

TYPOGRAPHIC RECOLLECTIONS.

BY THE INITIAL M.

No. 1.—AN ENTERPRISING DEVIL.

Thirty odd years ago, typographical apprentices were usually bound to learn the art and mystery of a printer as the old documents have it. I was then only an indigent novice myself, and ranked with the juvenile imps of the craft, many of whom resided in their masters households. It frequently occurred that I was sent to other offices and thus I became acquainted with many an odd circumstance, and queer personages young and old. I propose to amuse the readers of the Electrotypic with occasional reminiscences, as opportunity and memory permit, under the caption above written.

The first recollection that rises in my mind, concerns a rollicking, scrape-grace youngster, whose acquaintance I made by meeting him in the mornings before working time. His name was Jerry S. Like myself he was a bound boy, not over fifteen years of age, and devil, roller-boy, and errand runner in common, in the establishment of Mr. Y., a well known and rather eccentric printer, of Philadelphia, at that time, but long since deceased.

Jerry lived with his master's family when at home, and he was obliged to perform certain domestic services, as it happened to be required of him. I shall preface my story of the lively lad, somewhat further, by stating that he was quick-witted, active and useful, but brim full of mischiefous fun, and fond of original experiments and performances, mechanical and otherwise.

He was also given to meddling with matters not strictly within his province, and I little could escape his prying curiosity or handling, unless well locked up, whether inside or outside the office.

Twice each week it was Jerry's prescribed duty to accompany Mrs. Y., his master's wife, to the market and carry back the purchases. On one of these occasions, the lady invested in half a dozen half-grown pure-white and beautifully feathered chickens. These, on account of their sprightly appearance, were permitted to live on and roam the ample house-yard of the Y's, which premises were next adjoining the printing office.

In a little while the young fowls being well fed and petted, became very tame and familiar with the members and attaches of the household. Perhaps it was two or three weeks after their purchase, and occupation of the printing office.

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Mr. Y. mentioned the curious plumage of the fowls and several persons, and ere long a number of callers came to view them, among whom were several so called chicken fanciers, who were so much impressed with the oddity that they offered good sums for the new chickens. These proffers were not accepted, as it was not the desire of the lady who owned the fowls, to turn them into money again.

Surprise and curiosity were largely augmented a few days later by the fresh discovery of Mrs. Y. that there suddenly appeared decidedly blue feathers, in harmonious juxtaposition to the red ones, in various parts of the now highly prized bipeds. Still no one seemed to have a suspicion that the striking change in the plumage of the tender fowls, was other than natural to them, and not one supposed it to be a smart bit or Jerry S's deviltry. Even professed poultry breeders examined them, and, being unable to explain the peculiarity, were content to call it a "strange freak of nature," or that the birds were of a new variety.

Meanwhile, Jerry, the sly dog, who had accomplished the imposition, buzzed himself with very delight over his successful deception of so many persons. Mrs. Y. had a large fanciful Gothic cage made for her pets, and her market boy had the unblushing temerity to propose a name for the "new style" of fowls, which the simple hearted lady actually adopted. Gradually, familiar visitors were calmly informed that they were the "American National Banner Chickens," very rare indeed as nobody else had them. The Centennial was not then in vogue, or it is hardly possible that a different appellation might have been suggested.

Successful adventurers and charlatans not infrequently are emboldened to carry their schemes a step far. This was master Jerry's fate. Not content with fooling people to the "top of their bent," he must need accomplish the detractionment of his own artistic, although unrecognized, genius and tumble back to the common dust heap to be derived as an impudent trickster. So wags the world always. Humbug, to be accepted and admired as wonderful and true, must never exhibit its most simple tools, but work naturally, slowly, and by small degrees, until even a preposterous thing is consummated. People will swallow much if it be adorned to them in small pellets, and with due caution, until an entire quantity of magnitudes will be "taken in," and the recipients ask, no other "Oh, ver Twist, 'for more." P. T. Barnum has demonstrated this truism again and again.

Jerry's exploits tickled him to such an extent that he supposed he could go still further in the same direction with like impunity. The facts are, his previous operations were brought about by his discovery, in a private receptacle for such things, of several small pots of precious, bright colored

printing inks, which had never been used in the office until then. In the place were kept gold sizing and bronze powders, which long since had taught the diabolical young scamp the method of using at that period reckoned as one of the "mysteries" of the craft, comparatively speaking. These latter articles he applied with precision to the legs and banks of the already variegated fowls as he had before applied the colors to the plumage. The last result was rather stunning. From tawny drab, the parts receiving the coatings of size and bronze powder became like new brass. It was too much. The last "freak" was immediately apparent, and it led to the discovery of the others.

Jerry received a reward of merit, in the shape of a sharp castigation, from the hands of his master, ostensibly for encroachment on sacred preserves at the office, although some thought it was because the boy had succeeded in victimizing his employers common sense, in reality. For a full week after his punishment the aspiring 'devil' sullenly and spitefully brayed out ink and rolled the forms.

Late comers to view the strange birds whose fame had gone abroad, were told they were disposed of, as indeed they were, by being decapitated and stripped of their garish and fatal though innocent glory.

One day Mr. Y. drily (perhaps wretchedly) said to master Jerry that he must hasten back from an errand as the dinner that day would include a pot-pie make from the "American National Banner" and bronzed breed of chickens.

Jerry failed, however, to put in his claim for a share of the (under other circumstances) dearest dish of his desires. Whether he went dinnerless or otherwise I am not aware; but for a considerable time thereafter the enterprising 'devil' brooded a chicken meal with others of the family because of the memories it was liable to recall at his expense. Mr. Y. was always talkative and facetious at table, and Jerry knew he would have no chance to retort.

I am glad to report that Jerry S. served out his term of apprenticeship and became a hand pressman, working in New York and other large cities. Ten years ago he emigrated to California, where I hope he is thriving, and still in the flesh, as an energetic and good workman such as I last knew him to be.

The Globe-Journal, of Falls City has changed hands, having been purchased by Mr. Jacob Dailey, who comes from Pennsylvania to Falls City to embark in a newspaper enterprise.

FUN.

Party about to ask for a subscription.—I am so glad we have met, Mrs. Chodder. I wanted to speak to you—ahem—the Idiot Orphans' Fund. Mrs. C.—"Dear! dear! poor child, did he stray far? Lawks-a-mussy! Fund, is he then? Why, hi didn't heven know he were lost!"

"Mary, I do not approve of your entertaining your sweetheart in the kitchen," said a lady to her servant. "Well, ma'am, its very kind of you to mention it; but he's from the country you see, ma'am and I'm afraid he's to shy and orkard in his manners, ma'am for you to like him to come up into the parlor," replied Mary.

"Mamma," said a little five-year old, "what is a widow and what is a widower? The mother explained to the little fellow, and by way of further explanation, said, "If you should grow up and get married, and your wife should die, why then you would be a widower." "Oh, no I wouldn't," said the little fellow, "I'd court another girl!"

Miscellaneous Items.

Nantucket has a jail without a prisoner. Expense of maintaining the institution last year only \$133 32, a large portion of which was expended in repairs.

The smallest compositor in the country lives in Georgia. He is eight years old, fifty inches high, and can set a newspaper column of solid minion in a day.

Frank Buckland, the English naturalist, says that the skins of snakes, if dried and properly purified, might be made into very attractive trimmings for ladies' dresses.

Some of the life insurance companies are incorporating in their new policies a suicide clause to read that the policy shall be vitiated if the insured die by his own hand, "whether sane or insane."

Queen Victoria goes walking in a short dark petticoat; the hems of her boots are not half an inch high, the sales are broad and thick, and they are never blacked.

The London Globe complains of the increased use of the revolver by the criminal classes in London, and warns the police to stop the sale of sword-sticks, which are openly disposed of in the streets for sixpence each.

The amount of crude petroleum produced in Pennsylvania last year was 8,968,900 barrels, an average of 24,372 barrels per day. The total amount of shipment of crude and refined oil was 10,191,452 barrels.

How to ferment a malt liquor which shall combine the non-intoxicating character of the German lager beer with the incomparable flavor of English pale-ale, writes an English brewer to the London Times, is what he and his brethren have got to learn.

The Cherokees have over eighty common schools. The Chickasaws have four public and about ten district schools. The Choctaws have two public and over fifty district schools. The Creeks have three public and about thirty district schools.

Rice powder, which is much used by ladies upon their faces, is said to often contain lead, which renders it very injurious. If a little iodide of potash is dropped upon the powder, the presence of lead will be revealed by its turning yellow.

A Turk holding a considerable position in the State will take a handful of boiled rice from the common dish, and, after having squeezed all the water out by working it well in his hand, will put the lump into the mouth of a guest as a mark of peculiar favor.

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