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For THE TIMES.

BIRD SONG.

Pretty—pretty! Pretty—pretty!

Rythmical and sweet, and clear,

In the May-time of the year—

Pretty—pretty!—

Sang the red-bird all unseen,

In the dusky branches green—

Sang as of some sweetheart dear,

Pretty—pretty—pretty!

Pretty—pretty! Pretty—pretty!

With a rhythm more clear and sweet,

Did the mocking-wren repeat—

Pretty—pretty!—

Pleased, I listened to the words,

Imitating both the birds,

As I stayed my wandering feet—

Pretty—pretty—pretty!

Pretty—pretty! Pretty—pretty!

Pretty in my memory's view—

Memory ever fond true—

Pretty—pretty!—

Beamed Lenora, so that then,

Like the red-bird and the wren,

I must needs be singing, too,

Pretty—pretty—pretty!

W. L. SHOEMAKER.

A WOMAN'S ADVENTURE.

ORRVILLE was one of the sober little American towns which a certain class of novelists so delighted to select as a scene of their romances, and which frequently lie asleep for so long a period of time that it is a positive blessing when something out of the ordinary course of events happens, to awake them out of their state of lethargy.

Orrville had been asleep for almost twelve years, when an event occurred which together with the attendant incidents, completely aroused the whole town.

Orrville was situated on Lake Wanona, one of the most charming little sheets of water in our inland States. In a secluded valley, shut out, as it were from all the rest of the world by the surrounding hills, with a solitary majestic mountain keeping silent vigil over the slumbering scene, lay the beautiful lake, and, on its margin, the miniature town. The spot was all that a poet might fancy, or a romantic lover sigh for; and when there was advertised "A new summer resort, the Orrville House at Orrville," with every accommodation, &c., &c., it is not surprising that many persons, who had been struck by the surpassing beauty of the place, as they caught a flying glance of it in the whizzing train, should respond immediately to the opportunity, and engage to spend the summer or autumn months at so charming a resort.

Among the earlier guests at the Orrville House, were Charles Lacy, a talented young barrister of limited means, Colonel Harris, and a Mr. Van Haven, a handsome young merchant of New York.

Charles Lacy and Mattie Harris had been playmates in their childhood; but the former had removed from his native place in his fifteenth year, and had never met the sweetheart of his boyish days until time had transformed him into the full stature of a man. Both were now so completely changed that they met at Orrville as entire strangers, and were only recognized to one another by the mention of their names and places of residence. The acquaintance, thus renewed, ripened into ardent love, and Charles Lacy considered himself the luckiest fellow on earth.

"Did you hear the news, Mattie?" asked Lacy, one morning, as his betrothed seated herself at the breakfast table by his side.

"No; what is it?" Johnson & Co., bankers in this town,

have been robbed of over one hundred thousand dollars!"

"You don't say so! When did it occur?"

"Some time during the earlier part of the morning. The thief, whoever he is, made a pretty fair haul of it—left the firm with a very small sum for its own pocket-book. It was a private banking house, and involves many of the leading persons of the town."

"And they haven't secured the guilty parties?"

"No; and are not likely to do so either. Men who take such goodly sums as this generally secure a safe avenue of escape. But I can tell you this," he added, lowering his voice, and inclining his head toward her, "a suspicion falls on the Orrville House, but no one individually, as far as I am aware of."

Just then a waiter placed a letter by his side, saying:

"Something for Mr. Lacy."

It read thus:

"Come to Dalton at once. Your presence is needed immediately at Mr. Greenups. Do not delay. A. H."

"What is this? Come to Dalton at once! A. H. Who can that person be? But I'll go."

"I'm called away for a little while, Mattie," he said, in explanation, replacing the note in the envelope, "but expect to be back soon. I must go forthwith," and pressing her hand, he left the breakfast-room, hurriedly packed the necessary articles in his valise, and was at the station just in time to catch the morning train.

It was evening. The calm round moon smiled upon the placid little lake in all her pensive glory. Nature breathed her soft musical murmurings, and everything seemed to whisper "Peace, peace."

But the heart of Mattie Harris knew anything but peace as she left the gay crowd of thoughtless dancers in the brilliantly lighted hotel, for an atmosphere more in harmony with her saddened spirit. Her heart was very heavy to-night. She wandered listlessly down to the water's edge. A little boat lay moored there. She seated herself in it; where she felt she could be undisturbed in her lonely meditations. Her thoughts soon found utterance:

"What a change!" she murmured, "what a change from our happy condition of a week ago! I can hardly realize it! A bank robbed, and Charles arrested as the perpetrator of the robbery and thrown into prison. How could they ever suspect him? Yet the circumstances are very mysterious, and a hasty investigation points to him. It is evident to me, though, that he only left Orrville temporarily, that he was called away. Strange that he should have destroyed the letter, and that it turns out that there is no such person as Greenup in Dalton! It is not at all strange that he should have become excited when a couple of men laid their hands on him as he was getting out of the train, and told him he was a thief, and was wanted immediately at Orrville. Who wouldn't get excited under such circumstances? What nonsense they allege! They say he might have written the note himself, and passed it through the post. But I know that he has not the least link of connection with the affair; and the authorities had no right to commit him to prison, when he can obtain bail from half a dozen different persons. But the people here are so excited that they will listen to nothing." A tear trickled down her pale cheeks. "Pshaw! I'll not be such a baby; all will be right yet."

She sat in the boat until the lights in the different departments of the hotel gradually disappeared, and was just about to rise and return to the house, when a figure, coming down the path towards her induced her to retain her seat. The figure proved to be that of the young merchant, Mr. Van Haven.—Mattie had always been attracted by the handsome face and winning manners of the gay New Yorker and rather enjoyed his society than otherwise. So she remained seated until he took his place by her side.

"Let's row out upon the lake," said Van Haven, without an unnecessary "Good evening," as he raised the oars and pulled gently from the shore. "It is a very quiet night, and we shall not be disturbed. Most of the folks have retired. We must move cautiously."

"Why?" questioned Mattie, rather surprised at this remark.

"Why? Do you want to betray yourself?"

"Betray myself? Why, what are you talking about?"

Just then the moon, which had been shining on his back, fell full upon his face, and revealed a countenance with an unusual strange expression, and to the great astonishment of Mattie, the fact that her companion was asleep!—Van Haven had been known to walk in his sleep and perform a great many marvellous feats while in that condition; and Mattie Harris herself had happened to meet him once while enjoying a somnambulist's ramble. So she wasn't at all frightened by the circumstances under which she suddenly found herself placed, but was somewhat astonished; and being a young lady of a good deal of mischief and possessed of the usual amount of curiosity, of course she determined to let her companion continue on his nocturnal excursion.

"What are you talking about?" repeated Mattie, her saddened features giving place to an amused smile.

"You know well enough what I am talking about, Jim. We must secure it to-night. It may be found where we've hidden it, and that would be the last of us. That letter was a sharp thing of ours, wasn't it? I tremble lest Lacy may be cleared—though, then suspicion would seek some other party. So we'd better find some other quarters as soon as we can possibly do so without causing any comment upon it; and, of course, we will not let the money remain where it is now."

At the mention of Lacy's name, and "money," Mattie's mind, which for the past week had been invariably coupling those words together, caught eagerly at the suspicion thus aroused; and her very frame shook as the light of a great disclosure suddenly flashed upon her. She had found one of the guilty parties, concerned in the bank robbery, and could liberate her lover!

The discovery was almost too much for her. A dim mist suffused her eyes. She clutched eagerly for the side of the boat. But she soon recovered from the first shock, yet did not permit herself to speak, she trembled so violently.

Van Haven continued:

"We must leave to-morrow; don't you think so?"

"Yes," ventured Mattie. Now let's be quiet, for fear we should be heard."

"All right."

They moved slowly and noiselessly across the rippling waters of the lake, until they reached the opposite shore. The woods hung darkly over the tranquil depths, and all was quiet. Van Haven tied the boat and stepped ashore, followed silently by Mattie. He led the way to a dense thicket of underbrush, pausing a moment to assure himself that they were alone. Having satisfied himself of this point, he took a few steps forward, and cautiously raised a large stone. Under it lay a casket. He picked it up and replaced the stone.

"I'll carry it," said Mattie, with avidous eagerness, feeling confident that if she once got possession of the stolen money all would be well with her.

"Very well," said the somnambulist and consigned the casket to her keeping.

"Now let us go to the boat again, and we will finish the arrangement of our plans as we cross over to Orrville."

Mattie considered it a matter of prudence to agree, and followed her sleeping companion to the lake. He took his seat in the boat and loosening the chain from the sapling, enjoining his associate to maintain perfect silence until they should be out on the lake. He seemed to think that all was well, and shoved off from the shore.

Mattie stood in the moonlight and watched the boat and its solitary oarsman until they both were concealed within the dark shadow of the mountain, behind which the moon was fast hiding herself.

"I'm safe now!" she said, with a joyful bound. But what shall I do? I'm half a mile from any house, and have no means of crossing the lake. There's a road here somewhere, though, which leads to the town. I'll walk to the hotel if it takes till morning! There is no time to be lost."

So saying, she began her search for the road, which was soon found; and, after four hours of rapid walking, for which the excitement of the occasion lent the requisite amount of strength, she reached Orrville.

She lost no time in informing the authorities of the town of her singular adventure, producing the casket for their examination in proof of her statement.

Early in the morning, before most of the guests had arisen, the Orrville House was surrounded by half a dozen men, evidently intent upon the capture of some one within. Presently Van Haven made his appearance on the ground floor verandah, apparently unconscious that anything was wrong. The sight of the police quickly undeceived him; it was up with him. He was handcuffed at once without any ceremonious notification of the reason why he was thus rudely dealt with. Mattie came down just then, after a short sleep, and was requested to follow, when the officers started down the street with their prisoner in custody, attended by a large crowd of excited spectators, which had soon congregated.

A preliminary examination convinced all parties of the guilt of Van Haven, but did not exonerate Lacy from complicity in the affair. The subsequent investigation, however, fastened the guilt upon two parties, Van Haven and a James Thompson, an Orrville man, with whom the former had been on terms of suspicious intimacy.

Of course all redress was made to Mr. Lacy for the hasty opinions of the people concerning him, and was accepted by him as satisfactory. But a more material expression of the thanks of the bankers was made, when Mr. Johnson himself, the senior partner of the firm, rose in the police court and said:

"That in consideration of the surprising good sense and bravery of Miss Harris in securing the guilty parties in this robbery, it became his pleasant duty to present in the name of the firm, to the former, the sum of ten thousand dollars, and that the latter the sum of fifteen thousand dollars, and that he could accept no refusal."

We need not attempt to describe the applause and good feeling elicited by these remarks—that is left to the imagination of the reader.

No clamorous demonstrations of gratitude were made by either of the recipients of these princely gifts; but both expressed their thanks in a single sentence and retired from the court together amid the acclamation of the crowd.

Three weeks afterwards, Orrville was going wild over a gay wedding, and had actually awakened out of its long Rip Van Winkle sleep; and the happiest couple in town were Charles Lacy and Mattie Harris.

A Strange Wedding Fee.

MANY years ago, a New York minister was waiting in the office of a lawyer who was one of his members, chatting on various subjects and as the pastor happened to speak of the hard times, and the dilatoriness of the church in paying his small salary, the lawyer remarked:

"Now I hardly agree with you, pastor, in your assertion that ministers are paid less for their work than any other class of professional men. They have a great deal given to them in one way or another, donation parties, Christmas presents, etc. Then the item of wedding fees, which you seldom hear them speak about, but which must amount to quite a sum, several hundred dollars in the course of the year, brings them in a good revenue."

"Do you think so?" said the clergyman. "Now, come right down to dots, what do you suppose is the average fee that I receive?"

"I should say twenty dollars was a low estimate," said the lawyer. "Here in New York I have often known persons to give one hundred dollars, and a fifty dollar fee is quite common, but considering the fact that you marry a good many of the poor, or those who are moderately well off, as well as the rich, I should think, as I said, that twenty dollars was a pretty low average."

"That calculation is rather large," said the minister, "but still I cannot tell exactly, all I have received this year."

"No, I presume not," said the lawyer. "I have noticed that ministers

don't generally know how much they have received, when the sum is pretty large, but I rather think they would if it was a small one. But I will tell you what I will do. I will give you ten dollars for half your next fee, and I don't believe I shall lose anything by it either. Do you accept that?"

The minister hesitated a moment and then said: "Yes; well, yes; I'll accept that—ten dollars for half the next fee."

He soon bade him good morning and went home to his dinner. While he sat at the table the bell rang, and the servant came in saying a man at the door wished to see him a moment. He found a rough-looking farmer standing there, who accosted him thus:

"Good morning, Dr. A. I came in to see if you could just tie me up, this morning. Sal and I have been talking about it a good while, and we've come to the conclusion that 'tain't any use to wait any longer."

"O yes," said the doctor; "walk in, walk in. Where do you want to be married?"

"Right here," said the farmer, "if you're willin'. Sal's in the wagon, and I'll bring her in."

So he brought in a blooming country maid, and the minister, who had doffed his gown and slipped on his best coat, made them one, in his most impressive style. After the ceremony and the congratulations, the farmer said:

"About the fee, minister; we hain't got much money, but I thought your children might be fond of pups."

Saying which he tipped up a small box, and out rolled a little white pup on the piano.

The minister could scarcely contain his mirth, but thanked the bridegroom and told him the children would be glad of it, and bade him a pleasant good morning. He finished his dinner, then putting the pup carefully back into the box, he started with it under his arm for the lawyer's office.

His friend was quite surprised to see him so soon again, but the pastor relieved his curiosity by saying:

"I had no idea when I accepted your offer this morning that I should have come so soon to claim it; and I hardly think I should have accepted it so quickly, had I known I was to marry a couple to-day, and receive such an unusual and unexpected fee. Generally there is not much difference in them, but this was a perfect surprise to me."

"No backing out, now," said the lawyer; "that bargain was fair, and square, and you must hold to it. Here's your ten dollars; hand over the fee."

The minister demurred a moment, and told him he should beware how he made rash promises again; but finally, unfastening the cover of the box, said, "All right, I'll stand by the bargain." tumbled out the pup upon the lawyer's desk, and with the blandest smile upon his face, waving his hand and bowing politely, he said: "Here is the fee, which half will you take?"

The blank look of amazement and disgust which overspread the countenance of the lawyer, as he looked at the roll of puppiness, was amusing to see.

"You don't mean it—that you married a couple and that was your fee?"

"Indeed it was," said the minister, "and the man who presented it thought he was doing a handsome thing!"

Then with a hearty laugh the lawyer handed him the gold piece, and told him that he thought he had nothing more to say in regard to the enriching of ministers by wedding fees.—Baptist Weekly.

How Prairie Dogs Get Waters.

It has always been a subject of curiosity and inquiry as to how and where prairie dogs, living on the prairie, far away from any river or stream, obtain their water. Mr. F. Leech, formerly of Mercer county, Pa., and a frontiersman of experience, asserts that the dogs dig their own wells, each village having one with a concealed opening. It matters not how far down the water may be, the dogs will keep on digging until they reach it. He knows of one such well two hundred feet deep, and having a circular staircase leading down to the waters. Every time a dog wants to drink he descends the staircase, which, considering the distance, is no mean task. In digging for water the animals display as much pluck as in resisting the efforts of settlers to expel them from the land of their progenitors.