



THE CRUTCH.

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THE CRUTCH,

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The New Year's Morn.

BY ERNEST JONES.

Morning flowed o'er the endless sea
Like a march of spirits bright,
Till the foam was turned to a silver smoke,
And the wave to a waving light.

And forth from the ball of the cloven sun
The new year gaily came.
A shifting bark with sails of white,
A swan of snowy flame.

And ever as the strong ship passed
Athwart that boundless main,
It bore what was saved from the wreck of the last,
To be wrecked in the tempest again.
But time, he smiled
Like a new-born child,
Heart-beguiled
With roses wild,

And his hand he doth lay on the helm like a ray,
And steers out to sea as he chants away;

"Passions! ye warriors, the proud heart assaulting
Thoughts! ye wild eagles, that ride the cloud's arc;
Fears! ye black shadows from hell upward vaulting;
Hopes! ye sweet nightingales heard in the dark—
Mount millions! mount on the new year's bark!"
And forth from air, earth, sky and ocean they came,
Dewdrop and sunbeam, and shadow and flame.

Then sang the waves with a trumpet tone,
And danced to their own wild lay;
And the stars they shaded their golden eyes
With the mist of the rising spray.

The blushing clouds o'er the ether driven,
Sailed on a sunlight tide;
And the morning wind gathered those roses of heaven,
And scattered them near and wide.

Half an Hour in a Railroad Office.

TRAVELER—"New York!" plunking the price of a ticket. The ticket clerk jerks out a ticket and jerks in the money almost in an instant, without a word, and the traveler gives place to the next comer, who perhaps has the same destination, but who occupies much more time in making his wants known, something after this style:

"What's the fare to New York?"

"Four dollars."

"How long before you start?"

"Ten minutes."

"Ah—er—can you change a fifty dollar bill?"

"Yes, sir."

"Give me change in Boston money, (laying out the fifty,) and in five dollar bills, if you can."

[Change is made and the ticket thrown out in almost a second of the time.]

"Do you get to New York as early now as usual?"

"Yes, sir."

"What time does the Filadelfy train leave to-morrow morning?"

By this time the querist had gathered up his bank notes, folded them up, put them smoothly into a pocket-book, poked his umbrella into the stomach of a heated individual from the rural districts who was waiting nervously behind him, and by the delay caused the collection of half a dozen applicants for tickets.

Next comes the countryman's turn:

(Breathlessly)—"Ticket for Boston!"

"You are in Boston now, sir."

"O! O—er. Yes—ah! ha! ha! I want to go to Plympton-ville"—(no show of money.)

"Forty-five cents!" (waiting for a show of funds.)

"Yes; wal, I'll take one ticket."

"Yes, sir, forty-five cents."

By this time the gent from the rural district comprehends the pay-in-advance principle adopted at the well regulated railway stations—fishing into the profound depths of his pantaloons pocket withdraws in a capacious hand, a miscellaneous collection, which from a hasty glance appears to be composed of a piece of cavendish tobacco, a lead pencil, a piece of red chalk, large jack-knife, a political medal, leather shoe-string, a couple of buttons, a suspender buckle and some change.

From the latter a twenty-five cent piece, two half-dimes, two three-cent pieces and four cents are laboriously extracted and deposited on the counter, from which they are rapidly swept by three or four dexterous passes of the clerk, who turns to serve a lady.

"I want a lady's ticket to Providence"—depositing at the same time a five dollar note. Clerk throws out a "lady's ticket," which bears a striking similarity to and would in fact be called a twin brother to a "gentleman's ticket," and also some change at the same time. Lady cautiously examines a bank note she has received in return—"Is this a good bill?"

"Certainly, madam, we give no other."

Lady retires perfectly satisfied. The next comer is an illustrious exile, whom we have every reason to suppose has recently fared sumptuously upon a repast in which onions figured conspicuously as a vegetable, and moderate priced whiskey as the principal beverage.

"Shure what is the price of a ticket now to New Yarrk?"

"Deck passage, two dollars and a half."

"Wouldn't ye take a dollar and seventy-five? Shure it's all the money I've got at all, at all."

"No! two dollars and fifty cents."

(Persuasively)—"Shure, wouldn't ye take two dollars?"

"Not a cent less than two fifty. (Emphatically)—Pass out your money or pass on!"

Pat, finding his blarney and persuasion of no use in this instance, counts out his cash, which the quick eye of the clerk soon discovers to be a little short of the required amount.

"Three cents more."

The stray three-cent piece is reluctantly dropped from Pat's warm palm, and the individual who succeeds anxiously inquires "what time the five o'clock train leaves," and is seriously informed "at sixty minutes past four."

The next inquires: "Has Mr. Smith bought a ticket for this train?"

"Can't say sir; don't know him."

"O, he's a dark complexioned man, had on a dark overcoat, and an umbrella under his arm."

In consideration of the fact that about fifty "dark complexioned" individuals, with dark overcoats on, had purchased tickets of the clerk, some having umbrellas under their arm, and some not, it is not very extraordinary that he does not recollect which one is Mr. Smith.

All the time these negotiations are going on, eager interrogators on the outer circle of the crowd about the office are propounding questions, and a running fire of them, and replies fill up every possible pause.

"When does the next train start?"

"Ten minutes of five."

"Say you! what do you tax to Maxfield?"

"Seventy-five cents."

Suiter—"Parser, give us a card to New Bedford."—Slaps down a gold piece, sweeps ticket and change into the crown of his hat, takes a bite of the weed, and rolls off to a car well "farrard."

"Does this train stop at L?"

"No; this is the express train."

"Which one does?"

"Accommodation—leaves at two and a half o'clock."

"Ticket—n'arf to Providence?"

"How old is the half ticket?"

"Hey?"

"How old is the child you want the half ticket for?"

"Tween seven and eight."

"Is this the boy?" pointing to a lad of about eleven, who was endeavoring to make himself look as short as possible, by crooking his legs and resting his chin on the counter.

"Yes that's him; suppose you only charge half price for boys?"

"Full price for him, sir."

"Full price! why he is only a boy; yer hadn't ought to charge full price."

"Big enough to occupy a seat, sir; full price if you please."

The applicant reluctantly draws out the money, and the boy grows some eight or ten inches in stature in as many seconds.

"Ticket for New York," says another, throwing down a ten-dollar note. The clerk gives a rapid glance at the note, followed by a keen, searching one at the applicant, and then replies:

"Counterfeit!"

The dropping of the under jaw, the blank and stupefied amazement of the latter at this announcement, proves at once the official's judgment was correct, and that the applicant was unconscious of the character of the note until he tendered it in payment for the ticket.

A farmer being asked if his horses were matched, said, "Yes; they are matched first rate; one of them is willing to do all the work, and the other is willing to should."