

ARE YOU A CANDIDATE?

Out in the town of Nottotast, where I was born and bred, We want to make a change or two before the great day. The teacher of our grammar school has grown too wise of late. We want someone to sit the place. Are you a candidate?

The preacher at our little church has so much time to spare. He talks for hours on politics up in the public square. And though perhaps this might suit some, we feel quite free to state We want a man to preach the word. Are you a candidate?

Our station agent has become with such importance decked. He does not treat the common folk exactly with respect. He snaps you up even if you ask if the next train is late. We want a more obliging man. Are you a candidate?

Our postmaster so long has had his salary and place. He acts as if to question him was almost a disgrace. He tells you people should be prompt, while he is always late. Somehow we want a different man. Are you a candidate?

And even our doctor has of late grown tremendous big. He dresses like an English lord and rides round in a gig. Such mighty words upon his lips appear to condescend. We want one we can understand. Are you a candidate?

If any place that I have named you would like to possess. Send to the town of Nottotast your full name and address. The number of the shoes you wear, the inches from your nose to your eyes. And this will tell us fair and square you are a candidate.

—Boston Globe.

THE HOUSE OF HARL.

I was pretending to kill trout in the stream flowing through "the greenest of our valleys"—Pleasant valley, on the eastern Sierra slope—but my line was in the tree and I was dreaming of the days ago, when old Sam Quick, first of the settlers—oldest inhabitant—called me from the bank, rallied me on my careless angling and told me to follow him down the brook toward Steamboat creek, where the trout were bigger and more plentiful. As we went we came out upon the old stage road, and before long my guide was telling me the story of the honor of the house of Harl.

As we stood beside the road and the old settler was saying that it was no longer much traveled, everybody patronizing the railroad, a fine carriage drawn by four magnificent bay horses came up over a little ridge in the direction of the town of Reno and swept past us.

In the carriage were two ladies and some young girls, while on the seat in front, "handling the ribbons," was a handsome man of middle age, with beside him a manly looking lad, 10 or 12 years of age. All in the vehicle were laughing merrily as they passed along, and my thought was, "A very jolly family party."

The old man beside me was all eyes as the four-in-hand dashed by. With his right hand raised to the rim of his hat and with staring eyes he stood motionless, as one petrified. When the glittering turnout had rolled away southward to Carson City the old man dropped his hand and cried: "Ah, there they roll in wealth and gladness! But once it was not so. There was a time when all was very different with them. Yes, very different, and right here in this valley—right along the course of the very road over which they now ride so merrily. Yes, sir, very different times they've seen in these very valleys that lie along here under the eaves of the old Sierra range. They rode then as well as now—not in a kerridge, but on horses, and fliers they were too! It was a life and death business to them then. There was no laughing then!

"Yes, there was once seen right along here in these valleys a mighty lively chase—a life and death chase. All them big peaks looked down on that race, and all these lower ones echoed it. Lord, I remember it all as if it was only yesterday that it happened.

"Yes, there is a bit of a story in it. It is almost what you might call a tragedy, and here we are right on the stage where it was acted out. Then to think I have just seen two of the principal actors go laughin' by!

"Jack Lang, the man you saw drivin' that kerridge, was young them days—a slashin', dashin' feller and as handsome as they make 'em. And the youngest of the two wimmin you saw in the kerridge was then a young gal. She was the beauty of the Great Basin—not a gal between the Sierras and the Rockies could come up to her. She was tall and limber as a young willow tree, and her face was like the first blush of a bright mornin'. She could ride like a Comancher Injun and shoot a rifle like one of the old hunters of Kentucky. She was the pride of her father, the idol of her mother, an only child and the life and light of the 'house of Harl,' as old Sam liked to speak of his people.

"The ranch of her father, old Sam Harl, lies off yander in Washoe valley, and the land is as fine as the sun shines on anywhere on the face of the globe. Over these plains and along the slopes of them mountains the gal, Ella Harl, raced and chased about on the wildest young horses of her father's band. Or may be on foot, rifle in hand, she tripped it over the bench lands after jack rabbits and sagehens. Sometimes she even struck off up into the lower slopes of the Sierras and tumbled over a deer. Even a bar didn't skeer her—at least a cinnamon—and she killed several of 'em. I guess she'd even made it warm for a grizzly if she'd happened onto one. She was a gal of the frontiers and warn't skeered for nothin' that traveled mountain or plain.

"Jack Lang came over to this side of the mountains with a big herd of cattle from his father's ranch in Sonoma county, Cal. He and his cowboys herded these cattle on the Truckee meadows, no ranches bein' took up in that section then, and all bein' free and out o' doors like. Jack soon met Ella Harl scoutin' about, and after he'd once seen her he spent most of his time at her father's ranch or ridin' over the country with her, leavin' the hired men to look after his father's cattle.

"It seemed a case of love at first sight, and we all thought the pair made for each other. I guess old Sam Harl was of 'bout the same opinion, for he allers seemed to like to see Jack and Ella ridin' about together, racin' or chasin' rabbits or kytotes—games that Ella most allers come out fust best in. Ella wasn't to blame for fallin' in

love with the young feller, for he was no doubt the first real dashin' young man she'd ever seen in all her life. No sich young feller was to be found among the Mormon settlers, who mostly held the country. All the young Mormons were reglar yahoos, and besides her people had but little to do with the followers of old Brigham Young. So Ella looked on Jack as a sort of young Lochinvar. In her eyes he was perfect, and whatever he said or did was right. And no doubt her father was well satisfied, for Jack's father owned half a dozen big ranches over in California and so many cattle that he could hardly count 'em.

"All summer Jack and Ella were out ridin' about together 'most every day, and we all said it was a match. I remember one day when they rode by laughin' gayly. Barney Clow looked after 'em with all his eyes; then turnin' to me with a wink he said, 'A match as sure as if the knot were already tied!' It seemed to us it would be a mighty good match, too—good for the Langs as well as for the 'house of Harl,' for there was lots of land and cattle on both sides. But good lookin' and fair spoken as Jack was, it seems there must have been something not exactly honest and square in his makeup—would look thataway by the way he finally acted.

"One day 'long in the fall, 'bout the 1st of October, old Sam Harl, who had been ridin' about the valleys swappin' cattle and yarns with the settlers, went home kinder troubled in mind over some news he had heard. This news was that Jack Lang had been pushin' his cattle out of the country and would soon have 'em all on the California side—the main herd havin' already been driven out of Truckee meadows and up inter the mountains as far as Donner lake. Jack was about to strike up inter the mountains next day, leavin' some of his cowboys to gather up and bring along a few straggin' lots of cattle.

"Old Sam had happened to meet one of Jack's cowboys, who told him that Jack had got a letter from his father orderin' him to gather up the cattle and return to California at once. The cowboy furdur said Jack was in a peck of trouble, as his father was determined he should marry a Spanish senorita, who had hundreds of square leagues of land and countless herds of cattle. Seems this marriage had been arranged by Jack's folks and the Spanish family.

"Of course all the cowboys had seen Ella and Jack gallopin' about together and were glad to see that their young boss had had the luck to win the brightest and handsomest gal in the country—one that could ride with any of 'em and beat most of 'em when it came to shootin'. They looked on Ella Harl as a sort of queen among women—a reglar goddess. Not a man among them but would have risked his life for Ella. So they didn't like to see Jack fixin' to slip out of the country as he was doin'; in fact, they had held a sort of indignation meetin' in about it among themselves.

"By askin' a few questions old Sam Harl found that Jack had gone up to Eagle ranch, in Eagle valley, where Carson City now stands, and that in the afternoon he would return to Truckee meadows, and next mornin' push on up inter the mountains to catch his main herd of cattle. This news give Sam a feelin' of uneasiness, as every day for weeks he had been expectin' Jack would ask him to give him Ella for a wife. So, mornin' his horse, he struck out home like a hurry-came to see Ella, tell her what was up and find out jist how matters stood between her and Jack.

"By the Almighty," said old Sam in turnin' to leave the cowboy, 'it will be a bad bit of work for Jack Lang if he has not been actin' on the square with me and mine!

"Don't be too brash, Mr. Harl," said the cowboy. "All may come out well. Somebody has been writin' from over here to Jack's father a lot of stuff that has caused the old man to order him home at once, bag and baggage. I heard Jack say that much myself!

"To this old Sam made no answer but to roar, 'By the eternal, no Lang shall disgrace the house of Harl and live!' Then striking his spurs into his horse he dashed away.

"On reachin' home the old man at once told Ella what he had heard of Jack's movements and intentions. She was struck all of a heap. 'Why, father,' said she, 'I'm Jack's wife.'

"Old Sam then found that Jack had told her that as there was no one over here to marry them but a Mormon preacher or justice of the peace they would join hands and marry themselves after the 'California fashion'; then, as soon as possible, they would be married by a minister or gentle justice, which would satisfy her father and mother. Meantime she was to say nothing to the old folks and was assured that their marriage after the 'California style' was as good and lawful as any other.

"It seems that the pair had stood up in a grove at the upper end of the valley one Sunday, and that, claspin' hands, Jack had called upon God and all the mighty peaks lookin' down on them to bear witness that he took Ella for his lawful wife. She, following him, had in about the same words taken him for her lawful husband.

"This was the actual truth, for it so happened that Dick Sides and Jim Startevant, who had been out huntin' cattle and had laid down in the shade of the grove, saw and heard the whole business of the queer 'California style' of marriage. But the two men agreed to keep the matter to themselves until it was wanted and when it would do the most good.

"However, what the two men had soon heard did not come out till long after. Besides this, it seems that Ella had heard of marriage certificates and had made Jack write out a paper, which they had both signed. Ella had this paper, and gave it to her father, who found it was in effect a regular marriage contract. However, all this by no means satisfied him. He swore that Jack should never leave the country alive unless he married Ella in the regular way and without delay. No contract business in the wilds of Utah would do for the house of Harl!

"Old Sam took down his rifle, then went to his stables, and saddlin' his best and swiftest horse, man and horse, he would tell Ella as he marched out of the house with his gun was that he was goin' out to the main wagon road to ketch Jack on his way back from Eagle ranch and

bring him to terms. Of course this left her wild with distractin' thoughts. As for Mrs. Harl, Ella's mother, she had kerpelased at the first fire and was of no account.

"Harl came upon Jack Lang jist at the foot of Washoe lake, and hailin' him, ordered him to halt. Jack was about 100 yards ahead on the road, going northward, and was mounted on his favorite black mare, a strong and fleet nag as you'd often find.

"On hearin' old Sam's yell Jack faced about, but seen the old man whargin' down at him with a gun in his hand he put spurs to his mare and dashed away toward Truckee meadows. Bein' lighter than old Sam, and havin' a swifter nag, Jack soon widened the space between himself and his pursuer. But Harl's horse was a powerful beast, and one that would hold out for a long race.

"I can tell you that was a life and death chase. I saw a big part of it. Sol Geller, who is now dead, and I were out cattle huntin' and had rode up to the top of that big hill over yander to look over the country, when the two men came in sight and passed right along here where we stand. On to the northward they clattered and thundered. We knowed them both at once, and seen old Sam, rifle in hand, in full and desperate chase of Jack, we gussed at the nature of the trouble, for we'd all been expectin' to hear of a weddin' up at the Harl ranch.

"On past our lookout hill the two men dashed—on toward the meadows. As Sol and I watched the chase the distance between the pair seemed to be slightly narrowin', for Jack had left the beaten track and struck out into the open plain, and in the sand and sagebrush the more powerful horse of old Sam had the advantage.

"While watchin' this desperate race we heard a clatterin' of hoofs behind us. Turnin' about, we saw Ella Harl mounted upon her beautiful bay mare—one of the finest and swiftest animals in the country. With her hair streamin' backward she flew along the road like the wind, nor did the long, swift bounds of her mare seem in the least to slacken when she left the road and struck out into the open plain.

"From our stand on the hill we could see miles away to the north. Jack at first seemed to be headin' for his cattle camp in Truckee meadows, but when in sight of it he for some reason turned west and struck in toward the foothills of the main Sierra range.

"He is goin' to try to git up into the mountains to where the main herd of his cattle is stationed, and where he can git a fresh horse," said Sol, "but he'll git inter trouble before he has gone far. He'd done a good deal better to kept in the plains with that nag, for every where close in by the mountains he'll find the canyons big and deep—hard for him to cross. But look at that gal! She's takin' a cut off! Jehu! See her fly!

"Sure enough, she was takin' a near cut and was a-flyin'. When Jack swung round west toward the mountains she veered and took a course that would save so much distance as soon to bring her near to her father.

"Some of the cowboys at Jack's camp had seen the chase, and from our lookout we saw two mounted men dash out in the direction taken by Jack and his wrathful pursuer. Havin' fresh animals and good ones, the two men went over the plain like the wind, steerin' so as to strike in ahead on a straight course.

"On dashed Jack and old Sam, now close in by the foothills, and on flew Ella, who was fast nearin' her father, when the three passed out of sight behind the point of a hill. The two men who had cut across from Jack's camp reached and passed round the point of the hill almost at the same moment.

"The old man got to the edge of the canyon while Jack was lookin' for a way up out of the bottom of it. He sung out to Jack to stop and dismount or he'd 'blow his head off.' Jack paid no attention, but started to go up the opposite slope. Of course he couldn't go straight up, so was turned broadside by the time the old man raised his gun. Just as he was takin' aim the girl dashed up.

"Hold father," she cried. The old man turned to look at her. "Father, I'm the one to do this shootin'," said she, and laid hold of the rifle. The old man let go of the gun, too surprised at her bein' there to know what he was about, I guess. Then the girl leveled it, and called out to Jack to stop. He stopped, held open the breast of his coat and nodded to her to fire. Then she blazed away.

"At the crack of the rifle down went the mare and Jack, but as they fell Jack managed to throw himself off on the uphill side, and there he lay, while the mare rolled over and over down the hill. Then the gal charged down the hill and was soon at Jack's side.

"It seems she shot to kill the man, and aimed all right, but a move of the beast brought Jack's leg in the way and she sent a bullet through his thigh. But luckily it was only a flesh wound—the bone wasn't touched. It would have bin a devilish sight vus for Jack if the old man had done the shootin', and the gal knowed it mighty well. Old Sam seemed well satisfied when he see'd jist how Jack had been plugged. I see'd him kinder smile when his back was turned to Jack, and he'd heard him mutter somethin' about 'one shot for the honor of the house of Harl.'

"And so it was, for that's Jack Lang and his wife and children rollin' along there as rich an happy as ye please. It was the open season for good sons-in-law that day."—Dan De Quille in San Francisco Examiner.

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