

A Lawyer's Vigil.

HOW HE WORKED ALL NIGHT PREPARING A CASE.

The New Orleans Times tells the following good story: Among the stirring recollections of the history of our bench and bar during the past twenty-five years, there has been unearthed one touching two high legal luminaries who, a quarter of a century ago, were the first at our bar, but who are now, alas, gone the way of all earth.

The chief characters in the story were a certain district judge and a certain district attorney, and the occasion was the trial of a very important case in which the district attorney represented the government, being sued for claims amounting to many thousand dollars. The case was fixed for trial by jury; on the appointed day and at the appointed hour, the judge was on the bench, the jurymen were in their places, but the district attorney came not.

An hour—two hours passed—and the patience of court and jury was well nigh exhausted. Messengers had been dispatched in all directions for the laggard, but he could nowhere be found, when lo! as the court was about to adjourn in despair the governmental representative appeared on the scene, blowing like a porpoise. The court, in ruffled temper, demanded why the wheels of justice had thus been ruthlessly stopped—in short, "why had not the distinguished gentleman come at the appointed hour, and did he choose to treat the court with disrespect?"

To this the gentleman offered profuse apologies, disavowing any disrespect of the court, and offered in extenuation that, having been engaged the whole night long in preparing for this case, his labors had prostrated him, and the slight rest he sought after his task was done became prolonged slumber, from which he had just awakened.

His honor looked daggers, but used none—rather expressing himself satisfied with the explanation—and then without delay the case was ordered to proceed, and proceed it did vigorously to a termination, marked by an elaborate and exhaustive argument at the hands of the District Attorney, and a verdict in his favor after only a short deliberation.

After adjournment of court, the foreman of the jury dined with the Judge, when quite naturally there came up the subject of the recent suit, and the foreman dwelt at length in terms of ardent praise on the faithfulness, sacrifice and devotion to the interests of his office of the District Attorney, instancing his labors of the night before as an evidence of "what sort of a man he was."

The Judge smiled at his friend's remarks. "Why do you laugh?" said the other. "Because the story is enough to make a horse laugh. That stuff he told about laboring all night was a confounded lie. I know it, for (now this is the secret) I was with him myself last night, and we played poker from early dark until long after daylight this morning, and that was the way he prepared himself for the great case."

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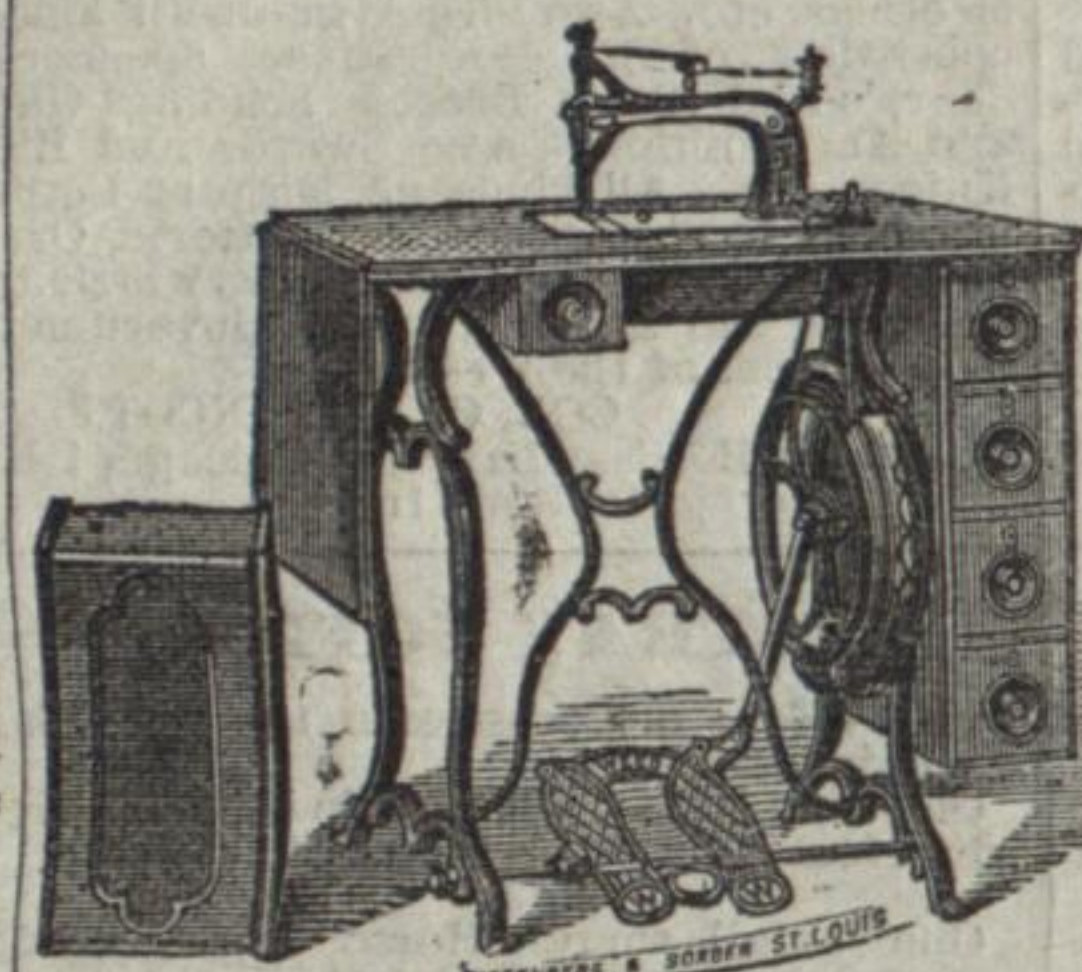
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