

the offender, who could do no less than offer his own in return.

While the stranger unclosed his surtout to take the card from his pocket, they had a glance at the undress coat of a military man. The card disclosed his rank, and a brief inquiry at the bar was enough for the rest.

He was a captain whom ill-health and long service had entitled to half-pay. In earlier life he had been engaged in several duels and was said to be "a dead shot." The next morning a note arrived at the aggressor's residence, containing a challenge, in form, and one of the cherry-stones. The truth then flashed before the challenged party; it was the challenger's intention to make three bites at this cherry—three separate affairs out of this unwarrantable frolic. The challenge was accepted; and the challenged party, in deference to the challenger's reputed skill with the pistol, had half decided upon the small-sword: but his friends, who were on the alert, soon discovered that the captain, who had risen by his merit, had, in the earlier days of his necessity, gained his bread as an accomplished instructor in the use of that weapon.

They met, and fired alternately, by lot. The young man had selected this mode, thinking he might win the first fire. He did—fired, and missed his opponent. The captain levelled his pistol and fired—the ball passed through the flap of the right ear, and grazed the bone; and as the wounded man involuntarily put his hand to the place, he remembered that it was on the right ear of his antagonist that the cherry-stone had fallen.

Here ended the first lesson. A month had passed. His friends cherished the hope that he would hear nothing more from the captain; when another note—a challenge, of course—and another of those ominous cherry-stones arrived, with the captain's apology, on the score of ill-health, for not sending it before. Again they