

# The Monroeville Democrat

"WE JOIN OURSELVES TO NO PARTY THAT DOES NOT CARRY THE FLAG AND KEEP STEP TO THE MUSIC OF THE UNION."

J. J. Gerritson, Publisher.

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## Miscellaneous.

### THE BEAUTIFUL DECOY.

It is well known to all in any degree familiar with the history of Mexico, that a regular system of highway robbery exists in every section of that miserably governed country; and that through a want of interference of the authorities this has grown up into such a regular and formidable shape, that every traveler must prepare to put his life at hazard at every stage, or be provided with a suitable contribution for the *ladrones* (*del camino*, the knights of the road), who in the event of finding you prepared and willing, will make their levy with as little politeness as the "smiling landlord," when he receives your overcharge for your last night's entertainment. Why such systematic boldness of robbery is allowed—if not with the connivance, at least with rarely any interference, of the government or state authorities—one of those mysterious matters which among many others, puzzles and perplexes the intelligent foreigners, but that such is the disagreeable truth every traveler through that wretched country can bear ample testimony.

Some years ago, having business which first called me to the capital of Mexico, and then through the interior of the country to the northward, I met with several thrilling adventures, which I have recorded for the benefit of those who may take an interest therein, omitting only the dates, they being non-essential to the interests of the narrations themselves.

The first of the series occurred on the route between Vera Cruz and the city of Mexico. In the regular diligence running between the places just mentioned, I had taken passage, and had passed through the beautiful city of Jalapa, and entered the gloomy town of Perote, without meeting with any unusual incident, though being continually warned to be on my guard against the dangers of the road. At Perote, where we halted for a refreshment, all my fellow passengers took leave of me, very solemnly assuring me that if assailed by the *ladrones*, or robbers, it would be much better for me to take matters quietly, and suffer myself to be gently plundered, than to run the risk of having my throat cut for resistance, as I had some what boldly proclaimed it was my intention of doing. I thanked them for their advice, and replied that I would take the matter into serious consideration.

At Perote, I repeat, all who had been my companions from Vera Cruz took leave of me, this being the end of their journey in that direction, but there was one passenger here to go forward, whom, to my great surprise, I found to be a beautiful young lady, some twenty years of age.

Senorita Paula, as I subsequently learned her name to be, was indeed one of those rare beauties seldom met with except in works of fiction—tall, graceful, with a profusion of long, black hair—soft, clear, melting dark eyes—features as perfect as ever came from the hands of the sculptor, and with an animation the most fascinating, varying in expression with every changing mood of the intellectual possessor. A glance at her bewitching dark eyes showed me that she was one who was naturally of sociable disposition; and as we sat in the gloomy town, I took the liberty of opening a conversation.

"They tell me," said I, "that the route between Vera Cruz and Mexico is a very dangerous one to travel."

"There is little to fear," she replied, with a sweet smile and in a melodious voice, "except from the professional robbers, and they seldom harm any one who makes no resistance."

"It seems strange to me," I rejoined, "that you Mexicans should take such things as a matter of course, and deem resistance a very impolitic way of treating the knights of the road, instead of boldly asserting your rights, and snatching the evil by a manly spirit of resistance. For myself, I must consider it the most cowardly of proceedings, for any respectable party to set out prepared to quietly gratify the cupidity of the *ladrones*, and unprepared to treat them to their just deserts."

"Every traveler," said she, "should be prepared to count the cost of his journey, and as a matter of course he should value his life highly, it seems me natural that he should not be certain of his positive safety rather than put that life in jeopardy. For instance, in traveling from Vera Cruz to Mexico, if he will first recruit to so much is the fare by diligence, and that so much will be required for entertainment on the way, and so much for the contingency you speak of, he will then have the exact cost between the two points; and if he will look at the whole as the sum total of his journey, he will not seem to be robbed by any one party more than another."

"That," I replied, "may be, I believe is the Mexican mode of doing business, but does not tally with the preconceived idea of no foreigners."

"But every one," replied the fair speaker, "should conform to the customs of the country he visits."

"And do you then go prepared for the highway robbery and have you no fear in thus journeying by yourself?"

"Well, Senor, what can I do I am for you perceive an unprotected lady; who, for certain reasons, am required to make the journey between Perote and the Capital some twice or thrice a year, and you certainly could not expect me to go prepared to resist an armed band! As to fear, I will not deny I have any share of that; but, so far, have never met with any rough treatment, and of course I trust to the saints that my fortune will ever be propitious."

"And has your really been robbed on your journey back forth?" I enquired.

"I think I have paid my share to the *ladrones* for my transit through their country," she laughed.

"Yes, but fled immediately, fortunately injured none of our party."

"As I should have expected," returned I, "you were not robbed on that occasion, I suppose?"

"We were not, Senor; but the two foreigner subsequently paid dearly for their resistance; for in journeying back and forth, both were killed, separate and at different times, near the same spot. You see those crosses by the side of the road, Senor?"

"I have observed them frequently, but here they seem to be much more numerous," I replied, looking forth from the vehicle.

"Each stands on the spot where some one has met a violent death," she rejoined; "and as we go along, I will call your attention to those where the foreigners met theirs."

"Do you know," said I, "that I am resolved to emulate their example, let the consequences be what they may?"

"Holy saints defend us!" she exclaimed; "you are not in earnest, Senor!"

"Seriously so, I assure you."

"You would only bring certain death upon us both."

"Say rather, I should lighten the expenses of the journey—for your knights of the road I understand retreat as well as advance—and you yourself have acknowledged that firm resistance put them to flight at once."

"But there were numbers opposed to them, Senor, and you are only one."

"But fortunately I have a couple of revolvers, which, in two good hands, amount to some ten or dozen shots, and my friends have repeatedly told me I am not a bad marksman."

"Ah! Santa Maria! you will think better of this, Senor—the very idea of resistance terrifies me!"

"But not the idea of robbery!"

"I acknowledge myself conquered by being outwitted!" said I, bowing to the Senorita.

Then turning to the robbers, who had now collected in a body, in front of the door of the diligence, I continued:

"Gentlemen, you will permit me to alight, and make you some valuable presents! In the language of your country, all I have is yours."

The leader of the party bowed politely in return, and said, with a grim smile:

"Si, Senor, we shall be most happy to receive anything so distinguished a traveler may have to bestow."

With this I quietly stepped from the vehicle; and one quick, searching glance put me in possession of the whole state of affairs. The diligence had been stopped in a wild, gloomy place, and the driver was sitting carelessly on his back, looking at the matter of course. He might also be an accomplice of the robbers, or he might not, but in either case, there was little hope of assistance from him—any attempt of the kind would certainly bring upon him a severe punishment, sooner or later. I glanced up and down the road, where it wound between dark, overshadowing trees, but discovered nothing to give me any hope. The robbers, some eight or ten in number, and all armed, were collected around me, part of them mounted and other standing off their feet, holding their mustangs by the bridle, looking upon my case as a desperate one, so far as being plundered was concerned, I still retained my presence of mind, and not wholly dispirited. True, I had been outwitted, and disarmed, and now stood singly between numbers; but the idea of yielding tamely to this outrage was repugnant to my very nature; and I resolved to put the least favorable opportunity for defence and retaliation to the strongest test.

"Will you accept this purse?" said I, producing one that held several gold coins, and handing it to the chief of the *ladrones*.

"Thank you, Senor! you are very kind," he said, as he took it in his hand, with a polite bow, and checked the money.

"This diamond pin may prove acceptable to your friend," he added, as I quietly reached it from the bosom of my shirt, and handed it to the gentleman on his left, who received it in the same polite manner. "This diamond ring I trust you will retain as a keepsake!" I continued, drawing the jewel from my finger, and presenting it to a third. "I beg your pardon, Senor!" I pursued, glancing at the Senorita Paula, who, with my pistol still in her possession, was quietly standing in the diligence, regarding the whole proceedings with one of her sweetest smiles. "I must not forget this beautiful lady! I have here," I went on, at the same time producing the article, "a beautiful gold snuff-box—set as you perceive, with diamonds—will your ladyship honor me by accepting this as a slight token of my regard for the pleasure afforded me by your company and conversation?"

"You are a very gallant gentleman, Senor!" she laughed, taking the two revolvers in one fair hand, and presenting the other.

I reached the box toward her—but my hand trembled a little—and just as the present was about to touch her finger, it slipped and fell between us.

"A thousand pardons, Senorita, for awkwardness!" I said, as I bent down to pick it up. Now was the all-important moment—the moment of life and death! All was quiet, and I held the pistol in one hand, and the other remaining extended for the prize. I lifted the box carefully; but as I raised my eye, I gave a wild, startling yell; and as the Senorita started back, I, with the quickness of lightning, seized both weapons, and wrenched them from her hand.

To wheel and commence firing upon the party, was now only the work of a moment. The first shot, fortunately, struck the chief; the second took effect on the one nearest to him; and by the time the third had been sent to its mission, there arose one simultaneous yell of dismay, and the astounded robbers began to scatter in every direction. I had no disposition to follow them; however, another minute they might rally and turn upon me; and sprigging forward, I grasped the reins of a frisky mustang, and vaulted into the saddle. One more glance around me showed me the Senorita Paula upon the body of the chief, her laughter changed to grief, and some of the scattered *ladrones* bringing their weapons to bear upon me.

"Adios, Senorita; and Senor!" said I bitterly; "he laughs best who laughs last!"

## The Forged Patent.

The changes which the last twenty years have wrought in Illinois, would be incredible to any one who had not witnessed them. At that time the settlements were few, and the spirit of enterprise, which now pervades every corner of the state, had not awakened. The bluffs of the beautiful Illinois river had never sent back the echo of the steam-engine. Without a market for their produce, the farmers confined their labors to the wants of their own families. Corn was nearly the only crop raised, and from the time it was "laid by," near the end of June, till "pulling time," in November, was a holiday, and the intervening period was passed in idleness, except Saturdays. On that day, duty as it arrived, the settlers at the distillery, amused themselves with shooting at a mark, trading nags, and too often, when the tin cup passed freely round, in fighting.

This is by no means a picture of all the settlements of that early period, but that it is geographically true of many, none of the oldest settlers will deny.

On Saturday afternoon, in the year 1819, a young man was seen approaching, with slow and feeble step, the house, or rather the distillery, of Squire Crosby, a man of some ability, and an obscure settler on the Military Tract. As usual on that day, a large collection of people were amusing themselves at Crosby's, who owned the distillery in that region, and being a magistrate, was regarded by the settlers as rich, and consequently a great man.

The youth, who now came up to the group, was apparently about twenty years of age, and of slender form, and delicate complexion, with the six of one accustomed to good society, and it was evident at a glance that he was not unaccustomed to the hardships of the frontier life or labor of any kind. But his dress bore a strange contrast with his appearance and manners. He wore a hunting coat of the coarsest liney woolsey, a common saw hat, and a pair of doekin moccasins. A large pack completed his equipment.

Every one gazed with curiosity upon the new comer, but they eagerly to learn who he was, when he came, and what was his business, the horse sweep was left unfinished, and the side laid aside, and even the busy tin cup had a temporary respite.

The young man approached Squire Crosby, who when a stranger could distinguish as the principal person among them, and apologetically inquired for some where he could be accommodated, saying that he was extremely ill, and felt all the symptoms of an approaching fever.

Crosby eyed him closely and suspiciously for a moment without uttering a word. Knives and saws had been recently abroad, and the language of the youth betrayed that he was a Yankee, a name at that time associated in the minds of the ignorant with everything that is base. In taking the silence of Crosby for a fear of his inability to pay, the stranger smiled and said, "I am not without money," and putting his hand in his pocket to give ocular proof of his assertion, he was horror struck to find that his pocket book was gone. It contained every cent of his money, besides papers of great value to him.

Without a farthing, without even a paper or letter to attest that his character was happily in a strange land, and sickness rapidly coming upon him, there were feelings nearly drove him to despair. The Squire who prided himself on his sagacity in detecting villainy, now found the use of his tongue. With a long and sneering voice he said:

"Stranger, you are barking up the wrong tree, if you think to catch the with that are Yankee tricks or yours."

He proceeded in that intemperate strain, scolding by nearly every one present, till the patience of Crosby for a few of his pliant lips. The youth felt keenly his disreputable situation, and casting his eyes a round the group, and in a tone of deep anxiety, inquired:

"Is there none here who will be so kind as to receive me?"

"Yes, I will," cried a man among the crowd; "yes, poor, sick stranger, I will shelter you. Then in a lower tone he added, "I do not know where you are deserving to be, but I do know you are a fellow being, and in sickness and in want, and for the sake of him who died for the guilty, if not for your own sake, will be kind to you, poor stranger!"

A few days afterwards, when Mr. Davis was absent from home, and Lucy engaged about her household affairs, Wilson was close beside his head his pack, and recollecting something that he wanted, he arose and immediately opened it. The first thing he saw was the identical pocket book, whose loss had excited so many regrets. He recollected having placed it there the morning before he reached Brant's Prairie, but in the confusion of the moment the circumstance was forgotten. He examined it and found everything as he left it.

The discovery nearly restored him to health, but he resolved at present to confine the secret to his own bosom. It was gratifying to him to witness the entire confidence they reposed in his honor and integrity as a stranger, and the pleasure with which they bestowed favors upon one who they supposed could make no return but thanks.

"Night came, and Mr. Davis did not return, Lucy passed a sleepless night. In the morning she watched hour for hour for his coming, and when sunset approached he was still absent; terrified at his long and unusual stay, she was setting out to procure a neighbor to go in search of him, when he came in sight. She ran to meet him, and was bestowed upon him a thousand endearing expressions of affection, when his baggage, and he became consciousness startled her.

He uttered no word, and went into his house and seated himself in silence. It was in vain that she attempted to cheer him.

After a long pause, during which there was a powerful struggle going on in his feelings, he rose and took his daughter by the hand and led her into the room where Wilson was seated.

"You must know all," he said, "I am ruined! I am a beggar. In a few days I must quit this house; the farm which I have so highly improved and thought my own."

He proceeded to state that a few days before, Crosby, in a fit of ungovernable malice, tempted him with a beggar, and told him that he was now in his power, and he would crush him under his feet. When Mr. Davis smiled at that he regarded as only an impotent threat, Crosby, to convince him, told him that the patent of his farm was a forged one, and that he had written to purchase it; and expected a deed in a few days. Davis immediately went home for his patent, and, during his long absence, had visited the land office. Crosby was right. The patent was a forgery, and the claim of Davis to the farm was not worth a farthing.

It may be proper to observe that counterfeiting soldiers' patents was a regular business in some of the eastern cities, and hundreds had been duped.

"It is not for myself," said the old man, "that I grieve at this misfortune. I am advanced in life, and it matters not where or how I pass the remainder of my existence. I have a little home beyond the stars, where my mother has long before me, and where I would have loved to protect her child, my own affectionate Lucy."

The weeping girl threw her arms around the neck of her father, and poured her tears upon his bosom.

"We can be happy still," said she, "for I am young, and can easily support us both."

A new scene followed, in which another individual was the principal actor. I shall leave the reader to form his own opinion of the old man's grief, and of the close, the old man took the hands of Lucy and young Wilson, and joining them, said:

## Agricultural.

Cultivate the Farmer, as well as the Farm.

### Calendar of Operations for November, 1858.

Fattening animals in all latitudes, should now receive much attention to prepare them for early slaughter.

Buildings of all kinds that were not closely inspected last month should be looked to now, and made storm proof. Painting may very properly be done at this season.

Cattle are now receiving most of their food from the barn, and should not be stunted at the commencement of Winter. Use straw or hay cut, that nothing be wasted. Allow no cabbage or turnip tops to decay upon the ground, unless well rotted for cattle. Fatten those animals intended for beef as early as possible, before cold weather comes on. Let all animals be housed during cold nights.

Cellars contain torrescent important stores. Arrange the fruits, roots and vegetables in a neat convenient manner, and keep the atmosphere dry and as cool as can well be maintained without danger of frost. Apples especially need a cold airy cellar.

Forest Leaves—Collect a large quantity for present use in the yards and stacks, and dry for winter bedding. Bedding furnishing the elements of an excellent manure, they make a better absorbent than straw.

Hogs—Pay particular attention to their fattening. Have them ready for killing before the cold weather, when they take up fat slowly. Allow the male to run with breeding sows, as early as possible.

Manures—Resolve to make a large portion of your own for another year, rather than pay away money for an imported article. If you have no manure, manure of your own, upon your own land, by the privilege of digging upon a neighbor's premises. Keep the pigs supplied with turf from the road sides, and leaves from forests. Look about for a manure of some kind and see if there is not a heap of manure going to waste—wool, bones, offal, fish, hides, leather, ashes, lime, bark, &c., are all capable of being composted and applied to the soil with advantage.

Permanent improvements may now be made to good advantage while waiting for the approach of Winter. A few rocks and stakes, and a ditch, and stumps taking out. Stumps may be picked and laid into permanent fences, hedges cleaned up, &c. These labor can probably use up all the spare time.

Now heavy lands before the ground freezes, thus turning up the soil (and grub) to the influence of frost. Shift ditches are better left in ridges for the frost to act upon the sides.

Schools are about commencing for the winter, in many places. Have the old door well mended, and apply the oil at the beginning; to take their places at once in the classes.

Tools—Put away under cover, as fast as they are out of use. Keep them collected each night, especially where there is danger of snow.

Winter Grain—Permit none of it to be eaten off at this season. The late growth is needed for protecting the roots. See that no water stands, or can stand upon the field.

Wheat Bars—Cold and open weather boarder barbs can easily be made by boarding them up on the inside and filling up the space between the outside and inside weather boarding with straw or coarse refuse hay. And this can be done at a very trifling expense by such as cannot afford to build new bars of thoroughly ripened their old ones. For a few dollars worth of boards and nails and a little labor, which you can do yourself, it is all that is necessary to prevent the loss of the sharp wind and cold, frosty air. And be who neglects or begrudges this is unmerciful to his poor shivering beasts, who would soon toil him of his want of mercy if they could.

How to Prepare Superior Mince-Meat for Pies—Take stoed raisins, currants, sugar, and each two pounds; Sultanina raisins, boiled (wash and tend) of each one pound; sour or tart apples, four pounds; the juice of two lemons; the rind of one lemon chopped very fine; mixed spice, 1 pound; candied citron and lemon peel, of each 2 oz.; and chop the whole very fine. The preparation may be varied by adding other spice or flavoring; and the addition of eggs, or the substitution of chopped fowl or veal, for beef, according to fancy or convenience.

Milk Weeds—Rolling milk weeds, if preserved in will destroy them—but put them in the ground, and the stalk will come up from an inch or two below the surface, leaving the root to perish wholly or in part. Three or four years since the writer pulled up 2000 in a lot near my house—the next year the number was reduced more than half—this year not over twenty or thirty were found. The labor is very light.

Feed for Cows—A Maine dairyman finds clover much better than the lowland grasses for producing milk—leaving the matter by accurate experiments. He says he never made as much milk with any kind of food as with a mixture of oats and potatoes; the milk was also of great quality. Potatoes, it is well known, increase the quantity of milk at the expense of quality;—perhaps oats are just the grain needed to make the amendment.

Top-Dressing Wheat—The Genesee Farmer gives a successful experiment with top-dressing a wheat field with fine manure, harrowing it in with the seed.—On clay or heavy soil, we have no doubt this is an excellent practice. Clayey soils are always the most benefited by top-dressing; as the manure serves to keep the surface soft and moist, to prevent crusting, and the clay more readily absorbs the volatile parts.

It takes five pounds of corn to form one of beef. Three and a half pounds of cooked corn to form one of pork.

A cubic foot of arable land will hold 40 pounds of water.

## Educational.

If you would learn—study. If you would become learned—practice what you learn.

### Punctuation.

We present to the readers of the *Journal* in this article a more remarkable instance of the effect of punctuation in changing the meaning of the sentence than has previously given. It is taken from *Colegrove's Grammar*, published in Cleveland, in 1852.

Richard Green Parker says James Russell Lowell is a great genius.

In giving the different punctuations which this sentence may have, we shall not follow the order adopted by Mr. Colegrove, nor use italics as he has done.

1. Richard, Green Parker says, "James Russell Lowell is a great genius."
2. Richard Green, Parker says, "James Russell Lowell is a great genius."
3. Richard Green Parker says, "James Russell Lowell is a great genius."
4. "Richard Green Parker," says James Russell Lowell, "is a great genius."
5. Richard, "Green Parker," says James Russell Lowell, "is a great genius."
6. Richard Green, "Parker," says James Russell Lowell, "is a great genius."
7. "Richard Green Parker," says James, "Russell Lowell is a great genius."
8. "Richard Green Parker," says James Russell, "Lowell is a great genius."
9. Richard Green Parker says, "James Russell Lowell is a great genius."
10. Richard Green Parker says, "James Russell Lowell is a great genius."
11. Richard Green Parker says, "James Russell Lowell is a great genius."
12. Richard Green Parker says, "James Russell Lowell is a great genius."
13. Richard Green, Parker says, "James Russell Lowell is a great genius."
14. Richard Green, Parker says, "James Russell Lowell is a great genius."
15. "Richard Green," Parker says, "James Russell Lowell is a great genius."
16. "Richard," Green Parker says, "James Russell Lowell is a great genius."

We have given two more readings than Mr. Colegrove: whether others may not also be given we leave the reader to ascertain. It is evident that each one of the above examples will admit of several altonary punctuations, which will add to the number of ideas that may be conveyed by the sentence.—*Indiana School Journal.*

Who smoked the first pipe? Pro-methus when he stole the fire from heaven to light his clay.