



From the Gleaner for 1844.

THE UNKNOWN BELLE.

I am no lover of mystery. Enigmas are my detestation. When a boy, studying Ovid, I used to regard the conduct of Sphinx with unmitigated disgust. I considered her the most intolerable of antique horrors, and Elphus a patient dunce. The proceedings of Alexander in cutting the Gordian knot, instead of puzzling himself by attempting to untie it, met with my hearty approval. I loved him from the moment I was made aware of that incident in his career. But when a mystery comes in the shape of a pretty woman, that is a different matter altogether. My antipathies give way like blocks of ice before a spring freshet. Listen to my story.

It was one of the gayest of the gay seasons at Washington. The first of a series of brilliant balls at the White House had commenced. The east room was crowded with all the beauty, resident and transitory, of the District. Foreign Ministers and attaches, with their stars, garters, ribbons, breeches and silk stockings; members of Congress with their thumbs in the arm-holes of their waistcoats, Indian chiefs, deputed by their tribes, with their plumes and painted features, office-holders, office-seekers, idlers and lobby-loungers, were the principal constituents of the male portion of the assemblage. Add to these some hundreds of invited guests, who came because they felt they had a proprietary interest in the mansion, and an idea may be formed of the density and mixed character of the crowd.

Half a dozen quadrilles and waltz had been completed. A number of the more provident and sagacious of the guests had begun to take up the line of march toward the supper room; and the dancers, tired of jostling one another, were endeavoring to retreat, when one of the managers called upon the gentlemen to form a new cotillon, and at the same time, causing the staiders by to fall back, opened a circle, and then led forth from the dense throng, from which she seemed to emerge like the evening star from behind a cloud, a young and beautiful female. A general murmur of surprise and admiration greeted her appearance.

"Who can she be?" "Did any one ever see her before?" "What a figure!" "What a face!" were the hasty whispers exchanged among the spectators. So great was the anxiety to see her, that the space cleared for the dancers was almost immediately filled up. No one seemed able to give the slightest information as to who she was, when or whence she came. It all seemed to me, for a moment, a fairy-like delusion. Was I not at the ball given by Prince Fortunatus, and was not this Cinderella herself? I glanced down at her feet; they were marvelously small and the glossy white satin slippers shone like glass. The delusion grew stronger. Never before had I experienced the potency of the imagination. I began to wonder whether or not she would disappear in coarse attire when the clock struck twelve.

I was roused from my reverie by being seized by the hand by the manager, (at the moment I took him for Prince Fortunatus) who had hastily introduced me as a partner to the fair unknown, and as I afterwards learned, bestirred himself to keep back the crowd, and create room for the quadrille. How dazzlingly beautiful she was! Ordinary beauties may be described in detail, but Miss Smith (yes that was the name by which she was introduced to me) startled you by the perfect unity of her charms. You could not pick out one feature or one quality as beautiful, because it was a part of a perfectly beautiful whole, and was therefore faultless, as a matter of course. Her countenance was a lucid mirror of every passing thought and emotion of her soul; and if occasionally the expression was melancholy, it was always lovely, like a mountain lake, the aspect of which no change of sky can render less picturesque, but in which every change develops new beauties.

It took a minute or two to rally my thoughts and recollections, and to convince myself that I had neither walked into the wrong room nor the wrong century. The lady spoke first. Her voice touched me like an Arabian harp, it was so musically sad. Some young fops of my acquaintance twined me by the elbow, and, by significant winks, indicated their wish to be introduced. Miss Smith penetrated their designs, and said to me, in a doubtful and confidential tone: "Don't introduce any to me but members of Congress." The remark puzzled me excessively, but I bowed my acquiescence.

We squeezed through the quadrille with tolerable success; and as the gentleman manager, who had assigned the fair cognita to my charge, did not make her appearance, I was soliciting myself with the idea that she would accompany me to the supper room, when slightly pressing my arm with her hand, she directed my attention to a young gentleman, who had been gazing at her with undisguised symptoms of admiration, and asked if he were not Mr. K—, the member from New York.

I replied in the affirmative. "He is quite a favorite with the old Roman, is he not?" asked the lady. "Undoubtedly, and in the lower house he is fast acquiring influence." "Is he married?" "Yes," I replied, confounded at the quiet, business-like manner in which the question was put.

"Then introduce him," said Miss Smith. "Certainly. But why is it that you are less merciful than that great Indian chief, who gave such a connoisseur-like glance at your flowing hair?"

"He contents himself with taking scalps; but you—you must have hairs!" She answered only by a melancholy smile and shake of the head; and I forthwith introduced Mr. K— to her.

Puzzled and chagrined, I made my way to the supper room, where I was instantly assailed by a shower of questions from the ladies, of compliments from the gentlemen, whose importunities I had disregarded. Murmurs, low but deep, were uttered against me, when it was found that I had elicited nothing from my late partner that could allay the general curiosity in regard to her. All that I could communicate was, that she was Miss Smith; and every one seemed to regard this piece of intelligence as involving the subject in profound obscurity. The lady's remark in regard to members of Congress, I kept to myself.

A series of brilliant entertainments, given by the hospitable and noble-spirited residents of Washington, succeeded the ball at the White House. At all of them Miss S. was present, and at all of them she was indisputably the belle of the evening. Perhaps the appellation is a wrong one, apart from her dazzling beauty, there was little of the self-assured and flattered belle in her appearance and demeanor. Her conversation was always cheerful and unforced; but an interested observer (and I acknowledge I soon became one) could detect beneath her apparent gaiety the pre-occupation of a heart filled with some secret sorrow. This conviction soon checked the tendency of my feelings towards her, and I had not met her three times before the lover was merged in the friend.

Still the mystery as to who she was and whence she came was kept up. All that the most inquisitive observer could discover was, that she resided in a respectable private family at Georgetown, the Mistress of which, (Mrs. Bothwell), though she did not go into society herself, yet held that position which would secure an entrée to any young female under her protection. On being questioned on the subject of Miss Smith, Mrs. Bothwell would reply that she could vouch for her respectability; but, beyond that, she knew nothing in regard to her parentage or history. Of course, this half way intelligence contributed still further to pique public curiosity, and to render the unknown belle still more an object of marvel and of interest. The fact that no one among the throngs that daily visited Washington, from all parts of the Union and of the world, had ever seen her or heard of her before, also added to the general perplexity. Several young men attempted to lay direct siege to her heart and immure her in the palaces and the serenades with which they endeavored to facilitate their approaches; but they ejected from her an encouragement. She received their attentions with sad civility, and, as soon as possible, got rid of them, and exerted her powers of fascination over some influential member of Congress.

One morning I called upon her at Mr. Bothwell's. As I ascended the stairs, in silence of the servant, I accidentally glanced at a mirror through the open door of an apartment. A reflection of two figures arrested my attention. One was the lady I had come to visit; the other was a young man, with features wan but highly intellectual, and a somewhat attenuated frame. The lady's hand was run through the thick hair that clustered about her forehead, and she was gazing in his face with an expression of deep and tender solicitude. A sound very much like a kiss succeeded this momentary attitude. Reluctant to disturb such an interview, I turned to retreat, but accidentally came in contact with her servant, who, tumbling half way down stairs, effectually interrupted the affectionate scene in the parlor. Without more ado, after a preliminary shuffling of my feet to spritz the parties that some one was coming, I entered the room.

An opposite door closed as Miss Smith advanced to receive me, and I heard a dry, cautious cough proceed from the departing visitor. It seemed to fall heavily upon the lady's heart, for she stopped short, pressed her hand to her eyes and heaved a sigh. Quickly rallying, however, she summoned a sweet smile to her lips, and received me with kindness. We conversed a few minutes on different subjects, and I took an early leave.

As I drove home to Gadsby's my mind was more lost than ever in conjecture as to this exceedingly beautiful but mysterious young lady. Who could the gentleman be on whom she had lavished such tokens of endearment? Was he a lover or a husband? If either, why did he not accompany her into society? Or if his health did not permit such indulgence, how could she quit him to become the exposure of a ball room? Perhaps he was a brother. No, a sister could never have bestowed such a look and such an embrace. What could it all mean?

A week after this interview, I called at the White House with a friend from England, who was desirous of an introduction to the remarkable man who then occupied the Presidential chair. We were received by Jenny Grant, the Irish door-keeper, who, with all absence of ceremony which astonished my trans-Atlantic companion, took us up stairs, and, pointing to the cabinet chamber said: "You will find the old man in that room." Aware of Jenny's despotic character, I entered without further question. The first object I saw was Miss Smith, lifting the President's hand to her lips, while an expression of earnest gratitude irradiated her face. She held a document with a seal, which looked like some official commission. "Two or three members of Congress, who had apparently accompanied her, were

present. On beholding the group, I drew back; but I was too late to escape observation. The President called upon me by name to enter; and Miss Smith turning at the same moment greeted me with inimitable grace.

"A call of the House!" exclaimed Jenny Grant, in his gruff voice, thrusting his head abruptly into the room, and as quickly withdrawing it.

"The sergeant-at-arms will be after us," exclaimed one of the representatives.

"We are not wanted at the capitol," said another. "Will you not accompany us, Miss Smith, since we cannot return to your home with you?"

"Here is one to whose care you may confide me. May they not?" said Miss Smith, turning to me.

Of course I acquiesced, with many blessings upon Jenny Grant for scattering the Congressmen.

Introducing my friend to the Chief Magistrate, I gave my arm to the lady, and took our leave.

When we were seated in the carriage, she exclaimed, pressing the parchment she held to her heart: "At length I have succeeded! An explanation is due to you; for you were one of the few who have respected my secret, and evinced no idle curiosity. Do not look as if I were on the eve of revealing some great mystery; for my story is a very simple one, and can be told in a very few words. I am from a very small and obscure village in the upper part of the State of New York, where I lived with my husband, a young lawyer, until he was visited by a pulmonary affection, which excited my constant anxiety. The physicians said there was safety in flight to a tropical climate. Our means were too limited to allow of such a removal. At my suggestion, my husband visited Washington and made strenuous exertions to procure a small post under Government in the West Indies. He failed; for he had never been a politician, and of course no political capital would accrue to the Administration by his appointment. I had read in universal history, as well as in that of the present dynasty, of the influence of woman in affairs of State. I persuaded my husband to dispose of our little farm, and accompany me to Washington. We came. From the circumstance of his illness, I could not appear well in society otherwise than I did—as a single young lady. I acquainted myself with the most prominent members of Congress; made them sharers of my confidence; interested them in my behalf, and this day succeeded in procuring my husband's appointment to an excellent post in South America. He is now in Georgetown, and has no hopes of my success. Come and be a partner of our happiness."

Her eyes flashed with her elated feelings. An expression full of triumph and hope beamed from every feature. Never had she seemed half so beautiful.

The carriage stopped and we alighted. A physician's chaise was at the door. My companion did not seem to notice it, but ran up the steps in front of the house, and eagerly rang the bell. Never shall I forget her face and figure, as she turned to me, while impatiently awaiting an answer to her summons, and exultingly shook in her extended hand the parchment commission. The door was opened. What an expression of grief and commiseration in that face! It is Mrs. Bothwell. My companion paused suddenly, and gazed several moments, without speaking, in her eyes. Too well she read their story. The parchment drops from her hands; and with the moon of a breaking heart, she sinks back insensible in my arms.

The commission had come too late! The subject of it had been appointed to a higher post than any which human power could have established.

But what became of the "unknown belle"? Alas! never again was the bright saloon made brighter by her presence! Never again were her sylph-like feet seen to twinkle in the mazy dance. Never again did that beautiful form (more beautiful than young sculptors picture in their dreams) attract the admiring eyes of a festive assembly! Such was her devoted affection, that she soon followed its departed object to that happier land, where pure souls find their lasting reward. Fashion missed her, and asked, "Where is she?" but forgot the question ere it was answered.

"Old Hundred."—Martin Luther, the great Reformer, was not, it appears, as has been generally supposed, the composer of that famous old "hymn tune." It was composed by Claude Goudimel, about the year 1524, who was a citizen of Lyons, in France, and died a victim of religious opinion in 1572.—*Cin. Gaz.*

Printing instead of Writing.—Chas. Thurber, Esq., one of the County Commissioners for Worcester county, Mass., has invented a machine, by which, by means of types connected with keys, one may print instead of writing. It is intended for the use of "the blind, the nervous, or the unskilful," and it is said that Dr. Howe, of the institution for the blind here, has expressed a high opinion of its advantages for the former class.

MAKING SOAP.—Tomlinson writing to Judge Noel, says:—My wife has no trouble about soap. The grease is put into a cask, and strong lye added. During the year, as the fat increases, more lye is stirred in, and occasionally stirred with a stick that is constantly kept in it. By the time the cask is full the soap is made ready for use. It is made hard by boiling and adding a quart of fine salt to three gallons of soap. It is put into a tub to cool, and the froth scraped off. It is afterwards melted to a boiling heat, and a little rosin or turpentine given, which improves the quality.

Col. R. M. Johnson's Private Opinion of Henry Clay.

We find the following tribute from one Kentuckian to another, both before the public in connection with the same great national question, in a late number of the Richmond Whig. As a part of "the case" now pending before the public, we give it in place, nothing doubting it is perfectly authentic:

Mr. Editor: I am opposed to the practice of giving publicity to fireside conversations, but when the leader of a great party, in a respectable company of his fellow-citizens, composed of both political parties, makes use of language either in praise or derogation of a political opponent, I consider it no breach of propriety to give his voluntary testimony to the world.

On the 30th of September last, Col. Johnson being in Staunton, Virginia, a number of gentlemen paid him the respect of calling to see him. One of the company remarked to him, "Colonel, when you reach the railroad junction, you will be near the *Slashes of Hanover*." The honest old warrior's face immediately lit up with an expression of sincerity and pleasure, and he eloquently said: "I should be delighted to see that place. Every spot of ground Henry Clay touches he immortalizes. I have been in public life for forty years, and in that time have been associated with all the great men of the country. Leaving out Madison and Gallatin, who were old men when I first stepped upon the theatre of politics, I will place Jefferson first, then Henry Clay. He is a perfect Hercules in all the qualities that can adorn human nature. Some men may excel him in a single quality—for instance, Webster may be a greater logician, or some may be more renowned for deep researches, but take Clay all in all, he has not an equal in the Union, either north or south—east or west. In moral courage—in oratory—in patriotism, and in every noble quality, he is without a superior. I have been associated with him on committees in connection with Calhoun, Lowndes, Cheever, Webster, and other distinguished individuals, but Clay was always the master spirit. We looked up to him as the Ajax Telamon; and by his counsel we were guided in our deliberations. If the rest of the committee assembled before him and were in doubt how to proceed, when he made his appearance, all eyes were turned upon him—and we were certain to be right when we followed his opinion. He is a great man, a very great man."

Protest of the Whig Members of the House Against the admission of the illegally chosen Members from the States which refused to district according to Law.

[Presented by Mr. BARNARD of N. Y., but not allowed to be read by the Loco majority.]

The roll of Representatives elected to the 28th Congress having now been called by the Clerk, according to usage, and a quorum of members whose right to participate in the act of organizing the House of Representatives is undisputed having appeared and answered to their names, this body is about to proceed to the high duty of electing a Speaker—to fill an office which, in point of dignity and political consequence, is hardly second to any known to the Constitution, after that of President of the United States. Before that high duty shall be entered upon, the undersigned, feeling a sense of solemn obligation to truth and of responsibility to God for what we utter and assert, are constrained to declare that, in their united and undoubting conviction and judgement, a deep and grievous wound, perhaps never to be healed, will be inflicted on the Constitution, and on law, order, and civil liberty, if the election of a Speaker shall be conducted in the manner in which we have reason to apprehend it may be.

Several persons from the State of New Hampshire, namely, Edmund Burke, John P. Hale, Moses Norris, Jr., and John R. Reding; several persons, also, from the State of Georgia, namely, Howell Cobb, Hugh A. Haralson, and Absalom H. Chappell; one person from the State of Mississippi, namely, Jacob Thompson; and several persons from the State of Missouri, namely, James M. Bowlin, James M. Hughes, John Jameson, Gustavus M. Bower, and James H. Relfe, have been called by the Clerk, are now in this Hall, and have answered to their names in a manner to leave no doubt that their intent and purpose is to vote with the duly elected Representatives of the People here present in the election of Speaker, and to act and participate fully in the organization of Representatives, as if they were members thereof.

By the act of Congress of June 20th, 1842, "For the apportionment of Representatives among the several States according to the sixth census," it was enacted, "that in every case where a State is entitled to more than one representative, the number to which each State shall be entitled under the apportionment shall be elected by districts composed of contiguous territory, equal in number to the number of Representatives to which said State may be entitled, no one district electing more than one Representative."

The several States above named have refused or failed to provide by law for the election by Districts of Representatives from those States respectively to the 28th Congress, each of them being entitled to more than one Representative, and the people of those States have failed, therefore, to elect Representatives by districts, as the law of Congress required.

These facts are notorious, indisputable, and undisputed; they are known to all, and admitted by all. Failing to elect by districts, they have failed to elect at all, for all legal and constitutional purposes.

They could not elect, because there were no districts in those States from which to elect. Election by general ticket is no election. No existing and valid law authorized any such election to be held; and no election, therefore, has been held in those States at which Representatives for the 28th Congress could be chosen.

It is understood, nevertheless, that the persons above named propose and intend to vote in the election for Speaker, on the ground that they hold returns, written certificates or commissions, drawn up in regular form, purporting to be the evidence of their election as Representatives. We hold that any returns they can have do not give them any title whatever, when they are considered in connexion with the known laws of the land. At the same time, it is undoubtedly true that, by the Parliamentary law, returns or certificates in regular form, by authorized functionaries, made according to law, are, in all cases, *prima facie* evidence of election, and conclusive evidence of a right to assist in organizing the body to which persons are thus returned, and it is under color of this Parliamentary law, as we understand, the persons above named presume to call themselves members of this body.

But as no provision has been made by law for election by districts in these States, and no such election in fact held, how could any officer or functionary in these States make a return of any such election? And as these States are not authorized by law to hold any election by general ticket, or otherwise than by districts, how can any officer or functionary therein be authorized by law to make a return of any such election? We are not prepared to admit that any person from any of these States can have in his possession any legal documentary proof of his election as a representative for the 28th Congress. We are well aware, however, that an attempt, if now made, by motion or resolution, before the organization of the House, to exclude these persons from all participation in that act, would be attended with great embarrassment and great delay, and with the hazard of confusion, violence, and anarchy in this Hall.

We have concluded, therefore, to content ourselves, in this stage of the business of the House, with declaring, in this formal and solemn manner, our condemnation of a proceeding on the part of the persons we have named, which, if performed, we shall hold to be lawless and essentially revolutionary in its character, subversive of the Constitution and of all law and order, and tending directly to the destruction of our free Government. We declare that we shall regard the election of Speaker, if effected by the votes of these persons, as an illegal election and a legal fraud upon the Nation; and we shall not fail or cease, after this body shall have been organized, and in the progress of the session, to make every effort within our competency to vindicate the law, to purge the House, and bring it back to a condition of Constitutional soundness.

(Signed) D. D. Barnard, of N. York, K. Rayner, of North Carolina, Robert C. Schenck, of Ohio, Milton Brown, of Tennessee, Washington Hunt, of New York, Asher Tyler, of New York, Samuel C. Sample, of Indiana, John J. Hardin, of Illinois, Alex. Ramsey, of Pennsylvania, Charles H. Carroll, of New York, Hamilton Fish, of New York, Solomon Foot, of Vermont, J. Phillips Pléaux, of New York, T. L. Clingman, of North Carolina, H. Gridler, of Kentucky, Thomas J. Patterson, of New York, Geo. P. Marsh, of Vermont, Jo. H. Peyton, of Tennessee, John Quincy Adams, of Massachusetts, Samuel F. Vinton, of Ohio, John White of Kentucky, Wm. A. Moreley, of New York, J. Collamer, of Vermont, W. Newton, of Virginia, Samuel Chilton, of Virginia, George B. Rodney, of Delaware, R. C. Winthrop, of Massachusetts, Wm. P. Thompson, of Kentucky, Garrett Davis, of Kentucky, D. M. Barringer, of North Carolina, Willis Green, of Kentucky, Jeremiah Brown, of Pennsylvania, John J. Vanmeter, of Ohio, James Irvin, of Pennsylvania, Elias Florence, of Ohio, Joseph Vance, of Ohio, J. R. Giddings, of Ohio, Alexander Harper, of Ohio, M. H. Jenks, of Pennsylvania, Albert Smith, of New York, Daniel R. Tilden, of Ohio, Charles Rogers, of New York, Charles Hudson, of Massachusetts, Charles M. Reed, of Pennsylvania, John Dickey, of Pennsylvania, A. R. McDevaine, of Pennsylvania, Daniel P. King, of Massachusetts, Joseph Grinnell, of Massachusetts, Elisha R. Potter, of Rhode Island, Jos. R. Ingersoll, of Pennsylvania, H. Y. Cranston, of Rhode Island.

Directions for Pickling Cucumbers.—Adapted from a recipe for pickling cucumbers in a family book, and is as follows: It is made thus: Take 1 gallon of sugar, (or molasses), 1 lb. of salt, 2 oz. of vinegar, (the best or coarsest sort), 6 pounds. Boil all together, and skim it. Then let it cool. The meat being placed in a vessel intended to hold it, pour the cold pickle on the meat until it is covered. In that state keep it for family use. The beef after lying in the pickle for ten weeks, has been found as good as if it had been salted only three days, and tender as a chicken. If the meat is to be preserved for a considerable time, the pickle must be boiled and skimmed once in two months, throwing in during the boiling two ounces of sugar and a half pound of salt. Thus the same pickle will hold good for many months. This pickle is incomparable for coming hams, tongues, and hung beef. When tongues and hung beef are taken out of the pickle, cleanse and dry the pieces, then put them in paper bags, and hang them in a dry, warm place. Some who have tried the method, choose their meat water and instead of 6 use 8 or 9 pounds of salt. In very hot weather, it is necessary before the meat is put to pickle, to rub it well with salt and let it lie one, two or three hours, till the bloody juices run off. If the meat in this case, is the least tainted before it is put to the pickle, it will be entirely spoiled in a day's time, in hot weather. Pickles pickle is found so valuable that it ought to be without it.