

MY WEDDING TRIP.

Having read in your paper from week to week, several very interesting stories of parted lovers, disappointed love, etc., all well calculated to attract and interest the sensational reader, I feel tempted to write a brief sketch of my wedding trip, and add to the proof of the adage that "Truth is stranger than fiction."

Thirteen years ago to-night—let me see—yes, the first of January, 1859, I took upon me the marriage vows, to love, honor and obey the one whom I loved above all on earth. We had been engaged for more than a year, and I had been very impatient for the engagement to terminate. Charley had "gone west to make his fortune," as a great many young men do, leaving their affiances to watch and pray for their speedy return.

The most of stories have the lover go to the Pacific coast, and having picked up a fortune in a fabulously short time, come back to his faithful Penelope with a large diamond ring to replace the simple gold band. But my lover was more of the real and less "imaginary," and had contented himself with going to Nebraska, which at that time, was considered as the jumping-off place, and settled on a quarter-section of land, had erected a "cage" for his "bird," and after making other improvements, had come back for me, and I was eagerly looking forward to the moment when we would start for our future home.

I did not expect to find a palace, ally exquisitely furnished, for Charley had told me it was constructed of logs, and had attempted to terrify me by saying I should have to climb up a ladder to reach the second story; but this did not disconcert me in the least, but in my imagination I had pictured the floor polished until it would shine, the windows bright and scrupulously clean, the little flower-bed before the house should be filled with geraniums and tulips, and a morning-glory was to be twined over the door.

I had everything arranged and planned before-hand, and now in a few hours I would be on the way there. The next morning was lovely. The sun rose bright, and the air, though cold, was clear and bracing. All nature looked beautiful to my delighted eyes, as I promised myself a pleasant and agreeable "wedding trip."

In that day there were no railroads across Central Iowa, nor even a regular line of stage coaches; and travelers at that season of the year were very few, but we, in company with Mr. and Mrs. Allen, a newly married couple, were to travel with a party of emigrants, and all being on hand the order was given, "forward march."

A light spring wagon, drawn by two horses, contained our stock of household goods. A similar outfit was used by the other couple. Two days brought us to the Mississippi river, opposite Davenport. Here we were to be ferried across in a very flimsy, leaky old boat. I felt some hesitation about leaving terra firma, but Charley said there was no danger, and of course he knew. After that I walked upon the boat with a firm step, wishing to show my bravery, all of which was called into requisition, for before we were much more than half way across, the engine became in some way disabled and stopped its motion; the boat was drifting slowly down stream. Fortunately for us a brisk breeze was blowing up the river which was almost sufficient to keep the boat in one position. Some large oars that were carried along in case of an accident of this kind, were brought out and manned, and every one who could pull to an advantage lent a hand.

It was two o'clock in the afternoon when we left the East side, and instead of crossing in half an hour, the night had fallen ere we could effect a landing, which we did about three miles below the town. Snow had been falling a little, but now the wind shifted to the east, and a storm set in which promised to prove no inconsiderable obstacle to our journey.

Once on shore, we were soon in our wagons and on the way to Davenport; where we hoped to spend the night. The darkness was so intense that we could not see any distance before us, and taking a distant light for a guide, pushed on as rapidly as fallen trees and stumps would allow. The wagon containing Mr. and Mrs. Allen we had supposed to be following closely in our rear, but soon

found they were not within hearing distance. This did not look at all pleasant, but we whipped up the horses who did not appear to relish the journey any more than we, and in about two hours we were greeted with a pack of savage, half-starved dogs, and soon after drew up before a small squatty log hut, with one door and one window. The inmates attracted by the unusual disturbance of the dogs, now opened the door, and after considerable scolding and kicking, with no little swearing intermingled, the brutes were driven off, and upon enquiring we found the distance to D. to be about six miles. That seemed strange, but after a brief discussion we concluded to ask for shelter for the night, which, after a prolonged debate between the host and some one within, was granted. We then alighted and went in.

It would be difficult to describe the place, and certainly impossible to do it justice. There was but one room; the ceiling was low and smoky; the rude log walls all around us were besmeared with dirt and grease. The mistress of this lovely place now came forward, a short, thickly-built, excessively homely Dutch woman, who stared at us with open mouth and eyes, a perfect picture of stolidity. I did not feel at all comfortable in our new quarters, but knowing it was the next thing to impossible to proceed to D. that night, tried to feel contented. We were offered the only bed of which the house could boast, but I affirmed my intention of setting up all night. To this, however, my husband very strongly dissented, and as the dirty blankets on the bed were not at all prepossessing in appearance, I accepted what is called a "shake-down" consisting of a buffalo robe and some blankets on the floor, on which, without disrobing, I threw myself, and was soon lost in the land of dreams. I thought we were comfortably settled in our little house, nicely furnished, and a tall rose-bush in full bloom at the window. This pleasant picture was cruelly dispelled on awaking at day-light the next morning and finding myself in the dismal, dreary hovel. Our host, the only one of the two who could speak a word of English, invited us to a breakfast which he had hastily prepared, but all of which I declined, except a cup of water, and some eggs, which I thought might be clean under the shell. This sumptuous meal over, we were soon on our way to D., where we arrived without anything more serious than an upset. Early the next morning we, with the other couple who had managed to get lost the night before, proceeded on our journey without waiting for the remainder of the company, who were still unable to cross the river.

Nothing worthy of notice occurred for a day or two; the snow had been falling off and on, and now began to impede our progress very much. Just at dusk on Saturday night we reached a village by the name of Dogtown, where a census taker would have great difficulty in finding the population owing to the superfluous abundance of the canine tribe. There being no hotel, we selected the largest and most respectable looking house, a long, two-story and a half. Driving up to the door we asked for lodging, which request being finally answered in the affirmative, we entered a room very similar to the one in which we passed our first night in Iowa. To make room for the visitors, a back door was opened, through which was ejected several dogs. I had thought myself in unpleasant situations before, but this certainly was without a parallel. Supper consisted of a huge pot of soup sat in the center of the room, around which we all gathered supplied with a bowl and spoon. After considerable scrambling and jostling, for the children seemed nearly famished, all were helped, when I proceeded very suspiciously to analyze the contents of my bowl. I think every kind of vegetable that grew in the west was represented; most prominent, however, in this compound conglomeration of indigestibles were onions, cabbage and turnips. The hostess seeing my hesitation came around to where I was sitting and nudged me very familiarly telling me at the same time to "pitch in," which I did not feel at all inclined to do, as my appetite had taken wings and disappeared. I made a pretense to eat, however, in order to escape observation. With the daylight the household retired, although to where I was at a loss to know. I was not long left in doubt, for the heavy snoring which soon vibrated through the building told of their proximity. I can safely say that all the sleeping done by us four that night could be put in a very small space.

Although the next day was Sunday we concluded that as there would of course be no preaching it

would be but justly charitable to ourselves to move on, and now, especially as the clouds looked threatening, and we had reason to fear the roads would become impassable. The day was pleasant, notwithstanding the season of the year, and we hoped to reach our western home by the next Thursday, in case no accidents occurred to prevent. All went well, and on Thursday at three o'clock we crossed the Missouri river at Nebraska City, which was, at that time, a mere handful of poorly built houses, but we were still forty miles from our journey's end. After a hearty dinner, we concluded to try to reach a tavern or ranch, called "Robber's Roost," about twenty miles distant, over a bleak prairie. The other team was to take the lead and break a road. About half past four the wind changed to the northeast, and we were soon enveloped in flying snow.

Persons who have lived on the plains will understand what is meant by a "regular northeaster," for such this was. When night came on we had still five miles to go. The driving snow, fortunately, came from behind us, but filled the air so that we could but just see from one telegraph pole to the next. Not a star was to be seen, and our situation was fast becoming seriously unpleasant, as the cold was growing still more intense. The team ahead of us seemed to be less jaded than ours, and was soon beyond hearing distance.

Our horses could no longer follow the tracks of the advance team, and we found the telegraph poles the only guide left us. I shall never forget that memorable night, nor do I ever want to experience another such. Suddenly the wind seemed to veer round and blow directly in our faces. The drifting snow had filled up every little gulch, and after stumbling around awhile, the team came to a halt—evidently they were lost. This did not look at all favorable, so, handing me the lines, my husband got out to look for the lost course, telling me to answer every shout, and thus prevent his getting lost from the wagon.

After considerable time spent in walking around, calling constantly and always receiving an answer, which tested the capacity of my lungs, he came back and was disappointed to confess that we were on a wide prairie, twenty miles from timber and any habitation save the one we were seeking, and lost. I spoke of the sudden change in the wind, and asked if it was a common occurrence. He said it was, except in case of severe storms like the present one. Suddenly a thought presented itself, and stooping he commenced feeling around on the ground, and announced that the wind had not changed, but that we had turned around and were going back towards Nebraska City. Strange as it seemed, yet it was nevertheless true, as was shown by the little drifts of snow around the weeds and other obstacles.

Turning around again with the wind almost directly behind us, we started anew, and were soon rewarded by coming again to the friendly telegraph poles. We now hoped our troubles were over, and that our stopping place for the night would soon be reached. That such was not destined to be the case, the reader will soon see.

Three miles had been traversed when suddenly, without a moment's notice, we were precipitated over a cliff into a snow bank, some six feet below the horses, wagon and horses badly mixed up. With extreme difficulty we extricated ourselves from the debris, but only to find that one of our horses was so badly injured as to be unable to proceed farther. Now we were in a predicament, when, oh joy, a light was seen in the distance, and we knew that help was not far distant. As the snow was too deep to allow of my walking, the plan was for me to remain with the wagon while my husband went for help. I felt some misgivings about consenting to this plan, but there seemed to be no other feasible one; so, reluctantly consenting, my husband mounted the uninjured horse and was soon out of sight, while I was left alone in a wide prairie, at night, in a terrible storm. I said alone, but I soon found I was not, for my attention was attracted by a snuffing, and on listening intently a footfall was heard. The manner in which I got into that wagon must have been more speedily than graceful. I could not say how I did get there, but I know that in an incredibly short space of time I was behind the wagon-seat, protected on all sides by the canvass cover, except the opening in the front, which I hastily blocked with an empty feed sack.

I now felt comparatively safe, and endeavored to collect my scattered wits. The wounded horse

lying at a short distance raised his head, and a short, piercing shriek, such as a wounded and terrified horse only will utter, smote upon my ear, and seemed to chill my blood; but my pulse stood still an instant later, on hearing, but a short distance away, a long, dismal howl, which was caught up and repeated here and there around me. Yes, I was surrounded by wolves. I instinctively held my breath, and peered from my place of safety into the night. The shaggy dark gray form of the timber wolf could be dimly seen. Had they been the common prairie wolf (cayote) I should not have felt so much alarm; but the timber wolf is larger and fiercer, and do not hesitate to attack man if driven by hunger.

The gathering wolves fell upon the wounded horse who was able to offer but feeble resistance to their fierce attack. I found I was very cold, scarcely able to move, and the cold was growing even more intense. The din of the struggle between the poor horse soon became almost unbearable. The clouds breaking away, let a few rays of the moon fall upon this scene of carnage, and on peering out I could see a dozen or more wolves snarling and fighting with each other over the remains of their scarcely cold victim. I knew that as long as my feast lasted, I should be safe, and I looked toward the distant glimmering light in hopes that success would speedily come.

But I soon saw to my consternation and horror that the number of wolves were rapidly increasing, and that the horse could last but a few moments longer. Some of the less favored ones soon left the struggle and circled around the wagon, uttering the while the most chilling howls, which seemed to pierce me like a knife. One after another they dropped off from the pack and joined in the chorus.

Things were getting to be pretty desperate, and I saw that all my energies would soon be called into action. One who has never been in a similar situation can scarcely understand the horror and anguish I felt. I consider myself possessed of at least my share of courage, so arming myself with a hatchet lying within reach, I prepared to meet my wolfish foe. Nor was I a moment too soon, for one of the most venturesome sprang upon the tongue and had succeeded in getting partly upon the seat, when I dealt him some quick sharp blows that effectually silenced him. One of the foe has fallen, I thought, and if they continue to come single handed I can manage them; but that did not seem to be the programme, for no sooner had one fallen than several made a rush for the gap which had been widened by the first attack and through which they had caught a glance of me. I fought bravely, but soon found it would be impossible to hold out long against such odds. Oh, will they never come, I thought again and again. My hands were bleeding in several places, and my strength just exhausted, when I heard a shout, the barking of dogs, and I knew I was saved. Then all seemed a blank.

The next I remember, I was lying on a bed in a neatly furnished room, with my husband and Mrs. Allen standing over me. They told me that when rescued, I was lying in the wagon in a swoon, and that the exposure and excitement had brought on a fever, from which, being possessed of a vigorous constitution, I was soon restored.

Should one of my readers chance to pass along Salt creek, a short distance west from Lincoln, he may still see the little log cabin in which I passed the remainder of my honeymoon.

A WELL ON FIRE.—A farmer living four-and-a-half miles from Mattoon, Illinois, while boring a well in his dooryard, at the depth of twenty feet, liberated a flow of gas. A pipe was procured and inserted in the well, projecting above the ground several feet, and the gas was ignited. For weeks the flame produced from this pipe has been plainly visible from Mattoon at night. This gas is described as pure hydrogen, almost without smell, affording a bright light, and giving out an intense heat. It appears to be much better adapted to heating and illuminating purposes than that which has been found in the neighborhood of Buffalo. The pipe placed in the well has a capacity of 15,000 feet per day, and the pressure of the gas is said by the Superintendent of the Mattoon Gas Works to be as great as in the mains in that city. The farmer who owns the well proposes to light and heat his house with the gas which has been so unexpectedly added to the products of his farm.

There are fifty lawyers in the United States Senate.

It is reported that Carl Schurz is the paid Agent of the Prussian Government to secure to that government the Island of San Domingo. Hence his bitter opposition to Gen. Grant and his policy of acquiring that Island by the United States. Schurz proves himself to be the same infamous traitor to the United States that he formerly proved to the Prussian Government. A traitor to every government and party that admits him to its protection or ranks; and yet Missouri is to be cursed for 4 years more with his infamies. Such is some of the curses heaped upon Missouri by the Missouri Democrat.—Mirror, Wheeland, Mo.

IMPORTANT TO FIREMEN.—The Fire Record, a new illustrated quarto paper, has just been issued by Fred. J. Miller, dealer in Fire Apparatus and Supplies of all kinds, at 65 Liberty street, New York. The paper is full of interest just at this time, when we have all been startled by the fearful ravages of fire in Chicago, and in Michigan and Wisconsin, and is most timely in furnishing very full and complete information of use in putting our means of protection for property in the most perfect condition against every emergency. A list of remarkable conflagrations from that of the destruction of Rome to Chicago. Notice is also given the publication of the *Fireman's Journal* will be commenced on January 1st, 1873. The *Fire Record* will be mailed to any address for five cents.

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No Getting Out of Your Vehicle! No Raising of Latches Nor Pulling of Strings, Except the "ribbons" of your team. It is often called THE "LAZY MAN'S GATE." And a "Dead Open and Shut." This gate is simple in its construction, both of iron and wood work, and not likely to get out of order. If a neat, cheap gate is desired, it may be made light, with three cross bars of wood and one-fourth inch wire, neatly curved at the top, the lower end hid in the bottom bar, which is the style of a factory made gate. The gates are now in practical use in several of the counties around San Francisco, and plenty of testimonials can be given. THOMAS J. SAFFORD, Having purchased the Right for Linn Co., Oregon, Has now on hand, and will manufacture the above described gate. Wherever it has been used it has received the highest encomiums, as the large number of certificates from prominent farmers in all parts of the country, now in my hands, will testify. CARRIAGES AND WAGONS, Of All Descriptions, On hand and manufactured to order. Blacksmithing and Repairing Done to order at most reasonable rates. Shop foot of Perry street, opposite Beach, Monteth & Co.'s flouring mill. THOMAS J. SAFFORD, Albany, Oct. 28, 1874-5.

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