

BARNUM'S RAILWAY COURTSHIP.

The managers of railways running west from Chicago pretty rigidly enforce a rule, excluding from certain reserved cars all gentlemen travelling without ladies. As I do not smoke, I avoided the smoking cars, and, as the ladies' car was sometimes more select and always more comfortable than the other cars, I tried various expedients to smuggle myself in. If I saw a lady about to enter the car alone, I followed closely, hoping thus to elude the vigilance of the brakeman, who generally acted as door-keeper. But the car-Cerberus, is pretty well-up to all such dodges, and I did not always succeed. On one occasion, seeing a young couple, evidently just married, and starting on their bridal tour, about to enter the car, I followed closely, but was stopped by the door-keeper, who called out:

"How many gentlemen are with this lady?"

I have always noticed that newly-married people are very fond of saying "my husband," and "my wife." They are new terms, which sound pleasantly to the ears of those who utter them. So, in answer to the peremptory inquiry of the door-keeper, the bridegroom promptly responded:

"I am this lady's husband."

"And I guess you can see by the resemblance between the lady and myself," said I to Cerberus, "that I am her father."

The astonished husband and the blushing bride were too much "taken aback" to deny their newly-discovered parent, but the brakeman said, as he permitted the young couple to pass into the car:

"We can't pass all creation with one lady."

"I hope you will not deprive me of the company of my child during the little time we can remain together," I said, with a demure countenance. The brakeman evidently sympathised with the fond "parent," whose feelings were sufficiently lacerated at losing his daughter through her finding a husband, and I was permitted to pass. I immediately apologised to the young bride and her husband, and told them who I was, and my reasons for the assumed paternity, and they enjoyed the joke so heartily that they called me "father" during our entire journey together. Indeed, the husband privately and slyly hinted to me that the first boy should be christened "P. T." My friend, the Rev. Dr. Chapin, by-the-by an inveterate punster, is never tired of ringing the changes on the names in my family; he says that my wife and I are the most sympathetic couple he ever saw, since she is "Charity" and I am "Pity" (P. T.) On one occasion, at my house in New York, he called my attention to the monogram, P. T. B., on the door, and said, "I did it." "Did what?" I asked. "Why that," replied the doctor, "P. T. B.—Pull The Bell, of course," thus literally ringing a new change on my initials.

At another time during my western lecturing trip, I was following closely in the wake of a lady who was entering the favorite car, when the brakeman exclaimed,

"You can't go in there, sir."

"I rather guess I can go in with a lady," said I, pointing to the one that had just entered.

"Not with that lady, old fellow; for I happen to know her, and that's more than you do; we are up to all these travellers' tricks out here; it's no go."

I saw indeed that it was "no go," and that I must try something else.

"Look here, my dear fellow," said I; "I am travelling every day on the railroads, on a lecturing tour throughout the west, and I really hope you will permit me to take a seat in the ladies' car. I am Barnum, the Museum man, from New York."

Looking sharply at me for an instant, the altogether too wide-awake brakeman said:

"Not by a d—n sight, you ain't! I know Barnam."