

KIEF AND KAUF.

A Story of Two Friendly Telegraph Operators

By TOM CARLTON.

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Kiefer of telegraph station 12, Butler's survey, was bored. His station was not a busy one, and he longed for some one to talk to. He called up Kaufman of a neighboring station, whose acquaintance he had made over the wire some time before.

"Kauf, are you busy?" "No, are you?" "Yes, I'm busy holding my chair down."

"I'm reading a novel." "What's it by?" "Maria Edgeworth."

"Good gracious! You don't read such stuff as that, do you? I thought Maria Edgeworth wrote for women and children."

"After a few moments this came: 'I don't read much fiction. When I do I usually read Hardy, Hail, Caine and such authors.'"

"What's your favorite athletic game?" "Basketball."

"Don't you go in for football?" "I never learned the game."

"When we meet some autumn I'll tell you something about it. Nothing pleases me so much as a fine punt. I think you'll like it too."

"No, I don't think so. I'm not much on athletics anyway. Pictures and music suit me better."

"I'm with you there. I'm fond of both. I play the violin. Do you play any instrument?"

"The harp."

"I love the harp. But with the exception of street musicians I've generally found the girls take to the harp rather than men. I've always fancied that the girl I should tie up to would play the harp."

"That so? I should like my partner to play the violin."

"There was a slight pause, after which Kiefer asked, 'Aren't you coming up this way soon?'"

"Don't think I'll ever get off. If I do I'll be in the fall so that you can show me how to kick football. You seem to be so bent on doing so."

"And you can instill into me a taste for Maria Edgeworth and that sort of thing."

"Well?" inquired the girl at last. "I'm reading."

"Is it Kauf in? How's Kauf? Well? Tell Kauf I'm out here to see him," answered Kiefer dazedly.

"I'm Kauf—Adalia Kaufman," said the girl. Then the utter blankness in the face before her seemed to restore the girl's equanimity, for she smiled.

"You're Kiefer, I suppose—er—Mr. Kiefer, I mean," she said. "Didn't I write you?"

"I wouldn't take it," miserably. "I thought it was some foolish ex-cursing of a man who wasn't used to visitors. I heard the instrument calling and recognized your touch, but I wouldn't listen. After that first time I kept my back turned and dodged out soon as the train came in sight. He looked toward the track as though to see if the train were still waiting for him, but all that was visible of it was a dark line trailing into the white horizon."

"Train's gone," he said tentatively, "and it's fifty miles to the nearest house, and there aren't any more trains either way until tomorrow. Now, if I'd brought some food I might walk the fifty miles or start off one way or the other to meet a train, but it's been eight hours since I had breakfast, and fifty miles—You see," deprecatingly.

"I felt so sure that Kauf—I beg your pardon, Miss Kauf—Kaufman, I mean—I—I—it doesn't seem possible there isn't any real Kauf after all the talking—writing—we've done."

"You've dined outdoors a good many times, I suppose, Mr. Kiefer. All western men have."

"Of course," inquiringly. Then, with an odd note of eagerness coming into his voice, "you mean I can camp right here by the track until a train comes? It won't be presumptuous after—after my density?"

"I control only the station, Mr. Kiefer, and you have a right to camp anywhere you please out of doors. But what I wish to say is that I'll be glad to have you take supper with me and all your meals until the train comes. At home I was considered a very fair cook. We can talk about books and such things."

"The next day the down freight was four hours late, and when it began to slacken speed in answer to his signal Kiefer released a hand which he had caught suddenly on the first appearance of the train into the sand's level horizon."

"I'll go and fix up my station some," he said, his voice tremulous with the awe and wonder in it, "and maybe have another room put on. The company will stand that much, I think. Then I'll run back and transplant the flowers and take over your things, and—"

"and the day before my vacation expires I'll wire for a person to meet us here. You'd better send in your resignation at once, Kauf."

"And announce my promotion, Kiefer," she finished softly.

"Hello, Kaufman!" he called. "Are you in for a vacation too?"

"A week," came back the prompt answer, "commencing on the 23d."

"The 23d? Why, mine ends on that day, and it's two weeks. But I understand. I've been here three years and only three months, and now it's full time they're going to let you control the section while I'm away and

then I'm to do the same for you. Too bad, though, for I'd thought we might go off together. Odd, isn't it? I feel you're the best friend I've got in the world—about the only one, for that matter—for we've wired no end of personal gossip and ambition, and our tastes run about the same way, and yet I've never seen you and don't know whether you're short or tall, lean or fat, beathen or a Y. M. C. A., or whether your mustache is still to sprout or your white hair is dropping out from old age. Queer world, isn't it, Kauf? But say, I believe I'll run down and spend my vacation with you. There's no other place I can think of, and we can see how each other looks and talk and smoke and—"

"There was a quick, protesting click. 'Don't you do it, Kiefer. What is your name anyway—the whole of it? Kiefer is so—so unpronounceable and blunt. But about the vacation. You mustn't visit me now—mustn't. Why, it's impossible! I—I haven't the accommodations, and—and I'm so busy, and—"

"There was a call from the home office, and with a hurried explanation to Kaufman he flashed in an acceptance of the proffered leave of absence, took and answered the call, made a few final arrangements, then bent over to continue the conversation, hesitated and swung back from the instrument."

"I won't do it," he chuckled. "Kauf's likely ashamed of his looks, baldheaded or fat or one-eyed or something and don't want me to know. I'm going to visit him on the next train, and I'm not going to give him a chance for any more excuses. Ashamed! Great Scott! Don't we like the same books and music and everything else? What do I care how the old chap looks? He ought to know my regard rises above such petty considerations. And I believe he thinks just as much of me. His personal confidences prove it. I'll just drop in on him so suddenly and affectionately that he can't help taking me in his arms."

So when the through freight slowed at the water tank Kiefer swung himself into the caboose with a generous outfit of tobacco and books and a brand new pack of cards ordered up by the freight conductor. And this same friendly conductor when they reached telegraph station 13 obligingly slowed the train so Kiefer could drop into the white, yielding sand, the familiar, unvarying landscape of his own station.

"Accommodations," he chuckled as he strode eagerly toward the open doorway of the little building. "It's got two rooms like my own, and that's plenty of accommodations for any reasonable man. But perhaps Kauf was used to a big house at home. He! Window curtains and flowers at the end of the house, and—Lord!"

For a young woman, pretty and neatly dressed and with lips and eyes that were meant for smiling, but that just now were sober with inquiry and consternation, had suddenly appeared in the doorway. Kiefer had not seen a girl in over three years, and such a girl as this one appeared to him never. His mouth opened and shut without sound.

"Well?" the girl inquired at last. "Is—Is Kauf in? How's Kauf? Well? Tell Kauf I'm out here to see him," answered Kiefer dazedly.

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WASHINGTON LETTER

By CARL SCHOFIELD, Special Correspondent.

It is too early yet to form any idea as to how far a certain element among former Union soldiers will go in their opposition to the reception on the part of congress of the statue of General Robert E. Lee, which already has its place in statutory hall. There is not likely to be any organized movement among the Union veterans. Only here and there do the more fiery ones let it be known that they do not relish such a statue being in the collection.

Objections to Confederate Uniform. Lately complaint has been made of the fact that the Confederate uniform is shown in the figure, and those who do not like this say they could probably overcome their objections if this feature had been omitted by the sculptor and those who accepted the design. They forget entirely that General Lee's fame was won as a commander of the Confederate forces. However, there are not many of these complaining ex-soldiers of the Union, and pretty much everybody has settled down to the belief that the statue which Virginia has proffered to the nation will in due time be accepted by congress when the formal ceremony is arranged.

Rumpus About Over. The rumpus that is being raised is expected to blow over, just as it did when a lot of anti-Catholic politicians endeavored to work up a religious sentiment that they hoped might make congress refuse to place in the hall the statue of Father Marquette. That movement was led by certain congressmen up in the northwest, who imagined that they would win favor with the Protestants out in the rural districts if they tried to rule out this statue of the great pioneer priest, but the Protestants did not appear to think the proposition was what the politicians tried to make it, and hence the matter was dropped.

Congress invited each state to send two statues of favorite sons, and when the legislatures make the selection that ends it.

Calhoun Statue in Place. As is well known, the last statue to reach the hall was that of John C. Calhoun of South Carolina. It was given its place at the opening of the present session of congress, and visitors to the capitol take keen interest in gazing upon the marble figure that perpetuates the fame of that renowned statesman of antebellum days.

Compared with others among the older states, the south has fewer statues in the hall, but within the next year quite a number will be contributed. One of the earliest expected to be put in is that of the late Senator Zeb Vance of North Carolina.

First Governor of Idaho. Of the newer states, Idaho is the only one that has presented a statue of one of her distinguished citizens, that of the late United States Senator George L. Shoup. He was the first governor of Idaho after the state was admitted and was one of the first senators elected. He was one of the pioneers out in the far west and was a noted Indian fighter when the red men used to give trouble to the white settlers. Senator Shoup was a native of Pennsylvania and is remembered here as one of the most liberal hearted men who have served in congress during the past quarter of a century.

Delving Into History. Several employees of the senate have had a task cut out for them which will in all probability keep them at work for several months. Senator Lodge is responsible for their labors, and he is responsible because of his unquenchable thirst for a knowledge of history. The senator is something of a historian himself. The list of books he has written on historical subjects takes up quite a bit of space in "Who's Who."

Documents From Fillmore's Time. Mr. Lodge discovered during the hours when he was un molested by politicians that he desired greater knowledge of the manner in which the United States became interested in the Austria-Hungary revolution. One of the first things he did upon returning to Washington was to introduce a resolution asking the president to send to the senate a report on the subject which had been made to the state department many years ago by a special investigator of that department. The following reply was received from President Taft:

"Referring to senate resolution No. 48, I beg leave to say that the papers asked for were forwarded to the senate by President Fillmore."

Members of the senate proceeded to have some fun with the Bay State historian, but the latter was more determined than ever to find the papers, and the secretary of the senate was ordered to institute search for them. Inasmuch as there are hundreds of boxes filled with papers, said boxes having no marks of identification and being stored away in a hundred corners of the capitol, Senator Lodge undoubtedly will be back at his home in Nahant enjoying the summer breezes before he gets the information he is looking for.

Pension Office Needs Room. What to do with the congressional rag bag is puzzling the brains of statesmen, and the prospects are that tons and tons of once priceless papers will be destroyed for the sake of room space. In the pension building are some 2,500,000 admitted or allowed claims, occupying some twenty-seven rooms and weighing more than 2,000,000 pounds. Secretary Ballinger has asked congress for permission to destroy some 130 tons of this matter, and when it is cleared out four more rooms will be available.

HUMOR OF THE HOUR

Isn't It Funny—

How a woman will put in an hour and twenty minutes putting on her hat to go to the theater only to take it off again the minute she gets there?

How the longest way around is always the shortest distance between two points in the estimation of the average taxicab driver?

How cheery and proud a father feels after he has educated his son at an expense of \$30,000 to find the lad holding down a job at \$6 a week?

How long it takes the average after dinner speaker to say nothing to a gathering of 200 diners talking simultaneously to one another?

How many people there are who regard statesmen of the verbose type as godsends instead of merely windfalls?

How often we pray that our children may make a noise in the world and then spank them because they do?

How few cooks there are in the world, considering how many there are in the active practice of their profession?

How much laughter the man who wears a chimney pot hat gets out of the absurdity of his wife's bonnets?—Harper's Weekly.

Jack and the Beanstalk.

The beautiful princess was in a sad predicament. "I have a hat, to be sure, but how shall I ever get it trimmed in time for the party tomorrow?" she moaned.

That night Jack planted his magic bean at one corner of the hat, and by morning, such was the growth of the vegetable, the confection was trimmed in the lat-it style.

"Oh, oh!" cried the princess in ecstasy. "As for the wicked giant who had been paying her attentions, he was practically bowled over."

"Wouldn't that kill you?" he exclaimed. And from that day forth Jack was known as the giant killer.—Puck.

An Amended Figure of Speech. "Think of the history that has been made by our great city," said the Philadelphia man. "After all, our city is in a sense the cradle of the American nation."

"No," answered the New York man, "not the cradle, the dormitory."—Washington Star.

Vanity.

"Stuck on himself, ain't he?" "Is he? Say, do you know why he gave up the idea of becoming a physician?"

"Why?" "He was afraid he couldn't feel a lady's pulse without giving her heart trouble!"—Cleveland Leader.

In Ye Olden Time.

The Burgomaster (as befuddled individual rolls by)—He told his wife that he must go downtown this evening in order to catch the post.

The Beadle—in sooth, he hath already caught on every post between your tavern and here!—Detroit Free Press.

Frigid Music.

A clergyman with a little time on the side has set the north pole controversy to music.

It will be interesting to note just how he treats a blubber motif with a pemican obligato and an igloo tonal effect.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

As the Debate Became Personal. Mr. Yipsley (at the top of his voice)—Madam, may I be permitted to say a few words parenthetically?

Mrs. Yipsley (in a shrill falsetto)—A man as knowledgeable as you are couldn't talk in any other way than parenthetically!—Chicago Tribune.

How Do Women Folks Like Her? Lawson—Are the rest of the family pleased with that young woman that Bobby is to marry?

Dawson—Well, Bobby's father is. He says that if he were young enough he would marry her himself.—Sumnerville Journal.

That Subway Air.

Church—Are they doing anything to get that awful smell out of the subway in New York?

Gotham—Well, the passengers take a lot of it with them every day.—Yonkers Statesman.

What Became of Him.

"What became of that manager who started out a few years ago to elevate the drama?"

"He's running an old fashioned leg show and paying up his debts."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Exceeding Rapid.

"Were the colors fast on the new goods you bought?"

"Fast? My dear, they fairly ran into one another they were that fast."—New York Journal.

Short on Imagination.

"Do you like poetry?" "Now! Poets say, 'The bird is on the wing,' while good sense tells us that the wing is on the bird."—Kansas City Times.

At the Zoo.

Mr. Mellow (confidentially to attendant)—Old man, where they keep the jaguar? Lead me to the jag—silk—war. Got speshal intere in jaguar.—Puck.

Real Rude.

Amateur Warbler—Yes, I wrote this song and can sing it all by myself. Miss Tabasco—Er—please sing it all to yourself.—Chicago News.

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