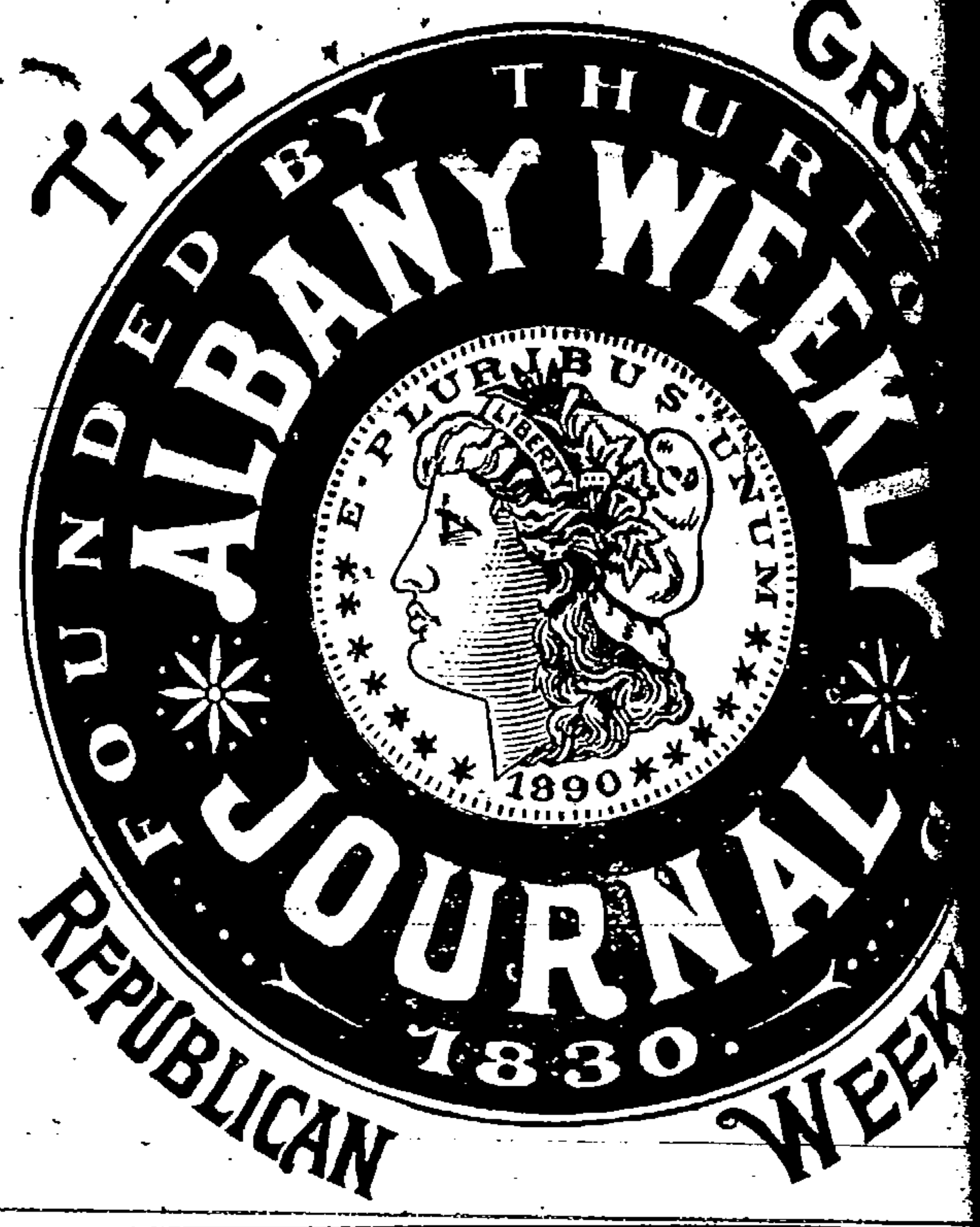


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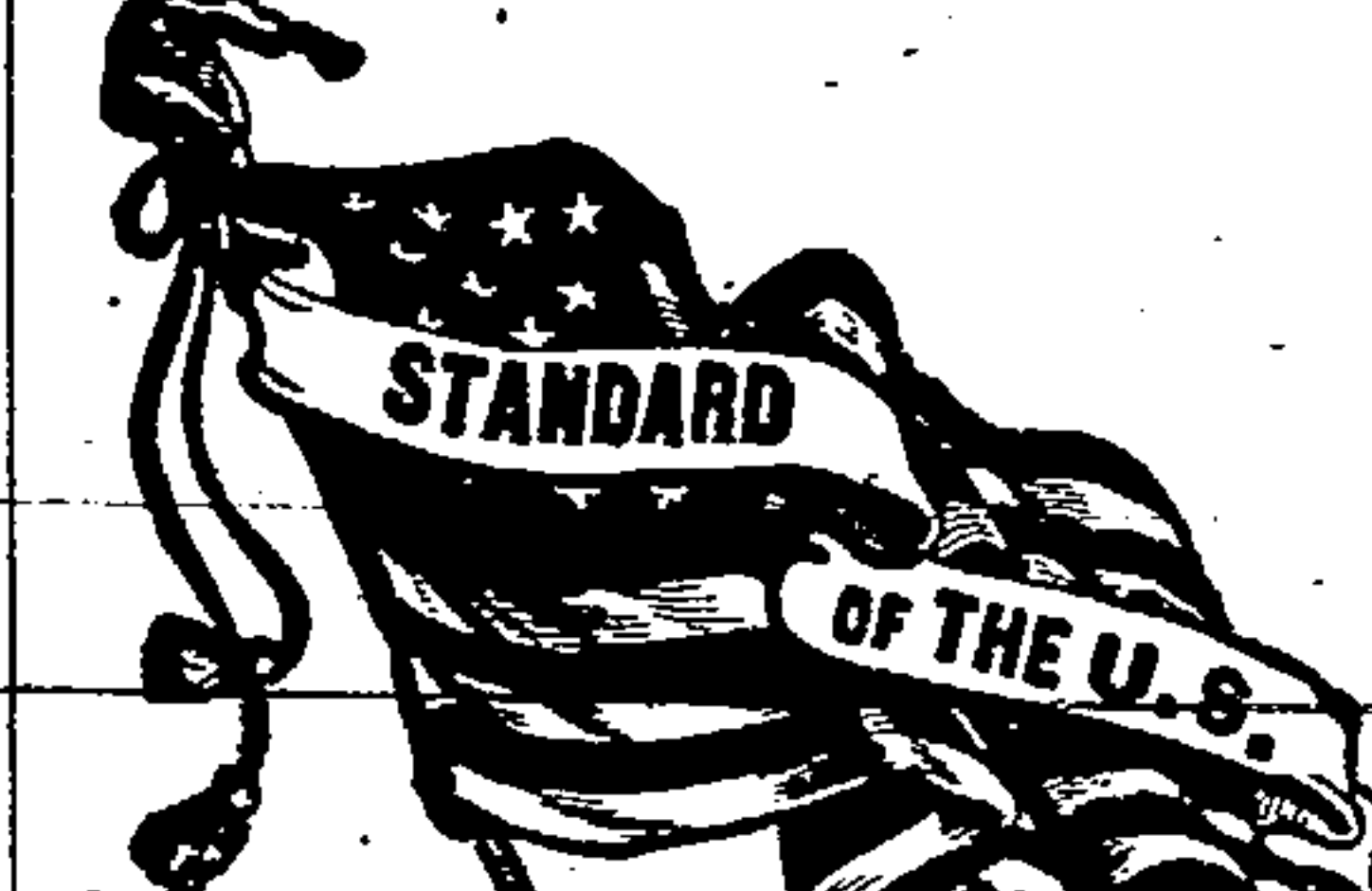
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luttering in the wind. Around the short curve came suddenly the fast express, and the child, as she saw the great engine bearing down upon her, uttered a cry which she would never repeat.

"Another injury and Mary would have been in time. Her dress caught in something, she stumbled, and was so delayed; but she recovered herself quickly, and hurrying on caught little Mary in her arms, and then—it ought to be easy, to tell it now."

"My business went to nothing just then. Perhaps my neglect hurt it, but I think not. At all events I gave it up. Then I secured a place as brakeman without much trouble."

"For a while neither spoke. The doctor, keenly observant, thought that Dorsey had more to tell; but he waited patiently. "Life has gone very evenly and smoothly with me since then until last night. Until last night," he repeated slowly.

"The train had been made up with the sleepers first, nearest the engine. I was standing on the platform waiting for the starting signal to be given, when suddenly a woman passed me. Something about her—her disordered hair maybe—attracted my attention; but before I could look more closely at her an engine behind me whistled sharply and I turned to see what was the trouble. Later, as I passed her on the train, her face seemed to bear a strange, far off resemblance to some familiar one; but I laughed at what I thought my foolish fancy. There were very few in the first sleeper, and I returned to it after I had made my first trip through the cars. I seated myself opposite, across the aisle, from this woman. I thought it strange that although the other passengers had had their berths made up she had not; but the porter was within easy reach and I did not feel it necessary to offer her any service."

"She was alone in her section. She sat quietly for the most part, looking out of the window, although the night was very dark. Sometimes she would become restless and excited. I thought her very nervous and that the frequent whistling of the engine startled her. As I remember it now it seems to me that she became excited a little before the leaving of the whistle. After a while I closed my eyes—it may be I fell asleep—but I was recalled to myself by a very unusual and prolonged whistle of the engine. (Our engineer was determined, it seemed, that none of us should sleep that night.) As I opened my eyes this strange woman came in from the front. Where she had been I do not know, but there was a bright and happy light in her eyes. Perhaps I should have spoken to her, but I was very tired and the temptation to rest there quietly was a very strong one."

"In a few minutes I surely fell asleep—I know I broke the rules, but it was for a minute only—I surely fell asleep, for I dreamed that dreadful day all over again. Once more I was rudely awakened by the engine's whistle. As I started up a cold wind blowing through the car met me, and there stood the strange woman holding the front door open, looking out into the night. Her hair had fallen loose as Mary's was that day. It was Mary. I hurried toward her."

light—that his recovery was impossible. Deeply as the doctor was grieved he was annoyed, too, to feel that his skill would be of no avail to his old friend.

"Don't, Tom," Dorsey replied. "Don't call it that." "And why should you be the only one to be hurt?" "Was I the only one?" Dorsey asked. "Yes."

"What caused the accident?" he asked. "Do they know?" "Yes," the doctor replied; and he told of the little land slide which the engineer had seen almost in time, but not quite, and the engine had run into with barely enough force to jar the train its length. "We suppose," he added, "that you must have been shaken between two cars in some way."

"No," the doctor answered. "And my brain is entirely clear?" "Certainly," the doctor replied, wondering a little. "Then let me tell you a great deal. I had a fondness always for all cars and trains. The earliest, the pleasantest recollection I have is of the noise of the coupling of cars as they were made into trains in the yards. No music was ever so sweet to me as that. I used to spend all the time I could watching the trains made up and going. No, novel ever pleased me so. They made me go through college, you know. I have never regretted it, but then I wanted to be an engineer. That seemed the only place worth having."

"Of course," said the doctor, "and it was deserved, too." "Yes, and it gladdens me so now to think it was. Matters, too, looked well for us then. Success seemed worth striving for. Mary was jealous a little of my love for the railroad. I always loved it, as I said. I was in business then, but our little home was close by the line. I could hear the trains go by all night if I happened to be awake. You can see the house now from the window yonder. Lift me up a little—so Mary at first hated the railroad, but she grew used to the noise, and I think after a little she paid no attention to it. She furnished our house prettily, and we were very happy; but she would ask me to conquer my liking for the railroad. She feared that I could not be fit for anything else, my thoughts were so occupied with it, but I laughed gently at her and went on in the same way and with the same hopes. She never doubted my love, and she used to say that some time I would obey her slightest wish and follow her wherever she might lead. It may be there was a little complaint in her manner."

"When the baby was born a love of the railroad seemed to have been born in her. She would as soon as she could clap her little hands at the sound of the engine whistle. As she grew older—we called her Mary, too—she would ask me in her baby way to come early to see the trains go. I need not say anything, and when I could I would. Our there on the grass we would sit, and I would tell her of all the strange places we sometimes would go on the cars to see. Even then in fancy little Mary and I would go with the trains all over the world. It was rare sport to her."

"One day I was ill at ease. Nothing that I had to do seemed worth while. I only wanted to be at home; I only wanted to feel them near me, and safe. But, try as I would, it was late in the long afternoon before I could get away. It was warm, but as I hurried home a gentle breeze met me. It was a bright, beautiful day, just such a summer's day as this. It was so peaceful, and the leaves so kissed one another in the light breeze that I was calmed, and the feeling I had suffered from all day left me. I was glad that we lived in the country. I was glad to be alive at all. The sun was almost behind the western hills, and all that side of the valley was in shadow, but on our side it was light and everything was rarely beautiful in the sunlight. The slanting rays made our house brilliant and glorious in its color. "As I neared home Mary came to the door, and I could see her welcoming smile. Then, shading her eyes with her hand, she looked over toward the railroad, and in a minute screamed and ran rapidly from the house. Alarmed and wondering, I ran after her. Down below on the track stood little Mary, her curls and all her pretty ribbons

THE ACCIDENT. Within a few miles of its terminus the railroad passed through a valley, narrow, to be sure, but of great and unusual beauty. The sides and crests of the surrounding hills were dotted with the pretty cottages of suburban residents, but the country was not yet so closely settled as to have lost all picturesqueness, and, although the houses were neat, they were simple, and the lawns, though well kept, were still undisturbed by brazen or cast iron statuary. The neighborhood had not yet reached that stage in its development where its new houses were built upon uninteresting plans furnished ready-made to rural carpenters by enterprising publishers. Nor had its occasional churchyard yet lost all sense of rest and peace. Simple gravestones there were, but no pretentious monuments. But even here death slyly took his victim unawares or stood forth to fight boldly for his own as he pleased. It was here that many years before John Dorsey had made for himself a home, and it was here that he was now about to die. There had been an accident. It was a very slight one, and its cause was almost ridiculous. John Dorsey, the conductor of the sleeping car train, had been the only one hurt. He, however, although fatally injured, suffered almost no pain and was entirely conscious of his surroundings and condition. He had, indeed, stated his belief that he was about to die long before the doctor had been able to ascertain the character of his injuries or to form any opinion of the probable result. His insistence upon this even annoyed the doctor.

"Dorsey," he said, "you must not speak so. You are too young to die, and we shall save you." As soon as could be after the accident Dorsey had been carried to a neighboring house, and Dr. Irwin had been sent for by men on the train who had known of the intimate friendship which existed between the two. This friendship was of earlier date than Dorsey's connection with the railroad, and that seemed to Dorsey's fellow employees to have begun almost ages before. Although Dorsey had been always as frank and candid as a man well could be in reference to all his later life, in regard to his earlier past he was singularly reticent. Among his fellows there had always been considerable speculation as to what his youth had been. Some who had known of his intimacy with Dr. Irwin, and of his ability to meet upon terms of personal equality the high officials of the road, and of their regard for him, believed that he had been an old college friend of the doctor's, and that some accident of fate had made him a working railroad man while the doctor had secured his profession. Others less charitable or with an unwhispered experience of the world, and guided by the reports which reached them of the repeated refusal of Dorsey to take other positions higher and more remunerative, believed that he must have committed some crime, and was therefore careful not to expose himself to too bright a light. As a matter of fact, he and the doctor had been classmates, but after their graduation they had lost sight of each other for a few years while Dr. Irwin pursued his studies in various foreign hospitals. Upon his return from abroad he had heard of the death of Dorsey's wife and child. He had looked Dorsey up and exostipated with him upon his selection of a vocation. But Dorsey was silent as to the reasons for his choice and quietly persistent in his determination not to change his work if he could help it.

When the doctor and stay with him, as possible, and their only friend had grown and ripened. "I am glad that you cannot do any," the doctor reluctantly said that Dorsey was

luttering in the wind. Around the short curve came suddenly the fast express, and the child, as she saw the great engine bearing down upon her, uttered a cry which she would never repeat.

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