

THE OLD HOME.

Barletta's Visit to the Town of His Birth After Thirty-six Years Absence.

HIS TOUCHING TRIBUTE TO HIS MOTHER'S MEMORY.

Robert J. Barletta, the Burlington Hawkeye humorist, is now on a lecture tour through the East. He recently visited the town of his birth and delivered a lecture there, and the following is a letter to the Hawkeye, full of brilliant thoughts, choice humor and sentiment, as he speaks of the place of his birth, and pays a tender tribute to the memory of his mother:

"I fail to recognize many of the old landmarks in Greene county. Perhaps the fact that I was only about two years old when I followed the star of empire as far as Cincinnati, may have something to do with it. But before I had talked to my Waynesburg audience ten minutes, I recognized some of my countrymen from Greensboro by their unmistakable family features. And there was nothing else familiar, the names of the good people I met, certainly were, for they were names as familiar as my own. And it was indeed a pleasure to talk half the night to my old neighbors who knew me thirty-six years ago, when I couldn't talk a bit, and now met me once more when I can't do anything else.

Storied times in Green county. The next day I drove down with cousin Dave and his wife to Greensboro. Rain? It poured down every furlong of the twenty-one miles. There is only one railroad and 2000 democratic majority in Greene county, and people travel over my native heath just as they traveled when I left them. And how the waters did just wander over the land as we drove down to my birth place! Every run was a torrent; every creek was a river, and old Ten Mile was as broad as the Monongahela and twice as thick.

"A man does love to go back and view the scenes among which he made his start, even though he may not remember much about them. There, see there? That is the house your great-grandfather built." It was a swell house in those days indeed. Two stories; square hewed logs, a porch all along the front. And the hands that built it, the merry feet that danced on its oaken floors! Down through the broken roof and in the chinks of the tottering walls the sun shines to-day in great bars of gold, just for an instant, and then the clouds shut out the sunlight and the pitiless rain beats down upon the old log house. The skies are gray, the trees are leafless, the hills are bare, and the rising wind moans and sighs. Drip, drip, drip the water falls from the broken eaves, like the monotonous tick of a clock that tells the lives of four generations. But for the moaning wind and the weeping water, how still, how quiet it all is. "My great-grandfather built it then?" I wonder if I waited here until the day is gone and the evening is gray and full of shadows, if he will come to the dismantled old door and with ghostly silence and old-time courtesy, bid his great grandson welcome to the acres and the manor of his ancestors.

"And that orchard on the hill. Robert, your grandfather planted. And he built the brick house on the other side of the road." There is the orchard still. Year after year the fragrant blooms and the robins come together, but the boy who planted the trees? The orchard bloom and the withered leaf of November are alike to him, and the song of the robin does not reach my ear. "Your mother was born in that house." "Ah, my mother? She was a little girl here, then. All these hills are sacred with the touch of her pattering feet; down this winding glen she has plucked the wood violets and anemones; and the birds in the swaying branches above her head have sung in wild joyousness to hear her laugh. She was a school girl here; my mother. And how pretty she was then, with the tender curve of her lips and the full orb eyes of brown, soft and deep as the shadows of these hills; ah, she was beautiful when she was a school girl!

"And that night, I stand in my native village, and I look at the stars that come out in the blue sky, and listen to the low voiced Monongahela singing at my feet and in the stars I see the soft light of my mother's eyes, and listening to the song of the river, I know where her dear voice caught the low, mellow music that in the long ago lulled with the old-time cradle songs, her little ones to sleep."

A HOPELESS CASE.—A diner-out, who has had more than his share of the wine, is carefully feeling his way home at night, when he unfortunately stumbles against the circular railing which surrounds a statue. After having gone round it about seven times the hopelessness of his situation flashes upon him with vividness, and he sinks down upon the pavement outside with a despairing shriek: "The scoundrels! They've shut me in here!" It is stated that 2252 women are engaged in farming in the State of Indiana. It has not been reported how successful they are, but it is hardly to be expected that if the first 1000 had failed, that the second 1000 would have gone into the business.

HOW SHE WON HIM.

"Woman at best a contradiction still," wrote Alexander Pope, and he had scores of intimate friends among the ladies. A woman has been known to whip a bear and then faint; to rescue her child from a burning house and then cry as if it was still in the flames. In the days when the late Senator Douglass had Presidential aspirations, his wife lunched an influential but rough constituent, whose fingers were all thumbs. He broke a costly china plate. "They are so fragile," said the lady with a smile, "that I frequently break a piece." See! she continued, cracking a saucer with her fair hands, "how easily it breaks." The Senator had one warm supporter in that man, but we doubt if Mrs. Douglass ever again invited him to lunch. A writer in the Philadelphia Quiz tells a story—it may be true and may not—which humorously illustrates the fact to which Mr. Pope alludes. He says: "I have just heard the most remarkable story of the evenness of the female temper. It is a beautiful little fairy story and may appropriately be called 'How She Won Him.' It happened here in Philadelphia and is in this wise:

There was a beautiful dinner given "many years ago," and she sat opposite him and looked ever so charming in a wine-colored silk with a square neck, and otherwise arrayed as never were the ladies in any valley of this poor earth. "Well, the waiter in handing the soup upset the entire contents of a plate in her lap. Just think of it, girls! The whole front breadth utterly ruined, and it could not be mended.

Well, what did she do? Did she faint? Did she say, "You horrid man! Did she scream? Not at all; she passed the thing off in some witty remark about fiery baptism and calmly resumed her dinner. He, of course, was delighted, thought her a most remarkable woman, and indeed she was; became attentive to her and finally married her. One evening, long after the event, they were sitting before the fire, the children having gone to bed, and were talking about old times, when he said:

"My dear, I never told you, I think, how I first thought I would like to marry you, did I?"

"Why, gracious goodness! no, never!"

"Well," he said, "do you remember that dinner at Mrs. Simpkins', where your dress was spoiled by the soup?"

"Indeed I do," she replied. "I shall never forget it as long as I live."

"Well," he continued, "you behaved so well about it that I thought you a perfect jewel!"

"Yes," she answered, "I remember behaving very well about it at the time; but, good land, you should have seen the marks of my teeth on the bed-post that night!"

BUILDING ANOTHER ARK.

Lately Robert S. Gardner, a special agent of the interior department, has been inspecting and investigating the tribes of "noble red men" who cumber the earth in various parts of Washington Territory. In an interview Mr. Gardner made some interesting statements about two tribes in eastern Washington. We extract what follows: "The Sannopel tribe numbers about 400 Indians and they all belong to a set known as the dreamers. They are looking for another flood, which they expect soon to come upon the earth. In order to be prepared they have secured all the necessary material for the building of an ark, in which to sail off, as Noah did, when the flood comes. Among the material is 50,000 feet of lumber. The ark is to be fifty feet long and about fifty or sixty feet wide. The dreamers have a small following among the Indians of the Palouse, Snake River, Warm Spring, Umatilla and other tribes. They believe that the whites will all be drowned when the flood comes, and that they only will be saved, and will be able to live off the fat of the land without having to work at all. The direct followers of Chief Moses do not number over 144, although he has a small following among Indians of other tribes. He has never occupied the large reservation set aside for him and his people, but lives in the Inespellim valley, where he has resided for years."

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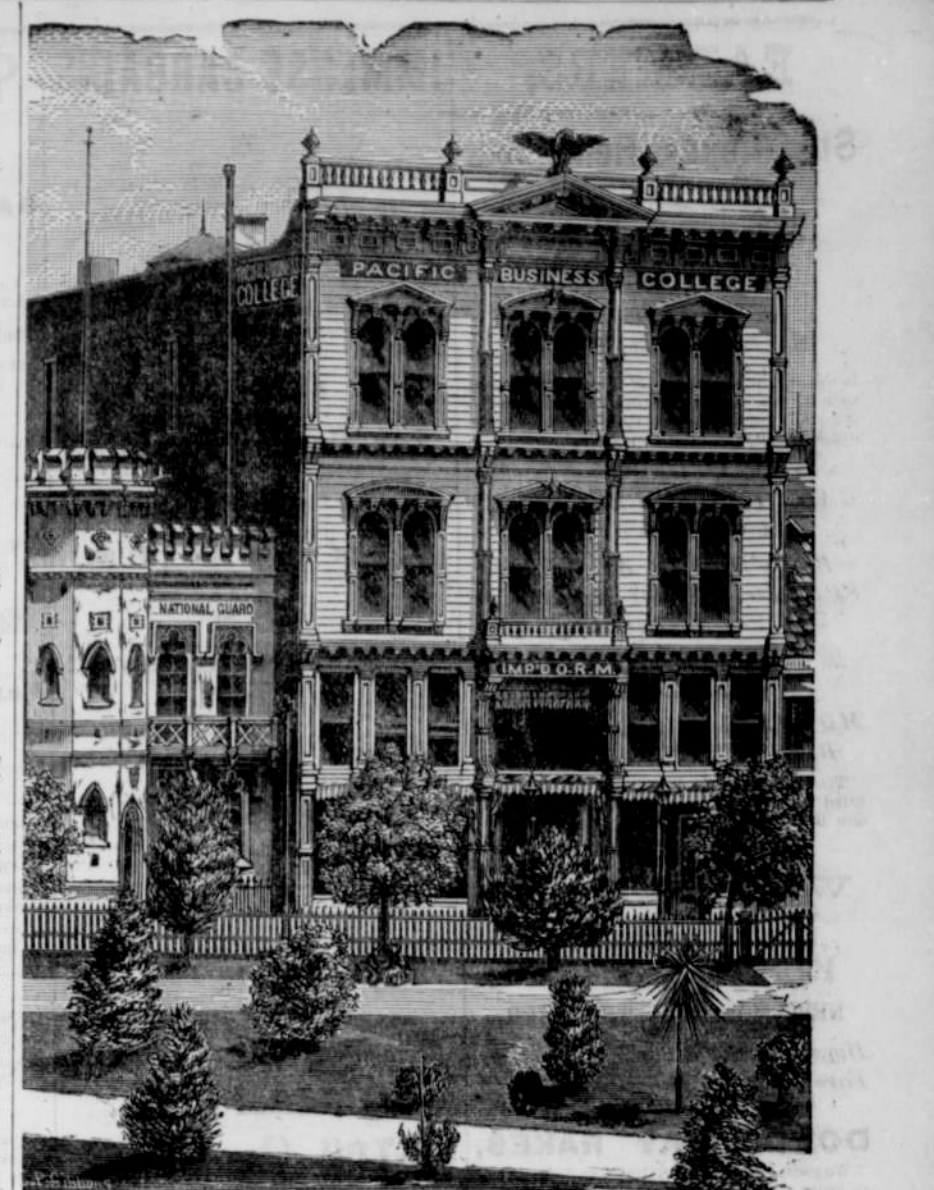
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