Donaldsonville Chief.

The Stage-Driver's Story.

BY BRET HARTE.

It was the stage-driver's story, as he stood
with his back to the wheelers,
Quietly flecking his whip, and turning his
quid of tobacco;
While on the dusty road, and blent with the
rays of the moonlight,
We saw the lash of his whip and the juice of
tobacco descending.

"Danger! sir, I believe you—indeed, I may
say on that subject.
You your existence might put to the hazard
and turn of a wager,
I have seen danger! Oh, no! not me, sir, indeed, I assure you;
Perchance 'twas the man with the dog that
is sitting alone in you wagon.

It was the Geiger Grade, a mile and a half
from the summit:
Black as your hat was the night, and never
a star in the heavens,
Thundering down the grade, the gravel and
stones we sent flying
Over the precipice side—a thousand feet
plumb to the bottom.

Half-way down the grade I felt, sir, a thrilling and creaking,
Then a lurch to one side, as we hung on the
bank of the ravine,
Then, looking up the road, I saw, in the distance behind me,
The off hind-wheel of the coach just loosed
from its axle, and following.

One glance above I gave, then gathered together my ribbons,
Shouted, and flung them, outspread, on the
straining necks of my cattle;
Screamed at the top of my voice, and lashed
the air in my frenzy,
While down the Geiger Grade, on three
wheels, the vehicle thundered.

Speed was our only chance, when again came
the ominous rattle:
Crack, and another wheel slipped away, and
was lost in the darkness.
Two only now were left; yet such was our
fearful momentum,
Upright, erect, and sustained on *two* wheels,
the vehicle thundered.

As some huge boulder, unloosed from its
rocky shelf on the mountain,
Drives before it the hare, and the timorous
squirrel, far leaping;
So down the Geiger Grade rushed the pioneer coach, and before it
Leaped the wild horses, and shrieked in advance of the danger impending.

But to be brief in my tale. Again, ere we
came to the level,
Slipped from its axle a wheel, so that, to be
plain in my statement,
A matter of twelve hundred yards or more,
as the distance may be,
We traveled upon *one* wheel, until we drove
up to the station.

Then, sir, we sank in a heap; but picking
myself from the ruins,
I heard a noise up the grade, and, looking, I
saw in the distance
The three wheels following still, like moons
on the horizon whirling,
Till, circling, they gracefully sank on the
road at the side of the station.

This is my story, sir; a trifle, indeed, I assure you.
Much more, perchance, might be said; but
I hold him, of all men, most lightly
Who swerves from the truth in his tale—No,
thank you—Well, since you are pressing,
Perhaps I don't care if I do; you may give
me the same, Jim—no sugar."

Torpedo Explosion.

We copy the following account of a terrible accident in New Orleans from the *Semi-Weekly Louisianian*, of October 22nd:

Between the hours of nine and ten o'clock, on Thursday morning last, the denizens in the vicinity of the French market were startled out of all propriety by a sudden and tremendous detonation. On crowding to the spot a tragical scene displayed itself. There lay scattered around a large quantity of sawdust, scraps of pasteboard and paper, fragments of board, the remnants of a shattered dray, a hurt mule, several wounded men, and the mutilated, half naked corpse of a dead drayman; while near by stood a dray with a number of cases of "merchandise."

A brief examination and inquiry revealed the facts that the demolished dray was loaded with twenty cases of the "Patent Celebrated Union Torpedoes," which had been taken from the Ship George Hulburt, and were being conveyed to some warehouse in the city; when on nearing Madison street, on old Levee street, the dray came in collision with a street car, and the concussion produced an immediate and terrific explosion.

In addition to the particulars first mentioned, it was found that two saloons suffered considerable damage; windows and glass doors, and a quantity of bottes were smashed to pieces, and a lot of plastering broken from the walls; the losses are estimated at about $500.

The unfortunate driver's name who was killed was Jim Conners. He was instantly killed, having one of his legs torn off and hurled two squares through the air, over the tops of houses, and deposited in Jackson square; two ribs and several other bones broken, his skull fractured, and every tooth knocked out. The explosion doubtless started from the rear of the dray and sent its fury forward, enveloping and killing Conners in its furious flight.

Neither the driver or any of the passengers in the street car suffered any damage; the iron front to the car resisting the rush of the material. The driver of another dray, also loaded with twenty-one cases of the same articles, and immediately in front of the exploding dray, one Jaque Coulogne, received a severe cut in the head, but to the present time we do not learn that danger to his life is apprehended. The other wounded, we learn, are all recovering.

Public attention was not long since called to the importation of torpedoes when a clerk in one of our city stores was instantly killed by the explosion of a box of torpedoes; and the City Council adopted a measure which was believed would save the public from the dangers incident to the handling of such material. It was, therefore, but natural, that as soon as the last disaster occurred, the Police Department, the City Administrators, and, indeed, the whole city should be so roused as to ascertain under what circumstances these "cases of merchandise" were found in our midst.

Coroner Jackson instituted a searching inquiry and ascertained that three hundred cases of torpedoes were shipped by the house of Klueber & Goldschmidt, New York, to Morris McGraw, of this city, who intended them for sale, but hearing of a recent explosion in New York, he informed the house that he would not receive the article. He admitted, however, that if he had not heard of the explosion he would have received them. In consequence of this refusal, Mr. Goldschmidt came from New York and made arrangements to have them stored, and they were being landed and so disposed of when the explosion took palce.

The captain of the ship, on his part, knew he was taking torpedoes, but was assured that they were perfectly harmless, were lawful merchandise, and were regularly shipped to New Orleans by almost every steamer and sailing vessel. The inquest is not yet concluded.

In the meantime, the City Council have interposed, and ordered the return to the levee of the twenty-one cases which were on one of the drays, and stopped the whole lot from removal from the landing. There is every probability that they will be "consigned" to the bottom of the Mississippi river, where they won't hurt if they do explode.

We hope the lesson taught our dealers in such dangerous material will not be lost on them. That if they will have handled these glycerine preparations, they will warn their unfortunate employes of the risk of concussions, that they will not conceal the deadly character of these "merchandises" and delude poor workmen into careless moving about and tumbling of highly explosive and deadly missiles. If they will not, we hope that the city authorities will adopt such stringent regulations as will, to the greatest extent possible, secure the community from the recurrence of such terrible disasters.

Sensation in Springfield, Ill.

LARGE GANG OF BURGLARS ARRESTED.

We copy as follows from the Springfield *Advertiser*, of the 17th:

The reign of terror is over. The citizens of Springfield who, for the last five or six years, have not rested a single night securely in their beds, have at last been relieved of this constant dread. Houses entered night after night, servant girls choked in their beds, belated travelers assaulted and robbed in our streets, pistol shots penetrating dwellings, have combined to make Springfield shunned by all who desired a secure and peaceful home. Bolts and locks have proved insecure, private watchmen were worthless, and our insufficient police force of no avail. Public meetings of outraged citizens, where fierce and denunciatory resolutions were passed and taxes voted to procure a police force, are events which were called forth by the midnight plunderings of a band of desperadoes who were regardless of life, and would cut a throat with the utmost *sang froid*. The newspapers have hurled invectives against the Council, and have published petitions from injured parties. It was all of no avail.

Mayor J. J. Hanna, when elected to the office, was aware of its responbilities. The burglars were holding forth in high carnival. He determined from the beginning to break up the gang. He therefore appealed early to the Council for help, and in its secret session laid his plans before the Council. He proposed, if the Council would sustain him in a financial way, to break up the organized gang, and relieve the citizens from their terror. The Mayor felt assured that the burglars who operated so successfully and in each case evaded detection, had a thorough system upon which they acted. He believed further, that the members of this gang were citizens of this place. The streets were often infested with young men who, with no visible means of support, yet appeared to have plenty of money and lived at their ease.

A man was selected who became intimately acquainted with the plans of the burglars, who met them when they prepared for their midnight excursions. He informed himself of their plans and purposes, and gave them, as fast as obtained, to Mayor Hanna, who detailed special policeman Bruner to watch them. The burglars, when they entered into a house, little knew that a man in a big overcoat, underneath which was concealed a blue uniform, watched all their movements, saw them enter, waited until they secured their plunder, and then saw them depart. Their names were in his possession. For several months this faithful policeman kept watch upon their movements, followed them like a shadow from place to place, haunted them day and night, until cases were made upon twenty of the gang. Some of these were not implicated as burglars, but were equally culpable as receivers of stolen gooods.

Mayor Hanna was cognizant of the dangerous character of the villians, and fearful that before his plans were fully ripe a murder would be committed, for they had been seen in their secret retreats to brandish fierce, glistening knives, and swear with oaths that they would sheath them in certain parties whom they determined to visit, if they made the least outcry.

It was determined, finally, to make the arrests of twelve of the ringleaders. The police force were in entire ignorance of the work that was going on; but last evening the Mayor informed the Chief of Police of the arrests to be made. The mine was sprung, and the burglars found at last that perseverance, skill and energy had outwitted them.

"It was a wonder that it was kept a secret so long," was the exclamation heard upon the streets this morning. The plans had been laid most judiciously. The Council kept the matter a secret, and ably seconded the suggestions of the Mayor, assuring him that they would support him in his efforts to clear the plague spot from the city.

The character of the parties who composed this gang was so well known that it was necessary to proceed with the utmost caution. Policeman Bruner, who has developed the shrewd qualities of the dective, was constantly on the alert, and he, in conference with the Mayor, knew all the plans of the burglars before they were fully carried out.

There was a regular organization, with a chief officer, who directed the proceedings of the gang. The strongest obligations rested upon each and every member. One of their oaths was that if any member was arrested they were to swear him out. The proceedings before the Mayor will begin as soon as possible, and it may be that they will be brought before the Court of Common Pleas at the present session.

Election Frauds in Texas.

The Houston *Union* of the nineteenth instant, has the following:

Our latest information from Austin leads us to believe that the Republicans have elected their candidates for Congress in the First and Third Districts, Colonel Whitmore and General Clark. It is probable taat the Democrats have elected their candidate in the Fourth District, and almost certain that they have elected their candidate in the Second District.

But we renew the question which we suggested yesterday. Sould the Governor give certificates of election as members of Congress to these latter men who, with their party friends, openly and outrageously violated every element of the country's laws, both State and Federal? Suppose they had strength enough to be clearly elected without counting illegal votes, and after making proper allowances for the number of Republican votes they kept away from the polls by terrible and villianous ostracism; is the simple fact of such majorities sufficient to cover up all their sins and outrages against the rights of the people, the dignity of the State, and the majesty of the United States? Are these open criminals against the laws of the State and nation, these well-known traitors to and haters of the United States government, to receive their certificates fron a Republican Governor, pledged in the most remarkable manner to the maintenance of law and order, and fair and peaceful elections, without any mark of the condemnation of the State government.

Have not these men during the whole canvass, denied that Mr. Davis was Governor at all, denounced and defied his election order, denounced the President of the United States, fearfully defamed the State government, and endeavored to break it down, met in a conspiratous convento incite the people into a rebellion against the State government, and urge them not to pay their taxes, and done everything else that marks a party of traitors and rebels, except the overt act of armed resistance? Aye, and this latter element of treason and rebellion was not wanting. Their armed bands were in every county in the State making war, not upon the officers of the government, but upon its friends, especially the more helpless—a safer course, but equally as criminal. The colored people in the towns were not so much affected by these things, but in all country places, especially where the colored people were few and feeble, they were deterred from coming to the polls at all, by hundreds and thousands.

Let the Governor refuse these men their certificates. Let them plead their cause before Congress. An airing of the villianous and murderous secret trickery of the Texas Democracy before the grave body of our Representatives at Washington, would be very healthful just now. And let our Republican Representatives be there to plead the cause of the oppressed and persecuted Republicans of Texas against them. Mayhap Congress will refuse to seat such men at all. At any rate, let the Governor vindicate himself and the people who have been outraged, and put this mark of condemnation upon them—withhold the certificates.

Not Too Fast.

The editor of the New Orleans *Mitrailleuse* was evidently in earnest when he penned the following:

Several of our State exchanges have hoisted the name of General Grant at the head of their columns. Is this not going a little ahead of the fox? We submit that there is plenty of time yet, before the meeting of the convention to hoist a figure-head, and we should not be surprised should a vast change take place in the opinions of the people respecting the policy of renominating General Grant.

So far as Louisiana is concerned, we may well refuse to be in haste in this matter. Has General Grant yet given us any tangible evidence that he disapproved the Custom-house outrage? We think that, by this time, he has had ample scope for investigation. If he approved the conduct of his officers on the ninth of August, in this city, we don't want any more Grant in our columns. We never can consent to vote or deliberate under the menace of bayonets, and if General Grant refuses to rebuke in the most positive manner those who appealed to this despotic power in this State, we are against him, though we stand alone. Massachusetts has repudiated Grant in the person of Butler, and the course of the good old commonwealth is worthy of note; other States will repudiate him should he fail to remove his brother-in-law and the other factionists who disgrace the Republican party in this State.

The newspaper editors who were refused even a ticket of admission to the tyrannical military convention of this city are doing a nice business to hoist Grant's name in their papers while he refuses to rebuke the scoundrels who perpetrated this outrage upon the press. Good God, to what depths of degradation some men are willing to be plunged! We say, if Grant has determined to retain Packard, Lowell, Casey and their satellites, let this little commonwealth fight him to the bitter end, tnough she fight him alone.

Base cowards are we all if we yield; men who would cringe to any tyrant and lick the hands of the master who would scourge us. Should Henry Clay Warmoth bow to such tyranny and make terms short of the removal of the above named gentlemen, we are through—of him, at least, we hope better things. God knows we have loved him more than we ever did mortal man, and almost with the love we would extend to a wife, because we have believed him honest and capable.

Few have had better opportunities than we of judging of his character and conduct. We have eat at his table, slept in his house, watched his every act, and judged of his every motive; and we have, in the midst of all the contumely, slander and vituperation to which he has been exposed, believed him to be a man of clean hands, pure motives and honest purposes; and should he bow to the behest of the man who, as far as we now know, sanctions the insult and ignominy cast upon the people of Louisiana, all we have to say is, that we can, in future, have no faith in human nature; and should the Republican party in Louisiana submit to such treatment, we have had enough of the party, and can, with clear conscience and willing mind, abandon it to its inevitable fate. We can submit to defeat rather than disgrace, poverty rather than dishonor; and if this be treason to the Republican party, our friends can make the most of it. If it be treason to rebel against military despotism, we are guilty, and the sooner we are tried and convicted the better. We have yet confidence that the Governor of this State will maintain his dignity of character, and never bow to tyranny. Every noble character in the State will sustain him, and we trust that the editors of the press of the State will remain firm in their determination to protect our citizens against the acts of a tyrant. If we do not, the Custom-house outrage will be accepted in history as a Republican iniquity, and this we can never afford. Hence we say, hold in a while before you hoist the name of U. S. Grant to the head of your columns.

Federal Interference.

If it be true as the telegraph reports, that it is the determination of the Government not to remove the Custom-house officials, who were responsible for the disgraceful occurrence of August 9, when a political convention was placed under the surveillance of the military, and that a pacification is looked for upon the impeachment of Governor Warmoth, then only miraculous efforts can prevent Louisiana from casting a Democratic electoral vote in 1872. To desert Warmoth at this time, is something no honorable man can do upon the evidence presented by the opposition. Governor Warmoth is the Chief Executive of the State; he has preserved the party in times of peril; there is no proof exhibited that that he cannot do so in the future, if Federal interference be withdrawn. We want no dictation from outsiders. The people of Louisiana are competent judges of their own needs and wants, and much better acquainted with the integrity of their officials than heads of departments one thousand miles away.—*Attakapas Register.*

A curious case of Kleptomania, says the New York *Sun*, has come to light in Lawrence, Mass. A burglar after breaking into a house was captured, shot and carried to the lockup. Although his wound was slight, it was agreed that the surgeon should tell him he would not live more than an hour, in order to draw a confession from him. The burglar, after exacting a solemn promise from his captors that all money in his possession should be handed over to his wife, confessed that he was the author of many burglaries that had been committed in that region, and that he had secreted in Ash Grove Church, in Albany, under the pulpit, two tin boxes filled with gold and silver, and in his room, in Arch street, in that city, several hundred dollars in bank notes around the waistcoating of the windows, and in other places; also, that his real name was Carrel Sanborn, and that he had worked for Mr. McDonald, in Albany. He then handed over $1800 in greenbacks, saying that according to the agreement that sum, with $800 in savings bank in Albany, and some $400 more secreted in his room, should be given to his wife. He had not robbed for money, he said, but for the pleasure of it; it was a mania which came over him at times, and which he could not shake off until he broke into some place. The dark lantern found in his possession is a marvel of perfection, and was made by himself. Sanborn's wife, who resides in Bristol, N. H., was shocked when she heard of his arrest, as she supposed that he was at work in Albany. All the money and property was found concealed in the places indicated.