

THE MAN THAT WAS USED UP.

A TALE OF THE LATE BUGABOO AND KICKAPOO CAMPAIGN.

BY EDGAR A. POE.

I CANNOT just now remember when or where I first made the acquaintance of that truly fine-looking fellow, Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith. Some one *did* introduce me to the gentleman, I am sure—at some public meeting, I know very well—held about something of great importance, no doubt—and at some place or other, of this I feel convinced—whose name I have unaccountably forgotten. The truth is—that the introduction was attended, upon my part, with a degree of anxious and tremulous embarrassment which operated to prevent any definite impressions of either time or place. I am constitutionally nervous—this, with me, is a family failing, and I can't help it. In especial, the slightest appearance of mystery—of any point I cannot exactly comprehend—puts me at once into a pitiable state of agitation.

There was something, as it were, remarkable—yes, *remarkable*, although this is but a feeble term to express my full meaning—about the entire individuality of the personage in question. What this something was, however, I found it impossible to say. He was, perhaps, six feet in height, and of a presence singularly commanding. There was an *air distingué* pervading the whole man, which spoke of high breeding, and hinted at high birth. Upon this topic—the topic of Smith's personal appearance—I have a kind of melancholy satisfaction in being minute. His head of hair would have done honor to a Brutus—nothing could be more richly flowing, or possess a brighter gloss. It was of a jetty black—which was also the color, or more properly the no color, of his unimaginable whiskers. You perceive I cannot speak of these latter without enthusiasm; it is not too much to say that they were the handsomest pair of whiskers under the sun. At all events, they encircled, and at times partially overshadowed, a mouth utterly unequalled. Here were the most entirely even, and the most brilliantly white of all conceivable teeth. From between them, upon every proper occasion, issued a voice of surpassing clearness, melody, and strength. In the matter of eyes, my acquaintance was, also, pre-eminently endowed. Either one of such a pair was worth a couple of the ordinary ocular organs. They were of a deep hazel, exceedingly large and lustrous: and there was perceptible about them, ever and anon, just that amount of interesting obliquity which gives force to the pregnant observation of Francis Bacon—that “there is no exquisite beauty existing in the world without a certain degree of *strangeness* in the expression.”

The bust of the General was unquestionably the finest bust I ever saw. For your life you could not have found a fault with its wonderful proportion. This rare peculiarity set off to great advantage a pair of shoulders which would have called up a blush of conscious inferiority into the countenance of the marble Apollo. I have a passion for fine shoulders, and may say that I never beheld them in perfection before. His arms altogether were admirably modelled, and the fact of his wearing the right in a sling, gave a greater decision of beauty to the left. Nor were the lower limbs less marvellously superb. These were indeed the *ne plus ultra* of good legs. Every connoisseur in such matters admitted the legs to be good. There was neither too much flesh, nor too little—neither rudeness nor fragility. I could not imagine a more graceful curve than that of the *os femoris*, and there was just that due gentle prominence in the rear of the *fibula* which goes to the conformation of a properly proportioned calf. I wish to God, my young and talented friend Chiponchipino, the sculptor, had but seen the legs of Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith.

But although men so absolutely fine-looking are neither as plenty as reasons or blackberries, still I could not bring myself to believe that *the remarkable* something to which I alluded just now—that the odd air of *Je ne sais quoi* which hung about my new acquaintance—lay altogether, or indeed at all, in the supreme excellence of his bodily endowments. Perhaps it might be traced to the *manner*—yet here again I could not pretend to be positive. There *was* a primness, not to say stiffness, in his carriage—a degree of measured, and, if I may so express it, of rectangular precision, attending his every movement, which, observed in a more *petite* figure, would have had the least little savor in the world of affectation, pomposity, or constraint, but which, noticed in a gentleman of his

undoubted dimension, was readily placed to the account of reserve, of hauteur, of a commendable sense, in short, of what is due to the dignity of colossal proportion.

The kind friend who presented me to General Smith whispered in my ear, at the instant, some few words of comment upon the man. He was a *remarkable man*—a *very remarkable man*—indeed one of the *most remarkable men* of the age. He was an especial favorite, too, with the ladies—chiefly on account of his high reputation for courage.

"In *that* point he is unrivalled—indeed he is a perfect desperado—a downright fire-eater, and no mistake," said my friend, here dropping his voice excessively low, and thrilling me with the mystery of his tone.

"A downright fire-eater, and no mistake—showed *that*, I should say, to some purpose, in the late tremendous swamp-fight away down south, with the Bugaboo and Kickapoo Indians. (Here my friend placed his forefinger to the side of his nose, and opened his eyes to some extent.) Bless my soul!—blood and thunder, and all that!—*prodigies* of valor!—head of him, of course?—you know he's the man!"

"Man alive, how *do* you do? why how *are* ye? *very* glad to see ye, indeed!" here interrupted the General himself, seizing my companion by the hand as he drew near, and bowing stiffly, but profoundly, as I was presented. I then thought, (and I think so still,) that I never heard a clearer nor a stronger voice, nor beheld a finer set of teeth—but I *must* say that I was sorry for the interruption *just at that moment*, as, owing to the whispers and insinuations aforesaid, my interest had been greatly excited in the hero of the Bugaboo and Kickapoo campaign.

However, the delightfully luminous conversation of Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith soon completely dissipated this chagrin. My friend leaving us immediately, we had quite a long *tête à tête*, and I was not only pleased but *really* instructed. I never heard a more fluent talker, or a man of greater general information. With becoming modesty, he forbore, nevertheless, to touch upon the theme I had just then most at heart—I mean the mysterious circumstances attending the Bugaboo war—and, on my own part, what I conceive to be a proper sense of delicacy forbade me to broach the subject, although, in truth, I was exceedingly tempted to do so. I perceived, too, that the gallant soldier preferred topics of philosophical interest, and that he delighted, especially, in commenting upon the rapid march of mechanical invention. Indeed—lead him where I would—this was a point to which he invariably came back.

"There is nothing at all like it," he would say; "we are a wonderful people, and live in a wonderful age. Parachutes and rail-roads—man-traps and spring guns! Our steam-boats are upon every sea, and the Nassau balloon packet is about to run regular trips (fare either way only twenty pounds sterling) between London and Timbuctoo. And who shall calculate the immense influence upon social life—upon arts—upon commerce—upon literature—which will be the immediate result of the application of the great principles of electro-magnetics! Nor is this all, let me assure you! There is really no end to the march of invention. The most wonderful—the most ingenious—and let me add, Mr.—Mr.—Thompson, I believe is your name—let me add, I say, the most *useful*—the most truly *useful* mechanical contrivances, are daily springing up like mushrooms, if I may so express myself, or, more figuratively, like—grasshoppers—like grasshoppers, Mr. Thompson—about us and—ah—ah—around us!"

Thompson, to be sure, is not my name; but it is needless to say that I left General Smith with a heightened interest in the man, with an exalted opinion of his conversational powers, and a deep sense of the valuable privileges we enjoy in living in this age of mechanical invention. My curiosity, however, had not been altogether satisfied, and I resolved to prosecute immediate inquiry among my acquaintances touching the Brevet Brigadier General himself, and particularly respecting the tremendous events in which he performed so conspicuous a part—*quorum pars magna fuit*—during the Bugaboo and Kickapoo campaign.

The first opportunity which presented itself, and which (*horresco referens*) I did not in the least scruple to seize, occurred at the church of the Reverend Doctor Drummumpp, where I found myself established, one Sunday, just at sermon time, not only in the pew but by the side of that worthy and communicative little friend of mine, Miss Tabitha T'. Thus seated, I congratulated myself, and with much reason, upon the very flattering state of affairs. If any person knew anything about Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith, that person, it was clear to me, was Miss Tabitha T'. We telegraphed a few signals, and then commenced, *sotto voce*, a brisk *tête à tête*.

"Smith!" said she, in reply to my very earnest inquiry; "Smith!—why not General John A. B. C.! Bless me, I thought you *knew* all about *him*! This is a wonderfully inventive age! Horrid affair that!—a bloody set of wretches, those Kickapoos!—fought like a hero—prodigies of valor—immortal renown. Smith!—Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C.!—why, you know he's the man"——

"Man," here broke in Doctor Drummumpp, at the top of his voice, and with a thump that came near knocking down the pulpit about our ears; "man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live—he cometh up and is cut down like a flower!" I started to the extremity of the pew, and perceived by the animated looks of the divine, that the wrath which had proved so nearly fatal to the pulpit had been excited by the whispers of the lady and myself. There was no help for it—

so I submitted with a good grace, and listened, in all the martyrdom of a dignified silence, to the balance of that very capital discourse.

Next evening found me a somewhat late visiter at the Rantipole theatre, where I felt sure of satisfying my curiosity at once, by merely stepping into the box of those exquisite specimens of affability and omniscience, the Misses Arabella and Miranda Cognoscenti. That fine tragedian, Climax, however, was doing Iago to a very crowded house, and I experienced some little difficulty in making my wishes understood; especially, as our box was next to the slips, and completely overlooked the stage.

"Smith?" said Miss Arabella, as she at length comprehended the purport of my query; "Smith?—why, not General John A. B. C.!"

"Smith?" inquired Miranda, musingly. "God bless me, did you ever behold a finer figure?"

"Never, madam; but *do* tell me"——

"Or so inimitable grace?"

"Never, upon my word!—but pray inform me"——

"Or so just an appreciation of stage effect?"

"Madam!"

"Or a more delicate sense of the true beauties of Shakspeare? Be so good as to look at that leg!"

"The devil!" and I turned again to her sister.

"Smith?" said she, "why, not General John A. B. C.! Horrid affair that, wasn't it?—great wretches, those Bugaboos—~~savage~~ and so on—but we live in a wonderfully inventive age!—Smith?—O yes! great man!—perfect desperado—immortal renown—prodigies of valor! *Never heard!*" (This was given in a scream.) Bless my soul!—why he's the man"——

——"mandragora,

Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou owd'st yesterday!"

here roared out Climax just in my ear, and shaking his fist in my face all the time, in a way that I *couldn't* stand, and I *wouldn't*. I left the Misses Cognoscenti immediately, and went behind the scenes for the purpose of giving the scoundrel a sound thrashing.

At the *soirée* of the lovely widow Mrs. Kathleen O'Trump, I was very confident that I should meet with no similar disappointment. Accordingly, I was no sooner seated at the card table, with my pretty hostess for a partner, than I propounded those questions whose solution had become a matter so essential to my peace.

"Smith?" said my partner, "why not General John A. B. C.! Horrid affair that, wasn't it?—diamonds, did you say?—terrible wretches, those Kickapoos!—we are playing *whist*, if you please, Mr. Tattle—however, this is the age of invention, most certainly—the age, one may say—the age *par excellence*—speak French!—oh quite a hero—perfect desperado!—*no hearts*, Mr. Tattle!—I don't believe it—immortal renown and all that—prodigies of valor! *Never heard!*—why, bless me, he's the man"——

"Mann?—*Captain Mann*?" here screamed some little feminine interloper from the farthest corner of the room. "Are you talking about Captain Mann and the duel?—oh, I *must* hear—do tell—go on, Mrs. O'Trump!—do now go on!" And go on Mrs. O'Trump did—all about a certain Captain Mann who was either shot or hung, or should have been both shot and hung. Yes! Mrs. O'Trump, she went on, and I—I went off. There was no chance of hearing any thing farther that evening in regard to Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith.

Still, I consoled myself with the reflection that the tide of ill luck would not run against me for ever, and so determined to make a bold push for information at the *roué* of that bewitching little angel, the graceful Mrs. Pirouette.

"Smith?" said Mrs. P., as we twirled about together in a *pas de Zephyr*, "Smith?—why not General John A. B. C.?! Dreadful business that of the Bugaboos, wasn't it?—terrible creatures, those Indians!—*do* turn out your toes, I really am ashamed of you—man of great courage, poor fellow—but this is a wonderful age for invention—O dear me, I'm out of breath—quite a desperado—prodigies of valor—*never heard!*—can't believe it—I shall have to sit down and tell you—Smith! why he's the man"——

"Man-fred, I tell you!" here bawled out Miss Bas-Bleu, as I led Mrs. Pirouette to a seat. "Did ever any body hear the like! It's Man-fred, I say, and not at all by any means Man-Friday." Here Miss Bas-Bleu beckoned to me in a very peremptory manner; and I was obliged, will I nill I, to leave Mrs. P. for the purpose of deciding a dispute touching the title of a certain poetical drama of Lord Byron's. Although I pronounced, with great promptness, that the true title was Man-Friday, and not by any means Man-fred, yet when I returned to seek for Mrs. Pirouette she was not to be discovered, and I made my retreat from the house in a very bitter spirit of animosity against the whole race of the Bas-Bleus.

Matters had now assumed a really serious aspect, and I resolved to call at once upon my particular friend, Mr. Theodore Sinivate—for I knew that here at least I should get something like definite information.

"Smith?" said he, in his well known peculiar way of drawing out his syllables; "Smith?—why not General John A—B—C.? Savage affair that with the Kickapo-o-o-o-os, was'n't it? Say! don't you think so!?—perfect despera-a-ado—great pity, 'pon my honor!—wonderfully inventive age!—pro-o-odigies of valor! By the by, did you ever hear about Captain Mann?"

"Captain Mann be d——d!" said I, "please to go on with your story."

"Hem!—oh well!—*toute la même cho-o-ose*, as we say in France. Smith, eh? Brigadier General John A—B—C.? I say—(here Mr. S. thought proper to put his finger to the side of his nose)—I say, you don't mean to insinuate now, really, and truly, and conscientiously, that you don't know all about that affair of Smith's as well as I do, eh? Smith? John A—B—C.? Why, bless me, he's the ma-a-an!"

"Mr. Sinivate," said I, imploringly, "is he the man in the mask?"

"No-o-o!" said he, looking wise, "nor the man in the mo-o-o-on."

This reply I considered a pointed and positive insult, and I left the house at once in high dudgeon, with a firm resolve to call my friend, Mr. Sinivate, to a speedy account for his ungentlemanly conduct and ill breeding.

In the meantime, however, I had no notion of being thwarted touching the information I desired. There was one resource left me yet. I would go to the fountain head. I would call forthwith upon the General himself, and demand, in explicit terms, a solution of this abominable piece of mystery. Here at least there should be no chance for equivocation. I would be plain, positive, peremptory—as short as pie-crust—as concise as Tacitus or Montesquieu.

It was early when I called, and the General was dressing; but I pleaded urgent business, and was shown at once into his bed-room by an old negro valet, who remained in attendance during my visit. As I entered the chamber, I looked about, of course, for the occupant, but did not immediately perceive him. There was a large and exceedingly odd-looking bundle of something which lay close by my feet, on the floor, and, as I was not in the best humor in the world, I gave it a kick out of the way.

"Hem! ahem! rather civil that, I should say!" said the bundle, in one of the smallest, the weakest, and altogether the funniest little voices, between a squeak and a whistle, that ever I heard in all the days of my existence.

"Ahem! rather civil that, I should observe!"—I fairly shouted with terror, and made off at a tangent, into the farthest extremity of the room.

"God bless me, my dear fellow," here again whistled the bundle, "what—what—what—why what is the matter? I really believe you don't know me at all!"

"No—no—no!" said I, getting as close to the wall as possible, and holding up both hands in the way of expostulation; "don't know you—know you—know you—*don't* know you at all! Where's your master?" here I gave an impatient squint towards the negro, still keeping a tight eye upon the bundle.

"He! he! he! he-aw! he-aw! he-aw!" cachinnated that delectable specimen of the human family, with his mouth fairly extended from ear to ear, and with his forefinger held up close to his face, and levelled at the object of my apprehension, as if he was taking aim at it with a pistol.

"He! he! he! he-aw! he-aw! he-aw!—what, you want Mass Smif? Why, dar's him!"

What *could* I say to all this—what *could* I!? I staggered into an arm-chair, and, with staring eyes and open mouth, awaited the solution of the wonder.

"Strange you shouldn't know me though, isn't it?" presently re-squeaked the bundle, which I now perceived was performing, upon the floor, some inexplicable evolution, very analogous to the drawing on of a stocking. There was only a single leg, however, apparent.

"Strange you shouldn't know me, though, isn't it? Pompey, bring me that leg!" Here Pompey handed the bundle a very capital cork leg, all ready dressed, which it screwed on in a trice, and then it stood upright before my eyes. Devil the word could I say.

"And a bloody action it *was*," continued the thing, as if in a soliloquy; "but then one musn't fight with the Bugaboos and Kickapoos, and think of coming off with a mere scratch. Pompey, I'll thank you now for that arm. Thomas (turning to me) is decidedly the best hand at a cork leg; he lives in Race street, No. 79—stop, I'll give you his card; but if you should ever want an arm, my dear fellow, you must really let me recommend you to Bishop." Here Pompey screwed on an arm.

"We had rather hot work of it, that you may say. Now, you dog, slip on my shoulders and bosom—Pettitt makes the best shoulders, but for a bosom you will have to go to Ducrow."

"Bosom!" said I.

"Pompey, will you *never* be ready with that wig? Scalping is a rough process after all; but then you can procure such a capital scratch at De L'Orme's."

"Scratch!"

"Now, you nigger, my teeth! For a *good* set of these you had better go to Parnly's at once

high prices, but excellent work. I swallowed some very capital articles, though, when the big Bugaboo rammed me down with the butt end of his rifle."

"Butt end!—ram down!—my eye!"

"O yes, by the by, my eye—here, Pompey, you scamp, screw it in! Those Kickapoos are not so very slow at a gouge—but he's a belied man, that Dr. Williams, after all; you can't imagine how well I see with the eyes of his make."

I now began very clearly to perceive that the object before me was nothing more or less than my new acquaintance, Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith. The manipulations of Pompey had made, I must confess, a very striking difference in the appearance of the personal man. The voice, however, still puzzled me no little; but even this apparent mystery was speedily cleared up.

"Pompey, you black rascal," squeaked the General, "I really do believe you would let me go out without my palate."

Hereupon the negro, grumbling out an apology, went up to his master, opened his mouth with the knowing air of a horse jockey, and adjusted therein a somewhat singular looking machine, in a very dexterous manner, that I could not altogether comprehend. The alteration, however, in the whole expression of the countenance of the General was instantaneous and surprising. When he again spoke, his voice had resumed the whole of that rich melody and strength which I had noticed upon our original introduction.

"D—n the vagabonds!" said he, in so clear a tone that I positively started at the change, "d—n the vagabonds! they not only knocked in the roof of my mouth, but took the trouble to cut off at least seven-eighths of my tongue. There isn't Bonfanti's equal, however, in America, for really good articles of this description. I can recommend you to him with confidence, (here the General bowed,) and assure you that I have the greatest pleasure in so doing."

I acknowledged this kindness in my best manner, and now took leave of my friend at once, with a perfect understanding of the state of affairs—with a full comprehension of the mystery which had troubled me so long. It was evident. It was a clear case. Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith was the man—was

THE MAN THAT WAS USED UP.

