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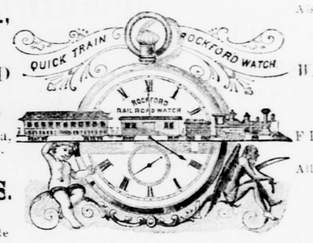

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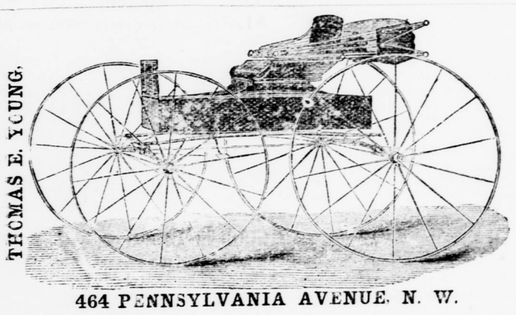

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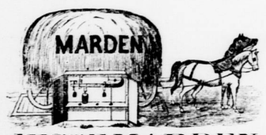

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[Written for the TIMES.]

The Disguised Murderer.

BY LOSTOW.

"Well what is the matter now," exclaimed handsome Rosa Jennings, as her modest little maid appeared at the door of her elegantly furnished room, and knocked for admittance.

"If you please, Miss Rosa, Miss Helen R. W——, is in the parlor and desires to see you."

"Pshaw, what a bother. Here, just as I was preparing myself for a delightful siesta, comes something to interrupt me and disturb my arrangements. Well, no matter, let Genie W——. No, no, I'll go down myself. Such a dear friend as Genie must not be treated with ceremony," and with a coquettish shake of the head and a lingering look at the glass Rosa Jennings tripped gaily down stairs, humming as she ran, the sweet words of the pathetic and at that time the popular air in Baltimore, "I'd offer thee this hand of mine," &c.

After the usual affectionate greetings, that characterize the meetings and throw a halo of lovely significance around the friendships of the young, Rosa exclaimed enthusiastically, holding still the hand of her friend, "Something surely is going to happen, Genie, you appear so lovely and radiant to day. Are you going to get married or going to act as bridesmaid to any one this evening? You really look charming."

"No, indeed, Rosa," replied Helen, "I am not going to be married—I am not to be bridesmaid to-night—and I didn't think, that you were such an accomplished flatterer," and Helen kissed Rosa affectionately on the cheek and looked earnestly into her laughing blue eyes.

"But I'll tell you what I am going to do. I am going to a private party this evening, given by Mrs. Ashton to a small number of select friends, and I have the honor to present to Miss Rosa Cooper Jennings the compliments of Mrs. Clara Ashton with this little note, which will sufficiently explain itself!" and Helen in a very formal and consequential manner presented to Rosa a neat envelope.

"Well done, Genie! You surely missed your vocation. You ought to be on the stage playing Juliet, or enacting the role of Lady Macbeth to an enthusiastic and admiring audience;" and throwing herself carelessly on a sofa, she opened and read the note from Mrs. Ashton inviting her to be one of the party to be given that evening.

"Well, Rosa," said Helen, who had been a silent spectator, while her friend was reading, "are you going?"

"Going! To be sure I am if you are. I always liked Mrs. Ashton, she is so loving and motherly, and besides, her parties are very select, and one always meets there with delightful company. And as for you Genie, just run over home, kiss your saintly mother for me and get yourself ready immediately and call for me and we will drive round to Mrs. Ashton's. Will this arrangement suit your ladyship, or have you a nearer friend to play the gallant and escort you hence?"

"That suits me perfectly, and I will be round before six o'clock, armed and accoutred for the enterprise;" so saying Genie embraced Rosa, threw open the door and was gone.

* * * * *

A real social party was that held at Ashton's on that memorable evening in November. The ladies were handsome of course, but they were more, they were talented and witty, well suited to enter the lists in joking and arguing with the stylish and accomplished gentlemen, who were fortunate enough to be in good odor with Mrs. Ashton. In those good old times of long ago, the fashions were different. Then a lady was supposed to be a being possessed of a mind and heart—of a mind to be cultivated and educated—of a heart to be chastened and purified by a careful training and frequent contact with the elevating influences of refined social and home circles.

Now-a-days, alas! in enumerating the qualities that go to make up the fashionable young lady, beauty of form and face and stylish dress constitute the *tout ensemble*,—little or no regard being had of the higher or nobler qualities, that form the intrinsic and essential element in all true and virtuous women. Dancing was then a pastime, not as at present the chief business of the evening. Mr. and Mrs. Ashton were polite, agreable and attentive—still there was at times an air of abstractedness and melancholly about them, that elicited expressions of surprise from the company, and, at last, Rosa Jenning, in all the innocent freedom of girlhood, exclaimed: "I am sure, Mr. Ashton, something is wrong with you. You look remarkably blue to night and appear like one preparing for a funeral. What in the world can be the cause?"

"You are right, Miss Jennings," replied Mr. Ashton, "I do feel sad tonight. Did you know the cause, you would, I am sure, pardon me and with greater reason my wife for this—the apparent anomoly of being at a party and appearing sad. The fact is, we did not reflect, when we contemplated this gathering, that this was the aniversary of a momentous day in our lives."

"So there is a mystery and a story. Do gratify our curiosity by relating it," said Rosa.

"Yes, yes," exclaimed several girlish voices, "do tell us a story, Mr. Ashton?"

So importuned, with the implied consent of the elder portion of the company, Mr. Ashton thus began:

"It is just ten years ago this night, since first I met my wife. I was journeying through the lower portion of Georgia on horseback, the samples of goods I was trying to sell, being folded in the saddle bags, which were strapped to the saddle. It was a bitter cold day in November. Dull leaden clouds had obscured the sun's light during the forenoon, and in the afternoon, drizzling, cold, piercing rain fell, penetrating the garments and chilling as it were, the very blood in the veins. I was in a lonely road in an unfrequented part of the country. At the little town of R——, if I could ride mightily with the name of town, a few straggling out-houses, a blacksmith shop, a grocery store and the inevitable country tavern, I received the unwelcome information, that ten long miles were to be traversed, before I could expect to reach P——, the place of my destination. Being myself for the journey by a stiffener, as they term a stout drink in those regions, and spurring my somewhat jaded horse, I set forward, determined if possible, to reach the town of P—— before nightfall. Half of my journey had been completed, and I was congratulating myself upon my good fortune in so well succeeding in that wild country, when I discovered that I was out of my way—that the road I was traversing, led directly into a piece of dense woodland. I stopped and looked about. Before me was the dark wood, standing in deep solemnity and awful grandeur, the trees uprising like weird sentinels, grim and stately, challenging approach and forbidding intrusion.

"I looked around in vain for any human habitation, for some evidence of civilization, and with the exception of the rough, narrow road, and the snake fence on either side, there was nothing to manifest any appearance of the progress of man. I must confess that my position was an awkward one and my prospects very gloomy, and though not naturally given to despondency or cowardice, I felt very much just then like yielding to despair and resigning myself to fate. At this juncture the sound of laughter, rude and boisterous, broke on my attentive ear, and I rejoiced sincerely at the sound, for there is a joy in companionship even in misfortune and misery. My jaded horse, too, seemed to participate in the feelings of his master, as with ear erect and distended neck, he eagerly looked in the direction whence the sounds proceeded. In a few moments two stout, smart-looking negroes made their appearance, chatting and laughing at the top of their voices, as if delighted to hear the echoes that reverberated in the deserted wilds. On seeing me they stopped in surprise and cast an inquisitive, and, as I fancied, a kindly look of inquiry upon me, evidently intimating their impression that I had inadvertently wandered into that particular spot; I anticipated their inquiry and saluting them politely, inquired the distance to P——?

"If you is gaine there, you is on the wrong road entirely. 'Tis more than five miles from the crossing away back yonder. Why, golly, Massa Stranger, you is gwine away out of your road. Just turn round and keep along till you comes to the cross roads, then take the road to the right. But, Massa, yer bound to hurry; don't let the grass grow under yer feet, for this is a mighty rough country, it is."

Having thanked him kindly for his information and given him a silver quarter to drink my health with, I turned about and set off in a brisk canter, accompanied by the profuse thanks of my sable friend for my unwonted generosity. I reached the junction, where several roads crossed each other at various angles—and with difficulty discovered the road to my right hand as the darkey had directed. Putting spurs to my weary horse I set foward in all haste, as the day was waning, and night was moving on apace and promised to be very dark. I had gone four or five miles, when I in vain looked for any signs of a village or town. Could it be that my African informant had purposely misled me? The remembrance of his honest face and friendly grin banished the suspicion as soon as formed. I was making up my mind to bivouac on the road side, and was already looking round to select the site best suited for my intended encampment, when my eyes were delighted with the sight of a large farm house some distance ahead of me.

Cheered by the sight, I pushed forward quickly, till I reached a gateway, that opened into a handsome avenue or lawn, guarded on either side by a row of fine trees, and leading by a circuitous route to the planter's mansion as it now proved to be. As I rode slowly up the avenue, I perceived straggling out-houses of all sizes and dimensions, the quarters evidently of the slaves attached to the plantation.

No sooner had my presence been noticed, than troops of dogs of every description and a host of little darkies of all sizes and sexes, rushed out to greet my arrival. Returning the broad grin of the youngsters with a pleasant smile, I addressed the largest of the girls and asked her for her master.

She darted into a hut and immediately returned with a comely mulatto matron of about thirty years, who in a manner, that would have put our city servants to the blush, inquired my wishes.

I stated simply, that I desired to see the master. She replied that the master had gone away, but she would call the mistress, and requested me, in the meantime, to dismount and accept her invitation to stretch my limbs. I gratefully complied, and soon found myself standing in the hallway of an old fashioned southern country residence. You all know what they are, so I will not describe the one I stood in. Suffice it to say for the better understanding of my tale, that the house was two stories high with a large attic, and so arranged, that the hall or passage way on both floors ran the entire length of the building, with rooms placed on either side. In a few minutes the door on my left opened noiselessly, and a young lady apparently about eighteen years of age standing in the doorway, kindly asked me to step in and warm myself. I bowed, thanked her and gratefully accepted the kind offer. Pointing to a large arm chair near the old fashioned fireplace, for stoves at that time were seldom used in that country, she bade me be seated, and seating herself on the opposite side, kindly asked me how I had strayed into that remote wilderness.

In a few words I explained all, and concluded by asking permission to pass the night under shelter somewhere on the plantation. She replied that it would give her very great pleasure indeed to grant my request, that she felt it a duty imposed upon her by the precepts of christian charity, by the dictates of humanity and the promptings of her own heart, but that unfortunately she was so situated, that she could not offer me the protection of her own roof; however, if I desired it, she would order me the best room in the best cottage on the plantation.—Of course any arrangement suited me that promised shelter and protection during the chilly night, and so I sat by the cheery fire, watching the bright flames and glowing embers, I could not but wonder, why my fair young hostess was so exclusive, and as it had been arranged that I was to take my meals with her, I determined to ascertain in the course of conversation at table, the cause of the present arrangement.

The supper was sumptuously prepared. The young mistress occupied the foot and placed me *vis-a-vis* at the head of the table, thus giving me an opportunity of examining her features and studying her character.

She was uncommonly beautiful in form and feature, but that which lent a charm and grace to her lovely countenance, and rivited the attention and aroused the feelings, was the peculiar expression of her laughing, loving, defiant blue eyes, at one time throwing an air of pleasantness and almost in the same moment casting a shade of sadness over her lovely face, and anon a look of haughty defiance would hover round, as she expressed her regret at the absence of her brother, the nominal master of the house. Supper was over and we had returned to the sitting room and were talking pleasantly together, when I narrated some of my adventures and stated the fact of my meeting with the two darkies, who had as I had long since discovered, either advertently or unwittingly directed me to the wrong road. On my mentioning the fact and describing the negroes, she mused for awhile, and then exclaimed:

"Why those were my men, my two most faithful servants, the two on whose good will and absolute attachment I place the most reliance. What can possibly have happened, that they are strolling about the country at this particular time?"

Concluded next week.

Select Miscellany.

Old-Time Nevada Jurors

Last night a number of men were sitting in front of the Ormsby house discussing the big mining suit in Eureka between the Richmond and Albion. General Kittrell, W. W. Bishop Sine, Barnes, Johnny Moore and others were interesting the crowd with recitals of the suits they had seen.—Bishop and Kittrell insisted that of late years the atmosphere of the courts had been purer than in the earlier days.

"That is," said Barnes, "thinner and weaker; in other words jurors cost less than formerly."

Both lawyers agreed that coin had a potent influence. When the law was all on their side and the jury on the other, they could only explain it on a coin hypothesis.

At this point an old grizzly bearded man who had been listening slid up and remarked:

"Mining suits ain't what they used to be. There's been no real live litigation to speak of since the Raymond & Ely suit with the Hermes in Pioche.

"Were you in town?"

"Well, rather; I traveled 400 miles on a mule to get to the jury box. I struck the town about six o'clock at night, and walking into the leading barroom, inquired if the suit had begun. Inside of half an hour a man came up and asked me what my name was. He wrote it down on his shirt cuff, and then he said: "Pard, if you want to stay and see the suit, let me see you through on your expenses;" and he handed me $500, remarking that he thought the R. & E. had the bulge on the law. I said that I was that way myself, and then I sauntered off. In about an hour a man came to me and told me I was drawn on the jury. I said I didn't mind and agreed to stand in. About nine o'clock a man tapped me on the arm and handed me five hundred, remarking that the Hermes had about all the law and the facts on their side that was necessary. He thought I might need a little money for expenses. Of course I took the money, he seemed so anxious to get rid of it, and then I slipped into a back room, put on a pair of false side whiskers, a thin duster I had been carrying under my coat, and I was a changed man. By 10 o'clock I was on a good horse that I paid $300 for, and started off on a prospecting trip. I couldn't bear the idea of holding the scales of justice in a case like that. I was fearful of further corruption, you see. But on the trial I was represented by proxy. On the road I met old Bill Daman, dead broke and discouraged. I put him on the lay, and he started double quick Pioche. He got the vein rich, I guess for when I next heard of him he was drivin' a spankin' team and enjoying life.

"If I was President".

"Now, if I was President began," Mr. Butterby, of Prospect street, the other morning, as he passed his cup over for the second tip of coffee—"If I was President of the United States——"

"Which you aren't you know! broke in Mrs. B., in argumental and confidental tone.

"And not likely to be," added Mrs. B.'s mother, with a contemptuous toss of her head.

"No," assented Mr. B., pleasantly, "but I was just supposing the case——"

"Then suppose something in reason!" retorted Mrs. B., snappishly; "you might as well suppose you was the man in the moon, or the man in the iron mask, or—"

"So I might, my dear, so I might!" assented Mr. B., still pleasantly smiling, "but that has nothing to do with it. I was merely going to say that if I was the President of the United States I'd.—"

"My!" burst in Miss Gertrude, aged eighteen, "wouldn't it be splendid if you was, pa! Just to think how those Wheedle-top g r s would change thier tune when I met them, instead of throwing out their insinuations about people who consider it nice to turn their last season's silk so that they may have more to give to charity! But they might turn green with envy before I'd ever—"

"Yes, and wouldn't I warm it to Sammy Dugan, just!" chirped Master Thomas, aged twelve; "I'd go up to him and smack him on the nose with a brick" fore he knowed where he was was, an' he darsent hit me back then' cos you'd be treson, an' they'd hang him, an' I'd slide on the sidewalk, and shy snowballs at the p'leeeemen, an sass Miss Ferule, an' play hookey every day when it didn't rain an'-an'-I'd—"

"Yes," shouted in Mrs. B., catching the infection from her enthusiastic progeny, "and then I'd be the first in the land, let the next be who she would; and the Senators' and Governors' wives would beg to be introduced to me, and banquets every day! an—"

"And I'd have the management of the White House, and run things remarked Mrs. B.'s mother, her eyes sparkling with the prospect.

"Not much you wouldn't"—from Miss Gertrude—"not if I kept my health and know myself, you would not: not as long as I was the President's daughter and—"

"Yah!" ejaculated Master Tom, "I guess the President's son would be the biggest plum in that dish! Wouldn't I be the Prince of Wales then—say?" What'nd you know 'bout—"

"Shut up—all of you!" commanded Mrs. B. "I reckon the President's wife is the highest authority in the land! Anyhow there'd be a dusty old time if anybody questioned it, and I bet when the exercies were finished the survivors wouldn't ask for any electoral commission to decide it over again. My! I'd like to see anybody—But by the way, Mr. Butterby, what was it you would do if you was President of the United States?"

"Resign as soon as the Lord would let me?" said Mr. Butterby, calmly but determinedly.

And then a meditative silence fell upon the family and remained there until the meeting arose.

Helping.

To be useful to others and to be helpful in home, should be early lessons taught in the nursery, and it is so easy to teach them then, so hard to learn them if childhood and youth are passed in self-indulgence. It is a poor reason that young people often give for neglect of domestic duties, that there are servants in the house to do the work, and effort there is wasted. If their time for a few years is spent entirely in study, let them feel that education is only a preparation for greater usefulness in the future, and that even accomplishments are designed to refine and elevate them in mind and heart, and to other object. But most of us are very glad to accept the help of children in the household, and they should be taught that their little assistance there is needed and expected.

The other evening a happy party of boys and girls were gathered to take tea with one of their young friends. "Excuse me a few minutes," said the little hostess, "I won't be gone long." And while they went on with their fun, she slipped off to the kitchen and into her big apron. The busy fingers that had just been making sweet music in the parlor were plunged into a heap of flour, and after a few magic turns, four pans of puffy white biscuits were ready for the oven. It was really only a few minutes and she was back again among her young companions; but she had helped in the household, taken her share in the labor of providing for her guests, instead of having all the pleasure herself and leaving all the work for some one else. But this merry child would never had thoughtfulness or ability to do this, and the hundred other little things in which she helps at home, if she had not been taught to do them, and to love to do then, even in the nursery.

"I can't get a chance to do anything, with the children to take care of," a young mother complained, "not even to dress my hair."

"Oh, yes, you can," said her sister, "give them something to do, and some thing that helps. If you want to do your hair, let Susie hold the hairpins, and she will watch and hand them to you one by one, and if you take half an hour, for that time she will be amused."

"Oh here comes the clothes basket; now I can help!" I heard a little girl shout eagerly as the basket was brought into the room piled high with fresh linen from the weekly wash. And one by one the pieces were laid on her pretty arms, and she with went them from room to room, until all were sorted and placed.

Your children are too little yet to do anything? Well, perhaps so, with their tiny hands; but how about the hearts that lie close to your own? It was a happy answer a little one made when papa held her off on his knee, and looking in her laugning face, said playfully;

"Well, Missy, I'd like to know what you're good for?"

"Oh, I'm just good for loving you."

God bless the babies who are just good for loving us! Who can say *that* does not help? Yes even before they can lisp the tender words, from the moments when the blue eyes looking into yours, the first smiles of intelligence lights the sweet face; and clasping her in your arms, you feel—"she knows me, she loves me,"--oh, it helps, it helps!—*New York Observer.*

The True Tale of Wm. Tell.

William Tell ran a hay ranch near Bergelen about 580 years ago. Tell had lived in the mountains all his life and shot chamois and chipmonks with a cross gun till he was a bad man to stir up.

At this time Switzerland was run principally by a lot of carpet baggers from Austria, and Tell got down on them about the 1307. It seems that Tell wanted the government contract to furnish hay at $45 a ton for the year 1306, and Gessler who was controlling the patronage of Switzerland, let the contract to an Austrian who had a big lot of condemned hay farther up the gulch.

One day Gessler put his plug hat up on a telegraph pole, and issued order 236, regular series, to the effect that every snoozer who passed down the toll road should bow to it.

Gessler happened to be in behind the bush when Tell went by, and he noticed that Bill said "shoot the hat" and didn't salute it, so he told his men to gather Mr. Tell in and put him in the refrigerator.

Gessler told him that if he would shoot a crab apple from the head of his only son, at 200 yards with a cross gun he would give him his liberty.

Tell consented, and knocked the apple higher than Gilroy's kite. Old Gessler however, noticed another arrow sticking in William's girdle, and he asked what kind of a flowery break that was.

Tell told him that if he had killed the kid instead of bursting the apple, he intended to drill a hole through the stomach of Mr. Gessler. This made Gessler mad again, and he took Tell on a picnic up the river in irons.

Tell jumped off when he got a good chance, and cut across a bend in the river, and when the picnic party came down he shot Gessler deader than a mackerel.—*Bill Nye, in Loramie City Boomerang.*

Willing to Give Way.

An amusing incident occurred on a street car the other day. A woman of fifty, made up to look about twenty-five years old, got aboard at a crossing to find every seat occupied. She looked around for a moment, and then selected a poorly dressed man about 45 years of age. She observed:

"Are there no gentlemen on this car?"

"Indeed I dunno," he replied, as he looked up and down. "If there ain't and you are going clear through, I'll hunt up one for you at the end of the line."

There was silence for a moment, and then a light broke in on him all of a sudden, and he arose and said:

"You can have this seat madam. I am allus perfectly willing to stand up and give my seat to anybody older than myself."

That decided her. She gave him a look which he will not forget to his dying day, and grabbing the strap refused to sit down, even when five seats had become vacant.

VARIETIES.

Ah, Bill, good day. Been away? Yes, but didn't stay. Some future day when I get more pay, then I may stay. Day-day.

A Connecticut woman presented her son with a bed quilt made of hair cut from her own head. It will go down to posterity as a family hairloom.

A book stolen from a Boston library twenty years ago has just been returned. Conscience wrestled with that thief for a long time, but fetched him at last.

It may be better to be right than to be President, but the salary is smaller; in this country, anyhow.