

THE OTHER ONE WAS BOOTH.

Now, by the road, as Hamlet says, 'I grieve me sore to say the stage is not as once it was when I was wont to play. 'Tis true that Irving, dear old chap, still gives a decent show. And Mansfield and young Willard really act the best they know; 'Tis true Duse and Bernhardt, for we mustn't be too hard, are very fair for women, though of course they ought to guard against some bad art-tendencies; and as for all the rest, there's hardly one, I may say none, who stands the artist's test. True artists are a rare, rare breed; there were but two, forsooth. In all my time, the stage's prime; and the other one was Booth.

CHASED BY DYNAMITE.

The engineer leaned back contentedly in his cab and lit his pipe. The express was thirty minutes late, and that meant a very acceptable rest for the crew of the local freight, which took the siding at this point to permit the passenger train to pass. "The air-brakes on freight cars are great things, Bill," he ejaculated, as he watched the fireman rake down the ashes; "beats all what a help they are in holdin' a heavy train on a down grade. I saw a time once when I'd have given a pile of money if there had been such a thing then, and 'twas right on this division, too." "Let's hear about it, Pete," said the fireman, putting the poker away and chipping off some hard tobacco for his corncob. "It's a good while ago now," the engineer answered meditatively. "I was runnin' a pusher between Conemaugh and Cresson, helpin' freight and coal trains up the hill. It was just after the strike in '77 when the boys raised Cain, and the cause of that strike, if you'll remember, was partly on account of the company cuttin' down the crews and doublin' the runs. Now, days, with box and coal cars fitted with air, a brakeman more or less don't make much difference, but then every man counted, and when they dropped a chap off on these mountain runs it made the rest feel shaky, for there wasn't enough men left to tend the brakes. "One night it was our turn to assist what was known as the Pan Handle freight up the mountain. We started out from Conemaugh about 11:20 pushin' the train, which was made up of about ten cars of hogs, two box cars and fifteen or twenty four-wheeled coal cars—'Jimmies,' we called 'em. The box cars were at the rear; that is, right in front of us. We made pretty fair time up to South Fork, where the flood broke afterwards, you know. Then the engine in front began to steam bad, and what with us pushin' hard and it pullin' by fits, 'twasn't long before the cars were bumpin' and jerkin' pretty rough. Then I saw the conductor comin' back hard as he could. When he got within hearin' he yelled, 'For God's sakes stop that bumpin'. We have two cars of dynamite in the train. "Did I stop it? You better believe I did, and mighty quick, too. I blowed for brakes and the engineer in front answered, and as the grade there is about eighty feet to the mile we soon stopped. I sent my fireman forward to tell the other engineer to try and get his steam gauge up, and that I wasn't goin' to bump myself into eternity if I knew it. After he was gone I discovered my water was low and concluded to run back to a stand pipe about half a mile down the track to fill the tank. So, cuttin' the couplin' myself, I dropped down. I found afterwards the crew didn't know I had gone and had failed to put the brakes on the last cars, thinkin' my engine would hold 'em. "I hadn't more than got alongside the pipe than I caught a glimpse of the tall lamps of the train comin' lickety split towards me. I knew at once what had happened. The train had broke in two and part of it was runnin' wild down the hill. That often happens, you know, and there ain't much danger in stoppin' the wild cars; all that's necessary bein' for the engineer of the pusher to run backward slowly, so as to make the bump when it comes easier than if the engine was stopped. "But you can bet I wasn't hankerin' to stop two cars of dynamite that way, and when I saw 'em comin' I didn't stop at the pipe, but kept on goin'. My old pusher jumped, and then lit out down the hill. Jiminy crickets, how she was a hummin' in less than a minute, while the runaways was chasin' us hell bent. Scared? Well, mebbe I wasn't, though it wasn't long before we began to gain on the cars and leave them further behind. Lord! how the little drivin' wheels of that old pusher did hum. "All this time I was thinkin' and

thinkin' hard as well as fast. I knew that bein' on the east-bound track I might run slap bang into a train comin' up and what would be left after that wreck would be blown to Kingdom Come when the dynamite arrived. In a case of that kind a man's got to think and act mighty prompt, and it didn't take me long to form a plan. I had a good half mile lead then and steadily gainin', and if I had wanted to could have had time to stop, crawl behind a rock up on the hillside and see the biggest display of fireworks ever known when the dynamite knocked the engine into smithereens. "But I conjured up a better scheme than that in less time than it takes to tell. About three miles further down was an abandoned coal mine, with a siding connecting with the up track. If I could reach it in time to throw the switch the runaways could be turned off and do little damage beyond destroyin' themselves. On the other hand, if the night express should be near, and I knew she was about due, the consequences would be horrible if I failed. Bad predicament, wasn't it? But, as I said, in such cases a man's got to decide quick, and I made up my mind to risk it. "I pulled the throttle wide open and fastened the whistle rope so as to keep up a steady blowin'. Great Moses, how we spun down that grade! All the time the lamps on the runaways were twinklin' in plain sight, and I knew the cars must be comin' a-whizzin'. We passed a train goin' down on the other track, and, although it was makin' pretty fair speed itself, the engineer told me afterwards that I slid past him like as if the devil was chasin' me, and when, a minute or so later, the cars came along like a comet he thought I was a goner sure. "Well, I reached the sidin', and by usin' sand and reversin' got my engine stopped. Then I jumped for the switch. It was rusty and bent, but fortunately not locked. I gave it a terrific jerk, got it turned and then ran as hard as my legs would carry me. I was too busy gettin' out of the way to watch for the cars, but I heard 'em comin', and I remember thinkin' that if I jumped the switch and kept on down the main track it wouldn't be my fault. "Then there was a crash and a shock which seemed to come out of the sky. I was knocked head over heels by the concussion of the air, and when I crawled up on my feet it was rainin' pig. Fact, the sky was full of ready-made sausage meat. A car of hogs had broke loose with the dynamite, and, of course, went up when it exploded. Spare ribs and pork chops fell all over Cambria County that night, and a farmer livin' near the railroad got three whole hogs out of the tops of pine trees next day. I was so weak I could hardly reach my engine, but I managed to get her side-tracked and out of the way just as the express came along. "How did the company reward you, Pete?" asked Billy, as the engineer knuckled the ashes out of his pipe. "Laid me off a month for leavin' the train without noffyin' the conductor." —New York World.

A Momentous Time.

When Mrs. Spudkins called on her friend Mrs. Dinsmore the other evening she could see at once that something unusual was about to transpire. The latter was dressed in her very best gown, and she bravely tried to repress the tears that came involuntarily as she smiled upon her little daughter, and tried to make the tot happy in a hundred ways that only a mother knows. "I want her to remember me as she sees me now," said Mrs. Dinsmore. "I want her always to think of her mamma as handsome and sweet. For this reason I have arrayed myself in my very best before I change my clothes and go away from her." Here the mother wept, but wiped away the tears ere the child saw them. "Mercy," cried Mrs. Spudkins, as the nurse carried the child away, "what is going to happen? Are you going to India as a missionary, leaving your family here?" "Oh, no!" "Are you going to the hospital to die of an incurable disease?" "No." "You haven't got a divorce with the child given to the father?" "Oh, no!" "Then why these tears, and this solemnity of farewell?" "I am going to take my first lessons on the bicycle."

A Regulator.

The Chicago Tribune says: A watchman, who lives on Clark street, has invented a patent compeno-retarding accelerating clock for use in families where they keep unmarried daughters in stock. If the young man is of an eligible sort the retarding attachment is turned on and the clock combounds with old time at eighty minutes to the hour, so that at 1 A. M. the next morning it only indicates about 11:05 P. M., the night before, and the young woman is perfectly justified in saying: "Oh, don't; it is early yet," when the young man reaches for his hat. On the other hand, if he should not be desirable, they just shove up the indicator to boiling point, and by 9:30 it is nearly 2 o'clock. The patentee, casting himself upon the generosity of a discerning public, invites patrons to increase the efficiency of his invention by judicious yavus or remarks, as "Dear me! how the time does fly!" and in extreme cases an admirable effect may be produced by the father coming in with a bedroom candlestick and saying: "Good-night, Amanda. Before you go to bed see that when the girl gets up in the morning she leaves out the milk pitcher." No family should be without one.

Ancient Records Translated.

In 1803, when Humboldt was in the City of Mexico, he collected a number of the ancient Mexican hieroglyphic writings called "Maguey paintings," which were bequeathed by him to the Berlin Royal Library, and recently interpreted by Dr. Seier, curator of the American department of the Ethnological Museum, Berlin. They comprise accounts, lists of temple tributes, fragments of court trials, particulars of the royal domain, articles of faith, the Ten Commandments, and so on. The records cover a period from before the Spanish conquest to the year 1571. The results are published in a book of 137 pages octavo.—London Globe.

Cupid dehumanized is an angel.

THE WAY TO A MAN'S HEART.

One Woman Reaches It Through Her Husband's Stomach. "I suppose," said a clever little woman the other night at the play, "that I get to go to the theatre more than any woman of my acquaintance, mean being equal. You see, it's this way. The night John wanted me to go to the play, and, of course, I accepted, for I dearly love the play. After the theatre was over John was steering me straight for the restaurant. 'No, John,' said I firmly, 'we can't afford it. The play was treat enough. Let's be sensible; we had a good dinner, and we are not starving.' "Oh, hang the expense," said Mr. John. "We might as well round off with a bit of supper.' But I wouldn't; as John says, 'I stood pat.' We went on home, and my man wasn't in the best of humors, for when a man is hungry he doesn't think much of the virtue of economy. In fact, he said, by my pigheadedness I'd spoiled all the evening, and he'd 'be ding squizzled' (whatever that may mean) if he'd take me out again in a hurry. I kept my temper, as I was grateful for having seen so beautiful a play as 'Old Homestead,' and said nothing." says a writer in the New Orleans Picayune.

"Well, when we got home John threw the bedroom door open with a bang, and there in the middle of the floor was my sewing table with as dainty a lunch as one could wish. We had had a leg of mutton for dinner, and I had shredded down some of it, chopped up a couple of shallots fine and added two cold potatoes cut into dice and covered the whole with mayonnaise made after 'Catharine Cole's' prize recipe. Then there were a few olives and some dainty slices of bread and butter and bottled beer. All on a white cloth with chairs drawn up, and as cosy as could be. John was simply delighted. Since then he often asks me to go to the theatre, for he says he can stick me for a supper that tastes better than any hot bird and cold bottle that he could order down town."

"What else do you have for those suppers?" inquired a curious wife, who had never had the happy thought of playing hostess for only her husband. "Well, one night I made before starting—and I never let John know what we are to have—a nice dish of oyster soup. I sent for fifteen cents' worth of oysters and five cents' worth of milk. I took the juice of the oysters, scalded it, added the hot milk and finally plumped the oysters in. I had seasoned it with plenty of butter, pepper and sauce. Then I poured it all into a yellow bowl and set it away. That night when we got home I doused it all into a saucepan and heated it up over our grate fire, put some broken crackers in the bowl and poured it over them. It made a tip top supper for poor people, who in going to the theatre want to eat their cake and have it, too.

"And do you know, while I think it must be very well to go to the Pickwick, or elsewhere, for the hot birds and cold bottles, I think John and I are just as well off with our mayonnaise de mouton, or our pig's feet and our oyster soup and beer at home."

An Astonishing Echo.

At Mme. Arabelle's the conversation turned upon echoes, and a lady in the company declared that she knew of one that repeated a sound nine or ten times. "Pooh! that is nothing," said the Marquis; "I have an echo that can beat yours into fits." "Impossible!" said everybody in chorus. "You can put it to the test if you like."

Very well, we will step across to-morrow to hear for ourselves.

"Yes, come without fail," and so saying the Marquis took his departure, meditating a little scheme of his own. On reaching his mansion he sent for his lackey, Sancho by name. "You are up to all sorts of tricks, old chap. Do you think you could manage to play the part of an echo?" "Certainly, my lord; you have only to shout 'Ho! ho!' and I repeat the same."

"Very well; to-morrow afternoon you shall go and stand in that clump of trees behind the lake and repeat thirty times any call that you may hear, gradually lowering your voice; but mind—mum's the word!" Next day his lordship's friends came trooping into the park. Sancho was at his post, pricking up his ears. "Now, ladies and gentlemen, your doubts will soon be dissipated," said the Marquis; "will you be the first to try the experiment, madame?" "No, thanks, Marquis; your voice is louder and more effective for the purpose than mine." Whereupon the Marquis inflated his lungs and called out at the top of his voice: "Are you there?" "To which the echo made answer: "Yes, my lord, I've been here a couple of hours!"—La Fanielle.

Where a Whale is a Fish.

A conflict between the methods of the Seattle Custom House and the truths of natural history arose recently over the question of the amount of duty to be imposed upon an article imported from China. The goods in question are invoiced under a name no one but a Chinaman can understand, but are nothing else than the flesh of the whale put up in cans. George S. Bush, the broker who entered the goods, wanted them classified as canned meat, but Deputy Collector McDonald insisted upon classifying them as canned fish. There is no dispute about the goods being canned while, but an attempt to convince Deputy Collector McDonald that a whale was not a fish met with the response: "Regardless of natural history, for Custom House purposes a whale is a fish."

The duty on canned fish is 5 per cent. greater than on canned meat, and an appeal will be taken from the classification.

Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

Both Looked Blue.

"Have you seen Mrs. Frankstown lately?" "Yes; saw her yesterday or the day before, all decked out in a new suit of blue stuff of some kind or other. Looked stunning!" "Have you seen her husband lately?" "Yes; saw him too." "How did he look?" "Oh, he was blue, too."

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