

THE MONTROSE DEMOCRAT.

A. J. GERRITSON, Proprietor.

MONTROSE, PA., TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 1867.

VOLUME XXIV, NUMBER 16.

Hoaxed into a Fortune.

Everybody was speculating; coal stocks, copper stocks, oil wells, machines, enterprises and schemes were brilliant and prosperous.

The stock list in the newspaper was a column in length. Men who "went in" with one thousand "margin," for a flyer, came out with twenty thousand, a span of horses and a directorship in four or five companies in a fortnight. Who does not remember the lively days of 1863 and '64?

It was about these days, as the almanacs say, that three young men regularly read the city papers, visited the metropolis two or three times a week, and sat together in a neighboring town railing at fate.

"One can do nothing without money," said Ginseng; "a speculation, the conception of which does honor to Spencer, of the Boston brokers' board, Jerome, or Bill Davis, coming from a poor devil like me, would attract no notice."

"I," said Pica, "have finished an article which would establish my reputation as a journalist, if I could only find a newspaper to buy it."

"I have asked for an increase of salary," exclaimed Denim, the third youngster, anxious to contribute to the chorus of lamentation, "and he told me that for \$600 a year he could get more clerks than he wanted."

"Now just look at Jack Hasede, one of the greenest fellows in this place, who went to Boston last fall; he's speculated some how or other in oil or copper, and came riding into town yesterday with a spanking pair of grays. They say he has made ten thousand dollars. He must have done it on credit, for he never had any cash beyond his salary of \$700 a year."

"It would not so much matter," said Ginseng, "if besides being poor, we did not seem poor. Could one of us only be thought rich?"

"What is the use of the shadow without the substance?" demanded Denim.

"Much," said Pica; "I agree with Ginseng; the shadow sometimes makes the substance. The next best thing to capital is credit."

"Especially," returned Ginseng, "the credit of having a good fortune. Have none of us a rich uncle at the South?"

"One of mine went to Texas or Mexico I forget which," ventured Denim, "and he never came back."

"Capital! that is all one requires," exclaimed Ginseng; "we will conjure up this uncle of yours, or, could we not kill him? Yes; Jabez Denim, formerly of this place, who went to Santa Fe in 1856, deceased, leaving a plantation and half interest in a silver mine, worth five hundred thousand dollars per annum, to his well beloved nephew, Charles Denim."

The trio laughed at the joke, and made merry over a bowl of punch sent for to do honor to the testator. Pica lost no time in concocting, and afterwards publishing a full account in a local newspaper of the fortune that had been left to the modest Denim.

It read, when in type, as follows:

"We understand that news has just been received of the decease of Jabez Denim, Esq., many years ago a resident of this town, and for some time a trader in Boston, who went to Mexico in 1845. Mr. Denim, it is said, died immensely wealthy; he owned an immense fortune in plantation stock, etc., but his chief wealth was a half interest in one of the most productive silver mines of the country, the annual profit of which is reported at over half a million. We learn that the whole of this immense wealth goes to his only surviving relative, Charles Denim, Esq., who, by this freak of fortune, becomes one of the richest men in the State." We congratulate our young townsmen, etc.

The publication of this extravagant as it was, had an unexpected effect. The next day sundry friends dropped in to compliment the newly rich man. He endeavored to undecieve them; but they would not take a denial. In vain he assured them it was a hoax; it was of no use. Several people remembered old Jabez very well, and knew he went out to Mexico. Among others came in Charles' tailor, to whom he owed a small sum.

A conversation followed which may be taken as a sample of many:

"Good morning, Mr. Schneider; I suppose you are come for those twenty dollars?"

"I hope, sir, you don't think I came for such a trifle as that. No, sir; I came to take your orders for a suit of mourning."

"Yes, sir. Dark brown frock, for morning wear, black trousers, and waistcoat; also full dress suits to receive friends."

"At the present moment, Mr. Schneider?"

"I hope, sir, I have done nothing to forfeit your patronage."

"But, I repeat, I have received no money at all."

"I hope, sir, you won't mention such a thing; there is no sort of hurry," exclaimed the tailor, who busily employed himself in taking Charles' measure with slips of paper.

The latter's wardrobe was not sumptuous, and he said nothing more.

"My dear sir," said the next visitor, "I have a very great favor to ask of you. Buy my house. You are very rich; you must be on the look out for safe and in-

creative investments. Twenty thousand dollars are nothing for you—a mere fraction of your estate. With me the case is different. I thought Mr. Howsunter had made up his mind to purchase the premises, and now I hear, he has changed his intention. What is to become of me? I have demands to meet, and I don't know where the money is to come from."

"I buy your house?" said Charles.

"Why, it would be madness to think of such a thing."

"Madness? no such thing," you could not find a better investment anywhere. In two years, with trifling repairs, it will be worth double its present value; you will never see such a good opportunity again. Say 'done,' and I'm off."

"And off he went, leaving Charles no time to put in a word.

Two hours after, in walked Mr. Howsunter, evidently not in the best of temper.

"Really, sir," he began, you have taken me quite by surprise. The house is indispensable to me. Reckoned on it as if it were mine, and only offered eighteen thousand dollars because the owner is embarrassed, and I felt sure that he would be obliged to take them. With you, sir, the case is different; so I came to ask you if you will let me have it for twenty five thousand dollars."

Five thousand dollars dropping all at once into the lap of the poor fellow who had to work hard to gain five hundred a year! Charles was dumfounded.

"I cannot give you an answer just now, sir," he said; "but if you will take the trouble to call again at five, I'll see what I can do."

At a quarter to five Mr. Howsunter re-appeared. Charles said to him:

"I should tell you, sir, that I had no thought of buying the house till the owner prevailed on me to do so. You say you want the house; any other will suit me equally as well, so I will accede to your terms."

"You shall have a check for the amount at once," replied the pleased Howsunter, apparently enchanted with this way of doing business. "I settle with you, you arrange with the present owner, my object is to secure the property."

A check for twenty five thousand dollars Charles wondered what he should do with it. After due deliberation he resolved to ask advice. So he wrote to the Boston banking house of Spelter & Co., who paid him semi annually the interest of a thousand dollars left him a few years before by a relative, saying that having a large amount of money at his command, desired to know how he could best invest it, and enclosed the check for twenty five thousand.

The following answer speedily reached him, proving that the story of his luck had reached State street:

"Sir: We are in receipt of your esteemed favor of the 17th inst., which reached us just after the inception of a new movement in Water power and Petherick stock, in which our firm has an interest. Desirous that our friends should have an opportunity of participating in an investment which we consider profitable, we have taken the liberty of placing a block, twenty thousand dollars worth of stock, to your credit. Should that amount appear too considerable, the rise of this stock admits of your selling out at a premium. We remain, sir, yours to command,

"SPELTER & CO."

To this was added a postscript by the head of the firm:

"We have heard with pleasure of the recent good fortune that has fallen to the lot of our old friend and correspondent, and beg to offer him our services as occasion may require."

Twenty thousand dollars! Charles let the letter fall in sheer amazement. He trembled with fear at the consequences. He at once wrote the bankers that the sum was much too large. "I have received no money," he said "from Santa Fe; and it would be impossible for me to meet my engagements."

An answer came by return of post:

"We learn, with regret, that you have misgivings with regard to Water power. According to your orders, we have sold out half the stock assigned to you, which brings you in already a net profit of eight thousand dollars. With regard to your property in Santa Fe, we are too well acquainted with the delays which bequests at such a distance must necessarily involve to think for a moment that you can be immediately put in possession of your inheritance; but your simple signature will suffice to procure you all the money you may require in the meantime. We take the liberty of reminding you of the advantage of making timely investments, lest, when the legal arrangements are ended, you should find difficulty in getting good interest for so large a capital. With the hope that you may entertain a better opinion of coal stock than you do of water power, we hand you a prospectus of a new coal company forming among some of our most wealthy men. You will please to observe that as calls are only made at long intervals, it will be easy for you to sell your shares, should you change your mind, without your having occasion to make any payment. We have placed

eight thousand dollars to your credit, and have the honor to remain," etc.

Eight thousand dollars! No doubt the clerk had made some mistake in the figures. Charles' position was becoming embarrassing. Congratulations poured in from all quarters, especially when he made his appearance in black from head to foot. The Daily Gossip thought it right to publish a biographical sketch of his uncle; and the editor wrote to him asking for further particulars. Ladies connected with all sorts of societies, begged that his name might be added to their list of subscribers, and the money he had to pay for postage was alarming. To escape from this avalanche of inquiries he hastily departed for Boston. Calling on Spelter & Co., he was received as heir to a large property generally.

"Sorry that you have such a poor opinion of the water power and Petherick," said Mr. Spelter; "there has been a great rise; however, we only sold but half your lot."

"Would you have the goodness to let me know what the present value of the remainder might be?" inquired Charles.

"Certainly, sir. Petherick has risen immensely. There is a corner, if you sell out to day you will, with the proceeds of last sale, have from forty to forty five thousand dollars."

"Very well. You said something about a coal company, I think?"

"Yes; that is a good thing, and outsiders are hungry for the stock, and the shares have risen considerably."

"Can I sell out?"

"Certainly; you have five hundred at twenty five dollars profit; that will bring about twelve thousand five hundred dollars."

"Without any calls to pay?"

"None yet."

"That seems strange; but you are no doubt well informed. I should like to find a secure investment for those sums; would you have the goodness to tell me what would be the best?"

"You cannot have anything better than United States five twenties. I know of nothing more secure; at the present price of gold you get a large per cent. for your money. I can easily understand that you would be worried by such trifling details as these."

"Then, if I invest the combined product of Petherick, the coal and water power stocks in the five twenties, what should I get a year?"

"Let me see. M—m—m; yes, about six thousand dollars a year interest."

"Ah! six thousand dollars a year. And when can the sale and the investment be made?"

"To-morrow morning; that is, if you will allow our firm to conduct the transaction."

"Certainly; in whom could my confidence be better placed?"

The broker made a polite bow.

"And now," said Charles, "I should feel obliged if you would have the goodness to advance me a few hundreds, as I am rather short of cash."

"My dear sir, as much as you require is at your service. How much do you want—one, two, or four thousand?"

"Thank you, five hundred will be quite sufficient."

"May I hope," added the broker, when Charles rose to take leave, "that our firm may be favored with the continuance of your patronage?"

"Certainly."

Mo period of Charles Denim's life affords pleasanter reflections than this brief interview with Mr. Spelter. He then began to realize for the first time that he was truly a rich man. The five hundred dollars cash in hand settled the question.

In the meantime, Pica and Ginseng were shocked at the success of their story, and were not a little alarmed at Charles' sudden journey to Boston, which was attributed by others to legal business respecting his uncle's estate. They began to fear that he had gone too far; that he had come to regard the joke as a reality.

When he returned from Boston, they went to him with solemn faces.

"My dear Charles," said Ginseng, "you know your uncle is not dead!"

"I cannot be sure of that," said Charles, "for I am by no means convinced of his existence."

"Well, but you know that this inheritance is only a hoax?"

"To tell you the truth, I think we are the only people of that opinion."

"We have been very wrong to originate such a foolish invention, for which we are sincerely sorry."

"On the contrary, I am much obliged to you."

"But it is our duty to contradict it, and to confess how foolish we have been."

Truth cannot remain long concealed, or reports of this kind stand long in these days of telegraph dispatches; people began to wonder, as time rolled on, that no news came from Mexico; the wise and prudent shook their heads ominously when Denim's name was mentioned.

Charles, however, had settled with his broker, and was possessed of a good solid investment in five twenties.

"The most ludicrous feature of the case is," said one, "that he ends by believing in the truth of his own invention."

For my part, I must say that I was always rather skeptical about that inheritance."

"And I also," said Mr. Howsunter, "though it has cost me five thousand dollars."

On seeing a dozen letters on the table one morning, Charles guessed that the bubble had finally burst. Their contents were much alike, for instance:

"Mr. Schneider's respects to Mr. Denim, and, having heavy demands to meet, will feel obliged by a check for the amt enclosed."

Charles' replies disarmed all doubts of his solvency.

"Mr. Denim thanks Mr. Schneider for having at last sent in his account, and encloses a check for the amount."

This cool and unconcerned demeanor kept curiosity alive for a few days longer.

"What a lucky fellow!" said one.

"Luck has nothing to do with it," rejoined another; "he has played his cards well, and has won."

Once or twice Charles' conscience troubled him; but a moment's reflection convinced him that his own exertions had no share in his good fortune, and that he owed it all to a universal public worship of the golden calf, and to the truth of Pica's axiom, "the next best thing to capital is credit."

A RADICAL POLITICAL SECRET SOCIETY.

GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC!

Official Expose of the Concern.

At the hour fixed for assembling, the signal—three taps of the drum—or other call, will be given, and all the officers present for duty will take their positions as follows:

Post Commander—At the head of the hall.

Senior Vice Commander P. C.—At the opposite end.

Post Adjutant—Three paces to the right, and one pace in front of the P. C.

Officer of the Day—One pace to the right, and one pace in front of the P. C.

The Sentinel at the out-post—Will repair at once to his post, and secure the main entrance.

The Sentinel on duty at the reserve—Will at the same time secure the inner entrance, and allow no one to enter without the countersign, nor during the opening exercises.

The P. C. will then command Attention! when the roll will be called, and each officer will rise in his place, salute and report.

The P. C. will then address the Officer of the day:

Who are these here assembled?

The officer of the day salutes and replies:

This is an encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic.

The P. C. answers the salute, and inquires:

Are all present duly enlisted soldiers of the Grand Army?

The officer of the day replies:

I will at once make the G. R. and report.

The officer of the day then commences on the right, makes the round of the camp, receiving the pass from each one present, coming back on the left, salutes and reports:

I find all present to be members of the Grand Army.

The P. C. then commands attention! when all rise—then parades rest, and the Chaplain invokes the Divine benediction. All in camp, not physically disabled, will remain standing until the conclusion, when, without orders they will be seated.

The P. C. then says:

This encampment is now open for the discharge of all duties that may come proper before it.

And call for the reports of permanent officers in the following order:

Post Adjutant—Conveying proceedings of the previous meeting.

Post Q. M.—Giving the receipts of the last meeting and disbursements since.

Committee of Examination—On the qualification of recruits.

Balloting on application of candidates reported duly qualified.

GUARD-MOUNTING.

The P. C. will command.

Let the Assembly be souded.

The Officer of the Guard will then command:

Fall in Guard.

The guard, previously detailed, will then fall into line. The O. G. will assign a competent soldier to each prominent post—the out-post sentinel at the inner entrance—and proceed to relieve the old guard.

The officer of the day will, at the same time, pass out beyond the reserve post and the inner entrance of the camp, having a general oversight of the reserve and out-posts; during the process of relieving the guard.

Upon arriving at the out-post, should

the sentinel be found with any prisoners in charge, the O. G. will demand:

Why are these men detained here?

Sentinel—I found them wandering near our lines without the proper pass.

O. G. to prisoners—What was your object in approaching our lines?

Prisoners—A desire to enlist in the Grand Army of the Republic.

O. G.—Spies also seek to enter that they may the better betray.

Prisoners—"We be true men and no spies." We have already served in the armies of the Republic, and have received an honorable discharge.

(If they are now in the service, the language will be varied to correspond with the facts.)

O. G.—We welcome all true soldiers, and if, on examination, we find you qualified according to the regulations of the Grand Army, we will gladly receive you into our ranks. Do you fully understand and heartily sympathize with the objects for which the Grand Army has been enlisted?

Prisoners—We do.

O. G.—Are you prepared to take an obligation to sustain the cause of your country at all times—in camp, on the battle-field, or in the more quiet walks of civil life—with your arms, your voice and your vote—against all her enemies whether in high or low places—and you are prepared to unite with those who would secure by all proper guarantees the cause for which we risked our lives in the field?

Prisoners—We are thus prepared.

O. G.—Guard, conduct these strangers to the officer of the day for further examination.

The guard then marches them to the officer of the day, who is found near to and in advance of the reserve post. The Sentinel at the out-post is relieved and falls in with the escort.

The O. G. saluting the O. D. reports:

Sir, these men were found by the sentinel wandering near our out-post, and seeking admission to our camp. They claim to have been true soldiers of the Union, and desire to enlist in the Grand Army of the Republic.

O. D.—Do they know what they seek?

O. G.—I have questioned them and they profess some knowledge of the purposes for which the Grand Army exists, and assume the obligations of recruits.

O. D.—Strangers, you have already expressed knowledge of, and willingness to take upon you an obligation to sustain the objects of this Grand Army. But, before permitting you proceed, it is required that you take an obligation of secrecy. Are you now ready to do so?

Each answers—I am.

O. D.—You do, each of you, upon your honor as a man and a soldier, and in the presence of these witnesses, your former companions in arms, promise that you will never divulge to any living being any questions that may be asked of you while in this camp, and that you will true answers make to all questions that may be asked of you.

Each replies—I do so promise.

The O. D. then inquires of each his name, age, present residence, occupation, where born, in what organization he served, and whether he has received an honorable discharge. These answers being satisfactory, and sustained by the rolls, the officer of the day will say:

You will remain in charge of the guard until I report your presence and wishes to the commandant at this post, and learn what are his further orders.

him of his coat and hoodwinking him.

The P. A. returns to the P. C., salutes and reports:

Sir: I have complied with your instructions, and the Off. of the day now awaits your orders.

P. C.—Let the alarm be given, and the camp prepared for action.

The drums now sounded the long roll, the post battalion is formed by the post adjutant in two lines facing each other. The coffin, with flag, bible and sword, is placed six paces in front of the P. C.; a guard, fully accoutred, immediately in the rear.

Everything being in readiness, the post adjutant, saluting, addresses the P. C.:

Sir: The camp is prepared.

The P. C. returns the salute, and says: Direct the O. D. to enter with his charge.

The P. A. goes to the entrance—the door is thrown open—and says:

Sir: The commander of this post directs that you conduct your charge immediately before him.

The O. D. then directs the officer of the guard to follow with the escort guiding the recruits—enters the camp and advances to the center of the room, where he is halted by a sentinel on duty; giving the countersign, he passes around the room, and, arriving in front of the P. C., is halted by a second sentinel; the countersign being found all correct, he passes on, and arriving in front of the Sen. Vice P. C., is again halted by that officer with:

Sen. Vice P. C.—Who comes there?

O. D.—Officer of the Day with recruits on our way to the quarters of the P. C.

Sen. Vice P. C.—Have these recruits been properly examined and found worthy?

O. D.—They have been carefully examined and questioned, and deemed worthy of enlistment.

Sen. Vice P. C.—Too much caution cannot be observed in the introduction of strangers. The enemy are seeking opportunities to learn our mysteries. But the punishment of spies and traitors is swift, and their destruction sure. What evidence have you that these men are true to our sacred cause?

O. D.—Their history is written in our archives, and their answers on examination are in accordance therewith. Here and discharge as shown by the rolls.

Sen. Vice P. C.—It is sufficient. You will at once conduct them to the commandant of the post. But remember ever that traitors shall be punished.

The whole encampment then responds: The penalty of treason is death.

The O. D. then commands—forward march! Conducts the recruits forward past the center of the room, files to the right, across the room near to the coffin, halts them, and the P. A. commands:

Attention! Guard! Shoulder arms! Ready! Aim!

The O. D. commands quickly:

Hold! these are loyal soldiers of the Republic, seeking the quarters of the commandant of the post.

The P. C. then demands:

Recover arms. Shoulder arms. Order arms.

The P. A. then commands—

Who have you there?

O. D.—Sir, I present these men as recruits for enlistment in the Grand Army of the Republic.

P. C.—Whence do they come?

O. D.—They were found near our outer lines, inquiring the way to our camp.

P. C.—What evidence have you that are what they claim to be?

O. D.—They have taken the test, and passed a satisfactory examination.

Sen. Vice P. C.—They have presented a good record, sustained by the evidence of the rolls.

Post Surgeon—They have been carefully examined, and we have pronounced them sound and fit for duty.

P. C.—With all these vouchers in your favor, there can be no hesitation in receiving you fully into the ranks of the Grand Army. But before entrusting you with the secrets of our organization, we require of you, as we have required of all, that you take upon you the obligations, by which are united in solemn covenant, all members of this great association. Having gone thus far, are you still willing to proceed?

Each recruit—I am.

They are then instructed by the guard to kneel in front of the coffin, place the left hand on the cross-words and the bible, raise the right hand pointing upward. The post adjutant will then administer the following oath:

You do solemnly swear in the presence of Almighty God, and these witnesses, your former companions in arms, that you will never, under any pretense, nor for any purpose whatever, make known the secrets of this encampment. That you will never make known, or cause to be made known, either directly or indirectly, any of the passwords, grips, signs, or any information whatsoever, by which any of the hidden mysteries, work or ritual of this band of comrades may be known to the uninitiated. You do further solemnly swear, that you will never suffer others to wrong them, if in your power to prevent; but that you will on all occasions

[Remainder on 4th page.]