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## LITERATURE.

### TIMMS' STRATEGY.

Mapes was chivalrous by nature; he believed in 'seeking the bubble reputation even in the cannon's mouth.' His enthusiasm was aroused by the recital of stories of deeds of desperate daring, while he had nothing but contempt for even success won by crooked and indirect means. Timms, on the contrary, believed there was policy in war, and that the end justified the means, particularly if the end was attained. Companions from infancy, their lives had been spent in competition for scholastic and such other honors as the locality afforded, without even a momentary break in their friendship. But now, in early manhood, they struggle for a prize of incalculable value, with an ardor that threatened a complete rupture of friendly relations. The heart and hand of Eliza Reed, the neighborhood belle, were to be won, and to those none others might aspire in the face of such formidable competition as that of Mapes and Timms. They alone—each by virtue of his own personality and position—had a right to lay a siege to the heart of that variable, irritable, imperious beauty. For months the strife between them had gone on. Each one had called into play all his personal and social resources; for the local society had taken such an interest that it was divided into two factions, known as the Mapesites and the Timmsites. And yet Miss Eliza could not be brought to express a preference; if she rode with one to-day she was careful to walk abroad with the rival to-morrow.

Coquetry is delicious to a woman, and Eliza would not have been feminine had she been in haste to have made an election. Nevertheless, she did not intend to miss her opportunity. She knew well the war could not always last, and feared that when one of the aspirants for her favor withdrew from the contest, the love of the other, wanting the stimulus of competition, would grow cold; hence, she had made up her mind that, upon the first favorable opportunity, she would signify to Mapes that his suit, so often pressed, was at last accepted. The opportunity, it seemed, was not to be long wanting; for invitations were given out for an apple-bee in the neighborhood, and Eliza found means to convey an intimation to Mapes that she expected to meet him there, and counted on his escort home at the conclusion of the frolic.

The appointed evening looked for with such nervous anticipation by Mapes, came at length. He felt that it was the most important of his life, and arrayed himself as only a rustic dandy can. His way lay across a meadow, through which ran—or rather loitered—a deep, but narrow stream

spanned by a single log. It was so dark when he reached this primitive bridge that he was compelled to feel his way slowly across. As he progressed it commenced to swing lightly—something very unusual—until he reached the center, when, to his utter confusion, it gave way, and he was launched into the water. He scrambled out, then suddenly the night became luminous with that lurid light to which people refer when they say, in speaking of some profane wretch, He wore until all was blue. Whatever illuminating qualities this lurid light possessed, it had no drying ones, and Mapes was forced to bid adieu for the night to all hopes of plighting his troth to the loved Eliza.

In the rural districts Down East in early times the good people had such habits of industry and rigid economy that they seldom gave or attended parties, unless such as were cloaked under the names of raisings, quiltings, huskings or apple-bees; thus, the apple-bee fraught with momentous consequences to Mapes Timms, was but a social party in disguise—a few apples being pared, quartered, cored and strung in the early evening for appearances' sake.

As usual, Eliza Reed was the belle of the occasion. Good looks, entire self-possession, and a keen, satirical wit always assured her that position; and this night she shone with unusual brilliancy, until as the hours wore away and Mapes came not, she began to lose herself in pondering why, and at length she asked Timms:

Is your friend Mapes ailing?  
I guess not, replied Timms; saw him to-day. He wasn't complaining.  
He denies himself much pleasure, said Eliza, in not coming here to-night, for this is the place where we always have a good time. Aunt Judy knows how to give an apple-bee.

You let Mapes alone, answered Timms; he knows what he's about.

What do you mean? asked Eliza.  
Oh! I mean, replied Timms, that Mapes is t'e prince of good fellows and gets invitations where the rest of us don't.

Where is Mapes to-night? asked Eliza, now fully aroused.  
I don't know for sure, answered Timms. He told me to-day there were special reasons for his coming here, but that he had an invitation to the rich and aristocratic Squire Huntoon's, who is celebrating his daughter's birthday, and that he didn't know which way he would go, and Timms turned away to talk to the next prettiest girl in the room.

Patted young women are seldom logical or patient. When the party broke up, Eliza accepted Timms' escort to her home, and, before they arrived there, she had consented to become, with the least possible delay, Mrs. Timms. The next morning the engagement was announced and preparations for the wedding commenced. Timms was exultant—happy Timms!

For a few days Timms was not much seen in public—perhaps for want of courage to wear his blushing honors openly; perhaps for want of courage to meet other contingencies—who knows! But a man cannot make arrangements for his own wedding from a fixed standpoint and he was compelled to venture out. In a quiet and secluded by-way he met Mapes. The meeting to him was a surprise; he smiled feebly and extended his hand. But Mapes, intent on business, strode squarely up to Timms and planted a vigorous blow on one of his eyes, which caused that gentleman to measure his length in the dust. Timms sprang to his feet and showed fight, but another blow on the other eye sent him again to grass, where he continued to lie.

Get up, said Mapes.  
You'll knock me down again, said Timms.

Yes, returned Mapes; I will.  
Then I won't get up, said Timms.

You're an infernal scoundrel, said Mapes.

I can't help your saying so, answered Timms.

You sawed the log, repeated Mapes, advancing a step.

Yes—stop, said Timms I sawed the log.

Well, you needn't think, said Mapes, that after your marriage you're going to tell that story and make me a laughing stock.

I'll never speak of it, whined Timms. Perhaps you won't, said Mapes; but I'm going to swear you before I get through. There's another thing; you won the woman by your—trickery, and I know it is in you to abuse her, so I'm going to swear you to treat her kindly.

I'll swear, said Timms.

Hold your hand, said Mapes. Timms held up his hand.

Now repeat after me: I, Silas Timms, solemnly swear that I will never bring to the knowledge of any human being that I sawed the log whereby Daniel Mapes fell into the creek and lost a wife; and, further, that I will, she consenting, marry Eliza Reed, and always treat her kindly, so help me God.

Timms repeated the oath verbatim.

Now, get up and go home, said Mapes, I don't think you'll be married till your eyes get out of mourning, and by that time I'll be far enough away. But don't think I'll lose sight of you, and if you don't keep your oath you'll see me.

Timms arose from the ground, shook off the dust and walked away; but when he had secured a safe distance he shouted back exultingly:

Mapes she's an angel.

In twenty years Daniel Mapes had learned many things, and among them this: Life is very much as we make it. In other words, the world is like a mirror and looks at us with the face we represent. It returns scowl for scowl, and smile for smile. It echoes our sobs and our laughter. To the cold, it is as icy as the northern seas; to the loving, it is as balmy as the isles of the tropics.

He had learned a still harder lesson; which was, to forget the griefs, the sorrows, the slights, the wrongs, and the hates of the past. The effect of this lesson was to make it appear that the lines, to him, had fallen in pleasant places. His rotund form and firm muscle bespoke a good digestion, while a cheerful countenance told of mental peace. A fair woman named him husband and children called him father. A beautiful home in the Santa Clara Valley was theirs; besides which, Mapes had many broad acres of land, as well as many head of stock running nearly wild in the countries Monterey and San Luis Obispo.

Once in each year the cattle that graze on California's thousand hills are gathered in bauds at convenient places, to be claimed and branded by the owners—such assemblages being called rodeos. Mapes had been down across the Salinas Plains in attendance upon a rodeo; and, being on his return jogging along on his mustang, he saw far in the distance, but nearing him, an equally lone traveler. Slowly the distance between them decreased; and, as they approached, Mapes—with California prudence—slipping his revolver upon the belt which sustained it, turned his back round to his left side, bringing the hilt under the shadow of his bridle arm, and within easy reach of his right hand. A near look assured Mapes that he had no occasion for weapons; the coming man was of middle age, but his look was worn, weary, dejected and hopeless—in local phrase, his manner was that of a person who has lost his grip; and those who have met that terrible misfortune are never highway robbers, grip being the very quality wanted in that hazardous pursuit.

The travelers met, with a long, inquiring gaze, when from their lips simultaneously burst the words, Mapes—Timms. After a moment of mute surprise Mapes, spurring his mustang, drew nearer Timms.

So—we meet, at last. I have been wanting to see you this many a year.

The movement seemed ominous to Timms, and he cried out: Don't—don't shoot! I have no weapons! Besides, I have kept my oath—at least, as well as I could. I never told the reason why you didn't attend the apple-bee, nor ever breathed a syllable about the sawed log,—upon my solemn oath!

I wasn't thinking of the ducking, said Mapes.

Don't come any nearer, returned Timms. I have always tried to use that woman well; but she wouldn't be treated well. I have done my best to treat her kindly; but she wouldn't be treated kindly.

It is no use to go over the grounds to me, Timms.

But, replied Timms, you have no idea what that woman is; you wouldn't blame me if you only knew. She's brow-beat me till I ain't half a man.

So I see, said Mapes.

No you don't see, replied Timms. You don't see half. Look at this scar—taking off his hat and showing a long seam on his scalp—that was done with the skillet.

You have suffered, said Mapes.

Suffered! returned Timms. You ought to have sworn her, too. If you only knew how I have thought of you, and of my oath to you; and how I have borne blows and been quiet—how I have been called a brute and a fool, and kept silent—how I have endured taunts and sneers, hunger and discomforts, without a word of reproach—you would forgive me; you wouldn't harbor thoughts of revenge.

Thoughts of revenge? answered Mapes. Let us dismount and have a settlement; for I see my chance has come at last.

Mapes, would you take the life of an unarmed man?

Timms, you're crazy! Let me explain. I have no wrongs to avenge. It isn't for vengeance that I have wanted to see you. I have heard about you often—I know all your life and experiences; and I have only wanted to meet you, to offer you a home and friendship, employment and opportunities for prosperity here in California. I owe you no debt but one of gratitude, for the inestimable service you did me by that little job of carpenter work, and that I mean to pay. Come with me. He took Timms' horse by the bridle, turned him about without remonstrances, and they travelled on in silence.

After a while, Timms raised his eyes timidly from the ground, and said:

Mapes, she's the devil!

### FREEZING HIM OUT.

Over in the Treasury a story is told at the expense of a high official.

The air in the room was rather chilly, but the clerks were busily at work in their light office coats. They had warmed the bulb of the thermometer up to 75, and awaited developments.

The official remarked that it was cold and shivered and looked uneasily about the room. A clerk leisurely glanced at the thermometer and said that it was comfortable.

The official looked and saw and wondered.

I think I must have a chill, he said, but he went to his desk.

Pretty soon the clerk in front of him deliberately pulled off his coat and resumed work.

I am sure I must have a chill, again remarked the official, but every clerk had his nose down to business and hadn't time to answer.

Oh! exclaimed another in a loud aside, pulling off his coat.

The official, still muffled in his overcoat and shivering, went over again and looked at the thermometer.

A clerk had in the meantime applied the lighted end of a cigar to the bulb, and the mercury had jumped to 80.

Dear me! said the official, I'm afraid I'm going to be sick.

After a little he pulled on his gloves and started for home, took quinine and whisky, and went to bed.

When he returned to the office next day the story met him in the corridor.

He says it is all right; he is well, and the fellows who played it on him are sneezing their heads off.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

Mrs. Gladstone.—It has been the happy fortune of great British politicians to have wives who aided them in bearing the cares of office, and made their private existence blessed. Not more to Pitt was the accomplished companion of his labors, or to Fox the lovely being who exercised her spell upon him to the last, than is the wife of the great minister to his honored and glorious age. Mrs. Gladstone is no longer a rare visitor to the House of Commons. She is a tall, distinguished-looking woman, following her husband "in the silvered gray of years," but at his side always either in literal truth or in the closest sympathy. Her face is strong, keen and refined. A forehead high rather than broad; full, bright eyes, rich with feeling, a long, straight nose, high at its joining with the forehead, a sympathetic mouth, a clear, sonorous voice, a simple, stately manner, gracious and womanly, a style of dress suited to her age and station—such are her exterior characteristics. Who does not rejoice that she has lived to behold the laurels on her husband's head, and that he has her to walk with him to the not distant end. It was my privilege to express to her the admiration with which in our own country his efforts for the betterment of men and governments are observed, and her response showed that she, as well as he, finds in this vaster sympathy a deep happiness.—Margaret F. Sullivan to 'N. Y. Sun.'

STATING A PROBLEM WITH EXACTNESS.—BESSIE, if there were three apples on the plate and you took one, how many would be left?

If Fred were here, mamma?

That wouldn't matter.

Yes it would, mamma.

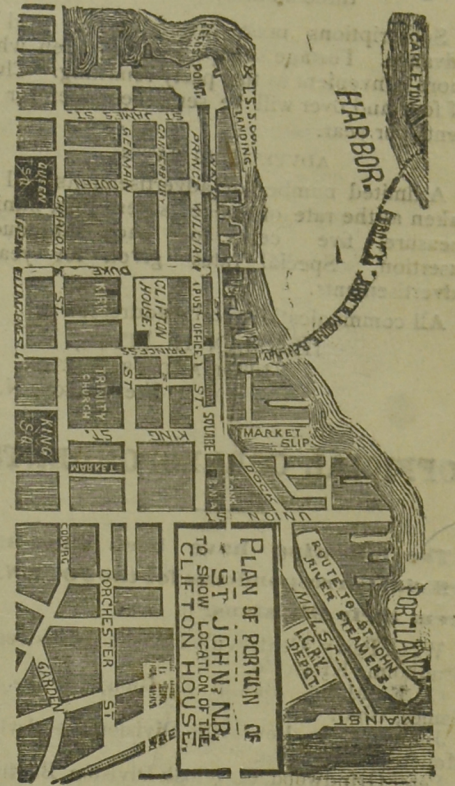
Well, with Fred here, then?

Mamma, there wouldn't be any apples left.

Why not, Bessie?

'Cause Fred would take the other two.

—Philadelphia Call.



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