

"Yes," in unconcealed glee. "Want to see it?"

The gentleman's face still denoting interest, the ticket was passed to him. During its passage the picture vender offered to dispose of it to any one south bound for half its value.

"You're ahead of the company this time certainly," the portly gentleman declared.

"That's the size of it," with a chuckle.

"You did it very well," in a dignified tone. "You're a successful canvasser, I'll wager."

"Decidedly so," profusely. The man's head was fairly turned by the attention given him.

"What house do you represent?" was the portly gentleman's next question.

Immediately the man's card was forthcoming and passed down the table, while the person whom it advertised principally sat enjoying the situation, fully imbued with the idea that he had attained the acme of popularity.

"Indeed!" the gentleman exclaimed, and read the card; then he placed both card and ticket in his pocket.

"You'll honor me by keeping the card," the man said, jocosely, "but there's money in the ticket, and I generally get out all the money there is in anything."

His was the loudest laugh at this sally.

"I beg you'll excuse me," the gentleman returned, quietly.

"I would like to retain this ticket, as it bears my autograph."

"Your autograph!"

There was evidently something less comical in the situation, for the man had ceased his hilarity. His face was considerably flushed. A piece of meat he was masticating bid fair to choke him.

"I am the general passenger agent of the Southern Pacific road," was the answer.

The man had evoked a degree of attention really painful by this time. We were all staring and grinning.

"So you evaded your fare?" came the measured tone from the head of the table.

"Well, if you call it that," with a gulp. He looked ill.

"Pretty serious offense, isn't it?" asked the gentleman at my left, who had been one of the original three at the table.

"Not less than six months' nor more than three years' imprisonment," replied the agent. "I have your card, sir," to the thoroughly discomfited picture man; "I'll wait on you later."

The picture man made a few attempts at his dessert. At last he rose abruptly, upsetting his chair, and reached for his hat, but, on account of excessive nervousness, he only succeeded in knocking it to the floor. Scrambling after it, he dashed from the dining room.

When we filed into the hotel office the gaudily-painted faces with the picture dealer himself had departed the house. The imperturbability of the S. P. agent's countenance when informed of this fact I attributed to the excellent facilities in his possession for capturing his man at any time. Consequently I was not a little surprised about an hour later to be waited on by the company with whom I had dined—minus the picture vender—and to be invited to contribute my portion toward a general internal shower-bath.

"The S. P. passenger agent, you know!" the crowd explained.

Amid much hilarity I was conducted to that portly personage.

"Hasn't he tumbled?" inquired the S. P. man. "Come, boys, do the agreeable!"

In answer to this request I was presented to Mr. Blank, farming implements, Oskosh.

"Oh, I see," I said, for it began to dawn on me that an Oskosh man would have a free ride to Roseburg.

"And you?" Mr. Oskosh asked; his broad face was beaming with good nature and from the effects of seven drinks.

"Oh, me? Well, I'm only a tenderfoot loose in Oregon. What is it this time, gentlemen?"

"Confusion to the conceited puppies that disgrace our profession!" returned Oskosh solemnly.

Eight hands were lifted; eight heads went back. There was a gurgle as of a rill rippling o'er smooth-worn pebbles as the self-empanelled jury brought in a verdict in the case of the too obstreperous traveling man.

C. J. M.

SWEET LAVENDER.

As, in some long, persistent day of rain,
That keeps intruders close shut in their homes,
We lift the lid of a forgotten trunk
That holds the garments of our happy youth,
So, as we talked that night, my love and I,
She turned the rusted key and raised the lid,
And one by one she shook the memories out,
Scented with sweet, old lavender among,
Till there between us lay the secrets fair—
The faded silks of memory, and the smart,
Starched frills of dainty hope, and then again
The little, scornful, high-heeled shoes of pride;
But all were crushed by such long packing, so
We smoothed, together, all the wrinkles out,
Then spread fresh lavender among the folds
And laid them back just as before, except
That there were two to fold instead of one;
And both I think were grateful for the rain,
For else the lock would still have been unturned.

SUZIE E. TRACY.