

ST. TAMMANY FARMER.

Covington, August 16, 1879.

HOW HE WAS CURED.

"My name is Laggs—Major Laggs, sir! What I don't know about war isn't worth knowing, sir!"

Here the Major generally paused to take breath, and contemplate the effect of his words upon his listener.

"Yes, sir!" he would continue, "I've seen service. Blood and bullets are my proper food. Never was frightened. Went into a battle once cool and composed as I am now, but my left leg was nervous. It manifested a tendency to depart for more peaceful scenes. But I glanced at it sternly, commanding, 'Be quiet leg—be quiet!' and immediately it was firm as a rock. There was will, sir! At that same battle, when I was in the very thickest of the fight, I caught a cowardly soldier making an attempt to run away. I just looked at him, and he returned to the ranks and fought bravely the rest of the day. He told me afterward he would rather singly face a whole army than receive again the eagle glance of my eye."

Major Laggs was the stiffest kind of a military gentleman. Although his connection with the army had been a thing of so many years ago that no one but himself remembered it, his air and tread were entirely military. He wore a blue coat with brass buttons. This coat was buttoned up about a neck and chin denoting brusqueness and unyielding character.

Although a battle-scarred veteran—at least he said he was battle-scarred, and surely he must have known (some envious miscreants claimed he was bottle-scarred)—he had a fault, we had almost written "a great fault." This weakness in his otherwise strong character was a chronic habit of making love.

He had not the slightest intention of getting married, although hardly a week passed without his asking somebody to marry him. He always selected elderly maiden ladies or widows for his victims. In this he was shrewd. He knew that, unlike gushing misses, ladies of the class he selected thought proper to exhibit a hesitation and surprise on receiving proposals of marriage. In this lay his safety. The Major took good care to construe such hesitation and surprise into refusal. He was very abrupt on these occasions.

"Madame, my income is three thousand—my real estate increasing in value. My heart is wholly yours; will you honor me with your hand? Excuse an old soldier's way of putting it."

Then, as a matter of course, from the lady came expressions of the before-mentioned hesitation and surprise.

The major took advantage of it immediately.

"A prior attachment, ma'am! I should be glad to be favored with the gentleman's name. I'm sorry, but let another word, ma'am—not another word?"

He would then retreat in good order, chucking at his sharpness.

This sort of thing could not be kept up forever.

The Major's peculiarity began to be talked about and pretty generally understood. Two or three ladies gave him "pieces of their minds." Still was the Major unmoved, and continued in the error of his ways.

It was summer time, and the major's "set" were staying at a certain seaside hotel. No doubt gazing on the ocean made our military friend more romantic than usual. His conquests and proposals that season were only equaled by his successful retreats.

But let man beware of the wrath of the fair sex.

The doors of Laggs was at hand. When women plot, then come the days of evil.

The Major's gentlemen friends liked him after a fashion, but were not over fond of his military manners and boastful airs of conquest.

They were readily induced to enter into the plot against him.

So one day a friend, whom we shall call Jones, said to him:

"My dear Laggs, there's to be a gorgeous arrival to-night. A magnificent widow. Beautiful, Laggs—beautiful as a dream!"

The Major's eyes twinkled.

"What's this angel's name?"

"Gobbs—Mrs. Gobbs."

"Gobbs!" exclaimed the Major, horrified. "What a name for a beautiful woman!"

"Oh, bother that," said Jones. "A rose, by any other name," etc.

"Will I be introduced to her?"

"You will, Major. I, Jones, will see to it."

Laggs became Shakspearian.

"Till then, sit still, my soul!"

That night there was a hop. Present, all those in the plot against the Major. Enter the widow Gobbs, escorted by Mr. Jones. Our military friend plucked up his shirt collar, ran his fingers through his hair and struck a graceful position, and then awaited the introduction.

"Mrs. Gobbs, allow me to make you acquainted with my friend, Major Laggs."

The widow bowed gracefully, and the coquettish glance she gave the Major from under her dark lashes thrilled him. Then they danced. Dancing was always a serious business with the Major.

His motions were suggestive of a man on stilts, and his face wore a funereal expression. But in this dance he smiled, for the widow's glances were almost tender. What need to recount Mrs. Gobbs' arts, or Major Laggs' gallantry?

Two weeks passed, and the evening came when the farce of proposing and running away was to be again enacted.

They were alone in a little conservatory. The flowers around were suggestive of romance, and the widow sighed.

The Major could contain himself no longer.

"Madam, no flower here is more beautiful than you. Behold me, your adorer and slave."

Again the widow sighed.

"My income, madam, is three thousand. Will you make an unpolished military man happy with your hand?"

Thus, reckoning without his host, Laggs rushed upon his fate. What an awful widow! Upon the moment, showing no hesitation whatever, Mrs. Gobbs' head dropped upon his shoulder, and she whispered:

"I am yours, dear!"

Here was a dreadful state of affairs. Her face was beautiful, but he contemplated it with horror. Oh, if he could only have borrowed a South American earthquake for a few minutes! He held her head as most bachelors do babies.

This woman was determined to marry him. How should he be rid of her? He resolved to appeal to the mercenary part of her nature.

"Perhaps," he said, "in the ardor of my love, I exaggerated my yearly income. Could you love a comparatively poor man?"

What disinterested affection!

"I love you for yourself alone, Major," she murmured. "Nothing shall part me from you."

He nearly groaned. He was caught at last—had proposed once too often. But he must make the best of it now, hoping for something to turn up to free him from his bondage.

When he left her, that night, it was with the promise that on the morrow she should wear the engagement ring.

When he had gone, how that dreadful widow laughed, and shook her little fist after him.

On the morrow, as the Major had promised, she wore the engagement ring—a plain gold one.

There is no need to describe the Major's misery. He was crestfallen. He lost his military air, and had the subdued manners of that mythical individual known as "a high private in the rear ranks."

At last, in desperation, he confided in his friend Jones.

"I don't want to marry that woman," he said. "How shall I get away from her?"

"Let this be a lesson to you," replied Jones, winking mentally to himself. "You wish my advice? I see but one way out of it—quarrel with her."

"Quarrel with her? But there must be cause."

"The cause man, is right at your hand. Didn't you see her dance with that big whiskered Legrange, last night?"

"Yes."

"He's the man, Major. Keep your eye on them—keep your eye on them."

The Major did keep his eye on them. Fierce looking, big whiskered Legrange was certainly very attentive. He rubbed his hands with delight, though he tried hard to convince himself that he was virtuously indignant.

Jones may be considered head fiend in the plot against the Major, for when that military gentleman came to him again for advice, he said:

"You must quarrel with her before friends. Then you will have witnesses if she sues you for breach of promise."

Major Laggs shuddered at the mention of a suit, and fell into the trap.

It was night, and the Major's set were assembled in the hotel parlor. Enter the widow Gobbs. Major Laggs deliberately turned his back upon her. The widow gave a faint scream, exclaiming:

"What does this man mean!"

Every one present, except the victim, was in the plot.

One lady, with difficulty, suppressed a giggle.

Major Laggs turned upon his betrothed, sternly inquiring:

"Where, madam, is the ring I gave you?"

The widow colored, or pretended to, and made no answer.

"Oh," said Jones, maliciously, "I saw it on Legrange's finger!"

"Ha, ha! Enough—enough!" said the Major, melo-dramatically. "False woman, I cast you off forever!"

Exclamations of horror from all around. The widow would have fainted, but the fierce Legrange, entering suddenly, caught her in his arms.

"What does this mean?" he thundered, looking as blood-thirsty as a Zouave.

The Major may have been brave in the field; he was not in the parlor. He trembled when the infuriated Legrange, having learned the state of affairs, turned on him, fiercely exclaiming:

"Villain! I must have your blood. This lady is my wife!" at the same time drawing a revolver.

In terror, Major Laggs rushed from the room. A roar of laughter followed him. The loudest laughers of them all were Legrange and his wife. The plot had succeeded.

The Major left by the first train, thoroughly cured of his love-making propensities. None of them ever saw him again.

TOO MUCH SLEEP.—"God bless the man who invented sleep." So said Sancho Panza. But there are those who will not feel like blessing the man who has discovered that there is danger as well as health and happiness in slumber. The *Golden Rule* rises to warn us that there is such a thing as too much sleep. It says: The effects of too much sleep are not less signal than those arising from its privation. The whole nervous system becomes blunted, so that the muscular energy is enfeebled, and the sensations, and moral and intellectual manifestations are obtunded. All the bad effects of inaction become developed. The memory is impaired, the powers of imagination are dormant, and the mind falls into a kind of hebetude, chiefly because the functions of the intellect are not sufficiently exerted when sleep is prolonged or too often repeated. To sleep good is not necessarily to be a good sleeper. Generally they are the poorest sleepers who remain the longest in bed, i. e. they awaken less refreshed than if the time of rising were earlier by an hour or two. We commend this to those who cry "a little more sleep and a little more slumber."

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