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From Reynolds's Miscellany.

A TRAVELLING ACQUAINTANCE.

It is highly important to those who travel from London to Edinburgh in a day, and who cannot read or go to sleep in a railway carriage, to secure for themselves an agreeable travelling companion.

Having to take this journey very often, and labouring under the above disadvantages, the practice of looking out for eligible fellow-passengers, at King's Cross, or Euston Square, has made me pretty perfect in my judgment. The most cursory of glances suffices to convince me of who, in the nine A. M., in the case of four-fifths of its live stock, whose rank and situation I can often predicate without giving them the trouble of opening their lips.

Four-fifths of the human race—or, at all events, of so much of it as travels in the first-class by railway—can be ascertained by about half-a-dozen pigeon holes, and when you have seen a specimen of each description, you have seen all, the rest being but duplicates.

Club boys, army, swell, man of business, country gentleman, parson, and individual with a grievance—very nice people all, without doubt, and may they live a thousand years at the least; but just conceive an "evening" journey in the same carriage with any one of them! Of the gentler sex I say nothing, save Bless their hearts, and may they never grow a day older! For as to being shut up for eleven hours with the same female, I am very sure that the honor would be altogether too much for me.

My sphere of choice then being thus narrowed to one-fifth of the human race, namely, who travel in first-class carriages, and my eye being, as I have said, unerring, I generally choose the carriage which is occupied by the most intelligent man in the train. I never indeed made a mistake that I can remember, but once, when at the same instant in which I deposited myself in my carpet-bag in a carriage, the individual whose appearance had captivated me, walked straight out of it with his hands in his pockets.

On Tuesday, the 20th of July last, I had occasion to set out northward, as usual, from Euston Square. As I walked hastily by the side of the already occupied carriages, the unthinking guard would, in his impetuosity, have twice consigned me to the barren wilderness of company with a whole vile family, who had already commenced eating and smelling of sandwiches, and once I saw five Caledonians, only waiting for an Englishman that they might begin to dilate upon the perfections of their native land. I cast myself into the last through carriage in despair, and without so much as looking before me. It was probable that my luck would be better; it could hardly, as may be imagined, at all events be very much worse.

Besides myself, the carriage had but one other occupant: a young man of gentlemanly appearance, excellent principles, but his clothes looked suspiciously new, and he had somewhat of a glow. He was not reading the Times, as you might expect, but he seemed to be looking at the new arrival, as if he were waiting for a competitor under the vest with his hands, and kept looking out under my right elbow, in time. When I rose, he was again turned in—yes!—in the advertisement sheet. The gentleman, then, had probably some good reason for concealing his talent for observation. His profession, whatever that might be, had been settled long ago, and the fishing-rod and guide-book which reposed over his head disclosed a young gentleman with money to spare, who was about to take a summer holiday among the trout streams of the north. One circumstance which occurred just after we started, persuaded me that he must needs be a lawyer, (and indeed as afterwards turned out his pursuits did somewhat partake of the nature of that calling,) so much did it smack of ready reasoning and practised address. Leaning out of the window as the train began to move, the wind carried away his glossy hat; whereupon, instead of sitting down forlornly, and muttering "Good gracious! or—Confound it!" the young man seized upon his hat-box, and launched that after the missing property.

"My hat-box," he explained, in answer to my stare of amazement, "has got my Edinburgh address in it, but my hat has not. The one is of little use without the other, and it is probable, since we have barely left the station, that they will both be found and forwarded to me by the next train."

Here was an original! Here was a rare exception to five-fifths of the human race who travel in first-class carriages! "But how do you know?" I urged, because I had nothing better to say, and was determined, at all risks, not to suffer the conversation to drop; "how do you know that somebody won't steal them?"

"I don't know," replied the other, with a contemptuous dryness, "but I do not think it probable; the articles would fetch so small

a price that the reward would be likely to be quite as remunerative as the swag itself, and of course, without the risk."

The swag! Did anybody who travels first-class ever hear such an expression? I was a good deal piqued, also, at the tone of annoyance in which he spoke, and replied tartly:

"I don't understand thieves' logic nor the language either."

"Ah! I do," responded my companion, carelessly. And he resumed his paper.

We had passed Rugby, and were flying through the dark dominions of King Coal, before either of us again broke silence.

"Come," cried my bareheaded acquaintance, suddenly, "there is no occasion for us to quarrel, only nothing puts me so out of temper as to see a man proud of his ignorance. Now, you are a keen, long-headed fellow enough, I see, but don't know anything."

"Perhaps not," I replied, annoyed at the unaccustomed position, of second fiddle, in which I found myself; but I have really no ambition to learn thieves' logic."

"What a type of the respectable classes of this country you do afford!" mused the other coolly, "in this your excessive obstinacy and conceit. You have no ambition to learn, and yet, I declare, that you yourself are concerned either directly or indirectly, in putting down rogues. You help to elect a member of Parliament who votes on social subjects; you subscribe to benevolent associations for the moral rescue of criminals, and yet you—"

Here this irreverent individual absolutely burst out laughing. "What would you think of a doctor, who had prescribed for a patient the particular features of whose case he had really no ambition to inquire?"

"I am not a doctor!" I roared, out of all patience; "and I wish all the thieves in England were to be hung to-morrow."

"The coming would be very sadly deplored," replied the other impassively; "you and I would certainly never meet again."

"This is downright insult!" I exclaimed, indignantly; "I shall take care to change company at the next station."

"Nay sir, I meant no offence," responded my companion, gravely; I referred only to myself as being doomed to be cut off in the flower of my days, if your wishes should be carried into effect. I have been a pickpocket from my cradle; and, added he after a pause, "I am thankful to say that I have not been altogether unsuccessful in my vocation."

I was startled for an instant by the man's seriousness, and instinctively—although he was at the other end of the apartment—looked for his wicked hands. They were lying in his lap before him, neatly gloved, one of them still holding the paper.

"Ah!" he said, smiling, and at once comprehending my glance, "these are nothing. They are merely my white gloves, my outside respectability, my externalities, like the commercial world. See here," he raised up to his full height, and the two leonine-looking aristocratic hands fell on the floor with a third. "These are my natural digits, he continued, producing another set of digits unloved and not particularly clean, "nobody can suspect a man of picking pockets, who always keeps his hands before him, and reads the city article in the Times."

"You were reading the advertisement sheet," I said, intensely interested, but still inclined for contradiction.

"Yes sir," he replied, "because I saw that pretence of that kind, to a person of your intelligence, would be futile. I always change my tactics with my company."

"But why," I urged, "not have picked my pocket, my good young man?"

"Because sir," he answered, "I am now bent on pleasure, and not on business, unless something very enticing should come in my way; open and unreserved conversation too, such as I felt I could indulge in with you, is to me in my situation (the poor fellow sighed) too rare a happiness to be easily foregone; besides," he added, reassuming his natural tone, "you do not carry your bank-notes in your pocket at all."

I felt myself glowing all over as red as a beet root or boiled lobster, but I managed to articulate, "Bank-notes! ah, that's a good joke. I very seldom have anything of that kind to carry, I'm sorry to say."

"Yes, but when you have?" interrogated the other, slyly.

"Well sir, when I have, what then?" I retorted with assumed carelessness.

"Why, what a very strange place, remarked he very slowly and very impressively; your neck cloth seems to be for keeping them safe!"

"How the devil did you come to know that?" I cried in astonishment.

"What does it signify? What can be the value of thieves' logic?" he answered, derisively. "I am sure you can have no ambition to be informed."

"Pray tell," I entreated, "I humbly apologize. It is very true that I have a number

of Scotch notes in the place you mention, which my purse would not hold; but what on earth made you discover it?"

"It was very simple reasoning," he replied, "and scarcely needs explanation; sticklers are seldom worn now, and yet your neckerchief had something in it; you were anxious about that something, and put your fingers to it involuntarily a dozen times; it was not through solicitude for your neat appearance, for you never touched the bow of it; nor did the thing itself you, or tiele your neck, because, instead of scratching, you simply tapped it, as a man taps a fob to be assured—there, you're doing it now—of the safety of his watch."

"What a fool I am!" I exclaimed testily.

"Nay," said he, "it would be more civil to me to compliment me on my powers of observation."

"I do compliment you," I replied with candor. "I think you are an exceedingly clever fellow."

"Well," said he, "it is not for me to speak about that; I know a thing or two, doubtless that may be out of your respectable head, and I dare say I could put you up to the time of day in several matters."

"Put me up to it," I cried, with enthusiasm, and parting with my last ray of superciliousness; "I am as ignorant as a peacock. I feel, do, I entreat you, put me up to it."

Whereupon, I am bound to say that my companion communicated to me such an array of interesting facts regarding his calling as would have shamed a parliamentary blue-book, and beguiled the way for hours with conversation, or rather monologue, of the most exciting kind.

Lord Byron states that one of the pleasantest persons he ever met in his life was a pickpocket, and I hasten to endorse his lordship's opinion with my own. I felt all that satisfaction in listening to my nefarious acquaintance which belongs to an intercourse with an enemy during a temporary truce; the delight which a school boy feels in playing at cricket with his pedagogue, or the pleasure which is experienced when a bishop happens to join, for once, in the chorus of one's own comic song. So stable, so almost friendly an air pervaded his remarks, that the most perfect sense of security was engendered within me. I could scarcely imagine that my agreeable companion could have been in reality concerned in a fraudulent transaction, and far less in any deed of violence.

We had just left Preston, and he was concluding a highly interesting account of how bad money was circulated in the provinces, when a sudden thought struck me, to which, nevertheless, I scarcely liked to give utterance. I felt exceedingly desirous to know exactly how garrotting was effected, yet how was I to put such a question to so inoffensive and gentleman-like a scoundrel? At last I muttered resolution enough. Did he happen to have heard from any acquaintance who, through misfortune or otherwise, had fallen in the intellectual branches of his profession, how the garrote was effected? I trembled for his answer, and half repeated of having said anything so rude as soon as the question had left my lips. He however did but blush slightly and becomingly, smile at the confidence of a master in his knowledge of its first principles, pulled up his false collar, with his real hands, and thus lived himself:

"Why, singularly enough, sir, the garrote is my particular line."

My satisfaction at this avowal was, as may be imagined, complete. It was like the question about Hugonmont mooted among the omnibus passengers, being referred to the strange gentleman in the corner with a Roman nose, who turned out to be the Duke of Wellington.

How eloquent did my fraudulent friend become about this his favorite topic! What spirit he threw into his descriptions! What hair-breadth escapes from the police and other intrusive persons interrupting him in the pursuit of his vocation, he had at various times experienced! Left alone with his man he had rarely been unsuccessful. Once however, with a gymnastic gentleman—a barlechin in plain clothes, returning home from the theatre—who had thrown a somewhat caustic over his head; and once with a stout party from a city dinner, who had no need—positively none—to afford the operator a chance, and who bit my poor friend's arm in such a manner that it was useless for weeks afterwards.

"And you did these feats of yourself, and without any assistance?" I inquired with some incredulity.

"Quite alone, sir," replied he, "but in all cases, the garrottes were several inches shorter than myself; with a man of your size, it would be almost an impossibility, and he laughed good-humoredly.

I laughed very heartily at this notion, too. "Would he be so good as to show me, just to give me an example how the thing was done?"

"I throw my arm from the back of your neck, like this," said he, sulking the action to the word, but with the very greatest delicacy of touch. "You are sure I am not inconveniencing you?"

"Not at all," said I. "Go on."

"I then close the fore-arm tightly. Stop a little lower, please; thank you, and compress the windpipe with—"

Where was I? Why, was I lying on the floor of the carriage instead of sitting on the corner seat? Why was my neckcloth unfastened, and where were the bank-notes which it had contained? These questions, in company with many others, presented themselves to my mind, as the train glided into Carlisle station. Above all where was my agreeable companion? I knew by the unerring Bradshaw that the train stopped nowhere between Preston and—Yes, but it did stop, just for one minute, at the junction of the Windermere line, to drop passengers though not to take them up.

"Guard! guard!"

"Yes, sir," Carlisle, sir. A quarter of an hour allowed for refreshments."

"Don't talk to me of refreshments," I cried, hoarsely. "Did a man from this carriage get out at Oxenholme?"

"Yes sir, very gentlemanly young man, with fishing rod and a landing-net. A lake tourist. Asked whether there was a trout stream in that neighborhood."

I have not quite settled yet, in my own mind, whether the thing was planned from the very first, and the last but itself—which was not claimed—a portion of the disguised plot; or whether the intentions of my companion had been really honorable until I was fool enough to put a temptation in his way which he could not resist. It was like placing the Bloomer suit of armor in the chamber of Joan of Arc, and expecting that she would keep to ermine and the small bonnet in preference to that martial costume, to which she had been so long accustomed, and in which she looked so becoming. Previous to the outrage the man's conduct had been certainly quite irreproachable. He reasoned, too, perhaps, that since he had so fully "put me up to the time of day," I should have no further occasion for my gold repeater. At all events, my travelling acquaintance had taken that away with him.

A SHALLOW DOCTOR, AND AN IMPERTINENT VISIT.

A person rushed into the court-room, evidently intent on some matter of importance. A full halting occurred in the regular business of the day, the stranger had not to wait long ere the opportunity was afforded for un-bosoming himself.

First of all, he said his name was Jones—John Jones; then cooed out the fact that he had been reported dead. "Yes; your honor—dead! as you will perceive by casting your eyes over this sheet."

The gentleman handed the Herald, of recent date, to the magistrate, who read as follows, of course from the usual obituary notices; on the 10th inst., John Jones, Esq., aged 35. Relatives and friends are invited to attend the funeral from the deceased's late residence—Groome street at 2 o'clock this (Friday) afternoon. The remains will be taken to Greenwood, for interment."

Returning the paper, the magistrate asked in what way could the above have regard to him.

The stranger seemed astonished at the question. "I live to do with me, sir! A good deal, I think—to myself as well, and to the public generally. My name is Jones, sir, John Jones as I said before. I live at—Greene street but am not dead, as that atrocious paragraph would signify. No, sir, I am alive, as you see. I am also on the eve of commencing business; (he said where but we shall not) I have the best stock on hand, Mr. —"

Here Mr. John Jones was cut short; the magistrate counselling him, if he so desired, to contradict the statement of his dissolution in the paper, which had been the medium of the false report.

The visitor would have prolonged the interview, had not the arrival of a prisoner and a few police officers cut him short.

It transpired, in the course of the day that the notice of the death of Mr. John Jones, in the Herald had been inserted by Mr. John Jones himself—whether as a mad freak or in connection with an expected spurge at the Police Court—we, not knowing, cannot say.

The Third Person vs. the First.

The other day, in one of the Paris restaurants, a party of literary men were discussing the merits of various epistolary styles. One of them, Monsieur A., made a fierce attack on letters written in the third person, such as "Monsieur X. has the honor to inform —" and so on. Another of the party defended them, maintaining that they were more ceremonious, more polite.

"That's a good idea!" replied Monsieur A. "The foundation of all politeness, in letter-writing is to express clearly what you mean to say. Nothing can be more ambiguous than these confounded notes in the third person. I will just tell you what happened to myself. About the middle of May, I received from my friend D., the Chief of Division, a billet-doux which I will show you."

Taking the note from his pocket, Monsieur A. read as follows: "Monsieur D., Chief of Division at the War Office, hastens to inform his friend, M. A., that he has just been named Chevalier of the Legion of Honor."

"You can fancy my delight at reading this note," continued Monsieur A. "I was the happiest man in the world. I ran to an engraver's and ordered him to make the flattering addition to my cards, 'Monsieur A., Chevalier of the Legion of Honor.' I ran to a jeweller's and bought a cross of the purest gold. I ran to a silk mercer's and bought a piece of the richest red *moire* ribbon for my button-hole. I ran to the houses of all my friends for the pleasure of receiving their congratulations. At last, I ran to my friend D., as soon as I caught a sight of him. I threw myself into his arms. 'Ah, my dear fellow,' I exclaimed, 'you have no idea what pleasure you have given me! How shall I ever thank you sufficiently?'"

"You are an excellent fellow, my worthy A. To 'very' praise them with my happiness. 'Thank you for that expression, the decoration is mine, and the happiness is yours.' 'How is that? Have you received the Order?' 'Certainly, I have not.' 'No, my good friend, 'tis I who am now made Chevalier.' 'You?' 'Yes, I do deserve the honor more than I do; but, nevertheless, it has been conferred upon me. 'But you wrote me word that I had received the cross.' I took his letter out of my pocket, and showed it to him. 'Alas! I now understand clearly what meaning I ought to assign to the ambiguous phrase, 'The deuce take you and your note.' I said to D., 'Instead of your affected and formal announcement in the third person, why could you not write to me simply and plainly. My dear friend, I have the pleasure of informing you that I now am a *chevalier*!'"

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European Intelligence.

ARRIVAL OF THE "PERSEA."

New York Dec. 13.

The Persea arrived yesterday afternoon. No tidings of the Indian Empire. Three new side wheel steamers to be put on the Go-way line next summer.

The Great Eastern is expected to be ready for a trial trip next July.

Intelligence reached Halifax of the loss of eight Quebec homeward bound ships, including ships Peersess, Barbara, and Eleanora, barques, Lady Campbell, Petchell, and Claude, and brig Wilkinson. Little of no loss of life except in the case of the Claude.

Lord Napier goes as minister to Berlin.

Five miles of the shore and of the Atlantic Cable are spliced.

Consols closed 94.

Breadstuffs in limited request at previous quotations. Tea firmer; common Congou 107 1/2. Markets generally present little change.

THE MORTARA CASE.—The following is the account given by the mother of the Jewish child Mortara (aged six years and some months), when after repeated solicitations she was permitted to see him on the 11th of Oct.:

"This morning I and my husband went to the Carabinieri and they told us that the rector and my dear child had just arrived; we mounted the flight of steps and very soon after that we had our darling Elegg in our arms. As for me I kissed him over and over again, weeping and sobbing; whilst he answered my kisses and embraces with his whole soul; greatly excited and smiling tears, the little fellow struggled between his fear of those who have him in their power and his impulsive love for us, but this at last triumphed. He cried out quite loud and he wanted to go home with his parents, to his brothers and sisters. I told him to remember that he was born a Jew as we were one. He answered—'Yes, dear mamma, I shall always take care to say the Siema every day.' I added, that we had come to Rome to see him again and that we should not leave the city without him, as which I appeared glad and happy. All this took place in the presence of the rector and of his brother and sisters."

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