

THE CIPHER DISPATCH.

ONE MORNING after breakfast the front bell rang violently and immediately afterward a servant made his appearance at the door of my private apartment, and announced that a visitor wished to see me.

"Who is it, Thomas?" I asked. "I don't know who is, replied the servant. He's dressed fashionable, and didn't say his name, sir, and is a young chap. I think as maybe it's a young fellow for the clerkship as you wanted. How's ever he didn't say, sir."

"Very well, Thomas," said I. "You may show him into the parlor, and I will be down presently."

The servant accordingly withdrew, and soon after I descended into the sitting-room, where sat a fine-looking young man, aged 23 or thereabouts, who immediately arose upon my entrance and stood by his chair in an attitude of the most profound respect.

"Good morning, sir," said I. "You wished to see me, I believe."

"Yes, sir," said he, becoming seated again as I took a chair; "I owe an apology for the inconvenience to which I have subjected you by so early an intrusion."

"The inconvenience is so light as not to require an apology," said I. "Pray proceed."

"I saw your advertisement for a book-keeper, and wishing to engage myself in that capacity, called to see about it," he said. "I can give unexceptionable reference as to my ability, and with me a large salary is not so much desired as a straightforward situation."

It came over me as he sat there with his eyes roving all over the room, talking in the same even, unchanging voice as he did, that this man had learned his speech by heart, and was delivering himself of a certain prescribed form (without any idea what it meant), while his mind was busy with an inspection of the contents of the apartment—or that he was like some wooden-talking machine with no feeling in what he said, and he himself entirely disconnected from it.

"Who are your references?" I asked. "Lindsay, Weed, Storms & Co.," he said, giving his handkerchief another turn. "I was their assistant bookkeeper for six months, and during that time fulfilled the position with ability and to the credit of those concerned."

"Very well," said I, rising; "you may call around to my office at nine o'clock, and perhaps we may effect some arrangement."

With a parting glance all over the room, which included everything but myself, he bowed himself backward out of the door and vanished.

That morning on my way to my place of business, I called on the importing establishment of Lindsay, Weed, Storms & Co., and ascertained that what the young had said in reference to himself was strictly true; therefore, when he made his appearance at my office promptly at nine o'clock, I engaged him immediately and he entered upon his duties forthwith.

He was, I confess, the best penman I had ever seen, and being thoroughly acquainted with the art of double-entry book-keeping, fulfilled the position for which I had employed him with entire satisfaction to myself. Aside from this work, there was something about the young man I did not exactly like—a peculiar, reserved way with him, during his stay with me, I never understood, and I suppose I might always have remained in ignorance concerning its meaning had not the circumstance I am about to relate thrown some light upon his true character.

One forenoon about two weeks after the engagement of my new clerk I had occasion, while he was absent, to go to his desk and saw, lying on the floor just beneath it, a half sheet of foolscap paper on which were inscribed, in my book-keepers handwriting the following characters, which appeared to constitute a key to some secret record or correspondence:

14 15 1 2 16 17 3 4 18 19 5 6 20 11 7

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z &

On what slight incidents are great events based! I carelessly put the piece of paper into my pocket, where it lay for months, forgotten by myself, to be brought forth at last as the instrument wherewith two villains were brought to justice, and as the means by which I was saved the loss of a large sum of money.

One day, after the banks had closed I was paid the sum of three thousand dollars which I placed within a drawer in my small office safe, intending it should remain there over night, and the next day I would put on deposit. Gannett (my new clerk) was present and appeared very observant of what I was doing—following my every motion with an eager, nervous, excited glance, which although it attracted my attention at the time, did not impress me as a matter of importance, and was soon out of my mind; though afterward I had cause to remember it very distinctly.

"Gannett," said I, as I swung too the safe door, locked it carefully, and put the key in my pocket.—By the way as well state here that I was the only one who

had a key.—"Gannett, you know, of course, about the money, and to insure its safety I wish you would do me a favor."

"I am ready to oblige at any moment—the present none the less," said he.

"Well, then," said I, "I would like to have you sleep in the office all night, and guard against burglars. You can sleep on the couch, and keep the fire burning so you will be warm and comfortable. Of course I shall pay you extra for the trouble."

"It will be a happiness to do so," said Gannett, somewhat eagerly I afterwards thought, "I care not for extra pay."

"I am sorry to have to cause you so much trouble and inconvenience," said I gratified at the readiness with which he acquiesced, "and I hope it will not often occur. By the way, Gannett," I added putting on my over coat, "I shall not be back at the office to-night, for I am going to the city on the five o'clock train. You and Wilson see to things while I am gone—though I shall probably return to-morrow. Good-night."

"Good-night, Mr. Parker. You can depend upon my faithfully carrying out your directions."

The unusual cordiality with which he spoke, combined with the fact that he made use of my name for the first time of my remembrance, occasioned me some surprise; however, I soon left him at the desk, and wrapping my overcoat closely around me, went out into the cold wintry air, and wended my way homeward.

After partaking of a hearty meal I proceeded to the depot, and took the five o'clock train for the city, at which I arrived two hours later.

In my younger days I had been employed in a telegraph office, and had become a competent operator, though for various reasons I did not like the business, and after having worked at it for a few years, resigned my position to engage in something more congenial to my taste. Among the many acquaintances I had formed at that time was that of a young fellow by the name of Taylor, who was also an operator, and at the time of which I write, was employed by the telegraph company in their down-town office, where for old acquaintance sake, I called without delay and found him seated by his instrument engaged in the perusal of the evening papers, with his feet comfortably resting on the top of an adjoining chair.

"Taylor, said I, advancing toward him, "how are you?"

"Halloo, Parker, is that you!" he exclaimed, rising from his seat. "Give us your fin, old fellow and how goes it?"

"First rate," I replied shaking hands; "you still keep at the old trade, I see."

"Yes, and probably always shall. Here is the paper; sit down and be comfortable. I've got to receive this message that's coming. No peace for the wicked," and certainly not for telegraph operators."

I took the seat he offered, and spreading the paper out before me, began to read—my friend in the meantime taking down the dispatch and otherwise busying himself about the instrument, which had commenced clicking in a very lively and animated manner.

"It's from your place," he said, presently.

"Is it?" said I folding the paper to get at the inside.

"It's in cipher too," he added, soon afterward.

"From my place and in cipher?" I repeated, throwing aside the paper.

"Who is it from?"

"Haven't come to that yet."

I had become strangely interested, I scarcely knew why, and waited patiently for the complete transmission of the message.

The instrument went on clicking, at a great rate, and presently Taylor began to spell aloud, as fast as it came over the wires, the name appended to the dispatch.

"G—a—m—n—e—t—t. Gannett," said he.

"Gannett!" I exclaimed, starting up. "Why, he's my clerk! Taylor let me see that dispatch."

Although the proceedings were somewhat irregular—it not being usual for telegraph officials to allow third parties to become acquainted with the contents of other people's messages,—my friend, under the present circumstances—which were considered a partial justification for the act, handed me the paper on which he had transcribed the message, and glancing over it eagerly, I saw what follows:

"To Wm. Jackson, 119 Coppice street:

10-4-23-16-16 4-7-24 9-14-21-22-7 6-4-14-23-9-18-21-10-4-16-9-14-17-15-13-8-24-23 5-16-23-5-7-21 16-10-18-6 6-10-7-20-7-23-23-7-11-1-7-30 16-2-7-11-31 11-18-10-4-16-10-7-7-5-9-18-30-16-3-18-14-10-16-6-9-13-14-10-7-31-16-15-16-18-10-10-4-16 7-17-17-18-1-16-13-15-11-18-6-5-16-10-26-7-24 18 21-18-9-6-16-16-8-10-4-14-13-17

GANNETT.

"Who is this Jackson—the man to whom the dispatch is addressed—or don't you know?" I asked.

"Runs a sort of blacksmith shop and makes tools," said Taylor. "I don't like his looks—he's vinegar-visaged."

I hardly know why it was; but the fact of my clerk having sent a telegraph dispatch in cipher looked very suspicious to me, and I instinctively thought of the paper I had found under his desk, and which was still in my pocket.

"Taylor," said I, "I wish you would allow me to keep a copy of this dispatch. It may affect my interests more than you think for."

"Well, if you think it does, go ahead," said Taylor. "Only don't get me into hot water—that's all."

"I'll take care of that, Taylor," said I going to desk and sitting down before it. "Now, leave me alone a few minutes and I'll see if I can solve this mystery."

Although I am not naturally of a prying or inquisitive disposition, and detest as much as any one the spirit that actuates a person to pry into the affairs of others and become a party to that which does not concern him, yet in the present case I felt justified in the course I was pursuing, and did not hesitate to do all in my power to decipher the mysterious figures and ascertain, if possible, what was engaging the attention of my clerk to such an extent that he required the medium of a secret alphabet through which to communicate with his friends.

By the aid of the piece of paper I have heretofore mentioned I soon obtained the following translation:

"To Wm. Jackson, 119 Coppice st.: Three thousand dollars in the safe and Parker gone till to-morrow. Come down with the tools immediately and at one be at the office and I will let you in."

GANNETT.

I could deduce from this dispatch only one conclusion, which was, that my clerk was taking advantage, of the confidence I reposed in him, and of my absence from home, to enter into a conspiracy with some villain to burglarize my safe, and carry off the three thousand dollars contained therein.

In a perfect thrill of excitement I had my friend a hasty good-by, and telling him I would more fully explain at some other time, ran back to the depot and took the night train for home.

As we whirled onward in the darkness, I resolved the whole matter over in my mind, and came to a decision as to what plan I should pursue—which will be better illustrated by the actual facts as they occurred.

Going directly to the police office, I communicated my discovery to the chief, who set a trap by means of which the burglars were caught in their nefarious schemes.

The depot was watched, and a stranger carrying in his hand a large satchel, was observed to get off from the half-past eleven o'clock train from the city, who, after loitering about in by-ways and alleys for nearly two hours, finally took his way to my office, on the door of which he gave a peculiar knock and was at once admitted by Gannett.

The officers waited on the outside a sufficient length of time for them to get fairly at work, and then, breaking into the store, found one man engaged in blowing powder into the key-hole of the safe, and the other—my clerk—looking over the burglar's tools that the satchel contained.

Both Gannett and his bosom friend Jackson were provided for by the authorities of the State of New York.

Hurt his Feelings.

THERE are few married men who are not averse to seeing their wives kissed, but an exchange relates the particulars of a case in which a newly-wedded Benedict felt himself insulted because his wife wasn't kissed. The bridegroom in question was a stalwart young rustic, who was known as a formidable operator in a "free fight." His bride was a blooming and beautiful country girl, only sixteen years of age, and the twain were at a party where a number of young folks of both sexes were enjoying themselves in the good old-fashioned style. Every girl in the room was called out and kissed, except R., the beautiful young bride aforesaid, and although there was not a youngster who was not dying to taste her lips, they were restrained by the presence of her hereulanean husband, who stood regarding the party with a look of sullen dissatisfaction. They mistook the cause, for suddenly he expressed himself.

Rolling up his sleeves he stepped into the middle of the room, and in a tone of voice that secured marked attention, said:

"Gentlemen, I have been noticing how things have been working here for some time, and I ain't satisfied. I don't want to raise a fuss, but—"

"What's the matter, John?" inquired half a dozen voices. "Have we done anything to hurt your feelings?"

"Yes, you have; all of you have hurt my feelings, and I have just got this to say about it. Here's every girl in the room has been kissed near a dozen times apiece, and there's my wife, who I consider as likely as any of 'em, has not had a single one to night; and I just tell you now, if she don't get as many kisses the rest of the night as any girl in the room, the man who slights her has got me to fight—that's all. Now go on with your plays."

Life is a book of which we can have but one edition. Let each day's actions, as they add their pages to the indelible volume, be such as we shall be willing to leave an assembled world read.

SUNDAY READING.

For The Bloomfield Times.

There's Not a Cloud Between me and my Saviour.

[During one of the battles in our late war, a soldier lay dying, and when asked if he was prepared, he said, "There's not a cloud between me and my Saviour."]

"There's not a cloud," Oh! precious words to fall from dying lips!

"Between the Saviour's face and mine, there resteth no eclipse."

"There's not a cloud?" Then there's no fear, no shirking, trembling feet;

No wavering faith, no lingering doubt, but trust and love complete.

"No cloud!" Thank God! no shadow steals athwart the Jasper walls;

No mist obscures the pearly gates—calm sunlight on them falls;

No dimming veil, with folds of gloom, shuts from thy longing sight;

The waving palms, the golden streets, the crystal waters bright.

No darkness hides the Shepherd's hand that leads thee safe along;

No sullen roar breaks on thy ear, to drown the angelic song;

No whirling waves dash o'er thy bark; serenely doth it glide

Adown the stream, to anchor safe, beyond the swelling tide.

"There's not a cloud!" Oh! ye who mourn for that brave soldier slain;

Words like these, bring healing balm to soothe your bitter pain;

Infinite love now shelters him; all mortal strife is o'er;

Sickness or sorrow, grief or woe can trouble him no more.

No fiery shot, no rending shell, no sickening clash of steel;

No heavy roll of beating drum, nor cannon's awful peal;

No stern array in battles' front, of fierce and vengeful foes

Can break the holy peace that marks the soldier's last repose.

"There's not a cloud!" Oh! blessed words, when all of life is given;

When earth recedes, and heaven draw the blissful shores of heaven;

Then may these words in triumph tones fall from my dying lips:

"Between the Saviour's face and mine, there resteth no eclipse."

ANONYMOUS.

Guard Against Vulgarity.

We especially commend the following extract to the thoughtful study of the young. Nothing is so disgusting and repugnant to the feelings of the noble and good as to hear the young, or even the old, use profane, low or vulgar language.

The young of our towns are particularly guilty of profanity. In our day it seems the "boy" does not feel himself a "man" unless he can excel in this great sin.

We would guard the young against the use of every word that is not strictly proper. Use no profane expression—allude to no sentence that will put to blush the most sensitive. You know not the tendency of habitually using indecent and profane language. It may never be obliterated from your heart. When you grow up you will find at your tongue's end some expression which you would not use for any money, which was used when quite young. By using care you will save yourself a great deal of mortification and sorrow.

Good men have been taken sick and become delirious. In these moments they used the most vile and indecent language imaginable. When informed of it after restoration to health, they had no idea of the pain they caused; they had learned and repeated the expressions in childhood, and though years had passed since they had been indelibly stamped upon the heart. Think of this, you who are tempted to use improper language, and never disgrace yourselves."

Secret Happiness.

An Italian bishop, who had struggled through many difficulties without repining, and been much opposed without manifesting impatience, being asked by a friend to communicate the secret of his being always so happy, replied, "It consists in a single thing, and that is, making a right use of my eyes."

His friend, in surprise, begged him to explain his meaning. "Most willingly," replied the bishop. "In whatsoever state I am, I first of all look up to heaven, and remember that my great business is to get there. I then look down upon earth, and call to my mind how small a space I shall soon fill in it. I then look look abroad in the world, and see what multitudes are, in all respects, less happy than myself. And thus I learn where true happiness is placed, where all my cares must end, and how little reason I ever had to murmur or to be otherwise than thankful. And to live in this spirit is to be always happy."

Trust men, they will be true to you; treat them greatly, and they will show themselves great, though they make an exception in your favor, to all their rules of trade.

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For information relative to the Patenting of lands, call on or address S. H. GALBRAITH, Attorney-at-Law & County Surveyor, Bloomfield, March 8, 1879.—11