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A LITTLE HISTORY.

HOW THE UNITED STATES NARROWLY ESCAPED WAR WITH ENGLAND.

A Story That Has Been Handed Down from Thurlow Weed—When America Needed a Friend in Parliament the Election of One Was Assured.

(Special Correspondence.)

New York, March 10.—At a dinner party given by one of the most distinguished merchants of New York city recently the conversation over the coffee and cigars turned upon the question whether it was exactly a proper act for a citizen of the United States to contribute money to assist a political party in Great Britain, as has been done by the friends of the Irish parliamentary party in this country.

One or two of the gentlemen present were disposed to doubt the propriety of such action, although expressing entire sympathy for the Irish people.

"It has been done before," said one of the guests, a gentleman who is president of one of the largest banks in New York, "and was done in the time of our great national peril. I think the story has never been told. I heard it myself from Mr. Thurlow Weed, who in his old age was full of most delightful reminiscences."

Being urged, the bank president consented to tell this story, which has in it the suggestion of the narrow escape which the United States had from a war with England within a year of the time that the war of the rebellion broke out.

The story is as follows: In the summer of 1861 President Lincoln sent Thurlow Weed, Archbishop Hughes and Bishop McIlvane as special ambassadors to represent this government in Great Britain and France. The mission of this embassy was to prevent, if possible, the recognition of the Confederate states by Great Britain and France, for it was known that both these governments contemplated such an act. The feeling among the upper classes in Great Britain was one of sympathy with the Confederacy, while in France Louis Napoleon, then emperor, was known to be desirous of the success of the Confederate cause.

After the arrival of the embassy they found Great Britain inflamed by the capture of Mason and Slidell, the Confederate ambassadors who were passengers on the British steamship Trent. The feeling was most warlike, and it was shared by the British ministry. Earl Russell had prepared a note addressed through the British minister at Washington to the state department, which was in effect nothing less than a declaration of war. Its language was so offensive that Secretary Seward would have been compelled in behalf of the honor of the United States either to have refused to receive it or to have replied in kind. In either event Great Britain would have declared war.

Thurlow Weed was informed by George Peabody, the American banker living in London, that the situation was very critical, that troops were under orders to embark for Canada, and that war was imminent. Mr. Weed's duties at this time made it necessary for him to go to Paris, as he thought. On the eve of his intended departure an Englishman called upon him, saying that it was vital for the interests of the United States that he should remain. He would be invited to a lunch given by Lord Russell, and he would receive at that dinner party a hint of utmost consequence, which he could convey privately to his government.

This Englishman had been a member of parliament, but had been defeated for re-election. He was an enthusiastic admirer of the United States and in thorough sympathy with the Union side of the controversy then raging. He had given Mr. Weed and the other ambassadors aid of the greatest importance, and he was therefore to be trusted.

Mr. Weed postponed his trip to France, accepted the invitation of Lord and Lady Russell, and went on the next day with his daughter, Miss Harriet Weed, to the lunch given by Lord and Lady Russell. When lunch was announced, Lord Russell escorted Miss Weed, and Lady Russell, taking Mr. Weed's arm, said to him, with a manner of gentle courtesy: "Mr. Weed, do you know that you are on historic ground? There is no great hurry, and you may not have another opportunity to have the points of interest shown to you. For instance, yonder is the place where Henry VIII stood when his wife, Anne Boleyn, was being executed." Thus speaking, Lady Russell led Mr. Weed a little to one side. She pointed out other places of interest in that historic vicinity. She told him some traditional anecdotes of Henry VIII. Yet there was that in her manner which indicated to Mr. Weed that she had something of more immediate importance to communicate than historical anecdotes, no matter how interesting.

At last, when they were beyond the hearing of any of the company, Lady Russell said: "Mr. Weed, you know sometimes it is said that women cannot keep a secret. I do not believe this always to be true; but I am going to impart to you a little secret, not because I cannot keep it, but because I want you to know who your friends are. Do not be disturbed over the present situation. The queen and the prince consort are friends of your country, and when your government hears from ours in respect to the Trent matter it will hear in a manner which shows that peace is quite possible."

Mr. Weed thanked Lady Russell with the sincerity which he felt, saying that a great burden had been lifted from his mind. He also learned that in a day or two he would discover in what way the queen had served his government. That also happened. He met the English gentleman, who asked him whether he was satisfied that he had postponed his trip to France on account of anything which happened at Lord Russell's dinner. "Perfectly satisfied," said Mr. Weed, "and when the steamer reaches America

with the letter I have written, my government will be satisfied."

Then Mr. Weed was informed that the communication which Lord Russell had written which was so offensive in tone would never be sent, but in its place a letter courteous in language, friendly in tone, although firm in its demands, yet indicating to the government of the United States that Great Britain did not seek war. Such a letter was sent.

"When Lord Russell's letter was shown to the queen," said Mr. Weed's informant, "she read it in company with the prince consort, who was then at the beginning of what proved to be his last illness. They were shocked at the ferocity of the language used. The prince consort advised the queen to withhold her approval, and calling for pen and paper the prince consort erased the offensive language and substituted gentle and courteous sentences for the bellicose communication of Lord Russell. When he finished it the queen said that it met with her entire approval. She sent for Lord Russell and insisted that this letter be substituted for the one which he had submitted for her approval."

Mr. Weed at once communicated these facts to Mr. Seward, secretary of state, and this knowledge satisfied Mr. Lincoln and his administration that whatever the sentiment of the British aristocracy might be, the queen and prince consort would oppose the warlike tendency. This was the last official act the prince consort did. With this information it was easy for Secretary Seward to adjust the Trent matter in a manner entirely consistent with the dignity of the United States and thus to avert war.

Mr. Weed was so greatly impressed by the services the English gentleman had rendered in this emergency that he cultivated an intimate acquaintance with him. He found that this man had been defeated for re-election to parliament largely on account of his friendship for the United States. He had stood with John Bright and the few English commoners who expressed friendship for this country during that emergency.

"Is it not possible for you to return to parliament?" Mr. Weed asked this man one day.

"Alas," said he, "I am too poor. I cannot afford to expend the money which would be required for my election."

"But if you had this money, is there any opportunity for you to make a contest at present?" Mr. Weed asked.

"Yes, there is a bye election to occur in a few weeks, and if I could afford it I should make the contest."

"Why, how much would such a contest cost you? In the United States in many of the congress districts the personal cost to a candidate is trivial," said Mr. Weed.

"Ah, but it would cost £2,000 to make a successful contest here," said this man.

"That is \$10,000," said Mr. Weed, and then he changed the subject.

Before an hour had passed Mr. Weed called upon Charles Francis Adams, the American minister, and said to Adams, that here was a man who had been defeated because of his friendship for the United States, who would if in parliament be a vast aid to this country, and who could secure an election if he had a campaign fund of \$10,000. "And," continued Mr. Weed, "I think we ought to raise the money for him."

Adams held up his hands in something of holy horror. The proposition he declared was one which the American minister could not for an instant entertain. That evening Mr. Weed returning to his hotel met by mere chance the American minister to Belgium, Mr. Henry Sanford, and as soon as he saw him he threw his long arms around Sanford, saying that his appearance in London at that moment was almost providential.

Mr. Sanford was a very rich man, who had spent of his money freely for his government and who was conspicuous among the American ministers for the zeal which he had displayed in furthering the Union cause. No sooner had Weed got Mr. Sanford into his parlor than he told the story which he had but a little while before narrated to Mr. Adams.

"Why, he shall have the money of course," said Mr. Sanford; "at once. There is no doubt whatever about that." And he sat down upon the spot, wrote a check for \$10,000 and gave it to Mr. Weed, and on the next day this Englishman received from an anonymous source a Bank of England draft for £2,000 and was told to use it as a candidate for parliament, and within six weeks Mr. Weed had the gratification of seeing his friend win the contest. In parliament his services were of great value to the Union cause.

Mr. Weed never mentioned the name of this man directly, but the circumstances and some incidental facts all point to one individual as the person who thus aided the United States and whom Mr. Weed helped to secure a seat in parliament. He was the Hon. McCullagh Torrens. E. J. EDWARDS.

Quarantine Fees in New York. Every vessel from a foreign port pays an inspection fee of five dollars. Coasting vessels pay only one dollar for the same service. Night boarding fees are fifteen dollars and five dollars. The expenses of the department are met by these fees, which have increased to such an extent that the annual deficiency is small. Smallpox and typhus fever patients who are removed to North Brother's island pay a fee of twenty dollars each for transfer. Health Officer Jenkin's jurisdiction extends from Hell Gate to Sandy Hook.

The Pleasures of Leap Year. A clerk in a Main street store received an invitation to a leap year party this week, worded as follows: "I would be happy to have you come. You will not have to go home alone, for some girl will go home with you."—Springfield (Mass.) Homestead.

LIGHT AND AIRY.

Special Dispensation of Providence. He was singing "neath her window, where the moonbeams softly fell. "Marguerite!" he sang, and waited, waited for the magic spell.

Of his perfect execution and his cultured phrasing, too. His beloved one's close locked shutters very quickly he heard there may, perhaps. With a patience quite uncommon thus he waited, while the thaw Was creating some conditions that he heeded not, how say.

"Well, I guess I'll try another," quoth the youth, whose heart was light, And he opened up his flytrap for a song of wings so white:

Lifted up his beaming face there to the stars so clear and bright, Threw his head back, pushed his chest out, started in with all his might. But he hadn't got a note out when a blooming statuette

Made of cold and frozen water, downward swooped in sudden flight; Downward swooped and, disappearing, sank into him out of sight.

For his blest mouth was open—and they said it served him right. —Chicago Tribune.

Well Worth Reading. Roaming Journalist—I hear that the present owner of The Daily Blowhard is a rich old snoozer, who made a fortune in hams. Does he ever write anything worth reading?

Blowhard Man—You just be darned. He signs the checks.—New York Weekly.

Blank. Oh, Blank, the man who occupies The domicile in which I toil, Gets up at 10 o'clock each day And lights the fire with fragrant oil. Within his heart there may, perhaps, A thousand manly virtues bloom; But in my heart what ugly thoughts When I go in to sweep his room.

Detective stories scattered 'round Displays the literature he reads; There's shoes enough upon the floor To make one think of centipedes. And coal and ashes every where! Enough to fill my heart with gloom; For everything is upside down When Blank has left his room.

There's dirty water in the bowl, The towels are festooned on the bed; His clothing lies upon the floor, Perhaps where it was shed. Dire confusion reigns supreme; In anguish and despair I fume, For what's the use of cleaning up When Blank lives in the room? —Boston Courier.

A Smart Woman. Mother—Mercy on us! How did you test that lovely new suit of clothes all to pieces? Small Son—I was throwin stones at that new neighbor's cat and it run under their barn, and then she gave me ten cents to crawl under and chase it out.—Good News.

We Have All Been There. There is a feeling of unrest That lies upon my soul; Earth has no charms for me at all; Life has no flowing bowl.

A sad and melancholy night, I'm feeling mighty gloom; I'm going to a ball tonight, And my collars haven't come. —Clothing and Furnisher.

Not a Love Story. Caller—Can you use this story? Editor—What's the name of it? Caller—"The Golden Marriage." Editor—We don't use love stories. Caller—This isn't a love story. She married him for his money.—Yankee Blagie.

Her Answer. "Just one little word," he pleaded, Kneeling humbly at her feet; "Just one word," he softly whispered, "That will make my joy complete."

But the maiden's gentle answer Was to him a cruel blow. For, although she said it kindly, The one little word was "No." —Somerville Journal.

Joking That Is Practical. She—Oh, it's fun, I tell you, to flirt with a man till you get him to propose and then say "No."

He—Yes, but I should think it would be a greater joke on him to say "Yes."—Sparks.

Latest from Gotham. She turns up her nose when the Four Hundred's named. For she wants you to know that that isn't her set; Of a crowd so promiscuous as that she's ashamed. She belongs to the Hundred and Fifty, you bet! —New York Press.

Pleasantest Part. He (preparing to leave)—I assure you, Miss Smarte, the time has passed very pleasantly this evening. She (abstractedly)—Yes, it is pleasant to know that it is past.—Boston Transcript.

Hard Lines. "This said," the poet said and rose In grief from her to go, "That all the songs which I compose Should discompose you so." —Washington Star.

Wonders of Phrenology. Phrenologist (delightedly)—My friend, you were born to command. Are you a soldier? Dignified Stranger—No, sor. Ol'm a janitor.—New York Weekly.

Lost. The overcoat we wore last spring 'Twill soon be time to wear. But Fate's unkind, we cannot find The ticket any where. —Clothing and Furnisher.

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A TRUE STORY OF THE PRODIGAL SON.

It was towards the close of a bright summer's day that the prodigal son arrived at the paternal mansion. He had come by the quickest route, "The Burlington." The sun was declining in the west—the only thing that does decline west of Chicago except base ball—and its slanting rays threw a golden tint upon the gray hairs of the aged father who sat on the front porch reading the last "Burlington Route" advertisement.

The gate opened, and the old man peering over his spectacles discerned a ragged tramp coming up the walk. He was about to set the dog on him, in accordance with the usual custom of that hospitable region, when the tramp came up, removed a dilapidated hat rim which encircled his brow, and cried, "father, don't you know me?" "Know you?" returned the old man, after scrutinizing him a moment over his spectacles, "I would know you if I saw your hide hanging in a tan yard, it's my own lost b-boy!" Then the fond parent fell upon his son's neck and wept—wept because it was so dirty, it hadn't been washed since Christmas, but he took him in all the same, gave him a bath and a new suit of clothes and then walked him down to the B. & M. depot to see to what perfection the "Burlington" had brought their passenger train service. 'Twas marvelous, and the prodigal son straightway registered a solemn vow that his children and his children's children for all time to come should recognize the "Burlington" as the one great railway whose equipment was always UP TO DATE.

We don't know how this legend of the prodigal son came down through the ages so accurate and free from side issues, but it's here, intact and unnumbered, ready to adorn a back cover or point a moral. The moral of this story is: if you would prosper in this world, travel only by the "Burlington Route."

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