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BUSINESS CARDS.

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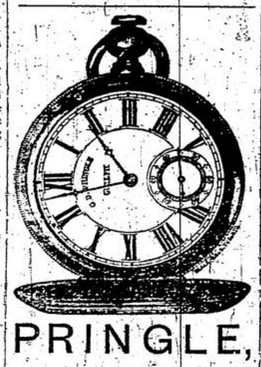

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LIFE IN CHICAGO.

A FAINT SKETCH OF ITS HIGHWAYMEN, PICKPOCKETS, BEGGARS, BURGLARS, AND MINSTRELS.

(From the Stratford Beacon.)

Of thousand ways by which men grab
Your money from your purse,
'Twould puzzle e'en Judge L. to tell,
Which method is the worst;
But all of them are bad enough
To make a Quaker cuss.

You're riding out, some pleasant day,
And counting up your gains;
A fellow springs out from a bush,
And grabs your horse's reins;
His comrade hints some words about
A bullet in your brains.

'Tis hard to meet such pressing friends
In such a lonely spot;
'Tis very hard to loose your cash,
But harder to be shot,
And so you lug your wallet out,
Though you would rather not!

Just as you're going out to dine,
A *hirpling homo* begs—
You'll hear about the cannon ball
That carried off his pegs;
He says it is a cruel thing
For men to lose their legs.

He tells you of his starving wife—
And children to be fed,
Poor lovely little innocents,
All clamoring for bread—
And, Christian-like, you help to put
The bachelor to bed.

You're sitting on your window seat,
Beneath a cloudless moon,
You hear a sound that seems to wear
The semblance of a tune,
As if a broken fife should strive
To drown a crack'd bassoon.

Nearer and nearer still the tide
Of music seems to come,
There's something like a human voice,
And something like a drum;
You sit in speechless agony,
Until your ear is numb.

Poor "*Home, Sweet Home*" should seem to be
A very dismal place,
Your "*Auld Acquaintance*" all at once
Is altered in the face,
The discords sting thro' Burns and Moore,
Like hedge hogs dressed in lace.

You'd think they are crusaders sent
From Nick's infernal clime,
To pluck the eyes of sentiment,
And dock the tail of rhyme,
To crack the voice of melody,
And break the legs of time.

But, hark! the air again it still,
The music grist is ground,
And silence like the poultice comes
To heal the wounds or sound;
It cannot be!—it is—this is
A hat as going round.

No!—pay the dentist when he leaves
A fracture in your jaw,
And pay the owner of the bear,
That stuns you with his paw,
And buy the lobster that has had
Your knuckles in his claw.

But if you are a portly man,
Put on your fiercest frown,
And talk about the constables
To kick them out of town,
Then close your sentence with an oath,
And shut the window down.

Or, if you are a dwarfish man,
Not big enough for that,
Or if you cannot make a speech,
Because you are a flat,
Go very quietly and drop
A button in the hat.

HIBERNICUS.

Chicago, Oct. 1, 1875.

DARKDALE.

"Wanted, a lady, over thirty years of age, to undertake the education of two children. A foreigner, or a person with few near connections, preferred. Address, B. A., Post-office, Ripon, Yorkshire."

Such was the advertisement that caught my eye one morning in the columns of the *Times*. Being a governess, out of a situation, over thirty years of age, and not having a friend or relation in the world, I thought it just the thing to suit me, and answered it immediately.

A week elapsed; and having received no reply, I had given up all thoughts of hearing from B. A., when, one evening, my landlady brought in a card, upon which was inscribed the words, "Mr. Jonathan Roydon, Darkdale," and informed me that the gentleman was waiting to see me in her parlor.

My visitor was a strange-looking personage that the first sight of him quite startled me. He could not have been more than five feet high; but his shoulders were nearly as broad, and his arms as long, as those of an ordinary man of six feet. His head was immensely large, and covered with a mass of bristly black hair: his forehead, which, as Shakespere says, was "villianously low," sloped inwards towards the nose, which was flat, with wide nostrils; the mouth was large and thick-lipped; the chin long and protruding. To add to his abnormally hideous appearance, his legs were bowed, and his feet splay. His dress and manner, however, were those of a gentleman.

"You are Miss Hester Manners, the writer of this letter?" he said, handing me my epistle to "B. A."

I never heard a voice so pleasant and musical issue from the lips of a man before.

I answered in the affirmative.

"You say you have no relations? Have you any female friend with whom you hold correspondence? I ask this question because I have a great dislike to have all the events which take place in my house diaried for the delectation of some young or old lady, who communicates the choice bits of the same to all her friends."

I assured him I had no correspondents.

"Are you nervous—timid?" he asked, abruptly.

"Not at all," thinking it a very odd question, however.

I could see him surveying me all this time from under his bushy eyebrows, with an intense scrutiny that was quite confusing.

"The children I wish you to undertake the care of," he proceeded, "are mine—a boy and girl, aged respectively seven and five. Their mother has been dead two years. Their education has been entirely neglected. You will find Darkdale Manor a dull place, and I am considered an eccentric person. I have come up to London to judge personally of several of the applicants for the situation. You look the most suitable; and if you like, we will at once strike a bargain."

The salary he offered was a very liberal one, and I was very poor at the time. These two circumstances combined induced me to accept an appointment which I would otherwise have declined.

Five days later, I booked at King's Cross for a certain town in the North Riding of Yorkshire, where a servant was to conduct me to my destination.

It was towards sunset on a fine November day, when I alighted at the dirty shed which served the small town of——for a station. With the exception of a porter, there was only one person upon the platform—a tall, guant man, whose long, saturnine, yet grotesquely figured face might have served as a model for a Gothic gargoyle. He wore dark breeches and gaiters, and a dark livery coat. He came up to me, and asked if my name was Miss Manners, and upon my answering in the affirmative, bade me follow him.

He assisted me to mount into a kind of dog-cart, that stood at the station entrance, and drove away. Our road lay through a narrow valley, between bare, lofty hills. After proceeding about four miles, we came suddenly upon a scene of almost solid grandeur. It was an irregular amphitheatre; the hills, here rocky precipices, there covered with dark fir and pine, assuming the proportion of mountains, their bases washed by the waters of a lake at least five miles in circumference. The night was falling fast, and wrapping every object in a sombre veil of mist.

We took a narrow path that skirted the water for a short distance, and after proceeding about another half-mile, turned sharply into a road that seemed scarcely more than a rift in the rocks. At the end of about a hundred yards, however, it became wider, and I saw before us, upon a rising ground, backed by a sheer precipice, an ancient stone building, forming three sides of a quadrangle; the fourth, which fronted us, being occupied by a blank wall, with a pair of high iron gates in the centre.

"Is that Darkdale?" I asked of my conductor, who had not spoken one word during the whole of the journey.

He nodded.

I looked around me, and could scarcely repress a shudder; the gloom and solitude of the place was frightful. My heart sank with indefinable apprehensions, and I wished myself back in my poor lodging in Camden Town.

Little time was given me for such reflections, as immediately afterwards we drew up in front of the gates, which stood open; we now entered a paved court-yard, which sloped upwards to the house, to which we were admitted through a stone porch guarded by an oaken door, studded with large nails. The stone passage was dark and cold as a vault.

The gaunt servant now conducted me into a room upon the ground floor, saying he would inform his master of my arrival. The apartment was oak-panelled, with heavy antique furniture of the same materials; a bright fire blazed upon the hearth of an elaborately carved fire-place, and this was the only light. While I was glancing round this cheerless place, the door opened and Mr. Jonathan Roydon entered, bearing a lamp in his hand, and so changed in appearance, that but for his unmistakeable figure, I should never have recognized him. Thick ploughman's boots, gray worsted stockings, a threadbare velveteen coat and breeches, a blue check shirt—such as are worn by labourers—had taken the place of the glossy black of his town dress, rendering his ugliness yet more repulsive.

"So you have arrived," he said. What is the matter? You look white and scared, as if you didn't like your quarters."

I answered, a little confusedly, that I was tired with my long journey.

He fixed his black eyes which seemed to literally burn beneath his beetling brows, upon me, with such a piercing force that they caused mine instantly to drop.

"Look ye, mistress," he said; "if the place is not lively enough for you, or if you have any nervous feelings about it, go back to London; I will pay all your expenses, and give you a quarter's salary for your trouble. Timid people are no good here. Come, what do you say?"

The effect of this strange address was to make me ashamed of my own cowardice, and express my determination to remain.

"Good!" he answered; keep a bold heart in your body, and you will do well enough."

After partaking of some substantial refreshment, a withered old woman, abnormally ugly, like everybody else whom I had seen connected with the establishment, showed me to my bedroom.

It was a wilderness of a room, panelled, like the parlor below, with black oak. A Venetian glass over the mantlepiece a large table, two chairs, and a huge bed stead, upon which four people might have comfortably slept abreast, constituted the sole furniture; but an inner dressing-room was fitted up with a modern toilette service.

After carefully locking my door, I went to the narrow latticed window, and drew aside the curtains. My apartment looked to the front. The towering cliffs that hemmed us in on each side, threw their dense shadows upon the court-yard; but between them I could see the shimmering water of the lake, and the mountain-tops silvered by the moonlight. The novelty of my situation—I, who until now had been associated with only the most matter-of-fact people, and lived amongst the most prosaic scenes, suddenly transported into a reign of mystery and romance—precluded all idea of sleep, and drawing my chair close to the roaring logs that blazed upon the hearth, I gave myself up to reflection.

The intense quietude of the house, however, the fatigue I had undergone, and the heat of the fire, proved so conducive to repose, that my eyes gradually and unconsciously closed, and I fell into a slumber. How long I slept I know not; but by-and-by, strains of soft music stole upon my senses. I awoke, and listened; a sweet tenor voice was singing a peculiar plaintive ditty, to the accompaniment of a guitar, touched by a master hand. The sounds seemed to come up from the court below. I ran across to the window. The moon, now high in the cloudless heavens, had dissolved the dense shadows, and cast her full light upon the yard, and upon the figure and upturned face of a man. Was I dreaming, or was it, indeed, the uncouth form of Jonathan Roydon I was looking upon? It was, and he was the serenader.

While I stood lost in wonder, a wild peal of laughter, succeeded almost immediately by a piercing, unearthly shriek, rang upon the night air. In an instant, the singer vanished, and a profound stillness succeeded.

Was all this a dream from which I had just started up? The whole thing had been so sudden, that I found it difficult to resolve myself upon the point; but I felt very much frightened, and huddled into bed all dressed as I was, and, like a child, drew the clothes over my head.

Once more, fortunately, exhausted nature conquered terror, and I fell into a deep sleep, from which I did not awake until daylight.

Morning is proverbial for dispersing the imaginative terrors of the night; but the people among whom I found myself were so unlike ordinary humanity; the place was so savage and solitary, and the thing I had seen, or rather heard, during the brief time I had been there, so inexplicably strange, that I felt far from reassured by the sunbeams. A thousand wild fears and fancies chased each other through my brain, and it was with difficulty I conquered an almost irresistible impulse to quit the house, and go back to London that very day.

My breakfast was brought by the old woman who had shown me to my room, and after I had finished the meal, the same person, whose language was purely laconic, conducted me down stairs to the parlor where I had had my interview with Mr. Roydon. And here I was introduced to my two pupils.

It would be impossible to conceive a contrast more startling than existed between these children: the boy was the father in little, deformed and very ugly: the girl was beautiful as an angel; but over both there was an atmosphere of inexpressible sadness, which, in the former, took the shape of a moody sulleness; in the latter, of pensive melancholy. I found them both ignorant of the commonest rudiments of knowledge; neither could read a word of two syllables, nor form a written character more elaborate than a pothook; both spoke with a broad Yorkshire dialect, which sounded natural enough from the lips of the boy, but strangely *mal apropos* from such a fairy-like creature as his sister. The most marked characteristic of all the inhabitants of the house was their taciturnity; every one seemed to have taken a vow of silence, even the children.

(Continued next week.)

A Sorrowful Confession.

(From the Marion (Ill.) News)

For some time past the habits of Elder J. V. Beckman, pastor of the Christian Church of this village, have been such as to cause great grief to his friends and bring reproach to the church. At the close of the sermon last Sunday, which was preached by a neighbouring pastor, Elder Beckman made the following address, which we give as a warning to all men, young and old, to avoid the sin and shame which has come upon this man:

"As a man I have the highest conception as to what the life and character of a minister of the gospel should be. I know that he should lead a consistant life, that he can be looked to by the community as an example of purity and righteousness. Knowing that my life has not been such in all respects, I desire to tender to this church, for which I have laboured so long, my resignation.

"You are aware that I refer to my sin of intemperance. This may be my last opportunity of addressing you, and I want to ask you that you will not charge this great shame to the religion of Christ. It teaches better things. Charge it to my own depravity and sinful nature. To you who have not this habit, it is strange that I should yield to the temptation. I will remember the time when I thought it strange that others drank and ruined themselves with alcohol.

"I am glad that so many young men are here this morning, that I may lift my voice in warning and beg them to profit by my example. You think now that you are strong and in no danger. I well remember the time when I believed the same. Twelve years ago, when I reached forth my inexperienced hand and took the intoxicating cup, I thought I was strong; but I developed a habit that now holds me in chains and in the most awful slavery that humanity has ever been subjected to. It holds me in its embrace when I seek my bed for repose, it disturbs my dreams during the weary hours of night, and seizes me as its prey when I rise up in the morning to enter upon the duties of the day.

"Profit, oh! profit by my example. See what it has done for me. There was a time when I stood as fair as any minister of the church in Illinois; there was a time when I had as bright prospects and as cheering hopes for the future as any of my classmates. But now they are all gone because of intemperance. Oh! that I could bring the whole world to hear my warning voice. Young ladies, you can do much to remove this curse from the world by not countenancing its use among your companions.

"Brethern I sever my connection with you as your pastor with a sad heart. It would be sad under the most favourable circumstances but more so as it is. But I shall remain with you in the church, and labour to the community for a livinood. I will come to your social meetings, and work with you in Sunday school, and will do all that I can to atone for the great sin that I have committed.

"God knows I do not wish to injure His cause. Pray for me that I may yet overcome this besetting sin. I trust that I shall be able to conquer. But, should I go down under the withering influence, I ask that you remember me kindly. Whenever you meet me and under what circumstances, remember there was a time when you were proud of me. But treat me as you may, act towards me as you choose, I beg that you will remember my wife kindly. Do not give her pain and sorrow because of my wrong doing.

"Poor woman, she has always suffered enough. I married her a sweet and innocent girl. She has been a patient and faithful wife. Again I ask you that you will kindly remember my wife and children."

INDESTRUCTIBLE WOOD.—A very important invention has lately been patented in England. It is a process for rendering timber uninflammable, preventing dry rot and decay, and for rendering the softer kinds of timber as hard and durable as oak and teak. This process which is at once cheap and effectual, consists in impregnating the timber with a hot solution of tungstate of soda, at a cost of about five cents per cubic foot. The success of the operation has been amply demonstrated by public experiments which has been so entirely satisfactory as to lead the English Government to enter on an agreement with the patentee. At a recent trial of the prepared wood at Chicago two wooden houses were set on fire, one being of prepared wood and the other of wood unprepared, except the framing. The result of the experiment was that the latter was entirely consumed except the prepared framing which was left intact, while the former was entirely uninjured.—*Canadian Mechanics' Magazine.*

The Haunted House.

In one of the baronial castles of the north, which had been uninhabited for years, there were at times such extraordinary noises as to confirm the opinion among the country people that the place was haunted. In the western tower an old couple were permitted to live, who had been in the service of a former lord; but so imbued were they with the superstitions of the country, that they never went to bed without expecting to hear the cries of the disturbed spirits of the mansion. An old story was current that an heir apparent had been murdered by an Uncle, that he might possess the estate, who, however, after enjoying it for a time, was so annoyed by the sounds in the castle, that he retired with an uneasy conscience from the domain, and died in France.

Not many years ago the property descended to a branch of the female line—one of the heroes of Waterloo—who, nothing daunted, was determined to make this castle his place of residence. As the noises were a subject of real terror to his tenantry, he resolved to sleep in the castle on the night he took possession, in order to do away these superstitious fears. Not a habitable room could be found except the one occupied by the old gardener and his wife in the western turret, and he ordered his camp-bed to be set up in that apartment. It was in the autumn, at nightfall, that he repaired to the gloomy abode, leaving his servant, to his no small discomfort, at the village inn; and after having found everything comfortably provided, turned the large, old, rusted key, upon the antiquated pair, who took leave of him to lodge hard by. It was one of those nights which are checkered with occasional gleams of moon-shine and darkness, when the clouds are riding on a high wind. He slept well for the two first hours, and was then awakened by a low, mournful sound that ran through the apartments. This warned him to be up and accoutred. He descended the turret stairs with a brilliant light, which, on coming to the ground-floor, cast a gigantic shaddow of himself upon the high embattled walls. Here he stood and listened; when presently a hollow moan ran through the corridor, and died away. This was followed by one of a higher key, a sort of scream, which directed his footsteps with more certainty to the spot. Pursuing the sounds he found himself in a great hall of the ancestors, and vaulting upon the oaken table, set down the lamp and folding his cloak about him, determined for all that was terrible. The night which had been stormy, suddenly became still; the dark, flitting clouds had sunk beneath the horizon, and the moon insinuated her silvery light through the chinks of the mouldering pile. As our hero had spent the morning in the chase, Morpheus came unbidden, as he fell asleep upon the table. His dream was short, for close upon him issued forth the horrid groan; amazed, he started up and sprang at the unseen voice, fixing with a powerful blow his Toledo steel in the arras. The blade was fast, and held him to the spot. At this moment the moon shot a ray that illuminated the hall, and showed that behind the waving folds there lay the cause concealed. He left his sword and retraced his steps to the turret. When morning came a welcome croud greeting him, asked if he had met the ghost. "Oh! yes," replied the knight, "dead as a door-nail behind the screen he lies, where my sword his pinned him fast; bring the wrenching-bar, and we'll haul the disturber out." With such a leader, and broad day to boot, the valiant throng tore down the screen where the sword was fixed; when lo! in a recess lay the fragments of a chapel organ, and the square wooden trunks made for hallowed sounds were used as projas, to stay the work when the wall coated round with oak. The wondering clowns laughed aloud at the voice. It was the northern blast that found its way through the crannies of the wall to the groaning pipes that had alarmed the country round for a century past.

When a man walking rapidly along the street suddenly stops and retraces his steps, the act itself is quite sufficient evidence that some thought has occured to him which necessitates a change of programme. And yet, in nine cases out of ten that man will pause for a moment in apparently profound contemplation, will perhaps draw some letters from his pocket and affect to examine them, will suddenly assume an expression of heroic decision, and then, with an exclamation of annoyance, rapidly return in the direction from which he originally came. And all this pantomine is for the purpose of convincing some one whom he believes to be looking on (but who is not), that he has forgotton something (which would have been known already). It's funny.

Manner of Retreat of Arabs.

When an Arab tribe is pursued by an enemy they sleep and take their food without halting. That they may not fall from their camels when sleeping, they stretch themselves out at length, placing their feed in a bag on each side of the animal's neck. Their food is prepared by the women. One mounted on a camel loaded with wheat continues grinding with a hand-mill, and passes the meal to another, who is provided with leather bottles containing water, suspended on each side of the camel; she, having prepared the paste, passes it to a third, who completes the operation by baking the bread in thin slices on a chafing dish, or portable oven, which is heated with wood or straw. This bread, with a portion of cheese and dates, is then distributed by her, to those whom it is her province to feed, and the frugal meal is finished with a draught of camel's milk. The camels are also milked as they walk, the men using for this purpose large wooden bowls, which are passed from one to another.

A BIG TREE FOR THE CENTENNIAL.—A section of one of the big trees of California is on its way to Philadelphia for exhibition at the Centennial. It passed through Omaha on the eighth inst., and the *Bee* of that place thus describes it: "The tree from which this section was cut grew in the Kaweah and King's River Grove, near the line of Fresno and Tulare counties, California, on the west slope of the Sierra Nevadas, at an elevation of 6,500 feet above the level of the sea, forty-five miles from Visalia, the nearest railroad station. The age of the tree as indicated by the yearly rings was about 2,250 years, the rings being so close on the outer edge that it was almost impossible to count them. The height was 276 feet. The diameter at the surface of the ground, was twenty-six feet; ten feet above the ground the diameter was twenty feet; 100 feet above the ground where the first limb projects, the diameter was fourteen feet; and 200 feet above the ground the diameter was nine feet. It was perfectly sound and solid. The bark averaged one foot in thickness, and in some places it was sixteen inches thick. The bark of some of this species of tree is three feet thick. The estimated number of lumber feet that it would make was 375,000, and the number of cubic feet about 31,000, enough to make lumber and posts enough for sixteen miles of ordinary fence. The weight of the wood when first cut was seventy-two pounds per cubic foot, making the weight of the lumber producing portion 2,232,000 pounds. It took two men ten days' hard work to fell the tree, and when it fell it broke in several pieces. This section was taken from the tree ten feet above the ground to twenty-six feet above the ground. The diameter at the base is twenty feet. It was hollowed out into a cylinder, and then cut into sections, making when put together the body of the tree complete, the wood thus left being from six to eight inches thick, exclusive of the bark."

LITIGATION OVER A TIN POT.—A trial growing out of the disputed ownership of a tin coffee pot, "the worse for wear," was held in the City Court, Brooklyn, before Judge Reynolds, the other day. Mrs. Henrietta J. Peden and Nettie Little and her husband, who reside in the same house in Dean street, are the disputants. Mrs. Peden, who got possession of the tinware in question, was called a thief, as alleged, by Mrs. Little who claimed it. For this license in the use of opprobrious names Mrs. Peden brings suit to recover $3,000 damages. Lawyer's fees amount to $100 and $150 on the respective sides at issue. The tin pot is worth about fifty cents. The verdict of the jury was for the defendant.

A CLOSE CALL.—A Detroit boy surprised his father the other day by asking:

"Father, do you like mother?"

"Why, yes, of course."

"And she likes you?"

"Of course she does."

"Did she ever say so?"

"Many a time, my son."

"Did she marry you because she loved you?"

"Certainly she did."

"The boy looked the old man over, and after a long pause asked:

"Well, was she as near-sighted then as she is now?"

There was a row in Pawlet, Vt., recently, because the doctor transferred his attentions from an aged maiden to a young widow. The maiden hooted under the widow's window while the doctor was courting his new sweetheart, and the widow threw dish water on the maiden.