THE ROANOKE NEWS, THURSDAY, MAY 25, 1893.

AN EXCHANGE OF SOULS.

"Well, what are you thinking of?"

The shoemaker, kneeling to measure the foot of Charles Vane, looked up as the gentleman asked this question, and turned red to his ears.

"Well, sir," said he, "I was thinking promiscuous like." And he went on measuring.

"You've got a high instep," he said, after a pause. "Ain't it singular how providence favors some and makes others as flat as turtles. I suppose you'd like a heel this height, sir; you're, 1 should say, six foot."

"Six feet one.

"Lor" an' I ain't quite five." The little shoemaker stood up as he spoke and pocketed his mea-sure. But the young man still looked at him with a puzzled air. "What were you thinking of,

Glint?" he said again. "I never saw your jolly face so solemn." "Well, sir," said the shoemaker,

"since you want to know, if you'll excuse the liberty. I was a-wishing I was you."

"Why?" "Well, sir, you are rich, you know, and can do as you like all day; and you are six foot one, and good lookin' to match."

"And I have wished often that I were you."

"You are making game of me, sir."

"No-I mean it. I have often said were I young Glint over there, hard at work all day, enjoying coarse fare, taking plea-sure in cheap pastimes, luxuriat-ing in his Sundays and holidays, what would I not give? I have too many leisures, I have a surfeit of all things. It isn't good for a man.

"I'd like to try it, sir." "And I should like to try the daily toil—the happy rest—the sharp appetite—the spirit that sends you whistling to your work. I'd change with you, Glint." "Ahem!" muttered somebody

behind them.

The shoemaker and the gentleman both turned. In the doorway stood a crooked little old man in black, with a weazen, yellow face. He bowed and entered.

"I over-heard your wish just now," said the little man. "I over-heard also that wish of your shoemaker yonder, and am here in consequence.

'I can, if I choose, gratify this wish of yours at once. It is a whim of mine to do so. Come now, were you in earnest?"

"I was," said the gentleman.

"Of course, I was," said the cobbler.

The little man in black drew

The little man in black drew from his pocket a parchment. "Append your signature," he said. "This compact will accom-plish all that you desire, but, re-member, it is irrevocable unless within the year both desire it to be broken at the same instant."

"The old gentleman is mad," thought Charles. "I'll sign to

"Come till yez, mate!" yelled the servant of the house. "Missus sez ye're makin' the other boarders wait," and down went the last and boot with alacrity.

Led by some queer instinct, the new shoemaker stumbled kitchenward, and saw at a table nine men, three women and a girl.

Charles Vane remembered hav-ing envied Glint his interchange of kisses with this damsel at the shop door of moonlight nights, and to have written a poem on humble love.

Alas! he now knew also that the brassy ring with a glass stone upon the damsel's finger was his engagement ring.

The damsel was not ugly, but she was coarse. Her finger nails were darkly rimmed; she had her hair tucked into a net, through which it poked its ends at inter-vals; her apron was dirty, and her waist a yard about.

The agonies of that dinner could never be forgotten. Even his

workshop became a paradise. He rushed thither. Alas! there waited a laborer with his hod who wanted his brogan patched. At this, soul rose superior to sense. Mr. Vane conquered the cobbler.

"Do you expect me to mend such dirty shoes as those?" he said. "Dirty, be jabers!" yelled the man, and flew at him. In vain did Mr. Vane strive to

remember the lessons in the manly art of self-defense acquired from Mr. Punchemflat. He was pounded to a jelly ; and Abigail Sprat, hearing the disturbance (Abigail was the damsel's name), flew to his rescue, wept over "her ducky." and plastered him with brown paper and vinegar.

When it smarted, Mr. Vane against his will said :

"Ouch ! ain't it tart though ?" "You poor, dear ducky," said Abigail Sprat. "But I'll kiss 'em and make 'em well."

And she did. At dusk Abigail Sprat proposed a walk. He treated her to ginger beer. He bought peanuts, and

they ate them out of his handkerchief

He returned in a state of indescribable despair and sought his garret. There he stared across at the hotel. Somebody at its win-

dow looked also at the moon. "H. ppy dog!" thought Vane. "He will never change back again. I'm fixed for life. Oh ! what a fool I'm home whether the View fool I've been-what a fool !"

Somebody on the other side of the street said, in a faint voice, audible by some miraculous means:

"Oh, what a fool I have SALESMEN: been !

"Who's that ?" called Vane. "I used to be Mr. Glint, now I'm Mister Vane," said the voice.

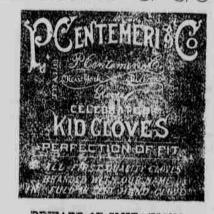
"Oh, ain't I wretched ?" "You are laughing at me," said

Vane. "I ain't. Oh. I don't wonder "I ain't. It's awful." you got me in for it. It's awful." "What has happened to you ?" asked Vane.

"First place the dinner," said Glint. "I had soup, and before I could eat it they took it away and



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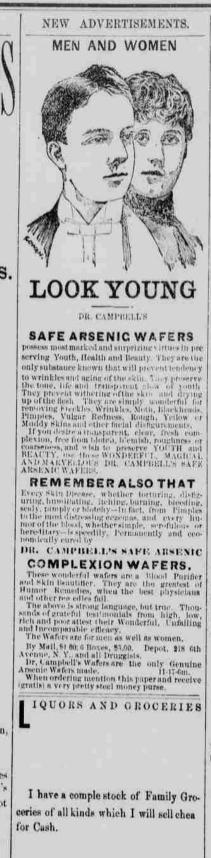
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humor him.'

"It's I don't know who," said the shoemaker, "but I'll sign for all that.'

"Done," said the old gentleman. "And now, remember you have now changed souls, but you have faces, voices, apparent knowledge. Watch the clock ten minutes," and pocketing the parchment he walked out of the room.

Five minutes-eight-ten. A sort of convulsion shook each of those men. An agony impossible to describe, was repeated twice in each breast, and for ten minutes more neither knew anything.

"A pretty shoemaker you, asleep on your bench. I say, are master's shoes done?" Mr. Charles Vane heard these

words and opened his eyes. He seemed to remember, absurdly enough, to have mended a pair of shoes for a Mr. He put forth his hand and drew them from beneath the table.

"A shillun," said he.

The boy took the boots and placed a filthy 10-cent stamp and a greasy two-cent piece on his palm.

Charles Vane dropped both with disgust. The boy grinned. "Ain't over your spree yet?"

he said, and went away leering. Charles Vane arose and looked

about the room. It was the cob-bler's shop. Pahl how is smelled of wax and gin! He looked in the glass. There was the cobbler's face and five brief fact of stature. He closed

brief feet of stature. He glanced over the way and saw himself stepping into a little natty turn-

"The old man spoke the truth," he said. "I am about to taste humble happiness."

He was conscious of a queer feel-ing never experienced before. After a while he began to believe it was hunger.

He began to remember, also, that he had had no breakfast except a piece of bread and an onion. He looked around for a bell to ring for lunch. There was no bell.

"Bo shoemakers starve?" he hed mentally. Just then the

gave me fish, and that they grabbed and gave me meat, and 1 hadn't nothn' to eat but sweets and things, and my digestives is so hurt I'm sure I shall die."

"Then I ain't got nothin' to do, and I have to be as stiff as a post, and I am afraid of the horsesthey prance so. And then-oh. you wretch! That's why you did it. I know. I'll kill you !"

"What?" asked Vane. "Abigail Sprat!" "Hey?"

"I saw her kissin' you. And you'll mary her!"

"Hang me if I will." said Vane. "Oh, Abigail Spratt!" moaned the wretch across the street. "1 don't think of giving her up. You won't change back, of course?" "Will you?" cried Vane, "Yes."

At that moment each saw in the street below the yellow-faced, crooked little man in black. He shook his finger at each and leered and wagged his head.

Then he took the parchment from his breast and tore it in two. At that moment the two gazers from the opposite windows underwent the same pangs of unufferable agony again and found all darkness for awhile.

With dawn Charles Vane gazed at himself rejoicing in the mirror, and Peter Glint rushed down stairs to embrace Abigail Sprat, who was making the kitchen fire' with redoubled affection,-Brandon Banner.

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