

Two Alike and a Lady.

Written by JULES VERNE.

CHAPTER I.

The tar on the roof of the railway station at Sierra Blanca was molten in a July sun at noonday. It had been a mistake to swab the surface with stuff that would melt at a temperature of 100 unshaded. Alternations of liquid and congealment had let the feet of pebbles alternately slip and stop, slip and stop, until half of them had slid off the steep eaves into the gut gutter, which had also caught the drippings of tar until it was full of the mixture. Not much is done in this lazy town on the Mexican border of the United States, and what is done once is hardly ever done over again, even by the railroad folks, who are all activity as contrasted with the local stagnation. So the roof had become bare boards near the ridgepole, and a black muck toward the lower eaves. It suggested a volcanic penit, and the still hot output, overflowing the eave-troughs, dribbled thence to the ground, making a black streak where it soaked slowly into the gravel. Along that mark an occasional drop of the resinous jet was falling.

An indolent group of American adventurers sat or half reclined under the portico. Their wide-brimmed hats were scattered on the floor, their red, blue or gray shirts were opened low at the necks, and several had pulled off their long boots. These fellows had thus made every effort to be cool. Not so the several Mexicans, Indians and half-breeds who stood in a half circle around the others, for they were too lazy to uncover their heads—too lazy, seemingly, to even sit down. All were watching the stripe of tar on the roof. One of the men, in a military uniform of a railway employe, lay on his breast, with his head uplifted like a half-torpid boar, and there was something like the snake's dull glitter in his eyes—as they moved warily along a six-foot section of the black line. That piece was marked at each end by a stone, and in the same way at the center. On the edge of the low platform, beside this man, lay silver coins of various small values. Not a word was spoken by anybody. Inert apathy prevailed, and some of the eyes that were fixed on the money and the tar were shut.

After something like ten speechless minutes, all the eyelids were suddenly raised, and the company stirred in an animate manner. A globe of tar had fallen from the eave and struck, with a little splatter, between the two stones at the left of the prostrate man.

"Let it be, and let it go," he said. "Then he duplicated every exposed coin by laying on it one of a like denomination; and after a rearrangement of the silver by its owners, another interval of expectant waiting ensued. Again there was a drop of tar within the limits, but this time it was at the right of the dividing stone.

"Right it is, and right losses," said the operator of this slow and singular game of chance, and he gathered in all the risked cash.

The distant whistle of a locomotive stopped the gambling, and drove the men to their feet. At the same time a ramshackle wagon was drawn up to the station. The vehicle held, besides a driver, two men in military uniforms, and a bearded and stalwart, in years about thirty, and in countenance handsome and intelligent. "The military men," said the operator, "are here to see if you have a little affected by the unconventionalality of the far Southwest. They alighted from the wagon with an activity which proved that they had not lived long in the lazy region of Sierra Blanca, and quickly, but very carefully, lifted out a large box. This was made smoothly and substantially of new boards. There were handled at the ends, but in one respect, they differed strongly from any ordinary traveling trunk. There was no sign of a lid to open. Lines of screwheads ran along all the edges, but no hinge or lock was to be seen. It was clear that the contents, whatever they were, had been securely enclosed for a long journey, and were not meant to be disturbed on the way. The two men carried the box to the platform, set it down as though it was something at once heavy and fragile, and one remained with it, while the other entered the station to purchase tickets for New York.

"Seems as if you two oughter travel on one ticket," the agent remarked, glancing at the purchaser and then at the other outside the doorway; "you're so jest alike."

"Wish we could," was the meditative response, as the speaker returned to his wallet the small remainder of his money, after paying for the costly tickets for the railway trip across the continent.

"Twins?" the agent asked.

"Yes, twins," was the reply, with a touch of weariness, for how many thousands of times had he been compelled to answer that question? Then he forestalled the pleasantry, which he had come to regard as almost inevitable, by adding: "We are Daniel and Donald Warren, I am Dan, and he is Don. O, yes; all the incidents that could suggest, in the way of confused identity, have happened to us, and he rejoined his brother at the box.

A second and nearer whistle of the locomotive was heard, and half a minute later a train arrived; but it came on the tracks of the San Antonio line, which ends at Sierra Blanca, and it waited there for a connection with a through train on the Texas and Pacific main route. A hundred passengers emerged from the cars, and the place had a spell of excitement through their presence, by adding to the shade of the station, or resorted to the makeshift restaurants and groceries close by, during the hour that the coming train was belated. They were such a singularly mixed assemblage as can only be found near the southwestern border region of the Rio Grande. Three-fourths of them were men, and the women were either Indians, Mexicans or vicious specimens of eastern civilization—with one marked exception. This was a lady, whose gentility, like her beauty, was to be seen at a glance. She was twenty years of age, and as fresh as a bud; and her delicate and jolly would soon have rejoined her to a similar extent. It was not the ordinary fear and fear of travel without male escort that gave anxiety to the fair passenger. She was in manifestly serious trouble. Looking about her for success, and at first seeing repellent faces only, she at length went to the brothers Warren, who sat on their box.

"Will you pardon me, gentlemen," she said, in a politely modulated but agitated voice, "and advise me? I have come from Fort Davis. I am on my way to Kansas City—or I was, but how to get there I do not know. I purchased a ticket for Sierra Blanca only, because none for the main line could be had there. I had money enough to pay my way from here, but it has been stolen from me in the car. I have not a dollar left."

Her eyes were full of tears, her cheeks were scarlet, and her lips quivered. She was in a plight out of which her diffidence and inexperience pointed no escape, save that of piteous appeal to the two stran-

gers who, of all the assemblage, looked likely to befriend her considerately.

With an inquiring look at each other, as if an agreement had been made, the two were agreed on a direct answer. "What do you want a ticket for Fort Davis," said Don.

"I am grateful," sobbed the lady, "but that would not help me. It is a most important matter—a question of life or death, sir, literally life or death—that requires me to be in Kansas City the very day that this next train will arrive there; and she wrung her small hands piteously, with the twitching symptoms of hysteria. "And there is only one train daily from here."

"I will speak to the ticket agent," said Don, "and maybe he will trust you for a ticket until you arrive in Kansas City."

"I have already begged him to do so, and he refused. This must be will do it to telegraph to my friends there, and let them pay the money at that end of the route; but that would make me miss this train, you see."

Don went to the agent, and pleaded in vain. That unimpressible official's judgment was that the lady was a professional pretender, but he expressed it less considerably than that, whereupon Don and Dan alternately guarded their box and canvassed the company for contributions. First putting in the sixteen tickets which comprised all the money left after their own expenditure for passage. Women pretty and good were so scarce in that bad part of the country that the men would not believe in this one, and their responses to the appeal were prompt denials, coupled in several instances with remarks so uncharitable that the Warrens could hardly restrain an impulse to whip the offenders.

The whistle of the expected train was followed by the rumble of its wheels, and then it slowed and stopped at the station. It had more than a dozen cars than the other for it carried a more presentable assortment of travelers. It would be off in four minutes. Should it leave the lady behind?

"Dan, we did it once," said Don, suggestively.

"When we both got our meals and bed at a San Francisco hotel for a week, and paid for only one," Dan responded.

"That was in a financial emergency."

"Well, so is this."

"Shall we try?"

"Yes."

During the dialogue the twin brothers were getting the boxes so placed in the baggage car, that it would not be subjected to rough usage, and the lady stood by herself on the platform, pale now with alarm at what seemed to her a certainty of being delayed for a day.

"We will try to take you along—"

"Dan said to her."

"Because we feel sure that you are not deceiving us," Don interposed.

The bell rang, the conductor cried "All aboard!" and there was no time for explanation. The Warrens and the lady entered a car, and found two empty seats adjoining. Don placed the boxes beside himself, next to the window.

"Take this ticket," he said to her, "and show it when the conductor comes along. Don't pay any attention to what my brother and I do. We will attempt a dishonest trick because we believe you are honest."

"Then he and Dan converted the tickets into not in secret from her, but so as not to be overheard by anybody else. They stopped on hearing the call, "Tickets, please." The conductor had entered the car at the rear door, according to usage, and was standing at the head of the aisle as he proceeded. Dan had one of the two tickets in his party of three persons, and Don had none. The conductor took a long strip of sectionally printed cardboard from Dan, and clipped a hole through the portion representing the journey as far as Fort Worth, about five hundred miles away. Then he turned to the passenger directly across the aisle, and after dealing with him in the same manner, crossed back to the seat in which Don sat, and handed the ticket to her. "There was a jetting down into his pocket, as though he had just moved there from the seat next rearward, while the only part of Dan's head visible was the back, for he was very intently looking out at the window."

It is a practice of American conductors, especially on long routes, to gaze directly into the face of every passenger upon the first inspection of the ticket, in order to memorize the visage, so that there may be no need of asking for another sight of the ticket when it is shown to another road brings an influx of new passengers, with the necessity of a general punching. By this system he can, with remarkable facility, distinguish the comparatively few additional faces gained at the small way stations, from those which he has seen in his previous rounds of the cars. Only of the recruits does he demand a showing of tickets at these times.

When Don sank into the seat that he had already occupied, with the deceptive motion of having moved forward from the other, the conductor was for an instant confused; but it seemed clear enough, when he looked into the Warrens' twin faces, that he had just attended to this case. "Any lingering, careless doubt was displaced when Don, with a smile, extended the ticket that Dan had surreptitiously passed to him behind the official's back, showing the hole that the punch had made. The conductor reached over to deal with the lady's ticket, and then passed unperceptibly along.

"We're good for a few hundred miles through their punch," said Don to the lady, "if my brother and I are careful not to let the conductor see both of our faces close together."

"So I'll go back to the rear car," said Dan, "to put a safe distance between us," and he quietly departed.

"It is a shame in me to let you gentlemen do this," the lady said to Don; "and I wouldn't allow it, only that I am in a great strait. Forgive me if I do not fully explain the vital importance to me and mine, of my arriving in Kansas City on this train; but this message will undoubtedly present the matter to you. She drew from her pocketbook a telegram, which she showed to him.

"Mrs. Henry Carter, Fort Davis, Tex.: If you are not here with me at Kansas City by noon of July 17 you will be too late. For God's sake, do not fail. Henry."

"Henry is Lieut. Henry Carter, of the regular army," she went on, "and I am his wife. We have been living a year at the military post at Fort Davis, but now he is in Kansas City, and it will be a calamity if I do not get to him in time to see him."

The time to Fort Worth was a few minutes more than twenty-four hours, and the distance was 524 miles. The train left Sierra Blanca at 1 o'clock p. m. There was no incident of consequence during the remainder of the afternoon. Donald Warren and Mrs. Carter conversed about the objects which they saw along the route, and their fraudulent method of transportation. The lady proved keenly

THE CHILDREN.

Amusing Stories Selected Especially for the Little Readers.

FUN, FACT, AND FICTION.

Squirrel Navigators—"Ned Gray," a Story Illustrating the Influence of a Bad Company.

Squirrel Navigators.

"Dear Jack," writes Jeanette C. W., "may I tell your children what a squirrel did?"

"She invented a boat to carry her babies in. At all events, a gentleman wrote to a paper called the Toledo Blade saying he saw her do it, and I believe him, for even animal mothers will do wonderful things when their babies are in question."

"They were on their way to a new part of the country in Ohio, and in the course of their travels they came to a creek. Mother squirrel tried to induce the babies to swim across the stream, but—bless their little hearts!—they were afraid, and could not pluck up courage even with mother to help them.

"The squirrel mother was very much distressed at this, and for a few moments seemed at a loss what to do. There was the creek, and it must be crossed. Pretty soon a bright idea struck her, and she ran briskly up and down the bank of the stream until she found a piece of wood about a foot long and half a foot wide.

"She dragged that to the edge of the stream and pushed it into the water until only one end of the piece of wood rested lightly on the bank.

"Then she coaxed the babies to walk out on the little boat. They stepped on board very timidly and snuggled close together. The little mother then pushed the boat into the stream, and taking hold of it with her teeth, swam behind it until it touched the opposite bank, when the babies scampered nimbly ashore, delighted to know that their mother was placidly following them."

This story is all very well and very true, but I have one to match it. One day the dear little school-ma'am saw a squirrel sailing on the creek that runs by the red school-house. To be sure, there was no sail to the boat, and there was no boat either, for that matter. The squirrel was seated high and dry on a big piece of bark and another squirrel was swimming behind and steadily pushing the barque (as the deacon calls it.) Whether the furry passenger was timid, or merely lazy, I cannot say, but probably she was the mother of the family and she was used to being waited upon."

"Ned Gray," a Story.

All the young people of Bellevue had gathered at Maple Grove for a picnic. It was a perfect Indian Summer day early in November. The sunset tints of the autumn leaves shone with wondrous beauty, dazzling in their brilliancy, and there had been just enough frost to open the burrs on the chestnut trees scattered through the grove. Winter storms would soon come, making out-door recreation impracticable; so the boys and girls were improving to the fullest extent their present opportunities.

Ned Gray, it was easy to see, was the hero of the occasion. He had only recently come to Bellevue, but had already made every one's acquaintance and won golden opinions on all sides. He was so graceful, so obliging, so polite, that the girls all held him up to their brothers as a model. This probably would not have assisted him in gaining the good-will of the boys had they not discovered at the same time that he was an expert fisherman, could make and set any sort of trap, and "could hold his own" in any game that might be proposed. Besides, he was 18—rather older than most of them—had lived in a city nearly all his life, yet never put on any airs, and was always an entertaining companion. Therefore it is not strange that he was a universal favorite.

There was one exception: Nettie Taylor was rarely found in the group that surrounded him. She listened in silence to the praises of her companions, and treated him with the polite consideration she gave every one, but said confidentially to her mother:

"I don't like him; I would not trust him. His black eyes are smoky. There always seems to be one expression, a good pleasant one, on the surface of them, and another, a very different one, back of that, that shines out once in a while when he thinks no one is watching him."

Late in the afternoon the picnic party had scattered somewhat, and Nettie happened to be for a few minutes alone. She stopped to pick up some chestnuts, and, hearing voices, glanced into the tree above her. Ned Gray and Charlie Rivers were perched on a limb half-way up, resting from their labor of beating the tree. Ned was saying:

"To-morrow afternoon will be the best time. We'll take the horse and buggy, start right after dinner, get supper at Willis's and come home in the evening."

The boys did not see Nettie, and not wishing to play eavesdropper, she wandered on. She felt uneasy. Charlie was an old friend of hers—a merry, good-hearted lad, but rather headstrong. Willis's was a hotel, about eight miles from Bellevue, that bore a not irreproachable reputation. Whatever the proposed excursion might be, Nettie felt that Ned Gray's company and a supper at Willis's boded no good to her old playmate. To say as much to Charlie would be mere folly. He would be sure to resent the idea that

he couldn't safely choose his own associates and amusements. Couldn't he coax him to go somewhere with her? It would seem such a forward thing to do; still, if it kept him out of harm's way—at best, if she succeeded it would only be for once. Would it pay to risk offending Charlie by trying? She decided that it would, as she was only responsible for what she could, not what she could not do. Then she remembered that her old nurse lived at M., a pleasant afternoon's drive, that she had meant to go soon. She turned back and found Charlie.

"Why, Ned, I'm real sorry! I'd like to, but I've just made an engagement with Ned Gray."

"Can't you break it? Ask him to excuse you. Please do. I've set my heart on going. I can't have the horse any other day this week. Ned is always ready to do anything to oblige a lady; he'll release you. I could ask some of the other boys, but papa won't let me go with every one, you know."

Who could resist such an appeal? Not Charlie, certainly. He hunted up Ned, and soon came back to tell Nettie he would go with her.

They found Nurse Adams mourning over the misdeed of her only son, whom his employer had just discharged.

"Jim has always been such a good boy until lately, since a new clerk came to the store. He led my boy astray, taught him to drink, play cards, and gamble. Now Jim is discharged without a recommendation, and the other fellow that got him into trouble—Gray, his name was—ain't blamed at all."

Nettie and Charlie exchanged glances. "Where Jim had been, was the city from which Ned Gray had come."

"What was this Gray's first name?" asked Charlie.

"Edward, I believe. They call him Ned," said Mrs. Adams.

"Not," said Charlie, on the way home, "did you know this when you asked me to come?"

"Not a word of it, but I mistrusted him, and I didn't want you to go with him. It would have been useless to tell you, so I had to devise some other plan."

"Nettie," said Charlie, warmly, "you're a brick!"

The expression wasn't elegant, but the boys will understand what he meant by it.—*Forward.*

EXCELLENCE OF NEWSPAPERS.

While the great journals of to-day may have a tendency to overwhelm feeble minds by the mere magnitude of their bulk, he who reads them with attention will probably obtain more solid knowledge, more pregnant suggestion, more general ideas, more food for thought, and more educational progress than he would be at all likely to derive from any book reading possible in the same time. The modern newspaper often contains the matter of an octavo volume in one issue. Sometimes it contains the matter of more than one such volume. Frequently it devotes to a single object as much space as one of the great encyclopedias would give, and in presenting papers of the kind it often puts at the disposal of its readers the precise and exhaustive knowledge of some eminent specialist. In dealing with current events the newspaper aims at accuracy, intelligent discussion, attractiveness of style, and compactness and condensation of matter. The result is that it treats its topics far more tersely and vigorously than as a rule they are treated in books. It furnishes the public with ideas reduced to the most simple and digestible form.—*New York Tribune.*

OLD-TIME WAGES.

In a recent lecture before the Harvard University students, Prof. Thompson gave some facts touching wages in "the good old times." In 1793 the Susquehanna Canal Company advertised for workmen at \$5 per month in winter and \$6 in summer, with board.

In Congress the next winter a Vermont member said that farm hands in his State were hired at \$4 per month with board. A stout boy in Connecticut could be had at \$1 a month, and it took three months' earnings to buy a cotton shirt. Butter sold at 8 cents a pound, and its rise to 10 cents for a short time set farmers' wives crazy.

Matthew Carey, in his letters on the charities of Philadelphia, 1829, told of men leaving the city to find work at 60 cents a day, women earning but 25 cents a day, and a multitude unemployed, with deaths from cold and want. The goods which people were compelled to buy with these low wages were much higher than now.

With the building up of varied home manufactures under our tariff policy, wages have risen and goods grown cheaper.—*Detroit Tribune.*

CHARGED WITH WHISKY.

"I don't know what I'm arrested for, Your Honor, I'm an oyster-man, and went into a restaurant and got clamorous, that's all. Asked the waiter for fish. 'What kind of fish—bluefish?' says he. 'It don't matter,' says I. 'blino or red, it's no difference to me. I'm color-blind.' Then he thought I was making fun of him, and there was a free fight."

"Officer, what was this man charged with?"

"Whisky, Your Honor."

"Ten dollars fine!"—*Chicago Ledger.*

REMINISCENCES OF PUBLIC MEN.

BY BENJ. FELLY POORE.

Caleb Cushing, who wrote no children, in a letter which he left from Mount Vernon on Fourth of July, said: "We may regret sometimes that Washington left no posterity of his own body to continue his name and race, and to retain and cultivate his lands. But what perpetuity of name or estate had Jefferson, Madison, and Jackson? They have immortally, not in heaven only, but on earth as well. Should not that suffice? And as to Washington, what son or grandson him succeeding could have continued his fame? Let us be content to have him stand in his solitary grandeur. We should not have tolerated a descendant of his presuming on his blood, nor should we have been satisfied with one of inferior metal. And it is unjust to complain, as we are too prone to do, of this or that descendant of his brothers, if, in the possession of a fragment of the Mount Vernon estate, he do not maintain the mansion house and its grounds in the style of its opulent builder; and still more unjust to complain of such a collateral successor, if he do not, as of himself of course he cannot, provide there a Mecca for the resort of the people of the United States. But this misplaced expectation has at length turned to good, now that, about to pass into the custody of the ladies of America, Mount Vernon becomes a central shrine, a national temple, in which, by the sanctifying influences of the memory of Washington, to keep burning bright forever the sacred fires of the love of home and of country. And thus we have it. Such a memory, calm, grave, dignified, severe, is well guarded by the fair maidens and pure matrons of our land, fit ministering priestesses at a holier and loftier than all the altars of the classic Vesta."

Rufus Choate, speaking of Daniel Webster, said that he never heard him make a speech, a great speech, whatever the topic or the time, that did not leave the impression that he loved nothing, desired nothing, so much as the good and glory of America; that he knew no North and no South; that he seemed to summon around him the whole brotherhood of States and men and hold them to his heart. This gave freshness and energy to all his speeches; this set the tone to the universal harmony. Even his studies revealed this passion. He knew American history by heart as a statesman, not as an antiquary should know it. The plain, noble man, the high aims and hard fortunes of the Colonial time, the agony and the glory of the Revolutionary War, and of the age of the Constitution were all familiar to him; but chiefly he loved to mark how the spirit of national life was evolving itself all the while; how the colonies grew to regard one another as children of the same mother, and therefore fraternally; how the common danger, the common oppression of the antebellum and Revolutionary period served to fuse them into one; how the Constitution made them formally one; and how the grand and sweet and imperial sentiment of a united national life came at last to penetrate and warm that whole vast and various mass and move it as a soul.

When Franklin Pierce was candidate for the Presidency, the pictorial papers of the day, among other items, gave a picture of Mr. Pierce's house at Concord. The facts were, he did not own a house there or elsewhere. Before his election he lived in a hired house, or boarded his family. The house represented as his was the fine residence of Willard Williams, with whose family he boarded. After the expiration of his presidential term of office, he purchased the tract of land situated a mile west of Main street, and while he traveled in Europe had a portion of it walled and otherwise improved. While abroad he obtained a plan for a mansion from some European model; but it was found to be too costly for his purposes and its building was abandoned. On his return from Europe he had a stable built, and the work of excavating a cellar for a house upon another plan entered upon. But after awhile work upon the cellar ceased, and, for cause not known to the public, the enterprise was forever abandoned. The general belief was, that the chagrin arising from the obtaining and exposure of his original letter of sympathy and assurance to Jeff Davis in favor of the rebellion of the Southern States was so crushing as to influence the abandonment of his building designs. Mr. Pierce was never himself before the people of his native State and the North after this exposure. The authenticity of this letter was never denied.

Having completed his "Thirty Years in the Senate," the last chapters of which were written when he was physically weak, in bed, and suffering acute pain, Col. Benton sent for several old friends to bid them farewell. Among them was the President, to whom the dying man said, taking his hands: "Buchanan, we are friends. I supported you in preference to Fremont, because he headed a sectional party, whose success would have been the signal for disunion. I have known you long, and I knew you would honestly endeavor to do right. I have that faith in you now, but you must look to a higher power to support and guide you. We will soon meet in another world; I am going now, you will soon follow. My peace with God is made, my earthly affairs arranged; but I could not go without seeing you and thanking you for your interest in my child." Mr. Buchanan was deeply affected, and wept like a child as he said "Farewell." A week before Col. Benton's death, he addressed a letter to his old Tennessee friends, Senator Houston and Representative Jones, requesting that Congress would not notice his departure.

REALISM IN PHILOSOPHY.

But, it is asked, are we unmercifully to cut off every form of idealism? It is urged that we may commit the same mistakes in philosophy as a modern realistic school in art does when it exhibits objects so bare and haggard—skull and bones, wounds and sores—as to make them unattractive, at times horrid. Some feel that if we proceed in this way we are abandoning all that is interesting in speculation. Upon this I have to remark that under realism the speculative intellect is allowed to discuss all manner of subjects, but its first and final aim should be not of these to construct a philosophy. When it has done so, it may wander as widely as its feet can carry it, and mount as high as the air will bear it; but let it know and acknowledge all the while, the difference between air and earth, and ever be prepared to settle on terra firma. It will be proper to continue the discussion as to the atomic and monadic theories, as to a priori and posteriori ideas, the relative and the absolute, and a hundred other topics, but it has now a test by which to try all hypotheses—Do they agree with facts? The vessel may sail over a wide ocean, but it should always start from land and seek land; go out from a harbor and keep it in view to reach a haven.—*Princeton Review.*