

He enlarged on the disinterested devotedness of his affection—touched on the felicitous sweets of love in a cottage, and quoted a text to the effect that contentment with a handful of oatmeal is better than turtle soup and roast beef without it. As he progressed (to use the barbarous lingo of the Yankee's) he warmed in his speech, even as silver brightens by scouring, and forgetting the near relationship of the parties, he likened and compared the Quaker to a huge, long-shanked spider, weaving the meshes of the abominable web of persecution around two forlorn loving hearts.

The latter words had no sooner issued from Laird Ogilvies mouth, than a gush of light flashed upon his face, and when his eyes recovered from their bewilderment they beheld an object which constrained them to stand stiff in his head like the motionless optics of a doll.

In place of the shrinking, blushing Bathsheba there stood as large as life, the tremendous Quaker, grasping a dark *booit* lanthorn in one hand, and a merciless potato beetle in the other, reminding you of Giant Despair and his club in the Pilgrims Progress!

How he came there, I never could properly expiscate, but so was the fact, that for the larger dividend of half an hour he had enacted the part intended for his niece, and, as is frequently the case with listeners, had heard but scanty good of himself. At his pristine advent he had discovered the root of the matter, and in order to learn the full bearing of affairs had remained so long quiet, answering only by a *yea* or a *nay* when obligated to make a response, which his chirping, feckless voice enabled him to do without risk of discovery. When the barm of Wattie's heat had worked to a climax, however, even a Quaker's flesh and blood could stand it no longer. The unsavoury similitude of the spider clean stuck in his throat, and turning round the light side of the *booit*, he flashed it, as aforesaid, on the defamer, and, without waiting to say grace, rained a perfect water spout of blows on his scone with the bloody and homicidal beetle.

Wattie conjecturing it was the enemy of mankind, who had assumed a broad-brimmed hat, to play him this plisky, emitted yell after yell of pain and horror. Off he set at full

speed, and clearing the hedge at a single jump, landed up to the oxters in Luckie Grainer, the Howdie's middenstead; in which delectable Egypt he remained near an hour, before he compassed his exodus therefrom.

Next day the doors of the Town Council Chamber were besieged by a countless host of men, women, children, and tailors, all anxious to hear the result of the novel and unprecedented trial. Gentle and simple elbowed one another without ceremony in the crowd, and even the halt and the maimed were to be found in the battalion of quidnuncs; I mind as well as if it had happened but yesterday, of seeing that feckless object Ebenezer Embleton, who had been bed-ridden with an income in his back for twenty years, carried down on a shutter to the place of judgment, in order to get ocular demonstration of the upshot of the plea. The school children got the play on the occasion, and the whole town wore as great an air of bustle and excitement as if there had been a hanging, or some such like merry making.

I chanced to be busy at the time, manufacturing a wig for Bailie Bellyband, who being on the eve of marriage with Barbara Brass, a maiden some fifty years his junior, was naturally anxious to put his moulded hairs under a bushel. Though thus engaged, however, I could no more resist the infection than my neighbours. Accordingly *steeking* the door of my shop, I proceeded to the Town Hall, and in virtue of my office of Dean of Guild, procured a seat on the bench to witness the proceedings.

At one side of the clerk's table sat the "braw wooer," with rather a misanthropical visage, his head resting on his loof, and every now and then emitting a sigh like a blast from Thomas Anvil the blacksmith's bellows. Opposite him was the cruel Quaker, his mouth screwed down as if a ten pound weight had been tied to each corner of his upper lip, and his hat, according to the fashion of such conceited idolators, planted firmly on his head, in sacriligious defiance, as it were, of the powers that be. Hamish McTurk, the court officer, scandalised at this heathenish disrespect, essayed to lift the beaver from the wearer's poll, but was rebuked by a sharp admonishment on the official's shins, which made him bellow forth in Gaelic what, if translated into