Wichita Eagle

WHY YOUNG ASTOR IS AN ENGLISHMAN.

Real or Fancied Dangers, and the Precautions That Were Taken.

A Million Cares Have Millionaires—The Heir to Scores of Millions, It Was Feared, Might be Kidnapped and Held for Ransom.

(Copyright, 1893.)

For the last few years of the great American land owner Astor's residence in his native city of New York, the prospect that his son Waldorf might at any moment fall into the hands of kidnappers was constantly the family sword of Damocles. Threats, darkly made in constantly arriving anonymous letters, precautions, the more efficient because their necessity and very existence were denied, and longing to escape the gaping publicity incident to his riches, combined, finally, to drive

W. W. ASTOR.

America's rent receiving Cræsus into his present splendid exile.

Connected with the chief aggravation were a host of lesser miseries. Balked in political ambition, longing for distinction in literature and in art, and a growing feeling that in New York he and his were becoming more and more the prey of the designing and ambitious, filled the measure of Mr. Astor's unhappiness to the brim.

About three years before the Waldorf Astors sailed away, there began to arrive the first of those threatening letters foreboding the abduction of the heir of the house. Like all the other general correspondence, these epistles passed through the hands of the Astor agents. Of course people of their wealth have all kinds of mail matter sent them. Therefore the communications, which at first took the form of non-compliance with certain pecuniary demands, received little attention. But gradually the writers, while not throwing aside their anonymity became more specific, until the abduction of young Waldorf was categorically threatened.

This boy Waldorf is one of an interesting trio of children. His education

MRS. W. W. ASTOR.

was, of course, a matter of the deepest concern to Mr. Astor, himself an accomplished scholar, master of half a dozen languages, acquainted with the sciences, and well versed in other departments of knowledge. It was but a matter of course, therefore, that young Waldorf's education, in every branch of learning and art, was carefully planned. The languages, music, painting, science and the belle-tristic divisions of knowledge were successful by this scion of the house of Astor under the tutorship of experts in their respective studies. That father and mother became wrapped up in their first born as his attractive qualities of mind and heart developed, stands to reason.

But two motives could exist for kidnapping the heir of all the Astors—as he then was. The hope of pecuniary gain by the operation would seem the weightiest and, indeed, was so well understood that the detectives, who usually reap their richest harvest in the uneasiness entailed by the possession of wealth, had long before been instructed to guard against the danger. Therefore, wherever the Astor house-

YOUNG WALDORF ASTOR.

hold established itself, there were hired, unseen and watchful guardians. If little Waldorf went on a journey, his parents knew that not far from him were those whose duty it was to make his personal safety their first care.

Mysterious Enmity.

But human precaution has its limits. The annonymous letters became less and less vague as time went on. Knowledge of the family's doings, which could only come with knowledge of the family plans, was shown by the writers of these harrassing communications. Who was the author of the letters?

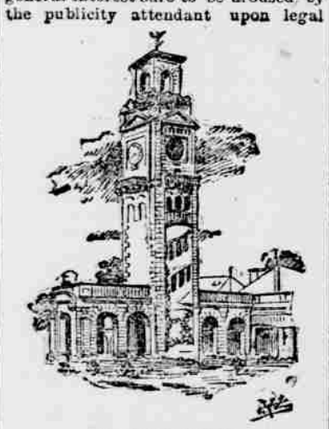
For an Astor to appear apprehensive of his heir's safety would but jeopardize that safety more; still, the field of suspicion was gradually narrowed un-

CLIVEDEN HOUSE (ENGLISH RESIDENCE).

til the family counsellors concluded that a former servant was implicated in the plot that threatened the family peace.

That the Astors should have enemies is not surprising. It is well known, among a certain social set, that Wm. Waldorf Astor, prior to his marriage with Miss Paul, of Philadelphia, had given rise to a rumor that he would wed a young lady who then lived in an entirely different part of the country. Moreover, Mr. Astor had occasion shortly after his wedding to dismiss more than one trusted servitor in view of certain disclosures connected with domestic finances. Could his hours of uneasiness respecting the kidnapping of young Waldorf, and his early personal unpleasantness be attributable to the same set of persons? Many circumstances indicated that such was the case.

For numerous reasons, however, a summary disposal of the whole matter was not to be thought of. Mr. Astor personally dreads notoriety and public attention. Besides, an objection to the general interest sure to be aroused by the publicity attendant upon legal



THE CLOCK TOWER.

easures to protect his family, was the fear that another set of schemers would take up the plot wherever one set had been forced to drop it.

This state of affairs continuing, it is not to be wondered at that even trifling anxieties connected with the young Waldorf were magnified into exquisite tortures. On one occasion not many years ago, when the boy still wore long curls, velvet knickerbockers, lace collar and the other details of a Little Lord Fauntleroy costume, he disappeared from his guardian during a walk through Central Park. His absence was not noticed for some time, and his tutor naturally dreaded returning until the youth was found. Then began an anxious search. Streets, byways and lanes were visited, but the boy could not be discovered. The hours passed and meanwhile parental alarm was awakened. Mrs. Astor was nearly distracted. Much further delay would certainly have resulted in one of the most sensational general alarms ever sent out over New York city.

But at dark the boy appeared. Amid hysterical embraces and reproaches he told his parents he "quil s'etait egaire!"

W. W. ASTOR'S NEW YORK RESIDENCE.

("That he had lost his way;" French is a strong point with the Waldorf Astors.)

The incident had some embarrassing consequences. A reporter or two visited the house but received courteous denials of any reason for anxiety. Mr. Astor smiled at the idea that his heir could be kidnapped. There was no possibility or reason for such a thing. The whole matter had better be dropped.

In this connection attention may be drawn to the Astor tendency to throw doubt and uncertainty upon all Astor movements. When Mr. Astor's own engagement to his present wife first became whispered about, the story was denied. Mr. Astor denied that he meant to be minister to Italy and that he would run for Congress. He denied the stories of his contemplated migration to a foreign land. The man of millions seems to have a mania for the element of uncertainty. He denied, after the death "fake" had been discountenanced, that he had been interviewed by a reporter the day before the story was cabled from England. He declared positively that he would have nothing more to do with journalists and journalism, and that no reporter would get anything from him or his. A week later he bought the Pall Mall Gazette and actively supervises its publication.

To resume. Other matters were pressing. Mr. Astor was anxious to live abroad. Various personal estrangements had made the family peace almost an armed truce. For years, as is well known, the Astors have been at variance among themselves as to the precedence of the two family branches. The difficulty over the intended addressee of letters directed to "Mrs. Astor" will be remembered. This is but one instance of many such minor miseries. Therefore when it was resented to the head of the Waldorf Astors that England was the place for him, that there he could satisfy his every ambition and escape an uncongenial social and political atmosphere at the same time, he determined to make the experiment. What followed is well known. William Waldorf Astor transferred his lares and penates to London. A town house was leased for the season, letters of introduction to exalted social deities were advantageously placed, and the career that has risen from one climax to another and has made this rich American a British newspaper publisher, a British land owner, a British nabob and a prospective British member of Parliament, is the sequence that is at present dazzling "the Yankees," as Mr. Astor now cheerily styles us.

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Mr. Baldie—I have discovered that baldness is a wise provision of nature.

Philosopher—That's a discovery, surely.

"Yes. You have noticed, doubtless, that I am bald as a billiard ball as far down as the rim of my hat, but below that the hair grows as luxuriantly as ever."

"Yes, that is usually the case."

"Exactly. Well, now comes my discovery. Barber shops are often draughty, you know."

"Very frequently."

"Too true. Sure to give folks influenza, pneumonia, and I don't know what all."

"Draughts are always dangerous."

"That's it. Well a bald-headed man can have his hair cut without removing his hat."—N. Y. Weekly.

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When she was a Child, she cried for Castoria.
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BOURGET'S AXIOMS ON LOVE.

A WOMAN is always grateful to you—for having thrown you overboard.

THE only person who can cure one of a woman is that woman herself.

THE only way to get the upper hand of a woman is to be more woman than she is herself.

ONE may make anything out of an old love—even a new one—anything except friendship.

THE surest way of making an unhappy marriage is to make up one's mind to marry happily.

THERE is only one way of being happy where the heart is concerned, and that is to have no heart.

TO TRY to cure one's self of a woman one loves by leaving her is like trying to cure thirst by refusing to drink.

ONE never loves as one is loved, and so the art of being happy in love consists in giving all and asking nothing in exchange.

THE morality of a woman of thirty is the morality which she had at eighteen, less what her experience in life has taken from her.

IDEAL happiness is found when two lovers love each other equally. Next to that the best happiness is when they both cease to love at the same time.

THE worst thing which can happen to a madman is not to be entirely mad; the worst thing which can happen to a lover is to reason about his love.

IN every heart which really loves either jealousy will kill that love or love will kill the jealousy. The contrary is true when passion alone speaks.

WHAT proves that experience in affairs of the heart is of no value is the fact that at the end of our old love affairs we do not hesitate to plunge into new ones.

TOUCHES OF ART.

THE French government has bought of W. T. Daunat, the American painter in Paris, his "Portrait of Miss E. H.," shown at the salon of 1885 and again at the Universal exposition of 1889. It will be placed at the Luxembourg.

THE picture galleries of Rome are to be illustrated by "Braun" photographs with the carbon process. A selection of paintings, three hundred and twenty-four in number, will be issued in portfolios, with letterpress written by Prof. Venturi, director of the Royal museum at Rome.

THE German sculptor, Josef Kopf, who lives at Rome and has a atelier in Baden Baden, has presented the contents of that studio to the grand duke of Baden with the request that they be kept as a museum for the citizens and guests. There are many paintings and tapestries besides the sculptures by Kopf.

A ROMAN tomb has been unearthed at Cologne containing the bones of a man, a silver sword handle with an inscription and an inkstand of bronze. The sword grasp is inlaid with gold and enamel, and the inkstand is rich in decoration. A coin of Gordian III. gives some clew to the period of the interment.

ETCHINGS.

OVER $100,000 was netted by the recent sale in Paris of the collection of pictures belonging to M. Coquelin aine.

MISS SELINA HARRIS, of Frankfort, Ky., has been asked by the author of "Ben-Hur" to sit for a picture of Esther.

IN the spring of 1889 a Hungarian Jew sent to a Vienna paper a grain of wheat on which he had written 309 words taken from Sissot's book of Vienna.

THE Stonehenge monument consisted, when entire, of two circles and two ovals, the outer circle being composed of 60 stones, each from 13 to 20 feet in height.

A PRISONER in the Montana penitentiary at Deer Lodge is quite an artist in wood. He carved upon a single stick the heads of all the presidents of the United States, and the likenesses are said to be excellent.

LOVERS OF THE WHEEL.

A ONE-LEGGED bicylist rode all the way on his wheel from San Francisco to Chicago. His name is F. S. Beedleson.

ELEVEN blind men lately rode in company on bicycles from London to Birmingham, a distance of one hundred miles.

THE winner in the military ride between Vienna and Berlin last fall covered the distance in seventy-one hours and forty minutes. Fischer, who won the bicycle race over the same road, took thirty-one hours to accomplish the task. The regular express trains make the trip in sixteen hours.

MISS DUDLEY, an English bicyclist, holds the record for long-distance riding by women. She made the distance of one hundred miles, between Hitchin and Lincoln, in little more than seven hours, or at an average speed of nearly fourteen miles an hour. This, too, in regulation petticoats, and not the new style of wheeling trousers.

Garden and Cradle.

When our babe he goeth walking in his garden,
Around his tinkling feet the sunbeams play;
The posies they are good to him
And bow them as they should to him,
As fareth he upon his kingly way;
And birdlings of the wood to him
Make music, gentle music, all the day,
When our babe he goeth walking in his garden.

When our babe he goeth swinging in his cradle,
Then the night it looketh ever sweetly down;
The little stars are kind to him,
The moon she hath a mind to him
And layeth on his head a golden crown;
And singeth then the wind to him
A song, the gentle song of Bethlem-town,
When our babe he goeth swinging in his cradle.

—Chicago Record.

A Rare Instance.

Brown—That is the wealthiest man in town, and he made it all by writing poetry.

Green—Impossible!

Brown—It's so. A rich widow who doted on poetry became infatuated with the stuff he wrote and married him.—Puck.

A BIG RUN ON A BANK.

—Coin.

Total Depravity.

Ethel—There goes that wicked man that divorced his wife.

Laura—Wicked?

Ethel—Yes.

Laura—Well, why didn't she get a divorce from him, then?

Ethel—Why, she would have done so, but he got his proofs first.—Truth.

A STORM IMPENDING.

Bert (to his youngest brother, who is helping him in the garden)—It is beginning to rain. Isn't that good, as it will save us the trouble of watering the plants any more.—Harper's Young People.

"When millions affirm that Beecham's Pills (Tasteless) are the great remedy for Bilious and Nervous Disorders, it becomes almost a duty to give them a trial." WORTH A GUINEA A BOX. 14

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