

The Daily Morning Astorian.

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ASTORIA, OREGON, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1885.

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THE MARRIAGE FEE.
A PERVERT \$25.00 PRAYER.
How Some Irreverent Bridegrooms Get Out of Paying the Minister His Fee.

"Here in Brooklyn," said the minister, "and in all large cities, the marriage fees form no mean part of a minister's income. We receive all the way from \$5 to \$100 per marriage generally, although in many instances we are 'beaten clean out' of the fee. In the first place, there's the envelope dodge. One night a happy, loving couple awoke me in the middle of the night and wanted me to marry them. I arose, dressed myself, and performed the ceremony. As the parties turned to leave, the groom hunted through his coat-tail pocket, and when the bride's head was turned he surreptitiously handed me a well-filled envelope. I bowed them out, thinking I had been paid for my trouble. I hurried to my room and told my wife she could have the new bonnet she had been plaguing me about. I tore open the envelope, and what do you suppose was in it?"

"Hundred dollars or so?"

"Ten sheets of reporter's 'copy paper.' I think that fellow was a member of the press."

"Then there's the marriage-certificate dodge. It's a good one. I've had it played on me and I know of a number of others who have suffered. Here is my case: An apparently well-to-do couple came to my house and I married them. After the consummation of the ceremony the groom said he wanted a handsome certificate with a costly frame. 'Let it be nice; anything below \$25.00 will suit.' Call it twenty-five," said he, stroking his mustache pompously. "When can I have it?"

"I told him if he'd call in in the latter part of the week I'd have a nice one for him. The certificate and frame cost me \$17.00. They were gorgeous. That's the frame up there around my grandmother," said the minister, sighing. "The certificate can be purchased at cost price."

"Another case is fresh in my memory, as it is of recent date. After I had married a couple, the groom jingled the contents of his pockets and then withdrew his closed hand. As I bowed him from the front door he got between me and the bride, and shaking my hand warmly, placed a large coin in it as he bade me a hearty good-bye. I have that coin yet. Here it is."

And the dominie produced a leaden sinker that had been beautifully rounded and sand-papered to make it resemble a \$20.00 gold piece.

"Checks drawn on broken banks or banks that never had any existence, or banks where they never heard of the drawer, cannot be classed under that head. The ministers of our cities could furnish a fine collection of these if they were called upon to do so. The effrontery of these depraved beings always takes the form of bashfulness. They make believe that they are too bashful to offer the money in the presence of the bride. Whenever I hear a bashful man jingling in his pockets, I am not certain that his pocket does not contain nails or keys until he produces a coin, and I am not certain of the genuineness of the coin until I have tested it with my teeth. An honest, God-fearing man comes out boldly, and in presenting his offering makes a little joke about his bride being worth it, or something of that kind. That makes us all happy, and there is no need of fracturing one's teeth."

"However, I was fooled once by a man who did this very same thing. He had neglected to provide a ring and I loaned him one I always have on hand. After the ceremony he returned it, asking me what my charge was. I told him we made no charge, but if he felt inclined to remunerate me he could do so. He jocosely remarked that 'he guessed his bride was worth \$25.00, and if she proved good he'd send me \$25.00 on every anniversary of the wedding.' He called for pen and ink and filled out a check. He insisted upon my praying for their welfare before they left, and I did so. They had never heard of him at the bank where the check was drawn."

"And you was a prayer out?"

"One minute! I really felt like amending that petition, for it was a fervent \$25.00 one. I trust the wayward youth was benefited by it. He needed all the prayers he could obtain by false pretenses. The ring he handed back to me was not mine. When he felt into his pocket for the check he exchanged it for a five-cent brass one. I have used it ever since when occasion required."—(New York World.)

How Opera Is Enjoyed in Philadelphia.

Country Visitor—"Do you always have your tea parties in a big place like this?"

City Host—"Tea parties, child?"

"Yes. What's the matter with those people over there? They seem to be suffering."

"Suffering?"

"Yes. Just hear how they groan and shriek. Why don't they go to a doctor?"

"My child, this is not a tea party. This is an opera."—(Philadelphia Call.)

Epitaphs.

When with characteristic cynicism, Byron derided the credulity of him who would "believe a woman or an epitaph," he may have had in mind Ben Jonson's famous lines on the Countess of Pembroke:

"Underneath this sable hearse
Lies the subject of all verse,
Sydney's sister—Pembroke's mother!
Death 'ere thou hast slain another
Fair, and learned, and good as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee."
Could the memory of Shakespeare demand loftier strains? Compare the above with the quaintness and simplicity of the lines:

"Best be the man who spares these stones,
And curst be he who moves my bones."
Inscribed on the tomb of the Bard of Avon!

Strict adherence to mere matter of fact has scarcely been considered the special attribute of an epitaph—though the three following are well authenticated examples of unvarnished detail:

"Sarah Yorks this life did resign,
Sixteen hundred and seventy-nine."
—(Norwich.)

"Here lies the body of William Wile,
One thousand seven hundred and sixty-six."
—(Richmond, Yorkshire.)

"Here lies the body of honest Tom Page,
Who died in the thirty-third year of his age."
—(Newrich Cathedral.)

And in the same connection may be instanced the inscription on the tomb of the inn-keeper, buried in the churchyard opposite his hostelry:

"Here lies Tommy Day,
Removed from over the way."
Latin was long considered the only appropriate language for an epitaph. It is well known that Dr. Johnson refused to disgrace the walls of Westminster Abbey with an English inscription to the memory of Oliver Goldsmith. This is the more to be deplored, since the doctor could (and did) write English epitaphs of merit—witness that upon Phillips, the musician—

"Sleep undisturbed within this peaceful shrine,
Till angels wake thee with a note like thine."

Brevity, "the soul of wit," has been little considered in this class of composition, and "O, Rare Ben Jonson" (excepted) there occur to the writer but three as remarkable in this particular—that upon Dr. Fuller—

"Fuller's Earth."

Upon Burbage, the actor, a simple stage direction:

"Exit Burbage."

And the happy combination of eulogium and farewell to the memory of Knight, the public:

"Good Knight!"

Successive generations have pressed into this service such time-worn effusions as "Afflictions sore long time I bore," etc.

And the really beautiful lines by Dr. Donne upon a deceased infant—

"Ere sin could blight, or sorrow fade,
Death came with friendly care;
The opening bud to Heaven conveyed
And bade it blossom there."

Have appeared upon hundreds of tombs. The touching subject of infant mortality finds also fitting expression in the two following:

"Just with her lips the cup of life she pressed,
Found the taste bitter—and declined the rest."

"This babe entombed on the world did peep,
Ere it—'twixt its eyes—could see all weep."

To form, while yet living, the subject of an epitaph, is one of the penalties of greatness. Some kings, and many prominent politicians, have had this experience. Rochester's epitaph upon the merry monarch "who never said a foolish thing, and never did a wise one," is too well known for repetition; while students of English literature are all familiar with Goldsmith's lines in memory of the still living Burke, Garrick, and Reynolds in "The Retaliator."

An ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, Robert Lowe (Viscount Sherbrooke), had appropriated to him one of exemplary venom and profanity, actually written in memory of an obscure Robert Lowe of by-gone days. The statesman himself is said to have discovered it and rendered it into Latin hexameter. A good example of this kind of ante-mortem literature is the epitaph written during the lifetime of Benjamin D'Israeli—need it be said by a "Liberal" pen:

"There lies Lord Beaconsfield
(It was a way he had)."

Presence of mind has always been held in just estimation, though it has been shrewdly remarked that in moments of peril, absence of body is even more desirable. It is certainly absence of body which forms the chief characteristic of the three following:

"Here lies the remains of Thomas Nicols
Who died in Philadelphia, 1753. Had he
Lived he would have been buried here."
—(Kir-Kiel.)

"Here lies the body of Jonathan Ground
Who was lost at sea and never found."
—(Utster.)

"Here lies the body of John Eldred—
At least he will be here when he's dead,
But at this time he is alive,
Fourth-month of August, sixty-five."
—(Oxford.)

—(Detroit Free Press.)

Tired and Languid Women
How many women there are of whom these words are true: "They feel languid and tired, hardly able to bear their weight on their feet, the bloom all gone from their cheeks, irritable and cross without meaning to be, nerves all upset, worried with the children, fretted over little things, a burden to themselves, and yet with good acute disease." What a pity it is. But a few bottles of Parker's Tonic will drive all this away, and relieve the troubles peculiar to their sex.

—Shiloh's Catarrh Remedy—a positive cure for Catarrh, Diphtheria and Canker Mouth. Sold by W. E. Demont.

The Passion Poet as a Novelist.

Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox is engaged upon a novel, and one who has read as much of the work as is now done tells us that the book will be a new departure in literature. The story, as we are told, will be remarkable for the originality and boldness of its thought—"many will be shocked at some of the subjects discussed." From this we infer that the promised book will be quite as peppery as some of the work Mrs. Wilcox has already given to the public; in fact, the boast is made by those who profess to know that it will create as much of a stir as did the "Poems of Passion."—(Chicago News.)

"Your father is entirely bald, isn't he?" "Yes, I'm the only heir he has left."

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Henry Karat went to sleep on a doorstep in New York, and was robbed of his "turnip." Henry says the policeman was not on his "beet."
—(Boston Bulletin.)

Oriental Opium.
Professor Kanny Loll Dey, the famous medical expert of India, on whom the Empress conferred the order of "Companion of the Indian Empire," besides elevating him to the rank of Rai Bahadour, publishes an official opinion that the new discovery,—Red Star Cough Cure—is free from opiates or poisons, and that it marks a new departure in medicine, and that he prescribes it with wonderful effect. It only costs twenty-five cents.

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