

mind, or at least of one stomach; the deck, as a modern wit (who I wish was my friend) once observed, looked like some horrid picnic. It was terrible, as I stood at the bow, to see nothing else but the drooping hats and bonnets of my fellow-beings as the vessel dipped and rose—an endless game of pitch and toss, where nothing turned up but heads. One sea-green face, however, was visible, the property of a middle-aged lady of large dimensions, and it interested me very deeply. Those nervous eyes, that twitching mouth, that countenance vainly striving to look unconcerned, I recognized at once as belonging to the amateur female smuggler running her first cargo. She would have been ill, I could see, only she had too great a weight upon her mind to enjoy any such relaxation. She saw that I was looking fixedly at her, and a blush came over her face, at once 'making the green one red.' Yes, it was plain she smuggled: she was stouter than any woman of her general appearance had any right to be.

'Madam,' said I, approaching her by a series of gymnastic evolutions, which the unstable character of the plane whereon I moved compelled—'I see you have no attendant; can I be of any service to you? I am an old sailor, and have, as you see, my sea-legs under me.'

The poor woman gazed on the limbs referred to with an unintelligent and frightened air; she had evidently never heard of 'sea-legs,' or else she had understood me to say that I had three legs, and she stared accordingly.

'I want nothing, sir, I thank you,' replied she feebly, 'unless you could put me on shore.'

'We shall be, my dear madam,' said I, taking out my watch, but keeping my eyes steadily upon her—'we shall be in less than ten minutes at the Custom-house.'

A spasm—a flicker from the guilt within—glanced over her countenance.

'You look very good-natured, sir,' stammered she. I bowed, and looked considerably more so, in order to invite her confidence. 'If I was to tell you a secret, which I find is too much for me to keep to myself, oh, would you hold it inviolable?'

'I know it, my dear madam—I know it already,' said I smiling; 'it is lace, is it not?'

She uttered a little shriek, and—Yes, she had got it there, among the crinoline. She thought it had been sticking out, you see, unknown to her.

'Oh, sir,' cried she, 'it is only ten pounds' worth: please to forgive me, and I'll never do it again. As it is, I think I shall expire.'

'My dear madam,' replied I, sternly but kindly, 'here is the pier, and the officer has fixed his eye upon us. I must do my duty.'

I rushed up the ladder like a lamp-lighter; I pointed that woman out to the legitimate authority: I accompanied her upon her way, in custody, to the searching house. I did not see her searched, but I saw what was found upon her, and I saw her fined and dismissed with ignominy. Then, having generously given up my emoluments as informer, to the subordinate officials, I hurried off in search of the betrayed woman to her hotel. She did not receive me warmly, and for a long time, indeed, refused to hear a word that I had to say. At last I overcame her antipathy so far as to get her to look at a piece of point-lace of twice the value of that which had been so ruthlessly taken away from her. I then placed in her hand the amount of the fine in which she had been mulcted. Then I began my explanatory statement:

'You had ten pounds' of smuggled goods about your person, madam. I had nearly

fifty times that amount. If you were alarmed for the possible consequences of your rashness, what, think you, must have been the state of my feelings upon my own account? I turned informer, madam, let me convince you, for the sake of both of us. You have too expressive a countenance, believe me, for this sort of free-trading, and the officer would have found you out at all events, even as I did myself. Are you satisfied, my dear madam? If you still feel aggrieved or injured by me in any manner, pray take more lace; here is lots of it.'

We parted the best of friends.

I had a second adventure, the other day, of a much less dangerous character: but which, as it happily illustrates my great natural ingenuity, I here take leave to add. Having come from the Mediterranean a few weeks ago to Southampton, I happened to be in possession of a couple of pounds of exceedingly fine cigars, adapted to my special taste, and which I was determined no custom-house fingers should meddle with. As soon as the vessel was brought alongside the quay, I left my cabin, and made my way to the movable gangway.

'Sir,' said the official at the deck end of it, with a malicious grin, 'I think I must trouble you to take off your hat.'

'To you?' cried I—'never! You are not Prince Albert in disguise, I suppose, nor the Bey of Tunis?'

'Come, come,' exclaimed the fellow—official persons, it may be here observed, have the greatest possible dislike to being rallied, or, as the vulgar have it, 'chaffed' by anybody—'none of your sauce; you take that hat off, or it will be the worse for you.'

'Which hat?' asked I innocently—'whose hat?'

'Yours,' replied he savagely—'yours. It's tipped up over your forehead in a way which convinces me that you have something in it.'

'My very dear sir,' answered I blandly, 'of course I have something in it. I always carry my pocket-handkerchief there; and there's my head besides.'

This suspicious person telegraphed, nevertheless, to his confederate upon the shore, who seized upon me as I touched ground, and with the same ridiculous pertinacity, requested me to take my hat off.

'If you lay a finger on my hat,' cried I furiously, 'I'll first knock you down (I was six feet one without the hat, which was an exceedingly tall one), and then bring an action against you for an aggravated assault. I want to get into the town particularly; there are friends expecting me—female friends; I insist upon being let go.'

The cold-blooded official smiled grimly without reply, and took me to his superior, by whom the same demand was repeated. I said that, in courtesy, and not upon compulsion, I would touch my hat to him: but that I would not take it off without a warrant. Then I was marched away in custody of a sort of guard of honor to the office of the superintendent. That individual convinced me of his right to enforce this absurd request of taking off my hat: and under protest, and to oblige him, as being a very gentlemanly person, I did it. There was nothing in my hat, as I had affirmed from the very first, except my pocket-handkerchief. Officials never apologise; but I do hope that they felt they had wronged a fellow creature by their cruel suspicions. I hastened back to the vessel, dived into my cabin, and presently reappeared with my tall hat tipped over my forehead more than ever.

'Would you like me to take my hat off?' inquired I of the first gangway-man. 'Would you like me to take my hat off?' asked I of

the second. I demanded, in short, whether I should again bare my injured head, of every custom-house officer who had been superfluous about that ceremony before. But they all looked sheepish or annoyed, and replied that they had had quite enough of me and my hat already. It was therefore certainly not my fault, but their own, that my two pounds of special Regalias, which really were in my hat the second time, have not assisted, in their proper quota of some eighteen shillings, to swell the revenue of my native land.

VOLUNTEER INSPECTION AT WOODSTOCK.

(Condensed from the Woodstock Times.)

On the 23rd ult., Brigade Major Moffatt inspected Nos. 1 and 2, Captain Beard's and Captain McCleneghan's Companies of Oxford Rifles, complimenting them, particularly No. 1, on their efficiency. Addressing the force, the Brigade Major took occasion to say that much of the evening's success was due to the officer commanding the battalion, who in addition to a large experience, was very enthusiastic, and the battalion enjoyed the advantage of having the very best instructor in the country; and it was pleasing to observe that in no respect were the advantages neglected. Lieut.-Col. Richardson, in addressing the men, said he had the pleasing satisfaction of being able to give the battalion an evidence of sympathy from abroad. He regretted that he was not able to give the name of the gentleman whose letter he would read, but it would be his pleasing duty to see that, on the earliest occasion possible, those wishes which the letter expressed would be carried out. He then read the following letter, which had been placed in his hands by the party to whom it was addressed:

61 * * STREET, PIMLICO, }
Jan. 2, 1867. }

ALEX. McCLENEGHAN, Esq.:

Dear Sir,—I enclose you a post-office order for £5. I wish to give two prizes to be competed for by the privates and non-commissioned officers of the 22nd Battalion; one of £5 and one of £10 sterling, and on the following conditions, namely: That the one of £5 shall be only open to those under 20 years of age, and that the range for competing for either shall not exceed 200 yards, as I believe that many who might be deserving of some reward for the patriotism and self-devotion of their time in joining the volunteer militia, would, by defect of sight, be deprived of any chance of success at long ranges. When you send me word of the safe arrival of this order, and of the approval of the commanding officer of the battalion, I will forward you another for £10.

I am, dear sir, yours truly, C. M. W.
For obvious reasons I have not placed my name in full.

Col. Richardson expressed the hope that early in the spring, at all events, the new arm would be supplied to the force, at which time would be the time for that competition which the letter suggested, and which he would be glad to afford. He was pleased to have the Brigade Major refer to the attendance of the two companies, and their creditable and soldierly acquirements. The Volunteers of the county of Oxford, he felt cer-