

and universal a sensation has never been created as by the receipt of the addresses of the Prussian ministry. The gravity of the situation is patent to every body.

### AN HOUR OF TERROR.

"If you please, ma'am," said Betsey, the hired help, presenting herself in the doorway with her arms dripping with hot soap-suds, and her calico skirts festooned about her spare form in a way which Worth never would have imagined, "there's an insane man in the barn."

I had just settled myself comfortably down to my morning task of coloring a cluster of slender-stemmed blue hare-bells, which Donald had brought in, a trophy of his before-breakfast walk up the mountain. Baby was sweetly sleeping under the pink lace draperies of her crib. Tommy and little Donald were fishing for minnows in the meadow stream, and I was heartily congratulating myself upon the success of my idea of renting a mountain cottage, "far from the busy haunts of men," for the sultry summer months.

"Where?" quoth I, to myself, as I glanced around the cool, little library, with its home-made hangings of butterfly-patterned chintz, its Japanese screens and the decorated china which I myself had arranged on impromptu shelves and brackets, "in all the dusty heated city, will you find a nook like this, with the scent of giant pine trees floating in at the casement, and the whistling of the blackbirds filling up the silence? I declare, it is enough to inspire anyone! I could almost write a novel, or an epic, if it wasn't for baby, and the children, and my flower-painting, and the tarts, and syllabubs, and frozen custards, that Betsey can't be got to comprehend!"

Thus, lapped in Elysian dreams, and secure in my own estimation, Betsey's announcement came like a thunder-clap upon my hearing. I dropped my camel's-hair pencil, and sat gazing blankly upon her ghastly countenance.

"A—what?" I gasped.  
"An insane man, ma'am," said Betsey. "Leastways, that's what Deacon Gadsley shouted out, as he was a gallopin' by on horseback to catch the down train with the mail bag, hollerin' good and loud, as he's aware I hain't quick o' hearin'." "Tell your missis," says he, "to call the children in—there's an insane man in the barn," says he."

"But Betsey," cried I, involuntarily clutching at the baby's crib, "it can't be possible!"

"That's what Deacon Gadsley said, ma'am, and I'll take my Bible oath to it," said Betsey, nodding her head, with a countenance expressive of entire conviction.

"Then, why didn't he come to our help?" I exclaimed, wringing my hands helplessly.

"Don't know ma'am," said Betsey, "unless it was the mail-train, like time and tide in the spelling-book, waits for no man."

"But what are we to do?" I almost sobbed, my courage and presence of mind nearly deserting me, as I pictured to myself the horrible vision of a crazy lunatic dancing about among the hatchets, scythe-blades and hay-cutters in the barn.

"Don't know, ma'am," said Betsey, viewing me with a sort of mild contempt, as one of the helpless city ladies who become powerless under the presence of any sudden emergency, "unless you call in the boys, and lock the barn-doors just as quick as possible."

I looked appealingly at Betsey.  
"Betsey," says I, "would you mind locking the barn doors, like a dear, good soul, while I run after Donald and Tommy?"

Betsey cleared her throat emphatically.

"Not if I know it, ma'am!" said she. "I hain't no more partiality than other folks for crazy people. My uncle, he was assistant-keeper in the Dunksville Lunatic Asylum, and he was choked to death by one of the patients forty-odd years ago. And I don't mean that sort of thing shall run in the family, ma'am, not if I can help it."

"Then," cried I, driven to sudden resolve, "stay here with the baby, Betsey. Don't leave her, for your life, while I go after the boys. Good heavens! If the wretch should be attacking them even now!"

With almost superhuman speed and swiftness, I ran down along the edge of the woods, seized Tommy and Donald each by one hand, and dragged them home, not

even pausing to explain matters to their bewildered little ears.

"Come, children—come!" I panted. "Oh, do make haste! We must get back to the house immediately!"

"But I've left my fishing hook, mamma," pleaded Donald, with a longing, lingering look over his shoulder.

"Can't we stop in the barn, mamma," cried Tommy, "to see if Mr. Jones has sent the cosset lamb he promised us?"

"Children," said I, pausing to regain my breath, "at your peril keep away from the barn! there is a crazy man there. Heaven only knows what violence he may attempt to perpetrate. Run to the house—run as fast as you can!"

And, pausing only to see them flying, like swift little antelopes, up the terraced slopes of the lawn, I hastened, with blanched cheeks and wildly-beating heart, to the barn, and was fortunate enough to secure both doors by wooden bars and outside buttons, only before the attention of a broad-faced, bristly haired ruffian was sufficiently attracted to induce him to present his moon-like countenance at one of the stable windows.

Without heed to his frantic gestures and loudly-shouted words, I fled back to the house and sank, nearly faintly, on the chintz sofa, with both hands clasped over my eyes.

"I declare for 't, though, that was real gritty!" was Betsey's admiring comment, as she hurried to bring the camphor and red lavender to my rescue.

"Mamma, will he kill us?" whispered Donald, who was a timid child and clung close to me.

"Shall I cut off his head with my tin sword, mamma?" bawled Tommy, the irrepressible.

"Betsey," I cried, rousing myself to the paramount necessity of not fainting, "place yourself at the window. Watch for passers-by—"

"Yes, 'um."

"Explain to them our dreadful predicament," I went on. "Summon help the instant it appears; and, above all, keep every door and casement locked and bolted, lest the fiend in human shape should break loose and attack us. There's an old rifle up-stairs in the garret, isn't there, Betsey?" I added, with a sudden inspiration.

"Yes, 'um," said Betsey; "but it ain't just in first-rate workin' order, I calculate."

"There isn't either stock nor lock to it, mamma," chimed in Tommy. "I loaded it with ashes, last week, and put in pebbles for bullets, and it wouldn't fire off worth a cent."

"But there's a carving-knife and the potato-pounder, mamma," suggested Donald.

I looked at the clock. Only eleven! It would be six hours at the very nearest, before my husband would return from the city. Suppose—this was a lonely and seldom-traveled neighborhood, a mere branch from the main thoroughfare which traversed the valley like a gigantic artery, and the hypothesis was by no means so very unlikely as it might seem—that there should be absolutely no passers-by between that time and this!

"Betsey," said I, "this won't do. I believe my hair will turn white with this terrible agony of suspense!"

"Ma'am?" said Betsey, who had the Shakespearian faculty of "not marking withal."

"Either you or I must go for help," I uttered very distinctly.

"If it wasn't for goin' right past the barn door, I wouldn't mind," said Betsey.

"It's fastened, Betsey," I pleaded.

"But them there wooden buttons doesn't amount to nothing," said Betsey. "And only s'pose he jumps out at me?"

I was just about to reproach Betsey with having none of the elements of the heroine in her composition, when little Donald who had posed himself in the garret-window to watch, came tumbling head over heels into the room with Tommy close behind.

"Mamma! mamma!" they shouted, in chorus; "there's somebody coming, and we guess it's Deacon Gadsley, on horseback, riding back from the train!"

"Stop him!" I gasped—"for mercy's sake, stop him!"

"He's a-makin' straight for the barn, ma'am," said Betsey, who had stretched the skinny length of her neck further out of the window than I dared. "He's heard that eller's hollerin'. He's unbarring the big doors! Land o' liberty!"—

with a long breath—"there comes the poor, crazy creature out, with a hop, skip and jump! Wal, if Deacon Gadsley likes to risk it, I wouldn't."

"I have heard of instances," I said faintly, "where some particular individual exercises unbounded influence over the mind of the insane, and—"

At this moment, however, Deacon Gadsley himself knocked briskly at the door. I made haste to open it.

"Be ye all crazy here?" said the deacon, with a broad smile upon his sun-burned countenance; "if ye ain't, what in the name of all creation possessed ye to shut up my son Hiram in the barn?"

"Your son Hiram!" I gasped feebly. "Was that your son Hiram? I—I thought it was an insane man."

"What!" roared Deacon Gadsley.

"Betsey said that you shouted out as you rode by, 'Tell your mistress to call the children in; there's an insane man in the barn.'"

"Good Je-rusalem!" cried the deacon, slapping his knee; "how folks will get things twisted around! I never said no such thing. What I did say was, 'There's a tame lamb in the barn.' I've promised one to them boys of yours ever since they came up here, and this morning our Hiram fetched 'em a reg'lar little cosset. And there he is, munchin' clover, down there, with Hiram holdin' on to his rope. And you s'posed it was a crazy man! Ha, ha, ha! Well, that does beat all! Ho, ho, ho!"

The deacon's cachinations echoed through my little parlor like the reverberations of a thunderstorm. I looked reproachfully at Betsey, as the primal cause of all the panic. That damsel, however, evinced no sign of discomfiture—it was not her way.

"Wal," said Betsey, slowly, "I always was a little hard o' hearin', ever since I had the scarlet fever, twenty-two years ago, come September. And I s'pose we're all liable to mistakes."

That was the end of our hour of terror. Betsey retired to her washing; Deacon Gadsley went his way chuckling; the children rushed whooping out to the barn, where Hiram, the victim of this unfortunate misunderstanding, stood smiling broadly, with the tame lamb at his side, bravely tied up in blue ribbons—and I looked in the glass, secretly thankful that my hair had not turned gray.

For, ridiculous as it all seems to write down in black and white, it was a real horror at the time. And I never could look at the innocent little lamb afterward, without a curious fluttering at my heart, vaguely suggestive of the apprehensions I had undergone.—*Saturday Night.*

### Nothing Like Logic.

There is nothing like logic, and every thoughtful man ought to keep a package of it on hand to use in cases of emergency. A countryman was told by a schoolmaster that the earth is round and turns round, and he stared in astonishment and then said, "I'll jest try an experiment for myself." The next day he came back with a triumphant proof that the schoolmaster's yarn was all nonsense. "Ef the earth turns," he said, inquisitively, "then half the time we are on top and half the time under, ain't we?" "Most assuredly," was the reply. "Well, the earth didn't stop turnin' round last night for the first time, did it?" "Probably not," said the schoolmaster. "Now, then," went on the logician triumphantly, "see how foolish you be. Why don't you try experiments before you scare people by telling such stories? Last evenin' when I went home, I put a 'tater' nicely balanced on a stick that I stuck in the ground. If the earth had moved a quarter of an inch all night that 'tater' would have dropped sure; but when I got up this mornin', there it was just as I left it. We don't want no such nonsense taught here. This school closes to-day, and your bill to date will be paid."

A young man who was proud of his atheism was once ridiculing the story of David and Goliath, asserting that it was impossible for a small boy to throw a stone with a circle enough to break the skull of a giant. He appealed to a Quaker in confirmation of his theory. "Well," said the man of broadbrim prejudices, "it all depends. If the giant's head was as soft as thine appears to be it could be done easily."

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