

A DUEL TO THE DEATH.

Night had spread her sable curtains o'er the town, not to mention the pretty who were perambulating Lovers' Lane, seeking their "Gossies" in the haunts of masherdom, as is the wont of the young and the lovely after dark. In a sombre chamber on a sky-floor in Water street, lit by a sickly candle that was running to rivers of grease for someone to crop it, the deadly foes had met! Hatred and contempt, not to mention loathing, competed for the mastery on either passion-heated visage, on either fevered brow!

"Laviolette," cried the challenger, "at last we meet! I am thirsting for your gore! Have you made your choice of weapons?"

"Bill Thorpe," said the skating-rink cowboy, "to this awful arbitration have you forced me. I will not reason with you, desperate man! But when this terrible tragedy is o'er, when one of us is cruelly, calmly, coldly corpsed, remember that she—she of the clocked stockings and winsome waist—is my sweetheart; that I am the only one—that I am alone in loving Bellevia Brown!" He gasped a deep, italicised gasp; then turning to his persecutor, he exclaimed: "Now, hellhound, to our work!"

"And the weapons?" sneered Thorpe, with a frown that lowered the roof several inches.

"On yonder table you will find them—cucumbers and doughnuts; both are fatal, having been ground to a razor-edge for the slaughter. Take your choice, villain! As for me, I prefer the cucumber—Ned Lever's favorite weapon of defence at all times."

A sound as of thunder, or of an Incharran omnibus "rattling o'er the stony street," which now awoke the echoes of the historic domicile, might have startled two ordinary men; but not the doomed duellists! 'Twas only 'Our Friend

serenading the Bonæreil-Jones affair with his long-range fowling piece. The gory gladiators sought their corners and there was blood on the moon; the remnant of tallow was still smoking and about to die; that was the signal—when it ceased to no longer diffuse its ghastly glare into the crevices profling with spiders, the fiends were to advance for the fray. Just a minute—50 seconds—40—30—20—10—5. And a moment later they lay amidst the dismal darkling dust and rudely riven furniture, in a picturesque confusion suggestive of a tumble by "Pum" down Hamilton's embankment, with the pillow-slip of apples uppermost. A moment before they were two mighty jossers breathing hatred and contempt, battle, murder and sudden death, fraught with deadly purpose, and now resting in one red ruin blent! Slowly from the gory debris appeared belligerent Jack. "Thank heaven!" he exclaimed, with calm but husky emphasis; "thank heaven the world is mine! Let him requiescat in pace—I am victor! From this hour Bellevia is mine!"

He was the Life of the Town.

While enjoying a skip the other evening on board Mr. Paul Du-Chane's sloop-yacht *Blue Blazes*, our colloquialism naturally drifted to "old-time" incidents. Said our Friend: "Yes, indeed, Jack; the persuasion of my cogitating faculty dispels all doubt, knocks indecision into oblivion, and leaves Murdock the most convivial fellow I ever sailed with." True it is. Full of merriment and spirit "Mug" always was, jovial and good-natured he always will be. As a narrator of "briny adventures" he is rich. Here is a snatch of one of his favorite sea ballads:

Cease, rude Boreas, blust'ring railer,
List, ye landsmen all, to me!
Messmates, hear a brother sailor
Sing the dangers of the sea!