ADVENTURE OF AN EXPRESS TRAIN.

By Virginia Champlin, From the French of Jacques Normand.

In our little circle of friends there was general astonishment when we learned of the approaching marriage of Valentine Sancerre. What! he, the hardened bachelor! the Parisian skeptic, rebelling against every idea of matrimony! the gay high-liver who swore a hundred times that he would never *have anything to do with it*! Valentine, in short, was going to enter the great brotherhood. And who was he to marry? A widow? Worse than that—a provincial! We could not understand it.

So the first time I met him, I collared him at once and asked for an explanation.

"I have hardly time," he said; "I have a hundred things to do. But if you will walk along with me."

So we went down the boulevard arm in arm.

"The story is very simple," said Valentine, "and devilish commonplace; but since you wish to know it, I will tell it."

"In the month of February I set out for Nice to attend the carnival festivals. I have a horror of travelling at night. I therefore took the 9 o'clock train, which would bring me into Marseilles at five minutes past midnight. I was to pass a day at Marseilles, where my good friends, the Rombeauds, expected me to breakfast. The next morning I was to go to Nice, where I was to arrive at 2 o'clock in the afternoon."

"At the Lyons station there was a perfect jam, but, thanks to the proverbial obligingness of the station agent, M. Friegnoul, I managed to find a corner in a coupe. I was alone with another traveller, who wore decorations, and had a severe, administrative bearing, and his sole baggage a portfolio. Assuredly he was not going far with such an equipment, and I should soon be alone. Alone!—the only thing that renders travelling on a railroad endurable.

'Everyone was in his place and the train was about to leave when we heard disputing voices at the car door.'

'"No, sir, no,' said some woman with a clear, fresh voice, with an imperceptible Southern accent. 'I have ordered a sleeping compartment and I must have one.'

'"But, madam, we have none.'

'"You ought to have paid attention to my letter.'

'"We have received no letter madam.'

'"Put on a car then.'

'"Impossible. We have on the full number. Come, come, be quick. The train is starting."

'"But I must have a seat.'

'"Well, I offer you two in this car.'

'"In there?'

'"Yes, there.'

"A little brunette face was thrust into the door and immediately withdrawn, as if startled.

'"Why, there are two gentlemen in there.'

'"But, madame, I cannot give you a car all alone to yourself.'

'"Very well; I will not go then.'

'"As you please. The train will go. I am about to give the signal.'

'"Stop, sir, stop. I really must go, and since there is only this car I shall have a sleeping compartment at the next station; shall I not?'

'"Yes, madam; yes, madam.'

'"Do you promise me?'

'"Oh, yes.'

'"Surely?'

'"Yes, yes, yes.'

"The door opened, the little brown face was lost in a pile of packages and rugs; a shriek from the engine pierced the air. We had started.

"The administrative gentleman had seated himself near me to leave a place free to the new comer.

"Without even casting a look at us, out of breath and red with anger, she arranged her bundles in the strap and around her, with that haste common to all who have many hours to spend in the car. There were one, two, three bags and rugs.

"From the corner of my eye I watched her movements, and found to my delight that she was charming. I say delight, for really it is always more agreeable to travel with a pretty woman than with an old Englishman with spectacles.

"The air was sharp and cold. The country, covered with snow and lighted by a pale sun, seemed to be flying rapidly away on both sides of the car. The fair traveller, wrapped up to the chin in her rugs, looked steadily and rather sullenly out of the window on the left; the official gentleman drew out large yellow, green, and blue papers from his portfolio and read them most carefully, and as for myself, being comfortably seated, I looked over the pile of papers I had bought at the station.

It was twenty-one minutes past 11, and the train stopped at Laroche. The official gentleman arranged his papers, rose, bowed and left the train. He had hardly alighted when the station agent addressed him by the title of inspector, which he pronounced as if the word was almost too big for his mouth. Here our lady traveler looked out of the car door and called out:

"Station agent!"

"Madam."

"Did you receive a telegram from Paris for a sleeping compartment?"

"Yes, madam, and I sent on a despatch for one."

"Sent on a despatch! Can't I have one at once?"

"Impossible, madam. We have no cars here. You can't have one until we reach Lyons."

"Lyons! At what hour?"

"At 5.45, madam."

"All day to wait, then. Why, sir, I cannot remain in this car until that hour. It is impossible. I will not."

"Take care, madam, the train is starting."

"The train moved on and she buried herself in her corner in a rage, without casting a look at me, while I buried myself in my tenth journal.

"Shall I confess that it took me longer to read that one journal than all the other nine? I read the same line twenty times; I even believe that I held it upside down. Devil take it, it couldn't be helped. You know what a Frenchman is. He can't be alone with a pretty woman on a long journey without feeling some emotion.

"I longed to enter into a conversation with her, but what pretext, what subject could I find? Owing to the temperature the classic resource of windows to raise or lower did not exist. What was there to do then? Attempt a commonplace remark? It was a hundred times better to be silent. With the keen perception of an old Parisian, I saw at once that my neighbor was a woman of the best society. To speak to her thus abruptly, without knowing her, would have made me pass in her eyes for a common travelling clerk. The only thing to do was to find something supremely original to say to her. But what? What? I racked my brains in vain and I was still racking them when the train suddenly stopped, thanks to the modern inventions so good in case of accidents, but so bad for travelers.

"Tounerre; stop twenty-five minutes for refreshments," cried the conductor, opening the car door.

"My neighbor arose, threw aside her rugs, which she left in the car with her three little bags, and alighted. It was noon, and hunger made itself felt. She went to the refreshment room in the station on the other side of the track.

"I followed her. I could admire at my ease an elegant figure, well defined by a long beaver cloak. I also remarked that she had pretty black frizzles at the back of her neck, a grey felt hat and very small feet.

"At the entrance of the room stood the head waiter, in a velvet cap, and highly favored by bearing a striking resemblance to Napoleon III. With a flourish of the hand and napkin, he pointed out a long table ready for an attack.

"I entered with the stream of hatless, breathless, rumpled travellers. In short, I was one of that file essentially grotesque and painful, as regards human grace and beauty, that pours out from an express train to feed itself in a hurry.

"I seated myself and hastily swallowed the courses served me, and my lady traveller took some soup at a separate table.

"I was one of the first to rise to go and smoke a cigar on the wharf. The twenty-five minutes, as usual reduced to twenty, would soon be consumed, and the passengers were leaving the station in groups and returning to the cars, and I entered mine. The lady had not yet returned.

"I saw her looking at books at the little book-stall at the depot, on the other side of the track. Although her back was turned to me, I easily recognized her by her pretty figure, beaver cloak and grey hat. Her hair did not seem to me quite so dark, but it was the effect of distance, no doubt.

"Everyone had entered the cars, and the conductors were noisily closing the doors.

"Why, she is going to remain here," I thought, 'she is crazy,' and I shouted: 'Madam! madam!' but I was too far away; she did not hear me. The engine whistled and the train was about to start. What was to be done? An idea, swift as lightning, flashed through my brain. She is going to remain there, in that horrible cold, without her baggage. She must at least have some of her small packages, poor little woman. So I made an armful of the three bags and rugs, and, flinging the whole to a brakeman standing near the car, I cried: 'For that lady yonder!'

"The man took the articles and went to the lady at the bookstall. At the same moment, in the opposite side of the car, near the wharf, the door opened and my lady traveller, flurried and hurried along by a cross conductor, sprang into the car, and the train started. Horrors! I had made a mistake. The traveller at the bookstore was not the real one. The same cloak, hat and figure, but it was not she. It is absurd to think that there are women who resemble each other like that—in their backs. Ah, I had done a fine thing.

"My lady had hardly entered the car when she gave a scream.

"'My bundles—some one has stolen my bundles,' and for the first time she looked at me, but with what an expression in her eyes! My God! that look, do you know, I shall never forget.

"'No, madam,' I said, 'your bundles are not stolen. They are—they are at Tounerre.'

"'At Tounerre. What do you say?'

"I explained all to her. Ah, my friend, I will not describe the second look she darted at me, but I believe I shall remember it even longer than the first.

"'I am distressed, madam, truly distressed,' I added, stammering, 'but my motive was good. I thought you would miss the train—that you would take cold, and I did not wish you to take cold. Indeed, you must pardon me. Have no fear about your effects. They are in safe hands—a baggage master. You can telegraph at the next station. I will telegraph—we will telegraph—and they will be sent at once. Ah, you will have them! I promise you, even if I return to Tounerre for them myself.'

"'Enough, sir!' she said to me. 'I know what is for me to do,' and she drew back in her corner, twisting her gloves in her anger.

"But, alas! poor little woman. She had not counted on the cold. She no longer had her nice warm rugs, and in a few moments she was shivering. In vain she drew herself together and wrapped her beaver cloak around her pretty figure; she positively shivered.

"'Madam,' I said, 'I beg you on my knees, accept my rug. You will suffer—and it will be my fault—and I shall never console myself.'

"'I do not wish to talk to you, sir,' she said, curtly.

"I was very nervous and excited. In the first place I thought her charming; then I was furious at my ridiculous blunder; in short, I was in a mood for great resolutions.

"'Madam,' I said, 'accept this rug or I swear to you that I will throw myself on the track.' And, flinging the rug between herself and me, I raised the glass and placed my hand on the outer handle of the door.

"Was I resolved? Between ourselves, not quite, I think. But it seems I appeared so, for she immediately cried out:

"'Why, you are crazy, sir; you are crazy.'

"'The rug—or I shall jump.'

"She took the rug and said, in a softer tone: 'But you, sir, will die of the cold.'

"'Do not disturb yourself about me, madam, I am not chilly, and even if I were cold, it would be only a just punishment for my unpardonable stupidity.'

"'Say for your too great haste, for you are right, your intention was good, but how could you take that lady for me?'

"'Because she appeared to me charming.' She smiled; the ice was broken; the ice of the conversation, it must be understood, for otherwise I was shivering.

"But I soon forgot the cold, the journey, and everything. She was delightful, exquisite, adorable. She had a distinguished mind—refined, lively, original. She liked to travel, like myself; she had been to Italy, like myself; to Spain, like myself; and she like myself, dreamed of going to Egypt. In literature, music—in everything, in short—she had the same taste as mine. And then, imagine, we had numerous acquaintances in common. She was intimate with the Saint Chamas, the Lavenoys, and above all, with the Martbazons. To think that I had perhaps met her twenty times in these salons and had not observed her! Where were my eyes? Great heaven! Where were my eyes?

"She spoke innocently and amiably, and with that distinguished simplicity which I like so much. She had a slight, very slight, almost, imperceptible provincial accent—a warbling rather—giving her words the chirping of a bird. She said 'tete,' which is light, instead of 'tete,' which is heavy; 'chateau,' which is spiritual, instead of 'chateau,' which is stupid. It was fascinating.

"But although I tried every way in the world not to show it, good heavens, how cold it was.

"At Dijon (2h 20m) my right foot was nearly frozen. We telegraph to Tounerre for the bundles left behind.

"At Macon (4h 45m) it was turn for my left foot. We receive the despatch from Tounerre that the baggage will arrive at Marseilles the next day.

"At Lyon-Perrache (5h 48m) my left hand becomes insensible. She forgets to ask for her sleeping compartment.

"At Valence (8h 3m) my right hand follows the example of the left—I learn that she is a widow without children.

"At Avignon (9h 59m) my nose becomes purple. I believe I understand her that she never loved her first husband.

"At Marseilles finally (5m past midnight) I sneeze violently three times. She holds out my rug and says to me, graciously, 'Au revoir.'

"Ah! her au revoir turns my head.

"I spent the night at the Hotel Novilles—an agitated night, filled with her memory.

"The next morning when I awoke I had the most frightful cold in my head a human being ever had.

"Could I venture in this state to call on my friends, the Rombeauds? Well, I must make the best of a bad matter. A traveller must be excused for mishaps. They will take me as I am, and to-morrow the sun of Nice will cure me.

"Oh, my friend! What a surprise I had! That excellent Rombeaud had invited several friends in my honour, and among them she was there—my traveller, my charmer!

"When I was presented to her an imperceptible smile flitted across her lips. I bowed very low.

"'Have you heard from Tounerre?' I asked.

"'I have them,' she answered.

"The company seated themselves at the table.

"'What a cold you have!' cried the excellent Rombeaud. 'Where the devil did you get it? In the cars, perhaps.'

"'Possibly,' I answered; 'but truly, I do not regret it.'

"No one understood this answer, but I felt the kind, gentle look of my travelling companion reach me through the fragrant steam rising from a superb soup cooling on the table.

"What more can I tell you, dear friend? The next day I did not go to Nice, and I shall be married in a fortnight."

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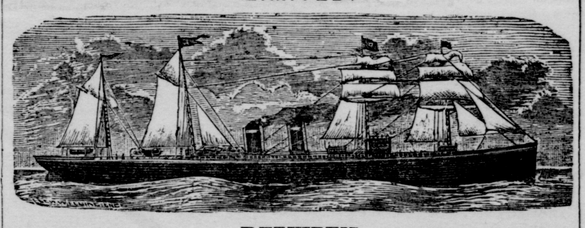
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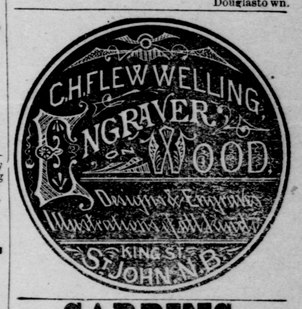
Being desirous of placing First Class Photographs within the reach of Residents of Chatham I have engaged
Mr. J. A. E. Morrell,
(late of 98 King Street, St. John,)
Who has arrived and is now ready for work,
We have now the
BEST GALLERY,
BEST LIGHT,
BEST PROCESS
& BEST OPERATOR
North of St. John.
Give us a Trial and be convinced.
—GALLERY OPPOSITE—
Masonic Hall, - Chatham.

Wanted Immediately.
A GIRL for kitchen work. No washing or ironing. APPLY TO
MISS HUTCHISON,
Douglastown.



CARDING.
THE SUBSCRIBER'S Carding Mill will be in full operation after the middle of the present month. Wool left at the mill will be promptly attended to. Wool left with E. A. Strang, Chatham, Wm. Stothart, Moorfield, or M. M. Sargent, Newcastle, will be taken to the mill, carded and returned within one week.
R. D. WILSON.
Derby, May 4th.

NEW LIVERY
AND
Boarding Stable.
ADJOINING THE ADAMS HOUSE.
CHATHAM, N. B.
The subscriber has just fitted up these stables, put in first class stock and hopes by strict attention to business to win a share of public patronage.
FRANK S. GRIFFIN,
Proprietor

Marble Works!!
The subscriber has removed his WORKS from Upper Chatham to the premises on WATER ST., CHATHAM, lately occupied by MR. ALEX. CANTLEY, Blacksmith, (near the Ferry,) where he is prepared to execute orders for
MONUMENTS, HEAD STONES, TABLETS AND CEMETRY WORK GENERALY,
Also: COUNTER and TABLE TOPS and other Miscellaneous Marble and Fine Stone Work.
A good stock of MARBLE constantly on hand.
EDWARD BARRY.
Chatham, August 1st 1885.

NOTICE OF
CO-PARTNERSHIP.
The subscribers have entered into business co-partnership under the name and style of MOSS & SON.
MYER MOSS,
MYER MOSS JR.
While thanking our patrons for past favors, we respectfully solicit a continuance of the same to the new firm.
We beg to announce that our stock of
Watches, Clocks, Jewelry, Plated-ware, &c.
will be much larger and more varied than hitherto.
Our BOOK and STATIONERY Department will be more complete also. We are determined to make our prices such as to meet the approval and favor of our customers.
Engraving, Watch and Jewelry Repairing, &c., done promptly and in the best manner. Work sent by mail will receive prompt attention—at either of our shops in Chatham or Newcastle.
MOSS & SON.
Miramichi, August 1st, 1885.

PRINTS! PRINTS!
Twelve hundred yards NEW PRINTS in all the
Newest Shades & Patterns,
from 7c. a yard and upwards.
GREY COTTONS
rom 4½c. upwards, a
F. W. Russell's.
Black Brook