

the advantage of that gentleman's acquaintance till he had arrived at years of maturity. I gather, however, that he matriculated at Oxford, and was rusticated from that pleasant University for some breach of college discipline, sufficiently venial in itself, but imbedded with a scarlet tinge in the eyes of the authorities. I have heard that he rode an Ayrshire bull across Peckwater in broad daylight having previously attired himself in a red coat, with feathers, etc., complete, and clad the patient animal in a full suit of academics. Also that he endeavored to mollify his judges by apostrophizing the partner of his trespass, in the words Horace puts into the mouth of Europa,

"Si quis infamem mihi nunc juvenemum,"

and so on to the end of the stanza. As, although Mr. Sawyer's fluency in all Saxon expletives is undeniable, I never heard him make use of any language but his own, I confess to my mind this bears upon the face of it the stamp of improbability, and that perversion of the truth from which Oxonian annals are not entirely free.

It is a good old fashion to commence a narrative by a personal description of its hero; such as you would see in the "Hud and Cry," or the advertisements for that missing gentleman in the "Times" who has never been found yet, and whose humble costume of half boots, twined trousers, and an olive surlout, with a bunch of keys and three-halfpence in the pockets, denotes neither affluence nor display. Upon this principle let me endeavor to bring before the mind's eye of my readers the outward semblance of my worthy friend, John Standish Sawyer, a man of mark, forsooth, in his own parish, and "justice of peace in his county, simple though he stand here."

Mr. Sawyer is a well-built, able-bodied personage, standing five feet eight in the worsted stockings he usually effects, with a frame admirably calculated to resist fatigue, to perform feats of strength rather than agility, and to put on beef; the last tendency he keeps down with constant and severe exercise so that the twelve stone which he averages into his saddle is seldom exceeded by a pound. "As long as I ride thirt on stone," quoth Mr. Sawyer to his intimates after dinner, "no man alive can take the shine out of me over a country. Mason! Mason's all very well for a spurt! but where is he at the end of two hours and forty minutes, through woodlands, in deep clay? Answer me that! and pass the bottle."

Our friend's admirers term his person square; his enemies, and he has a few, call it "clumsy;" certainly his hands and feet are large, his limbs robust, but not well turned, and though it would make him very angry to hear me, I confess he is not beautiful of the figure of a horseman. Nevertheless, he has an honest English face, round and rosy, light grey eyes, such as usually belong to an energetic and persevering temperament, with thin sandy hair, and a good deal of stiff red whisker.

Altogether, he looks like a man you would rather drink with than fight with, any day. Perhaps, if very fastidious, you might prefer hitting him alone, to doing either. Of his costume, I shall only say that it partakes on every-day occasions of the decidedly sporting with a slight tendency towards the slang. Its details are those of a dress in which the owner is ready to get on horseback at a moment's notice; nay, in which he is qualified, without further preparation, to ride four miles straight on end, over a stiff country; so enduring are its materials, and so suggestive of equestrian exercise is its general fit. Also, on Sundays, as on week-days, in town or country, he delights in a "five to two" sort of hat, with the flat brim and backward set, which denote indisputable knowledge of horseflesh, and a sagacity that almost amounts to dishonesty.

Not that Mr. Sawyer ever bets; far from it. He elbows his way indeed into the ring, and criticizes the two-year-olds as they walk

with hunting three and four times a week, talking of it the remaining days, and thinking of it all the seven, with constant visits to the stable and a perpetual feud with his blacksmith. Mr. Sawyer's mind was completely filled with as much as that receptacle could be thought capable of containing.

My hero, like the champions of Round Table, is perhaps seen to the greatest advantage on horseback. Let me introduce him to my reader, riding like a knight through the wilds of Lyonesse, up a deep muddy lane, as he returns from hunting the dull November twilight.

"Capital bit of stuff," says Mr. Sawyer, knocking off the ashes of his cigar with his dogskin-clad finger, and apostrophizing his "mount," a very little gray horse, with an arched neck and light mouth, and a tail set on high on his quarters. "Capital bit of stuff," he repeats, dangling his feet out of the stirrups; "as game as a pebble, and as neat as a pink." "Two hundred—two hundred and fifty! You're worth two hundred and fifty, every shilling of it!" (he had bought him of a fishmonger for forty pounds and a broken-winded pony). "Worth as much as any horse can be to carry thirteen stone. Hang it; you'd fetch all the money at Tattersall's if any of the customers could only have been seen you go to-day!"

Then Mr. Sawyer placed his feet in the stirrups, and fell to thinking of his day's sport.

They had really had a good run—a fine, wild, old-fashioned fox-hunting sort of run—from two hundred acres of woodland, down a couple of miles of bottomless ravine, and away over deep stiff ploughs and frequent straggling fences, till they reached the far-stretching downs. Here their fox had made his point good up-wind, and the pace even of those square-headed, deep-ribbed, heavy-timbered hounds had been liberal enough to satisfy the most exacting. Mr. Sawyer remembered, with a glow of pride, how, when they descended into the low country once more, he had led the field, and jumped an awkward stile, into a lane, to the admiration of all beholders. He could ride, to give him his due; and, moreover, he knew what hounds were doing, and was familiar with the country. Therefore he had slipped away with them, when the pack, after three or four turns round the huge woodland, had forced their fox into the open; therefore he had kept on the downwind side of the ravine aforesaid, and therefore he had been fortunate enough to see the fox handsomely run into, in an old double hedge-row, after an hour and forty minutes, during which he had unquestionably "gone best" from end to end. The huntsman said so—a wary ancient, who, never showing in front at any period, or running the slightest risks in the way of pace or fencing, had a huntsman's peculiar knack of turning up when he was wanted, particularly towards the finish. The doctor said so—an old rival, whose high character for riding entitled him to be generous, and the fishmonger, previous possessor of the gray, loudly affirmed, with many oaths which it is unnecessary to repeat, that "Master Sawyer always was a hout-and-houter, and had gone audacious!" Contrary to custom, none of the rest of the field had been near enough to give an opinion, though excuses as usual were rife for non-appearance. To judge from his own account, no man ever misses a run, save by a concatenation of circumstances totally unprecedented. Besides every normal casualty, he would always seem to have been baffled throughout by an opposing fiend of remarkable perseverance and diabolical ingenuity.

As the sun went down in a deep crimson segment, like the glow of a ruby, or the danger signal of a railway, Mr. Sawyer lit a fresh cigar, and began to ponder on the merits of his own riding and the capabilities of his stud. As the daylight wended, and the grey ash of his "choice Laranaga" (seven and forty shillings the pound) grew

potent man habitually (for the sake of his nerves), he rang for the old brandy labelled V.O.P., and mixed himself a real stiff one, with boiling water and one lump of sugar. I have my suspicions that his final decision was partly its result. The great difficulty was where to go. A man of him had acquaintance and reserved manners has at least this advantage—that all parts of England are equally attractive as regards society. Then he had hunted too much to believe newspaper accounts of sport, so that looking up the old files of "Bell's Life" assisted him no whit to a conclusion; also being of an inquiring turn of mind, wherever fox-hunting was concerned, he had amassed such a quantity of information concerning the "flying countries," that it took him a considerable time and another glass of brandy and water to digest and classify his facts. Altogether it was a complicated and puzzling question. First he thought of Leamington and the Warwickshire North and South, with regular attendance on the Atherstone and one field-day per week with the Pytchley; but many considerations combined to render the Spa ineligible as his head-quarters. In the first place, the evening gaities made his hair stand on end. Since his rejection by Miss Mexico, Sawyer was no dancing man; and indeed even in the first flush of his courtship he was seen to less advantage in a white neckcloth than a blue bird's-eye. Some men's hands and feet are not made to fit boots and gloves as constructed by our neighbour the fiery Gaul, and for such it is wiser to abstain from "the mazy," and to rest their hopes of success on another and more sterling qualities than the rapid demeanour and cool assurance which triumph in a ball-room. Then, with all his fondness for the applause of his fellow-creatures, he did not quite fancy making one of that crowd of irregular-horse who appear on a Wednesday at Crick at Misterton, to the unspeakable dismay of the Pytchley lady pack, who, if there is anything like a scent scour, away from them as if for their very lives; and although it is doubtless a high compliment that two hundred gentlemen in scarlet should patronize the same establishment, Mr. Sawyer thought that as far as he was concerned, the number might as well stop at one hundred and ninety-nine.

I believe, however, that the dread of those wide and fathomless rivers which are constantly jumped, in Warwickshire, by at least one amphibious sportsman out of a daring field, and of which the width from bank to bank, according to the newspapers, is seldom less than seven-and-twenty or more than seven-and-thirty feet, was what principally terrified our friend. Accustomed to a leading championship at home, he shrank from such aquatic rivalry, and resolved that, with all its fascinations, Warwickshire at least should not have the benefit of his patronage.

Once, after a steaming gulp of the stimulating fluid, the idea of Melton flashed his mind, but it was dismissed as soon as entertained. "I'm not such a fool as I look," quoth Mr. Sawyer; "and I don't mean to keep eight hunters and a couple of hacks to meet a set of fellows every day, who won't condescend to notice me unless I do as they do. Whist and dry champagne, and off to London at the first appearance of frost; ride like a butcher all day, risking twice as much neck as I do here, and I then come out 'quite the lady' at dinner-time, and choke in a white tie, acting the part of a walking gentleman all the evening. No! Melton won't suit my book at any price. Besides, I'd never sell my horses there; they order their hunters down from London just as they do their 'bacey' and their breeches." So the idea of Melton was discussed; and a vision of Oakham, or Uppingham, or even Billesdon rose in his stead. He could not quite get those tempting pastures, with their sunny slopes and flying fences, out of his head.

TO BE CONTINUED.

deceived her, nay, as he had deceived many another before it came her turn (here Waif's small white teeth closed hard on her dainty lip), and would deceive more, no doubt, hereafter, with the same alluring smile, if through her agency he would escape the penalty of his misdeeds, and survive for future treachery. How could he be so false, so cruel, so heartless? Were all men like this, Fin Cooper and the rest, or was John Garnet a vile exception to his kind? She knew not, she cared not. Good or bad, she loved him! she loved him! How could she ever have thought otherwise? and she would do all in her power to save him, cost what it might.

Oh, that endless stretch of moor—those weary, dragging miles! Curse them! Curse them! It was broad daylight already, and she had only now caught sight of the Severn Sea, lowering a dark and sullen line beyond the snowy waste. A band of iron seemed to enclose her head a weight to drag at each of her limbs, a cold hand to tighten round her heart. What if her strength were to fail, and she should be too late after all?

To see him once again!—once again! Only to look in his face and die! She would be content then, and ask for nothing more. But the time passed, ah! so quickly, and her lagging feet so labored in the snowdrifts, that he might be taken long before she could arrive at Porlock, and even then the only mercy she asked of heaven might be denied.

Her lips were parched and dry, her knees trembled, she could hold out such exhausting speed no longer, and yet she had scarce accomplished half the distance to her goal. She knew that deep, dark ravine well, narrowing yonder in her front to some eight or nine yards from bank to bank. It would save more than a mile could she cross it at that point where the blighted fir-tree stood. Above and below it widened into a deep, precipitous coombe, tangled with brackenwood, through which silver thread of running water laughed and whispered many a fathom down in its slippery bed of stones. No. It was far to leap, and she must go round. She lost heart utterly; and the wind, rising once more in mocking gusts, seemed to flout and buffet her, driving another snow storm in her face.

But on its wings it carried a dull, smothered heat, faint and distant, yet drawing nearer with each regular monotonous foot-fall. It was the tramp of horses, galloping at speed over the snowy surface of the moor; and Wait, eager, erect, motionless, listening with every nerve, as the red hind listens to the tufters, made out distinctly that the nearest rider was far ahead of two or three others in pursuit.

As the blinding storm passed over, that death-chase came fairly into view. Along the side of the opposite hill swept two horsemen at headlong pace, the one a quarter of a mile before the other, and increasing his distance with every stride. A third labored hopelessly in the rear; and two more, one of whom she recognized as her affianced husband, were making for the head of the coombe, with the obvious intention of hemming in and cutting off the object of their pursuit.

Keener even than a gipsy's eye-sight, the instincts of love and hate told Waif that the first rider was John Garnet, the second Abner Gale.

"Have I found thee, oh, mine enemy!" muttered the Parson, plying Cassock with his spurs, while he scanned the ravine before them, and reflected, not without a grim humor, how impossible it seemed that any creature unprovided with wings should reach the other side. He knew that deep and yawning chasm, where the fir-tree stood, well as he knew his own stable-door; but he did not know the gray horse's dauntless courage, nor the recklessness of a man like John Garnet riding for his life!

Waif, however, could understand and rely on both. Tearing the kerchief from her bosom while she ran, she hurried down to

horse made his effort too late! Chesting the opposite bank, the concussion shot the hapless pair, as if from a catapult, to the very bottom of a chasm.

Even in the turmoil of her feelings, Waif turned sick, while her imagination, rather than her senses, told her the hideous truth; but John Garnet, peering over the brink to where a dead man and horse, with hardly a bone unbroken in either of their frames, lay rolled up in a ghastly heap, could not help murmuring, "Tis a pity sure, for vile as he is, a scoundrel not worth hanging, no better rider, nor bolder, ever buckled a pair of spurs!"

CHAPTER XXX.

REPARATION.

But there was no time for interchange of sentiments, regretful or otherwise, at such a crisis. Fin Cooper and Dick Boss had already coasted round the coombe, and were hastening down its side to the fatal spot. Katerfelto, carrying his rider's saddle, valise, and pistols, galloping across them mastless, into the waste. John Garnet, dismounted and disarmed, for even the short sword he wore had been jerked out of its belt in his desperate ride, felt that he must surrender at discretion. What chance had he against two resolute men on horseback, who knew the moor, were provided with fire arms, and had legal authority to use them if required?

"The game's up, Waif," said he, "but you and I have played it out, my lass, to the very last card! I was thinking of you only this morning at daybreak when I stole away from Porlock, and my friends over yonder set up a shout of rage to see my tracks not three minutes old in the snow! If I had but known the country! Well, well! 'Twas a rare burst and a noble leap! You showed me the only spot where it could be done, and I understood with the first wave of your arm; but how came you to be here, my pretty Waif, in the nick of time?"

Oh! the kind, cruel voice! the kind, cruel words! It was snowing fast, and the wet Waif dashed from her eye-lashes might not have been tears after all.

"I knew they meant to kill you!" she sobbed. "I heard their vile, wicked plot, and Fin kept me a prisoner in his tent lest I should warn you. Ay! they little knew Waif, if they thought she could sit and count her fingers while you were in danger! I swore to save you, and I will! Thank your God, if you Gorgios have one, for this snow-storm. No man living can see twenty paces before him while it lasts. Take off your boots!"

He stared, wondering if she had gone mad, but Waif was already on her knees dragging at one of his feet will all her might.

She continued, in an eager, hurried whisper, without desisting for a moment from her task: "Close by here, under the birch-tree, is a sheep-track that will lead you safe to the bottom of the coombe. Keep in the brushwood by the waterside, and follow the stream. A mile lower down you will come to Red Rube's hut. They will never think of looking for you there. Tell him Thyra Lovel sent you, and he will hide you for my sake. Farewell, Master Garnet. I—I wish you good luck, and—do not—do not quite forget Waif!"

Ere she had done speaking, his heavy riding-boots were drawn on her own shapely limbs. Then she turned away to plunge through the snow without another word.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A young whippet, or elk, was born at Central Park, New York, last week.