

The Daily Astorian

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A NEVADA COURTSHIP.

Origin of the Drama "On the Yellowstone."

Six or seven years ago Judge Blackburn was one of the leading jurists of Nevada. His daughter Mary, then not quite seventeen years old, was a lovely girl—tall, lithe, and with a glorious head of deep blonde hair, of that peculiar shade which hesitates on the border of the lightest brown. They were at that time at Silver City, Nev., and she was besieged with admirers, whom the Judge endeavored with a popular sort of parental monopoly, to keep at arm's length. Probably the most obnoxious of all these to him was Harry J. Norton, a bright young newspaper man, who was publishing a typical mining-camp journal there. Norton was a romantic looking fellow, dark-haired and handsome, and had a history full of adventure. He had been a soldier, had fought his way into Mexico, he had been a scout and in government employ, had threaded the labyrinths of the Yellowstone in the most marvelous fairland that the foot of man ever trod; he was the sole survivor of a wild raid of the Apaches on the Gila river, and escaped by sheer and desperate courage alone; he had been a gold miner, a hunter all alone in leagues of prairie land, and, above all, he was a keen observer, an easy and graceful talker, and these "moving incidents by flood and field" wove themselves into his conversation, and lent it an ineffable charm. He was a man of undoubted nerve; will power was a dominant trait of his character, and it is not at all strange that he soon captivated the belle of the camp.

Judge Blackburn, however, regarded him with dislike and suspicion. He said freely that he considered him a dangerous and dissolute man, and declined to entrust the future happiness of his child in his hands. Norton loved her tenderly and purely, and was not the man to balk. Next to him, he was the most prominent suitor was a rich Mexican, who had drifted north, and whose name has escaped the pen. He was, however, rich, rather dashing, and a really dangerous rival anywhere. Norton fancied that he was standing in the way and prejudicing the Judge against him, and he lost no time in finding a pretext for a quarrel and challenging him to a duel. The challenge was instantly accepted, the Mexican, as the challenged party, choosing Colts' revolvers, at twenty paces, and an early hour next morning as the time. Prompt to the minute they met. During the night Norton had worked as usual at his office, coolly grinding out "copy" for the printers and correcting proof as conscientiously as though he was anticipating nothing more serious than a good sleep at the end of it. The last sheet of "copy" he wrote was a brief obituary of himself, and, hanging it on his hook, told the foreman, without mentioning its nature, to run it in the next issue in case he did not return.

The place selected for the duel was a level spot in the rear of some shattered adobe houses. They stood back to back, and at "one, two, three" were to wheel and fire. At "three" Norton turned deliberately and sent a bullet straight through his opponent's heart. The Mexican's ball had passed over his head.

It was yet in the early gray of dawn, and the journalist hastened to Blackburn's house and told Mary plainly just what had happened, also that he must instantly fly. "I will go with you," she said. She never re-entered the house. Norton procured her wraps in the camp, and they left together before the sun was up. Of course she was soon missed, and, linking her absence with the news of the duel, which reached him shortly, Judge Blackburn did not have much difficulty in arriving at an understanding of the case. He was a stern old man, and started in pursuit, fully determined, so he often afterward said, to kill them both. His instant construction was that the journalist had enticed the girl away, and, in the relentless old code of morality, he preferred death to dishonor.

Norton, however, had no such notion. They struck the stage and took passage as any lady and gentleman might, for Virginia City. En route the angered father pressed them so hard that they were compelled to abandon the stage, and securing horses, finished the trip in the saddle. They arrived in Virginia City half an hour ahead, and when Judge Blackburn arrived he was confronted by a marriage certificate. Although he concluded not to do any killing, he never entirely forgave Norton, and returned to his home feeling that he had been deeply wronged. Nobody was particularly affected by the death of the Mexican, and the prosecution quickly died out for lack of interest. For two years the young couple led a roving life, drifting wherever the shifting fortune of nomadic western journalism drew the husband. For a time they were in the Black Hills, but some "gold-brick" confidence man, whose Norton exposed, combined their influence to freeze him out. His next objective point was Leadville, and, reluctant to take his girl wife to so turbulent a camp, Norton sent her home to her parents in Nevada and went to fight the battle alone. He was soon a popular character there, and became editor of the *Chronicle*, which had recently been started.

While at Leadville Norton published a book, half romance and half history, entitled, "On the Yellowstone." It was the idealized story of his adventures, and, while it never reached the author's fortune, its sale was wide. In 1879 hard work and a needless life broke Norton down, and he was seized with pneumonia. His wife was telegraphed for and came in on the big lumbering stage on the evening that he died. They took her to the bare log cabin in which he lay, and the scene at the bedside was pitiful beyond all words. In the delirium of grief she clung to the corpse, and had to be finally taken away by sheer force. Norton was buried un-

C. W. Fulton for Congress.

ED. ASTORIAN:

As the time approaches for the state convention the various portions of the state are bringing forward their best men to succeed Hon. M. C. George the present efficient member of congress, who I understand does not want to be his own successor. I would therefore suggest and urge the nomination of Hon. C. W. Fulton, ex-senator from Clatsop, Tillamook and Columbia counties, who was an active and efficient member of the state senate, and his opinions, judgment and influence were sought from all portions of this state; and judging from his impartial actions in said body I do not think I am wrong when I say that he is the best man for the general interest, and welfare of this state that can be nominated at the coming convention.

I have lived in this state since 1844, and I will advance a few reasons why I think the above named counties are entitled to name the man to fill the honorable position. Astoria is the oldest city in this state and second in population and is situated in the northwest corner of the state at the mouth of the great and mighty Columbia river which drains Oregon, Washington Territory and Idaho; whose gateway and cascades need improvement which will benefit every section of this state and the world at large. And this section demands special attention at the hands of our representatives. There are our bays and harbors south from the Columbia to the Rogue river, and north to the British possessions, which need light houses, buoys and other improvements for the better protection of commerce which no person can understand as well as one who has lived for years at the mouth of this great highway, and gathered the ideas of the commercial world as to the wants of this section and the coast of Oregon. Such a man we find the Hon. C. W. Fulton to be.

This section of this state has never had a man to run on the state ticket for any office whatever, and this will be the first time in the history of this state that we count to the front and ask at the hands of the Republicans the honor of naming the candidate for congress.

I feel confident that if Hon. C. W. Fulton is elected he will fill the position with so much credit to himself and the state that his constituents will not be sorry for their choice.

JAN. W. WELCH.
Astoria, April 14, 1884.

The deeds which the Northern Pacific Railroad company give to purchasers of their lands stipulate that the company reserves all the mining rights on the lands, also to build as many lines of road over them as they please, and put buildings for depots, shops, etc., on it as they choose. The buyer is allowed to put a good, lawful fence each side all the lines they may build, and various other things, which make it a question whether a man owns the land after he buys and pays for it.—*Olympia Courier*.

With such a deed a man does not own the land, and cannot warrant it to a purchaser. It is his only until the company wants it again, or any part of it, when he is bound to surrender to them, with all its improvements, or remove the same, without the cost of a dollar to the company. It is no title at all the company gives, and the man who buys from it becomes its serf.—*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*.

The Democratic national convention, at Chicago in July next, will consist of 802 delegates—an increase of 64 over those holding seats in the last national Democratic convention at Cincinnati in 1880. The two-thirds rule will still prevail, and it will require 535 votes to nominate.

The Western Citizen, of Indianapolis, Ind., states: "Mr. Harry J. Miller, associate editor of this paper, was relieved by St. Jacobs Oil of a severe attack of rheumatism."

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