

How the Detectives Were Outwitted

THE REPUTATION THAT RANN HASKINS POSSESSED for shrewdness and cunning has been considerably enhanced since his recent masterly escape from the Auburn prison. It is well known that this accomplished rogue, assisted by potential but unknown influences, succeeded in walking free and clear from the prison, clothed in genteel raiment, with the nicest beaver, the finest kids and the glossiest of patent leather boots. Immediately after his escape the most rigid measures were taken to secure his arrest; the most acute and keen scented detectives were sent out in pursuit; but all attempts to catch the rogue proved failures. A few nights ago it was rumored that Haskins, emboldened by his prolonged escape, intended to visit a ball at a "tavern" in one of the small towns in Onondaga county in the vicinity of his former home. Two well-known detectives who knew Haskins, personally, determined to attend the ball, and dressing up in their best, disguised as gay cavaliers, they made their appearance at the tavern just as the fiddle had made its preliminary scrape, and the fair couples had commenced agitating the light "fantastic toe." To purchase tickets and "sail in" was but the work of a moment, and soon the gallant detectives were enjoying the delights of the dance, while at the same time their most vigilant glances were directed about the room for the escaped Haskins. During the third or fourth quadrille, the leading detective sought and obtained an introduction to a modest appearing lady, who had for the most part sat quietly in the shadow of the room, attended assiduously by a polite and attentive gallant. Her quiet demeanor, her graceful figure, neat and tasteful dress, her beautiful flowing curls had won on the detective, and much to his companion's annoyance, he succeeded in monopolizing her company through two or three quadrilles, a waltz, a contra-dance, and several polkas. When the landlord somewhat officiously announced "that the refreshments were in readiness," the successful detective gallantly crooked his elbow, the fair lady accepted his invitation, and accompanied him to the table, where it was his delight to crowd upon her notice all the delicacies the table afforded, she swam in soup, she was barricaded in frosted and sugared cakes, and frozen with surrounding cream. A few dances after the supper, a good deal of small talk, and the lady announced her intention of leaving. The lady excused herself from the obsequious detective, and after an absence of a few minutes appeared with furs and hood ready for departure. The detective greatly regretting her early departure, accompanied her to the sleigh, tucked the robes closely around her, bid her good by and returned to the ballroom in pursuit of Haskins. The detectives returned to Syracuse and reported to one of two of the officers who were anxiously awaiting the secret of the visit that they were satisfied that Haskins was not in the county. It has subsequently been ascertained beyond a doubt that the fair lady who completely won the affections of the detective was no other than Rann Haskins the escaped convict.

Republican Journal [ME], February 22, 1861