

Friday, April 19, 1912

ISAAC AS A REFORMER.

ALBANY, 1st Mo. 26th.
RESPECTED WIFE: These know that I came here to represent.

The upright and the pure in heart who on "Reform" are bent;
Yes, that I came as a picked man, resolved, come what or was it.

That bribery and corruption should find in me a foe.

The tidings of my coming must have preceded me,
And caused the evil doers from the Capital to flee.

Yes, and all the carnal workers of iniquity—
No true it is that sinners dread a good man's company.

But, in their stead, I find of courteous, honest men a swarm.

And every one, like me, a jealous champion of "reform."

Yes, many a private citizen hath left his own concerns,
To join here and push "Reformers" until the House adjourns.

One of these unofficial, unpaid patriots lately sought
An interview with me, and much I marvelled that each thought

And sentiment and maxim that he uttered,
Woke in me a corresponding sentiment of perfect unity.

A corresponding sentiment of perfect unity.
He said that upright men, like me, had long been needed here.

To stem corruption's availing tide, and stay its mad career,
Indeed, he thought that vice would shrink appalled before my face—

That outward sign of inward peace and spiritual grace!

My spirit yearned toward that man, his views appeared so just!

And verily he seemed to place, in me, implicit trust.

He said a meritorious enterprise I might assist
By allowing him to put my name in its stockholders' list.

There was nothing in the project to offend the strictest friends;
Indeed, he guaranteed the stock to pay good dividends.

The first of which the banks would pay the day we passed;
For its incorporation. It was pending then in fact.

It is a foolish husbandman that knows not wheat from
toe from a clover.

Wherefore, without ado, I said: "Go to, I'll take thy share!"

And when the Act came to a vote, on the ensuing day,
My own communication, of a surety, was "Yes!"

I was reminded, when I got my dividend and share,
Of what a said of entertaining angels unwearied.

Stay, Hannah! I advise thee, with thy tongue be not too free,
Lest thou stir up the aspens to despoil and worry me!

I am in tribulation! Yes, Hannah, I'm proscribed,
By the backbiting newspapers, as one that has been bribed!

Now verily, "the counsels of the wicked are devious!"

And I fear that stranger's flattery was a net spread for my feet.

Yes, I am to be investigated! Vanity of vanities!
I'll write, if peradventure I'm delivered from these snares!

But, Hannah, sink or swim, I'll keep my dividend and share.
—Buffalo Courier.

THE DIVER'S PARTNER.

I was a diver as a young man. I may say I was born a diver. For my father was one before me. You may have heard of him—Bill Hurst was his name; he was pretty well known in his time, and almost the first that ever went down in the dress without a bell. Even when I started out, it was through his influence in the business. Father began to train me for it early, and consequently, from habit and experience, I got to be considered a first-rate hand, and got my share of employment.

When quite young I was injured at my work, and after my leg began to get better a fever set in, and I was taken to a farmer's house. The farmer's daughter, Polly, was my nurse. By-and-by I got a bit better, and was able to creep about the house with a stick, or sit outside in the sun. The farmer was mostly out looking after his crops and his cattle, except at meal times; so Polly and I saw a good deal of one another, and very naturally fell in love.

One afternoon the farmer came home unexpectedly. Polly and I, never dreaming of such a chance, were on the settle by the fire—I with my arm round her waist, and she with her head on my shoulder. It was a very pretty picture, perhaps, but I can tell you it didn't suit his taste, anyhow.

Well, there was a pretty row, I can assure you. The old man would have struck me but for Polly. He ordered me out of the house at once as an ungrateful rogue and vagabond. Then Polly tried her powers of persuasion, for he wouldn't listen to a word from me. At first he wouldn't give much heed to her; but as she degreed she got him to sit down and hear what I had to say.

It wasn't very much beyond that I loved Polly. I could only say I hoped I should get work, and so on, and that sort of thing. He laughed at the idea. "What could we live on if we married?" Polly jumped up and said she could and would work at needle-work, or she'd go into service—anything and then she burst out crying, and went into hysterics. That touched the old man a bit, and he consented to give me a twelvemonth's grace. If I could come back at the end of it with a prospect of earning a fair living, I might have Polly. But she declared that I shouldn't be fit to work for some months yet, and that the twelvemonth should begin from when I was well and strong. So her father said, "It's autumn now; I'll give him a twelvemonth from Christmas!"

In the spring I shipped on board a trader bound for Wales for copper ore. We had one passenger on board, a friend of the captain's. They were shareholders in several mines, and had done business together for years. The passenger—his name was Turton—was very rich, but very speculative. The captain used often to rate him for such gambling rebuffs as he called it.

"You'll sink all your money some of these days as deep as the doubloons in the ships over there," said he to Turton one day as we were sailing along the Cornish coast.

"What ship?"—where?" said the other. "Do you see those breakers yonder," said the captain, "about half a mile to the windward of the southern point of that low, rocky little island? That's called Galleon Reef, and it is said that a fleet of Spanish treasure ships were sunk there, to prevent their falling into the hands of our men-of-war that were after them."

"Has any of the money ever been found?" asked Turton. "Yes, a few pieces now and then. There was a company started once—by some such speculative madcaps as you—but somehow or another it all came to nothing."

"Egad! I don't see why it shouldn't be done nowadays, with all our modern diving inventions," said Turton.

"Oh, if you're for diving," said the captain, "here's your man; and he turned to me. I had come aft to relieve the man at the wheel. I was a bit of a favorite with the captain for my steadiness and sobriety, and he had asked me questions, and I told him who and what I was.

To be continued.

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