

MISCELLANEOUS

THE ASTROLOGER'S DUPE.

A little old woman, gray-haired and trembling, sat a little while ago in the back office of a Wall-street broker. Her gaze was fixed on a wide blackboard, where chalk figures showed there drift of stock market quotations; there was no lustre in the eye; her whole aspect was that of one dumbfounded, brokenhearted. She had a sad story to tell were there only spirit enough left to her for a recital. A year ago she came to this same brokerage office. Her purse was fat with bank bills and she gave an order for the purchase of 500 shares of a stock which had been active a long-time. The broker advised her against the purchase, and told her plainly that he had what he believed excellent reasons for expecting a heavy decline in the particular stock she had selected to buy. But she persisted in her determination, declaring that she had information which could not be wrong that the stock was bound to go up a good deal very soon. She had her way, despite the counsels that plainly predicted the loss of her money. She left \$5,000 in cash as a 10 per cent. margin to protect her interest and went her way with a calm confidence shown on her countenance. 'I shall make a good deal of money,' she said as she left, 'for the information I have come from the very best authority.' The stock perversely declined forthwith, and each day saw some fraction clipped off of the preceding day's quotation. Within a month the original \$5,000 margin had dwindled down to \$1,000, and the broker was obliged to call for another deposit from his customer to protect her interest, she came down town with the same self-satisfied smile, and with the same expressions of confidence produced her rounded purse again. Four thousand dollars she left in the broker's hands this time. 'The advance, I am told, has been unavoidably delayed a little while,' she said, with a tone full of assurance and faith, 'but it is bound to come soon now, and I feel as sure that my money is safe as if I had it all in bank awaiting my orders.' This was in response to further grave predictions from the broker, who, by much argument tried to convince her that she was being misled. Another short period elapsed; and another enforced call was made upon the sunny faced old lady. Just a bare suspicion of disquiet was beginning to show itself, but there was no backdown in her action. Out came more money. And so a little later did more still follow. Then not long ago she came yet again; now she brought her bank book. She showed the broker that a year ago it credited her with deposits of \$18,000, of which but \$2,500 remained; and that \$2,500—every penny of it every penny she possessed in the world,—she handed over. She was not yet utterly downcast. 'But yesterday,' she averred, 'I had my information repeated again and the rise which I've waited for so long is to come now right away.' Down went the market, lower and lower dropped the price of the expectant woman's 500 shares of stock, till that day a little while ago when for the last time she came into Wall-street again, propped into an armchair before the quotation board and gazed long and listlessly, as one in a deep dream, confronting the white figures that glared out at her there like the eyes of so many demons. All of her \$18,000 was gone; she had only poverty left. But she was brave still, and when her broker approached her she rose with the grace of a woman young and queenly and thanked him for all his courtesies and the good advice he had wasted on her. 'Now, Madam, will you do me the great favor of telling me from what source you received the false information on which you relied so implicitly and risked so much money?' This was the broker's question. 'Upon an astrologer. This was her amazing answer, and she named a man whose 'card' is flaunted publicly in the metropolis. There was a stupefied broker, a broker who got mad. He didn't say 'Fool!' but he looked it. The old lady talked then freely. It was no new thing, she said, for her to seek the advice of this 'astrologer,' her husband had done the same before her and a score of friends, she said, had implicit confidence in the revelations of the seer. 'I'll give you \$1,000,' said the broker hotly, 'if you'll promise me one thing.' The old lady's lightning countenance showed that he need have no doubt of the promise. 'Never come into Wall-street again and have no more to do with this blanketed scoundrel whose lies have cost you so dearly.'

The promise was gladly exchanged for the money, and the old lady went her way. But this was not the only sequel to this speculation. Three or four days ago a dapper little fellow with a face weathered around a pair of twinkling adder eyes thrust himself into this same brokerage office. He sought the manager and said he wanted to buy some stock on a margin. He had brought a one-thousand-dollar note along to put up as the necessary deposit. He was just ready to hand over his money when of a sudden he looked into the broker's face

and ejaculated, 'You've got a bright eye may I draw this bank note across them just for a second?' The broker was astonished, but to humor a customer, whom he supposed to be only in a jovial mood, he consented, and the bill bliffling him momentarily. The customer closed his own eyes, withdrew the bill, and ejaculated as if to himself alone, 'Correct; perfectly correct!' He deposited his money, and was about to leave when suddenly the broker, urged by a strange suspicion, called him and said: 'Will you tell me why you went through that performance of putting that bill over my eyes? 'Certainly, certainly!' ejaculated the fallow fellow. 'Certainly; I was testing the information I had. I am an astrologer, and—'

'Are you the man that sent Mrs X here to buy stock?'

'Yes, oh yes!' and the adder-eyed customer rubbed his hands ecstatically, 'Yes, oh yes! I told her to come here.

'You swindled her, you scoundrel.'

'The broker's voice wasn't sweet to listen to, and the astrologer looked more than a little scared.

'Why, I believe in the powers myself,' he whined, 'or, of course, I wouldn't be putting up my own money.' It was only because there is a Police Court in this town that the fellow was not summarily kicked into the street. As it was the broker contented himself with saying: 'Your account will be closed in this office to-night. If there is anything due you you can have it at 3 o'clock. Get out of here now, quick.' At 3 o'clock when the gentleman called he found that something had run amok of the market during the day and his 200 shares of stock had fallen enough in a couple of hours to wipe out every cent of his \$1,000 margin. And I betray only a little bit of confidence in saying that the fellow wouldn't have been far wrong if he had suspected that his own broker was responsible himself for the sudden decline, having hammered the market and pacified his conscience somewhat in remembrance of the duped old lady whose fortune had gone at the idle dictation of the arrant humbug who now to some extent was doing penance for her sorrow.—*New York Times.*

GEN. JACKSON AND THE MINISTER.

Gen. Jackson understood no language but English, and he was often in a dilemma from being unable to converse with foreign ambassadors in Washington. The following comical story is told in a recent book, 'Court Circles of the Republic,' and is said to be true:

When Mr McLane was Secretary of State, a new minister arrived from Lisbon, and a day was appointed for him to be presented to the President. The hour was set, and Mr. McLane expected the minister to call at the State Department; but the Portuguese had misunderstood Mr. McLane's French, and he proceeded alone to the White House. He rang the bell, and the door was opened by the Irish porter, Jimmy O'Neil. 'Je suis venu voir Monsieur le President,' said the minister.

'What does he mean?' muttered Jimmy. 'He says President though, and I suppose he wants to see the General.'

'Oui, Oui,' said the Portuguese bowing.

Jimmy ushered him into the green-room, where the general was smoking his cornocob pipe with great composure.

The minister made his bow to the President, and addressed him in French of which the general did not understand a word.

'What does the fellow say, Jimmy?' said he.

'Don't know, sir; I reckon he's a furriner.'

'Try him with Irish, Jimmy,' said Old Hickory.

Jimmy gave him a touch of the genuine Milesian, but the minister only shrugged his shoulders with the usual 'Plait-ie?'

'Och!' exclaimed Jimmy, 'he can't go the Irish, sir. He's French to be sure!'

'Send for the French cook, and let him try if he can find out what the gentleman wants.'

The cook was hurried from the kitchen, sleeves rolled up, apron on, and the carving-knife in his hand.

The minister, seeing this formidable apparition, and doubting he was in the presence of the Head of the Nation, feared some treachery and made for the door, before which Jimmy planted himself to keep him in.

When the cook, by the General's order, asked who he was and what he wanted, and he gave the subdued answer, the President discovered his character. At this juncture McLane came in, and the minister was presented in due form. It is said Gen. Jackson always resented allusions to this incident.

No matter how warm you may be in the city on a summer's day, if you breathe freely the weather will continue clear; if you feel as if you needed air or, as if choking, you can be sure of rain in a short time.

DYNAMITE STATISTICS.

Dynamite is more and more in use—for lawful purposes, happily, even more than in furtherance of the objects of Fenians or Anarchists. If we include in it cognate explosive substances it has become a very great fact. Three Government inspectors watch it. A large number of manufactures make it. Its behavior is the subject of more than one act of Parliament, and the accidents by reason of it are detailed in a blue book just issued, containing the annual report of Col. Majendie and his assistant inspectors on explosives, which is well calculated to make one feel that the use of such powerful agencies has sensibly increased the perils of life. Twenty years ago all such substances were of little account. Expecting gunpowder they were curiosities, scarcely known outside of the laboratory. But of late the trade in explosives has wonderfully expanded. The factories for the manufacture have doubled in 10 years; the magazines for the storage are 75 per cent. more than they were in 1875, and the retail premises exceed by 9,000 what they were in that year. We made more and we import more of such substances, and there is every sign that the trade is only in its infancy. Every year, too, additions are being made to the recognized explosives. Within the last year several have been added to the authorized list, one being electric detonator fuses, consisting of electric fuses with platinum wire imbedded in a charge of a priming composition made of carefully purified gun cotton, such as tonite and potentite find favor. Compressed gunpowder cartridges are superseding in mining loose gunpowder, and, being safe to handle, they hold their own against the nitro compounds. The brown gunpowder called 'cocoa' powder is, as every one knows, much used here, as well as in Germany. But the tendency is to develop the nitro-glycerine group of explosives. For sporting purposes, schultze powder a nitro compound, consisting of nitro-glycerin carefully purified and mixed with a nitrate, is employed. For some time back the use of nitro-glycerine as a medicine in case of angina pectoris and similar diseases has been recognized by the British Pharmacopœia.

**A WIFE'S PRAYER.**—A man who has the prayers of a pious wife, and knows he has them—upheld by Heaven, or by a refined sense of obligation and gratitude—can rarely become a very bad man. A daily prayer from the heart of a pure and pious wife, for a husband engrossed in the pursuits of wealth or fame, is a chain of golden words that links his name every day with the name of his Creator. He may snap the chain three hundred and sixty-five times in a year, for many years, but the chances are that there will come a day when he will gather the sundered filaments and seek to reunite them in an everlasting bond.

The tramp who is so weak that he can't saw wood always develops strength enough to get out of the way of the dog.

—= MARCH =—

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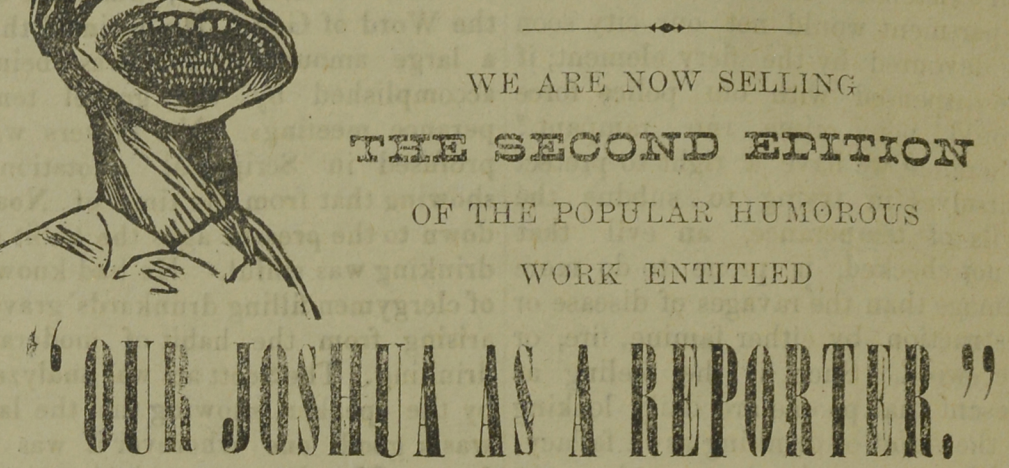
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'Our Joshua as a Reporter.' This is the title of a neatly-printed book of some 150 pages, from the facile pen of Herman H. Pitts, of the *Fredericton Reporter*. The story, which savors of the Bad Boy style of fiction, treats of the adventures of Joshua Bangs, from his entry into the office of the *Swampton Era* up the inky ladder of journalistic success till he revels in wealth and domestic felicity, the editor of a thrifty village daily. Mixed up with Joshua, from start to finish, is one Spuds, a practical printer, who divides the honors with him. Mr. Pitts boldly lifts the veil that hides from vulgar gaze the mysterious interior of the sanctum and discloses the manner in which the crank of an opinion mill is turned. Only early familiarity with the secrets of a printing office could have enabled the writer to dress up his characters as naturally as he does; indeed one is almost forced at times to believe that Mr. Pitts, in the earlier chapters, has simply torn a few pages from his own autobiography. If for Bangs we substitute the name Pitts, and transform Swampton into Fredericton, the interest in the tale is heightened and its true inwardness made more plain.—*St. John Daily Sun.*

'Our Joshua as a Reporter,' is one of the funny books of the season, and having been written by a New Brunswick and dealing with the amusing incidents of provincial life is calculated to amuse if not to instruct Canadians. This mythical reporter's extraordinary adventures form a story far better worth the twenty-five cents charged for it than many more pretentious publications. It may be purchased at the book stores or ordered from H. H. Pitts, Fredericton, N. B.—*Yarmouth Herald, Nova Scotia.*

'Our Joshua' is the title of a book lately published by the author of 'Brother Jonathan Sketches.' Brimful of anecdotes and sketches of newspaper life, it describes the experience of a Reporter, whose numerous escapes, love affairs, etc., make up an amusing story. Published in pamphlet form, price 25 cents. For sale by all booksellers, or forwarded by mail to any address for that sum in postage stamps. Address Herman H. Pitts, Fredericton, N. B.—*St. John Daily Telegraph.*

'Our Joshua as a Reporter,' has just reached us. It is from the pen of the author of 'Bro. Jonathan Sketches.'

This little manual is replete with graphic descriptions of 'Joshua' as a Reporter. We may return to it again.—*Victoria Star, Grand Falls.*

'Our Joshua' is the title of a book lately published by the author of the 'Bro. Jonathan Sketches.' It graphically describes the trials of 'Our Joshua' as the devil in a printing office, and his experiences as a reporter on a weekly and daily paper. It is brimful of anecdotes and sketches of newspaper life and will be particularly interesting to those who have been at some time connected with journalism. Joshua's many scrapes in the printing office in company with his friend Spuds are dwelt on at length; his trials as a reporter; his falling in love and leaving home on account of a difficulty with the 'boss'; and finally his triumphant return, all form the basis of an interesting story. The book is published in pamphlet form, in readable type, and contains 160 pages. Price, 25 cents; for sale by all Booksellers, or forwarded by mail to any address for that sum in postage stamp. Address Herman H. Pitts, Fredericton, N. B.—*Carleton Sentinel, Woodstock.*

'Our Joshua as a Reporter' is a pleasant companion for a leisure evening, or railway journey. The hero certainly managed to get into as many scrapes as the general run of printers' devils and reporters, and to come through on all occasions with quite the usual *sans froid* and *clat*. But there is no need we should relate any of these adventures, when 25 cents remitted to Mr. H. H. Pitts, Business Manager of the *Fredericton N. B. Reporter*, will secure the volume.—*Orillio Packet.*

Flattering notices have also been given the work by the *St. Croix Courier, Woodstock Press, Chatham World, Summerside Journal, P. E. I. The Watchman, Halifax, N. S., Wat-son's Illuminator* and a number of other Provincial and United States papers.

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