Issue Seventeen

The Portsmouth Squire Occasional

A San Francisco Steam News offering

I hope I go to Heaven, and when I do, I'm going to do what every San Franciscan does when he gets there. He looks around and says, 'It ain't bad, but it ain't San Francisco.'

Blackthorn Survives 10,000 Foot Fall

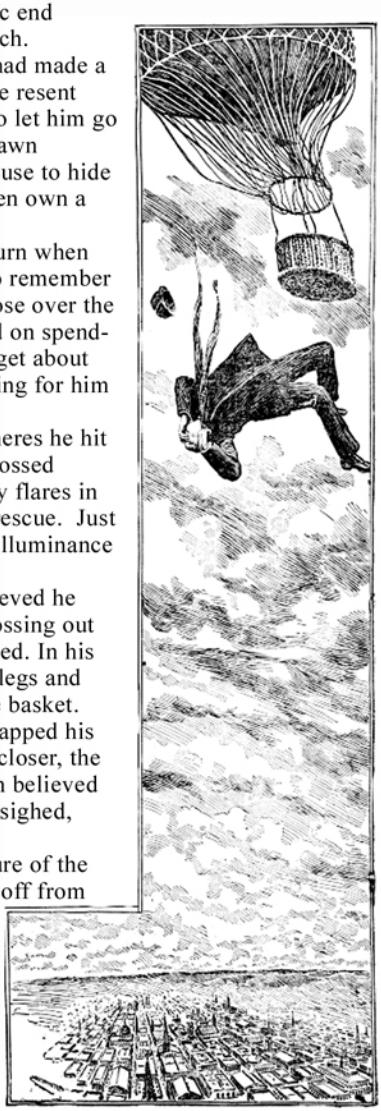
Balloon enthusiast, Jim Blackthorn, narrowly escaped a horrific end yesterday evening when he fell 10,000 feet from h is aerial perch. Blackthorn, a former photographer for the Portsmouth Squire had made a routine of photographing the city from 10,000 feet to record the resent building boom the city has seen. The Portsmouth Squire had to let him go when it was found his photographs were in fact just crudely drawn illustrations and he had been using the time in the air as an excuse to hide from his husband, and did not actually know how to use, or even own a camera.

Blackthorn, had taken his hot air balloon out for his daily sojourn when his husband, Rupert had discovered he had once again failed to remember to do the washing. Fleeing to his colorful gasbag he quickly rose over the rooftops of his Eureka Valley home and was away. He planned on spending a few hours alone in the air in hopes that Rupert would forget about his lack of domesticity and simply have supper ready and waiting for him on his return.

Unfortunately for Blackthorn, as he reached the upper atmospheres he hit strong winds coming from the Golden Gate. His balloon was tossed hither and thither in the gale. He attempted to light emergency flares in hopes that a passing winged transport ship would come to his rescue. Just as he light the flare he landed deep into a cloud obscuring the illuminance of the flair.

He leaned over the side of the small basket he stood in, he believed he saw below him a slow moving Oakland bound air freighter. Tossing out an anchor and rope he hoped to get their attention and be rescued. In his haste however he failed to notice the rope was around his thin legs and when tossing the anchor he ended up tossing himself out of the basket. Down! Down! Down he fell, past the freighter; he comically flapped his arms as seen in the Sunday funnies. The city came closer and closer, the spires of Saint Griffith becoming horribly in focus. Blackthorn believed soon he would be meeting the religious building soon enough, sighed, resigned to his fate and closed his eyes.

Oh joy, happy reader, but seconds before becoming a new fixture of the newly constructed house of worship, an winged taxi had taken off from Union Square caring newly weds, Jarvis Cunningham and Alice Opossum to their honeymoon destination, next door to Saint Griffiths, in it's descent, Blackthorn's trouser leg caught on the carriage door handle, ending his 10,000 foot plunge. On landing, Blackthorn was so over joyed, he paid the fair for the taxi and raced home on foot. Rupert was waiting, as was the washing.



FANGS OF DOOM BY DOVER WHITECLIFF EPISODE THREE

Rowan grimaced. Another bolt could take out half the block. Got to take this fella down. "Y'all couldn't hit water if'n ya fell out of a boat." Rowan shouted, motioning with her hand for Li to make a break through the front, then stood and fired toward the voice before ducking down again. "Hit me - I double dog dare ya!" Rowan taunted, scooching sidewise on the soapy, rainy floor boards and angling toward the beaded curtain, only to find the way blocked by overturned and smoking laundry tubs.

She could see hear him cussing. Where is he…There you are, you little snake… He held some sort of fiddly-knobbed box in his hands. Now where the heck were you keeping that thing? Not exactly something you could hide in a vest pocket or down your trousers. But whatever it was, Rowan was willing to bet a tidy sum that it was somehow attracting the lightning…and worse, she could see it had formed a shimmering bubble around the Fang. Well that explains why the first bolt didn't fry him to a crispy critter…and why shoot first and apologize later ain't gonna work.

Fingerlings of light danced across the barrel of her Colt, vaporizing the rain on the surface into an eerie glowing mist. " That can't be good." Rowan holstered the weapon and pushed off. Skidded across the soapy floor. Hurled herself forward. Blinding light flared. CRASH! Rowan dove through the front window, arms shielding her face from the shattering glass. She rolled and slid to a stop on her backside in the mud. She blinked the rain from her eyes to see Li standing over her.

"And you didn't use the door why?" Li hauled Rowan to her feet, protesting.

"We're heroes, ain't we? Heroes don't use doors in dime novels." Rowan grinned

"We must get the device from him."

"You got that right." Rowan made to turn, but then saw the vermillion horde sprinting toward them. "Damn, looks like he has friends. Run!"

To be continued.

UBER MOTORMEN USE NEW SPEAKING TUBE FOR PROFANITY, RIDERS NOT AMUSED.

"What did you say young man?" This can be heard coming from shocked riders on many of our new electric street cars roaring down Market Street. The new street cars have been equipped with a newly fashioned Speaking Tube, which would allow the motorman to call out upcoming street names, leaving the conductor free to focus on collecting fares and making change. The front platform is a fixed with a hinged mouthpiece that leads via a tube to the interior of the car. The motorman only needs to call out the street as it approaches and his words can be carried effortlessly to those in the middle of the car to hear. The new transportation cars which are not required to the high standards our fair city has set forth to our own MUNI trolleys are currently being run by motormen who appear to be using the Speaking Tubes, not to announce street names, but to holler profane and vile obscenities at both the passengers and to passer byers on the streets. Wilmington Loretta of Gough Street, nearly fainted when she heard her motorman use words too harsh for this reporter to put into print. City Hall continues to be silent when questioned how it will remedy the current potty mouthiness roaring down Market Street.

COME OUT TO A GAME
VINTAGE BASEBALL SEASON NOW ON!!!
WWW.BAVBB.COM
.A GENTLEMANLY LEAGUE DEDICATED TO 1886 RULES, EQUIPMENT AND ETIQUETTE.

ADVICE FROM A LADY S TOILET

The Countess Lola Montez of Landsfeld

THE ETIQUETTE OF CONVERSATION

To acquire the art of conversation in a superior degree, there must be intimacy with those who possess refinement and general information. There must also be observed certain general rules in order to accomplish the best results, prominent among which are the following:

1)Be cool, collected, and self-possessed, using respectful, chaste, and appropriate language.
2)Recollect that the object of conversation is to certain entertain and amuse.
3) Be patient. The foreigner cannot, perhaps, recall the word he desires; the speaker may be slow of speech; you may have heard the story a dozen times; but even then you must evince interest and listen patiently through.
4) Do not commence a conversation by an allusion to the weather.
5) Do not, when narrating an incident, continually say "you see", "you know", etc.
6) Do not use profanity, vulgar terms, slang, phrases, words of double meaning, or language that will bring the blush to any person.
7) Do not intersperse your language with foreign words or high-sounding terms.It shows affection, and will draw ridicule upon you.
8) Do not make a pretense of gentility, nor parade the fact that you are a descendant of any notable family, You must pass for just what you are, and must stand on your own merit.
9) Do not make a parade of being acquainted with distinguished or wealthy people, of having been to college, or of having visited foreign lands. All this is no evidence of any real genuine worth on your part.
10) Do not aspire to be a great storyteller. An inveterate teller of long stories becomes very tiresome. To tell one or two witty, short, new stories, appropriate to the occasion, is about all that one person should inflict on the company.

MADDENED HORSE JUMPS HEADLONG THROUGH PLATE GLASS WINDOW

A Bay horse attached to a delivery wagon belonging to J. h. Calm & co, commission merchants on Washington street, plunged through the large plate glass window in front of the Surprise clothing store yesterday afternoon. The glass was shattered into a thousand fragments and after the horse was extracted from the debris in the window it was found that he had sustained several serious cuts. The horse was taken to a veterinary hospital and will live, though he had a close call from bleeding to death.

Hundreds of people were passing along Market street at the time and as the horse scurried along the sidewalk and made the final jump, a large sized panic was created. Men, women, and children flew in every direction and the wonder of it is that no one was hurt. As it was two little boys – Harry Trebel and Willie Summerfield had narrow escapes. Two ladies who were looking in the window barley had time to get in the doorway of the store when the horse dashed by.

Just a few minutes before the accident the horse became balky at the corner of Sixth and Market streets and the driver, Sam Tomsky, got off the wagon to urge him along. The horse kicked him in the stomach and got one leg over the shaft. Tomsky threw the reins to a passer-by and the latter, became frightened, let go of them and the horse dashed on the sidewalk, which was crowded with people and made for the show window. The terror-stricken promenade fortunately got out of harm's way.

The plate glass is twelve by fourteen feet and is valued at $400. Two smaller showcases, which stood on the sidewalk, were also broken in pieces by the flight of the maddened animal.

CLOCKWORK ALCHEMY

FOR ONE GLORIOUS WEEKEND THE TEMPORAL RIFT OPENS FOR A GRAND MEETING OF THE MINDS AND HEARTS. GATHER YOUR WITS AND PLAN YOUR TRIP.
MAY 22ND TO 25TH
DOUBLETREE SAN JOSE
CLOCKWORKALCHEMY.COM

JOHN CHICKEN - THE COX WALKER
NO POULTRY TO LARGE
SOME HENS TO SMALL.
INQUIRE - ARMY STREET

PUT ON YOUR BEST HAT FOR EMPEROR NORTON DAY AT THE CEMETERY

Special Plaque to Be Laid in the Emperor's Honor
Sunday, May 3, 2:00 pm, Home of Peace Cemetery, 1299 El Camino Real, Colma
Emperor Norton, a beloved 19th century San Francisco Jewish eccentric, died in 1880 but was not given a Jewish funeral or burial. He attended services every Saturday at Congregation Emanu-El. In 1979, our congregant John Rothmann portrayed the emperor at the Court of Historical Review where it was determined that the Emperor should indeed have had a Jewish burial. Join us as we right this historical wrong and lay a plaque in his honor at the Home of Peace Cemetery.
Following the ceremony, we will present a live narrated documentary about the Emperor by SF historian Peter Moylan featuring the Emperor himself, portrayed by Joseph Amster of Emperor Norton Walking Tours, and hear comments by John Rothmann about his experience with the Court of Historical Review. The afternoon will conclude with refreshments and we will declare the winners of the Emperor Norton hat contest.
No admission charge; RSVP to emperornortonday@yahoo.com by April 21.

THE EMPEROR'S MUSINGS BY NORTON I, EMPEROR OF THE UNITED STATES AND PROTECTOR OF MEXICO

We frequently ride our fair city's Municipal Railway, as it is our primary mode of transportation (unfortunately, no longer complimentary), and we are appalled by the lack of manners exhibited by some of our traveling companions. It is truly a stab to our Imperial heart to witness younger people sitting in seats reserved for the elderly and not relinquishing them when a senior citizens boards, rubbish throughout the vehicle, graffiti and vandalism, and general pushing and shoving. What disturbs us the most, however, are those who feel they must share their music with the public. We prefer the songs of Stephen Foster, but would never dream of inflicting that upon our fellow passengers.
As a gentle reminder to our loyal subjects: mind your manners. Etiquette now, etiquette forever! For without etiquette, we are nothing more than barbarians!

The Portsmouth Squire, a project of the San Francisco Steampunks (SFsteampunk.com) is always looking for new writers, photographers, advertisements, stories of interest, crime reports, social columns, advice, rumors hear-say and more! Delivery persons also sought. Inquires should be made by electronic mail to PORTSMOUTHSQUIRE@gmail.com.
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