

STORIES IN PASSING.

There is one Lincoln lady who knows more about political slang than she did before the campaign. While the last republican convention was in session at St. Louis, she was reading the Journal one morning when she looked up and said:

"John, why do these politicians get their washing done just as soon as they get into a convention?"

"I didn't know they did," said John. "What makes you think so?"

"Why, in this paper it says that just as soon as the New York delegation got to Saint Louis, they proceeded to hold a meeting and wash all their dirty linen. What were they in such a hurry for? Couldn't they wait until they got home?"

Old Andy Thomas, the captain of the little gulf steamer, told me this one evening last summer as we were watching the sun sink slowly into the western waves.

"It happened during the Mexican war," he said softly. "We had captured a border town and taken up our quarters in the low, flat adobe houses. We had made the captured women prepare us supper, and were now outside, lounging about in the cool of the evening air.

"Suddenly the Mexicans rushed down between the shadowy houses. They had gotten together somehow and taken us unawares. It was all over in a moment. One sprang upon me from an angle of the house. But the very force of his assault saved me. We fell to the ground but I got him under me and held him by the throat. His dark, glinty eyes flashed fire into mine. There was no fear there; only deadly hate. I snatched the dagger from his hand, held it high, and sank it full in his breast. I felt him straighten out with a rattle in his throat. And from far up the town, the snatch of a love song floated out on the air."

"Mr. Marble, have you heard of the cattle disease that's going around? Here it says in the paper 'Bulls all sick and laid down!' What d'you suppose is the matter with them? Have you heard of any being sick about here?"

"That's the campaign kind. They're no good any more and have all been knocked in the head since election," said Mr. Marble, as he finished sorting out his campaign speeches from his other papers, and proceeded to put them in the stove.

Captain Guilfoyle, commandant of the university cadets, is credited with this story:

"I had graduated from West Point, but before going out to the post spent a few months visiting in the east. So, when I did arrive at the fort I fairly ached to get hold of a gun and do a little shooting. I picked up the first thing I could find, an old piece of the make of 1830, or somewhere near there. It was old and rusty, but I went out and banged away at the first thing I could find, a tin can standing up by a tree. That can was a can of dynamite. Of course it exploded. It tore up the tree and nearly everything in sight for fifty yards. How did I escape? Oh, that old gun kicked so hard, I was knocked back out of danger, a quarter of a mile from the explosion."

Suddenly the door of the big stone house on the corner opened and a man rushed hastily down the steps. His face was flushed. His eyes were flashing. He carried his hat and stick in one hand. The other was clenched in his coat pocket. He stumbled against the dog and muttered an oath.

On the pavement he faced about, clapped on his hat and angrily shook his fist at the house. Then he plunged down the street.

The breeze floated back the curtain of an open window for a moment. I

caught just a glimpse of a light lawn dress, and heard just the echo of a little laugh.

A certain Lincoln lawyer would perhaps have to explain to his wife if women were mentioned.

A servant girl who had been acting as cook in one of our Lincoln homes for a couple of weeks surprised the lady of the house by announcing that she must leave.

"Is the work too hard for you, Susan?"

"Oh, no, mum. I've no fault with the work."

"Don't you like me or my ways?" asked the lady.

"Oh, I've no objection to you, mum."

"Well, perhaps the children or Mr Jones?"

"That's it. The fact is Mr. Jones isn't sociable enough. He never comes into the kitchen to see me at all. Now at the last place I worked, Mr. Smith used to come down into the kitchen every morning and help me get breakfast. You see, I've kind of grown used to company and its lonesome here."

And the lady of the house let her go without another word.

I was but a boy at the time, but I can remember it as though it happened yesterday. We were down at the tracks 'doing dares,' when he challenged me to 'taste the rail.' Like a fool I did it and in a second my tongue was frozen fast. I jerked. I pulled. I kicked and yelled. But I was held to the spot.

And then far up the track I heard an approaching train. I could feel the bumping of the rails, the grinding of the wheels, the lurching of the trucks. And I could not move. Perspiration poured from my face. The chords of my neck stood out like great welts and I thought my back would break.

The train came nearer. It was like a roaring torrent. But above all the steady ringing of the bell was in my ears. I could feel the dust thrown against my face. I could see the shadow upon the track.

And then I gave a wrench that seemed to part my spinal cord and rolled down the bank, sobbing as if my heart would break.

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1.—She: George, what is that package in your hand?
George: Wait, dearest, until we are shown to our seats, and I'll explain.



2—You see, I sit on it like this, and whenever I want to see the stage I pull the lever; and—



3—I can see over hats, bass fiddlers and everthing else.