

CHAPTER XXXI.

A LAY OF LADIES LOVE AND DRU-ERIE.

THE following verses were written in 1868, when the contests between the revered Mr. Drew and Commodore Vanderbilt for the control of the Erie Railroad, and between the Rev. Drs. Tyng, Stubbs, and Boggs, for the control of the Episcopal Church, were at their height. They never riveted the public attention so firmly as one of my aunts thought they should, and I seize the present opportunity of giving them another show for it.

VORATIUS.

CORNELIUS, the Great Cornerer,
 A solemn oath he swore,
 That in his trowsers pockets he
 Would put one railroad more:
 And when he swears, he means it—
 The stout old Commodore.

Words have a certain weightiness
 That strikes one of a heap,
 When dropped by men whose early home
 Has been upon the deep—
 With so much saltness in their speech,
 Their oaths are sure to keep.

It serves him well, the Commodore,
 His battling with the breeze:
 Knowing the ropes, he takes and swings
 The biggest Line with ease—
 As one should do who all his life
 Has been upon the Seize.

Not following now the seas, instead
 You see him behind Bays ;
 'Tis said he always holds a pair ;
 And no one him gainsays—
 Being on stocks, 'tis plain that he
 Must have his way and Ways.

Each, every inch a railroad man,
 In not a line awry,
 His arms are railway branches,
 His feet are termini—
 If you doubt me, there are his tracks
 To witness if I lie !

He was the Hudson River's bed.
 The Harlem's bed and Board ;
 The Central's, too—whose cattle-pen
 Is stronger than a sword :
 His pockets were the tunnels
 Through which these railways roared.

Such share of shares were quite enough
 To serve a common mind,
 But not the stout old Commodore's—
 He for an Eyrrie pined :
 As though he were the Eagle bird—
 By chance—or had the Blind.

But brooding o'er the Erie sat—
 A brother bird of pray,
 A bird that, feathering his nest,
 Affirmed by yea and nay,
 Before he'd budge he'd see them all,
 Much further than I'll say.

Said he unto the Commodore :
 " Your bark is on the sea,
 But do not steer for Erie's ile,
 Since that's been struck by me.
 Go, man of sin, and leave me here
 To my Theology ! "

The dearest ties on earth to some
 Are plainly railroad ties ;
 So little wonder that he spoke
 In anger and surprise—
 Tears would not flow ; the Commodore,
 It seems, had dammed his eyes.

“When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug—”
 Which is all wrong you know;
 Unfriendly fires burn fast enough
 Without the help of tow,
 Especially when Coke is on,
 And several lawyers blow.

Such “Eerie” sights, such “Eerie” sounds
 Came from this Erie crew,
 It seemed, indeed, a den of Lines
 Prepared for Daniel—Drew!
 Not strange that he at last resolved
 To make his own ado.

Fleeing from jars—perhaps the jug—
 He looked to foreign lands,
 And to his brethren said:—“Arise,
 These Bonds put off our hands;
 We will into New Jersey, where
 My Seminary stands.

“There, in that benefice of Bogs,
 Of stocks and Stubbs and fen,
 Directors—if not rectors—we’ll
 Be all Tyngs to all men—
 They’ll strain their canon some, I think,
 If they would reach us then!”

’Twas thus that Daniel’s bark—and bite—
 Came on the Jersey shore:
 He can not cross, since in his face
 Is slammed the Commodore:
 There he must bide his time and tide—
 Tied till the row is o’er.

The gage of war has been thrown down,
 A broad-gauge—broad and free—
 And taken up—the Commodore,
 A gauger is, per sea:
 Cries Drew:—“He only wants to get
 The weather-gage of me!”

’Tis plain that if, in this tournay—
 A Poutrance is the tilt—
 The Commodore should keep his seat
 And Daniel be the spilt,
 The latter must make tracks, but roads
 Will all be Vander built.

While if upon the other hand
 The Commodore should fall,
 He'll see that little backward time
 Asked for by Mr. Ball—
 In other words, he'd lose his age,
 And Drew would have the call.

Just how the joust may terminate,
 Nobody knows nor cares;
 No need to ask how fares the fight—
 They'll ask us for our fares,
 And whiche'er side may win will plow
 The public with its shares.

So we will sing, Long live the Ring,
 And Daniel long live he,
 May his High school confer on him
 Exceeding high degree,
 Doubling his D's until, indeed,
 He is D—D., D—D!

As for the stout old Commodore
 May he still rule the wave,
 Yet never waive the Golden Rule,
 E'en the odd trick to save:
 If called to play the railway King,
 May he ne'er play the knave.

This ends my lay, if either wins;
 But if they both should fail—
 I mean that if by any chance,
 This struggle o'er a rail
 Should end like the Kilkenny cat's,
 You'll see another tail.