

SHORT STORIES.

A MUTILATED POET.

When a western editor was sitting in his office one day a man whose brow was clothed with thunder entered. Ferociously seizing a chair, he slammed his umbrella on the floor, and sat down. "Are you the editor?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Can you read writing?"

"Of course."

"Read that, then," he said, thrusting at the colonel an envelope, with an inscription upon it.

"B—," said the Colonel, trying to spell it.

"That's not a B, it's an S," said the man.

"S, oh, yes; I see! Well, it looks like 'Salt for dinner, or 'Souls of sinners.'" said the colonel.

"No, sir," replied the man; "nothing of the kind! That's my name—Samuel H. Brunner. I knew you couldn't read. I called to see about that poem of mine you printed the other day, on the 'Burdens of Sorrow'."

"I don't remember it," said the colonel.

"Of course you don't, because it went into the paper under the infamous title of 'Smearcase Tomorrow.'"

"A blunder of the compositor's, I suppose."

"Yes, sir; and that's what I want to see you about. The way in which that poem was mutilated was simply scandalous. I haven't slept a night since. It exposed me to derision. People think that I am an ass. Let me show you. The first line when I wrote it read in this way:

Lying by a weeping willow, underneath a gentle slope.

"That is beautiful, poetic, affecting. Now, how did your vile sheet present it to the public?"

Lying to a weeping widow to induce her to elope.

"Weeping widow, mind you! A widow! O, thunder and lightning; this is too much!"

"But look a-her at the fourth verse. That's worse yet:

Cast thy pearls before the swine and lose them in the dirt.

He sets it up in this fashion:

Cast thy pills before the sunrise and lose them if they hurt.

"Now, isn't that a cold-blooded outrage on a man's feelings? I'll leave it to you if it isn't!"

"It's hard, that's a fact," said the colonel.

"And then take the fifth verse. In the original manuscript it said, plain as daylight:

Take away the jingling money; it is only glittering dross.

"In its printed form you made me say:

Take away the tingling honey; put some flies in for the boss.

"By George, I felt like braining you with a fresh-hoel! I was never so cut up in my life. There, for instance, was the sixth verse. I wrote:

"It is a lovely line, too. But imagine my horror and the anguish of my family when I opened your paper and saw the line transformed into:

I am wearing out my trousers till they open at the knees.

"That is a little too much. That seems to me like carrying the thing an inch or two too far. I think I have a constitutional right to murder that compositor; don't you?"

"I think you have."

"Let me read you one more verse. I wrote:

I swell the flying echoes as they roam among the hills,

And I feel my soul awakening to the ecstasy that thrills.

"Now, what do you suppose your miserable outcast turned that into? Why, into this:

I smell the frying shoves as they coast along the hills,

And I peel my soul mistaken in the ecstasy that whirrs.

"I must slay that man, where is he?"

"He is out just now," said the colonel. "Come in tomorrow."

"I will," said the poet, "and I will come armed."—Ex.

BIG DOG FELT THE HEAT.

The big dog lay on the pavement in front of the custom house in New York. He was a yellowish, brindly sort of dog, enveloped in a coat of heavy fur that seemed very much out of place with the thermometer at 93. So the big dog thought, at any rate, for his face expressed extreme weariness, and from his open panting mouth great drops of water dripped on the hot flagstones. A sympathetic crowd of messenger boys and loungers gathered around him and volunteered counsel after the manner of the angels ministering to Elijah.

"Hully gee! But he's a whale," said one.

"Newfoundland," suggested another.

"Now, he ain't neither," said the shoe string man. "St. Bernard, you can always tell 'em by the color."

"Italiana dog; verra good; st!" chattered the pushcart man, showing all his white teeth in the delight the suggestion afforded him.

"That dog don't act right, I tell you," said a seedy-looking man, impressively. "Look at them eyes. I shouldn't wonder if he was going mad. He wouldn't be the first one this hot weather, either."

The big dog turned his head slightly and looked up as if in appreciation of the speaker's acumen. Several of the crowd drew back.

"That's the idea," said the seedy-looking man. "Give him air. Most likely he's run all the way from Harlem down here in the first stages of hydrofobia. What he needs is air and something to cool his blood."

"Send for the ice man," irreverently suggested a small newboy, who was quickly suppressed.

"That kid's all right," said the seedy-looking man, who was gaining confidence. "We got to do something. One of you fellows go for a policeman and another of you get a chunk of ice somewhere. Maybe we can save him yet."

Two of the messenger boys hurried away with the spirit of noble charity in their pace. The crowd by this time had increased to a small multitude.

"Now," said the seedy-looking man, turning to a fakir, "gimme one of them fans and I'll keep down his temperature till they get back."

He seized the broad palm leaf, and stepping in front of the canine sufferer, described an arc through the air which caused the fan to pass within three inches of the patient's nose.

"Ounce!" said the big dog, indignantly, starting to his feet. "Ounce! Ounce! Ounce!" he continued loudly.

But by that time there were only a few whose physical incapacity left them still within hearing; these only accelerated their speed. The big dog opened his eyes in melancholy wonder and settled himself upon the pavement.

Then a cool-appearing man in a blue suit came out of the custom house, says the New York Sun, and said, "Here, Rex," and the big dog rose and followed him down the street toward Broadway.

Five minutes later three policemen rounded the corner of double quick time, an ambulance dashed up, and the gong of an approaching fire engine was heard up the block. But they found only an overturned pushcart, whose owner was gathering up his wares with soft Italian curses, a man picking up a scattered stock of palm leaf fans, and a crowd of people watching from the second-story windows.

HE KNEW THE ROPES.

It's the canny old bird that cannot be caught with the bird lime of litigation.

You've probably heard of Lawyer Hackett of Somerset. A little while ago he purchased some land over which there had been a lawsuit for years, until the parties had spent half a dozen times what the land was worth. Hackett knew all about it. Some of the people wondered why he wanted to get hold of property with such an incubus of uncertainty on it. Others thought that perhaps he wanted some legal knitting work and would pitch in red-hot to fight that line fence question on his own hook.

That's what the owner of the adjoining land thought, says the Baltimore Herald. So he braced himself for trouble when he saw Hackett coming across the fields one day.

Said Hackett: "Where's your claim here, anyway, as to this fence?"

"I insist," replied the neighbor, "that your fence is over on my land two feet at one end and one foot at least at the other end."

"Well," replied Hackett, "you go ahead just as quick as you can and set your fence over. At the end where you say that I encroach on you two feet, set the fence onto my land four feet. At the other end push it onto my land two feet."

"But," perorated the neighbor, "that's twice what I claim."

"I don't care about that," said Hackett. "There's been fight enough over this land. I want you to take enough so you are perfectly satisfied you have got your right, and then we can get along all pleasantly. Go ahead and help yourself."

The man paused, abashed. He had been ready to commence the old struggle, tooth and nail. But this move of the new neighbor stunned him. Yet he wasn't to be outdone in generosity. He looked at Hackett.

"Squire," said he, "that fence ain't going to be moved an inch. I don't want the blamed old land. There warnt nothing to the fight but the principle of the thing."

A MATRIMONIAL MIX-UP.

A few more such matrimonial problems as that of which the Richmond, England, justices have patiently but vainly sought a solution would probably render an appointment on the Commission of the Peace a less coveted honor than it is at present. Mrs. Gibson a few weeks ago summoned her husband for arrears of maintenance under an order, and the defaulting Gibson pleaded that a former husband of his reputed wife—one Joe Boxall—was still living. At a subsequent hearing Samuel Boxall, a brother of Joe, appeared and deposed that he had met him last spring.

At the next hearing, a day or two ago, a man claiming to be Joe Boxall himself entered the witness box and swore that he separated from his wife about twenty years ago, and had never since been living in France. Confronted with this witness, Mrs. Boxall stoutly affirmed that he was not Joe Boxall, but Joe's brother, Tom, who, she said, had gone to Australia about the same time that her own husband went to France.

Other witnesses, however, swore positively to their recognition of him as the veritable Joseph which they had known eighteen or twenty years ago, and Samuel Boxall, on being further interrogated, declared that Tim did not go to Australia until several years after Joe disappeared; that he was living eighteen months ago in Western Australia, when he had written to his brother Samuel, and added, by way of putting a final touch to the confusion, that Tom "had a wife of his own now living in Battersea."

On the other hand, there are undoubtedly weak points in the alleged Joseph's account of himself, for whereas Samuel had described him as able to write letters, and Mrs. Gibson's

marriage certificate purported to bear his signature, he admitted in cross-examination that the noble art of penmanship was not included among his accomplishments. There was a considerable gap, too, in his French record which he at last endeavored to fill up by stating that he had been "in the ginger beer department"—a ministry which is certainly not known in Paris by that name, though in the present state of effervescence over the "Affaire Dreyfus" it would be no unapt description of more than one official bureau.

In the result the bench declined to make the order applied for by Mrs. Gibson against her second husband; but "they did not otherwise express any opinion on the case." This decision seems to mean that though they cannot for the moment precisely indicate the persons liable for Mrs. Gibson's maintenance, they feel reasonably certain that he will ultimately be discovered somewhere or other among the crowd of Boxalls. No accounts are yet to hand of the condition of the magistrates since the last hearing of the case; but we should think it not improbable that some of them are suffering from acute headache.

HIDDEN IN PETTICOATS.

Quite a sensation was recently caused at Jassy, in Roumania, by the death of a Mme. Balsech, who has, by her eccentricities, for years past, attracted much attention in that town.

Some years ago she was the wife of a Herr Veldmann, by whom she had a daughter. After a year or two of married life she divorced him and a married Herr Balsech, by whom she had a son. Soon after the latter's birth she left her second husband.

She then went to Paris, where she called herself Countess von Balsech. Toward her children she never seemed to feel anything but the greatest hatred, and when her son died she sent the body to his father for burial. She turned her daughter out of her house, and the unfortunate girl was only kept from starvation by the kindness of relatives. After the death of her second husband she returned to Roumania, where she lived in complete retirement.

In spite of the fact that she was extremely wealthy she lived in the most wretched manner, and was generally reputed to be a miser. A few days ago she died. When her daughter came to examine her belongings no trace of money could be found. In going through her mother's clothing, however, she noticed that one of the petticoats seemed stiff, as if heavily lined. She ripped it open and found over 200,000 notes sewed under the lining.

This put her on the track, and all her mother's petticoats, of which she had an enormous number, were examined. In nearly every one large sums of money were found, amounting all together to between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000 francs.—Fremdenblatt.

LI HUNG CHANG'S MISTAKE.

One day, some years ago, Li Hung Chang was making a journey from Tien-Tsin to Shanghai, on the steamer of the Chinese Mutual company, of which he is the principal owner, says the Philadelphia Saturday Post. Being of an inquiring disposition he asked many questions about the machinery and the furnishings of the ship. What interested him most was the barometer, and Captain Baker explained it with great care and described the minutest details.

Several months after, when Captain Baker arrived at Tien-Tsin at the end of a voyage, he was informed at the steamship office that Earl Li wanted to see him at the Viceroy's yamen. The captain, judging from the experience of other men, expected to receive a reward for faithful service, and dressing himself with care took a rickshaw for the residence of the greatest man in China. Upon arrival he was shown into the reception room, and pretty soon Li Hung Chang made his appearance, followed by a servant carrying a handsomely mounted mahogany box. He put it on the table, opened it, and took out a beautiful barometer, which had just arrived from Paris. After Captain Baker had admired the mechanism of the instrument, Earl Li turned to him and said:

"Now, I want you to show me how you foretell events with this thing."

"You cannot foretell events with a barometer," said Captain Baker, in surprise.

"You told me you could," retorted Earl Li.

"I never did anything of the kind," exclaimed the astonished seaman. "I told you that by comparing the changes in the temperature and the direction of the wind with the movements of this instrument we could anticipate a storm, but I did not say anything about foretelling events, because that is impossible."

The viceroy stared at the sailor with astonishment, and exclaimed:

"You are an ignorant, incompetent fellow. Don't you know that the weather is the most uncertain thing in the world? Other events are governed by laws and arbitrary conditions, from which the weather is entirely free, and anybody who can find out what the weather is going to be ought to be able to foretell ordinary events."

Then with a contemptuous motion he dismissed Captain Baker from his presence, and never spoke to him again.

"Why does Miss Leftover say she is twenty-four when everybody knows she is forty?"

"Perhaps she is trying to take advantage of the speculative instinct in men."

"How can that be?"

"She may think that some would be willing to take her at twenty-four who would consider her too high at forty."—Detroit Free Press.

THE BABY.

"She is a little hindering thing." The mother said.

"I do not have an hour of peace, till she's in bed."

"She clings unto my hand or gown, And follows me About the house from room to room— Talks constantly."

"She is a bundle full of nerves And wilful ways! She does not sleep full sound at night! Scarce any days."

"She does not like to hear the wind, The dark she fears; And pitiously she calls to me To wipe her tears."

"She is a little hindering thing." The mother said.

"But still she is my wine of life, My daily bread."

The children—what a load of care Their coming brings; But, oh! the grief when God doth stoop To give them wings.

A FAREWELL PERFORMANCE

Jack Halliday and Doris Verrall were what the society papers—especially the penny ones—call "smart people." They lived in a dear little world of their own, whose inhabitants had nothing whatever to do but eat, drink and be merry; a charming sphere where everybody tried their very hardest to be amusing and amiable, and where nothing was ever taken seriously—that is, in public. The greatest enemy of these Utopians was boredom, and this they avoided by being superficial—merely slipping at things instead of imbibing the huge draughts that ordinary mortals are apt to indulge in. When they did a good deed they did it by stealth and threw mud at it afterwards; when they spoke of things human and divine they hid their true selves and real meaning under an impenetrable cloak of flippant slang and cheap witticisms. Each one of them was a hero or heroine of an external comedy with a single part. Thus, the net result of their acquaintanceship was that Doris Verrall had never got a word of sober sense out of Jack Halliday, while Jack Halliday had never heard a syllable of wisdom issue from the delicate lips of Doris Verrall.

Doris was an only child and motherless. She and her father had kept house together and mutually spoiled one another these last fifteen years. They had a miniature Mayfair palace all to themselves, an Arcadia that would have surprised most of the Utopians among whom Doris took her pleasures, by reason of its restful simplicity and quiet affections. Father and daughter were very fond of each other, each in their own way—Mr. Verrall in a dignified, old world manner that reminded one of Balaac's elderly aristocrats, while Doris showed her affection by being disrespectful. She treated "Daddy" as she playfully styled Mr. Verrall, like a big spoiled child, and he was as clay under her fingers.

It was a Sunday evening in June. The sky was clearing fast after a day's rain, and London looked as if it had just come home from the laundry.

Doris and Mr. Verrall, who had gone down to the park for a mild constitutional, ran up against Jack Halliday, bent on a similar errand, and bore him home to dinner. He had never dined in family with the Verralls and wondered what it would be like. The idea seemed strange at first sight because it was new. London men are above all things creatures of habit, three-quarters of whose lives are carefully planned and mapped out for them by that huge machine, society. This saves them the trouble of thinking, and other discomforts. So Halliday thought for a moment and came to the conclusion that Doris was a nice girl and would keep him in a god temper half the evening if he kept her amused the other half. Mr. Verrall he hardly knew.

The dinner was a success. All three enjoyed it—Jack Halliday most of all. It was different from the shallow glitter of his everyday life. It reminded him of "Home Sweet Home" and the domestic Doris, carefully looking after her white-haired old father was an unexpected revelation. It seemed strange to think that this pattern of filial affection was the cynical, witty and flippant Doris Verrall he had hitherto known. For a minute or two the very thought made him uncomfortably self-conscious. He was an intruder, he had no place in the domestic economy of that household, no right to pry into their attachment and intimacy. This feeling gave way after the first few moments. No one, save himself, noticed the incongruity of his presence; he was evidently a welcome guest and belonged to the picture. Doris had never seen him so quiet before. To him she seemed a new being, more like one of the people in the books he read in his lonely chambers than the Miss Verrall of yesterday. When she talked to the old man the theater with the solitary actor seemed to have closed its doors; but whenever she addressed a remark to Jack the portals reopened, the footlights glared brightly as ever. Perhaps it was his fault. Habit was stronger than nature. He could not speak as he felt, and she took the cue. In spite of themselves they could not shake off the heartless jargon that veiled their true selves in a most of precocious coarseness, cynical affectation and superficial worldliness.

The old gentleman listened amusedly. He rather enjoyed their curious methods of evading sense and sincerity. There was a certain misplaced cleverness in it all that was new to him and seemed full of the pretty vanity and overflowing vitality of youth—simply a mood, a mood that had its faults, no doubt, but was interesting all the same.

He did not know that Jack and Doris spent the greater part of their lives amid similar drivel, and that both, in that instant, were tired to death of it—loathed. To them it sounded out of place, bad taste, even vulgar. Yet it was their language; they could not shake it off; they could not talk to each other but in that profane tongue. Each could see the reflection of their thoughts in the other's eyes, but neither was strong enough or bold enough to be real, to rebel.

They grew silent after a time while Mr. Verrall talked lovingly about books and pictures and men and women who had written and painted them. The old gentleman had a simple, homely way about him that was restful. Doris and Jack listened contentedly, and again Halliday thought of the people in the books, while the girl looked encouragingly at her father—even tenderly, Jack thought. She stayed in the dining room while the men smoked a cigar, and then Mr. Verrall, with many apologies, settled in a big arm chair for his usual after-dinner nap. It was nearly dusk, and Jack asked her to play for him in the twilight, so they went up stairs to the drawing room. Doris seated herself at a piano while he went over to the fireplace and sank deep into a big chair piled with cushions. Doris played divinely and the music went deep into his soul. It wove subtle spells as it filtered through the shadowy room and made him sink deeper into the chair and guard the silence of death lest he should lose a single note of the harmony that spoke to him out of the dimness, out of the fleecy haze that wrapt all things. A whole world of spirits whispered in his ears; they told him of Jack Halliday—much about Jack Halliday. The little devils that pop in and out of every man's past were murmuring fitfully around him, exercised maybe by the dim light, maybe by the music and shadowy figure at the piano, maybe by all three together. It was too dark for Doris to see his face, so he left his feelings have full play. Every note raked up some long forgotten dust heap in his heart, recalled thought after thought of past hopes, ambitions and love—chiefly love. Shadowy faces of nameless men and women, faces long forgotten and all too well remembered, that had left their mark on boyhood, youth or manhood, rose from out the gloom. Now the notes wove themselves into words—soft words that had made his heart beat madly in other days, or humbled him through their wealth of spotless purity. It was quite dark now, save for the moonlight, but he sat still in the chair listening to the voices that surged in his ears. He had shut his eyes and pressed both hands to them so that he should be still blinded to the present—blind to all save the sweet pain of the hour, the sadness and longing for better things that filled his naked soul.

Suddenly the music ceased. Doris closed the piano with a bang and, turning a tap in the wall above her head, filled the room with a great blaze of light. Halliday sprang hastily from his chair, then, regarding some of his old composure. "By Jove, you might give a fellow some warning!" he said. She smiled, divining the cause of his nervous face and the softness in his eyes with a woman's ready intuition. Then they both rubbed their eyes because of the sudden glare of the electric light, till she laughingly said: "Caught you napping, Mr. Halliday! I really didn't know that you ever took anything seriously," and a picture of the invariably flippant and supercilious Jack Halliday rose up before her. She saw a half reproachful, half pained look in his eyes, so she added, "I must be personal or you'll hate me," then, taking a chair to the other side of the fireplace, she went on tentatively, "Let's talk sober sense for an hour or two and keep up the illusion."

"Intoxicated nonsense is nicer, isn't it?" he answered weakly.

"Mr. Halliday, do you want me to frown?"

"No, but—" the smile that was on his face died away as the pain in his eyes deepened. "Do you know what you are risking? Are you in earnest? Shall we really take each other seriously for a change?" He paused here, wondering whether single men and women ever did take each other seriously—in his world, at least. In the other world, where people had to work for a living, it was different. They had to be serious or go under. Then he looked at her for an answer, marveling at the kindness and good will in her face.

"Why not?" she said slowly. "Doesn't the small talk sometimes bore you more than the big words? Weren't you serious when I turned the light on? Tell me what you were thinking about, if I'm not too curious."

Doris was silent now. She was waiting for him to speak. Her heart was too full for words, filled by that strange new sensation that made her wish to help him, to comfort him and give happiness even at the risk of her life, a feeling unselfish, self-sacrifice, and purely womanly that increased with every word that he uttered.

Jack began nervously, gaining grace as he went along. "The music rather stirred me up and set me thinking of the nothing, the empty nothing that represents my past—a thing I thought was gone and done with—quite gone. It's different with you." He went on, "You've got some one at home you can talk sense to. I haven't. I sit alone in my rooms sometimes and think of another life than the feeble imitation of a one I lead—sometimes real, something like the people who say, 'Time is money' lead. We say, 'Time is made to be killed.' I suppose it's because we've got the money. It's not the work I want, but it's something different to the aimless vanity of our life."

She looked at him—kindly, it seemed

to him. He thanked her with his eyes and continued: "This may be sentiment, even sickly sentiment, but you know that when a man begins that way he is ten times worse than a woman. It's a long time since I saw anything real—anything lasting. Perhaps if I had I would have believed in it, would have pooh-poohed it. May I be personal? I envied your father tonight and I envied you. I always thought your life as empty and as hollow as mine, or else I should never have complained. It was all new to me; it ought not to have been—only one forgets everything in time. I suppose the real world is full of men and women who live for men and women, but I've been playing my part alone all these years without help and without helping." He spoke disjointedly, with a voice changing from husky to broken and back again, rolling out every word painfully, sadly, as though he were alone in the room and speaking to himself. He kept his eyes away from Doris, save every now and again when he looked at her wistfully, pleadingly. When he caught her eye he saw pity in it and even fancied there was love as well. Her face was that of a woman—a real woman, tender and sympathetic.

He continued his monologue. "Then the twilight and the music, and may I say you, too, got hold of me and set me thinking of my people that are gone and the sister miles away in India, and a thousand other selfish thoughts of self-pity. But it's not too late to join the other people, to get out of the narrow world, the pack-of-cards thing I've built—that's now toppling over." He stopped and looked at her inquiringly for words. He knew she would comfort him, could comfort him, that he could find peace, even happiness, with her. It was all part of the new sensation that had made him pour his heart out to her and look to her for help to face his new life. She spoke to him. It was difficult for her to restrain her voice lest it should be too tender, but there was an occasional tear in it in spite of her self-command; and he loved her the better for it. She even thanked him for the confidence he had shown her; and then she spoke to him of his family and himself and other things they had only dared to vaguely hint at in the past.

They sat long together, talking as old friends do openly, intimately, without restraint. There was a new sense of rest in both their hearts now; a vague thing that people recognize and call happiness when it has become a memory.

The house was very quiet; there was a stillness over all things that was almost new to them. They had avoided it in the other days. The play with the one part was over now, and the theater razed to the ground.

Mr. Verrall came in later on and joined them, till Jack reluctantly said good-night.

Doris saw him as far as the hall. They shook hands, he pressing her five little fingers to his lips and thanking her earnestly, saying he had never spent a happier evening and asking if he might come again and talk to her.

She said: "Of course."

The door closed on Halliday, on all the vain trumpery of his past, and he went home planning a new world built on the ruins of the old. Yet the old was not utterly worthless, for it had given him Doris Verrall.

Owl Courtships.

Very funny, it is, from the human point of view, to witness the love-making of a couple of owls on a moonlight night, as they sit together on the coping of an old wall, or on the horizontal limb of some giant of the forest. Perched on the same bough, or the same wall of ruin, the lady owl, though usually much bigger and stronger than her mate looks the picture of demure coyness, if a little excited inwardly, like a girl at her first ball.

But the male owl, says the Pall Mall Magazine, is very much in earnest; for a moment or two he remains quite still, then he puffs out all his feathers, bows, and utters a softened scream, followed by a modified hiss that is full of tender meaning, and then he nudges her with his wing; she opens her big eyes very wide, and gives him a sidelong glance that may be a hint, for, horrible to relate, from the depths of his interior he instantly brings up a half-digested mouse; and, although she is full of similar rodents, and stag beetles as she can comfortably hold, she opens her mouth and accepts the fragrant gift with a murmur of satisfaction that speaks volumes of love and thanks. Then, when the dainty morsel has been disposed of, they caress each other tenderly for a moment or two, and then sit closely pressed to each other's side while the process of assimilation is perfected, after which they simultaneously fit away into the moonlight on noiseless wing in search of further prey.

Not only do the owls guard each other with a devotion that is rarely met with among more favored creatures, they positively idolize their ill-favored offspring, for whose sake they willingly risk not only liberty, but life. A young owl is not an attractive looking object from our point of view, but in its father's and mother's eyes it is perfection, and the way they wait on it, cuddle and caress it, feed it and keep it clean, must be seen to be believed.

GETTING EVEN.

"Oh, yes," said the stocky man with the square jaw, "my married life is quite a happy one."

"Glad to hear it," said the thin man with the thin hair. "Got any particular system?"

"Well, yes. Whenever my wife gets into a tantrum I go out and find the fellow who introduced us and give him another licking."