

Tales and Sketches.

METROPOLISVILLE.

BY EDWARD EGGLESTON,
Author of "The Hoopier School Master, The end
of the World, etc., etc."

CHAPTER II. (Continued)

It appeared from a beautifully-engraved map hanging on the walls of the Sod Tavern, that this tabernacle stood in the midst of an idea. The map had been constructed probably by a man of quite superior to the limitations of sense and matter-of-fact. According to the map this solitary burrow was surrounded by Seminole Perpetrator House, Woolen Factory, and a variety of other potential institutions, which composed the flourishing city of New Cincinnati. But the map was meant chiefly for Eastern circulation.

Charlton's dietetic theories were put to the severest test at the table. In the first place, he had a good appetite. A ride in the open air in Minnesota is apt to make one hungry. But the first thing that disgusted Mr. Charlton was the coffee, already poured out, and steaming under his nose. He hated it; because he liked coffee and the look of disgust with which he shoved it away was the exact measure of his physical craving for it. The solid food on the table consisted of waterlogged potatoes, half-baked salt-rising bread, and salt-pork. Now, young Charlton was a reader of the Water-cure Journal of that day, and despised meat of all things, and of all meat despised swine's flesh, as not even fit for Jews; and of all forms of hog, hated fat salt-pork as poisonously indigestible. So with a dyspeptic self-consciousness he rejected the pork, picked off the periphery of the bread near the crust, cautiously avoiding the dough-bugs in the middle; but then he revenged himself by falling furiously upon the aquatic potatoes, out of which most of the nutrients had been soaked.

Jim, who sat alongside of him, doing cordial justice to the badness of the meal, muttered that it wouldn't do to eat by ideas in Minnesota. And with the freedom that belongs to the frontier, the company all felt discussing dietetics, the fat gentleman roundly abusing the food for the express purpose, as Charlton thought, of diverting attention from his voracious eating of it.

"Simply despicable," grunted the fat man, as he took a third slice of the greasy pork. "I do despise such food."

"Fats like he was mad at it," said Driver Jim in an undertone.

But as Charlton's vegetarianism was noticed, all hands fell to denouncing it. Couldn't live in a cold climate without meat. Calaverous Mr. Minorkey, the broad-shouldered, sad-looking man with side-whiskers, who complained incessantly of a complication of disorders, which included dyspepsia, consumption, liver-disease, organic disease of the heart, rheumatism, neuralgia, and entire nervous prostration, and who was never entirely happy except in telling over the oft-repeated catalogue of his disgusting symptoms—Mr. Minorkey, as he sat by his daughter, inveighed, in an earnest crab-apple voice, against Grahamism. He would have been in his grave twenty years ago if it hadn't been for good meat. And then he recited in detail the many desperate attacks from which he had been saved by beefsteak. But this pork he felt sure would make him sick. It might kill him. And he evidently meant to sell his life as dearly as possible, for, as Jim muttered to Charlton, he was "goin' the whole hog anyhow."

"Miss Minorkey," said the fat gentleman, checking a piece of pork in the middle of his mad career toward his lips, "Miss Minorkey, we should like to hear from you on this subject." In truth, the fat gentleman was very weary of Mr. Minorkey's pitiful succession of diagnoses of the awful symptoms and fatal complications of which he had been cured by very allopathic doses of animal food. So he appealed to Miss Minorkey for relief at a moment when her father had checked and choked his utterance with coffee.

Miss Minorkey was quite a different affair from her father. She was healthy, thoroughly but not obtrusively healthy. She had a high, white forehead, a fresh complexion, and a mouth which, if it was deficient in sweetness and warmth of expression, was also free from all bitterness and aggressiveness. Miss Minorkey was an eminently well educated young lady as education goes. She was more—she was a young lady of reading and of ideas. She did not exactly defend Charlton's theory in her reply, but she presented both sides of the controversy, and quoted some scientific authorities in such a way as to make it apparent that there were two sides. This unexpected and rather judicial assistance called forth from Charlton a warm acknowledgment, his pale face flushed with modest pleasure, and as he noted the intellectuality of Miss Minorkey's forehead he inwardly comforted himself that the whole company was not wholly against him.

Albert Charlton was far from being a "ladies' man;" indeed nothing was more despicable in his eyes than men who frittered away life in ladies' company. But this did not all prevent him from being very human himself in his regard for ladies. All the more that he had lived out of society all his life, did his heart flutter when he took his seat in the stage after dinner. For Miss Minorkey's father and the fat gentleman felt that they must have the back seat; there were two other gentle-

men on the middle seat; and Albert Charlton, all unused to the presence of ladies; must needs sit on the front seat, alongside the gray traveling-dress of the intellectual Miss Minorkey, who, for her part, was not in the least bit nervous. Young Charlton might have liked her better if she had been.

But if she was not shy, neither was she obtrusive. When Mr. Charlton had grown excessively weary of hearing Mr. Minorkey pity himself, and of hearing the fat gentleman boast of the excellence of the Minnesota climate, the dryness of the air, and the wonderful excess of its oxygen, and the entire absence of wintry winds, and the rapid development of the country, and when he had grown weary of discussions of investments at five per cent a month, he ventured to interrupt Miss Minorkey's reverie by a remark to which she responded. And he was soon in a current of delightful talk. The young gentleman talked with great enthusiasm; the young woman spoke without warmth, but with a clear intellectual interest in literary subjects, that charmed her interlocutor. I say literary subjects, though the range of the conversation was not very wide. It was a great surprise to Charlton, however, to find in a new country a young woman so well informed.

Did he fall in love? Gentle reader, be patient. You want a love-story, and I don't blame you. For my part, I should not take the trouble to record this history if there were no love in it. Love is the universal bond of human sympathy. But you must give people time. What we call falling in love is not half so simple an affair as you think though it often looks simple enough to the spectator. Albert Charlton was pleased, he was full of enthusiasm, and I will not deny that he several times reflected in a general way that so clear a talker and so fine a thinker would make a charming wife for some man—some intellectual man—some man like himself, for instance. He admired Miss Minorkey. He liked her. With an enthusiastic young man, admiring and liking are, to say the least, steps that lead easily to something else. But you must remember how complex a thing love is. Charlton—I have to confess it—was a little conceited, as every young man is at twenty. He flattered himself that the most intelligent women he could find would be a good match for him. He loved ideas, and a woman of ideas pleased his fancy. Add to this that he had come to a time of life when he was in the best of spirits from the influence of air and scenery and motion, and novelty, and you render it quite probable that he could not be tossed for half a day on the same seat in a coach with such a girl as Helen Minorkey was—that, above all, he could not discuss Hugh Miller and the "Vestiges of Creation" with her, without imminent peril of experiencing a admiration for her and an admiration for himself, and a liking and a palpitating and a castle-building that under favourable conditions might somehow grow into that complex and inexplicable feeling which we call love.

In fact, Jim, who drove both routes on this day, and who peeped into the coach whenever he stopped to wait, soliloquized that two fools with ideas would make a queer span of they had a neck-yoke on.

CHAPTER III:
LAND AND LOVE.

Mr. Minorkey and the fat gentleman found much to interest them as the stage rolled over the smooth prairie road, now and then crossing a sough. Not that Mr. Minorkey or his fat friend had any particular interest in the beautiful outline of the grassy knolls, the gracefulness of the water-willows that grew along the river edge, and whose paler green was the prominent feature of the landscape, or in the sweet contrast at the horizon where grass-green earth met the clear blue northern sky. But the scenery none the less suggested fruitful themes for talk to the two gentlemen on the back-seat.

"I've got money loaned on that quarter at three per cent a month and five after due. The mortgage has a waiver in it too. You see, the security was unusually good, and that was why I let him have it so low." This was what Mr. Minorkey said at intervals and with some variations, generally adding something like this: "The day I went to look at the claim, to see whether the security was good or not, I got caught in the rain. I expected it would kill me. Well, sir, I was taken that night with a pain—just here—and it ran through the lung to the point of the shoulder-blade—here. I had to get my feet into a tub of water and take some brandy. I'd had pleurisy if I'd been in any other country but this. I tell you nothing saved me but the oxygen in this air. There's there's a forty that I lent a hundred dollars on at five per cent a month and six per cent after maturity, with a waiver in the mortgage. The day I came here to see this I was nearly dead. I had a—"

Just here the fat gentleman would get desperate, and, by way of preventing the completion of the dolorous account, would break out with "That's Sokaska, the new town laid out by John son—that hill over there, where you see those stakes. I bought a corner lot fronting the public square, and a block opposite where they hope to get a factory. There's a brook runs through the town, and they think it has water enough and fall enough to furnish a water-power part of the day, during part of the year, and they hope to get a factory located there. There'll be a territorial road run through from St. Paul next spring if they can get a bill through the legislature this winter. You'd had best buy there."

"I never buy town lots," said Minorkey, coughing despairingly, "never! I run no risks. I take my interest at three and five per cent a month on a good mortgage, with a waiver, let other folks take risks."

But the hopeful fat gentleman evidently took risks and slept soundly. There was no hypothetical town, laid out hypothetically on paper, in whose hypothetical advantages he did not covet a share.

"You see," he resumed, "I buy low—cheap as dirt—and get the rise. Some towns must get to be cities. I have a little all round, scattered here and there. I am sure to have a lucky ticket in some of these lotteries."

Mr. Minorkey only coughed and shook his head despondently, and said that "there was nothing so good as a mortgage with a waiver in it. Shut down in short order if you don't get your interest, if you've only got a waiver. I always shut down unless I've got five per cent after maturity. But I have the waiver in the mortgage anyhow."

As the stage drove on, up one grassy slope and down another, there was quite a different sort of conversation going on in the other end of the coach. Charlton found many things which suggested subjects about which he and Miss Minorkey could talk. There was a strange contrast in their way of expressing themselves. He was full of eagerness, positiveness, and a fresh-hearted egotism. He had an opinion on everything; he liked or disliked everything; and when he disliked anything, he never spared invective in giving expressions to his antipathy. His moral convictions were not simply strong—they were vehement. His intellectual opinions were hobbies that he rode under whip and spur. A theory for everything, a solution of every difficulty, a "high moral" view of politics, a sharp scepticism in religion, but a skepticism that took hold of him as strongly as if it had been a faith. He held to his non credo with as much vigor as a religionist holds to his creed.

But Miss Minorkey was just a little irritating to one so enthusiastic. She neither believed nor disbelieved anything in particular. She liked to talk about everything in a cool and objective fashion; and Charlton was a little provoked to find that, with all her intellectual interest in things, she had no sort of personal interest in anything. If she had been a disinterested spectator, dropped down from another sphere, she could not have discussed the affairs of this planet with more complete impartiality, not to say indifference. Theories, doctrines, faiths, and even moral duties, she treated as Charlton did beetles; ran pins through them and held them up where she could get a good view of them—put them away as curiosities. She listened with an attention that was surely flattering enough, but Charlton felt that he had not made much impression on her. There was a sort of attraction in this repulsion. There was an excitement in his ambition to impress this impartial and judicial mind with the truth and importance of the glorious and regenerating views he had embraced. His self-esteem was pleased at the thought that he should yet conquer this cool and open-minded girl by the force of his own intelligence. He admired her intellectual self-possession all the more that it was a quality which he lacked. Before that afternoon ride was over, he was convinced that he sat by the supreme woman of all he had ever known. And who was so fit to marry the supreme woman as he, Albert Charlton, who was to do so much by advocating all sorts of reforms to help the world forward to its goal?

He liked that word goal. A man's pet words are the key to his character. A man who talks of "vocation," of "goal," and all that, may be laughed at while he is in the period of intellectual fermentation. The time is sure to come, however, when such a man can excite other emotions than mirth.

And so Charlton, full of thoughts of his "vocation" and the world's "goal," was slipping into an attachment for a woman to whom both words were Choctaw. Do you wonder at it? If she had a vocation also, and had talked about goals, like two bodies charged with the same kind of electricity. People with vocations can hardly fall in love with one another.

But now Metropolisville was coming in sight, and Albert's attention was attracted by the conversation of Mr. Minorkey and the fat gentleman.

"Mr. Plausaby has selected an admirable site," Charlton heard the fat gentleman remark, and as Mr. Plausaby was his own step-father, he began to listen.

"Pretty sharp! pretty sharp!" continued the fat gentleman. "I tell you what, Mr. Minorkey, that man Plausaby sees through a millstone with a hole in it. I mean to buy some lots in this place. It'll be the county seat and a railroad junction, as sure as you're alive. And Plausaby has saved some of his best lots for me."

"Yes, it's a nice town, or will be. I hold a mortgage on the best eighty—the one this—at three per cent and five after maturity, with a waiver. I liked to have died here one night last summer. I was taken just after supper with a violent—"

"What a beauty of a girl that is," broke in the gentleman, "little Katie Charlton, Plausaby's step-daughter?" And instantly Mr. Albert Charlton thrust his head out of the coach and shouted "Hello, Katie!" at a girl of fifteen, who ran to intercept the coach at the hotel steps.

In a few moments the coach, having deposited Charlton and the fat gentleman, was starting away for its destination at Perritout, eight miles further on, when Charlton, remembering again his companion on the front seat, lifted his hat and bowed, and Miss Minorkey was kind enough to return the bow. Albert tried to analyze her bow as he lay awake in bed that night. Miss Minorkey doubtless slept soundly. She always did.

DEATH OF AN IRISH SMUGGLER.

BY JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE.

IN "Scribner's" for December, there is the following graphic description, by Mr. Froude, of the death of a famous Irish smuggler of the 18th century.

It was a strange wild place, close to the sea, amidst rocks and bogs and utter desolation. Near it stood the wreck of a roofless church, and the yet older ruin of some Danish pirate's nest. The shadowy figure of the brigantine was visible through the grey sheet of falling rain, at anchor in the harbor, and from the rocks in the entrance came the moaning of the Atlantic swell. Morty looked for no visitors on such a night and had neglected to post sentinels. The house was surrounded the wolf was trapped. The dogs inside were the first to take alarm. A violent barking was heard, and then suddenly the door was thrown open. Morty appeared in his shirt, fired a blunderbuss at the men who were nearest him, and retired. A volley of small arms followed from the windows and slits in the wall. One soldier was killed and three others wounded. The strictest orders had been given to take Morty, if possible, alive, and the fire was not returned. The house was evidently full of men; eight of them bolted, one after another, in the hopes of drawing off the troops in pursuit. Each however, was caught, and, when found not to be the man whom the party came in search of, was let go. Morty saw his time was come. He did not choose to be taken and determined to die like a man. He sent out his wife and child, who were with him, with a request that their lives might be saved. The officer in charge received them kindly, and gave them such protection as he could. Morty himself refused to surrender; it was determined to set fire to the thatch, and wild fire was thrust under the eaves. The straw was wet and refused to catch. At last it blazed up; the flames seized the dry rafters; the roof fell in and amidst the burning ruins, Morty and his four remaining companions were seen standing at bay, blunderbuss in hand. He was evidently desperate, and to save life it was necessary to shoot him. The soldiers fired; Morty fell with a ball through his heart. Two of his companions fell at his side the other two were taken; the other two, it so happened; who had been Morty's companions at the murder of Puxley. One of them Little John Sullivan he was called, was perhaps Morty's kinsman; the name of the other was Daniel Connell. The barony of Iveragh and Darrynace Abbey, where the Connells, or O'Connells, of later celebrity, had already established themselves, was but seven miles across the water; and it is thus possible, and even probable, that Daniel Connell, who had assisted at Puxley's murder, and escaped the bullets at Cleinderry, was a scion of the family which, in the next generation, produced the Liberator.

The weather making it impossible to carry off the brigantine, she was sunk, when daylight came, at her anchorage. The fire was extinguished; the ruins of the house were searched; and Morty's account books (he was as punctual as Dick Hatterack himself in his money transactions,) his bills, notes, and papers were found uninjured. Among them were found letters from many persons of consequence in the country, showing that they were accomplices in the assassination of the revenue officers. Twenty ankers of brandy and some chests of tea had been destroyed by the fire.

Morty's body was carried to Cork. His head mounded on a spike over the gate of the south jail. The rest of him was buried in the Battery. The prisoners can be traced to the jail; there is no mention that either of them were hanged, but of their future fate the records are silent.

So ended one of the latest heroes of Irish imagination, on whose character the historian, who considers that he and such as were the natural outgrowth of the legislation to which it was thought wise and just to submit his country, will not comment uncharitably. He had qualities which, had Ireland been nobly governed, might perhaps have reconciled him to its rulers, and opened for him an honorable and illustrious career. At worst he might have continued to serve with his sword a Catholic sovereign, and might have carved his way with it to rank and distinction. He was tempted home by the opportunities of anarchy and hopes of revenge. In his own adventurous way he levied war to the last against the men and system under which Ireland was oppressed when he fell with a courage which made his crimes forgotten, and the ghost of his name still hovers about the wild shores of the Kenmare river, of which he was so long the terror and the pride.

There was once an independent old lady who, speaking of Adam's naming all the animals, said she didn't deserve any credit for naming the pig—any one would know what to call him.

A young man gone out West a few months ago has sent only one letter home. It came Friday. It said, "Send me a wig," and his fond parents don't know whether he is scalped or married.

ON A NIGHT RAIN.

BY OLIVE THORNE.

I labor a sleeping car! It's all very well in the day-time, when you have a comfortable seat to yourself, but as soon as it approaches nine o'clock to have to go and stand up somewhere while the sable brigade turn your comfortable seat into an uncomfortable shelf, where you must lie down—*bon gre, mal gre*,—waked or sleepy,—is intolerable, and I can't endure it.

Making it impossible for me to sit up, just inspires me with an uncontrollable aversion to lying down. I envy the calm composure with which some people undress as complacently as though in their own rooms at home, go regularly to bed, and positively sleep all night. I look on them with somewhat of awe—as beings of a different species, and wonder if they have any nerves in their system.

But as for me, after tumbling and tossing, and fidgeting and fussing, through two or three long nights—trying to do my duty and go to sleep, I just made a declaration of independence, that I never would ride in one again.

Now there's some fun in a night ride in an ordinary car. You can lie down too—after a fashion—and I, at least can sleep as much as I like. I see there curiosities of human nature, that I should never see elsewhere.

I'd like to know what mysterious influence bonnets and hats have on peoples manners? A car load, that all day are as dull as owls, and as much alike as so many peas, no sooner take off their outside fixings for the night, than the company manners disappear, and the every-day character shines out. Now you'll see selfishness stalk abroad. Look at that elderly couple over the way,—the man hale and hearty,—the woman delicate and nervous to the tip of her fingers. He gets sleepy; so he turns his back to her, hangs his legs over the end of the seat, and actually lies back against her, and goes to sleep.

The great brute! perhaps I ought to say the great baby; for I suppose a thought of her comfort never crossed his selfish soul. She accepts her fate meekly—poor thing she's used to it. No wonder she is thin, hollow-eyed, and nervous. It makes me furious; and I fidget, and ache, and groan for her, till I turn my back, and try to forget it.

One variety of the human family that I admire, is the wooden-headed variety. These happy souls (or bodies) will curl up in some outrageous position, and sleep the sleep of peace, in spite of the slamming of doors, and cold draughts, the jerks of stopping, and the glare of the conductor's lantern. Such a one lies over in the corner. The conductor has to seize him by the collar, and jerk him to a sitting posture, every time he wants to see his ticket. Then he wry his eyes—fumble for his ticket—and drop off again, dead asleep in a minute.

There's another sort of human being whom I don't admire. In fact I detest him, and avoid him as I would a devil fish, or other unpleasant freaks of nature. It is the self-conceited person, who knows everything. That is to say he thinks he does. If the information he crams down the throats of his unhappy victims were always correct, one might pardon his hateful way of administering the dose. But it's not at all important that his information should be true,—if it's only his! Speech is his conc. For myself, it makes no difference. His smooth, self-sufficient voice is so rasping to my nerves, that I should hardly believe him if I knew he told the truth. But there are others not so faithless, whom he misleads by his positive way of stating things. I've seen one of these intolerable individuals persuade a weak, undecided sister, to ride miles past the station where the conductor told her to get off, because he knew the train stopped at so-and-so, or went through so-and-so.

There's always one of this sort on a night train;—there he sits, under the lamp, a long cadaverous fellow. He was "taken down" once to-night, to my great delight. An old lady, near the end of the car, asked in a general sort of a way, what time the train reached C—

"Eight o'clock," said he promptly.

"Eight twenty," said a quiet lady, sitting just behind the questioner.

Her tone, though lady-like, was self-possessed, and positive, and it roused the ire of the gentleman. Slowly drawing himself up to his full height—no insignificant height either—producing from the depths of his pocket a tattered Railway Guide, and holding near the light, he read in a loud and annihilating voice:

"This train reaches the city of C—at eight o'clock A. M.," and sat down with the virtuous air of duty performed, not to say sweet revenge.

The lady didn't wince! On the contrary she deliberately opened her travelling satchel and took out a *later* Guide—of course unanswerable authority, over all older editions—drawing herself up also, making her five feet almost as imposing as his six feet two or three, she carefully examined by the light, her time-table.

Everybody—who was awake—was on the *qui vive*. I trembled for fear she might be mistaken. As she sat down she remarked quietly, yet so clearly that every one heard,

"I thought I was not mistaken the train arrives at eight-twenty."

"Twenty minutes don't amount to much anyhow," he growled out; but he was discomfited, for he drew his hat over his eyes and pretended to sleep, and we had a rest from his tongue.