

SENT THREATENING LETTER

Member of One of New York's Oldest Families Demanded Money From Parent or He Would Blow Her Head Off On Sight—Says Thaw is Still Alive and "Maybe I Will Be"—Wants Her to Raise \$5000 On Her Fancy Name, and If Not to Keep Out of His Sight.

New York, July 21.—John A. Van Rensselaer, son of Mrs. John King Van Rensselaer, and a member of one of New York's oldest families, was taken into custody on a charge of attempted extortion. The arrest was made on advices from Chief of Police Crowley, of Newport, R. I., who received a complaint from Mrs. Van Rensselaer that her son had written a letter threatening her bodily harm unless she provided him with funds. Van Rensselaer is thirty-four years old and married.

Van Rensselaer is connected with a local brokerage house, and when he returned to his home he was placed under arrest by detectives, who produced the letter alleged to have been written by Van Rensselaer to his mother. The young man stated that he had written the letter, which is without any conventional beginning or ending, and of which the postscript is unsigned. The letter reads:

"I have just seen Lawrence Lee, and I am given to understand that you will pay \$30 per month for my board if I will go 300 miles from New York, and that I must have your written consent to leave the place that you may select.

"Did it ever occur to you that I have an absolute remainder interest in Aunt Frances' estate's securities, and that by blowing your head off, that my wife would have an income sufficient to support her?"

"I will take that course if necessary and upon my head will rest the consequences. (Thaw is still alive, maybe I will be).

"In any case, my wife, God bless her, will benefit by your demise, even if I don't."

"I have seen many disagreements and much suffering in my life, and I must say that most of it is due to you. A selfish peacock, whose name in these times amounts to nothing, and who is almost, if not entirely, forgotten in circles once tread.

"I am now in no humor to be trifled with, and I wish to go on record that I will take action on sight unless something is done at once. You gave Harold \$6000 and a trip to Europe. What have I had for being honest?"

"J. A. RENSSELAER."

"I want you to raise on that fancy name of yours \$5000 for me. If you are such a great lady, make good; if not, keep out of my sight. I can raise cash enough yet to go to you wherever you are, and I have a good name."

Van Rensselaer made the following statement regarding the demand on his mother:

"I gave her \$1000 when she was on her uppers, and now I wanted \$5000 to go into the brokerage business. When I was in business before I had a good friend, who used to loan me any amount I wanted up to a couple of hundred thousand. This friend's mother wanted to get into the Colonial Dames of America, of which my mother was a member, but my mother black-balled her. Then, soon after that, I went to this friend again for another loan, but he told me if my mother was too good to associate with his mother, he guessed his money was too good for me."

Van Rensselaer is a son of John King Van Rensselaer and grandson of Brigadier General Henry Bell Van Rensselaer, aide-de-camp to Major General Winfield Scott. The Van Rensselaers are descendants from Colonel Jermias Van Rensselaer, who was a member of the colonial assembly in this state, and its speaker in 1664.

Thaw Received Too Much Attention.
Poughkeepsie, N. Y., July 21.—Harry K. Thaw, who is in jail here awaiting arguments on his application for a jury inquiry into his sanity, was locked up in the main prison by order of Sheriff Chanler, who told the jailers that Thaw was receiving so much attention that other duties were neglected. Thaw, although on a corridor by himself, loses many of his liberties by the change from the juvenile department.

Pittsburg Having a Suicide Epidemic.
Pittsburg, July 21.—Suicides have become so frequent in the part of Pittsburg formerly known as Allegheny that the slang term for suicide is "Alleghenied" now. Between July 8 and 18 there have been fifteen suicides and six attempts, most of them using poison and nearly all being from grief or despondency.

Henry Ward Beecher's Son Drowned.
New Haven, Conn., July 21.—George L. Beecher, twenty-four years old, son of Henry Ward Beecher, of this city, and a graduate of the class of 1906, Yale Sheffield Scientific school, was seized with an epileptic fit while in bathing at Dosey beach and drowned.

"Oh, because—because it's for poor mamma. Mamma is dead, and I ran away to get some flowers." The next moment she was sobbing on the bosom of a new friend, and when she went away she carried the precious lily and other flowers to the home where death had been.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

A HUMAN MACHINE.

He Was Able to Correct a Language He Did Not Understand.

When Max Muller was preparing his edition of the Rigveda he had, so the story goes, an illustration of the instinctive wisdom of the compositor. In providing the manuscript for about 6,000 sheets of print the author naturally tripped from time to time. Whenever he did trip, there on his proof was the error queried in a careful hand. Surely, he thought, some unknown scholar in the university must be overlooking his proofs with kindly interest and making the corrections for him. Inquiry showed that this was not the fact. The corrections were the corrections of the man who set up the type. "Did this man, then, know Sanskrit?" Muller asked. Not a bit of it. Use and wont enabled him to detect the errors as a hungry child scents a cooking dinner. The discovery originated through his arm rather than from any intellectual doubt, and that arm was poised!

This printer had sustained an accident, leaving him with an arm partly paralyzed, and as this made him slower with his setting his masters turned him on to Sanskrit, with which he had had no previous acquaintance. He had to learn upward of 300 types for the work, but he learned them and accustomed himself to the work. Now, many of the letters in Sanskrit cannot follow each other or, if they do, must be modified. In writing Muller sometimes forgot these modifications, but they were all marked on the proof. Muller was so interested that he sought out the printer to ask him how he was able to correct a language which he did not understand. The explanation was remarkable: "You see, sir, my arm gets into a regular swing from one compartment of types to another, and there are movements that never occur. So if I suddenly have to take up types which entail a new movement I feel it and put a query." What a dog's life the "nu spelling," or Artemus Ward's, which is the same thing, would have caused that marvelous human machine!—St. James' Gazette.

THE BIRD CLOWN.

A Queer Kind of Fellow Is the Yellow-Breasted Chat.

The oddities of the yellow breasted chat begin even with his classification. To think of a warbler the size of a Baltimore oriole, a warbler with a song like a mocking bird! Indeed, there is little about the chat that is not remarkable. He goes in for the weird and the spectacular. If Nature designed him to show what she could do in the way of the unusual and the eccentric, she had remarkable success. This bird and not the catbird is the real "clown of the woods." Clown of the thicket would be more apt, for, like the catbird, he prefers the shrub and lower trees. A wild tangle of briars and vines is a favorite haunt. It is only the better to survey such a retreat that he mounts to the top of a tree. From his lofty perch he sings, to the amazement and bewilderment of the person that hears the song for the first time. More likely than not he will become invisible and silent upon the first attempt to approach him, remaining quiet and hidden till you move on again; then he chuckles loudly and scolds and spits and scoffs till you are out of sight and hearing.

No bird is so fearful of being seen or such a master of hide and seek. It is worse than useless to try to steal a march on him. He manages to be always on the wrong side of the next bush. If you should find his nest, which is a pretty little basket of straws and weed stalks lined with fine grasses and strips of soft bark or leaves placed a foot or more above the ground among tall weeds or bushes, the sitting bird steals away and is at once lost to sight. Take a peep at the white, red speckled eggs and then hide among the bushes as far away from the nest as you can while still keeping it in sight. You may have to wait for an hour and even make other trips to the spot, but this is the surest way to get a good look at this shy one.—St. Nicholas.

Triumph of Mind.
Victim of Delusion—Doctor, I'm awfully afraid I'm going to have brain fever. Doctor—Pooh, pooh, my dear friend! That is all an illusion of the senses. There is no such thing as fever. You have no fever; you have no brain—no material substance upon which such a wholly imaginary and supposititious thing as a fever could find any base of operation. Victim—Oh, doctor, what a load you have taken from me—from my—I have a mind, haven't I, doctor?—Chicago Tribune.

Pulling That Hair.
"What makes me really mad," said the woman, "is to spend minutes, maybe hours, trying to get hold of a white hair which shows up on my head like a dazzling light, yet which is tantalizingly elusive when I try to catch it, and then when I do finally separate it from the brown hair and give it a vigorous pull to find that I have snatched out a good brown hair, after all, and left the white one still shining."—New York Press.

A New One For Him.
"The climate here is salubrious, isn't it?" remarked the tourist.
"Say, friend," replied the native, "jest write that there word down fur me, will yer? I git tired o' swearin' at this climate in the same old way. That's a new one."—Philadelphia Press.

It is not the strength but the duration of great sentiments that makes great men.—Friedrich Nietzsche.

RECKLESS AARON BURR.

The Dramatic Story of His Marriage in Old Age.

The story of Aaron Burr's marriage in his old age to the widow of Stephen Jumel, who was well known in the early history of New York city, is a dramatic one.

Conceive, if you will, the picture of Burr, gifted adventurer that he was, broken in health, branded in the popular mind as the murderer of Alexander Hamilton and returning from a long exile to find himself an outcast in the city where he had once been the political monarch of all he surveyed and a distinguished figure in society and at the bar. Conceive, if you can, this lamentable old man, smirking through his wrinkles, bowing and prancing rather stiffly because of his rheumatic joints and with his mouth full of pretentious platitudes, paying court to the widow of Stephen Jumel, herself in the prime of years and health. Remove from the picture its surface incongruities, and you have a bit of pure pathos unequalled in the annals of foolish great men.

But something of his old time power to charm the gentler sex must have stood by him in his years of mental and physical misery, for in his suit for the widow Jumel's hand and fortune he won gloriously, dramatically. Rebuffed repeatedly, Burr finally declared in passionate rage that on a given day he would arrive at the Jumel mansion accompanied by a clergyman, who should marry them on the spot. He would give his prospective bride no

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quarter, no chance of escape from the inevitable.

She was amused at the threat and dismissed the old man with more than her usual coldness of demeanor. Burr stuck to his avowal and one July day rolled up in a carriage, and with him was a minister, the same who fifty years before performed the marriage ceremony for Burr and the mother of his daughter, the beautiful Theodosia. There was something of a scene in the old house on this day. There were tears of anger on the part of Burr. Relatives remonstrated; Burr remained immovable. All feared a scandal. The minister, book in hand, stood unflinchingly in the background. There were more tears, more declarations of undying love, and the widow Jumel became Mrs. Aaron Burr.

They were married in the great drawing room of the Jumel mansion. Burr squandered with reckless hand the wealth acquired by Stephen Jumel and left for the enjoyment of his marital partner. There were many bitter quarrels between the ill-mated pair, and they were soon divorced. Burr died in 1836, but madam lived until 1865, dying a recluse and a miser, the money received from the Jumel estate hoarded in an unused chamber.

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