

COMING THE COLONEL

There was a great political ferment in Simpson county, Ky., over the approaching election of a county judge.

After supper, while old John and his guests were sitting on the porch talking over the coming struggle and listening to a wondrously good piano accompaniment in a local room, old John, getting up and stretching himself, said to the major:

"Let me see you a moment, please." The major followed him to the end of the gallery. "Major," old John whispered, "I am compelled to tell you something. You gentlemen are welcome to stay with me as long as you like, but ability to accommodate cannot always be measured by willingness to do so."

"But can't the colonel and I sleep together?" the major rejoined. "Yes, you can, but the truth is the colonel is awfully peculiar."

"How so?" "Well, as rational as he appears while stirring about he's a strange man in bed. Our families, you know, are well acquainted, and I therefore know all about him. His peculiarities come from a severe he received when he was a child. It seems that a dog once tried to bite him, and now, just before he comes off to sleep, he begins to growl, and unless something is done to stop him he begins to bite ferociously."

"Humph," the major grunted, "that's old, but what can be done to stop him after he begins to growl?" "Well, his brother told me how he used to work it. He always took a coarse comb to bed with him and would rake the colonel with it when he began to growl."

"That's very odd. And would it quiet him?" "Would make him act just like a lamb. Why, he used insist that his brother should take the comb to bed with him. He don't like to have any one mention the frolicish misfortune, as he always terms it, but it would be doing him a great favor if you would give him the comb to bed with you and rake him a rake in case he should begin to growl. I am telling you this because I can your friend, and because I know that you are good timber, and especially because I hope that you may secure his influence if you should ever desire any office. Don't you know that we always respect titles before we are asked to explain them to him? He is sensitive that way, and if he sees that you understand him he will then know that you have had your eyes on him, have held him in your mind."

"All right. You get me the comb, and I will go through with the ceremony when the time comes." "Here's one, put it in your pocket." They returned to the colonel, and after a while, when the major stepped into the house to get a drink of water, the old man said:

"You and the major are good friends, I am glad to see." "I think he is a first rate fellow." "Glad you like him, for you and he will have to sleep together to-night, for the fact is I have only one spare bed."

"That will be all right I reckon," said the colonel. "Yes, but the truth is the major is the most peculiar fellow you ever saw." "In what way?" "As a bedfellow, I am very intimate with his family and know all about him. It seems that he had a nervous trouble when he was a boy, and could not go to sleep unless someone was growling like a dog. I have known him to be tossing in bed for hours at a time, and then when I would go to his bed and growl he would dose off like a lamb."

"I never heard of an affliction so strange," said the colonel. "I either, but then it is a very easy matter to relieve him. He and a fellow named Buck Johnson were once opposing candidates for prosecuting attorney. Well, they had to sleep together one night. Buck knew of his peculiar affliction, and shortly after they went to bed Buck began to growl. The major didn't say anything that night, but next day he withdrew from the race, declaring that he would not run against so good a man as Buck."

"You don't say so?" exclaimed the colonel. "Yes I do, and know it to be a fact. I would advise you to honor him in the same way."

"Hush, he's coming back." "We are going to have more rain," said the major, as he resumed his seat. "Yes," the colonel responded, "but I hope that it will not interfere with the convention. If the attendance is large and the proceedings harmonious, the result will be of great benefit to the county."

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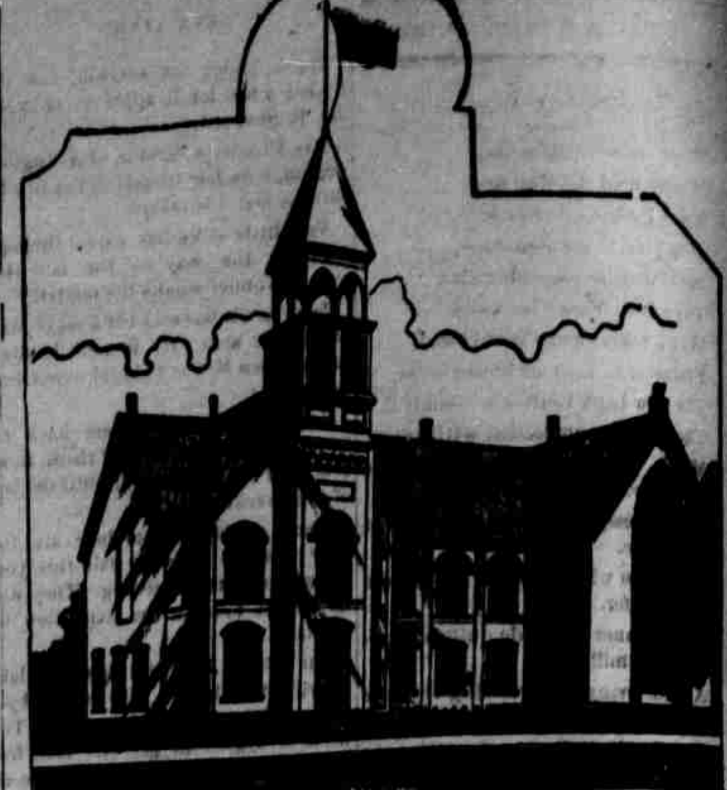
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