

THE EVENING NEWS.

Thursday, April 6, 1871.

(From Chamber's Journal.)

THE EXPRESS TICKET.

[CONCLUDED]

'Error, sir; error!' exclaimed the dean. 'You shall see, sir, what I shall see. I don't care for your ticket. You may make me pay again if you please, when I get to my destination. I believe this company is capable of anything; but I will teach them a lesson. This gentleman shall be my witness in the transaction—I will take your card, sir.' The men cleared from the window, for the engine whistled soundly, and off we went. 'Oblige me with your card, sir,' continued the dean. 'I will hardly ask you if you ever have so ridiculous a passenger!' 'Not a single absolutely ridiculous!' I replied. 'But do you think it worth your while to take any further notice of it? It will involve you in a great deal of trouble.'

'Trouble, sir! What do I care for that?' demanded the dean indignantly. 'It is my duty to expose such conduct, and I will do it. I will thank you for your card; it would be dangerous to refuse a card, so I expressed my sympathy with him, and gave him the card of a foreign gentleman of my acquaintance, which I luckily had in my pocket. Then the old gentleman seemed to be brooding over his injury, and scarcely spoke another word. When he came to the refreshment station, the guard brought him his ticket, which he took without a syllable, and at our next station we both got out. I saw his carriage was waiting for him; and I have no doubt Mrs. Dean had all particulars before half an hour was over. As for my friend whose card I gave, I never heard whether the coach had tried to find him out or not; but, faint though I could hear him, we were by no means friendly—You think the whole transaction rather dabs,' ejaculated my companion, interrupting himself.

'I think it downright dishonest,' said I frankly, 'unless you repaid the dean.'

'Oh, I did that,' responded he. 'I sent the old gentleman a post-office order in the name of my foreign friend, in a racing mail and up to the ring or two, but I'm straight as a die for honesty.'

'Well, well, I wonder where my communicative friend is now. I can say the pitcher has gone once too often to the well in his case, as with the thousand other clever fellows, we read of in their appropriate histories.'

(From the Citizen and Round Table.)

A STORY OF A PAINTING.

BY A. JEFFREYS.

'That is a wonderful painting, sir; as natural as life.' I said to my host, as coming into his parlour, and I pulled up the "three by four" metal frame, which hung above the mantel.

It was a room scene representing a group of persons surrounding two others—a young man and a girl—who were evidently just out of the water, for the crystal drops were dripping from their saturated locks and shining like diamonds in the firelight. There were some faults about it, but they were minor, and considering the intention of the artist, not worth mentioning. The grouping was perfect, and the expression of curiosity and admiration which mingled on the faces was very lifelike; while as to coloring, including the light from the wood fire which blazed on the hearth and shed its mellow radiance on the scene, there was nothing to wish for.

But the prominent feature of the picture, and that which caught my eye at once, was the expression of fate and the attitude of the figure of the young man spoken of, as well as that of the young girl. He stood with one foot a little advanced; the sheet, which was most elegantly proportioned, well thrown out; one hand somewhat elevated, and the fingers slightly spread, though not wide, speaking to some one, while the direction of his eyes, as well as their tender expression, showed that his speech was addressed to the young girl mentioned, whose face was raised toward his, and beaming with a depth of gratitude and admiration impossible to depict in words, and but rarely caught on canvas.

'This was the most remarkable face I have ever seen,' said I, 'or I thought on beholding it than for the first time. If you examined it in detail, it was not, perhaps, without its faults, but they were of feature only—the expression was faultless; and taking the whole face as it flashed upon me then, I thought, as I say, that it was the most remarkable and beautiful man's face I had ever beheld.'

The hand was small, the forehead high and finely arched, the cheeks firm and prominent, the chin round and brought well forward, the eyes dazzling with their fervid feeling, and the whole countenance glowing with a radiance of energy and conscious power seemed to comprehend all weaker objects in itself, and to throw back the firelight (which was necessary to bring out the features of the other faces), as the fire itself threw back the light of the lamp upon the table and cast it into shadow.

'Yes,' I said, 'as natural as life.'

'You may well say so,' answered my host, 'for it's taken from life—just as they came in at that dreadful night, escaped from a voluntary death.'

'Yes, sir,' said I, 'one can easily see the meaning of the artist. The lady has just been saved from drowning by her heroic youth.'

I am not apt to be enthusiastic over events that have long passed, nor to allow my imagination to be taken captive by stories which are intended to please the young, but somehow or other I was almost in tears when I looked at the picture, and I couldn't think of him as an ordinary individual.'

'As ay,' returned my host, 'heroic youth he was, and is, though his heroicism has never been shown in any greater matter than the snatching of a fellow-being from a sudden death, at the risk of his own life. But there is a heroism in the smaller affairs as well as in the larger ones of life, and it is sometimes all the greater because it is shown without the world taking notice. There is quite as much the reward of merit with the mere as with the boy. There are many heroes, and heroines too, whose quiet sacrifice of self, and steady courage in the face of trials worse than death, would raise them to the highest niche in the temple of Fame if suffered in the cause of country, but who goes down into oblivion, and is not even the object for which those qualities are displayed is too trivial to interest the world. As to Edwin there' (indicating by a motion of his thumb the youth in the picture), 'he was more fortunate than common, for he had a painter, which is even better than a bard, to record his virtues. If you should get hold of that picture, you will command which this painting is intended to commemorate, in a paper or a book—supposing that it could be sold as well in print, which is not possible—it wouldn't interest you half as much as that does now, because this glorious art not only tells the story to your mind, but impresses your senses too.'

To be continued.

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