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THE SERJEANT.

Menie Morrison was the bonniest lassie in a' Burnfoot—so, at least, said all the male portion of the community; the women were not quite so sure about it; some of them hinting that she was red haired, others saying plainly enough that she was a pale faced, up setting thing, that didna ken how to come into the kirk for pride; and what was she, after all, but just auld John Morrison the bedral's daughter.

Menie was a bonnie lassie, and she had been singularly fortunate; she had been a good and faithful servant for some years to an old maiden lady; who had lately died, at the time our story opens; and she had left Menie most of her wardrobe, and £10 in money, which was accounted quite a fortune at Burnfoot. Moreover, she was going to be married to Richard Thompson, the young blacksmith in the village, a steady, well-doing lad, with a good business and a comfortable house of his own. His mother lived with him; and Ritchie had promised to his father on his death bed that the old woman should always find a home with him. To most young women this would have been a drawback, but Menie liked Ritchie all the better for his kindness to his mother, keeping in mind the old proverb that a good son aye makes a good husband. Now Ritchie had one failing that had already brought him into some serious scrapes—he was tremendously jealous; he thought that every man that even looked at Menie must be in love with her; and as she was by no means disinclined for a little fun and flirtation, in a quiet way, poor Ritchie had his hands full. He gave Sandy Mason, the young miller up the water, two black eyes for lingering about her father's house one evening, trying to get speech of her; and a smart young Irishman, who had lately come to the village, having said in Ritchie's hearing that he had a good mind to try to put the "comother" on her (whatever that might be), he there and then gave him such a thrashing as quite satisfied him, although he was an Irishman.

At the time our story opens it is the month of May, and Ritchie and Menie had agreed to be married about Michaelmas, when Mrs. Gordon, one of good Dr. Leslie, the minister's daughters arrived at the manse with three children and a nursemaid. Her husband, a captain in a regiment of foot, was quartered in the neighboring town of L—— with a recruiting party. As the cottage in which Miss Graham, Menie's late mistress, had lived, was to let, furnished, Mrs. Gordon took it for three months; and Menie, after some persuasion, for she was busy with her providing, agreeing to serve her for that time. Ritchie was greatly annoyed at this, as the Captain had a smart soldier servant coming about the place; and that he should ever speak to Menie was more than could be borne.

The household at Rose Bank Cottage consisted of Mrs. Gordon, her three children, Katy the nursemaid, and Menie. There was also a splendid fellow of a cat, which a serjeant of the regiment had given the eldest boy; it was named after the donor, Serjeant Macdonald, and was a great favorite with everybody. However, since they came to Rose Bank he had got into dissipated habits, insisting on going out at night and staying till morning, and then scratching at the window of the room where Menie slept to be turned in.

"Menie, I canna stand this," said Ritchie one evening as they were parting at the little gate behind the cottage, "ye mairn leave this and come home. What right has that fellow to speak to you in that manner?" alluding to the soldier servant who had just gone into the house, and had passed some joke with Menie.

"And what for should I gang home?" said Menie; "are ye losing your senses entirely, Ritchie? Surely, man, ye canna be jealous o' me wi' that fellow a common soldier. Look here," (pointing down the garden), "there's a wise-like fellow o' a tattie-bogle; I think ye'll be turning jealous o' him next."

"Ye're an impudent cutty, Menie," said Ritchie; "I wonder that I fash myself about ye. But is that chield that

gaed in the noo just a common soldier? I thoct it wad be him."

"Na, its no the serjeant," said Menie, laughing. "he is a braw fellow; there's no money like him."

"Is he often here?" said Ritchie.

"Oh, yes," said Menie, "he maistly stays here; we couldna do without the serjeant. Frae the mistress down we're a fond o' the serjeant."

"Is he a married man?" said Ritchie.

"I d'na think he is," says Menie, laughing again, "but ye needna put down your broos and steek your fists the gate. Ritchie, if you hurt the serjeant, I could never speak to you again; but guid nicht, lad, it's time I was in."

Ritchie gaed home that night with his head in a whirl; he would not taste the supper his mother had prepared for him. This was the worst business yet: a serjeant—a braw fellow, as she had called him—living under the same roof with Menie; it was dreadful; he was nearly in a fever before morning. His two apprentices had a bad time of it next day; everything went wrong with Ritchie.

Although he had determined that he would not go near Menie that night, he got so restless about dusk that he thought he would go and look about, and perhaps he might get a glimpse of this magnificent serjeant. Just as he got to the back gate he heard voices down the walk, and presently Menie and a female friend of her's came out. He had drawn back among some bushes, so they did not see him.

"Weel, good nicht, Menie," said the friend; "I am sorry that I have not seen the serjeant."

"The serjeant's a rascal," said Menie; "he will gang out at night, and he'll be coming to my window rattling at a' the hours in the morning, and of course I canna see an' let him in."

"Ye should learn him better manners," said the friend, going down the road laughing.

Menie stood for some minutes looking down the road very wistfully, and then turned in at the gate with a heavy sigh. Ritchie's heart began to beat. Was it for him or the serjeant she was looking in that weary way? He understood from what he had heard that the serjeant was out, and was expected to come in during the night; so he was determined he would see him, and have it out with him some way or another.

Now, it so happened that Captain Gordon had promised to come out from L—— to the cottage that same evening; and although he had been unavoidably detained till it was late, still he was anxious to keep his word, and he set off to walk in the soft moonlight of that May evening. It took him longer to walk than he had anticipated, and it was very late indeed when he got to the cottage. He did not wish to disturb Mrs. Gordon or the children by ringing the bell so he went quietly round to the back, to the window of Menie's room, and tapped gently.

"Wha's there," said Menie terrified.

"It's just me, Menie, my dear," said the captain; "let me in quietly."

"Will she?" said a voice behind him; and he found himself lifted off the ground and shaken as a dog would shake a rat.

The captain, although taken at a disadvantage, was a strong man, and struggled manfully with his assailant, but he was getting the worst of it.

"I'll learn you to come to Menie's window that way, you infernal villain," said Ritchie. "What business have you here, I would like to ken?"

"I think I may rather ask you that," said the captain, struggling to get breath.

"Oh, Ritchie," said Menie, running out, "have you gone mad a' thegither? It's the captain!"

"The captain?" said Ritchie in amazement, letting him go; "I thoct it was the serjeant."

"The serjeant, you great generil," said Menie.

"What is the meaning of all this, Menie?" said the captain, "and what serjeant do you allude to?"

"Here he comes to speak for himself," said Menie, as an immense red-coat stalked around the corner of the house; "here's the serjeant, Ritchie, I am sure you will be mair jealous than ever now that you have seen him."

Poor Ritchie stood utterly dum-founded as the captain, now seeing through the affair, burst into laughter.

"I will leave you to make your peace with Menie," said he; "but oh, man, to be jealous of a cat!"

Ritchie did make his peace with Menie; and in due time they married, and a very happy couple they were; and if ever Ritchie showed the slightest inclination to be jealous, the least allusion to a cat or a serjeant brought him very quickly to his senses. I saw him a few Sundays ago standing at the plate, an elder of the kirk, as Menie, with half a dozen children, passed on to their own seat.—*Ladies Own Journal.*

Pleasant Paragraphs.

THE RUGG DOCUMENTS.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

I put up that night at the Fox and Pint House, and studied out where I'd go next.

I decided on Marysville Corners, in the State of New Jersey.

Afore I set out, I bought a couple of feet of lightning rod to terry in my pocket, for fear I should be struck by Jersey lightning—which I am told is as thick as blackberries in that region.

To Marysville Corners lived a man and a brother, of the culled persuasion who had been a B. S. An attached B. S., so his letter sed.

His name was Sambo Gumbo Washington Esquire.

He was aged one hundred and two and four months. He had his eyesight and his hearing, and his speeches, and all his other senses and reasons, as perfectly as a boy of sixteen, who is just beginning to hanker after something to make his whiskers grow.

It took me two days to git to Marysville Corners, and when I got there I inquired for Mr. Sambo Gumbo Washington Esquire at the depot. They didn't know him! Never heard of him! I was shocked! The idea of anybodys being so onerated as to live class by a Body Servant of the late lamented George, and not know him!

I groaned in agony of spirit, but then I took comfort, as the well known passage of Scripser cum into my mind:

"A profit is not without honor save in his own country."

I consulted Mr. Gumbo Washington's apistle to me, and found that he lived on the Bog Holler road—the next house beyond the skule'us. So I enquired for the Bog Holler road, and trudged onwards, musing onto the on gratefulness of republicks in general and of the State of New Jersey in particular.

I soon cum to the skule'us and seed Mr. Gumbo's house just ahead. It was small and umble, and had a couple of dirty looking dogs on the doorstep, and two more a setting on a wheelcarrer class by.

All of 'em cum at me as I arriv, but I laid rounn me with my ambrill, and they collapsed with their tails at half mast.

A youngish man answered my knock.

He was as white as anybody, but he sed he was Gumbo's great grandson. He sed they had bin expecting me, and his granther was very onpatient for me to cum, seeing as he thought I might give him a trifle, as he was very poor. He didn't chew, nor smoke, nor drink, but he took peppermint drops, and he was about out of 'em. Peppermint was his granther's wust failing!

I give him a quarter, and he sed he'd cum and prepare the old man for to receive me.

I sot down on a bag of corn, and looked around me. Evidently Mr. Gumbo warn't overburdened with the kind of riches that moth and rust doth corrupt, which Elder Jones is so fond of telling about when he wants a donation of some of that same kind of corruptible property.

There wasn't much furniture except the dogs aforesaid, and a couple of disabled cheers, and a table made by putting a shed door onto a flour barril.

Prity soon a woman cum in, and sed granther would see me now, and I fo

tered her into an inner room, where the venerable B. S. was engaged in reading the Bible upside down. I wanted to ask him why he preferred to read that way, but I forbore, for fear it wouldn't be respectful to his great age.

He was the oldest looking man I ever seed. His hair was white as snow and his face was black and shiny, and he wore green goggles as big as saucers.

"Granther," sez the young woman, "here is Mrs. Perkins that you sent the letter to. She's come to see you about Master Washington."

"Ay, ay!" sez the B. S., shaking his head, "I'll warrant it! That's what everybody comes to see ole Gumbo if it warn't for dat interest dey's all got in Massa Wash'n'ton."

"Oly aged friend," sez I, "do you enjoy good health?"

"Yes, I jist does dat, misses, tank de Lord."

"You are a pious man, be you?" sez I.

"So a brand plueged from de burning missis."

"What kind?" sez I, "Methodist or Baptist?"

"Methodis'."

"And you was a servant to George Washington?" sez I.

"Yes, missis, and a good massa he was, too. Neber scold, neber swear, neber do nothin'. Allers prayed tree times a day, and in foul weather four times, letting alone Sundays, when it was nuffin' else but pray and sing all de time. Ah, missis, dem was great times down in old Vagginny."

"Did he have many other servants?" sez I.

"Heaps ob 'em, sez he: but no body servants but dis chile. None at all, bress de Lord!"

"Wasn't some man?" sez I.

"As harnsum as a pictur'. His eyes and hair was black as de wing of a crow—"

"Black?" sez I. "I allers heard he had blueish gray eyes."

"Neber had nuffin' of de kind. Guess I know. Hain't I seed 'em snap when he was excited?"

"Did he ever get mad?" sez I.

"Neber!" sez he; "only excited."

"How did you amuse yourselves in them days?" sez I.

"Oh, we chased 'possums, and picked cotton over, and danced in the ebenings. Golly, missis! if dis chile warn't so pious he could show you jist how dat dancing did kick up!"

"Won't do no hurt!" sez I; "not a mite?" They danced in the Bible, you know!"

"So they did," sez he. "Ann Marier," to the woman, "do you s'pose Elder Bungby would eber find it out if I should jist shave her down a little?"

"Don't be so attish, Granther?" sez Ann Marier, patting him on the head.

The old man he got up, ballancing himself on his cane, and having cleared the floor by kicking two of the afore said dogs into the fire place, and tother one under the bed, he began for to trip the light fantastic."

For a man aged one hundred and two, he went it lively, and I was jist a going to clap my hands and yell for Ann Core, as they do in theatres, when one of them dogs in trying to shy out of the door, with the cat in his mouth, held by the scruff of her neck—somehow got himself tangled up with the legs of the B. S., and the venerable man cum down on the floor kerswash!

And as he fell, his white hair and his green goggles rolled off, and the black was wiped off from one side of his face and left a white streak—and my gracious me! Cum to git a good look at him, it was the identicle young man that had cum to the door when I had rapped.

I was dumbfounded, and I stood still, froz to the spot.

Yours, J. R. PERKINS.

A ten-year old girl in Wood county, Ohio, weighs 245 pounds.

Over one-quarter of the State of Minnesota has been given to railroads. The Emperor of Russia will visit England in April.

A prize Brahma hen was sold recently at a poultry show, in Buffalo, for \$75.

The Christmas Legend.

It was Christmas Eve. The night was very dark and the snow falling fast as Hermann, the charcoal burner, drew his cloak tighter around him, and the wind whistled fiercely through the trees of the Black Forest. He had been to carry a load to a castle near, and was now hastening home to his little hut. Although he worked very hard, he was poor, gaining barely enough for the wants of his wife and his four little children. He was thinking of them, when he heard a faint wailing. Guided by the sound, he groped about and found a little child, scantily clothed, shivering and sobbing by itself in the snow.

"Why, little one, have they left thee here all alone to face this cruel blast?"

The child answered nothing, but looked piteously up in the charcoal-burner's face.

"Well, I cannot leave thee here. Thou wouldst be dead before the morning."

So saying, Hermann raised it in his arms, wrapping it in his cloak and warming its little cold hands in his bosom. When he arrived at his hut, he put down the child and tapped at the door which was immediately thrown open, and the children rushed to meet him.

"Here, wife, is a guest to our Christmas Eve supper," said he leading in the little one, who held timidly to his finger with its tiny hand.

"And welcome he is," said the wife. "Now let him come and warm himself by the fire."

The children all pressed around to welcome and gaze at the little new-comer. They showed him their pretty fire-tree, decorated with bright colored lamps in honor of Christmas Eve, which the good mother had endeavored to

make a fee for the children. Then they sat down to supper, each child contributing of its portion for the guest looking with admiration at its clear, blue eyes, and golden hair, which shone soon to shed a brighter light in the little room, and as they gazed, it grew into a sort of halo round his head, and his eyes beamed with a heavenly lustre.

Soon two white wings appeared at his shoulder, and he seemed to grow larger and larger, and then the beautiful vision vanished spreading out his hands as in benediction over them. Hermann and his wife fell on their knees, exclaiming, in awe struck voices, "The holy Christ child!" and then embraced their wondering children in joy and thankfulness that they had entertained the Heavenly Guest.

The next morning, as Hermann passed by the place where he had found the fair child, he saw a cluster of lovely white flowers with dark green leaves, looking as though the snow itself had blossomed. Hermann plucked some, and carried them reverently home to his wife and children, who treasured the fair blossoms, and tended them carefully in remembrance of that wonderful Christmas Eve, calling them Chrysanthemums; and every year, as the time came round, they put aside a portion of their feast and gave it to some poor little child according to the words of the Christ: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

The Guardian Rat.

In the "early days," San Francisco was completely overrun with rats. It was a common thing to see them running through the streets in every direction. I have often heard a "49'er" tell of his experience with one, and I have every reason to believe in the truthfulness of his statement. His place of business was on a wharf, somewhere near what is now the corner of Montgomery and Washington streets, a location very favorable to the species of rodent under discussion. As was very common in those days, my informant slept in the store. There were numerous traps set to catch rats, and one day on entering his place of business, his attention was called to an immense gray rat struggling in a trap. Some sudden impulse seized him to set it at liberty; he said he thought its apparent age and venerable appearance influenced him—

When freed, it did not immediately leave his presence, but remained for some time, and accepted food from his hands. After this the rat put in an appearance daily, always receiving food and making demonstrations of pleasure at his presence.

One night he was awakened from a sound sleep by a gentle but impetuous scratching of his head. He was at first alarmed, thinking it a supernatural visitation, but recovering himself he set about ascertaining the source of his disturbance. At this time his attention was drawn to a noise that he was soon convinced was caused by an attempt to file a strong bolt by which the door was secured in addition to the lock. Rising softly he put his revolver to the key hole and fired, an exclamation and a groan told that execution had been done. On lighting a candle he discovered his friend, the rat, sitting on his pillow and wagging his tail with every appearance of extreme satisfaction. Daylight revealed a pool of blood, and tracks showing that a body had been removed by more than one person, and by following up the case it was ascertained that a well-arranged plot to rob and murder had been frustrated by timely warning of the old gray rat.

How He Started Out.

Henry J. Raymond, member of Congress, Lieutenant Governor of the State of New York, but better known as the founder and editor of the *New York Times*, was the son of a poor farmer. At the age of twenty he graduated at the University of Vermont. His father wanted him to go to work on the farm. But young Raymond had no inclination for farming. He felt if he could get a start in New York City, that he had habits of industry and the brains which would enable him to do all. Moved by

the son's convictions, the father raised three hundred dollars by mortgaging the farm, and with that sum the future journalist went to the city. There he studied law, taught school, wrote for the newspapers, and was the first person, it is said, to write regular letters from New York to the country journals.

Horace Greeley, about that time, started the *New York Tribune*, and being acquainted with Raymond, invited him to do his writing in the office. For some months he wrote at his borrowed desk, when, receiving a liberal offer to teach school in the South, he determined to accept it. Thanking Mr. Greeley for his many courtesies, he informed him of his intended departure.

"I don't think," said the kind-hearted editor, who, like Raymond, was then struggling for bread and a position, "there's any particular use of your going 'way down there, Henry. You ought to do as well here, and New York's a better place for you. How much are you to get for teaching?"

"Ten dollars a week, and I can't earn as much here."

"O, well, you'd better stay. Write for the *Tribune*; I'll give you eight dollars a week."

A man of seedy appearance entered a beer saloon in Savannah, called for a glass of lager, drank it, and as he started to go out, without paying for it the proprietor called his attention to his mistake. The man turned around and very coolly said: "My dear sir, I never pay for anything I drink—that's the kind of a man I am!" Whereupon the irate proprietor proceeded to kick him out saying: "Get out of here you mean, contemptible swindler—that's the kind of a man I am!"

Half the discomfort of life is the result of getting tired of ourselves.

Those who have true light in them selves seldom become satellites.

When a London *Times* dies, that paper says nothing of it.

Why is a side saddle like a four quart jug? Because it holds a gall on.

If Worcester spells Wooster, why does not Gloucester spell Gloopster.

The editor of the *Cape Ann Advertiser* says that a clean shirt is one of the most best gifts to man.

Pluck and patience are a strong firm in transacting the daily business of life.