

"By Jove!" exclaimed Yubbitts, "I don't believe that fellow knows that lady, and he's trying to force his unwelcome attentions upon her—the blackguard!"

That such was the case now became evident, for the young lady was heard by our heroes to say, "I desire you to leave me, sir; your presence is utterly distasteful to me; if you do not at once leave me alone, I shall certainly speak to the first policeman I see."

"Aw, I say, come, that 'ed be too bad, yau know; allow me to offer you my arm," remarked the fellow, without giving the slightest sign of any intention to comply with the lady's request. So intent was the young blood (who was, as before stated, tall, and somewhat heavily built), on persecuting his victim, that he failed to notice the proximity of the four Pickwickians, evidently imagining that no one was near, for they had all now turned out of the more crowded thoroughfare, and were proceeding along a nearly deserted street where only an occasional pedestrian was to be seen.

"By Jove!" ejaculated Yubbitts, who was by no means deficient in pluck, "I'm not going to let that blackguard torment that girl; he's evidently a beastly cad, and I'm going to tell him so," and, before his friends could interfere to prevent him, even had they desired to do so, he stepped up to the man, who had actually taken hold of the lady's arm and was whispering some words of a nature highly distasteful to her in her ear, and said, "You had better leave this lady alone, sir; she does not appear to be anxious to avail herself of your escort."

The hero of the tight trowsers relinquished his hold of the lady's arm in surprise and stared at Mr. Yubbitts, placing his glass in his eye and regarding him in a most offensive and supercilious manner.

"Who the dayvle are you, anyhow?" he at length exclaimed in a drawing voice, "and what the dayvle d'ye mean by your imputnent interferewence?"

"My interference is, I imagine, called for," replied Yubbitts. "You cannot fail to see that you are annoying this lady—am I right, Miss?" he asked, turning to the persecuted young woman, who was evidently a lady and an exceedingly pretty one. "I believe I am not mistaken when I say that you wish to be rid of this—this Thing," he continued, looking scornfully at the "masher."

"Indeed, sir, I am most anxious to escape from him," replied the young lady, trembling as she spoke.

"Exactly so," said Yubbitts, as his three friends halted near though without saying anything. "Now, you, sir, the sooner you get away from here the better for all parties concerned. You confounded blackguard," he continued as the young lady began to cry, and his temper commenced to rise, "take yourself off at once."

"You dayvlish common fellow," returned the other, "I am not accustomed to obey such fellows as you."

"You're not, eh?" cried Yubbitts, springing towards him and seizing him by the collar, "I give you one minute to make yourself scarce."

"Ah! you've got friends with you—" began the "masher," seeing the odds against him.

"Never mind my friends," returned Yubbitts, "they won't interfere; they are English gentlemen who know what fair play means. Now, are you going?"

The young lady exhibiting signs of being about to faint, Coddleby and Bramley stepped to her side with words of comfort, enjoining her not to be alarmed.

"No, I'm *not* going," replied the fop, "not for you; take that, d—you!" he cried as he aimed a blow at Yubbitts' head with his cane, which was warded off by that gentleman who threw up his arm very dexterously,

and before the other knew what was happening he had received a stinging rap between the eyes from Yubbitts' fist, followed up by a perfect shower of blows on his nose, eyes and mouth, delivered, it must be confessed, not in the most scientific manner imaginable, but with admirable effect and zeal.

"Oh!" yelled the fellow, "oh! help! I'm killed!" he shrieked as the blood spouted from his nose, "you bwoot," and he made a rush at Yubbitts, who, however, more by good luck than skill, tripped him up as he raised his cane, and he fell heavily on his face on the sidewalk, considerably damaging his immaculate costume in his downfall. Feeling that he was getting by far the worst of the combat, he picked himself up with extraordinary celerity, and started off at a rapid run from the battle-field, closely pursued by Yubbitts, who, at every other step, threw out one of his long legs with admirable dexterity, and implanted a vigorous kick in his flying foeman's rear. Out of breath at last, he desisted from the pursuit, and with one parting kick of immense vigor, he let the vanquished 'masher' go, that individual urging on his mad career till he disappeared round a corner. The gallant Yubbitts now returned to where he had left the lady and his friends. The former had quite recovered from her temporary faintness and was now fairly bubbling over with gratitude to her rescuer.

"Oh! sir," she exclaimed as the victor came up, out of breath, "I am so extremely obliged to you; how *can* I sufficiently thank you for your services?"

"By permitting me to escort you home," returned Yubbitts, bowing and taking off his hat. "I cannot think of permitting you to expose yourself to any further insults and indignities; I trust you will allow me to see you safely home."

The young lady, after some little hesitation, availed herself of Mr. Yubbitts offer, and that gentleman telling his friends that he would rejoin them at the Rossin House in a short time, sailed off with his fair companion in one direction, whilst the other three proceeded, leisurely, towards their hotel.

(To be continued.)



BADLY TIMED.

Happy Young Bridegroom (replying to toast of the bride)— * *
"No one knows better than I her virtues and graces, and no one feels more than I how unworthy I am of such a treasure—"

*Mr. Scottie Malaprop (from foot of table)—*Hear-r! Hear-r!

MARY—Stop your flatteries, or I shall hold my hands to my ears. John—(wishing to be complimentary)—Ah, your lovely hands are too small.—*Exchange.*