



“THE SCOTT ACT IS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION.”

AT “STRAW” WHICH SHOWS HOW THE WIND BLOWS IN THE VICINITY OF ST. JOHN, N.B. SCOTT ACT DETECTIVES MAKE A NOTE OF IT.

Mrs. Sniffin's Adventure with a Dramatic Elocutionist.

“It's perfectly himpossible to get a bit o' peace or quietness in Mrs. Arassall's boardin' ouse with the hincessant soreechin' o' that hodions Hamanda Larkins, as seems to think erself the Supreme Madonna o' the country, but I don't wonder if she complains o' sore throat, such screamin' must be very hagger-cavat-in' to the vocal corns and cartridges.

“As to 'er boastein' about runnin' hup to E flat, which 'as no connection with singin' in my hopinion, I remarked in my most hysterical manner, that though no light-weight now, when I was 'er hage I could a'run hup to henny number o' flats, and wouldn't o' thought I 'ad no call to boast on it either. And she, that himpertinent, bust out with 'er silly giggle right in my face.

“But I must say, as she was pretty nimble on 'er pins, the other hevenin', wich all 'appened through a slit in my tongue, as the sayin' is, for 'avin' fallen asleep on a sofy, I was waked hup all on a suddint, by 'earin' a man's voice shoutin' in the most voracious manner, 'Awake, arise, ring the alarm bell.' I feelin' that dazed like, I 'ardly knew what I was doin', jumps hup, throws hopen the window, and rings the dinner-bell vociferously, shoutin' at the same time 'fire' till I 'adn't a whiff o' breath left.

“Such a promotion as there was, with people rushin' in and draggin' hout the furniture, and throwin' buckets o' water all bover Mrs. Arassall's carpets; and, to clap the climate, as the sayin' is, participatin' all o' Miss Larkins' yeast-settle china right hout o' the window, though it wasn't much loss in my opinion, bein' about as full o' cracks as 'er own voice is. Just wen the hagation was at its 'lighth, down comes a young man, as 'ad arrived the previous hevenin', and asks wot in the world there was such a row about, as there was no fire, only 'im a practicein' o' 'is rheumatic hexecution. With that they all seemed perfectly satisfied, and quietly aspersed. But it wasn't no sort o' hexplanntion in my hopinion, as I don't care 'to be livin' in the 'ouse with a hexecutionist, though I must say, much more like a lunatik, with 'is long 'air parted in the middle, and a wild roll in 'is heyos.

“Well, I makes hup my mind to watch 'im, and the very next mornin', jest wen I was readin' a letter from John Cesar—I 'ad better hexplain that John Cesar is my boy at Hoxford, and is quite a gascal scholar—I 'ad my 'art nearly analyzed by 'carin' these words spoke in a sepulchral tone: 'My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.'

“And, lookin' hup, I saw that lunatik, wrigglin' 'imself into hall sorts o' haptitudes, and 'is heye, as the poot says, with a wild infuencyz rollin', wile 'e goes on a sayin'—

‘Ay, my good lord: safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenched gashes on his head;
The least a death to nature.’

“Hup to that time I 'ad stood as if prefixed to the spot, but now, rememberin' that lunatiks could be 'eld with a steady glare o' the heye. I fastens my troptic on 'im, at the same time superstitiously stealin' round the room in the direction of the coal grate, with the hintention o' seizin' the tongs. Till then, 'e 'adn't hobserved me, but now says, pointin' 'is long finger at me, 'Whence and what art thou, hexecrable shape?’

“Says I, feelin' my nervous sistem fortified by a pair of tongs with a live coal in the hend o' them, 'I'm no more a hexecrable shape than you are.' With that, 'e screams hout, 'The woman's mad! an', seizin' the piano-stool, dodges round the room as if 'e 'ad got 'old of a galvanic battlement.

“Of course I didn't mean to 'urt 'im, honly to 'old 'im at bay, as the sayin' is, till 'eiparrived, but, just at that moment, my foot tripped hover a darned patch in the carpet, an' the way them tongs went flyin' through the hair, just lightin' hon that lunatik's 'ead, and bringin' 'im down with a crash, nearly vtrified me on the spot; and I'm sure the blow that piano-stool gave 'im must 'ave halmost stove in 'is ribs, an' by the time I 'ad regained my hequal-iveryman, that coal ad' begun to make a regular consteration in 'is shirt-front.

“Of course I didn't want 'im to burn hup, an' 'im a lyin' there as frigid and 'eipless as one o' them 'igh hact statues, so I seizes a large hantiquarian as was standin' in the bay window, an' I pours the 'ole contents hover 'im. I soon distinguished the flames in 'is shirt-front, but it did go to my 'art to see the lizards and

gold fishes and hall them hother reptiles wrigglin' habout so huncomfortable through not bein' hin their native helement.

“By that time there was a crowd collected, an' they picks 'im hup and lays 'im on a sofy, sayin' 'ow I 'ad murdered a 'armless young gentleman, as was only practicein' 'Macbeth to recite in the hevenin' at a church sociable.

“‘Well,’ says I, paragorically speakin', 'I've spread a shelterin' wing hover that church sociable.’

“But it did give me a turn seein' 'im lyin' there lookin' very murdered, dead wite, an' a large cut in 'is forehead, so I leaves them pickin' the gold fish an' lizards hout o' 'is 'air and whiskers, an' goes to the kitching to make 'im a poultice.

“When I returns I finds 'im beginnin' to give a few feeble wriggles, an' at last 'e sits hup an' says in a very weak voice, 'Is that a dagger that I see before me?’

“‘No,’ says I, 'its a poultice o' soap an' sugar, though some do 'old as sweet hoil is better for burns, but in my hopinion soap an' sugar is more drawin'.

“Then,' says he, 'avin' the rulin' passion strong in death,' as good old David says, 'Throw physic to the dogs, I'll none of it.' But they pays no 'eed to 'is demonstrances, an' poultices an' bandages 'im hup till 'e looks like a becalmed mummy, though not nearly so brown in complexion.

“But I must say as 'e is a good-natured young fellow, and larfed quite 'earty this hevenin', wen I was a sittin' by 'im bathin' 'is damaged brow, an' hexplainin' 'ow it all 'appened, so as I might hexterpate the label on my character.”



LETTER FROM THE OTTAWA LOBBY To the Manitoba Ministry.

DEAR PALS,—I am sorry to report that since my last letter I have made great progress. After a long and tedious wait—I am of course stopping at the Russell and you will have to bring in supplementary estimates to a large amount to settle my bill—I at last got hold of John A., and prevailed upon him to promise to show me where he kept his grindstone. After a few weeks of additional dilly-dallying, he directed me to the Axe-Grinding department, and handed me the key. I was so pleased at having succeeded in my mission that I retired to my hotel and rested for a fortnight. I then went to the department in question, taking my axe with me. On entering the room I found the grindstone in first-class condition—evidently been out of use for a long time. I got fresh water in the pot and took off my coat to go to work, when I made the startling discovery that the handle of the grindstone had been removed. I learnt that Sir John keeps it locked up in his desk. After another month's wait I got the key and as you have already heard, my axe has been ground. Yours, patiently, J.-BN N.-RO.—Y.