

"Ten thousand tom-cats
Came rushing o'er the woodshed
And I alone—unarmed!
I seized my trenchant tomahawk
Dyed with the blood of a thousand battle fields
But caught the seat of my pantaloons,
Getting over the garden fence,
And there I hung transfixed."

"The song is ended and he comes—I rush into his arms. Just as the lovely Jane was about to carry into effect her amiable intentions a dark form strode from the shrubbery and grasping Alphonso's arm, sternly said "rash man remember your vows!" Jane fainted—Alphonso fled—the dark form laughed an awful laugh and strode away whence it came.

CHAPTER III.—THE VOW.

Alphonso fled—heedlessly, and caring not whither—it still rung in his ears "your vow"—what did it mean? "Twas thus Jane's princely father was a stamp collector, and on his death bed bequeathed her his fortune of fifty millions of dollars and his splendid collection of fourteen stamps—and also he made her swear that she would never enter into connubial felicity until her lover could produce an undoubtedly genuine 40 c. Belgium, perforated, 13 by 15. Thus she swore not knowing the terrible undertaking she was working for the gorgeous Alphonso. Then Alphonso was called in and deposited to the same effect—and the Duke of Lily Lake joined the lovers' hands with these words "my children it will be years before the condition can be fulfilled, but I make the condition solely for that reason that you may grow older for you know you are too young to marry yet. Alphonso I give you this great armful of treasure and with her my fortune—but remember your vow. At these words the venerable Duke who had seen enough of the world, thought he might as well go, and he went. The scene so gloriously depicted in chapter two, was two months after his obsequies, and the vow was not fulfilled; alas poor short sighted man to place such an unpassable barrier between two loving hearts—live on young hearts all will yet be well.

CHAPTER IV.—THE PURSUIT.

Five years have passed since Alphonso fled—and the vow is not fulfilled—Alphonso looks older, and Mrs. Allen's Zylobalsamum ceases to invigorate his hair. He has been on a five years' chase after that 40c. Belgium 13 by 15, and he has got it. He has had a diplomatic correspondence, also personal conversations with the Count of Belgium, and learned that only one stamp of the kind wanted, was ever made and that one for an Englishman—he has hunted that Englishman till he fled from England—chased him to the Mauritius, thence to the Cape of Good Hope—thence all over the world till we find him close on his trail in the same month of the year in which our tale opens, and in the same place—the balmy month of December in the city of Sanjux amid the vine-clad

hills of New Brunswick—he goes to see the beautiful Jane—again is she reclining on the Piazza, again sounds the melody of that classic air—again she rushes frantically to his arms—and again they are parted; but not by the dark form mentioned before, but by the Englishman who is rushing madly to escape from Sanjux, having just heard his pursuer is in the city. Alphonso stretches forth his hand and clutches him as he flies—with a triumphant shriek he cries, "give me that 40c. Belgium perforated 13 by 15 or die—" and with these cruel words his massive broadsword flashed in the evening twilight!—It was an awful moment!"

CHAPTER V.—THE DUEL.

The Englishman looked at Alphonso and cried "wherefore have you the right to demand it—the King of Belgium made it for me and me alone—death sooner than dishonor, give me but the chance on a fair field and no favor and the one who lives shall own the stamp. "Agreed" cried Alphonso and drawing another massive broadsword from his waistcoat pocket he handed it to Sir Splithair, and the terrific battle began. After they had fought for 22 hours they began to grow a little exhausted, and rested awhile on their laurels, but when about to resume the fight, Jane who had lain in a dead faint awoke and rushed between the combatants exclaiming "I am the cause of all, kill me." It was an exciting point, but neither of them killed her—and Sir Splithair demands an explanation—it is given. A convulsive shudder passes over his manly frame, he reels, and clutches several posts of the piazza. Alphonso grimly smiles. There is an intermission of fifteen minutes allowed Sir Splithair to recover himself—at last he does so—he steps towards the pair and says in tragic tones, "young people I will no more part you, take the stamp and happiness—I give it up and with it I give my dearest hopes—but, alas! I am a childless man and have none to whom to transmit my treasure Take it and be happy, but when in after years groups of happy children play around you, bestow a thought upon the lonely grave of him who invented a 40c. Belgium perforated 13 by 15"—he concluded—they raised their eyes to thank him but the magnanimous Baronet was gone—They were married the next day, and lived happy ever afterwards—and it is said that on the anniversary of that balmy night in December in which our tale unfolds the spirit of the deceased Duke of Lily Lake may be seen crossing the piazza murmuring "The Vow is fulfilled."

THE END.

PRIZE ENIGMA.

I am composed of 96 letters.
My 95, 86, 63, 76, 16, 67, 43, 4, 89, 62, 74, 51,
85, 40, 87, 27, 91, 84, 24, 83, 63, 78, 82, 69,
90, 96, 38, 81, 48, 10, 33, 59, 75, 71, 80, 78
22, 31, are often collected by Philatelists.
" 18, 28, 60, 54, 1, 20, 83, 61, 8, 14, 77, 92,