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VOL. III.

CLOVERPORT, KENTUCKY, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1878.

NO. 24.

CHURCH DIRECTORY.

HARDINSBURG CIRCUIT.

Methodist Episcopal Church (South).—Rev. W. W. Lambert, Pastor. Hardinsburg preaching 4th Sabbath in each month, at 11 o'clock a. m., and at 7 o'clock p. m. Class meeting every Sunday morning at 9 o'clock. Sabbath School at 9 o'clock p. m. Dr. J. M. Taylor, Superintendent. Prayer meeting every Wednesday night.

Oakland.—Preaching every 4th Sabbath at 11 o'clock a. m. Prayer meeting every Thursday night.

M. C. Zion.—Preaching every 1st Sabbath at 11 o'clock a. m. Sabbath School every Sunday morning at 9 o'clock. Dr. H. O. Fulliam, Superintendent.

Cave Spring.—Preaching every 1st Sabbath at 11 o'clock a. m., and at 7 o'clock p. m. Sabbath School every Sunday morning at 9 o'clock.

Union Star.—Preaching every 2d Sabbath at 11 o'clock a. m., and at 7 o'clock p. m. Sabbath School every Sunday morning at 9 o'clock. Richard Cox, Superintendent. Class meetings every 1st and 3d Sabbaths. Prayer meeting every Thursday night.

CLOVERPORT.

Baptist Church, Rev. A. J. Miller, Pastor.—Preaching every 2d and 4th Sabbaths at 11 o'clock a. m., and at 7 o'clock p. m. Prayer meeting every Wednesday night. Sunday School every Sunday morning at 9 o'clock. R. B. Pierce, Superintendent.

Methodist Church (South), Rev. J. L. Edgington, Pastor.—Preaching the 1st and 3d Sabbaths at 11 o'clock a. m., and at 7 o'clock p. m. Preaching every 2d and 4th Sabbaths at 7 o'clock p. m. Prayer meeting every Thursday night. Sabbath School every Sabbath evening at 7 o'clock. Preaching at Holt's Bottom the 2d Sabbath at 11 o'clock a. m., and at 7 o'clock p. m. the 4th Sabbath at 11 o'clock a. m.

Presbyterian Church, Rev. J. R. McDonald, Pastor.—Preaching every 3d and 4th Sabbaths at 11 o'clock a. m., and at 7 o'clock p. m. Prayer meeting every Sunday morning at 9 o'clock. Sunday School every Sunday morning at 9 o'clock. J. A. Murray, Superintendent.

Catholic Church, St. Rev. T. J. Jenkins, Pastor.—Services the 1st Sabbath in every month.

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The Great Deadwood Mystery.

BY BRET HARTE.

PART I.

It was growing quite dark in the telegraph office at Cottonwood, Tushme County, California. The office, a box-like inclosure, was separated from the public room of the Miner's Hotel by a thin partition, and the operator, who was also News and Express Agent at Cottonwood, had closed his window, and was lounging by his new-stained, preparatory to going home. Without, the first monotonous rain of the season was dripping from the porches of the hotel in the waning light of a December day.

The tread of mud-muffled boots on the veranda, and the entrance of two men, offered a momentary excitement. One of them proceeded to the desk, wrote a dispatch, and handed it to the other interrogatively.

"That's about the way the thing pinta," responded his companion assentingly.

"I reckoned it only equar' to use his dential words?"

"That's so."

"The first speaker turned to the operator with the dispatch.

"How soon can you shove her through?"

The operator glanced professionally over the address and the length of the dispatch.

"Now," he answered promptly.

"And she gets there—?"

"To-night; but there's no delivery until to-morrow."

"Shove her through to-night, and say there's an extra twenty left here for delivery."

The operator, accustomed to all kinds of extravagant outlay for expedition, replied that he would lay this proposition with the dispatch, before the San Francisco office. He then took it and read it—and re-read it. He preserved the usual professional apathy, had doubtless sent many more enigmatical and mysterious messages,—but, nevertheless, when he finished, he raised his eyes inquiringly to his customer. That gentleman, who enjoyed a reputation for equal spontaneity of temper and revolver, met his gaze a little impatiently. The operator had recourse to a trick. Under the pretense of misunderstanding the message, he obliged the sender to repeat it aloud for the sake of accuracy, and even suggested a few verbal alterations, ostensibly to insure correctness, but really to extract further information. Nevertheless, the man doggedly persisted in a literal transcript of this message. The operator went to his instrument hesitatingly.

"I suppose," he added, half-questioningly, "there ain't no chance of a mistake. This address is Rightbody, that rich old Button that everybody knows. They ain't but one?"

"That's the address," responded the first speaker, coolly.

"Didn't know the old chap had investments out here," suggested the operator, lingering at the instrument.

"No more did I," was the insufficient reply.

For some few moments nothing was heard but the click of the instrument, as the operator worked the key with the usual appearance of imparting confidence to a somewhat reluctant hearer who preferred to talk himself. The two men stood by, watching his motions with the usual awe of the unprofessional. When he had finished, they laid before him two gold pieces. As the operator took them up, he could not help saying:

"The old man went off kinder sudden, didn't he? Had no time to write?"

"Not sudden for that kind o' man," was the exasperating reply.

But the speaker was not to be disconcerted. "If there is an answer—?" he began.

"They ain't any," replied the first speaker, quietly.

"Why?"

"Because the man c'n send the message is dead."

"But it's signed by you two."

"O'ly ez witnesses—eh?" appealed the first speaker to his comrade.

"O'ly ez witnesses," responded the other. The operator shrugged his shoulders.

The business concluded, the first speaker slightly relaxed. He nodded to the operator, and turned to the bar-room with a pleasing social impulse. When his glasses were set down empty, the first speaker, with a cheerful commendation of the hard times and the weather, apparently dismissed all previous proceedings from his mind, and lounged out with his companion. At the corner of the street they stopped.

"Well, that job's done," said the first speaker, by way of relieving the slight social embarrassment of parting.

"That's so," responded his companion, and shook his head.

They parted. A gust of wind swept through the pines, and struck a faint, hollow cry from the wires above their heads, and the rain and the darkness again slowly settled upon Cottonwood.

The message lagged a little at San Francisco, laid over half an hour at Chicago, and fought long and hard the whole way, so that it was past midnight when the "all night" operator took it from the wires at Boston. But it was freighted with a mandate from the San Francisco office, and a messenger was procured, who sped with it through the snow-bound streets, between the high walls of class-sheltered-rayless houses to a certain formal apse, quietly with snow-covered status. Here he ascended the broad steps of a reserved and solid-looking mansion, and pulled a bronze bell-handle that summoned within those chaotic recesses, after an apparent interminable delay, a man in a dark coat, who took the message, and

waiting without—as he ought. Despite the lateness of the hour, there was a slight glow from the windows, clearly not enough to warm the messenger with indications of a festivity within, but yet bespeaking, as it were, some prolonged, though subdued, excitement. The sober servant, who took the dispatch and receipted for it as gravely as if witnessing a last will and testament, respectfully paused before the entrance of the drawing-room. The sound of measured and rhetorical speech, through which the occasional cough of the New England cough struggled, as the only effort of nature not wholly repressed, came from his heavily-curtained recesses; for the occasion of the evening had been the reception and entertainment of various distinguished persons, and, as had been epigrammatically expressed by one of the guests, "the history of the country" was taking its leave in phrases more or less memorable and characteristic. Some of these valdictory axioms were clever, some witty, a few profound, but always left a genuine contribution to the entertainer. Some had been already prepared, and, like a card, had served and identified the guest at their mansion.

The last guest departed, the last carriage rolled away, when the servant ventured to indicate the existence of the dispatch to his master, who was standing on the hearth-rug in an attitude of wearied self-righteousness. He took it, opened it, read it, re-read it, and said:

"There must be some mistake! It is not for me; call the boy, Waters."

Waters, who was perfectly aware that the boy had left, nevertheless obediently walked toward the hall-door, but was recalled by his master.

"No matter—at present!"

"It's nothing serious?" asked Mrs. Rightbody, with languid wifely concern.

"No, nothing. Is there a light in my study?"

"Yes. But before you go—can you give me a moment or two?"

Mr. Rightbody turned a little impatiently toward his wife. She had thrown herself, languidly, on the sofa, her hair was slightly disarranged, and part of a slipped foot was visible.

"Mrs. Marvin told me to-night that her son made no secret of his serious attachment for our Alice, and that if I was satisfied, Mr. Marvin would be glad to confer with you at once."

The information did not seem to absorb Mr. Rightbody's wandering attention, but rather increased his impatience. He said, hastily, that he would speak of that to-morrow.

Mr. Rightbody again moved impatiently toward the door. Mrs. Rightbody eyed him curiously.

"You will not write, I hope? Dr. Keppel told me to-night that your cerebral system interdicted any prolonged mental strain."

"I must consult a few papers," responded Mr. Rightbody, curtly, as he entered his library.

It was a richly furnished apartment, morbidly severe in its decorations, which were symptomatic of a gloomy dyspepsia of art, then quite prevalent. A few curios, very ugly but provisionally, equally rare, were scattered about; there were various bronzes, marbles and casts, all requiring explanation and so fulfilling their purpose of promoting conversation and exhibiting the erudition of their owner.

Mr. Rightbody turned up the gas, and, from a cabinet of drawers, precisely labeled, drew a package of letters. These he carefully examined. All were disclosed and made dignified by age; but some, in their original freshness, must have appeared trifling and inconsistent with any corresponding age of Mr. Rightbody. Nevertheless, that gentleman spent some moments in carefully perusing them, occasionally referring to the telegram in his hand. Suddenly there was a knock at the door. Mr. Rightbody started, made a half-conscious movement to return the letters to the drawer, turned the telegram face downward, and then, somewhat hesitantly, stammered:

"Eh? Who's there? Come in!"

"I beg your pardon, papa," said a very pretty girl, entering without, however, the slightest trace of apology or care in her manner, and taking a chair with the self-possession and familiarity of an *habitué* of the room; "but I knew it was not your habit to write late, so I supposed you were not busy. I am on my way to bed."

She was so very pretty, and withal so utterly unconscious of it, that one was consciously superior to it, that one was volked into a more critical examination of her face. But this only resulted in a reiteration of her beauty, and, perhaps, the added fact that her dark eyes were very womanly, her rich complexion eloquent, and her chiseled lips full enough to be passionate or capricious.

With the instinct of an embarrassed man Mr. Rightbody touched the topic he would have preferred to avoid.

"I suppose we must talk over to-morrow," he hesitated, "this matter of yours and Mr. Marvin's? Mr. Marvin has formally spoken to your mother."

Miss Alice lifted her bright eyes intelligently, but not joyfully, and the color of her face, rather than embarrassment—rose to her cheekbones.

"Yes, he said she would," she answered simply.

"At present," continued Mr. Rightbody, still awkwardly, "I see no objection to the proposed arrangement."

Miss Alice opened her round eyes at this. "Why, papa, I thought it had been all settled long ago. Mother knew it, you know it. Last July mamma and you talked it over."

"Yes, you returned her father's flanking arguments," that is, well, we will talk it over to-morrow. I am glad, Alice, that you have

quite forgotten your previous whims and fancies. You see we are right."

"Oh, I dare say, papa, if I'm to be married at all, that Mr. Marvin is in every way suitable."

Mr. Rightbody looked at his daughter narrowly. There was not the slightest impatience or bitterness in her manner; it was as well regulated as the sentiment she expressed.

"Mr. Marvin is—?" he began.

"I know what Mr. Marvin is," interrupted Miss Alice; "and he has promised me that I shall be allowed to go on with my studies the same as before. I shall be graduated with my class, and if I prefer to practice my profession, I can do so in two years after our marriage."

"In two years?" queried Mr. Rightbody curiously.

"Yes. You see, in case we should have a child, that would give me time enough to wear it."

Mr. Rightbody looked at this flash of his flesh, pretty and palpable flesh as it was; but being confronted as equally with the brain of his brain, all he could do was to say, meekly:

"Yes, certainly. We will see about all that to-morrow."

Miss Alice rose. Something in the free, unfettered swing of her arms, as she rested them lightly, after a half year, on her curving hips, suggested his next speech, although still *discreet* and impatient.

"You continue your exercise with the health-lift yet, I see."

"Yes, papa, but I had to give up the flannels. I don't see how mamma could wear them. But my dresses are high-necked, and by bathing I toughen my skin. See," she added, as with a child-like unconsciousness, she unfurled two or three buttons of her gown and exposed the white surface of her throat and neck to her father, "I can defy a chill."

Mr. Rightbody, with something akin to a genuine happy paternal laugh, leaned forward and kissed her forehead.

"It's getting late, Alice," he said, parentally, but not dictatorially. "Go to bed."

"I took a nap of three hours this afternoon," said Miss Alice, with a dazzling smile, "to anticipate this fatigue. Good-night, papa. To-morrow, then."

"To-morrow," repeated Mr. Rightbody, with his eyes still fixed upon the girl, vaguely. "Good-night."

Miss Alice tripped from the room, possibly a trifle the more light-heartedly that she had parted from her father in one of his rare moments of illogical human weakness.

When she had left, Mr. Rightbody fell again to the examination of his old letters. This was quite absorbing; so much so that he did not notice the footsteps of Mrs. Rightbody on the staircase as she passed to her chamber, nor that she had passed on the landing to look through the glass half-door on her husband, as he sat there with the letters beside him and the telegram opened before him. Had she waited a moment longer, she would have seen him rise and walk to the sofa with a disturbed air and a slight confusion, so that on reaching it he seemed to hesitate to lie down, although pale, and evidently faint. Had she still waited, she would have seen him rise again with an agonized effort, stagger to the table, fumblingly re-fold and replace the papers in the cabinet, and lock it; and, although now but half-conscious, hold the telegram over the gas flame till it was consumed. For had she waited until this moment, she would have done unhastily to his aid, as this act completed, he staggered again, reached his hand toward the bell, but vainly, and then fell prone upon the sofa.

But alas! no providential nor accidental hand was raised to save him, and interrupt the progress of this story. And when, half an hour later, Mrs. Rightbody, a little alarmed and more indignant at his violation of the doctor's rules, appeared upon the threshold, Mr. Rightbody lay upon the sofa, dead!

With bustle, with thronging feet, with the irruption of strangers, and a hurrying to and fro, but more than all, with an impulse and emotion unknown to the mansion when its owner was in life, Mrs. Rightbody strove to call back the vanished life; but in vain. The highest medical intelligence, called from its bed at this strange hour, saw only the demonstration of its theories, made a year before. Mr. Rightbody was dead—without doubt—without mystery, even as a correct man should die; logically, and indorsed by the highest medical authority.

But even in the confusion, Mrs. Rightbody managed to appeal a messenger to the telegraph office for a copy of the dispatch received by Mr. Rightbody, but now missing.

In the solitude of her own room she read these words:

"Copy.
To Mr. Adams, Rightbody, Boston, Mass.
Julius Silbee died suddenly this morning. His last request was that you should remember your sacred compact with his of thirty years ago."
(Signed)
SEVENTY-FOUR.
SEVENTY-FIVE.

In the darkened house, and amid the condolences of their friends, who had called to gaze upon the scarcely cold features of their late associate, Mrs. Rightbody yet continued to send another dispatch. It was addressed to "Seventy-four and Seventy-five," Cottonwood. In a few hours she received the following enigmatical response:

"A bare-thief, named Josh Silbee, was lynched yesterday morning by the Vigilantes at Deadwood."

PART II.

The spring of 1874 was retarded in the Californian Sierras. So much so, that certain Eastern tourists who had early ventured into the Yosemite Valley, found themselves one May morning snow-bound against the omnipresent shoulders of El Capitan. So furious was the onset of the wind at the Upper Merced Canon that even so respectable a lady as Mrs. Rightbody was hilt to cling to the trunk of her cabin to keep her eyes on

her saddle; while Miss Alice, scornful at masculine assistance, was hurled against the snowy wall of the chasm. Mrs. Rightbody screamed; Miss Alice raged under her breath, but scrambled to her feet again in silence.

"I told you so," said Mrs. Rightbody, when her daughter had regained the saddle.

Miss Alice shrugged her pretty shoulders scornfully.

"You were particularly warned against going in the Valley at this season," she only replied, grimly.

Mrs. Rightbody raised her eyes impatiently.

"You know how anxious I was to discover your poor father's strange correspondent, Alice; you have no consideration."

"But when you have discovered him—what then?" queried Miss Alice.

"What then?"

"Yes. My belief is that you will find the telegram only a mere business cypher. And all this quest mere nonsense."

"Alice! why you yourself thought your father's conduct that night very strange. Have you forgotten?"

The young lady had not, but for some far-reaching feminine reason chose to ignore it at that moment, when her late tumble in the snow was still fresh in her mind.

"And this woman—whose she may be?" continued Mrs. Rightbody.

"How do you know there's a woman in the case?" interrupted Miss Alice, wickedly, I fear.

"How do I know—there's a woman?" slowly ejaculated Mrs. Rightbody, floundering in the snow and the unexpected possibility of such a ridiculous question. But here her guide flew to her assistance, and stopped further speech. And, indeed, a grave problem was before them.

The road that led to their single place of refuge—a cabin, half hotel, half trading-post, scarce a mile away—skirted the base of the rocky dome, and passed perilously near the precipitous wall of the valley. There was a rapid descent of a hundred yards or more to this terrace-like passage, and the guides paused for a moment of consultation, coolly oblivious alike to the terrified questioning of Mrs. Rightbody or the half-insolent independence of the daughter.

The elder guide was russet-bearded, stout, and humorous; the younger was dark-bearded, slight, and serious.

"If you kin git young Bunker Hill to let you tote her on your shoulders, I'll git the Madam to hang on to us," came to Mrs. Rightbody's horrified ears as the expression of her particular companion.

"Freeze to the old gal, and don't reckon on me if the daughter starts in to play it like a cat," was the enigmatical response of the younger guide.

Miss Alice overheard both propositions, and before the two men returned to their side, that high-spirited young lady had urged her horse down the declivity.

Alas, at this moment a gust of whirling snow swept down upon her. There was a flounder, a mistep, a fatal strain on the wrong rein, a fall, a few plucky but unavailing struggles, and both horse and rider slid ignominiously down toward the rocky shelf. Mrs. Rightbody screamed, Miss Alice, from 2. confused *debris* of snow and ice, uplifted a vexed and coloring face to the younger guide—a little the more angrily, perhaps, that she saw a shade of impatience on his face.

"Don't move, but tie one end of the lasso under your arms, and throw me the other," he said quietly.

"What do you mean by lasso—the lasso?" asked Miss Alice, disgustedly.

"Yes, ma'am."

"Then why don't you say so?"

"Oh, Alice," reproachfully interpolated Mrs. Rightbody, encircled by the elder guide's stalwart arm.

Miss Alice deigned to reply, but drew the loop of the lasso over her shoulders, and let it drop to her hand. Then she essayed to throw the other end to her guide. Disastrous failure! The first fling nearly knocked her off the ledge, the second went all wild against the rocky wall, the third caught in a thorn-bush, twenty feet below her companion. Miss Alice's arm sank helplessly to her side, at which signal of unqualified surrender the younger guide threw himself halfway down the slope, worked his way to the thorn-bush, hung for a moment perilously over the parapet secured the lasso, and then began to pull away at his lovely burden. Miss Alice was no dead weight, however, but steadily half-ascrambled on her hands and knees to within a foot or two of her rescuer. At this too familiar proximity, she stood up, and leaned a little stiffly against the line, causing the guide to give an extra pull, which had the lamentable effect of landing her almost in his arms.

"I might have known a girl couldn't throw worth a cent," he said, half-sulkily, half-apolgetically.

"Why," demanded Miss Alice, sharply.

"Because—why—because—you see they haven't got the experience," he stammered, feebly.

She turned the blaze of her dark eyes full on him.

"Experience, indeed! A girl can learn anything a boy can."

The elder guide had gone forward to catch Miss Alice's horse, which, relieved of his rider, was floundering toward the trail. Mrs. Rightbody was now to be seen. And these two were still twenty feet below the trail!

"There was an awkward pane."

"Shall I pull you up the same way?" he queried.

Miss Alice hesitated.

"Or will you take my hand?" he added, in urgent impatience.

To his surprise, Miss Alice took his hand, and they began the ascent together.

But the way was dark, and dangerous. Once or twice her feet slipped on the

smoothly worn rock beneath, and she confessed to an inward thankfulness when her uncertain hand-grip was exchanged for his strong arm round her waist.

A fierce scramble finally brought them back in safety to the trail; but in the action, Miss Alice's shoulder, striking a projecting boulder, wrung from her a feminine cry of pain, her first sign of womanly weakness. The guide stopped instantly.

"I am afraid I hurt you."

She raised her brown lashes, a trifle moist from suffering, looked in his eyes, and dropped her own. Why, she could not tell. And yet he had certainly a kind face, despite its seriousness; and a fine face, albeit unshorn and weather-beaten. She slipped her hand away, not with any reference to him, but rather to ponder over this singular experience, and somehow felt uncomfortable thereat.

Nor was he less so. It was but a few days ago that he had accepted the charge of this young woman from the elder guide, who was the recognized escort of the Rightbody party, having been a former correspondent of her father's. He had been hired like any other guide, but had undertaken the task with that chivalrous enthusiasm which the average Californian always extends to the sex so rare to him. But the illusion had passed, and he had dropped into a sulky practical sense of his situation.

He strode moodily ahead, dutifully breaking the path for her in the direction of the distant canon, where Mrs. Rightbody and her friend awaited them. Miss Alice was first to speak. In this trackless, uncharted *terra incognita* of the passions, it is always the woman who steps out to lead the way.

"You know this place very well. I suppose you have lived here long?"

"Yes."

"You were not born here—no?"

A long pause.

"I observe they call you 'Stanislaus Joe.' Of course that is not your real name?"