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MOUNTAIN RIVALS.

Between the Harkets and the Trowers there had long existed a feud. It had begun back in the times of the grandfathers of the present generation, and the original cause had been lost to sight, yet seven or eight of the different members of the two families had from time to time "fitten fur sure," in a futile attempt of settling old scores.

At the opening of my story the feud was in as unsettled a state as for years past, although the difficulties in the way of a final adjustment seemed less formidable in that one son male representative of each house was left to maintain his home and uphold its reputation for bravery.

The two young men were of almost the same age, and were well matched in physical preparation, being athletic and hardy.

There seemed to be excellent grounds for apprehension when the two young men began to pay attentions to the same girl—a rivalry that is apt to produce discord, even between friends. With a woman's subtle art, even though untutored, Miss Betsy Struggs managed to lead each suitor a merry dance of it, and to hedge each beaux with hopes and fears alternately. It was a harmless coquetry, however, and she did not mean that any trouble should result from it, so she gave both suitors to understand that any breach of the peace would at once be visited with her lasting and severe displeasure.

Miss Betsy strove to avoid favoritism. If she went to singing school with Steve Trower on one occasion, she was apt to attend meeting with Grove Harket on the next. The rivals had reached a tacit understanding regarding Sunday courting, so that one did not intrude upon the other.

There was not entire illness on those Sunday afternoons, for when milking time came Miss Betsy took her pigpin and accorded a gracious privilege to her attendant to loiter at the bars and entertain her, or perhaps to keep a hungry calf at bay while she milked. Miss Betsy was capable enough to throw a charm over even this prosaic occupation, so that it became one of the enjoyable features of the day. On one occasion, as she sat and milked her "little now with the crumpled horn," such as there mountainous regions develop—Grove Harket leaned against the bars.

"Thar's goin' ter be great times down ter Dry Crick settlement, ses week come a Saturday," observed Grove.

"Hev big meetin' begunn down thar a'ready?" inquired Miss Betsy, glancing over her shoulder.

"Shucks! no. Big meetin' don's come off till nex' month. Hit's a big show a-comin fo'," answered Grove.

"Sick up, now! I know better," cried his interested auditor, pausing for a moment in her occupation, and thereby cutting off the two streams of milk that flowed into the pail with a sound most tantalizing to the hungry calf.

"Yes, sirree!" continued her admirer in quaintly. "Sl Parker war down thar t'other day an' seed thar big pictures hisself, a-settin' all 'bout hit."

"I s'pose yer air a-gittin'?" Miss Betsy remarked, after a few moments' silence.

"If I kin git good company, I mend," said Grove, with subtle meaning.

"I low ef yer look 'round 'nuff, yerun'll be no powerful hard thing ter do. Folks is plentiful 'bout yer."

"Anybody hain't company," said Grove, with artful emphasis.

"Yiss ter fetks, though," remarked Miss Betsy. "One gal ess go on with foolish beux an' sech 'bout as well as t'other."

"Well, I low to git sech thar purtiest gal in all thar, yes kills ef she'll go with me," continued Grove admiringly.

"Thar is them air says Malvisy Peerles is right purt lookin', thought hev never struck me powerful," said Miss Betsy in audible soliloquy, apparently unmindful of her beau's presence.

"I mersel thinkin' of an Malvisy Peerles," retorted Grove.

"Sis Hiss hain't no sich homely gal, ef her hair is red an' her nose turns up-ess," continued Miss Betsy admiringly. "Thar! Pinsy, now!" she added soothingly to her restless cow.

"Hain't no Sis Hiss, nother," interposed Grove with a faint touch of reproach in his tone. "I'd just make a beeline for yer, Miss Betsy, an' yer knows hit."

"Lo, Mr. Hacket!" exclaimed Miss Betsy with a toss of her head, and stopping long enough to send a distracting glance in the direction of her admirer, "whaver did hear o' sech foolishness?"

Before the milking was over, however, Miss Betsy had consented to accompany Mr. Hacket to the circus at Dry Creek settlement on Tuesday of the following week.

In consequence of this engagement Steve Trower found his plans easily shattered when he presented himself the next Sunday and asked for Miss Betsy's company to the circus. His disappointment was so evident that Miss Betsy's heart was touched, and she advanced the soothing suggestion that "big meetin' war's a-hitin' about usun off, an' ahe s'pose fetks would wont to go to hit too."

Added to Steve's sense of great disappointment was the feeling that his rival had taken undue advantage of him. Grove Hacket had gone while Miss Betsy to the circus the year before, and this should have been his own opportunity, and his heart was filled with a deep resentment.

Now there was something of a schemer by nature, and, incited by jealousy and anger, he began to cast about for some plan whereby he might circumvent his rival and accomplish his own ends. He noticed that he was suggested for a week that he set spot in his adversary's character. He knew Grove's fondness for "moonshine," and it was opportunity to get an's spree now and then, and so he had now been sober for quite a while he was peculiarly in a fit condition to be tempted successfully.

Early Monday morning Steve saw Sl Billy Warner's carrying with him a known jug of interest appearance but disputable contents. Bill was a harmless, good for nothing creature, fond of his drink and of sweet illness. He lived near Harket's and had frequently joined him on his spees. When Steve rode away from Bill Warner's he left the jug behind, and he had a parting words were:

"I'll fix him for yer, sustain an' shu'."

By a quick, cut Tuesday morning Miss Betsy had brushed herself and the rooms in her humble in her preparations for an early departure, as the road was a long and rough one and a start by daylight was necessary.

After breakfast Miss Betsy arrayed herself in her most beautiful bonnet in honor of the occasion. Then she got out her riding skirt and set down to await her escort, who was already past due.

The faint streaks of light in the east deepened into broad crimson bands, while the hills slowly lifted from the sunken world, like curtains of mauve rolled up from super fair pictures, and yet Steve or the lady cavalier. As the minutes took Miss Betsy grew quite restless and kept her father busy sending down to the mills to look for her missing escort. Finally "Pap" Struggs discovered an approaching thunderous boding weather national, and Miss Betsy concluded to the mills to be in readiness, as it was already so late. To her astonishment the rider proved to be Steve Trower instead of Grove Hacket.

"Hullo! hain't yo gone yit?" he exclaimed. "I thought you'd be off 'fore day."

"Sho-w'a a lady ter go 'thout company or wings anthar?" asked Miss Betsy with evident irritation. "Ther yer seen anything of Grove Hacket this mornin'?"

"Why, hain't he turned up yit?" questioned Steve in well feigned surprise.

"Yer ev anything ter git ter Dry Crick settlement?" asked Miss Betsy impatiently.

"If that's thar case, hit's likely yer won't set eyes on 'im terdar. I'm just hurried," continued Steve, as with sudden thought, "I seed Bill Warner jes' ter night, an' he tole me Hacket war on a powerful spree agin."

"Well, good mercy! now ain't that beautiful!" cried Miss Betsy indignantly.

"Jes' kinda ter mel," said Steve pensively, after a moment's reflection, "you's a mighty sight sotified an' hurried, an' she's a good 'un too. Now w'at's ther use ter stay at home when yer kin jump right on hot an' go straight ter ther show, which the ev'ry thing ter make yer a fetlow w'at likes better'n a promise."

Miss Betsy looked anxiously up the road, then wistfully down it.

"Hit must be jinkes w'at's keepin' 'im, shure he'd hev been yere 'fore this," she said by hesitation.

"If fetks is a-goin' they'll ougthter be on thar way thar," said "Pap" Struggs between the puffs of his cutepipe, and seemingly addressing his remarks to space.

"Thar say ez hit's a powerful big show," added Steve with alluring impressiveness. "Thar's ever' single varmint on thar whole ferm of ther parrit's ever ter see, an' rilin' an' tumblin' an' exhibiterd dogs, till yer'd die a-laffin' at 'em cuttin' up ther antses."

The picture was a most alluring one.

"Pap, I'm agoin' with Mr. Trower, thar's jes' w'at I am," said Betsy, gathering up her riding skirt.

Fully an hour later Grove Hacket rode up to the Struggs homestead. He was still under the influence of liquor, and showed unmistakable evidence of a night's debauch.

When he learned that Miss Betsy had gone away some time before in the company of Steve Trower, he turned about without a word, and giving his horse a savage cut with a switch, galloped back in the direction of his home.

"Thar's goin' ter be trouble yit 'twix Steve an' Grove jes' 'bout this very thing," muttered "Pap" Struggs as he slowly retraced his steps to the house, dubiously shaking his head as he went.

Some two weeks after this incident Hacket was out one day with his rifle for the purpose of bagging some game, and also to freshen up a bit after his long spree. He had learned from Bill Warner, in a moment of maudlin confidence, of the part his rival had played in the matter of his recent spree, and a desire for revenge burned fiercely within him. He had also possessed himself of the idea that Miss Betsy Struggs was a willing abettor in the shabby trick that had been played him, and his feelings were undergoing that strange process by which hatred can be finally evolved from love.

He had seen neither of the parties since and it was with surprise that he came suddenly upon Steve Trower taking a bath in one of the shady pools of a creek whose source was in the higher hills beyond. Grove's presence was so long unexpected to the bather. They looked at each other in silence for a moment, Steve standing in water up to his waist and Grove on the bank above him.

The bank was a little overhanging at this point, and Steve, with apparent indifference, moved slowly toward it, each step bringing the water farther up on his body and placing him more in the shelter of the bank.

Grove was not oblivious to this, and slowly raising his rifle to his shoulder said:

"Stop right thar!"

While the words were ominous, the action was more so, and Steve's head instantaneously disappeared under the water like a loon which had espied a foe.

Presently he came up within a little distance of where he had disappeared, while Grove, with a grotesque leer, deliberately brought his gun to bear upon him again, and Steve as promptly ducked his head under the water.

This odd performance was repeated several times, until Steve began to show unmistakable signs of fatigue, panting and blowing as he came to the surface.

As yet no word had been spoken.

"Gittin' scarce o' wind, is yer?" demanded Grove with sardonic satisfaction. "Yer thinkin' strunk, I'm mad a-mind ter make yer dance jes' ter tiddin' carkin, I hev. Dig!"

Steve promptly obeyed.

Again and again Grove compelled him to go down under the water, each time giving vent to loud gaffaws of delight which echoed through the valley.

Between these outbursts of merriment Grove kept up a running commentary.

"Lordy! Lordy! this is a heap sight funnier than thev show, hit air. Hit's better'n them edikated critters. Ef yer gits a little wet 'twon't hurt yer much. I'll git Bill Warner ter fetch yer down some prime sis redeye, leetwhile, ef yer git on no spree, kase yer must not be sick ter keep yer pinnent with me. S'pose yer dip down again—that's hit—only yer mustn't keep yer noggin under thar' water so long, for I'm 'feared yer health'll be so purely yer can't go down ter Dry Crick Settlement nex' show day, which, hit would be powerful unfortunit on Miss Betsy Struggs, now wouldn't hit? Mos' yer dip down agin! Well, don't stay thar long, for I want ter see yer purty face soon. Here yer come up. Now s'pose yer try diivin' once more—thet sorter 'minds me of a turtle-slippin' offen a log. Dangerd if this hain't a sight better'n any show I ever seed. Hit air hot how he kin dove."

Finally, utterly exhausted and breathless, Steve caught hold of the bared roots of a tree projecting out over the water.

"Yi yer air gittin' ter stunk, why, stunk" he cried sulkily. "What's thet ter yer feelings?"

"Jes's ness," answered Grove inscrutably, "though hit do look like a pity ter git a nice new hat, hain't yer air? Miss Betsy hev got up. I'm arter gittin' hoss wonsers, an' I don't 'low ter miss ness w'at comes in my way. This air a good time, too, ter settle up some ole scores w'at hev been rustin' for a long time back."

He slowly lowered his rifle, examined the lock carefully, then the priming and deliberately aimed it to his shoulder again.

"Usedy, is yer, yer jiggs headed terdar? he called out to Steve, who through all these preliminaries had maintained a wicked leaning.

"Quiet, yer cussin' coward!" the bather called out in defiance.

The next instant the sharp report of a rifle rang out through the silent valley, awakening the echoes among the hills.

Grove stood and watched the spot where there were more bubbles down until the rising trout stirred up the muddy and invaded the further bank. Then with the deliberate wave a grow calm again he slung his shattered his rifle and strode away.—H. C. Wood in Harper's.

The correspondents of scholars in Germany is far from abating. Fifty years ago there were but 22 students to every 100,000 inhabitants. The number now steadily fell to 19.5 in 1875 to 12.7 in the 100,000. In 1881 the ratio was 21 to 100,000, in 1886, and now it is 21.5. In 1872 there were but 15,784 students in all the universities. Now there are 30,000.

Don't Try to do too Much.

A man who works in an office or store six hours of the day does not return to his home and mowe furniture, or paint fence, or even mend his own clothes. No man expects it of him. A woman, doing precisely the same work for the same number of hours, will hurry home and work upon a dress or bat or embroidery, or some work about the house. The result is that nearly all men succeed in business life and very few women. Still, that men are more capable, they are simply more sensible. They choose their work in the world and give it their strength and time. Women must be content to do what they can, not to attempt the impossible.

If you are a good housekeeper think hours for it, and stick to it. If you are a good bookkeeper stick to that and be thankful, but don't attempt to keep house. It is not fair to yourself or to the work you are paid for. Be content to diversify your energy upon a dozen different occupations. Why women should be expected to do so much is a question. It isn't much that about it of "what" women do, but it is not satisfied that their sisters should be industrious and comfortable in their own way, but insist upon their attempting all sorts of commendable experiments. The time is fast approaching when sensible women will learn to make choice of one work in the world and stick to it, be it housekeeping or business life.—Boston Traveler.

Taking Out Grease Spots.

A correspondent asks how to take wagon grease out of a spring overcoat. Wagon grease makes the hardest kind of stain to remove from clothing, and we are therefore very glad to pass a recipe which has never been known to fail if proper time is allowed for the "charm" to work. If one could stay indoors for two days or a disaster's season and French chalk can be found to play a deservedly important part in making "old old" look like new, but we must hold by a professional gem cleaner, almost without any exception, leave a ring where they try to remove a spot with the former.

If a bobbed piece of clean woolen goods is placed under the part to be cleaned, a second saturated with benzine, rubbed gently on the way of the nap, another dry piece used at the last and the spot rubbed until perfectly dry there will positively be no mark left.

French chalk requires a little more time to remove grease, but has the advantage over benzine in being odorless. A piece that will last a long time may be bought at any druggist's for two cents. Scrape this thoroughly on the spot over night and brush off gently in the morning. If the stain is a bad one it may not have disappeared. In this case the application may have to be made again.—New York World.

Plenty of Sleep for Women.

It is well known but among physicians, nurses and those generally interested in the restoration of health, that the percentage of women among invalids and in asylum classes who retire early is alarmingly small. The term "alarmingly" is used advisably, because the growing tendency to keep late hours should be resisted by the best judgment and example her to establish in a manner that often threatens not only health but life more seriously. There are few women so constituted but that the wear and tear of daily life consumes to a great extent their vitality, which can only be restored by means of perfect repose.

Especially are long, unbroken hours of rest necessary for wives and mothers, all of whom are giving of their strength more generally and giving little physically in return save that which is derived from sleep. The growing tendency of the age toward physical culture training is not well sustained in the late hours so universally kept by many of the most enthusiastic advocates of that movement. Those who earnestly desire to use the most effective means at hand for the preservation of health and beauty should not fail to keep early hours.—Jennie Miller.

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