

HOW HE KILLED HIS MAN.

THE BEGINNING AND ENDING OF AN OLD TIME DUEL.

Sharp Southern Politicians Who Had Recourse to the Code—The Story of a Witness to a Tragic Event—How the Affair Terminated.

"My introduction to dueling was both tragic and dramatic, in the broadest sense of both terms," says Col. Gallaway, late of the Memphis Avalanche. "I have assisted at several meetings and came very near being made a target of on more than one occasion, but this was the only one that resulted fatally. It occurred in October, 1870. The parties were Col. W. H. Lake, of Vicksburg, a noted Whig leader in Mississippi, and H. C. Chambers, a rich planter of Coahoma County, Miss., who was a hot Democrat. Lake had been a member of Congress and came within two votes of being elected Speaker of the house, being defeated by a member from New Jersey, whose name I have forgotten. He was a man of fine attainments and splendid physique, an aristocrat to his finger-tips, brave as Caesar, but haughty and overbearing in manner. Chambers was of a smaller size and very quiet in disposition, but plucky as a bantam. Lake was out for Congress again, and Chambers had announced himself as an opposition candidate.

"Well, it happened that Chambers and Lake had agreed on a list of joint appointments to speak at different places in the district, the canvass to close at Vicksburg. Chambers appeared and spoke at the points agreed upon, but for some reason not explained, Lake failed to meet him. So when Chambers reached Vicksburg on his first round he published a card in the local paper, reciting the facts of his agreement with Lake and the latter's failure to keep his part of it, but used the most temperate language and indulged in no insinuations. He also announced that he was still willing to meet Lake in joint discussion during the remainder of the canvass, and it was so arranged by mutual friends.

"The two candidates met at Greenville. Chambers spoke first, confining himself entirely to political issues and using not a word that any one on the other side could reasonably object to. He did not allude to the former pact between himself and Lake. When he concluded Lake got up with a sneer on his handsome face, and taking a pistol from his pocket, struck Chambers on the head with it, cutting a gash, from which the blood poured in streams. The wildest excitement prevailed for a time, and it seemed there would be a terrible riot, but Chambers, who had not moved from the platform, succeeded in quieting his friends, and then he turned to Lake, who stood like a statue. 'I am sure, sir,' said Chambers, 'you would not have struck me had you known I was unarmed. You will hear from me.' 'Very well, sir,' said Lake, shaking his forefinger in Chambers's face, 'that's the kind of an appointment I want with you.'

"Chambers retired to his hotel, where his wound was dressed, and in a day or two later resumed his canvass, but in the meantime he had written to me, detailing the facts of the assault, and asking me to act as his second and demanded a meeting of Lake. I was then well, but had never met the other man. A few days after this letter came to hand, Lake arrived in the city with a party of friends and put up at the Gayoso Hotel. Among the number was Hon. Walker Brooks, the Whig United States Senator from Mississippi, with whom I had a slight acquaintance. The others were strangers to me. I sent up my card to Col. Lake's room, and was soon ushered into the apartment. The half dozen or more gentlemen of the party were drinking wine and having a jolly time together. Senator Brooks introduced me, and I sat with them for half an hour, conversing on general topics of the day. When I arose to take leave Col. Lake accompanied me to the door, and I told him in a low tone that I had called on behalf of my friend, Mr. Chambers. Lake, in the courtliest manner imaginable, expressed his gratification at the fact that Mr. Chambers had selected me as his representative, and referred me to Senator Brooks, who, he said, would arrange with me for a meeting.

"I at once wrote to Chambers, telling him to come on to Memphis. A week passed and I learned nothing from him, and I was meeting the Lake party nearly every day. The situation became decidedly embarrassing for me. There was scarcely any telegraphic communication with the interior of the Mississippi those days, and I could not have reached Chambers, even if I had known where to find him. At last, on the ninth day after opening the matter, Chambers arrived by boat. His first words were, 'I suppose it's all arranged?' 'Arranged nothing,' said I. 'How the devil could I do anything when you have not yet begun the correspondence? We must get to work at once.' Well, to cut a long story short, the correspondence was opened in due form and the meeting was agreed on, to take place on the Arkansas shore opposite the city a week later. I was nearly paralyzed when Chambers told me, in answer to my question, that he was no marksman and had not handled firearms in years, especially as report said Lake was a dead shot. But I took my man under my wing and began training him. I hired a shooting gallery, and setting up a board with the figure of a man chalked on it, made Chambers practice at it with rifle and pistol, knowing that the other side would choose one or the other of the two weapons. At first Chambers couldn't hit anything but the back fence, but he improved right along, and at the end of the week was shooting like a house afire.

"Meanwhile, I heard of some very pretty scores that Lake was making in his practice, and it occurred to me that the affair would be a combat to the death.

"All right," he said; "that's what we are going out for, ain't it?" "Cool as a cucumber." "You win the word, Matt," said he, "and I'll hit him, sure. I'm used to your way of giving it."

"I'll do my best," said I, "but you'll do him anyhow."

"That was to encourage him, you know, for I wasn't sure, not by a long shot, 'As I had expected, the other side chose rifles, and it was agreed that the distance should be forty paces. Everything was arranged without the least trouble. Brooks was a perfect gentleman, and so was Lake, though his violent disposition sometimes led him astray.

"The morning of the duel dawned clear

and cold. Frost lay on the ground, and the air was unusually chilly for the time of year. The affair was to begin at 9.30 o'clock. I had my man on the ground by eight. It was as pretty a spot for a meeting as the most exciting Galway expert could have wished for—a smooth, oblong, grassy plat, about fifty paces long and thirty wide, as level as a floor and shielded from the sun by tall forest trees. At one end of the space two oaks had grown up to a height of about seventy-five feet, and only six or eight feet apart.

"If I win the choice of positions," said I to Chambers, "I am going to place you just opposite those two trees. That will bring Lake immediately in front of them, and the space between them will guide your eye in taking aim."

"Fortune favored us in this respect, as you will hear. 'We had taken a couple of rifles along, and, while waiting for the other side to put in an appearance, I put my man through his exercise again. Taking positions as in a real duel, we fired blank cartridges at each other. That was an idea of my own, and intended to get my man used to looking into a gun barrel.

"At 9.30 the other side had not shown up, but we were not impatient. A half hour or so is no great matter when you know your adversary means business. And sure enough about ten o'clock we saw them coming across the river in a skiff, as fast as two stout oarsmen could pull them, and, by George, sir! there was a whole fleet of boats following them—two steamers and any number of skiffs all loaded with people coming to see the duel. There were fully a thousand of them altogether, and we had some trouble in persuading them to take position at a proper distance. Among them was a cousin of Lake's, whom I knew.

"Senator Brooks, on reaching the ground, apologized for the delay, and gave a satisfactory explanation of it. They had brought no surgeon along so confident were they that Lake would win his man. I had forgotten to mention that we had provided ourselves with a medical man.

"We won the word, and they the position, and, as good luck would have it, they placed their man in front of the two oaks, just where we wanted him. Senator Brooks and I loaded the rifles, using pieces of new kid gloves for patching for the bullets. The agreement was that the rifles should be held muzzle upward, at an angle of 45° until the giving of the word should begin, then lowered to a level, but not discharged until the final signal should be given.

"The men took their positions firmly, but without any appearance of bravado. Both were dressed in tight-fitting black clothes, with their coats buttoned up tightly to the chin, so as to expose nothing to guide the other man's aim. Lake was a superb object as he stood, easy and erect, holding the weapon as lightly as if it were a willow wand, instead of twelve pounds of wood and iron. Chambers also handled his gun like an old-timer. As soon as they were fixed, Chambers transferred his rifle to his left hand, and taking off his hat courteously, saluted his adversary, as the code requires. Lake did not move a muscle, but the stern expression on his face deepened into a scowl. I took position on a log at right angles with a line of fire and called out: 'Gentlemen, are you ready?' 'Ready,' answered both in a distinct voice without a tremor. I raised my hankerchief and proceeded: 'Fire! one, two, three.'

"Simultaneously with the last word the bit of linen dropped from my fingers and the sharp crack of the two rifles rang out. Both men had presented the left side in taking aim. Lake remained motionless. Chambers whirled half around, and I rushed to him, thinking he had got his dose. But he hadn't. Lake's bullet had only plowed through his chin whiskers, grazing the skin. Chambers' ball cut a hole in Lake's silk hat, knocking it off.

"The two men laid down their rifles and seated themselves on logs. As required by the rule, I went to Senator Brooks and asked if his side had any proposition to make. He had picked up a stick and was whittling it. Calmly brushing the shavings from his clothes, he replied: 'We are here to fight and not to negotiate.' 'Very well, then,' said I, 'let's load up and get through with it.' When I reached our end of the ground, Chambers said laughingly, 'I didn't do your teaching much credit that time, Matt.' 'Put it a little lower next time and you'll fix him,' I replied; but my confidence was only assumed, for just then I noticed Lake speaking to his second and smiling, and it was the deadliest smile I ever saw.

"This fire also resulted in nothing. Lake's breast was brushed by Chamber's ball, and his own bullet struck the ground in front of Chambers and ricocheted through his coat. When the two were again seated Senator Brooks asked me if we had any proposition to make. By that time I was pretty hot, and not in the humor for any compromise. 'No, sir,' I replied; 'you refused to salute us, adding insult to injury. We will proceed, if you please.' He bowed and we reloaded. Lake had picked up a leaf and was leisurely shredding it from the main stem. His hand was as steady as a rock. Chambers had taken out his penknife, and was trimming his nails. Not a symptom of nervousness there, either.

"Once more the two men faced each other. Both fired exactly with the word. Chambers was not touched. Lake sank forward to his knees and then fell backward. Chamber's bullet had pierced his head just above the left temple. Senator Brooks raised the wounded man and asked for the services of our surgeon, which, of course, was granted at once. Chambers, his nerves relieved from the fearful tension, began to tremble. I gave him a drink of brandy, which steadied him, and raising his hands toward heaven he said in a loud voice: 'I call upon God and all of you to witness that I did not seek this trouble with Col. Lake?' The crowd remained silent and I hustled my man away to the boat and back to the city. Col. Lake died that night, without having regained consciousness or spoken a word. Chambers was never prosecuted. He returned to his canvass and was elected to Congress, but died not long afterward—drank himself to death, in fact."

"Remorse?" suggested one of the youngsters.

"No, sir," replied the colonel, stiffly. "What did he have to be remorseful about? Did he not kill his man in a fair duel? His taste for liquor, as he told me not long before he died, was inherited, and he had always been a drinking man."

WHEN JUPITER SNEEZED.

The Extraordinary Conduct of a Piece of Classic Statuary.

General II—, who was stationed for many years in Algiers, was quite an original character in his way. He had great natural ability, but was not so highly educated as he might have been. He knew very little about art or literature, as his early education had been neglected. He made many ludicrous errors, but usually managed to get out of them gracefully.

The General owned a beautiful villa and grounds. On the occasion we are referring to he had determined to give a lawn party, to which the Governor and all the higher officers were invited. He spared no expense in making it the event of the season, his idea being that it should eclipse in splendor a similar entertainment given by the Governor a short time previously. It suddenly struck the General that his beautiful garden was destitute of statuary, while the Governor's was densely populated with statuary. The General remembered that in one of his regiments there was a worthless vagabond named Zephyr, who had a wonderful talent for sculpture. The General ordered Zephyr to be brought before him.

"I hear you are a sculptor. Now, I want you to sculpt me a lot of gods and goddesses—Jupiter, Apollo, Mars, and all the rest of them—and have them here by eight o'clock on Saturday evening."

"But, general, it will take months—"

"Silence!" thundered the General. "When I order anything to be done it has to be done. If you don't get them done by next Saturday I'll have you locked up for a month."

"But General—"

"Keep quiet! How much money do you need to buy plaster?"

Zephyr saw the general was in earnest, so he said:

"I shall want a hundred francs."

"Here they are. Now get to work, and if you don't get them done you'll wish you had never been born."

That was the last the general saw of Zephyr for some days, but he heard of him going from bar to bar treating everybody, and having a good time generally, so he sent for him.

"What is this I hear about you? Instead of sculpturing those gods you are going about filling your hide with wine."

"General, I'm getting along finely. We artists have to get drunk to catch the inspiration. That's the way with all great geniuses."

"I have heard something about that," replied the general, pensively; "but be sure you don't overdo it, for those statues have to be ready."

Saturday night arrived. Zephyr, true to his word, brought the statues, rolled in blankets, into an arbor in the garden. The pedestals on which to place the figures had already been put into positions. Zephyr, with the help of a friend, unrolled the blankets from the life-size plaster of Paris figures, and carefully placed them on the pedestals. Then he escorted the general through the garden, and showed him his works of art. They were, indeed, splendid.

"Ah, you are, indeed, an artist. That is a splendid Jupiter with his thunderbolt. He looks for all the world like that big corporal of the Zouaves. He has the same large beard."

"He was my model," replied Zephyr.

"I am well satisfied. There are a hundred francs to spend with your friends. The Governor's statuary cannot compare with these deities."

Zephyr disappeared, and the delighted general soon reappeared with the Governor and the other guests in the brilliantly-lighted garden. To say they were astonished at the artistic skill displayed is to use a feeble word. The Governor was lost in admiration, and he candidly stated that he could not boast of anything to compare with it. Jupiter, in particular, was much admired. Everybody knew the gigantic zouave corporal with the big beard, and pronounced the figure wonderfully life-like.

Suddenly the Governor, who was examining Jupiter through his eyeglass, uttered an exclamation of astonishment, and started back.

"What is it, Governor?"

"I must have been mistaken, but I imagined that Jupiter moved his head. It must have been the light."

"Yes, I suppose so," replied the general. Suddenly the whole company broke into exclamations of horror and astonishment. Jupiter's face was distorted in a most inexplicable manner, and, without warning, he sneezed a terrific sneeze. Before the guests could recover their astonishment, great Jupiter said solemnly:

"I know I was told not to move, general, but I just could not help it. I believe I have caught cold in this—"

Jupiter did not finish the sentence, for the exasperated general tore a limb from an orange tree and sailed into the god as if to destroy him bodily.

"We had better get out of this," remarked Mercury to Mars, and, jumping down from their pedestals, they made fine time to the fence, helping each other over as fast as they could. Several of the heathen deities who were a little late in starting were assisted by the general, who continued to chastise them with his weapon so long as there was a single deity in reach. The flight of the deities put the company in such good humor that, for the sake of the joke, even the inspired sculptor was forgiven. The lawn party was the greatest event of the season, and is still the subject of much merriment in Algiers.

Misjudged His Audience.

A story is told of an English conjurer who was performing before a rough and ready audience in Kentucky.

"I am now about to undertake a feat," he said, "in which I shall require the temporary loan of a pint flask of whiskey."

There was a dead silence.

"Will some gentleman in the audience favor me with a pint flask of whiskey?"

There was no response, and the conjurer began to look blank. "Surely," he said, "in a southeastern Kentucky town I ought not to have to ask a second time for such a thing. I give you my word I will return it uninjured. Is there no—"

"Stranger," said a tall, gaunt man, as

he rose slowly from a front seat, "wouldn't a quart flask do just as well?"

"Why, certainly; I merely—"

But before he could finish the generous, open-handed audience had risen like one man, and was on its way to the platform in a body.

But He Did Not Win.

The other afternoon a stranger walked into the dressing-room of one of the London athletic grounds. He was a big, stout man, and judging from his appearance, would require what athletes call a lot of "training down."

"How many times ought a man to run a mile in order to get properly fit for a race at that distance?" he inquired of the trainer.

"Well, sir," replied the latter cautiously, "a great deal depends on who the man is. I should say you ought to run the distance at least fifteen times."

The stranger disrobed, and, donning his running attire, made his way to the track. In about two hours and a half he returned to the dressing-room bathed in perspiration.

"Have you been running ever since you went out?" exclaimed the astonished trainer.

"Yes," gasped the other. "You see, the mile race I'm in takes place tomorrow, so I had to run the whole fifteen miles right away to-day."

No New-Fangled Ideas for Them.

A traveler on the Nile lately came across a New England Yankee who was in charge of a gang of natives employed in making excavations. Long lines of naked men were scraping the earth with their hands, placing it in baskets and then carrying it on their heads to dump in the Nile, just as they did in the time of Moses.


"Why do you, an enterprising Yankee, work in this way? Why don't you get shovels and wheelbarrows," he replied, "but the men will not use them. Their ancestors worked in this way in the days of Rameses, and, in spite of all my efforts, they insist on working so now. Shovels and wheelbarrows they absolutely refuse to touch."

Holman Hunt.

Holman Hunt is one of the few survivors of the celebrated Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, that select circle of young artists of whom Dante Gabriel Rossetti was the moving spirit. Mr. Hunt has faithfully adhered to the tenets of the Brotherhood, his pictures all exhibiting that microscopic attention to the details of nature which was one of the primary doctrines subscribed to by the members of the band.

His paintings always realize good prices when they come into the market, which is, however, but seldom. His great work, "The Triumph of the Innocents," was bought in 1891 by the Liverpool Corporation for £3,580. He lives practically in retirement at Fulham, and is now sixty-six years of age.

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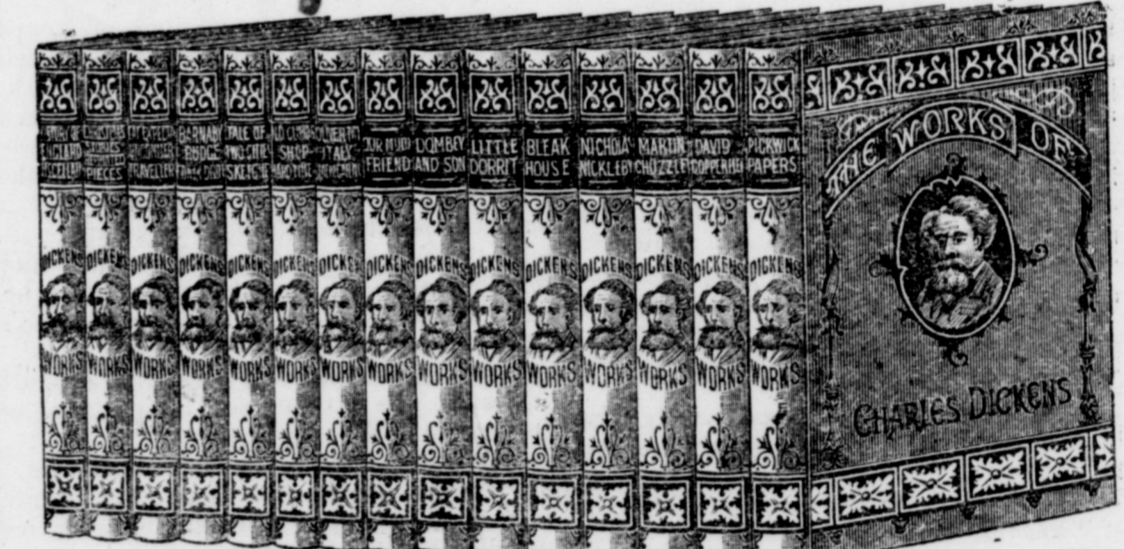
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