

The Daily Astorian

VOL. XX, NO. 133.

ASTORIA, OREGON, SUNDAY, MARCH 9, 1884.

PRICE, FIVE CENTS.

AN HONEST BURGLAR.

How he Found his Way into the Bank of England, Then Told the Directors.

Not long ago the directors of the Bank of England were much perplexed and not a little amused when the secretary read to them, at their usual sitting, the following ill-spelt and somewhat curious letter:

Two Gentlemen of Bank England: You think you are all safe hand your Bank is safe, but I know better. I hid inside the Bank these last 2 1/2 years and you nuffin about it. Well, I am not a thief, so hid yo' will mett me in the great square room, where all the mo'ey is, at twelf 2 nite. I explain or yo' yeow, let only 1, or 2 cum slown, and say nuffin 2 nobody—Jon Smith.

The letter having been duly read, was, as might be expected, the topic of conversation and suggestion for some little time. Others thought that under the apparently ignorantly written letter a deep mystery was hidden; but all agreed that the safest way was to put the letter with proper instructions into the hands of the detectives. The detectives looked grave. There was a plot at work, they saw; and with their usual penetration they at once penetrated the deepest depths of the iniquity.

There is a very large room underground, where the huge wealth of the bank is deposited—millions and millions of English sovereigns bars of gold, and hundred-weights of silver, with myriads of notes. The detectives, of course, knew that this room must be the place which the writer of the letter had designated as the "great square room." It is full of treasure. The floor is of solid stone pavement, and its walls, roof and doors are of wrought-iron and steel. All the night long detectives were secreted in the room, but they saw nothing and heard nothing, with the exception that some one said they heard, about one or two o'clock, a strange noise they could not account for. The next night was the same, and the next, and the next; and when the board day of the bank came around the whole of the bank directors would have treated the affair as an idle attempt to frighten them had not their attention been more strongly called to the subject by the following incident:

A heavy chest had been forwarded addressed to the "Directors of the Bank of England." The chest was of course opened before them at once—such a thing being very unusual—and found to contain a large packet of most valuable papers and securities which had been safely deposited in the vault. With them the following letter:

To the Directors of the Bank of England:

GENTLEMEN—My husband, who is an honest man, wrote to you last week and told you that he had found a way—which he believes is only known to himself—of getting into your strong-room, and offered, if you would meet him there at night to explain the whole matter. He had never taken anything from the room except the inclosed box. You set detectives upon him and he took the box to show that he could go there, whoever might watch, if he chose. He gives you another chance. Let a few gentlemen be in the room alone, guard the door and make everything secure and my husband will meet you there at midnight.

Yours respectfully,
ELLEN SMITH.

This letter was more mysterious than the last. The only thing that was evident was that the writer, "Ellen Smith," was a better writer than her husband, who styled himself "Jon Smith." The detectives were shown the letter and acted accordingly. Of course, they were posted in the room. In the morning they told a strange story. They said that they saw a light at about twelve o'clock. It seemed to come from a dark lantern, but directly they ran to the spot from whence the light proceeded, it went out and the strictest search had discovered nothing. The bank officials became alarmed. They, however, agreed to do what, perhaps, would have been wiser if done at first, viz., to depute a few of their number to visit the vault alone. So it was arranged that three gentlemen should remain in the strong room all night, and that no one else should be with them. Every suitable precaution was taken when night came. The sentinel paced up and down outside; the detectives were not far off; and after the most rigorous search had been instituted, the gentlemen were looked in. At last one of them, who paced the floor rather impatiently, began to think that perhaps, after all, it was only a clever trick, cried out: "You ghost, you secret visitor, you midnight thief, come out! There is no one here but two gentlemen and myself. If you are afraid, I give you my word of honor as a gentleman that the police are not here. Come out, I say."

It was more in jest than in earnest that Major G., for he was a military man, shouted out the absurd speech, for, as we have said, he began to suspect that, after all, some practical joke was being adroitly carried on, as had more than once before been perpetrated, and he did not much like being victimized himself. His astonishment, however, was great when, in reply, he heard a strange voice saying: "If you have kept your word, I will keep mine. Put up your light, for I've one and I'll come."

The major and his fellow directors did not much like putting out the light, but they were not cowards, and after some demur it was done. Where the voice came from was, however, a mystery, for their ears were no hiding places in the room, every side being of thick, many-plated iron and steel; the ceiling was also of the same material.

When the light was out they waited in silence, when the major grasped firmly in one hand a revolver, and in the other held the lantern and a few matches. For a little while a low grating sound was heard, and then a

voice, evidently that of some one in the room, said:

"Are you there alone, sure?"

The major, who cared nothing for bodily form, struck a match, and instantly a crash was heard, and a low, smothered laugh. When the match was lighted nothing could be detected—no one was there. Again the major called upon the mysterious somebody to come forth, and again a voice was heard saying, "How can I trust you now?"

The major was angry and his companions alarmed, and after trying in vain to trace the point whence the voice proceeded, exclaimed: "Well, we'll put out the light again; only come quickly and put an end to this bother." So saying he put out the light again.

A moment or two after the same grating sound was heard, then the falling of some heavy body, and the next instant a man was visible standing in the middle of the vault with a dark lantern in his hand. Of course he came from somewhere, but the puzzle was—how? A ghost could not have entered more mysteriously. The man soon spoke for himself; and the directors, who were still at a loss to explain his presence here, listened in astonishment. It appeared that he was a poor man and obtained a precarious living in a strange way. When the tide was low it is the custom of a certain class of men, unknown to refined society, to enter sewers to search for any articles of value which may have been washed down into them. It is a very dangerous task, and, of course, revolting in the extreme, but they not infrequently find very precious things hidden in the filth. This man was one of those strange adventurers. One night he had discovered an opening leading to some place above. There were large squares above, which he found could be easily raised. He listened for some time, and finding all was silent, lifted up the stone without much difficulty, and found, after some little investigation by the light of his lantern, that he was in the strong room of a bank. These men, like miners, can readily determine the exact spot of ground under which they are, and he soon had a clew to the whole mystery. He told his wife, who was a woman of superior education to his own, of the whole affair, and he then wrote as we have seen to the directors. Down in the sewer, he was able to hear all their movements, as well as if above ground, and thus was not only able to know their plans, but to frustrate them, and of course could watch his time to remove the small but valuable box, to leave the letters on the table and to appear so mysteriously. No one had thought of looking to the stone pavement, which was supposed to have been solid and immovable, as it was known that there were no vaults below, although the iron walls and doors had been carefully tested. The mystery was now cleared up and the man well rewarded.

Volcanic State of Society in Mexico.

They tell us that the days of the revolution are over in Mexico, and the blessed time has arrived when the swords are beaten into plowshares. Yet the very air is quivering with suppressed excitement and everybody is alert with uneasiness. That you may understand what they call "a time of peace," let me cite a few circumstances: There has not been an act of violence in this state for several months, but at the least symptom of disturbance—such as a runaway horse, or the pursuit of a burglar might cause—people are in a panic, business places are closed in a twinkling of an eye, doors are double locked and shutters clapped up to windows with an alacrity which could only have been acquired from frequent practice. When a riot actually does occur, woe to the luckless pedestrian who happens to be caught upon the streets. In an instant, before he has time to realize what it is all about, every house is securely barricaded and on no account will be opened to all over the body politic, like a badly treated case of measles, reached Zacatecas, everybody not among the rioters was in door and every business house securely locked before one could say Jack Robinson. The multitude of small dealers on the market plaza, who have no doors to lock, ran away in affright, leaving their wares entirely unprotected. The result was that the malecontents fell to stealing "revolute," and the trouble subsided without a shot being fired.—Zacatecas Corr. Springfield Republican.

A Familiar Face.

"Your face is very familiar," said a Colorado man to a thoughtful person he chanced to sit beside in a railroad train. "It strikes me that we were colleagues in the Ohio legislature in 1855."

"You are mistaken," replied the thoughtful person; "I was in the legislature, however, was great when, in reply, he heard a strange voice saying: "If you have kept your word, I will keep mine. Put up your light, for I've one and I'll come."

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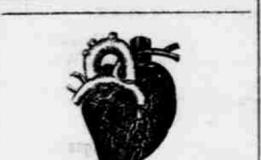
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Sheriff's Sale.

BY VIRTUE OF AN EXECUTION issued out of the Hon. Circuit Court of the State of Oregon, for the County of Clatsop on the 15th day of February, 1884, and to me directed on a decree for foreclosure of certain mortgage liens wherein Isaac Bergman, plaintiff recovered a judgement and decree of foreclosure against Peter H. Fox, Robert Fox and Lily P. Fox, defendants for the sum of three hundred and forty-five dollars, heides the costs and accruing costs and expenses, I have advertised and will sell at public auction on the 23rd day of March, 1884, at 2 o'clock P. M. of said day, at the court house door in Astoria, Oregon, certain real property to wit: Lots one and two in block 12, in Section 4, Astoria, Clatsop County, Oregon, as extended by Clatsop County, Oregon, as extended by Clatsop County, Oregon.

A. M. TWOMBLY, Sheriff.

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