

Judge Crane.

An Amusing Story.

SHORTLY after the first Republican Constitution of the State of New York was framed, and the judiciary department was established for the civil department of the supreme court, or that branch called the "circuit court" was appointed for one of the circuits in the county of Dutchess, and the eccentric Judge Crane was to preside.

Judge Crane was very wealthy, and highly respected for his public virtues, especially for his charitableness to the poor; but he always dressed in plain garb, and would hardly wear any overcoat, whatever the weather might be, and it was seldom he rode when he went abroad, although he owned many valuable horses. On the morning of the day on which the court was to begin, the judge set out before day, and walked gently on, through hail, rain and snow, to the appointed place. On arriving at Poughkeepsie, cold and wet, he walked to a tavern, where he found the landlady and her servants were making large preparations for the entertainment of the judges, lawyers and other gentlemen whom they expected to attend the circuit court. The judge was determined to have some sport, and in a pleasant tone addressed the landlady: "I have no money, and was obliged to come to court, and I have walked more than twenty miles through this dreadful storm. I am wet and cold, dry and hungry. I want something to eat before the court begins."

When the landlady put herself in a majestic posture, and putting on the countenance of contempt, said to the judge, "You say you are wet and cold, dry and hot, how can all that be?"

"No, my dear madam," said the Judge. "I said I was wet and cold; and if you had been out as long as I have in the storm, I think you would likewise be wet and cold. I said that I wanted something to drink and eat."

"But you have no money, you say," retorted the landlady.

"I told the truth, and nothing but the truth," said the Judge, "and if I were as rich as Croesus, I would be willing to work for something to eat and drink."

"Croesus, who is Croesus?" said the landlady.

"I never knew him," but I understood he was very rich. I want something to eat and something to drink, and were I as poor as Job in his utmost calamity, and my health and strength, as well as I am now, I would willingly go to work for a little while, if I could get something to drink and a bit of good victuals."

"Well, daddy," said she, "how much do you want to drink?"

"Half a gill of good brandy," said he.

"Very well," said she, "I will give you half a gill, and some cold victuals, if you will go into the back yard, and cut and split three arm-fuls of wood, and bring it into the kitchen where the servants want to make a good fire to dry the gentlemen's coats when they come, and after you get your victuals, I want you to go away."

He drank his brandy, went into the woodyard and soon cut and laid beside the stove the required amount of wood.

The landlady placed a cold luncheon before him, remarking "that there it was."

"And it is almost as cold as myself," said the Judge, "but not half so wet, for I see neither tea, coffee, nor chocolate to wet it."

"Beggars must not be choosers," said she.

"My dear madam, I am not begging of you," said he, "but have paid the full price demanded."

"I told you," said she, "I would give you cold victuals, and there is cold boiled ham, cold pork and beef, cold potatoes, &c., and if you want it hot, there is mustard and pepper, and here is good bread, good butter and good cheese, and all good enough for such an old ragamuffin as you."

"It is all very good," said he, "but, madam, be so good as to let me have some new milk, right from the cow, to wet these good victuals."

"The cows are not milked," says she. "Then let me have a cup of cold milk," says he.

"I will not send the servants in this storm to the spring-house to skim it for you," says she.

"Dear madam," said he, with a pleasant smile, "I have a good wife at home, older than you are, who would go out in a worse storm than this to milk the cows, and bring the milk to the poorest man on earth, at his request; or to bring the milk from the spring-house, cream and all, to feed one of the most abject of the human race."

"You have a very good wife at home," says she.

"Indeed I have," said he, "and she keeps my clothes whole and clean, and notwithstanding you call me an old ragamuffin, I am not ashamed to appear abroad in the clothes I wear, in good company."

"Well, I must confess," said she, "that when you have your broad-brimmed hat off you look middling well; but I want you to be off; for we want the fire to dry the gentlemen's great coats and umbrellas by, and among the rest we expect Judge Crane."

"Judge Crane," says he, "who is Judge Crane?"

"The circuit Judge, one of the supreme judges, you old fool."

"Well," said he, "I will bet a goose that Judge Crane, has not had, nor will have, a great coat on his back or umbrella over his head to-day; he would more likely go to the court house and stay until dinner time. I know something of the old codger, and some say he is a rusty, crusty, fusty old fudge."

"Pretty talk, indeed," said the landlady, "about the supreme judge. Now eat and be off."

"I tell you," said he, "Judge Crane is not the supreme judge, and if he were, he is no more fit to be a judge than I am."

"Well, now, be off with yourself," says she.

"Don't be in too great a hurry," said he mildly. "I wish to know who is the landlady here! And to know where he is?"

"He is the High Sheriff of this county and won't be home till night, but if he were here, you would not stay long."

"Well, madam," said he, "give me a cup of cider to wet my victuals, if you won't give me milk."

"Not a drop," said her ladyship.

The Judge, who had got pretty well warmed and dried, and wishing for his breakfast, put on a stern countenance, and positively declared he would not leave the room and the fire until he pleased. "But," said he, "if you will grant my request, I will then be off."

The cider was immediately brought and the Judge partook heartily of the collation before him, took his broad rimmed hat, and gently walked to the court house; he found good fires and clean floors, and during the court, presided with dignity and propriety. When he withdrew, the landlady looked after him for some time, as he walked steadily on to the court house, supposing him to be some poor man summoned to court as a witness, or some culprit, or some ugly vagabond who might give her further trouble in the time of court, and expressed to her servants a desire that they should see that he did not disturb the gentlemen and the judges who might put up there. While some of the girls declared that if he did come, they would use some of his own expressions which he used respecting Judge Crane.

"Let me see," said one, "rusty, crusty."

"Yes, and fusty old fudge," said another.

When dinner was announced, the court not being thronged, was immediately adjourned, and the day being stormy and cold, the lawyers and judges poured into the sheriff's tavern where they were sure of good fires and good fare, all except Judge Crane, who walked to a store and purchased a valuable shawl, and put it into his pocket, in the inside of his coat, and walked quietly to the tavern. While he was thus detained the landlady entered the dining room, and earnestly inquired if Judge Crane had come in. The answer was, "not yet, and perhaps he may not come." The landlady, who was anxious to pay the highest respect to the supreme judge, retired to the kitchen, not a little chagrined and disappointed.

In the meantime the judge arrived, and being at times very sociable, and at all times fond of cheering the minds of those present, began by making some prominent remarks, and to tell some lively anecdotes, intended to convey good morals, which set the whole company in a roar of laughter. At this instance one of the waiting maids entered the room to inform them that they might sit down to dinner. She did her errand, and hastened to her mistress with the tidings that the old fusty fellow with his broad rimmed hat on was right in amongst the bare headed gentlemen, talking as hard as he could, and all the lawyers and judges were laughing at him. "Then go," said she, "and whisper to the old gentleman that I wish to see him in the kitchen."

The errand was done accordingly, and the Judge in a low voice, said to the girl, "tell your mistress that I have a little business with some of these lawyers, and when done I will be off in the course of a few days." The girl returned, and faithfully rehearsed the message, and added that she believed the old fellow was drunk or he would not have said, "as soon as business is done I'll be off in two or three days."

"Well, Betty," said the mistress, "go back, and when the gentlemen begin to set down, do you stand near the head of the table, and say I wish a vacant seat left at the head of the table, for Judge Crane, then do you hasten back and see that John has the cider and other liquors in good order. And Mary, you fill two more tureens with gravy, and put one at each end of the table. And Martha, do you see that all the clean plates are ready for a change, and that the tarts and pies, &c., are in good order." Betty again repaired to her post, and softly informed a gentleman of her order. "Certainly," said the gentleman, and Betty hastened back to assist John.

The gentlemen now sat down to an excellent repast. The gentlemen carved and served round in the usual form. But, as the Judge was of a singular turn in almost everything, he had taken a fancy that if a person eats light food, and that which is more solid and harder of digestion at the same meal, the light food should be eaten

first. He therefore filled his plate with some pudding made of milk, rice and eggs, and placed himself in rather an awkward position, with his left elbow on the table, and his head near the place to eat according to his custom, which was very fast although he was not a very great eater; and as some of the gentlemen near the Judge followed his example as to partaking of the pudding before the meat, of course a large deep vessel containing that article was nearly emptied, when Mary approached with two additional tureens of gravy, according to the commands of her mistress; and as she set down the last near the Judge he said to her in an austere manner, "Girl, bring me a clean plate to eat some salad on."

The abrupt manner in which he addressed her, and her disgust at seeing him there in that position, so disconcerted the poor girl that she did not observe that any one but the Judge had partaken of the pudding, nor did she know what he meant by salad; but she observed that the large pudding pan was nearly empty, and then hastened back with the utmost speed to her mistress and addressed her with, "Dear madam, that old fellow's there yet, and he is certainly crazy or drunk, for he is down at the table, and he has eaten more than a skipple of the rice pudding already, and has his nose right down into a plateful now, shoveling it like a hog; and told me, as if he was the lord of the manor, to bring him a clean plate to eat salad on. Bless me! where can we get salad at this time of the year? And the gentlemen have not done carving yet, and not one has begun to eat meat, much less a tub full of pudding."

"Aye, he'll get a clean plate," says Martha, "before the gentlemen want clean plates." "I'll clean him out," says the mistress, and she started for the dining-room burning with indignation. The Judge was remarkable for not giving unnecessary trouble to anybody where he put up, and generally ate what was put before him, without any remarks, and seldom made use of more than one plate at a meal. But at this time he observed near him a dish of beautiful white cabbage, cut up in vinegar, which the Low Dutch at Poughkeepsie called "cold slaw," and which he called "salad," and he wished for a separate plate to prepare some of it for his own fancy. The carving and serving were not yet finished, when the landlady arrived at the door of the dining-room determined to drive him out. She advanced with a firm step to the door, and fixed her keen eyes sternly on the Judge, when he turned his eye that way, and observing her, mildly said, "Landlady, can I have a clean plate to eat some salad on?" "A clean plate and salad!" retorted the landlady indignantly. "I wish you would come into the kitchen until the gentlemen have dined. I reserved that seat for Judge Crane."

After the tumult had subsided a little, the Judge mildly said, "Didn't I chop wood for my breakfast?" "Indeed you did," said she, "and said you had no money." "I told you the whole truth," replied the Judge, "but I have a beautiful shawl, worth more than ten dollars, which I just now bought, and will leave it now with you in pawn, if you will only let me eat dinner with these gentlemen. Here the gentlemen were biting their lips to keep from laughing."

"How did you buy the shawl worth more than ten dollars without money?" "I bought it on credit," said he. "And where did you find credit to that amount?" said she. "I brought it from home," said he. "That's a likely story, and something like your abuse of Judge Crane this morning," said she.

"How could I abuse the Judge if he was not present?" asked he. "You called him a 'rusty, fusty, fudge,' and an 'old codger,' and said you did not care a rye-straw more for him than you did for yourself."

Here the company burst into a roar of laughter again. As soon as it had subsided a little, one of the gentlemen asked the landlady how she knew the gentleman she was addressing was not Judge Crane. "He looks more like a snipe than a crane!" she answered.

Here the loud laughter burst forth a third time, and after a little pause the Judge said: "I must confess that I am not a bird of very fine feathers, but I assure you I am a crane, and a crane is often a very useful instrument. I saw a very good one in your kitchen this morning, and sometimes an instrument called a crane is of invaluable use, madam."

Before she had time to reply, some of the gentlemen with whom she was acquainted assured her she was talking with the presiding Judge. Astonished and confounded she attempted some excuse, and hastily asked pardon for her rudeness. The Judge had by this time, unobserved, taken from his pocket the beautiful shawl and folded it at length one way and in a narrow form the other, and it being a very fine texture, it appeared more like an elegant sash than a valuable shawl. When he arose with a graceful dignity, and with a half smile advanced a few steps towards the landlady, saying, "It is not my province to pardon, but it is my business to judge; and I judge that you will, without hesitation, receive this shawl as a present, if not as a pawn."

So saying he gently laid it over her shoulders and across her arms. "Take it, madam," said the Judge, "and do not attempt to return it, for it was purchased on purpose for a present for you."

She hastily retired in confusion, hardly knowing what she did, and took with her the shawl, worth twelve, instead of ten dollars. And here were three parties who had each good things. The landlady had a good shawl and a good lesson to meditate upon; the gentlemen had a good dinner and a good joke to talk over—and the Judge had good intentions in the joke and good will and ability to follow up the lesson given.

SUNDAY READING.

The Lord's Will.

About fifty years ago, one bitter January night, the inhabitants of the old town of Slewick were thrown into the greatest distress and terror. A hostile army was marching down upon them, and new and fearful reports of the conduct of lawless soldiery were hourly reaching the place.

In a large, commodious cottage dwelt an aged grandmother, with her widowed daughter and grandson. While all hearts quaked with fear, this aged woman passed her time in crying out to God that he would "build a wall of defence around about them," quoting the words of an ancient hymn.

Her grandson asked her why she prayed for a thing so entirely impossible as that God should build a wall about their house that should hide it, but she explained that the meaning was that God should protect her.

At midnight the dreaded tramp was heard. An enemy came pouring in at every avenue, filling the houses to overflowing. But while the most fearful sounds were heard on every side, not even a knock came to their door, at which they were greatly surprised. The morning light made the matter clear; for just beyond the house the drifted snow had reared such a massive wall that it was impossible to get over to them.

"There," said the old woman, triumphantly, "do you not see, my son, that God could rise up a wall around us?"

A Touching Incident.

A lady was walking along the street in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., says the *Eagle*, when she met a little girl, between two and three years old, evidently lost, and crying bitterly. Taking her by the hand the lady asked her where she was going. "I'm going down town to find my papa," was the reply between sobs, of the child. "What is your papa's name?" asked the lady. "His name is papa," replied the innocent little thing. "But what is his other name?" queried the lady; "what does your mamma call him?" "She calls him papa," persisted the baby. The lady then took the little one by the hand and led her along, saying, "you had better come with me; I guess you came from this way." "Yes, but I don't want to go back, I want to find my papa," replied the little girl, crying afresh as if her heart would break. "What do you want of your papa?" asked the lady. "I want to kiss him." Just then a sister of the child came along looking for her and led her away. From subsequent inquiries it appeared that the little one's papa, whom she was so earnestly in search of, had recently died. In her loneliness and love for him she tired of waiting for him to come home, and had gone to find him and greet him with the accustomed kiss.

A Chinese Contribution Box.

Mr. W. Simpson, in a paper on "Chinese Architecture," read before one of the English societies, describes as follows the Chinese method of raising money for the building or repairing of temples:

"In the street of Peking I one day found a man in a sort of a wooden sentry box. Large nails had been driven into it, so that their points projected through. This prevented the man from leaning against the sides, and the only rest he had was from sitting on a board within. He was a monk, and never seemed to sleep, for he had a string with which he might day and night sound a large bell every few minutes, as a sort of advertisement of his purpose.

This was that the benevolent should come forward with his money; each nail representing a sum. When any one paid a sum his name was stuck on a piece of paper, and the nail pulled out, making it more comfortable for the hermit within. All the nails represented the necessary amount for the repair of a temple which was close behind. This is a common proceeding for raising the wind for such purposes. I was told that this monk had been for two years shut up, and that he would likely be another year before he got out of his cocoon of nails."

Nothing so strongly indicates the man of pure and wholesome thought as habitual purity of speech. By his conversation, among his own kind, you may always pretty accurately form an opinion as to the moral worth of a man. It is there where no restraint is supposed to be placed upon his words, that you discover his true nature. If he is given to looseness of discourse, or if his mind wanders to the discussion of subjects proscribed in mixed company or respectable society, you may justly mark him as one with whom association is undesirable.

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