AN AMERICAN BLUFF WINS

Georgia Man's Adventure With a French Duelist.

Abner Church after serving an apprenticeship at selling a patent clothes wringer to the farmers of New England was selected to open one of a number of agencies abroad for the sale of the same article. France was the territory assigned him, with Paris for his headquarters.

He had no sooner opened his salesroom than he was called upon by the representative of a Paris morning paper for an ad. Abner told him that he was not yet ready. The solicitor, taking his reply for a refusal, intimated that if the paper didn't get the ad. it would be to the disadvantage of the enterprise. Abner replied that he came from a land where in journalism the advertising and the newspaper's opinions were kept separate—in other words, where newspaper blackmail was unknown. The journal was welcome to "fire away."

The next morning an article appeared in the home columns of the paper in question stating that all clothes wringers tore the articles wrung in them, and the Eureka sold by Abner Church simply reduced them to ribbons. Other such notices appeared at intervals and were copied by other papers. Abner made up his mind that he must stop the slander on his machine or shut up shop and go home. He called at the office of the journal that was blackmailing him and protested. He was listened to politely by the editor of the home department and when he had finished was referred to M. Jules Chicolet, another editor, who he was assured would take up the case. Abner found M. Chicolet sitting in a study furnished a la Louis XVI. reading a novel and smoking a cigarette.

Abner stated his case, to which the gentleman listened attentively and at the end asked:

"Do I understand, monsieur, that you accuse our journal of blackmailing you?"

"That's what it looks like."

"Then as a representative of the paper I have the honor to refer you to a gentleman who will call upon you this afternoon."

Abner said that all he wanted was to be let alone, but while he was talking M. Chicolet passed out of a rear door and left him standing alone. The wringing machine agent went back to his store to think the matter over. While there a genteelly dressed Frenchman entered and said he came to arrange an affair between M. Church and M. Chicolet.

"I have no quarrel with M. Chicolet," said Abner. "Who the dickens is M. Chicolet anyway?"

"Pardon! Monsieur, being an American, does not understand. M. Chicolet is the fighting editor of the paper."

"Writes up duels, you mean."

"No, monsieur; M. Chicolet writes nothing. It is his duty to give satisfaction to those who think they have been insulted by the journal and to defend its honor. I understand you have accused it of blackmailing you. You must retract or fight."

"You tell the fighting editor that my grandfather lost an arm on the southern side at Gettysburg, and we Churches would rather die than lay down. Tell him I'll fight him with rifles at 500 yards."

The visitor protested that such weapons were not used in Paris, to which Abner replied that in America no one fought with anything else, and he would fight with the weapon he could handle and none other.

When the fighting editor received the news that he must stand up against an American rifle it occurred to him that for that occasion at least he would earn his salary. He was a perfect swordsman and a dead shot with a pistol at short range, but had never fought with rifles. Abner, who had all the so called trickery of the Yankee as well as the fighting proclivities of the Georgian, had sent him word that he'd better make a will, since he proposed to aim straight at his heart and he had never missed anything with a rifle.

Just after daylight one morning the fighting editor drove up to a secluded spot in the Bois de Boulogne, alighted with his attendants and waited for his antagonist. Presently an automobile appeared. On the roof was something of a black hue and oblong shape the nature of which could not in the dim light be detected. Abner alighted, and the porter of his store removed the article from the roof and carried it on to the field. M. Chicolet went up to it for a look and saw a coffin, on the lid of which was a silver plate bearing the name "Jules Chicolet — Died"—that very day.

M. Chicolet shuddered. This grotesque American way of fighting threw him off his balance. Abner stood near the coffin, leaning on a long rifle and looking at the man he intended should occupy it with a strange, diabolical stare. One of the attendants, seeing that the fighting editor was losing his nerve, asked if there was no hope of an arrangement. Abner replied that the journal must let him alone. A conference was held between the seconds, and it was agreed that Abner should withdraw his charge of blackmailing and the paper would publish an item in its home department especially commending the Eureka wringing machine.

Then the party drove to a cafe, where they breakfasted together, while the coffin was carried on the automobile to the undertaker's shop from which it had been borrowed.

A Jewel With a Temper.

Experts in such matters assure us that among jewels the opal alone defies the ingenuity of the imitator. This stone owes its charm not so much to its own intrinsic merits as to the splendor of the rays of light it reflects. It has been called "the chameleon of stones," and it has always been a great favorite with lovers of gems. Nearly 2,000 years ago Pliny remarked that it "displays at once the piercing fire of carbuncles, the purple brilliancy of amethysts and the sea green of emeralds, the whole blended together and refulgent with a brightness that is quite incredible."

The opal is a stone "with a temper." The diamond rises superior to climate, as does the ruby, the emerald and the sapphire, but the opal is of such delicate organization that when exposed to severe cold it loses color, and under the influence of excessive moisture becomes dull. It is a curious fact, however, that the temperature of one's hand will cause it to resume its wonted fire and brilliancy, as will also be the case when it is exposed to the direct rays of the sun.—Harper's.

An Extraordinary Bombardment.

One of the most extraordinary hoaxes on record is said to have been played upon the Dewan Lalla Moolraj, a native potentate of the Punjab, during the second Sikh war, in the winter of 1848-49. The British army, commanded by Sir Hugh Gough, had shut up the dewan and his forces in the fortified city of Mooltan. One day the besiegers were amazed by the thunderous sound of a most extraordinary cannonade, followed not by shot or shell, but by an assortment of miscellaneous provisions in a very fragmentary condition raining into the British lines. The Sikh chieftain, it was afterward discovered, had found in the city a large store of canned meats of the nature of which he was completely ignorant. A native spy in British pay gravely informed him that they were powerful explosives, and hence for some days the British camp was greeted with showers of Strassburg pates and other more or less mangled but perfectly eatable tinned food.

The Art of Economy.

All economy, whether of state, households or individuals, may be defined to be the art of managing labor. * * * Now, we have warped the word "economy" in our English language into a meaning which it has no business whatever to bear. In our use of it it constantly signifies merely sparing or saving—economy of money means saving money; economy of time, sparing time, and so on. But that is a wholly barbarous use of the word—barbarous in a double sense, for it is not English, and it is bad Greek; barbarous in a treble sense, for it is not English, it is bad Greek, and it is worse sense. Economy no more means saving money than it means spending money. It means the administration of a house, its stewardship, spending or saving—that is, whether money or time or anything else to the best possible advantage.—Ruskin.

Borrow Twice as Much as You Need.

A local financier is responsible for this story, which may at the same time serve as a hint. He tells us that a friend of his came to him a few days ago and told him about an acquaintance who wanted to borrow $100.

"Why doesn't he borrow $200, then?" asked the financier.

"Because he doesn't need $200."

"I know. But listen: Let him borrow $200 and pay a hundred of it back on time or a little before time. Then his creditor will think he's going to get the rest of it. That's a fine little system, and your friend ought to know it."

This is a grand scheme. Borrow twice as much as you need in order to establish your credit.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Where Fielding Is Buried.

The "father of the English novel," Henry Fielding, lies buried amid the cypress trees of the English cemetery of Lisbon. Not long after his death a tomb was erected to mark the spot—a memorial which an English visitor in 1772 found "nearly concealed by weeds and nettles." In 1830, through the exertions of the then British chaplain, a large sarcophagus was substituted, which about thirty years ago was repaired, and the inscription, a long one in Latin on the front, and the words on the back, "Luget Britannia gremio non dari fovere natum," carefully restored.—London Chronicle.

The Doctor's Aim.

Some frivolous person has remarked that illness was like a struggle between two people and that the doctor resembled the third man, who intervened to separate them with a club. Sometimes he hit the disease on the head and sometimes the patient.—Hospital.

Suspicious.

The General Manager — Are you aware the cashier has taken a half interest in a yacht? The Confidential Adviser—No. Perhaps we had better investigate and see he does not become a full fledged skipper.—London Telegraph.

Times Have Changed.

"Do you remember when the people demanded specie payment?"

"Yes. In those days people said they wanted hard money. Now everybody wants easy money."—Washington Star.

Ideas must work through the brains and the arms of good and brave men or they are no better than dreams.—Emerson.

A YOUNG MAN'S SCHEME

By M. QUAD

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"Gaul durn her picture, but I love her!"

The young man who uttered the words was at work in the field, and he straightened up to rest his weary back and mutter:

"And I'll make her love me before I'm through with her! She may think I don't amount to shucks, but all I want is a chance to prove that I do. Durn farm work! Durn widders! Durn love! Durn everything!"

He kicked the fence to show his disgust and wearily resumed work. Ebenezer Schermerhorn, hired man, was in love with the Widow Tompkins, whose farm adjoined that of his boss on the west. Ebenezer was twenty-four years old, plain of face and ungainly of form and without a hundred dollars' worth of property.

One evening as he dropped in to see the widow about borrowing some farm implement next day he found her reading a love story. She read a few chapters to him and afterward acknowledged that she had always been romantic and that if she ever married again it would be to a hero.

The farmer's hired man didn't rush right off that night and try to be a hero, but sat down and did some thinking.

Three or four days after Ebenezer's thinking bee a tramp came along the road and, seeing the young man hoeing corn just over the fence, halted for a word or two. Ordinarily Ebenezer would have leaped the fence and run the wayfarer half a mile, but on this occasion he invited him over to the corn and sat down with him for a confidential conversation. The result of that conversation was that at 8 o'clock that evening the tramp appeared before the Widow Tompkins and made threats of what he would do if she didn't set out victuals, hunt up old clothes and come down with a dollar in cash.

Ebenezer was not far away—just far enough to come running up and knock the tramp head over heels and rescue the widow. But as he started to come running he fell down and got tangled up with the bushes, and before he could get away the widow had broomsticked the tramp into flight. She didn't say she was glad that the would be hero was so near at hand. What she did say was that she wasn't afraid of any tramp walking the roads.

Ebenezer's first try was a failure, but within a fortnight he was ready for another. Two or three farmhouses in the township had been robbed, and this fact became the basis for his second plan. One night at midnight he left his bed, descended to earth by way of a window, and, armed with a club, he became a guard for the widow's house. He circled around it and patrolled the garden and the orchard, and he felt that he would give a year of his life if a robber would appear. He would first fell him and then arouse the house, and when the widow came to know that he had been guarding her for love her heart would melt toward him.

But no robber came. Instead of that his footsteps awoke the widow, and, peering out, she saw some one walking about, and she got a shotgun and raised a window and blazed away. The gun was loaded with bird shot to shoot hawks that might come swooping down on chickens, but in this case they answered just as well for a man. Ebenezer received about twenty of them and ran two miles to a doctor to have them picked out. He also had a vacation from work for a week under the excuse that he had sprained his back turning over in bed.

Ninety-nine out of every hundred would be heroes would have given up right here, but Ebenezer was a man to hang on. It was while he was limping around on his vacation and doing a lot of standing up and wandering over the fields that he came upon the widow fishing in the river at a certain point. He did not show himself, but fifty feet from where she sat under a tree he discovered a bumblebees' nest in the grass. It was a large and liberal nest, and it gave him a thought. The bees wouldn't bother anybody so long as they were let alone. If stirred up they would look for meat.

There was a haystack not far away, and Ebenezer had matches in his pocket. He retired behind the stack and collected a hatful of stones from the plowed land. These he threw one by one at the spot where the bees were pursuing the even tenor of their ways. The plot thickened. You can thicken a bumblebee plot in a very short time. All you've got to do is to tread on their coattails. When the insects found the rocks dropping on their heads they swarmed out of the grass to look for the enemy. They should have seen the widow and descended upon her, and at her first shriek Ebenezer would come charging down with a wisp of lighted hay in either hand. But things went wrong. The bees then went for him alone. They ran him up and down the haystack; they ran him over fences and back; they ran him across lots and in circles, and when they finally left him and he fell down the widow came forward and asked:

"But why were you such a fool?"

"Because I want you to marry me!" he groaned in reply. "And you said you would marry a hero. I thought the bees would attack you and I could rush in and save you."

"Why, you great idiot! I've been ready to say yes any day for the last three months."

Where Do the Watches Go?

What becomes of the watches? The average man does not buy more than about two or three watches in the course of his whole life, and yet the manufacturers keep on making new watches by the hundred thousands. Who buys them all? No statistics can answer the question. What becomes of the old watches? What did you do with the one you discarded when you got your present watch? Where is it now? It was a silver watch and it kept good time for years—that old watch, that predecessor of the gold one that you now possess. You had a strong affection for it. You called it "she," and sometimes in the solitude of your room you may have caught yourself saying a word or two to it aloud. The watch certainly talked to you in the middle of the night. Heine's watch conjugated Hebrew by the hour. The old watch had a kind of a ringing tick like a riveting machine, and you could hear it clear through the pillow. It has sung you to sleep more than once. But let's see—what in heaven's name became of it?—New York Mail.

Helping a Brother.

Suddenly the man with the chin beard, who was eating his luncheon in a restaurant, reached across the table, touched the button in the lapel of the coat worn by the man directly opposite him and gave him the grip of the secret order to which they both belonged.

"Brother," he said, "I see you're in need, and to live up to my sworn duty I am compelled to"—

"In need!" interrupted the other in wide eyed astonishment. "In need of what?"

"Of somebody to tell you that a knife is not the proper implement to use when you are eating corned beef hash."

By prompt action half a dozen waiters quelled the disturbance that began immediately, but they were too late to prevent the destruction of about $10 worth of tableware.—Cleveland News.

The Case Altered.

An attache of the American embassy at Paris tells the following as illustrative of the sort of sentiment which the French system of marriage de convenance produces:

Clarimonde, a young lady, announces to her parents that she has accepted the hand of M. Blanc.

"Child, you are mad!" exclaims Clarimonde's mother.

"But why, mamma?"

"Young Blanc will have no money for many years, because it all belongs to his grandfather, and after that comes his father, and you will be old before you get at the property."

"But, mamma"—

"No buts about it. You are a bad and undutiful child!"

"But, mamma, it is the grandfather whom I have accepted!"

"The grandfather! Oh, you little angel!"—Lippincott's.

Mr. Lavery's "Scottishness."

John Lavery, the eminent artist, is often taken for a Scotsman owing to the fact that he was brought up in Glasgow and first made his mark there. He is, however, an Irishman, born at Belfast. Soon after coming to London the young painter held an exhibition of his works. This was attended by a well known art collector, a Scotsman, who bought several pictures. In sending Mr. Lavery a check this gentleman said he was glad to be the means of helping a brother Scot.

Mr. Lavery wrote, thanking him, but pointing out that he was no Scot, but an Irishman.

"However," he added, "I am sufficiently Scottish to have delayed telling you this until I had cashed your check."

He was afraid his patron might have "stopped" the check on learning his true nationality.—London Answers.

Jeremiah Mason on War.

On one occasion Mr. Mason came into Mr. Sumner's office and found him engaged in writing an address to be delivered before a peace society. After a little good natured banter on the part of Mr. Mason and an equally good natured defense of his views by Mr. Sumner, the former, rising to take his leave, said: "Well, Sumner, you may be right, but I should just as soon think of joining a society for the suppression of thunder and lightning as a society for the suppression of war."—From Memoir of Jeremiah Mason, by G. S. Hillard.

Preferred the Operation.

Doctor (after thoroughly examining patient)—I'm sorry, Mr. Gaybird, but I'm afraid I'll have to operate on you. Gaybird—Good heavens, doctor! Is it absolutely necessary? Doctor — Yes, unless you care to go to a warmer climate. Gaybird (misunderstanding him)—Oh, no! I think I prefer the operation.—Judge.

Oh, Poor Willie!

Willie had been absent from school a whole day, so teacher sent his mother the usual excuse blank to be filled out. When it was returned to her, it held the following excuse: "Dear teecher Willie got wet in the a. m. and sick in the p. m."—Woman's Home Companion.

A Theatrical "Snowstorm."

A theatrical "snowstorm" is the business manager's way of describing the quantities of passes issued to "paper" a house when business is bad and there is no other way of filling the seats.—American Magazine.

Warned Both Ways.

Hub—I must go out tonight, my love. Engagement with a customer. Wife—Very well, but don't be gone long and— Hub—And what? Wife—Don't come home short.—Boston Transcript.

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