

PROGRESS, SATURDAY, MAY 5, 1894.

Progress' Short Stories.

Sketches of Personal Adventure Submitted in Competition for a Prize of Five Dollars.

JACK'S ROMANCE.

"Hello, Jack! Whither away now?"
"Hello, Bert! Whither? On my annual pilgrimage, you know where."
Cameron and I were strolling down Tremont street one evening early in July when we met my old chum, Jack Foster, waiting for an electric car en route to the Boston and Maine depot.
I introduced Cameron, who had never met Jack, and we stood chatting a few moments.
Presently Jack's car came along and we said, "Good-bye."
"You're a nice sort of chap, boy," said Cameron.
"As good a fellow as ever lived," I said, "though not very handsome."
"What did he mean by his annual pilgrimage?"
"Didn't I ever tell you about Jack?"
"No! Well let's go down and see our friend, Kellner, and I'll give you the story."
"My, but did he see the ring he had?"
"That's part of the story."

Reaching our destination, the "Old Elm," we sat down and over a couple of bottles of "Winzburger Hotbräu" I told Cameron the story of the ring.

"Back in the summer of '86 Jack and I were spending a week at Scarborough Beach, near Portland, Me. Some charming girls of our acquaintance did not a little to render our stay a pleasant one. We enjoyed ourselves immensely with boating, bathing, tennis and the rest of it.

Scarboro is a place where one meets very nice people, both Americans and Canadians, and as our friends were bright, jolly girls they were quite warm favorites there. Among other visitors, were an old gentleman from Montreal, named Barr, and his daughter, a lovely girl of twenty or so. We saw a good deal of her, as she and our friends had taken greatly to each other.

Of course it didn't take long for her to capture one or two susceptible hearts more, as she had so many previous ones.

Jack especially was very much captured; and right here I may say that a good husband for some nice little woman has been spoiled by Jack's romance, for since that time he will scarcely look at another girl.

Miss Barr was a fine specimen of the genus woman. Full of life and high spirits, she was always ready to take her part in whatever was going on, and whatever she did she did well. She was perfectly fearless and her friends often would remonstrate with her for her rashness, especially in the water where she felt quite at home, being an excellent swimmer. She delighted to test her skill and endurance in that way, particularly if there was a surf.

One morning, after a good bit of a storm, we found quite a heavy surf rolling on the shore, too much, in fact for my liking. All but a couple of the ladies decided not to take their usual plunge. Of course Miss Barr was one of the two who would do so; she declared it would be a shame to lose such a good surf as that.

So in she went and revelled like a mermaid in the foaming tossing rollers that swept in from the ocean. With the exhilaration of the tumble and roll of the sea she lost what little caution she usually possessed; and almost before she was noticed had swam far away from the shore and the few other bathers. Jack, however, seemed to be keeping an eye on her movements as he usually did, and to that fact she owes her life. Suddenly we heard a shriek from her and looking out where she was swimming, were horrified to see her throw up both her arms and sink. For an instant every one was panic-stricken, all but Jack, who on the instant started to her assistance. Though not so very far from her, he found it difficult to make headway against the heavy waves; and before he could reach her she had come to the surface and then gone down a second time. A second time she rose and by this time Jack was near at hand. Her long, fair hair had become loosened and floated out on the water. With a quick movement Jack reached and seized its silky strands, just in time to save her from being borne away from him on a foamy wave. She was by this time about unconscious, so she couldn't help; neither could she hinder, which was more important.

Jack managed to get her hands clasped about his neck securely, somehow, and paid all attention to keeping both his and her head above the rolling waves. He couldn't make much attempts at swimming for he was by this time pretty well exhausted himself. But he took advantage of each wave to the fullest extent and gradually neared the shore. Of course there was by

this time a great commotion on shore and various preparations for assistance were being made. A young Toronto fellow, whom our friends had dubbed "the But-ton," and myself had started and swam out to Jack's assistance. In a short time, though it seemed an age, we reached shallow enough water to wade; and plenty of willing hands were waiting to do their share. The girl's father, frantic with grief and anxiety, had rushed into the water till he was almost carried away; and his hands were the first to touch her.

Quickly as possible she was wrapped in blankets and carried to her room in the hotel. Jack dropped like a log on the beach when he got out of the water. But we soon fixed him up with a good, stiff glass of brandy and some vigorous chaffing. He was of course the hero of the hour. I was afraid he might begin to think himself some pumpkins on account of the praises and compliments bestowed upon him, but Jack's not easily spoiled. The proprietor of the hotel made a neat speech that night at a supper in his honor, and thanked him for his promptness and bravery; and when we left he wouldn't hear of Jack's paying a cent of a bill. He didn't let me off so easy, however.

Miss Barr didn't appear down stairs for a couple of days after it, being completely used up.

The first day of her coming down was the day of our leaving. All the guests of the house were on hand, and Jack and I, as we drove off, received a hearty cheer and many good wishes and invitations to come back again.

It is needless to say that Jack was more completely gone than ever; but it was a hopeless case, as the young lady was engaged to a Montreal man and was to be married in the autumn.

Her father offered Jack any reward he chose to name. Modest Jack wouldn't name anything, so the old gentleman shortly afterwards sent him a couple of U. S. bonds of a thousand dollars each. Mr. Allen, the lucky Montrealese, sent him a magnificent gold watch, chain and charm. The diamond which attracted your attention was given him by Miss Barr herself.

Each year since then Jack has spent a week in Montreal as their guest, and is just as much in love with her as ever.

MULBERRY SELLERS.

RETRIBUTION.

It is the last day of the grand trotting meeting at Rigby. The grounds, and grand stand are crowded with people. The bell from the judges stand, has just called out the starters in the three minute guarantee stake and there is a great cheer from the multitude, as the favourite, a beautiful coal black clean limbed animal comes trotting smoothly down the course.

The driver smiles confidently, and with his whip touches his cap carelessly to the crowd, and reining his horse in front of the judge's stand, goes up to be weighed. The attendants, one at the horse's head and the other standing by with a bucket and a sponge, are laughing and joking. And no wonder! Only a few days before, under less favourable circumstances, the horse had won a race in 2.28 and showed his ability to do better. Now the other horses are coming on, a nice enough looking lot but they don't look a match for the black. Then comes the wirey little chestnut mare driven by a man in pink. As he jogs along the track, he touches his cap to a lady and a gentleman seated in a carriage near the fence. The gentleman is the owner of the mare, and the lady is his wife. His gaze anxiously follows the man and horse as they pass. The horse has the fine limbs, compact body and small intelligent head of the American trotters, but to the eyes of a horseman she seems painfully deficient in size. The man is the usual type of the American reinsman. Again the bell rings and the drivers take up their positions, they score a few times, and then the word—go—rings out sharp and distinct. Before the quarter is reached the black has the pole and is leading, the others following in a bunch as they sweep under the wire on the first half, the positions are but little changed and the favourite is well in the lead. Again the driver smiles confidently and makes a graceful motion of his whip towards the stand in acknowledgment of the low murmur of applause.

The gentleman in the carriage is standing up, his face is white to the lips, and he seems greatly agitated, but gradually the bunch thins out and the little chestnut mare draws ahead and begins to close up the gap. As they reach the third quarter she is almost at the favourite's wheel and going beautifully. The black's driver, confident of an easy victory, has been taking it easy, but he has the pole and a little the best of it, now they are on the home

stretch she is abreast of him and both horses appear to be doing their best. "She can't stand the clip, she must break" shouts someone in the crowd, and the black's driver touches him lightly with the whip, he breaks but catches quickly, yet the mare has gained a little; he cannot recover his lost ground and the little chestnut darts under the wire and wins the heat by half a length.

It is sometime before the crowd recovers from its surprise and an angry murmur rises as a report goes round that the heat has been sold, then as the timer hands out a board with 2.25 chalked on it the murmur changes to a shout of applause for the winner and the gentleman in the carriage waves his hand to the driver and falls back on the seat with a sigh of relief. "Oh Frank, you bad boy, you did not tell me you expected the mare to win," says the lady playfully. "I wanted to surprise you," he replies with a forced laugh and then they turn their attention to a race that is just starting.

Up at the stables a flashily dressed man is talking to the driver. "I will give you ten thousand dollars to lose this race" he says. The driver hesitates so far he has always been honest, but just now he is hard pushed for money and ten thousand dollars seems a big sum. The mare's owner is wealthy, surely the loss of a race cannot make much difference to him. Then he suddenly remembers that if he is detected pulling the mare the judges will put another man in the sulky who might perhaps win the race. "Will you accept?" asks the man. "I accept" he replies.

Again the starters in the guarantee stake are scoring but the chestnut mare is pulling and acting badly, her driver is apparently trying hard to keep her steady, but without avail, and the gentleman in the carriage is looking very anxious indeed.

Finally they get the word but before fifty yards are covered the mare makes a bad break, and the favourite again takes the lead, and this time he keeps it to the end of the mile. The mare appears to lose her head altogether and just manages to save her distance, and the gentleman in the carriage seeing the flag fall and thinking her to be distanced sinks back on the cushions with a groan, his face is deadly white, and great beads of perspiration stand out on his brow.

"Oh, Frank, what is the matter, what has happened?" cries his wife in alarm. For a moment he cannot speak, and then he says brokenly. "The mare is distanced and we are ruined, I was sure she would win and I have staked everything I possess on her." "Oh surely not so bad as that," she says hysterically, and nerving himself with a great effort he answers hoarsely, "Worse, I have used a few thousand of the company's." "Oh, Frank why did you do it?" she moans but she is a brave woman and knows it will not do to attract attention, so she controls her emotion.

The crush of carriages prevents them from leaving the grounds, and together they sit wearily waiting for the races to end. Again the bell calls the starters in the guarantee stake, and this time the gentleman in the carriage does not stand up, but as the horses are coming down for the first time and the little chestnut mare speeds past, he springs to his feet and cries excitedly: She was not distanced, there is yet a chance.

But an instant later his countenance wears a look of despair, the mare is again acting badly and he knows she cannot win. Suddenly she rears and the sulky runs in under her heels and she falls back crushing the unfortunate driver beneath her. A thrill of horror runs through the crowd, then a man springs over the fence and catches the struggling horse by the bridle, others follow and soon the mare is got on her feet and the driver is released. Save for a few scratches the horse is uninjured, but the man is dying, he is perfectly unconscious and knows he has only a few minutes to live. The gentleman from the carriage is kneeling beside him and the dying man whispers faintly "don't—think—too hard—of me—I sold—the race—mare—can win—no—sulky—at barn—its my—own—fault—I put—tacks—in—harness—made—her—rear—am sorry—God—for—give"; his voice ceases, there is a sudden convulsive movement of the crushed form, and the driver is dead.

The gentleman springs to his feet, calls to the trembling groom who is leading the mare, and tells him to quickly change the harness and put her in another sulky. Then going to the judge's stand he asks permission to drive. They enquire if he is acquainted with the rules of the track. He declares he is, and his request is granted. Again the bell rings and the horses score past the stand. The gentleman has the chestnut mare well in hand, he is an expert reinsman, and as he wheels his horse he smiles and waves his hand to the lady in the carriage.

Again they come down and this time it is "go." Like a flash they are off, the black horse has the pole and is leading

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but before the quarter is reached, the little mare is abreast of him, both horses are trotting beautifully. The black's driver attempts to force him, he breaks, and the mare draws ahead and gets the pole, then the black balances and with a wonderful burst of speed he overtakes her. This time she breaks and again he has the pole, as they round the turn, the mare once more draws abreast of him. In this position they dash past the stand and continue round the course. Now they are within a dozen yards of the finish, the whip gently touches the mare's flanks, she responds nobly and again skins under the wire and wins the heat by half a length.

The board shows the time 2.22½ and a cheer goes up from the grand stand, but the gentleman driver doesn't seem to hear it, and he quickly follows the mare to the stable and leaves her till the next heat is called.

Once again the bell rings and once more they are off. There are only the two this time; the rest of the field had been distanced in the last heat.

Again they speed past the stand abreast, but this time the gentleman's face wears a triumphant expression and he waves his whip reassuringly to the very pale lady in the carriage, then the little mare darts ahead of her black opponent and gradually increases her lead. The horsemen look on in amazement, it seems incredible that such a mere handful of horseflesh can move so rapidly. Then there is a wild burst of applause from the crowd as the gallant little mare dashes under the wire and wins the race.

The lady in the carriage has fainted, and the gentleman smiles, touches his hat gracefully to the grand stand, glances approvingly at the mark of 2.20 on the board, and descends from the sulky richer by nearly half a million dollars.

A. E. C.

GREAT-GRAND MOTHER'S STORY.

A story, my dears, ah, well! there's many a tale I could tell about the evil days of want and hardship that came upon us, because we were willing to endure it all rather than join those who were rebelling against king and country.

"I think we rightly called ourselves 'Loyalists.' We could not give up our heritage of noble deeds wrought by our forefathers, and perpetuated in song and story. In the ever quieter times that are, please God, yet to come, I pray that you and your children's children will be proud of your lineage and be ever loyal to your God and to the country and its flag. We bore much and patiently, hoping for better times, but when my dear and honored father was called 'a spy,' and a price set upon his head while he was away from us in England, your brave grandmother took a schooner and with her family and all the household goods she could bring, sailed for New Brunswick, from comfort and allurement to hardship and poverty. This was hard enough to bear, but that was as nothing to the anxious hearts we carried in our bosoms. As for me I was leaving one behind dearer than life itself, for my brave sailor lover had remained to warn my father of his danger, as there was a doubt as to whether he could receive our despatches before he sailed for Massachusetts. It was a joyful day for us all when they both came back together and what could I do, my dears, but name my wedding day, though I was only a lass of scarce eighteen years.

For nearly a quarter of a century I was a happy wife and mother, then God took my beloved, and I was left to battle alone. But my sons were stalwart boys, and my daughters bonny and loving. But there, I am wandering, as old people will, dears, and even my dim eyes can see in your bright ones, the questioning wonder, as to where the story will come. It isn't much of a story after all, and only brought to mind by a bit of old patchwork I saw today.

"Quiet days had come, and we were beginning to dwell in peace and plenty, when we heard one day that a regiment had been disbanded in Fredericton. It was

not pleasant hearing, for we knew well how many a deed of violence would be committed by these men, suddenly masters of themselves, after long years of subordination.

Our house was quite by itself, on the outskirts of the little town, and one night, your grandfather had not returned from town, and the maids and younger people had all gone to rest. I was sitting before the blazing fire in the big fire-place, knitting and dreaming. A sound of voices and the tread of heavy feet, almost made my heart stand still. A swift prayer went up to Heaven for protection, as I arose, white and trembling, to face the intruders.

About a dozen men entered the room. There was no tremor in my voice, I think, as I calmly demanded, what they wished at that unseemly hour. Food and shelter, or—here followed such a frightful oath, that it made me wince as if I had been struck.

I looked the speaker full in the face and said, "young man! food and shelter I will give you, but curse not the name of thy Maker, lest a worse thing, than even thou hast invoked should come upon thee." He seemed a little abashed, as did his companions and they stood or sat quietly while I went to and fro preparing food for them. Fortunately as was necessary and customary in those days there was an abundance of food in the house and a substantial meal was soon made ready. As they were about to begin, I raised my hand, to ensure silence and asked a short blessing. All this time I was in constant dread lest your dear grandfather should appear and I felt sure that his fiery impetuous spirit might rouse the latent evil in these only half sobered men.

At last their hunger seemed appeased. Then I spoke again.

"We are only defenceless women and children in this house. Hitherto, it has been one of your duties, as soldiers of his Gracious Majesty to defend and protect such, I pray you to remember this, and act as honorable men. I cannot offer you shelter in my house, but I will provide you with coverings and you will find hay in the barn and there you can rest."

"Madame," said one stepping forward, "you have appealed to our honor and your confidence shall not be misplaced."

"Silently they filed across the yard to the big barn, carrying the coverlets I had given, one made of the same pieces I came upon today. Till I got back to the fire I did not realize how great a strain had been upon me during those two hours but now I was glad to lie down upon my bed.

Half an hour hardly passed before your grandfather passed my door, on his way to his room. "Is that you my son?" I called, "Yes mother, is there anything wrong?"

"No, my son, good night."
The next morning I told him of my visitors and he rushed out expecting to find horses and cattle all gone, but nothing had been disturbed and in a corner by the door lay all my coverlets neatly folded in a pile. He could not but acknowledge that I was right in withholding the facts from him the night before, but it was a night of terror to me. God was merciful to me then, as he has ever been. Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and soon I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Soon indeed! for an hour later we found her lying back among her pillows, with a peaceful smile upon her face. My great grandmother was dead.

H. F. M.

Died an Easy Death.

Plodding Pete—Here it tells about a accident wot happened in a brewery.

Shortly—What wuz it?

Plodding Pete—A man fell into a beer vat, an' got drowned.

Shortly—Dat wuz a hard way ter die. Plodding Pete—Hard! If drownin' in water is sech a easy death. Shorty, t'ink wot a dead picnic it must be ter drown in beer.

Ready to Go Off.

Notwithstanding the prisoner was still drunk, he begged the judge to let him go. "But I can't discharge you," argued the judge.

"Why not?" pleaded the prisoner; "ain't I loaded?"

TUESDAY.



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