and if you will let me have this one I will see what I can sell it for and divide with you." The man looked me in the face, handed me the painting and returned to work.

"Give me your address," I said. He did so, and I went away with his find. Instead of taking it directly to picture dealers I carried it to my room, and sitting down before it, looked at it a long while. The more I studied it the more I was impressed with its resemblance to the works of the artist I have referred to. The same evening I went to a library where engravings of many pictures of the old masters were kept in portfolios and familiarized myself anew with the style of this particular artist. The more I looked at his pictures the more I believed that the find was true. Could it be possible that it had been stolen?

I set the librarian to hunting for a book on stolen pictures, but though he was successful in finding such a book, it contained no reference to the painter's find. I wished to clean the picture, but did not know how to do so and was afraid to leave it with any picture dealer for the purpose lest the name be answered, and if it were as I suspected, the painting's value would be discovered and I be beaten out of it.

One day I told my father that I had left the place he had secured for me and had gone to work in a picture and frame shop. He was in despair about me, and this more capped the climax.

In the shop where I worked I learned to clean pictures. As soon as I became sufficiently expert to clean a picture I took the materials for doing so to my home and got the dirt off the corner where the name of the artist is usually placed. What was my delight to see the name of the artist who I believed had done the work.

Believing the picture to have been stolen I consulted an expert dealer, asking him if he could find a record of one of the artist's pictures having been stolen. He found a book in which the artist had been written up with other painters and a statement that in the early part of the nineteenth century one of his paintings belonging to a nobleman in England had been cut from its frame and taken away.

I succeeded in time in opening a correspondence with the descendants of the owner and sent them a photograph of the painting.

This was before enormous prices were paid for certain paintings, but my correspondents agreed that if the painting was the one they had lost they would pay me \$20,000 for it. It turned out to be the identical picture, and I pocketed \$10,000, giving the finder an equal amount.

I am now a prominent art dealer. My find has since sold for \$50,000.

James Russell Lowell

James Russell Lowell was a great favorite in the literary circles of London. On one occasion at a large banquet the peculiarities of American speech were discussed with English guests. Lord S. called to Mr. Lowell loudly, so as to silence all other speakers.

The Ashes of the Dead

"There is one new expression invented by your countrymen so foolish and vulgar as to be unpardonable. They talk of the 'ashes of the dead.' We don't burn corpses. No Englishman would use a phrase so absurd."

"And yet," said Mr. Lowell gently, "your poet Gray says, speaking of the dead:

"To be our ashes live their wonted dread—
And in the burial services of the Church of England it is said, 'Dust to dust and ashes to ashes.'—We also in good company." A cordial burst of applause greeted this prompt rejoinder.

London English

The English language is merely a small collection of slang words, business terms and oaths. It has become, indeed, very little less distinguished than the language of the Kaffir, who expresses himself by clicking his tongue against the roof of his mouth. "Harper" to take one instance, now stands in the dictionary of London and country house English for "How do you do?" "Gomore," to take another, may be translated as meaning "Good morning." Today when a person wishes to convey the fact that his condition of health leaves something to be desired, he says that he is "absolutely rotten." If, on the contrary, he feels particularly well and happy, he declares that he is "fuller than a barrel."—Impertinent Reflections, by Cosmo Hamilton.

The Modoc Indians

A few hundred of them—were removed from their old habitat in the Oregon country by the government. Not liking the change, they returned to their old homes, and under their able leader, "Captain Jack," defeated the troops sent to expel them in 1873. During the negotiations for a settlement they decoyed the United States commissioners into an ambush (April 11) and massacred General Canby and some forty others. Fighting followed, and the Indians retreated to an almost impregnable position. They were finally surrounded and after a brave resistance surrendered. "Captain Jack" was captured, tried in June, 1873, and executed Oct. 3.—Exchange.

Cure For Insomnia

A widely known New York clubman whose family is known to take earnest exception to his late hours recently encountered his physician on the street.

"How are you feeling these days?" asked the medico.

"Very well, indeed, thank you," replied the clubman, "but I'm a bit worried about my wife, doctor. She suffers dreadfully from insomnia. I have been on the point for some time of consulting you about her case. What would you suggest?"

"You might try getting home earlier," observed the physician.

Different Times

Saratoga once found his memory deserting him at a recital, but he discovered the reason of the mishap in time to a prevent a failure. A lady was fainting herself in the front row of the stalls. The violinist stopped playing.

"Madam," he said, "how can I play in two-four time when you are beating six-eight?" The lady shut up her fan, and the recital was concluded successfully.

Just the Opposite

"And you are going to have the hero and heroine of your story 'live happily forever after?'"

"No, just the opposite."

"Just the opposite? How so?"

"I'm going to have them marry one another."—Houston Post.

Briefly Speaking

Lady (to returned missionary)—And how was the king of the savages clothed? Missionary—E'm, principally with authority, madam, and not much of that.—McCall's Magazine.

The Worst

"Doctor, I must positively insist upon knowing the worst."

"Well, I think my bill will be about \$100."

Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principle.—Emerson.

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