

Virginia City Territorial Enterprise
January 13, 1864

Legislative Proceedings

Before the Legislature begins its labors, I will just mention that the Marsh Troupe will perform in Virginia tomorrow night (Thursday)—at the Opera House of course—for the benefit of Engine Company No. 2. They played here last night—“Toodles,” you know. Young George Marsh—whose theatrical costumes are ungainly enough, but not funny—took the part of Toodles, and performed it well—performed it as only cultivated talent, or genius, or which you please, or both, could enable him to do it. Little Jenny Arnot (she with the hideous—I mean affected—voice) appeared as Mrs. Toodles. Jenny is pretty—very pretty; but by the usual sign, common to all those of her sex similarly gifted, I perceive she knows it. Therefore, let us not speak of it. Jenny is smart—but she knows that too, and I grant you it is natural that she should. And behold you, when she does forget herself and make use of her own natural voice, and drop her borrowed one, it is the pleasantest thing in life to see her play.

The other ladies—however, I neglected to preserve a theatre bill, and I do not know what characters they personified. However, one was a handsome sailor boy, and the other was a lovely, confiding girl with auburn hair—the same being stuck after each other. Alexander was gotten up in considerable taste as a ratty old gentleman—the father of one of the stuck—the auburn one, I think. Beatty was one of those dear reformed pirates, who comes in at the finale with a bandaged head and a broken heart, and leans up against the side-scenes and slobbers over his past sins, and is so interesting. Billy O’Neil was so successful in keeping the house in a roar as the Limerick Boy, and especially as the Irish Schoolmaster, that he was frequently driven from his own masterly gravity.

After the performance was over, he said, “Those girls on the front seats knew where the laugh came in, didn’t they?” I said they did. I further observed that if there was any place where the laugh didn’t come in, those girls on the front seats didn’t know it. Wherefore, if so, he had them there. My head was level. I think I am not transcending the limits of truth, when I assert that my head was eminently level. I would not flatter Billy O’Neil, yet I cannot help thinking that as “Barney the Baron,” night before last, he was the drunkest white man that ever crossed the mountains. George Boulden, assisted by Mr. Alexander, sang “When this Cruel War is Over, as it Were,” and was thrice encored.

A circumstance happened to an acquaintance of mine this week, which I promised to say nothing about. A young man from one of the neighboring counties took a good deal of silk dress, with a moderate amount of girl in it, home from the theatre, and on his way back to his constituents he jammed his leg into a suburban post-hole, and remained anchored out there in the dark until considerably after midnight. He wept, and he prayed, and he cussed. He continued to cuss. He cussed himself, and the Board of Aldermen, and the County Commissioners. He even cussed his own relations, and more particularly his grandmother, which was innocent. It seemed a good deal mixed as to whether he was ever going to get loose or not; but the coyotes got to

skirmishing around him and grabbing at his independent leg, and made him uncommon lively. Whereat, he put on his strength, and tugged and cussed, and kicked at the coyotes, and cussed again, and tugged, and finally, out he came—but he pulled the post-hole up by the roots in doing of it. It was funny—exceedingly funny. However, I don't mind it; I slept all the same, and just as well.

I have received that carpet-sack of mine at last. It contained two shirts and six empty champagne bottles. Also one garrote collar, with a note from Dan written on it in pencil, accounting for the bottles under the plea that “voluminous baggage maketh a man to be respected.” It was an airy and graceful thought, and a credit to his great mind. The shirts were marked respectively “R. M. Daggett” and “Sandy Baldwin,” from which I perceive that Dan has been foraging again.

We organized yesterday. “We” is the House of Representatives, you understand. Simmons will make a good Speaker; and, besides, I shall be nearby to volunteer a little of my Third House experience, occasionally. The Council did not expend half an hour in getting very thoroughly and permanently organized. The regular joint committees were appointed to wait on the Governor, and that Body will be produced in Court this morning to testify concerning the condition of the country.

N.B.—The several departments of the law-making power are called Bodies. The Governor is one of them, by law—therefore it is disrespectful to speak of him otherwise than as a Body—a jolly, unctuous, oleaginous old Body. That’s it. I do not consider that we are entirely organized yet, either. You see, we are entitled to a Chaplain. The Organic Act vouchsafes unto us the consolations of religion—payable in greenbacks at three dollars a day. We roped in the Rev. Mr. White, yesterday, and gouged him out of a prayer, for which, of course, we never intend to pay him. We go in for ministers looking to Providence in little matters of this kind. Well, there is no harm in us, and we calculate to run this institution without a Chaplain. In accordance with a motion of Mr. Nightingill, we dispensed with the services of Chaplain in the Third House, and it is a matter of no little pride to me to observe that this Aggregation of Wisdom manifests a disposition, not only in this but in many other respects, to send Jefferson’s Manual and the Organic Act to the d—l and take the published proceedings of that Body as its parliamentary gospel—its guide to temporal glory and ultimate salvation. The House will proceed to business now in a few minutes.