

A Police-Officer's Seven Thousand Miles' Chase
by J. B. Armstrong

A few months since information was brought to me, by the officers connected with several Ohio banks, of the mysterious disappearance of one of their customers, named B—. His residence was some thirty miles distant from the village of U—, at another county town, and consequently some days elapsed before the creditors at U— were advised of his flight. They held his bills to the amount of eleven thousand dollars, amply secured by the names of good indorsers; though, for the reason that he had frequently before received accommodations, it did not occur to them to make a critical examination of the handwriting of the sureties at the time the bills were discounted. The officers at first thought everything right—that the circumstances attending a failure had compelled their man to leave, but that the sureties would have the money to pay. On a closer scrutiny of all the signatures, coupled with the denials of the parties, the names of the indorsers—save one, on a single bill for two thousand dollars—were pronounced forgeries. About this time a letter from the forger was received (by the house which had indorsed his bill), containing a deed for some trifling village property, and a confession that he had for some time been doing business “by permission.”

Here ended all surmises. The banks had been swindled, and the only remedy was to commence an immediate and rapid pursuit. Where to follow they had no [clue]. He had gained a start of one week, which, well improved, might place him in security. In this dilemma, the officers employed the writer to make chase, in the hope of securing a portion of the money with the capture of his person. Upon instituting inquiries into his business habits, I ascertained that he had dealt largely in stock for some years, and was accustomed to the using of considerable sums of money, which he procured in bank on the same kind of paper as that remaining unpaid, and which, doubtless, had all been forged. This was only a step in the examination; but it served to convince me of his audacity, and warned me that I had to deal with a man singularly cunning as well as bold. I next desired to procure such a description of the fugitive's person as would enable me to keep the trail, notwithstanding assumed names and changes of costume. Never having seen the person who was so soon to become the subject of my solicitude, I yet had formed an idea of his appearance. Most people are conscious of an effort of the imagination which almost involuntarily creates some ideal representation of the figure of an actor engaged in scenes which they may hear narrated. When and where such an impression was obtained I do not now remember. My anxiety, without doubt, tended to impress the fancied likeness of the culprit, as though daguerreotyped by some mental process on the brain. When listening to the description, as detailed by one of the cashiers, who was something of a physiognomist, I was startled to see him limning with professional accuracy every outline of my brain-picture. The shades of countenance and expression—a something that defied the strokes of his pencil—I already had. Wondering much at the extraordinary coincidence, I for some days remained unable to explain it. The intensity, however, with which my attention was directed to the subject, with the constantly-recurring image of his person as preconceived, and the strange similarity of the cashier's sketching, led me to believe the whole matter susceptible of explanation—that it was referable to some association, itself long forgotten. Trusting the truth of the impression, my thoughts recalled and revived old recollections of people and things that seemed in any way connected with the subject. Much depended on the truth of the conjecture. The general description that a criminal is six feet high, and so on, does not afford a satisfactory guide for a police-officer. We meet

hundreds of men every day who will very well answer it.

The problem was finally solved by the simple circumstance of seeing a friend attired in an outlandish manner suitable for a winter's-day excursion. Something familiar in his habit arrested attention. Afterward, while ruminating on the subject, my mind followed back the chain of events, slowly at first, and link by link; then with the rapidity of lightning, till, attracted by some salient point until now forgotten, one broad flash of light illuminated the dim recess that contained the original of my brain picture; and the forger stood forth in bold relief, as I had seen him stand on the platform waiting for the train, habited in green-topped boots outside of pantaloons, and wearing a broad-brimmed hat slouched over his eyes. His taciturnity, and the singular contour of his face, at the time unwittingly impressed me, as I now found no trouble in remembering. I was indebted to the principle of associated ideas for the recalling of the forgotten memory.

With a buoyant feeling the work of investigation went on. I compared and studied the various signatures, endeavoring to master his style of chirography. There was not, on casual observation, such a similarity in the writing as to lead to the belief that the same hand had executed them. But I arrived at a different conclusion. Some of his imitations were of light-handed, regular signatures; and being a rough, straggling sort of penman, in them he had failed. The peculiarities of his heavy hand were minutely observable in almost every letter, especially in their lines of termination. Satisfied now that he could not conceal from me this trait, I relied on the discovery for aid in various ways, believing that I should recognize him under any guise, and be by him unknown.

The forged bills were secured in my pocket; and receiving from my employers money, and letters of credit for more, not knowing when or where my journey would end—whether in London, the mountains of Switzerland, or the gold mines of California, I set out with the apparently hopeless object of arresting a man who was escaping from the State prison, aided by a long start, and the usual nerve common to bold men.

Arrived in New York, a systematic series of observations and inquiries began—hotel registers, drove-yards, and vessels up for foreign ports, were laid under strict surveillance. In the meantime, I learned through a drover that my man, with his wife and child, had been seen on board the *St. Louis*, a California-bound steamer, only a few hours before she sailed; and that, upon being interrogated, he replied he was going to California. The *St. Louis* had sailed ten days before my arrival. Her published list of passengers did not contain his name; nor had any circumstance occurred at the shipping-office, such as the writing of his name, or any other writing, on which to found a supposition that the intelligence was correct. There are so many opportunities of passing unnoticed by different outlets from the great city, and so many secret hiding places within it, that the chances of success seem diminished to a very small point, indeed, in the far perspective view. The report, for aught I knew, might have been originated by his confederates to mislead pursuit. Understood by the ordinary rules of interpretation, as applied to criminals, his ready avowal of destination meant a departure in any other direction—anywhere but to San Francisco.

Bankers were inquired of as to the persons to whom they had sold specie or drafts, without

getting the desired intelligence. I had expected to obtain evidence showing the conversion of his funds into coin, but failing, concluded that he must have done so at some other point; or that his resolution to escape was long enough maturing to enable him to do so at his leisure.

Finding that minute investigations were delaying valuable time, I resorted to general principles, and canvassed, one by one, the few items ascertained. The conclusion was, that Mr. B— was not to be judged by the rules that govern other men's actions; that, as he had displayed very superior talent and boldness in returning to Ohio for his family after the maturity of the bills, and had conducted an escape over the only Sunday train on the Erie Railway so as to preclude the possibility of capture before he sailed on Monday (if he did sail with the *St. Louis*); in short, he meant just what he said when he announced his destination to be California, supposing that no person would for an instant believe it. But I thought him capable of scientific finessing, though, in this instance, it might be deemed a little too finely drawn.

As the *Illinois* was to sail next day for the Isthmus, the writer walked down to the foot of Warren Street, and secured a passage in the name of Mr. Comstock, to prevent accidents; and now, if any gentleman bearing that name objects to my temporary use of it, I herewith restore in as good a state of preservation as any reasonable man could expect, after performing a tour in the detective service. We proceeded to sea on the 5th day of February, with fifteen hundred souls on board. For some days the decks were encumbered with baggage and with sick passengers, whose attentions were equally divided between leaning over the rail, apparently contemplating the depths of the sea, and in making insane attempts to walk the heaving deck. The *Illinois* is built on a model combining great speed and strength. She behaved nobly in a heavy gale we encountered off the Bahamas. We had been steering for the windward passage into the Caribbean Sea, and were rapidly running down our latitude when the storm burst upon us. The ship rolled in an ugly cross-sea, at times nearly submerging her wheels, while the engines continued to make nine or ten revolutions per minute. I knew that Captain Boggs would diminish her speed whenever he deemed such a rate dangerous, and kept my place on deck, whence most of the passengers had retired. Poised on an enormous wave, she sometimes pointed her bowsprit for a moment toward the bottom of the sea, then rising lightly on the next wave, passed level through its crest, with a surge of her iron wheels striking the water amidships such as to make the blows distinctly felt all over the ship. She was as tight as a drum, though the spoon-drift occasionally came inboard. One huge wave carried away a portion of the starboard wheelhouse, with four soldiers in the water-closets attached; then rolling aft, it disappeared in the scuppers and down the cabin stairs. The soldiers were not missed until next day. Our lady passengers mostly made up their minds to go to the bottom of the sea that night, raising cries of affright whenever a sudden lurch pitched loose articles to and fro with a noise. Once during the night the vessel lay very much over on her side, the fastenings of some tables drew out, and away they went with a bang, fetching up on the opposite side of the cabin, and raising such a racket as to bring everybody to their feet. Some of the ladies rushed into the rooms of their male acquaintances for companionship in their terror.

Arrived at Aspinwall, thence by railway across the Isthmus, a three hours' ride, to the old city of Panama, where the South American mail-steamer *Taboga*, bound for the western coast of South America, was lying in port. No other vessel of that line had departed since the arrival of the *St. Louis*'s passengers, and as very few Americans travel that route, I had no trouble in ascertaining at the office that my man had not been there, and was not then on board

the Taboga. All day was spent in looking after such straggling Americans as were to be found, but without gaining any information. Hiring a boat in the evening, I went on board the steamship *John L. Stephens*, and before midnight we got under weigh.

The long passage of three thousand five hundred miles to San Francisco was sometimes enlivened by incidents, such as singing and dancing on deck of moonlight nights. At Acapulco we took in supplies. The cattle are brought off shore, swimming, by the sides of the boats. They are hoisted by means of a rope tied round their horns, and block and tackle rigged out on the end of a yardarm, even with the deck, when the sailors pull them in board by the tail, and they are safely landed. One huge bullock plunged and kicked when he was dragged in, and, despite the efforts of the men, backed over the side. He fell twenty-five feet into the water, floundering and splashing like a whale.

The first officer, a genuine specimen of a sailor, was noted for his seamanship and his bluff good humor. He was always on his legs, often chatting with the passengers, and perpetually finding work to do. If anybody carelessly soiled the snowy deck, old Westfall was sure to call mops and squalgees into requisition. In common with old sailors, our first officer entertained feelings of contempt for the humdrum life on board steam-vessels, and was wont to illustrate it by a recital of the history of a passage made by one of the Company's steamers and a clipper ship from New York to San Francisco. Two days after the steamer left port the clipper unmoored, and "spreading her wings for a race," she followed Lieutenant Maury's directions, "blazing her way across the seas," and up with Cape Horn in fifty-five days. Off Valparaiso she overhauled the steamer and passed her, like walking away from a stationary object, with studding-sails set aloft and aloft. No longer able to control himself, the vanquished captain of the steamer jumped up on her rail, and gave loud vent to his feelings of disgust by cursing everything that wore a smokestack.

One day, in crossing the Gulf of California, the ship was laboring through a tremendous sea, against a headwind that blew strong and steadily. The old fellow seemed to derive enjoyment from the gale. He called it a favorable breeze—nothing more; and assured us that the wind ahead always caused the furnaces to draw better than in a calm. The next day, when two thousand miles from the Isthmus, we met the *Uncle Sam* coming down under a press of canvas and steam. Exchanging salutations as she swept by, our vessel tacked off to her course, plunging through the long seas and every day bringing cooler weather. To our great relief the voyage terminated on the first day of March by our passage through the magnificent entrance of the Golden Gate to the bay of San Francisco.

Once ashore, and quietly settled in my quarters, I set to work, without procuring aid from the police, hunting the trail of the fugitive. Assuming that he had been a first cabin passenger, I copied on a card the names of those in the first cabin having wives, who arrived on the steamer of the 14th February. There were but eight couples; three of them were soon traced to their homes; thus materially narrowing the bounds of the search. An interview with the Express messenger, who accompanied them from New York, satisfied me that a personage called Jones needed looking after. His name was found at the Railroad Hotel, whence he departed on the 15th of February, about the date of the sailing of the *Republic* for Oregon. To the office of the Steamship Company I next proceeded to learn if he had sailed on her. Many persons were

crowding around the desks, and the clerks gave no heed to my request. Calling repeatedly, my attempts were as often repulsed. At length, through the assistance of an officer connected with one of their ships, it was ascertained that Jones did sail on the *Republic*. The way began to open up; a trip to Oregon was inevitable, but much to be regretted on account of the prolongation of the voyage. Another steamer, the *Columbia*, was to sail on the 6th of March, leaving me two days of intervening idleness, which time was improved in trying to find other evidence of his departure, but without success. Brooding over it, I formed a resolution that, as it was a long way to go on a fool's errand, I would not go unless I obtained confirmation of the route. So setting off in hunt of the officer, I inquired if he saw the list of passengers by the *Republic*. As I expected, he replied No; that a clerk had given the information without reference to the book. I next went to the office, and opened my mission by a request to see the agent. He could not be seen, so a young gentleman perched on a high stool informed me, and, turning away, he began to write, but left off to inquire if it was some urgent business. He got a broadside in reply; they had not shown me the common civility due among gentlemen, and were withholding important information through incivility and carelessness. Coloring red, he stuck the pen behind his ear, and descending from the stool, reached down a book, which together we examined. There was no such name as Jones on it. I experienced a feeling of relief, as Dana somewhere expresses it, "as though just springing from an iron trap which was closing upon me," and felt that nothing but an inherent, bulldog determination had saved me a long and fruitless trip.

Resuming the examination of hotel registers of the date of February 14, and extending through a period ten days later, I found at the International the name of Hiram C—. Astonished to meet with it at all when he was supposed to be quietly farming up in Oregon, I looked again and found Mormon Island, California, written opposite as his place of residence. This man Hiram was an old acquaintance of mine. He had been a schoolmate of the fugitive's wife, as their parents' dwellings were situated within a stone's cast of each other. What business, I asked myself, could have led him to San Francisco, if not to meet the *St. Louis's* passengers? Here, in common parlance, was "a go," and a rather "rum one" at that; but making a note of it for future consideration, I went on with my work. The possession of the forger's autograph enabled me, with confidence, to scan page after page of signatures, and, as so much trash, to forever dismiss them from thought. There were many Joneses, Browns, and Taylors, written in every imaginable manner; but no signature that arrested attention, until turning over a leaf at the Rasette House, I saw, under date of 15th February, H. S. B—. I knew he was in California then, notwithstanding the crafty dodge of the initial letters H. S. The six thousand miles of pursuit had not been fruitless thus far, for the handwriting was incontestibly that of the forger. But he left the hotel on the 16th, and, with twenty days the start, he might then be in the heart of the Sierra Nevada, or in the Sandwich Islands.

Before forming any conjecture as to his probable route, my next plan was to find the driver who had conveyed his luggage from the hotel. After a hard day's work I found him; but the time was so long past, and he had conveyed such numbers of people to various points, that his memory of the transaction was rather dim. He was positive, however, that he had set my man down on the wharf of a river steamer. This exactly comported with my surmises, and so well agreed with my plans, that I forthwith proceeded to execute them by taking a steamboat for Sacramento, *en route* for Mormon Island, on purpose to look into the domestic arrangements of my quondam friend Hiram C—, thinking

that, perhaps, a personal inspection would enable me to account for his presence at San Francisco on the arrival of the forger. On the afternoon of the second day I arrived at Mormon Island, a mining village on the American River, and found many miners scattered along the stream, and the mountainsides, at work. After a little desultory conversation with the proprietor of the boarding shanty with whom I stopped, the precise locality of Mr. Hiram C—'s claim was ascertained, and he was easily prevailed on to accompany me on a little prospecting tour, with pick and pan, and shovel.

Gold washing is a back-breaking business. A bushel of dirt did not yield five cents' worth of gold, and I got all over bespattered with mud and dirty water. Before an hour I had as much reason to be dissatisfied with the Mormon Island trace as with its gold yield; for one glance of the personage named Hiram C— convinced me that he was not the man wanted. Returning to Sacramento, a thorough search of the city ended in disappointment. I had determined to go back to the city of San Francisco and try some other route, when I noticed a small steamboat about to start to Marysville. Her passengers were going aboard from the San Francisco boat without tarrying on shore. The forger could have passed Sacramento in the same way, I argued; and delivering myself over to the control of a kind of vagabond destiny, feeling that it mattered little whither I went, I took passage and paddled all day up Feather River.

The first register examined at Marysville, under date of February 17 (which was allowing the party two days to reach there), disclosed the name of my man, with another alias prefixed. I followed the [clue] to the stage-office, thence to N—, a populous mining town forty-five miles distant in the mountains. Reaching that place late on the next day, the time, until night, was employed in looking through various places of resort without discovering any trace. A building, lately a hotel, but then closed and in charge of a receiver, attracted my notice. Upon learning that it had been closed but a few days, I proceeded after nightfall to the premises and obtained admission. The former landlord brought a lamp to the deserted bar room, where the decanters and other paraphernalia still remained. Looking on his register under date of 18th February, the fatal inscription again appeared. Judging that the fugitive must have called a halt, as the place is environed by mountains, I carelessly inquired if Boniface knew the present location of the party. He had seen him only the day before, and he was then living in town, but he did not know where; his porter had conveyed their goods to the new abode, and he could get him to guide me. Declining the assistance, I beat a retreat with a very conscious feeling of having pushed the inquiry a little too far; for I had yet to find the sheriff, who only was authorized by my writ to make the arrest. Fearing that Boniface would meet the fugitive, and might say that a stranger had been looking for him, I saw the necessity for instant action, and proceeded on hunt of the officer. Finding him about nine o'clock, the writ was placed in his hands. We then returned to the hotel and made the landlord a *confidante*, as through him only could we obtain the porter, Jim, for a guide. After an hour's search we found him at a circus, and, laying hands on him, went back in triumph to the house, where I ordered refreshments for the party, double-locked the doors, and we held a council of war. Jim considerably dampened our ardor by the information that our man had, for one day, been absent, and, he thought, was not yet returned. We nevertheless proceeded, at midnight, by a narrow street leading to the suburbs, where our guide halted before a small dwelling, and whispered that this was the place. Dismissing him, we remained on watch, as we had determined, from the information, not to enter the premises, fearing to alarm the family without securing him, but to wait for "something to turn up." The dwelling was dark and silent.

A deep ravine, with precipitous banks all dug over for gold, bordered the south side of the premises. On its opposite margin, and darkening the gloom of the mountainside, immense pines shaded the starlight from a torrent that coursed over its rocky bed.

The officer, at my request, retired to sleep until near morning, for one could quite as well stand sentinel. Hour after hour wore slowly away in pacing back and forth; sometimes varying the monotony of the watch by going completely around the house to be assured that no sign of alarm was visible. In ignorance of his impending fate the forger slept peacefully; but his pursuer, for the first time during the long journey, having time and solitude for thought, felt pity for the sad fate which awaited the family, as two, at least, were guiltless.

Animated by the prospect of a successful termination to the chase, unbidden images of home arose, and of the welcome there waiting when returned across the distant seas. But with each picture came an accompanying shadow of the wife's prayer uttered too late to avert vengeance; of the agony too great for tears attending the separation on the morrow.

At the dawning of day the sheriff returned, leading a horse ready saddled. Without hitching, we stood by the animal as though engaged in examining him preparatory to a trade, that the cause of our lingering near might not be suspected.

Should B— take the alarm and try to escape, his only possible plan, I judged, would be to get softly out at the rear part of the house and make a bold push down the rocky hollow. In all other directions horsemen could quickly get ahead of him. On the opposite side of the ravine the daylight disclosed a considerable canal, filled with running water for the supply of a mill below. Once across this barrier he might elude pursuit in the mountains. But if he followed the gorge, which was impassable for horsemen, he might defy pursuit, provided he could reach and pass a bridge near half a mile below, where another road, leading by a circuitous route, crossed the chasm. The geography of the place satisfied me that the thing I had to do, in case of alarm, was to reach the lower bridge first, leaving the sheriff on foot to skirmish in the rear.

At sunrise a thin column of smoke began to ascend from the chimney: the family were evidently astir. Yet for half an hour not a soul was visible. Could the wife be alone? was the question we discussed. Meanwhile the horse-trading went on furiously. Such higgling and Jewing apparently was never before seen outside a farrier's yard. Finally the door opened, and the proprietor himself appeared in the doorway with a yawn, where, for a short time, he stood looking at us with a lazy regard, thinking us a couple of horse-jockeys. As he started for a stroll to town the bridle was dropped, leaving the horse to take care of himself, for our game was within shot. He was a large and powerful man, in the prime of life; but his physical advantages were not destined to aid him. Before he was aware of the object of the movement we had hold of him, though he started as if shocked by electricity. Making an attempt to withdraw his hand, as though grasping a weapon, the motion was checked by the timely display of a pistol barrel containing six of Colt's irresistible arguments pointed at his breast.

We secured his revolver, and about two hundred dollars in coin, which was given to his wife. She pleaded earnestly for permission to return home with her husband. But having represented to her that she could be of no possible service to him, that the spectacle of her husband being taken

home a prisoner could not fail of being known to the hundreds of passengers, she was persuaded to remain, and then follow on some other steamer.

Apprehending trouble from writs of *habeas corpus*, we procured a carriage with the best horses to be found, and at noon started for Sacramento, distant seventy-five miles, thirty-seven miles of the way lying through the mountains and foothills of the Sierra Nevada. The sheriff acted as our whip, and he drove like another Jehu, keeping up a long, sweeping trot over the roughest roads, and up hill as well as down. Our horses nobly sustained their credit for speed and powers of endurance, hardened as they were by the journey from the Atlantic States across the Continent. Late in the afternoon we emerged into the open plains of the Sacramento, which, far as the eye could reach, were uninhabited. Still pursuing our rapid way, the sun went down behind the range of coast mountains, and the stars came out of the sky when we halted for the night at a rude inn, distant fifty-one miles from the point of departure. We reached Sacramento the next morning, where the sheriff was dismissed, and we proceeded by steamboat to San Francisco. The *Antelope* is one of the old Hudson River boats. She was taken through the Straits of Magellan and up the coast to San Francisco a few years ago.

Upon reaching the city my prisoner was lodged in jail to await the sailing of a steamer for home. During the intervening time he caused much trouble by attempting to escape on writs of *habeas corpus*. We put to sea on the 20th March, where, once fairly outside the heads, and clear of shore boats, his door was unlocked, and he was as free as any other cabin passenger, subject, however, to an interdiction not allowing him to hold converse with any person on the subject of his arrest. I proposed that he should thus return quietly without the ignominious treatment to which refractory conduct might compel me to resort.

The passage to Panama was rapidly drawing to a close when a serious difficulty began to stare me in the face. It was a doubt as to my right of custody while crossing the territory of another government. On the seas, in one of our vessels, it was undoubted; but as to the rights acquired by treaty touching the transmission of goods, mails, and passengers across the Isthmus, I found the rascal better informed than I was, and he incautiously expressed his disbelief in any authority sufficiently strong to hold him. Warned by experience of the stealthy communications he had succeeded in making to attorneys at San Francisco, there seemed to be no doubt of his trying the same game to procure the intervention of some government official on our landing at Panama. Failing in this, he might escape by plunging into the dense undergrowth of jungle and vines along the roadside, and in a minute be as completely lost to view as though miles lay between us. The opportunity for making a last, desperate attempt for freedom would hardly pass unimproved.

My resolution to take him through safely became the more determined as I had right, if not law, on my side. The first move was to enlist the assistance of a few resolute fellows, who readily armed themselves and promised to “see me through,” a phrase which, when used by mountain men who had faced dangers before, conveyed an assuring and significant meaning. Precisely who they were he did not know—on that point he was left to his own conjectures; so that whenever he saw anybody in the way he might imagine him one of his sentinels. He was informed, in general terms, of the arrangement, and was also told of the revival, in this case, of the old rule that “might makes right”; that he was surrounded by a force sufficiently strong to retain him in spite of any attempt to make a rescue. The undertaking required delicate

management to prevent his tampering with the authorities; or, to keep him should that precaution fail, prudence dictated that he should not be taken ashore in irons, on account of exciting remark. We waited until the blind rush of disembarking passengers was well through, when he was quietly landed and escorted to a hotel without attracting notice. Before the hour fixed for the departure of the train I started one of our men out with a commission to purchase ice, cigars, and Champagne, to be placed in some car for the use of our party, as the heat of the climate was intense, and I desired to keep them about us. Our envoy found the cars locked, but he, like a prudent general, took up a position on one of the platforms, which he defended until our arrival. By this means we secured an entire car for our use.

Dusky groups of negroes and half-breeds swarmed around, offering to sell fruits and nuts. They are a half-naked, uncivilized race. One of our men, thinking there was no prospect of any trouble, on his own account got up an extemporaneous muss with the natives, which we quelled with difficulty. I am persuaded that, if the train had not started too soon, the savage massacre that took place on the same spot, in ten days thereafter, might have begun with us. It would have resulted very differently, perhaps; and the breech-clout gentry ought to congratulate themselves on their luck, for at least one carload of our men were well armed, and ready for anything in its nature "spontaneous."

We safely arrived at Aspinwall on the Atlantic side, where, by means of a pass from the President of the Panama Railway, I obtained of the agent permission to transfer my prisoner to the vessel.

On the 16th of April, after an absence of seventy-one days, and traversing, by sea and land, near fourteen thousand miles, we reached New York. Upon his return to Ohio the banks secured seven thousand dollars of their claims, through the agency of his friends, when, as an illustration of the uncertainties of the law, he was mysteriously released from prison one night before trial, and he disappeared to rejoin his family, it is to be hoped, a wiser and better man. Sympathy for his broken-hearted young wife, doubtless, had much to do with his release.

Harper's Weekly, January 3, 1857