

Our Family Circle.

GROOM OR BRIDE-GROOM?

By Jove, I'll do it! There is no other way of wooing her; so to the winds with common sense and propriety. Recommend me for the post as once, dear Jack and put me down your debtor for life.

The speaker was Tom Rainforth, a hair-brained young journalist, and the person addressed was Jack Fortescue, Esq., landed proprietor and gentleman at large. Tom and he had been dining at the Savage club, and, retiring to the smoke room, had been elaborating a little plot hatched by the fertile brain of the brilliant young journalist. The facts of the case at issue were these:

At the hunt ball recently held in the quaint old Lincolnshire village of Revesby, Tom Rainforth had the misfortune (or good fortune, according to the reader's opinion) to meet and fall desperately in love with Edith, the pretty daughter of Squire Everingham, who, being an eccentric gentleman, deemed every young man a fortune hunter, and systematically closed his doors in the face of the numerous admirers attracted by his daughter's pretty face and her ample dot.

Tom had fared no better than the others, but on confiding his sorrows to his friend and guest they had between them matured a scheme of romance and impudence unparalleled in these prosaic Nineteenth century days.

Squire Everingham was the right hand man and general estate manager to Lord Braintree, an office his family had held for several generations. He was, besides, a land owner of no small extent and a magistrate; hence his popular title of Squire. He resided some miles away on the Lincolnshire coast, in a moderately sized village, which consisted of a single, long, straggling street, a church, a chapel, and some venerable relics of the Saxon and early Norman eras. The squire occupied the great white house at the corner of this road, patronized the entire village, and was, of course, looked up to with unquestioning reverence by the inhabitants. He, however, never mixed with them socially, and as his nearest neighbor, whom he honored by admitting to a questionable equality, lived some miles away, the squire and his daughter lived a somewhat secluded life, broken only at rare intervals by visits from lady friends to her, and by his journeys to the market town or magisterial bench.

Popular as the squire was in the village, he had one blot on his escutcheon in the eyes of the hunt (to which he subscribed liberally) and in those of the few county families in the neighborhood, and that was, he had become accustomed since the loss of his wife, to drink, 'not wisely but too well,' and, as may be supposed, he incurred serious censure for a habit not tolerated in these days. In other respects the squire was still the cheery, open handed man as of yore; his kitchen door was ever open to the hungry, and his famous brown October ale was dispensed freely to callers and strangers. The only other change was in his appearance; the tall thin figure became slightly bowed, the hair tinged with gray; his riding in the field became reckless and irregular, and, greatest crime of all in a hunting country, he commenced to 'crane' at his fences, and knock his horses about for faults due to himself. He also grew quarrelsome, and newcomers not feeling the same amount of respect, or being under the same obligation as the old inhabitants, several brawls had taken place, and in one or two the squire was severely handled.

With increasing excitement and irritation of temperament he grew discontented with the slow rate of speed obtainable in his horses, and invested in several fast trotters, and went whirling from place to place to the danger of every one he met. This was endurable in his sober moments, but when, after a court meeting at the neighbouring town, he insisted upon taking the ribbons himself, thrashing the horse into a gallop, going over or through everything in his way, it became no joking matter.

On one occasion, returning home at night, he drove over a stone heap and spilled himself and groom into a broad and deep drain that ran by the roadside; on another he collided with his own gate post, smashing the cart to match-wood and breaking his groom's ribs, being himself dragged into the yard in consequence of having become entangled in the reins, while the horse was kicking and plunging in all directions.

Grooms soon grew scarce; finally, no one could be found to take the place; then, for some time, the squire drove himself, and after having several times been fined for furious driving, by his brother magistrates, they determined to put a stop to the growing scandal by declaring to him their intention of sending him to prison for a month if he appeared before them again. This had the desired effect, and set him seeking for a steady, capable groom.

Such was the state of affairs at the time of the hunt ball; and the intentions of Tom Rainforth, as declared at the opening of our story, was to offer himself for the post, drive the squire, keep him if possible sober, and, most of all, do his best to win the heart of the fair Edith, who was already more than well disposed toward him.

After some preliminary correspon-

dence an engagement was contracted, Tom entered into his duties, and became the squire's shadow. If any one took offence at the squire's unseasonable remarks, he was always on hand to smooth matters down, and for a time all went well. Gossips noticed, however, that Miss Edith took a greater amount of horse exercise than usual, and that the new groom was invariably in attendance while it was said that her latest 'fad' was always to see her horse cleaned every morning.

Truth to tell, she recognized Tom the very first morning, and threatened to denounce him to her father; but Tom overcame her scruples, and of their misunderstandings, love makings, and its attendant pleasures and pains, I am no envious chronicler; suffice it to say she was pleased to keep his secret, but, woman-like, delayed her happiness, and, notwithstanding all he had undergone to win her, declared capriciously she would never accept him unless he accompanied her as groom to the opening meet of the season.

Poor Tom! he had not counted upon a girl's mischievous fancy, and sorely against his will he bowed to the inevitable.

Downward steps are not easily retraced, so the conduct of the squire proved; for after a brief period of good behaviour he gradually grew worse and worse, until he was nearly, if not quite, as bad as ever. Do all that he could, Tom could not keep him sober. Once after attending one of the meetings, he drank rather more heavily than usual, and insisted upon driving himself home, which he did at a gallop, escaping injury by little short of a miracle. This resulted, however, in a brief illness which gave Tom a chance to think the matter over, and evolve a scheme to put an end to these midnight dangers.

He had a brown tanned leather rug made for the horse, which extended from the saddle to the tail, where it was fastened to the crupper and loosely girthed underneath. Being nearly the color of the horse, a casual observer at night would not notice it. He then took the horse out every night to exercise, instead of in the morning, and by the time the squire covered Tom was ready for him.

During these weeks Jack Fortescue made one or two surreptitious calls, and in his quiet way had much fun with Tom; but he only received his rallies with a grim smile, saying: Let those laugh who win, and the game is in my own hands if I have but patience. You shall dance at my wedding in the third week of October.

And see you as groom to the Lady Edith at the opening meet—eh; old man? responded the imperturbable Jack. Well, yes, I suppose so! But you will get no laugh at my expense, I promise you.

From this time, strange to say, no further accidents occurred when the squire rode home; the horse went quietly along, taking no notice of his furious jerking of the reins, or vigorous thrashing with the whip, beyond a slight jump to left or right as the whip struck its head or neck. When the squire railed at it for not galloping Tom declared that it was galloping at full speed, and that he could scarcely hold on, and the squire, in doubt, usually accepted his word.

Meanwhile the horse grew more and more steady, as though it had taken its master's character in hand, and was in league with Tom to save the old gentleman from further disasters.

The opening meet drew nigh, and Tom was daily teased by his fiancée as to what he would give to be let off.

Tom laughed, and said: Nothing! You keep your promise to marry me the third week in October and I will ride to the meet as your groom.

Edith looked wistfully at him, half regretting her bargain, but too high-spirited to let him off his penance after once imposing it.

At last the day arrived, and at 10 a.m. Tom, duly attired in a green coat with brass buttons, a broad leather strap round his waist, cords and boots and hat with a cockade, was to be seen holding two horses at the front door. The squire had an attack of gout and could not go.

Daintily attired in a dark riding habit, Edith was lifted to the saddle, and with Tom riding decorously in the rear, passed out of the gate. Once, however, in the green lanes, he ranged alongside, but Edith was in a dejected mood and scarcely spoke.

At last she said: Tom, dear, it's no use; I cannot do it. Go back and put on your own clothes; I will not make a public show of you; you have undergone enough for me.

Nay! nay! laughed Tom. A bargain is a bargain. You might want to cry forfeit to your own stake; and, dearest, owing his voice, I cannot let you do that now.

No, no indeed I will not! I will keep my word. But if you will not ride back and change that hateful suit, I will turn back myself and forego the meet.

Is that so? said Tom. Then here goes! And taking off his hat he drew out a velvet cap, and unbuckling his belt and throwing off the green coat, he sat revealed in the Melton Hunt colors. Tossing the coat and strap after the hat, he lifted her hand, and kissing it said: And do I still ride as your groom?

Yes, said she, with a merry laugh; as my bridegroom.

At the meet, speculation was rife as to who Tom was, and owing to Jack Fortescue the secret leaked out. The squire only stipulated that Tom should drive him, and gave his consent.

At the wedding breakfast Tom was asked the secret of his success with the squire's horse; he laughed, and said, Well, I trained him to stand the whip on that leather rug he always wore at night; and I had two pairs of reins, one running from the bit along the shafts round to the back of the cart where I sat; and the other pair, which the squire used, were buckled to the collar.

Of course a tremendous laugh was the result of this disclosure, and although against himself, the squire joined in it, and proposing his son-in-law's health, asked, Whoso shall say the days of chivalry are past?

Tom and his wife still live happily together, but the squire was shortly after the marriage gathered to his fathers, having been killed in the hunting field, and a brass tablet records his manifold virtues in the village church.—Wilf. P. Pond in Fores' Sporting Sketches.

NO USE CUSSING.

He was hurrying along Nassau street the other day, carrying a basket of lunch, says the New York Tribune. The slippery condition of the pavement made the greatest care necessary to maintain the perpendicular, but something attracted the lunch carrier's attention, and he stopped for a moment, then starting on again, his feet flew out from under him, and he and the lunch came down on the edge of the sidewalk. Over the person of the unfortunate youth there was a generous distribution of viands. His waistcoat was decorated with patches of chicken salad, there was a milky way of charlotte russe on each trousers leg, and in his hat, which had fallen off, nestled two buns and a cranberry tart.

The unhappy lunch carrier arose and began to scrape himself off, in complete silence. Too, bad, said a bystander, sympathetically, but you don't seem to care much; why don't you swear a little? It might relieve you.

Well, the situation kind er speaks for itself, said the lunch carrier sadly, as he extracted the tart from his hat and gathered up the shattered repast. It's no use for cuss words now. When I get to the office and the boss sees the salad on my vest he'll cuss enough for two.

HOME MADE CANDIES.

Home candy making, though not confined to the holiday season, is generally carried on then with the most vigor. Recipes for a few of the most popular plain candies are therefore given:

Butter Taffy.—Two cups sugar, one cup water, two tablespoons of molasses, four tablespoons of vinegar, one and a half tablespoons of butter. Boil twenty or thirty minutes and pour in buttered tins.

Vinegar Candy.—Three cups of sugar half a cup of water, two thirds cup of vinegar. Boil without stirring till brittle.

Lemon Drops.—Dissolve half a pound of pulverized sugar in lemon juice and boil to a thin syrup. Drop on plates and harden in a warm place.

Ice Cream Candy.—Two cups of sugar, half a cup of water. When boiling add a teaspoonful of cream of tartar dissolved in a little water. Boil ten minutes without stirring, then add a small piece of butter and boil till it will harden in water, then flavor and pull.

Butter Scotch.—Three tablespoons of molasses, two tablespoons of sugar, two tablespoons of water, one tablespoon of butter, a little soda before taking from stove.

If the trees are frosty and the sun takes it away before noon, it is a sign of rain.

HINTS ON THE USE OF LAMPS

A contributor to the New York Analyst says: Of all the misunderstood things in daily life the use of the Kerosene lamp probably stands at the head. First, a lamp is bought and fitted for use, and then filled day after day, and after a longer or shorter period does not give as good a light as it used to; then come complaints to the oil man or grocer about the quality of the oil, when a little reason or judgment used would remedy the fault and remove the causes of complaint. If persons using the lamp would remember that the lamp is a machine, combining the furnace and pump, and endeavor to learn the principles of using oil, much trouble would be saved; for while no one expects to use a large machine without learning how to work it, any one can use a lamp. Now, the wick is the pump to bring oil from the fount to the blaze, and as there is always more or less dirt in the oil the wick soon becomes clogged up and cannot pump oil fast enough for a good light; so a complaint is made, when a new wick would remove the cause. Then, as we burn oil out, the lightest part burns, leaving the heavy oil; and, as the lamp is filled day by day, the oil gets so heavy that the draft is not strong enough to pump it up when the oil should all be turned out of the lamp and refilled with fresh oil. And then the burner, after a time, gets gummed up and the even flow of the oil is dis-

turbed and causes a smoky, uneven light which is vexatious. I have often had burners brought into my store condemned, and a new one wanted, when by two minutes work they were made as good as new.

When the wick needs cutting, some scrape it off, others cut it so unevenly that it makes a pointing blaze, which so provokes one that he wants to condemn it. If a little reason and thought were used in every day life, we would soon find lots of our discomforts very easily overcome and banished; but things go in a slipshod manner, year after year, with no attempt to remove them. But to resume; The burner is furnished with a great number of small holes to provide air, to the end that perfect combustion may take place, and not to collect dust and dirt until they are clogged up, and a smoky, bad-smelling light is the result. Now, if in using kerosene we fill the lamp up with white oil every day, and once a week empty back what oil is in the lamp, and use a new wick, cut even and true, every week or once in two weeks, and are sure to have the lamp burner clean, and a clear, nicely polished chimney used, we will find that the kerosene lamp is a cheap and great luxury and not as is often the case, a necessary nuisance, which has to be used for lack of something better. A little care daily in using the lamp makes all the difference between luxury and nuisance.

Towels, brushes and combs should be apportioned upon the army plan. Each member of the family should be provided with a separate outfit.

When laid away for any length of time, linen should be washed, rough dried without bleaching, and laid in loose folds without much weight on it.

Fried Indian meal pudding—so called—is a toothsome breakfast dish, for the rising generation, as one can travel many miles to secure.

The best bathrooms have a natural wood floor, or are covered with oilcloth or something of that kind of material.

To remove white spots from table or furniture, rub the spots with camphor and they will disappear.

Decayed vegetables should not be left in the cellar, and cellars should be whitewashed to be kept sweet and clean.

Put salt in water to prevent black calicoes from fading when they are washed.

Books and pictures, in intelligent families, now rank next to bread and butter.

To fumigate a house, burn in it sulphur for it; then whitewash and paint.

The coasts of Lower California abound with huge turtles, which weigh from 300 to 400 pounds each. Down at Punta Banda, where a company is building a large hotel, one of the workmen, who is an expert swimmer and who spends much time in the water, has become skillful in riding the big animals. A traveler says that when the man sees one that is big enough to ride, he rushes into the water and mounts it. He has away of slapping the turtles on the side of the head that makes them go along, and, by striking them, he also guides them. He rode a big fellow near the shore the other day as the stage drove up the coast road, and the occupants of the stage were so pleased with the exhibition that they made up a purse of \$20 for the rider.

Never go to bed with cold or damp feet.

Never begin a journey until the breakfast has been eaten.

When hoarse, speak as little as possible until the hoarseness is recovered from, else the voice may be permanently lost, or difficulties of the throat be produced.

Place of Meeting, Divisions, Numbers Night of Meeting, and name of Deputies.

- St. Stephen; Howard, 1; Friday; S. Webber; Milltown, St. Stephen; Wilberforce, 3; Monday; H. McAllister.
- Market Building, St. John; Gurney, 5; Thursday; John P. Bell.
- Orange Hall Portland; Portland, 7; Monday; A. Y. Patterson.
- Market Building, St. John; Albion, 14; Wednesday; E. A. Everett.
- Gasatown; Queens, 21; Saturday; H. J. Chatham.
- Chatham; Northumberland, 37; Friday; G. Stothart.
- St. John; Mariners and Mechanics, 33; Tuesday; Walter Munford.
- Hillsboro, Albert Co.; Albert, 39; Wednesday; John I. Steves.
- Sackville, West Co.; Sackville, 40; Tuesday; J. C. Harper.
- Richibucto, Kent Co.; Richibucto, 42; Wednesday; A. Haines.
- Newcastle; Newcastle, 45; Thursday; Jas. Falconer.
- Point de Bute, West Co. Westmorland, 50; Thursday; Jas. W. Colpitts.
- Haywell Hill, Albert Co.; Golden Rule, 51; Tuesday; R. Moore.
- Penfield, Charlotte Co.; Safeguard, 58; Saturday; H. C. Tryon.
- Cambridge, Queens Co.; Johnston, 62; Saturday; George S. Wilson.
- Dalhousie; Dalhousie, 64; Monday; G. Hadow.
- Baie Verte; Baie Verte, 65; Wednesday; R. Goodwin.
- Dover, West Co.; Dover, 70; Saturday; Alfred E. Steeves.
- Carleton, St. John; Granite Rock, 77; Tuesday; John C. Thomas.

Derby, North Co.; Nelson, 99 Monday; J. Betts Douglastown, North Co.; Caledonia, 126; Tuesday; J. Henderson.

Collina Corner, Kings Co.; Collina, 129; Thursday; Jacob L. Keirstead.

Upper Gasstown, Queens Co.; Oxford, 134 Saturday; James B. Cox.

Benton, Carleton Co.; Garibaldi, 151; A. T. Campbell.

St. Martins, St. John Co.; St. Martins, 164, Tuesday; Samuel Osborn.

Moreton; Moncton, 183; Monday; F. W. Steeves Douglas, York Co.; Blunphy's W. O. Farmers 190; Saturday; Arthur W. Ross.

Salisbury, West Co.; Crystal Stream, 191 Monday; C. A. Beck.

South Bay, St. John Co.; Lime Rock, 207 Monday; Wm. Roxborough.

Milford, St. John Co.; Everett, 238; Wednesday Geo. H. Waring.

Mer ton; Intercolonial 243; Friday; Miss Vera Fawcett.

Victoria Mills, West Co.; Victoria, 245; Thursday; A. J. Main.

Mountville, Albert Co.; Home Circle, 244 Friday; E. E. Peck.

Baillie, St. James, Char. Co.; Baillie, 248; Wednesday; John A. Robinson.

Weldford, Kent Co.; Harcourt, 249; Saturday; H. Wathen.

Portland; Valley, 250; Tuesday; J. Fowler.

Buttermt Ridge, King's Co.; Havelock, 251 Friday; E. Joith.

Petitcodiac, West Co.; Petitcodiac, 252; Tuesday; D. A. Jonah.

Lewis Mountain, West Co.; Sunnyside, 253 Saturday; Isaac N. Alward.

Deer Island, Char. Co.; Moss Rose 254; Saturday; A. T. Lloyd.

Millstream, Kings Co. Britannia, 255; Saturday; C. W. Weyman.

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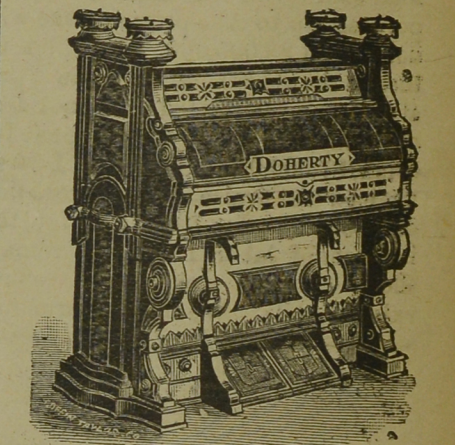
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