

BLACK JACK.

BY RUDYARD KIPLING.

There is a writer called Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson, who makes most delicate inlay-work in black and white, and files out to the fraction of a hair. He has written a story about a Suicide Club, wherein men gambled for Death, because other amusements did not bite sufficiently. My friend Private Mulvaney knows nothing about Mr. Stevenson, but he once assisted informally at a meeting of almost such a club as that gentleman has described; and his words are true.

As the three musketeers share their silver, tobacco, and liquor together, as they protect each other in barracks or camp, and as they rejoice together over the joy of one, so do they divide their sorrows. When Ortheris's irrepresible tongue has brought him into cells for a season, or Learoyd has run amuck through his kit and accoutrements, or Mulvaney has indulged in strong waters, and under their influence proved his commanding officer, you can see the trouble in the faces of the untouched twain. And the rest of the regiment know that comment or jest is unsafe. Generally the three avoid orderly room and the corner shop that follows, leaving both to the young bloods who have not sown their wild oats; but there are occasions.

For instance, Ortheris was sitting on the drawbridge of the main gate of Fort Amara, with his hands in his pockets and his pipe, bowl down, in his mouth. Learoyd was lying at full length on the turf of the glacis, kicking his heels in the air, and I came round the corner and asked for Mulvaney.

Ortheris spat into the ditch and shook his head. "No good seen 'im," said Ortheris, " 'e's a bloomin' camel. Listen."

I heard on the flags of the veranda opposite to the cells, which are close to the guard room, a measured step that I could have identified in the tramp of an army. There were twenty paces crescendo, a pause, and then twenty diminuendo. "That 'im," said Ortheris; "my Gawd, that's 'im! All for a bloomin' button you could see your face in an' a bit o' lip that a bloomin' Harkangel would 'a' giv' back."

Mulvaney was doing pack-drill—was compelled, that is to say, to walk up and down for certain hours in full marching order, with rifle, bayonet, ammunition, knapsack, and overcoat. And his offense was being dirty on parade! I nearly fell into the tort ditch with astonishment and wrath, for Mulvaney is the smartest man that ever mounted guard, and would as soon think of turning out uncleanly as of dispensing with his trousers.

"Who was the sergeant that checked him?" I asked. "Mullins, o' course," said Ortheris. "There ain't no other man would whip 'im on the peg so. But Mullins ain't a man. 'E's a dirty little pigscarer, that's wot 'e is."

"What did Mulvaney say? He's not the make of man to take that quietly."

"Said 'im better for 'im if 'e'd shut 'is mouth. Lord, 'ow we laughed! 'Sargint,' 'e sez, 'ye say I'm dirty. Wel,' sez 'e, 'when your wife lets you blow your own nose for yourself, perhaps you'll know wot dirt is. You're himperfectly edicated, sargint,' sez 'e, 'an' then we fell in. But after 'prace, 'e was up an' Mullins was swearin' 'imself black in the face at ord'ly room that Mulvaney 'ad called 'im a swine an' Lord knows wot all. You know Mullins. 'E'll 'ave 'is 'ead broke in one o' these days. 'E's too big a bloomin' liar for ord'nary consumption. 'Three hours' can an' kit,' sez the colonel; not for 'bein' dirty on 'prace, but for 'avin' said somethin' to Mullins, tho' I do not believe, ' sez 'e, 'you said wot 'e said you said.' An' Mulvaney fell away sayin' nothin'. You know 'e never speaks to the colonel for fear o' gettin' 'imself fresh copped."

Mullins, a very young and very much married sergeant, whose manners were partly the result of innate depravity and partly of imperfectly digested board school, came over the bridge, and most rudely asked Ortheris what he was doing.

"Me?" said Ortheris. "Owl! I'm wait-



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ing for my omission. 'Seed it comin' along yet?'

Mullins turned purple and passed on. There was the sound of a gentle chuckle from the glacis where Learoyd lay.

"'E expects to get his omission some day," explained Ortheris; "'Gawd 'elp the mess that 'ave 'em put their 'ands into the same kidd'y as 'im! Wot time d'you make it, sir? Fower! Mulvaney'll be out in 'arf an hour. You don't want to buy a dorg, sir, do you? A pup you can trust—'arf rampore by the colonel's greyhound."

"Ortheris," I answered sternly, for I knew what was in his mind, "do you mean to say that—"

"I didn't mean to arx money o' you, any'ow," said Ortheris; "'I'd 'a' sold you the dorg good an' cheap, but—but—I know Mulvaney'll want somethin' after we've walked 'im orf, an' I ain't got nothin', nor 'e ain't neither. 'I'd sooner sell you the dorg, sir. 'S t'rewth I would!'

A shadow fell on the drawbridge, and Ortheris began to rise into the air, lifted by a huge hand upon his collar.

"Anything but brass," said Learoyd quietly, as he held the Londoner over the ditch. "Anything but brass, Ortheris, ma soap! Ah've got one rupee eight annas of ma own." He showed two coins, and replaced Ortheris on the drawbridge rail.

"Very good," I said; "where are you going to?"

"Goin' to walk 'im orf wen 'e comes out—two miles or three or fower," said Ortheris.

The footsteps within ceased. I heard the dull thud of a knapsack falling on a bedstead, followed by the rattle of arms. Ten minutes later, Mulvaney, faultlessly attired, his lips compressed and his face as black as a thunder-storm, stalked into the sunshine on the drawbridge. Learoyd and Ortheris sprang from my side and closed in upon him, both leaning toward as horses lean upon the pole. In an instant they had disappeared down the sunken road to the cantonments, and I was left alone. Mulvaney had not seen fit to recognize me; wherefore, I felt that his trouble must be heavy upon him.

I climbed one of the bastions and watched the figures of the three musketeers grow smaller and smaller across the plain. They were walking as fast as they could put foot to the ground, and their heads were bowed. They fetched a great compass round the parade-ground, skirted the cavalry lines, and vanished in the belt of trees that fringes the low land by the river.

I followed slowly, and sighted them—dusty, sweating, but still keeping up their long, swinging tramp—on the river bank. They crashed through the forest reserve, headed toward the bridge of boats, and presently established themselves on the bow of one of the pontoons. I rode cautiously till I saw three puffs of white smoke rise and die out in the clear evening air, and knew that peace had come again. At the bridge-head they waved me forward with gestures of welcome.

"'Tie up your 'orse," shouted Ortheris, "'an' come on, sir. We're goin' 'ome in this 'ere bloomin' boat."

From the bridge-head to the forest officer's bungalow is but a step. The mess-man was there, and would see that a man held his horse. Did the sahib require aught else—a peg, or beer? Ritchie Sahib had left half a dozen bottles of the latter, but since the sahib was a friend of Ritchie Sahib, and he, the mess-man, was a poor man—

I gave my order quietly, and returned to the bridge. Mulvaney had taken off his boots, and was dabbling his toes in the water; Learoyd was lying on his back on the pontoon and Ortheris was pretending to row with a big bamboo.

"'I'm an' old 'fool,'" said Mulvaney, reflectively, "'dhragin' you two out here because I was under the black dog—sulkin' like a child. Me that was sold'er in when Mullins, an' 'e, was damned to him, was shquelin' on a countepin for fove shillin's a week, an' that not paid! Bhoys, I've took you fove miles out av' natural pervarsity. Phew!'

"Wot's the odds as long as you're 'appy?" said Ortheris, applying himself atresh to the bamboo. "'As well 'ere as anywhere else."

Learoyd held up a rupee and an eight-anna bit, and shook his head sorrowfully. "Five mile from t' canteen, all along o' Mulvaney's blasted pride."

"I know ut," said Mulvaney, penitently. "'Why will y: come wid me? An' yet I wud be mortal sorry if y: did not—any time—though I am' old enough to know better. But I will do penance. I will take a drink av' waffer."

Ortheris squeaked shrilly. The butler of the forest bungalow was standing near the railings with a basket uncertain how to clamber down to the pontoon.

"'Might 'a' know'd you'd 'a' got liquor out o' bloomin' desert, sir,'" said Ortheris, gracefully, to me. Then to the mess-man: "'Easy with them there bottles. They're worth their weight in gold. Jook, ye long-arm'd beggar, get out o' that an' hike 'em down."

Learoyd had the basket on the pontoon in an instant, and the three musketeers gathered round it with dry lips. They drank my health in due and ancient form, and thereafter tobacco tasted sweeter than ever. They absorbed all the beer, and disposed themselves in picturesque attitudes to admire the setting sun—no man speaking for awhile.

Mulvaney's head dropped upon his chest, and we thought that he was asleep. "What on earth did you come so far for?" I whispered to Ortheris.

"To walk 'im orf, o' course. When 'e's been checked we allus walks 'im orf. 'E ain't fit to be spoke to those times—nor 'e ain't fit to leave alone neither. So we takes 'im till 'e is."

Mulvaney raised his head, and stared straight into the sunset. "I had my rifle," said he dreamily, "'an' I had my baynit, an' Mullins came round the corner, an' 'e looked in my face an' grinned dishepful. 'You can't blow your own nose,' sez he. Now, I can't tell f'wat Mullin's expariance may 'a' been, but, Mother av' God, he was nearer to his death that minut' than I have iver been to mine—and that's less than the thickness av' a hair!'

"'Yes,'" said Ortheris calmly, "'you'd look fine with all your buttons took orf, an' the hand in front o' y: walkin'—

roun' slow time. We're both iron-fank men, me an' Jock, when the rig'ment's in 'ollow square. Bloomin' fine you'd look. 'The Lord giveth an' the Lord taketh away—Heavy with that there drop!—Blessed be the name o' the Lord!'

He gulped in a quaint and suggestive fashion.

"Mullins! Wot's Mullins?" said Learoyd slowly. "'Ah'd take a comp'ny o' Mullinses—ma hand behind me. Sitha, Mulvaney, dun not be a fool."

"You were not checked for f'what you did not do, an' made a mock av' afther. 'Twas for less than that the Tyrone wud 'a' sent O'Hara to hell, instid av' lettin' him go by his own choisin', whin Rafferty shot him," retorted Mulvaney.

"And who stopped the Tyrone from doing it?" I asked.

"That ould fool who's sorry he didn't stiek the pig Mullins." His head dropped again. When he raised it he shivered and put his hands on the shoulders of his two companions.

"Ye're wallded the devil out av' me, bhoys," said he.

Ortheris shot out the red-hot dottle of his pipe on the back of his hairy fist. "They say 'ell's 'otter than that," said he, as Mulvaney swore aloud. "You be warned so. Look yonder!"—he pointed across the river to a ruined temple— "'Me an' you an' 'im"—he indicated me by a jerk of his head—"'was there one day when HI made a bloomin' show o' myself. You an' 'im stopped me doin' such—an' 'im was on'y wishful for to desert. You are makin' a bigger bloomin' show o' yourself now."

"Don't mind him, Mulvaney," I said. "'Dinah Shadd wot let you hang yourself yet awhile, and you don't intend to try it either. Let's hear about the Tyrone and O'Hara. Rafferty shot him for fooling with his wife. What happened before that?'

"There's no fool like an ould fool. You know you can do anythin' wid me whin I'm talkin'. Did I say I wud like to cut Mullins's liver out? I deny the imputashin, for fear that Orth'ris here wud report me—Ah! You wud tip me into the river, wud you? Sit quiet, little man. Anyways Mullins is not worth the trouble av' an' extry 'prace, an' I will trate him wid out'rais contimp. The Tyrone an' O'Hara! O'Hara an' the Tyrone, begad! Ould days are hard to bring back into the mouth, but they're always inside the head."

Followed a long pause.

"O'Hara was a devil. Though I saved him, for the honor av' the rig'mint, from his death that time, I say it now. He was a devil—a long, bould, black-haired devil."

"Which way?" asked Ortheris. "Women."

"Then I know another." "Not more than in reason, if you mane me, ye warped walkin'-stick. I have been young, an' for why should I not have tuk what I end? Did I iver, whin I was corp' an' O'Hara, was a man wud stir up an' that taken away, more's the sorrow an' the fault av' me!—to prosecute

a nefarious intrigue, as O'Hara did? Did I, whin I was corp' ril, lay my spite upon a man an' make his life a dog's life from day to day? Did I lie, as O'Hara lied, till the young wans in the Tyrone turned white wid fear av' the judgment av' God killin' them all in a lump, as ut killed the woman at Devizes? I did not! I have sinned my sins, an' I have made my confessin, an' Father Victor knows the worst av' me. O'Hara was tuk, before he cud spake, on Rafferty's doorstep, an' no man knows the worst av' him. But this much I know!

"The Tyrone was recruited any fashion in the ould days. A draf' from Conne-mara—a draf' from Portsmouth—a draf' from Kerry, an' that was a blazin' bad draf'—here, there and iverywhere—but the large av' them was Irish—Black Orlish. Now there are Orlish an' Orlish. The good are good as the best, but the bad are wurst than the wurst. 'Tis this way. They clog together in pieces as fast as thieves, an' no wans f'what they will do till wun turns informer an' the gang is bruk. But ut begins again, a day later, meetin' in holes an' corners an' swearin' bloody oaths, and shiekin' a man in the back av' an' runnin' away, an' thin waitin' for the blood money on the reward papers—to see if ut's worth enogh. Those are the Black Orlish, an' 'tis they that bring dishgrace upon the name av' Orliland, an' them I would kill—as I nearly killed wun."

"But to resume. My room—'twas before I was married—was wid twelve av' the sun av' the earth—the pekin' av' the gutter—'thane men that I wud neither laugh nor talk nor yet get dhrunk as a man shud. They thried some av' their dog's tricks on me, but I drew a line round my cot, an' the man that thransgressed ut wint into hospital for three days good."

"O'Hara had put his spite on the room—'he was my color sargint—as 'nothin' cud we do to plaze him. I was younger than I am now, an' I tuk what I got in the way av' dressing down and punishment—dhrill wid my tongue in my cheek. But it was diff'rint with the others, an' why I can not say, except that some men are bornn mane an' go to dirty murder where a fist is more than enogh. Afther a while they changed their chune to me an' was desprit frien'ly—'t' twelve av' them cursin' O'Hara in chieus."

(To be Continued)

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Hamilton's Dueling Pistol.

In the parlor of the Roy homestead, in Superior, Wis., is the pistol with which Alexander Hamilton fought Aaron Burr on the banks of the Hudson in the year 1806, and the mate of the weapon with which Aaron Burr took Hamilton's life on that occasion. The owner of the relic is Margaret A. Roy, widow of Vincent Roy. Mr. Roy was one of Superior's pioneers, and over 20 years ago, upon the occasion of a visit to the town of a party of southern and eastern speculators, the pistol was presented to him by ex-Senator J. B. Beck of Kentucky in return for a favor conferred by Mr. Roy. Mr. Beck received the weapon from a relative of Colonel James Boyle, and subsequently loaned it to a friend, who used it during the civil war. Colonel Boyle received the pistol, together with its mate, from Judge Van Ness, who was Burr's second during the duel with Hamilton.

The Burr pistol, which is an exact duplicate of the other, is now owned by Louis Marshall, son of Colonel Thomas Marshall of Vermont. It has changed hands many times, and finally got into the hands of Colonel Marshall after passing through the Mexican and civil wars. Both weapons were marked by Colonel Van Ness to insure identification, the Burr pistol with an "X," to signify that it had killed one man, and the Hamilton pistol with the character "O" above the initials "A. H." The pistol owned by Mrs. Roy is of the old flintlock, horse pistol pattern. Although made of good material and well finished, it is a clumsy looking affair compared with the pistol of today. The barrel is 12 inches long and carries a two ounce ball, while the handle is heavy and extremely difficult to grip.—Chicago Times-Herald.

Not Religious and Not Fussy.

"When I came out on my regular trip the other morning," relates the Lee stage driver, "the only passenger I had was an old lady of very demure manners. I was most dead for a smoke, but I had sort of got it into my head that the old lady was a religious and a fussy party. When we got along a piece, however, I got to fingering my tobacco and, by snuff, I just couldn't resist the temptation. So I turned round to the old lady and asked her if she had any objection to my taking a whiff or two. She straightened up like a monkey on a stick.

"By golly, young man," she shouted, 'you've hit me just where I live. I've been a hankering for a smoke all the morning. Gimme a match.'

"She pulled out a black T. D., and I tell you, mister, me'n that old lady made the stage look like a steam engine going up a grade."—Kennebec Journal.

Scorching in Business.

The bicyclist is not the only man who scorches. There are business-scorchers, professional-scorchers, farmer-scorchers, mechanic-scorchers and laborer-scorchers. The man who overworks, who scorches, no matter what his occupation, and at the same time neglects his health, will sooner or later pay a penalty in sickness and possibly premature death.

If a man will always watch his health and correct minor irregularities by a resort to the right remedy, he may do a reasonable amount of scorching without serious results. Nearly all serious maladies are the result of imperfect nutrition. Imperfect nutrition is just another name for starvation. A man may eat voraciously and still starve. He may put on an eighth of a ton of sickly flabby flesh and have a big, corpulent stomach, and still be starving. He may scorch until he goes to the opposite extreme and gets thin as a rail, and he is still starving. The trouble lies in the fact that no matter how much food is taken it is not properly assimilated. The blood does not receive the life-giving elements of the food that build firm, healthy flesh, solid muscle and vibrant nerve fibers. Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery makes the assimilation perfect. It quickly makes healthy flesh, without raising the weight above Nature's normal. At all medicine stores.

E. M. Seavolt, of No. 47 Sandusky St., Mount Vernon, Knox Co., Ohio, writes: "I can heartily recommend your 'Golden Medical Discovery' to anyone who's troubled with indigestion and torpid liver; it was that that has done me in. All the other medicines could give me no relief; but at last, what came to my relief was that wonderful medicine the 'Golden Medical Discovery.' I could scarcely eat anything; it would cut me in terrible distress in my stomach. I had a dull aching and grinding pain in my stomach with pain in my right side and back, and headache, bad taste in my mouth, night I was feverish and the soles of my feet burned. I took four bottles of the 'Discovery' and two vials of the 'Pellets.' I am well and hearty and can eat as well as any body can,—thanks to your 'Discovery.'"

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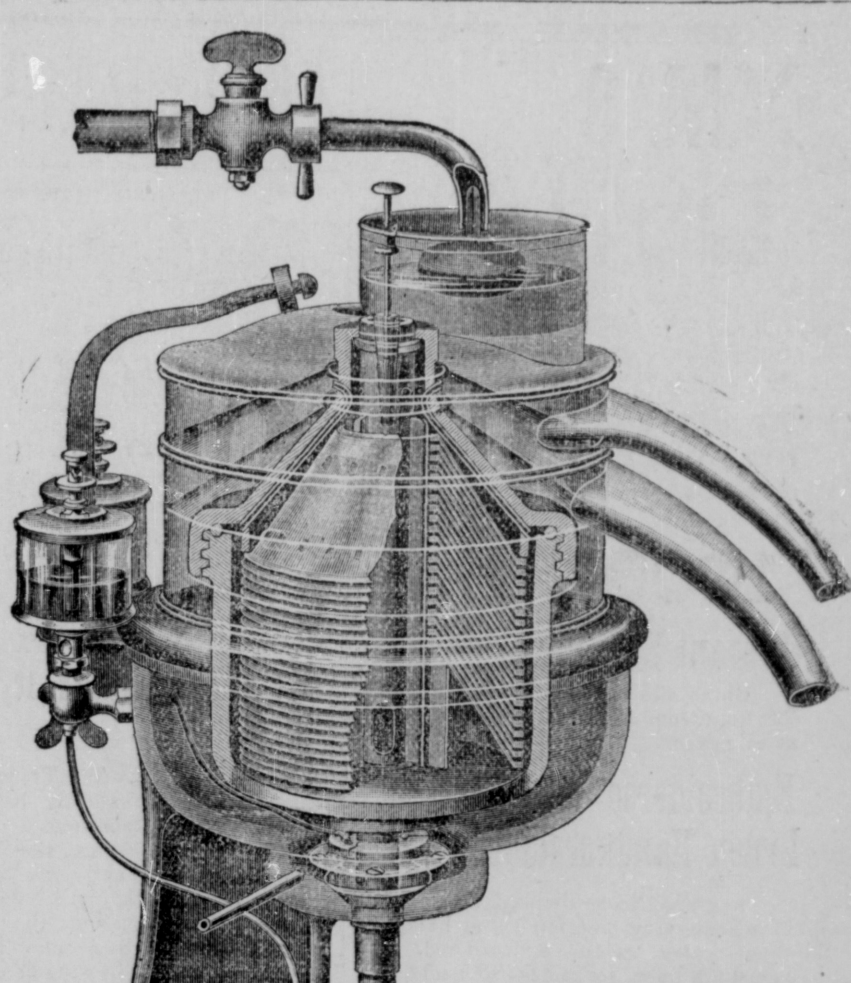
MORTGAGE SALE.

To be sold by Public Auction, at the Court House in Charlottetown, on Saturday, the 23rd day of January, A. D. 1898, at the hour of twelve o'clock, noon, under a power of sale contained in a mortgage dated the twenty-first day of September, A. D. 1894, and made between Mrs. Margaret A. Roy and Peter Mequardt and Charlotte Mequardt, wife of said Peter Mequardt, of the one part, and J. Edward Wyatt of the other part. All and singular that tract of land situate on Lot 15, Prince County, Prince Edward Island bounded as follows:—Commencing on the shore of Redoubt Bay, in the south-east angle of land of Thedy Lee Arsenault; thence along the same northwesterly seventy-two chains and fifty links, or to the southern boundary of land formerly owned by Daniel Arsenault, and land owned by Paul Perry; thence easterly along the same seventy-two chains and fifty links to the shore, thence along the same westerly to the place of commencement, containing fifty acres of land, more or less. For further particulars apply at the office of J. Edward Wyatt, Summerside, P. E. I., dated this 5th day of December, A. D. 1897. J. EDWARD WYATT, Mortgagee.

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