A Sage Brush Sketch.

BY THOMAS FITCH.

Among the old-time members of the Washoe bar, few possessed a readier wit than Tom C—, and none were more unsparing of an opponent. Tom lacked both the learning and the energy necessary to achieve rank among the foremost lawyers, but he had a tongue of rarest malice, and he never lost an opportunity of using it to the discomfiture of his more successful brethren.

There once came up for trial an action in which an honest woodsman was plaintiff, and the Ophir Mining Company was defendant. The case was commenced during the early days of the Territory, had been continued from term to term, and the original counsel of record on both sides had passed to other fields of effort than the law, leaving Tom sole representative of the plaintiff, and Judge W— alone for the defendant. The Judge was then, as he is now, a leading and prosperous member of the Nevada bar, a keen and careful lawyer, a plausible and powerful speaker, and a genial and entertaining companion. His one weakness is a personal vanity, so overwhelming and complete that it renders him incapable of appreciating the fun of any joke of which he may be the objective point. Tom was neither slow to perceive nor loth to assail the soft spot of his adversary, and in his final address to the "twelve good men and true," the "great Washoe cocktail exterminator," as he sometimes called himself, thus assaulted his wincing adversary:

"Gentlemen," said Tom, "this cause has been on the calendar for a long time. When it was commenced, the Ophir Company was a great corporation. From its plethoric coffers, was constructed, across the Ophir Slough, a causeway more costly than the Appian Way. Around its mill and residence property was erected a fence eighteen feet high, to exclude the gaze of the vulgar herd. Within that inclosure was built a mansion, where the trustees were accustomed to partake of wine dinners on Saturday afternoons. This great corporation had a United States District Judge, and a United States Senator for its lawyers; its stock sold for four thousand dollars a foot; its dividends were one hundred and fifty dollars per month, and its stockholders walked along snuffing the stars. But now, gentlemen, alas! *tempora mutantur;* the decayed bridge across the slough is useful only as a shelter for young wild ducks while their pin feathers are growing. The eighteen foot fence has fallen to the ground, and its once erect palings are the sport of every Washoe zephyr. The mansion is denuded, weather-beaten, and tenantless. Only the gurgle of Ophir creek is heard, where once the pop and fizzle of champagne made musical the night. No more wine dinners, no more jubilant trustees, no more happy stockholders, no more dividends, no more high-toned and costly counsel: The stock has fallen to a hundred dollars a foot, they have struck hot water and desert sand in the mine, and have come down to W— for a lawyer."

Of another sort than the last speaker was Judge H—, of Austin. He was a lawyer ranking with the foremost, and carrying a tongue of rarest eloquence and wit; but when in his cups he was altogether oblivious of his surroundings, and very much inclined to be disputatious. While in this condition he visited the theatre where Boucicault's play of "The Long Strike" was in process of presentation. The hero was on trial for murder, and the dramatist had perpetuated some startling anachronism in the way of a "ruling" of the judge presiding, that brought H— to his feet in the parquette with an "objection," which he proceeded to state and argue, to the discomfiture of the actors and the prolonged merriment of the audience.

"May it please the court," said Judge H—, on another occasion, "I do not wish to intimate that the learned counsel who has just taken his seat is devoid of a proper share of intelligence. But I must remark that if the learned counsel had been a contemporary of Thompson's colt, Thompson's colt would have lost its notoriety."

Who that has ever been compelled to litigate for the possession of a silver mine but has prayed in his secret heart for deliverance from the "professional mining expert?" To hear one of these gentry swear, it would seem as if the Mosaic account of the creation was imperfect, in that it failed to chronicle the presence of Professor—— as consulting engineer. Occasionally a mining man could be found who added scientific acquirements to practical knowledge, and such were never over positive as to the "course of the vein," while to the professor it was as plain as a highway. Often some empirical theorist assumed the title of professor, and demanded and received large sums for testifying to a mass of technical terms and unsupported conclusions. On the trial of the Eberhart and Richmond case, in White Pine county, one of these professors went down very suddenly, after a cross-examination, which was something as follows:

"What are you professor of?"

"Metallurgy, geology, and mathematics."

"Where did you study these sciences?"

"At the Royal College of Mexico."

"What text-books did you use in mathematics?"

"Daboll and Euclid."

"Can you square the circle?"

"I can."

"Indeed, you are advanced further than most of us. Please square it for us right here."

"I have not my instruments with me."

"Where are your instruments?"

"At the hotel."

"If that is the case, I will ask the court to take a recess, and send the Sheriff to the hotel for your instruments, that we may not miss the opportunity of having the circle squared."

But His Honor spoiled the fun by ordering the witness to stand down, and suggesting to the attorney for the other side that the testimony of the expert who offered to square the circle had better be blotted from the record.

If there were curious professors, there were also singular jurors in those days. A citizen, who was not anxious to escape from duty, answered the district attorney's question as to his opinion regarding capital punishment as follows:

"Have you any conscientious scruples?"

JUROR [interrupting]—"No, sir, none whatever."

D. A.—"Not on any subject?"

JUROR—"None whatever."

He was permitted to depart.—*Argonaut.*

WIT AND HUMOR.

REPAIR your dog muzzles. A stitch in time saves nine—canine—[Worcester Press.

IS IT not fortunate that the furnace-fire always burns brighter when is is coaled.

"HEWERS of wood and drawers of water"—Wood engravers and marine painters.

A SONG heard by a hive—"Bee it ever so humble, there is no place like comb."—[Danbury News.

THE great question, "Does it hurt a man to hang him?" is thus answered: "It harts his reputation."

IN regard to the weather, "If you don't see what you want, just ask for it."—[Wheeling Leader.

IF what Mr. Beecher says is true, we've been good all these long years for nothing.—[St. Louis Journal.

RICHES will never take wings and fly away, if you sprinkle a little economy on its tail.—[Whitehall Times.

WHEN a blockhead falls and breaks his cranium the paragraphers term it an injury in the lumber region.

A GREEN Christmas makes a fat goat, for then the succulent old shoe and oyster can are not hidden beneath the snow.

A MODEST young woman refused to wear the fashionable clocked hose until she ascertained that the clocks had no hands.

OYSTERS are sold for twelve and one-half cents apiece in Austin, Nev. We suppose that means they are ate for a dollar.

ACCORDING to Noah a dove was the first coo-rier.—[Herald P. I. Yes, it it carried the first green-back, you remember.

SENIOR is questioned: "What is the name of that lady to whom you are engaged?" Senior blandly responds: "Which one?"

"REACHING after the unattainable." A man feeling up under the back of his vest for the end of his parted suspender.—[Hawkeye.

"MA," said a little girl, "what is all this fuss about trade marks. Is it the trade marks that make so many wrinkles in pa's forehead?"

IT is said that Victoria has asked the Czar to spare Turkey. Vic should have come in with her spare before the Czar had made his strike.

JOSH BILLINGS says he knows people who are so fond of argument they will stop and "dispute a with guide-board about the distance to the next town."

THE last hit of the English conservatives is the following: I should be my first, if I had my second to throw at my whole." And the answer is—Gladstone.

PROVIDENCE is all wise, but it always piles the highest snow drifts in front of the house of the man who never shovels his sidewalks off.—[Rockland Courier.

"TELL your mistress that I've torn the curtain," said a lodger to a female domestic. "Very well, sir; mistress will put it down in the bill as extra rent."

JOSH BILLINGS says: "The mewl is a larger burd than a goose or turkey. It has two legs to walk with, and two more to kick with, and wears its wings on the side of its head."

THE late King of Italy will be buried with imposing ceremonies, and an imposing stone will be erected over his grave. Any obliging printer will explain.—[Worcester Press.

A WIDOW once said to her daughter, "When you are my age it will be time enough to dream of a husband." "Yes, mamma," replied the thoughtless beauty, "for a second time."

AN organ-grinder struck the town yesterday with his organ draped in mourning for the dead king. His silent token of his grief was very touching until he began to grind out "The Mulligan Guards."—[Oil City Derrick.

NOTHING makes the average tramp so mad as to find a bottle with a German label on it in the road. While he is almost certain that the bottle contains whisky, there is a lingering suspicion that it is medicine for a sore toe, and between the two doubts he goes thirsty.—[Free Press.

THE man with the ulster occupies an equivocal position in society, but his legs are warm, and he is raised high above many of the petty annoyances of ordinary humanity. He can wear his old trousers every day, and he does not care if there is a patch on the knee and whole rear platform is worn off.—[Puck.

"Do you know," remarked a rather fast Newark youth the other day, to a stuttering friend to whom he was slightly indebted, "do you know that I intend to marry and settle down?" "I do-don't know anything about it," was the reply, "bu-but I think you had b-b-better stay single and set-settle up."—[Newark Call.

HOW WE learn. Colonel (to instructor in musketry). "But I should like to know if they understand anything about the theory of musketry." (Private O'Grady is called out of the ranks). "What are the objects of position drill?" Private O'Grady (after deep thought). "Sure it's thim marks on the barrick wall, sir!"—[Punch.

AN English paper gives the origin of the word "damn." It says the oath is a corruption of the French exclamation "dame." This may be so, but we always thought the word "damn" originated by a man going out into the yard an hour after sundown and being abruptly caught under the chin by a clothes-line.—[Norristown Herald.

A YOUNG woman in Toledo, after receiving ten notes in as many hours from a lover whose address she had rejected, sat down with fury in her eye to write an answer that would wipe out his love making as with a sponge. But the little page with dimpled chin that never had known the barber's shears, softly touched the hem of her garment and whispered, "If you please mum, don't write anything that will scare him so he won't send any more notes 'cause I'm making five cents every trip this bad weather."

SITTING BULL never perpetrated but one joke. That was one day last autumn, when he sat down on a cluster of clover, in which there lingered the bumble bee of all bumble bees. The petulant insect prodded the warrior with a sting that marked one hundred and ninety degrees in the coolest place, and with a mightly howl the chieftian rose up in the air and felt around for his tormentor. "Now is the winter of our discontent," he said, holding the writhing bee up in his thumb and finger, "this is the Indian's hummer."

Modified Low-Neck Dresses.

We have to chronicle a very marked return to the regular old-fashioned low-neck, which bids fair to hold its place after giving way so long to high or square necks for dress occasions. They may be modified by fichus of tulle when too trying, but a few words said by a clever French woman may help to solve a doubt often felt by a woman as to whether she shall follow the dictates of fashion; or choose for herself what is most becoming and desirable. This French woman has much to say about the cling style of dress now worn, and the disadvantage of every one's following the same strict fashion. She would have every woman study her own style, and then follow out some particular idea which shall always have in view her own advantage or disadvantages, so as to show them off or to hide them, as the case may be; and she adds that the art of wearing a low-neck dress is understood by very few women, as tact alone will set a woman right in that respect, irrespective of her own innermost wishes. She gives one or two hints to be kept in sight by those who have no rules set down. High shoulders, she says, and a slightly rounding back, together with flat chests, exact a waist cut lower in front than at the back, while this rule may be reversed a little for an opposite built. Thin and high shoulders should never be seen otherwise than covered by a square neck; while well-rounded shoulders are never so beautifully framed as in the oval of a low neck waist. In wearing ornaments around the throat, the full and well-shaped throat is best left entirely uncovered, while a thin neck will require rows of pearls or stones in setting, or a pendant necklace, and a long slender throat is much enhanced by a velvet, or a ribbon with a single clasp, or a jewel in front. In the matter of sleeves, also, if the arm is short and fat the sleeves, would be replaced by a slight frill of lace; if it is long and thin a short full sleeve made like a puff, or a long sleeve is best; but if the arm is well proportioned it needs no adornment and it is best uncovered, as nothing is more rare, and, when found, more beautiful, than a perfectly rounded arm.

Demands of Etiquette.

Mrs. Robeson once told me that visiting cards alone during a season cost her $40. As it is necessary to make calls in person, not simply by card, a carriage is indispensable. Some of the cabinet families now use two carriages every afternoon, except Sundays, and their own reception days. Half of the family takes one carriage and the other half another, and each carriage load goes in a different direction, with a different list, and in this manner the two parties, by making brief calls, can sometimes discharge as many as seventy obligations in an afternoon. This is necessary when it is remembered how many calls are made at the residences of the cabinet each Wednesday. On the 16th of the present month 700 persons called at the house of one member of the cabinet, and as I saw the same crowd at the other receptions that day, I take it for granted that all received as many visitors as the lady referred to. She said that the names and addresses of all calls to be returned (which excludes those of gentlemen) covered sixteen pages in her visiting book—pages about the size of foolscap paper. Deducting Sunday and Wednesday, their reception day, these ladies have but five afternoons (calling hours being from about one to half-past five o'clock) in which to return calls, and if, even by dividing into two parties, seventy calls are the most which, under faborable circumstances, can be returned in an afternoon, only 350 can be returned before another Wednesday brings numerous additions to the list, leaving 300 at least over from the previous week. While as many as 700 calls are not made at every cabinet reception, still it is not unfrequently the case.—*Washington Correspondent.*

THE FIRST AMERICAN CUTLER.—One Naugatuck's oldest and most respected citizens, Lyman Bradley, is dead. He was the ostensible founder of a now extensive branch of American industry, having made the first pocket cutlery manufactured on this side of the Atlantic. This is a positive fact, and the building, or rather shed, under whose roof the first pocket knife made in the United States was hammered out, still stands. Lyman Bradley was born May 25, 1798, and was consequently nearly eighty years old at the time of his death. He was born in what is now called Middlebury, but what was then the town of Waterbury. As soon as he reached the years of understanding he went from his native town and learned the cutlery business, and soon after removed to this town, where he formed the idea of commencing the manufacture of pocket cutlery. In order to make this idea practicable it was necessary that he should import some mechanics from England, as Yankee ingenuity had not as yet captured that branch of mechanism. He advertised in Sheffield for some cutlers and set them at work. The enterprise was a success from the beginding, though some of Mr. Bradley's friends advised him against going into the enprise, arguing that he could not sell a knife in the United States which had not the Sheffield stamp on it.—*Waterbury (Conn.) American.*

IT was in church, and the bright-eyed, restless little cherub would stand up on the seat and spill the hymn-books, and keep up an incessant racket, while its mother frowned threateningly in the interests of good order. Cherub committed some particularly flagrant outrage, when the scandalized mother suddenly pointed a threatening forefinger at it after the manner of long suffering mothers under such circumstances, and the cherub, after the manner of cherubs under such circumstances, just opened its mouth, took that baleful finger in, and shut down on it with a pressure that made that mother groan out in the wrong place, "Oh! Ouch! Have mercy on us!"

BURR Cox was one of the wickedest men in Elliston, Ohio. He was a drunkard, a gambler and fighter, but he had a respectable family, whom he abused. A few days ago he went home half drunk, and, maddened by gambling losses, declared that he would kill his wife. He ground a hatchet for the purpose, he said, of chopping her head off, but when he made the attempt his son, aged 15, bravely grappled with him. The woman fainted from fright, but the boy fought desperately, and finally killed his father by stabbing him with a knife.

IT'S good slaying in Turkey.

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People suffer a great deal of pain unnecessarily. Among tortures that need not be endured are those inflicted with the rheumatism and gout, since the acrid element in the blood which produces them by contact with the sensitive covering of the muscles and joints may be eliminated by the use of that matchless depurent, Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, before the inflammatory symptoms are developed to any great extent. When it is considered what excruciating tortures rheumatism inflicts, and what a tendency it has, when fully developed, to attack the heart, the advisability of an early use of such a reliable antidote becomes at once apparent. The rheumatic virus is expelled from the blood by the increased action of the kidneys—which act as strainers—produced by the Bitters, and the sufferer will find, if he uses this supreme defensive agent, that he will be protected against a return of the agonizing complaint. Dyspepsia, fever and ague, liver and bowel complaints and maladies, are also cured by this admirable remedy.

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