

The National Tribune

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Janet's Hair.

Oh! loosen the snood that you wear, Janet,
Let me tangle a hand in your hair, my pet;
For the world to me has no daintier sight
Than your brown hair behind your shoulders white,
As I tangled a hand in your hair, my pet.

It was brown, with a golden gloss, Janet,
It was finer than silk of the floss, my pet;
'Twas a beautiful mist, falling down on your wrist;
'Twas a thing to be braided and jewelled and kissed;
'Twas the loveliest hair in the world, my pet.

My arm was the arm of a clown, Janet,
It was stoney, bristled and brown, my pet;
But warmly and softly it loved to caress
Your round white neck, and your wealth of tress,
Your beautiful plenty of hair, my pet.

Your eyes had a swimming gloss, Janet,
Revealing the dear old story, my pet!
They were gray with that chastened tinge of the sky,
When the trout leaps quickest to snap the fly,
And they matched with your golden hair, my pet.

Your lips—but I have no words, Janet—
They were fr-sh as the twitter of birds, my pet;
When the spring is young and the roses wet
With dewdrops in each bosom set,
And they suited your gold brown hair, my pet.

Oh! you tangled my life in your hair, Janet!
'Twas a silken and golden snare, my pet;
But so gentle the bondage, my soul did implore
The right to continue a s'ave evermore,
With my fingers enmeshed in your hair, my pet.

Thus ever I dream that you were, Janet,
With your lips, and your eyes, and your hair, my pet;
In the darkened and desolate years I moan,
And my tears fall bitterly over the stone
That covers your golden hair, my pet.

Matrimonial Lunacy.

Those who lived in Illinois in the early days of the Sucker State, have doubtless seen or heard of Judge Wilkinson, who presided on one of the eastern circuits, and whose peculiarities and eccentricities were oft food for the mirth and pleasure of the members of the bar. His Honor was one of the most agreeable, genial, and amiable of men, but fate had united him to a lady possessing entirely the opposite characteristics. Those who visited the Judge—who was exceedingly proud of company—and were witnesses of Mrs. W.'s curt ill humor and peevishness, wondered how the husband could have managed to live with her for thirty years. It can only be explained, I presume, on the ground that "use doth breed a habit in a man," and that if one had ever been accustomed to a boil on the neck, its absence would occasion distress. Well, on one occasion, when the Judge was presiding, a case of horse-stealing came up before him. The prisoner did not appear to be of the criminal class, and the bench seemed to regard him with favor from the commencement of the trial. The prosecuting attorney brought forth his witnesses to prove the ownership of the horse, that it was taken on a certain night from the proprietor's stable, and was found in the custody of the prisoner on the ensuing day. The case looked very clear in favor of a conviction. But Dick Fleming, the defendant's counsel, knew Judge Wilkinson thoroughly, and he well understood the domestic career of the prisoner at the bar; so, when he rose to address the court on behalf of his client, he stated he should put in a plea of matrimonial insanity. "Matrimonial insanity?" said the Judge. "Matrimonial insanity?" echoed the prosecuting attorney. "Yes, I put in a plea of matrimonial insanity," exclaimed Dick. "Matrimonial insanity," again remarked the Judge, apparently musing; "this is a novel defense, but let us hear the evidence." The names of six or seven witnesses were then called, and one of these was soon up for examination. "Do you know the prisoner at the bar?" queried Fleming. "Yes; I have known him for the past ten years." "During this time how often has he been married?" "He has had six wives—he now lives with the sixth." "Are you aware of the character, manners, and habits of the ladies he married?" "Well, if either one of them was better than the other I am not aware of it. They were all a sorry lot." "Have you been frequently at the house of the prisoner during these ten years?" "Quite frequently; he is a relative of mine." "Now, you say these ladies were a 'sorry lot.' What do you mean by that expression?" "Why, they kept the man constantly in hot water by their peevish, scolding, and quarrelsome dispositions." Other witnesses testified, and gave almost equivalent answers, and Ned stating that his testimony was all in, rose to address the court. He dilated at length upon the cunning of woman evinced in drawing men into the matrimonial noose, and the wondrous change which came over her when she had ensnared her victim, and warmly he contended his client was a lunatic—that he could not be a free agent or a responsible being to be gulled by such Xantippes in ten years. It was very evident that Judge Wilkinson lent a willing ear to this argument, for his summing up was decidedly in favor of the prisoner. "Gentlemen of the jury," said he, in concluding his charge, "this court has had a certain amount of matrimonial experience with one female, and such experience, it must be confessed, has not been altogether of a satisfactory character; but here is a man who, according to the testimony, has been so blind, imbecile, and idiotic, as to marry, in ten years, six horrible scolds and shrews. For so doing I class him as a natural fool, and even if he possessed any intelligence, the dwelling with these women must have destroyed that. The plea of the counsel for the defense

is sound in law and equity, and I charge you to bring in a verdict of acquittal." A verdict was found in accordance with the views of the court.

Early Debt-Collecting in California.

The Golden State is fast becoming one of the staid sisters of the Union, with all the steady habits pertaining to New England and the middle sections of the country, but in 1850 it was a land of wild romance, of daring deeds, of terrible crimes, and rapidly following punishments. "Jack," said I, while conversing with a gentleman friend from the West, the other evening at the Astor, "I believe you were in California in 1850?" "You are right there, old fellow, I was; Those were lively times, you bet—such sudden wealth, such quick succeeding poverty, such reckless gambling, such horrible murders, such infernal stealing and swindling. I tell you I had some rough experiences during those times, but perhaps none more exciting than the part I enacted once in collecting some debts due by a rascally banking house. Would you like to hear the yarn?" "By all means, let me have it," I answered. "Well, I had been up to the mines, and had accumulated, in two years, ten thousand dollars.—there were rich diggings in those days—and had deposited it with the banking house aforesaid. Remaining at the mines till I had made about two hundred dollars more, I resolved on returning to the 'States.' A number of companions, who had worked with me, who had deposited funds with the same concern, determined on embarking on the same steamer for the Atlantic coast. We started on our journey from the mines, but, ere reaching Sacramento, the startling news had been borne to that city that our banking house had gone by the board—that it had closed its doors, claiming to be utterly bankrupt, and refused pre-emptorily to pay one dollar to its depositors. Think of it, the funds of our entire party gone after these years of labor, and all prospect of visiting our native homes, with comfortable fortunes, at once destroyed. We were infuriated, of course, particularly as we felt confident that old D—, the head of the institution—from some rumors of his proceedings, which had been borne to the miners—was an unmitigated rascal. George Harkness was one of our party—I don't know if you ever met George in Frisco—and a more shrewd, resolute, determined, daredevil, honest fellow, never stepped in leather, and he said, on our way to the coast, "Boys, I'll be damned if I don't believe our gold is in old D—'s safe at this moment, but it will go out in the steamer on which we proposed to embark, and," turning to me, he continued: "Jack, I wish you and the other boys to go with me to the bank on our arriving in Frisco. Before we start, I want your books showing the exact amount due you by the bank. I'll be the captain, and you, Jack, shall be first lieutenant, and we'll see what luck will do for us." We all heartily indorsed George's plan, and on the next morning, after arrival at San Francisco, having been well washed and dressed in good shape, George, myself, and our fellow miners, walked round to the banking house. Notices of its suspension were posted on the door and about the building, and a crowd of indignant depositors were standing around it. George elbowed his way through these, for he was a very Hercules in strength, and 'spoke as one having authority,' and I followed him, the balance of our party standing back. George rang at the door. A waiter came "Is Mr. D—in?" I have a letter for him from the Governor of the State"—George had procured an official envelope, addressing it to the banker—"and I am directed to deliver it to him in person, and at once; and in my company here you see an old friend, well acquainted with Mr. D—." George held up the letter, the words "Executive Department" were doubtless seen upon it—he spoke through a door having a wire grating. The door was opened, George and myself entered and it was speedily pushed to. Back the three of us walked to where the banker sat in his private room, the door of which Harkness immediately closed and locked. The banker sprang to his feet, and George instantly drew his navy revolver. "Take a seat, sir, and keep quiet, or by — you're a dead man. Jack, attend to that servant, and I'll care for our dear banker." Again Harkness spoke, walking close up to D—, his weapon bearing on the banker's head; "Open it, I say," he thundered out, pointing to the safe, as he placed the pistol within three inches of D—'s brain. Like one in a dream the order was obeyed by the financier, and soon wide open stood the doors of that huge safe. "Well," exclaimed George, "Do you, Jack, and Mr. D—'s man, take out what you find in that safe, and lay it on this large, green-covered table, and I'll stand guard over the entire opposing parties." Harkness was just as cool as if engaged in any ordinary business. That safe was a bonanza, I tell you. There was over two hundred thousand dollars in gold coin, and double that amount in foreign bonds. "Now," said George, taking out from his pockets our deposit books, "we will make one general check upon Mr. D—. I find there is due thirty-eight thousand five hundred dollars. We will receive from you, Mr. D—, thirty thousand dollars in bonds, on account of convenience in handling, with eight thousand five hundred dollars in gold coin. Jack, count out the bonds, estimating them at four dollars and eighty-four cents per pound, then weigh the gold, and you must then exhibit the deposit books, and let Mr. D— see that everything is done in an honest and honorable manner." I carried out the programme as directed. My last work was to balance the deposit books and hand them to the banker. The gold, from four bags, was placed in our belts around our

persons, and our bonds in our side coat pockets. Just as we were ready to depart, Harkness turned in a polite manner to the financier, and remarked: "Mr. D—, this system of collecting debts is not usual, but wonderfully effective. Now, keep quiet, and you and the balance of your funds may be safe, but if you raise a noise, I will return with the angry crowd now outside, and you will probably be killed, and all your funds certainly be cleaned out. Do you understand me, sir?" The banker nodded, and told the servant to go with us to the door. And thus we secured our debts, though I have always blamed George for not telling the outsiders to adopt his system of collecting, for the amount taken by our party was all ever obtained from that rascally banker by his depositors."

RUBIES.

Interesting Gossip Concerning these Beautiful Gems.

[From the London Court Journal.]

The ruby is so called from the redness which commonly characterizes this exquisite gem. Like the sapphire and the Oriental topaz, it belongs to the class styled corundum, the members of which are alike in composition, though different in color and in quality. The true ruby or sapphire, is said to be the most valuable of gems when of large size, good color, and free from fault, so that it exceeds even the diamond in value. It is harder than any other known substance except the diamond, which alone among precious stones it will not cut. It is susceptible of electricity by friction, and retains it for some hours; it also possesses double refraction in a slight degree. Occasionally specimens are asterized, as in the case of what are known as star sapphires. Though it cannot be fused by itself, in combination with a flux it may be melted into a clear glass. Mr. Streeter describes its color as carmine, cochineal, or pigeon's blood, and rose-red, often with a play of violet.

The finest rubies are found in Ava, Siam and Pegu; others are found in India, Ceylon, Brazil, Australia, Borneo, Sumatra, and some places on the continent of Europe. The Burmese mines have long been famous; the working of them is a royal monopoly, and the king has, among other titles, that of Lord of the Rubies. The Brazilian ruby is declared to be a pink topaz, inferior to the true ruby, yellow in its natural state, and colored artificially. It is, unfortunately, beyond the power of ordinary chasers to pronounce any critical opinion upon rubies, except as regards their appearance, size and color, the best color being that known as pigeon's blood, which is a pure, deep, rich red, quite free from blue or yellow.

Speaking of the value of the ruby, Mr. Emanuel observes that the rare occurrence of the desired vivid pigeon's blood color of any size causes the price to increase in an even greater proportion than the diamond. For stones of the finest quality he supplies the following valuations: One carat is worth £14 to £20; one and a half, £25 to £35; two, £70 to £89; three, £200 to £250; four, £400 to £450. Under one carat the price ranges from £2 to £8 per carat, and over four carats what is called a fancy price is commanded. After all, perhaps it may have been truly said of rubies in general, that when they exceed one carat in weight no definite price can be given as a guide to the purchasers.

Mr. Streeter states that when a perfect ruby of five carats is brought into the market, a sum several times as great as that offered for a diamond of the same weight will be bid for it; if it reaches several carats it is almost invaluable.

Yet rubies of a much larger size are in existence. An Indian prince had one of near twenty-four carats, and it was bought for 150lb weight of gold. Catharine of Russia had in her crown a ruby as large as a pigeon's egg; and there is said to have been one in Paris which weighed 106½ carats. That of Catharine appears to be still in the Russian treasury. Others might be mentioned, especially that among the French crown jewels, which is cut into the form of a dragon with outspread wings. The finest specimens, of course, are the monopoly of princes and persons with princely fortunes. Even these may, nevertheless, be sometimes deceived, for we are told that two large stones shown as rubies among Her Majesty's jewels at the Exhibition in 1862 are simply spinels, and therefore neither rare nor precious.

Rubies may be faulty, in other words, may have flaws, specks, a silky or milky appearance, or a tint which is too dark, or too light. But fashion goes for something, and violet or pale-colored rubies may sometime rise very much in value. The least liable to fluctuation are those of the renowned pigeon's blood hue.

The best rubies are usually cut in the mixed or half brilliant style, but when silky, imperfect or asteriated, they will be met with *en cabochon*, or with a rounded top, like carbuncles.

Imitations of the ruby are made, and for a time look well, and even real rubies of small size have been produced artificially.

The ruby may be set either alone or in groups, or in conjunction with other precious stones. Few jewels have a more admirable appearance than those in which a large ruby is surrounded by diamonds. When set round with pearls of fine quality the effect is also admirable, though some object to it, as they say the red of the rubies detracts from the more quiet luster of the pearls. We do not think they look so well in connection with the emerald, the sapphire or other colored gems.