

MY OLD UMBRELLA.

I always prided myself on the neatness of my appearance before I was married, and if there was one particular thing which I liked to have stylish it was my umbrella. The best silk and finest frames were hardly good enough, and my umbrella was generally about as slim and nicely shaped as a cane; so much so, that Brown used to chaff me continually about its appearance, and say it was a bachelor's umbrella—his being almost the size of a Mrs. Gamp's.

It was three years ago this month, and the weather was evidently in a very sorrowful mood, for it just poured all day long, something like the cats and dogs which auntie always uses as a simile when it rains very hard. I had to leave the office a number of times during the day, and about two o'clock went to the bank to get a check cashed, and, of course, my umbrella, not this one, was in constant use. There was some dozen persons waiting on a line at the counter, and I had to wait also. Waiting there in a damp room wasn't very agreeable; but I just hung my umbrella on the edge of the counter till I had done, and just there I lost it, for when I got the cash I had forgotten the umbrella, and left the bank without it.

When I reached the street I missed it, and back I posted; but it was gone—where, by whom taken, or how, I never found out, but hanging to the counter instead was an old dilapidated looking thing, made of blue cotton. It was enough to make me shower left-handed blessings on the party who had made the exchange; but here, by the way, I might just as well observe that it was really a blessing to me, only in disguise.

As the rain poured in torrents, I just made the best of the matter, and stalked into the street as apparently unconcerned as possible, me, the natty Thornton, as my chums called me, perambulating those streets where my said friends most do congregate, and under a big cotton umbrella, large enough to shelter a whole family of seven.

Brown met me first. "Ah!" said he, "got a family now—congratulate you, my boy." And from him to the office, each and every friend I had, seemed to be in the street waiting to hail my appearance with a jest or a laugh. Confound it! I was almost mad enough to smash the old thing to pieces; but I didn't, for it rained too hard for any such foolishness.

Several times during that afternoon, I vainly endeavored to borrow or steal another one; but it was of no use; and for home I started with it, getting into the same omnibus with Brown, who at once commenced at me with, "I say, old fellow, when did it take place?"

Thinking innocence might extricate me from this confounded chaffing. I asked, "What take place?"

"Why, your becoming a married Benedict?"

"Well, you are mistaken, for I still remain my own master, and am not compelled to be at home every night at ten, or else suffer the discordant din of a scolding partner."

This was intended for him, but he shook it off easily, and gave it back with a vengeance.

"Yes, but being as you are, you are mightily put out about carrying an umbrella more serviceable than ornamental; whereas I, being married, satisfy myself with what I have. To be a philosopher you must get married, and who knows but what that same umbrella may come in service then?"

I escaped from him then, as I had reached the street I wanted to get out at; and leaving the omnibus, I elevated the umbrella to protect me from the pouring rain. At the corner, under a shop awning, stood two lovely damsels, evidently waiting for the rain to cease, for they were without umbrellas.

Over sensitive in regard to my appearance, I could not help noticing the fitter as they regarded me. And, to tell the truth, there was somewhat of a contrast to laugh at. Imagine a fashionably dressed young man, rather good looking, decidedly genteel, and over his head an enormous old cotton umbrella, and you'll see me as those girls saw me then.

I was nettled, put out, and wrathful, but resolved to check their mirth at all hazards. Stepping up to them I said, "Ladies, my umbrella is large, and as I see you are without one, can I offer you my services as far as I go?" Mentally resolving that if they went further than me my umbrella should go too.

After whispering for a moment, one of them replied, "Thank you, sir; we would be obliged for your escort."

Of course, as we went along I did my

best to open a conversation, and soon had the pleasure of eliciting a few words from them. They were both very pretty; but the one called Mary I thought then was a particularly pleasant young lady, and instinctively desired to prolong our walk, that we might be better acquainted.

Having reached the street in which I dwelt, I turned to Miss Mary and said: "I live in this street, and as I see you are going further, you are welcome to the use of the umbrella, for it is but a step to my residence. You can return it at your leisure. Good day."

And leaving them with my umbrella, which I knew they would never return, for I purposely did not give them my address, I ran home, congratulating myself at having so pleasantly disposed of my pest.

Somehow or other Mary's eyes were always in my mind, and I should almost have forgotten about the old umbrella if it were not for the remembrance of her sweet face. After a while I came to the conclusion that I had actually fallen in love with Mary; but who was Mary, and where to find her, I did not know. And then I began to wish I had given my address, that the umbrella might be returned to me.

All this took place in March. Months passed, and I never came across either Mary or the umbrella. How I wished for a glimpse of either I cannot tell you; but I did—awful!

During September I was down at my friend Wyndham's place, on the seacoast, for a week or two; and one day he and I were out fishing in a yacht, but noticing a storm coming up, we thought we had better put into the bay until it cleared up again.

The sky in the west was already black with the rushing clouds advancing up the zenith, as we passed the Point. On our way in we noticed a boat containing some parties still fishing, perfectly unconscious of the rising storm, for the trees on the land obscured the western sky, and overhead was still clear. Wyndham called my attention to them.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed I, "there's my umbrella!"

"Where?" said Wyndham.

"Why, there, in that boat, Wyndham," said I, "I must see the people in that boat, come what may."

And turning the yacht around, we sailed toward them. But we had to sail round a considerable distance; and in the meantime the people in the boat had evidently noticed the coming storm, for they were pulling up their anchor.

The umbrella—I was sure it was mine, still remained elevated, so I could not see who was beneath it, but my poor heart beat a little excitedly, for I hoped it would be Mary.

We had nearly reached them when the windy forerunner of the storm struck the boat, and the next moment it was overturned, and I saw two ladies and three men struggling in the water, one of them clutching tightly to the umbrella, whose strong ribs actually made a sort of balloon of it and bouyed her up, while the wind carried her away from the others.

"Wyndham!" shouted I, "you pick up the others, and I'll look after this one."

And tearing off my boots and coat, I sprang in to the water, and swam rapidly towards her, the wind at the same time carrying her toward me. She was terribly frightened, but seeing me, she seemed to take a little courage, and exclaimed, "Save me, sir! Oh, what shall I do?"

Without regarding her questions, I grasped her under the arms, and told her to let go the umbrella and trust herself to me.

"Now," said I, "don't touch me, and we are all right."

And being an excellent swimmer, I paddled along with my feet, and pushed her in front of me with my arms, the umbrella in the meantime taking a journey into the air.

All this took less than two minutes; and I saw with pleasure that Wyndham had been equally prompt, and had rescued the other lady and two of the gentlemen, the other having swam ashore, and was now sailing toward us, the wind carrying him with fearful velocity.

"Haul down those sails," he cried to the two men, "for we'll pass them."

The men were equal in promptitude, and the sails came down the mast, and flapped over the side, nearly upsetting the yacht, but at the same time impeding its speed, so that both the lady and I were easily pulled aboard. Of course, she fainted after the danger was over; and, of course, she proved to be Mary of the umbrella; and, of course again, I had the pleasure of making her so-

quaintance; which, of course, I did not fail to improve; and, of course, I fell more in love than ever.

Well, things were in this state for some weeks, and at last I thought that the time had come when I would know my destiny from her lips; so telling Wyndham I was going away for a stroll to take a few sketches—things I knew he abominated—I just walked off to Mr. Graham's house—that was Mary's father—hoping to meet her alone.

Taking a shady wood path which led up to the rear of the house, I stalked along for some distance, thinking of what I was about to do, when happening to glance up, I noticed on the rocks of the shore my inevitable cotton umbrella expanded in all its glory.

That umbrella haunted me then, and I presaged evil from its appearance; but, nevertheless, I went toward it, thinking of course that the wind and tide had driven it ashore—which they had, but not just there.

There it lay, wide open, its top toward me; and when I reached it I seized it by the projection of the stick and lifted it toward me.

By Jove when I think of the result I always wonder how I got through it at all; for, as I lifted the umbrella, what was behind and under it was revealed; and there, comfortably seated on the rock, was my Mary and a deuced good-looking young fellow. If I was astounded, they were about as much surprised. Mary blushed, and looked at me as if to reproach me for such an ungentlemanly action; while the young fellow looked as if he was about to eat me up, and muttered, "What d'ye mean, sir?"

"I beg pardon, Miss Graham," I stammered. "By seeing this umbrella, to which I have a slight claim, and not noticing its occupation by any one, of course I thought I was recovering a lost article of my own."

"Oh, then," said Miss Mary, "you are the gentleman who lent us the umbrella so kindly some months ago in London? Harry, this is Jane's and my escort. Don't you remember?"

This familiarity may have been pleasing to Harry, but it by no means followed that it was to me; so I remarked, as coldly as possible, "Miss Graham, I again beg your pardon for the interruption; and as the umbrella is pleasant for your use, allow me the pleasure of transferring the ownership to you."

"Gentlemen," she said, "allow me to introduce you to each other. Mr. Thornton, this is my cousin, Mr. Harry Graham, brother to the young lady who was with me that day. Harry, Mr. Thornton, the gentleman who saved my life the other day."

Did she not "accent" cousin pretty freely? I thought she did, at least; and it made me take heart, and act more pleasantly; and in five minutes I had the pleasure of finding that though the young lady was on the freest terms with Graham, it was only on account of the relationship between them.

To explain my appearance, I gave the same excuse as I had to Wyndham, and was forthwith put to work to make a sketch of the umbrella, with them beneath it; which, of course, I did, only wishing that Graham was in my place, and I in his.

After a while I noticed old Tim Hayes, the fisherman, launching his boat from the point, going off for an afternoon's fishing, and Graham seeing the same, it suddenly struck him that he had promised to go with the old man that afternoon; so, begging the young lady's leave, he placed her once more under my escort with the umbrella, and I need not tell you the result; for here comes Mary, and she would be angry if she knew that I had been divulging our love affairs, even to tell the story of our old blue cotton umbrella.

SINGULAR TENACITY OF LIFE.—The Rocky Mountain News mentions in a late issue the following singular fact:

A man, named Miles Maudlin, was shot by his sister-in-law, four months ago, at a farm house on Cherry creek, a few miles above Denver City. He was attended by Dr. McClelland, of Denver, who states that the ball entered the body at the fourth dorsal vertebra, severing the spinal cord entirely, and passed into the right lung, causing complete loss of sensation and motion below that point, embracing at least two-thirds of the body. In this condition he has remained up to date, with no noticeable change except the formation of several ulcers upon the legs and hips, with no prospect of recovery. Remarkable as it may appear, he has all the time a good appetite, and also good mental ability, so that he has been able to transact any kind of business. His case is unprecedented as to the length of time he has survived his terrible inju-

ries. It has seldom been recorded that similar cases survived the injuries more than thirty days. He is said to be slowly declining, although the wound caused by the ball healed weeks ago, and the lung which was perforated is apparently sound. How long he may live is at present impossible to prognosticate.

THE MORMONS.

Much is said and written at the present time in reference to the Mormons, their system of morals and religion. The government interference in some respects is well enough, but the men who are enforcing the laws in that Territory are not of much credit to this Government. If the system of polygamy is unlawful and cannot be sustained by the word of God, then let it go under, but in putting it under let it be done in accordance with the principles of justice. * * *

That the Mormons are greatly misrepresented, and in many instances persecuted, are facts well known to unprejudiced persons who are well acquainted with the state of affairs in that Territory. Even ministers of the gospel have lately written of the Mormons as "being universally not only as polygamous, but as murderers, as the old fighting patriachs—as so many Ishmaels and outlaws, vicious, depraved, disorderly, sensual, devilish."

Grace Greenwood in a late correspondence from Salt Lake City, says:

"Now, from all I have been able to observe, and from all I hear from intelligent Gentiles, long residents here, I am convinced that the Mormon people generally are remarkably quiet, orderly, sober and industrious—strongly and especially addicted to minding their own business. However much the leaders may be given to proselyting, the common people never intrude their peculiar tenets and ideas upon you; but if you inquire concerning them, they will plainly and seriously answer your questions, and in most cases, while struck by the absurdity or revolted by the moral obliquity of those ideas, you are convinced of the absolute sincerity of the simple-hearted expounders."—West Jersey Pioneer.

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