

### A TELEGRAPH JOKER.

He Knew What the Crowd Wanted and Delivered the Goods.

#### ELECTION RETURNS TO SUIT.

Swung States and National Chairman into Line in His Reports and Gave the Boys of the Mining Camp the Time of Their Lives.

A funny incident happened on the night of the national election of 1896 in a little camp tucked away in the mountains of southwestern Colorado, where the only means of quick communication with the world were a single uncertain telegraph wire and a single more uncertain telegraph operator. Naturally only the merest scraps of election news reached the camp, but before the certain news of McKinley's election could have been got the uncertain operator had fallen a victim to his favorite vice and, further, had fallen beneath the table.

The only other person who knew anything about telegraphy was "Shorty," the local wit and humorist, who volunteered to write out the election returns as they clicked off from the telegraph instrument. Political sentiment was adverse for Bryan. News of his election was not only sought, but demanded, for the average American miner is as sanguine concerning the uncertainties of politics as he is concerning the uncertainties of mining. The volunteer telegrapher was noted for an obliging disposition. He was the "genial" of the camp.

The "boys" had placed stores of giant powder at various points. They had cleaned and oiled their six shooters and re-filled their cartridge belts. Bonfires were ready to be lighted on the hillside, and natural enthusiasm had been stimulated at the Metropole, the Cosmopolitan, the Fashion, the Trouadero and less pretentiously named cases in the desert of mining camp existence—in fact, every preliminary to the grandest celebration the San Juan country ever had known. Shorty was not the man to neglect an opportunity like that. The final bulletin he handed to the waiting crowd stated that New York and Louisiana were in doubt and it looked like a close election, with the chances favoring Bryan. That whetted the crowd's keen appetite for returns to razor edge. The second bulletin sent their spirits up with a leap, "Bryan has carried Kansas, and the Democrats are claiming Iowa."

"Whoopee!" from the crowd. Shorty bent his ear to the clicking sounder and inscribed "Bulletin No. 3—Illinois joins the Bryan column with 60,000 majority. Indiana certain, New York very close."

When the deafening chorus had died down a young member of the party asked the leader, "Hahn! we better begin to set off the giant?"

Before the leader could answer Shorty reproved him by word and look. "Don't go off half cocked," he said. "It's always best to wait until you are sure. You can't be too conservative in a case like this."

After a long pause, in which the crowd displayed much impatience, the important and conservative Shorty transcribed bulletin No. 4, but before passing it out he said:

"Now, boys, don't do anything rash. Wait for the actual returns."

Bulletin No. 4 read, "Senator Jones claims Ohio and Pennsylvania for Bryan."

Under ordinary circumstances a doubt might have been expressed concerning the probability of such status reversing their political records, but the crowd was convinced of an impending landslide for their favorite and cheered with delight. "Now we are beginning to get the news," remarked Shorty when the cheering ceased, and he began to write bulletin No. 5 as follows:

"New York gives Bryan 100,000 plurality; Indiana, 40,000. Returns from Wisconsin and Minnesota indicate large Democratic gains."

The crowd heard only the first sentence. Shouting, cheering, yelling, screaming, it broke for the street.

"Hold out!" called Shorty. "Here's another."

Bulletin No. 6, "Quay concedes Pennsylvania to Bryan."

Another fragment broke from the crowd and ran down the street shouting the news. The newspaper's pencil was traveling rapidly over the paper, while his friends and fellow citizens crowded closely upon him and read as he wrote bulletin No. 7, "Mark Hanna has locked up Republican headquarters and gone home."

The ear of the crowd was drowned by the roar of exploding giant powder. Buildings shook, windows rattled, accompanied by the crash of broken glass. The celebration was on, and Shorty McIntyre was alone.

The celebration lasted for two days. The morning after election the regular operator had recovered sufficiently to transcribe messages announcing McKinley's victory. Those who were sober enough to understand them didn't believe them. After several warnings of what would happen to him if he didn't quit "trying to fool people" the operator desisted and joined in the general jubilation. Not until the arrival of the Denver papers on the second day did that ramp awake to a realization of the outcome of the election, and then there was not sufficient energy left to vent even indignation upon Shorty, much less to take revenge. On the third day the volunteer operator was more popular than ever, for all admitted he had given them the time of their lives.—New York Post.

### THE KISSING FETE.

By ROBERT C. WARNER. (Copyright, 1909, by American Press Association.)

The fete was a great success. Long before the hour announced for the beginning of the festivities crowds of people were flocking to the entrances of the park, and during the evening many thousands came and went. Of these there were the young and the older, married, the former as participants, the latter as spectators.

And what was the occasion of the fete? An edict had gone forth that between the hours of 8 and 12 any young man might kiss any girl in the park provided he wore in his cap a green feather. This provision was introduced to enable any girl opposed to strange embraces to take to flight on the approach of a would be kisser.

As the clock struck 9 two young girls entered the park arm in arm. One was tall and stately, with very black eyes, a cable of plaited black hair hanging down her back. The other was smaller, a blue-eyed beauty, with hair of spun gold drifting in the breeze. They had no sooner passed the gate than green feathers began to flutter in their path. Many a young man approached, but was deterred by a repellent glance from the queenly brunette. For an hour the pair walked about the park watching the others. Now and again some young girl would suddenly dart away on seeing a youth approach whom she wished to avoid or to appear to avoid. Here and there would be heard suppressed screams and giggles, while smacks resounded like pistol shots.

But the two girls walked untouched. Many persons noticed them, but no one seemed to know them. It was supposed that they were of high degree, daughters of noblemen who had come to witness the kissing without taking part in it, and it was even whispered that they were from the court. But there were men present from the court, and none of them had ever seen the girls before. The people wondered why these gallants dared not offer to kiss two such beauties.

Near midnight a man with a black beard entered in company with one who appeared to be his son. It was apparent that both were disguised. Passing the two girls, they turned and looked at them, then, walking in a circle, met them again. At this second meeting the younger man darted toward the blue-eyed girl. Seeing him coming, she left her companion and ran away. Those watching these unknown people then saw the older man approach the girl who was left. They expected that she would wither him with a glance. What was their surprise to see her after a faint resistance submit to be kissed. Then when he offered his arm she took it, and they walked on together.

"You are very bold," said the lady. "Such beauty as yours would inspire boldness in a coward."

"You had no right to kiss me. You do not wear the green feather."

"True. I never thought of that. But such beauty as yours makes one forget."

"You may have a ladylove."

"Such beauty as yours would win me from her in spite of my best resolution."

"I do not deny that she exists."

"I do not. Whatever or whoever I am, I am no liar."

"But would you break a heart for a stranger?"

"It is she who is the stranger. I have never seen her."

"Never have seen her! What manner of man are you who woos with out seeing her you woo?"

"I see her I woo, I have not seen her I have intended to make my bride."

"There comes my friend with your boy. I must rejoin her. This is but the adventure of an evening. Farewell."

"We will not part without the pledge of another meeting. Tell me when and where I may communicate with you tomorrow."

"You may call upon me tomorrow evening." She gave him the location of a villa where she said she lived.

"That will not do. You will think of this affair overnight and resolve to be true to that which I surmise is to your interest."

"Wait and see."

The next evening the stranger drove up to the villa in question. He was ushered in by lackeys with every evidence of profound respect. He seemed surprised. In a sumptuous salon he was received by the lady who had so suddenly inspired him. She was smiling at him with an air of triumph.

"I am surprised to see your majesty," she began, but he interrupted her.

"Majesty?"

"Yes. You were known to me from the first."

"Who are you?"

"First let me know your royal decision. For me will you break with the Princess Margaret?"

"The Princess Margaret! What do you know of the Princess Margaret?"

"Will you cast her off for one you have seen but once?"

"I will wed no one at present. I ask to be permitted to pay my addresses to you with a view to raising you to a throne."

"So you are not so sure of this newborn love after all?"

"I am. I wish time to prepare my people for the change."

"The lady turned her head aside. The ring took one of her hands in his and poured forth a torrent of words. Suddenly she stopped him.

"I am the Princess Margaret."

"You the Princess Margaret?"

### ONE AUGUST NIGHT.

She Was Told the Story of the Lady of Shalott.

By VIRGINIA LEILA WENTZ. (Copyright, 1909, by Associated Literary Press.)

It had been an unusually oppressive day even for August. Every one seemed sleepy or sleeping. Cobblers slept with half mended boots in their laps; Italian women slept at their fruit stands with sleeping babies at their breasts; horses dozed conscientiously along in front of sleeping drivers.

In the department store where Antonia Wheaton worked the day had been difficult, especially behind the stuffy counter where she measured out ribbons. And, oh, what a goddess the loud sounding bell at 6 had been! Most of the girls in the store were city bred, and they accepted the conditions of August philosophically, but Antonia Wheaton had come from a fresh little country town in the west, and as she leaned from her boarding house window—like the third floor hall room, back—a few minutes before going down to dinner it seemed to her that she was locked in a place of torment from which no escape was possible.

They dined at 7 in Mrs. Brown's boarding house. In the half hour that Antonia had been home she had taken a sponge bath, brushed her silky, flaxen hair and changed her black alpaca dress for a simple white muslin. As she leaned out of the window from the open space beside the storage house in the rear she could see the dust carts roll down the streets. The whistling of their big rotary brooms reminded the country bred girl of large turkey gobblers sweeping the earth with disdainful, proud wings. The open space faced the west, and, resting her little oval cheeks in her hands, Antonia could see that the sun was doing its best to set with some sort of rightful beauty, even in this homely downtown section.

"Where the quiet colored end of evening smiles!"

Antonia was speaking to herself in a reproachable fashion that was growing on her, trying to recall some verses which Francis Logan had quoted to her one sunset time down on the Battery. She had fancied she could remember them, they were so simple and lovely.

Just then Mrs. Brown's cracked dinner bell rang.

Across the long, narrow table Francis Logan glanced at Antonia with something like a lump born of a big, protective instinct rising in his throat. Every vestige of fresh country rose bloom had fled from the girl's sweet face, and in the intervals when she fancied she was not observed the young fellow's alert eye noticed that black lashes rested heavily against her cheek as would those of one who is overwary.

Antonia's weariness struck home perhaps because of contrast. Francis himself was more than usually happy that night.

The big importing house where he was employed had that very morning sent a note to his desk informing him that his salary had been increased some \$10 a month. His dear mother, over in Devonshire, had just written him that a relative had left her an unexpected little legacy. Altogether the world was going well with Francis Logan.

"You look pleased, Mr. Logan," observed Mrs. Brown from her accustomed seat at the head of the table.

"Ah, I remember—this is your favorite soup!"

For five years now young Logan had been an inmate of Mrs. Brown's establishment without having ever changed his seat at table or his room. Naturally Mrs. Brown sought to ingratiate herself with him.

"Why, my dear," she had exclaimed once to Antonia in a burst of enthusiasm, "he knows all the poets by heart. He sees only the best plays, even though it may be from gallery seats. He knows all the finest pictures up in the Metropolitan. He has what they call an 'artistic' taste too. My ans, you should hear him notice the sunset at the end of a narrow city street or a tiny flower out in the park or—"

"Yes, I know," said Antonia impulsively, for once coming out of her reserve. "He's pure gold—that's what he is!"

"Huh! 'Gold'?" Mrs. Brown had retorted disdainfully. "None o' your pretty, soft yellow stuff for him. He's good, solid, practical steel. If any one asked me. Don't you forget it, Miss Wheaton. And if you could be fortunate enough to tie up to him—"

Mrs. Brown had broken off abruptly at a flash from Miss Wheaton's eye. One dared not presume too far with Miss Wheaton, in spite of the silky, flaxen hair and the childish dimples, as many of the young men in the department store had found out.

"If only they could be a little more like Mr. Logan!" Antonia had more than once found herself commenting as she pinned up her colored bolts. "He is the soul of honor, and I—I don't know what I'd do without him!"

"Had a stroke of luck today, little girl?" Logan said to Antonia as she was going upstairs after the scanty saucer of raspberries, made purple with milk, had been eaten. "I want you to come out tonight and help me celebrate—if you'll do me the honor."

A little later, from the basement dining room window, Mrs. Brown, who was arranging her cloth for the next morning's breakfast, watched them go up the street together. Antonia, in her simple white muslin, wore a nodding spray of pink roses at her waist. As

they walked toward the west the young fellow's eyes were fastened adoringly upon her.

"Guess they'll hit it off all right," commented Mrs. Brown as she went on refilling the porcelain saltcellars. "I'll tell you what we'll do," said Francis as they walked toward the cars. "We'll go out to Riverside drive and sit there for awhile till the night gets cooler; then we'll go to some big uptown restaurant and order some ice cold chicken salad."

"Oh," broke in Antonia in economic defense. "I'd just as lief go to a drug store and have some nice soda."

"Now, don't you bother about the expense, little one," said Francis gayly. "As I said, I've had a rare stroke of luck today, and when we get out on one of those cool benches on the drive I'm going to tell you about it." Also he determined resolutely to himself he would tell her something else. She needed to be petted and taken care of.

The car ride to the river was long. The sun glow had faded entirely out of the west and the gray veil that spread beginning to be pricked by the city's innumerable lights when finally they reached the drive and leaned over the stone wall that edged it. The Palisades on the opposite shore cast huge black shadows upon the water. Near by a yacht or two were at anchor. Silently, mysteriously, their lights came up, one by one. Over on the Jersey shore a big building which by day showed itself to be an unsightly factory now took on the majesty of a mediæval castle.

"See the turrets and spires," said Francis, calling Antonia's attention to it. "Do you know the story of the Lady of Shalott?" he added. "She lived in a grand castle—we'll pretend that's it." He nodded toward the factory—"and from the highest window she watched her lover, Sir Lancelot, going by, and she drifted down the river to find him. We'll pretend this is the river, and—dear little Lady of Shalott, will you let me be your Sir Lancelot? I love you and want you to marry me and let me take care of you. Surely, little one, you are so fragile and sweet you need to be taken care of. Will you?"

The girl's eyes as he spoke were distant. All the yellow lights on the yachts seemed to be swinging them selves together.

"Just look at my hair, Francis," Antonia was saying twenty minutes later, with a shy note of laughter.

"I'm looking at it, dear," said Francis oddly, with something like a catch in his rich young voice. "And just to think I'm going to have it to look at all my life!"

"Nicknackiterian."

London shopkeepers' slang is a dialect in itself and one that is always changing. What, then, is a "nicknackiterian"? We know not the word today, but, looking recently through some old law cases dating about a hundred years back, I was puzzled to find it applied in all good faith to describe a plaintiff in the sheriff's court. On further search it turned out to be a piece of forgotten cockney slang for a dealer in bric-a-brac.

The evidence showed that this plaintiff kept a sort of odd curiosity shop in which he dispensed "mummies," poisoned arrows, the head of King Arthur's spear and a genuine manuscript of the "first play acted by Theophrastus and his company in a wagon!"

The defendant, a woman, had actually bought and paid for some of these rarities, but she died after having contemplated the examining of an orange outgoing to add to her collection, and for her executors refused to pay. Counsel for the defense poured contempt on the mummy of the orange outgoing and called it a "spruced monkey."

But the "nicknackiterian" won his case. His profession was more taking than his name.—Manchester Guardian

An Equal Test.

It is an interesting fact that the two studies of arithmetic and geography often seem to be opposed to each other in the affections of school children. Pupils who are particularly proficient in the one are apt to be backward in the other.

A story is told of a youngster who was slow in arithmetic and whose apparent stupidity in this field was a great source of grief to his father, a clever mathematician.

One day when the father and son were walking out they passed a place where a "learned pig" was on exhibition, and the father took the boy in to see the prodigies that the animal could perform.

"Just look at that!" said the father. "Why, there's a pig that can count and add up numbers! Don't you wish you were as smart as he?"

"Ha!" answered the boy. "Just let me ask him a few questions in geography! I reckon I could beat him at that!"

Told by Sydney Smith.

The late Lord Dudley was a most abstruse mind. "One day," says Sydney Smith, "he met me in the street and invited me to meet myself. 'Dine with me today; dine with me, and I will get Sydney Smith to meet you.' I accepted the temptation held out to me, but said he was engaged to meet me elsewhere. Another time in meeting me he put his arm through mine, muttering, 'I don't mind walking with him a little way; I'll walk with him as far as the end of the street.' He very nearly overtook my gravity once in the pulpit. He was sitting immediately under me, apparently very attentive, when suddenly he took up his stick as if he had been in the house of commons and, tapping the ground with it, cried out in a low but very audible whisper, 'Hear, hear!'"

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