

A Generous Irishman.

The following curious incident is furnished by a *Times* correspondent: Capt. Andrew Willard, having served thirty years in the regular army, has been retired on half pay. During several years of Indian warfare, Willard had several interesting experiences, but none more unique than his introductory one.

Willard enlisted in New York City, and, after a month passed on Governor's Island, he, with the rest of his company, was sent to Fort Sill, Indian Territory, at a time when the Indians were giving the troops a lot of trouble. He had not been there long before he, with others, were told off for picket duty. The assignments to posts were by number, and Willard's number chanced to be 2. Before the other officer came to escort them to their posts Willard was approached by a red-haired, freckled-face Irish lad, who had been assigned to post 8.

"See here, me boy," said the Irishman, "ye're jist in an' grane at the bizness, an' ye've gone an' put yez on for number two. That's for-nist the stables, down yonder, an' it's the hardest place av thim all, so it is. I've number eight, which is out be thim two haystacks, an' all yez have to do is to walk from wan to the ither, back an' forth. It's a cinch, so it is, an' bairn' as yez grane at the biznis, I'll trade with yez for the wanst."

Willard thanked the young fellow for his kindness and gladly availed himself of his offer. When they fell in to march to their posts, the Irishman fell into the second place and Willard into the eighth. As the officer of the guard left Willard at the post he said:

"Now look here, young fellow, we lose a man on this post every night or two. Nobody knows how it happens, but when we come to relieve him we find him laid out cold. You are supposed to make frequent trips from one stack to the other, but you need not make the trip very often. Keep in the shade of the stack, where you cannot be seen, and keep a sharp lookout. If you see anything suspicious whatever, fire at it. Fire first and inquire afterward. Good night."

The Irishman's generosity was explained. Willard says his hair immediately took a perpendicular position and maintained it the rest of the night. Half of the night passed away without incident, and then—the moon being bright—he saw away out on the plain what he took to be a dog trotting about, back and forth, and circling here and there, as though seeking the trail of some quarry. After watching it a while, Willard turned his attention elsewhere, and for a time forgot all about the animal. Later he looked for the dog and found that it had approached much nearer to the stack, but was still circling about as when he first observed it. He continued to note its movements, and became aware, that each circle or tack the animal made, it approached a little nearer the stack. The movements seemed to him to be systematic, and he grew suspicious. He determined to take a shot at the beast on a venture. Raising the gun he took careful aim and fired. There came a yell that sounded wonderfully like a human voice, and the dog arose upon his hind legs and ran swiftly across the plain. When the officer and men came running to learn the cause of the shot, Willard explained and was complimented for his sagacity. There were no more men picked off from that post during Willard's stay at the post.

A. J. B.

An African Night.

From the bush rose the death scream of some animal in the grip of its pursuer, jackals yelled in the distance or the prolonged howl of a hyena broke out close at hand. A wretched "boy" imitated it derisively, the snores gave place to a renewed murmur of talk, the askari flung another log on the smoldering fire. Not always did the land lie silent. I have known sleep made difficult by the antics of hundreds of zebra, who thudded hither and thither on the plain like diminutive cavalry cried in a succession of little barks, worried, perhaps, by finding the camps between them and their accustomed watering place. In some districts when on wet nights rain had swamped the fires, a zoological garden of "quoting beasts" was apt to foregather round the tents. Thus hyena, jackals, three and a brace of hippopotami contributed intimately to one scene that I wot of, and, as the darkness was too thick for vision, that night yielded but scanty peace. Hippo at all times awkward things to get raveled up it went ropes.—*Cornhill Magazine.*

THE METEOROLOGIST

Miss Sophia Nichols was a lady of great modesty and of a very retiring disposition, and as she had passed the age of "fair, fat and forty," wasted few glances on men.

She had lately established herself in a suit of rooms on the southeast corner of Laurel street, facing the lovely little Beech park. It was just the place for a quiet spinster who loved nature and retirement, and she enjoyed it with unalloyed quiet for a few days.

Opposite her new abode was a quiet old house with four immense windows wherein were set tiny panes of glass to each room. The inhabitants seemed very quiet persons, and she seldom saw them except in the evening.

After she had been domiciled about a week in her new place her attention was attracted by the very queer action of an old gentleman who lived in the quaint house.

After finishing her 1 o'clock dinner she always established herself cozily with work or book at her front window, and the old gentleman would as regularly appear in his yard and, drawing out of his pocket a red bandanna, raise it solemnly high in air. He did not seem to wave it, but let it go at its own sweet will, or the wind's will.

On moonlight nights, always about 10 o'clock, he repeated this mysterious rite, or whatever it was. His eyes were nearly always turned toward her window, and stared fixedly. Sometimes he did not use the handkerchief at all, but gazed steadfastly at her window.

This performance he kept up every day until Miss Sophia began to be fearfully nervous. She was really afraid it would draw down the gossip of the neighborhood on her, so she tried in many mild, well-bred ways to let the old gentleman understand that she did not like his very open attentions.

She pulled down her blind, and on popping out to see what effect it had found it had none; he still waved. Or she would retreat to the farthest corner of the room out of his range of vision, and her mirror told her he still gazed.

Finally her nephew came to make her a week's visit. Every spinster has a favorite niece or nephew, and Jack Brown was Miss Sophia's. She admired his youth (he was only twenty-four), his courage, his well-shaped body, and even his impetuosity (to put it mildly) temper. He was rather good looking, too, although his hair was auburn and his mustache, such as it was, undeniably red.

The first day of his visit Miss Sophia kept him engaged by showing him her photograph album, of which she had half a dozen. But she couldn't keep this up a whole week, so the second day Jack remarked as the bandanna and its owner appeared:

"What a queer old chap! What's he doing?" To which Miss Sophia tremulously replied, "I don't know," which was literally true, for she had her back carefully turned to the window.

The next day Jack observed the same performance and said:

"Confound the old scoundrel! Aunt Sophia, I really believe he's trying to flirt with you or else he's a lunatic." Jack was a senior at college and had taken his degree in the art of flirting.

The following day Jack's ire reached a climax as the old gentleman appeared as usual and not only waved the offending red rag (Jack was a fiery Republican), but actually gazed fixedly at Miss Sophia's window for fully five minutes.

He grabbed up his hat and said to his aunt, "I'll know the meaning of his confounded impudence or my name's not Jack Brown!"

He dashed downstairs, paying no attention to his aunt's pleadings: "Don't, Jack, don't! You will only make matters worse!" She pulled down her curtain and peeped from behind it to see what Jack would do.

He was striding angrily across the street, and in a few moments was at the old gentleman's side. With a wrathful face and sternly determined manner he said:

"Sir, what is the meaning of your infernal impudence? It is a nice thing that a quiet lady cannot sit at her window without being insulted!"

YOUNG AND OLD IN THE ARMY

Lieutenant Toney Rucker came out of the rookery known as the bachelors' quarters and started jauntily down the officers' line bearing in his hand a kite.

He was immediately surrounded by the abundant supply of small boys from the officers' quarters, all of whom were anxious for the kite. He picked out young Arthur because the boy was so fond of sport and never cried when thrown from his pony, but young Smart of the cavalry, lounging on the bachelors' piazza, stirred up "Mr. Dawdle of the infantry by remarking, "You will get left, plebe, for these goes Toney boot licking that boy again, and he is sure of an invitation to tea, and you know what that means."

"That boy" was the captain's son, and the captain's wife had a young lady sister visiting her, whom Toney had already escorted for a ride on a troop horse.

But this is all byplay to the kite story. Toney took out of his pocket a ball of cord, borrowed from the commissary sergeant for the occasion, and straightened the kite tail, made of old yellow stripes cut from scouting trousers. Everything being ready, he called out, "Hold her, my son, and I will run her up for you, and then she is yours."

Toney started in quarter race time, encouraged by frantic yells from the boys; but, alas, just as Arthur's young aunt was merrily applauding from the piazza the kite commenced to duck in the most cowardly fashion, and the faster Toney ran the more it ducked.

"Sumpen's the matter," said Arthur. "Tain't got the right sort of tail," said another; "tie a rock to her," and many similar pieces of advice came from all the boys at once.

By this time the piazzas were filled with spectators, and the men waiting for mess call sailed out to the barrack porches to see the fun, when old Major Stuffy started toward the boys with that important air which he thought becoming to one so old, "be gad, dragons, before the war, sir!"

"I say, Toney, you want to shorten up the center bridle and make her stand on the wind like this," said the old major, taking hold of the kite.

Toney, who was puzzling his mind as to where he could get more kite tail without tearing up his only extra pair of sheets, looked up and remarked, "Well, old man, what do you know about kites anyway?"

Now, Major Stuffy had always been very partial to Toney and showed it by always joking with him while swelling with ill fitting dignity in his intercourse with all the subalterns. The old gentleman's nerves had been a little shaken for a few days because the infantry colonel and brevet major general commanding the post—"one of those demned volunteers, you know"—had added insult to injury by sending him an order not to drive any more government horses in his private conveyance. Toney's light and airy remark upset the major completely, and he was on the point of venting his rage on him when who of all others should come strolling out but the commanding officer himself. He who had won his stars for bravery and conspicuous services from Perryville to Resaca certainly ought to know all about kites.

The excitement on the parade was too much for the old gentleman, and dismissing his orderly to dinner he raised his sun umbrella and remarked to his excellent spouse, "I will go and show them how to put up a kite." The very idea seemed to make him young again, and he threw out his chest and squared his shoulders as if he were going to take a new lease of life. He joined the group around the kite, and Major Stuffy braced himself pompously and saluted with an air which plainly said, "I'll stand me ground, be gad, sir!"

"How do you do, Mr. Rucker?" said the general blandly. "I see that your kite doesn't work right, and—" "It will be all right in a moment, sir. I have sent to the troop tailor for more tail."

"But, Mr. Rucker, when I was a boy—he retires for old age next year—we never made long tails. You just split the pieces you have and tie some knots in them. Then shorten up the bridle and make her stand so—"

"Just what I told the general," said the major eagerly, "and he insulted me, sir! Yes, sir; this young fellow that has not been in the service ten years, sir, asked me what did I know about kites, sir!"

Now, Major Stuffy had been avoiding the general ever since he had received the communication about the horses and had even declined invi-

tations to several garrison affairs for fear of meeting him, but he was greatly soothed when the general turned and said:

"Why, major, I am astonished, sir! Mr. Rucker, what do you mean, sir, by speaking to Major Stuffy in this way, sir? An old man and valued officer of your regiment, too, sir! I will not allow such things in my garrison, sir!"

"But, general, I did not intend to hurt the major's feelings. I guess I don't know much about kites anyway, boys, so you take it out behind the barracks and fly it to suit yourselves," said Toney in a hopeless kind of way.

"It will not go up unless you change the bridle, as suggested by the major," said the general.

"And split the tail and knot it, as the general explained, boys," said the major.

Toney left the two old veterans, and as he entered the bachelors' quarters he was muttering maledictions on the "old duffers" who had spoiled all his plans.

The sudden disappearance of Toney and the boys left the two old gentlemen alone on the parade, and the whole garrison was enjoying their dilemma. The general hemmed and hawed a moment and said:

"By the way, major, about that horse order, you know these young lieutenants have an idea that they can use ambulances and government animals whenever they choose, and I am determined to teach them a lesson. Of course I did not intend the order to hold in your case. Some consideration must be shown to long and valuable service, sir, and I want you to understand this matter."

Major Stuffy extended his hand warmly to the general and said:

"I am glad you mentioned it, general, but of course I understood the matter perfectly. These young snips are too presumptuous anyway and think they are entitled to all the consideration due old officers."

One of these "young snips" was struggling to pay up the bills contracted when his daughter was married and another was incessantly engaged in short division in the effort to provide for the wants of his four boys.

The two veterans strolled away together in the direction of the club-room, followed by several officers from the row who were interested in the reconciliation. As the major threw open the door and followed the general in he smiled benignantly on the old habits and said,

"Come, gentlemen, join us in a bottle of wine." Of course the invitation was accepted, for since the major had quit going on little "frolics," as he called them, in deference to the temperance ideas of the young snips, all recognized this as some special occasion. The major busied himself seeing that "Tubs" neglected no one and talked in the most amiable way about the magnificent weather and fine post the general had built up.

"This reminds me of old days in Texas, gentlemen, when the dragons"—he was saying when his Loyal Legion button fell off and rolled into a convenient knothole under the billiard table. Before he recovered from his efforts to secure the rolling button the general, with the air of Sir Roger de Coverley, removed his own little emblem and said:

"Major, let me present you with this as a memento of this most pleasant occasion."

While the major was still overcome by this graceful move the general wished them all a pleasant time and escaped to his quarters. The news spread around that the major was having a birthday, and even Toney Rucker put away his wrath when the orderly came to ask his presence at the clubroom.

"Tubs" was kept busy during the afternoon attending to the spiritual needs of the ever increasing party, and for each new arrival the major would say: "What a fine gentleman the general is! It was the neatest thing you ever saw, sir! Why, he actually took his button from his own breast and presented it to me, be gad, and we will drink to his health, gentlemen!"

That evening as the major and Toney, arm in arm, wended their way way to their quarters they passed young Dawdle on the walk with the captain's wife's sister making hay while the field was clear.

One Man's Reasoning.

The reasons why a man should employ a matrimonial advertisement in order to get married are often a source of bewilderment.

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