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McCRUM & DERN,

[INDEPENDENT IN EVERYTHING.]

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THE ALTOONA TRIBUNE.

E. H. McCRUM, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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had neglected to put his ticket in his hand; while Captain Silver dragged himself into a sitting position, putting his two hands back of his head with a portentous yawn, and smiled to remember the fantastic dreams that had chased one another through his brain during that half hour of cramped, uneasy slumber, from which the conductor's challenge had roused him—dreams in which bloody battle-fields and lonely night-marches had blended oddly with sweet home voices, and the sulphurous breath of artillery had mingled with violet scents from the twilight woods around, and gusts of sweetness from the tossing clouds of peach blossoms, through which the Express train shot remorselessly.

And then Carl Silver began to think of other things. "Conductor!" whispered the fat old lady opposite, in the bombazine bonnet and stiff colored shawl.

"Yes'm," said the man of tickets stopping abruptly in his transit through the cars, and inclining his ear.

"That young man in military cap, conductor—I hope he ain't an escaped lunatic dressed up in soldier clothes, I've heard of such things. And I don't like a bit the way he keeps a grinnin' to himself and rubbin' his two hands together. He's acted queerly all day, and I'm travelin' alone!"

The conductor laughed and passed on. The old lady bridled in offended dignity. Bless her anxious heart!—how was she to know that Captain Silver was only rejoicing in the thoughts of the glorious "surprise" he had in store for his mother and dimple faced sister that night? Was it not a year—twelve long, long months—since he had looked upon their faces last? And now—

On, speed on your way, Express train, through quiet villages where daffodils sprinkle all the gardens with gold. Speed over the sloping hills where springing grass sends up a faint, delicious smell, and brooks babble under swinging willows—past lonely church-yards, where the white heads of innumerable gravestones beckon through the twilight and are gone; for every throb of your iron pulse brings one true heart nearer home! Shot and shells had spared him for this hour; fever and pestilence and foul malaria have passed him by; and now—

Suppose there should be an accident! He has heard of such things on these lightning-routes. Suppose he should be carried home a dead, mangled corpse, the words of greeting frozen into eternal silence on his lips, the glad sight sealed forever under the heavy eyelids! Strange that such morbid fancies should never have assailed him in the fire and smoke of Gettysburg, yet come to him now, like gusts that would not be driven away, when he was within twenty miles of home! Would it break his mother's heart, or would she live on? And Kate Meriam—Kate Meriam, the blue-eyed, shy little fairy, who would never look at him save through her long, brown lashes, and whose coy mouth always made him think of scarlet cherries and roses dashed in dew.

"To think!" ejaculated Carl Silver, bringing down his bronzed fist on the window ledge with a force that made the glass rattle ominously and struck a chill to the heart of the old lady in the bombazine bonnet: "to think that I, who would knock down the man who ventured to tell me I was a coward, should be afraid to say frankly to a little, slender girl that I love her! To think that the very touch of her glove, the sound of her footstep, the rustle of her ribbons, can frighten my self-possession away and make a staring, silent idiot of me! After all, what is a courage worth? There's no use in thinking of it. I shall die an old bachelor, for I'll never marry any woman but Kate Meriam, and I shall never dare to plead my cause with Kate. I wish I had't had such an absurd streak of cowardice through me."

Yet Captain Silver's men had told a different tale when he led them over the bridge in that dreadful charge at Antietam. Cowardice! there are several different interpretations to that word.

"Carriage! carriage! No, I won't have a carriage. Get away from me you fellows! You are worse than the locusts of Egypt and ten times as noisy," cried Captain Silver energetically elbowing his way through the swarms of eager hickamens, who were making night hideous, at the foot of Courtland street. "Do you suppose I am going to spoil my precious surprise by a carriage?"

Broadway by gaslight! How strange, yet how familiar it seemed to the returning exile, with its stately facades of freestone and marble, seeming literally to rest on foundations of quivering fire, and its throngs of people, coming and going in everlasting succession, like the tides of a never-resting sea. Carl Silver's heart leaped up in his breast with a quick, joyous throb at the old accustomed sights and sounds. It was good to hear his footsteps on Manhattan ground.

No light in the house! His heart stood still a moment. This was strange—ominous. But then he remembered that his

mother was fond of sitting in the twilight, and dismissed the lingering doubt from his mind. How lucky, the door was on the latch, and swung noiselessly open.

Hush! not a creaking stair or clanking spur must betray him, through the old familiar hall he passed, and into his mother's room, lighted only by the ruddy glimmer of a bright coal fire.

"Where the mischief are they all?" ejaculated Captain Silver under his breath. "No matter—they'll be along soon; meantime I'll wheel this big chair up, and take a bask, for the air is chill, if it is the first of May. Won't they be astonished, though, when they come in? Upon my word, things couldn't have happened nicer! Fugh! what a smell of paint—white-wash, too, as I'm a living sinner. Confound it, I've kicked over a pair of the stuff! If the women folks ain't home cleaning!"

The Captain gave an indignant contemptuous sniff as he surveyed the desolate scene.

"What comfort a female can find in turning things upside down, and deluging the house with soap and water twice a year, I can't imagine. Carpets all up—floors damp—curtains torn down—not one familiar object to greet a fellow's eyes after a twelve month's absence from home. Heigh ho! I think I'll light a cigar."

Which he did, and began to smoke and meditate.

There was a rustle and tripping foot-fall on the stairs. The Captain took out his cigar and listened.

"That's Minny," he said to himself. "Ma'mma doesn't dance up stairs like that."

He arose, and leaned against the door-casing as the dancing feet came nearer and nearer. How his heart beat as the fire-light shone upon a merino dress and a little white apron on the threshold. And the next moment he had caught the slight form in his arms and was showering kisses on cheek, and brow, and lips and hair.

"Caught for once, Miss Minny?" he exclaimed. "That to pay you for presuming to clean house without my permission! No, you're not going to escape. Such a piercing scream as she rewarded his fraternal demonstration with! Carl Silver let go her waist and retreated against the wall with a faint idea of breaking through the lath and plaster, and hiding himself in the general ruin. For, as truly as he stood there quaking in his regimentals, the voice was not that of his sister Minny, but Kate Meriam!"

"How dare you!" she ejaculated, with crimson cheeks and quivering lips. "I'll ring the bell and call the servants if you don't leave the house this instant!"

"Upon my word, I'm not a burglar or assassin!" pleaded Carl, recovering his self-possession in a measure, as he saw Kate's breathless terror! "It was so dark I couldn't see your face, and I thought it was my sister Minny. Don't you know me, Miss Meriam—Captain Silver?"

"You are an impostor," said Kate, with spirit, "Captain Silver is with the Army of the Potomac."

to send out into the battle-field, to dream of and pray for Carl, I have always repined that I had no gift for my country, now I can give my best and dearest to aid her cause."

"Spoken like a soldier's wife, Kate," said Silver, with kindling eyes. "If you but knew how much better we rough men fight for knowing that woman's love and woman's prayers enshrine us with a golden, unseen army—nonsense! I'm getting sentimental. Good night."

So there was three surprises that May evening—one for Kate Meriam, (wouldn't you have been surprised, Mademoiselle, to be caught and kissed in the dark, and never know who the kisser was?) one for Captain Silver (a very agreeable one though), and the old original surprise, if we may term it, for his mother and sister.

And Carl has not left off congratulating himself that his "leave of absence" happened to fall in the migratory month of May. For if he hadn't blundered into Miss Meriam's house and kissed her by mistake, thereby bringing matters precipitately to a focus, probably to this day he never would have mustered courage to tell her of his love.

And when the golden armadas of the autumn leaves float down the forest brooks, and the blue mist of Indian Summer warps the hills in dreamy light, Carl Silver is coming back to seal Kate Meriam's destiny with a wedding ring.

BRIDESMAIDS.

Next to being a bride herself, every good-looking young woman likes to be a bride's maid. Wedlock is thought by a large proportion of the blooming sex to be contagious, and much to the credit of their courage, fair spinsters are not all afraid of catching it. Perhaps the theory that the affection is communicated by contact is correct. Certainly we have known one marriage to lead to another, and sometimes to such a series of "happy events" as to favor the belief that matrimony, as John Van Buren might say, "runs like the cholera."

Is there any book entitled "Rules for Bridesmaids," in secret circulation among young ladies? It seems as if there must be, for all the pretty hench-women act precisely alike. So far as official conduct is concerned, when you have seen one bridesmaid you have seen the whole fascinating tribe. Their leading duty seems to be to treat the bride as "a victim led with garlands to the sacrifice." They consider it necessary to exhort her to "cheer up and stand by." It is assumed by a poetic fiction, that she goes in a state of fearful trepidation to the altar, and upon the whole would rather not. Her fair *ads* provide themselves with pungent essences, lest she should faint at the "trying moment," which—between you and us, reader, she has no more idea of doing than she has of flying. It is true she sometimes tells them that she "feels if she should sink into the earth," and thus they respond "poor dear soul," and apply the smelling bottle; but she goes through her nuptial martyrdom with great fortitude, nevertheless. In nine cases out of ten the bridegroom is more "flustered" than the fragile and lovely creature at his side; but nobody thinks of pitying him, poor fellow! All sympathy, compassion, interest, is concentrated upon the bride, and if one of the groomsmen does recommend him to take a glass of wine before the ceremony, to steady his nerves, the advice is given superciliously—as who should say "what a spoony you are, old fellow!"

Bridesmaids may be considered as brides in what the lawyers call the "inchoate" or incipient state. They are looking forward to that day of triumphant weakness when it shall be their turn to be "poor, dear, creatured," and Preston salted, and otherwise sustained and supported as the law of nuptial pretenses directs. Let us hope they may not be disappointed.

A DIME FOR A KISS.—A traveller near the close of a weary day's drive over a lonely and a muddy road, came to a little log cabin in the forest, and asked for a drink. A young woman supplied his wants, and afterwards, as she was the first woman he had seen for several days, he offered her a dime for a kiss. It was duly taken and paid for, and the young lady, who had never seen a dime before, looked at it with some curiosity, then asked what she should do with it. He replied, what she chose, as it was hers. "If that's the case," said she, "you may take it back and give me another kiss!"

YANKEE SCIENTIFICS.—Mr. Eliphaz Stabbs, a real live Yankee from Connecticut in exhibiting his Patent Back action Spanker, thus scientifically describes it: "On being attached to a baby of any age, it (the spanker), watches over it like a mother, makes it to desist from swallowing thimbles, marbles and three cent pieces, pins, or any other food unsuited to its stomach; compels it to go to sleep when it doesn't want to; and if somewhat older, sees that it keeps its hand off the sugar bowl and jam pots; besides making it keep its face clean—and all by the power of its back action."

SOCIETY.

Society is a horrible fellow. He is composed partly of pretty good fellows, but take him altogether he is bad. Modern social philosophers are of this opinion, and of course they know. The only way to mend the rascal, some of them tell us, is to pull him to pieces, and put him together again, on an entirely new plan. The scamp you see, is wrongly constituted, and always has been, although we have only recently found it out. If you look at him you will remark that he is made up of a lot of selfish sub-organizations called households, each of which loves itself better than all the world and his wife besides. This is a fearful evil—it prevents "fusion," "oneness of purpose," and all that sort of thing. How can you expect a concert to work well that is made up of independent fragments? Segregation is ruin of us. Here are millions of separate domestic bundles knotted up with such ridiculous ligatures as matrimonial, filial and fraternal ties! Open them and mix the contents indiscriminately together. That's the way to remodel Society! At present he is a wretch that it would be gross flattery to call a criminal of any one particular class, inasmuch as he is a conglomerate of all criminals and responsible for all crimes. He ought to be hung—no not hung, reconstructed. To be sure the Bible recognizes the laws by which he is governed, and the patriarchs, prophets and evangelists, only wished to reform his faults, not to demolish him, and set up a Godless experiment in his stead—but then the Bible is a very old book and the personages referred to had old fashioned notions, and this you know, is the age of Progress.

JOSH BILLINGS ON SHANGHAI.—The shanghai reuster is a gentle and speaks in a forin turn. He is built on piles like a Sandy Hillerane. If he had bin built with 4 legs, he wud resemble the Peruvian llama. He is not a game animal, but quite often comes off sekund best in a ruff and tumble fight; like the injuns kant stand civilization, and are fast disappearing. The roost on the ground similar tew the mud turtle. Tha often go tew sleep standing, and sun times tha pitch over, and when tha dew, tha enter the ground like a pickaxe. These food consist ov corn in the ear. Tha crow like a Jackass troubled with broonskeucks. Tha will eat as much tew onst as a district skule master, and generally sit down rite oph tew keep frum tipping over. Tha are dreadful unhandy tew cook, yu kant git them awl into a poash kittle to onst. The female reuster lays an egg as big as a kokernut, and is sick for a week afterwards, and when she hatches out a litter ov young shanghis she has tew brood them standing, and then kant kiver up 3 ov them, the rest stand around on the outside, like boys around a circus tent, gittin a peep under the kanvass whenever tha can. The man who fust brought the breed into this country ought tew own them all and be obliged tew feed them on grasshoppers, credit, I land. I never owned but one and he got choked to deth by a kink in a clothes line, but not until he had swallowed 18 feet ov it. Not any shanghi for me if you please; I would rather board a traveling kolporter, and as for eating one, give me a billed owl rare dun, or a turkie buzzard, toasted hole, and stuffed with a pair ov injin rubber boots but not any shanghi for me not any shanghi!

TRAVELLING IN THE DESERT.—The mode of travelling in the Desert has so often been described, that I need do no more than add my tribute to its charms. There is no life to be compared to it; the air you breathe is an elixir. In the Desert we learn for the first time what hunger really is, and what depths of repose its fatigues can open to us. The Arabian heaven is indeed "poured upon our nights," and although the Arabian sun during the day may be a little too hot, yet the delicious coolness of the evening tones for the previous frizzle. Every incident, however trivial, is an excitement. A strange Arab, on his swift dromedary, is seen in the horizon, perhaps a spy from a hostile tribe—faint hopes of a skirmish, and a careful looking to pistols and fire-arms; a group of stunted shrubs indicating the presence of some "diamond of the Desert"; the comfortable encampment in the evening, so home-like that one leaves the very chicken bones the next morning with regret. All is delightful, strange, new, and exhilarating; and I sit down again by my sea-coal fire with a deep feeling of thankfulness that I have experienced the delights of Eastern travel.

DON'T KNOW MUCH.—A certain green customer, who was a stranger to mirrors, and who stepped into the cabin of one of our ocean steamers, stopping in front of a large pier glass which he took for a door, he said: "I say, mister, when does this boat start?" Incensed at the still, silent figure, he broke out: "Go to thunder! you darned sassafras-colored, shock-headed bull calf, you don't look as though you knowed very much, anyhow!"

A PARIS INCIDENT.—A young boy of sixteen years of age was brought before the police court, Paris, charged with stealing and begging in the public streets. He was a bright, fine looking boy but very poorly clad, and when brought before the judge, he fell upon his knees and begged hum not to put him in prison; that his mother was very sick and starving, and that alone had driven him to steal; that he could not find work, and if he was imprisoned, the disgrace would kill his poor mother. The judge seemed somewhat moved at the boy's story, but he nevertheless, after hearing the evidence, condemned him to six weeks imprisonment.

As the boy was being led away, a poor woman, pale, covered with rags, and her hair in disorder, forced her way through the crowd, and tottering up to the boy, passed one arm around his neck, and then turning to the judge, pushed back her long black hair, and exclaimed, "Do you not recognize me? Thirteen years have passed since you deserted me, leaving me with my child and shame; but I have not forgotten you, and this boy whom you have just condemned is your son. This announcement produced the bystanders. The judge in a loud voice ordered the woman to be carried from the court, and when left himself, but joined the poor creature in the street, and carried her and her boy off in a carriage.—Ez.

The renowned Josh Billings, whose opinions on financial as well as moral and political matters are worthy of "awl consideration," has prepared the "hollierin" explanation from original resipes" concerning the question of revenue:—

"Spirits of just men made perfect" don't cum within the whisky bill.

"Spirits of the damned" are constructed the same as damnable spirits, and must pay the highest whiskey rates.

"Tax on 'undressed poultry' doubled—the morals of the country seem to require it.

Bologna's sausage, in part dory and part red flannel, must pay the duty on flannels also.

Awl tabakker (unless the manufacturer diskriminates what is new and what is old chaws), is elevated 50 per cent.

Ministers of the gospel, who don't dew over \$1,500 worth of business a year are exempt.

A gentleman lately overheard the following conversation between a man and a woman who appeared as though they had just returned from a pleasure trip to some of the out of town resorts:—

Woman—"Blow me, Bill, how tired I feel! I am as miserable, too, as a starved cat. What a miserable world this is! I wish I'd never been born, I wish myself dead again! Man—"Why, Bet, what's the matter with you now? What are you grumbling about?" Woman—"Why, don't I tell yer I'm as miserable as a rat?" Man—"Miserable, indeed! Why, what on earth would yer have? You was drunk on Monday, and you was drunk again on Wednesday, and I'm blest if that isn't pretty near enough pleasure for yer, I don't know what is. I s'pose you wants to be a downright hangel here upon the earth!"

A humorous old gentleman once fell in with an ignorant and rather impertinent minister, who proceeded to inform the former, in very positive terms, that he never would reach Heaven unless he was born again, adding—"I have experienced that happy change, and now feel no anxiety."

"And have you really been born again?" said the old man, musingly.

"Yes, I have" was the reply.

"Well," said the old man, eyeing him attentively, "it may be all right, but—I don't think it would hurt you to be born once more!"

ANYTHING TO PRODUCE "CHANGE."—"This medicine," said Dr. Squills, "after having been taken a few days, will produce the change desired."

"What?" exclaimed the thunderstruck patient, "you don't say so, doctor?"

"It's a fact sir," said the doctor, "The science of medicine has now reached—"

"Well," said the patient, interrupting him, "it is wonderful! If you'd said 'postage stamps, doctor, I wouldn't have said anything; but the 'desired change,' doctor, it seems impossible!"

The doctor had to take the patient in hand.

Pat was employed at a furnace. He was ordered to take the two-wheeled cart with the oxen, and draw some iron to a particular spot and dump it. He brought the load to the place designed, and after gesticulating wildly to his meek oxen, exclaimed: "Rare up! rare up! ye bastards, and throw the load overboard."

The coal fields of Pennsylvania have yielded on an average, two hundred and thirty thousand tons of coal per week for the last three months.

Choice Poetry.

SHERIDAN'S RIDE.

Up from the South at break of day,
Bringing to Winchester fresh dismay,
The affrighted air with a shudder bore,
Like a herald in haste to the chiefain's door,
The terrible humble and rumble and roar,
Telling the battle was on once more,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

And wider still those billows of war
Thundered along the horizon's bar.
And louder yet in Winchester rolled,
The roar of that red sea uncontrolled,
Making the blood of the listener cold
As he thought of the stake in that fiery fray,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

But there is a road from Winchester town,
A good, broad highway leading down;
And there, through the flush of the morning light,
A seed, as black as the seeds of night,
Was seen to pass as with eagle flight—
As if he knew the terrible need
He stretched away with his utmost speed:
Hill rose and fell—but his heart was gay,
With Sheridan fifteen miles away.

Still spring from those swift hools, thunder'g south,
The dust, like the smoke from the cannon's mouth,
Or the trail of a comet sweeping faster and faster,
Foreboding to traitors the doom of disaster;
The heat of the steel and the heat of the master
Were beating like prisoners assaulting their walls,
Impatient to be where the battle-field calls;
Every nerve of the charger was strained to full play,
With Sheridan only ten miles away.

Under his spurting feet, the road
Like an arrow Alpine river flowed,
And the landscape sped away behind
Like an ocean flying before the wind;
And the steel, like a bark fed with furnace fire,
Swept on, with his wild eyes full of fire,
But lo! he is hearing his horse's desire—
He is sniffing the smoke of the roaring fray,
With Sheridan only five miles away.

The first that the General saw were the groups
Of stragglers, and then the retreating troops;
What was done—what to do—a glance told him
both,
Then strike his spurs with a terrible oath,
He dashed down the line 'mid a storm of hurrahs,
And the wave of retreat checked its course there
because
The sight of the master compelled it to pause,
With foam and with dust the black charger was
gray;

By the flash of his eye, and his red nostrils' play,
He seemed to the whole great army to say:
"I have brought you Sheridan all the way
From Winchester down to save the day."

Hurrah, hurrah, for Sheridan!
Hurrah, hurrah, for horse and man!
And when their statues are placed on high
Under the dome of the Union sky,
The American soldiers' Temple of Fame,
There with the glorious General's name
Be it said in letters both bold and bright;
"Here is the steed that saved the day,
By carrying Sheridan into the fight,
From Winchester—twenty miles away!"

Select Miscellany.

SURPRISED.
"Ticket, sir, if you please!"
Between dusk and daylight—the warm
gold of the sunset sky just fading into
crimson, and the Express train thundering
over the iron track like some furious demon.
Carl Silver became dimly conscious
of these things as he started from a brief,
restless slumber, wherein his knapsack had
served as a pillow and stared vaguely into
the sharp Yankee face of the obdurate
conductor.

"Ticket! I suppose I have such a thing
about me," he muttered drowsily, search-
ing first one pocket and then another.
"Oh, here it is! I say conductor, are we
near New York?"
"Twenty minutes or so will bring us
into Jersey City, sir—we are making
pretty good time."
And the sharp faced official passed on
to harass the next unfortunate man who

had neglected to put his ticket in his hand; while Captain Silver dragged himself into a sitting position, putting his two hands back of his head with a portentous yawn, and smiled to remember the fantastic dreams that had chased one another through his brain during that half hour of cramped, uneasy slumber, from which the conductor's challenge had roused him—dreams in which bloody battle-fields and lonely night-marches had blended oddly with sweet home voices, and the sulphurous breath of artillery had mingled with violet scents from the twilight woods around, and gusts of sweetness from the tossing clouds of peach blossoms, through which the Express train shot remorselessly.