

# The Lincoln Courier.

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NO. 2

## A Legal Fee.

"I have stolen a coat said a man to a lawyer, "and I want you to defend me. Think you can prove me innocent?"

"Oh! yes, we can prove that you were a hundred miles away when the coat was stolen, and that the prosecution is malicious."

"How much will you charge?"

"First rate—never been worn."

"Well, I won't charge you anything—just give me the coat."—*London Tid-Bits.*

## Discouraging.

"Pretty bad soil for a garden, isn't it?" said the potato vine.

"I should think it was," said the onion.

"I'm losing strength every day, and I never had much to begin with. I don't get along worth a cent."

"I can't get ahead here," said the cabbage. "I'm going to leave."

"I know I can't get 'long at all," said the cucumber.

"Nor I," cried the asparagus. "I don't get 'long or tall."

"This place isn't fit for a berrying ground," said the strawberry; "but here comes the sun to dry up, all of you."—*Detroit Free Press.*

## Love Laughs at Party Lines.

The future husband of Miss Winnie Davis is state's rights Democrat. Really it makes very little difference what his politics may be so long as he is a gentleman and loves "the fair daughter of the confederacy." Jefferson Davis was an ardent Democrat, and ran away with the daughter of old Zachary Taylor, the great Whig soldier. Love laughs at politics.—*Augusta Chronicle.*

## Proud of the Relationship.

"Oh, Mr. Dusenberry," cried her little brother "I'm so glad you are going to be kin to me."

"Ah, Johnny, is that so?" he gasped, a look of happiness flitting over his face. "How did you know? Come here and sit on my lap and tell me all you have heard."

"Sister's other feller came here last night," began the boy, after he was safely in the arms of the young man, devouring a quarter's worth of candy, "and I heard them talking 'bout you."

"What did they say?"

"He was mad," replied the terror, "cause sis goes with you so much."

"And what was her reply to him?"

continued the young man, the look of happiness spreading further across his features.

"She said," began the youth again, "that he needn't get mad 'cause sis goes to see her, as you was a soft snap and saving him lots of money that would go to fixin' up their house after they were married."

The look of contempt on the young man's face gave way to the pallor of despair as he gasped:—

"Well, how is that going to make me kin to you?"

"Oh, went on the boy, "I'm comin' in to that now. She said that when you proposed to her she would be a sister to you, and 'wont that make you my brother?"

As the child poked himself off the floor to behold the form of the young man fit through the front door.—*Atlanta Constitution.*

From New York Ledger.

## MY DREAD SECRET.

BY MADREINE VINTON DARLOR.

Alan Alexander and I were fast friends.

I am a New York man, born and bred in that world's commercial metropolis; but Alan was a Kentuckian, sent as a student to Columbia University.

We were chums and inseparable. I knew that he was the only son of a widow, and that he had a sister whom he had enthusiastically assured me "was a mighty fine growth of the blue grass region."

I had also heard him say that he had inherited "hundreds of broad acres and a stock farm such as only old Kentucky could boast of."

Yet these were merely incidental remarks of his, scarcely noted at the time he made them, but rather recalled by me during the terrible strain of later years, when every thing connected with this man, whom I had held near and dear as a brother, became of awful import to me; when each tone, look and word of his tortured me by day and haunted me by night.

And I, too, had secured a close grip on Alan's big and true heart. Cursed be the sin-conceived hour that tore us thus rudely apart. Yet must I lovingly linger for some brief space, as a fond woman might in fancy, over those pleasant hours of comradeship we spent together.

Alan was a typical son of the South; so brave, that he never knew what fear meant; so on the alert to resent an affront, that he stood ready charged like an electric battery, to knock down whatever touched him the wrong way. Quick of wit, quick of temper and full of fire, yet withal as endearing as a wasp's nest.

I was, in a measure, his opposite; and out of this opposing novelty of contrast grew the charm of our intercourse.

My nature is rather phlegmatic, and usually I hold my temper well under control; but I have deep passions when fully aroused, and wield a powerful arm, with bunches of knotted muscles standing out like whipcords, with a strength that had been fully trained by an expert, so as to enable me to strike a well-directed, stinging blow.

Why was not this death-dealing arm withered to its socket at my birth, rather than have been the instrument of such prolonged torture in after life? But what man, through all his days, stands exempt from sin-fraught moments, when from out the seething abyss of the senses there suddenly flashes forth an unchained fury?

If such passionless man there be, let him alone condemn me.

I hate to tell the story. I loathe to think of that tempestuous hour; and yet, perchance, some young fellow, as light of heart as we were, may, in the coming, be the wiser.

I am a man of means, and that disastrous day I had unexpectedly received a very large sum of money; so, of course, I must needs have Alan come with me to my rooms and make merry over my good fortune with a popping of champagne corks. The too heady wine did its mischievous work, and at the end of one fatal hour we two were in violent quarrel.

There was one unfortunate subject upon which we bitterly differed, about which we had hitherto tacitly agreed to disagree.

But now in the excitement of our partial inebriation, our amicable understanding was forgotten and the demon of discord took possession of us.

We were of the North and the South, and it was a score of years ago when our dispute would naturally evoke the lurking diabolical of fraternal hatred.

Alan could be cynical and cutting upon provocation, and he had a way, when displeased, peculiar to himself, of closely compressing his lips with a sneering expression that was perfectly exasperating. And now, the danger signal of his firm-set under-jaw betokened mischief

as he hissed forth the old taunts.

My angry retort infuriated him the more, and, with mad-lened impulse and rapid movement, he thrust his hand into his hip pocket, from which he drew a long-pointed jack-knife, which, with a sudden lunge, grazed my side. In part sobered up by my narrow escape, but totally enraged, I sprang upon him with furious force, as he stood half dazed at his own wild act, and, hitting right out, I knocked him down. He struck the floor heavily, falling backward, stunned and senseless.

The effort and its frightful result instantly restored my scattered senses. I stood appalled before the wreck my violence had made. The blood oozed slowly from a small darkish cut back of the ear, then turned into a black conglumation.

"My God!" I hoarsely murmured, "I have killed him," and as the horrid thought forced itself upon me, my head seemed to grow of an immense size, as if about to burst. I felt dizzy, as one might feel who unexpectedly stands on the verge of a tremendous precipice.

A confusion of blurring notes swam before my burning eyes, and a sickening nausea overcame me.

Sinking on my knees beside his inanimate body, I feebly stretched forth my now trembling hands, seeking to support the prostrate form: In vain; I could not. An oppressive incubus, a paralyzed sense of weight grew upon me as an invincible barrier arose between us. I dared not touch so much as a hair of his head.

What! I, his murderer, defile that rigid form! How passing fair to look upon he was in death! How I yearned, with tenfold of the old friendliness, to clasp him to my wildly pulsing heart.

"Oh, Alan," I groaned, "how cruel not to have killed me outright, and thus have spared me the commission of this hideous crime!"

What a hollow, mocking sound my voice had! How sepulchral! What right had I to breathe, anyhow, having robbed my twin soul of the breath of life?

With the insane inconsequence of vehement grief, I bared my offending right arm and held it upward, tracing with compressing finger the swollen course of its rigid muscles that had once been a source of manly pride.

But now, shuddering and with derisive imprecations, I beheld, in all its brawny length, the semblance of a brute force to which the superior part of my being must henceforth forever submit.

Worse than Mазeppa's riven torture was to be my torment, for in the doom of this eternal conflict I was adjudged to rend myself asunder.

"One hour ago, one brief hour, and wealth, honor, the esteem of men, the regard of women, friendship, yes," I moaned, "even his friendship were all mine to cherish."

But now what was I? An outcast, a hunted criminal—a something cursed of God. I was polluted with murder. The agony of hell was wrought into this one word of awful meaning. Each separate letter was branded through and through my quivering soul with a deep, fierce burning. Thus was I tossed to and fro in the seething vortex of unavailing remorse.

All this while—it might have been an eternity, for how can time measure the transports of despair—my dead lay extended before me, a rigid corpse.

Then there crept over me a benumbing change, as if of the slimy coldness of some venomous serpent trailing over me its poisonous length and under its depressing influence a chill fear overcame me. A shrinking dread of the felon's fate unnerved me, as my imagination was confronted with the horror of filling a murderer's grave, and my hitherto unsullied name basely defiled. But an instinct of self-preservation dragged me out of the abasement of this despondency, and yielding to this urgent cry of nature, I arose, turned away from the gruesome dead, and heartily prepared myself for flight, thrusting away over my

burning breast the fatal passage of money now needed for my wandering existence.

Thus I fled forth from those once cheery rooms now filled with desolation, into the outer darkness, an abject, hunted outcast.

I dared not attempt to cross the ocean in one of the mail steamers, but took a haphazard passage that very night in a merchant vessel just leaving the docks.

Week after week we tossed hither and thither, one day resting becalmed, another spurred onward by favoring winds, but in sunshine or storm it was all the same to me.

The tragedy of my life had set me adrift upon a never-ending, aimless drifting.

Thus I circled the globe from clime to clime, from continent to continent, and yet finding no oasis of rest for my weary feet.

And in this dreary circling of the world, I shunned making, courting, yet dreading solitude.

Thus five years had spent their course in these restless changes, wherein succeeding days and revolving months were alike unnoted.

I called myself Dr. Tristram whenever a name was needed, yet might have forgotten the uses of language in the vast desert of loneliness I traversed.

Wherever I went, I was indifferent to danger, but I seemed to bear a charmed life! Amid the malarial swamps of the tropics, the parched simoom of Syria's sandy plains, or the freezing blasts of the North Pole, the pangs of remorse that I endured made all climatic change alike indifferent. Did I look back upon the past? I dared not.

At last, with lapse of time, came now and then, at rare intervals, a sort of temporary effacement of this woe; and in these periods of blessed relief, as one in the lull of a great pain, an interest in things around me reawakened. I was blessed with one of these alleviating respites, when I found myself in that charming, pleasure-seeking resort, Baden-Baden.

Hitherto I had avoided, as far as possible, every place where Americans congregated, but now, yielding to an ardent desire to once more meet my compatriots, I remained in this beautiful spot. Never since my calamity had its garden-encircled villas been so attractive to me.

One day as I was listlessly promenading in a garden of the *Trinkhalle*, my attention was vividly attracted by a voice.

"Uncle," said a lovely woman, "this is indeed a most charming place; yet I shall be glad to leave it, and get back to dear old Kentucky."

"Old Kentucky! Oh God of Heaven! what a thrill in those two familiar words, and in the very tone of that voice!

Had the dead re-embodied, and Alan spoken?

Involuntarily I started forward, and as I did so, the movement attracted the notice of the fair girl, and our eyes met.

They were Alan's eyes! Overcome by emotion, I hastened away, seeking refuge amidst the somber shadows of the near ranges of the Black Forest, whose darksome pines were in unison with the gloom of my sad destiny. There I wrestled with my remorseless fate in mortal anguish. Such was the distress caused by our first meeting.

Yet the recounter rekindled in my suffering heart an irresistible desire for human sympathy.

Had hope, phoenix-like, arisen from the ashes of the past?

Whence came this sacred, new and strong emotion? This longing to hear again the semblance of that voice hushed by my brutal blow to accents of earth; this yearning to look again into eyes that I had cruelly closed to scenes of earth.

These fancies became for me irresistible. At last I yielded to an uncontrollable fascination: I forgot myself and dut on the outer manner of the man I once had been.

I introduced myself as Dr. Tristram to Colonel Preston, the uncle of the woman I sought to know, and with that cordial, social intercourse that often exists among Americans travelling abroad, I ingratiated my-

self so fully in his good graces, as to secure me the coveted introduction to his niece, Annette Preston.

The swirl of the un hoped-for happiness must quite have upset my reason, for never was man so madly in love as I became with that dear, innocent girl, whose every trick of tone, look and manner gave me back my Alan.

A thousand and a thousand times I would have shouted in her ear, "Alan!" Yet, in her sweet presence, I would not have my dead quicken. For here was Alan, ineffably more refined, more interesting, and oh! how immeasurably more—beloved.

At times, I had wild moments when left to myself, when I questioned the ancient ones of mystic faith; and in my mighty yearning that Alan might in some form re-suscitate, I was fain to believe in a transmigration of souls.

Had some pitying angel accepted my long suffering in atonement of an unpremeditated and momentary sin by materializing my lost friend?

God grant, yet God forbid, groaned I. This is a woman's pure spirit I adore.

But in my wildest moments of exaltation, the double happiness of friend restored and love reciprocated never occurred to me.

Nor was I exempt from moods of bitterness when I reproached Alan with a sort of hatred; he, whose rash act had involved me in so much misery.

"Was not his lunge murderous and made at me first?" I asked myself. "Would not any tribunal of justice exonerate an act of self-defense?"

When one sits as judge and jury upon one's self, the circle of specious sophistry is soon completed.

So one bright morning, having argued myself into a quasi state of assumed innocence, I sought Annette Preston, and told her of my love, of that one only all-absorbing emotion that had taken possession of me.

Was it honorable when I knew by the unexplained magnetism of a mutual affection that she was mine?

Yes, she was mine.

And now, in that supreme moment of confessed happiness, came the sharpest pang I had yet borne, for when I would have clasped this sweet confiding being to my blighted heart, when I would have sealed upon her dear lips the sacred betrothal kiss, looming up out of the blackness of the hideous past, my dread secret once more confronted me and stood as an adamantine wall of separation.

With a despair past all conceivable anguish, I yielded to my inexorable fate; and out of my sheer desperation came the strength for the confession.

"Annette," I said, "I am a wretch to have won your love. You may never be mine. You alone have my dread secret. I am a murderer!"

And at that moment of killing pain, I would have fled forth, as five years before I had done, into the outer darkness of a pitiless world.

Divining my thought, with instant but gentle force, she detained me, clasping my blood-stained hands within the pure pressure of her own, whispering to me with Alan's voice as she did so:

"Dear, my heart, this is not so." I could but regard her with an imploring gaze, but I dared not take advantage of that angelic confidence, for I knew myself to be guilty.

"Tell me the story—the exact, the whole story," she pleaded, with gentle persistence.

"Oh! what a blessed relief to my lonely heart was that enforced confession. For five terrible years had this secret tortured me; an ever-glutted vulture feeding on my life blood and never sated.

"Annette," I said, "thanks be to God that you are merciful as good. You shall not be deceived. I will tell you all, and having made at least this act of reparation, I can the better endure the misery of my fate. The future, in the light of this hour, can never be as blinding black as has been the past."

"In the first place, Annette, my name of Doctor Tristram is assumed

to hide my crime. My true name is Marcus Westmore."

She uttered a cry and sprang to her feet; then, clasping her hands closely together as if seeking to control herself, resumed her seat.

"Ah," said I hopelessly, "I knew it must come to this. You have heard of me as a murderer."

"No, no, no," she vehemently exclaimed, "not so. Go on."

I paused in astonishment. Her eyes sparkled, her cheeks were aglow, her lips parted as if she must speak, but the whole expression was one of unbounded, overwhelming joy.

"Sweet angel! I murmured, "how can I tell you that you are the counterpart of the friend whose life I took. Yes, you are his very other self; but, oh, how far transcendental—"

What was my pained amazement to hear a ripping, joyful laugh as her sole response.

"The shock has been too great; it has crazed her," I thought, with anguish, as I reproached myself with the rash selfishness that had added a new sorrow to my heavy load.

"Annette," I continued, "I must go on. I had a dear friend—oh, how dear!—Alan Alexander."

At the mention of this name she clasped her hands, laughed and cried.

"Crazed! crazed!" thought I; "and my monstrous act the cause."

"Go on," she cried. "Be quick; tell all!"

"Annette," I answered, "my poor dear, the story is soon told. Alan was invited to my rooms to make merry with me over some money gains. We drank too freely. We foolishly quarreled. He first made a lunge at me, when—Annette, how can I tell you all!—I struck him a blow that killed him. Need I say it? Since then I am a wanderer."

"And is that all?" she exclaimed. "The Lord be praised, dear Marcus. I was speechless with the horror of this. This unseemly joy was, indeed, the very perfection of madness."

"Dear Marcus," she repeated again, taking my hand. "Be happy. I have thought from the first, it must be you, so minutely had Alan described you, but the name puzzled me."

"Be at ease, for Alan was only stunned, not murdered. He still lives to mourn your loss, never ceasing to reproach himself for that thrust."

"He is my mother's son and we both love you, Marcus."

And now came my turn to be crazed, as uttering a great cry of rapturous joy, I pressed her to my blissful heart, with exclamations of: "Saved! Saved! Glory be to the good God! Saved through you, my love, my life, my wife!"

## Timepieces.

Looking in the familiar face of one's watch, it seems strange that the almost universal pocket companion of our day should have been unknown at the time of the Reformation. The most ancient extant specimen of the article was "built" in 1541. It is now in the possession of an English baronet. It is a slanting concern, about the size of a desert plate.

Clocks came in about the middle of the thirteenth century, and took the place of the simple instruments that measured time by the running of sand and the trickling of water. Before these, the hours were marked on bright days, by the shadows cast by the sun, and guessed at by night and when the sun was obscured by clouds. At what a rate the mechanic arts have progressed since Demosthenes requested that the *clepsydra* (or water-dripping time measurer) might be stopped, in order that he might continue his oration! For he it remarked that the prudent Greeks timed their orators, thereby escaping the modern bore of being talked at by speechifiers who match their tongues against old Chronos.

Five hundred years back the old scytheman's strides were but imperfectly noted. Now we have an agent that beats him in a fair race, traversing distances in a few seconds which it takes him hours to plod over. So we go.—*New York Ledger.*

## Baby Carriages! Baby Carriages! 83 New Styles.

I made the largest purchase in Baby Carriages this season I ever before made at any one time. I did it because I could buy them at so much less price from the maker. I buy from the maker only. I am selling Carriages from 10 to 20 per cent cheaper than I sold the same Carriages for last season. Prices tell. I can sell you a large Rattan body Carriage with wire wheels and upholstered seat at \$7.50. I have them at \$10.00, \$15.00, \$25.00 and \$30.00. No child should be allowed to walk when you can buy one at such a price. I get up a complete line of photos that I will be glad to send to any one, with very lowest prices. E. M. ANDREWS, Piano, Organ and Furniture Dealer, Charlotte, N. C.

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