

Parson Rusden's Fight

The Reverend Michael Rusden, curate of Rodesley, was sketching busily. After working hard for over an hour, he looked at the result of his labour with the feeling of a man who has done his duty to his country and the world at large.

"Ah," he said, "I think I have at last attained the true artist's dream and ambition—colour!"

There could be no doubt as to his having done so, inasmuch as the trees he was depicting had their natural autumnal tints portrayed in vivid crimson, the fields were brilliant green, while the sea in the distance was washed in with a dazzling blue. Furthermore, a solitary figure in the foreground was arrayed in golden brown, forming, he said, a quiet resting-place for the eye.

The Reverend Michael Rusden was no fool. He was a good scholar, a fair preacher, an excellent musician, and a first-rate athlete. And yet on none of these points was he proud. The one thing he could not do was the only thing about which he was feverishly eager, and even self-conscious. He would listen to praises of his really fine tenor voice with unaffected indifference; but, when asked to produce his portfolio of sketches, he would blush like a girl, and talk about them by the hour together.

After admiring his work for some minutes, he put up his painting materials with a pleasant feeling of intense satisfaction.

"I dare say the Vicar will be in the church about these repairs," he said. "I will go and show him my sketch. I think he will like it."

The Reverend Rupert a Beckett was the Vicar of Rodesley, a fine, genial, highly-cultivated man, and a really talented artist, although, from lack of time, he had for some years past abandoned painting. The Vicar and his curate were both about thirty-four years of age; and they worked together on the best of terms. Nevertheless at times the curate's sketches were a sore trial to Mr. a Beckett, whose honesty and kindness of heart were always doing battle over them. He longed to say, "My dear Rusden, you don't understand the first principles of art," but, finding that even the gentlest criticism hurt the curate's feelings, he held his tongue whenever practicable, generally contenting himself with saying that the subject of the sketch was a very fine one.

Rodesley was a mining locality, the population a rough one; and, although the Vicar was always doing all in his power to influence the men, scarcely any visible improvement rewarded his efforts. They liked him personally, but laughed at his suggestions, and ridiculed the idea of going to church.

Half-way on the road to the church the Vicar and curate met face to face. "I expected to find you in the vestry," said Mr. Rusden. "I have a sketch to show you."

"I shall be there soon," said Mr. a Beckett. "You go on, and I will quickly join you."

"I'm afraid I can't get it out in the street, or I would show it to you now," said the curate proudly. "I think you will admire the young lady in the foreground."

"Not a portrait, I hope?" returned the Vicar, laughing.

"Oh, dear, no!"

The subject of young ladies was a standing joke with both clergymen, neither of whom had, until a very recent date, evinced any signs of matrimonial intentions. It was thought however of late that the Vicar was beginning to look with kindly eyes upon a certain pretty young lady; but the curate stood firm. He was, in fact, a widower, and by no means disposed to marry again. He had dearly loved his wife, to whom he was wedded when only two-and-twenty; and it was not until her death, some five years before, that he had any idea of taking Holy Orders. Previously to that he had lived as an independent country gentleman, and was renowned for his strength and activity. He was a genuinely good man; but, having been ordained only two years, he sometimes entirely forgot that he was a parson; and, though up to the present time he had done nothing unbecoming to his cloth, he had by no means settled down into a strictly clerical groove.

He puts his portfolio down upon the vestry table, and took out his last sketch, placing it in the best light in order that the Vicar might see it to the greatest advantage. The day was very warm, and Mr. Rusden opened the vestry door wide, so that he could see the peaceful graveyard full of old trees and ancient monuments.

Presently he turned his back to the door in order to look once more at his sketch, when suddenly he heard a loud guffaw, and, looking round, he saw a man standing in the doorway, one of the roughest of the miners, whose name was Gibson, a man detested even by his fellow-workmen—a big bully with low tastes, although he had received a better education than most of his fellows.

"He, ha, ha!" he roared again. "Well, if ever I see such a daub as that there!"

The curate's face flushed crimson, and he laughed uneasily.

"So you don't care about it?" he said, trying to appear unconcerned.

"Care about it?" repeated the man, derisively. "Why, I ain't quite a fool, and I have seen them, pictures at South Kensington; but all the gals and young fellers a-workin' there never turned out such a bad 'un as that!"—pointing contemptuously with his thumb.

If his preaching had been railed at, in his manner of life assailed, his other talents impugned, Mr. Rusden would still have kept his temper; but his weak point had been roughly touched, and he felt his indignation burning within him. The man, seeing he had

made an impression, continued his remarks, and in so coarse a strain that at last human nature broke through professional etiquette, and the curate struck the miner a ringing blow on the face. The blow was returned with interest, and a hand-to-hand fight ensued in the pathway outside the vestry door.

A passing boy quickly spread the news of the thrilling event, and a crowd of men assembled, all thoroughly enjoying the startling spectacle. Backers for both parson and miner were found at once, but the betting from the first was in favour of the parson, who displayed an amount of science which every second raised him in the estimation of the beholders. Both were tall strong men, but the brute strength of the miner was no match for the skill of the curate, who had been a famous boxer, and after a somewhat lengthy combat was victorious, his supporters giving vent to their feelings in a round of cheers.

As the last cheer died away, Mr. a Beckett appeared on the scene. Good heavens, could that bruised, disorderly-looking man be his curate—his good, gentlemanly curate who had ever preached forbearance and kindness? Alas! it was even so!

Mr. Rusden's temper had been so thoroughly aroused that it was not until the Vicar appeared that he even faintly realised the enormity of his crime. At the first glimpse of Mr. a Beckett, the full horror of the situation dawned upon him. As he wiped his blood-stained face, he heard the Vicar saying, "Go away, my men!"—and the crowd at once dispersed. Then Mr. Rusden found himself sitting down in the vestry in the presence of his friend.

The curate leaned his head upon his hands and said nothing, for there was nothing to say. What possible excuse could he offer for his unseemly, his disgraceful conduct at the very church doors? He was not afraid of his Vicar, but he was bitterly ashamed of himself—so ashamed that for some five minutes he did not remove his hands from his face.

There was complete silence for Mr. a Beckett was too deeply moved to speak. Looking at the matter from a priestly point of view, it seemed to him that the honour of the Church had been dragged in the dust. He said nothing, because he feared his words of condemnation would be too strong.

When Mr. Rusden at last found voice he was so penitent, his humiliation was so complete, that, instead of censuring him, the Vicar placed his hand upon his shoulder and spoke a few words of kindness, which proved a greater punishment to the curate than any rebuke could have been.

Then Mr. a Beckett opened the door of the vestry, and saw that the churchyard was empty.

"You must go home, now, Rusden," he said, "and attend to yourself. Or will you go to the Vicarage? I think that would be best."

The curate however refused to go to the Vicarage—he would have been ashamed to dine with his Vicar just when he had been disgraced. He presented a sorry spectacle and he knew it; and his ardent desire was to get home to his lodgings out of sight of every one. Unfortunately he would have to walk through Rodesley to reach his destination.

"I will go with you," said Mr. a Beckett.

Although the churchyard was empty, the streets were not—indeed they were usually full of people. Groups and the Vicar and the curate both knew what they were all talking about. Mr. a Beckett put his arm within that of his curate, and walked on with his face set firm, lips tightly compressed, head thrown slightly back. As to Mr. Rusden, his face was incapable of expression just then, his eyes being, as many of the miners declared, "nearly bunged up."

They had almost reached the lodgings, when, as ill-luck would have it, to complete the Vicar's humiliation, a dignitary of the Church well known to him came riding by; but, although he was arm-in-arm with a man who looked like a battered prize-fighter, Mr. a Beckett only held his head a little higher and acknowledged his friend's salute with unusual dignity.

On reaching his lodgings the curate rejected all further offers of service, and the Vicar departed.

The disgrace seemed to fall upon both clergymen equally; but, while the Vicar was bemoaning the terrible influence he would suffer after all his hard work and earnest endeavour, the curate was feeling keenly that he must leave the neighbourhood; and to part from Mr. a Beckett would be a great trial. Besides, when his reason for leaving was known—and he was determined not to withhold the truth—no one would take him as curate.

The day following the encounter was market-day, and Rodesley was crowded with country-folk. The Vicar had occasion to pass through the market-place, on his way to visit a sick parishioner, and at one of the flower and fruit stalls he met the young lady who, rumour, declared, had made so deep an impression on him.

"How do you do, Mr. a Beckett?" she exclaimed, well pleased. "What is this I hear about a fight between Mr. Rusden and a miner?"

"Have you heard of it?" asked the vicar, in dismay.

"Oh, yes—every one in the market is talking about it! How plucky of him to fight that big man!"

Mr. a Beckett felt that this view, though comforting, was not the right way of looking at the matter.

"I was going to ask you to go out boating on the river this afternoon," he said gravely, "but this unfortunate affair has so disturbed me that I feel quite disinclined for pleasure."

added to which, I have Mr. Rusden's work to do as well as my own."

"Oh," returned the girl, with a smile, "don't take it to heart, Mr. a Beckett! I am very certain that no one will think any the worse of Mr. Rusden; and I am so disappointed about the river."

The Vicar said "Good-bye" and walked with a preoccupied air past the poultry and fish stalls. He could not put faith in Miss Johnston's prediction. No; he feared both his own influence and Mr. Rusden's were gone for ever. Of what avail was it to preach and not practise?

To Be Continued.

LORD CHESHAM.

The Man Who Has Recruited 8000 Rough Riders in Great Britain.

Lord Chesham, who has managed to raise with a few weeks' time a force of some 8000 volunteer cavalry, composed of men who have all received some cavalry training is one of the most popular of sporting peers in the United Kingdom, and belongs to that historic house of Cavendish, of which the Duke of Devonshire is the head. He is still on the right side of 50, and was at one and the same time the brother-in-law and the son-in-law of the Duke of Westminster, who has just died. For, whereas Lady Chesham is a daughter of the late Duke, Lord Chesham himself is a brother of the widowed Duchess. Lord Chesham served for a time in the 16th Lancers. But it is with the 10th Hussars that he is to say, the Prince of Wales' regiment, that his name is most closely associated. Since retiring from active service in the army he has been Colonel of the Royal Bucks Hussars, one of the crack regiments of yeomanry cavalry in the United Kingdom.

Both Lord and Lady Chesham are far too devoted to hunting and to other forms of sport to spend much of their time in London, and they make their principal home at Latimer, where the Cavendishes have been settled ever since the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

KING CHARLES I.

spent a considerable time at Latimer while a prisoner of Parliament, and according to contemporary history, was fond of looking out on the peaceful view from the front of the house across the River Chess to the woods of Chertsey. The grand old Elizabethan mansion has been modernized, though with taste and discrimination. While stately, it is essentially a homely, cozy-looking house, the front charmingly clothed with creepers. It is full of family portraits of great value, and of old masters, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Titian, Murillo, etc., being represented on the walls.

Lord Chesham was for many years master of the Bicester hounds, and has had numerous bad spills, notably one last year, when he was terribly hurt by barbed wire, that bugbear of all hunting men. He lost his eldest daughter two years previously, a very pretty 12-year-old girl, in the hunting field, the poor child being thrown from her pony and dragged along, her foot having been caught in the stirrup. Lord Chesham is very wealthy, and, besides his 15,000 acres around Latimer, owns a quantity of real estate in the most high-priced residential districts of London.

One of his best paying pieces of property in the metropolis is that Burlington Arcade, which is familiar to every foreigner who visits London. His connection with the Burlington Arcade was brought to light a short time ago by his efforts to purify the atmosphere of the place toward nightfall. For, whereas it is a popular thoroughfare and much frequented during the morning and early part of the afternoon, no respectable woman dared to show her nose in the place after 4 o'clock. The shopkeepers complained bitterly, and Lord Chesham, realizing the mistake, both economic as well as moral, that he was making in permitting his property to become known as a resort of this kind.

GAVE STRICT ORDERS

to drive away both men and women who visited the Burlington Arcade merely for the purpose of meeting one another. In consequence of these orders a Mr. George Barant, a lawyer of good family, was expelled from the Arcade on the ground that he had addressed insulting remarks to a lady with whom he was not acquainted, and whom he mistook for a prominent demimondaine. Instead of quietly submitting to this punishment, Mr. Barant was foolish enough to bring suit against Lord Chesham for damages for his forcible ejection. On learning through cross-examination the object for which the plaintiff had visited the place, the Judge manifested the utmost indignation that he should have had the audacity to go to law over the matter, and, acting under instructions from the bench, the jury immediately and without leaving the box, returned a verdict in favor of Lord Chesham, at the same time commending his endeavors to purify this once notorious thoroughfare.

It was in the Burlington Arcade that Lord Euston, the eldest son and heir of the Duke of Grafton, made the acquaintance of the notorious Kate Cook, who, despite all his efforts to get rid of her, remains his wife, and as such will become ere long the Duchess of Grafton, while many other scions of the British aristocracy who have been guilty of mesalliances such as that of Lord Euston first met their wives promning in the Burlington Arcade.

Lord Chesham's eldest son, a young fellow of about 23 years of age, is already in South Africa, being an officer of the crack regiment of 17th Lancers.

THIRTY YEARS WITH CANNIBALS.

The Experience of the Rev. Dr. John G. Paton in the New Hebrides Islands.

The career of the Rev. Dr. John G. Paton, a returned missionary from the New Hebrides, from the time that he left Scotland, thirty-one years ago, to his return to America is a serial story of adventures and hardships, of escape from death, almost incredible. And it was not in the path of conquest or leading the serried ranks of battle that Dr. Paton met and surmounted dangers and difficulties and brought many thousands of ignorant savages to an understanding of the arts of civilization, but it was in preaching the Gospel that Dr. Paton and his associates wrought their work.

Educated in the parish school in Dumfries, in southern Scotland, and finishing a course of study in the classical and medical departments of the college at Glasgow, Dr. Paton immediately began work as a city missionary in Glasgow. His special field was among the town police, and so appreciative were the policemen of his eleven years' labor among them that upon his departure they gave him a handsome gold watch, which he now carries. Dr. Paton had established clubs and reading circles among the police, and it is remarked that both Protestant and Catholic policemen contributed to the gift. The watch bears the inscription: "Presented to Dr. John G. Paton, city missionary, by the C. Division of the Glasgow Police as a token of his appreciation of his zeal in the promotion of their temporal and eternal welfare, March, 1857."

In 1858 Dr. Paton, accompanied by his bride of a year, left for the missionary field in the New Hebrides.

THE NEW HEBRIDES

are a group of islands in the South sea, an archipelago of Polynesia, a chain extending from latitude 13 deg. south, longitude 166 deg. east, to latitude 29 deg. south, longitude 170 deg. east, about five hundred miles long, and adjacent to the island of Borneo.

Weeks later Dr. Paton arrived at the island of Tanna, one of the northern islands of the group, and landing began his labors. For a time the intrepid missionaries were unmolested, but a white trader visiting the islands made an unwarranted personal attack on Dr. Paton, and following this the savage natives plundered the house and hardly a day passed without some attempt upon the lives of the missionaries, compelling them to leave the islands and seek a refuge with a native chief in another island. When the party landed at Tanna there was a fine harbor, capable of accommodating a large number of vessels, but an upheaval of the earth completely destroyed it. After the escape of the party from Tanna they were given shelter for a time with a friendly chief, but the natives were hostile and an attempt was made to escape from the island in an open boat, but a rough sea compelled the gallant workers to land again. On the following night the missionaries were assailed and the house in which they were stopping burned and the life of Dr. Paton was attempted. Dr. Paton, in speaking of the attack said:

"I defied the natives, and apparently in answer to my prayer, a tornado came with incredible swiftness and so alarmed the natives that they ran away and molested us no more."

The next day the party escaped by vessel to Anietyum, an adjoining island, one of the missionaries and his wife dying on board before the port was reached from the hardships and dangers through which they had passed.

"The mission passed through a baptism of blood in beginning the work in South Sea Islands," said Dr. Paton. "The population of the group was then estimated at 150,000, all cannibals, without clothing, and with no written language. On Anietyum, where we did our first work, every widow was strangled to death the moment her husband died. Child murder was common, and children destroyed their parents when long sick or aged. Neighboring tribes were often at war with each other, and all they killed were feasted on by the conquerors, which was also the fate of all shipwrecked sailors and strangers who fell into their hands, while crimes of the most revolting character were delighted in."

FIVE MISSIONARIES

were murdered and two of them eaten on Erromanga. A sixth fell by my side and died in consequence of an attack upon our lives at Tanna. Memorable teachers with their wives and children either died or were murdered and eaten by the heathen. Those associated with me either died or were killed, leaving me the only missionary north of Anietyum living to tell the story."

"It was thirty-six years ago that I barely escaping with my life I found my way to Australia and by a considerable effort secured our first mission schooner, the Dayspring, and since then the work has steadily progressed and Christian influence has been extended to twenty-two islands, The Bible has been translated and is now read in twenty-two different languages and about eighteen thousand natives have been redeemed from savagery. Out of the savage cannibals, among whom we were first placed, we have educated over three hundred native teachers. The high chief of one island cheerfully gave up eleven wives in obedience to the creed we taught."

Dr. Paton married a second time in 1862 and now has two sons engaged in missionary work in the islands. From

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ons he received a letter containing a wonderful story, illustrating the devotion of the converted natives. It appears that the chief of an inland town on one of the islands invited Dr. Paton's son, a few weeks ago, to visit him at his home. The young minister, accompanied by one of the native teachers, started with the chief. They had not proceeded far when the chief, suddenly turning, levelled his rifle at the intrepid young missionary. Divining the chief's murderous intent the converted native threw himself between the missionary and the rifle, receiving the bullet through his heart.

AFTER THE PROPOSAL.

The Maid—Yes, George, but you must ask papa's consent.

The Man—You ask him. You know him better than I do.

THE SUPREME TEST.

I'd lay down my life for you, protested the poetical lover.

Yes, argued the practical maiden, but would you lay down the carpets?

King Menelik of Abyssinia is going to Cairo, to visit the Khedive, thus proving false the story that he is unfriendly to Britain.

LESSONS FROM CIVIL WAR

EXPERIENCE OF THE NORTH WAS THE SAME AS ENGLAND.

The South Won at the First Battle of Bull Run, and After Great Butchered in many respects the South Africa to-day repeats the American Civil War of the vast resources of the South. The South has been allowed to suffer the same disadvantages. The true nothing quite like the Confederates, or like the Boers, were forced to an open air farmers and planters—English, a people of men was anticipated, and it the fact, that the peo to the open air would learn all the woodmen. Then, too, the Con Boers, fought in a co They know every inch and the tactics best rain.

They had the best parably the best gen- lier years of the war no man in 1861 or 18 Joseph Johnston, or Jackson.

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decimated in th hundreds of thou ous killed and The North open and hasty moven listen to General the outset occur would happen, ar madman when he sands but for it of men. It was in this respect, H Army, and conse- provided instead But then the Sou the other hand developed as the have been.

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Owing to the two Northern batt- of the war, was a serious de- feat for the North. At Bull Run the green Northern troops, indeed, fought splendidly, and there were moments when it seemed that they had won the battle. But as the day wore on another hostile force came up on their flank, and they broke and fled in the wildest disorder. The very capital of the North all but fell into the enemy's hands, and there was at once a cry that the South could never be beaten. That was in the summer of 1861. The defeat in no sense weakened the grim determination of the North. Steps were taken largely to increase the army. One hundred and fifty-seven thousand men had been called for before the battle; now 400,000 were demanded and raised.

The difficulty was not so much to find soldiers as to discover generals. Many officers had been appointed to high commands through interest and jobbery; many were much too old for a bold, aggressive war; others, again, who seemed to promise highly and were appointed on their merits, failed lamentably when put to the test.

Success in the field is the one thing which proves the general's capacity; and from the nature of circumstances all Powers must grope very much in the dark when they appoint to high command men who have only peace service on their record.

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