

## NOTES FROM GOTHAM

### THE SUDDEN DEATH OF THE HEAD OF THE VANDERBILTS.

His Busy But Quiet Life—Business Is Improving—Money Flows Out of Town—All for Dewey—Matters and Ramapo Tunnel Prospects.

Death has at last ended the life of Cornelius Vanderbilt, the head of the Vanderbilt family. This life was practically closed so far as concerns any active part in the world's affairs, by the paralytic stroke from which he suffered three years ago. Since then he has done little more than keep burning the spark of vitality still remaining to him. The brittle condition of the arteries of his brain which made the first seizure possible still existed and was a constant threat of future attacks.

As the eldest son of the late William H. Vanderbilt there devolved on him at the death of his father large cares and responsibilities in the management of the great Vanderbilt estate, with its vast railroad investments and to the discharge of these he devoted himself with the most painstaking assiduity and the most



The Late Cornelius Vanderbilt.

conscientious sense of duty. It was always with him, duty first and pleasure afterward and it was the duty which chiefly concerned him, for he was always a serious man, religious in his tone, and by temperament indisposed to the gaieties of the society to which he belonged. This grave cast of his character was indicated by the circumstance that he received the intelligence of the sudden death of his father while he was attending a meeting as one of the directors of the American Bible Society.

In every relation of life Cornelius Vanderbilt exhibited himself as a conservative and conscientious man, never brilliant, but always safe and considerate. His appearance typified these mental and moral characteristics in him. He was in no way a striking figure physically, but his whole walk and conversation inspired confidence in his uprightness and bore testimony to his sobriety of character. He came suddenly into a vast fortune which made him notable throughout the world, but his head was in no wise turned. It simply imposed on him a duty to be fulfilled and for the mere enjoyment of it he had comparatively little taste or ambition. He was always simple and unobtrusive, reserved and obviously of a deep religious sense. This almost Puritan-like tone of his character made him seem a somewhat incongruous figure amid the state inappreciable from his great wealth, but none the less he sustained all the requirements of his position with a dignity natural to him.

In his business affairs Mr. Vanderbilt was scrupulous in his exactitude and his patience with details was exhaustive. The shortness of his life, only fifty-six years, he probably attributable largely to his close and minute attention to affairs which he might have relegated to some subordinate, but his constitution of character and habit of mind compelled him to take the unnecessary load on himself. He was made for work before play. Nor did he have any inclination to public life or for mere personal distinction socially.

#### In Wall Street.

There was no connection between the death of Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt and the weakness of the stock market. Properties with which the name of Vanderbilt is identified are not on the speculative list, and it is a high tribute to their management that the death of a member of that family does not affect their values. Some of the overexploited speculative issues fell pretty sharply, and there was a moderate recession in the general list. The publication of the government's monthly crop report, indicating a decrease in the estimated yield of wheat and corn, was in part responsible for the decline, but the chief cause was the continued calling of loans by the banks and consequent enforced sales of stocks by overextended speculators.

#### Business Men Happy.

The business men of New York are happy. The hotels have been actually crowded for the past four weeks, and among these crowds were not a few of the important merchants of the country who have been here combining business with pleasure. These merchants have made larger purchases than ever before in the history of the city, and they have purchased a more expensive grade of goods than ever before. The reason for this is found in the assurance which they have that the demand is not only to be great,

but that the people are prepared to consume better and more expensive articles than they have been, in some time. Of course the profits on these higher priced goods are greater than on those for which there has previously been a demand, and the merchants are correspondingly happy.

#### Money Flows Out of Town.

As is always the case at this season of the year, the surplus in the city banks runs down to its lowest point. During the dull hard times this surplus at times reached the enormous sum of one hundred millions of dollars. Last week it sank to a little over two millions, and there were fears that it would be entirely wiped out. This statement of the associated banks showing the condition referred to is the real gauge of the country's prosperity. While the money accumulated in the banks labor was unemployed and the wolf of hunger was staring many a family in the face. Now both capital and labor is fully employed, and pretty nearly every one who wants work can find it. The present drain upon the surplus in the banks is owing to the preparations of the Western banks to provide for the moving of the crops. It will be only a matter of a few months when this golden stream will return again, as the payments of the merchants to meet with the proceeds of the crops now being sold.

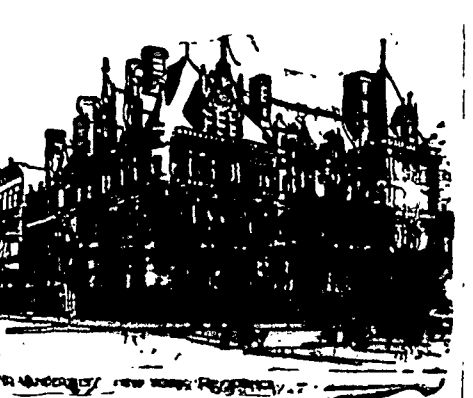
#### All for Dewey.

Preparations for the observance of Dewey Day have progressed to the point where about every one has made arrangements to attend, and the city will contain more people on that occasion than it ever did before. The hotels can accommodate but a small part of those who will want to come, but there will be no lack of accommodations, as all the numerous rooming houses will be at the disposal of the visitors, and a perfect system has been adopted which will put the visitors into communication with the householder with the least possible amount of trouble.

The line of march will be a long one, and the naval parade, which takes place on the 29th, will be the grandest ever seen in these waters. The land parade will start at Grant's tomb, and will go nearly the entire length of the city. It will be a long and tedious march for those who participate, but their patriotic enthusiasm will no doubt sustain them. Thousands of seats have been arranged at vantage points, for some of these enormous prices have been asked, and not a few have already been engaged. One of the drawbacks about engaging seats in advance is the possibility that the day may be too uncomfortable for long waiting to see the parade. For this reason many persons will trust themselves to a soap box from which they can view the parade, and which they can move to another location if that is desirable.

#### Disasters and Ramapo.

The Mast committee is again at work, and it is a safe prediction that there are some uneasy heads in this city, and will be while these investigations are going on. I changed to meet former Assemblyman Dalton, now at the head of the water department of the city, and had a conversation with him on this subject. The committee is one of those who voted for the Ramapo contract, and he says that time will fully justify his course. He explains that his early report on the abundance of water was correct, but that this abundance was due to an excessive rainfall during



The Vanderbilt House in New York, the early spring months, which was the greatest that has been known in many years. He predicts that the city will soon see the great necessity of having an increased supply, and that as rapid transit is to absorb all the funds which can be provided under the constitution, resort must ultimately be had to private enterprise. Besides, the commissioner shows that there are now no less than thirteen different companies furnishing water to the city.

#### Tunnel Prospects.

It is a little remarkable that after all these years of ceaseless agitation, and the expenditure of an enormous amount of money, the rapid transit commission has finally come back to substantially the old arcade plan of rapid transit. This plan was developed many years ago and a charter was procured at Albany and a company was organized. The Broadway tunnel was to be constructed as far as Madison Square, and private enterprise was to be relied upon to furnish the money. From this point there were to be two branches, one going to the East Side, and the other to the West. The same general plans of the promoters of the Arcade railway have now been adopted by the commission, but the tunnel is to be built and controlled by the city. The introduction of electricity as a motive power has given the great impetus to, underground railways. The principal reason for the failure of the old Arcade scheme, was the fact that the powerful influences of the elevated roads were at all times exerted against it, and long litigations ensued which in the end proved disastrous.

## GIRLS OF LONG AGO.

Reared in many a lonely cabin, Learning but in Nature's school; Proudly playing straw for pasture, Perched upon a wooden stool. Bounding through the dim old forests, Finding where the wild flowers grow, Dressed in homely linsey-woolsey, Little girls of long ago.

Rowing up and down the river, Singing in a birch canoe, Sticks for dolls their only playthings, Feet that seldom donned a shoe. Watching mother at her spinning, While she hummed some old tune low, Crowding round the cherry fireplace, Little girls of long ago.

Mush and milk their daily diet, Eaten from a pewter bowl; Always happy and contented, Dancing on from goal to goal. Busy as the bees in summer, Helping father out to sow; Gathering up the nuts and apples, Little girls of long ago.

Indians everywhere about them, Wolves at bedtime howling near, Yet they did not know the meaning, Or the misery of fear. Following their elder brothers, While they hunt with gun and bow, Brave as any older set was, Little girls of long ago.

Building houses every autumn, With the brown leaves scattered round, Taking tea with bits of china, Neatly laid upon the ground. Sliding on the ponds in winter, Trudging through the drifted snow, To some distant neighbor's quilting, Little girls of long ago.

Snow-white grew their shining tresses, And at last they sweetly slept, On their low mounds of daisies blossomed, Round and round the ivy crept. Many a line they've left to tell us, Of their merry-go-rounds and games, And of their great-grandmothers, Little girls of long ago.

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## A LITTLE JOKE.

A day or two before Easter I was sitting in my office finishing up some scraps of work and ever and anon casting happy glances at my portrait, which stood in the corner. I was just off to spend a fortnight with my old friend, Col. Gunton, in Norfolk, and I was looking forward to seeing him again with great pleasure. We had not met for ten years, and I had never been to his place or seen any of his family. It would be delightful.

The telephone bell rang. "Oh, confound it! I hope that's nothing to keep me," I exclaimed, and rose to see it.

"Mr. Miller, are you there?"

"Yes."

"All right, I'll come round."

A few minutes passed and then my clerk announced, "A lady to see you, sir."

A remarkably pretty girl of about eighteen was ushered in. She stood still some way from me till the door was closed. Then she suddenly rushed toward me, fell at my feet and exclaimed, "You will protect me, won't you?"

"My dear young lady, what in the world—"

"You're the famous Mr. Miller, aren't you—Mr. Joseph Miller, the philanthropist?"

"My name is Joseph Miller, certainly. 'Ah! Then I am safe!' A-d she sat down in an armchair and smiled confidently at me.

"Madam," said I sternly, "will you have the goodness to explain to what I owe the pleasure of this visit?"

"They told me to come to you."

"Who?"

"Why, the people at the police station."

"The police station?"

"Yes, when they let me go—because it was a first offense, you know. They said you always took up cases like mine, and that if I stuck to you I should be well looked after."

It was quite true that I had taken an interest in recalcitrant young persons from becoming habitual criminals, but I was hardly prepared for this.

"What have you been doing?"

"Oh, nothing this time—only a bracelet."

"This time?"

"They didn't know me up here," she explained smilingly. "I've always practiced in the country. Wasn't I lucky? But really, Mr. Miller, I'm tired of it; I am indeed. The life is too exciting—the doctors say so—so I've come to you."

"The case was a strange one, but I had no time to investigate it now. It wanted only half an hour to the time my train left Liverpool street."

"What is your name?" I asked.

"Well, I will have your case looked into. Come and see me again, or, if you are in distress, you may write to me—at Col. Gunton's Beech Hill, Norfolk. I shall be staying there."

"I don't know who you are or what you are, but the Guntons are respectable people, and I am a respectable man, and—"

"There's no reason why you should promenade up and down, Mr. Miller. It's very uncomfortable for me."

"What is the meaning of this insolent behavior?"

"Why not be friendly? We're off now, and I must go on."

"I shall give you in charge at the next station."

"What for?"

On reflection, I supposed she had committed no criminal offense, and with a dignified air I opened my paper.

"I don't mind your smoking," she said and took out a box of chocolates.

I was at my wits' end. Either this girl was mad or she was a dangerous and unscrupulous person. She was quite capable of making a most unpleasant and creditable commotion on the platform at Beech Hill station. What in the world was I to do?

"Shall we stay long at the Guntons?" she asked.

"You, madam, will never go there."

"Oh, yes, I shall!"

"Indeed, you won't. I'll take care of that. The police will see to that."

"I don't care a fig for the police. I shall go and stay as long as you do. They told me to stick to you."

I became angry. Any man would have. But nothing was to be gained by losing my temper. I took out a silvering.

"If you'll get out at the next station, I'll give you this."

She laughed merrily. "I thought you went in for personal supervision, not mere pecuniary ones," she said. "I read that in your speech at the charity organization meeting. No, I'm not to be bribed. I'm going to the Guntons."

"It's absurd. It's preposterous. What will—what will Mrs. Gunton say?"

"Oh, she won't mind!" answered my companion, with a confident nod. "She's used to girls like me."

"You surprise me," I retorted sarcastically, but she only laughed again. I returned to my paper.

An hour passed in silence. The train began to slacken speed as we neared the station next before Beech Hill. She looked up and said:

"Would you really rather I didn't come with you?"

I had passed a wretched hour. This girl was evidently bent on blasting my character.

"Madam," said I, "if you will get out at this station, I'll give you a £5 note."

"What? I heard you never gave away a farthing. They said so once could get a penny out of you."

It is true that I disapprove of indiscriminate charity, but under the circumstances I—

"Think I am a deserving object? Well I'll take it."

With a slight of relief I took a note from my pocketbook and gave it to her.

"I'll pay it back soon," she said.

"Never let me see your face again. Apologize for me to the Guntons. Goodby."

She jumped out lightly and I sank back murmuring:

"Thank heaven!"

After I got rid of her my journey was peaceful and happy and I forgot my troubles in the warm greeting my old friend Bob Gunton and his wife gave me. The girl must have lied about the telegram; at least Bob made no reference to it. He had a fine family of boys and girls and presented them to me with natural pride.

"That's my lot—except Addie. She's gone to see some friends, but we expect her back every minute. They keep me alive, I can tell you, Miller."

After tea my host and hostess insisted on taking me for a stroll on the terrace. It was a beautiful evening and I did not mind the cold. As we were talking together I heard the rumble of wheels. An omnibus stopped at the gate.

"Ah, the bus," said Gunton. "It runs between here and our market town."

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