THE EVENING NEWS.

Monday, - - - June, 5, 1871.

THE OLD MAID OF THIRTY-FIVE.

BY ETHEL BRANDE.

[CONCLUDED.]

"Now cousin Laura, if you will come into the library, I will show you my present."

The library had been entirely deserted by our guests, and as Katie and I approached it from the dining-room, I saw only one solitary figure, that of the stranger, sitting with his face turned from the light. I was about to withdraw, but Katie urged me gently forward, and just then the stranger turned with an eager look, and, for the first time for twelve long years, I stood face to face with John Davis. There was no mistaking those features, which once seen, could never be forgotten, and there was no mistaking the eager, impetuous haste with which John rushed forward to greet me. He was not changed, and that thought brought such exceeding joy, that I forgot that I was thirty-five, and no longer young and handsome.

Strange to say, this idea never occurred to me during the remainder of the evening, which seemed unusually short, neither the next day, nor the next day after that. But, as Willie remarked next morning at breakfast, travelers have such wonderful stories to relate, that one can not ever think of anything else. John, indeed had been a wanderer many years, and those years had been so full of marvellous adventures, and it was so necessary that he should tell them to somebody, that it happened, I hardly know how, that I was obliged to give him a good many conferences in the library. And finally in the most unromantic manner possible, (for what romance could be expected of such elderly people?) it was proposed that we should give out another invitation to our friends, and that we should become actors in that very imposing *tableau* called marriage. We did as we proposed, and so I became Mrs. John Davis. Robert congratulated me in a curious fashion:

"You are not half good enough for John, Laura, for havn't you deserted me most cruelly, when I took the trouble to take you to ride upon your thirty-fifth birth-day, and nearly killed myself in keeping good news from you? The whole family took the greatest trouble to deceive you that day, for of course we all knew that John had come. By the way I must tell John how much happier you would be if you went away from here, because—"

And here Robert was seized with his old fit of coughing, which was speedily cured, however, by a sight of Madge Walters.

As for myself, I need only to say that I look back with the most pleasant recollections to the day when I was thirty-five, and I assure you that wasn't a great while ago.

"THE BITER BIT."

There is a story told of a former Lord Chancellor of Ireland, who was desirous of visiting a lunatic asylum near Dublin, in order to satisfy himself upon some points touching its management and administration. None of the officials of the establishment were to be previously apprised of the intended visit, his lordship's object being to see the asylum in its every-day working, and to judge for himself as to the matters that interested him.

For this purpose the Lord Chancellor repaired thither alone and quite incognito. One other person only was in the secret. This was an eminent medical man whom the chancellor had requested to meet him in the waiting room of the institution at a certain hour on a particular day. When his lordship, punctual to the minute, got to the place, he found upon inquiry that the doctor had not arrived. He said he would wait, as he wanted particularly to see the doctor. Fifteen minutes passed, but the medical man did not make his appearance. The Lord Chancellor began to show signs of impatience, not unobserved by an official in attendance.

High functionaries must not be kept waiting, and this one was notoriously fidgety and short tempered. He kept looking at his watch every two or three minutes, and at length gave vent to his impatience by stamping his foot on the floor, and muttering something which bore a strong resemblance to a good round oath. His manner attracted the attention of the attendant, who began to suspect the visitor must be mad.

The attendant kept his eye on him, and prepared for an emergency. Half an hour elapsed—still no doctor. The great man could stand it no longer. Starting from his seat, he paced up and down the room hurriedly, uttering angry ejaculations the while. The official, now satisfied of the insanity of the visitor, made a rush at him and called out for help. One of the keepers soon appeared on the spot, and the unlucky chancellor was duly secured.

Not without a fierce struggle, however. Against the indignity he protested loudly and lustily. He declared with all the emphasis possible that he was perfectly sane, and threatened condign punishment to the officials. But the men only smiled. Having made up their minds he was a dangerous patient, they at once proceeded to forcibly remove him to one of the wards. Seeing that his protest and threats were useless, and that the matter was getting serious, the chancellor thought to turn the scales in his favor by divesting himself of his incognito. Accordingly he declared himself to be the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and that Sir——(naming the physician) was his personal friend.

The officials knew better. Each gave a sly wink to the other.

"Oh yes, I dare say," quietly remarked one of the men, "we have already got two Lord Chancellors up stairs, besides the Duke of Wellington, and the Queen of England. And nobonly was the unhappy chancellor removed, but he was actually placed in a straight waistcoat, each successive manifestation of his rage at the proceeding being only regarded as a stronger symptom of lunacy.

Luckily Sir——arrived at the asylum immediately afterwards. Entering the waiting room he anxiously inquired whether a gentleman had called, and asked for him.

"A gentleman called," was the reply, "but he became so violent that it was necessary to remove him up stairs."

"Good God!" exclaimed the physician, "Why it is the Lord Chancellor. What is the meaning of this?"

"The officers were horror-stricken, and it need hardly be added that the unlucky Lord Chancellor was released instanter with many apologies.—*St. James Magazine.*

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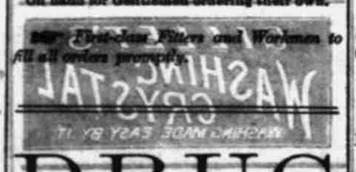

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