THE PATH TO PERDITION.

By LOUIS VINCENT DE FOE.

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From the window of Deacon Birdsell's house the bright rays of a lamp marked the forks of the country road which led to the right, past the old Quaker meeting house, and, to the left, through the worldly and iniquitous village called into existence only a year before by the coming of the new railroad.

This little cluster of houses, a mushroom growth of unpainted boards, included, besides a blacksmith shop and general store, both welcome enough in their way, a tavern conducted on wide-open principles, under the name of Lowden's Half-Way house, which had speedily brought the locality into general disrepute. No one had discovered toward what goal it marked the half-way point, unless it was that goal of torment which is the ending of every career of intemperate profligacy.

In the dining room, which served likewise as a sitting room, the deacon was carefully gleaning stray scraps of wisdom from the columns of the Michigan Agriculturist, the silence of the house disturbed only by the loud ticking of the farm clock on the shelf in the corner and the busy click of knitting needles in the deft fingers of Mrs. Birdsell. It was characteristic of the deacon that he always postponed his study of the agricultural until after the harvest, when the information he might gain was sure to be of least value to him.

Presently the clock tolled the hour of 8, lingering long, it seemed, upon the final stroke. Deacon Birdsell started suddenly.

"Mother," he said, "don't you know it's gettin' pretty late?"

Mrs. Birdsell paused in surprise and dropped the half-finished sock in her lap.

"Eight and after, an' it's high time folks was abed," said the deacon. "Did you shut down the back window an' bolt the kitchen door? An' Joel—of course, Joel's in."

As if in answer to the deacon's question, the quavering, uncertain notes of a song sifted through the ceiling from the chamber above.

"Sh!" Mrs. Birdsell said, holding up her finger in warning.

The song from the chamber above gradually became more distinct until a word could be understood here and there in its uncertain rhythm. It bore a distant resemblance to one of the popular songs of the day heard with great frequency in the neighboring town, but justly abhorred for its worldly insinuations in the peaceful Quaker church neighborhood.

"William," exclaimed Mrs. Birdsell in a trembling voice, "somethin' must be done right away. It's gettin' just awful! It's been weighin' on my mind until sometimes I get that nervous."

The deacon gathered his shaggy gray brows and stroked his angular, unshaven chin in silence for a moment. "I hate to think of it, Joel," he observed thoughtfully, "but I guess it must be true. Have you been noticin' anything else lately, Martha?" The deacon seldom addressed his wife by her given name except on occasions of great solemnity.

"Anythin'! Good land alive!" Mrs. Birdsell swept her hands around her head as if she was warding off a swarm of impending evil. "It's gettin' worser and worser every day," she exclaimed with great earnestness, "an' the worst part of it all is he's gettin' that brazen about it—to think, too, William, that he's your own brother!" The song began again in the chamber above, this time accompanied by the unmistakable sound of shuffling feet.

"Just listen to that, now," she went on. "I guess you can hear it for yourself!"

"Yes, mother, you're right," pronounced the deacon reflectively, slowly nodding his head in the affirmative. "Poor Joel is certainly goin' straight to the—I was almost goin' to say devil, an' here we are, you an' me, sittin' with our hands folded, not doin' a blessed thing to put him right."

"It didn't get real bad 'till the middle of June—leastwise Joel didn't take to goin' out nights 'till then." Mrs. Birdsell squinted thoughtfully through her glasses as if to look into the past. "I first suspicioned him circus day over in the town, when he spent all that money for a box of cellars an' them red and green neckties. He seemed right ashamed of 'em, too—that is to say at first he did."

"When was it he spoke to you about creasin' his pant legs?"

"Why, dear me, you ain't forgotten that, have you? It was the very same day he come out from town bringin' his tail coat. I'll never forget that! He was precious careful to keep that ridic'lous thing out of my sight an' when he spoke about the pants he blushed like a boy. He says to me, 'Martha, sometime when you've got a flatiron on I wish you'd press out my gray pants an' leave 'em creased before and behind. Folks say, nowadays, it keeps 'em from wearin' out so quick.' I almost gave him a piece of my mind right then an' there. I says, 'Joel Birdsell! An' at your time in life, too.' He didn't say another word, but went off upstairs that ashamed—an' that very night was the first time in the twenty years he stayed out till after midnight!"

Deacon Birdsell clasped his long fingers around his bony knee and bowed his head.

"If I do say it, I watched him from the window when he went out," Mrs. Birdsell earnestly continued, "an' I seen him tramp straight off toward the tavern. 'Twasn't the last time I've seen him, either."

The deacon suddenly started up and thumped his fist hard upon the table. "Them Lowdens will get to prison yet!" he burst out with indignation. "'Twould be a true religious act to see their cussed dram shop on fire! I'd do it, too, if—"

Mrs. Birdsell reached across the table to place a restraining hand upon her husband's arm, but the tips of her fingers barely touched his shirt sleeve. "William," she said in a more composed tone, "we mustn't get excited. What we need to do is to tend to Joel's case. The Lord that judges between the righteous an' the unrighteous will tend to the Lowdens himself."

Before such an undeniable exposition of truth the farmer's anger slowly subsided.

"You know the time Joel washed the buggy an' went to town?" Mrs. Birdsell went on. "He didn't get back that night 'till a quarter past twelve, an' he took his boots off before he come into the house. I know all about it because he clean forgot 'em an' left 'em on the porch."

"You wouldn't call them things boots, would you?" The deacon threw his whole available fund of sarcasm into the words.

"Gaiters, I mean," corrected Mrs. Birdsell, quickly. "An' that's another thing. Just to think of a man takin' to gaiters after boots has been good enough for him for fifty years! It's a sure sign, William."

"Yes, mother, that's the long and the short of it. Gaiters may be a small thing in themselves, but in Joel's case they help powerful to show what fast livin' and strong drink will do, once a man gets goin' in the wrong way."

The deacon started suddenly at the meaning of his own words. A spade had finally been called a spade. Mrs. Birdsell straightway began to sob audibly, while her husband searched abstractedly for his handkerchief, which he finally produced from the armhole of his vest.

Joel Birdsell filled the place of a son not only in the hearts, but in the home of the deacon and his wife. Back in the 50s, when a heavy timber still covered what is now the rich, rolling farmland of lower Michigan, William Birdsell had gone forth from the circumscribed acres of the homestead in Vermont to win a place for himself in the world, with only a young wife and his own grit to aid him. Then Michigan was not the farmers' Eldorado it afterward came to be. But the house in which he still lived was built, and then Joel, the next younger by three years, was sent for to share the increasing fortunes—incidentally to lend a helping hand in the running of the farm.

And Joel—he was a shining example of New England stagnation. Never inclined to marry, always content with a kind of helpless dependence upon his brother and sister, whose home had not been brightened by the advent of children, he grew more and more to be the object of parental solicitude to the farmer and his wife. He was satisfied with his unique position and gradually the horizon of his life came to be bounded by the views and wishes of the two foster parents.

Mrs. Birdsell was the first to break the oppressive silence. "William," she said, "there's no use puttin' it off any longer. Suppose we call Joel down now—this very night—an' point out to him like—tell him—that is to say, ask him—" She hesitated. The task seemed greater when framed in words.

"Sh!" The exclamation escaped the pair at the same instant.

In the chamber above the song began again. This time the words were loud and distinct, although the tune was still doubtful. Silently the couple followed the lines:

I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls—

Not a word was uttered until the verse ended. Mrs. Birdsell was busy making a mental analysis of the meaning of the words—their import seemed beyond a doubt.

"It's a real gamblin' house tune," she pronounced, with assurance born of conviction, although there was a trembling in her voice. "I've heard all about the infernal places. All marble an' glass an' electric lights an' polished woodwork."

The squeaking, heavy footsteps grew louder. The culprit was certainly coming down the stairs. Now the door opened and he walked into the dining room. Mrs. Birdsell looked straight in front of her. The deacon hastily snatched the Agriculturist from the table.

Joel appeared surprised to find the rest of the family keeping late hours. "Still settin' up," he asked, innocently enough, but in the ears of the others the words had a guilty ring.

From the corner of her eyes Mrs. Birdsell was taking a quiet inventory of incriminating evidence. There was the red necktie encircling the stand-up collar that sagged out in tired fashion at the front. The long-tailed coat was there, too. She wished that she had the forethought to put on her spectacles, for she knew that proper scrutiny would detect faint creases in front of the bagging gray pants. As for the shoes—the noise on the stairs had already told its own story.

"Well, I guess I'll walk out for a little bit," he went on, taking no notice of the unusual restraint. "The sky's as clear as a bell, an' it seems just shameful to stay in. Won't have many more nights like this."

"It's time honest folks was abed an' asleep." The deacon's voice grated harshly, as he, too, rose to his feet to confront the culprit.

"That's just one of your notions, William." Joel answered with a faint laugh. "Come now, night's just as good as day. I don't see the difference. Just leave the key to the dining room door under the stone by the steps an' I'll get in all right."

There was no reply.

"An' that reminds me," the culprit went on, "the next time I go to town I'm goin' to have that key along with me an' have one made like it. No use talkin' a man ought to have a latch key."

This last worldly whim, more significant than anything else, more even than the reckless display of the costume—fell with astounding weight on the farmer and his wife. It was nothing less than the limit of moral depravity. In the suddenness of the shock there was no chance for reply. Joel hesitated a moment, then picked up his hat and was gone.

The deacon and his wife remained seated, rigid with consternation, until they heard him step off the porch. Then with one accord they arose and tiptoed to the parlor window. Peering out into the darkness they watched him walk through the yard to the gate and then turn off the road in the direction of the tavern, the lights of which twinkled dimly half a mile away across the left fork of the road.

"The time's come, Martha," the deacon burst out. "Joel will hear from me the first thing tomorrow mornin'! He's got to shut off his scand'lous, drunken ways instanter, or by the Lord! he'll never stay another day under my roof!"

Mrs. Birdsell was fairly struck dumb before her husband's awful denunciation. It was the first time in her married life that he had so ruthlessly broken the third commandment, and she laid herself down to broken sleep and troubled dreams.

The first gleam of the rising sun was already painting gold and purple hues in the eastern sky when the deacon slowly roused to the troubles of a new day. Quickly throwing on his working clothes he hastened to the foot of the stairs.

"Joel!" he called to the upper chamber, "Joel, be stirrin'! The sun's more'n an hour high! We've overslept scand'lous!"

No answer came from above.

"Joel!" This time there was an angry ring in the word.

And still no answer.

The deacon did not call again, but started briskly for the stables, his heavy boot heels making dark half-circles in the light frost that covered the ground. He was surprised again to find the heavy doors thrown wide open to the morning breezes. Sounds were issuing from within, and, as he paused, he heard his brother Joel's voice lifted in song, the rhythm punctuated by the steady "swish" of milk against the bottom and sides of the tin milk can.

The absolute unexpectedness of the situation caused the deacon to hesitate in doubt for a moment on the threshold. Bending slightly forward and listening attentively he managed to catch the words:

Bet my money on the old bay mare,
Somebody bet on the gray—

The doggerel had only one meaning to the deacon. It was a shameless defense of horse racing, an unholy pastime into which he had gained some insight through the innocent medium of country fairs.

"Mornin', William!" The greeting was fresh and cheery—surely not spoken with the languor that is supposed to follow a night of debauchery. "Guess you kind of overslep'. Must be you and mother kept late hours!"

"IT'S TIME HONEST FOLKS WAS ABED AND ASLEEP."

"There's one way you might o' knowed how late hours mother an' me kept." The deacon's answer bristled with harsh insinuation, but it was all lost on the erring one. Whistling softly to himself, he picked up the milk pails again and started for the house while the deacon, mystified and angered, clambered up the perpendicular ladder to the hay loft. He threw down a generous quantity of sweet smelling clover to the neighing, impatient horses below and then leaned meditatively upon the fork handle to arrange in his mind the admonitory talk which he was more certain than ever alone intervened between his brother and irredeemable damnation.

The morning meal in the little farm house was not as comforting as usual, particularly for the farmer and his wife. It might have been noticed that the deacon lingered long and fervently over the thanks which he invariably offered up from his board. It might have been noticed also that appended to those fervent thanks was an earnest supplication that Divine Providence in Its all-seeing wisdom might not judge harshly the weakness of his erring children, all of which was lost on Joel, inasmuch as it was well known to be a part of the deacon's religious philosophy to regard all earthly beings as weak and sinful in the eyes of the Lord. As for the deacon, he was surprised to note that Joel's appetite seemed even better than usual.

The meal finished, Mrs. Birdsell arose and from force of habit began to clear away the dishes.

"Joel," the deacon said, trying to appear natural and at ease, although in spite of himself there was a threatening ring in his voice, "supposin' you walk down to the barn with me for a moment. I've got somethin' I'd like to talk over with you this mornin'."

Joel had picked up his hat and had started toward the door. "Better put it off till dinner, William," he replied carelessly. "I'm an hour late now getting to the creamery, an'"—

"Then the creamery can wait! I want you should do what I say! D' you hear?"

"All right, then; must be somethin' terrible pressin'. What's on your mind?" Joel detected a stern look on his brother's face and sensibly concluded that argument was a waste of time.

The deacon did not wait to make further reply, but started out of the house, motioning for his brother to follow him. Silently leading the way, he sought the seclusion of the store room, where a nondescript collection of sleighs and bobsleds stood, covered and festooned with a summer's accumulation of dust and cobwebs. The silence of the place was impressive and in its selection the good man prided himself on the exercise of a neat bit of strategy. Furthermore, it removed the most remote danger of interruption.

For some time the deacon sat in silence, his cold eyes sharply fixed upon his brother's face. Then, when the suspense had begun to grow painful, he cleared his throat with evident effort and spoke, carefully weighing every word.

"Joel," he said, "I've come down here to talk to you man to man an' I'm in earnest. It's hard, but it's got to be done. It's been on my mind for a long time."

"I hope there ain't any trouble, William." The shadow of an impending calamity had gradually formed before Joel's eyes and his face wore a pale and anxious look.

"Trouble? Yes, there is trouble, and plenty of it. The truth is, I've been—mother and I've been—watchin' you now this last six months, an' what you've been doin' is scand'lous!" An expression of surprise spread itself over Joel's face and his eyes sought the floor in embarrassment. The deacon noted the quick change and his last lingering doubt instantly vanished. His face wore a look clearly defined.

"Yes, Joel," he continued, with greater earnestness, "there's no use denyin' it now. Mother an' me—"

"I ain't denyin' nothin', William."

The deacon started suddenly and bit his lips with anger. The last thing he had anticipated was a frank acknowledgment of guilt. It came so unexpectedly that he hardly knew how to go on, yet he realized that the best way to approach the crisis was by successive steps. The culprit exhibited no further willingness to speak in self-defense, so the deacon plunged in again.

"Yes," he repeated, "we knowed all about you right along. We suspicioned you when you took to high-fangled notions about stand-up collars and gay neckties; we was sure of it when you took to spendin' your money on tail coats an' such, an' then," dropping his voice to an insinuating whisper and punctuating each word with a pause, "we finally saw through the whole thing when you took to goin' out late nights."

Before such an accumulation of evidence Joel hung his head. His expression changed gradually from embarrassed confusion to guilty assurance, while with the feet of his boot he unconsciously drew parallel lines on the dusty barn floor.

"Well, what of it, William?" he asked, with a faint smile. "What if you have?"

"What of it?" The deacon repeated the words with angry surprise.

"Yes, what of it? I don't see the good of makin' a fuss about it, anyway."

The deacon swallowed something that seemed to rise in his throat to choke his words. "What of it?" he repeated again angrily. "Why, man, you have gone clean mad? Can't you see that if you keep on it's goin' to make your life a regular hell on earth?"

Even the unpleasant prospect of immediate earthly perdition seemed to have no effect upon the culprit. His confusion did not diminish, but his smile broadened to a faint laugh. Then he looked thoughtful and said:

"I shouldn't hardly think you'd like to say that, William."

"Say it, man alive! Why don't I know it? Do you think I've been livin' all these years for nothin'? Ain't it always that way?"

The deacon spoke the words in an angry treble accompanied by an impatient and deprecating gesture. "An' besides, Joel," he went on, his voice rising to a still higher key, "look at it this way, if it ain't too late. You've got a little money put by in the savin's bank. How long do you suppose its' goin' to last if you keep on?"

To a financial consideration of the question Joel made no immediate answer. He seemed to be actually reckoning up the costs. After meditating quietly for a little while, he composedly replied:

"Well, suppose it does cost a little more? I guess it's worth the difference."

The calm reduction of moral depravity to a matter of dollars and cents brought the deacon to his feet with an impatient start.

"An' your friends—your new friends!" he exclaimed, "what do you suppose they'll do when your money's gone! Are they goin' to stand by you then?"

"Come, William, you talk as if I was goin' to commit a crime instead of just followin' out a man's natural way. There ain't much danger of starvin' anyhow." Joel's impatience, too, was beginning to show itself. "If you're goin' to go back on me now, well, I suppose there's other places I can go to. I wasn't expectin' to stay in the old house much longer, anyhow. But I didn't think this of you, William. It ain't deserved for you to get mad."

"Tryin' to play reproachful, eh! Just look back over the last thirty years or more. Ain't I always been all a brother could be? Ain't Martha been more'n a flesh an' blood sister could be? An' how about your home? Ain't it been all a reasonable man could want?"

The deacon's voice trembled a little as he rapidly summed up the list of unappreciated kindnesses.

"Well, William, I ain't forgettin' all that—not a bit of it. But what if a man, after a while, gets tired of livin' day in an' day out in a rut? What if he wants to get out into a bigger, better life. I suppose I wouldn't thought of it if the railroad hadn't been put through. I got to goin' there first when they was layin' the tracks. Well, that was all right enough an' then——"

"That'll do. Enough of that! I won't hear it from your lips."

"An then——"

"Stop, man! I say, stop, in the name of what little regard for decency you've got left! I won't hear from you! I didn't come out here to listen to your boastin' an' plumin' yourself about your reckless, senseless goin' on."

Then the deacon's bloodless lips trembled as he fairly thundered the command and shook his clenched fist in unbridled wrath. "I won't have it made any worse by your goin' into all the details of what you did," he went on, hotly. "I wanted you to listen to reason an' I wanted to talk to you like a brother. But there ain't any reason left in you. It's gone too far an' Martha an' I'm too late. You're proud of that broader life you talk about, are you? All right, then; now listen to what I've got to say. The way's still open to you to turn over a new leaf an' come back and be one of us, as you was before the Lowdens and their tavern came to Quaker Church. It's got to be one or the other an' you've got to decide right now. Either you quit this new, broader life that you've been harpin' on or you must get along without Martha an' me from this day for'ard."

The deacon pronounced the sentence in excited, impassioned tones. "The way's open, which do you take?" he repeated, wiping away the beads of cold sweat that stood out upon his brow.

Joel's flushed face turned pale at the deacon's words. They cut him like a sharp knife, and his brother knew it. But quickly the scornful look returned, and he met the issue squarely half way. Without a tremor he stepped close to his brother, and, placing his hand gently on the other's shoulder, exclaimed: "William, William, if it was the last thing on earth, I didn't expect this of you! If it was anybody else, I'd a said he'd gone clean crazy. You an' mother never did circulate much around among the neighbors, but I never once had an idea either of you had anything against Miss' Cook. I can't understand it. Her husband's been dead for three years now, an' durin' that whole time she's hardly been outside her dooryard. It's goin' to be hard to tell her that this is our weddin' present from you an' Martha, but I can do it, an' I will. One thing has got to be settled between you an' me, howsomever"—here Joel's words became deliberate and foreboding—"I ain't goin' to stand up an' listen to anybody throw miserable slurs on the woman that's goin' to be my wife—not even you, my own brother, an' a deacon in the church, who ought to be above such a thing. I want you to understand that if the Lowden boys did build their tavern across from her house, she ain't responsible nor the worse for it! An' as far as that place is concerned, I hate it worse than you do. It's hurt her property scand'lous!"

Wedding bells often ring out in unexpected places. Their notes are the sweeter when they sound above the din of discord. In vain the deacon, perplexed and confused, his excited mind in a whirl, tried to interrupt Joel's words. Then he gave up the attempt and grasped weakly at the objects near him for support. He could only gasp: "Miss' Cook—you marry Miss' Cook—the Widow Cook at the crossin'—I—you—"

"We've been thinkin' it over ever since the day the circus was in town. An' last night we fixed it all up an' decided to hitch."

"Lord save us all! Joel, I—" It was too much for the deacon and his strength deserted him. His knees bent beneath his weight and his voice dropped to an inaudible whisper. He leaned upon the sleigh and rubbed his eyes as if to bring back his scattered senses. Then he suddenly found his voice again. "Is that the meanin' of it all? Is that where you've been goin' evenin' after evenin' when mother an' me thought you was at the Lowdens? Say somethin', man! Are you struck clean dumb?"

The scornful look had left Joel's face and the suggestion of a triumphant smile played around the corners of his mouth as he watched the successive stages of his brother's collapse. But malice was not a part of Joel Birdsell's makeup. He answered the deacon's question with a question: "You ain't forgot, William," he asked seriously, "the day you an' me signed the pledge back in Vermont? Well, I've kept my share of it to this day. But I never signed a pledge not to get married."

"But you didn't tell us."

"I didn't have nothin' for sure to tell till last night. You know how courtin' is, William. A man don't like to speak right out—"

Once again the deacon swallowed something that seemed to choke his words. "God bless you both," he said, and his voice trembled as he spoke. Then he added quickly: "Perhaps you'll forget the hard things I said. You see—"

"It's just the same as if you hadn't ever spoke 'em," Joel interrupted. "An' now perhaps there's time yet to go over to the creamery. Supposin' you tell Martha about it while I'm gone."

The quavering notes of a song awakened the deacon from a deep brown study as he stood alone in the middle of the storeroom floor. Listening, he caught the words until they were lost in the rattle of the wagon wheels:

Bet my money on the old bay mare,
Somebody bet on the gray.

The deacon did not stir until the sound had died away in the distance. Then he left the barn and slowly walked up the path to the farmhouse. As he reached the porch he hesitated a moment. "Darn my fool picture," he said to himself. "I might have knowed it! But it's a good joke on mother, anyhow!"

Then he entered the kitchen, closing the door behind him.

FREIGHT CAR VANISHES.

One of the Most Remarkable Accidents in History of Railroading.

The most remarkable of all railroad accidents occurred on the Chicago & Alton railroad near Atlanta, Ill., last Sunday night, when a loaded car jumped out of a freight train and lodged in a ditch and the train coupled up and reached its destination without the crew either knowing that an accident had occurred or missing the car from the train.

Charles Bragnell of Roodhouse, Ill., the conductor of the train, tells the story. He says:

"When I delivered my train I was told that I was a car short. I thought a mistake must have been made in checking me up. I was called up for an explanation. The clerical record showed plainly enough that I had taken out of East St. Louis a car of hard coal that I had never delivered. I had lost it some place between East St. Louis and Bloomington. I couldn't explain it. We had made up a heavy train, put two engines in front of it and a caboose behind it, and when I delivered it would have sworn that it stood just as we had made it up, and that every car left or added along the line was accounted for.

"The next morning one of the passenger crews reported a coal car wrecked in the ditch near Atlanta. When it was looked up it proved to be the car I had lost. The superintendent asked me why I had not reported the wreck. It was news to me and it was news to the whole crew. We knew nothing about it. It seems impossible that it could have occurred and not have been seen, but it did. If I had read of such a thing happening upon another road I would not have believed it.

"The car that jumped out of my train was the eleventh behind the engine. It was loaded with hard coal and I suppose we were running something over twenty miles an hour where the car jumped out. The train was coupled up with automatic couplers and when this car left its place the twelfth car, just behind it, came up and coupled on at the rear of the tenth car."

The Chicago & Alton experts have agreed that this remarkable loss of a car out of the middle of a rapidly running train of twenty-one loaded cars can be explained in but one way. The flange of a front truck wheel upon the car wrecked is broken and just below the point where the car lodged the ties are marked as though by a car off the track. The couplers catch with what is commonly known as "the Indian grip," catching automatically. When the flange of the coal car broke, it is reasoned, the car left the track at that end and uncoupled itself from the car ahead by pulling one of the couplers, or hands, below the plane of the other. At the same time the coupler at the other end sank below the plane of its mate and uncoupled the car there, and, by some peculiar wrench, the uncoupled car was shot out of the train and left fifty feet from the track, while the trainmen were all unconscious how very near they had been to a bad wreck and death.

It is related among railroad men that an occurrence very like that at Atlanta happened years ago on the Lehigh Valley, where a car left its train and rolled down a long embankment and into a thick underbrush just leafing in early summer. The trainmen did not see the car go and it was not known that they had lost it until the train was checked up and a car proven missing. In a little while the greening vegetation entirely hid it and the disappearance of the car of valuable merchandise became the chief mystery of the road. When the leaves fell in the autumn the car was found and the freight which filled it was recovered with very little loss. The lost car of the Lehigh was not, though, as remarkably lost as the Chicago & Alton car, for the Lehigh car was the last upon a train and could easily escape, while the Chicago & Alton car left the middle of the train.

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Vaccination Marks.

Louisville Commercial: Genial Jim Camp was a much disgusted man at the opera Thursday night. There was Zelie de Lussan trilling haunting little gypsy melodies as if she were indeed of the Romany race, and yet the big audience treated her with a silence that was almost appalling. That was the case at first.

Of course they awoke and after they recovered from their self-consciousness gave the great singer and actress the plaudits she so richly merited. But this incident occurred during the period of silence.

"Did you ever see such an audience?" exclaimed Jim, fretfully; "they don't seem to like her work!"

"Oh, no, that isn't so," said a bright girl sitting next to him. "The men can't applaud because they have been vaccinated, and the women can't stamp their dainty feet for the same reason." Jim relapsed into grim silence.

A Poor Speller.

Boston Pilot: It was not Artemus Ward of whom such a remark was made, but it was Artemus Ward himself who said: "Some kind person has sent me Chawcer's poems. Mr. C. had talent, but he couldn't spel. No man has a right to be a litrary man unless he knows how to spel. It is a pity that Chawcer, who had geneyus, was so unedicated. He's the wuss speller I know of."

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