

A FRESH YOUNG MAN AMONG THE WAX-WORK FIGGERS.

HOW HE WAS "INTERVIEWED."—A LOVE AFFAIR—THE CLIMAX.

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A Society Novelette, written specially for this Journal.

Hoisting anchor in the way of pulling on a tight pair of Wellington boots, (size twelve) I set out from my London lodgings at an intensely previous hour in the morning. I was going to visit Madame Tussaud's celebrated wax ghost gallery, the whereabouts I calculated by the rule of three would take me sometime to discover. Passing under the wire about forty-seven boat lengths ahead of my usual success in the way of street hunting, I found myself in the presence of the wax figger factory, about one hour and a half before I was due there. Presuming that the place was conducted on the police station plan, namely : doors open at all hours for new arrivals, I walked right in through the main entrance, and following the direction of a guide board I ascended a staircase which led me into an anti-room, and at the same time into the presence of a very genteel-looking middle-aged person, whose face to me seemed as familiar as that of the man in the moon. I thought I could read in his features the name of an old photographic acquaintance, but what that name was I could not just at that moment fish up to the surface. Being myself unacquainted with any of the fraternity on this side of the Atlantic, I hastily concluded that the shorthand man in whose countenance I detected deep traces of familiarity must be a fellow-countryman. I was almost in the act of surrendering to the overjoy with which I was seized consequent upon coming so suddenly and unexpectedly in contact with a Canadian maker of magic stringlets, and was just about to holler out "Hallo, my covey! what brought you so far away from home?" When, remembering that such things as cases of mistaken identity have frequently occurred since the opening day of the world, I decided not to allow my self to be too fresh on the present occasion. Observing that my friend occupied a position at the inner door which made him appear to be the collector of admission fees, I approached him with an inquiry concerning the dimensions of the price of admittance. I was just about preparing to inaugurate a wondering over the fellow's stupid silence, when a love-forsaken-looking damsel of forty summers of single agony appeared upon the scene to inform me that the exhibition would not be open for another hour, and that the party whom I was addressing was Charles Dickens in wax. The contents of a quart bottle of Carter's blue black writing fluid and a pillow case of goose quills could not photograph my feelings as well as they can be imagined. However, I found a few blades of comfort in the fact that my

cranium was perfectly plumb so far as the shorthand was concerned in the recognition, for, those who are acquainted with the early days of the noble-minded novelist, will remember that he laid the corner stone of his glorious career in a bed of stenographia chicken tracks.

Making my exit I returned again after an hour's shop window gazing, deposited my shilling and proceeded to look around. Having exhausted pretty thoroughly the contents of the principal room I walked up to a policeman whom I saw standing at a short distance from me, and invited him to be so good as to direct me to the "Chamber of Horrors," a room which as its name implies contains model portraits in wax of distinguished tight rope performers. Finding my inquiry treated with that silent contempt which I had been subjected to at the hands of Charles Dickens, I did not occupy many hemidemisemiquavers of time in coming to the conclusion that this officer of the law, too, was a wax institution.

Proceeding through the building by the shortest overland route I could find leading to the aforesaid chamber, on entering I lost no time in nailing my mind to the determination never again to appear before the world as the author of such silly blunders as I had just been committing. The forming of such a resolution was, however, no guarantee against the blundering of other visitors, and I'll tell you why. First of all it will be necessary to explain that the wax figures are indexed by means of numbers, which are placed before them at their feet. By referring to a catalogue, which is obtained at the door, the visitor, by turning to the corresponding number, at once comes into possession of the biography of the creature of wax. While I was standing with my back towards the assassin of President Garfield, gazing steadily upon the face of Lefroy, whose wax remains occupy a position opposite those of Guiteau, and wondering what in the name of phonography ever possessed him, a newspaper man and shorthand reporter, to commit that crowning act of crime, murder,—whilst I was thus standing, staring and wondering, unconscious of the fact that in my close proximity to Guiteau I was intervening his figure and its brass number on the floor, a lady visitor approached, and surveying me through her eyeglasses from base to summit she consulted her catalogue, and on looking up the number agreeing with that at my feet she turned to her daughter, a charming young miss of about sixteen summers, and with a very ruffled air remarked as follows : "The very idea, Florence my dear, of so handsome and intelligent looking a young man trying to pass himself off on the good people of the United States as a fool that he might escape the gallows, to me, and I don't pretend to be half as clever as American judges and experts ought to be, seems almost too ridiculous for anything."