

## An Instrument of Providence

By WILLARD BLAKEMAN

I was walking on the beach, watching the waves come rolling in before a gale and throwing up driftwood, when a bottle was tossed at my feet. I extracted a paper from it on which was written:

We are going to please. Whoever gets this to Norman D. Carlisle and tell him he will find my will in my desk in secret drawer.

This was all—no date, no signature, no address as to where Norman D. Carlisle would be found.

That night I went to bed thinking about the message. Suppose it was genuine. Somebody was enjoying property that belonged to another. But it seemed to me that if it were genuine the writer would have given at least the city in which the person for whom it was intended lived. If the perpetrator was doing the thing for sport or to pass the time or because he hadn't any more sense he would have given it. And yet perhaps that's just what he wouldn't do. He might not like to particularize. On the other hand, a man who is about to be dumped into a roaring ocean might leave something out that he should have put in.

It was impelled to find Norman D. Carlisle. I didn't wish to engage in looking for a needle in a haystack, but I couldn't resist the feeling that it was my bounden duty to do so. There were then some 80,000,000 people in the United States alone. The name was Anglo-Baxon, and the person might be somewhere in the great British countries. Nevertheless when I found that I couldn't let the matter alone I went into it methodically. I put a personal advertisement in one newspaper in every city in the United States whose inhabitants numbered 500,000 or over for the said Norman D. Carlisle. I received several replies signed Norman D. Carlisle, the middle name usually differing. I wrote each of them, asking if he had lost a relative at sea, but they all answered in the negative—that is, so far as they knew.

After six months I put in another advertisement for Mr. Carlisle and received a reply from a Norman D. Carlisle living in a town of about 80,000 people. He had seen the ad while in the city where it had been inserted. I asked him if he had lost a relative at sea, and he replied "No." I dropped the matter so far as he was concerned, but later he wrote me that he was a lawyer and had had a client who had sailed from Rio de Janeiro in a vessel that was catalogued among missing ships.

After some correspondence he sent me a check for expenses, and I went to see him. He made an engagement for me to meet a lady in his office, and I was introduced to Miss Edith Parks, twenty-one years old and comely. She appeared to be a lady, but was shabbily dressed. I was informed that her uncle had been lost on the missing vessel from Rio. I brought out the paper I had found, which I had carefully kept, and as soon as she saw it she said she believed that it had been written by her uncle. Some of his letters were produced, and all doubt was removed. The message, though scrawled hastily in a trembling hand, was found to correspond with the uncle's writing.

I was then told that Miss Parks had been brought up by this uncle, who was wealthy, he being unmarried and without children. After he had been declared legally dead the courts had set about administering his estate and had already found forty persons who were heirs at law.

Since Mr. Weatherby, the man who had been shipwrecked, had given Miss Parks to understand that she was to be his heir it was likely that the will mentioned in the message gave his property to her. But the desk—where was it? Mr. Weatherby's furniture had been sold a year before. Who had bought the desk? No one could tell.

Since I had gone so far in the matter I did not propose to be beaten now. Advertising having availed, I advertised for the person who had bought a desk at a sale of the effects of Cyrus Weatherby. In due time I received a reply from the purchaser. I wrote him that a niece of the deceased wished to redeem it and asked him to fix a price. He said he would sell it for \$100. Miss Parks had no money to pay for it, so I mailed the man a check for the amount. The desk was sent to me, and, taking it into a cellar, I chopped it into kindling wood. Among the rubbish lay the papers in a secret drawer, and, taking this up, I found one marked "Last Will and Testament of Cyrus Blake Weatherby." I read it and found that he left all his property to his beloved niece Edith Parks.

That same evening I called on Miss Parks with the will that changed her condition from poverty to wealth. She sat like a statue staring at the paper as though she were looking through it rather than at it. I asked her what she was thinking about, but she did not hear me. I repeated the question, and, apparently awakening from a dream, she said:

"It doesn't seem possible that uncle, about to die on a boundless ocean, too wrought upon to give my address, could have reached me among the millions of people of the earth."

I did not tell her so, but she soon came to recognize me as the instrument chosen by Providence to find her. After awhile she rewarded me by giving me herself.

## Our Absent Feet

There have been many rationing accusations brought against civilization, but may they not all be summed and typified in the prevalent custom of absent feet?

We inclose them in leather air tight coverings, and may this not be why our souls are so hidebound? When we wish to be particularly civil we paint this leather with an impervious polish that the ten poor prisoners in the two black holes of Calcutta may be exquisitely punished.

When I think of the abuse heaped upon our feet, how the toes are misshapen by irrational compression, how the arches are broken by high heels, and how corns, bunions and abrasions afflict alike the dapper of fashion in her too narrow boots and the laborer in his hard brogue, and how humanity climbs on utterly without initiative to break the bonds of habit, I do not wonder at the other things they do.—Chicago News.

An Absentminded Ametour.

They were talking about their husbands over the tea things. Husbands and the weather supply the same vacuum between the gales of gossip.

"Theophilus, you know, is very absentminded and so wrapped up in his new study of photography that that's all he thinks of. You can't imagine the time I have with him."

She paused a moment to imagine it herself, while her listener found an idle interest in creating the lace ends with her fingers.

"Oh, this is what I was going to tell you! Theophilus came out of the dark room the other evening just as dinner was set. I says to him, 'Theophilus, what are you standing up there rolling that plate of soup around like that for?' 'Just a minute,' he says to me, 'just a minute, it's developing nicely. See that high light coming up?' 'High light nothing?' I says. 'That's cracker, sit down!'—Kansas City Star.

Workers Without Wages.

Birds live to eat. It is lucky for men they do. Some years ago a French scientist told the world that if all the birds should suddenly die man would have only a year's life left to him and proved his point to the satisfaction of other scientists.

How much does a bird eat? Take a robin as an example. It eats at certain seasons of the year about double its weight in insects and worms every day.

The bird's dinner hour begins at sunrise and ends an hour after sunset. Any legislation looking to the shortening of his hours of labor, which are coincident with its hours of eating, would bring famine. All the song birds and all the silent birds give their service to man, and they ask no pay for it except to be let alone.—Our Dumb Animals.

Fishskin Dresses.

Among the most curious as well as wonderful of garments are the fishskin dresses worn by wealthy women of the gold fields along the Amur river in east Siberia. These women produce some extraordinary ornaments, designs and embroideries. The dresses mentioned are composed of several layers of fishskin, the undermost representing the skin of the garment proper, the uppermost showing the ornaments in their cutout forms.—Between these two layers there is another layer that serves to throw out distinctly the beautiful qualities of the ornaments. The pieces of fishskin that form the ornaments are usually blue. The front and back of the dress are adorned with these cutout pieces. Fishskin sewed with fishskin thread.

Only Jar of its Kind.

Horace Walpole tells a lively story of an old porcelain vander who had an exceedingly rare and valuable jar on which he set an almost fabulous price. One hot summer a slight volcanic shock, such as the British Isles occasionally experience, jogged his house about his ears and split the porcelain vase. To an ordinary mind the accident would have been calamitous, but the china seller rose superior to fortune. He doubled the price of the article immediately and advertised it as "the only jar in the world which had been cracked by an earthquake." Nothing very slow about that.

Cruelty to Animals.

The first legislation to be passed for the protection of dumb animals was the work of an Irishman, Richard Martin of the county of Galway. In 1822 Martin introduced a bill for the prevention of cruelty to animals in the British house of commons. Queen Victoria was one of the principal supporters of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and it was she who gave the society its name.

A Quitter.

"I always knew that Murphy was a quitter."

"What's your evidence?"

"This paper says while the catcher was fighting with the umpire Murphy was caught trying to steal home."—Buffalo Express.

Different Tastes.

Kenyon—Welsh credit always keeps me awake at night. Kenyon—It don't trouble me. It's the cats that keep me awake. Kenyon—I never eat cats.—London Telegraph.

Catty.

Nell—Miss Prim was in a very scornful mood. When she spoke she curled her lips. Belle—Well, that is more than she can do with her hair.—Baltimore American.

Goodness is the only investment that never fails.—Thoreau.

## A GHOST PILOT

By WILLIAM CHANDLER

Tom Singleton, to use a nautical expression, was a boating amateur. He spent all his vacations on Cape Cod, on the Maine coast. There is something more in that bay than handling a boat, and that is handling what the boat is liable to bring up against. The waters are literally full of rocks.

Tom early fell in with a seaman named Wilkins—Captain Wilkins he was called, as all men who sail their own boats in that region are—who took a fancy to the youngster because they both loved the water. Wilkins usually went out after dark, set his nets and returned about sunrise the next morning. Tom was so in love with the water that he would go out with the captain one or two nights in the week. That's what made the captain love Tom. Both were avid of the solemn grandeur of the starry dome above them. Both loved the mystical moonlight—so Tom named it—and when they got caught in a rising wind and all was black about and above them, if there was not a pleasure in it, there was a pleasure in getting above and in the memory of it.

But there was one weather condition that appalled Tom, and it was this that caused him to confine his excursions alone to short sails in fair weather—was dreading a fog.

And why shouldn't he? Often when the sun shone brightly on a party submerged rock and the foam of a gigante wave breaking over it he would exclaim, "Just think of running on to that of a dark night or in a fog!" And the captain would say, "I've been sailing in this bay for thirty years in dark nights, in foggy nights, in all kinds of nights, and I never struck one of 'em yet."

"How do you do it?"

"I dunno. Reckon I do it as you get out of bed in the middle of the night and go downstairs for a drink of water or something, without a light."

One day when the two were sailing together Tom said that so long as he lived he would spend his vacations on Cape Cod, and if he grew rich he would spend the whole of each season there.

"I won't be with you when you're running your own yacht, Tom," said the captain, "but if you ever get in a bad fix I'll help you out."

"What! After you're dead?"

"No one dies. We simply change conditions; we don't need legs and boats and such like."

When the mackerel became so scarce that it didn't pay the captain to go out nights he said Tom would cruise about among the beautiful islands of the bay, living aboard the boat. They had buttered for breakfast, cod or lobster or clams for dinner and mackerel for supper. And as for sleeping when at anchor in a cove, with the wavelets soothing them to slumber against the sides of the boat, they kept awake only because it was so delightful.

Well, the day came when Tom Singleton was able to keep a small yacht of his own and spend the greater part of the summer cruising in her. He took her to Cape Cod—by the way, a cottage on Bailey's Island—and enjoyed sailing to his heart's content.

But, though he knew a great deal more about navigating a boat than when a youngster, he was not up to the rocky bottom of Cape Cod. Moreover, he didn't have Captain Wilkins to rely on, for the captain's old bulk was buried in the cemetery on the highest part of Orr's Island, where one can see the ocean in many different parts. So Singleton was obliged to sail his own boat, confining himself to fair weather.

But if the yachtman could tell about what the weather would be he couldn't predict freedom from fog. The coast of Maine is nearly as bad for fogs as the banks of Newfoundland. They come suddenly, and sometimes they stay a long while.

One bright morning Singleton started with his wife and children and a few friends from Bailey's Island for Popham beach. They had made the voyage outward and were returning past Seguin Light when a fog bank came rolling in from the eastward and enveloped them. Singleton could steer only by compass, and what is compass steering on the coast of Maine? The fog was heavy and promised to be of long duration.

Tom heard a splash of waters to port. He knew the sound and steered just in time to avoid one of the big submerged rocks of that part of the bay. The party rocked a couple of hours in terror; then it began to grow dark.

The women and children were mostly in the cabin or on the forward deck. Tom had the tiller. He began to feel a resistance when he turned it, and this continuing he yielded to the force. He heard waters surging to port and starboard, but seemed to pass, by some unseen mannequin, between or around all dangers. He let go the tiller, and it moved not by the waves, but apparently by the unseen force.

What was Tom's astonishment at last to find himself in the narrow crooked gut between Orr's and Bailey's Islands and going through safely! When he got out into the sound the fog suddenly vanished and he was enabled to steer for the dock.

No one can convince Tom Singleton that a spirit hand was not on the tiller during that perilous voyage. And he remembers Captain Wilkins' words: "If you ever get in a bad fix I'll help you out."

## Modern Chivalry

By DONALD CHAMBERLIN

I was sitting on the porch with Father Griggs, while his daughter, Patricia, surrounded by a group of children, was reading to them some of the age of chivalry. Her father and I could hear her, and while she read how Sir Somebody charged upon Sir Somebody Else in a contest for the Lady What's-her-name I noticed that the farmer's eye lit up, and he seemed to be rapt in reminiscence.

"They don't do such things now that they do!" he said when the story was finished. "But it's just as natural for men to fight for women today as it was then. But they're generally young fellows, and the girls are young too, had a scrap like that when I was a youngster. I heard one day that there was to be a dance in a barn six or seven miles down the road. After supper I started to walk it."

"What?" I interrupted, "walk seven miles, dance all the evening and walk seven miles back?"

"Oh, I didn't mind a little thing like that! I was young and tough, needed to keep my muscles active; there was no much vim in 'em. When I got to the barn some fellows were putting some boards on barrels to make steps for the people to dance. While they was tending up the dance was coming on."

"Furty soon they began to dance, but I didn't know any of the gals, and I was afraid to ask 'em to dance with me. After awhile a black-eyed gal said that I was left out in the cold, said to me, 'Well, why don't you dance?' and I says, 'Gosh, I don't know nobody to dance with.' And she says, 'Well, I do.' And I says, 'You bet! I put my arm around her waist, and we spun around that barn-door like a flywheel of a cotton mangle with the bolts out.'

"When the music stopped we went off into a dark corner and set till it commenced again. I asked the gal if she would dance with me some more, and she said she didn't mind. We was a-gittin' up to start off when a fellow came up and said the gal was engaged to him for that dance. She said she didn't remember any engagement with him, so I put my arm around her, and we walked away."

"Not wishin' to take up the hull of her time, when the dance was over I told her I would go and get a cup of water—just for an excuse, you know, though I would have liked to stay with her the rest of the evening. I hadn't gone far before the fellow that said the gal was engaged to dance with him came up to me, and he said, says he, 'Now here, mister, if you want to monopolize the balls of this year, you got to fight for her.'

"I don't want to monopolize any one," says I, "neatway any one that don't want none of your sass."

"That ain't exactly like Sir Somebody or Sir Somebody Else in the story would put it, but I meant just what he did. The fellow didn't throw down his mailed glove, neither, but he was a-gittin' for a fight, and first thing I knowed he give me a jaw breaker. Then some of the managers of the ball that was standin' by interfered and said we couldn't fight there; we must go outside. So we went out, and all the men followed us. The gals, sartin' their selves without the men, they might as well see the fun, and they come out too."

The moon was full that night and as big as a big round silver dollar. The fellow I was to fight—they called him Buck—was six feet high to my five feet eight. If the gal he was to fight for was the belle of the county he would get to fight him just as Sir Somebody did in the story. What-d'ye-call-him in the story had vanquished all the other knights. I wasn't so big as he was, but I was lit and tough. My arms was like a wild cat's fore legs. When I seen the gal galtherin' around I looked for the one that the fight was about. I saw her standin' with her face squared to the moon, and she give me a smile that put enough vim in me to tackle a grizzly.

"I couldn't give you much of an account of the fight 'cause it was twenty-five years ago and a rough and tumble scrap anyway. Didn't neither of us know how to box, and we just slammed at each other like two windmills whose wings had got mixed from bein' too close together. Onct in awhile when I felt discouraged under a sledgehammer blow the fellow got in on me I'd look for a smile from the girl. She'd give me one, and I'd start in a-gittin' party high as fresh as ever."

"The big fellow was more ponderous-like than me, but he didn't have my steel muscles, and he didn't have my wind. After awhile he began to breathe kind o' hard, and at last he was hittin' wild. I was as fresh as ever, and when I saw he was gittin' out I just waited awhile till he got well tuckered, then landed a blow on his jaw that sent him sprawlin' on the dirt."

"Just then a rooster tuk it into his head to crow in the middle of the night, and everybody larked. We went into the barn, the fellows struck up, and I danced with the gal I'd fought for."

"What became of her?" I asked.

"She's in the kitchen there, bollin' doughnuts."

"Oh, I see! Quite a romance."

"Not much like them romances, but really the same thing after all."

## Byron on Dentistry

The profession of dentistry stood higher in Byron's esteem than the profession of arms. In September, 1820, on hearing that his favorite dentist had died, Byron wrote to John Murray: "The death of Watts is a shock to the teeth as well as to the feelings of all who knew him. I left him in the most robust health and little thought of the national loss in so short a time. He was much superior to Wellington in national greatness, as he who preserves the teeth is preferable to the warrior who gains a name by breaking heads and knocking out grind-stones. Who succeeds him? Where is tooth powder, mild and yet effective; where is tincture, where are clearing roots and brushes now to be obtained? . . . I knew that Watts had married, but little thought that the other disease was so soon to overtake him."

Optimistic.

Among those who applauded the least and longest when the young girl graduated was a young man of twenty-two. He kept it up so long that an oldish man turned to him and said: "You must be in love with that girl?"

"I am, sir."

"Going to marry her?"

"I am."

"On a salary of about \$15 per week, I suppose?"

"No—only \$12."

"And there will be times when the sour barrel is empty."

"And you—"

"We will turn to that beautiful essay and have it served boiled, fried, roasted, baked and warmed over and be filled up and content. Don't worry about us, Mr. Man!"—Providence Journal.

Questions of Ownership.

Dale Peyton Waggoner once loaned his grandson, Mark Waggoner, enough money to purchase a motorcycle. The money was to be paid back by installment, the machine to remain the property of the grandfather until the last payment had been made. The other day while out riding Mark met Mr. Waggoner and jumped off the motorcycle. "Say, grandfather," said the boy, "who does this machine belong to?"

"It belongs to me until you give me the last payment. That was the agreement, you know. But why do you ask?" questioned Mr. Waggoner.

"Well, I just wanted to make sure," remarked Mark, with a grin. "Your motorcycle needs a new tire."—National Monthly.

Foiled Men.

Betty, a bright little five-year-old, was a born gossip. It was her custom as soon as she arrived at her grandmother's to say:

"Come into the kitchen, g'ma. I've got a lot to tell you."

And she generally had, being blessed with three popular grand sisters.

One day, however, she came in looking depondent.

"Any news, Betty?" inquired grandmother.

"Not much," said Betty soberly. "William (Sister Mabel's fiance) was over last night, but he and Mabel spelled most everything."—Judge.

False Hope.

Horace—I cannot help telling you again I love you. Can you not hold out any hope? Phoebie (wearily)—I did hold out one hope, but that's gone now. Horace—What was it? Phoebie—I had hoped you wouldn't mention the subject again.—Manchester Guardian.

Geological Survey.

"You do not speak to him?"

"No," replied the scholarly girl. "When I passed him I gave him the geological survey."

"The geological survey?"

"Yes; what is commonly known as the stony stare."—Washington Star.

Tatful.

"When you look at me, my dear, your eyes always have a staid expression."

"That is without doubt, my dear, because they always reflect your adorable image."—Paris Pages Follies.

Japanese Idols.

Daimio-no-Hai is the name of the Japanese sun god, while that huge idol with a multitude of hands is known as the Daidioth.

Two to Make a Bargain.

He—Be mine, and make me the happiest man in the world! She—Sorry, but I want to be happy myself.—London Opinion.

## Byron on Dentistry

The cheeks of cardinals appear noticeably along the British coast in June. They come by millions, and the water takes on a silty tint from their presence beneath the surface. This phenomenon is evaded instantly by thousands of fishermen, and when the cry of "Here they are!" goes up there is as much excitement as is occasioned by the whaler's shout of "That she blows!" Each boat carries from three to a dozen nets. Cod are in great numbers, and the average catch is about 4,000 each coasting of the net. When first drawn from their element the cardinals glitter like jewels, reflecting many colors, but they soon lose their brilliant tints. Every village along the coast has its cannery, and, as these are mostly individual enterprises, there is much competition. The cardinals themselves who do not own a boat of his own seldom makes over 1,000 francs, or about \$200, from his labor of five or six months, and in bad seasons his earnings are much less than that.

Byron on Dentistry.

The profession of dentistry stood higher in Byron's esteem than the profession of arms. In September, 1820, on hearing that his favorite dentist had died, Byron wrote to John Murray: "The death of Watts is a shock to the teeth as well as to the feelings of all who knew him. I left him in the most robust health and little thought of the national loss in so short a time. He was much superior to Wellington in national greatness, as he who preserves the teeth is preferable to the warrior who gains a name by breaking heads and knocking out grind-stones. Who succeeds him? Where is tooth powder, mild and yet effective; where is tincture, where are clearing roots and brushes now to be obtained? . . . I knew that Watts had married, but little thought that the other disease was so soon to overtake him."

Optimistic.

Among those who applauded the least and longest when the young girl graduated was a young man of twenty-two. He kept it up so long that an oldish man turned to him and said: "You must be in love with that girl?"

"I am, sir."

"Going to marry her?"

"I am."

"On a salary of about \$15 per week, I suppose?"

"No—only \$12."

"And there will be times when the sour barrel is empty."

"And you—"

"We will turn to that beautiful essay and have it served boiled, fried, roasted, baked and warmed over and be filled up and content. Don't worry about us, Mr. Man!"—Providence Journal.

Questions of Ownership.

Dale Peyton Waggoner once loaned his grandson, Mark Waggoner, enough money to purchase a motorcycle. The money was to be paid back by installment, the machine to remain the property of the grandfather until the last payment had been made. The other day while out riding Mark met Mr. Waggoner and jumped off the motorcycle. "Say, grandfather," said the boy, "who does this machine belong to?"

"It belongs to me until you give me the last payment. That was the agreement, you know. But why do you ask?" questioned Mr. Waggoner.

"Well, I just wanted to make sure," remarked Mark, with a grin. "Your motorcycle needs a new tire."—National Monthly.

Foiled Men.

Betty, a bright little five-year-old, was a born gossip. It was her custom as soon as she arrived at her grandmother's to say:

"Come into the kitchen, g'ma. I've got a lot to tell you."

And she generally had, being blessed with three popular grand sisters.

One day, however, she came in looking depondent.

"Any news, Betty?" inquired grandmother.

"Not much," said Betty soberly. "William (Sister Mabel's fiance) was over last night, but he and Mabel spelled most everything."—Judge.

False Hope.

Horace—I cannot help telling you again I love you. Can you not hold out any hope? Phoebie (wearily)—I did hold out one hope, but that's gone now. Horace—What was it? Phoebie—I had hoped you wouldn't mention the subject again.—Manchester Guardian.

Geological Survey.

"You do not speak to him?"

"No," replied the scholarly girl. "When I passed him I gave him the geological survey."

"The geological survey?"

"Yes; what is commonly known as the stony stare."—Washington Star.

Tatful.

"When you look at me, my dear, your eyes always have a staid expression."

"That is without doubt, my dear, because they always reflect your adorable image."—Paris Pages Follies.

Japanese Idols.

Daimio-no-Hai is the name of the Japanese sun god, while that huge idol with a multitude of hands is known as the Daidioth.

Two to Make a Bargain.

He—Be mine, and make me the happiest man in the world! She—Sorry, but I want to be happy myself.—London Opinion.

## Modern Chivalry

By DONALD CHAMBERLIN

I was sitting on the porch with Father Griggs, while his daughter, Patricia, surrounded by a group of children, was reading to them some of the age of chivalry. Her father and I could hear her, and while she read how Sir Somebody charged upon Sir Somebody Else in a contest for the Lady What's-her-name I noticed that the farmer's eye lit up, and he seemed to be rapt in reminiscence.

"They don't do such things now that they do!" he said when the story was finished. "But it's just as natural for men to fight for women today as it was then. But they're generally young fellows, and the girls are young too, had a scrap like that when I was a youngster. I heard one day that there was to be a dance in a barn six or seven miles down the road. After supper I started to walk it."

"What?" I interrupted, "walk seven miles, dance all the evening and walk seven miles back?"

"Oh, I didn't mind a little thing like that! I was young and tough, needed to keep my muscles active; there was no much vim in 'em. When I got to the barn some fellows were putting some boards on barrels to make steps for the people to dance. While they was tending up the dance was coming on."

"Furty soon they began to dance, but I didn't know any of the gals, and I was afraid to ask 'em to dance with me. After awhile a black-eyed gal said that I was left out in the cold, said to me, 'Well, why don't you dance?' and I says, 'Gosh, I don't know nobody to dance with.' And she says, 'Well, I do.' And I says, 'You bet! I put my arm around her waist, and we spun around that barn-door like a flywheel of a cotton mangle with the bolts out.'

"When the music stopped we went off into a dark corner and set till it commenced again. I asked the gal if she would dance with me some more, and she said she didn't mind. We was a-gittin' up to start off when a fellow came up and said the gal was engaged to him for that dance. She said she didn't remember any engagement with him, so I put my arm around her, and we walked away."

"Not wishin' to take up the hull of her time, when the dance was over I told her I would go and get a cup of water—just for an excuse, you know, though I would have liked to stay with her the rest of the evening. I hadn't gone far before the fellow that said the gal was engaged to dance with him came up to me, and he said, says he, 'Now here, mister, if you want to monopolize the balls of this year, you got to fight for her.'

"I don't want to monopolize any one," says I, "neatway any one that don't want none of your sass."

"That ain't exactly like Sir Somebody or Sir Somebody Else in the story would put it, but I meant just what he did. The fellow didn't throw down his mailed glove, neither, but he was a-gittin' for a fight, and first thing I knowed he give me a jaw breaker. Then some of the managers of the ball that was standin' by interfered and said we couldn't fight there; we must go outside. So we went out, and all the men followed us. The gals, sartin' their selves without the men, they might as well see the fun, and they come out too."

The moon was full that night and as big as a big round silver dollar. The fellow I was to fight—they called him Buck—was six feet high to my five feet eight. If the gal he was to fight for was the belle of the county he would get to fight him just as Sir Somebody did in the story. What-d'ye-call-him in the story had vanquished all the other knights. I wasn't so big as he was, but I was lit and tough. My arms was like a wild cat's fore legs. When I seen the gal galtherin' around I looked for the one that the fight was about. I saw her standin' with her face squared to the moon, and she give me a smile that put enough vim in me to tackle a grizzly.

"I couldn't give you much of an account of the fight 'cause it was twenty-five years ago and a rough and tumble scrap anyway. Didn't neither of us know how to box, and we just slammed at each other like two windmills whose wings had got mixed from bein' too close together. Onct in awhile when I felt discouraged under a sledgehammer blow the fellow got in on me I'd look for a smile from the girl. She'd give me one, and I'd start in a-gittin' party high as fresh as ever."

"The big fellow was more ponderous-like than me, but he didn't have my steel muscles, and he didn't have my wind. After awhile he began to breathe kind o' hard, and at last he was hittin' wild. I was as fresh as ever, and when I saw he was gittin' out I just waited awhile till he got well tuckered, then landed a blow on his jaw that sent him sprawlin' on the dirt."

"Just then a rooster tuk it into his head to crow in the middle of the night, and everybody larked. We went into the barn, the fellows struck up, and I danced with the gal I'd fought for."

"What became of her?" I asked.

"She's in the kitchen there, bollin' doughnuts."

"Oh, I see! Quite a romance."

"Not much like them romances, but really the same thing after all."

Small text at the bottom of the page, possibly a date or publication information.