

The Bloomfield Times.

FRANK MORTIMER,
Editor and Proprietor.

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ISABEL.

SOFT waves of warm brown hair,
With gold lights shining through,
Shading a face as sweetly fair
As ever fancy framed in air,
As ever painter drew.
Sweet spirit, frank and true,
With love, with kindness rife;
What tender heart but to thee drew!
What kindly eye but in thee knew
The sunshine of our life!
Sweet Spring, bright summer past,
And Autumn come again;
The west-wind's spools are falling fast;
What is our change bro't with that blast?
Why fall our tears like rain?
Only a new-turned heap,
One little grave, new made;
Bare is the earth o'er which we weep;
Never a flower to pluck and keep,
Never a grassy blade.
Silence, where late was mirth;
One mother's heart half-given;
One vacant seat beside a hearth;
One loving spirit less on earth;
One angel more in Heaven.

A Fortunate Imprisonment.

SOME twenty years ago I was cashier in a bank situated in the city of Milwaukee, in the State of Wisconsin. Although a large place now, Milwaukee at the time I refer to was a long, straggling town, with a rough class of inhabitants. Like all places on the extreme verge of civilization, the law was almost a dead letter. Horse thieves, robbers and murderers, were there in such numbers that they struck terror into law-abiding citizens, and no jury could be found to convict the most heinous offender. If it chanced to leak out that any of the twelve jurors were in favor of bringing in a verdict of guilty, his or their lives were sure to pay the forfeit of their sense of justice. As a natural consequence of living in such a state of society, every man walked abroad with his life in his hand, and without a single exception every one went armed to the teeth. I have known men to be shot down like dogs for a word or even a look. There were hundreds of men who made it their special business to try to pick up quarrels with the better class, that they might have an opportunity of killing and robbing them. You will readily understand that carrying on a bank under these circumstances was a most arduous task. Every one of the employees was heavily armed, and the vaults built for the specie and valuables of the bank were all of the most massive character. In fact so much was this the case, that they became a kind of a show place for strangers; and every one who happened to be detained in the city was sure to visit the vault of the Citizens' Bank. Our president was a strong, powerful, energetic man, who had more than once proved his courage in a melee; consequently the ruffians of the place kept him at a distance, and for two years after the bank was started, no one offered to molest us. We had received orders from him to shoot down the first man who showed the slightest disposition to be aggressive. Mr. Baintree, for such was our president's name, was accustomed to mingle a great deal with the rougher portion of the community, thinking by this means he might learn if there was any scheme on foot to attack the bank. Of course these inquiries were always made in disguise, and indeed, Mr. Baintree possessed the art of so altering his features that he could deceive his own family and particular friends when assisted by a change of dress. He had carried out his plan for about two years without anything occurring to prove its necessity or usefulness, when one hot July morning he entered the bank about an hour earlier than was usual with him.

"Good morning, Mr. Archer," said he to me, as he took off his fine black coat, and put on an easy-fitting blouse. "Good morning, Mr. Baintree. You are early this morning." "Yes—I have something particular to tell you, and I thought it better to lose no time. You must know, in the first place, that I visited the 'Three Swans' last night." The "Three Swans" was one of the lowest taverns in the place, and the rendezvous for all the desperate characters in the town and neighborhood. There was scarcely a night passed that some one was not killed there. "You visited in disguise, I suppose?" I remarked. "Certainly. I was disguised as a drover, and had the extreme pleasure of being taken for a horse thief by all the scoundrels present." "That is at least a compliment to your success in disguising yourself," I returned. "Yes—that's true. I learnt something at the 'Three Swans' last night, Mr. Archer, which nearly concerns us." "Indeed," I returned, pricking up my ears. "You have heard of 'White Haired Bobby'?" said Mr. Baintree. "Do you mean the great bank robber?" I asked. "Yes, he himself. He has robbed more banks than any ten men in the United States together. He has never failed in one instance. His success in breaking into safes and vaults has something marvellous in it. He works generally in company with a friend of his who goes by the name of 'Slippery Jim.'" "I have heard of that rascal, too," I returned. "Well now for my information. I learned last night that White Haired Bobby and Slippery Jim are about to visit Milwaukee for the express purpose of depriving the Citizens' Bank of its specie and valuables." "The deuce they do!" was all I could say. "Mr. Archer, I do not intend that this worthy pair shall accomplish their purpose, so I want you to keep an extra lookout. I shall visit the Three Swans nightly for some weeks, to find out, if possible, the moment they arrive." Six weeks passed away and we heard no more of "White Haired Bobby" or "Slippery Jim." Mr. Baintree continued to visit the "Three Swans" nightly but heard nothing further. We came to the conclusion that the two famous bank robbers had changed their minds and had gone to exercise their enterprising profession in a different field. We had forgotten all about the matter, when one Saturday, in the middle of the month of September, while we were busily engaged in our various duties, a clerical individual entered and asked to see the president. The request was addressed to me, and I had an excellent opportunity for observing his external appearance. He appeared to be about forty-five years of age, of commanding presence. His face was fresh, fair, and exceedingly healthy looking. His hands were very white, and he wore a fine diamond ring on the little finger of the right hand. He was dressed in a suit of black which fitted him perfectly, and must have been made by a first class tailor. It was this black suit together with the whitest and stiffest of cravats, and a short-sighted eye-glass which dangled from his neck, and which he every now and then raised to his eyes, that gave him the intense clerical appearance to which I have referred above. "Do you wish to see Mr. Baintree on business?" I asked. "Not exactly on business," returned the stranger, "but if he is disengaged, I should like to speak to him." "Here is Mr. Baintree now," I replied, as the president stepped out of his private room into the bank. "Mr. Baintree," said the stranger, courteously removing his hat and speaking in the most polite tone, "allow me to introduce myself. My name is Elliot, the Rev. Robert Elliot. I am an Episcopal clergyman, lately appointed pastor to a church in St. Paul's. I am now on my way there, but cannot leave until Monday." At my hotel to-day I heard the landlord speak of the extraordinary safety vault you have attached to this bank. As I have a penchant for seeing such structures, I have thought perhaps you would allow me to see yours, of which I have heard so much." "Certainly, sir, with pleasure," replied Mr. Baintree, who by the way was particularly partial to clergymen, doubtless because they formed such a striking contrast to the inhabitants of frontier cities. "Mr.

Archer," added my chief. "will you be good enough to light the dark lantern and accompany us?" It wanted about twenty minutes to our usual hour of closing the bank, and I had just finished my work. Had such not been the case, I should in all probability have sent one of the clerks in my place. There was nothing, however, to prevent me from doing as the president requested; I therefore lighted a dark lantern, and we all three descended the steps leading to the vault. The specie and valuables of the bank were kept in an immense iron safe which was placed in a stone chamber. The walls of this chamber were of extraordinary thickness and the entrance to it was through a massive iron door, which was secured by a thick bar of iron fastened by an immense padlock. By this means the specie of the bank was doubly protected, for even supposing that a robber should succeed in obtaining an entrance into the stone vault, he would still have to force the immense safe, a matter of impossibility, unless he happened to possess the secret, which was turning the handle around exactly seven times. Once more or less would be of no avail. I unlocked the padlock, leaving the key in the lock, and we all entered the stone vault. The Rev. Mr. Elliot appeared to be strangely interested in the place. He gazed around him in seeming wonder; he measured the thickness of the walls, and the length and breadth of the stone room. "Very secure! very secure, indeed!" he murmured. "You can set bank robbers at defiance with a room like this, Mr. Baintree." "Yes, sir; I believe we can. For even if any one should succeed in getting into the stone vault they would have still the safe to force." "True, very true," responded the reverend gentleman, "but I notice one peculiarity about your safe," he added, glancing toward it as he spoke, "you have no lock on it." "It is not necessary," returned Mr. Baintree, "for unless a person happened to know the secret of opening the door, I would defy him to open it. You see," added the president, suiting the action to the word, "in order to effect an entrance, it is necessary to turn the handle around exactly seven times." After the seventh time, Mr. Baintree gave a strong pull and the heavy door slowly turned on its hinges. The reverend gentleman glanced inside with excusable curiosity. "Very curious! very curious indeed," he murmured. "How wonderful is the ingenuity of man!" At that moment Mr. Baintree called the clergyman to see something else in the stone vault and they both moved away to the extreme end of the apartment. On glancing into the safe I noticed that two ledgers were out of their places. I entered the safe to place them in their respective cases, when either the clergyman or Mr. Baintree brushing past the safe, unconsciously knocked against the door, as he did so, which gave it an impetus that closed it on me, the bolts shot noiselessly into their sockets and I was a prisoner. There was an acoustic phenomenon connected with this safe which I never heard explained, and that was, any one shut inside could hear every word that was uttered in the vault, while no noise that he might make could reach those outside. I was aware of this peculiarity and knew that it was utterly useless for me to call out. The only hope I had was, that when Mr. Baintree missed me he would surmise where I was. But in a few moments this illusion was dispelled. "Why, where can Mr. Archer be?" I heard Mr. Baintree observe. "Oh! I remember now, he had an engagement after banking hours, and I suppose he has gone to keep it, but I think he might have left the lantern with me. But we can find our way out easy enough." I heard them leave the vault, the iron bar put in its place, and the key turned in the padlock. I realized the fact that there was no hope for me. I was a prisoner, and that I had to remain until Monday morning. It was no pleasant thing to contemplate remaining shut up there for forty-two hours without food or water; but there was no help for it, for I knew that all the screaming in the world would only be so much breath wasted; I therefore determined to take matters as philosophically as I could, and not indulge in useless repinings.

Fortunately in the safe was a volume of Shakespeare, and the dark lantern was also in my possession. I made a seat for myself on some ledgers and turning down the lamp to a point at which I could read conveniently, I began to enjoy myself as well as the circumstances of the case would permit. I read for five or six hours, and I can safely affirm that I never enjoyed Shakespeare as well before. The absolute quiet prevailing, and the fact of being shut off from all exterior influences seemed to make me appreciate the hidden beauties of the great poet much more clearly than I ever did in my life. I read till I grew sleepy. I then made a bed for myself of the account books, turned the lantern down to the faintest glimmer for the sake of saving oil, and closing my eyes, I was soon fast asleep. When I awoke and looked at my watch I found it was ten o'clock on Sunday morning. I had therefore slept about twelve hours. I felt very hungry, but I knew that I had twenty-four hours more to pass there before I could get anything to eat, so I determined to try and sleep as much of my time as possible, remembering the French proverb, "qui dort dine." I read a great deal of Shakespeare during the day, and about 8 o'clock in the evening I again composed myself to sleep. I was suddenly awakened by the sound of voices in the stone vault, and naturally supposing that it was ten o'clock on Monday morning, and that some of the clerks were coming to open the safe, I glanced at my watch and found to my extreme surprise that it was exactly twelve o'clock at night. By some intuition the truth struck me in a moment. It was some one come to rob the bank, and the reverend visitor of the day before was a spy. The first words I heard confirmed the truth of this conclusion, for I heard the Rev. Mr. Elliott's voice exclaim to his confederate: "Well, here we are in this famous stone vault—do you know Jim, we got in much easier than I expected." "Thanks to your visit on Saturday afternoon, Bobby, as one of the black-coated-gentry." The robbers then were the famous 'White Haired Bobby' and 'Slippery Jim.' "Yes," returned Bobby, "I think I gammoned the two buffers pretty well.—You see, Jim, what it is to be a man of education. I should just like to see you in the part of the Rev. Mr. Elliot, and see what a figure you'd cut in it." "That ain't in my line, no how—but I tell you what, Bobby, you can't beat me at picking a lock." "You are pretty good at that, and no mistake. But come, let us get at the saw." "You are sure you haven't forgotten how to open the safe, Bobby?" "No indeed; the fool told me that it was by turning the handle round seven times. Of all the blessed babies I ever saw, I never saw any one to come up to this man, Baintree." I saw that it was now time for me to act. Fortunately I had my pistol with me. I drew it from my pocket, cocked it, and turned up the lantern to its full, I waited for the door of the safe to be opened, realizing fully that my only chance of overpowering the two ruffians, was to take them by surprise. For if I allowed them to recover themselves from the sudden effect of my appearance, they being two to one, would soon overpower me. I had not long to wait. I heard the handle turn seven successive times, and then Bobby gave a strong pull at the heavy door of the safe. It yielded, but in a moment, I stepped out with the dark lantern turned full on the robbers and with my arm stretched out holding the cocked pistol in my hand. The effect of my appearance on Bobby and Jim, was absolutely terrific. They must have thought me a ghost, for they both turned livid with fear. Before they had time to recover themselves, I knocked Jim senseless to the floor with the butt end of my pistol; and then springing on the other, I grasped him by the throat and bore him to the ground. Fortune favored me in another respect, for I saw hanging out of the pocket of the ruffian I had under me, a strong piece of cord. He struggled violently, but I was the stronger man of the two, and succeeded in binding him fast without much trouble. When I had White Haired Bobby secured I turned my attention to his companion,

who, fortunately for me, remained in a condition of insensibility. In five minutes I had them both so securely bound that they could not move hand or foot. I left them while I went to arouse the house. I proceeded first to Mr. Baintree's room. He slept over the bank. I knocked loudly at his door. "Who's there? What is it?" he exclaimed. "Get up, Mr. Baintree," I cried out, "White Haired Bobby and Slippery Jim have made an attempt to rob the bank. They are both now lying in the vault securely bound." "You are jesting, Archer," said Baintree, jumping out of bed and opening the door. "It is the positive truth. The Rev. Mr. Elliot, to whom you so obligingly showed the vault on Saturday afternoon, and explained to him how to open the safe, was none other than White Haired Bobby himself." It was a minute or two before Mr. Baintree could realize the news I brought him. At last the truth began to dawn on his mind. "You say the villains are securely bound on the floor in the vault?" "Yes." "But who bound them?" he asked more and more puzzled. "I did." "Who helped you?" "No one." "But how the deuce comes it that you were on the spot?" I then told him how I had been fastened in the safe and he began to see through the fog. While this conversation had been progressing, Baintree had been dressing himself. We went down together, summoned the officers of the law, and all proceeded to the vault. We found our prisoners just where I had left them, and in a quarter of an hour they were safely lodged in jail. It was the last exploit of White Haired Bobby and Slippery Jim, for they were tried, and public opinion having at last aroused at their terrible contempt of laws, human and divine, they were sentenced to penitentiary for life. Mr. Baintree and the directors of the bank amply compensated me for my incarceration, declaring that it was the most "fortunate imprisonment" that had ever occurred.

Not The Lady.

A well known minister, walking along the street a few days since, met a lady for whom he had recently performed the marriage service. Desiring to renew the acquaintance (for the lady had interested him greatly at the time) he accosted her with the remark: "Madam, did I not have the pleasure of marrying you a few days since?" "I was married a few days since, sir." "Yes I thought I was not mistaken; I married you." "Indeed! Well, I thought my husband was a much younger man than you are; but I have not seen enough of him to make his acquaintance thoroughly. By-the-way my dear, my chignon is getting shabby; please give me some money to buy a water-fall." Evidently this was more than the minister bargained for, and with hasty bow, accompanied by the remark, "No, you are not the lady—I'm mistaken," he took his leave. A curious story is told of three young candidates for a Scottish ministry. The first one put upon his trial, while putting on his robes, happened to desecrate an ancient looking, well-worn roll of paper, which proved to be a sermon on the text, "Jacob was a plain man dwelling in tents." Seeing that the old sermon was much better than his new one, the aspirant to pulpit honors took possession of it, delivered it as his own, and then returned it to its old resting place. The sermon was a good one, and pleased the hearers, although they would have preferred one delivered without the book. Great was their astonishment the following Sunday when preacher No. 2 treated them with the same sermon from the same text; but it was too much for Scottish patience when a third minister falling into the same trap, commenced his sermon by announcing that "Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents," and one old woman relieved the feelings for her fellow-sufferers by exclaiming: "De'il dwell him! Is he never gaun to flit?"