



ORAL EXAM.

SIR A. P. CARON.—“Jenkins, what is a ‘military mess?’”
 JENKINS (*promptly*)—“The Militia Department under its present management, sir.”

THE CASE OF MR. COGGE.

A CANADIAN COMMOTION IN THREE PARTS AND A HIATUS.

BY W. C. NICHOL.

PART III.—(*Concluded.*)

WHEN Niagara Falls was reached one of the numerous Customs House officers who came through the train approached Mr. Cogge deferentially and said: “I am very sorry, sir, but I have received instructions from Ottawa this morning that American women passing into Canada have been added to the list of dutiable articles. I know this means considerable annoyance and inconvenience, but of course it cannot be helped.”

“But what is the reason for it?” asked Mr. Cogge.

The official briefly outlined the position of affairs. “Things had got to such a state that it was absolutely necessary to take steps to prevent the evil, and this was hit upon as the only feasible method of accomplishing it,” he added.

Mr. Cogge was bewildered for a moment, but quickly recovered. “Oh, that’s all right,” he said, smiling cheerfully. “That doesn’t bother us at all. This lady is a Canadian subject. It is true she has lived in the States for years, but she was born and brought up in Canada, and consequently the regulation you speak of does not apply to her.”

The officer seemed nonplussed for a moment, but finally said, “Your father was a Canadian, Miss?”

“Yes.”

“Was he naturalized after going to the States?”

“I think—yes, I know—he was.”

“Then that settles it. There is no help for it. This lady is the daughter of an American subject, and, consequently, is clearly dutiable. I’m sorry to detain you, but you can readily see that the value of the young lady will

have to be appraised and the duty paid before she can be permitted to proceed.”

“Oh, very well,” said Mr. Cogge, “if there’s no help for it of course there is no sense in objecting. Can it be arranged so that we can take this train and go right ahead?”

“Certainly, sir,” replied the official. “There will be no delay. The matter will not take five minutes to settle.”

Mr. Cogge and his *fiancée* left the car and were escorted to the Customs department by the official.

“On what basis is the duty fixed?” asked Mr. Cogge as they walked along.

“On the basis of weight,” replied the official.

Mr. Cogge laughed cheerfully. “What a pity it is you’re not thin, Belle,” he cried. “If you were a slim, slender girl now, as you were when I first knew you, we could save money. But,” he added, lowering his voice and speaking tenderly, “do you know, dear, I like you better the way you are.”

“Don’t be so foolish, Phil,” cried Miss Asherton, blushing both at the “we” and the concluding words. “Some one might hear you.” But she accompanied the remark with an affectionate glance from her pretty blue eyes, which made Mr. Cogge’s heart throb more ecstatically than ever.

In the Customs department everything appeared the same as usual, with the exception of the addition of a large pair of scales, which stood conveniently near the entrance. “These arrived from Ottawa this morning,” the official explained. “They were sent on purpose for determining weights in compliance with the new regulation.”

Miss Asherton stepped jauntily on the scales, blushing a little as was quite natural, and smiling sweetly at her future spouse. The Customs officer adjusted the weights and made some jocular references to his occupation, noting that the balance finally settled at 200 pounds.



AN UNEQUAL MATCH.

BLOBBINS.—“So you are still a bachelor, Maulstick?”

MAULSTICK.—“Yes; I shall never marry. I am wedded to my art.”

BLOBBINS.—“Quite so. Marriage is a failure, that’s a fact.”