Warren Sheaf.

JOHN P. MATTSON, Editor and Prop.

WARREN, - - - MINN.

MR PLOD.

[A Letter of Introduction.]

Do you know my friend Plod? If you do not, permit,
I pray, an admirer to make you acquainted;
But do not expect you will find him a wit,
Nor a person whose portrait will ever be painted.

He's not brilliant or beautiful, that I allow;
Neither riches nor rank did he ever inherit;
No, the place in my favor he occupies now
Was gained by most common and work-a-day merit.

Some there are even call him quite stupid and slow;
They see in him nothing to claim their attention;
And wonder how can one admire him so,
Or deem him deserving such flattering mention.

However, I seldom have known him to fail
To accomplish a project, when fully decided;
No matter what hardships his course might assail,
Nor how loudly by critics his scheme was derided!

He just sticks to his purpose and pushes ahead,
Overcoming a thousand grave trials and troubles;
While others weakly falter, this good friend, instead,
In patient persistence his effort redoubles.

In fact, when I've work that must really be done,
I ask Mr. Plod his assistance to lend me;
And once with his help and his sympathy won,
Success in the end never fails to attend me!

Now you see why I prize him, I'm certain, and why
I desire so greatly all others to know him;
Should you wish his acquaintance to form, by-the-by,
You have only that wish, by your conduct, to show him.

—Philip B. Strong, in Golden Days.

JEFF KANTRY'S MISTAKE

Pretty Romance from the West Virginia Mountains.

I GREW, after the manner of a colt, end about. In my early boyhood I developed an enormous pair of ears. Though nature made great effort and supplied me with good nether proportions, they never quite grew up to those ears. They defy concealment. To comb my hair over them is to make a modern Mercury of myself, with wings on my head instead of on my heels. To tie them back from their outstanding publicity converts them into rosettes of neither use nor attractiveness. There is a superfluous commendation of the art of listening about them. As if specially intended to localize the observation of others, there is a hole, clean cut and as round as the winding spot in a clock face, through my left auricle at its exact center of prominence.

Persons never look me in the eye; they look me in the ear. Their faces become interrogatory. The question is stenciled all over them: "How did you get that hole?" I have answered it hundreds of times, but I will tell the story once more. If the art of printing was equal to it I would have it printed upon my ear, that all might read.

A one-legged man answered an inquisitive stranger that he would tell him how his leg was lost, provided he asked no more questions. The promise given, he promptly said: "It was bit off." The bottled agony of the questist can be imagined. It has always appealed to me. I will, therefore, banish all uncertainty by telling at once that the hole in my ear was shot there.

Creeks are as plentiful as snakes in the mountains of West Virginia. They twist up the hundreds of narrow ravines to eternally abrade their rocky sides and bottoms. In the summer they dash heavy rainfalls to the open of rivers; in winter they gorge with ice or toss their broken burden with rushing madness. The narrow wagon roads keeping them company are at such times dangerous and the innumerable fords a terror to the bravest.

One wintry day I was riding my mare Fanny (one who feared nothing where there was a foothold nor hesitated where her master bade her go). The road lay well above a swollen, ice-laden torrent. Ahead was a sharp turn, so sharp that the road seemed snapped off in its course. It pointed its jagged end to a precipice of cave-eaten rocks, high above and across the wild rush of waters. Both Fanny and myself knew the spot well. Twice a month at least we carried saddle pockets heavily laden with silver and pockets well filled with notes to pay the workmen on a heavy lumbering operation in the mountains of West Virginia, far from town or bank. On this occasion the sum was two thousand dollars. The dates of these payments were well known among the mountaineers; the road was lonely, the opportunities for robbery and attack numerous as the juts and passes along it. My partner and myself generally took these rides after money together. This time I was alone. My mare was loping under me as lightly as a kid.

When I reached the turn I swung to the rock side to ease my horse's footing. I saw a puff of smoke belch from a cave mouth across the flooded chasm. I heard the whistle of a bullet as it passed, and felt that it had struck somewhere out upon the cartilaginous territory lying adjacent to my head. I had heard bullets many a time when they were flocked, licensed, indiscriminate. This bullet was unlicensed and unpleasantly discriminating. A huddle of thoughts demanded immediate individual attention. A plucky one bellowed: "Stop and fire back." My hand naturally drew my pistol. A cautious one whispered: "There is danger around the turn; hold your fire." Another cried: "Fly before a second shot can reach you." Yet another: "Escape from this danger; tackle the next."

There is active contagion in the fight of a bullet; and Punch's axiom: "Better than presence of mind in danger, is absence of body," is worthy of remembrance at such times. I cocked my revolver. My mare was dashing ahead, undisturbed, save by the raising of her pretty head in quick surprise, the pricking of her pointed ears, and a snort of warning as when she saw or smelled danger. I glanced quickly at the spot whence the bullet came. There was nothing visible but the gaping cave mouth and the wisp of smoke scurrying off like a belated cloud.

In an instant I was around the corner. The road beyond was bare, yet each niche in the opening strata of the mountain side might contain an assassin. I might be running the enfilade of a masked battery. With thoughts more of my mare than myself, a slight shake of the bridle rein bade her go as the wind. With a long gasp of relief I slackened her pace a mile away and straightened myself in the saddle for calmer riding and soberer thinking. With ungloved hand I felt my ear. A hole was there, but no sign of blood. The intense cold had halted the circulation.

"Who fired that shot?" I asked myself. The object was not robbery, because no human being could have breasted the ice and current to have reached me, had the shot been fatal. Again, I would have been attacked by accomplices at the turn, had robbery been planned. Perhaps not. The failure of the first shot might have deterred others from seeking me at close quarters. Could some one be seeking revenge? Very likely. I had never hesitated in discharging a workman for cause. Many threats against my life had come to my ears, but never a bullet before. Was there a woman in the situation? A resume of flirtations, dances, double rides on Fanny's back, chance meets on mountain trails with mountain maidens and hickory widows, failed to remind me of anything serious or even a debatable case. There was no imported malice in the mountains; it must be local. I was as far apart as the tips of my ears in decision when I reached the log cabin camp, for the time home.

Mr. Whipin, my partner, looked grave when I told him of my escape. He was a brave fellow, true to the core, quiet to exasperation, slow as a fuse, fiery as a hornet, and worked excessive profanity inside. He suddenly went around the stable, and I knew he was swearing. He was quite chirpy when he came back. The prospect of a still hunt or a fight always enlivened him.

"We had better keep the thing to ourselves," he said. "The whelp will drop his scent some day." (Horses or hunting furnished him with all of his figures of speech.) "When we run him to earth we will smoke him out with powder." He left me and went behind a tree, and I heard his fists ring on the bark.

We lived alone in a two-roomed cabin, excepting the presence of as wild and well-made a mountain girl as ever whooped hymns for outbursts of jollity and laughed through her prayers because "she didn't b'lieve the Lord kept what she axed fer." A year had passed since I had found her snowed in, starving, in her father's cabin—her father dead by the fireless hearth—and had carried her on Fanny's back to warmth and life and comfort. She was kinless, gypsy-like, perfect in limb and line, glossy in beauty, purring and loving as a cat when pleased, a panther in anger. As soon as she recovered from her terrible experience she took my partner and myself to her heart and care, and woe be to the man, woman or child who interfered with her monopoly. She had a beau, "jest to fool wih," she said, "an' ride bareback across the fords meetin' nights." Jeff Kantry was his name. He was a fair average specimen of a young mountaineer and devotedly fond of her. She teased him unmercifully.

"Shall we tell Mat?" I asked, as we walked from the stable to the house.

"There is no use weighing in for a race with Mat's wits. I'll bet five dollars she will distance you, take the purse, gate money and secret, and show us her heels after the fellow that shot you in five minutes. If it was I that was hurt I'd give her five minutes longer. But you are her Josh."

A joyous "Whoopee!" burst from the girl as she jumped the doorsteps, and, bareheaded, ran along the snow path to meet me, her eyes lustrous as a seal's. "I'm glad you're back. Gimme that pesky money. I never think uv you bein' safe till I git a hold uv it. I won't let you go arter it alone ag'in, notime—never. I'd a cut a right caper if you hadn't got home afore dark night. You're too venturesome. What kep' you so long at the stable, an' you nearly froze? What—what's the matter? What's your hat doin' over sideways thataway fer? What's your pistol stickin' out of yer wrong pocket fer? Hev you hed a fight? Air you hurt?" Her cheeks were too health-hued to blanch, but her expressive face was netted in lines of anxiety. While she awaited my answer she glanced searchingly at my partner.

"Nothing is the matter, Mat," I answered.

"I know better, colonel. Look at him. He's been swearin'. His face is red yit. He's blue at his nose corners. His han's hain't in his pockets. He's been mad. Don't story to Mat. Tell me now, won't you?" She laid her hand on my arm. She was purring. Nobody could resist the sweetness of her "Tell me now."

By the open fire, cracking, sputtering, roaring, I told her of the shot and the wild ride. As she listened, rubbed warmth into my ears, bathed, salved, patched and petted my wound, her face was the battleground of emotions. The merest trifle connected with the affair did not escape her questioning. She was as expert a woodsman as any

"TELL ME NOW, WON'T YOU?"

hunter of the mountains. The secrets of forest and stream were open to her. Her father had taught her and her wild life had cultured her in them.

Questions were as plenty as her soft touches of sympathy and ejaculations of savage wrath. Finally she gathered her lithe figure as if for a spring, curved her fingers for a cruel tear, flashed her eyes with intensity of purpose and snarled between her glittering teeth: "I'll fetch you one of that sneakin' fellow's ears to patch your own with, an' I'll put a hole in t'other one of his'n fer him to wear ez a sign uv his meanness."

"You had better let us do the saddling up for this business, Mat. You would girth too tight for a long hunt like this," said my partner, firmly but anxiously.

Her face flushed, softened. There was the tremor of pleading in her full voice, but determination in her up straightening as she looked at him. "You must let me do it. Hit takes you an everlastin' while to fix your saddle blanket an' fool with your stirrups, an' you finger your girth till I ketch the jumpers lookin' at you. Ef I wuz your critter I'd kick. You can't ketch the feller. You don't hev the specifications of these folks 'bout yere like I hev. The fish hawk hez a white belly, so's the fish can't see him when he swoops fer it. The skunk's black, 'cause he hunts at night. The owl makes no noise flyin', so's he won't wake up the birds he's arter; but ther's noie uv 'em that wise there ain't somethin' wiser. That feller knows you'll be arter him, but he won't 'spicion me. You shan't take any risks. You'd git shot in arnest. Every rifle on the mountains 'ud be p'inted agin you, an' every cabin 'ud be a grave fer you if you ran him inter it. The folks 'round yere sticks together. You must let me do it. I'm goin' to. No feller shall hev a chance to tech a hair uv your heads two times ez long as Mat's livin'. Don't you say nothin' to nobody, nohow, 'bout what's happened ary time. Watch sharp to-morrow wher you're payin' off. The dog thet's killed a sheep is allus lickin' hisself."

There was no use arguing with her in one of these moods.

While giving my ear a final overhauling and bundling it against sleep tossing and cold, she said: "I suppose you will take your dinner to the office with you to-morrow, won't you? I have something nice for you."

I nodded "yes" with my muffled head. She said "good night" and went into her room.

Pay day was always a holiday. The mountaineers came into the office from the distant choppings, carrying the rifles, hunting as they came. They carried back provisions from the supply store, their money, game and interchanges of polyhedral gossip from the various sections.

My partner made some excuse to go to the house at noon. When he returned he handed me a slip of paper, on which was written: "The door is locked. Mat is gone, so is your mare. Tracks show that she rode off on the town trail. Had I not better follow her?"

I wrote "no" for my answer. It disconcerted him, but, as we always pulled together, he did not reply.

When we approached our house in the evening we heard Mat singing in a suppressed voice: "Hold the Fort for I Am Coming." She met us with her usual heartiness, but her face was hard and her eyes glittered.

"Where have you been, runaway?" I asked, pleasantly.

"Trailing," she answered.

"Did you find out anything? We did not."

"I didn't 'spicion you would. I wuz down to Crooked Leg bend to-day, where you wuz shot. I know how the feller got there, an' which way he went hum. Ther' wuz only one of 'em. He's a young feller 'bout your years an' size, Mr. Whipin." She paused, fumbled for her pocket and brought forth

"HOLD ON, JEFF."

something carefully folded in her handkerchief. Whipin colored to his swearing limit. "Yere's a piece uv bread he wuz eatin'. He must hev throwed it down when he saw you comin'. See the marks uv a hull set uv front teeth? The young fellers is the only ones that hez their front teeth round yere. Yere's another thing. I finded it among the leaves in the cave where he laid. He wuzn't there long. He'd come a good ways fast, an' wuz warm, for he took off his hat to cool his head, and laid it on a leetle pile uv snow there wuz ther' an' left the print."

She handed me a hook fastening, such as is on lace shoes to throw the lace around. There was a strange stare in her eyes as she looked at my partner and said, slowly: "There's only two people thet hez them things in their shoes in these parts, you an' the colonel. He wore your shoes, Mr. Whipin, an' he hed on a pair uv your buckle leggins. He left the print uv a buckle on the side uv a rock with some snow agin it."

"Great God!" roared Whipin, leaping to his feet. "Do you mean—"

"No, I don't," she interrupted, quickly, putting her hand caressingly on his shoulder and laughing. "I don't mean you nary time. I wuz jist teazin' you. There now, go over in the corner an' do the rest uv your swearin'. I know the feller that did it. I gave him a pair uv your old shoes an' leggins once."

"Who?" we both ejaculated.

"Ax me no questions. I'll show you afore long. I want his ear, an' you'd skeer him ef you knowed."

There was no doubting Mat. I am prepared to forever assert that women can keep a secret, also that men have curiosity.

After supper there was a knock at the door. Jeff Kantry came in. Mat received him with manifest pleasure. As he was about to take off his overcoat she went quickly to the mantel piece, grabbed my revolver and hunting-knife from where she had placed them, then leaped in front of him. "Hold on, Jeff. Hit ain't for the likes uv you to sit down with decent people never agin, never. You put a hole in the colonel's ear yesterday; there's one fer yours." Bang went the pistol. Jeff staggered back, blinded with smoke. His left ear had a hole in it. Quick as the dart of a trout a knife flashed in the air, sheered past his head, and his right ear fell to the floor. "Now go!" she shrieked. "Go, marked forever, you jealous, murderin' sneak!"

The man howled with fright, rushed for the door and out into the night. Mat picked up the ear, threw it contemptuously into the fire, exclaiming: "I wouldn't hev a patch uv such poor stuff ez thet on your head, colonel."

A year afterward I remarked to my partner: "Well, we are now through with our work here. We can return to civilization." He reached me his hand and said, feelingly: "I don't believe you will be away from us long. As for me, I am going to stay here with Mat."—Detroit Free Press.

A Penal Offense.

The girl had a lovely complexion, but sad to relate, it was mostly from the drug store. One day a stranger in town met her on the street and right away he rushed to an acquaintance.

"By Jove," he exclaimed, "I passed a complexion on the street just now that was simply perfect."

The acquaintance had seen the young woman.

"Hist," he said nervously, "don't talk so loud."

The stranger gasped.

"Why-er-um-why shouldn't I? What's wrong?" he asked.

"You've committed a penal offense."

"How do you mean? What have I done?"

"You've passed a counterfeit," and the acquaintance thought he was a great fakir.—Detroit Free Press.

A Hero Worshiper.

Here is an instance of a touching, although unbusinesslike, form of hero worship: A distinguished landscape painter once left his carpet slippers behind him in the humble village lodging where for three months he had lived and worked, and "won the secret of moor, and hill, and dale," and perpetuated it on canvas. His careful wife at once sent for her husband's slippers. His whilom landlady—fond, foolish woman!—sent one slipper, begging, at the same time, to keep the other as a memento.—Pall Mall Budget.

WIT AND WISDOM.

—The test of civilization is the estimation of woman.—G. W. Curtis.

—"Called 'down'"—The feathers on an eider duck.—Chicago Record.

—Mrs. Catchall—What do you think you make out of Miss Nextdoor's voice? Professor of Music—Five dollars a lesson.—Inter Ocean.

—Jasper—Is intoxication always followed by a swelled head? Jumpuppe—Yes, even when a man has been intoxicated by succes.—N. Y. Herald.

—Mrs. Byer—Those are nice-looking eggs. Grocer (enthusiastically)—Yes, indeed; they're birds! (And then he wondered why she didn't buy any.—Troy Post.

—All the world's a stage; but to any one who has ever witnessed an amateur theatrical performance the fact is apparent that all men and women are not actors.—Vogue.

—"What ebbah yoh does," said Uncle Eben to his eldest boy, "doan be sahcastic. Er man dat keeps allus tryin' ter shoot Folly ez she flies run er heap o' resk ob bein' hurt by de kick ob his own gun."—Washington Star.

—When an athletic sinner is converted he is apt to make an athletic saint. There is some stuff in him, and he runs the heavenly race with zeal and serves God as heartily as he ever served the devil.—Rev. Chas. G. Ames.

—"What is the matter with Dickie Van Wibbles? I saw him in the gymnasium just now going through the most horrible facial contortions." "Oh, that's all right. Dickie is developing his facial muscles, so as to get a good grip on his monocle."—Washington Star.

—"Dese new-fangled clothes dat de young gents is wearin' makes me tired," said the young man who prides himself on creating an impression that he is looking for trouble. "Whut's de matter wit 'em?" "Dey make one man look jest like anodder. Yer can't tell whedder yer goin' up against er dude er a college at'lete."—Washington Star.

—"I never in my life," said a clergyman to his wife, after a sermon in Westminster Abbey, "so touched the congregation. They were entranced; every eye was upon me from the first word to the last." "No wonder," said his wife; "your gloves were inside your hat, and when you took it off they remained on the top of your head all through the sermon."—Tit-Bits.

—There are persons who are always calling upon us to admire their virtue of saying just what they think. If we could only regulate their thinking, we would perhaps be more willing to grant them their tribute of praise. To say just what one thinks may be well enough, if only the thoughts that are kind and charitable and sympathetic are entertained, but we all want to be delivered from the human tormentor who thinks unkind, cruel things, and straightway gives expression to such thoughts, and then actually expects us to acknowledge with all meekness and with approving smile, his disagreeable habit of plain speaking.—United Presbyterian.

STRANGE BUT TRUE.

THE most extensive mines are those of Saxony; the galleries have 123 miles of length.

THE Chinese language is spoken by the greatest number of people, over 400,000,000.

THE deepest coal shaft in America is at Pottsville, Pa. In 1885 it had reached 1,576 feet.

THE longest river is the Mississippi and Missouri, considered as one; about 4,300 miles.

THE oldest library is that of the vatican. It was originally founded by Augustus Cæsar.

THE highest bridge is near Bradford, Pa. It has a span of 2,051 feet and is 301 feet high.

THE lowest body of water is the Dead sea, nearly 1,300 feet below the level of the sea.

The Age of Steam.

Ideas sometimes slumber for ages without fruition—like the grains of wheat found in the wrappings of Egyptian mummies. Two thousand years ago, one Hero, a philosopher of Alexandria, Egypt, made a steam turbine and a hot air engine. Their development went no farther than curious mechanical toys. It remained for men living seventeen hundred years later to see that the idea was applicable to doing the world's work. In fact, none tried to make human labor anything more than "main strength and awkwardness," until the seventeenth century. The first treatise on steam was published in 1601. In 1678 the first engine having a cylinder and piston was built. About that time some one operated an engine by successive explosions of gunpowder in the cylinder—the crude idea of our present gas engines. The great impulse to the steam engine was given in 1763, when James Watt invented the steam jacket to keep the cylinder always hot, and then the separate condensing chamber for the waste product. Think of it—only a century that the steam engine has been a practical worker—and now no part of the world but is reached by the steamer or the locomotive. Ten millions of people are served, ten great states are traversed, by the lines of the Burlington system, and but for the steam engine they would not have been. The moral is, to buy railroad tickets from the agents of the Burlington Route, or to write to W. J. C. Kenyon, Gen. Pass. Agent, St. Paul, Minn.

FATHER—"Is that young girl you're going to marry economical?" Son (enthusiastically)—"I should say so! Why last year she spent $2,5.0 in bargains!"—Chicago Record.

You Feel Ready to Go to War

With all mankind when your liver is out of order. Drastic cathartic pills will neither regulate your liver nor sweeten your temper. Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, though, will bring comfort and calm, relieve your bowels pleasantly, and disperse all the symptoms of biliousness. Incomparable is it too for malarial, kidney and rheumatic ailments, dyspepsia and nervous debility.

JILLSON, whose eyesight is undimmed, says the only opera glasses he has any use for are those he is compelled to go out after between the acts.—Buffalo Courier.

A Child Enjoys

The pleasant flavor, gentle action and soothing effect of Syrup of Figs, when in need of a laxative, and if the father or mother be costive or bilious, the most gratifying results follow its use; so that it is the best family remedy known and every family should have a bottle.

MOTHER—"Now Violet, can you give me any reason why I should not punish you?" Violet—"'Es, I tan; ze doctor said 'oo mustn't take any vi'lent ex'cise."

J. S. PARKER, Fredonia, N. Y., says: "Shall not call on you for the $100 reward, for I believe Hall's Catarrh Cure will cure any case of catarrh. Was very bad." Write him for particulars. Sold by Druggists, 75c.

COL. INGERSOLL says that as long as we love we hope. That depends a good deal upon the attitude taken by the girl and her parents.—N. Y. World.

Dr. Ward's Gen-De-Can-Dra for the Blood.

GRIEF is so far from retrieving a loss that it makes it greater; but the way to lessen it is by a comparison with others' losses.—Wycherley.

IT is astonishing to the girl who has just got a position as clerk in a confectionery store to see how many girl friends she has who feel like dropping in to lean over the counter and gossip with her an hour or two three or four times a week.

IT is all right for a man to take a rest, just so it is not some other man's rest he takes.—Galveston News.

FORTIFY Feeble Lungs Against Winter with Hale's Honey of Horehound and Tar. Pike's Toothache Drops Cure in one minute.

THE man "whose words can always be relied upon" never went fishing.—Yonkers Statesman.

Dr. Ward's Gen-De-Can-Dra for the Blood.

A LAZY man is necessarily a bad man; an idle is necessarily a demoralized population.—Draper.

BROWN'S BRONCHIAL TROCHES relieve all Throat irritations caused by Cold or use of the voice. Sold only in boxes.

"THESE are stirring times," as the cook said when she was making the melted butter.

Dr. Ward's Gen-De-Can-Dra for the Blood.

THE trouble with the love of a bonnet is the hate of the bill.—Puck.

A FOWL blot—the scrub chicken.—Rural New Yorker.

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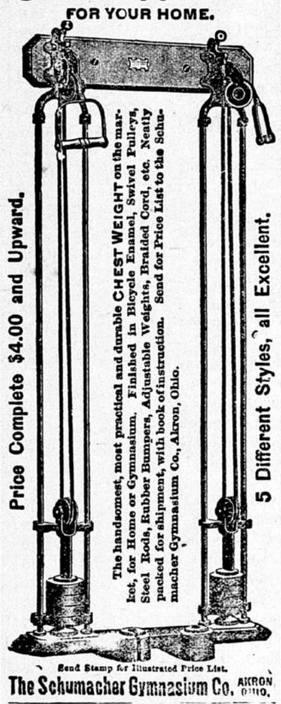

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