

Bound by a Spell

CHAPTER XXX.—(Continued.)

A few doors farther down the corridor, in a chamber more somber and gloomy than any we have visited, was Judith. She is lying back listlessly, in an easy chair, with her red hair loosely falling around her pallid, worn face. The tears roll down her cheeks, at intervals, in large, heavy drops. She is weeping over the ashes of love, over wrecked hopes, and a lost life. Heavily over her broods the spirit of the night, boding of death.

As the night advances, the clouds have it all their own way, veiling the sky with profound darkness; and the winds wax fiercer. The air is filled with the alternate shrieks, and sobs of terrified nature. There is heavy rain, with which the monster sports, dashing it, and whirling it, and scattering it in gusts, and eddies, and masses.

Heavy footsteps upon the carriage drive; but the tempest absorbs every sound into itself. Over the gravel, which stands out lightly from the blackness that encompasses it, moves a large, dark, lumbering object. It is a man, bearing another, seemingly senseless, upon his back. Slowly, staggering and swaying at times under the weight and the wind, he advances to the hall door. There he lays down his burden, and seems to ponder for a moment. Then he walks cautiously round the house, looking up at all the windows. There is a faint light in two, but seemingly emitted only by night tapers. All seem to be sleeping.

He cautiously tries the windows upon the ground floor. All were securely fastened. In a corner of the building there was a smaller window, like that of a pantry. With his diamond ring he cut out one of the panes of glass, put his arm through the cavity and with some difficulty succeeded in reaching the fastening that secured the sash. He raised the window and crept through. He took a lantern and some matches from his pocket and struck a light.

It was not a pantry he was in, but a small bedroom. Passing out at the door, he found himself in the servants' offices. He took off his boots and crept noiselessly along the passage, until he reached the corridor. He halted at Silas Carston's door and listened, with his ear to the keyhole. All seemed quiet.

He ascended the stairs. As he reached the first corridor he became sensible of a strong, pungent odor and a mistiness in the air, like smoke. He looked about him for some cause and crept further along the corridor. Beneath the door, and through the keyhole of one of the rooms, shone a red glow.

Great heavens! had accident anticipated his intention? Was this fire? He turned the handle of the door—it was not locked. His doubts were solved in an instant. A body of hot, blinding smoke rushed into his face, nearly overpowering him. The room was in flames! Hanging across the arm of a chair was the body of a man, either dead or insensible. Lost and awe-stricken, Rodwell stood helpless and transfixed, gazing upon the awful sight.

At that moment Judith, hurrying out of her room, appeared upon the scene.

Miles away, a carriage containing an old gentleman is speeding furiously along the Essex road. Upon the box are two policemen.

On through the pelting rain and the rushing wind, beneath the shadows of overhanging trees and along the open road, the soaked, blinded driver, scarcely able to see a yard before him, gallops the horses.

"Look, look!" cries a policeman, suddenly pointing ahead.

There is a glare rising up in the black sky—a wavering, red glare, that brightens and fades, fades and brightens.

The old gentleman within, who, spite of the storm, is continually putting his head out of the window to see what progress is being made, sees it, too.

"Faster, faster, for heaven's sake!" he cries. "Do you not see that fire? It must be the Manor House; there is no other house near."

What is that dark object advancing so swiftly towards them? A horse, galloping furiously, darts past like an arrow, and is lost in the darkness.

"What is that?" cries the old gentleman, looking out of the window again. But only the wind hears his voice.

The glare in the sky grows stronger, nearer. Up rise showers of sparks, and up rolls the red smoke, and faster and faster speed the horses, until they seem running a race with the wind, matching themselves against the tempest.

Judith and Rodwell face one another—but only for an instant. With a cry of agony, she rushes towards her father. The fire surrounds him now, screening him from all human help. The flames and smoke drive her back with their scorching breath. With wild fury, she turns upon Rodwell. Recovered from his momentary panic, he is flying; but as he reaches the head of the stairs, she is upon him, with the grip of a tigress, and calling wildly for help.

He struggles fiercely, twines his fingers in her long hair, and with the other hand rains heavy blows upon her head and face; but still she holds on, never ceasing her wild cries for help. Other cries begin to mingle with hers, and the sounds of battering at doors. The prisoners are aroused to a sense of their danger, as well as the servants below. He will be detected, after all, and through this wild cat of a woman. Suddenly there is a dull thud—her voice is silenced—he has hurled her over the balusters.

Down the stairs he springs. In the hall he meets the two terrified servants in their night dresses, who scream and run back. Quick as lightning he shoots back the ponderous bolts of the door, and the next moment is flying along the graveled drive, through the iron gates and out into the highway, where he has left his horse, tied to a tree. One bound and he is in the saddle, barefooted and bareheaded. One look behind—a red glare is shining through the windows—and away he dashes through the darkness, and the rain, and the howling wind.

On, on, over the open common, where the tempest rages in unresisted fury—then under the swaying, groaning trees, plunging into yet deeper darkness. Down, down, down—the speed redoubles, he is rapidly descending, but whither? Impenetrable by sight as a wall of iron is the black gulf before him. He pulls the rein with all his strength; but down, down, down, still gallops the horse with awful rapidity. Crash! a low, projecting branch has caught him across the forehead, and dashes him from the animal's back; there is a heavy splash, and then a rushing sound—the horse is breasting the water; another moment, he is scrambling up the opposite bank, riderless.

Within the Manor House the flames are spreading with frightful rapidity. Judith lies in a motionless heap, and two hapless beings are locked within their rooms; upon the chamber above, the fire has already seized; upon the one below it is rapidly advancing.

The fire is consuming one side of Clara's room—it has fastened upon the stairs—no one can mount them. Who can save her now?

Flames dart above the roof, and through the windows, and up into the black sky rise volumes of lurid smoke, chasing away the darkness and illuminating every object around with a fearful radiance.

What new figure is this come upon the scene? A man who seems to have arisen from the bowels of the earth. He looks strange and bewildered. The women catch sight of him, and shrieking with a new terror, fly away and cover upon the sodden earth, under the dripping branch of a tree. He sees an arm grasping at a window frame. He goes to him.

"Unlock the door—the key is outside!" cries a frantic voice within.

The stranger comprehends—dashes through the hall door, which stands wide open. The flames rolling down the stairs show him the key. He turns it. As he does so, he sees a senseless woman huddled at his feet. He does not recognize her, but quick as lightning he raises her in his arms and bears her safely out into the air, followed by Silas.

Only just in time—the flames are already licking the spot she laid upon.

"Is it Clara?" cries Silas, frantically. They turn over the body and disclose the death-like face of Judith.

"Where is she—oh, heaven, where is she? She has perished in the flames!" exclaimed Silas.

A wild, piercing cry of agony rises above the roar of the elements. They raise their eyes. Standing on the extreme edge of the window sill, with outstretched arms, the flames darting around her, is Clara.

A frightful scream bursts from Silas' lips; but his companion grasps his hands, drags him under the window, and stretching out both their arms, shouts to her to jump. Just in time—the flames cling to her dress as she falls.

At that moment a carriage tears up the drive—two policemen spring from the box, and an old gentleman jumps out, and falls into the group.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A soft evening in June. The sky of a deep, cloudless blue, save towards the west, where the sun is sinking into a sea of crimson light. Not a breath of air is stirring—the trees are motionless; not the quiver of a leaf. There is a buzz of insect life in the air, mingled with the music of the birds. Upon a lawn, over which is scattered numerous flower beds, gay with bright colored blossoms, stretching before a picturesque cottage covered with roses, sit three men. One is young, not more than twenty; the second is a stout, florid, benevolent looking man; the third is thin-visaged, sad-looking, with iron-gray hair. The three men were I, Silas Morant, Mr. Jonathan Rodwell, and my father. My father was speaking—"What his ultimate intentions could have been, I am at a loss to understand. Probably to cast me, in my insensible state, into the flames."

"Which, it seems, after all, he did not kindle," said Mr. Jonathan, shuddering at the remembrance.

"That is the most wonderful circumstance of all. Chance, or destiny, or whatever you please to call it, had actually anticipated him. Porter must have overthrown his lamp in a state of stupor. Judith lived long enough to tell how she had seen the fire first in her father's room, and he lying across the chair, dead or insensible."

"I could not help pitying the unfortunate creature," said Mr. Jonathan, "in spite of the evil she had wrought. She at least deserved a better fate than to perish by the brutal violence of the man whom she loved so devotedly."

"I have often thought," said my father, "what a divine mercy it was that only one of the telegrams fell into that wretched man's hands. It appears that the lad had put one in his pocket—the one addressed to you, Mr. Rodwell—and was holding the other in his hand, when he ran against his master, who snatched it from him and forbade him to leave the house. The lad said nothing about the other, but watched his opportunity to leave the premises, and deliver it at the office. The delay, however, was very near proving fatal to more than one of us."

"That unhappy man," said Mr. Jonathan, "had telegraphed to say that he would be with me that night. But I felt half inclined to start for Essex without waiting for him, and chance the condition of the house. But look! here are two old friends of yours coming this way, Silas."

Such was the fact. Walking up the pathway towards the house were Martha Jennings and Josiah Cook.

I hastened to meet the good, kind creature who had sheltered me, fed me and clothed me when I was houseless and destitute. She was dressed with unusual smartness—a white bonnet, a blue silk dress, and a bright-colored, or rather many-colored, shawl. Josiah was also got up in an unusual style; bright green satin necktie, buff waistcoat and white hat.

After a little conversation, the secret came out; the worthy pair had been mar-

ried that mornin'.

"Married!" I exclaimed; "why I had not the least idea that such a thing was ever thought of!"

"No more had we, Master Silas, a few weeks ago," answered Martha, blushing, "and, you know, you have not seen us since Christmas. So, as you had kindly sent me an invitation to come down and see you, I thought I would take the liberty to bring Josiah along with me, and make it a sort of marriage trip."

"I am very much delighted to see you both, and you shall stay with us for your honeymoon," I said, shaking a hand of each. "But you might as well have invited us to your wedding."

Martha laughed and blushed; and then my father and Mr. Jonathan offered their warm congratulations to the happy bride and bridegroom.

"And are you still at the Corinthian, Josiah?" I inquired.

"No," he answered; "Martha has persuaded me to relinquish public life, and her father has procured for me an appointment upon the railway as a porter."

A little time afterwards, Martha came to me with a radiant countenance. "Only think," she said; "that dear, good Mr. Jonathan is going to set us up in business for your sake! And, Master Silas, what did I use to say when you made such a fuss about the little I could do for you—didn't I tell you you would be rich some day, and what fine things you would do for me?"

"But I am not rich, my good Martha," I said, smiling, "and it is not I who have done this for you."

"Oh, but it's all the same, sir," she said, with a very sly look.

Presently my father, Martha, and Josiah went into the house. But Mr. Jonathan remained behind, and taking my arm, strolled with me across the lawn.

"Silas, my lad," he said, in a kind voice, "the sight of that 'happy couple' has set me thinking upon a subject I have long had in my heart! Although I have never mentioned it, I know all about you and Clara. Mrs. Wilson told me what she knew, and I have picked up the rest here and there. I have waited, however, until now. In the first place, I wished to know you better, to judge of your disposition; and, in the second place, although the ties that bound you to that unhappy woman were of the weakest, yet, after the dreadful circumstances that attended her death, we were compelled in decency to allow a certain time to elapse before the subject of love and marriage could be broached."

"Ah, sir," I answered mournfully, "Clara has ceased to love me. She will never forgive the wicked weakness of my conduct in gaining her love while another claimed me as her husband."

"It was very culpable," answered Mr. Jonathan, gravely; "and in any other person I could never have pardoned it; but your life, my poor boy, has been so exceptional, that it would be hard to judge you by the rules of every-day life."

"And you forgive me, darling?" I whispered as I held Clara in my arms.

"I was never angry with you," she answered, softly. "I only felt sad, and that I wished to die."

She was mine—mine at last! Nothing could stand between us now save death! Oh, the bliss, the rapture of that moment!

I am lying at her feet, with my head resting against her, and my face upturned towards hers, as I used to in the old days. The cool air of the soft summer's night, laden with the perfume of the clustering roses, steals through the open lattice. There is no light save that of the moon, that streams through the window, chequering the floor with the shadows of the overhanging leaves. One broad beam glances over my darling's head, making her golden hair glisten like threads of gold, and falls full upon the portrait of her mother that hangs behind her. She is transcribing the rhapsodies that fill the souls of both into love's own language—music. Oh, those wild, passionate strains, how they thrill through my soul! They tell all the story of our love—soft, melancholy, mysterious—then broken by sobs and wails—swelling into horror and cries of agony—then melting into a soft, dreamy harmony too ecstatic for joy, too hopeful for sadness—and so they die away into the passionate silence of love.

(The end.)

Older Than the Chinese.

Older even than China, the oldest existing nation, are the cliff dwellings of southwestern United States, homes of a race whose very name has perished from the earth. Explorers, puzzling through the Mancoos and Casa Verde canyons of Arizona and New Mexico, have found the houses of this strange people in the wildest and most inaccessible of the mountain sides. Did the cliff dwellers antedate the pyramids of Egypt? Were they of blood relation to the early inhabitants of the land where the Nile is god? Some students are prepared to answer both questions affirmatively and to give what is to them abundant proof. The pottery from their long-wrecked homes suggests Egypt, and the few inscriptions found have similar suggestions. Mummies, bodies wrapped in cloth, feathers from the breast of the turkey have been dug from burial places among the cliffs, and in bone and hair much unlike the Indian of today, there is a hint of resemblance to a more oriental type. If the cliff dwellers left any descendants, however remote, they are doubtless the Moki and Zuni Indians, who, resembling them in habits and appearance, are their closest kinsmen.

Nothing to Regret.

"Ah me," sighed the spinster as she gave a backward glance at her wasted life. "I have selfishly lived alone all these years and made no man happy!"

"Oh, yes you have," rejoined the bachelor with the ingrown hair. "Don't you remember I proposed to you 20 years ago and you turned me down?"

Unconscious Insult.

Mrs. Homer—Do have some more of the ice cream, Miss Guesty!

Miss Guesty—Well, just a little, as you insist; but only a mouthful, mind.

Mrs. Homer—Jane, fill Miss Guesty's plate up again.

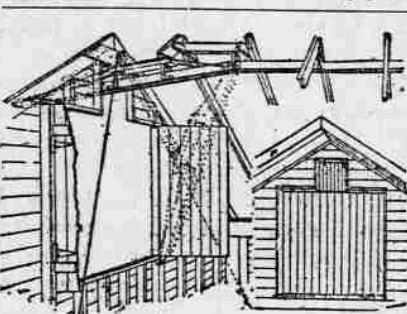


FARM AND GARDEN

Doors for a Hay Barn.

This cut shows a simple manner of constructing doors when it is desired to have the track extend out close to the peak of the roof. The large doors should be about 7 feet square, and swing inside; above these a small door 2 feet square hinged at the top to swing outside. This opening will be sufficient for the track and head of fork, leaving the full space of the large door for the loading of hay. When the lower doors are opened, raising the tracking will open the upper door, allowing it to lie upon the trust rod of track, out of the way of the carrier; when the track is lowered it will shut, closing tight against the top of the lower doors. Both positions of the track, extending out ready for use and lowered within the building, are also shown.

To secure the track in working position you have only to pull down upon the hoisting rope until the supporting loop of the track is above the hook; then a little side movement will move it upon the hook. In lowering the track, elevate to clear the point of hook, when pulling in a little upon the rope will draw the loop clear of the hook.



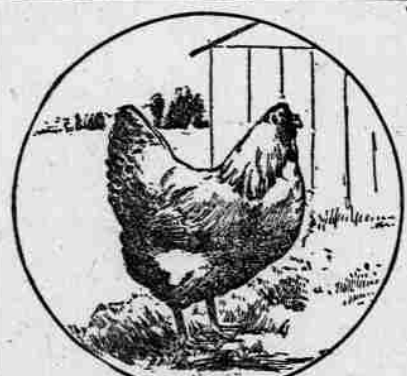
DOORS FOR A HAY BARN.

Raising and lowering the track is but a moment's time, and can be done after each load if you desire to close the doors. When using track the rope can be thrown over the door or a nail in door jamb out of the way. Next we will illustrate a single and double rail hinged extension track adapted to all the various hay carriers in use.—Michigan Farmer.

Good Poultry Breed.

We believe that some of the troubles of raisers of the White Wyandotte come from improper feeding. While the breed is supposed to be tough and hardy there is a weakness in them somewhere which demands careful feeding. In an experience of ten years with the breed, we have found they must be uniformly fed at the same hours daily, and that their food must be of the best quality and in considerable variety.

Handled in this manner they will give satisfactory results and produce eggs in about the same numbers during the year as the Plymouth Rocks, but with us at least, they do not equal the Leghorns in this respect. On the other hand there is considerable to the carcass and they are readily fattened for market when desired. In the hand of some poultry men they are very satisfactory and will probably become



THE POPULAR WYANDOTTE.

more so in the years to come, for they are noticeably better and stronger now than they were ten years ago.—Indianapolis News.

Getting a Potato Crop.

In response to the query how to get a good crop of potatoes an expert replies: "Use plenty of good commercial fertilizer and you will have no trouble." Very definite, is it not? The writer thought it a good plan to put this same question to an expert potato grower, and the following is the substance of his reply:

"In a general way, one can get a good crop of potatoes in a normal season if the soil used is well filled with humus and is mellow and friable. The seed must be first-class and be properly and thoroughly treated with formalin for scab before being planted. Of course, the soil must be well fertilized, but more than all, the cultivation and care of the plants is essential. The soil must be cultivated and the sprayer kept busy. Then, if nothing happens, you'll have a good crop." While perhaps this reply is not wholly satisfactory, it at least gives one some idea of what is necessary in the way of material and labor.

The Seedless Apple.

A Utah nurseryman reports in the Country Gentleman that he has finally gotten hold of specimens of the much-talked-about seedless apple, and he says that the fruit is very inferior, and "certainly not such as would have a host of a chance of a showing in the

market with any of the standard varieties." It is evident that it is the same old seedless apple that was known in Virginia a generation ago. Those who want a poor apple merely because it may be seedless are welcome to pay \$3 each for the trees.

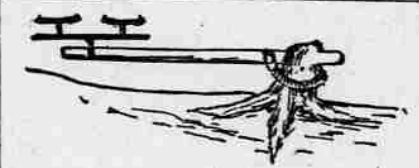
At Seed-Buying Time.

It is estimated that if the corn crop of the country could be increased 10 per cent it would add to the production of wealth in the United States over seventy millions of dollars. That the corn crop can be increased this small per cent is well known, for it requires only the selection of the best seed and the best methods of cultivation to do it. The trouble is, corn is too easily grown and the crop is usually large enough so that there are enough kernels left in the crib for seed. So the average farmer argues, "why should I pay out good money for seed corn when there is more than I need in my own crib?" He forgets that the seed corn in his cribs may be the kernels dropped from nubbins and if so they will produce nubbins.

The tendency to pay out as little as possible for seeds is wrong. It is safe to say that in a normal season one would make more clean cash from crops grown from the best seed sold regardless of price than from double the quantity of what may be called cheap seeds. If you don't believe in the value of the best seeds, test them in a small way. Take, for example, a few seed tubers from the potato pile in the cellar, then buy from some reputable seedsmen the same quantity of the same variety, cut the seed in the same way, plant at the same time and give the same care and cultivation. At harvest time compare results and if you do not find the argument in favor of high-class seed a solid one we'll take it all back.

Homemade Stump Puller.

In many places in New Jersey there are Italians who clean scrub oak land on contract for about \$30 per acre. That is the best and cheapest plan, but you must watch and see that no stumps are buried in the deeper holes. I have tried the stump-puller, but it did not work well; it was too heavy to move, and it took four men to work it. I want to tell this paper's readers about one of the best and most labor-saving contrivances for working out stumps. I call it a "stump-twister;" see diagram. First make a strong hook as for a log-hook, only three times as heavy. Get a good stout pole 20 to 25 feet long. About 2 feet from the large end of pole fasten the hook



A STUMP "TWISTER."

in the manner of a cant hook, and hitch a team to the end of lever. The stump is easily twisted out. If there is any trouble at the start, cut one or two of the larger roots. Always try to twist stumps soon after a rain; it is then so much easier work. In using this twister there are no tools to carry; team pulls pole to next stump. Two men pull thirty stumps a day easily.—Correspondence Rural New-Yorker.

Crops for Orchards.

There are those who do well with some small crop in the orchard. In last season's experiments no difference could be seen between the summer cultivation plan and the plan of growing a crop; that is, no difference in the tree growth. The best results for both trees and crops between came from growing two rows of potatoes set far enough apart so that they could be cultivated on both sides. This brought the light cultivator close to the trees on the outside rows and enabled us to set the teeth deeper for the inside rows when it was necessary for the benefit of the potato crop. The soil was fertilized for the potatoes and quite heavily, so that a portion, at least, was left in the soil for the benefit of the trees. By planting early sorts we were able still to get in our cover crop for the benefit of the orchard this cover crop being plowed under the spring to add humus to the soil. By following this process the best results may be obtained, and the orchard will reap the benefits.

Poultry Yard Pickings.

Our fowls would suffer were they presented with the same unvarying mess day after day.

In feeding fowls the best rule to go by is a balanced ration. This means that the hen should be fed just what is needed.

A variety in food must be given our feathered friends if we would have them fill our expectations. Variety is one great charm of life.

Get a table of foods and study the proportions and then balance them up a little. Clover, bran, green bone and meat are good to balance against corn.

If the chickens must be penned up, see that they have an opportunity to get a good dust bath occasionally. Put a half-pail of dust where they may reach it.

An egg is composed of a certain per cent of albumen, of mineral matter, water and other materials. In order that an egg be formed these necessary constituents must be supplied.

The hen that steals away and secretes her eggs should be penned up. Thus confined, and with a suitable nesting place at hand, she will stop this practice when again released.

An egg-eating hen might as well be disposed of by amputation of the head. It is a habit that is so hard to break that the trouble is hardly worth the value of the offending fowl.

THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN



One Hundred Years Ago.

Fifty-four thousand troops stationed along the coast of France were ordered to the borders of Italy.

Beethoven's "Fidelio," with the Lenore overture, was produced in Vienna.

The Bey of Algiers declared war against Spain.

Lord Nelson's squadron arrived at Palermo in pursuit of the French.

Lieut. Z. M. Pike was ordered by the governor of Louisiana to proceed to Minnesota and expel all British traders from that territory.

Russia joined the coalition against France.

Russia established an embassy at Peking, China.

Aaron Burr arrived at Blennerhassett's Island, in the Ohio.

Oxen were used for the first time on the Santa Fe trail.

The King of Spain issued a decree abolishing the operation of the Sallio law in the succession to the Spanish monarchy.

President Bustamante, of Mexico, forbade further immigration from the United States.

Ohio was the fourth State in population in the United States.

Seven persons were burned to death in a lodging house fire in London.

The first omnibus used as a public conveyance in New York began its trip through the city.

The Bank of England lost £360,000 by Fauntleroy's forgeries.

President Jackson at a public dinner in Washington gave the following toast: "Our federal union; it must be preserved." Vice President Calhoun responded: "Liberty dearer than union."

The first dental clinic in Germany was established.

The ship canal at St. Mary's Mich., was opened.

Broussa, in Asia Minor, was visited by earthquake, and all wooden buildings destroyed by fire.

The system of registered letters was introduced in the United States postal service.

The prohibitory bill of Pennsylvania was signed by the Governor and became a law.

The United States gave twelve months' notice to Denmark of its intention to terminate the treaty of 1823, by which the payment of sound dues was recognized.

The depot of the New York and Erie Railroad at Jersey City, with several passenger and freight cars, was destroyed by fire.

The church tenure bill, putting the property of all religious denominations in the hands of trustees, was signed by the Governor of New York.

Mobile was evacuated by the Confederates.

The testimony in the so-called Chicago conspiracy trial before a military court at Cincinnati closed.

Henry S. Foote, Confederate Senator, arrived in New York from Europe, traveling steerage to avoid detection, but was arrested.

Lynchburg surrendered to Union scouting party; Selma, Ala., and Montgomery were reported in Union hands.

Gen. Robert E. Lee, at Appomattox, surrendered the Confederate army of North Virginia to Gen. Grant on the terms proposed by the latter.

A jubilee celebration was being held in every city of the North because of the surrender of Lee and the apparent end of the war.

A battle occurred between miners and soldiers near Hazleton, Pa.

Martial law was declared in the mining region of Pennsylvania because of riots by striking workmen.

Moody and Sankey, the revivalists, opened a new hall in Bow street, London, constructed for them and capable of seating 10,000.

Paul Boyton, in a bathing suit, made an unsuccessful attempt to swim across the English channel from Dover to Boulogne.

The steamer believed to be so constructed as to do away with sea-sickness crossed the English channel—successfully, it was announced.

Contractor J. J. Hines and Clerks Channel and Van Vleet, of the Post Office Department at Washington, were arrested in connection with contract frauds.

With a solemn and emphatic denial of the charges against him, Henry Ward Beecher concluded his direct testimony in defense in the Brooklyn trial.