

CHARACTER SKETCH.

BROAD BEAMS.

NO. 11

Every community has its Col. Mulberry Sellers. Whether it be eye water or town lots these natural born optimists are unalterably convinced that there's millions in it. The squirting of a million nozzles can not put out the fire of hope that burns within them. They are convinced that success is coming and no power on earth can shake that conviction. They may have all sorts of obstacles to overcome; they may have to keep up appearances by all sorts of ridiculous subterfuges; like Col. Sellers they may be compelled to burn candles in their stoves as a substitute for coal or wood; but there is one thing they never let get in their way, and that is discouragement. They have confidence in themselves whether other people have or not, and they keep right on going ahead. Probably P. T. Barnum had as much hard luck as ever befell one man. He met failure and had to bow down to it a half-dozen times, but he was never entirely vanquished. Difficulties that would have broken the spirit of 999 men out of a thousand were met by him and surmounted. Fire destroyed everything he had in the world more times than one; losses of various kinds came upon him; but he never lost his grip; he kept right on going ahead, and he was on top oftener than he was underneath, and when he died he had success in a mighty tight grasp. Whatever he attempted he knew there were millions in it, and he kept on until the fact was demonstrated. These men, the Barnums and Sellersea, serve a good purpose. They prevent other people from giving way to discouragement. Their example incites others to renewed effort. There was a good deal of more or less harmless fraud and deception about Barnum; perhaps it were better to call it humbuggery; and there usually is about these men who go through life with hope for capital. But their colossal nerve commands admiration, and people submit to the imposition they practice with little or no protest. After all it is the Barnums and the Sellersea that give zest to business life.

Not all that I have written above applies to a certain citizen of Lincoln who is the subject of this sketch; but he partakes in a general way of the characteristics of Mark Twain's great optimist. He is as great a schemer as was the proprietor of the eye water, and his faith in himself and his undertakings is comparable to that sublime confidence that marked Col. Sellers. The fact that misfortune has not kept away from him has not affected the natural elasticity of his temperament. Lately he has, in common with other citizens, been under the necessity of acknowledging himself, a victim of the hard times; he has lost a great deal. But he has not changed in the least. The hopefulness that is in him is the same. He knows that there are millions in the town, and he proposes to keep at it till he get his share of the wealth.

This man in the hey day of his prosperity was distinguished for his romantic turn of mind. His imagination knew no bounds. He fell into the harmless habit of looking at his own comfortable store of wealth through the magnifying glasses of his hopeful mind. Many are the stories illustrating this cheerful eccentricity. And when he was romancing in the wildest way he always endeavored to convey the impression that he was modest to a degree. He is an odd character all through. Big and bluff, a large talker and a schemer all over, optimistic, and full of life, he is a type of western manhood such as the

men who write novels of the west put in their books. He is a Silas Lopham kind of man, or rather the kind of man Lapham would have been in the west. He is a boomer, bland and blarneying. Everybody in town knows him. It isn't necessary to give his name or tell his business. He is a familiar figure. He is one of the men who have made money in Lincoln and he is one of the men who will make money again. He deals in something more substantial than eye water.

WHEEL IMPROVEMENTS:

An expert on cycling matters, who was asked "How will the bicycle be improved in future years?" says there is some ground for believing that the chainless safety will be the coming bicycle. Overcoming the friction is the greatest difficulty in the manufacture of this class of wheel, and many of the experiments which have been made to this end have given encouraging results. There will be improvement all around in the construction of the bicycle; in the tires, the saddles and the pedals. Already a saddle has been brought out in France which is pronounced a comfort and a delight. It is said to enable a wheelman not only to ride further with less discomfort and wear and tear, but to add distinctly to his speed. The present saddle is barbarous and unscientific, and before long the public will realize the fact, and demand improvement. The bicycle makers are loath to adopt a new idea, no matter how good it is, and it is only the pressure of popular dissatisfaction that will drive them to the manufacture of a better form of saddles. It was so with the safety frame, the pneumatic tire, the wood rim and other improvements. Just now light wheels are the fashion, but they are certain to be dropped later on. On the question of whether cycling is merely a craze, or will take a permanent place among the national pastimes, opinion is divided. The authority just mentioned says on this head: "Of course, the cycling craze will die out, and the sport remain. Cycling has backbone, and has come to stay; but it may experience a setback, for many persons now riding will hardly do so next year or the year after. Field athletics, tennis, base ball, roller skating and many other sports have all had their booms in this country, and cycling now has the time and attention of the public." Nevertheless, cycling is about the most rational and healthy craze that has taken hold of the people in a generation, and it bears unmistakable signs of robustness and long life.

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MRS. L. C. COREY

of Lincoln will have charge of the C. L. S. C. work during the assembly. Mrs. Corey is a live Chautauquan. She has been interested in this work many years and has attended many assemblies. All Chautauquans will immediately feel at home.

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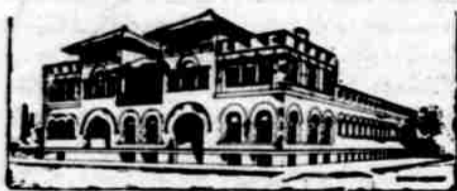
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