

# The Bloomfield Times.

FRANK MORTIMER,  
Editor and Proprietor.

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## The Bloomfield Times.

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BY

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## A Mysterious Patient.

BY FRANK DELACY.

ONE EVENING while myself and several old friends were seated in Dr. Blank's office, telling stories of our past lives, one suggested that the doctor tell us some of the curious incidents that must have come to his knowledge during his long practice, in such a city as New York. He finally consented, and said he would tell us about his mysterious patient, as he had named him. I will tell the story as near as possible, in his own words.

"It had been nearly a year since I had hung out my sign, and as yet I had hardly been called to a single paying case." My rent was long past due, and I was in daily expectation of receiving notice to quit, or pay up. Just at this time I was not prepared for either, for if I left, I knew not where to go, and as to paying my rent it was impossible. This evening I had sat until quite late, thinking whether I had not better give up, trying to secure a practice in this city. I had finally come to the conclusion to hold on as long as my landlord's patience did not give out, and had just arose to close my office for the night, when I was surprised by hearing a carriage stop before my door, shortly followed by the entrance to my office, of a middle aged man, of genteel appearance. He carefully closed the door and taking a hasty glance around the room said, "if you are alone doctor, and disengaged I should like a few words with you." Telling him that I was at his service, he replied; "I suppose doctor that you like to practice, where you are sure of a good fee." Under existing circumstances, I was not disposed to deny this, and he continued; "I have a case in which your services are needed, but before engaging you, I must tell you that I shall require certain promises from you which may not be agreeable but which I must necessarily insist upon; but I assure that I require nothing, that you may not easily and honorably agree to. In return for your services, if you comply with my conditions, I shall pay one hundred dollars," and handing me five twenty dollar gold pieces, said, "here is the pay for your first visit, do you accept?"

"I must first know I replied, what are the conditions I am to agree to, though I needed the money so badly, I was ready to agree to anything not actually wicked."

"What I require," he replied, "is that after getting into the carriage now in waiting at the door, you allow yourself to be blindfolded and so to remain until you reach the room of your patient; and you are not to try to ascertain who your patient is, nor the manner in which his injuries were received. You shall be safely returned to your office, probably within two hours."

I thought over the proposition for a few moments and as I could really see no reason to apprehend danger from accompanying him, I signified my acceptance of his conditions. He then handed me the sum agreed upon, told me the nature of the case that I might know what instruments to take and in five minutes we were on our way. As soon as we started, he produced a handkerchief for a bandage which accor-

ding to promise, I allowed him to place over my eyes. We rode rapidly, for probably fifteen minutes, during which time we made so many turns that I could not even judge the direction we were from my office. When the carriage stopped my companion conducted me into the house, passing through a long hall and up a pair of stairs covered with a carpet so soft and thick that no sound of our footsteps could be heard and taking me into a room requested me to wait a few minutes, while he announced my arrival. From the rustle of garments I was sure that some lady was in the room although nothing was said, during the absence of my guide, who soon returned and informed me that he would now take me to the patient who was anxiously expecting me. He then led me from the room, across a hall as I thought, into an apartment opposite, when he removed my bandage, and pointing to another door, said, "you will find the patient needing your services in the room adjoining this." A quick survey of the furniture and ornaments, around the room, showed it to be the home of wealth and refinement. I had no time now to think much over the singular manner in which I had been brought there, though the question, why all the secrecy? would force itself upon me.

I found my patient to be a young man, probably about twenty-three years of age, and to be suffering from a severe fracture of the thigh and a severe cut on the head, with some internal injuries, which I judged came from a fall. It was apparent that the injuries had been received a day or perhaps two days previous, and I wondered greatly at the delay in securing surgical attention. After attending to his injuries in a proper manner, during which time I saw no other person except the gentlemen who had come for me—I signified my readiness to leave—when I was again blindfolded and returned to my office accompanied by my former companion. He removed my bandage as the carriage stopped at my office, and said, "I suppose doctor we can depend upon your services as we may need them." I assured him that he might, and wishing him "good night," went into my office to think over the singular circumstances attending this visit.

After I returned it was long before I could sleep and then I dreamed such strange dreams, that I awoke in the morning uncertain whether the whole affair, was not a delusion, and nothing but the gold received for the visit convinced me of the reality of the transaction. Although I had promised not to try to discover who my patient was, I must acknowledge that nearly my whole thought through the day was, "who is this mysterious patient and why all this secrecy?" but I arrived at no satisfactory conclusion. About ten o'clock in the evening I was again called for by the same person who came the evening previous, and again he paid me the hundred dollars, for a visit, requiring the same precautions.

In this manner I had made four visits receiving each time, the same fee, and as yet was as far as ever from arriving at any solution of the mystery. I could but wonder "why they should pay me so large a price for a secret visit, when ten dollars would pay for the visit in the regular manner of the best surgeon in New York," unless there was some crime connected with the case. What I saw on the premises showed every evidence of wealth and refinement, and I was unable to think in what way to connect any crime with the parties.

The morning after my fourth visit, in looking over a paper, I read a paragraph which it once explained as I thought, the whole affair. This you remember was before the days of telegraphs, and often quite important events would not be extensively known by the public for some days after they had happened. The article read as follows:

"On last Monday night, Charles Gordon who

was confined in Hackensack jail awaiting his trial upon the charge of killing Abner Henderson, made his escape. By the aid of some friends, he had procured tools with which he had cut the bars of his cell, and by tearing his bedclothes in strips had made a rope long enough to reach the ground. This rope was found to be broken near the top and from the appearance of the blood on the pavement he must have been badly hurt by the fall. It is probable that some of his friends were there to help him, as he could hardly have escaped after reaching the street, without their aid. No clue to his whereabouts, has as yet been discovered. He will probably have to apply for medical attention, and this may lead to his detection."

Charles Gordon, to whom the above referred, was the son of a wealthy broker in the lower part of the city. He had been exceedingly dissipated, going on from bad to worse, until in a drunken fight, a companion was killed, and he was arrested on the charge of murder.

All was now clear to me. Mr. Gordon to save his son the risk, and his family the disgrace of this trial for murder, had aided Charles to escape. The injuries received by the fall, had made it necessary to bring him home and care for him in this secret manner.

I was undecided, whether when asked again to visit my patient, to state my suspicions, demand an explanation or else decline to visit him again, or to say nothing and continue my visits as before. I finally decided, that as I might be wrong in my conclusions, and was so well paid for my services, that I would not relinquish so profitable case, on mere suspicion.

I therefore continued my calls whenever required and it was not until I had made eleven visits, that I thought my patient sufficiently recovered, to dispense with my services.

It was about a year after these visits ceased that a young man formerly an associate of Charles Gordon's was taken sick and died. Shortly before his death however he had duly drawn up and attested, a confession which Mr. Gordon had published stating that it was him who had killed Abner Henderson, and that Charles was perfectly innocent of that crime. Since his escape from prison no person seemed to know anything regarding the whereabouts of Gordon; but it was only a few months after the publication of this confession, however that a gentleman called at my office and introduced himself as "Charles Gordon," and I at once recognized him as my former patient. He had been living in Europe until he found that he could return without danger of being arrested on the charge of murder. During the time he was suffering from the injuries occasioned by his fall, he had thought over the evil of his ways and determined that in the future he would lead a different life. He carried out his good intentions, making an enterprising and useful citizen, and until his death which happened only about a year since he was one of my best friends.

I have always considered, that one of the most fortunate events of life was being called to visit this "mysterious patient."

### Horrible Treatment of a Child.

ON Monday night last week, the authorities of the city of Newport, O., received information that a child was being treated with excessive cruelty by its parents, residing on McArthur street. The facts set forth were deemed sufficient to justify an official investigation, and a visit to the premises was accordingly made.

The Mayor at once ordered the arrest of the father, John Weidinger, and placed the child in charge of a kind-hearted neighbor. The mother, having a young babe in her arms, was permitted to remain at home.—After the arrest the child was visited by thousands of citizens, and the feeling exhibited by the whole community was most intense. An examination of these two fiends in human shape was had before Mayor Buchanan Tuesday afternoon, and revealed the following additional facts; John Weidinger is step-father to the child, and a tailor by trade. Both parents are Germans. They had been treating the child cruelly

for more than a year. Although but little over six years of age, it has been given a certain amount of work to do daily, and a scanty supply of food in proportion to its deserts, measured by their unnatural judgment, which was sometimes scarcely sufficient to keep it alive. They have been in the habit of punishing the poor little fellow by placing him in a hole under the floor for hours at a time, of locking him up in the wood-shed at night, and of inhumanly beating him with a raw-hide.

The boy was stripped in Court, and his emaciated form and bruised and bloody body was enough to melt any heart not made of stone.

The only excuse offered by the brutal parents for their conduct was that the child was bad, and would steal, although no evidence was offered to show that he had ever taken anything except a piece of bread from another child, and that was probably induced by the pangs of hunger. Mayor Buchanan said it was evident the parents were not fit to exercise authority over their offspring, and as Mr. Frank Cook had taken the child, if it was agreeable he would willingly bind the child to him; if not, care should be taken to furnish a proper home.

The father was remanded to jail in default of \$300 bail. The mother was also remanded to jail for her own safety, the feeling of exasperation against her being such as to make it necessary for her bodily protection.

### How about Elijah.

A METHODIST minister was on his travels through the west of Illinois twenty years ago. Illinois was a wild place then. He traveled twenty miles one day before coming to a farm house. But there he was received with hospitality. Chicken pot pie and corn dodgers composed his supper, but to a hungry man these are as good as a truffled turkey.

A fine old grandmother of the house was most profuse in her hospitality. She pressed the hot pie upon the holy man's plate till he could eat no more. And then when the family was gathered around the great log chimney, and its blazing fire, the venerable dame opened her mouth and thus spoke:

"Ah, well-a-day! it's a grand comfort to have a minister of the Gospel in these parts. It's twenty years ago now since I have seen one 'em. I've been a readin' o' my bible all that time, and a waitin' to see a minister to ax him a question about sumthin' I don't rightly understand."

"Madam," answered the cautious minister, "I am so tired with my long ride that I could not enter into a serious conversation till I have slept; but if you will ask me tomorrow morning before I set out, I will answer it to the best of my ability."

The old lady expressed herself satisfied and the cunning minister secured a soft cot for the night. The next morning grandma was up early, and hard at work frying slappacks for the minister's breakfast. This last being dispatched, the old lady was still in a nervous fidget about her question, while the holy man's horse was saddled and brought to the door.

After adjusting his saddle bags and shaking hand with all the family, he mounted his horse, and turning to her asked:

"And now, madam, what is your question?"

"Waal, minister," said she, "yer know how it sez in the bible, that Elijah was made a prophet, the heavens opened and Elijah was taken to heaven in a chariot and horses o' fire. It's better nor twenty years sin' I see that ere in the bible, and I have puzzled over it ever since, an' there ain't a soul round these diggins knows anymore nor I. But you're a minister o' the Gospel an' ought to know all them things. Now, what I want to know is this: Did the Lord take Elijah right straight to

heaven or didn't he go kinder slantendicular?"

History has not recorded the minister's reply.

### A Foolish Custom.

THE foolish and ridiculous custom of asking others to drink, is responsible for there fourths of all the drinking done in this country. Abolish that custom to-day, and where there are eight barrels of liquor drank now, there would not be two. We believe this, and believe it can't be gainsayed. We appeal to any number of drinkers for their opinion on the subject. We think they will agree with, and corroborate our statement in the matter. To this custom we owe this "drinking between drinks," which some wag, with more truth than poetry in his soul, said was the only thing that hurt, or words to that effect. What a ridiculous piece of folly it is to go into a place, if in a mood for liquor, and to ask five or six acquaintances up to drink with you; yet it is done all the time, and by parties who perhaps needs the money for stockings; but not to do it when your acquaintances are about is to be looked upon upon as "small potatoes" and few in a hill. A most absurd, dreadful fraud, this "asking" in connection with liquor. Do we ask, coax, prevail, on acquaintances to go in and have neckties, gloves or boots with us? "Come in and take a bottle of wine with me?" men will say, and take you by the arm and in you go. Do they ever say, "Come in take a hat with me?" Are you continually urged to eat things? Do they ask you to take pocket knives, lead pencils, hair-dye, tooth-powder, paper collars or umbrellas with them? No; this "asking" business is confined to liquor. It is liquor liberality, or a custom rather, that extends itself to no other article, if we except oysters and cigars, but in this it is limited.

Take a party of six Germans who go in for their lager. They sit down, and each one drinks what he wants, and pays for what he drinks. He isn't forced and bawled because he don't drink more. The same with Englishmen, Frenchmen, and all other people on the face of the globe except Americans. You know how it would be with six of the latter, did they go in for lager. There would be thirty-six glasses drank, or paid for, if not all drank, because each must ask the other. Humbug! Folly!

Imagine a case like this, did the "asking" business extend beyond the confines of liquor. Two gentlemen walking up Broadway. One is attracted by a fine display of bottles—no boots, shoes, &c., in a window. "Bob let's go in and take some boots." "In they go!" "Take hold, Bob. What's your fancy?" "No, I thank you, Tom, but I'm not taking boots just now." "Oh, get in. Take a pair. One pair won't hurt you." "No, excuse me, Tom." "Take something else. Have a pair of shoes, boot-jack or gaiters. Take home a pair of boots to your wife. Don't see me do this thing alone." Bob comes down and takes a pair of boots. It's no use. Who could stand Tom's appeal?

Can't this thing be extended to boots, hats, umbrellas, tooth-brushes, nutmeg-graters, shirts, eye-glasses, carpet-bags, &c.? How cheap some of us could get along, if it could be. Give it a start, gentlemen. Do not let it be limited to liquor. If not let us say Teetotalers, if you would curtail the consumption of liquor, make an assault upon this absurd "asking" custom in vogue with us; and until you can do this, you need not expect any decrease in the liquor business.

The lion and the lamb may possibly suntime lay down in this world together for a few minutes, but when the lion kums to git up, the lamb will be missing.—Billings.

The lady whose blood curdled in her veins has ever since been sour in her disposition.