

shan't pay it; and what's more, I'll fight any man that pretends to tip, hear that, young man."

"You see, waiter," said Woodsher, with great solemnity, "how we are situated. You alone can settle the difference. You must say who shall settle the account."

"Lor, Sir, how can I ever do that?"

"You must, only do not let any prepossession you may have conceived in favour of any one of us, prejudice your choice, all are alike anxious to come off victorious in this friendly contest."

The waiter looked timidly around; took up the corner of his apron, and threw his napkin over his shoulder. His glance rested on the chancellor, and his lordship nearly groined. Woodsher cut short his scrutiny; he would have jumped down his throat had his lips parted ever so slightly. He desired him to take a glass of wine, and another, and another, and then told him, that as there existed such a difficulty in his choice, he had another plan to propose: that he should be blindfolded—his napkin tied over his eyes—and the first person he caught was to be the fortunate individual. The arrangement was completed. For a few minutes the gentlemen ran about the room and the waiter after them. There was not much danger of a capture, for the wine above and the whisky below, in their joint operation, had considerably affected the poor man, and had made his gait unsteady, and his motions uncertain. Woodsher then went softly to the door, passed out, and walked noiselessly down stairs. His companions successfully imitated his example, and the waiter had the sport all to himself. The

sleighs had been previously ordered and stood ready at the door. They were met by the landlord as they went out, who bowed respectfully, trusted the dinner had given them satisfaction, wished them all a happy new year, and hoped to see them again on many a future occasion. He did not even say a word to Sir Peter about a certain little account which accumulated on a long-past day.

"All right, governor! Capital! Very moderate! Soon see you again!" Were a sample of their exclamations as they got into their sleighs and drove off—we scarcely need say, at no small's pace.

The landlord thought he might as well step upstairs to see how matters were there. When he opened the door what should he see but his waiter, blindfolded, groping about the room like a blind pointer. He thought the man must be beside himself; walking towards him, in a moment he found himself in his arms.

"Ha! I've got thee at last."

"Got the devil," said the landlord—"what do you mean by this?"

The waiter pulled the covering from his eyes and stared round a stupid moment in stupid astonishment: he had a great mind to do something singular, only he could not decide, suddenly, what it should be.

"Where be the gentlemen?" was his question when he recovered the use of speech.

"What gentlemen, fool?"

"The gentlemen what dined here."

"Why, gone to be sure, you jackass!"

"Did they pay you, Sir?" said the man timidly.

"Pay me, you thick-skulled brute! didn't they pay you?"

"No, Sir."

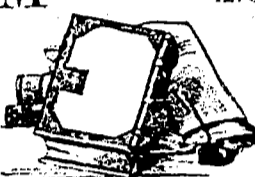
"Not pay you?"

"No, Sir."

The truth now flashed upon the landlord: his first proceeding was to kick his waiter down stairs; his next to blow off the steam in vituperation, and phrases very unlike blessings, and then he rushed to the bottle for further comfort. All this was unnecessary exertion. Next morning, he determined to go to the college, vowing to discover the scamps if above ground; but, the gentlemen, to their honor be it said, and may they commence every new year (and end it too) as honestly, content with their frolic, saved him that trouble. On their return home they applied to one of those Samaritans who bind up young gentlemen's wounded credit, and on Harper's endorsement, thirty pounds was advanced. They despatched the amount of the bill early next morning, with an additional ten shillings for the waiter, which healed his bruises—and no bones were broken. The landlord, as he had done strange things the previous day, in his misery, repeated the performance in his joy, and wound up January 2nd and himself, in a manner, very similar to that which he essayed and accomplished on the ever to be honoured *jour de Pan*.

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