

WEST SIDE TELEPHONE.

VOL. I.

M'MINNVILLE, OREGON, OCTOBER 22, 1886.

NO. 78.

WEST SIDE TELEPHONE.

EVERY TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

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WHAT HE SAW IN HER?

Whatever could he have seen in her? She isn't the least bit pretty; she isn't stylish, she isn't rich, she is neither wise nor witty.

So he passed by the bellies of the season, the maidens both stylish and pretty. He passed by the highly accomplished, the clever, the wise and the witty;

THE "EVEN FINGERS."

How a Daughter Captured Her Father's Murderer.

The Brigadier, astride a cane chair, smoked his pipe before the door. Slowly the smoke arose, regularly, like a blue cloud, forming a circle which enlarged, trembled and disappeared in the cool air of the evening.

And Catinson heard him turn over and over the pages of his almanac. She has often told me that she felt, while working mechanically, a little drowsy, by this noise of the paper, so regular, and that, suddenly raising her head from her work to yawn, and see if it was not time to go to sleep, she saw, believing at first that she had dreamed, that she dreamed that she had the nightmare—she saw between the folds of the shutter, passing, moving softly, a hand, a large hand, but with something frightful about it that Catinson remarked at once, the four fingers, almost as large as the thumb, being all of the same size, as though cut by line, yet they were not cut, only terminated in this frightful way; and this hideous hand glided along the shutters, evidently seeking to open the blind noiselessly. Then it remained motionless, as though its owner knew that Catinson had discovered him. For a moment she believed she had not seen aright, that the light of the lamp had dazzled her sight. But when she opened her eyes, very much frightened, there was the moving hand, with its enormous even fingers. Catinson wished to scream, but seemed strangled by that terrible hand. Then she suddenly arose, and, seizing her father by the sleeve, pointed to the hand on the blind. But at the same moment that old Couscous turned, the robber quickly pushed open the blind, and a current of air extinguished the lamp in a cloud of flame and smoke, leaving Catinson and her father in darkness. Couscous, hearing the sound of a heavy body leaping into the room, tried to find a knife with which to defend himself, and more especially the money, but before he could open the cupboard he was seized by the throat, and felt a stroke against his neck, then down near his heart. Catinson screamed, divining all, though seeing nothing, but a heavy blow rendered her powerless. The poor girl was in a faint, she could not say how long, and when she recovered found herself in the lower hall, where Mother Couscous, white as her robe, sought to rouse poor Leonard, who pointed to his breast as if to say: "Wound in here—no remedy."

"Of course the closet where Couscous had placed the money was broken open and the bills were stolen. Such a night! The Faubourg Montmailler will long remember it. They aroused the neighbors and searched the garden, where they found foot-prints, which they measured. They searched everywhere. In the meantime Couscous died, and the old mother was beside herself. Catinson, half out of her senses, saw ever that frightful hand, with the four even fingers gliding over the oak shutter, like a spider or a crab.

"As you can imagine, we made every effort to find the dog who had sent that worthy to Louvat (the cemetery at Limoges). Yes, we did all we could, but there was no clew. We had the hand as Catinson had described it to me, but knew of no one possessing such a hand. We questioned all the masons who had worked with Father Couscous, but no suspicion rested upon them; all were worthy people, well-known, with a little fondness for chestnut wine, but not crime. Who, then, was the criminal?"

"One day a butcher-boy from la rue Aigueperse came to tell us that he remembered once having a quarrel with a great fellow who, in drawing his Noutron knife, had displayed a very peculiar hand—with four even fingers. Now the knife with which he had killed Couscous was a Noutron knife, but the butcher could give no further information, and many thought his story a fabrication. And our men still searched, finding nothing, which annoyed me, as I had said to Catinson: 'Tell me, demoiselle, what you will

house a beautiful girl, with black eyes like mulberries, and red lips like strawberries, came toward me, saying: 'Have you any news of the assassin? I am the daughter of Leonard Couscous.'

"That was something worth hearing," she spoke with so much energy and feeling that I felt ashamed of not having put into custody the wretch who had killed her father. Then I tried to excuse myself, saying how meager was our information regarding the assassin, and this and that, but she looked at me so steadily I became embarrassed and said suddenly:

"Well, Miss, I would risk an arm or a limb to catch the rogue for you." "And I spoke the truth; yet it was not perhaps professional duty that made me say it, but those velvety black eyes.

"Only," I said, "we must have a clew." "A clew? And then she shrugged her shoulders. 'Is not the hand one?' 'The hand! What hand?' "Then Catinson Couscous related to me the story of the crime, which I confess chilled me.

"It was one evening in September. Poor, honest Couscous had at his house in Faubourg Montmailler some money which had been entrusted to him by his patron, M. Gabourdy, the contractor; about ten thousand francs, with which he was to settle two bills—one with a plasterer, the other with a lumber merchant. Having upon this particular evening, finished his repast, Father Couscous and his daughter remained downstairs after Mother Couscous had retired, he reading his almanac as he sat near the closet containing the silver and she knitting a wool stocking. It is necessary to explain that there was a garden back of the house, and facing this, a window, the height of a man, the shutters of which were generally closed, but which on this particular evening the worthy man, being a trifle warm, left open. He read there, under the skylight by a small lamp, and Catinson heard him turn over and over the pages of his almanac. She has often told me that she felt, while working mechanically, a little drowsy, by this noise of the paper, so regular, and that, suddenly raising her head from her work to yawn, and see if it was not time to go to sleep, she saw, believing at first that she had dreamed, that she dreamed that she had the nightmare—she saw between the folds of the shutter, passing, moving softly, a hand, a large hand, but with something frightful about it that Catinson remarked at once, the four fingers, almost as large as the thumb, being all of the same size, as though cut by line, yet they were not cut, only terminated in this frightful way; and this hideous hand glided along the shutters, evidently seeking to open the blind noiselessly. Then it remained motionless, as though its owner knew that Catinson had discovered him. For a moment she believed she had not seen aright, that the light of the lamp had dazzled her sight. But when she opened her eyes, very much frightened, there was the moving hand, with its enormous even fingers. Catinson wished to scream, but seemed strangled by that terrible hand. Then she suddenly arose, and, seizing her father by the sleeve, pointed to the hand on the blind. But at the same moment that old Couscous turned, the robber quickly pushed open the blind, and a current of air extinguished the lamp in a cloud of flame and smoke, leaving Catinson and her father in darkness. Couscous, hearing the sound of a heavy body leaping into the room, tried to find a knife with which to defend himself, and more especially the money, but before he could open the cupboard he was seized by the throat, and felt a stroke against his neck, then down near his heart. Catinson screamed, divining all, though seeing nothing, but a heavy blow rendered her powerless. The poor girl was in a faint, she could not say how long, and when she recovered found herself in the lower hall, where Mother Couscous, white as her robe, sought to rouse poor Leonard, who pointed to his breast as if to say: "Wound in here—no remedy."

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give for the man who captures your father's assassin?' "She did not answer, but turned pale while her beautiful black eyes went and promised, but all that did not enable me to find the criminal. Finally Catinson said: 'If you can not find him, I will.' "She had still her grandmother, a true woman, living, who since the assassination had been silent as a stone, yet fierce as a dog ready for attack, and the poor old woman kept repeating: 'Will they not, then, conduct to the Monte-Regret the villain who killed my son?'"

"In the name of the law, I arrest you."

"The villain's only reply was a blow, which would, I believe, have sent me ten feet if I had not had the presence of Catinson to increase my strength. I ridiculed the blow. I held the man; I dragged him; I would not let him go. They would have had to break my wrist in order to make me. And he gave me blows on the head, trying to stun me, or break my skull. Suddenly I attempted to plunge a knife into my neck, in the same way he had struck Father Couscous—a habit of his, I believe. He counted upon killing me; but the collar of my uniform turned aside the blade of the knife—a Noutron knife, with yellow handle. It cut through the collar and gave me only a scratch. Then my hand seized the wrist which held the weapon, which, if it descended a second time, he told me, would do its work. I saw the knife raised like the sword of Damocles, and grasping its handle were those gross even fingers by which Catinson had recognized the assassin of her father. How long it might have lasted—that battle in which my blood flowed, though I had wounded him—I can not say; but I felt that I was losing strength, that I should release the hand which held the knife. Suddenly he uttered a cry, a savage one, like that of an animal being killed. He jumped, but I held him still; then he turned so rapidly that he fell, dragging me after him, he underneath and I above. We fell to the ground. Then something moved him, or, rather, clung to him. It was Mother Couscous, who gnawed and pecked at his limbs to make him release his hold. And we rolled on the ground like worms, but this time it was not for long. Catinson recovered and aided me to regain the armed arm, or, rather, she took the knife away from him while I held the man by the throat with my right hand, and then would have stifled him. Then people came at the noise, and the paymaster, Bugead, arrived with a comrade. They assisted me to bind the criminal, raised him up, put on the handcuffs and led him through the crowd, who, seeing him taken, wished to prevent his escape. That brave crowd who a short time ago were afraid. It was well they came. I could not hold on longer. I was going, going. It was foolish for a gentleman, I faint from loss of blood. But I had the sensation of white arms sustaining me, and, instead of the Noutron blade near my head, I perceived, as in a dream, the large, beautiful eyes of Catinson, who smiled upon me.

"Thus the stroke of a knife was the cause of my good marriage. That my wound healed, I need not tell you, since you see me here; but it healed more rapidly because it was Catinson who cared for it. She became a Sister of Charity, that electric girl, and when I was on my feet, think what she said to me: 'You please me, and I you, and I promise to be a worthy wife.' "Mother Couscous, who sleeps now at Louvat, lived then, the marriage of Catinson being her last joy—poor, good old lady. I am mistaken; her last joy was the sentence passed upon the villain who killed the master mason.

"He was a mixer of plaster, named Massaloux, of Southeraine in La Crouse—so a deputy of La Crouse told us—who, presenting himself to M. Gabourdy for work, had overheard him speak of the money confided to Leonard Couscous by his patron. Then he exclaimed: 'There is a chance,' and he took it alone, with no accomplice; an idler, but energetic. After the murder he reached Paris, then returned to Queret, then to Limoges, the money gone, seeking work. When before the Court d' Assizes, he scarcely defended himself, as though saying: 'You have taken me, so much the worse for me.' They condemned him to death. The famous hand is preserved in alcohol at the Ecole de Medicine.

"It is not for me to boast that the President commended me, but I did not need congratulations. I no longer needed anything. I had Catinson. On my wedding day, however, I received the Brigadier's ornaments, and if you wish to see a happy man look at me.

"Catinson received many offers from the stage. The journals everywhere spoke of her. But she had other duties then. The children to care for, my epaulets to clean, to take care of the house, the chickens, the ducks and the Brigadier. No! No! Catinson is no longer an artist, but if ever a crime were committed, I would depend upon her rather than all the bloodhounds of the police. Catinson has fine eyes, and they never look coldly into those."

The Brigadier let fall a word from his pipe as, beautiful and happy in the setting sun, came Catinson to the window, saying, with a pretty laugh: "Come, Martial, the pudding is out of the oven; call the children."

And Tharand arose, and, making a cornet of his two hands, called: "Oho, there, little ones, come to supper." And as the children ran, inhaling the odor of the soup and the cooked cherries, the Brigadier, taking his eldest and pushing him before the others, took off his kepi, blue, trimmed with white, saluted them gayly, while going to taste at the same time the kiss and soup of Catinson.

At the end of the street a sabbatar was singing an old song and the setting sun cast its last rays upon the flag of the good gendarme.—From the French, in Chicago Journal.

FENCES AND HEDGES.

What the Farmers of the Country Have to Pay for Their Maintenance.

A Washington writer, close to the Agricultural Bureau, thus discourses on the question of fences and hedges. He says that the fence question is one of great importance, as we have in the United States 6,000,000 miles of fences, which have cost nearly \$1,900,000,000, and have to be renewed every fifteen years. It, however, interests most of the farmers, who have the bulk of the labor to perform and expenses to meet and the timber to furnish for their construction. The consumption of the timber for this purpose interests every philanthropist. It is reported that Kentucky requires annually 10,000,000 of trees to keep up her "national fence," the old Virginia rail.

Hedges have been tried for a substitute, but as the farmers of America are all looking for labor-saving methods instead of labor-increasing devices, the hedge is not the coming fence. It will not do so well in America as in England, because our extremes of climate prevent its general use, and no plant has yet been found that is wholly reliable in the wide range of latitude through which the farming of the United States extends. The extremes of heat and cold limit the use of both the osage and buckhorn. Then, too, the trimming of hedges must be done in the season of growth, which is the time the farmer must give all his strength to the tillable crops, the corn, wheat, rye, barley and oats. By the time they are attended to the hedge is rampant, and the labor of trimming has been so increased that it costs more than some other kinds of hedges. Hedges, as a rule, are neglected and become a public nuisance, which costs the farmer more to remove than to build a good board fence. It is clear the hope for saving timber and the money of the Nation, now locked up and decaying in fences, is not in hedges.

The enterprising manufacturers of wire fences have improved the opportunity and proclaimed the barbed wire as the coming fence. Plain wire at one time promised to meet every want of the public. It has been sixty-seven years since the first effort to introduce hand-drawn wire was made. But it was too expensive and uncertain. After wire-making on the new process of machinery made wire cheaper and more abundant, the lovers of light open novelties in fences claimed that the days of wooden fences had ended. But slowly did this new, smooth wire fence take their place. The pigs smiled at them, and the sheep treated them as rubbers set up for scratching their backs, and the cattle and colts paid little attention to them. Occasionally a colt got an eye knocked out with the end of a broken wire, or a leg damaged by tangling up in the loose strands. Build them as farmers might, the extremes of heat and cold either broke the strands or loosened them, so the stock found little trouble in passing through.

Various were the devices for adjusting the tension, but like the trimming and caring for hedges, it had to be done often and regularly in order to be efficient. So smooth wires, after a trial of years, fell into disuse where introduced. Its loose, forlorn look did not recommend it, and the broken wires became an imperishable nuisance in the fence rows and fields and along roadsides. Its cattle and colts were few and full of trouble. Even the old muley cows had no fear of it, but slipped through unharmed. Nevertheless, the New England manufacturers claimed that in twenty years 350,000 miles of this kind of fence were made.

Then came the barbed-wire fence, a Yankee invention, which has come into general use. Its value is in the sharp barb, which commands the attention and respect of every animal that touches it. Smooth bars are more dangerous, as the animals do not fear them and use them for scratching, and thus get tangled in them or push through. A sharp barb gives value to the wire fence as the sharp thorns give efficiency to the hedge plant.

Until something cheaper and more efficient than barbed wire is found it will be more largely used than anything else. It is more durable than plain, untwisted strands, stands the strain of expansion and contraction better than single strands and can be put up more rapidly and at less cost than board fence and with far less labor than hedge fence. Until our farmers learn to farm without fences we shall be compelled to use barbed wire, with all its objectionable features.—Chicago Herald.

—Most people have heard a great deal about marriage customs in France, but not many foreigners are probably aware that a French officer is not allowed to marry unless the lady of his choice possesses sufficient capital to guarantee an annual income of twelve hundred francs (two hundred and forty dollars) a year. This is the minimum value that the Ministry of War sets upon an officer in the matrimonial market. Another condition is that the lady shall be of unblemished character. There is a proposition under consideration to increase the minimum income on which an officer is allowed to marry.

—Clerk (to Mr. Isaacstein in the back room)—The gentlemen's vat was looking at dot seventeen-tollor coat says he was a striker met Third avenue. Mr. Isaacstein—I sympathize with dot strike. Errow him in a pair of suspender. Clerk—He says he will gif five tollor for dot coat. Mr. Isaacstein—Vell, let him hat de coat; but don't trow in dot suspender.—N. Y. Times.

—There are buried in Trinity churchyard at the head of Wall street America's two greatest financiers and one of her most famous naval heroes—Alexander Hamilton, Albert Gallatin and "Don't-Give-up-the-Ship" Lawrence.—N. Y. Graphic.